STEPS TO A NEW EDITION
OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

TEXT-CRITICAL STUDIES

Michael W. Holmes, General Editor

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STEPS TO A NEW EDITION
OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

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The page that is destined for immortality can traverse the fire of textual errors, approximate translations, inattentive readings, and incomprehension.

— Jorge Luis Borges, "The Superstitious Ethics of the Reader"

Editors make, as well as mend.

— D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*

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To the editors and advisors of the HBCE,
with gratitude.

Contents

Foreword

Scholarship is an obsession and a labor of love. Two decades ago I formulated a plan to create a new critical edition of the Hebrew Bible. Much to my surprise, a number of excellent scholars agreed to take part, and the first volume of this series has appeared: Michael V. Fox's superb edition of Proverbs. Along the way the project gained a number of eminent critics, including Emanuel Tov and Hugh Williamson, names to conjure with in my profession. As a result of conversations among our editors and advisers and inspired by the precise arguments of our critics, the conceptual underpinnings and practices of the project have developed into a finely-grained structure.

The essays in this book are steps along the path of the new edition, detailing its theoretical and practical aims and exploring the wider conceptual and disciplinary horizons within which this project finds its conditions of possibility. Some of the essays are exploratory; all of them attempt to advance the status quo of the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible. As a whole, they work—from various angles—to increase the analytical precision and the conceptual scope and self-awareness of the discipline. Textual criticism has a distinguished genealogy, and it is up to its current practitioners to keep it sharp, alive, and compelling. Otherwise, the barbarians win, and philology—the love of words—will die an unlamented death. But philology has life left, at least so I dream, and other old philologists, from Qimḥi to Cappel to Nietzsche, would surely agree.

Good scholarship is predicated on conversation among specialists. This is certainly true of the "steps" in this book. I owe a debt of gratitude to the editors and advisers of the HBCE project, particularly those who patiently commented on earlier versions of these chapters or otherwise helped my understanding of particular puzzles: Annelie Aejmelaeus, Sidnie White Crawford, Michael V. Fox, Leonard Greenspoon, Jan Joosten, Gary Knoppers, Michaël van der Meer, Andrés Piquer Otero, Bas ter haar Romeny, Julio Trebolle, Alexander Rofé, Ronald Troxel, Zipora Talshir, and Yair

Zakovitch. Outside of the charmed circle of HBCE, I wish to thank Hindy Najman, Armin Lange, Yosef Ofer, Annette Schellenberg, Konrad Schmid, Niek Veldhuis, and Molly Zahn for their guidance on various matters. There are many others whom I ought to thank for stimulating conversations about critical editions, including my friends Michael Segal, Eibert Tigchelaar, Emanuel Tov, and Hugh Williamson. Thanks also to John Kutsko and Bob Buller for taking on the HBCE project with energy and intelligence. I wish to thank the Norma and Sam Dabby Chair in Hebrew Bible and Jewish Studies for research support.

Finally, my thanks and love to Ann, Ed, and Nat, who don't have to read this book.

Earlier versions of some of these essays were presented at the Universiteit Leiden, the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, the University of Toronto, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, and meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature and the International Organization for the Society of Old Testament Studies. I am grateful for these opportunities to engage in global conversation outside of my usual haunts.

Most of the chapters based on publications have been thoroughly revised, a few only lightly. The previous publications are:

Chapters 1 and 2: "The Oxford Hebrew Bible: Prologue to a New Critical Edition." *VT* 58 (2008): 324–51; and "The Oxford Hebrew Bible: Its Aims and a Response to Criticisms." *HBAI* 2 (2013): 63–99.

Chapter 3: "The Idea of a Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible: A Genealogy." *HBAI* 3 (2014): 392–423.

Chapter 4: "What Is a Biblical Book?" Pages 283–302 in *From Author to Copyist: Essays on the Composition, Redaction, and Transmission of the Hebrew Bible in Honor of Zipi Talshir*. Edited by Cana Werman. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015.

Chapter 5: "The Epistemology of Textual Criticism." In *Reading the Bible in Ancient Traditions and Modern Editions: Studies in Textual and Reception History in Honor of Peter W. Flint*. Edited by Daniel K. Falk, Kyung S. Baek, and Andrew B. Perrin. Atlanta: SBL Press, forthcoming.

Chapter 7: "Assessing the Text-Critical Theories of the Hebrew Bible after Qumran." Pages 281–302 in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*.

Edited by Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins. Oxford Handbooks. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Chapters 8 and 9: "(Proto-)Masoretic Text and Ancient Texts Close to MT (Pentateuch)" and "Problems of Classification and Other Texts (Pentateuch)." Pages 59–84 in *The Hebrew Bible*. Vol. 1 of *In Textual History of the Bible*. Edited by Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov. Leiden: Brill, 2016.

Chapter 10: "The Contribution of Frank Moore Cross to Textual Criticism." *BASOR* 372 (2014): 175–82.

Chapter 11: "The Dream of a Perfect Text: Textual Criticism and Biblical Inerrancy in Early Modern Europe." Pages 542–66 in *Sybils, Scriptures, and Scrolls: John Collins at Seventy*. Edited by Joel Baden, Hindy Najman, and Eibert Tigchelaar. Leiden: Brill, 2016.

