

MULTIPLE ORIGINALS



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Sidnie White Crawford

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MULTIPLE ORIGINALS

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New Approaches to
Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism

Gary D. Martin

Society of Biblical Literature
Atlanta

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PREFACE

This book aims not only to underscore shortcomings in those practices of textual criticism that operate predominantly from a reductionist view of text, but also to offer theoretical and practical approaches to account for multivalent realities of textual origins that are generally overlooked in the text-critical enterprise. Typically, a text-critical edition presents to the user a single primary text block thought to represent the closest possible approximation to a putative original text. The assumption is that, among variant extant textual witnesses, there can be only one correct reading. This book challenges that assumption on two fronts, which I categorize as multivalences of meaning and multivalences of text. Thus, I argue that in reconstructing textual histories of early Jewish writings, scholars need to become more alert to the possibility that textual variations in their earliest known historical contexts are not necessarily the results of intentional or unintentional scribal intrusions into a hypothetical pristine original. Current text-critical practices suppress multivalences as a result of a narrow *a priori* view of textual origins. In some cases multivalences can be demonstrated to have been intended by the composer, in other cases multivalences of texts during the periods from which our earliest extant manuscripts derive simply fell within certain limits of acceptable variability by those who valued and transmitted those texts. Therefore these do not need to be corrected or reduced to univalent readings. Variant readings must not always be thought of as competing for the exalted status of singular original when they rather represent a multivalent original.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“MY PLANS REQUIRE TIME AND DISTANCE”

Marcus Whitman

As I reflect upon all of those amazing people who have influenced, educated, and guided me through the academy, I am awestruck by the magnitude of the debt I owe to so many over such a long period of time and in so many places. I began my academic pursuits in Physics-Astronomy at Whitman College in 1971, seeking explanations for the origins of our universe. Over the past third of a century I have channeled more of my academic energy toward an understanding of the origins of ancient texts. This pursuit ultimately led to a career in ancient Near Eastern studies. With intervening careers as a Christian minister, then as executive of a sheet music technology company, my *Curriculum Vitae* reads eclectic and disjointed. Somehow it all makes sense to me: I am situated where my path has led me. Those who have helped bring me here are too many to enumerate. I regretfully must limit my words of gratitude to those who have been directly involved in the production of this book.

Professor Scott B. Noegel, current Chair of the Near Eastern Languages and Civilization Department at the University of Washington in Seattle, has been a remarkable teacher, mentor, dissertation committee chair, and colleague. Without his phenomenal multivalent assistance and direction over the past decade, I would not be where I am today. Professors James J. Clauss (Classics) and Michael A. Williams (Comparative Religion) served on my dissertation committee in a most exemplary fashion—encouraging, critiquing, and always challenging me to formulate the more important issues of my research.

I have been an extremely fortunate recipient of numerous graduate positions at the University of Washington that have made my academic path economically achievable. For these positions I thank the Graduate School, the Language Learning Center, and the Department of Near

Eastern Languages and Civilization. I am also an especially grateful recipient of the Greenfield Scholarship (Classics, 1993–1994), and the Marsha S. Glazer Graduate Fellowship that resulted in my decision to pursue the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Near and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Washington in 2004.

It was both unexpected and gratifying to receive an invitation from Sidnie White Crawford to have my dissertation published in the Society of Biblical Literature Text-Critical Series, of which she is Editor. Her confidence in my work and the editorial expertise she has expended have been instrumental in the production of the book. I also thank Bob Buller, Editorial Director of the Society of Biblical Literature, for his guidance through the production process, and Leigh Andersen, who caught numerous errors and provided formatting guidance. All remaining errors and infelicities, whatever their nature, are my own doing, and I take full responsibility for them.

I now know why the acknowledgement page of numerous books ends with a word of praise for significant family members, and I gladly follow in this noble tradition. It would be far too trite to simply thank my wife Cathy for her unwavering support throughout my academic pursuits. For more than thirty-seven years she has been a source of immeasurable joy in all our individual and combined endeavors. It is her companionship that has made far more than the appearance of this book possible.

ABBREVIATIONS

AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJSLL	<i>The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</i>
AOS	American Oriental Series
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BDB	<i>The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic</i>
BHQ	<i>Biblia Hebraica Quinta</i>
BHS	Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph, eds., <i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> , 5th ed.
BSOAS	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i> , University of London
CAD	<i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i>
CDA	Black, Jeremy, Andrew George, and Nicholas Postgate, eds., <i>A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
DJD	<i>Discoveries in the Judaean Desert</i>
DJDJ	<i>Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan</i>
DULAT	<i>A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition</i>
HAHAT	Donner, Herbert, ed., <i>Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament</i> , 18th ed.
HALOT	Koehler, Ludwig and Walter Baumgartner, <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament: Study Edition</i>
JAAR	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
Jastrow	<i>A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JQR	<i>The Jewish Quarterly Review</i>

L or Leningrad	Freedman, David Noel, ed., <i>The Leningrad Codex: A Facsimile Edition</i>
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon with a Supplement</i>
MT	Masoretic Text
NA27(8)	Nestle-Aland, <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , 27th ed., 8th printing
PAPS	<i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i>
PSBA	<i>Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology</i>
SP	Samaritan Pentateuch
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>

INTRODUCTION

THE NATURE OF INFORMATION TRANSFER

The universe is communicative. Information of a variety of types and in a variety of modes has been transferred across time and space for as long as time and space have been. The carrier of information typically originates from some source and is received by some target. The carrier can be extremely small. A single photon of light both embeds and carries information—energy and momentum in proportion to its frequency—and the information it contains will inevitably impact and change the target upon which it impinges, however minute that change may seem from our perspective. The transfer of information it delivers also transforms the object with which it interacts. The nature of that interaction cannot be explained using a simple scheme, for a photon exhibits wave-particle duality. Some aspects of its interactions with objects can be best described in terms of wave analysis, while other aspects are more easily explained by imagining the photon as a particle. The field of quantum mechanics takes both of these observable behaviors of photons into account, combines them into a theoretical model, which it puts to use in real world applications. Physicists have come to accept a complex view of the photon. They do not debate whether light is a wave or a particle, or even whether it is more wave-like than particle-like. It is both, at the same time, and in the same space. Light is inherently polysemous. But it is not chaotic. Its behavior, though appearing dual according to certain taxonomic structures we have created, is predictable and repeatable.

Human beings have transferred information of a variety of types and in a variety of modes for as long as human beings have been. The carrier of information typically originates from some source and is received by some target. The carrier can be extremely small. A single sound, a single stroke, can embed and carry information, and the information therein contained will inevitably impact and change the target upon which it impinges, however minute that change may seem from our perspective.

The transfer of information it delivers also transforms the person with whom it interacts. The nature of that interaction cannot be explained using a simple scheme, for human communication in all its modes is multifarious. But it is not necessarily chaotic. Its behavior, though appearing complex according to certain taxonomic structures we have created, is found to be surprisingly predictable and repeatable.

Two primary disciplines have emerged whose task is to provide theoretical models for understanding certain historical processes of information transmission from human to human. These are textual criticism and oral studies. Textual criticism operates primarily on the basis of transmission of information via the written mode. Oral studies addresses primarily transfer of information via the oral (or oral/aural) mode. No one debates whether human communication takes place either in the written mode or the oral mode. Unlike physicists, however, who have universally and successfully merged wave and particle manifestations of the photon into a unified theoretical and practical framework, many (though increasingly fewer) who study issues of text and orality remain specialists in one or the other discipline. Textual criticism and oral studies are gradually evolving into a unified discipline. At present we observe textuality and orality migrating from multi-disciplinary approaches of studying human information transfer, to an interdisciplinary endeavor. We are moving away from thinking about textuality and orality as entirely separate disciplines toward examining their interconnections. But we have not yet developed the analog to the physicist's quantum mechanics. We have not universally and successfully merged textual and oral manifestations of human communication into a unified theoretical and practical framework. Physicists do not think of wave theory and particle theory as multi-disciplinary, or interdisciplinary, approaches to understanding the nature of light. They have a single discipline that constantly takes both manifestations into consideration.

But nature consists of far more than photons. Some elements of nature really do behave like particles; other elements really do behave like waves. Not everything behaves like a photon, sharing both manifestations at once. Hence, physics curricula still include separate courses in classical Newtonian mechanics for things that behave more like particles, and courses in wave dynamics for things like electromagnetism. In like manner, sometimes texts do behave very much according to the methods employed by textual critics, and sometimes they behave very much according to the methods employed by oralists. Not every text behaves like every other text. Sometimes there are scribal errors that are really not reflections of an oral tradition; sometimes there are textual

variants that do reflect oral traditions and are not scribal errors. So we still need both disciplines.

THE NATURE OF TEXTS

In this book I investigate the nature of texts and their impact on theories of textual origins. I will identify elements of textuality and orality in early Jewish writings that have not been adequately analyzed and treated according to current methods. I will focus on methods that provide arguments for establishing and clarifying two primary types of multivalence of traditions in their oldest recorded (written) forms. These multivalent traditions could be the result of earlier stages of oral, or written traditions, or both handed down concurrently. While issues of orality therefore play a role in this book, I will not argue that an earlier stage of oral variation alone provides an explanation for later textual variation. Indeed, I will propose that at the time of the earliest extant manuscripts of what came to be the Hebrew Bible (ca. third century B.C.E. to fifth century C.E.), the texts vary in ways analogous to those which have been observed in and proposed for oral transmission.

What is the issue at stake here? The central problem of transmitted texts, especially, but not exclusively, in the period before the invention of printing, is that only on very rare occasions are copies of a parent text identical to the parent text itself, or to each other, in every aspect of the text.¹ While the goal of textual criticism may be thought to be the recreation of a now lost single written original, the central problem of textual criticism—and this is especially important to note—is to explain the differences among texts that are believed to have been intended to transmit identical textual information at the graphical and acoustic levels. For if two texts are not thought to have been derived from a single predecessor text and also were not intended to transmit identical textual information, but come rather from separate texts, each with its own unique identity, the task of comparison, should that even be entertained

¹ That the invention of printing came so late in the transmission of texts has been often lamented. Johannes Clericus is said to have reflected on “the immeasurable benefits that would have accrued to classical and textual scholarship if it had pleased God to inspire the ancients to invent the art of printing.” Yet “divine intervention, as Housman once remarked, has other and more urgent employments than the rescue of textual critics from tribulation.” Both quotations are from E. J. Kenney, *The Classical Text: Aspects of Editing in the Age of Printed Books* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 1–2.

as a useful enterprise, is no longer one of textual criticism, but belongs more properly to the purview of comparative literature.

STRUCTURE OF THE ARGUMENT

In Part One I survey theoretical and methodological approaches to texts, focusing in Chapter 1 on applications of traditional textual criticism, and in Chapter 2 on applications from oral studies. I emphasize the word "survey" here—the goal is not, and cannot be, one of comprehensiveness, for that would unnecessarily broaden the discussion far beyond the purposes of this book. The selections surveyed in Chapter 1 were chosen because: (1) they represent a wide range of thought about issues of text and originality from a wide range of texts and genres; (2) they illustrate important methodological approaches and the underlying premises upon which those methods are employed; (3) they highlight the passion with which scholars in their respective areas of specialization approach the topic of textual origins and transmission, for whom the labors expended on these issues can rightly be called a "quest."

In Chapter 2 I primarily am interested in concepts and definitions of the "formula"—particularly how a formula is characterized as simultaneously static and variable, and how it can be identified. Formulaic approaches to understanding textual origins and their transmission have evolved over the past half century or so from applicability to "oral epic poetry" to "oral poetry" to "oral prose." In Chapter 2 I extend the application to written texts with no requirement for earlier stages of poetic structure or orality. In some of the areas upon which I focus textuality and orality so closely interrelate as to be inseparable.

Part Two comprises the first of the two major categories of multivalence I examine in this book—Multivalences of Meaning. These are cases where the polysemous intention of the author can be identified through the interplay of structure and semantics, resulting in sophisticated literary devices that became unnoticed in their later transmission and interpretation histories. In such cases the issue of multivalency does not pertain to graphical variations of the text. The individual letters and their sequences are fixed firmly enough in the extant manuscripts. The issue concerns what thoughts those letters were intended to convey. Some of these cases involve homograms and homophones: words that were written and pronounced alike, but each carrying a different meaning depending on its contextual environment. Some contextual environments, however, are capable of embedding the meanings of these words simultaneously. Other cases involve only homograms: words that

were written alike, but when supplied with different vocalizations, resulted in different words. These also can be found sharing space in certain textual environments. In such cases a reader must mentally or vocally supply one or another pronunciation at a time, although the letters visually conveyed both meanings simultaneously. These are all cases of double entendre. The lack of recognition of double entendre surfaces in translations into other languages and in commentaries where it is evident that only one of the possible meanings was captured or selected. Chapter 3 introduces the problematic of consonant-only texts in ancient Hebrew and their later vocalization, and the implications these systems have in the creation and recognition of various forms of double entendre in early Jewish writings.

Commentaries that miss cases involving double entendre by treating only one or the other possible senses as the correct meaning sometimes look very much like physicists arguing whether a photon is a wave or a particle. In one case, which is the subject of Chapters 4–8, I will offer a “unified field solution” to a long-standing debate over whether a word means “a” or “b.” I will show that it means both “a” and “b” at the same time and in the same place, depending on how one reads it. However, I do not wish to act simply as mediator and settle a semantic quarrel. I wish to show how that quarrel might have developed in the first place, why it continued so long, how the parties involved did or did not communicate effectively about the issue, and how decisions were made that have affected the further transmission of the text even to the present day. This enterprise will take us into disciplinary approaches exercised in the fields of historical linguistics, comparative literature, textual criticism, oral studies, and historical inquiries of culture, religion, and text-interpretation. The specific example I investigate in this chapter is also especially relevant to those interested in issues of gender and sexuality.

In Chapter 9 I present additional examples and arguments for the presence of double entendre in a variety of constructions. These serve a purpose greater than providing supportive evidence for the case developed in the preceding chapters. They point the way toward methodological approaches for identifying other examples, and in so doing, reinforce that we have much more to consider about how ancient writers embedded meaning in their texts.

Part Three examines the second category of multivalence—Multivalences of Text. In this book I accept a complex view of textual histories. I will not argue that all, or even most, variations among manuscripts of a given textual entity are necessarily the result of multivalent traditions. There is room in my analysis for scribal errors of all the kinds identified by those engaged in the current traditional “single original” practice of

textual criticism. The methodological problem becomes apparent: how does one separate between transmission changes and errors in successive copies on the one hand, and the accurate transmission of multiple concurrent versions on the other? When arguments can be made on both sides, employment of a variety of analytical approaches can yield at least relative levels of plausibility so that one explanation may be preferred to another, even if one cannot be absolutely eliminated. In any event, the first order of business in the analysis of manuscript variants is to identify all possible and reasonable causes for the existence of the variants, then to discuss their relative merits based upon observational or theoretical criteria, leaving all well-reasoned options on the table. Admittedly this approach increases the difficulty of producing a printed critical edition, but considerations of text selection and the visual layout or display of textual information should in no way impact or precede a full historical and theoretical study of transmitted traditional material. If our goal is ultimately to assess the thought and structure of past cultures through their textual remains, as multivalent as they may be, limitations imposed by constraints of modern editors operating on the assumption of a single original theory will obscure and oversimplify the historical realities that are still capable of being heard if only we are willing to listen. On the other hand, merely printing side-by-side, in full, all extant copies/versions of what is taken to be essentially a common work can be unwieldy and by itself does not tell us anything more than what we already know: there are a lot of variants in the manuscripts.

With these considerations in mind, Chapters 10–12 investigate issues of textual variation in a case study of all extant manuscripts of the Decalogue from the earliest dated manuscript (second century B.C.E.) through the fifth century C.E. I will apply a variety of analytical models to provide various explanations for the origin and nature of some of the numerous variations encountered in the manuscripts.

The Decalogue texts have been chosen for several reasons. First, they represent an example of multivalence that on one level has already been accepted, codified, and standardized: there are two different versions of the Decalogue that are not reduced to a single written original by textual critics. The current debate among textual critics of these texts concerns not their standardized multivalence, but the issue of how to handle the several “mixed” versions of these texts (other multivalent texts) that do not easily align with standardized versions. The problem appears especially acute since the mixed versions represent our oldest extant manuscripts of Decalogue material. I investigate some of the issues at stake here using the methods of traditional text criticism as well as formulaic analysis.

The number of extant Decalogue manuscripts is relatively large, and their textual and physical forms are relatively diverse. Thus, they provide enough data and context to make at least some preliminary quantitative statements about the extent and nature of the textual fluidity that they exhibit. The richness and variety of material provides considerable opportunities for comparative and analytical study of textual forms of the Decalogue in their earliest extant forms.

Finally, the Decalogue texts have been selected because they form a foundational platform upon which religious, moral, and ethical structures have been built that continue to impact and influence large segments of human beings to the present day. To what extent are the texts of the Decalogue “fluid”? How does the presence of any fluidity at all impact our view of other ancient records associated with the Decalogue? The phenomena uncovered in this book not only invite, but will require, further thought to be devoted to such questions. The results of this study, therefore, do not remain in isolation as merely addressing the concerns of textual criticism.

In Chapter 13 I extend the discussion of multivalences to New Testament studies. As early Jewish writings are cited and incorporated into New Testament writings, the issue of multivalence can be observed frequently. It is well known that the New Testament citations or allusions to early Jewish writings often are derived from Greek versions of Hebrew texts, and that this multivalency resides in Greek and Hebrew texts long before there was a New Testament. It is therefore not the mere occurrence of these multivalent traditions in New Testament writings that I pursue. I am rather interested in the investigation of two cases in particular where multivalence of early Jewish writings intersects with core New Testament theology. One case involves variant forms of the principle “the just shall live by faith,” which in all its variations and accompanying different applications has generally not been considered a theological crux to be resolved. Of further interest is that this phrase also plays a fundamental role in rabbinic Judaism, and in this we find a noteworthy commonality between two world religions. The second example shows how a text in one line of tradition has an almost opposite sense from its mode of expression in a different line of tradition, and yet both come to stand side-by-side, both considered “true” among Christians who accept as authoritative both the “Old Testament” as based on the Hebrew Masoretic tradition, and the New Testament based on the evidence of extant Greek manuscripts. How does this come to happen, and how does it persist without forces of textual criticism stepping in to clear up the discrepancy and unify “the text”? Considerations

of both formulaic and scribal phenomena yield possible answers to this question.

A more far-reaching question in this study is: why is it important to preserve material from the past at all? Further, why is it important to locate a putative original, or, as this book shows, to demonstrate that in some cases there may never have been a single original? What is this infatuation with the past forms of traditional material all about ultimately, and why are people so passionate about the topic? Part Four concludes the study by providing insight into some of the more significant motives, agendas, and practices that drive current practices of textual criticism.

CATEGORICAL CLARIFICATIONS

Throughout the book categorical terms are used, such as: Hebrew Bible, biblical, Jews, Judaism, Christians, Christianity. I am aware that these terms are often used in senses that imply a greater homogeneity than is historically or presently actualized. In some senses one can speak of Judaisms and Christianities. Bible connotes canon, which implies fixity of content, yet there were and remain varieties of canons. I have tried to use such terms as I believe people with respect to whom I apply them would themselves use them. For example, if I speak of Abraham Ibn Ezra's commentary as a writing of medieval Judaism, I do so with the understanding that Abraham Ibn Ezra saw himself in a religion that he would designate as Judaism (though he would certainly not have used the term "medieval"). If I speak of Christian exegesis in the context of the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, I do so with the understanding that Bernard saw himself as a participant in a religion he designated as Christianity. Although a "Hebrew Bible" emerged only later in the transmission processes examined in this book, I nonetheless use the expression "Hebrew Bible," recognizing that sometimes it occurs as an anachronism. I generally use the term "biblical" when it pertains to those writings that came to belong to what is now meant by "Hebrew Bible." More problematic is the use of the term "Bible" in Christian contexts, since there are differing New Testament canons. Nonetheless, I employ the terms "Bible" and "New Testament" in senses where I believe respective adherents mentioned in connection with the terms would employ them, without providing formal definitions in each context.

PART ONE

THEORETICAL MODELS

1

IN SEARCH OF THE ORIGINAL

The business of textual criticism is to produce a text as close as possible to the original (*constitutio textus*).¹

INTRODUCTORY CONSIDERATIONS

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “ORIGINAL”?

A news report announcing the discovery of “original” scrolls of the Hebrew Bible would undoubtedly raise more questions than it would answer.² Of course there would be heated discussions among those advancing charges of forgery and those defending the authenticity of the finds. But even if the antiquity of the scrolls could be verified through rigorous applications of archaeology, paleography, and high-tech dating methods, all of which independently and uniformly converge to the same date ranges at very early periods, how would we know these are the “originals”? How would we know who actually wrote them? What would/should be the nature of their content so that their status as originals would be accepted by a wide range of scholarship? Would we see pentateuchal texts that mirror hypothetically constructed documentary sources? Or documents representing dialectal locales? Or five scrolls signed(?) by Moses? Would there be a single scroll signed(?) by Isaiah? Or would there be three Isaiah scrolls labeled א, ב, and ג? Would certain

¹ Paul Maas, *Textual Criticism*, trans. Barbara Flower (Oxford: Clarendon, 1958), 1.

² At the 2006 SBL Annual Meeting in Washington D.C., amongst the booths in the exhibition hall was one with a particularly large banner announcing that Codex Washingtonensis (W), housed in the Freer Gallery of Art, had been discovered to be “The Original First Century Gospels.” An article distributed by the “discoverers” reports that W is “the actual First Century version of the four gospels” and that this claim can be supported by paleography, textual examination, and by the “signatures” of the four gospel writers. Numerous unanswered questions remain, and there has been no scholarly consensus that the claim has merit.

compositional theories emerge vindicated, and if so, would those theories consequently be adopted even by scholars who had proposed alternate theories of origins? If the answers to these kinds of questions seem difficult to answer, the reason has less to do with the complexity and variety of current compositional theories, and more to do with the fundamental question underlying all others: what do we actually envision when we use the term "original," whether we initially mean by that either the ultimate goal of the text-critical process, or in fact a tangible document that removes the need for speaking of an original as a theoretical construct? As we will see, many scholars whose specialization is the transmission of documents, in one form or another, and in a wide range of disciplines, use the term "original" (without quotation marks) as a concept assumed to be understood by others in their disciplines. Modern text-critical editions of ancient literatures, or even more recent musical works, typically strive to produce an Urtext that is widely accepted as such among both students and scholars of those editions.

It has been the insistence of locating a single original text that has largely governed the textual studies of the Hebrew Bible as well as other ancient texts. It should be noted that this approach is based on a theoretical model. Textual critics often attach a greater sense of objectivity to their approach, since, as they see it, they handle only the hard data of the manuscript evidence itself. But approaches such as those applying formulaic models also deal only with such hard data. The issue is not whether tangible textual data lie at the base of the inquiry; that is true for a variety of text-driven theories. The issue is what to do with the available data. The postulate of a single original is no more or less axiomatic than the postulate of an oral original, or the postulate of a combined oral/written tradition, or the postulate of contemporaneous oral/written traditions. These approaches all begin with extant text; they merely process the textual remains differently.

The formation of texts even in modern times is a far more complex process than may appear to a reader who is not also an author, editor, or publisher. Authors and editors write, rewrite, add to, delete from, and change a text numerous of times before its publication. Sometimes subsequent editions follow. Is an original text "what appears in an author's final manuscript, or in a first printed edition, or in a revised second edition"?³ What if a text is a compilation of other earlier texts, with or without later editorial glosses? Are we then to speak of "pre-original"

³G. Thomas Tanselle, *A Rationale of Textual Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 12. Tanselle is referring to poems specifically, but he is more generally introducing the topic: "The Nature of Texts."

texts that, together with an editor's notes, comprise a new "original" text? What if multiple accounts are recorded simultaneously about an event, but those accounts differ from each other? Would it not be senseless to ask which statement from multiple witnesses to an automobile accident represents the "original" statement? On the other hand, when a single witness delivers testimony on multiple occasions, it can be quite reasonable to speak of an original statement.

The business of textual criticism in producing a text as close as possible to the original is an enterprise encountered in a wide range of fields. Within each of these fields there are debates about approaches, methods, and a plethora of textual and technical details. The theory that is most influential in driving the publication of critical editions has been, and with few exceptions continues to be, the theory of a single written original. Yet, some textual scholars have challenged that concept and have proposed alternate theories, such as multiple original, no original, or oral-traditional origins for what later become homogenous, or nearly homogenous, literary works. However, many of these kinds of challenges to the single written original theory have provided little in the way of methodological programs that can be implemented to test the theories, or at least provide predictable and repeatable strategies validating the notion that a given textual entity may in fact have its origin in something other than a single written original or Urtext.

THE ISSUE, THE QUESTIONS, AND THE APPROACH

I will begin the investigation of fundamental textual concerns by returning to the discussion of the idea of "original" as it is conceived in a variety of fields, some of quite diverse character. What all examples below have in common is a desire to preserve traditional textual material from the past. The following survey in no way pretends to cover all representative viewpoints of each discipline. Its purpose is simply to note certain similarities among disciplines, and to highlight patterns of thought that might not be observed by limiting the study to a single discipline. I aim here first to identify and examine varieties of theories and methods, and assess which, if any, in current or modified forms are particularly useful, and why they are useful. New theories and methods will also be proposed, especially when they yield different, but meaningful and plausible results.

The order in which I proceed is as follows: I begin with current practices in classical scholarship, which has defined and refined many of the methods that have impacted textual research in a wide range of literatures. I then examine genres of more recent times that many would

classify as somewhat removed from the traditional notion of “text”—drama, music, and medieval vernacular poetry. Although originals, or materials very close to the originals, exist for a number of works in these genres, questions still arise about the status of those originals, and about the fact that transmitted versions exhibit numerous variations, although they were created within a very short time of the originals. I then take a look at some of the world’s earliest literature from Mesopotamia and Egypt, and note how scholars handle textual concerns that surface in our most ancient textual materials. In the last major section, I discuss a few examples of the sacred texts of current world religions. Rarely examined by biblical scholars, Sanskrit and Sikh religious texts have recently received extensive text-critical examination by their respective textual scholars. A survey of the issues encountered by these scholars yields important insights not only in the methods of the text-critical enterprise, but also in the ways in which religious communities view their sacred texts, and view those who critically study their sacred texts from both etic and emic perspectives.⁴ Finally I turn to “biblical” texts, first those of the “Second” or “New” Testament, and then to those belonging to the corpus now called “the Hebrew Bible” or “Old Testament.”

SURVEY OF TEXT-CRITICAL APPROACHES IN OTHER FIELDS

CLASSICAL SCHOLARSHIP

It is not necessary here to rehearse in detail the historical *Vorlagen* of what emerges as the practice of classical textual criticism in the nineteenth century to the present. One can find such surveys in several important works, some of which I will cite later in the development of specific arguments.⁵

⁴ The terms “etic” and “emic” were first introduced by Kenneth Pike from the linguistic terms “phonemic” and “phonetic.” See Kenneth Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of Structure of Human Behavior*, 2nd ed. (The Hague: Mouton, 1967). They have come to be used in the social sciences to represent different observational vantage points: “Etic” refers to the viewpoint of a (theoretical) detached observer; “emic” refers to the viewpoint of a participant in the behavior under observation.

⁵ See especially L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon and Oxford University Press, 1991). For the period after 1465 (the arrival of the printing-press in Italy), see Kenney, *The Classical Text: Aspects of Editing in the Age of Printed Books*. For the history leading up to and connecting with the work of

It is Paul Maas's book(let), *Textual Criticism*, amounting to only fifty-nine pages (including the index), that continues to occupy a position of "standard" when it comes to articulating the general theory and method of textual criticism applied to classical literature. His often quoted definition of textual criticism (cited at the beginning of this chapter) has been a guiding principle of classical, and non-classical, textual scholars, both before and after the publication of his book. Indeed, the complete statement, which Maas himself has entered as his first "basic notion" is as follows:

1. We have no autograph manuscripts of the Greek and Roman classical writers and no copies which have been collated with the originals; the manuscripts we possess derive from originals through an unknown number of intermediate copies, and are consequently of questionable trustworthiness. The business of textual criticism is to produce a text as close as possible to the original (*constitutio textus*).⁶

In smaller print immediately following this first basic notion, Maas already qualifies what he means by "original":

A dictation revised by the author must be regarded as equivalent to an autograph manuscript.

The second basic notion provides the theoretical framework with which the method of Maas proceeds: "In each individual case the original text either has or has not been transmitted."⁷

The possibility of a multivalent tradition is immediately excluded. There is only one "original text." By examining in each case (manuscript) what has been transmitted, and comparing various transmissions, one constructs a recension ("recensio") which is composed either of individual manuscripts or groups of manuscripts with a high degree of similarity. Each recension then undergoes examination ("examinatio") to determine the likelihood with which each recension may be considered identical with, or as close as possible to, the original. If it is evident that no extant manuscript or recension can be considered original, then an attempt must be made to reconstruct the original by suggesting possible readings, a process called conjecture ("divinatio"). The process of comparing recensions leads to considerations of dependencies—that is, one

Karl Lachmann, see Sebastiano Timpanaro, *The Genesis of Lachmann's Method*, trans. Glenn W. Most (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

⁶ Maas, *Textual Criticism*, 1.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

manuscript or recension may be considered as deriving from another manuscript or recension, through consideration of types of scribal errors thought to occur primarily in one direction. Such considerations include taking into account, for example:

- (a) what mistakes are most likely to occur on psychological grounds (e.g. the tendency for an uncommon expression to be replaced by a common one, 'trivialization'; this is why it is right to prefer as a rule the '*lectio difficilior*');
- (b) what class of corruption can be shown to exist most frequently in the tradition in question;
- (c) what sort of corruptions are most likely to have arisen, in the period between original and archetype, on other grounds (history of the tradition of the author involved, history of the transmission, script, orthography, state of classical scholarship, editing technique, cultural conditions, &c.).⁸

In the methodology described by Maas it is important to note the distinction between "original" and "archetype": the archetype is the form of the text, whether represented by a single extant manuscript or a reconstructed text, thought to best reflect the original, which itself, at least in the cases of the classical works with which Maas is concerned, does not exist. Thus, "original" is a non-existent theoretical construct.

There are circumstances in which it becomes extremely difficult to isolate a single archetype, or where a reconstructed archetype remains in some way unsatisfactory. In some cases: "We must also consider the possibility that there were two versions of the original; admittedly the two versions would then have to have been already 'contaminated' in the archetype."⁹ Maas does not expand on the idea of "two versions of the original," but it would have been informative to see that thought further developed.

The methodological tool employed to establish relationships among manuscripts is called stemmatology. As Maas illustrates:

The diagram which exhibits the inter-relationship of the witnesses is called the *stemma*. The image is taken from genealogy: the witnesses are

⁸ Ibid., 13.

⁹ Ibid., 18.

related to the original somewhat as the descendants of a man are related to their ancestor.¹⁰

Just as a human being can only have one biological father, so a manuscript can have only one stemmatological ancestor. This is a fundamental operating assumption of this methodological approach to the evaluation of manuscripts. In reading about the process, it is therefore important to pay special attention to the indefinite article “a” or “an”:

Each witness depends either on **a** surviving or on **a** lost *exemplar*. If it depends on **a** lost exemplar, this lost exemplar either can or cannot be reconstructed. If it can be reconstructed, this may be done either without the aid of the witness or only with its help.

It will now be obvious that a witness is worthless (worthless, that is, *qua* witness) when it depends exclusively on **a** surviving exemplar or on **an** exemplar which can be reconstructed without its help. A witness thus shown to be worthless must be *eliminated* (*eliminatio codicum descriptorum*).¹¹

Maas is fully aware that in reality it may not be the case that every witness is a direct descendent of only one ancestor, even though this is the primary assumption:

In what follows it is assumed (1) that the copies made since the primary split in the tradition each reproduce one exemplar only, i.e. that no scribe has combined several exemplars (*contaminatio*), (2) that each scribe consciously or unconsciously deviates from his exemplar, i.e. makes ‘*peculiar errors*’.¹²

If the first assumption does not hold, then “the process of *eliminatio* ... is greatly hindered, if not made impossible.”¹³ Maas diminishes the likelihood of any serious contamination to have occurred by postulating that, if a scribe had two (Maas does not entertain the notion that there might be more than two) copies before him, it would be “very exhausting” to imagine him constantly evaluating and alternately providing readings from each of the copies. Maas does admit, however, that among

¹⁰ Ibid., 20.

¹¹ Ibid., 2. Bold for emphasis is mine; italics are the author’s.

¹² Ibid., 3.

¹³ Ibid., 7.

the manuscripts of the classics contamination has in fact taken place, making it “impossible to hope for a clear-cut solution.”¹⁴

It is important to read Maas carefully. Many who cite Maas only summarily often refer to his mathematical approach—rigid, calculating, repeatable, predictable, sure. In fact, Maas often calls out assumptions (four times alone in the chapter on “Recensio,” pp. 3–8), and admits that in some cases there is “of course, no absolute standard of good or bad to guide us.”¹⁵ Maas’s language throughout is clothed in terms of hypothesis and probability, though his line of argument remains carefully and systematically sequenced. In one section Maas describes textual transmission with a vivid metaphor:

A river comes from an inaccessible source under the peak of a high mountain. It divides underground, its branches divide further, and some of these branches then come to the surface on the mountain side as springs; the water of these springs at once drains away and may come to the surface at several places farther down the mountain side and finally flows onward in visible form overground. The water from its source onwards is of ever-changing but fine and pure colours. In its subterranean course it flows past several places at which colouring matters from time to time dissolve into the water; the same thing happens every time the stream divides and every time it comes to the surface in a spring. Every influx changes the colour of a certain part of the stream, and this part keeps the colour permanently; only very slight colour changes are eliminated by natural processes. The distinction between the colours of the various springs is discernible. On the other hand, the falsified elements can often be detected and the original colour restored by chemical methods; at other times this method fails. The object of the investigation is to test the genuineness of the colours on the evidence of the springs.¹⁶

Maas does not provide a point for point explanation of his metaphor, though he makes wonderfully clear the utter complexity of “textual flow”¹⁷ across time and space. Maas returns to his regular form and

¹⁴ Ibid., 9.

¹⁵ Ibid., 10.

¹⁶ Ibid., 20.

¹⁷ Although I have coined the expression “textual flow” to extend the metaphor, the expression itself is not without precedence among textual critics. The New Testament textual critic Gerd Mink devotes a section of an article in *Studies in Stemmatology II* specifically to a discussion of “Textual flow: General/particular, global/local” and speaks of this flow in terms of both time and space. “There is a textual flow connecting the witnesses. The *general textual flow* leads

concludes the chapter on “Examinatio” with the following comparisons and optimistic outlook:

It is useful also to compare the methods of archaeology, which reconstructs a lost work of art from its copies, or those of literary or folk-lore research, which looks for the original version of a motif. But nowhere will the road be so clear, the goal so certainly attainable, as in the textual criticism of the classical authors.¹⁸

In spite of the assumptions, unknowns, probabilities, and vicissitudes inherent in the transmission of texts, the goal (“to produce a text as close as possible to the original”) is achievable.

Why did Maas not find the metaphor of human genealogy a compelling one? His expansion of the genealogy paradigm is as surprising as the subsequent parable:

One might perhaps illustrate the transmission of errors along the same lines by treating all females as sources of error. But the essential point, the aim of reconstructing the original, is not brought out by this comparison.¹⁹

Maas does not tell us precisely why reconstruction of the original is not brought out by the model of human genealogy. I would hypothesize—and this point needs to be considered whether or not it explains Maas—that a true genealogical model, at least for human beings, necessarily involves *two* parents. Stemmatology is rather a model of agamogenesis, or asexual reproduction, like simple cells, simply dividing and thereby multiplying. So, are manuscripts more like amoebas or people? The stemmatological diagram makes them look like amoebas, but then asexual reproduction produces *exact* replicas of the parent, since there is no genetic recombination. And that is definitely *not* the nature of manuscripts; they are not exact replicas of any parent or sibling!

As always, one must be careful in taking an analogy too far. Genetic reproduction uses mechanisms, such as meiosis, designed specifically to facilitate stable reproduction. Though a human being is composed of

from earlier to later textual states.” Mink goes on to introduce and define “particular textual flow,” “global textual flow,” and “local textual flow.” See Gerd Mink, “Problems of a Highly Contaminated Tradition: The New Testament; Stemmata of Variants as a Source of a Genealogy For Witnesses,” in *Studies in Stemmatology II*, ed. Pieter van Reenan, August den Hollander, and Margot van Mulken (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2006), 33–34.

¹⁸ Maas, *Textual Criticism*, 21.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

elements that constantly employ these mechanisms, the human being performs far more complex and varied tasks than that of mere reproduction. Manuscripts, unlike genetic material, do not have embedded within them the inherent ability to reproduce themselves. The mechanism that accomplishes this is the human being, with or without additional mechanical aids. The history of manuscript transmission has amply demonstrated the inferiority of the human being alone as the reproductive mechanism for a manuscript as compared to, for example, meiosis as the reproductive mechanism for a cell.

Some of the mechanical aids invented by humans have significantly remedied human deficiencies. The printing press is an obvious example. But even successively printed copies from identical, unaltered plates, sometimes reveal differences. Those may be due to uneven inking, or to physical type that has become worn or broken though the effects of constantly applied friction.

A more recent invention has made the reproduction of texts even more accurate, approaching perhaps to the level found with meiosis in asexual reproduction, producing consistent exact replicas. It is the simple “cut and paste” algorithm used constantly in the production of this very book. It is an amazingly reliable process, as anyone can test by simply repeating the copy, paste, and save commands multiple times, then comparing the last copy against the first. That is not to suggest that the process is always perfect and never fails. A hard disk that stores the binary data is a *physical medium*, and it is subject, *like all physical media and processes*, to error. Indeed, even meiosis is not always perfect.

The preceding considerations and observations lead us to think more deeply about what we envision or expect when we think of the term “original.” The simple cut and paste routine, now entirely commonplace, has been in existence for only a couple of decades. Yet it has undoubtedly had a profound impact on the high levels of precision that we in the modern world reasonably expect when it comes to making a copy of a text.

Though Maas himself finds the metaphor of human genealogy not especially suitable, in an article appearing just a few years ago (2004) the genealogical model applied to manuscripts received a very sophisticated treatment. In the second volume of the two-volume series *Studies in Stemmatology*, Christopher Howe (*et al.*) describes a project with a title serving both as topic designation and acronym, “STEMMA—Studies on Textual Evolution of Manuscripts by Mathematical Analysis” as follows:

This project aims to apply the techniques of evolutionary biology to the analysis of manuscript traditions. In particular we are interested in the

application of computer programs developed for evolutionary biology to the study of manuscripts. In this paper we explore the similarities between the evolution of DNA sequences and the changes occurring in manuscript traditions. We will show how the techniques of evolutionary biology can be applied to stemmatic analysis and how a number of features of manuscript traditions have clear parallels in genetics.²⁰

After describing variant analyses performed on manuscripts of John Lydgate's fifteenth century poem, *Kings of England*, the specific parallels to genetics are identified:

It is remarkable how many parallels there are between the evolution of genetic material and the changes occurring in manuscripts (Howe et al. 2001). These include recombination, convergent evolution and transposition.²¹

Each of these three phenomena are briefly described and the parallels between their appearance in genetics and in manuscripts are explained.

Other articles in *Studies in Stemmatology II* demonstrate that new and often highly technical models of stemmatological analysis are providing new results as well as challenges for textual criticism. The titles of a few of the other articles are listed here merely to show some of the territory now being explored: "Problems of a Highly Contaminated Tradition, the New Testament: Stemmata of Variants as a Source of a Genealogy for Witnesses"; "How Shock Waves Revealed Successive Contamination: A Cardiogram of Early Sixteenth-century Printed Dutch Bibles"; "Constructing Initial Binary Trees in Stemmatology"; "Trouble in the Trees!: Variant Selection and Tree Construction Illustrated by the Texts of Targum Judges"; "Cluster Analysis and the Three Level Method in the Study of the Gospels in Slavonic"; among others.

While new approaches to textual histories are being explored, particularly in respect to the phenomenon of "orality"—a topic rapidly increasing in popularity as witnessed by the upsurge in publishing activity and course offerings at universities—the discipline of stemmatology is by no means dead or dying. It is in a sense experiencing a "revival," and there is much excitement about the future of stemmatological theory and

²⁰ Christopher Howe, et al., "Parallels Between Stemmatology and Phylogenetics," in *Studies in Stemmatology II*, ed. Pieter van Reenan, August den Hollander, and Margot van Mulken (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2004), 3.

²¹ Ibid., 7.

practice. This is clear from the Prologue to the first volume of *Studies in Stemmatology*:

We consider stemmatology, the study of the relations between texts, as one of the two sciences basic to the study of older languages. The other basic discipline is the study of the linguistic variation found within and between texts ... Together these two disciplines are fundamental to text history ...

Stemmatology has always been regarded as an inevitable 'malus' in text history. Every self-respecting philologist consecrates the first chapter of his text edition to the text genealogy of the treated manuscript tradition ...

Since the 1970s ... new initiatives have been taken to renew interest in systematics in stemmatology. Especially in the Netherlands, philologists have tried to restructure research in the field of stemmatology. Thanks to Anthonij Dees, a theoretical revival of the traditional practice of text editor took place.²²

Areas in which stemmatology is being restructured lie, for example, in the analysis of variant dependencies, and especially in the application of computer technology, both in the development of complex computer algorithms, as well as in the incorporation of very many and very large text blocks into textual analysis. As a result of the pace with which advanced research is taking place, the contributors of *Studies in Stemmatology* "have clearly shown that they have confidence in the development of stemmatology."²³

Martin West, whose book *Textual Criticism and Editorial Technique* is considered by his publisher as a replacement for Maas's *Textkritik*, follows Maas's use of "original" and the method of stemmatology to derive an archetype, from which all other copies ultimately descend, and which itself is thought to represent a text as close to the original as can possibly be reconstructed. West thus provides a chronological and methodological link between Maas and the New Stemmatology. Without providing (or restating) a formal definition of textual criticism, West is concerned with "copies many stages removed from originals, copies of which not a single one is free from error."²⁴ West conceives that it may

²² Pieter van Reenan and Margot van Mulken, eds., *Studies in Stemmatology* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1996), vii–viii.

²³ *Ibid.*, xvi.

²⁴ Martin L. West, *Textual Criticism and Editorial Technique, Applicable to Greek and Latin Texts* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1973), 8.

not only be possible, but also highly instructive to determine among variant manuscripts of a particular passage “whether Aristophanes wrote δέ or τε.”²⁵ For West, textual criticism can always be thought of as a series of binary decisions for, or against, particular readings. There can only be *one* reading at the end of the process. There may be difficulties encountered, when for example a single archetype among existing manuscripts does not clearly emerge from the initial analysis. Additional sorting techniques must be applied so that the ultimate goal is attained:

When the evidence of the various sources for the text has been collected and organized, apographa eliminated, hyparchetypes and archetypes reconstructed where possible, and so on, the time has come to try to establish what the author originally wrote.²⁶

Such a reconstructed text that establishes, as far as possible, “what the author originally wrote” becomes the reading for the main body text in the critical edition. Alternative readings which “inform the reader which parts of the printed text depend on emendation and which parts are subject to uncertainty”²⁷ are placed in the critical apparatus, along with other material, depending upon need and available space.

As I now proceed to other areas of textual tradition, I will note that statements of textual criticism’s goal often qualify the term “original” with the phrase: “the form intended by its author.” Authors, subject to common human frailties of carelessness or fatigue, can and often do intend to write what they do not write, and write what they do not intend to write. Following the principle of authorial intention, an editor will produce a text believed to be what the author actually had in mind.²⁸ The qualifying phrase “form intended by the author” may result in a different decision here and there about which text to produce in a critical edition, but the goal remains the same: the production of a *single* textual unit. Variants among existing copies may be the result of error either on the part of the copyist or author, but whether the term “original” or the

²⁵ Ibid., 8.

²⁶ Ibid., 47–48.

²⁷ Ibid., 86.

²⁸ For a discussion of the issue of authorial intention, see Tanselle, *A Rationale of Textual Criticism*, esp. 36–37, 41–42, 75–93. On pg. 36 Tanselle also asks what one ultimately means by “intention”: “the author’s original intention, the author’s final intention, or the author’s intention mediated by scribes or publishers’ editors”? For an expansion of the discussion, see Jerome J. McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1992).

phrase “original form intended by the author” is used, the end result of the editorial process is the same.

DRAMA, MUSIC, MEDIEVAL VERNACULAR POETRY

Shakespeare Studies

Texts do not have to be “ancient” in order for a text-critical approach to be employed. Textual critics of more recent works, such as those of Shakespeare, also have struggled with the problem of determining which critical theories to apply to surviving texts, and how to understand the concept “original.” For example, the text of *King Lear* exists in two early editions from 1608 and 1623 respectively. These two texts are not identical. How should they be text-critically handled? Do they represent “two *relatively corrupted* texts of a pure (but now lost) original,” or “two *relatively reliable* texts of two different versions of the play (as we now think).”²⁹ The problem may have much to do with the genre of *King Lear*—a play which was performed and in all likelihood modified from performance to performance. In addition to the vicissitudes of play production and performance, Samuel Johnson is said to “lament over the state of the Shakespearean texts” which according to Johnson had been changed by players, mutilated in transmission, transcribed by inept copyists, and poorly printed, all without the input or permission of the author.³⁰ I propose to convert the question of the textual originality of the plays of Shakespeare from McGann’s alternative formulation—*either* two corrupted texts of a pure original *or* two reliable texts of different versions of the text—to an inclusive formulation: the two early texts of *King Lear* entail examples of *both* corruption *and* versional differences. There is no reason why it should be only one or the other. If there were “originally” two versions (or at first only one version, then shortly thereafter an author-approved second version), there is no reason why the separate versions would not each have experienced the typical kinds of transmission problems that would have occurred had there only been a single version.

Musicology: The Case of Handel’s *Messiah*

This is precisely the situation we have with another genre of the performing arts that entails both text and performance: musical scores. A number of parallels could be drawn between, for example, the textual history of the score(s) of Handel’s *Messiah* and the plays of Shakespeare.

²⁹ McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*, 4.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 16–17.

The world premiere of *Messiah* took place in Dublin in 1742. In successive performances in various locations, Handel employed different choral and orchestral configurations—different numbers of performers, and different instrumentations. While music performances today are often promoted as offering “authentic” listening experiences, with performers using “period instruments,” the question remains: *which* “authentic” version of Handel’s *Messiah* is the one to be performed on a particular occasion or for a particular recording?

Despite the fact that Handel himself created multiple versions, so that no single version can be regarded as the “authentic” one, audio CDs of *Messiah* often carry marketing slogans such as “according to the original score,” and customers seem to respond favorably. A reviewer of the Robert Shaw recording with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Choir comments at amazon.com: “I have found the recording to be the best out of all my *Messiah* recordings as well as the recording that is the truest to Handel’s original intentions and scope.”³¹

A full account of the manuscript sources and early printed editions has been provided by John Tobin.³² During the process of collating the manuscripts of *Messiah*, Tobin found “Handel’s own alterations disclosing his first, second, and third thoughts.”³³ Among the manuscripts described by Tobin only one represents a (nearly) complete score of *Messiah* written in Handel’s own hand: R.M. 20 f 2, obl. 4to. in the British Museum, referred to simply as “The Autograph Score.” Tobin holds this manuscript to be “of prime importance.”³⁴ However, the Tenbury-Dublin copy made by John Christopher Smith is regarded by many as “sacrosanct” for several reasons: (1) it “clarifies Handel’s almost illegible alterations in the Autograph”; (2) it “contains ninety-nine marginal entries made by Handel himself”; (3) it “was the score Handel used in his own performances” including, with a high degree of probability, the premiere performance of *Messiah* in Dublin on 13 April 1742.³⁵ Tobin lists seventeen additional copies, or collections of copies, each differing from one another in matters of wording, word distribution, orchestration, truncations, ornamentation, and other details.

³¹ <http://www.amazon.com/Handel-Messiah-Erickson-Humphrey-Stilwell/dp/B000003CT7>. Accessed: 12-26-2006.

³² John Tobin, *Handel’s Messiah: A Critical Account of the Manuscript Sources and Printed Editions* (London: Cassell & Company Ltd, 1969).

³³ *Ibid.*, x.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

Tobin next describes the numerous printed editions of *Messiah*, where the issue of author/composer “intentionality” comes to the foreground. Handel made mistakes, and Handel corrected at least some of his mistakes; some of those corrections were illegible and needed interpretation by copyists, who sometimes misinterpreted Handel’s handwriting. Alterations to the physical copy of the manuscript were made by crossing-out, by scraping with a knife, by trimming pages, and by reassembling with different content, or content sequence, than the pre-trimmed manuscript originally contained.³⁶ Printed editions deal with these phenomena variously, resulting in a general state of confusion as to what constitutes an “authoritative” edition of *Messiah*:

The confusion has been aggravated by the failure of editors to distinguish between a definitive *Urtext* edition and an exact reproduction of the Autograph score in type. The latter, with its reproduction of Handel’s errors of commission and omission and with no explanation of the performing conventions of the period, is of little use either to scholar or performer...³⁷

Tobin wishes to produce “a definitive and *Urtext* edition,” terms which he carefully defines:

Definitive, in that it contains all the music of the work extant in the composer’s own hand, together with any non-autograph settings of whose authenticity there is satisfactory evidence; *Urtext*, in that all the composer wrote is so printed that it is clearly to be seen; and an edition which, being faithful not merely to the composer’s text but also to his intentions ...³⁸

Tobin recognizes that such a work will still be an interpretation, but at least it will be a scholarly interpretation. The optimal edition of *Messiah* is *not* the “original”—the word does not even occur in Tobin’s purpose statement. It is rather a work of scholarship, amenable also to a general audience. In any event the optimal edition is itself *an interpretation*. What is particularly noteworthy about this example in terms of general text-critical theory is that, at least in some cases, having access to an autograph does *not* suspend scholarly activity and human judgments in regard to producing a “faithful” edition. The text-critical task is not superfluous just because an “original autograph” is available.

³⁶ Ibid., 13. See Appendix 1 for the full citation.

³⁷ Ibid., 13.

³⁸ Ibid., 13. See Appendix 1 for the full citation.

In these cases the text-critical process continues to be engaged for another reason. One of Tobin's goals is to ensure that the composer's work is performed "with the forces and balance and in the style of the period." I am not a musicologist, but since I do understand in other disciplines the difficulty of visualizing and re-experiencing the setting of past cultures (reconstructing the *Sitz im Leben*), I can imagine what debates among musicologists in general, and Handelian scholars in particular, must occur when it comes to determining with absolute clarity the additional layers of performance practice that lie beyond the printed page (which itself is an interpretation).

For example, there is the matter of the so-called "double-dot" convention, which in essence calls for the duration of notes to be performed differently than they are notated. If we have a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note, in modern convention the dot means that the note receives additional duration equal to half its value. So a dotted-quarter note should be held for a duration of a quarter note plus an eighth note, and the following fully written eighth note is played for its normal duration. However, according to the double-dot convention, sometimes called the French style, the eighth note would be reduced to a sixteenth, or even a thirty-second, meaning that the augmentation dot is conceived of as a double (or even triple) dot, taking away time from the eighth note. Whether the dotted quarter is played for the duration of the implied double dot, or whether there is a short rest, the effect on the eighth note is the same—it is shortened.

It may come as no surprise that musicologists differ on whether the double-dot convention is applicable to Handel. Tobin himself includes a chapter on "Style in Performance" and devotes a section of that chapter to "The Double-Dot Convention." According to Tobin, the double-dot convention was not strictly applied in all cases. An exception would be in cases where "music of a tender mood does not accord with the defiant effect of dotted notes."³⁹ As for the opening notes of *Messiah*, Tobin is unclear whether or not these belong to a tender mood, and thus he allows room for individual interpretation, though he personally favors the regular note values since "the mood of this music is reflective."⁴⁰ More aggressively opposed to the double-dot convention applied to Handel (and others) is Frederick Neumann, who has written volumes on issues of baroque ornamentation and related matters. The conclusion to one of his many essays on the subject suffices to capture the "tone" of his argument:

³⁹ Ibid., 88.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 89.

Indeed, for the period from Lully to Rameau, the so-called French style is essentially a legend, and its first formulation by Dolmetsch is an invention which has been wrongly taken for discovery.

When we play the overtures, sarabandes, chaconnes, etc., of Lully, Rameau, Handel, and Bach, it is a mistake to deprive them of their majestic dignity in favor of the frantic style of jerks and jolts. In any case, for many listeners a prolonged series of such jerks and jolts can be rather irritating. Others might find such a style stimulating, perhaps because it reflects the nervous tensions of our age; they have the privilege of their taste, but they must cease the claim of historical authenticity.⁴¹

What relevance does any of this have for the textual history of early Jewish writings? I have highlighted a variety of issues raised by a quest for a past “original” document, whether that document is a historical record of Herodotus, a play by Aristophanes, a play by Shakespeare, or a musical score by Handel. Although the times, cultures, genres, and availability of manuscript sources differ widely in all cases, there are also shared elements as traditional texts from the past that are being transmitted. Additional shared elements and their applicability specifically to the target of this book—early Hebrew writings—will be pointed out in the development of the thesis.

Medieval French Vernacular Texts

every manuscript is a revision, a version ⁴²
every edition is a theory ⁴³

In his book *In Praise of the Variant*, Bernard Cerquiglini offers a critique, not of textual criticism *per se*, but of an entire range of

⁴¹ Frederick Neumann, “The Dotted Note and the So-Called French Style (FN1),” in *Essays in Performance Practice* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1982), 98. Four different musical interpretations of the same score (“text”) can be heard online at: <http://www.aol.org/cg/Music/messiah.htm>. The interpretations provided there are as follows: (1) Double-dotted with note extended (Trevor Pinnock), (2) Double-dotted with silence before the eighth (Nicholas McGegan, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra), (3) Double-dotted with ornamentation (Masaaki Suzuki, Bach Collegium Japan) and (4) As notated (no double-dot) (Hermann Scherchen, Vienna State Opera Orchestra), from a vinyl recording. The album cover reads: “original Dublin version (1742).”

⁴² Bernard Cerquiglini, *In Praise of the Variant: A Critical History of Philology*, trans. Betsy Wing (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 38.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 79.

theoretical and methodological approaches that simply do not do justice to realities, as he sees it, of textual transmission phenomena, particularly with respect to medieval French vernacular texts, which “constitute the laboratory of writing in the medieval vernacular.”⁴⁴ According to Cerquiglini, this first literature of the French language was “not yet forced into the shackles of established forms of the written word (the author as the tutelary origin, textual stability, etc.).”⁴⁵ Variation in texts was normal, expected, and of course therefore acceptable. Cerquiglini calls this:

an essential variance, which philology, modern thinking about the text, took to be merely a childhood disease, a guilty offhandedness or an early deficiency of scribal culture, whereas the variance was, quite simply, joyful excess.⁴⁶

Variation in texts is “joyful excess”; hence the title, *In Praise of the Variant*. Medieval French vernacular literature possesses “essential plurality.”⁴⁷ This inherent variability of text “eludes the modern conception of the text,” because modern publishing and editing practice is bent on providing a single, stable text, and not a multiple, variable one. The problem is that the literature upon which Cerquiglini focuses is inherently multiple and variable.⁴⁸

Medieval vernacular literary works were variable because writing was a joyful privilege carried out in the atmosphere of “a writing workshop.” From the beginning of the nineteenth century philologists began searching for an authenticity that was never afforded the texts whose “origins” had, it seemed, been lost.

In the generalized authenticity of the medieval work, all that philology could see was a lost authenticity. Medieval philology is the mourning for a text, the patient labor of this mourning. It is the quest for an anterior perfection that is always bygone, that unique moment in which the

⁴⁴ Ibid., 19.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 21.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 21.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 27. The other brief quotations in this paragraph are from pg. 21 in the same context as the preceding inset citation.

⁴⁸ I notice Cerquiglini has structured his five chapters according to the convention of ring composition, which often places its emphasis in the middle of the ring: Ch. 1 (A) “Textuary Modernity”; ch. 2 (B) “Mr. Proustes, Philologist”; ch. 3 (C) “The Joyful Excess”; ch. 4 (B’) “Gaston Paris and the Dinosaurs”; ch. 5 (A’) “Turn the Page.” The body of the book is even framed further by two items of front-matter and two corresponding items of end-matter(!)

presumed voice of the author was linked to the hand of the first scribe, dictating the authentic, first and original version, which will disintegrate in the hands of all the numerous, careless individuals copying a literature in the vernacular.⁴⁹

“Copied” works were manipulated, modified, commented upon, with ease and for pleasure. All the philologist saw were carelessly transmitted texts. Cerquiglini contrasts this state of the text with the text of the Bible, considered at that time to be immutable, stable, finite, closed. The question that lies ahead of us, of course, is the one that asks whether biblical texts were always considered immutable, and not variable.

