



Quelle était la Bible des Pères, ou quel texte de la Septante choisir pour Biblindex ?

Guillaume Bady

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STUDIA PATRISTICA

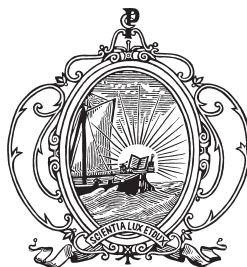
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Biblical Quotations in Patristic Texts

Edited by
LAURENCE MELLERIN and HUGH A.G. HOUGHTON



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Quelle était la Bible des Pères, ou quel texte de la Septante choisir pour Biblindex?

Guillaume BADY, Lyon, France

ABSTRACT

Lacking a single, original and normative text of ‘the’ Septuagint, a pragmatic choice for Biblindex may be proposed. Though less accurate and less extensively grounded than the edition from Göttingen, the Rahlfs’ edition might be preferred on consideration of its completeness regarding the number of books, its almost universal diffusion and even its attention towards patristic literature, as evident in the example of *Daniel*. In the case of alternative texts (such as *Josh.*, *Judg.*, *Tob.* and *Dan.*), the parallel information provided by Rahlfs’ edition can also be of use in determining the appropriate reference.

L’utilisation de l’article défini singulier ‘la’ devant le mot ‘Septante’ aura sûrement laissé songeur plus d’un bibliophile, même s’il l’utilise tous les jours. À supposer qu’il soit possible de remonter à un texte unique, original et normatif, dans le cadre de Biblindex il restera délicat de confronter les textes patristiques à celui-ci; et ce texte idéal n’existe pas. La Bible des Pères était enrichie ou altérée par mille contingences historiques, géographiques, linguistiques, éditoriales, personnelles. À partir du moment où, par force, le texte choisi sera en partie étranger ou artificiel, comparé aux corpus patristiques déjà éloignés des originaux supposés, l’exigence scientifique de retour à ces originaux se fait moins sentir. Bible(s) réelle(s) des Pères et édition(s) critique(s) moderne(s) de la Septante ont de fortes chances de ne pas coïncider tout à fait. Le choix sera donc plus conventionnel que satisfaisant d’un point de vue scientifique. Ce qui est présenté ici est donc une simple proposition, motivée par des considérations essentiellement pragmatiques.

1. Rahlfs ou Göttingen?

C’est la première question qui se pose. Mais en est-elle une en réalité? Ainsi présentée, elle n’a pas vraiment de sens, puisqu’Alfred Rahlfs (1865-1935) a été le co-fondateur du *Septuaginta Unternehmen* de Göttingen, où il a travaillé sa vie durant. Le choix réside en réalité entre trois éditions de la Septante:

- celle, complète, en deux volumes, d’A. Rahlfs, dont la publication en 1935 à Stuttgart a éclipsé celle de F.C. von Tischendorf, *Vetus Testamentum græce*

- iuxta LXX interpretes* (Leipzig, 1887), et celle de H.B. Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek According to the Septuagint* (Cambridge, 1922);
- celle, incomplète, d'A.E. Brooke et alii, *The Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge, 1906-1940) sur les livres suivants: Gn, Ex, Lv, Nb, Dt, Jos, Jg, Rt, 1-4 Rg, 1-2 Ch, 1-2 Esd, Est, Jdt, Tb;
 - et celle, encore inachevée, des continuateurs de Rahlfs à Göttingen, le *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Græcum*; les volumes parus depuis 1974 sont: Gn, Ex, Lv, Nb, Dt, 1-2 Esd, Est, Jdt, Tb, 1-4 M, Psaumes de Salomon et Odes, Jb, Sa, Si, Is, Jr, Ez, Dn et les Douze petits prophètes.

En raison de son plus grand avancement, garantissant une plus grande constance, l'édition de Göttingen peut être préférée à celle de Cambridge, du moins dans le simple cadre d'un choix de norme éditoriale, et *a fortiori* à celle de Rahlfs, puisque c'est une édition critique de très loin plus aboutie.

Or Rahlfs est celui qui fournit l'édition la plus complète, et aussi la plus répandue. C'est d'ailleurs la première fois dans l'histoire qu'un *textus receptus* de la Septante est si diffusé, à supposer qu'il y en ait eu un auparavant (l'édition sixtine de 1587?). Ce fait n'est pas du tout mineur, si l'on considère ces deux points: l'édition de Rahlfs est le seul texte numérisé disponible et c'est aussi celui auquel l'utilisateur de Biblindex se référera spontanément et facilement.