Chapter 12: "The Untimeliness of Biblical Philology." *Philology* 1 (2015): 9–28.

Chapter 13: "From Polyglot to Hypertext." Pages 19–33 in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Editions*. Edited by Andrés Piquer Otero and Pablo A. Torijano Morales. Leiden: Brill, 2016.

Appendix: "Comparing Critical Editions: BHQ Proverbs and HBCE Proverbs." *ZAW* 128 (2016).

Abbreviations

A	Aleppo codex
Ag. Ap.	Josephus, *Against Apion*
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJSL	*American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*
AmSci	*American Scientist*
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
ARevEnt	*Annual Review of Entomology*
Ant.	Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
B	London Pentateuch Codex (British Library Or. 4445)
b.	Babylonian Talmud
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BCCT	Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition
BCLSB	*Bulletin de la Classe des Lettres et Sciences morales et politiques de l'Académie Royale de Belgique*
BDB	*A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament: With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic*. Edited by Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. Oxford: Clarendon, 1907
Ber.	Berakot
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BHK	*Biblia Hebraica*, ed. R. Kittel
BHQ	Biblia Hebraica Quinta
BHRef	Bibliotheca Humanistica & Reformatorica
BHS	*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*
Bib	*Biblica*
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation Series
BICS	*Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*

BJRL	*Bulletin of John Rylands University Library of Manchester*
BJSUCSD	Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California, San Diego
BRSS	Berkeley Religious Studies Series
BTT	Bible de Tous les Temps
ByzZ	*Byzantine Zeitschrift*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
C	Cairo Codex of the Prophets
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBH	Classical Biblical Hebrew
CD	Cairo Genizah copy of the Damascus Covenant
ConBOT	Coniectanea Biblica: Old Testament Series
CP	*Classical Philology*
CRAI	*Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CritInq	*Critical Inquiry*
CSSA	Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology
CTHP	Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy
DCLS	Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Studies
Dial.	Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DSD	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
EDSS	*Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Edited by Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam. 2 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000
EHMF	Early Hebrew Manuscripts in Facsimile
EJL	Early Judaism and Its Literature
ErIsr	*Eretz-Israel*
ʿErub.	ʿErubin
ETLC	Editorial Theory and Literary Criticism
f	feminine
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GBS	Guides to Biblical Scholarship
Gen. Rab.	Genesis Rabbah
GHand	Gorgias Handbooks

Giṭ.	Gittin
harm(s).	harmonization(s)
HBAI	*Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel*
HBCE	The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition
Hen	*Henoch*
HHS	Harvard Historical Studies
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUBP	Hebrew University Bible Project
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
HumLov	*Humanistica Lovaniensia*
Hypoth.	Philo, *Hypothetica*
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IJAL	*International Journal of American Linguistics*
IJCT	*International Journal of the Classical Tradition*
ILP	International Library of Philosophy
ISBL	Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature
J	Yahwist, a hypothetical source in the Pentateuch
JAJ	*Journal of Ancient Judaism*
JAJSup	Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JCPS	Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series
JHI	*Journal of the History of Ideas*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JLC	Jewish Literature and Culture
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism.
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
Jub.	Jubilees
Ketub.	Ketubbot
L	Leningrad (St. Petersburg) Codex
LAI	Library of Ancient Israel
LBH	Late Biblical Hebrew
LEC	Library of Early Christianity

LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
LXX	Septuagint
m	masculine
MasS	Masoretic Studies
MdB	Le Monde de la Bible
MedEnc	*Medieval Encounters: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Culture in Confluence and Dialogue*
Meg.	Megillah
Menaḥ.	Menaḥot
MG	*Materia Giudaica*
MMCH	Manuscrits médiévaux en caractères hébraïques
MS	Manuscript
MSU	Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens
MT	Masoretic Text
NTTSD	New Testament Tools, Studies, and Documents
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OCM	Oxford Classical Monographs
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
OG	Old Greek
OrT	*Oral Tradition*
OSHT	Oxford Studies in Historical Theology
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Old Testament Studies
OtSt	*Oudtestamentische Studiën*
P	Priestly, a hypothetical source in the Pentateuch
PCA	*Proceedings of the Classical Association*
Ph&Lit	*Philosophy and Literature*
Philology	*Philology: An International Journal on the Evolution of Cultures, Languages and Texts*
QHenoch	Quaderni di Henoch
Questes	*Questes: Revue pluridisciplinaire d'études médiévales*
Rab	Second Rabbinic Bible, 1524–1525
RBL	*Review of Biblical Literature*
RBS	Resources for Biblical Study
RCHL	*Revue critique d'histoire et de littérature*
RevQ	*Revue de Qumran*
s	singular

