

THE TEXT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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Canon and text are closely related.¹ For those who believe in divine revelation mediated by authorized agents, the central questions are (1) What writings constitute the words communicated by God? and (2) Have such writings been reliably transmitted to us? Although my presentation is focused on the latter question, the former is logically prior. How one answers the first question will determine evaluation of evidence relating to the second.

I am assuming in this treatment of the text of the OT that what is authoritative as inspired Scripture is the canonical text.² Factors defining a canonical text according to Nahum Sarna, are “a fixed arrangement of content” and “the tendency to produce a standardized text.”³ M. Civil notes concerning the transmission of ancient Mesopotamian literature that “text stability and fixed sequence of tablets within a series are also the criteria by which to define a cuneiform text as standard or canonical.”⁴ Although I defer to the paper by Professor Dempster,⁵ my own study of canonization has led me to conclude that the text of the OT in arrangement, content, and stability was fixed by the time of Ben Sira or more probably, at the end of the fifth century BC by Ezra and Nehemiah. According to 2 Macc 2:13–14, Judas collected the books *as a library* after the war, following the example of Nehemiah before him. It is the history of this text that I attempt to treat in what follows.

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¹ I am grateful to the following for constructive criticism and proofing of my work: Andrew McClurg and Duane Garrett. This paper represents a development and complete revision of Peter J. Gentry, “The Septuagint and the Text of the Old Testament,” *BBR* 16 (2006) 193–218, although some examples are duplicated.

² This definition is more accurate theologically than “the autographic text of Scripture” to which the Chicago Statement on Inerrancy makes reference. It is also a realistic goal in terms of historical research.

³ Nahum M. Sarna, “The Order of the Books,” in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography: History and Literature in Honor of I. Edward Kiev* (ed. Ch. Berlin; New York: KTAV, 1971) 407–13, esp. 411 and 413, n. 15.

⁴ Miguel Civil, *Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon* 14 (1979) 168–69, as cited by William W. Hallo, “The Concept of Canonicity in Cuneiform and Biblical Literature: A Comparative Appraisal,” in *The Biblical Canon in Comparative Perspective. Scripture in Context IV* (ed. K. L. Younger, W. W. Hallo, B. F. Batto, and D. Lampeter; Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1991) 1–20, esp. 6. See also Benjamin R. Foster, “On Authorship in Akkadian literature,” *Annali dell’Istituto Orientale di Napoli* 51 (1991) 17–32.

⁵ For a longer version, see Stephen G. Dempster, “Canons on the Right and Canons on the Left: Finding a Resolution in the Canon Debate” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Institute of Biblical Research, November 24, 2007).

Discussion of the text of the OT entails the discipline of textual criticism, both an art and a science at the same time. Study in this discipline advances by knowing: (1) bookmaking and practices of scribes in the ancient Near East; (2) the surviving witnesses to the text of the OT; (3) the relative worth of the various witnesses; (4) the history of the transmission of the text; and (5) appropriate methodology in the praxis of deciding between different readings in the witnesses.

Engaging in this task is overwhelming; in my judgment no one person can begin to master all the materials, much less survey them in a brief presentation. Here I will attempt to survey recent work on book production and our list of witnesses before providing some assessment of the history of the text, the worth of the witnesses, and approaches taken to the criticism of the text.

I. BOOKMAKING AND SCRIBAL PRACTICES

A work by Emanuel Tov appeared in 2004 entitled *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert*.⁶ He discusses the identity, nature, role, and status of the scribes as well as their approaches to their *Vorlagen*. Were they mere copyists or did they, in fact, function as editors and even co-authors? He describes writing and writing materials such as leather and papyrus, scrolls and sheets, ink and implements for writing. All the technical aspects of scroll writing are catalogued and extensively detailed: the contents and lengths of all the scrolls; whether or not they had blank handling sheets at the beginning or end; dimensions of sheets; the number of columns of text per sheet; the dimensions of the margins and of the text; and how corrections and repairs were made. He discusses divisions between words, sense units, poetical units and books, and classifies and lists all editorial marks and the procedures of scribes. The different scripts used and their origins are analyzed. The special scribal characteristics of specific groups of texts are classified as well. The practices of scribes at Qumran, for example, differ from scrolls found elsewhere in the Judean Desert, so that one may speak of a Qumran scribal practice, particularly in morphology and orthography.

The countless details make reading the book tedious and soporific, but this is offset by the enormous value of the work. It is interesting that a number of rules prescribed for writing biblical scrolls in the late talmudic tractate *Massekhet Soferim* were already being followed at Qumran with little distinction between sacred and non-sacred literary texts. Yet a few distinctions are observable between biblical and nonbiblical texts, and especially so in manuscripts from the Judean Desert other than Qumran. Almost all biblical scrolls—including all proto-Masoretic texts—from sites in the Judean Desert were copied carefully and those in the paleo-Hebrew script were copied more carefully than those in the square script. Apart from the amulets from Ketef

⁶ Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (STDJ 54; Leiden: Brill, 2004).

Hinnom bearing the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6 inscribed on silver and dating to the seventh to sixth century BC, our earliest witnesses to the text are after 300 BC.

1. *Texts from the Judaeen desert.* Early attestation to the text changed considerably in the twentieth century with the discovery of what are commonly called the DSS. Texts were found at the following sites, listed from north to south: Wadi Daliyeh (beyond the Judaeen Desert, strictly speaking), Ketef Jericho, Khirbet Qumran and caves related to Qumran, Khirbet Mird, Wadi Murabba'at, Wadi Sdeir (= Nahal David), Nahal Hever, Nahal Mishmar, Nahal Se'elim, and Masada.⁷ The discovery entails fragments of some 930 texts, of which approximately 200 are biblical books, all dated generally between 250 BC and AD 130. Some texts were written in Greek and Aramaic, although the majority are in Hebrew. Most Hebrew texts are in the square script, although approximately 12 texts are in the paleo-Hebrew script, mostly scrolls of the Torah. The official publication is in the Oxford Series *Discoveries in the Judaeen Desert*. Commencing publication in 1955, thirty-nine of the 39 or 40 projected volumes have now appeared—thirty-two since 1990 and even twelve since 2000. We can say with certainty, then, that scholars have only just begun to adequately assess the textual value of these witnesses.

2. *Cairo Genizah fragments.* Another cache of important witnesses was discovered at the end of the nineteenth century in the Genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Old Cairo, now preserved in the Taylor-Schechter Collection in the Cambridge University Library. Proper protocol for old, worn-out scrolls requires that they be stored away. The place of storage is called a *genizah*, from Hebrew *ganaz*, “to store away.” Of some 200,000 documents, 24,700 fragments are biblical texts. Catalogues containing complete description of these texts appeared in four volumes by M. C. Davis and B. Outhwaite.⁸ Volume 1 of the Catalogues was published in 1978 and the last two only in 2003. These are important proto-Masoretic texts, and readings from these manuscripts have been cited in the apparatus of our printed Hebrew Bibles since BHK3, but in a non-systematic way. They have, as yet, not been collated fully, nor is their witness being included systematically in the new BHQ for texts dated after 1000. Here, too, can be mentioned a catalogue of papyrus texts from Egypt by Sirat listing five manuscripts from the third to seventh centuries:⁹

⁷ Ibid. 3.

⁸ M. C. Davis, *Hebrew Bible Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections. Volume 1. Taylor-Schechter Old Series and other Genizah Collections in the Cambridge University Library* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 1978); idem, *Hebrew Bible Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections*, vol. 2: *Taylor-Schechter New Series and Westminster College Collection* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 1980); M. C. Davis and Ben Outhwaite, *Hebrew Bible Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections*, vol. 3: *Taylor-Schechter Additional Series 1-31* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 2003); idem, *Hebrew Bible Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections*, vol. 4: *Taylor-Schechter Additional Series 32-255 with addenda to previous volumes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 2003).

⁹ Colette Sirat, *Les Papyrus en Caractères Hébraïques Trouvés en Égypte* (Paris: CNRS, 1985).

Hebrew Manuscripts from III–VII Centuries AD

Exodus	Oxford Bodleian Lib. Ms. Heb. D.89
Numbers	Berlin, Staatsliche Museum, P 10598
Genesis	Cambridge T-S NS 3.21 and 4.3
Kings	Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, Pap. 47–48
Job	Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, Ant. Pap. 49–50

None of these are mentioned by Tov in the first printing of his handbook *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, although the publication by Sirat preceded his own by several years.¹⁰ Apparently their witness was overshadowed by that of the DSS. Moreover, a catalogue by M. Dukan of codices in Hebrew from the Orient and Sephardic Region before 1280 lists 74 codices.¹¹ In addition, she dates 158 of the fragments from the Cairo Genizah before this time. These witnesses cast enormous light on the early history of the MT. Description of the manuscripts covers codicology as well as content.

3. Masoretic tradition. The history of the text from AD 600–900 correlates with different groups of Masoretes, Jewish tradents who devised systems of signs to represent vowels and accents and committed the reading tradition handed down orally before that time to writing.¹² At first, only a few vowels were shown. Later, full vocalization was shown under the influence of Syriac and Arabic literature.

A large-scale emigration of scholars to Babylon occurred in the second century AD as Romans and Christians gained control. Later, the conquest of Palestine by Islam in AD 638 made possible a return to Palestine of Jewish scholars and revival of textual work in Tiberias (Galilee). As a result, different systems of pointing arose:

Tiberian	Sublinear
Palestinian	Supralinear
Babylonian	Supralinear
“Expanded” Tiberian	Codex Reuchlin (AD 1105)

There are two famous families of Tiberian Masoretes: (1) ben Asher; and (2) ben Naphtali. The text of the ben Asher family was universally accepted as the most faithful preservation of the text and is believed to be represented by such famous codices as Jerusalem, Makhon Ben-Zvi le-Heqer

¹⁰ Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Mineapolis: Fortress, 1992). Translation by the author of *Biqqoret Nusah ha-Miqra’—Pirqê Mabo’* (Biblical Encyclopaedia Library IV; Mosad Bialik: Jerusalem, 1989).

¹¹ Michèle Dukan, *La Bible Hébraïque: Les codices copiés en Orient et dans la zone séfarade avant 1280* (Bibliologia 22; Turnhout: Brepols, 2006).

¹² On the oral reading tradition preserved by the Masoretes, see Bruce K. Waltke and Michael P. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990) 20–30 and James Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968) 188–222.

Qehillot Yisra'el ba-Mizrah MS No 1 (= Aleppo Codex, c. AD 930) and MS EBP. I B 19a in the Firkowitsch Collection of the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad Codex, AD 1008).

