Article

Self-Portrait of a Bible: The Ezra Image of Codex Amiatinus

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Abstract: Dating from the early 8th century and created in Anglo-Saxon Northumbria, Codex Amiatinus is the oldest intact single-volume Bible in any language. Within its extensive prefatory material is an image of Ezra, the scribe who according to legend rewrote the whole of the Old Testament, while behind him stands a large open book cupboard in which nine volumes of the scriptures are displayed. In this paper, I will argue that this image depicts a tension between two versions of the Old Testament that the compilers of the codex have had to resolve. In the image, this Bible represents itself as the product of the decisions that have gone into its making.

Keywords: Bible; canon; Ezra; Codex Amiatinus; Old Testament; pandect; paratext; scripture

1. Introduction

The Christian Bible is a varied collection of texts, divided into an Old Testament and a New, but it is also a physical object. The physical or material objects called "Bibles" vary in appearance, but what they have in common is that they incorporate all 70 or so Christian scriptural texts between the covers of a single volume. The production of such comprehensive volumes or "pandects" may be traced back to the second half of the 4th century (Parker 2010, pp. 16–17), but the oldest pandect to have survived in complete form is the early 8th century Latin Bible known as Codex Amiatinus, named after Mount Amiata in Tuscany, the site of the monastery where this work was housed for many centuries before it was moved to its present location in the Laurentian Library in Florence (Houghton 2016, pp. 128–29). Yet the book itself was created not in Italy but in a monastery in Northumbria, as is clear from two contemporary accounts—one from the pen of the Venerable Bede, the great historian of the early Anglo-Saxon church, the other anonymous (Giles 1843a, pp. 423, 430; 1843b, p. 386; White [1890] 2006, pp. 2–15; Chazelle 2019, pp. 1–7).[1]

The double monastery of Wearmouth–Jarrow was founded by Benedict Biscop in the late 7th century and named in honour of St Peter and St Paul. Benedict wanted his monastic churches and libraries to be equipped to the highest possible standard. The books, artwork, and vestments he required could not be found in Britain, so Benedict made the arduous trip to Rome no less than five times to acquire the expensive prestige items he needed for his monastery. After Benedict's death, Bede reports that his successor Ceolfrith doubled the size of the monastic library, and that among the books he added was a pandect containing the old, pre-Jerome version of the Old Testament in Latin, together with the New Testament. At some point it must have occurred to Ceolfrith and his colleagues that they too had the resources to produce a high-quality pandect—resources that would have included the cattle or sheep to provide skins for the massive quantities of parchment required. Indeed, Ceolfrith eventually produced not just one but three pandects, one each for the libraries at Wearmouth and at Jarrow and one that he intended to take to Rome as a gift for the pope. The great book did eventually reach Italy, although the elderly and ailing Ceolfrith died en route.

The Northumbrian scribes and artists included copious preliminary material within the book that came to be known as Codex Amiatinus, and much of this material serves to explain and justify its structure and contents (White [1890] 2006, pp. 15–36; Farr 2019, pp. 63–76; Chazelle 2019, pp. 311–72). An ornate Table of Contents is inscribed in gold

on purple-stained parchment (page 3). Decorative diagrams attempt to negotiate the differences between versions of the scriptural contents provided by the Septuagint and Augustine on the one hand, and Jerome on the other (pages 6–8). In the midst of this textual material is set a portrait of Ezra the scribe (page 5r; Chazelle 2019, pp. 320–36, 402–12)—an Old Testament figure traditionally associated with the copying of the Hebrew scriptural texts. On closer inspection, this image confirms the impression created by the diagrams—that the production of a single all-encompassing volume of the scriptures is anything but straightforward. The problem is that there are two incompatible versions of the Hebrew scriptures from which to choose. On the one hand there is the Septuagint, the pre-Christian Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures that became the "Old Testament" for most early Christians (Hengel 2002; Dines 2004) and from which Old Latin translations were derived. On the other hand, there is Jerome's translation directly from Hebrew into Latin—accompanied by prefaces in which Jerome polemicises against critics (including Augustine) who question the need for a radical new translation that appears to undermine and supersede the old one. Anxieties and tensions around this issue are reflected in the Ezra image, where the scribe works on his own manuscript against the backdrop of an open book cupboard containing a complete set of the Christian scriptures in nine volumes.[2]