S	Damascus Pentateuch Codex (Sassoon 507 = National Library of Israel MS Heb. 24°5702)
S&T	Studies and Texts (Philip W. Lown Institute of Advanced Judaic Studies)
Šabb.	Šabbat
SANER	Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records
SBib	*Studies in Bibliography*
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBOT	Sacred Books of the Old Testament
SBPC	Studies in Book and Print Culture
SCL	Sather Classical Lectures
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SDSS	Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature
Sefarad	*Sefarad: revista de estudios hebraicos, sefardíes y de Oriente Próximo*
Šeq.	Sheqalim
SHCT	Studies in the History of Christian Thought
SJ	Studia Judaica
SJOT	*Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*
SLCTI	Scientific and Learned Cultures and Their Institutions
SP	Samaritan Pentateuch
SSD	Studies in Social Discontinuity
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
TC	*TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*
TCSt	Text-Critical Studies
TCT	Textual Criticism and the Translator
TECA	*Testimonianze Editoria, Cultura, Arte*
Text	*Textus*
TiLSM	Trends in Linguistics: Studies and Monographs
TISEJ	Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry
TJ	*Trinity Journal*
TSAJ	Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism
V	Vatican Pentateuch Codex (ebr. 448)
var.	variant reading
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WF	Wolfenbütteler Forschungen
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

Yad.   Yadayim
ZAW   *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZWT   *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*

Introduction

In the post-Qumran era, the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible has become a sophisticated and conceptually rich field of inquiry. The biblical text is no longer seen as a unitary object but is irreducibly plural, dispersed in time and space. The study of textual history and textual change now includes the hermeneutics of ancient scribal traditions. The idea of a critical edition of the Hebrew Bible is, as we will see, a topic of intense debate. Issues of canonicity and textual authority intersect with analyses of biblical, parabiblical, and exegetical texts. The proliferation of variant readings in the Qumran texts raises difficult questions of filiation and innovation. There is little in the field that is uncontested, including its operational concepts such as "text," "edition," "author," and "error." For a book with the theological gravity of the Hebrew Bible, each of these terms has a history of contestation, which includes sectarian accusations of heresy and insanity. To the surprise of its practitioners, the field of textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, as currently constituted, is far from dull.

Cesare Segre describes textual criticism as "a meeting place of logic and intuition, of rigor and flexibility."[1] It is a discourse that requires erudition and imagination, each yoked to the other and focused on particular cases. It is a unique conjunction of the empirical and the abstract, of friable parchment with curls of ink and the semiotics of prose, prophecy, and poetry. Moreover, the *realia* of ancient manuscripts is counterbalanced by the vast absence of lost texts. In its staunch insistence on the historicity of texts and language, even as their traces are dispersed and multiple, textual criticism entails a nexus of concepts that challenge the habitual assumptions of biblical scholarship, including its modern and postmodern varieties. As we will see, textual criticism has been a driver of innovative schol-

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1. Cesare Segre, "Problemi teorici e pratici della critica testuale," in *Opera Critica*, ed. Alberto Conte and Andrea Mirabile (Milan: Mondadori, 2014), 356: "La critica testuale è un luogo d'incontro di logica e intuizione, di rigore e duttilità."

arship since the Renaissance, and in the post-Qumran era it is revitalizing the field of biblical studies once more.

Modern textual criticism studies the whole life of texts, including all their discernible transformations through time. Segre has formulated a concept of transmitted texts as diasystems (a term borrowed from the study of language contact).[2] At any given time, a text consists of several systems in contact: that of the first authorial or published edition and those of subsequent scribes. It is a superposition of writers and copyists in a potentially endless series. The object of textual criticism is to eluci-date each system *and* the dialectic among them. In our case, this involves multiple editions, other exegetical, linguistic, and theological revisions, the reading tradition(s) transmitted in the systems of vocalization, accen-tuation, and annotation, and the interrelationships among these textual/ semiotic systems. Synchrony and diachrony are interwoven in this pursuit, as they are in most historical inquiries.

In this book I advocate a new text-critical project that includes this range of inquiries, The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition (HBCE). This project will produce eclectic editions of each book of the Hebrew Bible, accompanied by extensive annotations, introductions, and text-critical commentary. The first volume has recently appeared: Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition with Introduction and Textual Commentary*, HBCE 1 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015). As this volume demonstrates, the the-oretical and practical gain of this type of critical edition is substantial.

A project of this scope has many roots and precursors in the his-tory of textual scholarship on the Hebrew Bible. Thinking through the issues involved in a new edition and responding to serious criticisms has led me to explore the intellectual genealogy of the discipline. There is much to learn from the textual critics of the pre-Qumran era, includ-ing both the well-known and the forgotten. In several of the following chapters I situate the HBCE project within the genealogy of the disci-pline by exploring the conceptual orientations and choices of past schol-arship. In some respects, the HBCE project sheds a different light on the past, highlighting some forgotten moves as significant and some well-known moves as flawed or unnecessarily limiting. The HBCE project, in this sense, reconfigures the past textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible

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2. Cesare Segre, "Critique textuelle, théorie des ensembles et diasystème," *BCLSB* 62 (1976): 279–92.

by its shift of concepts and procedures. Textual criticism, which strives, as Paolo Trovato states, "to preserve part of the memory of our past,"[3] changes its relationship to the past even as it seeks to restore it.