Par ailleurs, comparée aux textes patristiques, l'édition de Rahlfs est peut-être moins inadéquate, et donc plus légitime, que celle de Göttingen. Celle-ci, en effet, vise à retrouver, certes en partie ‘par le biais’, mais malgré tout, dans bien des cas, ‘en dépit’ du texte biblique majoritaire cité par les Pères, la Septante la plus ancienne qui soit: l'objectif se situe bien en amont du corpus des auteurs chrétiens que vise principalement Biblindex, et lui est parfois contraire. De ce ‘Vieux Grec’, le *Vaticanus*, qui sert de base, à titre principal ou secondaire, à toutes les éditions, y compris celle de Rahlfs, peut être dans certains cas un témoin intéressant, ou point trop origénisé, mais dans l'ensemble les éditeurs anciens le choisissent aussi par commodité. Entre la gageure que représente la reconstitution assurée des textes originaux mis sous le nom des Septante et celle, encore moins envisageable, d'une édition synthétique ‘du’ texte des Pères – encore une fois, il n'existe pas –, la commodité, jointe à la cohérence, n'est pas un pis-aller si déshonorant.

Un cas peut être étudié de plus près: celui de *Daniel* dans la version de Théodotion, qui est quasiment la seule citée par les Pères; dans ce cas, l'édition de Göttingen pourrait peut-être mieux correspondre au corpus de Biblindex.

La comparaison entre Rahlfs et l'édition de J. Ziegler parue en 1954 et révisée par D. Fränkel dans l'édition de 1999¹ permet de mettre en évidence des

¹ *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Græcum auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum vol. XVI/2: Susanna, Daniel, Bel et draco* (Göttingen, 1999).

différences:² d'abord, sur un total de 530 versets comprenant Suzanne, Daniel, Bel et le serpent, il y en a 81, surtout aux chapitres 4 et 6, pour lesquels le découpage ou la numérotation sont différents; mais ceci n'a que peu de rapport avec les bibles anciennes. Plus pertinentes sont les quelque 225 différences textuelles – en dehors du nu éphecystique et de l'accentuation –, pour lesquelles la consultation des apparets critiques est très instructive. En effet, dans presque tous les cas, on peut observer que le texte de Göttingen est fidèle à la règle selon laquelle la leçon la plus courte, ou non attestée ailleurs, est la ‘meilleure’: concrètement, le texte de Göttingen est un peu plus court, car émondé de dizaines de mots qui correspondent soit au texte de la Vieille Septante – tel qu’édité à nouveaux frais par O. Munnich en 1999 en regard du texte de Théodotion –, soit au texte masorétique, soit à un parallèle dans un autre livre biblique. Parmi les témoins supportant le texte de Göttingen, on trouve bien sûr quelques Pères, mais il s’agit d’une minorité et leur usage est délicat.³ Les éditeurs de Göttingen, il est vrai, n’ont pas pu collationner tous les textes patristiques – sinon il ‘suffirait’ à Biblindex de numériser les cahiers de collations de Göttingen! –, mais en priorité les commentaires exégétiques et si possible les écrits les plus anciens – à commencer par le commentaire, si important, d’Hippolyte.⁴ On peut toutefois penser que le ‘panel’, ou plutôt le corpus collationné dans l’état où les textes ont été transmis, est représentatif et que le texte de Göttingen a globalement moins de chances de correspondre précisément au texte cité par les auteurs visés par Biblindex; plus court, il entraînerait notamment dans les relevés de références un nombre d’omissions aussi impressionnant qu’inutile.

Disponibilité sous forme numérique, diffusion universelle en tant que standard, intégralité du corpus considéré, fiabilité – au moins relative – du texte critique, meilleure adaptation à la visée et au corpus de Biblindex, gain de temps et d’énergie enfin: l’édition de Rahlf's a tous les atouts dans son jeu.

² On trouvera sur la page <http://www.sources-chretiennes.mom.fr/upload/doc/DanielTheodotionGoettingen.pdf> le texte grec de Göttingen, soit isolé, soit comparé à celui de Rahlf's.

³ Il est relativement rare que, dans l’apparat critique, les Pères soient cités du côté du lemme. Ainsi au v. 5 de *Suzanne* (Théodotion), Grégoire de Nazianze (*Discours* 2,64) conforte la leçon λαόν sans addition de που, mais sa citation s’arrête là, et on trouve le même auteur du côté variant quand, dans le *Discours* 36,3, au lieu de λαόν il a Ἰσραήλ. J. Ziegler a d’ailleurs négligé de préciser que, deux mots plus tôt, cette même citation comportait une transposition et donnait κρίνετιν au lieu de κυβερνᾶν, mais on peut se demander s’il n’a pas ‘fait un exemple’ en citant un même auteur des deux côtés de l’unité critique. Voir *Septuaginta ... XVI/2: Susanna, Daniel, Bel et draco* (1999), 217-9.

⁴ Pourvu de la 1^{re} édition de G.N. Bonwetsch (Leipzig, 1897), J. Ziegler n’a pu utiliser la 2^{de} édition préparée par M. Richard: *Hippolyt, Kommentar zu Daniel*, GCS N.F. 7 (Berlin, 2000). Voir *Septuaginta ... XVI/2: Susanna, Daniel, Bel et draco* (1999), 125-7. Les autres commentaires utilisés, en plus de celui de Théodore de Cyr, sont ceux mis sous le nom de Chrysostome ou de Polychronius d’Apamée.