In the background of the present discussion of this single image is a range of methodological issues arising from the disciplinary practice known as "biblical studies". This discipline has conventionally focused on the set of texts assumed to comprise a singular "Bible", while assigning hermeneutical priority to their historical circumstances of origin. As a result, the intricate processes of reception and transmission—including ideological, codicological, and paratextual aspects—have until recently been downplayed or ignored, on the tacit assumptions that the transmitted texts are essentially independent of their media of transmission and that their formation into "the Bible" is somehow self-evident. Recent scholarship has rightly criticised this "invisibility of manuscripts" (Lied 2021, pp. 1–32) and highlighted the materiality of early Christian textual cultures (Hurtado 2006; Lundhaug and Jenott 2017; Nongbri 2018). Underlying the present study is a related concern to investigate the transformation of plural scriptures into the singular Book. As we shall see, the Ezra portrait of Codex Amiatinus discloses the fact that a "Bible" is the product of a range of contingent editorial decisions.

2. The Scribe

Ezra the scribe is presented in the act of writing, the stylus poised in his right hand above a blank recto page while his left hand supports the completed section of the substantial codex on which he is working (Bruce-Mitford 1967, pp. 11–14). Seated on a cushioned bench with his feet resting on a footstool, Ezra bends over his work, concentrating intently. The jewelled breastplate and the golden tiara securing the turban identify him as high priest as well as scribe; the artist or his source has drawn selectively from the instructions for the high priestly garments recorded in the Book of Exodus, with the inscription on the tiara—"Holy to the Lord"—represented by the halo (Exod 28.36–39). Yet, the emphasis lies on Ezra as scribe rather than as high priest, and the reason for his depiction in this role is stated in the hexameter couplet placed above the heavily framed image: "*Codicibus sacris hostili clade perustis/Esdra Dō feruens hoc reparauit opus*" ("When the sacred books had been burnt in the devastation caused by the enemy, Ezra fervent for the Lord restored this work").

The origin of this tradition is to be found in 4 Ezra (2 Esdras) 14, where Ezra prays to be allowed to restore the scriptures so that the world may not be left in total darkness after his departure (Stone 1990, pp. 425–42). Ezra is told to assemble writing tablets and scribes, and, after consuming a fiery liquid, he dictates the books of scripture together with seventy books intended only for the wise, over a period of 40 days.[3] In the early Christian reception of this tradition, the scribes and the 70 additional books drop out as attention is focused on the divine inspiration that enables Ezra to restore lost books that had themselves been

divinely inspired. In a striking parallel to the Amiatinus couplet, Clement of Alexandria states that,

> After the scriptures had been destroyed at the time of the captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, Esdras the Levite, the priest, being inspired at the time of Artaxerxes the Persian, prophetically renewed the ancient scriptures.[4]

A variant form of this tradition is found in Eusebius, who abandons the appeal to miraculous divine inspiration but credits Ezra with an important scribal innovation: Ezra is "the sacred scribe of the Hebrews, who is said to have memorised the whole of Holy Scripture and who transmitted it to the Jews in the new Hebrew script . . . ".[5] For Jerome too, "it is clear that Esdras, the scribe and teacher of the law . . . devised other letters which we now use".[6] As the scribe who rescues the whole of Jewish scripture from oblivion, Ezra/Esdras is as appropriately placed at the start of the Old Testament as an evangelist portrait is at the start of a gospel. As the inventor of the writing system still in use in Hebrew manuscripts, Ezra is especially relevant in a Latin manuscript that follows Jerome's translations from the Hebrew Bible rather than the Septuagint. The random characters on the completed page in the Amiatinus Ezra image are probably intended to represent Hebrew lettering.

3. The Nine Codices

Behind the figure of Ezra the scribe, and towering over him, stands an open book cupboard or *armarium* within which nine codices with red-patterned covers are displayed on five shelves. The spines are facing outwards and these indicate the content of the respective books in gold lettering—or rather, they once did so although the lettering has in most cases almost disappeared (White [1890] 2006, p. 19). On the spine of the left-hand volume on the top shelf, the letters OCT are still legible, indicating that this book contains the Octateuch, the eight books from Genesis through to Ruth. On the fourth shelf down, the Byzantine cross on the cover and the still legible letter E and Roman numeral IIII on the spine identify this as a gospel codex, while in the smaller book to its right, EPIST[ULAE] indicates a collection of apostolic letters. The nine volumes must therefore represent Christian scripture in its entirety, a Bible in nine volumes, with the Old Testament contained in six and the New Testament in three.