4. *Medieval manuscripts.* Other recent catalogues of Masoretic manuscripts deserve brief mention. Malachi Beit-Arié, Colette Sirat and Mordechai Glatzer have edited several magnificent volumes entitled *Codices hebraicis litteris exarati quo tempore scripti fuerint exhibentes*. Dated codices are listed up to AD 1020 in Volume 1, 1021–1079 in Volume 2, and 1085–1140 in Volume 3. The number of manuscripts containing biblical text in these three volumes is 11, 5, and 3, respectively, for a total of 19.

According to Israel Yeivin, more than 3,000 Hebrew manuscripts are known after 1100.¹³ These witnesses have not been consulted systematically since B. Kennicott (1776–1780)¹⁴ and G. B. de Rossi (1784–1788).¹⁵ Kennicott notes variants from more than six hundred manuscripts and fifty-two editions and de Rossi from 1,475 manuscripts and editions.¹⁶

Recently, Francisco Javier del Barco del Barco along with M.^a Teresa Ortega Monasterio, M.^a Josefa de Azcárraga Severt, and Luis Vegas Montaner have published three volumes describing medieval Hebrew manuscripts in the community of Madrid.¹⁷ The number of manuscripts comprising complete or incomplete Bibles in these three volumes is 18, 23, and 3, respectively, for a total of 44. They have now begun a new catalogue of Hebrew manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The value of these medieval witnesses will be noted shortly.

5. *Ancient versions of the OT text.*

a. *Samaritan Pentateuch.* After John Hyrcanus attacked Shechem in 128 BC, the breach between Samaritans and Jews was final. Only the Pentateuch is recognized among the Samaritans. The Samaritan Pentateuch, therefore, is a recension of the Hebrew text of the Torah transmitted among the Samaritans in isolation from the Jews from the second century BC onwards. It was later translated into Aramaic (whence the Samaritan Targum) and Arabic, and probably also Greek (τὸ Σαμαρειτικόν).

¹³ Israel Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah* (trans. and ed. E. J. Revell; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1980) 29.

¹⁴ Benjamin Kennicott, *Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum cum variis lectionibus* (2 vols.; Oxford, 1776–1780).

¹⁵ Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi, *Variae Lectiones Veteris Testamenti, ex immensa MMS. Editorumq. Codicum Congerie haustae et ad Samar. Textum, ad vetustiss. versiones, ad accuratiorae sacrae criticae fontes ac leges examinatae opera ac studio Johannis Bern. de Rossi* (4 vols.; Parma: Regius 1784–1788; repr. with 1798 Supplement, 5 vols. in 2, Amsterdam: Philo, 1969–1970).

¹⁶ See E. Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament* (2d ed.; trans. Erroll F. Rhodes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) 40.

¹⁷ Francisco Javier del Barco del Barco et al., *Catálogo de Manuscritos Hebreos de la Comunidad de Madrid* (3 vols.; Madrid: C.S.I.C., 2003–2006). See also now idem, *Catálogo de Manuscritos Hebreos de la Biblioteca de Montserrat* (Barcelona: C.S.I.C., 2008), which lists 36 biblical manuscripts.

The proto-Samaritan text, which was adapted to suit the theology of the Samaritans, represents by comparison to what is later preserved in the Masoretic tradition a popular form of the text. It is characterized by replacing archaic lexemes, morphology, and syntax in Hebrew with those of a later linguistic tradition. Exegetical and historical difficulties have been removed and parallels are harmonized. Thus a comparison between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the later MT shows that many differences between the two represent a modernizing of the former in terms of grammar and spelling.¹⁸ What became the proto-SP is a modernization and popularization of the proto-MT. The Samaritan Pentateuch is thus a strong witness to the antiquity and purity of the tradition in the MT, since the proto-MT had to be modernized and popularized in the second century BC so that it could be understood.

b. *Old Greek and later Greek versions.* Old Greek or Septuagint refers to a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. The Pentateuch was translated early in the time of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–240 BC) in Alexandria, Egypt. The evidence of the Prologue to Ben Sira suggests that almost all the remaining books were translated by 130 BC. The name *septuaginta*, or “the Seventy,” is adapted from propaganda that the Torah was translated by seventy-two scholars from Palestine (*Aristeas*).

Individual books vary in character and quality of translation and exhibit a full spectrum from extreme formal correspondence and literal translation to dynamic and functional translation and even paraphrase.¹⁹ Sometimes the translation is an abbreviation of the source text and at other times there are additions, as for example in Daniel and Esther. Differences between the Septuagint and the later MT will be discussed shortly, but the Septuagint is important because it witnesses to a Hebrew *Vorlage* older than our other witnesses, including the DSS.

To complicate matters, long before all the books had been translated, revisions were already being made of existing translations. The process of making systematic, thoroughgoing revisions (called recensions) continued from possibly 200 BC through AD 200. We know of the so-called *καίγε* tradition from the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever and the later Jewish revisions of Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus. The precise line of demarcation between original Greek translations and later revisers in this corpus of texts has, in fact, not yet been clearly established.²⁰ Scholars are still working to prepare editions of these translations based upon careful study of all available evidence in Greek manuscripts, citations by Church Fathers, and early daughter translations.

¹⁸ For this characterization, see Bruce K. Waltke, “Samaritan Pentateuch,” in *ABD* 5:932–40. See also Stefan Schorch, “The Septuagint and the Vocalization of the Hebrew Text of the Torah,” in *XII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Leiden, 2004* (ed. Melvin K. H. Peters; SCS 54; Atlanta: SBL, 2006) 41–54.

¹⁹ Cf. Bruce K. Waltke, “The Reliability of the Old Testament Text,” in *NIDOTTE* 1:51–67.

²⁰ See Peter J. Gentry, “Old Greek And Later Revisors: Can We Always Distinguish Them?” in *Scripture in Transition: Essays on Septuagint, Hebrew Bible, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of Raija Sollamo* (ed. Anssi Voitila and Jutta Jokiranta; JSJSup 126; Leiden: Brill, 2008) 301–27.

c. *Latin versions.* Two Latin versions witness to the OT text. One, the Old Latin, originated in Italy and North Africa c. AD 150. It is based on the Septuagint and is not translated directly from the Hebrew. Possibly it represents a plurality of versions. No complete manuscript survives. Scholars still seek to provide an adequate explanation for agreements with MT against the LXX, although most derive through Hebraizing recensions of the Old Greek.²¹

The other, the Latin Vulgate, is a translation made by Jerome between AD 391 and 405 and commissioned by Pope Damasus I. Jerome began learning Hebrew during a stay in the desert of Chalchis AD 375–377 and devoted further study during his stay in Rome in AD 382–385.²² He continued to consult Jewish teachers when he lived in Bethlehem and worked on the Vulgate.²³ The Latin Vulgate is translated directly from the Hebrew with some influence from the Septuagint and the Jewish revisers, especially Symmachus. In general, it is a clear witness to the proto-MT of that time.

d. *Syriac Peshitta.* Peshitta means “simple [translation]” and is the name given the standard translation of the Bible into Syriac, a dialect of Aramaic. The early history of the translation is unknown. It probably originated in Edessa and was almost certainly completed by the third century AD since it is cited by fourth-century writers.²⁴

Translation technique varies from book to book, from literal to paraphrastic. The Hebrew *Vorlage* of the Peshitta is close to the proto-MT. It offers less variants than the Septuagint, but more than the Targums or Vulgate. Agreements between the Peshitta and Septuagint or Peshitta and Targums can be explained for the most part by polygenesis and common access to the interpretive traditions of Second Temple Judaism. In certain books (Genesis, Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Twelve, Psalms, Proverbs, Song, Qoheleth, Ruth and Daniel), clear cases of sporadic and non-systematic dependence on the Septuagint can be found.²⁵

²¹ See N. Fernández Marcos, *Scribes and Translators: Septuagint & Old Latin in the Books of Kings* (VTSup 54; Leiden: Brill 1994); idem, “The Old Latin of Chronicles between the Greek and the Hebrew,” in *IX Congress of the IOSCS, Cambridge 1995* (SCS 45; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997) 123–36; and M. Kraus, “Hebraisms of the Old Latin Version of the Bible,” *VT* 53 (2003) 487–513.

²² See especially Michael Graves, *Jerome's Hebrew Philology: A Study Based on his Commentary on Jeremiah* (VCSup 30; Leiden: Brill, 2007). Note also Adam Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesis* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997) 41.

²³ Jerome, *Ep.* 84.3.

²⁴ See Michael P. Weitzman, *The Syriac Version of the Old Testament: An Introduction* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 56; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 2. Cf. Sebastian Brock, *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition* (2d rev. ed.; Gorgias Press Handbooks; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2006) 23.

²⁵ See Michael P. Weitzman, “Peshitta, Septuagint and Targum,” in *VI Symposium Syriacum 1992: University of Cambridge, Faculty of Divinity, 30 August–2 September, 1992* (ed. René Lavenant; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1994) 51–84; and idem, *The Syriac Version of the Old Testament: An Introduction* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 56; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

e. *Aramaic Targums*. The word *targûm* means “translation.” It was customary in Talmudic times (third-fourth century AD) to translate biblical readings in synagogue simultaneously from Hebrew into Aramaic (*m. Meg.* 4:4, 6). Tradition traced this practice back to Ezra’s public re-promulgation of the Law described in *Neh* 8:8 (*y. Meg.* 74d).²⁶ The main reason, however, for the origin of the Targums must have been the fact that increasingly in the post-exilic period Aramaic replaced Hebrew as the vernacular of Palestinian Jews. Étan Levine argues that the Targums originated in an academic setting and asserts that at no stage can they be envisaged as spontaneous translations, although doubtless they influenced synagogue worship.²⁷ The earliest evidence is the literal targums from Qumran and exegetical traditions in the NT (e.g. the names of Jannes and Jambres, mentioned in *2 Tim* 3:8).²⁸

The Targums usually reflect the proto-MT. Deviations are based mainly on exegetical traditions, not on deviating texts. Four approaches to combining interpretation and text are used in targums: (1) some offer a literal translation with substitutions that actualize the text; (2) some offer a literal translation with additions that can be bracketed without disturbing the syntax or flow of thought; (3) some offer a free translation and the additions actually replace parts of the original; and (4) some offer a midrashic rendering, that is, a complete new story is created out of the original text.²⁹ All four approaches embellish using Jewish interpretative traditions, explain figurative language, and modernize geographical toponyms.³⁰

II. THE TEXT-CRITICAL USE OF THE VERSIONS

Before devoting the remainder of the time to an evaluation of the relative worth of the witnesses and a reconstruction of the textual transmission in the light of appropriate methodology, the principles for proper text-critical use of the versions should be briefly set out.³¹ As the Septuagint is by far

²⁶ *y. Meg.* 74d = Jacob Neusner, *The Talmud of the Land of Israel: An Academic Commentary to the Second, Third, and Fourth Divisions. IX. Yerushalmi Tractate Megillah* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998) 123. For rabbinic law and lore on targum cf. *m. Meg.* 3:10; 4:4, 6, 9; *y. Ber.* 9c; *Bik.* 65d; *Meg.* 74d; 75a; *Sabb.* 15c; 16c; *b. B. Bat.* 134a; *Ber.* 27b; 45a; *Meg.* 3a; 8b, 9a; 17a, 21a; 23a, b; 25a, b; 32a; *Mo’ed Qat.* 3a; 21a; 28b; *Qidd.* 49a; *Sabb.* 115a b; 116a; *Sanh.* 84b; *Soa* 33a; 39a; 40a; 41a; *Sukk.* 28a; *Tem.* 14a, b; *Yebam.* 22a. See also *Sifre Deut* 161; *Tanhuma* II, 87f.; *Pesiq. R.* 14a-b; *Mek.* II 17:7; *Exod Rab.* 8:3; *’Abot R. Nat. B.*, XII; *Sop.* 5:15; 12:6; 15:2; 18:4.