Modern textual critics and philologists are troubled at this state of affairs, who see variants as annoyances of the human condition, corruptions to be eliminated. In reality variants contain treasures of individuality and beauties of expression befitting the inherent variety of beholders’ eyes. This beauty of diversity must be made visible. But how should this be accomplished? In Cerquiglini’s vision, praising the variant can only be realized effectively through the use of computer technology. Thus, in the final chapter, Cerquiglini provides a corresponding praise of the computer and its ability to present a variety of multidimensional views of varieties of texts.

Cerquiglini made an additional observation that will be key to an approach I will take up later with Hebrew biblical texts. Medieval French vernacular literature displays an “astonishing repetitiousness” in the form of formulaic expressions, bringing to mind features often associated with oral composition. As we will see later, in many key works on oral composition, the formula is linked to aspects of *poetic* structure. Cerquiglini observes:

However, a formulaic style may also be easily found ... in eighteenth century prose, though clearly this is a matter of the written word ... What we perceive as the heavy-handed repetition of this prose participated in the aesthetic of return which lay at the basis of vernacular writing.

No matter what genre is considered (from the epic to the *fabliau*, from verse narrative to prose fiction), if one pays close attention, ridding oneself of the modern scorn for needless repetition, a whole collection of

⁴⁹ Cerquiglini, *In Praise of the Variant*, 34. See Appendix 1 for the full citation.

processes, figures, and motifs whose sequence is meaningful becomes apparent.⁵⁰

The main point to note here is that formulas are found in all genres and forms. I will devote a section of my study of the Decalogue to examine the role of such formulas even in the most fundamental legal material of the ancient Israelites. While formulaic expressions may be essential modular components of oral composition, and may have thence "moved into the written word, which amplified and made use of them,"⁵¹ their occurrence in written texts, however, does not *necessarily* imply an oral pre-history of those written texts.

TEXTS FROM THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

Sumerian "Schooldays" Composition

Some literature is believed to have a very long pre-history in a strictly oral environment, with accompanying feats of memory that in today's fast-paced information-overloaded technical society seem fantastic. Some literature may not have sprung from oral roots at all; new thoughts may in fact have entered the world scene first in a written mode. Although oral predecessors can never be completely excluded from the realm of possibility, some of the world's oldest literature, namely that of Mesopotamia in Sumerian and Akkadian, and that from Egypt written in hieroglyphics, may entail examples of textual creation and communication that has its origin in writing and not in speaking, as the ancient Sumerian proverb says: "Writing is the mother of speakers, the father of scholars."⁵²

One text that may have originated as early as 2000 B.C.E. as a composition written by an instructor in an *é-dub-ba*, a school (lit. "tablet-house"), possibly used as an exercise text, is known as the "Schooldays" composition.⁵³ This ancient composition describes daily affairs and

⁵⁰ Ibid., 36.

⁵¹ Ibid., 37.

⁵² G. R. Driver, *Semitic Writing: From Pictograph to Alphabet*, 3rd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 1. See also S. Langdon, "Babylonian Proverbs," *AJSLL* 28, no. 4 (1912): 242 (Sm 61 rev, line 19). Langdon's translation is: "Writing is the mother of orators and the father of skilled men" (pg. 232).

⁵³ Reconstruction and translation of all the extant portions was published in Samuel Noah Kramer, "Schooldays: A Sumerian Composition Relating to the Education of a Scribe," *JAOS* 69, no. 4 (1949). Additional references to Sumerian scholastic dialogues can be found in Driver, *Semitic Writing: From Pictograph to Alphabet*, 235.

interactions of a student, his parents, and his teacher that bring to mind Qohelet's observation that "there is nothing new under the sun" (Qoh 1:9), and so especially for a generation that still remembers the application of corporal punishment in school as an incentive for learning and as a corrective to behavioral disorders. The "schoolboy" hurries to be at school on time so as not to be caned for late arrival. His mother has prepared his lunch. At school he reads his tablet, eats his lunch, prepares and writes new tablets. Upon returning home he reads his tablet to his father, goes to bed, and gets up early to repeat the routine the next day.

At the time of Samuel Kramer's initial publication (1949), the text of *Schooldays* was extant in twenty-one tablets and fragments, most of which had been excavated at Nippur and were written during the first half of the second millennium B.C.E. Kramer's transliteration, based on his collation of all the extant portions, is accompanied with a detailed text-critical apparatus, where one finds over 150 variant readings for the ninety-one lines of reconstructed text. The variants are identified as omissions, additions, insertions, different readings, different line divisions, transpositions, and there are notes on probable and certain scribal errors, and scribal erasures.⁵⁴

Two important observations emerge from this example. First, although many and varied are the disagreements among the tablets of this ancient Sumerian text, the *similarities* among the tablets are *greater than their differences*, so that they all can be viewed as attempts to transmit essentially the same text. Second, the variations among the tablets and fragments may all derive from the copying of *written Vorlagen*, and not from variations associated with an oral tradition.

⁵⁴ See note 76, "probably a scribal error is involved"; note 77, "In E, perhaps, the sign is MA written over an erasure"; note 83, "the signs are illegible because of a scribal erasure"; note 99, "the scribe wrote an extra *ba-*"; note 116, "the scribe wrote erroneously ..."; note 122, "In Q the position of lines 67 and 68 is interchanged"; etc.

Gilgamesh Texts from Mesopotamia

The Babylonian "Epic of Gilgamesh"⁵⁵ tells the story of a great king (Gilgamesh), who, with his companion Enkidu, experiences journeys full of adventure and danger. Indeed, in one episode Enkidu is killed, leaving Gilgamesh to journey onward alone, where he meets Utnapishtim, the survivor of the Great Flood, and ponders the question of immortality. Accounts of Gilgamesh are extant in Sumerian poems (where he is called Bilgames) dating as far back as the third millennium B.C.E.⁵⁶ Gilgamesh was immensely popular for over two millennia, copied and translated often and widely. Fragments have been found written in Hittite, Hurrian, and Elamite.⁵⁷ The text appears to have been standardized in the seventh century B.C.E. at Nineveh during the reign of Assurbanipal. Among the five early Sumerian poems of Gilgamesh, one exists in two versions, one of which is shorter and "exhibits many minor variations" although "a major difference is one of plot."⁵⁸ Minor and major variations continue to characterize the various versions and traditions of Gilgamesh throughout its transmission history.

How was Gilgamesh transmitted? A. R. George reasons that Gilgamesh motifs on terracotta plaques "are more likely to reflect people's knowledge of orally transmitted stories than to witness popular familiarity with a written version."⁵⁹ Gilgamesh stories would be sung, recited, related in formal and informal settings, written, memorized, and repeated. Some "may even have improvised lines in Akkadian for the fun of it."⁶⁰ With such a long history and many conceivable *Sitzen im Leben*, it is not surprising that the recent text-critical edition of the Standard Babylonian version alone is dense with variant entries in the text-critical apparatus.

⁵⁵ A. R. George notes that the term "epic" is merely "a coinage of convenience, for the word has no counterpart in the Akkadian language." A. R. George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3. For a fuller discussion of the term "epic" applied to writings from Mesopotamia, see Scott Noegel, "Mesopotamian Epic," in *A Companion to Ancient Epic*, ed. John Miles Foley (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 233.

⁵⁶ For the textual history of Gilgamesh, see Jeffrey H. Tigay, *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982). An overview of the Mesopotamian epic traditions of Gilgamesh and other compositions is found in Noegel, "Mesopotamian Epic."

⁵⁷ Noegel, "Mesopotamian Epic," 239.

⁵⁸ George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic*, I:11.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, I:17.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, I:18.

Variations in the transmission of Gilgamesh can thus be accounted for by a mixture of oral tradition and scribal activity, and while some instances may appear to derive clearly from, say, a scribal slip, differentiating generally between variants traceable to oral tradition, and those traceable to written tradition, would be an extremely difficult, if not impossible, undertaking.

Egyptian "*Book of the Dead*"

As for the erudite scribes from the time of those who lived after the gods, they ... were not able to leave heirs in children, pronouncing their names, but they made heirs of themselves in the writings and in [the scrolls of wisdom] which they composed.⁶¹

In some ancient cultures what eventually emerges as a relatively fixed text, with elements of canonicity of content and sequence, has an identifiably long pre-history, extending to thousands of years, in a *written mode*. Such is the case with the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

The designation "The Book of the Dead" is a misnomer. There never was *a* or *the* fixed, commonly transmitted, work that, strictly speaking, could be called "The Book" of the Dead. Each tomb, each papyrus, had a different selection of formulae, and the formulae themselves varied in wording. It is much like Cerquiglini noted for medieval French vernacular literature: "every manuscript is a version." Hence, the name Book of the Dead is not set in italics, as is conventional for a uniform textual entity designated as "book." The designation is merely a convenience, though to the novice it is utterly misleading. Now it is true that from all of the tomb wall and papyrus writings that contain elements of the Book of the Dead, there are enough points in common to distinguish them as a collection from other forms and genres of Egyptian writings. But the Egyptians never referred to a collection of funerary texts as the Book of the Dead. The expression, or rather its German equivalent, *Totenbuch*, was coined by the German Egyptologist Karl Richard Lepsius (1810–1884) for a group of ancient Egyptian funerary texts, or formulae, which he published in 1842.

During the Saite period (twenty-sixth dynasty, ca. 672–535 B.C.E.) a version of the Book of the Dead, known to scholars today as the Saite Recension, was arranged with the funerary formulae in a standardized

⁶¹ Cited in Scott Noegel, "Text, Script, and Media: New Observations on Scribal Activity," in *Voice, Text, Hypertext: Emerging Practices in Textual Studies*, ed. Raimonda Modiano, Leroy F. Searle, and Peter Shillingsburg (Seattle: The University of Washington Press, 2004), 140.

sequence and with standardized content. Earlier collections of the same or similar funerary formulae from the New Kingdom (ca. 1550–1069 B.C.E.) show a wide variety of content and sequence. The point of interest here is that, whatever the exact wording, and however the exact sequence, the twenty or so extant manuscripts of the Book of the Dead from the Saite period, and the several hundred manuscripts from the later Ptolemaic period (ca. 305–30 B.C.E.), have identifiable “links” back to *written* forms that lie a millennium or so earlier. Furthermore, some of the formulae known from New Kingdom period texts can be shown to have been derived from even earlier Coffin Texts from the Middle Kingdom (ca. 2040–1640 B.C.E.). Other formulae from the New Kingdom may have either been created as new compositions, or they may derive from oral rituals that had not previously been written down. What we do know is that some of the formulae have written extensions that go back another half of a millennium. But the trail does not end here. The Coffin Texts themselves show affinities with even earlier Pyramid Texts from Old Kingdom Egypt, extending even farther back to ca. 2400 B.C.E. As a result of all of these extant funerary texts, Egyptologists are able to track the evolution of, and at points along the way the variations in, thoughts about the afterlife. One wonders how differently our understanding of the religious history of Egypt would have been formed if all we had at our disposal were a few Saite manuscripts of the *Book of the Dead*, so similar to each other that one scholar’s “testing of some twenty Turin manuscripts did produce only insignificant variants.”⁶²

Yet even with the knowledge of the complex history of and variations in these funerary texts from Egypt, scholars are not dissuaded from compiling a “critical edition” of the Book of the Dead, incorporating within that edition a wide range of texts, in terms of both chronology, provenance, and format. Thus the edition by Thomas G. Allen, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead Documents in the Oriental Institute Museum at the University of Chicago*, compares the texts of seventy Book of the Dead documents from the eighteenth dynasty or later, including “seven papyri, three coffins, a shroud, a statuette, three stelae or similar, and fifty-five ushabiu.”⁶³

⁶² Thomas George Allen, ed., *The Egyptian Book of the Dead Documents in the Oriental Institute Museum at the University of Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 1.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 1. Ushabtiu (*ushabti*, or *washabti*) are small servant-figurines placed, in later periods by the hundreds, in tombs to perform work for the deceased in the afterlife.

In 1997 the British Museum began a series entitled *Catalogue of Books of the Dead in the British Museum*, beginning with the publication of the New Kingdom Papyrus of Nu, dating to the Eighteenth Dynasty.⁶⁴ According to W. V. Davies, Keeper of Egyptian Antiquities, it “is in very good condition and is of special scholarly importance for its large number of chapters and for the quality of its text.”⁶⁵ It is assumed that the Papyrus of Nu was copied from a *Vorlage* or multiple *Vorlagen* (note below the plural “original texts”):

Its condition is extremely good, and the original texts were copied onto the papyrus with exceptional care. For this reason A. de Buck planned an edition of the Book of the Dead in which the papyrus of Nu was to have served as the base text... Since de Buck died before completing his manuscript, until now scholars have had to fall back on the decidedly unreliable hieroglyphic copies published by Budge in the last century. Nevertheless, in view of its importance the papyrus has frequently been mentioned and its texts have often been cited in studies and translations of the Book of the Dead.⁶⁶

Additional papyri in the British Museum series are published in completely separate volumes, although the second volume presents two different, but closely parallel, texts dating to almost 1400 years later than the Papyrus of Nu, “probably to the first century BC.”⁶⁷ These are the Papyrus of Hor and the Papyrus MacGregor. Along with four other documents, these represent the Book of the Dead tradition at Akhmim during the Late Period. Malcolm Mosher, the editor, provides the following insight into their nature and the plan of his publication:

Collectively, these six documents provide evidence for a unique tradition of the Book of the Dead at Akhmim. The purpose of this and the following chapters is to discuss the various elements of this tradition, contrast these with the standard traditions found elsewhere, suggest dates for the documents, and draw several conclusions regarding the

⁶⁴ Note that the series title changed slightly with the publication of volumes 2 and 3 to *Catalogue of the Books of the Dead in the British Museum*.

⁶⁵ G. Lapp, ed., *Catalogue of Books of the Dead in the British Museum. I. The Papyrus of Nu (BM EA 10477)* (London: British Museum Press, 1997), 1.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁶⁷ Malcolm Mosher, ed., *Catalogue of the Books of the Dead in the British Museum. Vol. II. The Papyrus of Hor (BM EA 10479) with Papyrus MacGregor: The Late Period Tradition at Akhmim* (London: British Museum Press, 2001), vii.

general funerary cult practiced at Akhmim at the time when the documents were produced.⁶⁸

In overview fashion, Mosher gives us some of the results of his investigations. The six documents contain a large number of corruptions and differences when compared against the "standard versions from Thebes and Memphis." All manner of scribal errors can be found, signs are written backwards, signs are omitted, and sometimes the signs are "so thoroughly mangled that they not infrequently appear to be an unintelligible sequence of characters, words, or short phrases."⁶⁹ Yet, when compared to each other, these six documents are "virtually identical." For Mosher this situation can be explained as follows:

... this general corruption was not the result of carelessness on the part of an individual scribe who prepared a given document. Rather, the master manuscripts used to produce the individual documents all contained the same corruption ... That is not to say that the individual scribes did not also make mistakes. Each document contains the typical types of errors found when copying from one document to another ...⁷⁰

We have here a truly complex set of affairs: a past tradition with variations, but enough continuity to provide opportunities to "correct" many later corruptions that must have made their way into non-extant immediate predecessors (masters), and other corruptions attributed to the individual scribes of the extant copies.

The difference in publishing practice is noteworthy. The Chicago texts, as diverse as they are, are nonetheless included in a single critical or comparative edition. On the other hand, the British Museum texts are published in separate volumes, presumably because, as diverse as they are, it makes no sense to combine them in a single edition. Yet, the editors of the separate volumes still believe that others texts from other times and places can provide valuable editorial assistance for dealing with especially difficult passages of their respective papyri.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 6.

⁶⁹ See Appendix 1 for the full citation from Mosher.

⁷⁰ Mosher, ed., *The Papyrus of Hor*, 11.

CONTEMPORARY SACRED TEXTS

Sanskrit Texts

The expression “religions of the book” is commonly applied to three world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This restrictive usage betrays an ignorance of other world religions for which texts play an extremely important role. The following examples from Sanskrit and Sikh religious texts illustrate how text-critics of the works belonging to religions other than those generally thought of as relying heavily on “the book” draw upon similar methodologies and concern themselves with the same issues of originality and variant readings in their respective manuscript traditions.

A recent and thorough treatment of textual issues for writings from ancient India was published in 2002 by Jayant Thaker, former Director of the Oriental Institute, Vadodara, India.⁷¹ The Foreword connects the work to the vision of Maharaja Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad III of Baroda, who in 1893 “conceived the idea of having an Institute for the propagation of our ancient culture & heritage by way of collection, preservation of Mss. and editing of rare, valuable & important works.”⁷² Works on textual criticism typically begin with a description of *what* textual criticism is, and move on to articulate *how* it operates. What is fascinating about the Foreword to *Manuscriptology and Text Criticism* is that it begins by telling us *why* textual criticism is important. Its ultimate goal is to propagate cultural heritage. This ideological interest is made clear throughout Thaker’s work. In his treatment of the Brahmi script, it is important for Thaker to mention, along with two other possibilities, the tradition that the script is so named “because it was invented or created by Brahma!”⁷³ The idea that the Brahmi script originated from other systems (Greek, Semitic, or others) has been “ably refuted”; it has “been established firmly that Brahmi was a genuine creation of the Indians themselves.”⁷⁴ Furthermore, Brahmi is an ideal script since it represents all vowels and consonants uniquely and is arranged according to a clear phonological structure, in contrast to the deficiencies of the “poor Semitic script.” We learn in a later section of the work:

⁷¹ Jayant P. Thaker, *Manuscriptology and Text Criticism* (Vadodara, India: Oriental Institute, 2002).

⁷² *Ibid.*, iii.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 25. Exclamation is his.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

No other country of the world had so ample natural writing substances as India in ancient times ... Palm-trees and Birch-trees grew here quite profusely without any human effort of sowing their seeds as is the case with the Papyrus plants of Egypt.⁷⁵

A sense of cultural pride is pervasive throughout this work. It is clear that this is a driving force behind the zeal with which Thaker also approaches the study of his manuscripts, which, he says, is “the central topic of our Study.”⁷⁶

The process of text composition is neatly outlined as follows: (1) An author prepared a first draft, then (2) the author or a disciple prepared a systematic correct manuscript from the first draft, called by Thaker “the First Ms,” which (3) was then given “to experts in the subject who made due corrections wherever required,” and finally (4) was given to copyists for production of multiple copies.⁷⁷ If the First Ms experienced too many corrections, it would be recopied and the process would pick up at step 3 with this new copy.

One of the most useful aspects of Thaker’s work is his extensive taxonomy of variants. He has constructed detailed classification systems for correction signs, types of manuscripts, portions of manuscripts, and causes of corruption. Thaker’s methodology for handling variants is essentially the one employed by Western classicists—stemmatology, or the genealogical method. At the end of the process only one text can emerge. Significant variants in the manuscripts are to be printed in a text-critical apparatus at the bottom of the page.

In 2005 a collection of articles under the auspices of the Asiatic Society was published under the title *Aspects of Manuscriptology*.⁷⁸ Pride of intellectual achievement through preservation of written records is evident, once again in the Foreword:

Like other old nations, India can rightly boast of many of its past achievements in various knowledge domains and that too because of her ability in preserving ancient records of Sastras for millennia against all odds. Manuscripts, and for that matter, manuscript studies indeed have had a very long history in India.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Ibid., 85.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 135.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 135.

⁷⁸ Ratna Basu and Karunasindhu Das, eds., *Aspects of Manuscriptology* (Kolkata: The Asiatic Society, 2005).

⁷⁹ Ibid., v.

Again, in the article by M. M. Anantalal Thakur on "Manuscriptology from Indian Sources," we find similar sentiments:

Indian Manuscript (ms.) tradition shows a wonderful continuity and its vastness surpasses that of any other country. Mss. were an object of high esteem. The offering of a manuscript was accepted as the best of gifts. The epics, Puranas and other sacred texts eulogise such gifts. Loss of or damage in a ms. was considered a great calamity. Scholars negotiated great distances to get a copy of the rare mss. These were an object of worship and they were stored in the best room in the house; they were bedecked and well cared for.⁸⁰

Thakur provides an insightful account of interplay between *oral* and *written* traditions of religious texts.

During the periodical or occasional recitations of religious texts, well-versed *grantha-dharakas* were engaged beside the reciter. The former used to rectify the mistakes in the recitation or those in the mss. of the reciter. Sometimes disputations over such defection necessitated postponement of the recitation till the decision was reached and the necessary correction was made.⁸¹

Compare the remarks above with the following note in the article by Bijoya Goswami:

In the course of this workshop, we were told that several mss. of any Sanskrit text may be available. All these were copied by scribes, many of them had very little knowledge of the language as such, and were liable to various slips and errors. There is also the great probability that interpolations were interpolated in some particular copies of the text. These interpolations may have come in through oral recitations of the text when the reciter might have added some of his own creation to the original. Since copies were made of the copies again, slips and errors and interpolations were incorporated into the later copies. As a result, many of the mss. found were further and further away from the

⁸⁰ M. M. Anantalal Thakur, "Manuscriptology from Indian Sources," in *Aspects of Manuscriptology*, ed. Ratna Basu and Karunasindhu Das (Kolkata: The Asiatic Society, 2005), 83.

⁸¹ Thakur, "Manuscriptology from Indian Sources," 83. See also Gautam Bhadra, "The Performer and the Listener: Kathakata in Modern Bengal," in *Studies in History*, 10, No. 2, 243–254 (1994).

original. So, in order to prepare an authoritative text, one needs to take all these factors into consideration.⁸²

Thus, we find that sometimes a correction to a manuscript can be made on the basis of the oral tradition, and sometimes an oral recitation will include a new creation that did not belong to the original. Decisions on these matters are made on the basis of *oral* disputation.

In concluding his article, Goswami pleads his case for increased activity in the creation of scholarly, critical editions of Sanskrit works. Many works are available only in popular editions for those “who are merely interested in reading the works” but they are “still far from what is essential for research work.”⁸³

Sikh Scriptures

During the fifteenth century C.E. a number of reform movements emerged in India. The movement that became known as Sikhism advocated abolition of the caste system, thereby representing a break from traditional Brahmanism.⁸⁴ The movement is said to have been founded by Nanak (1469–1539 C.E.), who taught equality of all castes, and who became known as the First Guru (in a series of ten Gurus).

In his article in *Sikh Studies*, C. H. Loehlin begins with the following claim in regard to Sikh scripture:

The Sikh religious community has the unique distinction of having in its possession a manuscript of its original Scripture, namely, the Adi Granth kept at Kartarpur in Jullundur District.⁸⁵

An even more forceful claim, cited by Loehlin at the conclusion of his article, is the following quotation which the author found in the “Facets of Sikhism” section of the August 1975 issue of *Sikh Review* published in Calcutta:

⁸² Bijoya Goswami, “Expectations and Experiences from Textual Criticism To-day,” in *Aspects of Manuscriptology*, ed. Ratna Basu and Karunasindhu Das (Kolkata: The Asiatic Society, 2005), 144.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 146.

⁸⁴ For an excellent overview of Sikh history and culture based on field work in village of Daleke from July 1956–November 1957, see Indera P. Singh, “A Sikh Village,” in *Traditional India: Structure and Change*, ed. Milton Singer (Philadelphia: The American Folklore Society, 1959).

⁸⁵ C. H. Loehlin, “Textual Criticism of the Kartarpur Granth,” in *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspectives on a Changing Tradition*, ed. Mark Juergensmeyer and N. Gerald Barrier (Berkeley: Graduate Theological Union, 1979), 113.

We have our Scripture, the *Guru Granth Sahib*. Without meaning any disrespect to anyone, the fact is that it is the only Scripture in the World which is written, prepared, and sealed by the Founder who directly received the Word.⁸⁶

Thus the Sikh Scriptures are contrasted with the teaching of Socrates, which have come down to us through Plato and are now extant only in multiple and differing copies, or the teachings of Jesus, which have come down to us only through his disciples and are also now extant only in multiple and differing copies, or the teachings of Muhammed, which have likewise been transmitted by his followers, though the textual outcome may appear more unified than classical or Christian traditions.

However, there are other points of view, such as the following assessment by another contributor of *Sikh Studies*, who in referring to the same Sikh Scriptures states:

The problems of textual analysis, in determining authenticity, chronology, and editorial accretions, are not dissimilar to those faced by biblical scholars, or scholars of any other ancient text.⁸⁷

Can these disparate claims be reconciled? How can there be at the same time both a single original and a need for text-critical analysis? The following brief survey of Sikh Scripture provides the background against which these questions can be more thoughtfully pursued.

Tradition has it that hymns of the first five Gurus, and even some composed from the time before Nanak, were collected and compiled in written form by the Fifth Guru, Arjan Dev (1563–1606), in 1604 C.E. In actuality, the texts were committed to writing by Bhai Gurdas, the amanuensis of Arjan Dev. Now we are told that Guru Arjan Dev utilized earlier manuscripts containing the hymns. One writer refers to these earlier manuscripts themselves as “original manuscripts” from which the manuscript of the collection was made, which itself is called by the same writer in the same paragraph the “original copy” of the *Guru Granth*

⁸⁶ Ibid., 117. The statement is found on p. 31 of the edition of the *Sikh Review* noted above and was written by Bhayee Ardaman Singh.

⁸⁷ Mark Juergensmeyer, “The Forgotten Tradition: Sikhism in the Study of World Religions,” in *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspectives of a Changing Tradition*, ed. Mark Juergensmeyer and N. Gerald Barrier (Berkeley: Graduate Theological Union, 1979), 22. Juergensmeyer appends the following note on this statement (his n. 31): “Some of the best of the Western scholars of Sikh texts, including Clinton Loehlin, W. H. McLeod, and John C. Archer, received their early training in textual analysis on biblical texts.”

Sahib.⁸⁸ In any event, this 1604 manuscript exists today; it has been located since 1850 with the family of Sodhi Sadhu Singh in Kartarpur, Punjab, in the northwest corner of India near the border of Pakistan. Its name *Guru Granth Sahib* is composed of the words for “master/teacher” (*guru*), “book” (*granth*), and “master, owner” (*sahib*), and carries with it both the idea of “holy (master) book” (*granth sahib*) as well as “living teacher” (*guru*). It is also called the *Adi Granth*, meaning “first book.” The manuscript itself is thus thought to be the embodiment of a living Guru.⁸⁹ The volume is presented periodically to worshippers, but only a few scholars who have been given sufficient access to it have been able to publish descriptions of it. In his article in *Sikh Studies*, C. H. Loehlin provides notes from his own personal observations and those of another scholar, excerpts of which are provided below:

“Kashmiri” paper, brownish, about 12" x 8" mounted on new margins which are lighter in colour, making the page size about 15" x 12". Many erasures, some filled in, but several lines completely blotted out in greenish ink. Some erasures were left white. Mostly written by one hand, but size and carefulness varies greatly. Many corrections in the margins.⁹⁰

It contains 974 leaves ... 1948 pages including some blank pages (no one seems to know why these blanks are included, nor for what ultimate purpose). The writing is well done and by “one man” so they said; although the size of the script varies ...

The problem of the Book is acute. This is considered to be the *Adi Granth*, the “original” or only copy in existence of the “original”... But it bears no dates, nor any scribe’s name, nor is its history clear. Its authenticity cannot be proved.⁹¹

⁸⁸ “The Fifth Master: Guru Arjan Dev (1563–1606),” Sandeep Singh Brar, <http://www.sikhs.org/guru5.htm>. Accessed 1/4/2007.

⁸⁹ For a parallel in Judaism, where textual embodiment can occur in “the person of the Rabbinic Sage,” see Martin S. Jaffee, “A Rabbinic Ontology of the Written and Spoken Word: On Discipleship, Transformative Knowledge, and the Living Texts of Oral Torah,” *JAAR* 65, no. 3 (1997): 527ff. See also M. Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism, 200 BCE–400 CE* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), esp. 150.

⁹⁰ Loehlin, “Textual Criticism of the Kartarpur Granth,” 113–14. The quotation is from notes taken by the article’s author, C. H. Loehlin, who saw it on July 7, 1946.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 114–15. The description is from J. C. Archer of Yale University who saw the manuscript with Loehlin on November 21, 1946.

Loehlin laments the fact that so little access has been granted to scholars for a "scientific investigation into the actual original text of the Kartarpur Granth," and notes that an attempt to procure photographs of the Granth caused quite a stir among its caretakers, whose "reaction was to the effect that 'You will photograph the naked body of our Guru over our dead bodies!'" So the matter was dropped."⁹²

But the matter of originality is not confined to issues relating to the condition of or accessibility to the *Guru Granth Sahib*. For two other versions contend for originality. A second version is that of Banno, which includes passages not found in the Kartarpur manuscript. W. H. McLeod finds an explanation for deletion to have occurred in the Kartarpur version, rather than seeing the passages as additions in the Banno version. The Banno version is thought to "incorporate concepts which would be unacceptable in the light of later ideals," such as the shaving of a child's head.⁹³ This would be an argument for positioning the Banno version chronologically earlier than the Kartarpur version, which would make it "the earliest, representing the nearest approach to Guru Arjan's dictation."⁹⁴ A third, the Damdama version, accepts the revisions as *marked* in the Kartarpur version. These recensional views, however, remain theoretical. McLeod believes that access to the Kartarpur manuscript is essential to resolve the matter:

No one can deny that the available descriptions of the Kartarpur manuscript do make it sound very much like an original work rather than a subsequent copy ...

There is thus no suggestion that the Kartarpur claims are on the brink of refutation. The point which I am endeavoring to make is simply that we need a sustained campaign of textual analysis if we are to establish a sure and certain text. If access to the Kartarpur manuscript continues to be denied the process must necessarily remain tentative and incomplete. This would be a great pity. No one will benefit from continuing uncertainty in this respect.⁹⁵

Introductory considerations raised in McLeod's article highlight tensions between the community of believers and the community of

⁹² Both quotations in this paragraph from Loehlin, "Textual Criticism of the Kartarpur Granth," 117.

⁹³ W. H. McLeod, "The Sikh Scriptures: Some Issues," in *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspectives on a Changing Tradition*, ed. Mark Juergensmeyer and N. Gerald Barrier (Berkeley: Graduate Theological Union, 1979), 101.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 102–03.

scholars that explain the juxtaposition of views on the nature of Sikh scriptures presented at the beginning of this section, that is, whether the Sikh scriptures are unique and inviolate, or whether they, like all texts from the past, are in need of textual processing. For believers, the writings under consideration are *sacred* scriptures to be revered because it is through them that salvation can be attained. Academic research that raises historical questions about the textual integrity of those texts may well offend the religious sensitivities of the community of believers. It is a classic battle between tradition and scholarship. Yet there is a paradox. Believers seem to be carrying on just fine without the firm foundation of textual certainty which the scholars could provide if they only had a chance.

The story is still not complete with the identification of three separate recensions of the *Adi Granth*. For while the *Adi Granth* "is unquestionably the principal Sikh scripture, and its canonical status is beyond question" there are other works "which in varying degree possess a semi-canonical status."⁹⁶ But this issue shall not detain us.

Surjit Singh's conclusion to all these matters is apropos for bringing this section to a close.

Since Guru Gobind Singh enjoined that the Granth Sahib be acknowledged as the Guru Granth Sahib, the Damdama Granth is perhaps the final text by progressive revelation. Practice and the printed text show it to be the case. But this still does not settle the question of originality. On deep religious grounds the Body of the Guru cannot be allowed to be strained by spreading it upon three rescensions [sic] and variants. It must be restored to wholeness. Piety alone cannot do it; it needs the services of technical scholarship. This becomes all the more urgent if the *Adi Granth* is to have its rightful place among the sacred scriptures of mankind.⁹⁷

New Testament

Rule number one in the list of "Twelve Basic Rules for Textual Criticism" recommended for New Testament textual critics is as follows:

Only *one* reading can be original, however many variant readings there may be. Only in very rare instances does the tenacity of the New

⁹⁶ Ibid., 98.

⁹⁷ Surjit Singh, "Comments: Scholarship and the *Adi Granth*," in *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspectives on a Changing Tradition*, ed. Mark Juergensmeyer and N. Gerald Barrier (Berkeley: Graduate Theological Union, 1979), 120.

Testament tradition present an insoluble tie between two or more alternative readings.⁹⁸

In case of an “insoluble tie” the New Testament critic is to continue searching for a mode of analysis to ultimately eliminate one of the readings.

The question of what constitutes an original text of a New Testament writing has become widely discussed during the past decade or two. Eldon J. Epp summarizes the issues in his article “The Multivalence of the Term ‘Original Text’ in New Testament Textual Criticism.” First, Epp notes that New Testament textual scholars have increasingly placed the term “original” inside quotation marks, but there is uncertainty as to what those marks are specifically meant to convey: “To be sure, New Testament textual critics recently have placed the words ‘original text’ in quotation marks, but do they really understand what is signified thereby?”⁹⁹

There are numerous reasons why New Testament textual critics have become increasingly hesitant to use the term “original” without some qualification. The first reason is not so much conceptual as it is practical. The thousands of available manuscripts containing hundreds of thousands of variant readings makes the task of collating alone virtually impossible without the use of a computer. Once all the data is collected, the decision-making process that ultimately selects a single reading as original requires such an analysis of all the possible scenarios that all other readings are satisfactorily explained as secondary. This can be a daunting task. Perhaps, then, New Testament textual critics use “original” in quotation marks to imply “provisional.” That is, there is no doubt in their minds that (1) an original existed, and that (2) the point of textual criticism is to reconstruct that original. The only doubt is whether a textual critic wishes to assert that his edition represents the original. Uncertainty as to whether or not that goal has been achieved is possibly what is meant by the use of quotation marks. In other words, “original” means “as close to the original we have been able to determine up to this point, but we are not so sure as to declare with certainty that a collation of our edition with the original, if found, would result in no variants.”

⁹⁸ Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1995), 280.

⁹⁹ Eldon J. Epp, “The Multivalence of the Term “Original Text” in New Testament Textual Criticism,” in *Perspectives on New Testament Textual Criticism: Collected Essays, 1962–2004* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 553.

Under “multivalence” Epp includes different opinions about *which* text constitutes the original text. In discussing Bart Ehrman’s volume on *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture* in which Ehrman asserts that changes were made by scribes to serve their own theological agendas, Epp summarizes Ehrman’s view by asking: “Therefore, which is the ‘original,’ the texts altered by the scribes—now much obscured—or the scribes’ altered texts?”¹⁰⁰

It is unclear why this should be considered an example of “multivalence” of the term original. We are confronted here only with the issue of determining among a multiplicity of variants which one was written by the author. Whether the variants were created by inadvertent scribal slips or ideologically motivated agendas does not change the landscape. It is certainly true that people have *called* different texts “originals” for a variety of reasons. But from the view of the textual critic, the term original retains its fundamental meaning: the text originally written (and/or intended) by its author. The only argument is *which* text represents that putative original. There is no disagreement over different meanings of the term “original” in such cases.

A clearer example of multivalence would be, for example, parallel to the case of our earlier discussion of Handel’s works. Is the original what Handel originally produced, including his mistakes which he did not correct until later? Or does it include Handel’s corrections? Or if those are illegible, does it include someone else’s interpretation of Handel’s corrections? Here the argument is centered primarily between the alternatives of what an author *wrote*, and what the author *intended to write*. But while such a discussion is possible, and even fruitful, in the case of Handel, where we have sufficient extant manuscripts bearing the marks of Handel himself, it is entirely theoretical when there are no extant manuscripts that can be traced to an author.

Epp’s final example summarizes the ideas expressed in David Parker’s *The Living Text of the Gospels*. As Epp notes:

Parker begins by challenging the common belief that “the purpose of textual criticism is to recover the original text,” followed by a call to examine whether there is an original to be recovered.¹⁰¹

Parker’s thesis is both simple and provocative: there never was a single original version of any of the Gospels. The pattern of textual history did not proceed along a chronological development of (1) single

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 567.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 572.

original, followed by (2) variant traditions characterized as a period of textual “fluidity”, followed then by (3) a period of crystallization of only a few individual recensions, which then became a concerted effort to (4) “restore” the text of the single original as it was found in stage 1. Rather, so Parker argues, the “text” at the very beginning of the process was already diverse and fluid, hence a “living” text.

Parker’s thesis also does not provide for an alternate definition or understanding of the term “original”; no multivalence can be detected here. For Parker, the issue is not how to define “original”; the issue is rather that *there is no such thing* as an original.

Epp next pursues the question of whether ideas such as those expressed by Parker move us into territory that can no longer be claimed as the turf of textual criticism. The primary concern here is that the discussion has moved back to the time *before* our earliest extant manuscripts and is now engaged in purely theoretical models of compositional processes that cannot be controlled by the direct testimony of our existing manuscripts. Epp argues that a careful examination of manuscript variants in some cases forces the compositional question to be raised anyway. Hence, within certain parameters, pursuits other than the traditional investigations of textual criticism properly belong to the domain of textual criticism. Those pursuits and parameters are summarized as follows:

Any search for textual *preformulations* or *reformulations* of a literary nature, such as *prior* compositional levels, versions, or formulations, or *later* textual alteration, revision, division, combination, rearrangement, interpolation, or forming a collection of writings, legitimately falls within the sphere of text-critical activity *if such an exploration is initiated on the basis of some appropriate textual variation or other manuscript evidence*.¹⁰²

The argument is formulated primarily for the inclusion within the text-critical enterprise of pursuits “in addition to the traditional investigations.” Yet, it is equally an argument for the traditional investigations themselves. It seems that textual critics have so strongly believed in the *single original theory*, that they have forgotten that their reconstructions are themselves just as theoretical as those which operate on the basis of *multiple original* or *no original* theories of origins. All go back in time “beyond” the extant manuscripts. They are all theoretical models. The only question is which model, or models, best explain(s) the total of what we find among the written attestations that lie before us in the New

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 578. The italics are those of Epp.

Testament manuscripts. In concluding this major section of his article, Epp foresees New Testament criticism moving beyond "its myopic concentration on an elusive and often illusive target of a single original text"¹⁰³ in a manner that challenges the current theories and methods while making the enterprise more relevant to fields relating to composition, interpretation, and reception histories.

It is observed that the number of textual variants increases with an increase in both the number and age of manuscripts we include in our analysis. This may provide a basis for postulating that natural variations in the pre-textual oral transmission period have simply left their collective signatures in the earliest textual witnesses. Not all scholars will agree with this type of reasoning. One critic's evidence of fluidity deriving from oral tradition is another critic's "highly contaminated tradition." For example, Gerd Mink describes the analysis of the book of James carried out at the Institute for New Testament Textual Research in Münster, Germany, for the *Editio Critica Maior*. The variant data collected is impressive:

The text of James contains about 1740 words; the exact number depends on textual decisions. The selected 164 Greek manuscripts, including the fragmentary ones, present 2132 genuine variants at 761 places of variation ... Since many of these 761 places comprise more than one word ... it follows that about half the text is subject to variation.¹⁰⁴

Conclusion? Evidence of fluidity in the pre-textual oral tradition of James? Not for Mink.

Earlier in his article, Epp gives credit to text critics of the Hebrew Bible and Septuagint for being more willing to confront the issue of "what the term 'original text' might mean or what implications might flow from any given definition of it."¹⁰⁵ It is to the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible that I now turn.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 580.

¹⁰⁴ Mink, "Problems of a Highly Contaminated Tradition: The New Testament; Stemmata of Variants as a Source of a Genealogy For Witnesses," 18–19.

¹⁰⁵ Epp, "The Multivalence of the Term "Original Text" in New Testament Textual Criticism," 553.

TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

Early Text-Critical Observations

Letter of Aristeas: Textual Concerns

In the middle of the third century B.C.E. a Greek translation of sacred Hebrew writings was undertaken in Alexandria, Egypt that became known as the Septuagint (LXX). It was not necessarily the first translation into Greek, nor was Alexandria necessarily the first place where such translation was undertaken. Among the earliest documents from Qumran is a set of five small fragments of Deuteronomy (4Q122) that may date as far back as the mid-third century B.C.E.¹⁰⁶ The Letter of Aristeas (henceforth simply "Aristeas") postures for a unique position of the Alexandrian undertaking. It identifies the text to be translated as τοῦ θείου νόμου (the divine law), νομοθεσίας κειμένης πᾶσι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, (the law-code set for all the Jews), τὸν πάντα νόμον (the whole law).¹⁰⁷ On the one hand, there is a need to provide clarity in the face of Hebrew manuscripts "carelessly copied...due to lack of royal patronage"; on the other, there is a need to connect with Jerusalem for the validity of the Septuagint enterprise. In time, the Septuagint is afforded authoritative, divine, or inspired status, as seen in passages from Philo's *Vita Mosis* (II, 37–40), the New Testament, Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* (XVIII, 42–43), and others.

There is much discussion on Aristeas, ranging from its date of composition to the value of its historical references and its underlying agenda. I limit my investigation here to ascertaining what Aristeas might tell us about the perceived state of the text of the sacred writings of the Jews. It should be kept in mind that Aristeas is extant only in late manuscripts—twenty-two ranging from the eleventh to sixteenth centuries.¹⁰⁸ Based on internal considerations, Aristeas appears to have originated in

¹⁰⁶ Only fragment 1 has enough extent text to identify it as containing a portion of Deut 11:4. See DJD IX, pg. 145 and pl. XLIII.

¹⁰⁷ It is generally understood that Aristeas refers only to the first five books of the Hebrew Bible.

¹⁰⁸ Sidney Jellicoe mentions twenty-three manuscripts. Sidney Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (Ann Arbor: Eisenbrauns, 1978), 34. Pelletier lists only twenty-two manuscripts by century, but explains that a twelfth century manuscript was destroyed in a fire in 1922. "Le *Smrynæus* du XIIe siècle que signalait Wendland (p. XIII) et qui contenait un fragment au folio 1 a été détruit dans l'incendie de la Bibliothèque Évangélique le 1^{er} sept. 1922 (Lettre de l'Institut de Recherche, 15 mars 1954)." André Pelletier, *Lettre d'Aristée à Philocrate* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1962), 8–9.

mid-second century B.C.E. Text-critical issues, however, do not appear to play a significant role in the excerpts I discuss here. Semantic uncertainties present larger concerns.

First I note the designation of the body of literature under consideration in *Aristeas* 3, and the reasons for the interest taken in it:

Pelletier¹⁰⁹

Τὴν προαίρεσιν ἔχοντες ἡμεῖς πρὸς τὸ περιέργως τὰ θεῖα κατανοεῖν, ἑαυτοὺς ἐπεδώκαμεν εἰς <τὴν πρὸς> τὸν προειρημένον ἄνδρα πρεσβείαν, καλοκἀγαθία καὶ δόξῃ προτετιμημένον ὑπὸ τε τῶν πολιτῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων, καὶ κατακεκτημένον μεγίστην ὠφέλειαν τοῖς σὺν ἑαυτῷ καὶ τοῖς κατὰ τοὺς ἄλλους τόπους πολίταις, πρὸς τὴν ἐρμηνείαν τοῦ θείου νόμου, διὰ τὸ γεγράφθαι παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν διφθέραις ἐβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν.

The English translations of Charles and Schutt below show how the Greek text of *Aristeas* is variously understood concerning the nature of the activity undertaken.

Charles (1913)¹¹⁰

It was my devotion to the pursuit of religious knowledge that led me to undertake the embassy to the man I have mentioned, who was held in the highest esteem by his own citizens and by others both for his virtue and his majesty and who had in his possession documents of the highest value to the Jews in his

Schutt (1985)¹¹¹

We have a set purpose devoted to the special study of the things of God, and offered ourselves as a deputation to the aforesaid gentleman, whose integrity and reputation have won him preeminent honor in the eyes of citizens and others alike, and who has gained a very great benefit for his own circle and for (fellow) citizens in other

¹⁰⁹ Pelletier, *Lettre d'Aristée à Philocrate*, 102. Pelletier differs from Swete only in the inserted text in angle brackets and in the breathing mark over the alpha in καλοκἀγαθία. Henry Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1914; reprint, 1989), 551.

¹¹⁰ R. H. Charles, "The Letter of Aristeas," *The Clarendon Press*, <http://www.ccel.org/c/charles/otpseudepig/aristeas.htm>.

¹¹¹ R. J. H. Shutt, "Letter of Aristeas: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol 2: Expansions of the "Old Testament" Legends, Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms, and Odes, Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Inc., 1985).

own country and in foreign
lands
for the interpretation of the
divine law, for their laws are
written on leather parchments in
Jewish characters.

places. Our deputation (waited
upon him)
with a view to the translation of
the divine Law, due to its being
written by them on parchments
in Hebrew characters.

This section is constructed in a loose ring composition pattern with internal chiasmic structures and considerable use of alliteration. I highlight below only a few of these compositional features which help us gain clarity on our points of inquiry.

Τὴν προαίρεσιν ἔχοντες ἡμεῖς
πρὸς τὸ περιέργως τὰ θεῖα κατανοεῖν
ἐπεδώκαμεν εἰς <τὴν πρὸς> τὸν προειρημένον ἄνδρα πρεσβείαν
καλοκάγαθία καὶ δόξῃ προτετιμημένον
ὑπὸ τε τῶν πολιτῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων
καὶ κατακεκτημένον μεγίστην ὠφέλειαν
τοῖς σὺν ἑαυτῷ καὶ τοῖς κατὰ τοὺς ἄλλους τόπους πολίταις
πρὸς τὴν ἐρμηνείαν τοῦ θείου νόμου
διὰ τὸ γεγράφθαι παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν διαθήραις ἐβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν.

The center of the ring focuses doubly on Eleazar, high priest in Jerusalem, whose character, expertise, and beneficence on behalf of all Jewish communities is emphasized at the outset to provide legitimation for the work of translation of the Law from Hebrew to Greek.

The two πρὸς-purpose clauses form a logical pair: in order to understand the divine things (τὰ θεῖα κατανοεῖν, or “matters of religion,” LSJ 788), one needs a translation of the divine law (ἐρμηνείαν τοῦ θείου νόμου). Now the word ἐρμηνεία can mean either “translation” from one language to another language, or “interpretation, explanation” using different words of the same language. The circumstance that requires the ἐρμηνεία in the passage under investigation is that the divine law *is written by them on hides in Hebrew letters* (διὰ τὸ γεγράφθαι παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν διαθήραις ἐβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν), and not that the Hebrew wording itself is difficult to understand. Indeed, ἐρμηνεία meaning “translate” makes good sense whenever it occurs in Aristeas (3, 11, 32, 39, 120, 301, 309).

Aristeas uses other words for “translate,” among them μεταγράφω, which, in some contexts, can also mean “transcribe, copy” (Aristeas 9, 15, 45, 46, 307, 309) and διερμηνεύω, which often means “interpret” (Aristeas 15, 308). These two words are conjoined in Aristeas 15 as follows:

τῆς γὰρ νομοθεσίας κειμένης πᾶσι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, ἣν ἡμεῖς οὐ μόνον
μεταγράψαι ἐπινοοῦμεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ διερμηνεύσαι ...

For, since the law-code is set for all the Jews, which we intend not only to μεταγράψαι, but also to διερμηνεύσαι ...

The correlative construction seems to require two different activities: both terms can hardly mean “translate.” But what two activities are correlated? Charles reads: “not only to transcribe but also to translate”; Schutt reads: “not only to translate but also to interpret.” To further complicate the issue, in some cases the terms μεταγράφω and διερμηνεύω are not only used interchangeably, they also occur in the same context with the word ἐρμηνεύω, as is observed in Aristeas 307–308:

συνέτυχε δὲ οὕτως, ὥστε ἐν ἡμέραις ἑβδομήκοντα δυοὶ τελειωθῆναι τὰ τῆς μεταγραφῆς... Τελειώσιν δὲ ὅτε ἔλαβε, συναγαγὼν ὁ Δημήτριος τὸ πλῆθος τῶν Ἰουδαίων εἰς τὸν τόπον, οὗ καὶ τὰ τῇ ἐρμηνείᾳ ἐτελέσθη, παρανέγνω πᾶσι, παρόντων καὶ τῶν διερμηνευσάντων, οἵτινες μεγάλης ἀποδοχῆς ... ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τὸν Δημήτριον ἀποδεξάμενοι παρεκάλεσαν μεταδοῦναι τοῖς ἡγουμένοις αὐτῶν, μεταγράψαντα τὸν πάντα νόμον. Καθὼς δὲ ἀνεγνώσθη τὰ τεύχη, στάντες οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ τῶν ἐρμηνέων οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ...

The outcome was such that in seventy-two days the business of translation (μεταγραφῆς) was completed ... When it was completed, Demetrius assembled the company of the Jews in the place where the task of the translation (ἐρμηνείας) had been finished, and read it to all, in the presence of the translators (διερμηνευσάντων), who received a great ovation... Likewise also they gave an ovation to Demetrius and asked him, now that he had transcribed (μεταγράψαντα) the whole Law, to give a copy to their leaders. As the books were read, the priests stood up, with the elders from among the translators (ἐρμηνέων) ...

Schutt provides a footnote on the word “transcribed” (μεταγράψαντα) that states:

This is a vague statement; if it had been precise, giving more details of the task undertaken and the exact books dealt with, many of the chief critical problems connected with LetAris would have been solved.¹¹²

While key terms used in Aristeas are multivalent, and in some contexts it remains difficult to ascertain with precision which meaning is to be supplied, in the case of Aristeas 3 the term ἐρμηνεία seems more likely to mean “translate” (from Hebrew to Greek) than “interpret” (to explain using the Hebrew language). What is required for the Greek-speaking community in Alexandria “to understand the divine things” is

¹¹² Schutt, “Letter of Aristeas,” 33, n. k3.

first and foremost a “translation of the divine Law.” The divine things may also require “interpretation,” but that would also have to be done in Greek, not Hebrew. If one argues for the meaning “interpret” for ἐρμηνεία, or allows for its multivalent nature to remain multivalent in the sense “translate and interpret,” the target language for both translation and interpretation, whether only one of the two or both are present, is Greek. In any event, nothing here is implied about any deficiency resident in the Hebrew language source material itself.

The situation may be parallel to the event related in Neh 8:8 where the term מִפְרָשׁ is considered by some to mean “translate” and by others “explain,” or as HALOT defines it: “to make an extempore translation of a text.”¹¹³ Whatever the precise nature of that activity, it was carried out in Aramaic. Ezra is not thought to have merely explained or interpreted the Hebrew text of the Law using Hebrew as the language of his instruction and exhortation. In Neh 8:8 there is nothing to suggest that the Hebrew text itself was corrupt or deficient in any way whatsoever.

In Aristeas 30, however, the state of the Hebrew text itself comes under scrutiny, although once again, the exact meaning of Aristeas is disputed. The situation is fully discussed by Schutt in the footnotes to his translation, which is as follows:

Schutt’s translation of Aristeas 30–31a:

[30] Scrolls of the Law of the Jews, together with a few others, are missing (from the library), for these (works) are written in Hebrew characters and language. But they have been transcribed (σεσήμνται) somewhat carelessly (ἀμελέστερον) and not as they should be, according to the report of the experts, because they have not received royal patronage.

[31] These (books) also must be in your library in an accurate version, because this legislation, as could be expected from its divine nature, is very philosophical and genuine.¹¹⁴

In a footnote on the word “transcribed” (σεσήμνται), Schutt argues against Kahle’s position that Aristeas refers here to the revision of existing translations and concludes that Aristeas 30 rather has in mind “unreliable Heb. MSS,” although the language of Aristeas is admitted to be difficult.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ HALOT 976, s.v. פִּרְשׁ.

¹¹⁴ Schutt, “Letter of Aristeas,” 14–15.

¹¹⁵ For a fuller discussion of positions taken on the meaning of σεσήμνται, see Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, 51–52.

If Schutt is correct, then Aristeas supplies an additional reason for the work of translation: the translation of the Law into Greek should *correct* the errors present in faulty Hebrew manuscripts. Aristeas, however, is generally considered to be a work of propaganda, making it often difficult to separate between fact and fiction. Whatever the historical reality may have been, whatever the motive to be assigned to this section of Aristeas, we have here the first documentation of a *problem* with the textual integrity of copies of early Hebrew writings.

Prologue to Ben Sirach

At about the same period of time that Aristeas was composed, a contrasting view was expressed in the Prologue to the Wisdom of ben Sirach regarding the deficiency of Greek translations of Hebrew biblical texts. The deficiency lies, however, not in errors of textual transmission committed by the carelessness of copyists, but in the very nature of the translation enterprise itself, as the following excerpt from the Prologue indicates:

You are invited therefore to read it with goodwill and attention, and to be indulgent in cases where, despite our diligent labor in translating, we may seem to have rendered some phrases imperfectly. For what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language. Not only this book, but even the Law itself, the Prophecies, and the rest of the books differ not a little when read in the original.¹¹⁶

In spite of the most diligent efforts, some phrases cannot be transmitted from Hebrew to Greek with exactly the same sense. Difficult choices must be made, and not every translator will decide difficult cases in the same manner. As a result, Greek-speaking communities will not confine themselves to a single Greek translation.

During the second century C.E. new Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible were produced, known as the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, Quinta, Sexta, and Septima; these Origen is said to have utilized in the production of his Hexapla. By comparing and contrasting the Hebrew text against an historical array of existing Greek translations, the diligent student might be able to gain closer insight into the nuances of the Hebrew text. Origen's approach provided textual

¹¹⁶ Michael D. Coogan, ed., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 101 APOCRYPHA.

witnesses in full, and fully aligned, so that one could make informed decisions about the possible meanings of the text. As Jellicoe observed:

His principle concern was not with the construction of a text, but rather with the presentation of the evidence, leaving the reader to make his own judgement in that light.¹¹⁷

There is no indication that Origen showed preference for one column in particular, or that he highlighted the “correct” Greek expression where the versions differed.

With the production of Latin translations, the scenario repeated itself. Eventually Jerome was commissioned to provide a new Latin translation to replace current local Latin texts which were in his day quite variable. Jerome was to base his Latin version directly on the Hebrew text, because the “Hebrew truth” (“Hebraica veritas”) was considered the most reliable textual source, just as the prologue to Ben Sirach had claimed a half millennium earlier.

Jerome's Recensions: "Trifaria Varietas"

In his “Preface to the Books of Chronicles,” Jerome describes three recensions of the Greek Old Testament in circulation in his day, and their approximate geographical distribution: (1) the Hesychian in Alexandria (and throughout Egypt); (2) that of Lucian in use from Constantinople to Antioch (primarily Asia Minor); and (3) Hexaplaric codices used by Origen in Palestine (between Egypt and Asia Minor). The presence of these three recensions is not unproblematic, for, as Jerome says: “And so the whole world is in conflict with itself over this threefold variety of text.”¹¹⁸

Jerome provides in other prefaces and writings a wealth of information regarding specific problems of texts and translations. He worked with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic biblical texts. Unfortunately, we do not find a full description of differences that allow the Greek versions to be categorized into the three recensions identified by him. The historical situation appears to have been more complex than Jerome indicated. There is evidence for more recensions during Jerome's time, and the information available to us about each individual recension is far from definitive. In general, we can say that the texts of Jerome's day were as fluid as they were in Origen's, that is, they cannot easily be categorized into a few discrete text-types.

¹¹⁷ Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, 145.

¹¹⁸ Cited in Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, 134.

Modern Textual Categories

Modern development of theoretical models to explain the relationships between various recensions and text types of early Jewish writings begins in the mid-nineteenth century C.E. with Paul Lagarde, who proposed that the three recensions, still referred to since Jerome's day as the Lucian, Eusebian (Hexaplaric), and Hesychian, were all derived from a single *Urtext* or Proto-Septuagint text form, which itself derived from a single Hebrew archetype. In the first half of the twentieth century Paul Kahle proposed that a standardized Septuagint text developed out of the three named recensions, rather than being the predecessor of them. In the mid-twentieth century W. F. Albright and later F. M. Cross developed the "local text theory" for Hebrew texts, which divided them also into three categories:¹¹⁹ Palestinian (reflected in Josephus and the Samaritan Pentateuch), Egyptian (closely tied with the Greek Septuagint), and Babylonian (closely related to the Masoretic Text). Details of these theories are complex and ever-evolving.¹²⁰

Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls the assignment of both Hebrew and Greek texts into discrete categories has become an even more complicated task. In addition to the three "local text types," Emanuel Tov added two new ones: "non-aligned" and those described as "texts written in the Qumran scribal practice," although in the sentence preceding his identification of the now "five different groups of texts" he refers to the "textual reality of the Qumran texts" attesting to "a textual multiplicity ... that one can almost speak in terms of an unlimited

¹¹⁹ Tov considers modern division of witnesses to the Hebrew Bible into three categories a result of "prejudice" of "important religious groups" and motivated by an effort to parallel "the traditionally accepted tripartite division of the manuscripts of the NT." Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis & Assen: Fortress Press & Royal Van Gorcum, 2001), 161. According to E. Ulrich, this hypothesis originated with Shemaryahu Talmon, who "introduced the socioreligious aspect of *Gruppentexte*, which served to explain why the Jews, the Samaritans, and the Christians emerged with *only three* textual forms of the Scriptures out of the plethora of forms generally circulating in the first century CE." Eugene C. Ulrich, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hebrew Scriptural Texts," in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Vol. 1: Scripture and the Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2006), 92.