This arrangement of the contents of scripture is modelled on the "nine codices" referred to by Cassiodorus in book one of his *Institutes of Divine and Secular Learning*, dating from the mid-sixth century.[7] After achieving high office in the Gothic court in Ravenna, Cassiodorus established a monastery known as the Vivarium on his family estates at Skylletium (Squillace) in southern Italy (Halporn 2004, pp. 13–15). The monastery was celebrated for its fish ponds but above all for its library of both Christian and secular literature, and the two books of the *Institutes* contain an extensively annotated library catalogue that is also intended as a study programme for the monks of the Vivarium and a set of guidelines for continuing scribal activity. At the heart of this library are the scriptures in a nine-codex format, each of which occupies its own bookcase, where it is accompanied by commentaries, homilies, or other material relevant to the scriptural texts in question. Cassiodorus also mentions that he has supplied each scriptural text with chapter headings (*capitula*); where he has not found existing sets, he has supplied his own.[8] He also claims to have personally corrected the nine codices as friends read to him from older and supposedly better manuscripts.[9] Textual criticism is thus a further strand in Cassiodorus's ambitious project of scriptural scholarship.

Cassiodorus's nine volume Bible or proto-Bible is evidently the inspiration for the Amiatinus book cupboard image and consists of (1) the Octateuch; (2) the four books of Kingdoms together with 1 and 2 Paralipomenon (Chronicles); (3) the Psalter; (4) the books of Solomon (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and Wisdom) together with Ecclesiasticus; (5) the prophets (in the order Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Minor Prophets); (6) the Hagiographa (Job, Tobit, Esther, Judith, Esdras, and 1 and 2 Maccabees); (7) the four

gospels; (8) the apostolic letters (21 in all: 13 by Paul, Hebrews, and the seven Catholic Epistles); and (9) Acts and Revelation. The contents of this multi-volume Bible correspond exactly to Augustine's list of canonical scriptures in book two of his *de Doctrina Christiana*, as Cassiodorus notes in the analysis of three different versions of holy scripture—Jerome's, Augustine's, and the Septuagint—that follows the account of the nine codices and their associated commentaries.[10] Augustine's scriptural canon contains 71 books (44 in the Old Testament, 27 in the New), and so too do Cassiodorus's nine codices (O'Loughlin 2014).

4. The Cupboard

There is one significant difference between the Amiatinus image of the nine codices and Cassiodorus's account. In Cassiodorus's monastic library, the nine scriptural codices are grouped not with one another but with volumes of patristic commentary so that the distinction between scripture and commentary becomes blurred: library users are encouraged to place themselves alongside the fathers as readers of scripture, viewing themselves as members of a reading community that takes the form of a school in which they are pupils and the fathers are their teachers. Cassiodorus's nine codices are not quite the self-sufficient artefact contained within the Amiatinus book cupboard, which opens its doors to invite the reader to engage directly with the co-ordinated scriptural texts. As it does, so it reveals on its inner doors four inset rectangles on the right side that contains four books, while five are to be assumed on the left side that contains five books. This item of furniture is designed to accommodate nine codices and no more. It contains the nine volume Bible and in a certain sense it *is* the Bible, understood now as a singular object with nine primary components.

The representation of the doors and the books indicates that we are viewing the book cupboard from above, giving us a clear view of the books' front covers as well as their spines. At the top of the bookcase, however, the perspective changes. Here, a triangular structure rests on a rectangular platform, which, as it recedes towards the rear wall of Ezra's scriptorium, is viewed no longer from above but from below. Now, the bookcase towers above not only Ezra the scribe but also ourselves as its viewers. The question is what this shift of perspective signifies. The front of the pediment features a pair of birds facing each other on either side of a rectangular opening that seems to extend through to the wall behind. Below the birds, on the front edge of the platform, a pair of cows are represented. The paired birds and cattle and the window indicate that the bookcase is also Noah's Ark, and this is confirmed by a number of further details. The bookcase towers above us because the ark was 30 cubits high.