²⁷ Étan Levine, “The Targums: Their Interpretive Character and Their Place in Jewish Text Tradition,” in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation* (ed. Magne Sæbø; Vol. I, Part 1, #8.5, 323–331; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996) 324.

²⁸ See R. le Déaut, *La nuit pascale* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963); and M. McNamara, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch* (AnBib 27; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1966).

²⁹ This characterization is from Harry Sysling, “Translation Techniques in the Ancient Bible Translations: Septuagint and Targum,” in *A History of Bible Translation* (ed. Philip A. Noss; Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2007) 279–305.

³⁰ B. K. Waltke, “The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (ed. Frank E. Gaebelein; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979) 1.209–28.

³¹ J. W. Wevers, “The Use of Versions for Text Criticism: The Septuagint,” in *La Septuaginta en la investigacion contemporanea (V Congreso de la IOSCS)* (ed. Natalio Fernández Marcos; Madrid: C.S.I.C., 1985) 15–24.

the most important of the ancient versions, it will be used for illustrative purposes.

1. *Source and target languages as codes of communication.* One must compare and contrast source and target languages as codes of communication. This point may be rudimentary, but can be overlooked. Two examples may illustrate sufficiently. One cannot use the Latin Vulgate to determine whether the Hebrew parent text used by Jerome had the article or not, since Latin has no definite article. In Greek, nouns are inflected for case, but not in Hebrew. Thus in rendering a prepositional phrase such as על המזבח a literal translator would probably use the preposition ἐπί, but would then have to decide which case to use after ἐπί, i.e. τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ, or τὸ θυσιαστήριον.

2. *Inner Greek corruptions.* By “version” one can only mean the actual translation itself and not later corruptions or revisions of it arising from the scribal transmission of that version. One example must suffice:³²

2 Chr 31:6

MT³³

גַּם־הֵם מֵעֶשֶׂר בְּקָרָן וְצֹאן

וּמֵעֶשֶׂר קֳרָשִׁים הַמִּקְרָשִׁים לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם

They, too, [brought] a tenth of herds and flocks, and a tenth of holy things devoted to YHWH their God.

LXX³⁴

καὶ αὐτοὶ ἤνεγκαν ἐπιδέκατα μόσχων καὶ προβάτων

καὶ ἐπιδέκατα αἰγῶν καὶ ἡγίασαν τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ αὐτῶν

They, too, brought tenths of bulls and sheep and tenths of goats and they devoted [them] to the Lord their God.

LXX Apparatus: ΑΙΓΩΝ] ΑΓΙΩΝ 93³⁵

The original text from the hand of the translator almost certainly had ἀγίων for קְרָשִׁים and not αἰγῶν (“goats”). Early in the history of the textual transmission, a Greek scribe with no access to the Hebrew misread ΑΓΙΩΝ

³² The example in 2 Chr 31:6 is adapted from N. Fernández Marcos, “Some Pitfalls of Translation Greek” (paper presented to XII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies: Leiden, July 30, 2004).

³³ K. Elliger and W. Rudolph et al., eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967/77, 1983) is cited as the putative parent text of the Greek translation. Obviously the manuscripts used by the translator were not graphemically pointed, but the Masoretic vocalization is retained to aid the modern reader. English translations for both Hebrew and Greek texts are my own.

³⁴ Cited according to A. Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta, Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935). All citations of the Septuagint are from this edition unless the critical editions in the Göttingen Septuaginta are available.

³⁵ I am grateful to Professor Dr. Robert Hanhart of the Septuaginta-Unternehmen, Göttingen, Germany for verifying the evidence for this variant in the manuscript tradition.

as ΑΙΓΩΝ on palaeographic grounds, since characters in the square series are easily confused in papyri and uncials. The mention of sheep in the context also leads one naturally to think of goats. This error occurred so early that it dominated most of the extant manuscript tradition.

3. *Differences due to factors in translation.* Before a translation can be properly used in the text criticism of the parent text, one must understand just how and from what point of view this translation was done by a particular translator.³⁶ Many differences between the resultant translation and original source text are due to the task of translation and do not constitute real textual variants. The following illustrations provide a classified sampling of issues in translation technique.

The most obvious quantitative difference between our present Hebrew text and the Greek translation consists in the pluses and minuses. Origen attempted to mark all of these in his famous Hexapla in the third century. Yet the majority of them are due to issues in translation and do not bear witness to a different parent text.

The Book of Job is a star example. The earliest Greek translation of Job is about one-sixth shorter than the Hebrew text of MT. For nearly a hundred years the consensus was that the Greek translator had used a different parent text, and some thought that the MT was derivative and secondary to the Hebrew base of the Septuagint.³⁷ Yet painstaking comparison of our Greek and Hebrew texts clearly showed that the differences were due to a functional equivalence approach to translation in which many of the long, windy speeches were made more manageable for a Hellenistic readership. Consider, for example, Job 20:2–4:³⁸

MT

20:2a לְכֹן שְׁעֵפִי יִשְׁבוּנִי	Therefore my anxious thoughts answer me;
20:2b וּבְעֵבֹר חוּשֵׁי בִי	And because of my feelings in me,
20:3a מוֹסֵר כְּלִמְתִי אֶשְׁמַע	I hear admonition that humiliates me;
20:3b וְרוּחַ מִבִּינְתִי יַעֲנֵנִי	And a spirit from my understanding answers me.
20:4a הֲזֹאת יָדַעְתָּ מִנִּי-עַד	Did you know this from of old?
20:4b מִנִּי שָׂים אֲדָם עַל־אֶרֶץ	From the placing of mankind upon the earth?

Ecclesiastical Text Derived from Origen

20:2a Οὐχ οὕτως ὑπελάμβανον ἀντερεῖν σε ταῦτα,	I was not, was I, responding so to dispute you in these things?
20:2b καὶ οὐχὶ συνίετε μᾶλλον ἢ καὶ ἐγώ.	and surely you do not understand more than me,

³⁶ J. W. Wevers, "The Use of Versions for Text Criticism: The Septuagint" 20.

³⁷ See e.g. Edwin Hatch, "On Origen's Revision of the LXX Text of Job," in *Essays in Biblical Greek* (ed. Edwin Hatch; Oxford: Clarendon, 1889; repr. Amsterdam: Philo, 1970), 215–45.

³⁸ Taken from P. J. Gentry, *The Asterisked Materials in the Greek Job* (SCS 38; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995) 386.

20:3a	※ παιδείαν ἐντροπῆς μου ἀκούσομαι, ✓	[I will heed discipline from my humiliation,
20:3b	※ καὶ πνεῦμα ἐκ τῆς συνέσεως ἀποκρίνεται μοι. ✓	and a spirit from my understanding will answer me.
20:4a	※ μὴ ταῦτα ἔγνωνς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔτι, ✓	You do not know these things, do you, from the hereafter?]
20:4b	ἀφ' οὗ ἐτέθη ἄνθρωπος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς;	from the time man was placed upon the earth?

Six lines from MT have been condensed by the O(ld) G(reek) Translator³⁹ of Job into three: OG 20:4b renders MT 20:4b; OG 20:2b is derived from MT 20:4a;⁴⁰ and OG 20:2a is based largely on MT 20:2a.⁴¹ Origen equated OG 20:2b and MT 20:2b, and consequently supplied 3a, 3b, and 4a from Theod(otion). These lines he marked with an asterisk and metobelus. His intent was to align OG quantitatively with MT, but on a different level he was wrong on several accounts: (1) essentially OG 20:2b and Theod 20:4a translate the same line in MT; (2) while OG and Theod are comprehensible taken by themselves, the hybrid text transmitted by the Christian church from Origen's work is a hopeless mismatch and does not make sense; (3) both OG and Theod obviously intended to supply a rendering of the Hebrew, albeit according to entirely different principles of translation.

Frank Polak of Tel Aviv is currently attempting to develop criteria to distinguish redactional from translational issues in the matter of minuses in the LXX.⁴²

4. Interpretation based on meaning in post-biblical Hebrew or Aramaic.

Ps 60[59]:10:

MT - Ps 60:10

LXX - Ps 59:10⁴³

מוֹאָב סִיר רְחֵצִי

Μωαβ λέβης τῆς ἐλπιδος μου

Moab is my washbasin

Moab is the cauldron of my hope

The Hebrew root רחצ 'to wash' is correctly rendered by *νίπτομαι* in Ps 26[25]:6, 58[57]:11 and 73[72]:13. Here in Psalm 60 the rendering by

³⁹ The text of Job transmitted by the Christian church (called here the Ecclesiastical text) is an amalgam of the earliest Greek translation and additions from the translation of Theodotion inserted by Origen. The Aristarchian signs in Origen's Hexapla which distinguish the additions from Theodotion are absent in most manuscripts. The siglum OG designates the part of the Ecclesiastical text that derives from the first Greek translation, that is, without the additions from Theodotion.