Before moving to the detailed discussions in the chapters, I wish to discuss two examples of textual complexity that will, I hope, position the HBCE project in the light of the *longue durée* of textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible. These examples—from Genesis and Joshua—illustrate the philological desire to restore or reconstitute lost readings based on close analysis of the textual witnesses. These examples show that, whether we acknowledge it or not, pondering the consequences of textual change is a core activity of biblical scholarship. The HBCE project is, in this respect, not a departure from past scholarship but a continuation of the large-scale trajectory of biblical philology.

<p align="center">Restoring Genesis 4:8: What Cain Said</p>

Something is awry in the MT of Gen 4:8. The text in most editions reads:

<div dir="rtl">

וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל־הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיְהִי בִּהְיוֹתָם בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיָּקָם קַיִן אֶל־הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ׃

</div>

Cain said to Abel, his brother, and when they were in the field, Cain rose up and slew Abel, his brother.[4]

The problem is that Cain does not say anything to Abel. This problem has perplexed scholars for millennia. When Jerome set about translating Genesis into Latin around 390 CE, he noted that the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint have a fuller reading here, נלכה השדה and Διέλθωμεν εἰς τὸ πεδίον (both: "Let us go out to the field"). Since Jerome held that the traditional Hebrew text (the consonantal MT of his time) was the unchanging *Hebraica veritas*, he initially dismissed the fuller reading. In his *Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim*, he writes: "What is found in our scroll [LXX], and in that of the Samaritans, namely, 'Let us go out into the

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3. Paolo Trovato, *Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Lachmann's Method: A Non-standard Handbook of Genealogical Textual Criticism in the Age of Post-structuralism, Cladistics, and Copy-Text*, Storie e linguaggi 7 (Padova: Libreriauniversitaria, 2014), 13.

4. Unless otherwise stated, all translations are my own.

field,' is unnecessary."[5] However, when he made his translation of Genesis, he included a version of the fuller reading: *egrediamur foras* ("Let us go outside"). Evidently, Jerome changed his mind about the text of this verse, reaching around the *Hebraica veritas* to the LXX and SP.[6]

The medieval Masoretes were also divided about how to treat this verse. Although the oldest Masoretic codices with this section (L and C3, eleventh century CE) present it as a single unit, many later Masoretic codices insert a section division—a *pisqah beʾemṣaʿ pasuq* ("section division in the middle of a verse")—after the first הבל אחיו ("Abel, his brother"), at the point where Cain should say something. As Emanuel Tov notes, this inner-verse division "signifies a break in content."[7] Here it signifies a textual-grammatical gap, which this Masoretic tradition indicates with blank text. The oldest dated codex known to me with this feature

is Bibliothèque Nationale de France MS Hébreu 1, written in 1286 CE. (fig. 1).[8]

Many other codices and printed editions have this visual gap, including the Second Rabbinic Bible, edited by Jacob Ben Ḥayyim in 1524–1525. Ben Ḥayyim includes a Masoretic note (*Masora parva*) in the margin by this *pisqah*: ח"כ פסו' פסקי' במצו' פסוק ("28 verses with a *pisqah beʾemṣaʿ pasuq*").[9] This note
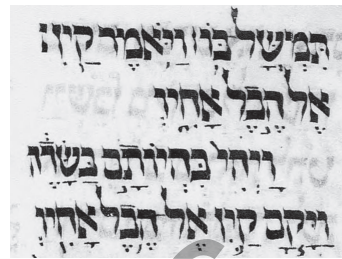

Figure 1. MS Hébreu 1 (1286 CE) at Gen 4:8. Source: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

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5. *Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, trans. C. T. R. Hayward, OECS (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 34; Jerome, *Quaestiones Hebraicae in Libro Geneseos*, ed. Paul de Lagarde (Leipzig: Teubner, 1868), 9: "superfluum ergo est quod in Samaritanorum et nostro volumine reperitur *transcamus in campum*." Origen also noted that this reading is not in MT, but according to the Jews it is ἐν τῷ ἀποκρύφῳ ("in the apocrypha"); Adam Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones hebraicae in Genesim*, OCM (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 100–101.

6. See Hayward, *Jerome*, 122.

7. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 50.

8. Christian D. Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible* (London: Trinitarian Biblical Society, 1897), 771; Bibliothèque Nationale de France, http://tinyurl.com/SBL7010k. The collations of Ginsburg, Kennicott, and de Rossi are not entirely reliable on this feature.

9. Moshe H. Goshen-Gottstein, *Biblia Rabbinica: A Reprint of the 1525 Venice Edition*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Makor, 1972), ad loc.

means that Masoretic scholars had counted and recorded this verse within this category of textual phenomena. In sum, the lacuna in the verse was explicitly marked in one Masoretic tradition and passed over silently in another. There was apparently dissent among the Masoretic scholars over how to respond to this textual problem.