¹²⁰ See the extended discussions with flow-chart illustrations in Chapters 2 and 5 of F. E. Deist, *Witnesses to the Old Testament* (Pretoria: NG Kerkboekhandel, 1988). For a more recent survey of the theories of Albright and Cross, see Ulrich, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hebrew Scriptural Texts," 89–90.

number of texts.”¹²¹ For the student approaching the study of biblical Hebrew and Greek texts and text types, the category lines begin to blur, and one soon realizes that only personal experience with the manuscripts accompanied by a detailed study of the variant readings they transmit can bring clarity to the issues of category. Then one may be able to ascertain whether attempts to categorize texts that are described as “fluid” into a few discrete categories has any methodological or practical merit. What is clear is that the texts that we possess since the discovery and publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls not only have impacted theoretical models of text types, but have brought an increasing number of challenges to the practical applications of textual criticism, especially if a textual critic sees the objective as the reconstruction of a putative single original. The situation has become exactly like the one mentioned by Cerquiglini in a footnote of his book *In Praise of the Variant*:

One expert recently remarked “In fact, without touching on the question of principles, and without a doubt, no scholar has ever succeeded in classifying beyond dispute the manuscripts of a French medieval work, whenever the manuscripts are the least bit numerous.”¹²²

Eugene Ulrich has challenged views of discrete text types for the Hebrew Bible as a result of the increase of variant readings that has accompanied the increase in the numbers of extant biblical manuscripts. In his view “the MT and the LXX are not ‘text-types’” as is often assumed by other scholars.¹²³

The “Original” Text

Tov introduces his book *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* with the following statement of the nature and goal of textual criticism:

Textual criticism deals with the origin and nature of all forms of a text, in our case the biblical text. This involves a discussion of its putative original form(s) and an analysis of the various representatives of the changing biblical text.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 161–62. The classification according to “Qumran scribal practice” is problematic and is discussed in Ulrich, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hebrew Scriptural Texts,” 92–93, and n. 36.

¹²² Cerquiglini, *In Praise of the Variant*, 85.

¹²³ Ulrich, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hebrew Scriptural Texts,” 80.

¹²⁴ Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 1.

The term "original" is qualified in several ways. First, there is the implicit idea of multiple originals in the expression "origin ... of all forms." Tov does not yet suggest that there is an original form. Second, Tov consciously adds the qualifying adjective "putative," which I take to be the equivalent of the quotation marks around "original" in the usage of some New Testament text critics, as Epp discussed. Third, Tov uses the plural "representatives" in connection with the "changing" biblical text. The idea of singularity is not absent, however. For twice Tov lets us know his subject is the "biblical text" (singular).

It is not until Chapter 5 that Tov provides a more detailed description of the aims and procedures of textual criticism. However, it is Chapter 3, section B, "The Original Shape of the Biblical Text," which is of primary interest in connection with various views on what is meant by the term "original." Tov outlines the discussion of originality beginning with the *Prolegomena* of Brian Walton's *Polyglot* (1657), who operated under the principle of a single original, and continuing up to authors in the late twentieth century who hypothesize multiple originals. Tov asks key questions of both camps:

Beyond the mere acceptance or refutation of the assumption of one original text it would be ideal if those who adhere to the assumption of one original text should not be content with a vague statement of such a view, but should also express an opinion on its repercussions. It is particularly important to know which stage in the development of the biblical book, if any, can be identified as the original text. Likewise, it would be ideal if those who reject the assumption of one original text should actually formulate an alternative model which explains the development of the texts and the relation between the existing differences. There are no ideal discussions in scholarship, however, and many questions remain unanswered.¹²⁵

The discussions Tov invites have increased since the publication of his work here cited. This book seeks to continue the discussion that Tov directs toward the second group by formulating alternative models to the assumption of a single original text. In view of the available manuscript evidence, I cannot begin to address his challenge to the first group. Until all the available textual evidence has been thoroughly evaluated, I do not have a clear idea of what the "original" text might have been, or how one would construct a convincing argument for such an "original" should it be proposed. Ulrich explained in a recent article on this issue of an original form of the "Hebrew scriptural texts":

¹²⁵ Ibid., 166–67.

Thus, the goal of seeking “the original text” may sound like a clear idea with a clear object, but as I have argued elsewhere, it can have a least eight different levels of meaning.¹²⁶

In recent years, at both scholarly conventions and in published works on textual issues of the Hebrew Bible and its versions, the term “fluidity” has become a household expression.¹²⁷ To what extent are the texts fluid, and what does one do with such a preponderance of fluid texts? These questions have become the current focus for textual critics of the Hebrew Bible. There is much work to do in moving forward with the mass of new textual data at our disposal. Scholars are increasingly less inclined to look to the past for answers. If a *trifaria varietas* ever existed, it is no longer evident, and is therefore no longer a useful model for the analysis of extant manuscripts. Perhaps, however, the earliest testimony I have examined in regard to the state of our texts, taken at face value, tell us that the situation we face now is as they described it then. Aristeas said manuscripts had been “carelessly copied” and Ben Sirach was concerned that translations often miss the sense of the original. Removing the pejorative adverb “carelessly,” the implication is that there were a variety of biblical Hebrew texts in circulation. Aristeas sees that as a problem to be resolved. For the most part, modern textual critics agree, although their numbers are diminishing.

Our texts are older than Aristeas. What was for Aristeas, and is still for many today, problematic, may not have been problematic at all for preceding generations, or even for communities during Aristeas’ time who would not share his assessment that differing texts have to imply carelessness. The two areas of multivalence that I take up in the following main sections in a sense are not only responses to modern queries, but responses to ancient assessments as well. It will be through the

¹²⁶ Ulrich, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hebrew Scriptural Texts,” 90.

¹²⁷ Indeed it has become quite literally a “household” expression. The recent traveling exhibits of the Dead Sea Scrolls throughout the U.S. has been accompanied by the sale of books relating to the Scrolls and largely aimed at a general audience. A publication described as “designed to supplement the exhibit, providing visitors and other interested readers with a full historical and photographic account of the Dead Sea Scrolls” (<https://secure.aidcvt.com/sbl/ProdDetails.asp?ID=069009P&PG=1&Type=BL&PCS=SBL>) appeared in January 2007 containing an article by Sidnie White Crawford entitled “The Fluid Bible: The Blurry Line between Biblical and Nonbiblical Texts” in: *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (Biblical Archaeology Society, Society of Biblical Literature, 2007). The term “fluidity” is now widely used among textual critics of other literatures, and other terms are used as well, such as “pluriformity” and “multivalence.”

difficulties encountered in translation that we will be able to uncover examples of multivalence of meaning, and it will be through taking variant Hebrew texts as peers that we can appreciate how variation, within limits, communicated essential ideas while affording richer experiences with text, for centuries before our first historical encounters with text-critical concerns.

2

THEORIES AND METHODS OF ORALITY

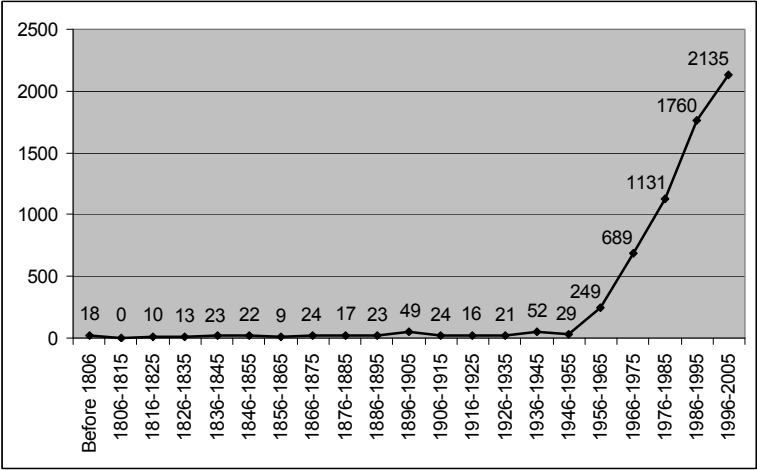
INTRODUCTION

Orality as an academic discipline has become a monumental phenomenon. The number of OCLC¹ records associated with keyword phrases “oral poetry,” “oral tradition,” “oral literature,” or simply “orality” has skyrocketed in the past half century.² The exponential growth curve of titles entered in the OCLC database that began in 1965 and lasted through 1995 may have attenuated slightly in the most recent decade. In terms of the absolute number of records, however, the level of current interest in the topic remains extremely high.

The upsurge in works relating to “oral poetry” or “oral tradition” or “oral literature” (Figure 1) was instigated primarily by the work of Milman Parry and Albert Lord in their field work of the oral tradition in the former Yugoslavia, published by Lord as *The Singer of Tales* in 1960. The popularity of the book is evidenced by the appearance of a second edition in the year 2000 with an accompanying CD-ROM with both audio and video supplementary material. The term “orality” (Figure 2) has become widely used in works (both in titles and as associated keywords) relating to oral tradition, especially since the publication of Walter Ong’s *Orality and Literacy* in 1982.

¹ Online Computer Library Center (<http://www.oclc.org>).

² The data generated for the tables in this section was collected on 30 January 2007.



**FIGURE 1: OCLC RECORDS FOR ORAL STUDIES BY DECADE
(KEYWORDS: "ORAL POETRY," "ORAL TRADITION," "ORAL LITERATURE")**

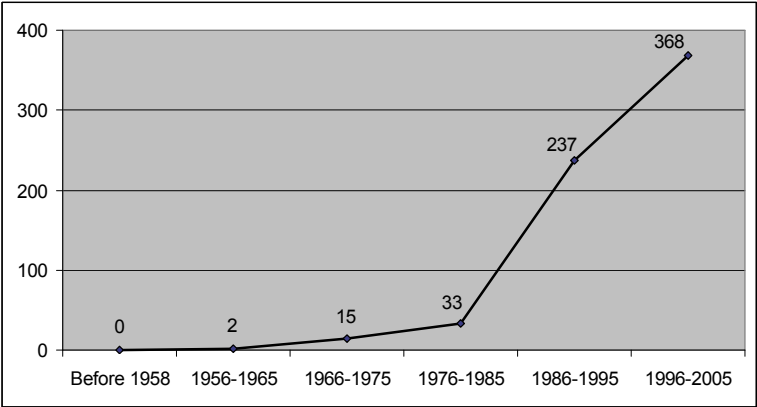


FIGURE 2: OCLC RECORDS FOR "ORALITY" BY DECADE

By way of contrast, the number of OCLC records using the keyword phrase "textual criticism" is shown below (Figure 3), and in comparison with the combined "oral poetry," "oral tradition," and "oral literature" data (Figure 4):

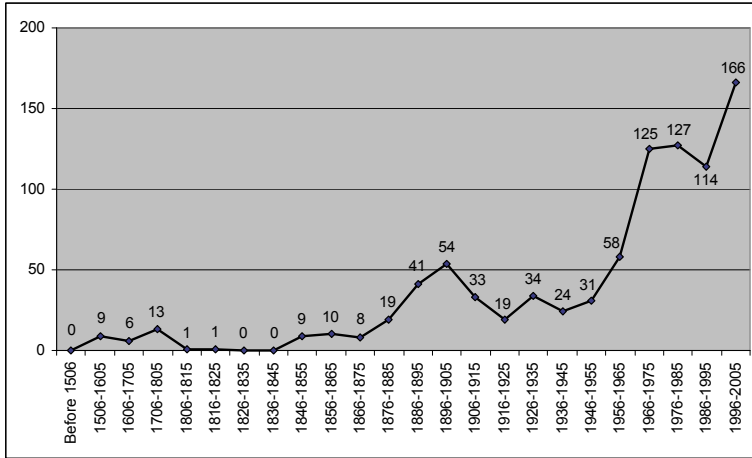


FIGURE 3: OCLC RECORDS FOR "TEXTUAL CRITICISM"
(BY CENTURY FROM 1506-1805; BY DECADE THEREAFTER)

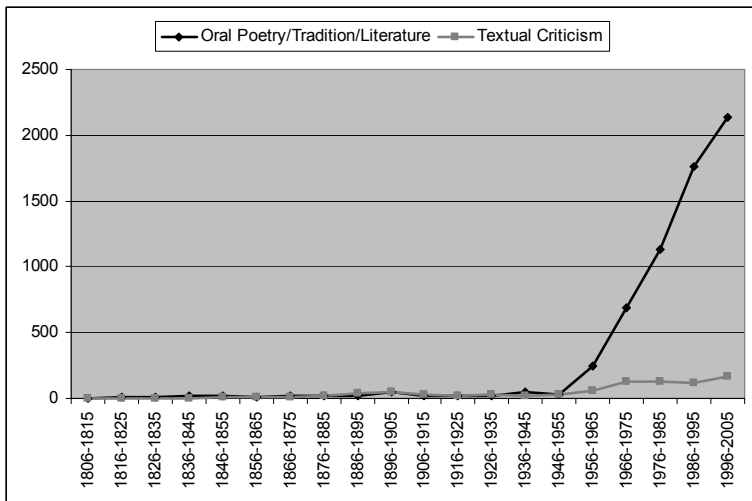


FIGURE 4: OCLC COMPARISON: ORAL STUDIES VS. TEXTUAL CRITICISM

These graphs are merely representative and should not be taken as a comprehensive scientific survey, since (1) a variety of other search terms could have been included, (2) there are overlaps and some multiple entries for the same work, and (3) not every record is necessarily relevant to the issues under investigation in this book. Nonetheless, taking our

data at face value, the relative publication popularity trends are as follows: oral and text-critical studies kept even pace with each other for the first century and a half of the past two centuries, but for the past fifty years, publication of oral studies has outperformed that of text-critical studies by a wide margin—during the past two decades at a rate of almost fourteen to one. I make two apposite observations on all this data.

First, it certainly goes well beyond the ability of any one person, and in particular of this book, to attempt a review of the cumulative contributions of thousands of items relating to oral studies published in a variety of formats over the past fifty years. A selection is necessary; I will limit myself here to a brief survey of discussions relating to the identification and use of formulae.

Second, it is now time for those whose area of specialization is textual criticism to become well informed in regard to the ways in which thought about orality is developing, for issues of orality intersect quite naturally with those of textual criticism. The same can be said *vice versa*. Orality studies quite naturally have an impact on the way in which we conceive of the construction of texts. What we are beginning to see, although the gap to be bridged is still significant, is a gradual convergence of two disciplinary approaches to textuality, and we will all be benefited if that convergence continues to gain momentum.

ISSUES OF TEXTUALITY AND ORALITY

APPLICATIONS OF ORAL METHODS TO WRITTEN TEXTS

Several phenomena have contributed to an increased perception that an interdisciplinary approach may be not only useful, but necessary. First, the number of extant texts from antiquity has increased significantly during the past century, and it has been observed generally that textual variability increases with increasing age of the extant manuscripts. Secondly, there is evidently no observed textual convergence that would imply a uniform textual transmission in the more remote past. Thus, textual critics, whose business it is to create critical text editions, are not only developing more sophisticated models to explain the variants in traditional stemmatological fashion, but are also considering other options that connect with orality studies. But this increase in written documents from ancient times is likewise impacting the study of orality, in that it must come to terms with the notion that not all variation or formulaic phenomena must derive from a strictly oral past, as Scott Noegel has shown in a recent article published in a multi-author work devoted to ancient epic.

In his article "Mesopotamian Epic," Noegel notes that the word "epic" is lacking in ancient Mesopotamian languages.³ Further, Mesopotamian poetry is not composed in meter, such as the hexameter form found in Homer. The primary feature of Mesopotamian poetry (found generally throughout the ancient Near East) is parallelism in a wide variety of forms. Noegel's article treats primarily the genre "poetry," but it is important to note that the form of this poetry is quite unlike the forms of other poetries. Nonetheless, formulaic patterns typical of those other poetries also exist in Mesopotamian poetry, and indeed, in virtually all literary forms represented:

...Mesopotamian bards utilized a stock repertoire of literary expressions and features common to other genres as well (e.g., hymns, prayers, proverbs, love songs, letters, didactic literature, historical annals, and myths ...). Depending on the historical period in question, therefore, one or more of these genres had a greater impact upon, or were impacted by, the epic traditions. Thus, while monumental building accounts and autobiographical inscriptions, in particular, may have provided some of the literary influences on early epic ... in later periods, epics appear to have influenced historical annals and hymns ... This rather fluid exchange between genres makes some texts difficult to categorize.⁴

An important observation here is that varieties of formulae ("stock repertoire of literary expressions") are found across the entire range of literary types, which themselves are often difficult to place into discrete categories. What is clear is that category is *not* a prerequisite for the existence of literary formulae.

Secondly, although Noegel notes that scholars may find theme development an indication of "how Mesopotamian epic draws upon popular oral traditions,"⁵ he reminds us that the material he discusses represents some of the oldest examples of *written composition* in existence. Indeed, Noegel's discussion of the textual and thematic history of the Gilgamesh epic is noted by L. Edmunds as a challenge to his own

³ Nevertheless Noegel provides a working definition of "epic" as: "all poetic narratives that praise the accomplishments of a heroic figure of history or tradition." Noegel, "Mesopotamian Epic," 233. A similar working definition is found in George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic*, 3. George notes: "When applied to Gilgamesh the term 'epic' is a coinage of convenience, for the word has no counterpart in the Akkadian language. By it is meant a long narrative poem describing heroic events that happen over a period of time."

⁴ Noegel, "Mesopotamian Epic," 244.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 243.

thesis that links epic to orality, and orality to variation—a variation which is “irreducible” and thus points to “no unique originary intention” and “no original story.”⁶

Martin Jaffee’s work on “Oral Torah”⁷ in rabbinic Judaism is further testimony that models originally developed for oral epic are equally applicable to literary genres remote from epic. Jaffee furthermore takes an intermediate position in respect to whether rabbinic literary tradition derives from a strictly oral tradition or was set in writing from the beginning, pointing out that it “is not helpful to conceive ‘orality’ and ‘literacy’ as mutually exclusive domains of rabbinic cultural transmission.”⁸ He considers the view fundamentally flawed that supposes the written form of an oral text to be “a neutral medium for preserving the tradition in unchanged form.”⁹ We have to conceive of an entire range of possibilities in the interface between oral and written: written texts may have derived entirely from previous oral forms; written texts may have been shaped by oral traditions; written texts may have originated as written compositions without an oral predecessor. We may not know which scenario, or which combination of them, lies behind a particular text. A general rule follows from a specific case discussed by Jaffee: it is often impossible to determine whether a text “was known in written transcription or only in oral-performance.”¹⁰ We are left to contemplate what impact, if any, our inability to separate oral from written may have on our understanding of a text.¹¹

Combining Jaffee’s study of formulaic approaches derived from traditional oral and/or written material and applied to *non-poetic, non-epic* literature, and Noegel’s observations that formulaic expressions positively occur in some of our earliest *written* literature, I proceed in this book to apply formulaic methods to certain biblical texts without imposing as necessary prerequisites that those texts must have been

⁶ Lowell Edmunds, “Epic and Myth,” in *A Companion to Ancient Epic*, ed. John Miles Foley (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 33.

⁷ Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth*.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 100–01.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 195, n. 5.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 106.

¹¹ In a comparative study, William Whallon understands formulas to have first been developed by oral poets, then incorporated into literary works, and notes: “It is wrong to assert either that Job and the *Iliad* and *Beowulf* and the *Song of Roland* are in every sense, or that they are not in any sense, oral poems retold from the past.” William Whallon, *Formula, Character, and Content: Studies in Homeric, Old English, and Old Testament Poetry* (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Hellenic Studies, 1969), 160.

preceded by oral traditions, or that they must have been recorded earlier in poetic or epic style. In adopting this approach plausible models emerge that can afford validity to certain aspects of the multivalence found in the manuscripts of early Jewish writings, with the end result that textual criticism need not always feel compelled to proceed with a reductionist approach.

Formulaic expressions are essentially tools to facilitate both composition and transmission in either oral or written, or mutually co-dependent forms, and independent of genre. The medium of sense perception engaged in the communicative process is not essential to the creation and deployment of formulas. Information created, received, and transmitted by the differential reflection of light off contrastive elements of patterned graphical symbols on a physical medium and processed by a human eye/brain connection is not fundamentally different than information created, received, and transmitted via patterned differential densities of air processed by a human ear/brain connection. There may certainly be different psychological processes at work in the respective written/visual and oral/aural modes of communication, but on some level the two modes are simply alternate methods of information transfer, which share some of the same tools to facilitate the cognitive process. One of those tools is the use of formulae. A brief survey of the evolution of thought about formulaic methods follows in the next section.

INTRODUCTION TO FORMULAIC THEORY

The Chadwicks' compendious 3-volume series begins with the presumption that the written literatures of Europe (ancient Greek from seventh century B.C.E., island literatures from seventh century C.E., vernacular literatures of the Continent from eleventh century C.E.) were all "derived in some form from ... 'unwritten literature,' though opinions often differ as to the precise nature of the relationship between the two."¹² Special attention is given to the identification of epithets and formulae of various types. The simplest examples are those composed of stock adjective-noun pairs (for example, "hollow ship," "breezy cliff," "lofty building"), or standard adjectival descriptions coupled with personal names. One must caution against the Chadwicks' terminology of "static epithet," for as they note in the paragraph exemplifying that expression, epithets are multivalent. The word "ship" is not always constructed with "hollow," but at times with "curved" or some other term.

¹² H. Munro Chadwick and N. Kershaw Chadwick, *The Growth of Literature. Vol. I: The Ancient Literatures of Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), 2.

One finds also standard formulae (note the plural) used to introduce speeches, a feature the Chadwicks consider to be "a regular feature of oral narrative poetry among many peoples—perhaps everywhere."¹³ Parallels in the Hebrew Bible are found in word pairs as well as in the introductory "formulae" to the prophetic books, which I demonstrate later in this chapter.

The Chadwicks observe adjective-noun pairs also in *byliny*, the oral narrative poems of Russia, many of which are identical to those found in Yugoslavian poems. A few examples are "white palace," "bitter tears," "illustrious prince," "nimble feet." Of course, there are also numerous non-parallel Russian/Yugoslavian pairings, and well as lengthier formulae:

Thus the formula for setting out in a hurry is as follows: "He flung his boots on to his bare feet, his fur cloak over one shoulder, his sable cap over one ear." The formula generally used of a person's entering a building is "He bowed on two (three, four, all, etc.) sides." When strangers meet they commonly ask the following question: "by what name do they call you, and how are you known in your native country?" Speeches are almost always introduced by the phrase: "Dobrynya, (Chrilo, etc.), spoke such words."¹⁴

Russian *byliny* incorporate a more frequent use of repetition than is found in Greek and Teutonic heroic poetry, especially in the language of speeches.

In early Indian poetry epithets occur more frequently with human beings than with non-human objects, but are otherwise similar in construction, using either an adjective-noun pair, or a pair of substantives. The Chadwicks cite examples such as, "lord of men," "(man) of mighty arm," or the "distinctively Indian ... 'tiger of men.'"

The last section of Vol. 2 is devoted to "Early Hebrew Literature." There is no treatment of epithets, formulae, or repetitions as with the other literatures that the Chadwicks treat. Perhaps this is because the presence of these linguistic phenomena is thought to be dependent on

¹³ On the form, "speeches are usually introduced by a line which consists of one of a limited number of recurrent formulae, followed by the name of the speaker with a standing and frequently recurring epithet." Chadwick and Chadwick, *The Growth of Literature. Vol. I: The Ancient Literatures of Europe*, 565.

¹⁴ H. Munro Chadwick and N. Kershaw Chadwick, *The Growth of Literature. Vol. II* (New York: The Macmillan Company and Cambridge University Press, 1936), 71–72. For a summary of epithets and repetitions in Yugoslavian oral poetry, see pg. 340.

the specific forms of "heroic saga and poetry" and that, in the estimation of the Chadwicks, "very little heroic poetry has been preserved" in early Hebrew literature.¹⁵ I argue that the presence of epithets, formulae, and repetitions are in no way the exclusive domain of special poetic forms, but occur in all forms and genres, as Cerquiglini has noted even for medieval French vernacular literature.

THE FORMULA

Motivated largely by a desire to answer the "Homeric Question"—how to explain the origin of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—Milman Parry initiated a series of studies focusing on epithets and formulae as essential compositional features of the Homeric poems.¹⁶ Parry's field work in the Balkans with epic singers of Yugoslavia, which was carried on after his death by his student, Albert Lord, resulted in the identification of formulaic models based on a living oral epic tradition that were seen as analogous to the formulaic features of Homer.

The Homeric Question became focused on the Formulaic Question: what *is* a formula and how does it contribute to the formation and performance of oral epics? Introducing the chapter on "The Formula" in his *Singer of Tales*, Lord cites Parry's definition of formula as "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea."¹⁷ The emphasis was on regularity and essentiality, and not on a strict verbatim repetition.

The aspect of meter entered the definition because it was observed in the particular epic poetry investigated. Additionally, the epic poets of Yugoslavia were typically non literate. The working definition of the formula acquired its particular form, tied in particular to meter, in response to the need to explain how singers who were unable to write could recite thousands of lines of epic poetry, time and time again, entirely from memory. But the fundamental idea of the formula has slowly

¹⁵ Ibid., 655. See also pg. 645, "The Heroic Age of the Hebrews is somewhat difficult to delimit, owing to the fact that only one story, or rather part of a story, has been preserved in pure heroic form. With the exception of the story of David we have only traces of heroic stories, or at best stories which were perhaps heroic originally but have assumed non-heroic characteristics."

¹⁶ The papers of Milman Parry have been published in Adam Parry, ed., *The Making of Homeric Verse: The Collected Papers of Milman Parry* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971).

¹⁷ Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, 2nd ed., edited by Stephen Mitchell and Gregory Nagy (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), 30.

evolved into a useful analytical tool independent of the literacy (or non literacy) of the performer or the content of the performance.

Robert Culley approached his study of oral formulae in the biblical Psalms with a modified definition of the formula:

A formula in oral poetry is a repeated group of words the length of which corresponds to one of the divisions in the poetic structure, such as the line or the smaller divisions within the line created by some formal division such as the caesura. Formulas are used repeatedly by oral poets because they are useful, in fact necessary, for rapid oral composition.¹⁸

Meter is not a recognizable feature of Hebrew poetry, but since repeated patterns correlating to the internal poetic structure of the Psalms could be observed, Culley considered it reasonable to use the term "formula," modifying Parry's definition for use in identifying formulaic patterns in the Psalms. The assumption prevailed that what gave rise to the formula, however one defined it, was a context of oral composition.

The strength of Culley's work lies in the demonstration of his method in numerous examples organized into groups. For example, he has seventy-two groups which contain three or more phrases that fit his definition of formula. Formulae are visually identified by a system of underlining and an abbreviation scheme that describes the pattern.

Related to Culley's investigation of poetic formulae are studies of word pairs, word groups, or word clusters, that may or may not meet his requirement that a formula must be a line or a colon in length. Culley mentions the work of S. Gevirtz, who investigated fixed word pairs in biblical and Ugarit poetry.¹⁹ Jonas Greenfield extended the study of word groups to what he calls "clusters." He describes them as follows:

In the "cluster" the Biblical writer draws from the poetical resources available to him a number of word pairs and standard epithets and uses them to construct a complex poetic structure, or to set the background framework of the material that he is presenting.²⁰

Unlike Culley, Greenfield places no emphasis on orality:

¹⁸ Robert C. Culley, *Oral Formulaic Language in the Biblical Psalms* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 10–11.

¹⁹ S. Gevirtz, *Patterns in the Early Poetry of Israel*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, no. 32 (Chicago: University Press, 1963).

²⁰ Jonas C. Greenfield, "The 'Cluster' in Biblical Poetry," *MAARAV* 5–6 (1990): 159–60.

It is of minor consequence for this discussion if the resources were written or oral; indeed, a case can be made for the use of both types of material by the Biblical writers.

Culley regarded his definition of formula to have been constructed "in general terms so that it can be widely applied."²¹ Yet it is restricted: formulae and formulaic phrases are to be a single line or a single colon long; and they are viewed in the light of orality. Gevirtz removed the length restriction, and Greenfield removed the oral restriction. If we can go one step farther and free the formula from a strictly poetic environment, we find the application of formulaic analysis useful even in non-oral, non-poetic biblical texts, such as the following example.

THE "FORMULA" OF PROPHETIC HEADINGS

Formulae contain certain key components which make them identifiable as formulae, but they also exhibit variation in their precise wording and structure. The term "formula" has been applied to headings of the prophetic books in the Hebrew Bible, and it is considered by some to be characterized by a "normal form." In his opening discussion on the "Form" of Isa 1:1, Hans Wildberger notes:

Die Überschrift ist geschaffen worden in Anlehnung an eine fest geprägte Tradition für Einführungen in literarische Werke. Die "Normalform" eines Titels über einem Prophetenbuch dürfte in Hos 1:1 vorliegen: "Das Wort Jahwes, das an Hosea, den Sohn Beeris, erging, zur Zeit Ussias ..." ²²

Wildberger points out the difference between the "normal form" represented by Hos 1:1 and the form in Isa 1:1, but notes that "alle Elemente des Titels lassen sich auch sonst aus solchen Überschriften mehrfach belegen." The key word here is "Elemente"—there are certain "elements" that one typically finds in prophetic headings, although variations occur. When one focuses only on the variations, one may overlook the formula, and consequently read too much into the variables that afford uniqueness to a particular instance of a formula. On the introductory formula in Jonah 1:1 Phyllis Tribble notes:

²¹ Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, 11.

²² Hans Wildberger, *Jesaja. 1. Teilband, Jesaja 1–12*, 2nd ed., *Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament*, Band X (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1980), 1–2.

Yet no other prophetic book opens just this way. The distinction recalls the familiar observation that Jonah differs from all other prophetic books in being a story about a prophet rather than words (oracles) by a prophet.²³

In a footnote Tribble shows she is aware that “variations of the formula” occur in other prophetic books. What is there specifically about the uniqueness of Jonah’s heading that lends uniqueness to the book? I agree that the book is in some sense unique, but it is unclear to me how the distinct way in which Jonah is introduced can be thought to “recall” the book’s uniqueness.

An itemization of the elements and sub-elements of the prophetic heading shows that *all* prophetic headings differ from *all other* headings. These elements are as follows:

- A. Form of the verb **הָיָה**
 1. **וַיְהִי**
 2. **וַיֵּשֶׁר הָיָה** / **הָיָה**
 3. **הָיָה הָיָה**
 4. **וַיִּהְיֶה**
- B. Designation of the content
 1. Noun designation of the content
 - a. **חֲזוֹן**
 - b. **דְּבָרִי**
 - c. **דְּבַר-יְהוָה**
 - d. **הַמִּשָּׁא / מִשָּׁא**
 - e. **סֵפֶר חֲזוֹן**
 2. Verbal designation of the content or delivery
 - a. **חֲזָה**
 - b. **לֵאמֹר**
- C. Information about the prophet
 1. Name of the prophet
 2. Name of the father of the prophet
 3. Occupation of the prophet
 4. Place of the prophet
 5. Family of the prophet
- D. Prophet as recipient
 1. **אֵל** with suffix
 2. **אֵל** (with name of prophet)
 3. **עַל** with suffix
 4. Expanded description of the prophetic experience

²³ Phyllis Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the Book of Jonah* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 124.

5. יְהוָה
 6. בְּיָד (with name of prophet)
- E. Audience of the prophecy
1. with עַל
 2. Name of recipient
 3. with אֶל
- F. Time of the prophecy
1. Names of kings
 2. Other event
 3. Absolute
- G. Secondary introduction

The precise construction of the prophetic formula in each case is as follows:

Isaiah 1:1	B1a / C1 / C2 / B2a / E1 / F1
Jeremiah 1:1–4	B1b / C1 / C2 / C3 / C4 / A2 / D1 / F1 / F2 / G: A1 / B1c / D1 / B2b
Ezekiel 1:1–3	A1a / F3 / C4 / D4 / G: F2 / A3 / B1c / D2 / C1 / C2 / C3 / C4 / A4 / D3 / C4 / D5
Hosea 1:1–2a	B1c / A2 / D2 / C1 / C2 / F1 / D4
Joel 1:1	B1c / A2 / D2 / C1 / C2
Amos 1:1	B1b / C1 / A2 / C3 / C4 / B2a / E1 / F1 / F2
Obadiah 1:1	B1a / C1
Jonah 1:1	A1a / B1c / D2 / C1 / C2 / B2b
Micah 1:1	B1c / A2 / D2 / C1 / C5 / F1 / B2a / E1
Nahum 1:1	B1d / E2 / B1e / C1 / C5
Habakkuk 1:1	B1d / B2a / C1 / C3
Zephaniah 1:1	B1c / A2 / D2 / C1 / C2-C2-C2-C2 / F1
Haggai 1:1	F1 / A2 / B1c / D6 / C1 / C3 / E3 / B2b
Zechariah 1:1	F1 / A2 / B1c / D2 / C1 / C2-C2 / C3 / B2b
Malachi 1:1	B1d / B1c / E3 / D6 / C1

We observe: no two introductory formulae are *exactly* alike in form or content. They differ from each other in at least these three points:

- (1) in the number of elements
- (2) in the order of the elements
- (3) in the mode of expression of the elements

Examples of (3) include: (a) different descriptions of the prophetic message, (b) different expressions for the reception of the prophecy, (c) different methods for dating the prophecy.

The only two elements that *all* the headings have in common are items from group B and group C, the designation of the content, and information about the prophet. Only one of the headings confines itself to just one element from each of these two groups.

As different as the encoded forms of the prophetic headings may appear in the above tabulation, in the reading of any particular instance of a prophetic heading the distinct impression arises that one is somehow reading something stereotypical. Their overall variability does not disallow them from being thought of as "formulaic." One also notes their non-poetic genre, and perhaps also their non-oral origin. In Chapter 6 I will explore formulaic components embedded in the Decalogue texts and will ask if some of the variations that surface in the manuscripts reflect mere variations in the formulae employed and are not to be thought of as errors of the pen or of the memories of the scribes who transmitted them.

PART TWO

MULTIVALENCES OF MEANING

3

SPLIT VISUAL—AURAL/ORAL ISSUES IN HEBREW TEXTS

CONSONANT-ONLY TEXT AND ITS VOCALIZATION

INTRODUCTION: *BHQ* AND “VOCAL-DIFFER”

The publication of the successor edition to the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (*BHS*)¹, namely the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (*BHQ*), began in 2004 with fascicle 18 containing a General Introduction and text-critical editions of the five Megillot (Ruth, Canticles, Qoheleth, Lamentations, and Esther).² A second fascicle (no. 20, Ezra and Nehemiah) was published in 2006.³ Deuteronomy (no. 5) was published in 2007.⁴ Initial projections called for completion of the entire edition by the year 2010, but the full edition will extend a few years beyond that projection.⁵

BHQ has implemented a detailed and hierarchical typology of variant characterizations unlike any other text-critical edition of the Hebrew Bible. The typology “moves through increasing levels of specificity about the relationship between a particular variant reading and the preferred

¹ K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 5th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997).

² Adrian Schenker, ed. *Biblia Hebraica Quinta, Fascicle 18: General Introduction and Megilloth* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004). Each biblical book of *BHQ* was edited by a separate editor, with Schenker as the general editor.

³ David Marcus, ed. *Biblia Hebraica Quinta, Fascicle 20: Ezra and Nehemiah* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006).

⁴ Carmel McCarthy, ed. *Biblia Hebraica Quinta, Fascicle 5: Deuteronomy* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007).

⁵ Richard D. Weis, “*Biblia Hebraica Quinta* and the Making of Critical Editions of the Hebrew Bible,” *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* 7 (2002), <http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/vol07/Weis2002.html>.

reading in a case.”⁶ The levels are given below, followed in parentheses with a few examples of each level:

- I. Characterizations of a Reading as Not Bearing on the Issue in the Case
(illeg = illegible, insuf = insufficient, lit = literary)
- II. Characterizations of One Reading as Differing from Another, Identifying Only the Point of Difference
(differ-gram = difference in the grammar, differ-phonol = difference in the phonology, differ-vocal = difference in the vocalization)
- III. Characterizations of One Reading as Representing a Type of Change from Another Reading, But Not Commenting on the Motivation of the Change
(conflation, omission, transposition)
- IV. Characterizations of a Reading as Representing a Change Arising through Accident
(dittography, haplography, homoioteleuton)
- V. Characterizations of a Reading as Representing a Change Arising through Ignorance or Error
(ign-cultur = ignorance of cultural information, err-lex = error in lexical matters)
- VI. Characterizations of a Reading as Representing a Change That Arises in Reaction to Some Textual/Linguistic Element
 - A. In Reaction to Some Difficulty in Source Texts: Hebrew and Versional Witnesses and Their *Vorlagen*
(facil-seman = facilitation of a semantic difficulty)
 - B. In Reaction to Some Aspect of the Receptor Language (Versions Only)
(transl = translational adjustment)
- VII. Characterizations of a Reading as Representing a Change Arising through the Intention of a Tradent
 - A. Through an Intention Which Is Not Further Specified, Instead the Type of Change Is Specified
(lib-seman = liberty in respect to semantic matters, interpol = interpolation)
 - B. Through an Intention Which Is Further Specified in Terms of the Results of the Change
(assim-ctext = assimilation of specific words or phrases in the context of the current passage)
 - C. Through an Intention Which Is Further Specified in Terms of the Purpose of the Change
(midr = midrash, theol = theologically motivated)
- VIII. Miscellaneous Terms
(crp = corrupt, tiq soph = tiqqun sopherim)

This typology is an immensely helpful tool. The user of *BHQ* is informed not only that a variant exists, but is also given information

⁶ Schenker, ed., *BHQ: General Introduction and Megillot*, LXXXV.

about the specific cause or nature of the variant. One may take issue here or there with a specific assignment, or whether or not a particular variant may have additional characterizations that are not noted in the apparatus, but both student and scholar of the text are provided with a sophisticated and differentiated tool with which to begin further inquiry.

The variant characterization that relates specifically to issues of orality is “differ-vocal”—variants that differ based on different vocalization patterns placed upon the transmitted consonant-only text. This variant category pertains to differences in the *oral tradition*. Now those differing oral traditions could have originated either (1) before any form of written text was created, or (2) after a written text was created, or (3) *along with a written creation*, a possibility that remains largely unexamined among textual critics. In addition, we could have a case of (4) confusion of different dialectal pronunciations. Before we take up these possible scenarios, I will provide a brief survey of the development of the Hebrew writing system and focus on issues of multivalency that inherently reside within that system.

THE EVOLUTION AND AMBIGUITIES OF VOCALIZATION

Language can be ambiguous in a variety of ways. The same arrangement of letters that spell one word might also spell another word in the same language, either pronounced the same or differently. Texts written without vowels provide even more opportunities for ambiguity than texts written with vowels. In order to appreciate the additional opportunities afforded a writer of an ancient Hebrew text for polysemy, a brief survey of the development of Hebrew writing follows.

Historically, the earliest texts written in Hebrew were written without any vowels or vowel-letters.⁷ The oldest extant text in the Hebrew language is the Gezer (Tel el-Jazari) calendar, which was found ca. thirty kilometers northwest of Jerusalem, written on a piece of limestone measuring roughly 7 x 11 centimeters, and dating to the tenth century B.C.E. It lays out the sequence of months in which various crops are handled by field workers. The text is written entirely without vowels. There are a couple of word-dividers,⁸ which are not infrequently present in

⁷ The vowel-letters were given the technical designation *matres lectionis*, “mothers of reading.” For a study of the earliest use of *matres* in ancient Hebrew epigraphy, see Ziony Zevit, *Matres Lectionis in Ancient Hebrew Epigraphs* (Cambridge, Mass.: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1980).

⁸ Specifically, “two division lines found in the continuous first two lines ... but not in the following lines, which assume the form of a list.” Gary Martin, Review of Marjo Korpel and Joseph Oesch, eds., *Unit Delimitation in Biblical*

texts from the ancient Near East, in contrast to the general use of *scriptio continua* in early classical texts.⁹ As early as the ninth century B.C.E. and certainly by 700 B.C.E., a few Hebrew consonants began to be used also as vowels.¹⁰ The Hebrew letter *waw* (pronounced today “vav”), for example, which normally stood for the consonant “v” (or in an earlier stage “w” as it still is in Arabic) could in some cases indicate the long vowels *ō* or *ū*. Context, or more precisely the oral tradition, would determine in any given instance which of those two vowels was to be pronounced. Other consonants stood for other vowels. The Siloam inscription dating to ca. 700 B.C.E. shows the use of such vowel-letters, but on a limited basis.¹¹ By the time of the scrolls from the Dead Sea (mid-second century B.C.E. to late first century C.E.), and in particular in the scrolls found in the vicinity of Qumran, vowel-letters came into frequent use, although with little consistency from manuscript to manuscript.

One should note that while virtually all the texts from Qumran can be characterized as consisting of religious content, non-religious texts from other areas of the Dead Sea, as well as inscriptions and other documents dating to times before, during, and after the Dead Sea scrolls, also show variations in the use of vowel-letters. What we see is that the use or non-use of vowel-letters is independent of textual content or genre. In every case, however, no system of writing Hebrew, regardless of form or content, was sufficient to preserve completely the vocalization of the words. With or without the help of vowel-letters, the knowledge of an oral tradition, either of the structure of the Hebrew language

Hebrew and Northwest Semitic Literature (Pericope 4; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2003). *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 5 (2004–2005). Online at: <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/JHS/reviews/review163.htm>

⁹ The majority of the Judean Desert texts leave some space between words, or use dots as word-dividers. The former is found in texts using the Aramaic or square script; the latter where paleo-Hebrew script is used; see Ch. 5, “Writing Practices,” in Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

¹⁰ The earliest attested use of a vowel-letter is in the inscriptions of Kuntillet ‘Ajrud (ninth–eighth century B.C.E.). In the Siloam inscription (700 B.C.E.) the Hebrew letter *he* can be consonantal *h* or indicate the endings *-āh* or *-eh*; the letter *waw* can be consonantal *w* or indicate a long *ō*. Other options appear in later texts.

¹¹ A brief discussion of some of the philological issues that have been raised in connection with *matres lectionis* in the Siloam inscription can be found in Stig Norin, “The Age of the Siloam Inscription and Hezekiah’s Tunnel,” *VT* 48, no. 1 (Jan., 1998): 46–47.

generally, or the oral tradition associated with a familiar text, was required to fully vocalize a written text. That vocalization was no trivial matter. Crucial elements of morphology, lexicon, semantics, and syntax are bound up with the vocalization patterns that were not transmitted in graphical format.

It was not until around the eighth to tenth centuries C.E. that systems of vocalization were developed to provide (almost) complete keys to the pronunciation of every element of Hebrew texts. An elaborate system of vowel signs, consonant-modifiers, and accents (often referred to collectively as “the pointing” of the text) was introduced into the biblical text by the Masoretes (“transmitters”) beginning around the eighth century C.E. and was fully developed by the time of the early extensive codices of the Hebrew Bible (for example, the Aleppo and Leningrad codices, 930 and 1008–1010 C.E. respectively). The earliest dated Hebrew manuscript written with these signs was written in 903/4 C.E.¹² The signs, composed of various configurations of dots and strokes, appear above, below or inside the consonants so as not to change the horizontal spacing and page layout of the previously written consonant-only text. Different systems, which handled the shape and placement of these signs differently, emerged probably concurrently. The system that eventually became the standard, and has remained the standard until the present day, especially for modern critical editions of the Hebrew Bible,

¹² With Babylonian (supralinear) pointing and small Masorah consisting of several fragments of texts from Ruth and Nehemiah in the Taylor-Schechter collection from the Cairo Genizah, designated Ms. T-S AS 62.402, 461, 492–493, 533, 644; T-S NS 246.26.2 et 18 (a); T-S NS 283.10, and fully described as Manuscript 2 in Malachi Beit-Arié, Colette Sirat, and Mordechai Glatzer, *Codices Hebraeicis Litteris Exarati Quo Tempore Scripti Fuerint Exhibentes: Tome I: Jusqu’à 1020*, Monumenta Palaeographica Medii Aevii: Series Hebraica (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 40–41. See also Michelle P. Brown, ed., *In the Beginning: Bibles Before the Year 1000* (Smithsonian Institution, 2006), 116. Until recently it was generally thought that the so-called Cairo Codex of the Prophets was the earliest pointed Hebrew manuscript, dating to 894/5 C.E. That date has been revised. In *Codices Hebraeicis I* it is listed as Manuscript 1, but the introduction to the volume states: “as will be seen in the description, a number of elements suggest a later date for this manuscript—this is why this date is followed by a question mark. Given the notoriety of this manuscript, it was nonetheless judged important to place the Bible of Cairo at the onset of the volume” (p. 18). The Cairo Codex is now dated to the tenth or eleventh century C.E. See Colette Sirat, *Hebrew Manuscripts of the Middle Ages*, trans. Nicholas de Lange (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 43. The earliest text with Tiberian pointing is dated to 924 C.E. and is listed as Manuscript 4 in Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer, *Codices Hebraeicis I*, 48–52.

is the system developed by the Tiberian Masoretes. When reference is made to “the Masoretic text” of the Hebrew Bible, what is primarily meant thereby is the Tiberian system of pointing the consonants, even though at the time of its development other systems, such as the Babylonian and Palestinian, coexisted with it. These alternate systems differ from the Tiberian system mostly in the shape and position of the vowel signs, as opposed to the resulting vocalization. However, real vocalization differences do exist among these three systems.¹³

The manuscript evidence does not show a gradual evolution from the consonant-only to the fully pointed text, but the material evidence is very sparse. Although the text referred to above dating to 903/4 C.E. is the oldest pointed text that can be dated from reliable colophon information, there are a few manuscripts that can be dated to an earlier period based on paleographical and codicological analysis. But there are very few Hebrew manuscripts at all for the nearly 800-year period between the latest documents of the Dead Sea and the year 900.¹⁴ A few fragments shorten that gap to a couple hundred years.¹⁵

The extant manuscript record shows a quantum jump from a consonant-only text to one fully supplied with vowels, accents, and marginal notes. We do not see a gradual evolution as we see with the introduction of the vowel-letters, a process which we can follow over a period of several centuries. One should also note that not every Hebrew manuscript was pointed after 900 C.E. Synagogue scrolls even to this day are written

¹³ We know there are also diachronic differences in the pronunciation of Hebrew, as well as dialectal synchronic differences. For a brief summary of these issues, see Gary A. Rendsburg, “Ancient Hebrew Phonology,” in *Phonologies of Asia and Africa (including the Caucasus)*, Vol. 1, ed. Alan S. Kaye (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1997). For a discussion of the phonology of the Tiberian Masoretes, see Geoffrey Khan, “Tiberian Hebrew Phonology,” in *Phonologies of Asia and Africa*, Vol. 1.

¹⁴ Fragments described as “the oldest surviving Hebrew codex (Cambridge, University Library, T-S. 6H9 to 6H21 ... possesses archaic features ... These codex fragments are the only ones on papyrus; from the tenth century on, paper was used ...” in Sirat, *Hebrew Manuscripts of the Middle Ages*, 35, with illustration on 36. See also the eighth–ninth century C.E. Ms. TS MISC 2.77+TS-NS 19.27 recorded in a table of non-dated manuscripts in Michèle Dukan and Colette Sirat, “Les codex de la bible hébraïque en pays d’islam jusqu’à 1200: formes et formats,” in *Scribes et manuscrits du Moyen-Orient* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997), 54.

¹⁵ Unpointed manuscripts dated to the sixth to seventh centuries CE are shown in Michelle P. Brown, ed., *In the Beginning: Bibles Before the Year 1000* (Smithsonian Institution, 2006), 110–11. See Ms. T-S NS 3.21 and Ms. T-S NS 4.3.

only with consonants, as of course are modern Hebrew texts, unless there is some ambiguity to resolve.

When pointing systems were imposed upon the consonantal text, a number of features were included: (1) Vowels (both long and short), half-vowels, and vowelless consonants (to indicate a closed syllable); (2) accent, or cantillation marks, which appear to have served at least three purposes: (a) generally (but not always) to show the stress syllable, (b) to provide relative melodic values of each syllable for public reading, (c) through a hierarchical system of conjunctives and disjunctives to provide markers for the syntactic divisions of the text; (3) inline and marginal notes (written in the top, bottom, and middle margins, as well as at the end of books and at the end of sections), called the Masorah, that provide an impressive array of statistical information about word forms and other aspects of the text (such as, for example, which is the middle word, or the middle letter, of the Torah). From the sheer volume of information surrounding every element of the consonantal text, it would seem clear that the Masoretes wished to provide and preserve a *single written text* that included a *single vocal scheme*.

There are, however, a few exceptions to this rule. In some manuscripts (such as the Leningrad Codex, and reflected in the typography in *BHS*) some words are provided with *double accents*. For example, there is a double accent on the final word “Israel” at the end of Gen 35:22. The reader may choose either (1) to end the verse with a *soph pasuq* (the greatest of all disjunctive accents, used consistently as a verse divider), or, (2) after a pause (*Atnach* accent, frequently used to divide a verse into two major reading units), to continue the reading until the end of Gen 35:23.¹⁶

The phenomenon of double accents is not limited to this single instance. The entire text blocks comprising the Decalogue in both Exodus and Deuteronomy (Exod 20:3–17 and Deut 5:7–18) are also pointed with double accents. Further, there are double accents *and vowels*(!) on three words in the Decalogue, at Exod 20:3–4 and Deut 5:7. In the Decalogue texts, the pointings occur over the same consonants in an “upper set”

¹⁶ See William Wickes, *Two Treatises on the Accentuation of the Old Testament, with Prolegomenon* by Aron Dotan (New York: KTAV, 1970), 130. Wickes notes that the *Atnach* accent was “adopted by the Occidentals, that Reuben’s abominable act might be slurred over in the chanting as rapidly as possible,” and in a footnote cites the Mishna that directs: “The story of Reuben is read out but not interpreted [נקרא ולא מתגרים]” (*Megillah* 4.10 in: Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew With Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933], 207).

and a “lower set” reflecting different reading traditions within Jewish communities.¹⁷ They have essentially the same function as the case in Gen 35:22: to provide two alternate patterns of text division and consequently to represent the unique reading flow of each. The vowel differences that also occur reflect, therefore, only whether or not the words affected are to be read with a following major pause (*soph pasuq* or *atnach*), resulting in an associated lengthening of the vowel on the accented syllable of the word preceding the pause. The text of Exod 20:3 in BHS shows that the final *nun* of the word *pānāy* has both a *qameṣ* (*pānāy*) and *pataḥ* (*pānāy*), as does also the *taw* of the word *mittāḥat* in verse 4. In Deut 5 the double pointing is found only on *pānāy* in verse 3.

It is noteworthy that of all the texts in the canon of Hebrew scriptures, the texts that should deviate from the practice of firmly establishing a *single written and oral* tradition would be found in the very heart of the most fundamental code in the religious history of Israel. In practical terms this means that the text of the Decalogue has been transmitted to us in a *single* pointed-manuscript tradition, namely the Tiberian, in *four* different forms: the two forms found in Exod 20 and Deut 5 that differ even at the consonantal level, with two separate forms for the vocalization of each of those texts. Even though the phenomenon of double pointing is limited in the manuscript traditions to a handful of cases, the fact is nonetheless established that multiple oral traditions in the reading of Torah coexisted in the medieval period, *and found expression in written form*.

Without at this point embarking on a detailed description of the vocalization systems of Hebrew, it will suffice to point out that when BHQ uses “differ-vocal” in the text-critical apparatus of its edition, what is thereby indicated is that some ancient version gives testimony to a vocalization pattern that differs from the Tiberian pattern, and that such a difference impacts, not so much the division of the text and flow of

¹⁷ I thank Yigal Levin who first gave me the reason for the double pointings in an email reply to my query via the b-hebrew Biblical Hebrew Forum (<http://lists.ibiblio.org/mailman/listinfo/b-hebrew>). More information can be found Wickes, *Two Treatises on the Accentuation of the Old Testament, with Prolegomenon* by Aron Dotan, 130–31. There Wickes informs us: “The Orientals and Occidentals differed also in the pointing of the Decalogue. The former had the single accentuation (known as the טעם העליון [upper pointing]) according to the commandments. This was no doubt the original, for the verses of the Parasha in each case are reckoned accordingly (72 and 118). On the other hand, the Palestinians introduced a second division (טעם התחתון [lower pointing]) breaking up the longer verses (3–6, 8–11), and bringing together the shorter ones (13–16); with the view of easing and equalizing the reading.”

reading, but the decoding of the text at a morphological, lexical, semantic, or syntactic level.

At this point of the discussion one may naturally ask whether there is any independent witness to the vocalization of the Hebrew text outside the various pointing systems mentioned above. There are some extant fragments of consonantal Hebrew texts transliterated into Greek. Since Greek included vowels in its writing system, we can to a certain degree deduce the pronunciation of Hebrew based upon these Greek transliterations, although caution must be exercised since there is not a strict one-to-one phonological mapping between Hebrew and Greek.

The best attested source for these transliterations is the 1943 publication by Einar Brønno of an analysis of the Mercati fragments of the second column (hence "Secunda" or SEC) of Origen's *Hexapla*.¹⁸ These fragments with texts from the Psalms date to the tenth century C.E., but they are believed to provide a picture of pre-Masoretic vocalization. In an unpublished study¹⁹ focusing in particular on the evidence for preserving the soft and hard combinations of the preformative attachment to the initial root letter of I-Laryngeal verbs, which can be determined simply by noting whether or not the Greek transliteration renders the connection with a double vowel (soft connection) or single vowel (hard connection), I noted that of the twenty-six cases isolated from Brønno's analysis, twenty correspond with the Masoretic tradition, and six do not. Thus, on this admittedly fine point of Hebrew vocalization, 23% of the cases in the Mercati fragments give evidence for a different oral tradition than the one the Masoretes delivered to us. However, Brønno's general conclusion after analyzing all of the evidence from the fragments (containing approximately one thousand words, of which close to eight hundred are unique), points to an overall correspondence particularly with the Tiberian tradition in contrast to the Babylonian and Palestinian pointing traditions.²⁰ Brønno's important remarks follow:

Die große Bedeutung der SEC für die hebräische Sprachwissenschaft liegt u. a. darin, daß diese alte Überlieferung deutlich zeigt, daß das

¹⁸ Einar Brønno, *Studien über Hebräische Morphologie und Vokalismus*, Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, Vol. 28 (Leipzig: 1943; reprint, Nendeln, Lichtenstein: Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1966). The fragments were discovered in 1896 by Cardinal Mercati in a palimpsest of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana at Milan.

¹⁹ Gary Martin, "The Soft and Hard Combinations of I-Guttural Verbs: A Quantitative Summary with Phonological, Lexical, and Linguistic Observations," (University of Washington, 2002).

²⁰ Brønno, *Hebräische Morphologie*, 462–63.

tiberische Formensystem in seinen wesentlichen Hauptzügen eine alte Tradition hinter sich hat, wenn auch die SEC an der einzelnen Stelle keineswegs immer die Form aufweist, die morphologisch der Form des MT an der betreffenden Stelle entspricht ... Hinsichtlich der Quantität stimmt die SEC durchgehend genau mit dem MT überein (dagegen nicht mit dem Quantitätssystem der späteren jüdischen Grammatiker, die bekanntlich überall das Sere and das Cholem für lang hielten). Die SEC zeugt deutlich davon, daß die tib. Überlieferung rücksichtlich des Aufbaus des Formensystems viel zuverlässiger ist, als einige Forscher nach der Entdeckung der bab. und der pal. Vokalisationssysteme zu glauben geneigt waren. Daß zwischen der Entstehungszeit des Textes der SEC und der des MT eine Entwicklung stattgefunden hat, ist ja kein Wunder.

Der Wert der SEC beruht aber nicht nur auf den Erhellungen, die sie direkt hinsichtlich der Vorgeschichte der tiberischen Formen liefert: teils ist die SEC dazu imstande, in die Transkriptionen der Septuaginta und des HIERONYMUS ein Licht zu bringen, teils ermöglicht sie in mehreren Fällen neue Gesichtspunkte für die Vergleichung der hebräischen Formen mit denen der anderen semitischen Sprachen ...

It is hard to overestimate the value of this work of Brønno, who provides in nearly five hundred pages of exhaustive data and analysis far better information regarding pre-Masoretic traditions than can be gleaned from its primary counterpart, Field's *Origenis Hexaplorum*, which is difficult to control.²¹

IMPLICATIONS OF A CONSONANT-ONLY TEXT AND ITS LATER VOCALIZATION

APPLICATION TO THE VARIANT TYPE "DIFFER-VOCAL"

I now return to the various scenarios that could have given rise to the vocalization differences noted in *BHQ*, that is, whether those different vocalizations originated: (1) before the written text, or (2) after it, or (3) *with it*, or (4) as a result of dialectal confusion.