⁴⁰ Dhorme, following Bickell, believes OG read הוֹאֵר יִדְעָתֶם מִי הוּא, see Édouard Dhorme, *A Commentary on the Book of Job* (trans. H. Knight; ed. H. H. Rowley; 1967; repr. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984) 289.

⁴¹ Dhorme suggests OG read לֹא-כֵן rather than כֵן, see Dhorme, *Commentary on the Book of Job* 289.

⁴² F. Polak, "The Minuses of the LXX on Joshua: Classification and Comparison" (paper presented to XII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Leiden, July 30, 2004).

⁴³ Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Psalmi cum Odis* (Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum 10; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1931, 1967).

ἐλπίς ‘hope’ is based on the Aramaic meaning of this root.⁴⁴ In 1912 M. Flashar argued that the Greek translation was based on theological considerations since the translator hesitated to speak of God as having a washbasin.⁴⁵ Thus the Greek Psalter is based on the same Hebrew text that we have in MT, but the apparent divergence is based both on Aramaic influence as well as exegetical issues.

III. THE TEXT-CRITICAL VALUE OF THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION

When issues related to the language, transmission, and task of translation are removed, only then can the text-critical value of the translation be assessed. Two examples illustrate that sometimes the MT is better, and at other times the parent text of the Septuagint is superior.

Zech 1:21[2:4]

MT 1:21

וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלֶיהָ לְהַחְרִיד אֹתָם
לְיָדוֹת אֶת-קַרְנֹת הַגּוֹיִם . . .

And these came to terrify them by
casting down the horns of the
nations . . .

LXX 2:4⁴⁶

καὶ εἰσῆλθον οὗτοι τοῦ ὀξῦναι αὐτὰ
εἰς χεῖρας αὐτῶν τὰ τέσσαρα κέρατα

And these came to sharpen them—
the four horns—into their hands.

The rendering in the LXX is based upon reading לְהַחְרִיד from חרד ‘be sharp’ and is due to confusion of *dalet* and *resh*. The translator also vocalised יָדוֹת ‘hands’ and supplied a possessive pronoun rather than the Piel Bound Infinitive of יד that we find in MT. The number four is supplied from the context. The text offered by the LXX is obviously inferior and easily shown to be a secondary development from the text in MT by common errors in textual transmission. At the same time, it is clear that it testifies to the same consonantal text transmitted in MT and is not a serious witness to a different textual tradition.

Ps 145(144 LXX):13

cor add

נֶאֱמַן יְהוָה בְּדַבְּרוֹ / וְיִחְסֵד בְּכָל-מַעֲשָׂיו
The Lord is faithful in his words,
and loyal in all his works.

⁴⁴ See M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* (2d ed.; Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2002), s.v. רחץ. The observation was also noted in Franz Wutz, *Die Transkriptionen von der Septuaginta bis zu Hieronymus* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933) 151.

⁴⁵ M. Flashar, “Exegetische Studien zum Septuagintapsalter,” *ZAW* 32 (1912) 241–68, esp. 251. Aramaizing influence here was noted earlier by Z. Frankel, *Vorstudien zu der Septuaginta* (Leipzig: Vogel, 1841) 201. I am indebted to Seulgi Byun for this reference.

⁴⁶ Joseph Ziegler, ed., *Duodecim Prophetarum* (Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum 13; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1943, 1967).

11QPs ^a	נאמן אלוהים ברבריו וחסיד בכל מעשיו
Ken 142 ^{mg}	נאמן יהוה בכל־בְּרִיּוֹ וְחֲסִיד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׁיו
LXX	πιστὸς κύριος ἐν τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁσιος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ
Gall	fidelis Dominus in omnibus verbis suis et sanctus in omnibus operibus suis
Pesh	ܢܡܢܢ ܝܗܘܗ ܒܟܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܥܫܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܟܘܨܝܕ ܒܟܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܥܫܐ
MT	> (cf. Talmud Babli <i>Berakhot</i> 4b, R. Yohanan, c. 250 AD)
ὁ ἔβραϊος	> ⁴⁷
οἱ λοιποὶ	> (i.e. Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion)
Jerome	> (<i>Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos</i>)
Targum	>

Psalm 145(144 LXX):13 is a clear case where the Septuagint has a superior text to that of MT. The Psalm is an alphabetic acrostic. The *nun* strophe is lacking in MT, but extant in the Septuagint and Syriac (Peshitta) and now also attested by 11QPs^a. The evidence from Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus shows that the verse had already disappeared from the proto-MT at an early stage, doubtless due to mutilation of a scroll at the bottom or top of the text. Explanations due to errors such as parablepsis are not suitable.

Another example, taken from Isa 53:8, concerns the consonantal text and not just a difference in vocalization. Barthélemy and the Committee of the Hebrew OT Text Project sponsored by the United Bible Societies propose that the parent text represented by the LXX is superior and the text of MT secondary. The relevant sources are cited followed by the summary analysis of *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament* (CTAT):

⁴⁷ A scholion attributed to Eusebius in the Palestinian Catena tradition reads as follows: ὁ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα στίχος δι' οὗ εἴρηται· πιστὸς κύριος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁσιος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ, οὐ φέρεται οὔτε ἐν τῷ ἔβραϊκῷ, οὔτε παρὰ τοῖς λοιποῖς ἑρμηνευταῖς. διόπερ ὡς περιττὸς ἀναγκαίως ὀβέλιστα. For the text, see D. Barthélemy, *Critique Textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*, 4, *Psaumes. Rapport final du Comité pour l'analyse textuelle de l'Ancien Testament hébreu institué par l'Alliance Biblique Universelle, établi en coopération avec Alexander R. Hulst, Norbert Lohfink, William D. McHardy, H. Peter Rüger, coéditeurs, James A. Sanders, coéditeurs* (ed. Stephen D. Ryan and Adrian Schenker; OBO 50/4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005) 878. The manuscript sources are Milan, Bibl. Ambr. F 126 sup. fol. 382v and Patmos, St. Johannes 215 fol. 327v. See Ekkehard Mühlenberg, *Psalmenkommentare aus der Ketenenüberlieferung*. Band III: *Untersuchungen zu den Psalmekatenen* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1978) 276.

Isa 53:8

MT מִפְשַׁע עַמִּי נִגַּע לָמוֹ
 1Q^{a(c)} מִפְשַׁע עַמּוֹ נִוִּגַע לָמוֹ
 1Q^b מִפְשַׁע עַמּוֹ נִגַּע לָמוֹ
 4Q^d מִפְשַׁע עַמּוֹ נִוִּגַע לָמוֹ

LXX ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνομιῶν τοῦ λαοῦ μου ἤχθη εἰς θάνατον⁴⁸
 Aq ἀπὸ ἀθεσίας λαοῦ μου ἦψατο αὐτῶν
 Sym διὰ τὴν ἀδικίαν τοῦ λαοῦ μου πληγὴ αὐτοῖς
 Theod ἀπὸ ἀθεσίας τοῦ λαοῦ μου ἦψατο αὐτῶν

MT because of the transgression of my people, the blow was his/theirs
 LXX because of the sins of my people he was led to death

CTAT:

53,8B cor לְמוֹ נִגַּע לְמוֹ [C] G // err-graph: 1Q^a(corr) לְמוֹ נִוִּגַע → harm-int: M 1Q^b
 4Q^d Sym; לְמוֹ נִגַּע, ThAq V S T: clav לְמוֹ נִגַּע / lacun: 1Q^{a*}

לְמוֹ	<i>lammâwet</i>	to death
לָמוֹ	<i>lâmô</i>	to them / to him?

The best handling of the problem is by Barthélemy in *Critique Textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*.⁴⁹ It seems that the parent text of the Septuagint Translator had לְמוֹת, i.e. “to death.” The *taw* was lost by accidental mutilation at the end of the line. The translator also read a passive form of the verb—also attested by the corrector of 1Q^a. Once the *taw* was lost, the remaining letters were read in the MT as *lâmô* and the consonants for the verb vocalized as a noun: “the blow was to them.” This text is problematic, since evidence is slim to show that the suffix can mean “to him” as many modern scholars interpret the text.⁵⁰ Thus, while not all critics are persuaded,⁵¹ the difference in the Septuagint is probably due to a different Hebrew parent text which preserves the original reading.

⁴⁸ The text of the LXX as well as of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion are all cited from Joseph Ziegler, ed., *Isaias* (Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum 14; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1939, 1967).

⁴⁹ Dominique Barthélemy, *Critique Textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*, 2, Isaïe, Jérémie, Lamentations. Rapport final du Comité pour l'analyse textuelle de l'Ancien Testament hébreu institué par l'Alliance Biblique Universelle, établi en coopération avec Alexander R. Hulst, Norbert Lohfink, William D. McHardy, H. Peter Rüger, coéditeur, James A. Sanders, coéditeur (OBO 50/2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986) 397–99; and Jan de Waard, *A Handbook on Isaiah* (Textual Criticism and the Translator 1; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997) 194–95.

⁵⁰ E. Kautzsch, ed., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (rev. A. E. Cowley; 2d English ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1910) § 103f, n. 3.

⁵¹ Ekblad acknowledges the possibility that the parent text of the LXX had לְמוֹת, but argues that since neither ἤχθη or any form of ἄγω matches נִגַּע anywhere in the LXX, the Greek translator may have mistaken נִגַּע as the perfect of נָהַג. This is not probable either as an error of hearing or sight and overlooks the fact that the rendering in verse 9 is inspired by that in verse 7. See Eugene Robert Ekblad, Jr., *Isaiah's Servant Poems According to the Septuagint: An Exegetical and Theological Study* (Leuven: Peeters, 1999) 235–36 and nn. 278–79.

Differences, therefore, between the LXX and other witnesses to the text which are genuine textual variants should be evaluated on a case by case basis, and one should not prefer *a priori* either the LXX or the MT.

IV. ASSESSING THE WITNESSES AND RECONSTRUCTING THE TEXT HISTORY

Several competing theories of the history of the transmission of the text have given way in recent years to a near-consensus that both canon and text are fluid until the end of the first century AD when they were standardized. Evidence for this is based mainly on the variation found among the texts from the Judaean Desert and also on large scale differences between the Septuagint and MT largely in the Former Prophets, Jeremiah, Job, and Proverbs. Attention will be focused on this evidence, then, as I assess the consensus view and offer an alternative proposal to the reconstruction of the text history.