The medieval Jewish commentators were also divided. David Qimḥi quoted here the Palestinian Targum (Targum Yerushalmi), which supplies a lengthy exchange between Cain and Abel, prefaced by Cain's invitation to Abel, קום ותא ניפוק לאפי ברא ("Come, let us go out to the open field").[10] This Aramaic reading is equivalent to LXX and SP and presumably relies on a Hebrew text with this reading. Qimḥi's quotation of the Palestinian Targum here arguably influenced Nachmanides's comment on this verse: אמר לו נצא השדה והרג אותו שם בסתר ("He said to him, 'Let us go out to the field,' and he killed him there in secret").[11] What Cain said to Abel—נצא השדה—may be Nachmanides's Hebrew retroversion of the reading in the Palestinian Targum. In any case, it approximates the reading in the Palestinian Targum, SP, LXX, and also the Syriac Peshiṭta.[12] Nachmanides is, in essence, doing textual criticism: he is seeking to solve the problem in the verse by recourse to the available textual evidence. He prefaces his restoration by saying על דעתי ("in my view"), making it clear that he is exercising his critical judgment in proposing this restoration of what Cain said. For Nachmanides, Qimḥi, the Masoretes, Jerome, and the others, the question of what Cain said to Abel is not purely a text-critical problem. It is also a historical problem, since they want to know what Cain actually said. Modern textual criticism differs by bracketing the historical question—and even the question of whether there is any history at stake—and focusing on the text as the object of inquiry. But

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10. Cited from Bar Ilan Responsa Project, http://tinyurl.com/SBL7010l. Qimḥi's quotation is close to the wording of the Fragment Targums P and V, איתא ינפק תרינן לאפי ברא ("Come let us both go out to the open field"); Michael L. Klein, *The Fragment-Targums of the Pentateuch*, 2 vols., AnBib 76 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1980), 1:47, 128.

11. Cited from Menachem Cohen, ed., *Mikra'ot Gedolot Ha-Keter: Genesis* (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1997–1999), 1:62. My thanks to Itamar Kislev for alerting me to the literary relationship between Nachmanides and Qimḥi, which was established by Hillel Novetsky.

12. The Peshiṭta reading, ܢܘܕܐ ܠܥܘܡܩܐ ("Let us go to the valley"), reflects the tradition that Adam and Eve live on a mountain and Cain lures Abel to the valley below; see Sebastian Brock, "Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources," *JJS* 30 (1979): 217.

the modern textualization of the Bible is not wholly discontinuous with the inquiries of premodern interpreters.[13] They too wanted to restore the lacuna in the text, and they made considerable efforts in annotation, collation, and analysis in order to gain a critical perspective on the problem and its most plausible solution. In the HBCE, we will restore this text, based on the SP, LXX, and the other textual evidence. The apparatus entry will read:[14]

> ינפק תרינן 4:8 SP G (Διέλθωμεν εἰς τὸ πεδίον) sim T^P נלכה השדה
> לאפי ברא (נוג̇א לחמדא̈) S (*egrediamur foras*) V [> M (parab,
> prps triggered by repetition of ... קין אל הבל אחיו)

The diagnosis is that a proto-MT scribe committed a visual error (parablepsis = eye-skip), leaving out these two words, perhaps triggered by the repetition of a similar sequence:

> ... ויה אחיו הבל אל קין ... ויה (השדה נלכה) אחיו הבל אל קין
> Cain to Abel, his brother, ("Let us go out to the field") … Cain to Abel, his brother

The scribe's eye may have jumped from one cluster of words to another, accidentally leaving out what Cain said to Abel. This is not a certain solution, but it makes good sense of the textual evidence.[15] Moreover, this reading provides an elegant motive for Cain's crime and his punishment. As Nachmanides noted, this invitation enables Cain to kill Abel in secret. Biblical and ancient Near Eastern law presumes that in the field there is no one to hear a victim's cry (see the similar circumstance in the law of rape in Deut 22:27). Cain's plan fails when Yahweh hears Abel's blood crying

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13. See Menachem Cohen, "The Idea of the Sanctity of the Biblical Text and the Science of Textual Criticism," in *The Bible and Us* [Hebrew], ed. Uriel Simon (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1979), 42–69; trans. Ahava Cohen and Isaac B. Gottlieb at http://tinyurl.com/SBL7010c.

14. By convention, the minor versions and other secondary witnesses are listed only where they differ from MT. These include the Targums (T^O, T^P, T^J, etc.), Vulgate (V), Peshitta (S), Aquila (α′), Symmachus (σ′), Theodotion (θ′), the Hexapla Quinta (ε′), and rewritten Bible texts such as Jubilees, Pseudo-Philo, the Temple Scroll, etc. This rule varies by book, e.g., S is a more important witness in some books.

15. Hendel, *The Text of Genesis 1–11: Textual Studies and Critical Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 46–47.

out (Gen 4:10). There was no other witness to the crime, but Cain had not counted on a supernatural witness. Yahweh's report that the earth "opened its mouth to take your brother's blood from your hand" (4:11) even provides a metaphorical mouth to expand the resonance of the blood's cry, with its implicit message, "violence." In the field there is no one to hear a cry, but Cain's ruse fails because Yahweh hears the postmortem cry. The punishment then fits the crime. Because he spilled his brother's blood on the soil, Cain, the first tiller of the soil, is banished from the soil. Where he wanders, as he complains, anyone may kill him. Cain's terse invitation, נלכה השדה ("Let us go out to the field"), with its motive of secret murder, is punished by his wandering in a lawless place, far from the arable soil and hidden from God's face. As we see, the restoration suits the literary style and poetics of the story, and accords with the terse but resourceful diction of the J source. The literary analysis provides another level of support for the text-critical reasoning.