I begin with a hypothetical case in which *two different oral versions* were in circulation before they were committed to writing. Since the text indicated by "differ-vocal" reflects differences only with the unwritten

²¹ Frederick Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt; Veterum interpretum graecorum in totum Vetus Testamentum fragmenta. Post Flaminium, Nobilem, Drusium, et Montefalconium, adhibita etiam versione Syro-hexaplari, concinnavit, emendavit, et multis partibus auxit Fridericus Field*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1875).

vowels, the consonant-only texts of two different oral traditions would appear identical. For people familiar with (or preferring!) one of the two oral traditions, the consonant text would continue to be verbalized according to the known (or preferred) oral tradition. Later in the transmission process, when the vowels were inserted into the text, or when translation of the Hebrew text into other languages was carried out, or when commentaries on the text appear, we see reflections of the two oral traditions, whereby each now finds explicit graphical representation.

Now we can also imagine a case in which there existed a *single oral tradition*. Once the oral tradition was encoded using only (or primarily) consonants, the text would continue to be read according to the established oral tradition. However, it could have happened that somewhere, sometime, someone read the consonantal text and mentally or orally supplied different vowels, resulting in a different meaning, at some level of meaning. Under whatever circumstances this might have taken place, the result would be that two readers could come away from the same consonantal text with different views about what the text said. When for the first time a reader read the text differently than the original oral tradition had prescribed, the second oral tradition was born. If that new reading was subsequently heard and passed on to and by others, we would have an explanation for how the two readings came to be reflected in various stages of the later transmission of the text.

There is a third scenario that we must examine, and this scenario may in fact turn out to be the most likely one in a number of cases, although it remains the one currently least recognized or developed among textual scholars. The scenario is this: at some definite point in time an author created a text that had never been recited, heard, seen, or read before. It was a real *Urtext*, a *single written original*. Within this text the author consciously created what we may call a *visual pun*, a consonant string that could be vocalized multiple ways, each of which had meaning within the immediate context of that particular consonant string. The author chose to exploit the inherent ambiguity present in a non-perfect graphical system of representing a text, and did so for a variety of reasons: to demonstrate artistic, stylistic, or poetic finesse; to entertain; to embed political satire; to encode a divine oracle; or for any number of other reasons. Whatever the motive, purpose, or intended function, the author, simply stated, employed a *double entendre*, of which there are numerous varieties in literatures both ancient and modern, including early Jewish writings.²²

²² An extensive typology of “word plays” in the Hebrew Bible was presented by Scott Noegel at the Pacific Northwest Regional Meeting of the Society of

Finally, we can also imagine a scenario in which the same consonants, although vocalized differently by different people, still *meant* the same thing. (“I say ‘to-mah-to,’ you say ‘to-may-to’”). Miscommunication can take place, however, when one of two possible pronunciations of the *same* word for one group of speakers turns out to be a *different word* for another group of speakers.

We shall keep these and other possibilities in mind as we turn, first to a general discussion of the cases of “differ-vocal” in *BHQ*, and then come to focus considerable attention on one case in particular, in which an entire range of possible author-stylistic, historical-linguistic, oral-traditional, text-interpretive, and cultural-interactive processes becomes completely buried by a text-critical method that labels the non-Tiberian vocalization as “differ-vocal,” and treats it as an errant variant, so that it not only does not enter the text of the edition, but is commented away as simply a mistaken vocalization. No treatment is given in the apparatus or in the separate text-critical commentary as to what could have given rise to this case of “differ-vocal,” nor is the immense influence that this variant played in a variety of text-historical settings mentioned. The only matter that appears to count, ultimately, is that current users of the edition have the best available text at their fingertips.

CASES OF “DIFFER-VOCAL” IN *BHQ*

The following table shows the number of variants characterized as “differ-vocal” by the various editors of the *BHQ* editions of the books indicated, sorted by decreasing order of occurrence based on word counts of the individual books.

TABLE 1: FREQUENCY OF “DIFFER-VOCAL” BY BOOK IN *BHQ*

<i>Book</i>	<i># differ-vocal</i>	<i># words in book</i>	<i>% of content affected</i>
Lamentations	23	1551	1.48%
Canticles	13	1259	1.03%
Ruth	2	1214	0.16%
Qohelet	2	2806	0.07%
Esther	0	2775	0.00%
Ezra	0	3632	0.00%
Nehemiah	0	5046	0.00%

Biblical Literature in May, 2006. Noegel is preparing a monograph for publication entitled: “*Word Play*” in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*. While Noegel admits the use of word play in lighter contexts for entertainment purposes, he emphasizes that punning in the ancient Near East is often connected with serious business.

The variations in the above data may be due in part to different editorial decisions of the individual editors; each book was edited by a different person, taking Ezra-Nehemiah together as a single work. For Canticles, the individual cases of “differ-vocal” have received additional treatment by the editor of *BHQ*’s Canticles.²³ The editor has provided his general view in regard to matters of vocalization:

Cases which involve only the vocalization are, strictly speaking, not of text-critical interest since the Masoretic vocalization is an interpretation of the consonantal text. Venerable though it may be, it is subject to challenge on the basis of another interpretation of that text, certainly when that interpretation is as old as G [=Old Greek] or S [=Syriac Peshitta].²⁴

Every one of these cases of “differ-vocal” is worthy of a full investigation. They are all evidence of different oral traditions that relay different meanings of words based on differences in how the consonants were vocalized. They are also evidence of a particular kind of variation, where *identical visual symbols split into multiple aural/oral channels*, whether those aural/oral channels are manifested only in the mind of the reader, or via sound waves generated by a human voice and captured by a human ear. Thus, in reading a consonant-only text, whether silently or orally, on occasion the reader is faced with viable vocalization alternatives, and a decision must be made as to which alternative is the most appropriate choice for the context at hand.

SILENT READING IN ANTIQUITY

Before continuing with a specific instance of this phenomenon, a point regarding silent vs. oral reading practices in antiquity needs to be clarified as a result of the following consideration. If a composer of texts in the consonantal tradition wished to exploit the inherent ambiguity of that tradition to create a form of *double entendre*, then what takes place in the mind of the reader is a process of decision *before* (or perhaps even *instead of*) the actual vocalization. That is, whether or not the text is eventually vocalized, the alternate vocalization strategies are mentally, silently processed, however short a time that processing may require.

²³ Piet B. Dirksen, “Septuagint and Peshitta in the Apparatus to Canticles in *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*,” in *Sôfer Mahîr: Essays in Honour of Adrian Schenker Offered by Editors of Biblia Hebraica Quinta*, ed. Yohanan A. P. Goldman, Arie van der Kooij, and Richard D. Weis (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 15. I am responsible for the explanations in brackets for the sigla G and S.

The phenomenon is of course entirely common in English, where even in fully vocalized text forms we have words that are spelled the same but pronounced differently.²⁵ They generally present no problem to us, because context dictates one pronunciation/meaning or the other. However, they are often, at least in modern American culture, intentionally exploited to create humor.

The idea that reading in antiquity was always performed orally, and was never (or practically never) performed in the silence of one's mind, occasionally still finds its advocates. That idea appears to have gained notoriety in a 1927 article by Josef Balogh.²⁶ Within at least the past decade, several articles have demonstrated that both kinds of reading, silent and oral, were known and practiced in antiquity. A. K. Gavrilov traces the history of the issue, takes in the evidence of modern psychology of reading, discusses problems with the so-called evidence of Augustine (for a long time the crux of the position against silent reading as a general practice in antiquity), and provides an extensive list of citations from ancient authors "where silent reading is more or less certainly implied." Gavrilov summarizes his findings as follows:

The main conclusion I draw from our examination of these examples is that silent reading was a quite ordinary practice for wide circles of the free population of classical Athens, and possibly for earlier periods too ... I would emphasize also the sophistication of the ancients' own reflections on reading. The evidence shows them aware of the interdependence of the two types of reading, of the importance of eye-voice span, of the kind of aesthetic subvocalization that Goethe called 'innere Aufführung'. They appreciated both the advantages of silent reading, in terms of concentration, speed, and absorption of material, and the artistic demands and rewards of reading aloud ... These ancient reflections help us to see that the phenomenon of reading itself is fundamentally

²⁵ It seems that there is no standard nomenclature for this phenomenon, although "heteronym" as defined in OED fits our situation as far as the consonants are concerned: "A word having the same spelling as another, but a different sound and meaning." But that designation draws attention only to the fact that there is a difference. If we wish to highlight the similarity, we could also call the words "homograms" or "homographs," although in OED the latter is reserved as a philological technical term for "a word of the same spelling as another, but of different origin and meaning." Some prefer to use the more generic term "equivocal." Various options are explored at: http://www.scs.fsu.edu/~burkardt/fun/wordplay/equivocal_words.html

²⁶ Josef Balogh, "'Voces paginarum': Beiträge zur Geschichte des lauten Lesens und Schreibens," *Philologus* 82 (1927).

the same in modern and in ancient culture. Cultural diversity does not exclude an underlying unity.²⁷

This is not to deny the importance of oral reading, or reading as a performative act, in antiquity. One simply needs to avoid exclusivity in reconstructing the past. It is as Frank Gilliard concludes in his article:

There is no question that the predominance of orality in the ancient world has “potentially wide-ranging effects” on NT studies. It still seems self-evident, from what we know about how ancient books were written and read, that we would get a more authentic experience of the text of the NT, and gain valuable insights, if we regularly did read it aloud, preferably from an uncial edition, with no punctuation or paragraphing, and in *scriptio continua*. But we should be mindful that the predominance of orality does not mean exclusivity, either in writing or in reading.²⁸

SUMMARY

Before proceeding to a discussion of a particular case of “differ-vocal,” I summarize here the main findings up to this point.

(1) For the first two thousand years of its extant history (ca. 1000 B.C.E. to 900 C.E.), Hebrew was written primarily without indication of vowels, and in some cases continues to be written without vowels even to the present day.

(2) Around the year 900 C.E., some Hebrew texts were supplied with pointing systems to provide a graphic representation of their vocalization in terms of vowels, accents, reading flow, and inflection (or melodic) patterns.

(3) Although at first multiple pointing systems emerged, the Tiberian system became the one primarily handed down to us for the vocalization especially of biblical texts.

(4) Within the Tiberian system, there is allowance for at least dual vocalization possibilities in a few passages of the Hebrew Bible.

²⁷ A. K. Gavrilov, “Techniques of Reading in Classical Antiquity,” CQ 47, no. 1 (1997): 68–69. In the article that follows that of Gavrilov, M. F. Burnyeat adds a second century C.E. text from Ptolemy testifying that the ancients “often did read silently, for the mundane reason that voicing the words is a distraction to thought.” M. F. Burnyeat, “Postscript on Silent Reading,” CQ 47, no. 1 (1997): 75. A similar conclusion is reached in Carsten Burfeind, “Wen hörte Philippus? Leises Lesen und lautes Vorlesen in der Antike,” *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 93 (2002).

²⁸ Frank D. Gilliard, “More Silent Reading in Antiquity: Non Omne Verbum Sonabat,” JBL 112, no. 4 (1993): 694.

(5) Based on historical-linguistic evidence, and especially the evidence of Greek transcriptions, we find additional variations in the vocalization of consonantal Hebrew texts. These variations, to be pursued in the following section, impact the perceived meaning of the text in, for example, morphological and lexical matters.

(6) An awareness of both the practice of silent reading, or the ability to process written texts mentally, and the existence of equivocal words in Hebrew, provides at least a theoretical framework for postulating that an author could easily create *double entendres* in a consonant-only writing system.

THE "JANUS" PARALLEL AND OTHER *DOUBLE ENTENDRES*

The consequences of *double entendre* creation in the consonant text for the practice of textual criticism are fascinating to contemplate. First, consider a case in which two different Hebrew words are homograms and homophones. The words are written with identical consonants and vowels, but have different meanings because, for example, they each derive from separate roots. Such is the case of the Janus parallelism²⁹ found in Song 2:12, where the word **הַזִּמְיָר**, can be either the word "pruning" or the word "singing," depending on the root from which it is derived. In Song 2:12 the author intended *both* words to supply their respective meanings: "pruning" works in parallel with the preceding text "flowers have appeared in the land," and "singing" works in parallel with the following text, "the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land." Thus, either the single consonant string **הַזִּמְיָר** or its vocalized form **הַזִּמְיָר** can represent two different words. The author of Song 2:12 exploited the equivocal graphical representation of these two words to allow a single representation to do double duty. In such a case the textual critic of the Hebrew text would be on the correct path assuming a single written original, and a single vocalization pattern. Text-critical work could become difficult, however, when dealing with *translations* of

²⁹ The term "Janus parallelism" based on the two-faced god Janus who looks both forward and backward at the same time, was first coined in Cyrus H. Gordon, "New Directions: 1. Janus Parallelism," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists (Studies Presented to Naphtali Lewis)* 15 (1978). For an extensive treatment of Janus parallels in the book of Job, with additional examples from other parts of the Hebrew Bible and from other literatures of the ancient Near East, see Scott Noegel, *Janus Parallelism in the Book of Job* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996). Janus parallelism is properly identified only when the pivot word forms a well-established word pair in the previous and following stichs.

this Hebrew text, which may or may not have recognized the *double entendre* embedded within the Hebrew text.

In such cases, before textual critics can properly understand their role in processing textual variants, they need to think through fundamental issues of translation theory and practice. For one can easily imagine the following scenarios in translating a *double entendre*, which are by no means unique to ancient versions. (1) The *double entendre* was not recognized by some translators, resulting in (a) some translations using the equivalent word in the target language for one of the two possible meanings of the word, (b) some translations using the equivalent of the other possible meaning. (2) The *double entendre* was recognized by a translator, who (a) found a word in the target language that was as equivocal as the word in the source language, and thereby consciously passed on the *double entendre* even in translation,³⁰ (b) could not find a similar equivocal word in the target language and was hence constrained to choose a word reflecting only one or the other options of meaning in the equivocal word in the source language. In this case the outcome is the same as in the first scenario. The translator, though aware of the *double entendre*, did not indicate awareness in translation; (c) could not find a similar equivocal word in the target language, but chose to provide an expanded translation using two words of the target language that mapped to each of the respective meanings of the equivocal word in the source language.

Out of these possible ways of handling a *double entendre*, we could have at least four different translations: (1) One using a word reflecting only meaning A, (2) One using a word reflecting only meaning B, (3) One using an equivocal word that mirrors the *double entendre*, (4) One that makes the *double entendre* explicit by expansion.

Consider also another type of polysemy, one that is strictly visual and which, interestingly, uses the same root as the pivot word in Song 2:12 (זמר). In this case the polysemous word derives its two meanings from initial root consonants of different Proto-Semitic phonemes. The beginning of the Song of the Sea in Exod 15:1–2 reads:

³⁰ For examples of how the Septuagint, Targum, Peshitta, and Vulgate versions capture Hebrew polysemy, see Noegel, *Janus Parallelism in the Book of Job*, 140–43. With attention focused primarily on the Septuagint, see Scott Noegel, “Wordplay and Translation Technique in the Septuagint of Job,” *Aula Orientalis* 14 (1996).

אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־נָאֵה נָאֵה	I will sing to Yahweh, for he is highly exalted.
סוֹס וְרֹכֵבוֹ רָמָה בַּיָּם:	Horse and its rider he has cast into the sea.
עֲזִי וְזִמְרָתִי יָהּ	My strength and זמרת is Yah;
וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה	and he has become my deliverance.

The word זמרת appears to be an alternate form of זמרה, but זמרה reflects two different words, one meaning “song” (from Proto-Semitic *zmr*, as in Ugaritic), and the other meaning “strength” (from Proto-Semitic *ḏmr*, as in Ugaritic). In the sense “song” (with initial consonant pronounced *z*) the word connects back to אֲשִׁירָה, “I will sing”; in the sense “strength” (with initial consonant pronounced *ḏ*) it connects with the immediately preceding עֲזִי, “my might.”³¹ The lexica treat זמרת variously and seem not to have caught the polysemy. BDB (274) relates it to “song”; HALOT (274) and HAHAT (II:305) relate it to “strength.”

The word זמרת occurs three times in the Hebrew Bible. Aside from Exod 15:2 it is found in the same formula also in Isa 12:2 and Ps 118:14 (the only difference is in Isa 12:2 where יהוה is added after יה). In the section immediately preceding Ps 118:14 (118:5–13) the theme is Yahweh’s strength displayed in the deliverance of the distressed one who was surrounded by nations. Ps 118:15 follows the formula with וַיְשׁוּעָה בְּאֶהְלִי צְדִיקִים קוֹלָם רָנָה “a cry of jubilation³² and deliverance is in the tents of the righteous.” Thus the word זמרת in connection with the following “jubilation” suggests the meaning “song.” In the Isaiah passage, immediately preceding the formula (which in Isa 12:2b reads, “Yah, Yahweh, is my strength and זמרת”) the text is, “I will trust, and will not be afraid” (12:2a). Immediately following the formula the text continues, “With joy you will draw water from the wells of deliverance” (12:3), and the psalm concludes with “sing praises” (זַמְּרוּ [!], 12:5) and “shout aloud and sing for joy” (צַהֲלִי וְרַנִּי, 12:6).

In all three occurrences of the formula, the word זמרת presents the two meanings “song” and “strength” visually, but in reciting the verse orally one would have to decide between the pronunciations *zmrāt* (“song”) and *ḏmrāt* (“strength”), that is, until /ḏ/ shifted to /z/, at which point the polysemy became both visual and aural.³³

³¹ Since the polysemous word does not occur between its two counterparts, this is a case of uni-directional polysemy and not Janus parallelism.

³² The word can also mean “lamentation,” but that sense does not fit the context here.

³³ The evidence for when the shift from /ḏ/ to /z/ took place is uncertain. Regarding the Proto-Semitic phonemes /ḏ/, /z/ or /ṣ/, and /ḏ/ Rendsburg explains: “There is no evidence for the preservation of these sounds in ancient

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Consider now the work of the textual critic, faced with manuscripts in both source and target languages that offer such an array of variants. The textual critic who is unaware that the source text employed a *double entendre* will see only one meaning presented in the source text, choose the closest equivalent among the variants in the manuscripts of the target language to place in the main body text of a critical edition of the translation, and place all other readings in a text-critical apparatus, with or without an explanation of what “scribal errors” might have been committed that could explain their origins. But what does the textual critic do who is aware of the *double entendre* in the source text, that is when *multivalent texts* in one tradition have equal justification for their existence? Answering this question brings us back to the discussion in Chapter 1 of the work of Cerquiglini who advocated a multi-window display model for the treatment of such variants. For now, however, my purpose is not to approach the issue of textual layout of complex cases, but to trace first of all the historical awareness or non-awareness, in connection with the acceptance or non-acceptance, of *double entendre* in the transmission of a text—to be specific, of an original (as I believe, hence the lack of quotation marks around the word “original”) string of four Hebrew consonants in the opening section of the Song of Songs. Although I believe I have solved a long-standing textual problem in Song 1:2, which has a certain value in itself as far this text in particular is concerned, my purpose has less to do with providing justification for the simultaneity of multiple readings for Song 1:2 and more to do with fundamental issues impacting both the practice of textual criticism and the way we approach and process reception and interpretation histories. Concerning textual criticism, I will demonstrate in a general sense that when a *single written original* view of a text, which may or may not be justified in a particular instance, is joined with a *single original meaning* view of that text, textual criticism may completely bury literary devices intended by an author. Concerning reception and interpretation history,

Hebrew. Instead, in most regional dialects of ancient Hebrew, /d/ shifted to /z/ (in some Israelian dialects it shifted to /d/) ... At the same time, scholars recognize that any one, two, or three of these phonemes may have been preserved in some locales. But since the Hebrew alphabet does not have special signs to represent these sounds, it is difficult to ascertain if and where such phonemes may have been retained. Were it not for the story in Judges 12:6 ..., we would not know that Gileadite Hebrew retained the voiceless interdental /t̪/, so it is conceivable that elsewhere in ancient Hebrew /d/, /z/, and /d/ existed.” Rendsburg, “Ancient Hebrew Phonology,” 72.

I will demonstrate how a text's meaning acquires legitimacy on the basis of traditions of religious communities, even when individuals within those communities believe they are deriving meaning on the basis of historical-linguistic considerations. Further, I will track how trust gained in a particular religious-traditional meaning other than one's own can effect some degree of transformation, and I will inquire into the underlying factors that determine whether or not transformation occurs, and to what degree it occurs.

With these preliminary considerations in mind, I now begin the discussion of the four-consonant string that speaks volumes on our points of inquiry.

4

SPLIT VISUAL—AURAL/ORAL TRADITION IN THE SONG OF SONGS

“DIFFER-VOCAL” AT SONG 1:2—LOVE OR BREASTS?

יִשְׁקֵנִי מְנֻשְׁקוֹת פִּיהוּ כִּי־טוֹבִים דְּרִיךְ מִיַּיִן:

Song 1:2

So reads the introductory line to the song of all biblical songs. A comparison of numerous modern English versions of Song 1:2 reveals an overall uniformity of verbiage in spite of a wide range of translation techniques employed. Translations of the second line vary primarily in the choice of the adjective used to compare love with wine, such as *better*, *sweeter*, *more delightful*, but the general thought is the same in all. A variety of modern German, French, and Spanish versions consulted all present similar readings.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE TEXT

Yet for a period of approximately a millennium and a half, from some of the earliest biblical manuscripts of, and commentaries on the Song, practically all (I am aware of no exceptions) of western Christianity read the second line as follows: “for your *breasts* are better than wine.” In fact, this was the *only* text known among Christians in the West. During the same period of time, in Jewish as well as Syriac Christian communities, the second line was read just as our modern versions have it: “for your *love* is better than wine.” In fact, this was the *only* text known in these communities. Sometime around the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth centuries, some Protestant western churches began reading the text with the word “love,” while other Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic Church retained the reading “breasts” in its

official Latin (Vulgate) and English (Douay Old Testament) versions. After nearly another half of a millennium, the textual conversion from “breasts” to “love” was completed, most recently evidenced in the appearance of the *New American Bible* in 1970 and with the adoption of the *Nova Vulgata* in 1979 as the official Latin version of the Catholic Church.¹ There is now virtually no faith community in the West among Jews or Christians whose text in Song 1:2 reads “breasts” instead of “love.” Thus, the reading “love” continues to be supported in the most recent critical edition of the Hebrew Bible, namely *BHQ*, which notes in the text-critical apparatus that the reading of the Old Greek and Vulgate versions (“breasts”) is due to different vocalization of the Hebrew consonants and is therefore a case of “differ-vocal.”

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF INTERPRETATION

The interpretation history of the Song, in particular the allegorical methods that were applied to it, is a fascinating story that, after a very brief survey below, will only be tangentially addressed in this study. For my focus is directed not so much on how the text of the Song *was allegorized*—the volumes that have been written on this topic are numerous enough²—but rather on how the text that was allegorized *was read*. This is a story that, as far as I am aware, has not been told in its entirety. This *textual story* is well worth pursuing, for it sheds light on issues such as scribal practices, theories of oral and written texts, transmission history, interpretation history, and perhaps the most interesting of all issues: the interplay of scholarship, interfaith communication, and interfaith conflict, in effecting official changes to a text regarded by adherents of those faiths to be essentially unchangeable.

APPROACH

I seek here to answer several questions in regard to the textual situation of Song 1:2 as outlined above: how well is the textual divergence of “love” vs. “breasts” documented in biblical manuscripts? What could

¹ The traditional Vulgate text reads: “meliora sunt ubera tua vino” (“your breasts are better than wine”); the *Nova Vulgata* reads: “meliores sunt amores tui vino” (“your love is better than wine”).

² See especially: E. Ann Matter, *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990). Ann W. Astell, *The Song of Songs in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990). Friedrich Ohly, *Hohelied-Studien: Grundzüge einer Geschichte der Hoheliedauslegung des Abendlandes bis um 1200* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1958).

have given rise to the divergence? How persistent and exclusive did the divergent texts remain within their respective communities? When did a textual tradition that had always read “breasts” adopt the reading “love” for the first time, and what processes facilitated that change? Further, what are the implications of all this for the role that textual studies can play in acquiring a deeper understanding of the relationship between religious communities and their religious texts, as well as making substantive contributions to current practices of textual criticism? While the following analysis focuses primarily on a single word, the main goal, as emphasized above, is not simply to solve an isolated semantic problem. I rather regard this exercise as a case study demonstrating the value of applying a variety of methodological approaches that will prove to be of general utility.

At the same time, viewed even from the perspective of solving a single isolated semantic issue, the following methods, observations, and arguments demonstrate how trying to fully understand and explain a seemingly trivial issue of oral tradition can become an utterly complex affair.

BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPTS OF SONG 1:1–4

OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPTS OF SONG 1:2

The following table lists the oldest manuscripts of Song 1:2 written in Hebrew and Greek, ordered by date. All dates given are C.E. The list is exhaustive for Hebrew manuscripts to the year 1200 C.E.³ and for Greek manuscripts through the eighth century C.E.⁴

³ Hebrew manuscript information is from Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer, *Codices Hebraicis I*. The four volumes published to date catalogue 101 Hebrew manuscripts from 903/4 to 1200 C.E.

⁴ Greek manuscript information is from Alfred Rahlfs, *Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des Alten Testaments. Vol. I, 1: Die Überlieferung bis zum VIII. Jahrhundert*. Edited by Detlef Fraenkel. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004).

TABLE 2: OLDEST MANUSCRIPTS OF SONG 1:2

No.	Date	Language	Designation
1 *	50	Hebrew	6Q6 / 6QCant ⁵
2 *	4 th c.	Greek	Codex Sinaiticus
3 *	4 th c.	Greek	Codex Vaticanus
4	5 th c.	Greek	Codex Alexandrinus
5	8 th c.	Greek	Codex Venetus
6 *	930	Hebrew	Aleppo Codex
7 *	1008	Hebrew	Leningrad Codex
8	1028	Hebrew	Cairo, Moussa al-Dar'i (Karaite) synagogue [Gottheil 13]
9	1189	Hebrew	London, Valmadonna Trust Library, 1
10	1193	Hebrew	Bologna, Biblioteca universitaria, Ms. 2208
11	1197/8	Hebrew	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Hébreu 105

Numbered items with asterisks have been consulted on the basis of facsimile editions or an *editio princeps*. One notes the long chronological gap (ca. 900 years) between the text from Qumran and the next extant Hebrew manuscript (Aleppo Codex). Additional textual data for Hebrew and Greek, as well as for manuscripts in Latin, Syriac, and Aramaic will be noted below as examined. The nature of the issue at hand is perhaps best illustrated by juxtaposing the two earliest extant manuscript witnesses of the Song. In fact, these are two among the only three witnesses to Song 1:1–4 from the earliest period until the fifth century C.E.

Hebrew Consonantal Text from Qumran: First Century C.E.

The earliest extant witness of Song 1:2 is found in the Qumran manuscript 6Q6 (6QCant)⁶ which dates to ca. 50 C.E. The manuscript has large lacunae and its reconstruction is somewhat conjectural. The portion of the fragment with the text of Song 1:1–4 shows the two instances of

⁵ Altogether there are 4 mss. of the Song from the Dead Sea. The other three are from cave 4 (4Q106, 107, 108), but they do not offer the text of Song 1:2.

⁶ The *editio princeps* is: M. Baillet, J. T. Milik, and R. de Vaux, *Les 'petite grottes' de Qumrân*, DJDJ III (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962), 112–14. Dates of manuscripts from the Judaean desert are from: Emanuel Tov, ed., *The Texts from the Judaean Desert: Indices and An Introduction to the 'Discoveries in the Judaean Desert' Series*, DJD XXXIX (Oxford: Clarendon, 2002). An index of biblical passages in the manuscripts from the Judaean desert that gives both primary manuscript designations is: David L. Washburn, *A Catalog of Biblical Passages in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Atlanta: SBL, 2003).

the word **דדיך** partially visible.⁷ The approximate English equivalent of the Hebrew text of Song 1:1–4 is as follows (non-extant portions are placed in square brackets):

¹[The song of songs which is Solomon's]. ²May he kiss me with the kisses
[of his mouth for] **דדיך** [is better than wine. ³For a fragrance] oils are good.
[An oil poured out?] is your name, therefore [the maiden]s love you. ⁴Draw me
[after you, let us run. The kin]g has brought [me] into his chambers. Let us be glad
[and let us rejoice in you. Let us remember] **דדיך** [more than wine.]
Right are beloved ones.

The word **דדיך** in verses 1 and 4 is generally translated “your love,” but that is not the way *this same Hebrew text* was read when it was translated for the first time into Greek, probably sometime during the second or first centuries B.C.E.

Septuagint Text From Codex Sinaiticus: Fourth Century C.E.

The next earliest extant manuscript is the Codex Sinaiticus (Σ) dating to the fourth century C.E., with explanatory rubrics (comments in red ink)⁸ inserted between lines within the text block.⁹ I have provided a literal translation of the text and the rubrics (indented and underlined). The punctuation and word capitalization that I have added (not in the original) is open to alternate interpretation.

The song of songs which is Solomon's

The bride

Let him kiss me from the kisses of his mouth
for your **breasts** are better than wine
and the aroma of your myrrh is above all the fragrances
myrrh emptied out is your name
therefore the maidens have loved you
they have drawn you after you into the aroma
of your oils let us run

To the maidens the bride relates the things about the bride-groom
that he provided to her

The king has brought me into his chambers

While the bride was discoursing with the maidens they said

Let us rejoice and let us be glad in you

⁷ See DJDJ III, vol. 2, Plate (Planche) XXIII.

⁸ On a black & white printout, the red text appears grey.

⁹ The image is from the collotype (not a photographic) edition of Constantinus Tischendorf, ed., *Bibliorum Codex Sinaiticus Petropolitanus. III: Veteris Testamenti pars posterior* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1969), 61.

We will love your **breasts** more than wine
The maidens to the bridegroom call out the name of the bride:
Uprightness Has Loved You
 Uprightness has loved you

The text is remarkable. Not only does it clearly show the reading “breasts” (Greek: *μαστοι*), but the rubrics give us the earliest historical commentary of the Song.¹⁰ I will discuss later how the reading “breasts” could have arisen.

Other Greek Manuscripts

The next earliest Greek witness is the Codex Vaticanus (B), also from the fourth century C.E. Its text is the same as that of Codex Sinaiticus for Song 1:2.¹¹ In general, the Vaticanus text of Song 1:1–4 is laid out with similar line breaks and indents found in the Codex Sinaiticus, but without the rubrics.¹²

When we search among other manuscripts of the Septuagint, for example by consulting the critical apparatus of the edition by Rahlfs,¹³ we find no Old Greek manuscripts that read anything other than “breasts.” The Greek manuscripts of Song 1:2 never use a Greek word for “love.”

¹⁰ An image of the collotype edition of this section along with an English translation is online at: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~jtreat/song/sinai.html>, with reference to a book on the subject of the rubrics of the Song: Jay Treat, *Lost Keys: Text and Interpretation in Old Greek Song of Songs and Its Earliest Manuscript Witnesses*, Ph.D. Book (University of Pennsylvania, 1996).

¹¹ As compared with the newest facsimile of Vaticanus, *Biblorum sacrorum Graecorum Codex Vaticanus B* (Rome: Istituto poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1999). See also the older collotype edition of Vaticanus: *Biblorum Sacrorum graecus Codex vaticanus auspice Pio IX. pontifice maximo collatis studiis Caroli Vercellone sodalis barnabitarum et Iosephi Cozza monachi basiliani editus: Tomus III* (Rome: S. Congregationis de propaganda fide, 1871).

¹² In both **Σ** and B Song 1:1–4 is laid out in 17 lines, ignoring the rubric lines in **Σ**. Lines 1–8 have identical line breaks and indents (at lines 3 and 6). From lines 9–16 there are slight differences in both lines breaks and indents, but line 17 is again the same in both mss.

¹³ Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta: Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1935). Unfortunately the Göttingen edition of the Song has not yet appeared.

Second Oldest Hebrew Manuscript—Aleppo Codex: c. 930

The text of the Aleppo Codex, identical to that of the Leningrad Codex,¹⁴ is the text represented by our modern English (and other) translations. Neither of the two most recent critical editions¹⁵ of the Song shows any Hebrew manuscript that reads anything other than “love.” Thus, there appears to be no Hebrew manuscript of Song 1:2 that uses a Hebrew word for “breasts” at Song 1:2.

Old Latin Versions¹⁶

The Old Latin versions of Song 1:2 read:

Osculetur me ab osculis	Let him kiss me from the kisses
oris sui	of his mouth,
quoniam bona ubera tua	for your breasts are
super vinum	better than wine

The edition of Sabatier shows no Old Latin witness that reads anything other than “breasts.” This is the text that is also found in text editions cited by P. B. Dirksen in his edition of Canticles in *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*, namely that of Gregory of Elvira’s commentary on the Canticles¹⁷ and “an edition of the text of Salzbουργ, Abbey of St. Peter, Ms. IX 16.”¹⁸

¹⁴ David Noel Freedman, ed., *The Leningrad Codex: A Facsimile Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

¹⁵ P. B. Dirksen, ed. “Canticles.” In *Biblia Hebraica Quinta, Fascicle 18: General Introduction and Megilloth* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004). K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, eds., 5th ed. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997).

¹⁶ The newest critical edition in the *Vetus Latina* series has not yet appeared. Only the Introduction has been published in: Eva Schulz-Flügel, ed., *Canticum Canticorum. Band 10/3, 1. Lfg.: Einleitung, VETUS LATINA: Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel nach Petrus Sabatier neu gesammelt und herausgegeben von der Erzabtei Beuron* (Freiburg: Herder, 1992). The old standard edition is: Pierre Sabatier, ed., *Biblorum Sacrorum Latinæ versiones antiquæ seu vetus Italica, et cæteræ quæcunque in codicibus mss. & antiquorum libris reperiri potuerunt: quæ cum Vulgata Latina, & cum textu Græco comparantur. Accedunt præfationes, observationes, ac notæ, indexque novus ad Vulgatam e regione editam, idemque locupletissimus*, vol. 2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1743; reprint, 1987). The most recent bibliography for Latin witnesses is found in Dirksen, “Canticles,” 11*–12*. Also useful is Richard Marsden, *The Text of the Old Testament in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

¹⁷ Eva Schulz-Flügel, *Gregorius Eliberritanus. Epithalamium sive Explanatio in Canticis Canticorum*, *Aus der Geschichte der Lateinischen Bibel*, 26 (Freiburg:

Vulgate¹⁹

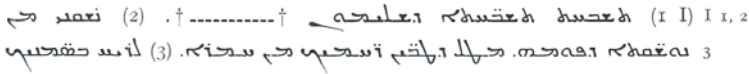
The Vulgate of Song 1:2, with only minor variations compared against the Old Latin, is as follows:

Osculetur me osculo	Let him kiss me with the kiss
oris sui	of his mouth,
quia meliora sunt ubera tua	for better are your breasts
vino	than wine

The critical apparatus of the *Biblia Sacra* shows no evidence of any Latin witness that reads anything other than “breasts.”

Syriac Peshitta

The Syriac Peshitta²⁰ of Song 1:2 reads:



(2) Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth:
for your love is better than wine.

The critical edition of the Peshitta shows no evidence of any Syriac witness that reads anything other than “love.”

Herder, 1994). Gregory’s text adds “sunt” in line 2, thus: “quoniam bona sunt ubera tua super vinum.”

¹⁸ Dirksen, “Canticles,” 11*. The text is in: D. De Bruyne, “Les anciennes versions latines du Cantique des Cantiques,” *Revue Bénédictine* 38 (1926): 97–122. Note that Dirksen has the year 1962 for the journal, with the last two digits reversed (!)

¹⁹ The most extensive critical edition is: *Biblia Sacra iuxta latinum vulgatam versionem ad codicum fidem: Libri Salomonis, id est Proverbia, Ecclesiastes, Canticum Canticorum*, vol. 11 (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1957).

²⁰ English translation by George M. Lamsa, *Holy Bible from the Ancient Eastern Text: George M. Lamsa’s Translation from the Aramaic of the Peshitta* (New York: HarperCollins, 1933). The critical edition of the Peshitta is in: *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshitta Version*, vol. II, fascicle 5: Proverbs, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs (Leiden: Brill, 1979).

Aramaic Targum²¹

Alexander Sperber's edition of the Targum of the Song is based on a rather late manuscript: British Museum Or. 2375 dating to ca. 1460–1480.²² The Aramaic Targums of the Megillot, especially of the Song, are highly periphrastic and allegorical. A. Sperber characterizes them thus: "These texts are not Targum-texts but Midrash-texts in the disguise of Targum."²³ It appears, however, that the text that the Targum paraphrases and allegorizes is one that reads "love." An excerpt of the portion expanding on Song 1:2 follows:

2 Solomon, the prophet, said: Blessed be the name of YHWH, who has given us the Law by the hand of Moses, the great Scribe—written on two tablets of stone—and six orders of the Mishna and the Talmud by oral tradition,²⁴ and conversed with us face to face, as a man who kisses his companion out of the greatness of his love [דִּיבְתָא], loving [דְּחַבֵּיב] us more than the seventy nations.

The midrashic nature of this Targum is readily apparent. Among other features one notes that the phrase "seventy nations" is derived from gematria on the Hebrew word for "wine." The text-interpretive strategy ran as follows: (1) YHWH loves us more than *y-y-n*. (2) Taken as a word, *y-y-n* means "wine," but taken as a number, it adds up to "seventy," since each *y* = 10 and *n* = 50. (3) The number "seventy" is to be taken as an ellipsis for "seventy nations" by association with Gen 10, where seventy nations are listed in the Table of Nations. The Aramaic

²¹ The edition used here, disavowed by the editor to be a critical one (pg. viii) is from: Alexander Sperber, ed., *The Bible in Aramaic Based on Old Manuscripts and Printed Texts. Vol. IV A: The Hagiographa: Transition from Translation to Midrash* (Leiden: Brill, 1992). An English translation is available in: Herman Gollancz, ed., *The Targum to 'The Song of Songs,' The Targum to the Five Megilloth* (New York: Hermon Press, 1973).

²² The manuscript is described in: Christian D. Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, by Christian D. Ginsburg. With a Prolegomenon by Harry M. Orlinsky; *The Masoretic Text: A Critical Evaluation* (New York: KTAV, 1966), 704–07. This manuscript contains three versions of the Megillot: (1) the Hebrew text, (2) Saadia's Arabic version written in Hebrew characters, and (3) the Targum with superlinear vocalization.

²³ Sperber, ed., *The Bible in Aramaic*, viii.

²⁴ The Aramaic word נִרְסָא signifies "acquired learning, study of tradition" and with the preposition בּ, "for verbal study"; see Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: The Judaica Press, Inc., 1989), 271.

words “kiss,” and “love/loving”²⁵ followed by “more than” make it clear that the Targumist read his biblical text with the word “love” and not “breasts.”

SUMMARY

The individual manuscript traditions are remarkably firm within their own domains: I have found no “mixed” traditions. All extant Greek and Latin (classical languages of the Mediterranean world) witnesses read “breasts.” All extant Hebrew, Syriac, and Aramaic (Semitic languages of the Near and Middle East) witnesses read “love.” We do have large gaps in the manuscript records, however, so we cannot conclude that there were no mixed traditions, or that changes did not at some point take place within the traditions in those periods for which no manuscripts are extant. The state of affairs as we know it does require explanation, and the following sections represent an attempt to find at least a plausible cause for these split traditions.

LINGUISTIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR דד

THE COMPONENTS OF D-D-Y-K

The text now universally translated *your love* is represented in the Hebrew of Qumran 6Q6 by the consonant string דדדד. This four-letter consonant string is composed of three morphological elements, and all three are potential sources of ambiguity. They are:

- (1) A word root דד
 - a. As a middle weak *dwd* the primary meanings given in *HALOT* are:
 - i. Beloved, lover
 - ii. Father’s brother, cousin, female cousin
 - iii. Love (lust) [“Liebe(sgenuß)” in *HAHAT*]
 - b. As an original biliteral root דד, the meaning is:
 - i. Breast [or, “weibl. Brust” = “female breast” in *HAHAT*]
 - ii. Perhaps more specifically “teats,” “nipples” (“Brustwarze,” with question-mark in *HAHAT*).

²⁵ For a possible double entendre on the Aramaic root דבב, see later in this chapter.

- (2) A plural indicator *y*, which can be taken as:
 - a. A regular numerical, or dual, plural
 - b. An abstract plural [as indicated in *HAHAT* under *dwd* 3. "Pl. abstr. ... Liebe(sgenuß)"]
- (3) A pronominal suffix *k* meaning *your* (sg.), which could be:
 - a. Masculine
 - b. Feminine

A few of the many options for rendering דדיך *ddyk* are, for example:

- (1) *dodeyka* = *your* (masc. sg.) *love*
- (2) *dodayik* = *your* (fem. sg.) *love*
- (3) *daddeyka* = *your* (masc. sg.) *breasts*
- (4) *daddayik* = *your* (fem. sg.) *breasts*.

The internal double *d* in cases (3) and (4) is brought out only in pointed texts by placing a dot (*dagesh forte*) inside the letter *d*.

What is the sense in Song 1:2? Why is it that modern scholars are so confident in the pointing that renders the word *love* as well as the pointing that indicates *your* as masculine singular? Indeed, that confidence is so high that the alternative readings *breasts* and/or *your* as feminine singular are dismissed with hardly a second thought, though the rendering "breasts" is the exclusive reading of Greek and Latin manuscripts through the Middle Ages. The answer to this question appears to lie in a combination of confidence attached to the Tiberian Masoretic system and, ostensibly, in comparative studies of the root דד which occurs in other Semitic languages (found also as a Semitic loan word in Egyptian texts²⁶) with the meaning *love*, particularly *sexual love*.

A few examples of critical treatments of the Song show how some scholars have handled the issue of the meaning of דדיך in Song 1:2.

Michael Fox considers the rendering "breasts" to be a mistranslation, since *dodim* means "sex acts":

I render *dodim* as "caresses" because "lovmaking," which is more precise, often seems awkward in the translation. *Dodim* always refers to sex acts ... But *dodim* includes more than sexual intercourse. When the Shulammite praises her lover's *dodim* in 1:2, she is elaborating on the sweetness of his kisses. When she says, "We will praise your *dodim*" in 1:4, she is declaring that she will tell of his kisses and caresses, as she in fact does.

²⁶ Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian*, 378–80.

LXX mistranslates *ddym* in this verse and in 1:4; 4:10; and 7:13 as “breasts.” Peshitta translates thus at 4:10 and 7:13.²⁷

Marvin Pope agrees in the final analysis with Fox. He uses less definitive language in some of his analysis, but is quite definite in respect to certain issues:

The reading “your breasts” by LXX (*mastoi sou*) and Vulgate (*ubera tua*) appears mistaken, although there are grounds for the choice, since the words *dôdîm*, “love(s),” and *daddayîm*, “breasts,” “teats,” appeared the same in the ancient consonantal orthography, *ddm*. The figure in Isa 60:16, of Zion sucking the milk of the nations and the breast of kings related to economic nourishment and exploitation and it would be preposterous, as Ginsburg remarked, to appeal to this catachresis in support of the LXX and Vulgate rendering “breasts” in the present passage. In Prov 5:19 the word is given the vowels for “breasts” although it stands in parallelism with *‘ahâbâh*, “love,” whereas in Prov 7:18 where it is likewise parallel to *‘ahâbâh*, “love,” and associated with the same verb *rvy*, “be sated,” the Masoretic vocalization is *dôdîm*, “love(s).” In the present passage, the vocalization *dôdêkâ*, “your love(s),” is certainly preferable to the reading *daddêkâ*, “your (masc.) or *daddayik*, “your (fem.) breasts,” since the female is speaking about and to the male ...

In Ugaritic *dd* occurs in parallelism and synonymy with other words for “love,” *yd* and *ahbt* ...

Akkadian *dādu* which is cognate with Hebrew *dôd* and Ugaritic *dd* designates both love as lovemaking and the object of love. In the meaning “lovemaking” it is always used in the plural, as in Hebrew, while as a designation of the object of love, “darling,” or the like, it may be either singular or plural.²⁸

Pope initially finds that the reading “breasts” in LXX and Vulg. “appears mistaken” and even acknowledges that “there are grounds for the choice,” namely that the unvocalized word is equivocal. Pope does not, however, explain why LXX and Vulg. read the text the way they did. He only deals with one possible explanation, and finds that one “preposterous.” The evidence from parallels in the Proverbs is split equally between the two occurrences: in one passage (Prov 5:19) it is “breasts” and in the other (Prov 7:18) it is “love.” One would think the

²⁷ Michael V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 97.

²⁸ Marvin H. Pope, *Song of Songs: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible; 7C (New York: Doubleday, 1977), 298–99.

score is even: the unvocalized word can be pointed both ways, and in fact it is half the time in the Proverbs. Apparently for Pope, then, the deciding factor is to be found in the use of the cognates in Ugaritic and Akkadian literature. But this only demonstrates the possibility that the Hebrew word can mean “love,” which was already assumed in the previous discussion. In the end, it remains unclear why Pope settled on “love” for his translation.

As we will see below, Pope does not point out that in Ugaritic *yd* means not only love (from *yd* II) but can also mean “hand,” used as a euphemism²⁹ for “penis” (from *yd* I). That is, *dd* can be thought of as parallel not only to another Ugaritic word meaning “love,” but to another Ugaritic word referring to male genitalia. We will also see that the Akkadian *dādu* not only means “love” or “lovemaking” or “darling,” but refers also to male or female genitalia.

In the matter of the pronominal suffix, for Pope the issue is clear: the reading with the masculine suffix is “certainly preferable ... since the female is speaking about and to the male.”³⁰ Yet, Pope is aware of the rabbinic discussions (which I will address in more detail later on) in which the issue was debated, though the decision did come down on the side of the masculine. The debate on the gender of the suffix was carried out in even greater detail by the Christian commentator Bernard of Clairvaux, as we will see later. Historically then, perhaps on the basis of possible rapid change of speakers here, as it happens in other sections of the Song, it was *not* immediately obvious to later readers just who is speaking in each phrase of Song 1:2. So *if* it is the female speaking to the male, *then* the reading with the masculine suffix is preferable—of course!

²⁹ The euphemism “hand” for penis is also found in the Hebrew Bible (Isa 57:8, 10). For a study of euphemisms in the Hebrew Bible see: Stefan Schorch, *Euphemismen in der hebräischen Bibel*, *Orientalia Biblica et Christiana*, vol. 12 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000). For Mesopotamia and Bible see: Shalom M. Paul, “The Shared Legacy of Sexual Metaphors and Euphemisms in Mesopotamian and Biblical Literature,” in *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 47th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Helsinki, July 2–6, 2001*, ed. S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2002).

³⁰ Pope cites Christian Ginsburg on this point (see above), who says about the reading “thy breasts”: “That this is a gross error is evident from the fact that a man and not a woman is here addressed. To appeal to the catachresis in Isa. lx. 16, would be preposterous.” Christian D. Ginsburg, *The Song of Songs and Qoheleth (commonly called the Book of Ecclesiastes) Translated from the Original Hebrew, with a Commentary, Historical and Critical. Prolegomenon by Sheldon H. Blank* (New York: KTAV, 1970), 130.

The question remains: is it in fact the female who speaks this line? Pope assumes it is the female who speaks, but he does not demonstrate why.

F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp considers the Greek rendering “your breasts” in Song 1:2 an example of “LXX’s misconstruals.”³¹

Among German scholars, Gillis Gerleman notes that the LXX never translates the word correctly, but he does not explain why the LXX is in error, or how the introduction of the error might have occurred.³² Wilhelm Rudolph remarks that the translation “breasts” is against the context, and observes further that the word “breasts” is elsewhere in the Song always expressed by a different Hebrew word (*šadāyim*).³³ But he does not explain why “breasts” is against the context, and he does not consider that elsewhere in the Song the word for “love” (in both nominal [11x] and verbal [7x] forms) is also from a different Hebrew root (אהב).

In summary, commentators are generally aware of the different interpretations of רדד in the LXX and later Masoretic Hebrew readings of Song 1:2. They all ultimately argue for the meaning “love,” but do not provide convincing arguments against the reading “breasts.” Further, the decision to be made about רדד is viewed as strictly alternative: the possibilities are either “love” or “breasts,” but that both are meant in an intentional *double entendre* is not an option they entertain.

Since so much of the equation of Hebrew רדד = “love” is based upon the evidence of cognates, especially in Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Egyptian, a full discussion of those cognates is provided below in order to examine the level of certainty so often assumed in this equation.

COGNATES AND PARALLELS OF רדד

Lexica of biblical Hebrew provide a number of etymological links to related Semitic words for the Hebrew root רדד. Those discussed below have special relevance to our focus of inquiry.

³¹ F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp, “Late Linguistic Features in the Song of Songs,” in *Perspectives on the Song of Songs; Perspektiven der Hoheliedauslegung*, ed. Anselm C. Hagedorn, *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, Band 346 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 69.

³² “**6** hat den Plural nirgends richtig übersetzt,” Gillis Gerleman, *Ruth. Das Hohelied*, vol. 18, *Biblischer Kommentar. Altes Testament* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1981), 96.

³³ “Die Übersetzung ‘Brüste’ ... ist wider den Zusammenhang, auch steht dafür in Cant stets רדד,” Wilhelm Rudolph, *Das Buch Ruth, das Hohe Lied, die Klagelieder*, vol. 17: 1–3, *Kommentar zum Alten Testament* (Gütersloh: G. Mohn, 1962), 122. Note that the singular of the dual *šadāyim* is *šōd*, with long ō like the singular *dōd*. The two words occur in parallel phrases, but in different sequences, in Ezek 23:3 (*dd, šd*) and Ezek 23:21 (*šd, dd*).

Akkadian

CAD cites four primary cuneiform texts in which the Akkadian word *dādu* is used in the sense “love-making,” and then always in the plural, as in biblical Hebrew. The texts are as follows (CAD D 20, s.v. *dādu*):

- (1) *dTašmetu ilat kuzbi u da-di* = “Tashmetu (divine name), the goddess of sexual-joy and love-making.”³⁴ Here *da-di* is joined with *kuzbu*, which can mean “luxuriance, abundance, attractiveness, charm, sexual vigor.” In some texts it is “referring euphemistically to virility and sexual parts” (including Gilgamesh I iii 22, 43; I iv 9, 16, discussed below under the Gilgamesh citation).³⁵
- (2) *hi-i-pa-a-ku a-na da-di-ka* = “I am consecrated(?) to your love-making.”³⁶
- (3) *da-du-šú iḥabbubu eli šēriki* = “his love-making will express itself(?) upon you.”³⁷ Similar is:
- (4) *da-du-šú iḥbubu eli šēriša*.³⁸ = “his love-making expressed itself(?) upon her.”

Text (1) is found in two “Prayers of the Lifting of the Hand,” a title inscribed on tablets containing prayers and formulas from the Kuyunjik collections now in the British Museum. L. W. King characterizes this collection of texts as follows:

Unlike the prayers of many Semitic nations the compositions here given are accompanied by an interesting series of directions for the making of offerings and the performance of religious ceremonies, and they show a remarkable mixture of lofty spiritual conceptions and belief in the efficacy of incantations and magical practices, which cannot always be

³⁴ L. W. King, *Babylonian Magic and Sorcery: Being “The Prayers of the Lifting of the Hand”* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1975). See 33:20 (pp. 97–98), and 1:37 (pg. 4; note on page 6).

³⁵ CAD K 614–15, s.v. *kuzbu*.

³⁶ Cited source: Erich Ebeling, *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts*, 2 vols. (Osnabrück: O. Zeller, 1970), 158 r. ii 11. The phrase is translated in George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic*, II:797. In a general discussion of the terms *dādu* and *ḥabābu*, George translates KAR 158 rev. ii 11 as follows: “I am amorous at the thought of your love.” There is more to the story, which I take up later in this section.

³⁷ From Gilgamesh I iv 15 (= George, I:186).

³⁸ Gilgamesh I iv 20 (= George, I:193).

understood. In language closely resembling that of the penitential psalms we find the conscience-stricken suppliant crying to his god for relief from his sin, while in the same breath he entreats to be delivered from the spells and charms of the sorcerer.³⁹

The connection between religious ceremony and explicit references to sexuality in Mesopotamian texts has been thoroughly studied and needs no expanded treatment here.⁴⁰ The two prayers in which the word *da-di* occurs invoke the goddess Tashmetu for the healing of some malady of the suppliant. In the both prayers Tashmetu is “petitioned to intercede with her husband the god *Nabû*”⁴¹ to induce him to remove the ailment. The reference in this prayer to “sexual-joy and love-making” is to be understood as a call upon Tashmetu to use her sexual powers as the means of influencing Nabu to bring about healing. The connection here between sexuality and health is a common theme found throughout the ancient Near East as well as other literatures.

A more detailed look at texts (3) and (4) from Gilgamesh yields valuable parallels to the use of the cognate in the Hebrew Bible. The section from which these two occurrences of *dādu* are found is given below from the edition of George:

- 180 ‘This is he, Šamḥat! Uncradle her bosom;
 181 bare your sex [*ur-ki*] so he may take in your charms
 [*ku-zu-ub-ki*]!
 182 Do not show fear, take in his scent!
 183 He will see you and he will come up to you.
 184 Spread your clothing so he may lie on you,
 185 treat the man to the work of a woman!
 186 His ‘love’ [*da-du-šu*] will caress [*√ habābu*] and embrace you,

³⁹ King, *Babylonian Magic and Sorcery*, VI.

⁴⁰ See Samuel Noah Kramer, *The Sacred Marriage Rite: Aspects of Faith, Myth, and Ritual in Ancient Sumer* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969). More recent works find the “Sacred Marriage Ritual” explanation too simplistic. See Gwendolyn Leick, *Sex and Eroticism in Mesopotamian Literature* (London: Routledge, 1994). However, the general connection between cult and sexuality is clear. See Yitzhak Sefati, *Love Songs in Sumerian Literature: Critical Edition of the Dumuzi-Inanna Songs* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1998) and Pirjo Lapinkivi, *The Sumerian Sacred Marriage in the Light of Comparative Evidence* (University of Helsinki, 2004).

⁴¹ King, *Babylonian Magic and Sorcery*, 6. The quotation is from text no. 1, a prayer addressed to Sin, Ištar and Tašmîtu, referring to the transliteration on pg. 4. See also text no. 33, transliteration on pg. 97 and the note on the translation on pg. 98.

- 187 his herd will be estranged from him, though he grew up
in its presence.⁴²
- 188 Šamḥat let loose her skirts [*di-da-šá*],
- 189 she bared her sex [*úr-šá*] and he took in her charms
[*ku-zu-ub-šá*].
- 190 She showed no fear, she took in his scent:
- 191 she spread her clothing and he lay upon her.
- 192 She treated the man to the work of a woman,
- 193 his 'love' [*da-du-šu*] caressed and embraced her.
- 194 For six days and seven nights Enkidu, erect, did couple
[*√ rehu*] with Šamḥat.
- 195 After he was sated with her delights,
- 196 he turned his face toward his herd.⁴²

George provides a number of text-critical footnotes with alternate readings in the various tablets containing this section of the account. Particularly interesting for a point to be taken up later in this study is the exchange of pronouns in MS x in two places: (1) line 186: 'let your "love" caress and embrace him!' and (2) line 193 (where George has "MS x possibly): '[her] "love" caressed and embraced [him].'

The context in which the term *dādu* occurs clearly connects it with the idea "love-making." The word appears to have a more concrete notion as that which itself caresses and embraces within the context of love-making.

In discussing other word plays in Gilgamesh, George makes reference to a medical commentary from Nippur:

Without corroborative evidence it is always difficult to vindicate a suspected play on words, as also to refute one. There is no doubt that Babylonian scribes enjoyed playing with words, whether out of piety in serious exegesis or out of fun in lighter contexts. The usual medium of such games was Sumerian, whose monosyllabic lexemes made it a versatile instrument for speculative etymology. But Akkadian could also serve, as in the ingenious interpretation of *hurdatu*, a rare word for 'vulva', which a medical commentator glosses *hur-ri da-du da-du ma-ra*, 'cave of the darling, darling = child.'⁴³

George adds in a footnote: "This etymology suits the context, an incantation for easy childbirth, but probably rests on a more sexual image, *dādu* being a term for love-making."⁴⁴ George continues the

⁴² George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic*, I:548–51.

⁴³ Ibid., I:452.

⁴⁴ Ibid., I:452, fn 34.

thought by pointing out other examples of punning based on “the association of like-sounding words.” Now according to the manuscripts B, F, and P, the word *dādu* in lines 186 and 193 is something Enkidu possesses with which he is to caress and embrace Šamḥat. According to manuscript x, it is something which Šamḥat possesses with which she is to caress and embrace Enkidu. A more general term for the concrete objects used in the act of love-making would be “genitalia.”