Many scholars, including James Sanders and Eugene Ulrich who believe that the text was fluid and pluriform up to AD 130, classify the earliest witnesses according to two types: (1) manuscripts that represent a simple, straightforward copying and transmitting of the text precisely as received; and (2) manuscripts that represent scribes revising and updating the text to make it relevant to the current circumstances and generation. Sanders labels the former the “repetition” factor and the latter the “resignification” factor.⁵² Such a classification is extremely helpful in evaluating the apparent chaos in the witnesses, but does not necessarily lead to the conclusions of Sanders and Ulrich.

1. *Assessing the texts from the Judaean desert.* First, we will consider the biblical texts from the Judaean desert, and then all the DSS in general, biblical and non-biblical. Emanuel Tov has broadly classified the various witnesses found at Qumran according to a theory of text groups as follows:⁵³

⁵² James A. Sanders, *Canon and Community: A Guide to Canonical Criticism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) 22, and Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1999) 11. This classification is not dissimilar from the description of B. K. Waltke who notes two tendencies at work in the early history of the transmission of the text, one to copy and preserve the text exactly and precisely as received and one to revise and update the text to make it understandable to the next generation. The *Tendenz* to revise and update may be limited to alterations to the form of the text such as switching from palaeo-Hebrew script to Aramaic square script and *plene* spelling, or may involve updating in geography, grammar, and lexicon, or may go as far as re-interpreting the text for a contemporary sub-community within Second Temple Judaism. Beyond the far end of the spectrum in resignification would be the so-called parabiblical texts found at Qumran (cf. Bruce K. Waltke, “Old Testament Textual Criticism,” in *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation* [ed. David S. Dockery, Kenneth A. Mathews and Robert B. Sloan; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994] 156–86).

⁵³ Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 114–17. The revised statistics are from Emanuel Tov, “The Biblical Texts from the Judaean Desert—An Overview and Analysis of the Published Texts,” in *The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (The Bible as Book Series; ed. Edward D. Herbert and Emanuel Tov; Bristol: British Library & Oak Knoll, 2002) 139–66.

Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible (1992)

Q-Practice	Proto-MT	Pre-Samaritan	Close to LXX	Non-aligned
20%	35%	5% of Torah 15% of Total	5%	35%

The Hebrew Bible and the Judaeen Desert Discoveries (2002)

	Proto-MT	Pre-Samaritan	Close to LXX	Non-aligned
Ta- (Pent)	52%	6.5%	4.5%	37%
NaK (Rest)	44%		3.0%	53%

Such a presentation can give the impression that we are lacking a standardized text of the OT in the Maccabean and Hasmonean periods. We may even wonder if strong attestation for an early standard text can be found. Two considerations must suffice to show that this portrayal of the text history may be misleading.

First, these data can be assessed differently. Qumran practice refers to manuscripts exhibiting a different approach to morphology, orthography, copying practices, and grammar, but this does not mean a different text type. Paulson Pulikottil, in a detailed investigation of 1QIsa^a appearing in 2001, identified numerous variants that represent harmonization, explication, modernization, and contextual changes on the part of the scribe(s).⁵⁴ This demonstrates resignification in relation to the mainstream text and presupposes it. The pre-Samaritan tradition does offer important textual variants, but when compared with MT by and large represents a popularized text that is updated in various ways, especially grammatically and lexically.⁵⁵ The fact that the Hebrew text later known as MT was being linguistically updated by 200 BC shows that it was already an ancient tradition at that time. Thus, the Samaritan Pentateuch witnesses to the antiquity of the tradition in MT. The claim that 5% of texts among the Qumran Scrolls are close to the parent text of the LXX can only refer to cases where the LXX differs textually from MT. In fact, agreement between LXX and MT is overwhelming. Finally, Tov's category "non-aligned" needs to be re-examined to determine whether the kind of variants included here are real textual variants, singular variants of no particular value, or evidence of interpreting the text to a particular audience or sub-group within Second Temple Judaism. What we may have instead are texts copied in circles outside the scribes from the Temple where adapta-

⁵⁴ Paulson Pulikottil, *Transmission of Biblical Texts in Qumran: The Case of the Large Isaiah Scroll 1QIsa^a* (JSPSup 34; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

⁵⁵ See Bruce K. Waltke, "The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Text of the Old Testament," in *New Perspectives on the Old Testament* (ed. J. Barton Payne; Waco: Word, 1970) 212–39. This assessment of the pre-Samaritan tradition vis-à-vis the tradition represented by the MT acknowledges a measure of resignification within the latter tradition as well. Surely the decision to abandon the palaeo-Hebrew script and adopt the Aramaic square script is a form of updating, however minimal. On resignification in the Masoretic Text, see Michael A. Grisanti, "Inspiration, Inerrancy, and the OT Canon: The Place of Textual Updating in an Inerrant View of Scripture," *JETS* 44 (2001) 577–98. What is being affirmed however, is that in the tradition represented by the MT, repetition is maximized and resignification minimized by comparison with the pre-Samaritan tradition.

tions were freely made to suit the variegated communities of Second Temple Judaism.⁵⁶

Second, Bruno Chiesa's criticisms of Tov must be heeded.⁵⁷ We cannot simply count variations between texts or groups of texts. Each variation must be thoroughly analyzed and scrutinized for its worth in determining textual relationship. Chiesa cogently notes that two fundamental principles have been forgotten. First, only significant errors,⁵⁸ what P. Maas called *Leitfehler*, can be used to determine genetic relations. He provides an excellent example where 2QJer (*DJD* III, 62–69) shares a variant with the LXX in Jer 47 MT (29 LXX):4 as follows:⁵⁹

Jer 47:3b–4 MT

לֹא־הִפְנוּ אֲבוֹת אֶל־בְּנֵים מִרְפִּיּוֹן יָדֵים:
עַל־הַיּוֹם הַבֹּא לְשֹׁדֵד אֶת־כָּל־פְּלִשְׁתִּים [4]
לְהַכְרִית לְצֹר וּלְצִידוֹן כָּל שְׂרִיד עֵזֶר

Fathers will not turn to their children,
their hands hang paralysed to help
because of the coming day to destroy all the Philistines,
to cut off all survivors giving help to Tyre and Sidon.

Jer 47:3b–4 MT] והכרתי 2QJer = καὶ ἀφανῶ LXX⁶⁰

Soderlund argues persuasively that the reading in 2QJer and LXX breaks the parallelism and introduces a clumsy change of subject which must be expressed in the form of an intrusive and inexplicable quote. The author of the composition cannot be blamed for this and hence the reading is clearly secondary.⁶¹ What matters here is not a literary-critical argument but the fact that 2QJer and LXX share a certainly erroneous reading. This is primary evidence for a common ancestor somewhere in the history of these two witnesses, in spite of the fact that the fragment from Qumran does not agree with the LXX in the arrangement of the chapters. And it is this common

⁵⁶ For the proposal that scribes from the circles of the temple were entrusted with copying and preserving of the proto-Masoretic Text, see Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Mineapolis: Fortress, 1992) 28; and Al Wolters, "The Text of the Old Testament," in *The Face of Old Testament Studies: A Survey of Contemporary Approaches* (ed. David W. Baker and Bill T. Arnold; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999) 30. Earlier, see S. Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950) 20–27.

⁵⁷ Bruno Chiesa, "Textual History and Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Old Testament," in *The Madrid Qumran Congress: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Madrid 18–21 March, 1991* (ed. Julio Trebolle Barrera and Luis Vegas Montaner; 2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1992) 1:257–72.

⁵⁸ Paul Maas, *Textkritik* (3d ed.; Leipzig: Teubner, 1957) 27–31.

⁵⁹ Adapted from Chiesa, "Textual History and Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Old Testament" 267–68.

⁶⁰ MT has "to cut off" while 2QJer and LXX have "and I will cut off."

⁶¹ Sven Soderlund, *The Greek Text of Jeremiah: A Revised Hypothesis* (JSOTSup 47; Sheffield: JSOT, 1985) 215–16.

ancestor that witnesses a reading secondary to MT, despite the singular readings in 2QJer. Thus, as Chiesa reminds us, “in textual criticism what matters is not the number of agreements and disagreements between the various witnesses, but the nature of their variant readings and/or errors.”⁶²

The second fundamental principle easily forgotten, according to Chiesa, is that many so-called unique readings used to classify these manuscripts are far from being unique and are not reliable for establishing the position of a witness within the text history of that biblical book. As an example, he points to K. A. Mathews’s article “The Leviticus Scroll (11QpaleoLev) and the Text of the Hebrew Bible,” *CBQ* 48 (1986) 171–207, where the main results of his *editio maior* are made available to a wider circle of readers. I cite Chiesa in full:

According to the editor 15 *lectiones singulares* are to be found in his scroll. But, five of these readings are certainly not «unique»: nr. 6 appears also in a Genizah fragment; nr. 14 in a De Rossi manuscript; nr. 38 is quite certainly shared by LXX; nr. 42 by the same witness as well as by the Vulgata; nr. 48 is to be found in some Kennicott manuscripts. Of the remaining ten «unique» readings, one is clearly the result of a mechanical error (14), and in four other cases (29, 39, 48, 55) what is concerned is the presence or the absence of תא (*nota accusativi*). Only five «unique» readings are left—not very safe ground for declaring this manuscript to be an independent text of *Leviticus*.⁶³

Chiesa’s reminder concerning unique readings shows the category of Non-Aligned Texts provided by Tov needs re-examination. One must weigh the variants, not count them. Tov’s category does not support the idea of a fluid text at this time. Chiesa also demonstrates the value of later manuscripts. Editors for BHQ are not collating Genizah Fragments after 1000 or including readings from the more than 3000 medieval manuscripts. Yet it is possible that these later sources preserve readings now attested earlier by texts from the Judaeen desert.

When all the texts from the Judaeen desert, both biblical and non-biblical, are considered, characterization from repetition to resignification is, in fact, a continuum on a spectrum, just as one color changes gradually to another in the color spectrum of light refracted through a prism.

Sidnie White Crawford, in her 2008 monograph *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times*, characterizes texts at Qumran on a continuous spectrum from biblical texts of the Pentateuch in the pre-Samaritan tradition, to Reworked Pentateuch, the Book of Jubilees, the Temple Scroll, the Genesis Apocryphon, and finally 4QCommentary on Genesis A.⁶⁴ This spectrum moves

⁶² Chiesa, “Textual History and Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Old Testament” 267.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 269.