Restoring Joshua 21:36–37: Missing Cities

The second example is another curious problem in MT—a lacuna at Josh 21:36 in the list of Levitical cities—which also raises the issue of how best to restore the text in a critical edition. According to the context, four cities are missing.[16] Some Masoretic codices have two verses at Josh 21:36–37 that supply the missing cities. But these verses are absent from the oldest codices, including the Aleppo Codex (A), the St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad) Codex (L), and the Cairo Codex of the Prophets (C), all from the ninth–eleventh century CE. They are also absent from the Targum (Jonathan) of Joshua. A version of these two verses is in the LXX, but in Origen's Hexapla these LXX verses are marked with an obelus, indicating that they were lacking in MT. In sum, the evidence from roughly the third century CE to the thirteenth century (see below) indicates that these verses were missing in MT.

The two verses in the later MT codices are similar to the text of 1 Chr 6:63 and to LXX Josh 21:36–37. Here is a comparison of these texts, in translation, with the substantive variants italicized.

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16. Two verses in this chapter—Josh 21:7, 38 (40)—report that the priestly clan of Merari was allotted twelve cities. The former verse specifies that they are from Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. However, in the oldest MT codices, only eight cities are listed, all from Gad and Zebulun. The four cities from Reuben are lacking.

A, L, C, etc.
>

later MT codices
And from the tribe of Reuben, Bezer and its pasture lands, and
Jahaz and its pasture lands, Kedemoth and its pasture lands, and
Mephaath and its pasture lands: *four cities*.

MT and LXX 1 Chr 6:63
From the tribe of Reuben: Bezer, *in the wilderness*, and its pasture
lands, and Jahaz and its pasture lands, Kedemoth and its pasture
lands, and Mephaath and its pasture lands.

LXX Josh 21:36–37
From the tribe of Reuben, *the city of refuge for the manslayer*,
Bezer, *in the wilderness on the plain*, and its pasture lands, and
Jahaz and its pasture lands, Kedemoth and its pasture lands, and
Mephaath and its pasture lands: *four cities*.

On the basis of our current knowledge, the probable historical relationship
among these texts is as follows:[17]

1. Chronicles adapts a contemporary text of Joshua.[18]
2. Old Greek translation from a contemporary text of Joshua.[19]
3. Eye-skip in (proto-)MT Joshua, triggered by homoioteleuton (ואת
    מגרשה ערים ארבע ⌢ ואת מגרשה ערים ארבע) or homoiarkton
    (וממטה ⌢ וממטה).[20]

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17. See the thorough analysis of Dominique Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de
l'Ancien Testament*, OBO 50 (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires; Göttingen: Vanden-
hoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), 1:64–68.

18. Gary N. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, AB 12A (New York: Doubleday, 2003),
443–48.

19. See Michaël van der Meer, "Joshua," in *The T&T Clark Companion to the Sep-
tuagint*, ed. James K. Aitken, T&T Clark Companions (London: Bloomsbury, 2015),
75–88; Emanuel Tov, "The Growth of the Book of Joshua in Light of the Evidence of the
Septuagint," in *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint*, VTSup
72 (Leiden: Brill, 1999; repr., Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 385–96.

20. Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 223; Richard D. Nelson, *Joshua: A Commentary*, OTL
(Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 236.

4.   Medieval restoration based on MT Chronicles.

The last step is indicated by closeness of the text to Chronicles. As Richard Nelson cogently argues (building on the analysis of Dominique Barthélemy), "The loss was restored in some Hebrew witnesses by taking part of the corresponding text from Chronicles. This is evidenced by the absence of the tag line 'city of refuge for the killer,' the elimination of which is characteristic of the Chronicles parallel."[21] This tag line, את עיר מקלט הרצח, occurs consistently in this section of Josh 21 at verses 27 (Manasseh), 32 (Naphtali), and 36/38 (Gad). The MT plus in verses 36–37 appears to be a slightly reduced and systematized version of Chronicles (deleting במדבר, "in the wilderness," after Bezer), adapted to the context by supplying the expected count at the end, ערים ארבע ("four cities").

Once this MT plus appeared—arguably as an attempt to restore the missing text—there ensued some controversy in Masoretic circles about its authenticity.[22] Three Masoretic codices from the thirteenth century CE provide an entry into these disputes.

The earliest dated codex with these verses is the Madrid Codex (M1), written in 1280 CE, but it has a fuller text. The copyist wrote the plus quoted above with two additions: את עיר מקלט הרצח ("city of refuge for the killer") after ראובן (Reuben), and במדבר ("in the wilderness") after בצר (Bezer). These are arguably harmonizations with את עיר מקלט הרצח in Josh 21:27, 32, 36/38 and with במדבר in 1 Chr 6:63. A second hand, presumably the *naqdan*, erased את עיר מקלט הרצח and left במדבר unpointed, putting two small circles over it.[23] The resulting pointed text is the same as the plus quoted above. The erasure and pointing by the second hand indicates that the shorter plus was in the Masoretic codex that was his reference source. The plus seems to be slightly fluid, but there is already an authoritative Masoretic version of it.