George takes up the meaning of *dādu* in more detail in the critical and philological section of his work. He first deals with the word *ḥabābu*, which CAD has split into two verbal roots, A (of noise) and B (of sensuous physical contact).⁴⁵ George says that he “sees no reason to separate *ḥabābu* into two verbs: movement, as well as sound, is characteristic of lovemaking.”⁴⁶ It is in this connection that George takes up *dādu*:

It should be noted that the construction with *dādū* is unique. Elsewhere in Gilgameš the verb *ḥabābu* appears as Gilgameš’s response in his dreams to the meteorite and axe that are symbolic of Enkidu ... The construction used there also, with a personal subject, occurs in similar context in the goddess Anunnîtum’s oracular promise to Zimrî-Lîm, *a-na-ku e-li-ka a-ḥa-ab-bu-ub* ... ‘I will make love to you.’ In these passages the expression *ḥabābu eli* means acting tenderly like a lover. In the present line [186], where the naked Šamḥat is lying down with the wild Enkidu on top of her, something more passionate is meant; the question is, what exactly is meant by *dādū*? This word seems to mean generally ‘love,’ but it also denotes the object of love (‘darling’) and the physical realization of love (‘lovemaking’). It comes also to be a euphemism for the lower abdomen, i.e. the genital region, in both female and male physiology ... Use of the word therefore may convey the suggestive ambiguity that is characteristic of the language of flirtation and sex. The incipit of the love song *ḥi-i-pa-a-ku a-na da-di-ka* (KAR 158 rev. ii 11) means ‘I am amorous at the thought of your love’, but it also suggests ‘I am amorous at the thought of your manhood ... In the same way the phrase used here, *dādū ḥabābu*, might refer both to general dalliance (the whispering of sweet nothings) and to the physical entwining of a reclining couple that is the prelude to coitus.⁴⁷

George notes that the actual act of coitus is indicated in line 194 by the word *reḥu*, translated “did couple with.”

In keeping with the notion that punning is produced by associating like-sounding words, one should not overlook the word *dīdāša* in line 188

⁴⁵ CAD H 16, s.v. *ḥabābu*.

⁴⁶ George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic*, II:797.

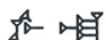
⁴⁷ Ibid., II:797.

"her skirts." George notes: "Foster speculates that *kirimmu* in parallel (l. 180) is replaced here by *dīdū* 'to prepare for a play on *dādu*' (*Essays Pope*, p. 24)."⁴⁸

Summarizing the evidence for the meaning of *dādu* in Akkadian texts, we note the following: (1) *dādu* has clear connections with "lovemaking"; (2) *dādu* is lexically and contextually multivalent; it can mean: (a) "love" generally, (b) "darling" as the personal object of love, (c) "lovemaking" in the sense of sexual intercourse, or specifically to love-acts leading up to coitus, (d) "genitals" in general, or specifically "vulva" or "penis"; (3) sometimes the exact nuance of *dādu* in a particular occurrence is ambiguous, typical of erotic contexts, (4) *dādu* is found in close association with words that sound alike, e. g. *dīdū*; (5) *dādu* is found in close association with other words that have equally multivalent or ambiguous meanings, since they, too, are found in erotic contexts, for example *kuzbu* (charm, sexual vigor, sexual parts), (6) *dādu* is associated with other words that have erotic meanings, such as *ḥabābu* ("caress" including both sound and touch); the word *reḥu* ("inseminate, impregnate"); the phrase *ūra petū* (lines 181, 189 "to open the vulva" or "bare the genital area"); the phrase *napīšu leqū* (lines 182, 190 "to take in his breath" but "a euphemism for virility"), and others.

Before leaving this Akkadian text from Gilgamesh, the word *ūru* (in the phrase in lines 181, 189 referred to above, *ūra petū*), composed of the signs gal₄-la, is defined in Rykle Borger's newest edition of the sign-list as "weibliche Genitalien" ("female genitals").⁴⁹ In CDA, under "**ūru(m)** II, *ūru*" one finds the following definitions: "(nakedness, i.e.) pudenda" ... of man, woman; "(representation of) pubic triangle."⁵⁰

The entry in Borger's *Zeichenlexikon* appears as follows:

 = gal₄-la = *ūru*, weibliche Genitalien

⁴⁸ Ibid., II:797. There are many more sexual puns in this section of Gilgamesh. See Anne Kilmer, "A Note on an Overlooked Word-Play in the Akkadian Gilgamesh," in *Zikir Šumim: Assyriological Studies Presented to F. R. Kraus on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. G. van Driel, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1982). See also ch. 2, "Enigmatic Dreams in Mesopotamian Literature," in Scott Noegel, *Nocturnal Ciphers: The Punning Language of Dreams in the Ancient Near East*, American Oriental Series, 89 (New Haven, Conn.: American Oriental Society, 2007).

⁴⁹ Rykle Borger, *Mesopotamisches Zeichenlexikon* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2004), 450. See under sign no. 883.

⁵⁰ CDA 427, s.v. *ūru(m)* II.

The cuneiform signs *gal₄-la* are thought to represent a *pictorial* image of the pubic area, perhaps more so in an earlier stage. Now cuneiform wedges, and many combinations of wedges, are inherently triangular in shape or configuration, so it would seem difficult to see how *gal₄-la* is particularly representative of the pubic triangle, although it is certainly possible. However, the orthographic development of this particular sign does strongly suggest that the sign indeed originated from an image of the pudenda, as the following scanned image from the entry in René Labat shows (to which I have added the lines on the left and rectangle on the right):⁵¹

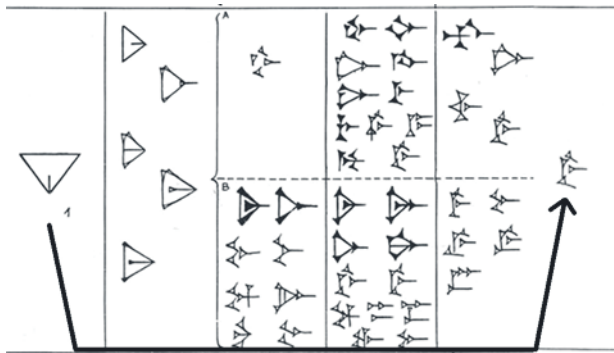


FIGURE 5: LABAT, DEVELOPMENT OF THE GAL-4 SIGN

It is clear that any pictorial information residing in the Sumerian lexeme is lost in rendering the text in the Standard Babylonian version, where the syllable *ūr* appears in two different forms in lines 181 (*ur*) and 189 (*úr*).

Ugaritic

The evidence for the root *dd* in Ugaritic is sparse, but nonetheless instructive. Two passages cited in *DULAT* follow:⁵²

- (1) *šd ddh* = “the field of her loved one” (CAT 1.24:33). Possible meanings for *dd* are given as (1) “loved one” and (2) “love,” with reference to

⁵¹ René Labat, *Manuel d'épigraphie akkadienne: signes, syllabaire, idéogrammes*, 5th ed. (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1976), 228–29, entry 554.

⁵² *DULAT* I:264–65, s.v. *dd* (I). A third passage is found in a broken context; nothing for my purpose here can be deduced from it.

Kjell Aartun⁵³ who suggests also “concrete ‘reizende / liebliche Teile, d.h. Genitalien’” (=‘charming/pleasant parts, i.e., genitals’)

(2) *t(!)šr dd DN (...) dd DN* (CAT 1.3 III 5, 7), noting the parallel terms *yd* and *ahbt*. A discussion of these parallel words is taken up below.

The first citation is from a text entitled “The Betrothal of Yarikh and Nikkal-Ib” and is described as follows:⁵⁴

This is a short poem of fifty lines, the first part of which recounts the myth of the betrothal of the West Semitic moon god, Yarikh (“moon”), with the Mesopotamian moon goddess, Nikkal-Ib (“great lady,” “the fruit,” or “radiant one.”) ... Yarikh asks Khirikhbi, the divine match-maker, to arrange his marriage to Nikkal ... Khirikhbi makes a counter-proposal of two other prospective brides including Padriya, one of Baal’s daughters. But Yarikh insists on Nikkal ... The second part of the poem pertains to a human bride called PRBKHTH (vocalization unknown). It contains an ode to the *katharat*-goddesses,⁵⁵ the patronesses of wedlock and conception ... It is possible that the poem was recited at marriage ceremonies to ensure for the bride the same blessing and protection by the *katharat* as was accorded the goddess Nikkal at her wedding.

The section of the poem containing the word *ddh* is as follows (CAT 1.24):

- 16–17 Yarikh, the luminary of the sky,
Sends word to Khirikhbi, king of summer:
17–19 “Get me Nikkal! Yarikh would wed her,
Let Ib enter his home!
19–23 Then I will give to her father, as her marriage price,
One thousand shekels of silver,
And ten thousand shekels of gold.
And I will send jewels of pure lapis-lazuli.

⁵³ Kjell Aartun, *Studien zur ugaritischen Lexikographie: Mit kultur- und religionsgeschichtlichen Parallelen*, vol. I: Bäume, Tiere, Gerüche, Götterepitheta, Götternamen, Verbalbegriffe (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), 39–43. Aartun provides extensive documentation for Ugaritic *dd*.

⁵⁴ Marcus in Simon B. Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry* (Scholars Press, 1997), 215.

⁵⁵ David Marcus does not include diacritics in this descriptive paragraph. Transliteration of the Ugaritic would require long *ā* for the feminine plural in the word *katharāt*.

I will make her field like a vineyard,
The field of her love [*šd ddh*] like an orchard (?).⁵⁶

In the last line one first notes the word “field,” which along with other agricultural terms, is commonly associated with sexuality. This is especially clear in early Sumerian literature, as a single example from “A balbale (?) to Inana (Dumuzid-Inana P),” segment B, lines 18–34 adequately demonstrates:

18–28. “These genitals,, like a horn, a great wagon, this moored Boat of Heaven of mine, clothed in beauty like the new crescent moon, this waste land abandoned in the desert, this field of ducks where my ducks sit, this high well-watered field of mine: my own genitals, the maiden’s, a well-watered opened-up mound—who will be their ploughman? My genitals, the lady’s, the moist and well-watered ground—who will put an ox there?”

29–30. “Lady, the king shall plough them for you; Dumuzid the king shall plough them for you.”

31–34. “Plough in my genitals, man of my heart!” bathed her holy hips, holy, the holy basin⁵⁷

Thus, the possible translations of *šd ddh* in line 23 are “the field of her loved one” (Sanmartín), “the field of her love” (Marcus), “the field of (or, which is) her genitals” (Aartun). One wonders if the author of the Ugaritic poem intended a *double*, or even *triple entendre* here. Lexicographers, translators, and commentators typically choose only one of the above as *the* meaning in a particular occurrence.

An additional use of *dd* (not referenced in *DULAT*) where it is related to the ground is found in CAT 1.3 iii, 14–17:

14–15	<i>gryy . barš / mlhmt</i>	<i>št . b^cprm . ddym</i>
16–17	<i>sk . šlm . lkbd . arš</i>	<i>arbdd . lkbd . šdm</i>

The English translation of Mark Smith is:

14–15	Place in the earth war,	Set in the dust love.
16–17	Pour peace amid the earth,	Tranquility amid the fields. ⁵⁸

⁵⁶ English translation by Marcus in Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 216.

⁵⁷ From *The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature*: <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.4.08.16&charenc=j#>. For a biblical Hebrew parallel, see Judg 14:18: “If you had not plowed with my heifer, you would not have found out my riddle.”

Rather than taking *mlhmt* as “war,” Aartun notes J. Gray’s rendering “unions”⁵⁹ and derives the word from a root *LHM* meaning “(harmonische) Vereinigung bzw. Zusammenfügendes, -wachsendes, Sich-zu-einem-Ganzen-Verbindendes,”⁶⁰ based on cognates in Syriac, Arabic, and Mishnaic Hebrew. Further, Aartun takes *ddym* as a collective meaning “Wurmartige” (*dd* = “Wurm; Made; Larve”) as a symbolic expression for the embryo; and *šlm* as a collective “(Motten-)Larven ähnliche (Samen-)Körner,” an additional symbolic expression for “embryo.”⁶¹ The word *arbdd* remains problematic.⁶² If Aartun is correct, the text describes the placing of embryo-shaped seeds in the earth, resulting in fruitful union. This understanding of the text fits well with the preceding lines, offered in *DULAT* as the second citation for *dd*, CAT 1.3 iii 5, 7:

- 5–6 She sings the love [*dd*] of Mightiest Baal,
The passion [*yd*] of Pidray, Daughter of Light,
- 7–8 The desire [*ahbt*] of Tally, Daughter of Showers,
The love [*dd*] of Arsay, Daughter of the Wide World.⁶³

The word *dd* serves both as a frame in a chiasmic arrangement of these four lines, and, as indicated in *DULAT*, is parallel to both *yd* (“passion” or “love”) and *ahbt* (“love”). The word *yd* here is thought to derive from *yd* II < *y-d-d* (compare Hebrew *yadíd*, “beloved,” “lovely,” and related words). There is another word *yd* (from root I) in Ugaritic meaning “hand” (also as in Hebrew). In Ugaritic, as in Hebrew, *yd* I can be used euphemistically for “penis,” but that would not be the sense in the above parallel with *dd*, since the text refers to the *yd* of a woman; thus *dd* here is not functioning as a *double entendre*, but means simply “love.”

⁵⁸ In Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 110. Smith provides the following footnote on the word “war” (line 14): “The word involves a pun on the Ugaritic word for ‘food’” (pg. 168, n. 61). Also on the word “peace” in line 16 Smith notes: “The word involves a pun on the Ugaritic word for ‘peace-offering’ and thereby evokes the impression of a ritual act” (pg. 168, n. 63).

⁵⁹ John Gray, *The Legacy of Canaan: The Ras Shamra Texts and Their Relevance to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 45.

⁶⁰ Aartun, *Studien zur ugaritischen Lexikographie*, I:75.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, I:150. On *qryy* see I:136.

⁶² For a discussion on various attempts to render *arbdd*, see again Aartun, *Studien zur ugaritischen Lexikographie*, 42–43.

⁶³ CAT 1.3 III 5–7. Translation by Smith in Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 109.

We do not have to see a *double entendre* every time a word occurs that can entail a double meaning in certain contexts.

One also notes that in the internal two lines the words *yd* and *ahbt* are also parallel. In another text where the same two words are parallel, *yd* appears to function as a *double entendre*. Later in the Baal Cycle we have:

Or does the hand [*yd*] of El the King excite you,
The love [*ahbt*] of the Bull arouse you?⁶⁴

A footnote on "hand" makes the following observation:

Ugaritic *yd*, "hand," is an euphemism for penis as well as a word for "love, passion" (the Ugaritic word reflects a coalescence of two originally distinct lexemes ...).⁶⁵

The sense "penis" for *yd* is perhaps nowhere more clearly seen than in CAT 1.23, also referring to El, where "many translators pick up on the bawdy language and conclude that we have a burlesque."⁶⁶ The *Sitz im Leben* of the text is still under discussion. On the other hand (excuse the pun), "the euphemistic use of the words 'hand' and 'staff' to refer to El's penis is widely acknowledged."⁶⁷ An excerpt from CAT 1.23 follows:

- 30 [El strides(?)] the sea's shore,
 He marches to the shore of the deep.
31 El [takes(?)] a pair of brands,
 Twin brands from atop the firestand.
32–33 Now one bends low, another arcs high,
 Now one cries: "Father! Father!"
 Now cries the other: "Mother!"
33–34 El's "hand" grows long as the sea,
 El's "hand" as the ocean.
34–35 El's "hand" is long as the sea,
 El's "hand" as the ocean.⁶⁸

Thus, sometimes *yd* means "hand," sometimes it means "penis," sometimes it means "love," and sometimes it is used as a *double entendre*

⁶⁴ CAT 1.4 IV 38–39. Translation by Smith in Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 128.

⁶⁵ Footnote 120, Smith in Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 171.

⁶⁶ Theodore J. Lewis in Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 205.

⁶⁷ Lewis in Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 206.

⁶⁸ Translation by Lewis in Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 210.

combining the latter two meanings in the same occurrence. Likewise, sometimes *dd* means “loved one,” sometimes it means “love,” sometimes it may mean “genitals,” and sometimes it is used as a *double* (or *triple*) *entendre*.

In the cases of *double* or *multiple entendre* we are examining here, the word in question refers either to the act of sexual intercourse itself, or to a part of the body associated with the act. This is unlike many other instances of *double entendre* where one meaning is sexual in nature and another is not. Nevertheless, ambiguity exists and it becomes problematic when one tries to provide a single translation that captures all of the intended meanings.

Egyptian

The word *d3d3* followed by the phallus sign occurs in the nineteenth dynasty (thirteenth—fourteenth centuries B.C.E.) Papyrus Harris 500 (recto).⁶⁹ Excerpts leading up to the passage in which *d3d3* occurs follow:

1. (Girl)

...Am I not here with [you]

Where have you set your heart (upon going)?

Should you not embrace [me]?

...

Is it because you are hungry that you would leave? ...

(Then) take my breasts


that their gift may flow forth to you

4.

My heart is not yet done with your lovemaking,

my (little) wolf cub!

Your liquor is (your) lovemaking.⁷⁰

The last word of the text, “lovemaking” in the Egyptian text appears as follows (in the form presented by Fox⁷¹, but with the typography of James Hoch⁷²): . Note that in Egyptian the hand sign represents the consonant *d*; the phallus is a determinative, which “expresses what

⁶⁹ For literature and more information about the papyrus, see Michael Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 7.

⁷⁰ Translation and layout is that of Fox, *Song of Songs*, 7–10.

⁷¹ Fox, *Song of Songs*, 371.

⁷² Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian*, 380. See Hoch’s discussion on p. 379.

issues from or is performed by it.”⁷³ In the section following the translation, Fox notes: “*Dd*, determined by the phallus sign; a semiticism (corresponding to the Hebrew *dodim*) meaning sexual lovemaking.”⁷⁴

The parallel word occurring two lines earlier, also translated by Fox “lovemaking” in the phrase “My heart is not yet done with your lovemaking,” is from the Egyptian word *mri*, a common word for “to love” in general (noun “love”: *mrwt*).⁷⁵ The noun form occurs later in P. Harris 500 where the girl says: “I am excited by (?) your love alone.” Fox comments there:

“Your love” can also mean “my love for you”...At still other times it seems that the word alludes to sexual relations, a meaning demonstrated most clearly in the Ramesside pornographic papyrus, in which a woman demands of an ithyphallic man: “Come behind me with your love; your penis belongs to me.”⁷⁶

Note the chiasmic parallelism:

Come behind me	with your love
Your penis	belongs to (is with) me

The phrases are paired thus: *come behind me* || *belongs to (is with) me*; and *your penis* || *your love*. As with Akkadian and Ugaritic texts, the Egyptian also has words that describe both sexual intercourse generally and genitalia specifically.

In the text cited at the beginning of this section from Papyrus Harris 500, several words are found that refer to sexual intercourse or sexual parts: (1) “Should you not *embrace* me?” (2) “Take my *breasts*”; (3) “My heart is not yet done with your *lovemaking* (√ *mri*)”; (4) “Your liquor is

⁷³ The comment on sign D53 is in the note to sign D52 in: Alan Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 3rd revised ed. (Oxford: Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, 1982), 456.

⁷⁴ Fox, *Song of Songs*, 11. In agreement with Fox’s assessment, with the additional meaning “copulation” for *dd* is Leonard Lesko, *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian*, vol. I (Berkeley: Scribe, 1982), 145. See also pg. 122 under *d3d3*, where Lesko gives the definition “to be lascivious.”

⁷⁵ Leonard Lesko, *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian*, vol. IV (Providence: Scribe, 1989), 226.

⁷⁶ Fox, *Song of Songs*. Translation on pg. 20; note on pg. 21. For the translation of the papyrus, Fox cites Joseph Omlin, *Der Papyrus 55001 und seine Satirisch-erotischen Zeichnungen und Inschriften* (Torino: Edizioni d’arte fratelli Pozzo, 1973), 67. The German translation provided there by Omlin is: “siehe, komme hinter mich / mit Deiner Liebe (?) / Dein Phallus / ist mit mir” (pp. 67–68).

(your) *lovemaking* (*d3d3*)", whereby *mri* can specifically refer to *penis*. A similar multivalence may be considered also for the parallel term *d3d3*.

Summarizing this section we note that when scholars appeal to cognates of Hebrew רָר to substantiate the meaning "love," they overlook the fact that in the literature of Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Egyptian in which cognates are attested, the words have multiple meanings: they can mean "love" or refer specifically to male and/or female genitalia, and can occur where *double entendre* is present.

COMPARATIVE TEXTS PARALLELING KISSING AND INTERCOURSE

Before we examine the use of רָר in early Jewish writings, one should note that, at least in Ugaritic and Sumerian, the word "kiss" is often found parallel to, and probably also as a euphemism for, sexual intercourse. In the opening line of the Song we have: "May he *kiss* me with the *kisses* of his mouth, for your *love* is better than wine." If we have here the same literary parallelism as found elsewhere in the ancient Near East, we have an additional case, and I think a very strong one, for the equation $\text{רָר} = \text{lovemaking}$.

In the Ugaritic text cited above in connection with El's "hand" (CAT 1.24) we have the following text (lines 46–52, note especially line 51):

- 46 Lo! The maiden pair cries out:
46–47 "O husband! husband!
 Lowered is your scepter,
 Generous the "staff" in your hand.
47–48 Look! a bird roasted on the fire,
 Basted and browned on the coals."
48–49 The pair became his wives,
 Wives of El, his wives forever.
49–50 He bows down to kiss their lips,
 Ah! their lips are sweet,
 Sweet as succulent fruit.
51 In kissing, conception,
 In embracing, pregnant heat.
51–52 The two travail and give birth
 to the gods Dawn and Dusk.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Lewis in Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 211–12. Lines 49–51 are repeated in lines 55–56, followed by lines 56–57 which read: "They recite again five more times" making a total of seven, a number that plays a key role in lines

Texts that parallel kissing and intercourse are frequent in Sumerian literature. A few examples suffice. In “Enki and Ninhursaja” we have an especially noteworthy nexus of these three elements: (1) bosom, (2) kissing, (3) intercourse:

88–96. In turn Ninnisig went out to the riverbank. Enki was able to see up there from in the marsh, he was able to see up there, he was. He said to his minister Isimud: “Is this nice youngster not to be kissed? Is this nice Ninnisig not to be kissed?” His minister Isimud answered him: “Is this nice youngster not to be kissed? Is this nice Ninnisig not to be kissed? My master will sail, let me navigate. He will sail, let me navigate.”

97–107. First he put his feet in the boat, next he put them on dry land. He clasped her to the bosom, kissed her, Enki poured semen into the womb and she conceived the semen in the womb, the semen of Enki ...⁷⁸

From “Enlil and Ninlil” we have:

13–21. At that time the maiden was advised by her own mother, Ninlil was advised by Nun-bar-ce-gunu: “The river is holy, woman! The river is holy—don’t bathe in it! Ninlil, don’t walk along the bank of the Id-nunbir-tum! His eye is bright, the lord’s eye is bright, he will look at you! The Great Mountain, Father Enlil—his eye is bright, he will look at you! The shepherd who decides all destinies—his eye is bright, he will look at you! Straight away he will want to have intercourse, he will want to kiss! He will be happy to pour lusty semen into the womb, and then he will leave you to it!”

22–35. ... The king said to her, “I want to have sex with you!”, but he could not make her let him. Enlil said to her, “I want to kiss you!”, but he could not make her let him. “My vagina is small, it does not know pregnancy. My lips are young, they do not know kissing. If my mother learns of it, she will slap my hand! If my father learns of it, he will lay hands on me! But right now, no one will stop me from telling this to my girl friend!”

35–53. ... The lord, floating downstream to—he was actually to have intercourse with her, he was actually to kiss her!—Father Enlil, floating downstream to—he was actually to have intercourse with her, he

14–15, 20 (in a less common n , $n-1$ progression, 8:7) , 29 and 66 (in the more common n , $n+1$ progression: 7:8).

⁷⁸ Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature, <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.1.1&charenc=j#>

was actually to kiss her!—he grasped hold of her whom he was seeking—he was actually to have intercourse with her, he was actually to kiss her!—so as to lie with her on a small bank He actually had intercourse with her, he actually kissed her. At this one intercourse, at this one kissing he poured the seed of Suen-Acimbabbar into her womb.⁷⁹

Among the Sumerian institutions, practices, and mores (or simply cultural facts) known as the *mes* (sg. *me*) are included: “the standard, the quiver, sexual intercourse, kissing, prostitution” (“Inana and Enki” 1.3.1). In the “Marriage of Martu” (1.7.1) we are taken back to a time “when intercourse and kissing already existed.” In “A balbale (?) to Inana (Dumuzid-Inana D)” we have in lines 12–18 a “kissing with the tongue” followed by rounds of love-making that rival Enkidu’s session of six days and seven nights with Šamḥat:

1–3. As I was strolling, as I was strolling, as I was strolling the house, as I was strolling, he caught sight of my Inana.

4–11. “What did the brother say to you and speak to you? He of the loving heart and most sweet charms offered you a gift, my holy Inana. As I looked in that direction, my beloved man met you, and he fell in love with you, and he delighted in you alone! The brother brought you into his house and had you lie down on a bed dripping with honey.”

12–18. When my sweet precious, my heart, had lain down too, each of them in turn kissing with the tongue, each in turn, then my brother of the beautiful eyes did it fifty times to her, exhaustedly waiting for her, as she trembled underneath him, dumbly silent for him. My dear precious passed the time with my brother laying his hands on her hips.

19–20. “Let me go, my sister! Let me go! Come, my beloved sister, let me go ...

21–22. “To my paternal eye you are still a small child. May Bau know you as a man. I’ll let you go.”

23. A balbale of Inana.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature, <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.2.1&charenc=j#>

⁸⁰ Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature, <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.4.08.04&charenc=j#>

דד IN EARLY JEWISH WRITINGS

The primary point of interest in the roots דד or דדד in connection with our theme in Song 1:2 is how the plural (or dual) forms of the word are handled, since it is only with these plural forms that double entendre becomes possible. The following text comparisons show how each occurrence of the Hebrew plural of these roots is reflected in the Septuagint and the Vulgate.

MT/LXX/Vulg: דד ("breast")

Ezek 23:3

MT: וְשָׁם עָשׂוּ דְדֵי בְּתוּלֵיהֶן

LXX: ἐκεῖ διεπαρθενεύθησαν

Vulg.: et fractae sunt mammae pubertatis earum

Ezek 23:8

MT: וְהִמָּה עָשׂוּ דְדֵי בְּתוּלֵיהָ

LXX: καὶ αὐτοὶ διεπαρθενευσαν αὐτήν

Vulg.: et illi confregerant ubera pubertatis eius

Ezek 23:21

MT: דְּדֵיךָ

LXX: ἐν τῷ καταλύματί σου

Vulg.: ubera tua

Prov 5:19

MT: דְּדֵיךָ יִרְגֹּךָ בְּכָל-עֵת

LXX: καὶ συνέστω σοι ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ

Vulg.: ubera eius inebrient te omni tempore

דד (pl. "love")

Ezek 16:8a

MT: עַתָּה דְּדִים

LXX: καιρὸς καταλύντων

Vulg.: tempus amantium

Ezek 23:17

MT: לְמִשְׁכַּב דְּדִים

LXX: εἰς κοίτην καταλύντων

Vulg.: ad cubile mammarum

Prov 7:18

MT: לָכֵה נִרְנֶה דְּדִים

LXX: ἔλθε καὶ ἀπολαύσωμεν φιλίας

Vulg.: veni inebriemur uberibus

Song 1:2 (Vulg., 1:1)

MT: כִּי־טוֹבִים דְּלִיךְ מִיַּיִן

LXX: ὅτι ἀγαθοὶ μαστοὶ σου ὑπὲρ οἶνον

Vulg.: quia meliora sunt ubera tua vino

Song 1:4 (Vulg., 1:3)

MT: נִזְכְּרָה דְּלִיךְ מִיַּיִן

LXX: ἀγαπήσομεν μαστούς σου ὑπὲρ οἶνον

Vulg.: memores uberum tuorum super vinum

Song 4:10a

MT: מִה־יָפוּ דְּלִיךְ

LXX: τί ἐκαλλιώθησαν μαστοὶ σου

Vulg.: quam pulchrae sunt mammae tuae

Song 4:10b

MT: מִה־טָבוּ דְּלִיךְ מִיַּיִן

LXX: τί ἐκαλλιώθησαν μαστοὶ σου ἀπὸ οἶνου

Vulg.: pulchriora ubera tua vino

Song 5:1

MT: שְׁתוּ וְשָׁכְרוּ דוֹדִים

LXX: καὶ πίετε καὶ μεθύσθητε ἀδελφοί

Vulg.: bibite et inebriamini carissimi

Song 7:13 (Vulg., 7:12)

MT: שָׁם אֶתֵּן אֶת־דְּדִי לָךְ

LXX: ἐκεῖ δώσω τοὺς μαστούς μου σοί

Vulg.: ibi dabo tibi ubera mea

When Tiberian Hebrew has a form based on *dad* (“breast”), Vulg. always has a word for “breast” (1x mammae, 3x ubera), and LXX always has a circumlocution with a word or phrase referring to sexual intercourse (2x referring to loss of virginity—once to lose it, once to cause it; 2x with words for being together, with intimacy implied—once to “lodge, spend the night,” once to “be with”).

When Tiberian Hebrew has a form based on *dōd*, in the Song both LXX and Vulg. always have a word for “breast” (reflecting Tiberian *dad*), except for 5:1: LXX always has μαστοὶ (or pl. acc.), Vulg. has mammae (1x) or a pl. form of ubera (4x). In 5:1 both LXX and Vulg. take *dōdīm* as the plural of *dōd* in the sense of “beloved one” (LXX “brothers,” Vulg. “beloved ones”). The situation is as follows in the remaining three passages:

Ezek 16:8a:	MT "love"	LXX "lodging"	Vulg. "lovers"
Ezek 23:7:	MT "(bed of) love"	LXX "(bed of) lodging"	Vulg. "(bed of) teats"
Prov 7:18	MT "love"	LXX "love"	Vulg. "breasts"

Summarizing by version, Vulg. always takes forms of *dad* in the sense of "breast" (4x) as it does also in 7 of the 9 occurrences of plural *dōd*; the remaining two times Vulg. treats plural *dōd* as people engaged in love—"lovers" or "beloved ones." Vulg. never uses the noun *amor* or its plural abstract *amores* ("love") for either form of דד . This is important to note for changes that occur in medieval Latin versions other than Vulg. LXX takes all forms of *dad* as well as all forms of plural *dōd* outside the Song in the sense of sexual intimacy. Only in the Song, and there 6 times out of 7, LXX takes plural *dōd* as "breasts."

The Peshitta shows an intermediate position on דד in the Song, which will surface in the same manner in an intermediate stage of later English and German editions: Song 1:2 and 1:4 read "love"; the other occurrences in the Song read "breasts." The texts are as follows:

Song 1:2	<i>ʔbyn rḥmyk mn ḥmrʔ</i>	better is your love ⁸¹ than wine
Song 1:4	<i>ntdkr ḥwbk mn xmrʔ</i>	let us remember your love more than wine
Song 4:10a	<i>mʔ špyryn tdyky</i>	how beautiful are your breasts
Song 4:10b	<i>mʔ špyryn tdyky mn xmrʔ</i>	how more beautiful your breasts than wine
Song 7:12	<i>tmn ʔtl lk tdy</i>	there I will give you my breasts
Prov 7:18	<i>ntbsm brḥmtʔ</i>	let us take delight in love
Ezek 16:8	<i>zbnʔ dʕzrrtʔ</i>	the time of marriageable age
Ezek 23:17	<i>lmdmk ʕmh</i>	to sleep (lie) with her

The situation with דד is thus, simply put, mixed. The mixed treatment of forms of דד in the versions can have a variety of causes. (1) Particularly with LXX we can see an argument for different translators at work on the separate books in which דד occurs. (2) The words based on דד (either root) could be used, as their Semitic cognates were, as *double entendres*, but since the translators of the ancient versions appear to operate on the basis of a one-to-one correspondence theory of translation, they choose one of the available meanings in each case. Different translators make different decisions, or the same translator makes a different decision from case to case. (3) Oral traditions for pronouncing the various דד words differed from the later Tiberian

⁸¹ For double entendres on both *rḥm* and *ḥmrʔ* see later in this chapter.

system. One linguistic approach for this possibility is explored in the following section.

The shift from “love” to “breasts” in the Song of the Peshitta will be discussed later in this chapter. It will be seen that the choice of meaning has less to do with linguistic considerations and very much to do with the contexts in which Hebrew **חָמַם** occurs in the Song. Thus, Peshitta differentiates based on sense.

THE “PHOENICIAN SHIFT”

Examination of the cognates of *dōd* in a Hebrew lexicon reveals an interesting vowel difference between almost all of the cognates and Hebrew itself. The cognates have either *ā* or *a* where Hebrew has *ō*. Examples are:⁸² (1) Akkadian *dādu*, (2) Arabic *dād* (“Papa”) and *dad* (“Spiel, Scherz”), (3) Syriac *dadā*, (4) Mandaean *dad*, *dada*. This is likely a manifestation of the “Phoenician shift.” Gary Rendsburg provides a general background to the phonology of vowels in ancient Hebrew:⁸³

The exact pronunciation of the vowels in ancient Hebrew cannot be recovered. However, we may assume that the classical pattern of Semitic (illustrated best in Classical Arabic) was operative in Hebrew in its earliest historical period.

Typically, the Proto-Semitic long vowels retain their basic pronunciation in all environments. Thus, /î/ is always [î], and /û/ is always [û]. The only area of fluctuation is with /â/. When Semitic cognates indicate /â/, the Hebrew reflex typically will be /ô/, though sometimes the /â/ is retained. Thus, for example, Arabic *lâ* = Hebrew *lô* ‘no’.

Randall Garr traces the shift from long *a* to long *o* beginning with the Phoenician dialects and notes that the consistency of this change “indicates that this correspondence applied to *all* Phoenician dialects from the El-Amarna period on.”⁸⁴ He notes that the long *a* is retained in Aramaic, probably Samalian, and Akkadian, whereas the shift from long *a* to long *o* is found in Phoenician, possibly Ammonite, and Hebrew. There is no clear evidence for Edomite, although Garr finds the shift feasible there, or for Moabite or the inscription from Deir Alla, where the

⁸² From Herbert Donner, ed., *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*. 2. Lieferung: *Dalet–Yod*, 18 ed. (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1995), 243.

⁸³ Rendsburg, “Ancient Hebrew Phonology,” 76–77.

⁸⁴ Randall W. Garr, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000–586 B.C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 30.

situation “is more difficult to infer because each dialect shares diagnostic traits with both Phoenician-Hebrew and with Aramaic dialects.”⁸⁵

A word pronounced one way among one group of speakers and another way among a different group may not present a problem, unless one of those pronunciations maps to the pronunciation of a *different* word in the language or dialect, especially if those words (homonyms) are used in similar contexts. Certainly words meaning “(sexual) love” and “breasts” occur in the same contexts in many literatures. Now when those two words have similar pronunciations, confusion of meaning can occur even among native speakers. In the case of Hebrew **לל** it may be that the Phoenician shift resulting in the vowel difference between the Hebrew words for “love” and “breasts” was not everywhere observed, which brought the pronunciation of the two words even closer together. In the plural forms the doubling of the middle letter *d* probably would have been observed in speaking the word “breasts,” (though it was never written with two *d*’s in the consonantal text), whereas in “love” the letter was not doubly pronounced. In that case we would not have before us exact homonyms. The closeness of the two words, however, suffices either for possible aural confusion, or at any rate for intentional *double entendre*.

A “TRULY” VISUAL PUN?

In the Akkadian cognate section above, mention was made of the possible pictorial representation of the pubic triangle by some stage of Sumerian writing. A similar hypothesis could be made in the case of Hebrew **לל**, which, in the orthography of early Canaanite inscriptions would appear as two deltas or triangles side by side, approximately:



If the Song had been composed with similar letter shapes,⁸⁶ one could see a representation of two breasts, or two pudendas. Although by the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls the Aramaic square script had been adopted, with letter shapes that differ in some cases markedly from the older script, the paleo-Hebrew script was still known and used, as

⁸⁵ Ibid., 32.

⁸⁶ The letter *dalet* in the ostraca of the sixth century B.C.E. shows the right stroke projecting below the bottom stroke. In the later Aramaic script, the *dalet* is open and eventually is reduced to two strokes: horizontal top and vertical left-side strokes.

evidenced by the fifteen or sixteen paleo-Hebrew scrolls from Qumran.⁸⁷ In many other texts the tetragrammaton YHWH is also written in the paleo-Hebrew script.

It is generally well known that the Greek letter *delta* derives its name and shape from the same Phoenician predecessor as the archaic Hebrew letter *dalet*. That Hebrew letter name is derived from a rebus on the word *delet*, meaning “door.” In Hebrew texts the word “door” refers to the female vulva or womb, even in a metaphor:⁸⁸

Song 8:9: If she is a wall, we will build upon her a battlement of silver;
but if she is a *door* [Heb. *delet*], we will enclose her with boards of cedar.

Job 3:10a: because it did not shut the *doors* of my mother’s womb

Job 38:8: Or who shut in the sea with *doors* when it burst out from the womb?

SUMMARY

In this section I have applied a number of approaches to ascertain the answer to a single question: why is there a variant reading at Song 1:2 characterized by “differ-vocal”? A number of possible answers emerge. There could have been an original intended *double entendre* as found in other ancient Near Eastern texts where cognates are found. The duality of meaning could have originated by exploiting the vowelless mode of writing, allowing each of two different lexemes from roots containing a double *dalet* to bring their respective semantic values into the visual text at the same place. There could have been a confusion of dialect leading to a mis-reading or mis-hearing of the original intent, but a reading that nevertheless “worked” for the context. Or, this duality of orality was intentional from the start, either preceding, or emerging from, a text. The graphical symbols themselves may have played a role,

⁸⁷ Tov, ed., *The Texts from the Judaean Desert: Indices and An Introduction to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series*, 214. The list of Paleo-Hebrew texts gives fifteen or sixteen as the number from Qumran, since it is not certain whether the first two originally belonged to the same scroll. There are also two paleo-Hebrew texts from Masada, and two paleo-Hebrew palimpsests from Murabba’at.

⁸⁸ Note also the cases where illicit intercourse is desired at the “doorway” of a house. The intercourse is denied by shutting the door: Gen 19:6–10; Judg 19:22, or not, Judg 19:27. On the account in Judg 3:22–23 as a case of homosexual activity denied by the shutting of doors, see Geoffrey P. Miller, “Verbal Feud in the Hebrew Bible: Judg 3:12–30 and 19–21,” *JNES* 55 (1996).

if only a coincidental secondary one, that added to the duality already present for other reasons.

I wish to emphasize in concluding this section that the preceding exercises have not, ultimately, been about the single four-letter string ךדיך in Song 1:2. That word has served primarily as a basis for developing methodological approaches to more fully investigate the general phenomena of “differ-vocal” now registered in the apparatus of *BHQ*. Yet, my intent serves an even greater purpose. I seek to draw attention both to the lack of scholarship exercised in decisions made for, or against, variant readings, and more importantly, I propose that the existence of polysemy be more widely acknowledged and incorporated into the strategies and practices of textual criticism, as well as in translation. For it appears from our historical survey of the manuscripts of the ancient versions that even *if double entendre* had been recognized by ancient translators, they made little effort to draw attention to polysemy, except in a very few cases.

Admittedly, polysemy presents challenges for both textual-criticism and translation, where both processes are primarily concerned with delivering texts visually. The main problem appears to lie in the very nature of information transmission via a linear string of characters, which does not easily admit of concurrent multiple strings, whether they represent visual, or oral multivalences, or both at the same time. Certainly that task of textual criticism as well as translation is made much easier when no polysemy occurs, or is thought to occur.

Perhaps there is an additional cause for avoiding recognition of polysemy in texts. Suppose we have two different religious communities, each regarding itself to be in an advantaged position with regard to religious truth. Each of those two communities as such takes a different position on the reading and interpretation of a polysemous text. That is, each one takes a different option offered by the text and treats that option as the only correct one. Depending on the nature of the relationships between those communities, and the nature of the text about which the reading and its interpretation is disputed, it may prove difficult to bring about an acceptance of polysemy, for that could first signal acceptance of the other point of view, and one may not wish to give the impression that the adherents of the other religion are in any way correct. But this all assumes that polysemy of a religious text could even be entertained as an option. Clearly, if there are pre-conceived principles connected with authoritative religious texts concerning the singularity of their expressions and their resultant truths, the only option then available would be to disown one's own reading and interpretation, and accept that of the other side. Such a step would require, in some

situations, conversion, courage, or a tactical strategy that gives a little here in order to gain more elsewhere.

Yet there is another possibility we must consider. It is clear that the religious texts in use by Jews and Christians could be viewed as having meaning on multiple levels. Both groups developed detailed allegorical methods leading to multiple interpretations. It may be that those methods, though fully acknowledging an inherent multivalency of text, did not recognize *cognate* multivalency options.

In the following section I will track the subsequent textual history of Song 1:2 and note how the reading and interpretation of this polysemous text split along Jewish-Christian lines. I will show how, eventually, the reading “breasts” for שדין has practically disappeared from official text editions, thereby closing a two millennia textual gap in the reading and interpretation of Song 1:2. We will see Christians engaging with Jews and the Hebrew language, and slowly, century by century, inching their way toward acceptance of the Tiberian system, a process which comes to a textual close in 1979 of our era, when the Nova Vulgata, now the official Latin edition of the Catholic Church, changed its text from “breasts” to “love.” That is, the official Latin text changed from:

quia meliora sunt ubera tua vino
to:
nam meliores sunt amores tui vino

The textual gap, however, is about to be reopened. The issue may regain attention, and momentum, as we witness a resurgent interest in the Septuagint. Many web sites offer the text of the Septuagint online, and many of those wish to awaken interest and even urge acceptance of its text as *the* text of the early Christians. A scholarly effort to provide a “New English Translation of the Septuagint” (NETS) is now available. Shall we in the coming two millennia witness a slow, century by century, return to an “original” reading of “breasts” (as the Greek is correctly translated in NETS in Song 1:2, 4; 4:10; 7:12)?⁸⁹

On the other hand, the most recent English rendering of the Song found in *The Orthodox Study Bible* translates Song 1:2 with “love” but shifts to “breasts” in 1:4 and 4:10.⁹⁰ Why is μαστοί translated “love” the first time it occurs in the LXX of the Song, but not in subsequent

⁸⁹ Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁹⁰ *The Orthodox Study Bible: Ancient Christianity Speaks to Today's World* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008).

occurrences? Is it an oversight, or does it reflect a certain tension on the part of the translators?

As scholars increasingly recognize the presence, function, and importance of polysemy as a *bona fide* compositional device in ancient Near Eastern texts, the pendulum will be checked from swinging inexorably back to its opposite position, but will rather come to rest, centered in the balance to be found in “both/and” instead of “either/or.”

5

CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION HISTORY OF SONG 1:2

May *he* kiss me with the kisses of *his* mouth,
for *your* [love is] / [breasts are] better than wine.

INITIAL AMBIGUITIES

The masculine gender of both the verb “kiss” as well as the pronoun “his” in Song 1:2 is unequivocally expressed even in the vowelless, consonantal Hebrew text. The gender of “your” in “your love” is equivocal—grammatically it could be masculine or feminine. The gender of second person singular pronoun suffix is distinguished only in pointed Hebrew texts. Now the opening lines present an additional difficulty out of which various historical-interpretive routes for determining the gender of “your” have emerged—the shift from “he/his” to “your.”

For the most part, not only modern scholars, but also the rubricator of the Codex Sinaiticus, have understood the shift from “he/his” to “your” as a case of enallage (the use of one pronoun for another), a device commonly employed throughout the Hebrew Bible.¹ Thus, there is one speaker, the girl, who says both lines to and about her male lover.

But therein lies something a bit awkward if the translation “breasts” is understood for ך'ך'ך': *she* is infatuated with *his breasts* (as is reflected

¹ As far as I am aware, no complete catalog of cases identified as enallage exists, nor have the functions served by enallage been comprehensively treated. Various instances of enallage (depending on which form stands for which other form) are noted in E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible, Explained and Illustrated* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1898; reprint, Baker Book House, 1970), 490. A common shift is one that begins with the third person and changes to the second which is found in Song 1:2 as well as, for example, in Psalm 23: “...he leads me...your rod...” Some commentaries on the Song (such as Ginsburg) cite additional examples.

also in Song 1:4 in the Greek and Latin versions). Yet, in the rest of the Song, the word **אָהבָה** as understood in either sense, “love” or “breasts,” applies to the girl (Song 4:10 [2x], 7:13 [7:12 in English]) and the synonym **שָׁדַיִם** applies always to female breasts, generally to those of the girl (Song 1:13; 4:5; 7:4, 8, 9 [7:3, 7, 8 in English]; 8:8, 10), and once to those of the girl’s mother (8:1). It is of course not unthinkable that the girl could be attracted to a manly chest, but in her detailed description of him in Song 5:10–16, she highlights his color/complexion, head, hair, eyes, cheeks, lips, hands, abdomen, legs, and mouth, but not his *breasts*. However, in the boy’s three detailed descriptions of the girl, he mentions her breasts twice (Song 4:5; 7:4).

So why then, *if* the Greek translator(s) made a conscious choice between *love* and *breasts*, should we have a rendering that results in an uncommonly expressed attraction of the female speaker to the male breasts? This is an intriguing question which preoccupied many Christian exegetes, as I will show. In text-critical terms, it is the *lectio difficilior*, which is often (but by no means always!) taken as the more original meaning, since it is considered to be a more likely scenario to find that a scribe made a difficult text read more understandably, than to find a scribe making a text more difficult than it needed to be.

Another option, if enallage is not assumed, is that we have in these open lines an abrupt change of speakers, thus:

She said: May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.

He said: For your love is / breasts are better than wine.

Some exegetes proposed this real change of speakers as opposed to finding here the rhetorical feature of enallage, though usually a change of speakers is presented as a weak alternative to the sense felt to be more natural, namely that the girl speaks both lines.

A third option began to be popularized by the work of the German scholar Ewald in the mid-nineteenth century, who interpreted the Song as a drama involving a girl and *two* male suitors. In Ewald’s reconstruction of this drama, the girl says both lines, but there is no enallage. In the first line she *mentally*, but *not verbally* (“an aside”) expresses a desire for one of the two suitors (who is absent from the stage) to kiss her, while in the second line she *verbally* expresses her admiration for the love (as Ewald read it) of the second suitor, who is with her. Thus, the Song

opens with “The Dilemma.” She is in love with two men, and they are each in love with her. The Song dramatizes how this conflict is resolved.²

With so many possibilities for ambiguity in just the first seven Hebrew words of the Song, there can be little surprise that the interpretation history of the entire Song is hugely diverse. For now, however, I will continue with the transmission trail of שִׁירָה in Christian and Jewish sources from antiquity, throughout the medieval period, and into the modern era.

EARLY AND MEDIEVAL CHRISTIAN WRITERS

GENERAL SURVEY

The interpretation history of the Song begins in earnest with Origen. Elizabeth Clark sets the stage by arguing that Origen’s reading, coupled with his interpretation, makes it conceivable that the textual divide observed between Jewish and Christian readings might have been maintained for such a long period by the force of the interpretive divide.³ If this is the case, we need to know more about that interpretive divide.

Once a large portion of the Christian church adopted the Greek Septuagint as its Old Testament, the task for exegetes was to explain the text of that version. Beginning with Origen, we have a continuous series of Christian exegetical works on the Song that has continued into the present. Origen read: “for your breasts are better than wine.” He needed to explain that line. Having already adopted allegorical strategies, it was for him no stretch to recall, as he did in his commentary on the Song, that in the Gospel of John there was a certain disciple at the Last Supper “leaning on Jesus’ breast” (John 13:23).⁴ It was the disciple “whom Jesus

² Georg Heinrich August Ewald, *Das Hohelied Salomo’s übersetzt mit Einleitung, Anmerkungen und einem Anhang über den Prediger* (Göttingen: Rudolph Deuerlich, 1826). The third edition appeared in 1866. In the 1826 edition he describes the “scene” of 1:1–4 as follows: “Die Scene ist im Pallast Salomo’s (I, 4) ... Erste Zusammenkunft zwischen Salomo und Sulamit ... Sie ist anfangs ganz verwirrt und denkt, ihre Umgebung vergessend, nur an ihren Freund und an Befreiung (I, 2–4)” (pg. 53).

³ Elizabeth A. Clark, “Origen, the Jews, and the Song of Songs,” in *Perspectives on the Song of Songs; Perspektiven der Hoheliedauslegung*, ed. Anselm C. Hagedorn, *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, Band 346* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 281–82.

⁴ The Greek word used in John 13:23 is κόλπος (bosom, breast, chest); the Vulgate has *in sinu*. The word μαστός occurs 3x in the NT (always plural), once in praise of Mary’s breasts at which Jesus nursed (Luke 11:27), and once in the

loved" (same verse). From there it was easy to see a connection between Jesus' breast ("bosom") and Jesus' "heart" embedded within that breast, a heart full of love, wisdom, and knowledge. It all made perfect sense to Origen, and subsequently to the Christian community.

In fact, this was *the* interpretation handed down from generation to generation for the next several hundred years—but not without extensive elucidation and justification! I will note in particular how allegorical interpretations reveal a struggle that the Christian exegetes had with the text. Indeed, their allegorical interpretations are often constructed primarily to make sense of a difficult text. As they read it, the text *did not* make sense. Without the allegory, the text was problematic. The following excerpts show then not merely that the word "breasts" instead of "love" was read in various passages in the Song, and so interpreted within early Christian communities—that fact is known well enough. I wish rather to draw attention to the labor expended on *justifying the text upon which the allegorical interpretation was made*. This, to my knowledge, has not yet received attention, but it is here that we find explanation for the *two-phase* transition in later English and German translations (which, however, developed in different chronological frameworks) from "breasts" to "love" in the Song.

ORIGEN (185–254)

Origen's commentary on Song 1:2 begins with a full explanation of the enallage in this verse, the shift from third to second persons.

FOR THY BREASTS ARE BETTER THAN WINE, AND THE FRAGRANCE OF THINE OINTMENTS IS ABOVE ALL SPICES. Taking the story that is being acted first, you must understand that the Bride has poured out her petition with hands uplifted to God the Father, and has prayed that the Bridegroom might come to her now and bestow on her the kisses of His own mouth. While she is thus praying to the Father, she is ready to add to this very prayer in which she said, 'Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth,' some further words of prayer, and to say that, even as she began to utter those words, the Bridegroom was present and standing by her as she prayed, and that He revealed His breasts to her, and appeared as Himself anointed with splendid ointments, possessed of fragrance such as befits a Spouse. The Bride ... moved deeply by the beauty of His breasts ... alters the form of her prayer from that which she intended, in order to adapt it to the fact of her Spouse's presence. Whereas she said before: 'Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His

introductory apocalyptic vision of John's revelation, where Jesus appears "like the Son of Man" with a sash across his *breasts* (Rev 1:13).

mouth,' she now continues, speaking to the Bridegroom's present Self: 'Thy breasts are better than wine ...'

So much in passing for the literal meaning which, as we said before, is woven [the] in form of a play.⁵

Origen repeats both at the beginning and end of this section, which he calls the "literal meaning" (his first of three interpretations), his view of the Song as a drama, where characters come and go from the stage at various intervals. Thus in Origen's opening comments on Song 1:2 he devotes considerable space constructing a scene that harmonizes with the shift of address from "he/him" to "your." The initial line "May he kiss me" is spoken by the Bride to God in a prayer (God, of course, is not on stage, whether real or imagined). But suddenly, mid-sentence, the Bridegroom appears on stage, and thus the Bride directs her next comments directly to him.

In the ensuing second (the "inner meaning") and third (the meaning in which the soul enters into the mysteries of wisdom) interpretations, the "breasts" are elucidated beginning with their identification as "heart": "We find the ground principle of the heart described in the Divine Scriptures by different words according to the cases and circumstances that are being discussed."⁶

Origen makes the connection between "breasts" and "heart" by first referring to the "bosom" or "breast" of Jesus in John 13:25 where the disciple whom Jesus loved was reclining on Jesus' breast at the Passover meal. Origen tells us the reason John so reclined: so that John could be near Jesus' heart, and therefore near the inward meanings of the teaching of Jesus, in whom, according to Col 2:3: "the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden." And thus Origen concludes: "And indeed I think the term 'the bosom of Christ' is not unfitting, if it be taken as denoting the holy teachings."⁷

Origen continues to expound on this connection at great length in both his commentary and his first homily on the Song. One of the reasons for the extended discourse that establishes the equation "breasts" = "treasures of wisdom" is to show that the phrase "the bosom of Christ" is *not unfitting*. Without explanation, the phrase *is* unfitting. It is not the kind of reading one would expect. Only after much exposition can the real sense become clear. The *text itself*, however, is awkward. This

⁵ Origen, *The Song of Songs: Commentary and Homilies*. Translated and annotated by R. P. Lawson (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1957), 62–63.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 64.

becomes more apparent later in the commentary on Song 1:2 where Origen says:

For just as it seems fitting to speak of their 'heart' with regard to those of whom the Lord says that *they shall see God*, while with reference to those reclining at table 'bosom' or 'breast' is used, doubtless because of the behaviour of those persons and the nature of the meal ... so in this present passage, where the behaviour and conversation of lovers is described, I think that this same seat of the heart is very happily called 'breasts.'⁸

The expressions "seems fitting," "doubtless," "I think ... very happily" draw attention to the fact the Origen is not simply elucidating, but is *arguing for* the appropriateness of his elucidation of this *awkward text*, and hence for the correctness of the text itself.

Origen nowhere shows familiarity with another possible reading of the text. His text has "breasts." Awkward though that reading may seem, upon thoughtful reflection it loses its problematic nature. If Origen had at least known of the reading "love" for $\pi\pi$ in the passage, the exegesis would have been easier. Jewish exegetes will query the nature of the enallage, as I will show, but there is nothing comparable in their commentaries indicating a sense of awkwardness of the root $\pi\pi$ itself.

The nature of Origen's later comments on Song 1:2 will make it difficult for later Christian exegetes to seriously consider an alternate reading, should they become aware of one. For as the breasts in the Song are tightly linked with the teachings of Jesus, those teachings are subsequently contrasted with Jewish Scripture (the Law and the Prophets); Jesus' teachings are vastly superior.

The Bridegroom's breasts are good, therefore, because treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed in them. The Bride, moreover, compares these breasts to wine, and that in such a way as to point the breasts' superiority. By wine is meant the ordinances and teachings which the Bride had been wont to receive through the Law and Prophets before the Bridegroom came. But when she now reflects upon the teaching that flows forth from the Bridegroom's breasts, she is amazed and marvels: she sees that it is far superior to that with which she had been gladdened as with spiritual wine ... a much more perfect teaching than that of the ancients issues from His breasts ... 'Thy breasts

⁸ Ibid., 64–65.

are better than wine'—better, that is to say, than the teaching with which she was gladdened by them that were of old.⁹

One must keep in mind that the translation "breasts" for דד entered the text of the Song a century or two before the beginning of the Christian movement. It was therefore at that time, at least, a *strictly Jewish* reading. Yet, within a century or two after the beginning of the Christian movement, the reading "breasts" apparently became a *strictly Christian* reading for Song 1:2. The exegetical strategy employed here by Origen must have contributed in large measure to continuing that textual divide; it was effected through an interpretive divide, which played upon the superiority of Jesus over Moses and the Prophets. The division between Judaism and Christianity is henceforth, from the Christian perspective, made clear in the text of Song 1:2 and its accompanying allegorical explanation.

These findings are, however, not easy to explain in the light of Origen's Hexapla. The second column (*Secunda*) of the Hexapla contained a transliteration in Greek letters of the Hebrew text. That is, long before the Masoretes provided the consonantal text with vowel signs, Origen's *Secunda* gives testimony to some oral reading tradition. Unfortunately, we do not possess any remnants of the *Secunda* for the Song. One must assume, however, that Origen, from some source, likely Jewish, *heard* a Hebrew text that he understood, or that someone whom he consulted understood, to mean "breasts" and not "love." This must also be the case for Jerome, for in his Latin translation he also shows no awareness of any other tradition. The question remains open: what were the sources that lie behind the only reading that Origen and Jerome reflect in their translations and commentaries? If, as many scholars believe, Origen and Jerome learned Hebrew from Jewish teachers, then it appears that the same presumably third century B.C.E. Alexandrian tradition that gave rise to the Septuagint reading persisted in some circles into the fifth century C.E., and now also in Syria and Palestine, where Jerome is thought to have acquired his knowledge of Hebrew.¹⁰

⁹ Ibid., 65.