Cassiodorus calls a bookcase an *armorium*, but the term *arca* might also have been used. An *arca* is any kind of wooden box or case that might be used to hold books, or clothes, or money, or a corpse. Hebrew, Greek, and Latin terminology agrees: Noah's Ark is a wooden box, as is the Ark of the Covenant. All versions agree that Noah's Ark included not only a door but also a window above it, from which Noah released the raven and the dove as the flood waters began to recede (Gen 8.6, cf. 6.16), and this window is no doubt the source of the rectangular opening in the pediment of the Amiatinus bookcase. The pediment is also a pitched roof, a feature of Noah's Ark that stems from the Septuagint translator's difficulty with the divine instruction that Noah is to "make a *ṣōhar* for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above" (Gen 6.16). The Septuagint takes the unknown term *ṣōhar* as a participle and renders it as ἐπισυνάγων: Noah is to make a "gathering" for the ark, finished to a cubit above, that is, the ark is to narrow from its large rectangular base to a summit just one cubit wide, such as an elongated pyramid, so at least the Septuagintal text is understood by Philo, Clement, and Origen.[11] Together with the paired birds and cattle and the window, the narrowing of the upper part of the bookcase towards its summit establishes its ark-like character.

Additionally Septuagintal are the five shelves on which the books are displayed. In the Hebrew text Noah is to make the ark "with lower, second and third" (Gen 6.16), that is, lower, second, and third stories or decks. In the Septuagint, Noah is to make it "with

two stories below and with three stories", thus with five stories in all. To maintain the ark symbolism, the nine codices are therefore displayed on five shelves, two to a shelf with one left over rather than on three shelves with three to a shelf—a more logical arrangement that would have reflected the distinction between Cassiodorus's six Old Testament codices and his three New Testament ones. Origen reports a tradition that the two lower decks were reserved for excrement and for food and that the three upper ones were occupied by wild animals, domesticated animals, and humans respectively.[12] In place of any such hierarchy, the Amiatinus image presents the sequence of nine codices from top to bottom, Genesis and the rest of the Octateuch in Cassiodorus's codex one, and Acts and Revelation as codex nine. The codices are held within a container constructed mainly from rectangular panels of wood, and this may echo the Septuagint's rendering of the Hebrew reference to *gopher* wood as "four-cornered" planks or panels: the ark is to be made ἐκ ξύλων τετραγώνων (Gen 6.14). In early Christian symbolism, wood is always also the wood of the cross, a wooden object with four extremities if not four corners. The book cupboard and its contents allude to this symbolism in the two crosses on its top, one on its base, and one on the front cover of the gospel book on the second shelf. Elsewhere, diamond shapes enclose cross-like decorative patterns on the covers of the books and link with the triangle of the pediment.

The Amiatinus bookcase is therefore also Noah's Ark, an association that takes its starting point in the ordinary meaning of the term *arca* and its Greek and Hebrew equivalents. A likely influence is the second of Origen's homilies on Genesis, where a literal interpretation of the construction of the ark is followed by an allegorical or homiletical interpretation of each detail in turn: the squared planks, the two lower decks and the three upper decks, the numbers specifying the ark's dimensions, and so on. As he nears the conclusion of his homily, Origen casts his hearers in the role of the scriptural Noah and exhorts them to build an ark of salvation in their own hearts by turning from the evils of the world to the divine word and thus creating a library within:

> If then you build an ark, if you gather a library, gather it from the words of the prophets and apostles or in the words of those who have followed them in the right lines of faith. You shall make it with two decks and with three decks: learn from these historical narratives, and from them recognise the great mystery that is fulfilled in Christ and in the Church.[13]

Read in the light of Origen's homily, the Amiatinus bookcase represents the Bible in both its external physical form and its internalisation within the human heart. The ark of salvation is now to be constructed within ourselves through meditation on the contents of the nine codices.