A slightly later codex with this reading is the First Ibn Merwas Bible (British Library Or 2201), written in 1300 CE (fig. 2). The plus is fully

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21. Nelson, *Joshua,* 236.

22. See Ginsburg, *Introduction*, 178–80.

23. Universidad Complutense Madrid Biblioteca Digital Dioscórides, http://tinyurl.com/SBL7010m. Yosef Ofer plausibly suggests that when the *naqdan* realized the error, he had already pointed the first phrase and therefore was compelled to erase it (rather than leave it unpointed). My thanks to Ofer for sharing with me his analysis of this text and guidance on related Masoretic matters.

pointed, but it is accompanied by a marginal note: "These two verses are not written in the codex called Hilleli."[24] This note refers to a lost authoritative Masoretic codex, known only from Masoretic notes. The author of this note was keenly aware of the absence of these verses in this master codex.

Another codex from around this period has a more assertive response from the Masoretic *naqdan*. In British Library Arundel Or 16, these verses were copied but not pointed (fig. 3). A long marginal note begins: "These verses are not written here in the Codex Sinai, the Codex of Rabbi Gershom, and the other old manuscripts. I regret this, but this is not their place, for their root is in Chronicles." [25] The *naqdan* refused to point these
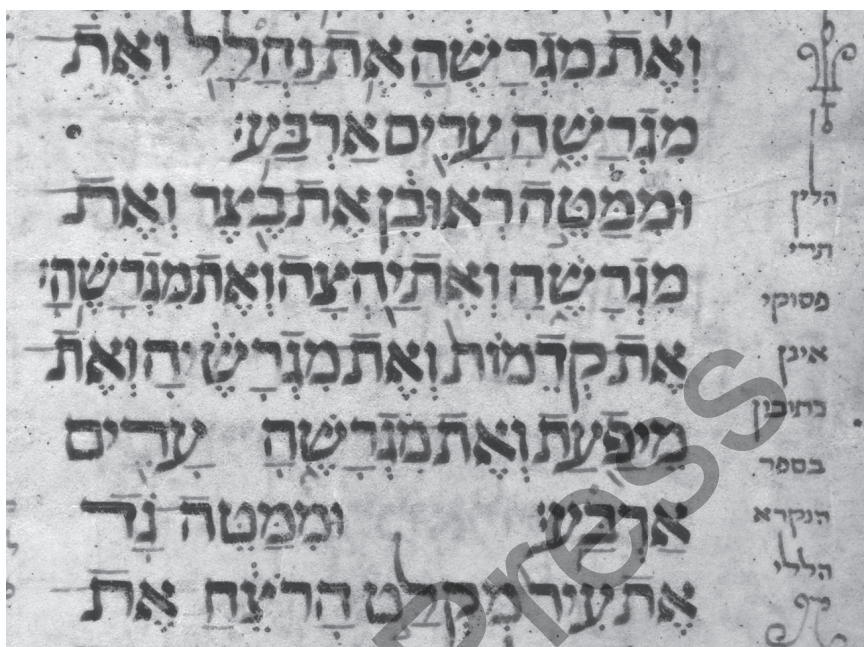

Figure 2. Or 2201 (First Ibn Merwas Bible) at Josh 21:36–37 with marginal note. Copyright: The British Library Board, Or 2201.

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24. הלין תרי פסוקי אינן כתובין בספר הנקרא הללי, British Library, http://tinyurl.com/SBL7010o; quoted in Ginsburg, *Introduction*, 178 n. 1.

25. אין ב' פסוק' הללו כתוב' בספר סיני ובספר רבי' גרשם והעתקים מספרים אחרים. ואני מתחרט בכך. אך אין זה מקומן כי אם בד"ה עיקרם, British Library, http://tinyurl.com/SBL7010p; quoted in Ginsburg, *Introduction*, 179 n. 1. This codex dates to the thirteenth century according to George Margoliouth, *Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the British Museum*, part 1 (London: British Museum, 1899), 85–86.

Figure 3. Arundel Or 16 at Josh 21:36–37 (unpointed) with marginal note. Copyright: The British Library Board, Arundel Or 16.

words because he judged them to be inauthentic based on the textual evidence. The reasoning of this medieval Masoretic scholar is essentially the same as the modern textual critic.

In his Joshua commentary (early thirteenth century), David Qimḥi notes the textual diversity in the MT codices and states his preference for the shorter text based on the evidence of "old accurate manuscript[s]" (ספר ישן מדוייק): "There are corrected manuscripts that have in them, 'And from the tribe of Reuben, Bezer and its pasture lands, and Jahaz and its pasture lands, Kedemoth and its pasture lands, and Mephaath and its pasture lands: four cities,' but I have not seen these two verses in any old accurate manuscript, only in some corrected manuscripts."[26] Qimḥi is here

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26. Qimḥi, commentary on Josh 21:7: יש ספרים מוגה בהם וממטה ראובן את בצר ואת מגרשיה את יהצה ואת מגרשיה את קדמות ואת מגרשיה ואת מופעת ואת

expressing his text-critical judgment, based on his evaluation of the manuscript evidence.