¹⁰ For contemporary sources of information relating to Origen's knowledge of Hebrew and consultations with Jews on textual issues, see N.R.M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews: Studies in Jewish-Christian Relations in Third-Century Palestine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

GREGORY OF NYSSA (CA. 335–394)

Gregory became Bishop of Nyssa in Cappadocia in 372. Nyssa's commentary on the Song draws upon Origen, but develops aspects of the "breast" theme further. In the first citation below, note in Gregory's comments on Song 1:1–2 an insistence on the correctness of the given interpretation *and* text by the expressions "nobody will err if" and "one would rightly suppose that":

"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth" [1:2] ... But once the soul has been cleansed ... it looks to the treasure house of all good things. A name for this treasure house is the heart. From it there comes to the breasts the wealth of divine milk by which the soul is nourished and draws grace in proportion to its faith. Therefore the soul exclaims: "Your breasts are better than wine," signifying by the breasts the heart. Nobody will err if he understands by the heart the hidden, secret power of God. One would rightly suppose that the breasts are the activities of God's power for us by which he nourishes each one's life and bestows appropriate nourishment ...

Thus, the next part of the virgin's prayer in the Song's first words say: "Your breasts are better than wine, and the scent of your perfumes is beyond all ointments." [1:1–2]

What is signified by these words is, in our opinion, neither trivial nor unimportant. Through the comparison of milk from the divine breasts with the enjoyment obtained from wine we learn, I think, that all human wisdom, science, power of observation and comprehension of imagination cannot match the simple nourishment of the divine teaching. Milk, the food of infants, comes from the breasts. On the other hand, wine, with its strength and warming capacity, is enjoyment for the more perfect. However, the perfection of the wisdom of the world is less than the childlike teaching of the divine world. Hence the divine breasts are better than human wine, and the scent of divine perfumes is lovelier than any fragrance.¹¹

Gregory adds authoritative strength to his interpretation, which further solidifies the text as he read it. His rendering of the sense is "neither trivial nor unimportant." Gregory differs from Origen in the point of the contrast. For Gregory, the inferiority of wine represents, not Jewish or Old Testament teachings, but worldly, human wisdom and

¹¹ Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Song of Songs*. Translated with an Introduction by Casimir McCambley (Brookline, Mass.: Hellenic College Press, 1987), 51–52.

science. As we will see, step by step, Christian exegetes not only make sense out of their reading of Song 1:2, but attach the highest level of significance to their text-interpretive understanding: the “breasts” of Song 1:2 ultimately stand for the superiority of Christianity over *both* Jewish and worldly wisdom.

Gregory expands these ideas in his comments on Song 1:4:

“Let us rejoice and be glad in you” [1:4]. for your joy is our common rejoicing. Because you love the Word’s breasts more than wine, we shall imitate you and love your breasts more than human wine, for through them you feed those who are infants in Christ.

To make the intention of the passage even clearer, consider the following: John, who reclined upon the Lord’s chest, loved the Word’s breast [Jn 13:25]; and having placed his heart like a sponge, as it were, beside the fountain of life, he was filled by an ineffable transmission of the mysteries hidden in the heart of the Lord. John offers us the teat filled by the Word and fills us with the good things he got from the fountain of goodness, loudly proclaiming the Word who exists eternally. Thus we may now rightly say, “We will love your breasts more than wine,” if we have become like the maidens and are no longer infants in mind, yoked to an infantile kind of vanity, and if we are not soiled through sin in an old age unto death. Therefore, let us love the flow of your teaching, for “righteousness has loved you” [1:4]. This is the disciple whom Jesus loved, and Jesus is righteousness.¹²

Origen had remarked that he thought the phrase “bosom of Christ” was not unfitting. Gregory is much surer. Though it is still his “opinion,” no one who follows his interpretation will err; rather they will suppose rightly; they will rightly say the things he is saying about Song 1:2, 4. Through this understanding of the sense and the text, one remains no longer infantile, soiled by sin, but attains to Jesus, which is righteousness. Thus, the reading “breasts” is not a trivial matter. It is a crucial reading. We are now pushed beyond the mere assertion of Christian supremacy over Jews and Greeks; within Christian theology itself we are at the core: the breasts represent maturity, cleansing from sin, attaining to righteousness, to Jesus himself.

In a few places Gregory shows he is familiar with Hebrew-Greek translation issues. The clearest example is a discussion of a Hebrew word in Song 5:11:

¹² Ibid., 55.

"His head is fine gold (*kephaz*)" [5:11]. If the Hebrew is translated into our [Greek] language, *kephaz* signifies pure, uncontaminated gold which is free from any impurity. It seems to me that those translating Hebrew into Greek have left the term *kephaz* unexplained; they could not find any word to convey the Hebrew meaning. We have learned however, that *kephaz* represents uncorrupted purity because it is free from anything base. We have come to understand that this term pertains to Christ as head of his body the Church [Col 1:18].¹³

Yet Gregory does not show an awareness of any Hebrew-Greek translation issue in the text of Song 1:2. He shows no awareness that the word **דד** is read any other way.

GREGORY THE GREAT (CA. 540–604)

The extant portion of Gregory the Great's commentary on the Song covers only 1:1–9. Gregory continues the interpretation of his predecessors, emphasizing the distinction between the Law and Prophets on the one hand, and the teaching of Christ on the other.

Therefore, as the holy Church desires the absent Bridegroom to be made flesh, of a sudden she is aware of his presence and adds: *for your breasts are more delightful than wine* ... Wine was the knowledge of the Law, the knowledge of the prophets. But with the coming of the Lord, because he willed to proclaim his wisdom through his flesh, he made that wisdom to be, in a manner of speaking, the breasts on which we may feed for the wisdom which, in his divinity, we were scarcely able to grasp we can know in his Incarnation. And so it is right to praise his breasts: for by bringing his preaching down to earth, he can effect in our hearts what teaching of the Law can hardly effect at all. For the preaching of the Incarnation nourishes in a way that the teaching of the Law cannot.¹⁴

The text is again justified on the basis of its allegorical meaning: "*and so it is right to praise his breasts.*" Only through the Incarnation of Jesus can one know wisdom, can one be nourished; this the Law simply cannot accomplish. With this understanding, the text makes sense.

ALCUIN OF YORK (CA. 735–804)

Alcuin's comments on Song 1:2 refer to the "sweetness of the Gospels' teaching" in contrast to "the sour taste of the Law," noting Heb

¹³ Ibid., 237–38.

¹⁴ Denys Turner, *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs* (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian, 1995), 226.

7:19 that “the Law can bring nothing to perfection,” whereas the “breasts ... referring to teachers ... give us the milk of knowledge to drink.”¹⁵

WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY (CA. 1080–1184)

William wrote two works on the Song, the *Brevis Commentatio* and the *Exposition on the Song of Songs*. Two different approaches to the problem of enallage in Song 1:2 are found in these two works. In the *Brevis Commentatio*, the breasts are those of the Bride, to whom the Bridegroom speaks. Thus, William chooses to view the change of pronouns as indicating a change of speakers.

Like Gregory of Nyssa, the inferiority of wine refers not to the Law and the Prophets, but to “the love and wisdom of the world,” or “the argument of the logicians.”¹⁶ In this light, the Bride represents first the apostles, then their followers (“the children of grace, the children of the New Testament”) who have within themselves the “the new wine of the Holy Spirit.”

A grape when crushed loses its juice once and for all; and so it is with the world’s wisdom or with the knowledge of the law of the flesh; but the more the Bride’s breasts are pressed the more they flow. By my grace your breasts are more delightful than wine—that is, they are more abundant than the love and wisdom of the world. Both intoxicate: but your breasts are more abundant in good than [the love and wisdom of the world] are in evil. For the milk of the Christian and apostolic teaching is simple: it dissolves all the argument of the logicians. But the new wine of the holy Spirit, which filled the apostles and made them drunk, also filled the blessed poor in spirit, the children of grace, the children of the New Testament, making them to embrace the love of God to the contempt of self; so as to think of all things as dung and so as to gain Christ. For this reason the breasts of the Bride *are more delightful than wine*.

But the Bride has two breasts: one of compassion, the other of praise. From the breast of compassion may be sucked the milk of consolation; from the breast of praise, the milk of encouragement. So as to make those breasts to be *more delightful than wine*, they are scented with the finest oils, for the finest oil—that is, a supreme charity—works its effect on them. And so the breasts of the Bride are anointed, they are smoothed with oil by the touch of the Bridegroom: the fragrance of good example, which is diffused far and wide like a fine scent mingles

¹⁵ Ibid., 260.

¹⁶ Ibid., 287.

with the fragrance of the Bridegroom, through the sacrifice of a holy intention and holy desires.¹⁷

William appears to be among the first Christian exegetes not only to view the change of pronouns as a change of speakers, but to supply a full exegesis to elucidate that meaning. He also connects the thought of Song 1:2 with the following verse.

William adopts an entirely different approach in his *Exposition on the Song of Songs*. There the Bride speaks both lines to the Bridegroom, but with a chiasmic twist: the Bride says, "Let him kiss me" while *present* with the Bridegroom, but stated "as if he were *absent*." Later when he is *distant*, she address him as though *present*:

While he withdraws, she follows him with her gaze until he is out of sight; and finding it sweet to address him even though he no longer hears, she says: "For your breasts are better than wine!"¹⁸

William develops the exegesis along familiar lines. The breasts represent the nourishment of grace, a good conscience unadulterated by "worldly wisdom or joy of fleshly pleasure." William extends the contrast to include "fleshly pleasure" along with human wisdom.

We have now seen three specific explanations for the "wine" of Song 1:2 to which the "breasts" (the teachings of Jesus) are more favorably compared: (1) The Law and the Prophets (the Old Testament, Jewish learning); (2) The wisdom of the world (philosophy, or the argument of logicians); (3) fleshly pleasures. The breasts are superior to all. Further, even with Christian theology, the breasts represent the best and most important of what Christ has to offer, whether emanating from himself, or through his followers. These four comparisons, three external to Christianity, one internal, become the reason for scholars even to the present day to associate the *reading* "breasts" in Song 1:2 with *Christian* theology, even though the reading originated long before there was a Christian movement.

BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX (CA. 1090–1153)

In the twelfth century C.E. Bernard of Clairvaux composed eighty-six sermons on Song 1:1 to 3:1. He devoted most of Sermon Nine to the metaphorical "breasts" of Song 1:2. The first question Bernard addresses

¹⁷ Ibid., 287–88.

¹⁸ William of St. Thierry, *Exposition on the Song of Songs* (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian, 1989), 29.

has to do with the identification of the speaker and the issue of gender of the suffix “your.”

The author does not say who spoke these words, so we are free to assign them to the person whom we think they best suit. For my part, I can see reasons for attributing them either to the bride, or to the Bridegroom or to the latter’s companions.¹⁹

If the words are spoken by the bride, they are addressed to the Bridegroom. The shift in pronouns from “he/him” to “your” is explained as a shift from one audience to another, but unlike Origen, the first audience is not God, and she is not praying; rather she is conversing with her companions when she says “May he kiss me ...,” and then, suddenly (Origen and others also had a “sudden” appearance) the Bridegroom appears, and the Bride addresses him directly. Bernard, like Origen and Gregory, then launches into an argument to demonstrate that “breasts” refer to the heart of Jesus. Bernard emphasizes: “and be assured that this is no figment of mine.”²⁰ As with Origen and Gregory, Bernard anticipates a certain resistance to his exegetical solution to the awkwardness of the text, and thus he admonishes acceptance with reassurance.

Bernard also considers the possibility that these words were spoken by the Bridegroom. The setting is the same: the bride is conversing with companions while expressing her wish to be kissed, when, suddenly the Bridegroom appears. The Bridegroom fulfills her wish, kisses her, and pronounces *her* breasts better than wine. Bernard’s commentary is pregnant with graphic *double entendre*. Note especially the nexus “kiss, conception, breasts”:

While the bride is conversing about the Bridegroom, he, as I have said, suddenly appears, yields to her desire by giving her a kiss, and so brings to fulfillment those words of the psalm: “you have granted him his heart’s desire, not denied him what his lips entreated.” The filling up of her breasts is proof of this. For so great is the potency of that holy kiss, that no sooner has the bride received it than she conceives and her breasts grow rounded with the fruitfulness of conception, bearing witness, as it were, with this milky abundance. Men with an urge to frequent prayer will have experience of what I say.²¹

¹⁹ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Song of Songs I*, trans. Kilian Walsh (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian, 1971), 55–56.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 57.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 58.

While Bernard explores various interpretive strategies, as far as the text is concerned, he gives no hint that he is aware of any reading other than “breasts.”

GILBERT OF HOYLAND (D. 1172?)

Gilbert of Hoyland, abbot of Swineshead Abbey in Lincolnshire, England, extended the commentary of Bernard from Song 3:1 to 5:9 in forty-seven sermons. Gilbert begins his commentary on 4:10 (Sermon 31) with his own erotic *double entendre*:

Gently now we must touch upon the breasts of the bride. Though previously in more than one passage they have been drawn upon, still I know not whether their meaning has been fully expressed. Perhaps even touched upon lightly, they may yield us fresh nourishment. Who would not run avidly and with great expectation to the breasts which the Bridegroom has been at such pains to praise? These are the breasts from which Peter exhorts us to long for milk like newborn babes [1 Pet 2:3].²²

Gilbert proceeds in a question-answer format. For example, he asks about the order of items presented in 4:9–10, that the eye and hair²³ are mentioned and then the breasts; this he explains as “alternation of contemplation and consolation.” In a later passage the two breasts are the two Testaments. Gilbert finds in Paul’s accommodation to culture (1 Cor 9:20–22) an adaptation of breasts to fit the needs of disciples, drawing upon Paul’s self-comparison in 1 Thess 2:7, “I became ... like a nurse taking care of her children.” The ideas of alternation and adaptation are extended to a discussion of the differences between the left and right breasts; the left is for “assistance in temporal affairs,” the right for “spiritual consolation.”

Gilbert notes that since these breasts are described as “beautiful” it can be inferred that not all breasts are beautiful. To underscore the nature of these beautiful breasts, Gilbert launches into the following graphic analogy:

And if you wish to hear some spiritual and more developed interpretation of their beauty, I refer you to the devices of women, who cultivate and develop physical beauty and have mastered this art. For what are

²² Gilbert of Hoyland, *Sermons on the Song of Songs, II* (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian, 1979), 374.

²³ Gilbert read “one hair of your neck” in 4:9; modern versions read: “one jewel of your necklace.”

they more anxious to avoid in embellishing the bosom than that the breasts be overgrown or shapeless and flabby, or occupy the spaces of the bosom itself? Therefore they constrain overgrown and flabby breasts with brassieres, artfully remedying the shortcomings of nature. Beautiful indeed are breasts which are slightly prominent and are moderately distended; neither raised too much nor level with the bosom, as if pressed back but not pressed down, gently restrained but not hanging loose.

Following this model, let him who must utter good words, consoling words, imitate the art and care of women. Let him adopt restrained language; let not the breasts of his words be sloppy or tumble out of disorder. Let them not replace rather than adorn, as it were, the bosom and consistory of the mind. Let them not have more bulk than grace, more flesh than milk ... Let the discourse not have more in the mouth than in the breast, lest the milk be spilt. The breasts should rise from the bosom and cling there; the bosom should not be merged into the breasts. From the abundance of the heart let the mouth speak [Luke 6:45]; let it speak from the abundance, not emptying itself entirely. The breasts must be restrained lest they spill over in excess.²⁴

The heightened erotic expressiveness employed here by Gilbert is especially illustrative of D. Turners' thesis of medieval Christian exegetical proclivity to combining eros and allegory, an issue I will address more fully at the end of this section.

Gilbert finds opportunity to discuss reasons for the breasts' superiority over wine, since the same expression found in 1:2 is repeated in 4:10. The contrast is familiar:

Gentle is the word of the Gospel; harsh is the word of the Law ... Barren and weak is the severity of the Law; it commands without grace and punishes without pardon; it lacks both breasts. It contains a foreshadowing of these breasts but it does not exhibit their reality. Remember that you are a minister not of the Law but of the Gospel, a minister of Jesus who in his passion rejected vinegar and at the Supper the sourness of the old wine.²⁵

Gilbert extends the superiority also over the pagan teachings of Novatian and Pelagius. In a later passage Gilbert moves to the impact on the "self":

²⁴ Ibid., 377–78.

²⁵ Ibid., 379.

In the wine harsh things are broached and tasted, until the old self is expelled and destroyed; in the milk, in the newness of life, we draw milk from the wooing of divine kindness, a sign not of rout but of refuge.²⁶

Thus Gilbert's contrasts include the superiority of the Gospel over (1) Jewish Law, (2) pagan teachings, and (3) moral deficiencies in one's self.

JOHN OF FORD (D. 1214)

John, Abbot of Ford in Dorset, England, completed the series of Bernard and Gilbert from Song 5:8 to the end of the Song in 120 sermons. As far as the occurrence of the root **רר** is concerned, John covers only 7:12: "there I will give you my **רר**." John has little to add to the exposition of his predecessors. The breasts of the bride represent the tender feelings of the Church toward those in it, especially toward those who serve with patience.²⁷

GLOSSA ORDINARIA (CA. 1100–1130)

In the early part of the twelfth century C.E. the books of the Bible were provided with notes (glosses) by *magistri* in northern France. The Song received more glosses than any other book of the Bible. By the fourteenth century the collection of glosses along with the biblical texts were known as the *Glossa Ordinaria*. The glosses functioned as the authoritative guides to understanding the biblical texts. Anselm of Laon (ca. 1080–1117) and his brother Ralph, masters at the cathedral school at Laon, compiled the *Glossa Ordinaria* on the Song. Mary Dove attributes the entire *Glossa* enterprise to Anselm:

Anselm almost certainly invented the idea of a *Glossa Ordinaria* for all the books of the Bible, although the Song of Songs and the Pauline Epistles had been glossed in the eleventh century, and in the tenth century the Song of Songs, Daniel, and Isaiah were accompanied by glosses in manuscripts written in Germany for Otto III. The Laon project originated in the desire to yoke the text of the Bible with a guide to how it should be read, and as more and more libraries began to want copies it must have become clear that the difficulties for scribes of ensuring that the glosses were correctly aligned with the biblical text would lead to an unwillingness to add or alter glosses, and therefore the standardization

²⁶ Ibid., 379.

²⁷ John of Ford, *Sermons on the Final Verses of the Song of Songs*, VI (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian, 1984), 92–96.

of glossed books of the Bible (just as happened with the printed Gloss). The Song of Songs was glossed again, very extensively, by William of St. Thierry (ca. 1120–30), who drew on the mystical works of Ambrose of Milan.²⁸

The glosses themselves were collected from earlier Christian writers. Dove identifies the following sources from which the glosses on the Song were drawn: Origen of Alexandria, (ca. 185–254), Gregory the Great (ca. 550–604), the Venerable Bede (ca. 673–735), Alcuin (ca. 735–804), Hrabanus Maurus (Raban Maur) (ca. 780–856), Haimo of Auxerre (fl. mid-ninth century), Robert of Tombelaine (ca. 1010–1090), Anselm of Laon (ca. 1050–1117). The *Glossa Ordinaria* on the Song thus provides a survey of the exegetical work carried out by Christians over a period of nearly a millennium. The glosses pertaining to the root **טט** everywhere that root occurs in the Song show no other reading than “breasts.” In all cases except Song 1:2 the breasts are those of the female. Thus, we see special attention given to 1:2 in order to find an appropriate sense for the bride praising the bridegroom’s breasts. There are four glosses directed specifically toward **טט** in Song 1:2:

Gloss 10

As she prays, her prayer is answered, and seeing the bridegroom she speaks to him [*because your breasts, etc.*]

Gloss 11

He speaks of the ‘breasts’ of the bridegroom, a female term, so that from the very beginning of this song he may reveal himself to be speaking figuratively.

Gloss 15

because your breasts are better than wine because here [there is] assisting grace and the end is [eternal] life

Gloss 16

[the bride says] “*your breasts*: the teaching and refreshment of your presence, which is sweet”

Particularly noteworthy is the comment in Gloss 11 that the word “breasts” is “a female term.” The expression “He speaks of the breasts,” pertains not to the speakers of the Song, but to the composer of the text

²⁸ Mary Dove, *The Glossa Ordinaria on the Song of Songs. Translated with an Introduction and Notes* (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 2004), xii–xiii.

of the Song, hence, "the writer." The problem identified with the verse is not simply a matter of tracking change of speakers in connection with the enallage. It is considered strange that the writer should place these word in the mouth of the bride. Why would she use "a female term" in referring to the bridegroom? That she does so can only mean one thing: the Song, at the very outset, is to be understood figuratively.

Throughout the glosses the constant equation is "breasts" = "teaching." On Song 1:4, Gloss 57 notes that the phrase "mindful of your breasts" means "mindful of your gifts or teachings." On 7:12 Gloss 101 notes: "*breasts*, tender teaching, by means of which children may grow." On 4:10 Gloss 93 first explains the principle of reciprocity:

Above (1:1), the bride was praising the breasts of her beloved; here, the beloved praises the breasts of the bride. In this is denoted the unity of Christ and the church, because, as the apostle [Paul] says, they are *two in one flesh* (Eph. 5:31), and so each praises the other with like praise.

The Gloss continues with: "Teaching comes from Christ, because he gives [it], and from the church, because she administers [it]." Gloss 94 continues the explanation of the breasts as the "love of God and neighbor, by means of which the holy mind nourishes its senses ..." Gloss 98 provides a more literal remark: "*breasts*, that is, milk, the thing containing [breasts] for the thing contained [milk]." While the *Glossa Ordinaria* does not expand the thought here, in mind is surely a passage such as 1 Pet 2:2 "like newborn infants, long of the pure, spiritual milk" (see also 1 Cor 3:2; 9:7; Heb 5:12–13).

ALAN OF LILLE (CA. 1120–1204)

Few specifics are known about Alan of Lille beyond the fact that he was a teacher at Paris and Montpellier. Turner notes that "Alan was admired for the extent of his learning" and that his epitaph claims "he knew everything to be known."²⁹ Alan's commentary on the Song is entitled: *A Concise Explanation of the Song of Songs in Praise of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God*. For Alan, the Bride of the Song is first Solomon's bride, secondly the Church ("according to its spiritual sense"), and thirdly "in its most particular and spiritual reference it signifies the most glorious Virgin."³⁰ It is the third interpretation on which Alan devotes considerable energies. The female does not represent the collective body of the faithful in their intimate spiritual relationship with God; the female is an

²⁹ Turner, *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs*, 292.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 294.

actual female: Mary, the mother of Jesus, the “mother of God.” Alan is among the earliest interpreters (though not the first) to develop the mariological allegory on Song 1:2.³¹ The opening plea “May he kiss me” is compared to the angel Gabriel’s announcement to Mary in Luke 1:38 that she will bear a son: “be it done to me according to your word.” Conception takes place through the Word of God, which is the result of the “kiss” of Song 1:2. The allegory then takes an interesting turn. For it is the Son who is the mouth of the Father. He is thus both the mouth that Mary kisses as well as the divine offspring emanating from that kiss. He is both her son and her husband. Mary thus holds a unique position, to which a third relationship can be added. First, she like all believers, is a “child of God” and hence in a sibling relationship with Christ. Second, she is Christ’s mother. Third, as part of the collective body of believers, the Church, she belongs to those who are addressed as the Bride of Christ. It is the mother-son relationship that is Alan’s primary focus, but the other two relationships are woven into his commentary.

In his exegesis of the second line of Song 1:2, Alan explains the change of pronouns as a change of speakers:

For your breasts are more delightful than wine. Which is as much to say, ‘You desire my kisses and I your breasts ...’ I can read this literally as referring to the Virgin’s natural breasts, for the Gospel speaks of them in these terms: *Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts which you have sucked* (Luke 11:27). Which breasts are more delightful, which better, than those which gave milk to Christ, milk drawn not by the foulness of lust, but from the rich store of virginity? Christ longed for those breasts, he longed to draw milk from them, so as to experience not the deceitful taste of the flesh, but rather the antidote of her virginity.³²

PATROLOGIA LATINA DATABASE (CA. 200–1216 C.E.)

In an effort to find out whether or not the reading *love* was known or discussed among at least the Latin Christian writers, a search of the online Patrologia Latina database³³ was undertaken as follows: I entered

³¹ Turner notes that Rupert of Deutz, who died about the time of Alan’s birth, already read the Song as an allegory of Mary. The groundwork for the mariological interpretation may have been laid four centuries earlier in the practice of “including readings from the *Song* in the offices of the feast of the Assumption (and later on the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary).” See Turner, *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs*, 306, fn 1.

³² Turner, *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs*, 296.

³³ <http://pld.chadwyck.co.uk/> As of the dates of my inquiries (21 Feb 2007 and again on 9 Aug 2010) the Patrologia Latina database “comprises the works of

search strings representing Old Latin and Vulgate readings, followed by strings reflecting the *Nova Vulgata*’s rendering of the Tiberian Masoretic text. The results are in the tables below:

TABLE 3: PATROLOGIA LATINA DATABASE, OLD LATIN & VULGATE READINGS

<i>Search String</i>	<i>Hits</i>	<i>Entries</i>
“meliora sunt ubera”	121	55
“meliora ubera”	6	5
“bona sunt ubera”	1	1
“bona ubera”	15	8

TABLE 4: PATROLOGIA LATINA DATABASE, NOVA VULGATA READINGS

<i>Search String</i>	<i>Hits</i>	<i>Entries</i>
“meliores sunt amores”	0	0
“meliores amores”	0	0
“melior est amor”	0	0
“melior amor”	0	0
“boni sunt amores”	0	0
“boni amores”	1*	1*
“bonus est amor”	1*	1*
* 1 non-relevant hit each (passages do not pertain to the Song)		

Shortly after the cut-off date for this database (1216), we begin to find Christian awareness of the possible rendering of ׀׀ in Latin using *amor*. It is during the thirteenth century that more critical thinking is brought to bear on issues of text and interpretation.

GILES OF ROME (CA. 1247–1316)

As a student at Paris, Giles may have attended lectures of Thomas Aquinas. Turner describes Giles as “a highly inconsistent ‘Thomist’ and an ‘Aristotelian’ only within strict limits.”³⁴ *Giles’ Exposition on the Song of Songs* carries on the allegorical interpretations of earlier Christian exegetes, as well as engages critical issues in regard to the logic of the text. These textual issues must first be resolved; then the interpretation may proceed.

Then when she says: *For your breasts are more delightful than wine*, she gives the cause and reason of her longing. But before we give an

the Church Fathers from Tertullian in 200 AD to the death of Pope Innocent III in 1216.” Queries run on both dates yielded identical results.

³⁴ Turner, *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs*, 357.

interpretation of this text there are three doubtful points which occur to us about its literal meaning.

The first is that the text seems here to be defective, for the Church began by speaking in the third person, saying *May he kiss me with the kiss of his mouth*; but then, when giving the reason, she spoke to God in the second person, adding: *For your breasts are more delightful than wine*. But also, there is a second reason for supposing that the text is corrupt, and its apparent meaning unlikely; it is that since what the Bride longed for was a kiss, in wanting to give the reason for her desire, she should have praised the lips, which are what you kiss with, not breasts. And the third reason why such a form of words seems out of place is that it is the Bride who has breasts, not the Bridegroom. Since, therefore, it is the Bride who addresses the Bridegroom in this manner, it does not seem very appropriate to praise his breasts.³⁵

Giles finds solutions to all three of these difficulties. First, regarding the change of pronouns, Giles offers two solutions. One is based on the *Gloss* which attributes the change of pronouns to the Bride's ecstatic state in which she finds herself unable to keep track of how she is speaking. The other explanation has the Bride presenting the direct request with psychological distance to the majestic personality she is addressing, which is reflected in the use of the third person, after which she gained sufficient trust to give the reason for the request in the second person. Giles does not consider the option of a change of address. The second difficulty is resolved by understanding the kiss to be spiritual, not physical. The rule is rather simple: if the text does not make sense as it stands, it means something else. The third difficulty is resolved by the same method, with reference, again, to the *Gloss* which argues: "the Bride ascribes breasts to the Bridegroom so as to make it clear that she is speaking figuratively."³⁶

SUMMARY

Christian writers consistently read "breasts" for **77** in the Song, and they found a variety of allegorical interpretations for that reading. Song 1:2 is problematic for a variety of reasons, but Christian exegetes find exegetical approaches to make sense of the text. Particularly awkward is the Bride's praise of the breasts of the Bridegroom. Christian exegetes employed multiple interpretive strategies to remove that difficulty.

³⁵ Ibid., 361.

³⁶ Ibid., 362. See also above under section h., *Glossa Ordinaria*, Gloss 11.

There is one strategy, however, that they never used, apparently because they were never aware that it *could* be used: to read the word **דד** as “love.” “Love” would have been a much easier term to use in reciprocal praise between bride and bridegroom. Christian exegetes were either completely unaware of this alternate rendering, or, if they were aware of it, they suppressed it entirely—not one discussed why the rendering “love” would be unsuitable or incorrect. In pointing out how the Christian faith is superior to the Jewish faith, no Christian writer ever strengthened the argument by noting that the Christian *text* of Song 1:2 is superior to the Jewish text. It would not be long after the compilation of the *Glossa Ordinaria*, however, that Christian awareness of an alternate rendering can be documented. That awareness begins another struggle among Christian scholars. This time it will not be a struggle of what the text *means*, but rather what the real text *is*. We will begin to see Christians arguing for the superiority of the current *Jewish* reading, beginning a convergence of text that takes hundreds of years to complete. That is a theme I will take up after a brief survey of Song 1:2 as read and interpreted among Jewish exegetes.

The passages I have examined above only begin to broach the full range of exposition offered by these and other Christian writers on the “breasts” of the Song. Since there is another, more common, word for “breast” (Hebr *šad*) that occurs in the Song, our writers devote additional remarks at those places. What is clear is that they see **דד** and **שד** as mere synonyms, since they are both translated “ubera” in the Vulgate.³⁷ Before turning to Jewish exegesis, the explicit erotic content of spiritual allegory in Christian monastic contexts requires explanation.

EROS AND ALLEGORY

Male celibates, monks and priests, have for centuries described, expressed and celebrated their love of God in the language of sex. They did this in many genres of writing, occasionally in poetry, more often in set treatises on love, but most prolifically and characteristically in a thousand years of commentarial tradition on the Song of Songs ...

Medieval monks do not seem to have been repressed. Most seem to be happy. They *like* sexual imagery, and if a Freudian would require of repressed subjects that they are ignorant of the forces which they sublimate and that they misrecognise them in their sublimated form, then

³⁷ **שד** occurs 8x: 1:13; 4:5; 7:4, 8, 9; 8:1, 8, 10. Vulgate has “ubera” for **שד** in all its occurrences in the Song, as is generally the case also for **דד** (“mammas” instead of “ubera” once at 4:10a). Likewise LXX has **μαστοί** everywhere for **שד**.

the medieval monk, by and large, lacks an important symptom: he *knows* what he is doing, he *intentionally* denies to himself a genital outlet for his sexuality and *deliberately* transfers his sexual energies upon a spiritual object.³⁸

Turner's *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs* seeks to explain and document the erotic element in allegory of the Song, employed especially by male celibates, a phenomenon he calls "a curious fact of western christian history."³⁹ It is curious because in the New Testament the emphasis is on *agape*, a committed, self-sacrificing love acted out for the well-being of others. It has nothing to do *per se* with erotic love, though neither is it in any way its opposite. In the Septuagint, *agape* can be used of a strictly sexual attraction (2 Sam 13:4, 15), but this sense is not frequent. Turner suggests that two streams of influence account for the eroticism in the medieval commentaries on the Song: the Greek tradition of *eros* captured in the Neo-Platonism apparent from the time of Origen, and an eschatology that even in the New Testament is coupled with images of intimate union of a "bride" and "bridegroom" in a spiritual marriage.⁴⁰

Eschatology is not simply the "doctrine of end things/end times." It represents a longing for fulfillment not realized in this life. It is a theological construct that responds to human anticipation of something glorious to come. Sexual anticipation is analogous to eschatological anticipation. Turner sees the Song's opening line "May he kiss me" as an introductory anticipatory element that makes the Song serviceable for eschatological purposes. It expresses "that most erotically intense condition of all, sexual arousal at the not quite immediate prospect of fulfillment."⁴¹

Turner develops his thesis with reserve, noting in the Preface that he argues only for plausibility:

It is the main purpose of this essay to claim plausibility for the hypothesis that the monks' conscious and acknowledged preoccupations with a biblical and eschatological theology met and cross-fertilized with sources in neo-platonic metaphysical eroticism in the Song commentary⁴²

³⁸ Turner, *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs*, 17–18.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁰ See Matt 25:1–13; Eph 5:32; 2 Cor 11:2; Rev 19:7; 21:9; 22:17.

⁴¹ Turner, *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs*, 84.

⁴² Turner, *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs*, 21.

Whatever opinion one may hold of Turner's argument for *explaining* the prominent erotic element in medieval Christian writings, he has at least convincingly demonstrated, through both his essay and extensive translated selections, that the erotic element was employed frequently, consciously, and apparently eagerly.

Some of the most erotic comments on the Song are specifically those in which the "breasts" are elucidated. Now the entire Song is about "love." But the Hebrew root אהב used in the Song, and the corresponding Latin Vulgate terms (*diligo* for verbal forms of אהב; *caritas, amor, dilectio* for nominal forms), are so broad as to include all kinds of love. On the other hand, the term "breasts" in a love-song context supplies an immediate erotic connection for Christian exegetes.

We can add an additional motive for Christian exegetes to read "breasts" for ננ in the Song: they have found it an eminently enjoyable exegetical task to employ highly charged erotic language, as Turner has argued.

We can now summarize the reasons for the Christian reading and interpretation of ננ in the Song:

- (1) It was the only reading they knew.
- (2) It signified superiority of Christian teaching over Jewish teaching.
- (3) It signified superiority of Christian teaching over worldly wisdom.
- (4) It signified superiority of Christian teaching over worldly immorality.
- (5) It signified core Christian theological principles.
- (6) It provided a means to link eros and allegory, a theologically useful way to articulate eschatological longing.
- (7) It provided a means to link eros and allegory, a particularly enjoyable verbal outlet for sexual energies denied their bodily fulfillment.

While these may be viewed as strong motives to retain a particular reading, they provide no strong criteria for determining what the text intended.

6

JEWISH INTERPRETATION HISTORY OF SONG 1:2

THE SITUATION

Jewish exegetes present an equally consistent picture in their reading of **אָהב** in the Song: it always means “love.” No works that I have consulted show evidence that early and medieval Jewish writers read or commented on Song 1:2 with the word “breasts” in mind. Below I provide only a small representative sample of Jewish exegetes on Song 1:2 since additional examples do not change the main argument.

EARLY AND MEDIEVAL JEWISH TEXTS

MIDRASH RABBAH (SIXTH TO EIGHTH CENTURIES)

The Midrash Rabbah on the Song of Songs is thought to have originated between the sixth and eighth centuries C.E., though the earliest manuscripts date from the eleventh century C.E.¹ The root “love” is presupposed throughout, although we do find a discussion on the gender of the suffix, similar to Bernard:

‘Brother Ishmael,’ he said, ‘How do you read “For *dodeka* (thy love) is better than wine”, or “*dodayik*”? He replied: ‘It cannot be the latter,

¹ Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, trans. Markus Bockmuehl (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 315. The oldest fragments derive from the Cairo Genizah and Leningrad.

because the subsequent words throw light upon it, *Thine ointments* (shemaneka) *have a goodly fragrance*.²

The question concerns the issue of which oral tradition—regarding only the vocalization of the suffix—is correct, the one that reads *dōdeka* (your [sg. m.] love), implying that the woman is speaking to the man, or *dōdayik* (your [sg. f.] love), implying that the man is speaking to the woman. The question appears to be settled on the basis of an oral tradition of a following word with the same suffix, that could, of course, theoretically embed the identical ambiguity, but apparently did not: *šemaneka* (your [sg. m.] ointments) was read instead of *šemanayik* (your [sg. f.] ointments), and since דודיך and שמניך are parallel (or thought to be), the suffixes must be the same.

One notes that, while both Christian and Jewish exegetes discussed options for the gender of the suffix, both generally agree that the suffix is masculine (hence, spoken by the woman to the man), though some Christian writers argued for a change of speakers. Yet there were no discussions regarding a possible ambiguity resident in דודיך. In this case the traditions split firmly: Christians read “breasts”; Jews read “love.”

The Midrash Rabbah, however, also recognizes the possibility for דודיך in Song 1:2 to refer to a plurality of people, and not to be taken as the abstract noun “love.” This sense is parallel to the *dōdim* (“loved ones”) of Song 5:1:

Another explanation: FOR THY LOVED ONES (DODEKA) ARE BETTER THAN WINE. The words of the Torah are like one another, they are close companions (*dodim*) to one another, they are close akin to one another, as you say, or *his uncle* (dodo) or *his uncle's son* ...³

There is a play on the words “loved ones” (*dodeka* דודיך), “like” (*domin* דומין), and “close companions” (*dodin* דודין). And, although there is an intriguing editor’s footnote after the phrase “like one another” that reads—“Like two breasts (*daddin*). Lessons can be learnt from similarities in different passages”—the Midrash text makes no such argument. The plene spelling with *waw* precludes the reading *daddin*.

The Midrash Rabbah also highlights the superiority of Torah over other elements. Though the word upon which the allegorical explanation is based differs from the word read by Christian exegetes, the comparison language “X is better than wine” allows for a similar strategy:

² *The Song of Songs Rabbah 1:17* from David Kantrowitz, *Judaic Classics, Version 3.0.6* (CD-ROM) (Davka Corp., 1991–2003).

³ *Ibid.*

whatever X is in the allegory, it is better than whatever “wine” stands for in the allegory. “Another explanation: FOR THY LOVED ONES ARE BETTER THAN WINE. The words of the Torah are compared to water, to wine, to oil, to honey, and to milk.”⁴

The commentary proceeds to show just how Torah is superior in all cases. Additional points of comparison follow: “loved ones” are the patriarchs who are better than “princes”; “loved ones” are offerings that are better than drink-offerings. And finally,

Another explanation: FOR BETTER ARE THY LOVED ONES: This refers to Israel; THAN WINE: This refers to the Gentile nations. *Yod* is ten, *yod* ten, *nun* fifty, alluding to the seventy nations, to show that Israel are [sic] more beloved [הכיבִּיא] before the Holy One, blessed be He, than all the nations.⁵

Midrash Rabbah on the Song thus makes Israel superior to all other *things*, and all other *people*—as Christian exegetes did before and after the composition of this midrash.

RASHI (1040–1105)

Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaqi) was born in Troyes, in northern France, where he established his own yeshiva in 1070. Rashi wrote commentaries on the Talmud and the Bible. Among the latter he is best known for his commentaries on the Torah (“Chumash,” the “five” books of Moses), but he also wrote commentaries on all the other books, including the Song. Rashi follows an interesting pattern in his commentary: wherever the root **דד** occurs in the text of the Song, Rashi also uses that root in his explanation; wherever the root **אהב** occurs, Rashi uses that root also in his explanation. So while it seems clear from general contextual clues that Rashi understands **דד** in the sense “love,” he is not explicit about it as Abraham Ibn Ezra will be (see following), who uses **אהב**, and not **שד**, to explain **דד**.

On Song 1:2 Rashi notes:

כי טובים לי דודיך מכל משתה יין ומכל עונג ושמחה⁶

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid. The interpretation is based on gematria, as was the case with the Targum (see above).

⁶ This and the following quotations from Rashi from: *Mikra'ot Gedolot* (New York: Pardes, 1951).

For better to me (is/are) דודיך than any banquet of wine and any pleasure and joy.

On Song 1:4, on the phrase “Let us remember [your] דודיך”:

גם היום באלמנות חיות תמיד אזכיר דודיך הראשונים מכל משתה עונג
ושמחה

Even today in living widowhood I always recall [your] first דודיך
more than any banquet of pleasure and joy.

But on Song 1:4 on the phrase “rightly have they loved you (אהבוך)”:

אהבה עזה אהבת מישור

A strong love (אהבה), a straightforward love.

In summarizing 1:4, Rashi retains the matching scheme:

ושם מזכירים דודיו מיין ומישור אהבתם אותו

... and there they recall [his] דודיו more than wine, and the straightforwardness of their love (אהבתם) for him.

On Song 4:10 and 7:12 Rashi provides a more general commentary and employs neither word for “love.”

ABRAHAM IBN EZRA (CA. 1092–1167)

Abraham Ibn Ezra (Abraham ben Meir ibn Ezra) was born in Tudela, Spain and traveled about in North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, Italy, Northern France, and England, providing him opportunity for exposure to a wide range of local traditions. His commentary on the Song is three-fold, each following a different exegetical strategy.⁷

On דדיך in Song 1:2 Ibn Ezra says in his first interpretation:

Your love [אהוביך] gladdens [me] more than wine. But the Gaon⁸ said that this refers to the saliva [הריר] beneath the tongue and he brought

⁷ Quotations in this section from Ibn Ezra are from Richard A. Block, *Ibn Ezra's Commentary on the Song of Songs* = [Perush Ibn 'Ezra 'al Shir ha-shirim] (Cincinnati, Ohio: Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion, 1982).

⁸ Saadia Gaon (882–942 C.E.). A connection is made between נרוה, from the root רוה “drink one's fill,” and ריר “saliva.” Note also the graphical similarity between ריר and דוד.

evidence from the verse, *Come let us drink our fill of saliva נרוה until the morning* (Prov 7:18).

In providing a paraphrase for the reading of Song 1:2, Ibn Ezra writes “your love” (אהוביך) from the Hebrew root אהב (to love), in substitution for רדיך. A similar note is found at 7:13:

My love [אהובי], or the saliva [ריי] of the tongue.

In his second interpretation, Ibn Ezra has on Song 1:2

Your love [אהביך] satisfies and delights *more than wine*.

In his third interpretation, Ibn Ezra has on Song 1:2:

Your love [אהביך], just as He testified concerning His love [אהבתו] [in] *the seed of Abraham My friend* [אהבי] (Isa. 41:8), for there is a difference between “the one whom I love” [אהבי] and “the one who loves me” [אהובי].

On 4:10:

And they *clung* [רבקן] to God, and this is the meaning of *how sweet is your love* [רודיך].

Ibn Ezra always writes רדיך plene, רודיך, and he always glosses it with, what is for him, the Hebrew root אהב “love.” In rephrasing, as in his comment above on 4:10, Ibn Ezra uses the root רבק (“cling”) that occurs six times in the Hebrew Bible in parallel constructions with אהב, but never with a word meaning “breast,” although in three passages the word “heart” [לב] is also found:

Gen 34:3

And his soul *clung* [רבקן] to Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, And he *loved* [אהב] the girl, and he spoke to the *heart* [לב] of the girl.

Josh 22:5

Only take good care to observe the commandment and instruction that Moses the servant of YHWH commanded you, to love [לאהבה] YHWH your God, to walk in all his ways, to keep his commandments, and to hold fast [לרבקה] to him, and to serve him with all your heart [לבבכם] and with all your soul.

1 Kgs 11:1–2

And King Solomon loved [אהב] many foreign women, and the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, from the nations concerning which YHWH had said to the children of Israel, “You shall not enter *into marriage* with them, neither shall they enter *into marriage* with you; surely they will incline your [pl.] heart [לבבכם] to follow after their gods”; Solomon clung [דבק] to these in love [אהבה].

In Hebrew, the word “heart” in such contexts is connected more with the idea of “mind” than with the physical location in proximity to the chest. Two cases in Deuteronomy (11:22, 30:20) give the command to love God connected with holding fast to him, as in Josh 22:5 (but without the word “heart”). The last case is Prov 18:24: “a true friend (‘lover’ [אהב]) sticks [דבק] closer than a brother.”

The evidence for treating רדף as “love” in Ibn Ezra will prove to be a critical factor for changes that occur in Christian scholarship on the text of the Song.

GERSONIDES (1288–1344)

Gersonides (Levi ben Gershom, or Ralbag) was a Jewish polymath with connections to Muslims and Christians. A brief excerpt from his commentary on the Song will suffice to show his understanding of the text in the matter under discussion:

His saying for *thy love is better than wine* means that the intellect reckoned ab initio that love of God is more desirable and worthier than physical pleasures. He mentioned wine because it is the best known of all physical pleasures and most delectable to the masses, and the one which brings one to be drawn after the other pleasures, such as intercourse and gluttony.⁹

⁹ Levi ben Gershom, *Commentary on Song of Songs: Levi ben Gershom (Gersonides)*. Translated from the Hebrew with an introduction and annotations by Menachem Kellner (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 24.

7

TEXTUAL CONVERSION: THE CHRISTIAN READING BECOMES THE JEWISH READING

OVERVIEW

The slow but steady change that transpired in the reading of Christian Bibles to reflect the Hebrew Masoretic reading can be witnessed in the following series of English and German Bible translations. All passages in which the root **תת** receives the vowel **ō** in the Hebrew Bible, except for Song 5:1 (generally “friends”), are included in the summaries below.¹

ENGLISH: SONG

	Wycliff c. 1380	Coverdale 1535	Matthew 1537/1550	Great 1539
1:2	tetis/tetes	brestes	brestes	loue
1:4	tetis/tetes	brestes	brestes	loue
4:10a	tetis/tetes	brestes	brestes	brestes
4:10b	tetis/tetes	brestes	brestes	brestes
7:12	tetis/tetes	brestes	brestes	brestes

	Geneva 1560	Bishop's 1568	Douay 1609	AV 1611
1:2	loue	loue	brestes	Loue
1:4	loue	loue	brests	loue
4:10a	loue	breastes	breastes	loue
4:10b	loue	breastes	breastes	loue
7:12	loue	brestes	breasts	loues

¹ For publication details on each of the versions cited, see Appendix 2.

ENGLISH: PROVERBS & EZEKIEL

	Prov 7:18	Ezek 16:8	Ezek 23:17
Wycliff c. 1380	be we fillid with tetis	the tyme of louyeris	to the bed of tetis
Coverdale 1535	let us lye together	yee eve(n) the tyme to wowe the	they laye with her
Matthew 1537, 1550	lette us lye together	yea even the tyme to wowe ye	they lay with her
Great 1539	lett us lye together	yee, eve(n) the tyme to wowe the	they laye with her
Geneva 1560	let vs take our fil of loue	the time of loue	came to her into the bed of loue
Bishop's 1568	let us take our fill of loue	yea [even] the time to woo thee	came unto her in the bed of loue
Douay 1609	let vs be inebriated with brestes	the time of louers	were come to her vnto the bed of pappes
AV 1611	let vs take our fill of loue	the time of loue	came to her into the bed of loue

GERMAN: SONG

	Luther 1534	Luther 1545/1580	Luther 1728	Luther 1743	Luther 1755	German 1899	Luther 1928
1:2	brüste	Brüste	Brüste	liebe	Brüste	Liebe	Liebe
1:4	brüste	Brüste	Brüste	liebe	Brüste	Liebe	Liebe
4:10a	brüste	Brüste	Brüste	brüste	Brüste	Brüste	Liebe
4:10b	brüste	Brüste	Brüste	brüste	Brüste	Brüste	Liebe
7:12	brüste	Brüste	Brüste	brüste	Brüste	Brüste	Liebe

GERMAN: PROVERBS & EZEKIEL

	Prov 7:18	Ezek 16:8	Ezek 23:17
Luther 1534	las vns gnug bulen	du warest manbar	bey ir zu schlaffen
Luther 1545/1580	las vns gnug bulen	die zeit vmb dich zu bulen	bey jr zu schlaffen / nach der liebe
Luther 1728	laß uns gnug bulen	Zeit um dich zu bulen	bey ihr zu schlafen nach der Liebe
Luther 1743	laß uns gnug bulen	zeit um dich zu werben	bey ihr zu schlafen nach der Liebe
Luther 1755	laß uns genug buhlen	um dich zu buhlen	bey ihr zu schlafen, nach der Liebe
German 1899	laß uns genug buhlen	Zeit, um dich zu werben	bei ihr zu schlaffen nach der Liebe
Luther 1928	laß uns genug buhlen	Zeit, um dich zu werben	bei ihr zu schlaffen nach der Liebe

DISCUSSION OF THE CONVERSION PROCESSES

ENGLISH PROTESTANT BIBLE CONVERSION

For English Protestant Bibles, beginning with the first Great Bible of 1539, the reading “love” is adopted in nearly all subsequent English editions for Song 1:2 and 1:4, except for those that reprint or are based on the older versions of Wycliff, Coverdale, and the Matthew editions. However, the reading “breasts” is retained in the Great Bible and Bishop’s Bible for Song 4:10 and 7:12. With the advent and mass popularity of the Authorized (King James) Version (1611), and in nearly every non-Catholic English Bible since then up to the present day, all five passages in the Song read “love,” except that the Authorized Version curiously retains the plural “loves” only at Song 7:12.

For passages outside the Song, only Ezek 16:8 never used a word meaning “breast,” but words for either “love” or “woo.” Prov 7:18 and Ezek 23:17 migrate from “tetis” to “lie” and finally to “love.” At the end of the process the word “love” reflects the root $\text{ל}\text{ו}$ in all three passages in spite of the different expressions in which $\text{ל}\text{ו}$ is found in each of the three.

GERMAN LUTHER BIBLE CONVERSION

German Luther editions follow a similar two-stage conversion process for the Song. The first change affects only Song 1:2 and 1:4, and only later the other three places in the Song. One also notes that the changes in Luther editions seem to lag behind English editions by a couple hundred years or so.²

For passages outside the Song there is greater uniformity than is seen in the English versions as far as the translation of the word in each passage is concerned. However, with respect to each other the passages always retained some difference of expression: (1) *buhlen* for Prov 7:12; (2) *werben* for Ezek 16:8; (3) *schlaffen nach der Liebe* for Ezek 23:17. Thus the word “Liebe” reflects $\text{ל}\text{ו}$ in only one of the three.

² Dutch editions appear to have made the global change earlier than Luther editions. A 1713 edition of a Dutch Bible (Pieter Keur: Dordrecht, and Pieter Rotterdam: Amsterdam) has the equivalent of “love” in all 5 passages in the Song. I thank Douglas Machle, the owner of this 1713 edition, for providing these readings and other information in regard to the Dutch editions.

ENGLISH CATHOLIC BIBLE CONVERSION

For Catholic Bibles, the reading of Ezek 23:17 changed to “bed of love” in the 1750 Challoner³ revision of the Douay version, but the reading in Song 1:2, 4; 4:10; 7:12 is still “breasts.” In the Confraternity Bible (1960),⁴ Song 1:2 and 1:4 read “love,” but “breasts” is still the reading at 4:10 and 7:12. “Lovers” or “love” is the reading in the three passages outside the Song. The New American Bible (1970) reads “love” in all five places in the Song, as well as in the three passages outside the Song.

LATIN BIBLE CONVERSION

While the official Catholic Latin editions retained “breasts” until 1979, some early Latin editions do translate using “amores,” “love” (if “amores” is taken as abstract plural like the Hebrew). In examining these Latin editions we obtain a little better insight into the nature of that process.

The reading “breasts” (ubera) is found in numerous Latin editions I have been able to view, dating to 1479, 1481, 1482, 1490, 1532, 1563 (hubera), 1583 (hubera). This is as one would expect. There is, however, a Latin edition from 1528 that offers the following text:⁵

quia meliores sunt amores tui vino

There is no marginal or other note indicating any alternate reading. Compare this version with that of the Vulgate and the Nova Vulgata:

³ Online edition of *The Holy Bible translated from the Latin Vulgat: ... first published by the English College at Doway, Anno 1609. Newly revised, and corrected, according to the Clementin edition of the Scriptures. With annotations ...* [Dublin?], 1750. 4 vols. Based on information from *English Short Title Catalogue. Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale Group. <http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/ECCO>

⁴ *New Catholic Edition of the Holy Bible: Old Testament, Confraternity-Douay Version with the New Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Translation of the First Eight Books, and the Seven Sapiential Books of the Old Testament and the New Testament, Confraternity Edition, a Revision of the Challoner-Rheims Version Edited by Catholic Scholars under the Patronage of the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Catholic Book Publishing, 1960).

⁵ *Biblia cum concordantiis veteris et novi testamenti et sacrorum canonum: necno et additionibus in marginibus varietatis diversorum textuum ac etiam canonibus antiquis quattuor Evangeliorum. Novissime autem addite sunt concordantie ex viginti libris Josephi de antiquibus et bello Judaico excepte* (Lugduni: Jacobum Marechal, 1528). A copy of this 1528 Latin edition is housed in the Special Collections Rare Book section of the University of Washington (Seattle) library.

1528 ed.: quia meliores sunt amores tui vino
 Vulgate: quia meliora sunt ubera tua vino
 Nova Vulgata: nam meliores sunt amores tui vino

This 1528 Latin edition uses *amores* also in all other places in the Song where **יך** occurs, except 5:1, where it has “*charissimi*” (“beloved ones”). Thus, it is fully in line with the Tiberian tradition, and not the LXX or preceding Latin traditions.

In 1534 the reading “*amores*” (“love”) was entered in the side margin of another Latin Bible⁶ by its editor, Robert Stephanus (Estienne), whose work on the Greek New Testament became known as the “*Textus Receptus*” of that text corpus. The main body text still offered “*ubera*.” Unlike other editions offering only one or the other reading, at least this 1534 edition gives the reader more information: the marginal note on “*ubera*” reads “*v.l.*” (*vario lectio*, “variant reading”)—“*amores*.”

When and under what circumstances did the knowledge/tradition that **יך** means *your love* make its debut among those who had always read *breasts*? Was there an open debate, and one side conceded? Or did someone learn something new and introduce that learning to an audience that was receptive to new insight into the text?

In order to answer these questions we need to examine the time period between 930 C.E. (the first pointed Hebrew text of Song 1:2) and ca. 1500 C.E., about the time “love” enters Latin, English, and German Bibles.

JEWS, CHRISTIANS, AND THE SONG

INITIAL CONTACT: HEBREW-LATIN BILINGUALS

I begin by noting the existence of Hebrew Bibles containing Latin translations of the Hebrew text, either in separate columns, between the lines, or in the margins, from the twelfth to thirteenth centuries C.E. Are these bilingual texts indicative of Jewish interest in Latin, or Christian interest in Hebrew? Probably both are true. At that time, however, “the system of vowel points was often disregarded by medieval Christian scholars in their studies of Hebrew.”⁷ It may be that since the vowel

⁶ Roberti Stephani, ed., *Biblia. Breves in eadem annotationes, ex doctiss. interpretationibus, & Hebræorum commentariis. Interpretatio nominum Hebraicorum. Index Epistolarum & Euāgeliorum totius anni. Index rerum & sententiarū vtriusque testamenti* (Paris: 1534).

⁷ Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, “The Knowledge and Practice of Hebrew Grammar Among Christian Scholars in Pre-expulsion England: The Evidence of

points had been a relatively recent introduction to the Hebrew text, they were not considered to have the same authority as the consonantal text, which, as I have already noted, was ambiguous without, and perhaps even with (depending on dialectal considerations), an accompanying oral tradition. It may also be that it simply took time for Christians to acquire the necessary skills to decipher the detailed system of pointing introduced by the Masoretes.

NICHOLAS OF LYRA (~1270–1349)

Nicholas of Lyra was born probably in Neuve-Lyre in northern France (Normandy), approximately 300–350 km from Laon, where the compilation of the *Glossa Ordinaria* was undertaken by Anselm a couple hundred years earlier. Lyra's demonstrated knowledge of Hebrew has suggested to some that he might have been a converted Jew, but this claim cannot be substantiated. Lyra refers often to Rashi in his writings, and he later became criticized in Christian circles for relying too heavily on Rashi. Lyra wrote of his intent to make use not only of Catholic theologians, "but also of the Hebrews, especially Rabbi Solomon [Rashi], who among the Hebrew doctors spoke more reasonably in expressing the literal sense."⁸

Between 1322 and 1339 Lyra compiled two voluminous sets of notes on the Bible: the *Postilla litteralis*, which became the first Bible commentary in print (Rome, 1471–1472), and the *Postilla moralis*.

Lyra's comments on the Song show the middle position on 77: "love" in Song 1:2 [1:1] and 1:4 [1:3]; "breasts" in Song 4:10 and 7:12.

On 1:1 Lyra notes:

For thy breasts are better than wine. The Hebrew says, *for thy loves are better [than wine]*. The Hebrew word used here means both "loves" and "breasts." The Hebrew interpreters follow the first meaning, and our [Latin] translation follows the other. But in this case the Hebrew interpreters seem to be on better ground, because, according to the peculiar nature of the Hebrew language, what seems here to be directed to the bride is actually directed to the groom, and, in praising the groom, it does not seem proper to mention his breasts. On the other hand, it might be said that, by the breasts of the groom, the fullness of God's mercy is understood. So, according to the Hebrew interpreters the sense

'Bilingual' Hebrew-Latin Manuscripts," in *Hebrew Scholarship and the Medieval World*, ed. Nicholas de Lange (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 24. See also the other literature cited in this article.

⁸ James George Kiecker, ed., *The 'Postilla' of Nicholas of Lyra on the Song of Songs* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1998), 15.

is this: *For thy loves are better than wine*, that is, your love is more delicious to a devout mind than any earthly flavor to the sense of taste. According to our translation the sense is: *[For] thy breasts are better than wine*, that is, the fullness of your mercy is sweeter to the human mind than wine to the sense of taste, wine being among the things that people consider very delicious.⁹

Lyra refers back to this explanation in his brief comments on Song 1:3: “*remembering thy breasts or thy loves*, according to the Hebrew interpreters as I explained above.”