⁶⁴ Sidnie White Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008). The notion of “rewritten scripture” as employed by White Crawford needs to be complemented by other processes. See, e.g., Natalio Fernández Marcos, “Rewritten Bible or Imitatio? The Vestments of the High-Priest,” in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich* (VTSup 101; ed. Peter W. Flint, Emanuel Tov, and James C. Vanderkam; Leiden: Brill, 2006) 321–36. Fernández Marcos shows that the Hellenistic literary model of *imitatio* or *mimesis* is an adequate description for phenomena that is sometimes assigned to different literary stages or rewritten scripture.

from conflation, harmonization, and modification, through new compositions closely related to the source text, to commentary involving citation plus comment. She concludes that both canon and text were fluid and not standardized at this time. What is helpful is that her study shows the graduated continuum from biblical text to paraphrase to commentary. Her conclusions, however, do not follow from analysis of the evidence. The evidence from Qumran must be put within the larger picture of all the scrolls from the Judean desert—the evidence of one sect within the widely variegated Judaism of the Second Temple. In the larger picture there is a central stream dominated by the proto-Masoretic texts.⁶⁵ The fact that most of the texts described by Crawford employ as a base a popularized text similar to that in the proto-Samaritan tradition is revealing: she is describing the path of resignification at this time, but this is only part of the larger picture. To be sure, outside the circle of scribes closely connected to the Temple various sub-groups within Judaism used popular forms of the text. This is no different from a Christian or Jewish bookstore today and should not be interpreted to show that the text was fluid or non-standardized.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Armin Lange's perspective on canon and text is also skewed by failing to put the evidence from Qumran within the larger picture. See Armin Lange, "Pre-Maccabean Literature from the Qumran Library and the Hebrew Bible," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 13/3 (2006) 271–305; and idem, "From Literature to Scripture: The Unity and Plurality of the Hebrew Scriptures in Light of the Qumran Library," in *One Scripture or Many? Canon from Biblical, Theological, and Philosophical Perspectives* (ed. Christine Helmer and Christof Landmesser; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) 51–107.

⁶⁶ In many ways, the history of the biblical text at this time is not dissimilar to a Christian or Jewish bookstore today. One wonders what an archaeologist would conclude after excavating remains of a contemporary Christian bookstore some 2000 years hence. The number and variety of translations of the Bible is bewildering to people today, not to mention some future historian of the text. Here are some examples of what one may encounter:

The New Student Bible
 Life Application Bible (Take The Next Step)
 Psalty's Kids' Bible
 NIV Young Discoverer's Bible
 The Adventure Bible
 The Full Life Study Bible
 Disciple's Study Bible
 Women's Devotional Bible
 The Family Worship Bible
 The Dramatized Bible
 Youth Bible
 The Discovery Bible
 The Daily Bible
 The One Year Bible
 The Spirit-Filled Life Bible
 The Orthodox Study Bible
 Rainbow Bible
 Precious Moments
 Mother's Love N.T. and Psalms

The same categories used to classify texts at Qumran exist in Bible editions currently published: Bibles that offer a standard text unadorned and uninterpreted, and Bibles that adorn and decorate, paraphrase, interpret, and re-arrange the text for the audience and culture of our times. Do we conclude from this that both canon and text are fluid? Hardly.

Crawford's criteria for identifying a text as canonical are also faulty. She gives four criteria: (1) the text claims to be authoritative; (2) the text is cited as authoritative; and/or (3) the text is the subject of a commentary; and (4) the text exists in multiple copies. Zechariah warns that inspired prophecy is at an end, and on several occasions 1 Maccabees notes that no prophet existed in Israel at that time.⁶⁷ So the high claims of Jubilees and the Temple Scroll were not recognized by all in Second Temple Judaism. Someone in the future writing in the *Martian Journal of Twenty-First Century American Archaeology* and using the criteria provided by Crawford might wrongly conclude from a dig done at Southern Seminary that Grudem's *Systematic Theology* was a canonical text.

2. *Assessing the Septuagint.* Finally, brief consideration of the evidence of the Septuagint is necessary, however complex and problematic. At first glance, many differences exist between the Septuagint and MT. Most of these arise from differences between source and target languages as codes of communication, corruption within the textual transmission of the Greek version, and variants which are due to the translator and not genuinely textual.⁶⁸ When such differences are eliminated, the first datum from comparative study is the high level of agreement between MT and the presumed parent text of the LXX. In research on the text of the Greek Psalter, Gilles Dorival concluded that the majority of differences between it and MT are translational and not textual.⁶⁹ The same is true in Job as I concluded in my own extensive study.⁷⁰ In Proverbs, several recent studies have concluded that the LXX version is a creative reshaping of the proto-MT aimed to enhance the figure of Solomon.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Zech 13:2–6; 1 Macc 4:46; 9:27, 54; 14:41.

⁶⁸ Tov readily acknowledges both points, see E. Tov, "The Contribution of the Qumran Scrolls to the Understanding of the Septuagint," in *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint* (ed. E. Tov; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 285–300.

⁶⁹ Gilles Dorival, "Septante et Texte Massorétique: Le Cas des Psaumes," in *Congress Volume: Basel 2001* (VTSup 92; ed. A. Lemaire; Leiden: Brill, 2002) 139–61.

⁷⁰ See Gentry, *Asterisked Materials in the Greek Job*.

⁷¹ See Johann Cook, *The Septuagint of Proverbs: Jewish and/or Hellenistic Proverbs? Concerning the Hellenistic Colouring of LXX Proverbs* (VTSup 69; Leiden: Brill, 1997) and H. C. Washington, "Wealth and Poverty in the Instruction of Amenemope and the Hebrew Proverbs: A Comparative Case Study in the Social Location and Function of Ancient Near Eastern Wisdom Literature" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1992) 194–97. The most recent summary of all the research is B. K. Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004). Also noteworthy is Johann Cook, "The Greek of Proverbs—Evidence of a Recensionally Deviating Hebrew Text?" in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov* (ed. Shalom M. Paul, Robert A. Kraft, Lawrence H. Schiffman, and Weston W. Fields; Leiden: Brill, 2003) 605–18 and Ruth Scoralick, "Salomos griechische Gewänder: Beobachtungen zur Septuagintafassung des Sprichwörterbuchs," in *Rettenendes Wissen: Studien zum Fortgang weisheitlichen Denkens im Frühjudentum und im frühen Christentum* (ed. K. Löning and M. Faßnacht; AOAT 300; Münster: Ugarit, 2002) 43–75. She analyzes the intentional composition in LXX 15:27–16:9 compared with MT. This removes a major plank in Tov's argument for the recensional differences between the parent text of LXX and the MT (see E. Tov, "Recensional Differences Between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint of Proverbs," in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins, presented to John Strugnell on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday* (College Theology Society Resources in Religion 5;

Early witnesses such as 4QLXXLev^a and 4QLXXNum were assessed by Ulrich against Skehan and Wevers to show a different *Vorlage* and hence a pluriform text. A major new study by Petersen reverses the conclusion of Ulrich: the singular variants in these texts represent clarification and stylistic revision, as Ulrich did not adequately explore issues of translation technique.⁷² A dissertation on Lamentations by Kevin J. Youngblood involving exhaustive analysis of translation technique did not find many differences that were genuinely textual.⁷³ Y. Goldman, editor of Ecclesiastes for BHQ, preferred readings from the LXX against MT in 46 instances and MT against LXX in approximately 104. It is in the nature of things that textual critics focus on differences. Let us not forget that both LXX and MT in tandem witness to a Hebrew text that is, for the most part, ancient and pristine.

In addition, Greek recensions of the Septuagint, attested outside Qumran, both before and after the Fall of Jerusalem, show revision towards the proto-MT as the dominant and authoritative form of the text. A good example is the *καίγε* tradition witnessed in the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever and the recensions of Theodotion (early first century AD), Aquila (AD 120), and Symmachus (AD 180).

3. *Large-scale differences between the LXX and MT.* Lastly, something should be said, however brief and inadequate for so large a topic, about those situations where we observe a group of real textual variants between the LXX and our Hebrew texts that belong to a pattern, so that the only explanation is that the one or the other apparently represents a different edition or recension in the history of a biblical book. Scholars such as Eugene Ulrich use the witness of the DSS, the LXX, and other witnesses to stress that in both canon and text, the Scriptures were fluid and pluriform until AD 70 or 100, or perhaps even AD 135.⁷⁴ Instead of grouping our witnesses according to families or text-types as in Table 1, Ulrich argues that we must recognize evidence for different editions of a text in its development or literary history as in Table 2.⁷⁵

ed. H. W. Attridge, J. J. Collins, and T. H. Tobin; Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1990) 43–56. On the other side, the research of M. Fox is also important, showing that in spite of the translational issues, cases exist where real textual variants obtain between LXX and MT in which LXX has the superior reading. See Michael V. Fox, “LXX-Proverbs as a Text-Critical Resource” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, November 25, 2003).

⁷² See Nicholas Petersen, “An Analysis of Two Early LXX Manuscripts from Qumran: 4QLXXNum and 4QLXXLeva in the Light of Previous Studies,” *BBR* (forthcoming).

⁷³ Kevin J. Youngblood, “Translation Technique in the Greek Lamentations” (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004).

⁷⁴ Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1999) 31. See also Eugene Ulrich, “The Text of the Hebrew Scriptures at the Time of Hillel and Jesus,” in *Congress Volume: Basel 2001* (VTSup 92; ed. A. Lemaire; Leiden: Brill, 2002) 85–108.

⁷⁵ Eugene Ulrich, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Biblical Text,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (2 vols.; ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam; Leiden: Brill, 1998) 1:79–100, esp. 84–85.

Table 1. *Grouping of MSS according to Text-Types*

Q Practice	Proto-MT	Pre-Samaritan	Close to G	Non-aligned
1QIsa ^a	1QIsa ^b	4QpaleoExod ^m	4QDeut ^q	4QDeut ^{b, c, h}
4QSam ^c	4QJer ^{a, c}	4QNum ^b	4QSam ^a	4QIsa ^c
4QIsa ^c	4QEzra		4QJer ^{b, d}	4QDan ^a

Table 2. *Grouping of MSS according to Editions*

n+1 ⁷⁶	G-Exod	M-Num	4QJoshua, Josephus	G-Jer	M-Dan	M-Pss
n+2	M-Exod	4QNumb	[SamPent, OL]	M-Jer	G-Dan	11QPsa
n+3	4QpaleoExod ^m		G-Josh			
n+4	SamPent-Exod		M-Josh			

According to Table 1, various witnesses may be grouped into families of texts which may then be derived from a single archetype. By contrast, the witnesses according to Table 2 represent different literary stages in the history of individual books.