The same textual judgment was expressed by Jacob Ben Ḥayyim in the Second Rabbinic Bible. The earlier printed editions included the plus at Josh 21:36–37, but on the basis of his collation of the Masorah and his "accurate Spanish manuscripts,"[27] Ben Ḥayyim omitted them. In his marginal note, he echoes Qimḥi: "There are corrected manuscripts that include in them, 'And from the tribe of Reuben, Bezer, etc.,' but this is not found in any of the old accurate manuscripts."[28]

Perhaps surprisingly, these two verses were included—in smaller print—in Rudolf Kittel's edition of Joshua in his *Biblia Hebraica*.[29] Kittel used the Second Rabbinic Bible as his base text, but he disagreed with Ben Ḥayyim's decision to omit this text. More surprisingly, Kittel retained this text—still in small print—when he switched over (at the urging of Paul Kahle) to the Leningrad Codex as his base text in the third edition.[30] In *BHS* these two verses remain, with the following explanation in the apparatus: v 36.37 > LC Mss 𝕭𝕿 (Syh c ob); exstat in mlt Mss Edd 𝔊𝕿^Mss𝕭 cf 1 Ch 6,63 sq; 𝔖 tr post 34a.

All of this is surprising, because the *BHS* is a diplomatic edition featuring a single Masoretic manuscript, L. The editors state in the preface: "We have thought it best to reproduce the text of the latest hand of L with close fidelity. We have accordingly refrained from 'removing obvious scribal errors.'"[32]

If these verses are not in the text of the manuscript that *BHS* is transcribing "with close fidelity," why then are they included? The *BHS* editors seem to indicate that these verses *should* be in the text, even though they

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מגרשיה ערים ארבע ולא ראיתי שני פסוקים אלו בשום ספר ישן מדוייק אלא מוגה במקצתם.

27. Jordan S. Penkower, "Rabbinic Bible," in *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, ed. John. H. Hayes (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 2:362–63.

28. *Biblia Rabbinica*, at Josh 21:36: יש ספרי' מונה בהם וממטה ראובן את בצר וגו' ובכל הספ' המדוייקי' הישנים לא נמצא.

29. *BHK* (1st ed., 1905–1906), 1:324.

30. *BHK* (3rd ed., 1937), 356.

31. *BHS*, 391; translation: "vv. 36–37 lacking in L, C, other Masoretic manuscripts, the Second Rabbinic Bible, and the Targum; in the Syro-Hexapla marked with an obelisk; present in multiple manuscripts, printed editions, the LXX, Targum manuscripts, and the Vulgate; compare 1 Chr 6:63; the Peshiṭta translates these verses after v. 34a."

32. *BHS*, xii.

are lacking in L and the other early Masoretic codices. The editors of *BHS* have here reconstructed a critical eclectic text. The use of miniature type is a strategy for restoring the missing verses. The editors have departed from their stringent guidelines because, as textual critics, they felt a responsibility to include these verses in the text of a critical edition. Their text-critical judgment is arguably wrong, since this particular text is probably a medieval restoration based on Chronicles, as stated by the scholarly *naqdan* of Arundel Or 16 and implied by Qimḥi.[33] But the impulse of Kittel and the *BHS* editors is recognizable—one wants to restore a problematic text as best one can.[34] In this curious instance, the medieval scholars and the editors of *BHK* and *BHS* open the way for a more fully realized eclectic critical edition of the Hebrew Bible. In the HBCE Joshua, I expect that the restoration will be closer to the LXX reading than to the Chronicler's text.[35] There is no definitive solution, so I await the editors' judgments on how best to adjudicate the evidence and restore the four cities.

These cases of textual restoration illustrate some of the complexities of the text of the Hebrew Bible, the long history of textual inquiry, and the advantages—and risks—of a new kind of critical edition. The following chapters provide a more detailed justification of the HBCE project. They also provide other kinds of prolegomena—forays into the conceptual structure, procedures, and intellectual genealogy of textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible; new vistas on the history of the biblical text in the light of the Qumran biblical manuscripts; the mechanisms and motives of scribal change; the representational possibilities of the electronic HBCE; and even some theology, as in the early modern debate about church authority versus *sola Scriptura*, which curiously pivoted on text-critical issues. Finally, I argue that textual criticism has been and will continue to be untimely, disturbing our entrenched habits and assumptions, and opening our eyes to the multiplicity of the *Hebraica veritas*.

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33. In his comment, Qimḥi credits Hai Gaon (eleventh century CE) for noting that the four cities missing in Joshua are to be found in Chronicles.

34. Kittel accepted that, in principle, an eclectic critical edition is the proper procedure, but he regarded it as impractical; see Ernst Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 42; and below, ch. 1.

35. So Barthélemy, *Critique*, 68; Nelson, *Joshua*, 236.