Here for the first time the double meaning of **חָמָה** is documented. Lyra is the first writer, Christian or Jew, who says that the Hebrew word carries both meanings. The Latin reads: “*nomen enim Hebraicum hic positum equivocum est ad amores et ubera.*”

The Hebrew word is “equivocal”—it carries more than one meaning. In the following sentence it appears that Lyra begins to argue for the Hebrew reading as the *better* one. But the key word in that sentence is “*videntur*” (“seem”)—the Jews only *seem* to be on better ground, since their rendering removes the awkwardness of praising a man’s breasts. However, interpreted in a certain light, the rendering “breasts” turns out to mean essentially the same thing as “love.” So, it appears, the reader may read it either way. The situation is clearly laid out by Lyra: (1) the Hebrew *word* is ambiguous; (2) the Hebrew *interpreters* read it one way (“love”); (3) Catholic *interpreters* read it another way (“breasts”); (4) But the *word* can be read *either way*, since the respective *interpretations amount to the same thing*. This is a remarkable position. I have found no parallel among ancient, medieval, or modern writers. Lyra correctly identified this word in context as a *double entendre*. What enabled him to see what apparently no one else had seen before? Perhaps it was his penchant for finding broad, middle ground that on the one hand countered both traditional Jewish and traditional Catholic exegesis, but on the other hand brought them together. Kiecker’s summary of Lyra’s general interpretation strategy of the Song makes a strong case for this view:

Lyra rejects various interpretations: He rejects as too fleshly for Scripture the interpretation that the groom and his bride are literally no more than Solomon and Pharaoh’s daughter. Likewise he rejects the Jewish interpretation that the groom is literally God and the bride is literally the Jews. He also rejects the Catholic interpretation that the groom is Christ and the bride is the Church. Both Jewish and Catholic interpretations strike Lyra as too narrow. Rather, blending the two, Lyra believes

⁹ Ibid., 35.

the groom is literally God, and the bride is literally the Church of all ages, God's people in both the Old and New Testaments.¹⁰

Lyra accomplished this "blending" of the two by adopting a historical-allegorical interpretation of the Song: chapters 1–6 recount the history of Israel and Chapters 7–8 the early history of the church.¹¹

In commenting on the other passages in which **דד** occurs in the Song, however, Lyra is not aware of any equivocation. In Song 4:5 the bride's breasts (Hebrew sg. **דש**) are described in the series of bodily descriptions in 4:1–5. Then in 4:10 her *dodim* are described, concerning which Lyra says:

How beautiful are thy breasts etc. Breasts should be understood as I explained earlier. Here they are said to be *more beautiful than wine*, because of the beauty and elegance contained in the tablets of the Law.¹²

The expression "as I explained earlier" undoubtedly means earlier in this context, and not all the way back to 1:1, 3. Lyra's initial comments on 4:5 echo those of Gilbert:

Thy two breasts like two young roes that are twins, that is, they are the same size, not too large, but well-proportioned, insofar as they show the female sex. All the above-mentioned things clearly contribute to a woman's bodily beauty. However, by means of this parable, one should see the spiritual beauty of the bride, that is, the spiritual beauty of Israel during the Old Testament ... The two breasts are the two tablets of the Law, from which one draws the milk of sacred knowledge and devotion.¹³

The identification of "breasts" with the two tablets of the Law make it clear that, in Lyra's view, 4:10 revisits the thought of 4:5. Lyra shows no awareness that the *identical Hebrew word* as that found in 1:1, 3 is "equivocum" in 4:10. Apparently he is here relying only on his Latin text which read "ubera" for the two different Hebrew words used in 4:5, 10b (but "mammas" in 4:10a). This is also the case for Song 7:12, where Lyra notes only briefly:

¹⁰ Ibid., 18.

¹¹ See also Herman Hailperin, *Rashi and the Christian Scholars* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963), 240–46.

¹² Kiecker, ed., *The 'Postilla' of Nicholas of Lyra on the Song of Songs*, 71.

¹³ Ibid., 67–69.

There will I give thee my breasts, that is, I will provide the teaching contained in both Testaments for your benefit.

Note that Lyra has shifted from “two tablets of the Law” in 4:10, where Lyra’s historical-allegory is still tracking the history of Israel (through Chapter 6), to “both Testaments” in 7:12, where Lyra now follows the early church. For Lyra the text in 7:12 unequivocally reads “breasts.”

Ultimately this means that Lyra was simply not consistent in supplying insight from the Hebrew text or reading tradition in his commentary. Lyra noted the equivocal nature of the Hebrew word only at Song 1:2 and 1:4. It should not be too difficult to ascertain why this was the case. As I have noted earlier, in Song 4:10 and 7:12 the Latin text’s “ubera” (or “mammae”) refer to the girl. When a text makes sense as it stands, there is no need to consult the Hebrew tradition. It is, therefore, not his inherent interest in things Hebrew, or “original” meanings, that provides the motive for Lyra’s investigation into the Hebrew word in Song 1:2 and 1:4; it is the fact that his Latin text’s “ubera” is *problematic* in those two places since, as he noted, “in praising the groom, it does not seem proper to mention his breasts.”

Within a couple hundred years after Lyra, new translations of the Bible will follow one of three lines: (1) they will translate דָּד in the Song always as “breasts” following the Latin text; (2) they will translate דָּד in Song 1:2 and 1:4 as “love,” and elsewhere in the Song as “breasts”; (3) they will translate דָּד in the Song always as “love.” The first is based on a long tradition that is also reflected in the Greek. The second is motivated primarily by the need to remove an awkward reading, and finds support in the Hebrew tradition for that removal. The third consistently favors the Hebrew reading which differs everywhere in the Song from the Latin and Greek readings.

A THIRTEENTH CENTURY LATIN VERSION OF RASHI’S COMMENTARY ON THE SONG

During the second half of the thirteenth century an anonymous author produced a Latin version of Rashi’s commentary on the Song entitled: *Expositio hystorica Cantici Canticorum secundum Salomonem*—the name at the end is a play on “Solomon” and “Salomen,” the medieval Christian name for Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, or Rashi. The editors of the manuscript¹⁴ of this interesting work characterize it as follows:

¹⁴ Vatican MS Latin 1053, ff. 105a–114d. The manuscript also contains exegetical works of Andrew and Richard of St. Victor. See Sarah Kamin and

We have before us a unique composition, unparalleled in the whole range of medieval Latin exegesis. Its originality lies in the adaptation of Rashi, not only to the nuances of the Vulgate text but also to the cultural climate of medieval Christendom. Our author succeeds in balancing himself on a tightrope between the apparently opposite poles of Rashi and the Judaism he represents on the one hand, and the Vulgate, its exegetical *corpus* and its enveloping cocoon of Christian dogma and tradition, on the other.¹⁵

The work is not unique in terms of Christian use of Jewish sources, especially Rashi. The uniqueness pertains to its full dependence on Rashi coupled with its moderating stance between Jewish and Christian traditional dogma. As for Christian use of Jewish and Hebrew sources, Kamin and Saltman note:

For, from the twelfth century onwards, many Christian exegetes made use of Rashi's commentaries to a greater or lesser extent, but, to the best of our knowledge, not one of them went so far as to state that his commentary was based on Rashi or composed in accordance with (*secundum*) Rashi. Our author runs counter to the normal course. Such notable Hebraists as Hugh and Andrew of St. Victor, Herbert of Bosham, and even Nicholas de Lyra, draw on Jewish exegesis as a subsidiary source. But, here, it is the Christian sources which play second fiddle to the maestro Rashi. Indeed, our author does not admit to his readers that he is making use of Christian exegesis at all; Rashi is the only source he acknowledges.¹⁶

The anonymous author identifies fourteen places where the Hebrew and Latin texts differ, but, as the editors observe:

Had he been really interested in questions of philology, it would be hard to understand why the discrepancies he points out are by no means the most significant, and many important variations are ignored.¹⁷

Among the passages ignored are all of the 77 passages in the Song. For example, on 1:2 the author merely glosses and notes:

Avrom Saltman, eds., *Secundem Salomonem: A Thirteenth Century Latin Commentary on the Song of Solomon* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1989), 47.

¹⁵ Kamin and Saltman, eds., *Secundem Salomonem*, 7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 21, n. 60.

Quia meliora sunt ubera tua, id est misericordia tua.
 [For your breasts are better, that is your mercy.]

Nothing is noted here or at 1:4, 4:10, or 7:12 in regard to a different meaning of the Hebrew word. So while, on the one hand, the author claims to follow Rashi fully, Lyra offers more information at least on 1:2 than this *Expositio hystorica*.

MARTIN LUTHER (1483–1546)

Luther was well acquainted with the works of Lyra; Luther cites Lyra hundreds of times in his works, mostly favorably, but he often enough also disagrees sharply with Lyra, or is ambivalent toward him. Kiecker notes:

An old tradition links Lyra with Luther. On the inside cover of the 1482 edition used for this translation, the phrase *Nisi Lyra Lyrasset, Lutherus non saltasset* (If Lyra had not played his lyre, Luther would not have danced), punning on Lyra's name, appears twice, in different hands. The origin of the phrase, in various forms, is not certain.¹⁸

Luther's work of Bible translation began with the New Testament, which he accomplished at the age of 38 in the remarkably short time of less than three months, from mid-December 1521 to the beginning of March 1522. The first printed copies rolled off the press in September 1522, giving rise to the name of this edition as the "Septembertestament." Luther began work on the Old Testament in 1522, which he issued in three installments in 1523 (Pentateuch), 1524 (Joshua to Esther), and later in 1524 the remaining books.

In several instances Luther expresses a low attitude toward previous versions and contemporary scholarship, even when he himself admits his own shortcomings. In his Preface to the Books of Moses, Luther says:

Herewith, I commend all my readers to Christ, and ask that they will help me get from God the power to carry this work through to a profitable end, for I freely admit that I undertook too much, especially in trying to put the Old Testament into German. The Hebrew language, sad to say, has gone down so far that even the Jews know little enough about it, and their glosses and interpretations (which I have tested) are not to be trusted. I think that if the Bible is to come up again, we Christians are the ones who must do the work, for we have the understanding of Christ, without which the knowledge of the language is nothing. Because they were without it, the old interpreters, even Jerome,

¹⁸ Kiecker, ed., *The 'Postilla' of Nicholas of Lyra on the Song of Songs*, 19.

made mistakes in many passages. Though I cannot claim that I have got everything, nevertheless, I venture to say that this German Bible is plainer and surer, at many points, than the Latin, and so it is true that if the printers do not, as usual, spoil it with their carelessness, the German language has here a better Bible than the Latin language. I call upon its readers to say whether this is so.¹⁹

Luther worked continuously on revisions of his translation, as his understanding of the original language editions before him changed, and as he found more appropriate German to render the text. In October, 1531 Luther wrote: "Every day I spend two hours in revising the prophets."²⁰

Mathesius, Luther's pupil and first biographer (d. 1561), delivered seventeen sermons on the Life of Luther. Reu cites a portion from the thirteenth sermon in which the process of Luther's revision of the 1534 Bible (which took place between 1539 and 1541) was undertaken.²¹ Luther engaged for several hours weekly a team of scholars: Jews, friends, old Germans, individuals who brought their own copies of Latin, Hebrew, "Chaldean,"²² and Greek Bibles with them, and professors with rabbinical commentaries. The procedure was:

Each one had studied the text which was to be discussed and had examined Greek and Latin as well as Hebrew commentators.

Thereupon the president submitted a text and permitted each to speak in turn and listened to what each had to say about the characteristics of the language or about the expositions of the ancient doctors. Wonderful and instructive discussions are said to have taken place in connection with this work, some of which M. Georg (Rörer) recorded, which were afterwards printed as little glosses and annotations on the margin.²³

The first volume of the complete Weimar critical edition of Luther's Bible editions reproduces Ms. germ. quart 29 der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin ("Berliner Handschrift") dated to 1523/24 in Luther's own hand. (Blatt 113–254 contains Luther's translation of Job, Psalms,

¹⁹ Cited in M. Reu, *Luther's German Bible: An Historical Presentation Together with a Collection of Sources* (Columbus, Ohio: The Lutheran Book Concern, 1934), 193–94.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 208.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 212–13.

²² That is, Aramaic, which was called Chaldean even among philologists into the nineteenth century.

²³ Reu, *Luther's German Bible*, 213.

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song.) The text of the Song 1:2 is on page 632:

Er kusse mich mit dem kusse seyns mündes
Denn deyne bruste sind lieblicher den weyn.²⁴

In the manuscript, the word 'lieblicher' is written in red in the margin, to take the place of the original reading "besser" which is crossed out in red ink.²⁵

Song 1:4 reads as follows with no corrections:

Wyr gedencken an deyne bruste mehr denn an den weyn

Song 4:10 has "bruste" twice with no corrections; 5:1 has "meine freunde" (parallel to the preceding "meine lieben"); and 7:12 has "bruste" with no corrections.

Deutsche Bibel, Vol. 4 provides a printed version of the manuscript's detailed session protocols of the revision meetings that took place between 1539 and 1541. For a number of the sessions we know the month, date, day of the week, and scripture section discussed.²⁶ We do not have the exact dates for the Song sessions. There are two notes of interest for Song 1:2 and 1:4.²⁷ The first reads "Offenduntur uberib[us] Christi masculi. Dido, david kompt daher." The editor states in a footnote that Luther attempts to construct an etymological connection between *dōdēyka* and the names Dido and David. The second note is especially intriguing, which reads: "Denn deine ⟨Bru^este sind⟩ lieblicher denn Wein.: Denn deine [liebe ist] lieblicher als." This note shows Luther's awareness of the alternate reading. The editor's signs ⟨ ⟩ and [] indicate that the words "Bru^este sind" are the original words, which are crossed out and have written over them the words "liebe ist." Normally this would indicate that in a forthcoming printed edition, the text should read "liebe ist." However, the editor of *Deutsche Bibel* states in a footnote: "die alte Übersetzung bleibt bestehen." But as we see, Luther editions generally, as the footnote indicates, retain the reading "Brüste" for a long time after these notes were completed in 1541. The protocol notes have

²⁴ D. Martin Luthers *Deutsche Bibel*, vol. 1 (Weimar: H. Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1906).

²⁵ Explanations of editor notes for representing corrections in the manuscript are found in *Deutsche Bibel* 1, XXI–XXIII.

²⁶ See D. Martin Luthers *Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Die Deutsche Bibel*, vol. 4 (Weimar: Hermann Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1923), XXIX–XXX.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

nothing comparable to offer on Song 4:10; only the word “Brüste” appears in the note there. On Song 7:12 there is this short note: “Brüste amoris, Zitzen lactationis” (“breasts of love, teats of enticement”) with the words in Latin in smaller print.

Luther delivered a series of lectures on the Song between March 7, 1530 and June 22, 1531; they were printed in 1539:

It was not until 1539 that the lectures appeared in print. The editor who prepared them for publication was Veit Dietrich, who had also been present in Luther’s classroom when the lectures were being delivered. He had hesitated to issue them, hoping that other auditors would prepare them in a more ample version, but was finally persuaded to go ahead. Luther supplied a preface.²⁸

In Luther’s commentary on the Song of Songs, we always have **77** = “breast” with the traditional interpretive equation: “breasts” = “teaching.”

Song 1:2

For Your breasts are more delightful than wine.

Breasts refer to doctrine, by which souls are fed so that “the man of God may be perfect for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:17). He compares doctrine with wine, of which Holy Scripture declares that it makes the heart glad (Ps. 104:15). Wine is thus metaphorically used for all the world’s delights and gratifications.

And this is, so to speak, the voice of an outstanding faith, which declares, “I prefer Your Word to all the pleasures of the world.” For we must refer everything to the Word.²⁹

Song 1:4

We will recall Your breasts more than wine.

This is part of his thanksgiving, that is: “We shall be grateful, we shall remember Your remembrance, how You love us, seeing that You give us Your breasts.” For “to recall” means to preach, to praise, to give thanks. As before, he calls all physical and fleshly joys “wine.”³⁰

²⁸ Martin Luther, *Notes on Ecclesiastes, Lectures on the Song of Solomon, Treatise on the Last Words of David*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 15, Luther’s Works (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999 [CD-ROM], 1972), 15.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 197.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 199.

Song 4:10

How beautiful are your breasts, My sister, My bride!

The breasts can be found not only in the teachers but also in the people. For the saying of Christ is true (Matt. 18:20): "Where two or three are gathered in My name, I shall be in the midst of them." So when in private brother consoles brother, when he announces the remission of sins, that Word is valid and does not deceive. For the Holy Spirit is active through the Word whenever it is rightly and sincerely applied, whether in public or in private.³¹

Your breasts are sweeter than wine.

Every other sort of consolation is nothing if you compare it with those consolations which the Word of God places before us.

Song 7:12

Let us go out early to the vineyards, etc.

We want to see whether among those peoples, too, there are some good men, men who will be useful to the state.

There I will give You my breasts.

We shall teach in those regions also; we shall put our worship and law into practice even among them.³²

Throughout all of his exegetical and translation work, Luther retained the word "breasts" for **חָמָם** in the Song although (1) he learned Hebrew, (2) he often relied on Nicholas of Lyra, who knew the alternate meaning for **חָמָם** at least in Song 1:2 and 1:4, and (3) the alternate rendering was discussed and entered into the notes of the protocol sessions in which Luther was present. The probable reason for the long delay in the conversion of readings of the German Luther editions is simply this—they were *Luther Bibles*! Their goal was to pass on the Luther tradition, and the last edition of the Luther Bible published before Luther's death still retained the old renderings. Eventually, Luther Bibles undergo more severe editing than simply updating sixteenth century German to the current standard. This may have been motivated in part by the appearance of new versions of the Bible in German. For example, in 1871 the first version of the Elberfelder Bibel appeared. A 1905 edition of Elberfelder (Perlbibel) renders **חָמָם** everywhere (Song, Proverbs, and

³¹ Ibid., 233.

³² Ibid., 253.

Ezekiel) as "Liebe." As other German versions appeared with the same renderings, it would only be a matter of time until the Luther Bible itself would also convert to "love," inasmuch as it becomes less important to retain Luther's wording, and more important to transmit the "Luther Bible" in the "spirit" of Luther, revising it from time to time, just as he did. However, while the most recent 1984 revision indeed has "Liebe" everywhere in the Song (including 5:1, "werdet trunken von Liebe"), it retains the flavor of Luther in the passages outside the Song: "kosen" in Prov 7:18 (more refined than "buhlen"), still "werben" in Ezek 16:8, and "bei ihr zu schlaffen" (although without the expansion "nach der Liebe").

8

ARGUMENTS FOR THE “EQUIVOCUM” OF **אֵל** IN THE SONG

AMBIGUITY OF SEMITIC COGNATES AND RELATED WORDS

I refer here to the section above “Cognates and Parallels of **אֵל**” and note that, just as in the literatures of Israel’s geo-political and linguistic neighbors, the cognate root is used in a variety of polysemous ways in texts of erotic content also in early Hebrew writings.

NICHOLAS OF LYRA’S OBSERVATION

With the exception of one note from Nicholas of Lyra, the entire transmission history of **אֵל** in the Hebrew Bible can be described as a struggle to answer the question: “which word do I read?” Nicholas indicated that the word in Song 1:2 was “equivocum”—ambiguous. He showed how, in allegorical modes of interpretation, either of the equivocal readings could work in that passage. But that would be the case *only* in this passage, and *only* in allegorical senses, since otherwise it would not make sense for a woman to speak erotically of a man’s breasts. At least, however, Nicholas caught that the Hebrew word itself was ambiguous.

CHANGE OF SPEAKERS

If one accepts the possibility of an abrupt change of speakers in Song 1:2, as occurs according to almost all interpreters between Song 1:15 and 1:16, and between Song 7:8 and 7:10, the breasts belong to the girl, and any sense of “awkwardness” is removed. Thus, the ambiguity of **אֵל** is connected to ambiguity of the Hebrew pronoun subjects and pronominal suffixes.

רָר AMONG OTHER WORDS FOR “BREASTS” AND “LOVE”

A possible argument against translating רָר as “breasts” in the Song is that there is already another word used for breasts. The argument is invalidated not only by the simple observation that there is also another word used in the Song for “love,” but more fundamentally that synonyms are commonly employed in all genres, but especially in poetry. But, as I argue, the word רָר does not mean *either* “love” or “breasts” absolutely, but only relatively, depending on other choices a reader may make about the texts in which רָר occurs.

The root רָר with both vocalizations is found in parallel with אָהֵב.

Song 1:2 and 1:4, רָר (with long-o):

your love is better than wine (1:2) ... therefore the maidens love you (1:3)

remember your love more than wine (1:4) ... rightly they love you (1:4)

But אָהֵב is also closely connected with רָר (with short-a) in Prov 5:19, where the root רָר is framed by אָהֵב and connected with the root רוּה (Piel, “give to drink abundantly”):

a lovely (אֶהְיֶה) deer, a graceful doe.

May her breasts (דְּדֵי) satisfy you (יִרְנֶה) at all times;

may you be intoxicated always by her love (בְּאַהֲבָתָהּ).

The root רָר closely connected with אָהֵב does not mean it must be viewed as a synonym of אָהֵב. However, in Prov 7:18 we have:

Come, let us drink our fill (נִרְוֶה) of love (רִדִּים) until morning;

Let us delight ourselves with אֶהְיֶה.

Here רָר is vocalized “love,” although it is also connected with both אָהֵב and רוּה (Qal, “drink one’s fill”).¹ Why did the Masoretes point רָר

¹ In biblical Hebrew רוּה is found outside poetic language (Psalms, Proverbs, Lamentations) only once, in Jeremiah in the metaphorical sense of a sword drinking its fill of blood (Jer 46:10). One can be “sated” with “wormwood” (Lam 3:15, parallel to “filled [שָׂבַע] with bitterness”), “fatness (דֶּשֶׁן) of your house” (Ps 36:9, parallel to “you give them drink from the river of your delights”); “breasts” (Prov 5:19); “love” (Prov 7:18), and in the senses to water the ground (“furrows,” Ps 65:11), and of a generous man giving water (Prov 11:25). The adjective רוּהָ means “well-watered” (Deut 29:19; “garden,” Isa 58:11, Jer 31:12); and the noun

as "breasts" in one case, but "love" in the other, when the associated parallel words are identical in both cases? The answer may reflect the same discussions about a certain "awkwardness" that occur among Christian exegetes: because in Prov 5:19 the exhortation addresses what a *man* does to a *woman*, but in 7:18 it is the *woman* speaking, and she presumably does not mean to suggest they *both* drink their fill of "breasts," at least in the view of the Masoretes. But if this was a consideration that influenced the vocalization decision, it tells us also that the Masoretes perhaps took too literally the absolute sense of רַר and its first person plural subject "let us drink our fill."

In Song 7:1–9 the girl is described for the third time in the Song. Her breasts are described in 7:4, 7:7 and 7:8. In the last passage the boy says in 7:7–9:

Your stature is like a palm tree And your breasts are clusters. I said, "I will climb the palm tree, I will take hold of its fruit stalks. Oh, may your breasts be like clusters of the vine, and the fragrance of your nose like apples/apricots. And your mouth like the best wine!

The girl responds in 7:12: "I will give you רַר" (my "love", or my "breasts"). He has described her breasts twice; then asked to lay hold on them. She says, "Come ... let us go ... I will give you my רַר." Note in 7:7–9 also the nexus "breasts" "fragrance" (same word found in 1:3 after רַר), and the allusion to drinking and wine.

POSSIBLE CAPTURE OF *DOUBLE ENTENDRE* IN ANCIENT VERSIONS

ARAMAIC TARGUM

The Aramaic Targum uses the root חבב twice, as a noun-participle pair, in the phrase "greatness of his love, loving us ..." (חִיבְתָּא רַחֲבִיב). The Aramaic verb חבב, which is related to its Biblical Hebrew counterpart, means fundamentally "to bosom, love."² In the Piel stem it is typically translated "to love, cherish, embrace." The nominal form (חִיבָה) means "love, esteem, honor." A חֲבִיב is an "uncle" or a "dear friend" (we might say, "bosom buddy"). Now the verbal root חבב is a

רַר is found once in Ps 23:5 of a "saturated" cup (image of a saturated drinking vessel, or with HALOT, 1202 "superfluity of drink").

² Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: The Judaica Press, Inc., 1989; reprint, 2004, Judaica Treasury), 415.

denominative of the hollow root **חוב**, which, as a noun, means “bosom” (root II in Jastrow). Thus, the Aramaic root **חבב** used in the Targum allegorically of God’s love for Israel has the same semantic ambiguity embedded within it as does the Hebrew **רר**. (The root is also used in Midrash Rabbah 1:19, which parallels the sense of the Targum).

The Hebrew cognate of Aramaic **חבב** behaves in much the same way. The root surfaces in the Hebrew Bible only twice. In Deut 33:3 the Qal participle of **חבב** refers to Yahweh’s love of peoples, in a construction of enallage, shifting from third to second person:

אַף חֲבֵב עַמִּים כָּל-קִדְשָׁיו בְּיָדְךָ

Indeed, a lover of peoples; all his holy ones are in your hand.

The subject of the participle **חֲבֵב** is Yahweh (see Deut 33:2).

In the second passage, Job 31:33, the word **חב** means “breast, bosom” then in a transferred sense “shirt-pocket”³

אִם-כִּסֵּיתִי כְּאָדָם פֶּשַׁעִי לְטִמּוֹן בְּחֻבִּי עֹנִי:

If I had concealed, like people *do*, my transgression, by hiding in my “bosom” my iniquity.

Whether intentional or not, the Aramaic Targum captured the same ambiguity of meanings that resides in vowelless Hebrew **רר**, by using the root **חבב**, which also in its biblical Hebrew counterpart carries the same ambiguity of meanings, now “love,” now “bosom.”

SYRIAC PESHITTA

The Peshitta of Song 1:2 reads:

Song 1:2 *ṭbyn rḥmyk mn ḥmrʿ* better is your love than wine

There are two possible ways in which the Peshitta text attempts to capture the *double entendre* of Hebrew **רר**. First, the word for “love” (*rḥm*) used here is literally “womb” with the following range of meanings:

womb, a woman’s privy parts; the bladder; testicles.

Usually pl. *bowels*, metaph. *Tenderness, mercy, compassion, affection, favour*⁴

³ See *HAHAT* II, 316.

While "breasts" is not included in the range of meanings, the Syriac word mirrors the semantic range present in the Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Egyptian cognates of Hebrew בָּרֵךְ.

Secondly, the choice of *rh̄m* creates a sound pair with the word *hmr̄*, "wine." The Syriac translator thus doubly draws attention to the ambiguity inherent in his Hebrew *Vorlage*.

METAPHORICAL *DOUBLE ENTENDRE* FOR GOD AND ISRAEL

While one may ultimately agree with the assessment of Pope, in agreement with Ginsburg, that an appeal to the catachresis of Isa 60:16 to establish the meaning of בָּרֵךְ in Song 1:2 may be off track, one must at least be aware that interpretive strategies employed by many ancient commentaries depended simply on parallels of expression, and that context was determined secondarily based on observance of those verbal parallels. Modern scholarship approaches interpretation, as well as lexicography, from the other direction: determine the immediate contextual setting first, and then read/interpret accordingly. For the ancient commentaries, passages like Isa 60:16 referring sucking "the milk of nations" and "the breasts of kings" were natural connections to Song 1:2, 4. The exegetical link was established by asking a simple question: "are male breasts ever mentioned elsewhere as something praiseworthy?" Note also Isa 66:8–11 where future joy in Jerusalem is metaphorically described:

8 Who has heard of such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall a land be brought forth in one day? Shall a nation be born in one moment? Yet as soon as Zion was in labor she delivered her children.
9 Shall I open the womb and not deliver? says Yahweh; shall I, the one who delivers, shut the womb? says your God. 10 Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her (אֶהְיֶיהָ); rejoice with her in joy, all you who mourn over her 11 that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast (מִשָּׁד תִּנְחַמֶּיהָ); that you may drink deeply and refresh yourselves from her glorious nipple. (מִזֵּי כְבוֹדָהּ)

The metaphor uses explicit, unambiguous expressions for "breast" and "nipple," but at least the gender is feminine, in agreement with Jerusalem, which like all cities, is a grammatical feminine: Jerusalem is

⁴ R. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock, 1999).

the nursing mother; Yahweh is the provider. The gender issue takes an interesting chiasitic turn in the following verses (Isa 66:12–13):

12 For thus says Yahweh: Behold I extend well-being (שְׁלֹמִים) to her like a river, and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream; and you shall nurse and be carried on her arm, and dandled on her knees.
13 As one ("a man") whom his mother comforts, so *even* I will comfort you; and in Jerusalem you shall be comforted.

Thus, Yahweh is the nursing mother. Jerusalem is the provider. For exegetical strategies that sought out and connected verbal parallels without first delineating the character of individual contexts, the connection between Song 1:2 and Isa 66:8–13 was clear. In fact, for many commentators from antiquity through medieval times, the metaphorical interpretation of Song 1:2, 4 *was* the literal interpretation, or the *peshat*, the simple, straightforward interpretation.

TEXTUAL STRUGGLES IN THE MIDST OF RELIGIOUS STRUGGLES

The text-historical issues I have tracked to this point have only occasionally touched upon issues of religious differences that, perhaps, affected ways in which the text of the Song was read and interpreted. From the time of our first evidence of Jewish-Christian collaboration on issues of the Old Testament text until the complete conversion of some English versions from "breasts" to "love" in the Song, religious communities experienced some of the darkest hours of religious intolerance. The earliest Hebrew-Latin bilinguals date from the twelfth century, in the middle of a series of conflicts waged by Christians to recapture Jerusalem and the "Holy Land" that lasted from ca. 1095 to 1291. Nicholas de Lyra was born shortly before the last of these conflicts (1270).

As early as the fourth century C.E. Christian rulers meted out severe punishments for heresy, beginning with the execution of Priscillian of Avila, who was beheaded in 385. The Theodotian Code, published in 438, enumerates in its final Chapter (16) a number of heretical sects and pagan practices and prescribes for them severe punishments. Beginning in the twelfth century, the Catholic Church developed more formal and structured mechanisms to prosecute heretics. The institution created was designated "Inquisitio Haereticae Pravitatis Sanctum Officium," or the "Holy Office of Inquisition into Heretical Wickedness," out of which developed four manifestations or phases of inquisition: Medieval, Spanish, Portuguese, and Roman. As the reformation progressed,

animosity and intolerance for each other as well as for non-Christians grew among Catholic, Protestant, and Reformed Christians.

Jews bore the heaviest burden of religious intolerance. In the year 1190 Jews in England were massacred, or forced to convert or commit suicide; many chose the latter. In 1509 emperor Maximilian I was counseled by Johannes Pfefferkorn to confiscate and burn all Jewish books. Through the efforts of Johann Reuchlin, the most celebrated Hebraist among Christians of his day, who was also a humanist, kabbalist, and accomplished jurist, Maximilian was persuaded to rescind the edict on May 23, 1510. The aftermath of the incident, however, had significant negative consequences on Reuchlin, who at great expense of time and monetary resources spent the next few years defending himself against accusations. In January 1543 Martin Luther wrote his treatise "Von den Juden und ihren Lügen," an entirely anti-Semitic treatise advocating harsh persecution of the Jews.

These incidents only begin to tell the story of the religious struggles experienced in western Europe during the periods in which biblical scholars also labored to transmit and translate biblical texts. These suffice, however, to establish that the effect of these struggles upon the direction of scholarship of this period would have two opposing outcomes. First, a textual change could be motivated by a desire to break from a previous tradition, or to distinguish one's own religious community from others, and thus lay claim for its distinctively true character; this motive would *promote textual change*. On the other hand, the threat of persecution for anyone daring to challenge existing structures would have a polar opposite effect: rather than face persecution, it would be more expedient to *continue to accept the authority of the status quo text*. In addition, other forces were driving textual work on and in behalf of the biblical writings, such as the material and procedural aspects of scribal culture, language proficiency among copyists and exegetes, the tasks and criteria engaged for propagation and development of allegorical commentary traditions, theories and practices of textual criticism, transmission, and translation—all quite scholarly phenomena. To these one must not fail to include the societal, political, and religious forces at work, forces that had little or nothing to do with scholarly inquiry.

The English version known as the Great Bible, which incorporated far more changes into its text than the two cases in Song 1:2 and 1:4, when compared to earlier English and Latin versions, did not appear without a struggle. At the heart of the struggle lay the very issue of textual change. The printing of the Great Bible was begun in Paris, but relocated to London after printed sheets were seized by authorities in France, because the texts printed on those sheets contained readings that

differed from the status quo text that was based upon current editions of the Latin Vulgate.

CONCLUSION: THE IMPACT ON TEXTUAL CRITICISM

The long struggle for the correct rendering of **טט** in the Song appears to have been finally resolved, but with no other explanation, or justification, than with a single note in a text-critical apparatus indicating “differ-vocal”—read: “wrong-vocal.” As Dirksen notes:

Almost universally the vocalization of M is followed. One of the few exceptions is E. A. Livingstone, who holds that original “breasts” was changed to “love” for anti-anthropomorphic motives.⁵

Livingstone makes other arguments as well. He surmises that the discussion of the pronominal suffix attached to **טט** in the Midrash Rabbah of the Song implies that the Rabbis had in mind the meaning “breasts” for the root itself, because “they are in the middle of a discussion on cheese, that is to say, a process of milk,”⁶ but rabbinic discussions often rapidly change topics. Livingstone raises doubt as to whether there is any linguistic evidence allowing the plural of **טט** to be taken as a “pluralis intensivus,” although the cognate evidence for it is clear. A stronger argument is the evidence of Jerome, which is difficult to explain without assuming that some Hebrew readers in Palestine during Jerome’s day read “breasts.” Livingstone concludes with a plea for a one-sided return to the traditional Vulgate reading:

My conclusion, therefore, is that the mistake is to assimilate the pre-Masoretic versions, in particular the Latin, to the Masoretic text, and so to cut the roots from a tradition of exegesis which has derived rich nourishment from the breasts of God, that is to say, of Christ, according to the Christian revelation.⁷

The solution I propose is to acknowledge in **טט** a *double entendre*, acting in concert with other contextual ambiguities. All that needs to be done in textual criticism is to provide categories for varieties of

⁵ Dirksen, “Septuagint and Peshitta,” 16. The article referenced is E. A. Livingstone, “‘Love’ or ‘Breasts’ at Song of Songs 1:2 and 4? The Pre-Masoretic Evidence,” *Studia Patristica* 30 (1997).

⁶ Livingstone, “‘Love’ or ‘Breasts’ at Song of Songs 1:2 and 4? The Pre-Masoretic Evidence,” 9.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

polysemy in the typology of variants. For example, in the characterization scheme of *BHQ*, with which this chapter was introduced, one could add the category: *Characterizations of a Reading as Representing Intentional, Stylistic Ambiguity that Arises through Visual and/or Aural Elements*. One sub-entry under this heading could be "ambiguous vocalization."

9

MORE MULTIVALENCE IN THE SONG

The preceding section argued for the intentional use of 77 in the Song as a *double entendre*, a literary feature that has been recognized in other passages in the Song as well as in many other writings. The first additional case below examines text transmission and text-interpretive parallels between the multivalence of 77 and the multivalence of a word that became generally recognized by scholars only in recent times. The second additional case below builds upon new research into the Song in a volume co-authored by Scott Noegel and Gary Rendsburg.

JANUS PARALLELISM

As noted earlier, Song 2:12 is the first modern example of what Cyrus Gordon identified as a “Janus Parallelism.” In his comprehensive study of Janus Parallelism in the book of Job, Scott Noegel contrasts modern “either/or” textual and exegetical thinking with earlier exegetes who recognized ambiguity in the text:

Though countless tomes have been written on the book of Job from a variety of angles, none has included an in-depth discussion on its widespread employment of word-play. A few scholars have mentioned such devices, but only in passing or in brief footnotes. Doubtless, this is due to an ‘either/or’ scholarly disposition when it comes to philological analysis. Modern exegesis proceeds on the assumption that a given lexeme or passage has but one meaning or interpretation. Yet, as a perusal of the early versions and rabbinic commentaries readily demonstrates,

early exegesis recognized the multiplicity of meanings inherent in the biblical compositions.¹

According to Noegel, additional reasons for univalence of text and meaning lie in scholarly confidence in the Tiberian vocalization system, as well as in largely Indo-European philosophical structures that apply rigid principles of distinction and uniqueness to semantics.

VERSION HISTORIES

A brief historical overview of the reading of Song 2:12 shows no awareness among ancient or medieval writers that the word in the middle line is ambiguous. For the Hebrew עֵת הַקָּצִיר we have:

Texts	
LXX: καιρὸς τῆς τομῆς	time of cutting, pruning
Vulgate: tempus putationis	time of pruning
Syriac: zbn ³ dksx ³	time of pruning
Jewish Exegetes	
Rashi	singing
Ibn Ezra	singing
Gersonides	singing
Christian Exegetes	
Origen	pruning
Gregory of Nyssa	pruning
Bernard of Clairvaux	pruning
Versions	
Wycliff	shredying/kutting
Great Bible	the tyme of the byrdes syngynge is come
Confraternity (1960)	pruning the vines
American Bible (1970)	pruning the vines
Luther (1534 to present)	der Lentz/Lenz (Spring)

This appears to resemble the pattern we found for קָצַר where Jewish and Christian traditions were firmly split. That pattern breaks down

¹ Noegel, *Janus Parallelism in the Book of Job*, 14. Whether rabbinic commentaries and witnesses actually *clarify* that a word is polysemous is not in and of itself significant. The very fact that some commentaries and witnesses read a word with one meaning, while others read the same word with another meaning, is itself a pointer to polysemy.

first, and most interestingly, with the *earliest* Jewish commentaries: the Targum and the Midrash Rabbah.

TARGUM

By aligning the corresponding phrases of the Hebrew text with the Targum on the Song, it is clear that the Targumist read “pruning” and not “singing”:

Hebrew Text	Targum (based on Sperber)
The flowers	And Moses and Aaron, likened to the palm-branches, appeared, to work wonders in the land (בארעא) of Egypt.
have appeared	
in the land (בארעא)	
The time of the זמיר	And the time for the cutting-off (קיצור) of the first-born had come
has arrived	
And the voice (קול)	And the voice (קל) of the Holy Spirit of redemption, which I spoke to your father.
of the turtledove	
is heard (נשמע)	Already you have heard (שמעתון) what I said to him.
in our land.	

MIDRASH RABBAH

The same is true for the Midrash Rabbah on the Song:

THE FLOWERS APPEAR ON THE EARTH: the conquerors have appeared on the earth. Who are they? R. Berekiah said in the name of R. Isaac: As it is written, *And the Lord showed me four craftsmen* (Zech 2:3), namely, Elijah, the Messiah, Melchizedek, and the War Messiah. THE TIME OF THE ZAMIR IS COME: the time has come for Israel to be delivered; **the time has come for uncircumcision to be cut off;** [הגיע זמנה של ערלה להזמר] the time has come for the kingdom of the Cutheans to expire; the time has come for the kingdom of heaven to be revealed, as it says, *And the Lord shall be king over all the earth* (ib. 14: 9). AND THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE IS HEARD IN OUR LAND: Who is this? This is the voice of the Messiah proclaiming, *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger of good tidings* (Isa 52: 7).²

² Kantrowitz, *Judaic Classics*, Midrash Rabbah, The Song of Songs, II:33.

By using the verb זמר as an action to be performed on the “uncircumcision” (ערלה), there is no doubt that the word זמיר is understood to mean “cutting off” here. There seems to be no *double entendre*; no hint of a Janus. The expression הגיע זמנה של ערלה להזמר could not possibly also mean “The time of the uncircumcision to be sung has arrived”!

ABRAHAM IBN EZRA

Ibn Ezra notes the two possible meanings of זמיר. In the first interpretation of his commentary, he says:

Like the singing זמיר of tyrants was vanquished (Isa 25:5), and it concerns the singing of birds. Some say that is from *And you shall not prune תזמור your vineyard* (Lev 25:4), but [spring] is not the time [of pruning].³

Ibn Ezra does not consider that there might be a *double entendre* here. He rather argues against the meaning “prune.” In his third interpretation, Ibn Ezra simply notes: “[Meaning the time when] she should utter a song.”

EXPOSITIO HISTORICA

The thirteenth century anonymous Latin adaptation of Rashi, the *Expositio hystorica*, explains the different interpretations more fully than any previous commentator. Kamin and Saltman note:

On quite a few occasions our author does not attempt to harmonize Rashi with the variant Vulgate and chooses instead to point out the differences between the Hebrew and Latin texts. Having done this, he is then in a position to reproduce Rashi’s comment on “the Hebrew.”

Hebrew 2:12: עת הזמיר הגיע (The time of singing is come.) Vulgate 2:12: Tempus putationis advenit. (The time of pruning is come.) Rashi: The time of singing is come, when you will be singing the Song of the Sea (Exod 15:1).

Our author: The time of pruning is come. The Hebrew has “the time of singing”, as if to say—the time has come when you will sing the Song after crossing the Red Sea—Exod 15.⁴

The author simply notes the differences, but does not explain them. In saying “the Hebrew has” the author does not ask how Jerome, if his interest was in the *hebraica veritas*, would have chosen the wrong word

³ Block, *Ibn Ezra’s Commentary on the Song of Songs*, 111.

⁴ Kamin and Saltman, eds., *Secundem Salomonem*, 19.

for this passage. He also does not mention that the Targum and Midrash read otherwise.

NICHOLAS OF LYRA

Nicholas gives only a general interpretation of the thought of the verse and provides no information on the meaning(s) of זמיר, but there is no hint of a word meaning “pruning” in the text that he interprets:

*The flowers have appeared in our land etc., that is, a delightful time of freedom has come, during which you are able to serve me freely. This time of freedom is indicated here by the springtime, when the flowers begin to appear, the turtledoves to sing, the birds to fly, the vines to blossom, the trees to bud and the first figs to mature, in that land which ordinarily is very hot.*⁵

SUMMARY

Few writers noted the ambiguity of the Hebrew word זמיר. No writer until the time of Cyrus Gordon suggested the word may entail a *double entendre*, in this case a special kind that is framed on either side with parallels to its two possible values, one before it, the other after it. Gordon published his article on the Janus of Song 2:12 in 1978. Pope published his commentary in 1977, and fully aware of the two options for translating זמיר, from both linguistic as well as historical perspectives, seeks to find an “either/or” solution, ultimately choosing “pruning” for his translation. Fox wrote his commentary just a few years later in 1985; he notes the Janus and cites Gordon’s article, although in his translation he chooses “the time of song.”

Fox’s translation and commentary demonstrate the problem of handling *double entendre* as a translator *even when it is recognized*. The commentary clearly explains the word play and shows how זמיר means both “pruning” and “singing” at the same time and in the same space. Yet, for his translation, which precedes the comments, Fox makes no attempt to draw attention to this fact.⁶

⁵ Kiecker, ed., *The ‘Postilla’ of Nicholas of Lyra on the Song of Songs*, 53.

⁶ On the difference between “song” (from Proto-Semitic *zmr*, as in Ugaritic), and one meaning “strength” (from Proto-Semitic *ḏmr*, as in Ugaritic), and the merger of the phonemes /z/ and /ḏ/, see the discussion on pg. 96 and note 36.

POLITICAL INVECTIVE?

Scott Noegel and Gary Rendsburg investigate the genre of the Song of Songs in the light of the Arabic poetic traditions *Tashbib* and *Hijāʿ*, forms of political invective disguised as poems of praise.⁷

I propose to add Song 8:5 to the examples discussed by Noegel and Rendsburg.

MT, LXX, and Vulg. are below, with my translations in the following table:

מִי זֹאת עֹלָה מִן־הַמִּדְבָּר	Τίς αὕτη ἡ ἀναβαίνουσα λελευκανθισμένη	quae est ista quae ascendit de deserto deliciis affluens
מְתַרְפֶּקֶת עַל־דֹּרְךָ תַּחַת הַתְּאֵנָה עֹרְרָתִיךָ שָׁמָּה חֲבֹלְתְךָ אִמִּיךָ שָׁמָּה חֲבֹלָה יִלְדָתְךָ:	ἐπιστηριζομένη ἐπὶ τὸν ἀδελφιδὸν αὐτῆς Ὑπὸ μῆλον ἐξήγειρά σε ἐκεῖ ὠδίνισέν σε ἡ μήτηρ σου ἐκεῖ ὠδίνισέν σε ἡ τεκοῦσά σου	et nixa super dilectum suum sub arbore malo suscitavi te ibi corrupta est mater tua ibi violata est genetrix tua
Who is this one (f.) who is coming up from the wilderness, supporting herself on her beloved? Under the apple tree I awakened you. There <u>went into labor</u> <u>with you</u> your mother. There <u>went into labor</u> she who bore you.	Who is this one (f.) who is coming up all white, leaning on her beloved? Under the apple tree I raised you up. There <u>travailed</u> <u>with you</u> your mother. There <u>travailed with you</u> she who bore you.	Who is this one (f.) who comes up from the desert, flowing with delights, and leaning on her beloved? Under the apple tree I raised you up. There <u>was corrupted</u> your mother. There <u>was violated</u> she who bore you.

⁷ Scott Noegel and Gary Rendsburg. *Solomon's Vineyard: Literary and Linguistic Studies in the Song of Songs*. Atlanta: SBL, 2009.

Jerome's translation of the term for labor/travail has generally been explained as influenced by negative theological viewpoints toward women and childbirth. While that may be true, the translation itself turns out not to be a flagrant display of disregard for the Hebrew text. The meaning "be pregnant" for the Hebrew word used in both of the last two stichs is derived from חבל IV (*hbl*, HALOT, 286), which is attested with the meaning "conceive, be in labor" in Middle Hebrew, Jewish Aramaic, Mandaean, Syriac, and "to become, be pregnant" in Arabic. In the Hebrew Bible חבל IV occurs only in Ps 7:15 and in these two times in Song 8:5. The passage in Ps 7:15 is instructive. Speaking of the man who does not repent, but continues on the path of violence, which will return upon his own head:

הִנֵּה יַחְבֵּל-אֶוֹן וְהָרָה עֲמֹל וַיֵּלֶד שָׁקָר:

Behold, he travails [חבל] with wickedness, and he conceives trouble, and he gives birth to falsehood.

Why does the author of the Song use this root in particular, which in its only other occurrence gives rise to such a negative result: what comes forth is "wickedness"? An examination of חבל III (*hbl*)⁸ in biblical Hebrew is also instructive. It is attested in Canaanite, Middle Hebrew, Jewish Aramaic, Christian Palestinian Aramaic, Syriac, and Egyptian Aramaic in the senses "damage, ruin," and in Ethiopic as "act corruptly," and in Akkadian (*ḥabālu*) in the senses "to use violence (against), to do wrong (by)." In biblical Hebrew it means "to use violence (against), to do wrong (by)."

Thus, with חבל IV we have the travail of birth, and with חבל III we have the travail of damage and violence, as an act of *corruption*. Now there are still problems with Jerome's translation. He would have read the word as passive instead of the active form transmitted in the vocalization of the Masoretes, and there is an additional problem of the pronominal suffix for "you" (sg. m.) in the first occurrence in Song 8:5. But the underlying senses of "corrupt" and "violate" are not without linguistic justification.

What we appear to have here is a further instance of political invective, based upon the polysemous pair חבל III and חבל IV. It is of further interest to note that the two meanings connected with these roots were exploited by Nicholas of Lyra, although he may not have known

⁸ The roots *hbl* (חבל IV) and *hbl* (חבל III) would have been distinguished in pronunciation, until /h/ merged with /ħ/ in ca. 200 B.C.E. For the linguistic evidence, see Rendsburg, "Ancient Hebrew Phonology," 72–74.

anything about the linguistic issues involved. In commenting on this verse in his *Postilla*, he employs the negative sense of **חבל** III reflected in Jerome's version as an invective against the Jews, while taking the sense of **חבל** IV in a positive light as applying to Christians.

There thy mother was corrupted, that is, the synagogue was corrupted. It is called the mother of God for the reason I gave earlier in chapter three. It is described as corrupted because, due to Christ's passion, its rights under the Law ceased as if they were dead. *There she was deflowered that bore thee*. This repeats the same thought to give it more emphasis. The Hebrew text has, *There your mother bore you. There your parent bore you*. This agrees particularly well with the truth of the Gospel. For it says in John 19 [25]: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother," pierced with a sword of sorrow because of her son, in accordance with what holy Simeon had prophesied in Luke 2 [53]: "And thy own soul a sword shall pierce." Therefore the sense of this verse is, *there*, that is, by the cross, *your mother bore you*, that is, bearing you caused her to suffer. In a similar way the Apostle says in Galatians 4 [19]: "My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you." *There your parent bore you*. This is a repetition of the same thought to make a deeper impression.⁹

Luther finds the translation of the Vulgate in error, but understands the multivalence of the word itself. In his commentary on Song 8:5, he says:

This the translator has rendered: "There your mother was corrupted." This is a manifest error. For it has changed a term meaning "pain" into a term meaning "guilt." The word here really means the labor of delivery, or the misery of childbearing, even though in other places it may be used to mean "to corrupt" or "to wound."

The "mother" is the state, and the citizens are her children. "These," he says, "I have awakened under the apple tree; there your mother has borne you or delivered you." The Jewish kingdom was not really very extensive in spatial terms. It is therefore not compared to a small tree, but the seed of the future kingdom of the church, which would spread throughout all lands.¹⁰

Thus in the earliest complete Luther Bible of 1534 Luther translated, "da deine mutter dich geborn hatte, da mit dir gelegen ist, die dich gezeugt hat."

⁹ Kiecker, ed., *The 'Postilla' of Nicholas of Lyra on the Song of Songs*, 115.

¹⁰ Luther, *Song of Solomon*.

Now חבל III in the sense “ruin” is used in Song 2:15. Noegel and Rendsburg have commented on the usage there, which makes an even stronger case for a similar usage in 8:5:

If we rely solely on a literal reading of the text, they are understood as marauding “foxes” ruining a vineyard. If we read the passage for its sexual overtones, however, the verse “represents the imagery of the deflowering of the young girl.”¹¹

¹¹ Noegel and Rendsburg, *Solomon's Vineyard*, 164. The internal citation is from Edward Ullendorf, “The Bawdy Bible,” *BSOAS* 42, no. 3 (1979): 448.

PART THREE

MULTIVALENCES OF TEXT

TEXTUAL THEORIES AND THE DECALOGUE

EXTANT DECALOGUE TEXTS AND TRADITIONS

TEXTUAL FLUIDITY IN THE DECALOGUE TRADITIONS

Torah, as the embodiment of the fundamental law code given to Israel on two tablets of stone at Mount Sinai, is multivalent: it has been transmitted in two distinct versions in the canonical texts of the Hebrew Bible. One version of the Decalogue, or “Ten Commandments,” called the “Ten Words” in the Hebrew Bible,¹ is found in the context of Israel’s history in Exod 20; the other version is found in Deut 5 as an admonition to remember that historical event. These two versions of the Decalogue are not identical in every respect.²

¹ MT: עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרִים (Exod 34:28, Deut 10:4, LXX: τοὺς δέκα λόγους; Deut 4:13, LXX: τὰ δέκα ῥήματα). I do not engage here the issues of how the commandments are variously enumerated or labeled in their reception histories. I am aware that what I call the “Prologue” is part of the “First Commandment” in some traditions. I use conventional, if not universally accepted, divisions merely to facilitate the textual analyses and comparisons that form the essence of this chapter.

² The literature on the Decalogue is immense. Two important studies dealing especially with the nature of the multivalent textual traditions of the Decalogue are: (1) Sidnie White Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008), and (2) Jeffrey H. Tigay, “Conflation as a Redactional Technique,” in Jeffrey H. Tigay, ed., *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 53-97. Additional literature is cited in the following volumes and their bibliographies: J. J. Stamm and M. E. Andrew, *The Ten Commandments in Recent Research* (Naperville, Ill.: Allenson, 1962). Ben-Zion Segal, ed., *The Ten Commandments in History and Tradition* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1985). David Noel Freedman, *The Nine Commandments: Uncovering a Hidden Pattern of Crime and Punishment in the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 2000). In this chapter I do not address

In 1903 interest in Decalogue studies intensified with the discovery and publication of the Nash Papyrus, which presented a text of the Decalogue identical neither to Exod 20 nor to Deut 5. The Nash Papyrus is thought to derive from Egypt. It was acquired in 1898 by W. L. Nash, Secretary of the Society of Biblical Archaeology,³ and was first published by Stanley A. Cook in 1903.⁴ When pieced together, the four fragments that comprise the Nash Papyrus measure approximately five inches tall by slightly less than three inches wide. The composite contains twenty-four lines of text in a single column, with text missing on both sides of the column, except for lines 16–19, where the papyrus material extends beyond the right text margin.⁵ Based on paleographical analysis, the Nash Papyrus is dated to the second to first centuries B.C.E., which corresponds to the dates of some of the earliest Dead Sea Scrolls.

The text of Nash has a mixed or composite character. Compared with the Masoretic text (represented by L), the Nash Papyrus: (1) is sometimes identical to the text of Exod 20 and Deut 5 where these are identical with each other; (2) sometimes agrees with Exod 20 in disagreement with Deut 5; (3) sometimes agrees with Deut 5 in disagreement with Exod 20; (4) sometimes disagrees with both Exod 20 and Deut 5, in terms of orthography, wording, and word sequence, but agrees with the Septuagint where that version differs from the Masoretic traditions. (5) Nash sometimes presents a unique text not found in any other known textual traditions; (6) it sometimes agrees with texts from Qumran where these differ from other known textual traditions; (7) the Decalogue text of Nash is followed immediately by the “Shema” text of

hypothetical reconstructions of an “original” Decalogue. The works cited here provide insight into that particular inquiry.

³ H. Rabinowicz, “Review: Cambridge University Library,” *JQR*, New Series, Vol. 53, no. 1 (July, 1962), 69.

⁴ Stanley A. Cook, “A Pre-Masoretic Biblical Papyrus,” *PSBA* (1903). Albright adds that Mr. Nash purchased the Papyrus “from a native Egyptian dealer, and was supposed to come from somewhere in the Faiyûm.” In a footnote to his 1937 article on Nash, Albright adds, “...the Nash papyrus may actually have been found anywhere in Egypt; the authority of the dealer is generally quite valueless in itself. The fact that widely publicized finds had then been recently made at Oxyrhynchus and elsewhere in the Faiyûm was quite enough to suggest to a dealer that the mention of this provenience might enhance the value of his wares. All archaeologists working in the Near East are familiar with the tendency in question.” W. F. Albright, “A Biblical Fragment From the Maccabaeon Age: The Nash Papyrus,” *JBL* 56, no. 3 (1937), 145.

⁵ A twenty-fifth line contains only a few partially visible letters.

Deut 6, passing over the intervening material of Deut 5 found in the Masoretic tradition.

The discovery of the Nash Papyrus resulted in a proliferation of new discussions and publications on the Decalogue, especially within the first decade after its discovery. One of the key questions addressed pertained to the textual alignment of Nash: was the text of Nash closer to text of Exod 20 or to text of Deut 5? A second question also received considerable attention: what *kind* of text was the Nash Papyrus—a biblical text, a school-exercise text, a liturgical text? Once scholars had generally classified it as a liturgical text as opposed in particular to a strictly biblical one, textual work on the Decalogue generally returned to focus on the traditional texts: the Hebrew Masoretic, Samaritan, Septuagint, Vulgate, and Syriac Peshitta. Nash remained in the background, periodically referenced for points of comparison, but it was not a peer among the others, which demonstrated a greater degree of agreement with the Masoretic tradition, that is a greater degree of standardization and therefore general acceptance among religious as well as scholarly communities.

With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls about half a century later, more Decalogue texts surfaced, and along with them additional textual variations. These earliest Hebrew witnesses to the Decalogue present readings that differ from all previously known texts. In addition, the earliest *tefillin* (phylactery) and *mezuzot* (door-post) texts were uncovered, some of which contained the Decalogue, which in later rabbinical times ceased to be included in these minuscule copies of Scripture enclosed in small leather pouches or other containers.

The issue of textual fluidity surfaced again, but with stronger force. For now we have texts originating in Palestine, not Egypt, and written in Hebrew, not Greek, and which represent the oldest copies of the Decalogue in our possession. How are the variants in these documents to be evaluated and categorized? These questions remain under discussion among textual scholars of the Hebrew Bible. It is the issue of textual fluidity and categorization that this chapter addresses. Textual fluidity of our earliest Decalogue texts provides a window into the type and extent of variations, whether ultimately deriving from oral or written traditions (or both), that were alive at a time before the two separate forms (Exod 20 and Deut 5) became firmly standardized. The Nash Papyrus is not the only "mixed text."