5. The Two Old Testaments

The Amiatinus Ezra image serves as a frontispiece to a single-volume Bible, which is represented here in its complete form by way of the nine codices in the bookcase and in the act of inscription through the figure of Ezra the scribe. In its context, the image is therefore doubly self-referential: not one but two Bibles are represented here in the bookcase and the Ezra portrait, and their relationship to each other is unclear. The volume that Ezra is inscribing is not destined for the bookcase, which is already full, for it is one of the 22 or 24 volumes of the Hebrew Old Testament that must now be rewritten after the destruction of the older copies in the Fall of Jerusalem. Another smaller volume in the series lies open on the floor next to Ezra's footstool. The bookcase is ambiguously related to Ezra's scriptorium, seeming to hover above the level of the floor and at an indeterminate angle to it. The first six of the nine codices it contains represent a Latin version of the Septuagint; Cassiodorus claims to have corrected them on the basis not of the Hebrew but of older manuscripts of the same doubly translated text, transferred from Hebrew to Greek and then from Greek to Latin.[14] The question is how far these two Bibles—the one that Ezra is writing and Cassiodorus's, represented by the bookcase—are the same. The answer is that they are very significantly different. Their differences go far beyond the semantic accommodations required from both languages in any act of translation, and they threaten

to undermine any attempt to place the entire contents of Christian scripture within a single volume. How is a singular Bible possible if there are two Old Testaments, one that Jewish and Christian tradition traces back to the miraculous agreement of the seventy translators, its rival the work of a single gifted translator, Jerome?

Cassiodorus notes that his nine-codex Bible corresponds to the scriptural text sanctioned by Augustine, based on the Septuagint for its Old Testament and including texts that apparently lack a Hebrew original: the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus in codex four, Tobit, Judith, and the two books of Maccabees in codex six. This Bible contains 71 books.[15] Cassiodorus also possesses an older Bible, this one in a single volume that he calls his "larger codex" (*Codex Grandior*), a 44-book Septugaintal Old Testament such as that of the nine codices.[16] The *Codex Grandior* contains just 70 books in all, owing to a 26-book New Testament that may have excluded the Letter to the Hebrews. The difference between this single-volume Bible and the more recent nine-volume one is not a major problem for Cassiodorus, who claims that the 70 scriptural books were anticipated in the 70 palm trees at the oasis of Elim where the people of Israel encamped after their exodus from Egypt (Ex 15.27); the number 71 is also seen as symbolically significant. What is more of a problem is that Jerome counts just 22 books rather than 44 in the Old Testament, in order to correspond to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet; he achieves this figure by counting paired books as single and by relegating other books to the status of apocrypha. Cassiodorus has created a Jerome-based pandect in 53 gatherings of six sheets (thus in 1272 pages), somewhat more compact because of the smaller handwriting than the *Codex Grandior*, with its 95 gatherings of four sheets (1520 pages).[17] So, Cassiodorus bequeaths to his monastery three complete Latin Bibles, one in nine codices accompanied by commentaries and claiming the authority of Augustine, a second in the form of a Jerome-based pandect, and a third in an older and still larger pandect said to represent the Septuagint (although that is also true of the first six of the nine codices). Cassiodorus causes these differences and their symbolic interpretations to be represented in the form of decorative diagrams, one for each of the three different Bibles, and he inserts these diagrams both in his *Institutes* and in the *Codex Grandior* itself.[18] New versions of these diagrams also feature in *Codex Amiatinus*, where the Septuagintal one is misattributed to Hilary and Epiphanius.[19]

The Amiatinus scribes recognise that the differences between the three versions of the Bible resolves into a difference between two: Augustine's version, which asserts the supreme ongoing authority of the Septuagint, and Jerome's version with its anti-Septuagintal appeal to the *Hebraica veritas* (Fürst 2011, pp. 336–83). The tension between the two is reflected in the Ezra portrait, in the indeterminate relationship between the nine codices in the bookcase and Ezra's reconstruction of the Hebrew text, and it is made explicit in a prologue to the whole volume, written in gold ink on a purple-stained page. The prologue concludes as follows:

> Let it not concern us that Father Augustine divided the Old and New Testaments into seventy-one books whereas the most learned Jerome included the Old and New Testaments in forty-nine sections ... For while these figures appear to diverge, the whole teaching of the fathers leads harmoniously to the instruction of the heavenly church.[20]