Emanuel Tov claims that that the LXX contributes far more large-scale differences than any other witness, including the texts from the Judean desert. He is probably right. Well-known examples are: (1) the shorter LXX Jeremiah; (2) the shorter LXX Ezekiel; and (3) the LXX of Samuel-Kings.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Ulrich explains, "The 'n+1' type of designation for successive editions of a text assumes that there has been a series of editions during the composition of the text which constitutes its growth leading up to the first extant witness to a given book." See Ulrich, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Biblical Text" 85, n. 21.

⁷⁷ Emanuel Tov, "The Nature of the Large-Scale Differences Between the LXX and MT S T V, Compared with Similar Evidence in Other Sources," in *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible: The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered*, edited by Adrian Schenker (SCS 52; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003) 126. The relation between the OG Version of Samuel-Kings and the MT as well as their relation to Origen's Hexapla and the Lucianic Recension represent problems that are extremely knotty and intractable. Philippe Hugo has summarized well different positions taken by serious students of these texts: (1) some assess the LXX as a free translation of MT and that the differences are largely due to translation technique; e.g. D. W. Gooding, "Problems of Text and Midrash in the Third Book of Reigns," *Textus* 7 (1969) 1–29; idem, "Text-sequence and Translation-Revision in 3 Reg. IX 10–X 33," *VT* 19 (1969) 448–63; idem, *Relics of Ancient Exegesis: A Study of the Miscellanies in 3 Reg. 2* (MSSOTS 4; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Andrzej S. Turkanik, *Of Kings & Reigns: A Study of Translation Technique in the Gamma/Gamma Section of 3 Reigns (1 Kings)* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2008); P. S. F. van Keulen, *Two Versions of the Salomon Narrative: An Inquiry into the Relationship between MT 1 Kgs. 2–11 and LXX 3 Reg. 2–11* (VTSup 104; Leiden: Brill, 2005); cf. Paul McLean, "The Greek Kaige Version of 2 Reigns 11:1–3 Reigns 2:11: A Study of Its Constituent Translation Technique and Semantic Variations from its Hebrew Vorlage Using the Interlinear Paradigm for A New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS)" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2003); (2) others argue that the Hebrew parent text behind the LXX attests a literary form that is secondary and marked by midrash; e.g. Z. Talshir, *The Alternative Story: 3 Kingdoms 12:24 A-Z* (JBS 6; Jerusalem: Simor, 1993); idem, "Literary Design—A Criterion for Originality? A Case Study: 3 Kgdms 12:24a-z; 1 K 11–14," in *La double transmission du texte biblique. Études d'histoire du texte offertes en hommage à Adrian Schenker* (OBO 179; ed. Y. Goldman, C. Uehlinger; Fribourg: Editions Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht,

Moreover, the LXX version of both Joshua and Judges offers a pattern of textual variants that, according to some, attest a different stage in the redactional history.⁷⁸ All of these are extremely knotty problems, each of which requires exhaustive analysis rather than just brief *Probeschriften*. Lack of critical editions and exhaustive studies on translation technique make it difficult to identify variants providing genuine evidence for different editions. Furthermore, by and large scholars have not heeded the important review of Tov's work on textual criticism offered by N. Fernández Marcos:

I begin by recognizing that the section dedicated to textual criticism and to literary criticism as well as to the different editions of some books (pp. 313–350) is one of the most outstanding contributions of the book. But here also I am inclined to express, as a textual critic, some reservations. It seems to me to be productive and positive to build a bridge between literary criticism, that is to say, the stage of formation of a book, and textual criticism, the period of its written transmission. But it is necessary to warn that the two disciplines demand different methodologies which should not be mixed together in that dialogue. The difficulty of distinguishing in many cases whether a certain variant dates back to the period of textual transmission, or rather belongs to the period of literary formation of the book, is admitted. But, in my understanding, all of the modifications or variants that are not mere palaeographical errors are attributed with excessive ease to a different literary stratum. In this way, the process of textual transmission is minimized, overlooking the existence of ideological variants and the creative activity of many copyists at least in the first

2000) 41–57; (3) a third view sees in MT and the Vorlage of LXX two distinct literary forms derived from a common source and developed in parallel; e.g. J. Böseneker, *Text und Redaktion: Untersuchungen zum hebräischen und griechischen Text von 1 Könige 1–11* (Ph.D. diss., Rostock, 2000); H. J. Stipp, *Elischa – Propheten – Gottesmänner: Die Kompositionsgeschichte des Elischa zyklus und verwandter Texte, rekonstruiert auf der Basis von Text- und Literarkritik zu 1 Kön 20.22 und 2 Kön 2–7* (ATAT 24; St. Ottilien: EOS, 1987); (4) a fourth view judges that the Vorlage of the LXX attests a majority literary form that is older than that represented by MT; e.g. Anneli Aejmelaeus, “David’s Return to Ziklag: A Problem of Textual History in 1 Samuel 30:1,” in *XII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* 95–104; idem, “Lost in Reconstruction? On Hebrew and Greek Reconstructions in 2 Sam 24,” *Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* 40 (2007) 89–106; idem, “A Kingdom at Stake: Reconstructing the Old Greek—Deconstructing the *Textus Receptus*,” in *Scripture in Transition: Essays on Septuagint, Hebrew Bible, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of Raija Sollamo* (ed. Anssi Voitila and Jutta Jokiranta; Leiden: Brill, 2008) 353–66; P. Hugo, *Les deux visages d’Élie. Texte massorétique et Septante dans l’histoire la plus ancienne du texte de 1 R 18–19* (OBO 217; Fribourg: Academic Press/Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006) 85–113; A. Schenker, *Septante et Texte massorétique dans l’histoire la plus ancienne du texte de 1Rois 2–14* (CahRB 48; Paris: Gabalda, 2000); idem, *Älteste Textgeschichte der Königsbücher: Die hebräische Vorlage der ursprünglichen Septuaginta als älteste Textform der Königsbücher* (OBO 199; Fribourg: Academic Press/Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004). See P. Hugo, “Text History as a Research Tool: On Literary Development in the Books of Kings: The Case of 1 Kgs 19 MT and LXX” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the SBL, San Diego, 2007).

⁷⁸ Tov, “The Nature of the Large-Scale Differences Between the LXX and MT S T V, Compared with Similar Evidence in Other Sources” 127. See also Natalio Fernández Marcos, “The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Judges,” in *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible: The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered* (SCS 52; ed. Adrian Schenker; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003) 1–16; and Kristin de Troyer, *Rewriting the Sacred Text: What the Old Greek Texts Tell Us About the Literary Growth of the Bible* (SBL Text-Critical Studies 4; Atlanta: SBL, 2003) 29–58.

period of said transmission, that is to say, forgetting that the period of transmission also meant a process of hermeneutical appropriation of the text. With excessive frequency each omission in an ancient witness (pp. 344–348) is interpreted as belonging to a different literary stratum. But, what should be said about the accidents of textual transmission? The biblical manuscripts are plagued with omissions of this kind; in some cases the reason for the omission is clear, but there are many other changes in the process of transmission for which we cannot find a satisfactory palaeographical explanation. But this does not mean that they belong to different literary strata.

The textual critic can choose for multiple reasons, including pragmatic reasons, to publish a certain language stage, even though it may not be the oldest that can be achieved by the methods of textual criticism. But even in this case he will not be able to disregard the diachronic perspective and the connecting, if it were possible genetically, of all the witnesses of the tradition. He will have to establish the connection at which the textual witnesses meet, even in the case of having to publish them separately given the predominance of variants that are not indicative or significant for genetic and textual relationships.⁷⁹

Space and time allow only brief comments to point scholars in a direction different from the picture painted by Ulrich. The question to be faced squarely is this. If we can demonstrate that a group of real textual variants represents a different edition of a biblical book, what is the textual value of such a witness? Assured results are hardly possible with the editions and studies in hand at the present time. Nevertheless, clear guidelines and principles from the categories of repetition and resignification can give proper direction to our conceptual framework and help us carefully look at the assumptions and methodologies of those who are attempting to combine literary critical and redaction theories with textual criticism.

(1) It is possible for a text to be resignified in the process of transmission.⁸⁰ Therefore, when the Septuagint agrees with a Hebrew text from Qumran, this may mean nothing more than that it is a translation of a resignified text, not a better text. On the other side, the MT may be the resignified text. Yet in his analysis of the large-scale differences between LXX and MT, Tov shows, at the very least, that the arguments for a Maccabean dating of the MT are one-sided.⁸¹

(2) It is possible for a text to be resignified in the process of translation,⁸² or it is possible for a translation to be resignified. Thus, the LXX may entail

⁷⁹ Natalio Fernández Marcos, "Review of *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* by Emanuel Tov (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992)," in *Revue de Qumran* 62/16/2 (1993) 306–8. Translation by Jason Parry and approved by N. Fernández Marcos.

⁸⁰ On agreements between LXX, Qumran, and the Samaritan Pentateuch, see Stefan Schorch, "The Septuagint and the Vocalization of the Hebrew Text of the Torah," in *XII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Leiden, 2004* (SCS 54; ed. Melvin K. H. Peters; Atlanta: SBL, 2006) 53.

⁸¹ Emanuel Tov, "The Nature of the Large-Scale Differences Between the LXX and MT S T V, Compared with Similar Evidence in Other Sources," in *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible: The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered* (SCS 52; ed. Adrian Schenker; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003) 121–44, esp. 142.

⁸² Turkanik, in a recent doctoral dissertation, argues that many differences between the Gamma-Gamma section of 3 Reigns LXX and 1 Kings MT are due to resignification, that is, they are issues

a resignification involving one or two stages. De Troyer has shown that the OG of Esther is a resignification of a Hebrew text and the final chapter of the Alpha Text of Esther is a resignification of a Greek Translation.⁸³

(3) It is possible that the parent text behind the LXX represents an earlier stage. This does not automatically mean a superior text. The biographical notes in the book of Jeremiah clearly indicate that the work was rewritten several times. The book was sent to the exiles in Babylon, but Jeremiah himself migrated to Egypt. This history in itself suggests that perhaps the version in Egypt is not the canonical version in the library authorized by Ezra and Nehemiah.⁸⁴

of translation rather than of different text traditions. See Andrzej Szymon Turkanik, "Issues in Text and Translation Technique in the Gamma-Gamma Section of 3 Reigns (1 Kings)," *TynBul* 55 (2004) 157–60 for a summary of his dissertation completed at the University of Cambridge in 2002.