2. Quel texte de référence choisir en cas de textes alternatifs dans l'édition d'A. Rahlfs?

C'est la seconde question qui se pose. Précisons à cet égard que l'édition Rahlfs de 1935 n'a subi, en dehors des accents, que 2 modifications textuelles dans l'édition révisée par R. Hanhart en 2006, encore peu répandue: en Is 5,17 ἀπειλημμένων devient ἀπηλειμμένων et en Is 53,2 ἀνηγγείλαμεν devient (par conjecture) ἀνέτειλε μέν.

Le vrai problème est le suivant: l'édition Rahlfs offre parfois deux textes concurrents, pour les livres de *Josué*, des *Juges*, de *Tobit* et de *Daniel*. Le choix d'un seul texte de référence n'est pas obligé, mais les futurs analystes de Biblindex préféreront sans doute avoir une orientation.

A. Rahlfs a édité le livre de *Josué* en 2 colonnes, B (*Vaticanus*) à gauche, A (*Alexandrinus*) à droite, pour 2 passages:

- Jg 15, 21-62
- Jg 18, 22 – 19, 45

Ces passages sont en somme des listes de toponymes. Dans l'apparat critique de l'édition d'A.E. Brooke et de N. McLean (Cambridge, 1917), fondée sur B, on ne sera donc pas surpris de ne trouver, du moins à première vue, que l'*Onomasticon* d'Eusèbe de Césarée (abrégé 'On'), lequel a souvent des leçons différentes de B et de A et comporte, de surcroît, de nombreuses variantes (d'où les différences entre 'On-ed' et 'On-cod', à savoir l'édition et un ou des manuscrits).

J. Moatti-Fine, qui a publié *Josué* dans la Bible d'Alexandrie (vol. 6) en 1996, conformément aux principes de la collection, a traduit B, pas A.

La proposition est donc que le texte de référence soit le seul *Vaticanus*, à savoir la colonne de gauche dans l'édition Rahlfs.

Deux textes alternatifs sont publiés par Rahlfs pour l'ensemble du livre des *Juges*, A en haut et B en bas. B, isolé par rapport aux autres témoins et plus proche de l'hébreu (d'après une recension du 1^{er} siècle ap. J.-C.), appartient davantage à la révision *kaigé*; A en tant que tel témoigne de la recension origénienne, mais ce que Rahlfs édite sous le sigle A est en fait un texte éclectique, à savoir l'*Alexandrinus* mâtiné de texte antiochen et de recension hexaplaire!

P. Harlé et Th. Roqueplo, auteurs du volume 7 de la *Bible d'Alexandrie* paru en 1999, ont traduit les deux textes en regard, A à gauche, B à droite.

Dans l'Antiquité grecque, les 3 auteurs principaux citant les *Juges* sont:

- Flavius Josèphe, *Antiquités juives* V, 120-137, témoin d'un texte peut-être antiochen;
- Origène et ses 9 homélies transmises dans la version de Rufin et commentant une sorte d'*'Alexandrinus* qui n'aurait pas été retouché par la recension hexaplaire' (*La Bible d'Alexandrie* 7, p. 46);

- Théodore de Cyr enfin, dans ses 28 *Questions*, est l'un des représentants du texte antiochien.

Dans ces conditions, pour éviter d'avoir à noter trop de différences par rapport au texte, isolé, de B, il est proposé que le texte de référence soit le texte A en haut de l'édition Rahlfs, surtout si celui-ci tient compte du texte antiochien.

Deux textes alternatifs sont publiés par Rahlfs pour l'ensemble du livre de *Tobit*, BA en haut et S (*Sinaiticus*) en bas; cela correspond respectivement à G^I en haut et à G^{II} en bas de l'édition de R. Hanhart (Göttingen, 1983). B et A s'accordent avec presque tous les autres manuscrits grecs, S avec la Vieille Latine.

Au vu de la représentativité du texte de BA, il est proposé de le retenir. Les auteurs qui citeront un texte proche de S, en effet, seront en majorité latins: leur texte sera comparé non à la Septante, mais à la Vulgate.

Dans le cas, déjà évoqué, du livre de *Daniel* et de ses suppléments, deux textes alternatifs sont publiés par Rahlfs, la Septante en haut et Θ (Théodotion) en bas. Comme on l'a dit, l'édition de J. Ziegler (Göttingen, 1939) a été refaite en 1999 par O. Munnich pour la Septante (pages de gauche) d'après le *Papyrus 967* et par D. Fränkel pour Théodotion (pages de droite). Les Pères citant la Septante de *Daniel* sont peu nombreux,⁵ tant Théodotion s'est imposé. Il paraît donc raisonnable de retenir le texte de Théodotion.

En tout état de cause, l'analyste pourra toujours, au besoin, choisir son texte de référence, puisque les textes alternatifs sont inclus dans Biblindex. Dans ces conditions, et dans le meilleur des cas, Biblindex sera susceptible, à son tour, d'aider à faire une nouvelle édition de 'la' Septante...

⁵ *Septuaginta ... XVI/2: Susanna, Daniel, Bel et draco* (1999), 93-100, 115-7.

STUDIA PATRISTICA
PAPERS PRESENTED AT THE SIXTEENTH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON PATRISTIC STUDIES
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