The Amiatinus prologue refers here to the canon list in Jerome's preface to his translation of the books of Samuel and Kings (Weber 1994, p. 364), and to the longer list in book two of Augustine's *de Doctrina Christiana* (2.8). Jerome and Augustine are agreed on a 27-book New Testament, but Jerome has an Old Testament in 22 books, whereas Augustine's includes 44. The difference is accounted for by Jerome's exclusion of six books he regards as apocrypha (the Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, Tobit, and one and two Maccabees), by his counting of five paired books as single books (Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Jeremiah—Lamentations), and by similarly regarding the 12 minor prophets as constituting a single book. The difference between Jerome's 49-book Bible and Augustine's 71-book one narrows down to just the six books retained

by Augustine that Jerome regards as apocrypha. At first sight, the table of contents that immediately follows the Amiatinus prologue appears to side with Augustine, announcing that "in this volume are contained seventy-one books of the Old and New Testament". Among the 71 books listed are the six that Jerome evicted from his Old Testament canon. Yet, the table of contents concludes with a short poem in praise not of Augustine but of Jerome:

> Jerome, most learned translator from various languages, Bethlehem celebrates you, the whole world resounds with your praises! Our own library displays your books, in which you store new treasures along with the old![21]

In this canon list that is also a table of contents, Augustine's 71 books are all present—yet Augustine has failed to establish the point that matters most to him, which is that the Old Testament in Latin should be based on the Old Testament in Greek rather than the Old Testament in Hebrew. Augustine continues to believe that by a miracle of divine inspiration the Septuagint translators' independently produced translations were found to be in exact agreement with each other (Hengel 2002, pp. 25–41); Jerome dismisses this tradition as a legendary accretion to the true, non-miraculous account of the Septuagint's origins. Where the Hebrew text differs from the Septuagint, Augustine concludes either that it has been emended and falsified by "the Jews", or that, if both texts are inspired, the Greek should still take precedence as God's way of communicating the saving truth to the world rather than confining it to the Jewish people.[22] If there are not to be two parallel Old Testaments and if the Bible is to exist as a single volume, a choice must be made between the two revered authority figures, who at this point are fundamentally opposed to each other (Fürst 1999).

In spite of its 71 books rather than 49, Amiatinus opts decisively for Jerome's *Hebraica veritas* and rejects Augustine's plea for the Septuagint. It also provides Jerome with multiple opportunities to state his case by including the prefaces to his Old Testament translations, a series that began in the early 390s with the books of Samuel and Kings and concluded with Joshua–Judges–Ruth in 404. In most cases, these highly personalised prefaces have little to say about the scriptural texts themselves but are concerned to defend Jerome's translations from critics who—like Augustine—view them as undermining the authority and integrity of the Septuagint. The effect of Jerome's prefaces is to promote his claim to ownership of the entire Old Testament (and indeed of the gospels, where Amiatinus locates his two prefaces either side of the Eusebian canon tables). Exhorting the addressee of his epistolary preface to "read my Samuel and Kings", Jerome underlines the possessive pronoun: "Mine I say, mine—for what we have learned and grasped through persistence in translating and care in correcting is our own" (Weber 1994, p. 365). This work of his exposes him "to the howling of critics who allege that I disparage the work of the Seventy Translators and produce new versions in place of the old." Jerome claims that he has no intention of disparaging the work of the 70 Translators. Nevertheless, he insists that the 70 were fallible translators not inspired prophets; they knew nothing of the coming of Christ and their translations are often ambiguous; relying on their work makes us vulnerable to the mockery of the Jews as they see how far the Christians' text diverges from the authentic Hebrew original.

6. Conclusions

More than 300 years after Jerome published his translations, the Amiatinus editors incorporate his polemical prefaces into their single-volume Bible, thereby endorsing Jerome's plea for a Latin Bible directly answerable to the Hebrew text and his opposition to those who preferred to rely on a divinely inspired Septuagint. Indeed, according to Bede, all three of the pandects created in the scriptoria of Wearmouth and Jarrow represented the *nova translatio*, even though a copy of the old and established version was available as an exemplar. For Cassiodorus, in contrast, a Jerome-based pandect served to supplement an *antiqua translatio* preserved in his *Codex Grandior* and, personally corrected by himself, in the nine codices that formed the basis of his library of scriptural commentaries. In his view,