⁸³ As examples, de Troyer, *Rewriting the Sacred Text*, offers the OG of Esther as a resignification of a Hebrew text and the final chapter of the Alpha Text of Esther as a resignification of a Greek translation.

⁸⁴ Recent essays by Emanuel Tov, "The Nature of the Large-Scale Differences Between the LXX and MT S T V, Compared with Similar Evidence in Other Sources," in *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible: The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered* (SCS 52; ed. Adrian Schenker; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003) 121–44; and idem, "The Septuagint as a Source for the Literary Analysis of Hebrew Scripture," in *Exploring the Origins of the Bible: Canon Formation in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective* (ed. Craig A. Evans and Emanuel Tov; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008) 31–56, only attempt to provide a brief overview and summary. Nevertheless, he presents as established fact the view that the shorter LXX Jeremiah is an earlier edition, while that of MT is a later edition which "added various new ideas" (p. 126). Tov discussed this problem in detail in his doctoral dissertation; see E. Tov, *The Septuagint Translation of Jeremiah and Baruch – A Discussion of an Early Revision of the LXX of Jeremiah 29–52 and Baruch 1:1–3:8* (HSM 8; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976); idem, "The Characterization of the Additional Layer of the Masoretic Text of Jeremiah," *Erlsr* 26 (1999) 55–63; idem, "Exegetical Notes on the Hebrew Vorlage of the Septuagint of Jeremiah 27 (34)," in *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint* (ed. E. Tov; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 315–32; and idem, "The Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah in Light of Its Textual History," in *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint* (ed. E. Tov; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 363–84. See also Young-Jin Min, "The Minuses and Pluses of the LXX Translation of Jeremiah as Compared with the Massoretic Text: Their Classification and Possible Origins" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1977). Support for Tov's view is found, e.g., in studies by P.-M. Bogaert, "La *vetus latina* de Jérémie: texte très court, témoin de la plus ancienne Septante et d'une forme plus ancienne de l'hébreu (Jer 39 et 52)," in *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible: The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered* (SCS 52; ed. Adrian Schenker; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003) 51–82; and Adrian Schenker, "Est-ce que le livre de Jérémie fut publié dans une édition refondue au 2^e siècle? La multiplicité textuelle peut-elle co-exister avec l'édition unique d'un livre biblique?" in *Un Carrefour dans l'histoire de la Bible: Du texte à la théologie au II^e siècle avant J.-C.* (OBO 233; ed. Innocent Himbaza and Adrian Schenker; Fribourg: Academic Press, 2008) 58–74. Schenker argues that the Teacher of Righteousness could authorize a revision of Jeremiah = MT while the previous version (= LXX) still circulated. Yet recent studies on LXX Jeremiah reveal the complexity of the textual transmission of Jeremiah and show that this knotty problem is far from solved: Sven Soderlund, *The Greek Text of Jeremiah: A Revised Hypothesis* (JSOTSup 47; Sheffield: JSOT, 1985); Louis Stulman, *The Other Text of Jeremiah: A Reconstruction of the Hebrew Text Underlying the Greek Version of the Prose Sections of Jeremiah With English Translation* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985); H.-J. Stipp, *Das masoretische und alexandrinische Sondergut des Jeremiabuches – Textgeschichtlicher Rang, Eigenarten, Triebkräfte* (OBO 136; Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires/Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994). J. Lundbom has also done extensive research and claims that 1,700 of the 2,700

(4) *Aristeas*, a work from 150 BC that purports to relate the origins of the Septuagint, is, in fact, propaganda to authenticate the Greek Version in regard to the character of the translation and the sources used. Standards derived from the textual criticism of Homer required the assertion that the most authoritative sources had been used.⁸⁵ In reality, they may have used manuscripts outside the circle of temple scribes characterized by resignification rather than repetition.⁸⁶ We cannot *a priori* assume that an earlier edition or an older text is better. It may be a resignified text. To be sure, there are passages where the tradition in MT is poor and other witnesses may be better. But we have to show first that these witnesses are more along the lines of repetition than resignification. The history of the textual transmission is highly complex, and we are only beginning to sort it out. In any case, we need not think that the LXX constitutes evidence that our Hebrew text on the whole does not go back to an early and fairly pristine source.

V. CONCLUSION

An alternative proposal for the reconstruction of the history of the text better corresponds to the data and is more plausible. Up until the fall of

words by which LXX Jeremiah is shorter than MT could be explained by haplography—a problem to be expected in the transmission of a text whose chief literary feature is repetition; see J. Lundbom, “Haplography in the Hebrew *Vorlage* of Septuagint Jeremiah” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the SBL, San Antonio, 22 November, 2004); and David Noel Freedman and Jack R. Lundbom, “Haplography in Jeremiah 1–20,” *ErIsr* 26 (1999) 28*–38*. Two doctoral students working under A. Pietersma at the University of Toronto did further research: Marc Saunders and Tony S. L. Michael. Michael suggested from his studies that the LXX Jeremiah belongs more to the classification of a resignified text (private communication). A. Pietersma, “Greek Jeremiah and the Land of Azazel,” in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint, Presented to Eugene Ulrich* (VTSup 101; ed. Peter W. Flint, Emanuel Tov, and James C. VanderKam; Leiden: Brill, 2006) 403–13, offers good evidence that differences between LXX and MT may be translational rather than textual. See also A. Pietersma, “Of Translation and Revision: From Greek Isaiah to Greek Jeremiah,” in a forthcoming *Festschrift* edited by Michael van der Meer and Wido Th. van Peursen, where Tov’s hypothesis of revision in Greek Jeremiah 29–52 has been falsified and in fact may point to a new hypothesis of contextual accommodation and exegesis.

⁸⁵ See especially Sylvie Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria: A Study in the Narrative of the Letter of Aristeas* (New York: Routledge, 2003). It is unlikely that *Aristeas* § 30 is acknowledging a pluriform textual situation as Armin Lange claims; see Armin Lange, “Textual Standardization in Egyptian Judaism and in the Letter of Aristeas” (paper submitted to Die Septuaginta: Texte, Theologien und Einflüsse: Internationale Konferenz zur Septuaginta – Wuppertal, Germany, July 24–27, 2008); so Benjamin G. Wright, III, personal communication. Rather, Aristarchus’s edition of Homer motivated the defense of the sources used for the Greek Translation. Lange’s attempt to demonstrate a pluriform textuality from the Fouad Papyri is also flawed. For a better analysis, see John W. Wevers, “The Earliest Witness to the LXX Deuteronomy,” *CBQ* 39 (1977) 240–44.

⁸⁶ See Stefan Schorch, “The Septuagint and the Vocalization of the Hebrew Text of the Torah,” in *XII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Leiden, 2004* (SBLSCS 54; ed. Melvin K. H. Peters; Atlanta: SBL, 2006) 41–54. From a close comparison of MT, LXX, and Samaritan Pentateuch, Schorch concludes that the LXX translators were dependent on parabiblical traditions in their vocalization of the consonantal text. See also Bruce K. Waltke and Michael P. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990) 28, who concludes that the LXX translators lacked an oral reading tradition; similarly, James Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968) 209.

Jerusalem, Judaism was highly variegated, and textual transmission answers to a broad continuum of texts ranging from repetition to resignification. Scribes in the circle of the temple nearly always preferred texts representing repetition rather than resignified texts.⁸⁷ After the fall of Jerusalem, in the Hebrew textual transmission there was only repetition and no longer any resignification. This gives the impression that the text was standardized at this time, but, in fact, this is an incorrect conclusion. Let me be absolutely clear: the consensus view that the text was standardized in the first century AD is wrong. Rather, what was dominant before the fall in terms of repetition, was likewise dominant after the fall—the proto-MT. Since there was no longer any resignification, it only appears that the text is now standard and not before this time. Two important reasons support this reconstruction. First, after the destruction of Jerusalem, Judaism was no longer variegated but rather dominated by one sect, the Pharisees, the precursors of the rabbinic tradition. Their approach to the text restricted transmission to repetition. Second, the period from the first to fourth centuries AD is the period in which the Aramaic Targums were developed. From the description above, we can see that they exhibit exactly the same types of resignification that we see earlier at Qumran. Thus, there was resignification after the fall of Jerusalem, but it was in Aramaic and in the targumic tradition and therefore separate from the textual transmission of the Hebrew text.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Recently, Emanuel Tov has argued that the collection known as the MT is coincidental in nature. He asserts that this is “more pronounced in the translations than in the Hebrew MT. We do not claim that the collections show no planning at all. We merely suggest that, in addition to visible elements of planning, we should also recognize many unplanned elements.” See E. Tov, “The Coincidental Textual Nature of the Collections of Ancient Scriptures” (paper presented at XIXth Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament, Ljubljana, 2007, July 16, 2007); similarly, idem, “What is the Septuagint?” (paper presented to Die Septuaginta: Texte, Theologien und Einflüsse: Internationale Konferenz zur Septuaginta – Wuppertal, Germany 24. bis 27. Juli 2008). This description, however, does not aptly suit the evidence. The collections we have were always the result of conscious choices. Martin Abegg has shown, for example, in a recent reconsideration of 1QIsa^a and 1QIsa^b that the dominant and mainstream text constantly represents choices from available manuscripts of texts representing repetition rather than resignification. See Martin G. Abegg, Jr., “1QIsa^a and 1QIsa^b: A Rematch,” in *The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (The Bible as Book Series; ed. Edward D. Herbert and Emanuel Tov; Bristol: British Library & Oak Knoll, 2002) 221–28. Admittedly, the choices available were poor at times, but cannot be best described as coincidental and unplanned. Even in the translations, they were the result of groups with interests at stake in the method of translation.

⁸⁸ After presentation at the plenary session of the annual meeting of the ETS, Stefan Schorch kindly pointed out that Abraham Tal had already propounded a similar view. See Abraham Tal, “Is There a Raison d’Être for an Aramaic Targum in a Hebrew-Speaking Society?” *REJ* 160 (2001) 357–78. Tal’s argument may be summarized as follows. The traditional view considering the Aramaic Targum as a social necessity aimed at the masses that no longer understood Hebrew was in active use among the common people by the time the first Targum was conceived. Tal submits the thesis that the Onqelos-type Targum was not destined to expose the ignorant masses to the Law, whose language was inaccessible to them. It was rather directed against the tendency to “modernize” the text of the holy writ in accordance with contemporary linguistic habits and ideological trends. As we learn from the DSS, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and even rabbinical testimonies, such harmonizing exemplars of the Law existed in the first centuries AD. The use of the Targum along with the original made possible the modernization without altering the sacred text.