scribes should consult Jerome's renderings at points where their Septuagint-based exemplars are unintelligible, with a view to correcting them in their own copies. Cassiodorus shows no interest in Jerome's prefaces and is concerned only with differences between Jerome and Augustine in their enumeration of the scriptural books. While the Amiatinus scribes faithfully reproduce Cassiodorus's diagrammatic presentation of those differences, their decision to replace the old version with the new in all three of their pandects may be understood as a rejection of the preference for the Septuagint that Cassiodorus shares with Augustine. Long-established ecclesial usage is no longer the key criterion in the quest for the authentic canonical scriptures; novelty need no longer be a criterion of falsehood. The scribes of Wearmouth and Jarrow honour Cassiodorus's work but they model themselves on Ezra, who, anticipating Jerome, restores and renews the lost books of Hebrew scripture.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Notes

[1]　My definition of a "pandect" as a single-volume Bible containing the Old and New Testaments is slightly simplified (Chazelle 2019, p. 6). A complete Christian Bible might be bound or rebound in more than one volume, as in the case of the four-volume Codex Alexandrinus from the 5th century (McKedrick 2003). A complete Old Testament such as the 6th/7th century Syriac Codex Ambrosianus (Lied 2021, pp. 35–49) can be regarded as a pandect.

[2]　The image may be viewed at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Codex_Amiatinus, or https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/codex-amiatinus (accessed on 7 June 2022). Images of the entire volume may be found at https://www.loc.gov/resource/gdcwdl.wdl_20150/?st=gallery (accessed on 7 June 2022).

[3]　4 Ezra 14.23–26, 37–47. In current usage, 4 Ezra refers to the text that comprises chapters 3–14 of the text also known as 2 Esdras, which encloses the earlier text within an extensive new introduction and conclusion. On early Christian and Jewish understanding of Ezra's role in restoring the scriptures, see (Wollenberg 2019).

[4]　*Strom*. 1.22.149.3 (**?**, p. 92 [Greek textB21-religions-1755943).

[5]　*Chron*. 1 (**?**, p. 12 [Latin and Greek textsB20-religions-1755943).

[6]　Prol. in Libro Regum (**?**, p. 364 [Latin textB23-religions-1755943).

[7]　*Inst*. 1, praef. 8; 1.1.1–1.9.1; 1.11.3; 1.13.2; 1.15.16 (Halporn 2004, pp. 109, 111–31, 134, 136–37, 145). Halporn wrongly takes *codices* to mean "sections" rather than "codices".

[8]　*Inst*. 1, praef. 8 (Halporn 2004, p. 109).

[9]　*Inst*. 1.14.1–15 (Halporn 2004, pp. 139–45).

[10]　*Inst*. 1.12.1–14.5 (Halporn 2004, pp. 135–39).

[11]　Philo, *Quaest. Gen.* 2.5; Clement, *Strom.* 6.11; Origen, *In Gen. hom.* 2.1.

[12]　*Hom. in Gen.* 2.1 (Baehrens 1920, pp. 24–25).

[13]　*Hom. in Gen.* 2.6 (Baehrens 1920, pp. 37–38).

[14]　*Inst*. 1, praef. 8 (Halporn 2004, p. 109).

[15]　*Inst*. 1.13.2 (Halporn 2004, pp. 136–37).

[16]　*Inst*. 1.14.1–2 (Halporn 2004, p. 137).

[17]　*Inst*. 1.12.1–4 (Halporn 2004, pp. 135–36).

[18]　*Inst*. 1.14.3 (Halporn 2004, pp. 137–38).

[19]　Images at https://www.loc.gov/resource/gdcwdl.wdl_20150/?st=gallery.

[20]　*Nec nos moveat quod Pater Augustinus in septuaginta unum libros testamentum vetus novumque divisit, doctissimus autem Hieronymus idem vetus novumque testa/mentum xlviiii sectionibus comprehendit . . . Nam licet haec calculo disparia videantur, doctrina tamen patrum ad instructionem caelestis ecclesiae concorditer universa perducunt* (3r).

[21]　*Hieronyme interpres variis doctissime linguis. Te Bethlem celebrat, te totus personat orbis. Te quoque nostra tuis promet bibliotheca libris qua nova cum priscis condis donaria gazis* (3v).

[22]　Augustine, *Epist*. 28.2; 71.3–6.

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