This study also forces the modern reader to ask fundamental questions about how the ancients perceived of texts which they relate to be "set in stone"—texts which can neither be added to, subtracted from, or modified in any way without severe consequences. The manuscript evidence thus presents challenges not only to the academic discipline of

textual criticism, but inseparably linked to those challenges are questions about the conceptualizations of religious communities toward their fundamental and authoritative religious traditions.

FLUIDITY IN TEXTS PROVIDING THE BACKGROUND TO THE DECALOGUE

Both within and outside the biblical corpus, the Decalogue is considered to be of foundational interest to Israel. The Ten Words are said to be “written by the finger of God” (Exod 31:18) on tablets that “were God’s work, and the writing was God’s writing engraved on the tablets” (Exod 32:16). These texts were perceived to be literally “set in stone.” If ever an argument could be made for a text *not* to experience changes throughout its transmission history, surely within the corpus of the Hebrew Bible it would apply most of all to the Decalogue, so one might think.

After Moses broke the first set of tablets, he was instructed to cut out new tablets for himself (Exod 34:1a). Since Moses was told to cut these out, they would not be like the first tablets which were designated as “God’s work.” On these second stones God promises: “and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered” (Exod 34:1b). While the new stones are said to be of different origin, human and not divine, the text is to remain identical. The words of the former tablets are to be rewritten on the new tablets. But who is to do the writing this second time? One account reads:

Then Yahweh said to Moses, ‘Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.’ So he was there with Yahweh forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread or drink water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Words” (Exod 34:27–28).

However, in passages describing the writing of the stone tablets we find a number of textual variations within the Hebrew Masoretic tradition. Parallel accounts of the production of both sets of tablets are given below.

PASSAGES RELATING TO THE FIRST SET OF TABLETS

Summarizing only the main points of difference in the texts, we note that:

1. No two of the accounts are identical in all respects. They are multivalent *texts*.

2. The accounts uniformly state, but with *different formulations*, that Yahweh/God wrote the tablets:
 - (a) With pronouns:
 - (i) Yahweh as referent of the first personal pronoun: Exod 24:12
 - (ii) Yahweh as referent of the third personal pronoun: Deut 4:13
 - (b) With phrases:
 - (i) written by the finger of God: Exod 31:18; Deut 9:10
 - (ii) the writing was God's writing: Exod 32:16.
3. The descriptions of the content are not uniform:
 - (a) The law and the commandments: Exod 24:12
 - (b) The testimony: Exod 32:15
 - (c) His covenant = Ten Words: Deut 4:13
 - (d) The covenant = all the words which Yahweh had spoken with you at the mountain from the midst of the fire on the day of assembly: Deut 9:9–11.
4. The precise content of the tablets is unclear.
 - (a) Did it include only the Ten Words, as suggested by Deut 4:13, or
 - (b) much more than that, according to Deut 9:11?
 - (c) If only the Ten Words are in view, is the explanatory material embedded in them included, or are only the direct statements of the commands themselves in mind?

Before taking up these points, I include below similar passages relating to the second pair of tablets that replaced the first pair broken by Moses.

PASSAGES RELATING TO THE SECOND SET OF TABLETS

Various sources or other theories have been constructed to explain the differences in these texts, but these need not detain us, since our primary point is to show that the texts relating to the writing of the Decalogue differ in key areas:

- (1) as to the precise verbal content of the tablets
- (2) as to whether the second set of tablets was written directly by Yahweh/God (seven out of eight texts) or by Moses (one text).

In either case, and whatever the precise verbal content, it is clear that both sets of tablets were considered to have *the same words*. Further, the second set of tablets was thought to reside inside the ark of the covenant, a tradition that is reflected outside of the Pentateuch explicitly in 1 Kgs 8:9 and 2 Chr 5:10:

1 Kgs 8:9

There was nothing in the ark
except the two tablets of the stones
which Moses had put there at Horeb,
where Yahweh made a covenant
with the sons of Israel
when they came out from the land of
Egypt.

2 Chr 5:10

There was nothing in the ark
except the two tablets
which Moses had placed (lit. given) at
Horeb,
where Yahweh made a covenant
with the sons of Israel
when they came out from Egypt.

Thus, according to the tradition, the Decalogue text existed in Israel for hundreds of years as a *single written original* which was well-preserved in the most sacred container inside the most sacred of all places in Israel.

DECALOGUE TEXTS IN EXODUS 20 AND DEUTERONOMY 5

The Decalogue texts are presented in full in Exod 20:2–17 and Deut 5:6–21, with wording and structure indicating the identical time and place envisioned for their introduction to Israel. Each section is framed with phrases indicating that what lies between is *the text* of the Decalogue. Exod 20:1 and Deut 5:4–5 introduce the beginning of the content with the Hebrew marker of direct speech (“saying”), which often serves as a colon, immediately after which begins the cited material. The closing formulae differ, but are as clearly demarcated as the introductory formulae in each account. The implication from the use of both opening and closing formulae is that everything that is contained between them represents the content of the Decalogue, inclusive of various internal explanatory material. A comparison of the two accounts of the Decalogue in Exod 20 and Deut 5 reveals a number of similarities and differences.

Different Text Lengths

Exod 20 letters	620	
Deut 5 letters	709	14% more than Exod
Letters Shared	550	88% of Exod / 78% of Deut
Letters Unique to Exod 20	620 – 550 = 70	11% of its text
Letters Unique to Deut 5	709 – 550 = 159	22% of its text

Orthographic Differences

Exod 20:5, defective אֲבֹת	Deut 5:9, plene אֲבוֹת
Exod 20:12, defective יֹאדְכֵן	Deut 5:16, plene יֹאדְכֵן
Exod 20:12, plene יֹאדְכֵן	Deut 5:16, defective יֹאדְכֵן

Ketiv/Qere Differences

Exod 20:6	Ketiv: "my commandments"	No Qere
Deut 5:10	Ketiv: "his commandments"	Qere: "my commandments"

Conjunction ("and") Differences

Exod 20:4 yes וְכָל תְּמוּנָה	Deut 5:8 no כָּל תְּמוּנָה
Exod 20:5 no עַל שְׁלִשִּׁים	Deut 5:9 yes וְעַל שְׁלִשִּׁים
Exod 20:10 no עֲבָדְךָ	Deut 5:14 yes וְעֲבָדְךָ
Exod 20:14 no לֹא	Deut 5:18 yes וְלֹא
Exod 20:15 no לֹא	Deut 5:19 yes וְלֹא
Exod 20:16 no לֹא	Deut 5:20 yes וְלֹא
Exod 20:17 (2x) no לֹא	Deut 5:21 (2x) yes וְלֹא

Text Order Differences: Inversion

Exod 20:17a house	Deut 5:21b wife
Exod 20:17b wife	Deut 5:21a house

Vocabulary Differences

Exod 20:8 "remember"	Deut 5:12 "keep"
Exod 20:16 "falsehood"	Deut 5:20 "vanity"
Exod 20:17 "desire"	Deut 5:21 "crave"

Textual Additions to Deuteronomy

Deut 5:12	"as Yahweh your God commanded you"
Deut 5:14	"your ox or your donkey or any of"
Deut 5:14	"so that your male servant and your female servant may rest like you"
Deut 5:16	"and in order that it may go well with you"
Deut 5:21	"his field"

Differences in Historical Analogs for Observing Sabbath

Exod 20:11	based on Creation
Deut 5:15	based on Captivity in Egypt

Differences in Concluding Statement for Observing Sabbath

Exod 20:11	Therefore Yahweh blessed the day of the Sabbath and sanctified it.
Deut 5:15	Therefore Yahweh your God commanded you to do the day of the Sabbath.

Differences in Opening Formula

Exod 20:1	Elohim
Deut 5:5	Yahweh, face to face

Differences in Closing Formula

Exod 20:18	Abrupt return to narrative, but resumptive return to scene at mountain
Deut 5:22	Resumptive "Yahweh spoke" and resumptive return to scene at mountain

The differences between the two records of the Decalogue are many and varied. If these represented two manuscripts of what was thought to be a single original, textual critics would have considerable difficulty recreating that single original. While some scholars attempt to reconstruct a hypothetical single original of the Decalogue, those hypotheses are not taken into consideration in the preparation of text-critical editions of the Hebrew Bible. Two, but only two, traditions are to be considered in some sense as "original." Within the past hundred years or so we have come to possess a number of manuscripts that resist clear alignment with either of our two Decalogue traditions, and this presents a situation of keen interest to textual criticism. While the duality of Decalogue textual traditions has been accepted, further variations are considered problematic. A manuscript that offers Decalogue material must be shown to belong to one of the two standardized traditions. Other forms of criticism, such as form criticism or source theories, have eliminated this need. There are good reasons to suppose that both versions, while depending on a common tradition, were never intended to be taken as exact copies of each other. They draw upon a common heritage, while modifying the text for contemporary purposes, each with its own *Sitz im Leben*. This state of affairs does not preclude an injunction like the one found in Deut 4:2:

"You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of Yahweh your God which I command you today."

A similar injunction is found in Deut 12:32 (see also Prov 30:6). Somehow, in some way, statements forbidding alterations in Yahweh's commands to Israel come to stand side by side with the texts of those commands that show considerable variations. It is intriguing to note that the first activity forbidden in Deut 4:2 is "add," and it is emphasized in Deut 5:22 that Yahweh "added no more." The date of composition of Deuteronomy is later than that of Exodus. If the Deuteronomist knew of

the text of the Decalogue in Exodus, he *added to, subtracted from, and changed* the text of Exod 20.

On the other hand, the majority of the text found in Exod 20 and Deut 5 is the same text. Statistically, 88% of the text of Exod 20 and 78% of the text of Deut 5 are identical at the letter level.

In the following discussion, I wish to pursue two matters of inquiry that have little to do with explanations for why Exod 20 and Deut 5 differ. First, I ask to what extent the manuscripts we possess align with either Exod 20 or Deut 5. If they are “mixed,” to what extent are they mixed, and how do we incorporate them into our text-critical models? Secondly, I examine how formulaic approaches may help us find at least a partial answer to the last question. By combining methodologies of traditional textual criticism and formulaic analysis, we are enabled to situate our texts into new frameworks that make them less problematic for us. My working hypothesis is that the variability resident in our extant manuscripts was less problematic for the ancients, so the ultimate agenda, ironically enough, is as firmly anchored in a “quest for the original” as a traditional-stemmatological approach. In the end, we must consider that when we say a text was “changed” by “adding to, subtracting from, or altering” it, we may be describing a different phenomenon than the statements of Deut 4:2 and 5:22 have in mind. What we identify as “adding to the text” may not be the same as adding *על-הדבר* (Deut 4:2).

THE NASH PAPYRUS

DIFFERENCES OF ASSESSMENT

Each of three standard works on the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible assesses the *alignment* of the Nash Papyrus with Exodus or Deuteronomy differently.

In Würthwein's⁶ opinion the Nash Papyrus follows “mostly the text of Exod”; according to Deist's⁷ more neutrally stated assessment, it is “in part from Ex. 20 and in part from Deut. 5”; Tov⁸ is unsure, but thinks that it “probably reflects mainly the text of Deuteronomy rather than that of Exodus.” In two of the earliest detailed textual and paleographical descriptions of the Nash Papyrus, assessments are also divergent: in 1903

⁶ Ernst Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 34.

⁷ Deist, *Witnesses to the Old Testament*, 62.

⁸ Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 118.

Cook⁹ wrote: "the papyrus comes midway between the two; it seems unnecessary to regard it as a third independent recension, and instead of treating it as a fuller form of Exod., I venture to decide that it represents a simpler form of Deut." In the concluding paragraph Cook postulates: "It is, therefore, not impossible that the papyrus may have belonged to a recension of Deuteronomy."¹⁰ In 1905 Peters objected to Cook's view:

Zunächst scheitert die von Cook (S. 56) 'nicht für unmöglich' gehaltene Meinung, daß N. ein Blatt einer hebräischen Bibelhandschrift sei aus einer Rezension, die Dt 5,19 bis 6,4 nicht enthalten habe, schon allein daran, daß N. nicht den Dekalog des Buches Dt, sondern des Buches Ex hat, wie sich zeigen wird.¹¹

Later in his book, Peters shows that opinions of several others were divided on this subject: Burkitt¹² and Offord¹³ think Nash is a mixture of elements from both Exodus and Deuteronomy; von Gall,¹⁴ along with Cook, argue for Deuteronomy; Lévi¹⁵ and an anonymous reviewer¹⁶ argues for Exodus. It seems that not much progress has been made in the century between Cook's 1903 publication and Tov's 2002 edition of his major work on the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible.¹⁷ There were then, and there remain now, three positions: (1) Nash is a mixture of Exod 20 and Deut 5; (2) Nash is essentially Exod 20; (3) Nash is essentially Deut 5. One of the practical issues noted by Peters at stake here is how the decision of the alignment of Nash affects the text-critical treatment of MT. Should Nash be considered an ancient witness to the MT text of Exodus, or the MT text of Deuteronomy?

In order to perform an independent investigation of the alignment of Nash one must first decide *which* Nash text to use. Shall one choose any

⁹ Stanley A. Cook, "A Pre-Masoretic Biblical Papyrus," *PSBA* (1903): 53.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹¹ Norbert Peters, *Die älteste Abschrift der zehn Gebote, der Papyrus Nash* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1905), 8.

¹² F. C. Burkitt, "The Hebrew Papyrus of the Ten Commandments," *JQR* 15 (1903), 559–61.

¹³ Joseph Offord, "The Newly Discovered Pre-Masoretic Hebrew Papyrus," *The American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal* 25 (1903), 37–39.

¹⁴ Aug. Frhr. v. Gall, "Ein neuer hebräischer Text der Zehn Gebote und des Schma'," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentlich Wissenschaft* (1903), 347–51.

¹⁵ Israel Lévi, "Un Papyrus Biblique," *Revue des Études Juives* 46 (1903), 212–17.

¹⁶ "Un Papyrus Hébreu pré-massorétique," *Revue Biblique, nouvelle série* 1 (1904), 242–50.

¹⁷ Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*.

of the several transcriptions of Nash found in the literature on Nash since its first publication, or is there a definitive, scholarly source for its transcription? Shall one attempt to perform an independent transcription based upon the best photographs? Should one request access to the original itself, or would any deterioration that Nash may have experienced over the past century make such an effort pointless? The question of *which* Nash text to use does not have a simple answer.

WHICH NASH TEXT?

Some of the issues of originality pursued in the first chapter of this book have practical application in determining just what, exactly, the Nash papyrus text is. Photographic images and transcriptions of Nash have been published often enough, so the issue here is not one of accessibility. It is rather one of multivariance, within limits, of published transliterations of Nash. Therefore, before one can compare the text of Nash with other texts, one needs to identify *which* Nash text (although it exists in only a single copy) one has chosen from the available published versions.

The earliest transliteration of Nash was published in 1903 by S. Cook¹⁸ in the first complete study of Nash to be published. It was published again later that same year by F. C. Burkitt,¹⁹ who re-examined the papyrus with Cook. There are numerous small differences between these two transliterations; mostly they reflect whether a letter can be positively identified or not: (1) some letters printed within brackets (reconstructions) in one transliteration are printed as extant (not within brackets) in the other transliteration; (2) some letters marked as partial or doubtful by a dot placed above them in one are printed without the dot in the other. I count twenty instances of both types of differences between these two transliterations. These differences do not represent textual differences; they only represent differences of opinion about the positive identification of a letter, and not about which letter it may be. There are two additional differences that affect the actual text. The first textual difference is found in line eighteen, where in Cook's transliteration the word תנאף occurs, but in its place the word תאנף appears in Burkitt.²⁰

¹⁸ Cook, "A Pre-Masoretic Biblical Papyrus," pl. II.

¹⁹ Burkitt, "The Hebrew Papyrus of the Ten Commandments." The transcription is on pp. 394–395.

²⁰ The reading תאנף would yield the following sense for this commandment: "You shall not be angry." The root אנף in Qal (and Hithpael) is used only of God's anger toward people, and mostly in contexts in which the removal of that

This appears to be a transposition error in Burkitt, since Burkitt does not draw attention to it in his article. The second textual difference is found in line twenty, where in Cook's transliteration the word תהמור appears, but in its place the word תתאור appears in Burkitt. Burkitt discusses this point in his article:

The only point where there is some doubt as to the actual reading of the Papyrus occurs in line 20, where I read תתאור "desire" (as in Deut. v. 18^b), but Mr. Cook is still inclined to read תהמור "covet" (as in the preceding line and in Ex. xx. 17^b).

Burkitt describes the difficulties of reading the papyrus in this location, but retains his reading in a publication he authored the next year, when a new photograph of Nash was published. In his 1904 article Burkitt describes the nature of the difficulty in reading Nash, and here we learn that the text that appears in previous photographic reproductions were not of the original pen strokes of the papyrus. The disclosure Burkitt provides is worth citing fully here in order to understand the issues at stake:

The papyrus itself, now numbered MS. Or. 233, was presented to the Cambridge University Library by the then owner, Mr. W. L. Nash, while the article referred to was passing through the press.²¹ Mr. Nash and several others had tried to make a legible photograph of it, but all attempts had ended in failure. What appeared facing p. 392 in my article was, as I then explained, a photograph of the *papyrus*, but not of the *handwriting*. The dark yellow of the papyrus and the black ink of the letters had almost the same effect on the photographic plate. Moreover the original is best read with a side light, but the crinkled surface of the papyrus casts shadows when illuminated from the side, and it has been found impossible to press it smooth. The fragments had been gummed on to pieces of cardboard, and to detach the brittle and fragile papyrus from the card is a delicate task which the Library authorities have not even yet ventured to attempt. Under these circumstances the only way in which it was possible to explain the appearance of the document to those who had not seen it was to make a careful pen-and-ink copy of the writing upon Mr. Nash's photograph of the papyrus.

The reproduction which appeared in the illustration of Mr. S. A. Cook's paper in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* for

anger is expressed. All this provides intriguing possibilities for interpretation, but the reading תתאור is just an error, caught early in the editorial process.

²¹ That is Burkitt's 1903 article cited above.

November, 1902,²² the reproduction in the *Jewish Enclopaedia* (art. DECALOGUE), and finally the reproduction in the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, of which mention has been made, were all taken from my drawing. But what now appears is taken from an untouched photograph. Dr. F. J. Allen, of St. John's College, Cambridge, succeeded last summer in obtaining negatives in which the writing was visible, and it is a reproduction from his negatives which is now published. The happy result was reached by taking intelligent pains in many little points of difficulty, from the preparation of a special plate to lighting up the fragments only by diffused reflection from both sides, the front light being cut off.²³

We here learn the precise details about the text of Nash that was transcribed in the earlier articles. It was based upon a photograph of the Nash papyrus, upon which the letters had been reinforced by hand—certainly not a method that reinforces the sense of “originality.” Burkitt identifies a few details that can be more clearly seen on the basis of the new photograph, and here he also notes his transposition error in the 1903 transliteration: “I would here specially call attention to the **ס** in תנאף (*sic*) in l. 18.” That is, תנאף is the way Nash reads, and not תנאף. Regarding the issue of which word is found in line twenty, we find that the new photograph did not provide additional clarity on the תתאווה/תחמוד problem: “The one place where we differ is in l. 20, which I leave to the readers of the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW to make out for themselves.”²⁴

It is unclear just how readers of the article will be in a better position to make a judgment of a reading based on a printed photograph, when two scholars who had access to two photographs and the original cannot be certain about what they see. The issue here is significant for the issue of Nash's alignment, since תחמוד represents the reading of Exod 20, and תתאווה that of Deut 5. Burkitt concludes the article with a revealing statement about the increased level of confidence gained in having a suitable *untouched* photograph²⁵ available, instead of a hand-reinforced version:

²² A photocopy of this article, which I cited above, was delivered electronically from Cambridge University Library to my Suzallo Library account at the University of Washington, and it bears the date Jan 14, 1903 in the header of the first page of the article.

²³ F. C. Burkitt, “The Nash Papyrus: A New Photograph,” *JQR* 16 (1904): 559–60.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 560.

²⁵ The *retouched* photo that appeared later in the frontispiece of the 1934 edition of Ira Price's *The Ancestry of the English Bible* was one of two sources

In any case, it will now be possible for the palaeographer to study, from an unbiased witness, the general appearance of the handwriting and the forms of the single letters in this most interesting and ancient relic of Jewish religion.²⁶

The new photograph is an “unbiased witness.” It has not been retraced by a later hand. As it turns out, the transcription that accompanies Burkitt’s 1904 article differs in no way from the 1903 article, except for the correction to תנאי.

In 1905 another transcription appeared in a monograph on the Nash Papyrus by N. Peters.²⁷ Peters identifies all publications of Nash of which he is aware,²⁸ and painfully notes that for his article he was unable to examine the Papyrus itself.²⁹ For his transcription Peters compared the new photograph by Allen with the first facsimile prepared by the hand of Burkitt. Peters’ transcription differs from that of Cook and the previous two by Burkitt in that Peters offers two versions: the first does not provide any reconstructed text within brackets; only the visible letters of Nash are presented. For the questionable word in line 20, Peters has תתאור instead of תחמוד; he agrees with Burkitt against Cook. The

consulted by John Trever and William Brownlee as they examined the Isaiah scroll together during the evening of 20 Feb 1948 in Trever’s room at the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, under the light of two kerosene lanterns, “huddled together over the two small tables under the pale yellow light.” The second source was the palaeographical analysis published in 1937 by W. F. Albright. These two sources, along with evidence obtained earlier in the day, convinced Trever and Brownlee that the Isaiah scroll “belonged to the same period as the Nash Papyrus.” Trever describes their reaction to this new discovery: “...we felt completely overwhelmed. Sleep was almost impossible that night as the full impact of our confirmed convictions sent wild dreams racing through my mind.” John C. Trever, *The Untold Story of Qumran* (Westwood: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1965), 37.

²⁶ Burkitt, “The Nash Papyrus: A New Photograph,” 560.

²⁷ Norbert Peters, *Die älteste Abschrift der zehn Gebote, der Papyrus Nash*. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1905).

²⁸ In order of date they are the three I have already cited: (1) Cook (1903); (2) Burkitt (1903); (3) Burkitt (1904); and in addition the following: (4) Offord, “The Newly Discovered Pre-Massoretic Hebrew Papyrus.” (5) Gall, “Ein neuer hebräischer Text der Zehn Gebote und des Schma’.” (6) Lévi, “Un Papyrus Biblique.” (7) “Un Papyrus Hébreu pré-massorétique.”

²⁹ “Da sich zeigen wird, daß keine einzige Lesart zweifelhaft bleibt, ist es zu verschmerzen, daß ich den Papyrus selbst nicht prüfen konnte.” Peters, *Die älteste Abschrift der zehn Gebote*, 12.

second version provides not only reconstructed text within brackets, but he also provides the vowels of the Masoretic text of Exod 20 and Deut 5.

A palaeographic analysis of Nash was published by W. F. Albright in 1937.³⁰ Albright dated Nash to the mid-second to mid-first century B.C.E. In his article Albright treats not only the palaeographic details in the light of all the comparative evidence available at the time, but also the textual position of Nash; no image or transcription of Nash is provided in the article.

A more recent and widely available transcription of Nash is found on Plate 6 in Würthwein.³¹ On the page facing Würthwein's transcription is an illustration of Nash "enlarged from the infrared photograph in W. F. Albright 1949a."³² In this 1949 article, Albright discusses the paleographic issues of the Nash Papyrus in the light of the first discoveries that later became known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. The impetus for Albright's article were claims that the newly discovered Scrolls were forgeries, or as one scholar characterized them openly as a "hoax."³³ Albright does not provide a transcription of Nash in this article; but the image of Nash even in the downloadable format available from JSTOR³⁴ is quite clear. The 1949 article also updated and extended the paleographical discussion of Nash that Albright published in his 1937 article, but without either image of the Papyrus or transcription.³⁵ Albright highlights the value of the new infrared photograph provided to him, saying that it "brings to light many details which could not be controlled before," and that it assisted him in "correcting a number of errors which

³⁰ Albright, "A Biblical Fragment From the Maccabaeian Age: The Nash Papyrus."

³¹ Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*, 144. The most recent edition of Würthwein in English was published in 1995. The Nash Papyrus image and transcription was included in the first German edition of Würthwein published in 1952. Presumably the transcription was carried out by Würthwein himself; there is no specific information about the source of the transcription. Würthwein's transcription has תתאידה in line 20.

³² W. F. Albright, "On the Date of the Scrolls from 'Ain Feshkha and the Nash Papyrus," *BASOR* 115 (1949): 10–19.

³³ Albright identifies him as Zeitlin, that is, Solomon Zeitlin, who had carried on a lively debate with Albright and other scholars on the date of the Dead Sea Scroll. See Albright, "On the Date of the Scrolls from 'Ain Feshkha and the Nash Papyrus." The entire article is Albright's answer to Zeitlin's challenges.

³⁴ "Journal Storage," an electronic archive of scholarly journals (<http://www.jstor.org>).

³⁵ Albright, "A Biblical Fragment From the Maccabaeian Age: The Nash Papyrus."

I made in 1937, on the basis of the photographs then available.”³⁶ It must be noted that the primary concern of Albright in this article is the palaeographic argument for dating the scrolls, and not so much the identification of the letter values. In 1953 the infrared image was republished by J. Trever along side of a high contrast print from the negative of the infrared.³⁷

At this point in the historical survey of the publication of Nash, the question remains open as to which transcription of Nash is to be taken as the definitive one for current text-critical analysis. Should it be the corrected 1904 version of Burkitt based upon the first clean photograph of Nash, or the more recent version in Würthwein based upon the later infrared photo, which reveals better image quality than the 1904 version, but was taken over 40 years later? I decided to use the transcription of Burkitt in 1904, but to include letters identified positively in Würthwein that had been bracketed in Burkitt for the following reasons: (1) The original may have suffered some deterioration between the images of 1904 and 1949, so the readings positively identified in 1904 may have been valid. (2) The new infrared photo likely made new letters clearly visible, so they should also be included. This assessment provides the most text that can possibly be attributed to Nash.

TRANSCRIPTION OF NASH

Based on the above considerations, the transcription I use for the Nash Papyrus is provided below (without reconstructed text and without consideration for the precise lateral position of the letters). Line numbers flank the column on the left and right, and to the far right is the letter count for each line.

1	הוה אלהיך אשר תיך מארץ מ	1	19
2	ך אלהים אחרים ני לוא תעשה	2	20
3	אשר בשמים ממעל ואשר בארץ	3	20
4	ם מתחת לארץ לוא תשתחוה להם	4	21
5	אנכי יהוה אלהיך אל קנוא פק	5	21
6	ם על שלשים ועל רבעים לשנאי	6	21

³⁶ Albright, “On the Date of the Scrolls from ‘Ain Feshkha and the Nash Papyrus,” 14.

³⁷ John C. Trever, “Studies in the Problem of Dating the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *PAPS* 97, no. 2 (1953): 191.

7	לאהבי ולשמרי מצותי לוא ת	7	20
8	להיך לשוא כי לוא ינקח יהוה	8	21
9	מה לשוא זכור את יום השבת ל	9	20
10	ם תעבוד ועשית כל מלאכתך ובים	10	24
11	אלהיך לוא תעשה בה כל מלאכה	11	21
12	עבדך ואמתך שורך וחמרך וכל ב	12	22
13	בשעריך כי ששת ימים עשה י	13	19
14	ם ואת הארץ את הים ואת כל א	14	19
15	וינח השביעי עלכן ברך יהוה את	15	23
16	השביעי ויקדשיו כבוד את אביך ואת אמ	16	27
17	ייטב לך ולמען יאריכון ימך על האדמה	17	29
18	יהוה אלהיך נתן לך לוא תנאף לוא תרצח לון	18	30
19	נב לוא תענה ברעך עד שוא לוא תחמוד	19	26
20	וא תתאוו את ב ת רעך שד	20	16
21	ורו וחמרו וכל אשר לרעך	21	18
22	ים והמשפטים אשר צוה משה את	22	21
23	במדבר בצאתם מארץ מצרים שמ	23	21
24	ל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד הוא וא	24	23
25	לן ל ל	25	3

Total letters for lines 1–25 525

Total letters for the Decalogue portion, lines 1–21 457

NASH COMPARED WITH EXODUS 20 AND DEUTERONOMY 5

Text Alignment

The texts of Exod 20, Deut 5, and Nash are aligned below as closely as the three can be aligned together. To facilitate visual comparison, non-orthographic differences are highlighted only where comparison with Nash is possible. Highlighting shows only the places where the reading is unique to a single text, that is, where a reading differs from the other two (which includes cases where all three readings differ with respect to each other). Orthographic differences are underlined>.

Exod 20:1-17	Nash	Deut 5:6-21
2 אנכי יהוה אלהיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים 3 לא יהיה לך אלהים אחרים על פני 4 לא תעשה לך פסל וכל תמונה אשר בשמים ממעל ואשר בארץ מתחת ואשר במים מתחת לארץ 5 לא תשתחוה להם ולא תעבדם כי אנכי יהוה אלהיך אל קנא פקד עון אבות על בנים ועל שלשים ועל רבעים לשנאי 6 ועשה חסד לאלפים לאהבי ולשמרי מצותי 7 לא תשא את שם יהוה אלהיך לשוא כי לא ינקה יהוה את אשר ישא את שמו לשוא 8 זכור את יום השבת לקדשו 9 ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך 10 ויום השביעי שבת ליהוה אלהיך לא תעשה כל מלאכה אתה ובנך ובתך עבדך ואמתך ובחמך וגרך אשר בשעריך: 11 כי ששת ימים עשה יהוה את השמים ואת הארץ את הים ואת כל אשר בהם וינח ביום השביעי למען ינוח עבדך ואמתך כמוך 15 וזכרת כי עבד הייתי בארץ מצרים ויצאך יהוה אלהיך משם ביר חזקה ובזרע נטויה על כן צוה יהוה אלהיך לעשות את יום השבת 16 כבד את אביך ואת אמך כאשר צוה יהוה אלהיך למען יאריך ימך ולמען ייטב לך על האדמה אשר יהוה אלהיך נתן לך 17 לא תרצח 18 ולא תנאף 19 ולא תגנב 20 ולא תענה ברעך עד שוא 21 ולא תחמד אשת רעך ולא תחמדה אשת רעך	הוה אלהיך אשר תיך מארץ מ ך אלהים אחרים ני לוא תעשה אשר בשמים ממעל ואשר בארץ ם מתחת לארץ לוא תשתחוה להם אנכי יהוה אלהיך אל קנא פקד עון אבות על בנים ועל שלשים ועל רבעים לשנאי לאהבי ולשמרי מצותי לוא ת להיך לשוא כי לוא ינקה יהוה מט לשוא זכור את יום השבת ל ם תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך וביום אלהיך לוא תעשה כל מלאכה עבדך ואמתך שורך וחמורך וכל ב בשעריך כי ששת ימים עשה י ם ואת הארץ את הים ואת כל א וינח השביעי עלכן ברך יהוה את השביעי ויקדש כבד את אביך ואת אמך יטב לך ולמען יאריך ימך על האדמה יהוה אלהיך נתן לך לוא תנאף לוא תרצח לוא נב לוא תענה ברעך עד שוא לוא תחמדה וא תחמדה את ב ת רעך	6 אנכי יהוה אלהיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים 7 לא יהיה לך אלהים אחרים על פני 8 לא תעשה לך פסל כל תמונה אשר בשמים ממעל ואשר בארץ מתחת ואשר במים מתחת לארץ 9 לא תשתחוה להם ולא תעבדם כי אנכי יהוה אלהיך אל קנא פקד עון אבות על בנים ועל שלשים ועל רבעים לשנאי 10 ועשה חסד לאלפים לאהבי ולשמרי מצותי 11 לא תשא את שם יהוה אלהיך לשוא כי לא ינקה יהוה את אשר ישא את שמו לשוא 12 שמוח את יום השבת לקדשו כאשר צוה יהוה אלהיך 13 ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך 14 ויום השביעי שבת ליהוה אלהיך לא תעשה כל מלאכה אתה ובנך ובתך ועבדך ואמתך שורך וחמורך וכל בהחמך וגרך אשר בשעריך למען ינוח עבדך ואמתך כמוך 15 וזכרת כי עבד הייתי בארץ מצרים ויצאך יהוה אלהיך משם ביר חזקה ובזרע נטויה על כן צוה יהוה אלהיך לעשות את יום השבת 16 כבד את אביך ואת אמך כאשר צוה יהוה אלהיך למען יאריך ימך ולמען ייטב לך על האדמה אשר יהוה אלהיך נתן לך 17 לא תרצח 18 ולא תנאף 19 ולא תגנב 20 ולא תענה ברעך עד שוא 21 ולא תחמד אשת רעך ולא תחמדה בית רעך

שדהו ועברו ואמתו שורו וחמרו וכל אשר לרעך	שד ורו וחמרו וכל אשר לרעך	ועברו ואמתו שורו וחמרו וכל אשר לרעך
--	---------------------------------	--

Even a quick glance at the shaded areas above shows a much larger percentage of unique readings in Deuteronomy than in Exodus. I exclude from the following discussion orthographic differences for two reasons: (1) they contribute practically nothing to the issue of alignment, since the differences in orthography are almost always unique to Nash anyway; (2) orthography is included in the general statistical summaries that follow in the next section for comparison across all Decalogue manuscripts.

While Nash generally appears more closely aligned with Exodus than with Deuteronomy across the entire passage, one sees a rough division into two sections: (1) Nash agrees predominantly with Exodus through Exod 20:11; (2) Nash agrees predominantly with Deuteronomy from Deut 5:16b–20. To speak of Nash simply as a “mixed” text does not describe the situation accurately enough. Just as Exod 20 and Deut 5 differ from each other primarily in terms of text blocks, and not in an even distribution throughout the pericope, so too does Nash differ from Exod 20 and Deut 5. Some manuscripts from Qumran behave in the same manner. One needs to look for blocks of differences and not simply average them across the entire pericope. Doing so will not only enable us to articulate “fluidity” with more precision, it will enable us to seriously consider a formulaic approach as a possible explanation for the types of variations that we observe.

It is observed that Nash sometimes differs from both Exod 20 and Deut 5, that is, it contains a unique reading. There are two ways in which Nash is unique in this respect: (1) where Nash agrees with manuscripts that also differ from MT; (2) where Nash contains readings unique among all extant manuscripts.

For the first case I note: (1) Exod 20:10 / Deut 5:14 read ויום, where Nash includes the preposition in the word, וביום. While the reading וביום is not found in MT, it is the *exclusive reading* of all Deuteronomy mss. from Qumran (see Appendix 3: “Fourth Commandment [Part 3]”). (2) The independent preposition כ with suffix occurs in Nash later in the same verse, where it is not found in MT. It is found in two out of three extant Exodus texts (and in all LXX Exodus mss.), and in three out of six extant Deuteronomy texts (and all extant LXX Deuteronomy mss.). (3) In Exod 20:11b Nash reads השביעי where MT Exodus reads השבת. All extant LXX Exodus mss. agree with Nash against MT here. (4) Commandments six and seven are in the reverse order in Nash compared with MT. Yet Codex Vaticanus for both Exodus and Deuteronomy, as well as

Chester Beatty Papyrus VI, agree with Nash for commandment six; Vaticanus has commandments seven and eight in reverse order compared to Nash in Exodus. The situation with commandments six through eight is especially fluid; I address this more fully later in this chapter. (5) Compared with Deut 5:16, it appears that Nash has a unique order of the elements **לֹא יִיטֵב לְךָ** and **וְלִמְעַן יֵאָרִיכוֹן יָמֶיךָ**. Both phrases, in the same order as Nash, are found in Codex Vaticanus only in Exod 20:12b, but not in Deut 5:16b.

For the second case I note only a single reading where Nash has no parallel in any other extant tradition covered in this study: in Exod 20:17a Nash includes the object particle **אֹת** before **רַעַךְ** ב. There is one additional variation where Nash probably differed from all other traditions. Based on issues of space, it is likely that in Exod 20:2 / Deut 5:6 the phrase **מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים** (“from the house of slaves”) is not to be found in Nash. This has often been regarded as a conscious deletion by the Jewish scribe of Nash in Egypt so as not to characterize their contemporary Egypt as a prison, and thus perhaps kindle the ire of Egyptian neighbors. I think this is an improbable scenario, though it is possible; I discuss this issue further in a later section of this chapter.

A careful study of all Decalogue manuscripts reveals that others besides Nash have their own unique readings, some of which are more extensive in terms of content and number of instances. When we also learn that Nash shares all but two of its “unique” readings (compared against MT of Exodus and Deuteronomy) with other manuscripts containing the Decalogue textual traditions, it appears entirely justifiable to count it equally among all the others.

Finally, it is questionable what end is served by attempting to align Nash with the MT of Exodus or Deuteronomy. One needs to break up the pericope into text blocks in order for the comparison to be meaningful, and even when that is done there will be only some percentage of agreement with one version against the other. If we repeat the exercise with all extant manuscripts, we will find that we must divide the pericope into different blocks, and we will end up with a range of percentages of alignment. The following section provides a statistical view of the ways in which all Decalogue manuscripts vary with respect to variant types. I believe that the “fluidity” observed ought to make it difficult for the textual critic to isolate a clear choice in each variable case for the *single written original* that is thought to underlie each of the two MT Decalogue traditions. It is equally difficult to divide the texts into discrete *categories*. I will address that topic in greater detail after first providing the data upon which categorization schemes ought to be based.

ALL DECALOGUE MANUSCRIPTS

OBSERVATIONS

The Decalogue texts are numerically well represented in early Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, which can also be compared with the text of the Samaritan Pentateuch, although it is extant only in late manuscripts. Our oldest Decalogue manuscripts derive from different geographical locations: Egypt, Qumran, and possibly other locations from which they found their way to Qumran. The texts are written in a variety of formats, including many *tefillin*, which are not generally categorized by textual critics as proper “biblical texts.” I will show that such an assessment lacks both clarification and justification. Based on the data from the text comparisons in Appendix 3, the following statistical observations can be made about the extant Hebrew Decalogue manuscripts covered in this study.³⁸ The data include the entire range of the Decalogue pericopes. No account here is taken for clustering of variants. I will address that issue qualitatively in the following section in the application of formulaic approaches to partially account for variant clusters.

All data is included in the tables below. Some manuscripts have so few extant letters that they have little or no statistical value (such as Exod 4Q11, Deut 4Q42). These are included for the sake of completeness. The tables show the percentages of variants (total, orthographic, non-orthographic) based on the number of extant letters for each manuscript, as measured against MT.

Orthographic variants include all plene/defective and other spelling differences between the manuscript and MT. Non-orthographic variants include word additions, word subtractions, word differences, word sequences, addition or subtraction of conjunctive *waw* (as a separate category), differences in pronominal suffixes, differences in number, and differences in the use or non-use of prefixed prepositions and the definite article. The following abbreviations are used in the tables below:

- Ms. = Manuscript
- # Let = Number of letters
- O = Orthographic Variants
- NO = Non-Orthographic Variants
- Tot = Total Variants

³⁸ LXX manuscripts are not included here. This allows us to examine only Hebrew language manuscripts and avoid issues of translation theory and practice.

TABLE 5: PERCENT TOTAL VARIANTS IN DECALOGUE MANUSCRIPTS

Ms.	Type	# Let	O	NO	Tot	% O	% NO	% Tot
Exod 4Q11	Scroll	8	0	0	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Exod SP	Edition	629	4	8	12	0.64%	1.27%	1.91%
Deut SP	Edition	711	8	13	21	1.13%	1.83%	2.95%
Deut XQ-3	Phyl	705	6	16	22	0.85%	2.27%	3.12%
Deut 1Q13	Phyl	175	2	5	7	1.14%	2.86%	4.00%
Deut 4Q42	Scroll	22	0	1	1	0.00%	4.55%	4.55%
Deut 4Q142	Phyl	74	2	2	4	2.70%	2.70%	5.41%
Deut 4Q37	Scroll	145	9	0	9	6.21%	0.00%	6.21%
Exod Nash	Leaf	455	17	21	38	3.74%	4.62%	8.35%
Deut 4Q128	Phyl	52	5	0	5	9.62%	0.00%	9.62%
Exod 4Q149	Mezuzah	100	5	5	10	5.00%	5.00%	10.00%
Deut 4Q41	Scroll	844	40	52	92	4.74%	6.16%	10.90%
Deut 4Q139	Phyl	134	16	3	19	11.94%	2.24%	14.18%
Deut 4Q129	Phyl	280	36	5	41	12.86%	1.79%	14.64%
Deut 4Q137	Phyl	581	66	20	86	11.36%	3.44%	14.80%
Deut 4Q134	Phyl	431	19	47	66	4.41%	10.90%	15.31%

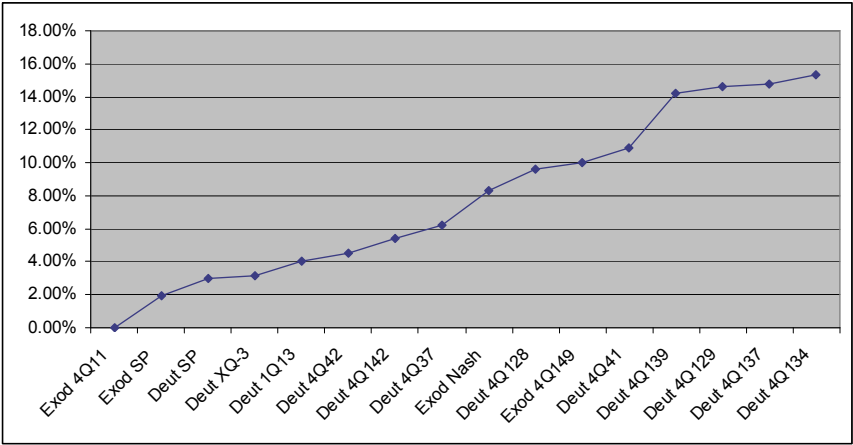


TABLE 6: PERCENT ORTHOGRAPHIC VARIANTS IN DECALOGUE MANUSCRIPTS

Ms.	Type	# Let	O	NO	Tot	% O	% NO	% Tot
Exod 4Q11	Scroll	8	0	0	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Deut 4Q42	Scroll	22	0	1	1	0.00%	4.55%	4.55%
Exod SP	Edition	629	4	8	12	0.64%	1.27%	1.91%
Deut XQ-3	Phyl	705	6	16	22	0.85%	2.27%	3.12%
Deut SP	Edition	711	8	13	21	1.13%	1.83%	2.95%
Deut 1Q13	Phyl	175	2	5	7	1.14%	2.86%	4.00%
Deut 4Q142	Phyl	74	2	2	4	2.70%	2.70%	5.41%
Exod Nash	Leaf	455	17	21	38	3.74%	4.62%	8.35%
Deut 4Q134	Phyl	431	19	47	66	4.41%	10.90%	15.31%
Deut 4Q41	Scroll	844	40	52	92	4.74%	6.16%	10.90%
Exod 4Q149	Mezuzah	100	5	5	10	5.00%	5.00%	10.00%
Deut 4Q37	Scroll	145	9	0	9	6.21%	0.00%	6.21%
Deut 4Q128	Phyl	52	5	0	5	9.62%	0.00%	9.62%
Deut 4Q137	Phyl	581	66	20	86	11.36%	3.44%	14.80%
Deut 4Q139	Phyl	134	16	3	19	11.94%	2.24%	14.18%
Deut 4Q129	Phyl	280	36	5	41	12.86%	1.79%	14.64%

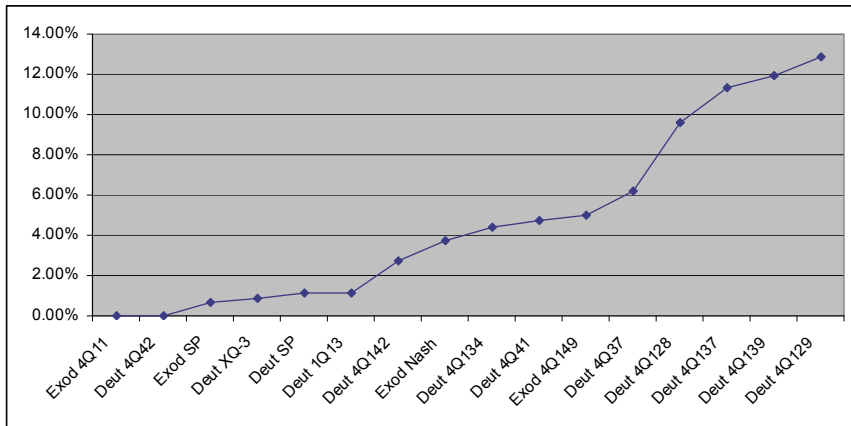


FIGURE 6: GRAPH OF ORTHOGRAPHIC VARIANTS

TABLE 7: PERCENT NON-ORTHOGRAPHIC VARIANTS IN DECALOGUE
MANUSCRIPTS

Ms.	Type	# Let	O	NO	Tot	% O	% NO	% Tot
Exod 4Q11	Scroll	8	0	0	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Deut 4Q37	Scroll	145	9	0	9	6.21%	0.00%	6.21%
Deut 4Q128	Phyl	52	5	0	5	9.62%	0.00%	9.62%
Exod SP	Edition	629	4	8	12	0.64%	1.27%	1.91%
Deut 4Q129	Phyl	280	36	5	41	12.86%	1.79%	14.64%
Deut SP	Edition	711	8	13	21	1.13%	1.83%	2.95%
Deut 4Q139	Phyl	134	16	3	19	11.94%	2.24%	14.18%
Deut XQ-3	Phyl	705	6	16	22	0.85%	2.27%	3.12%
Deut 4Q142	Phyl	74	2	2	4	2.70%	2.70%	5.41%
Deut 1Q13	Phyl	175	2	5	7	1.14%	2.86%	4.00%
Deut 4Q137	Phyl	581	66	20	86	11.36%	3.44%	14.80%
Deut 4Q42	Scroll	22	0	1	1	0.00%	4.55%	4.55%
Exod Nash	Leaf	455	17	21	38	3.74%	4.62%	8.35%
Exod 4Q149	Mezuzah	100	5	5	10	5.00%	5.00%	10.00%
Deut 4Q41	Scroll	844	40	52	92	4.74%	6.16%	10.90%
Deut 4Q134	Phyl	431	19	47	66	4.41%	10.90%	15.31%

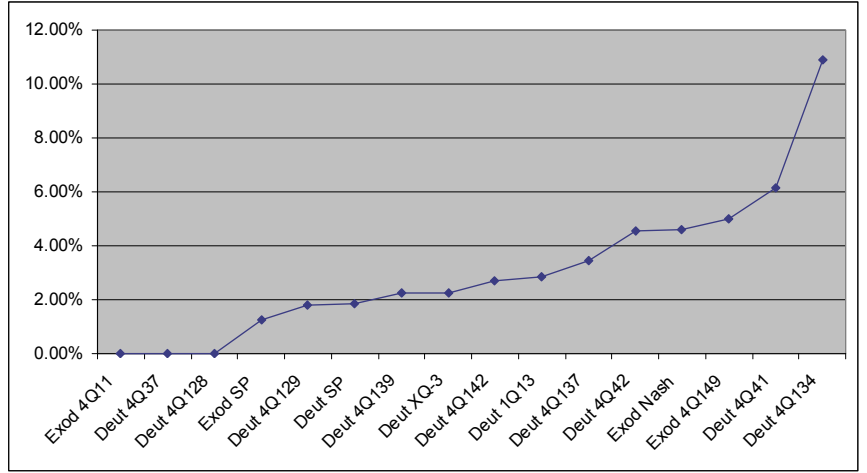


FIGURE 7: GRAPH OF NON-ORTHOGRAPHIC VARIANTS

Distribution by Manuscript Type

A comparison of the tables reveals that, while the phylactery texts from Cave 4 generally exhibit a high number of total variants, most of those variants are orthographic. From table 5 it is seen that the phylactery texts generally, as well as those specifically from Cave 4, are almost evenly distributed across all manuscripts.

Correlation Between Orthographic and Non-Orthographic Variants

How well do the manuscripts correlate across the variant categories? Are manuscripts relatively high in orthographic variants correspondingly high in non-orthographic variants? The number in the columns "Total," "Orth.," and "Non-Orth." represent the rank of the manuscript in terms of its percentage of variants for each category (1 is the lowest variant percentage, 16 the highest). Column "Diff O/NO" is the difference (absolute value) in rank between a manuscript's orthographic and non-orthographic rank. There is no general correlation across all the manuscripts. Some manuscripts do not correlate closely at all, which means that the level of orthographic variants in those manuscripts is not a good measure of the level of non-orthographic variants they exhibit.

TABLE 8: CORRELATION BETWEEN ORTHOGRAPHIC AND NON-ORTHOGRAPHIC VARIANTS

Ms.	Type	Tot	O	NO	Diff O/NO
Exod 4Q11	Scroll	1	1	1	0
Deut SP	Edition	3	5	6	1
Exod SP	Edition	2	2	4	2
Deut 4Q142	Phyl	7	7	9	2
Exod 4Q149	Phyl	11	11	14	3
Deut 4Q137	Phyl	15	14	11	3
Deut XQ-3	Phyl	4	4	8	4
Deut 1Q13	Phyl	5	6	10	4
Exod Nash	Leaf	9	8	13	5
Deut 4Q41	Scroll	12	10	15	5
Deut 4Q134	Phyl	16	9	16	7
Deut 4Q139	Phyl	13	15	7	8
Deut 4Q42	Scroll	6	2	12	10
Deut 4Q37	Scroll	8	12	2	10
Deut 4Q128	Phyl	10	13	3	10
Deut 4Q129	Phyl	14	16	5	11

Note that the lack of correlation between non-orthographic and orthographic variants is not uni-directional. Deut 4Q42 exhibits a low number of orthographic variants, but a high number of non-orthographic ones. Deut 4Q37, 4Q128 and 4Q129 exhibit just the opposite behavior: high in orthographic variants, low in non-orthographic ones.

A NOTE OF CAUTION

As valuable as these statistical windows are for certain types of queries, one must exercise caution in using them to describe a manuscript's qualitative character. A missing word, an added word, or a different word in the non-orthographic category—variants that are often labeled as “significant”³⁹—do not tell us all we may wish to know about the nature of those variants. The level of importance one attaches to any particular non-orthographic variant will depend largely on a subjective evaluation. Some variant readings would probably be considered “significant” by anyone who reads the text. The well-known example of the “Wicked Bible” is a perfect illustration, in which a 1631 printing of the King James Version left out the word “not” before “commit adultery.”⁴⁰ None of our extant Decalogue manuscripts exhibit textual fluidity of this kind.

A full study of both quantitative and qualitative differences exhibited in the manuscripts must be undertaken to gain clearer understanding of the full impact of manuscript variants. Preliminary study indicates that category lines remain indistinct, not only in terms of alignment with Exodus or Deuteronomy, but also in terms of other category types which I take up in the following chapter.

³⁹ I discuss the term “significant” in Chapter 8.

⁴⁰ As of 16 Sept 2010 an image of this variant can be viewed at: <http://www.greatsite.com/ancient-rare-bibles-books/platinum.html>, which offers this printing of the “Wicked Bible” as “the only one for sale in the world” for \$89,500.

11

TEXTUAL CATEGORIES OF DECALOGUE MANUSCRIPTS

BIBLICAL OR NON-BIBLICAL?

An initial question of category is first to determine if, on the basis of number and nature of variants, a text like the Nash Papyrus is to be categorized as “biblical” or “non-biblical.” Scholars involved in publishing the Dead Sea Scrolls have classified the nearly nine hundred documents into two major groups of ca. seven hundred non-biblical and ca. two hundred biblical documents, as most clearly seen in the Chronological Index of the Texts from the Judaean Desert in DJD XXXIX, pp. 371–375. The Nash Papyrus is, of course, not from the Dead Sea area, but rather (most likely) from Egypt. How does its text compare with the “biblical” vs. “non-biblical” texts from the Dead Sea? How *would* it have been categorized by Dead Sea scholars *had* it been discovered among those documents? We will consider this matter shortly in connection with the next section: “biblical” vs. “liturgical.”¹

BIBLICAL OR LITURGICAL?

Each of three standard works on the text of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament discuss the liturgical function of the Nash Papyrus with varying degrees of certainty. Only one of them addresses what the term “liturgical” means. Below are relevant citations:

¹ A more fundamental question of “biblical” vs. “non-biblical” is essentially the canonicity question, which is a subject outside the scope of this section, and about which much has been written in ancient through modern times. An excellent recent collection of studies on this subject is *The Canon Debate* (Hendrickson, 2002).

Würthwein is certain that the Nash Papyrus is *not* a biblical scroll, but he is less sure what the category should be called to which it does belong:

The Nash Papyrus, as it is called, contains a somewhat damaged copy of the Decalogue, following mostly the text of Exod. 20:2–17, partly Deut. 5:6–21, with the Shema' from Deut. 6:4f. appended. The sequence of the text shows that it is not derived from a biblical scroll, but from a liturgical, devotional, or instructional document.²

Deist cautiously says what it “probably” is without saying it is not biblical. Perhaps Deist would categorize the Nash Papyrus as *both* biblical *and* liturgical. But this he does not explicitly do:

This partially damaged papyrus contains the Ten Commandments (composed in part from Ex. 20 and in part from Deut. 5) and...diverges from the Massoretic tradition...and is probably a copy of a liturgical document from the Maccabean period.³

Tov refers to the Nash papyrus as a liturgical, or not a strictly biblical text, at least four times in his work on textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible: (1) in a footnote to the Nash papyrus Tov said that it “does not reflect a witness for the biblical text in the generally accepted sense of the word because it presumably contains a liturgical text.”⁴ (2) In the main entry on the Nash papyrus, Tov states that the “mixed formulation of Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 ... reflects a liturgical rather than a biblical text ... so that its relevance for textual criticism is limited.”⁵ (3) Under the heading “Vulgar texts” (another category), Nash is “not a biblical text in the usual sense of the word.”⁶ (4) In a section on “The Copying of the Biblical Text,” Tov notes “also the Nash papyrus, containing the Decalogue and probably used for liturgical purposes.”⁷

It is interesting to note Tov’s hesitancy to definitively label the Nash papyrus as “liturgical” on the one hand—note the moderating terms “presumably” (p. 14), “apparently” (p. 118, which also applies here to its non-biblical assessment), and “probably” (p. 203), while on the other hand certainty is expressed as to its non-biblical status—“does not reflect

² Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*, 34.

³ Deist, *Witnesses to the Old Testament*, 62.

⁴ Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 14, n. 12.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 118.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 193.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 203.

a witness for the biblical text" (p. 14), "not a biblical text" (p. 193), although following these statements there are additional qualifiers on the term "biblical": "in the generally accepted sense" (p. 14), "in the usual sense of the word" (p. 193).

Tov has the following to say about the historical evidence for a distinction between liturgical and non-liturgical scrolls:

From early times a distinction was made between liturgical scrolls, which were used in the public reading of the Bible in places of worship, and non-liturgical or private texts. In the Second Temple period there may have been some differences in content between the two types of texts, since the former were often transmitted more precisely, with fewer mistakes and corrections...At that time there may also have been differences in external shape, but proof for this assumption is lacking.⁸

Tov continues the discussion by noting that the earliest documentary evidence for these assumptions derives from the Talmudic and post-Talmudic periods. But if by "early times" we are dealing with the pre-Talmudic period, in which the Nash papyrus and Dead Sea documents belong, it is anachronistic to speak of their text types in terms of a development that can be documented only centuries later. There may, or may not, have been the same distinctions between liturgical and non-liturgical practices and readings during the period of the earliest extant witnesses to what later becomes the Hebrew Bible.

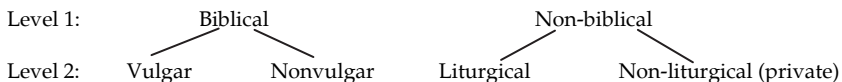
The various categories and their juxtapositions so far discussed—biblical vs. non-biblical, biblical vs. liturgical, liturgical vs. non-liturgical, vulgar vs. nonvulgar—have areas of overlap and non-overlap.

One of the problems that may lie in the very creation of a series of bifurcated typologies, unless their points of reference are clearly distinguished, is that, sooner or later, inconsistencies are likely to surface. For example, we find that on the one hand, the Nash Papyrus is liturgical, not biblical. Its non-biblical status renders it relatively unfit for text-critical purposes, presumably because it is less than accurately transmitted, or at least less so than the strictly biblical texts. However, when liturgical scrolls are juxtaposed with non-liturgical ones, it is the liturgical scrolls that are the ones "transmitted more precisely, with fewer mistakes." So, we would now need to consider the Nash Papyrus, in terms of its accuracy, to occupy a middle position between the more accurate, strictly biblical texts, and the less accurate non-liturgical ones. So far so good; out of two bifurcations, we have three levels of accuracy. Now consider the category of "vulgar" texts, which are said to contain

⁸ Ibid., 207.

"many changes and corrections" though "not written negligently." It is in this context that Tov remarks: "The Nash Papyrus, though not a biblical text in the usual sense, also belongs to this [i.e., vulgar—gm] group."

One should note that the terms "vulgar" and "nonvulgar" are considered *subcategories* of biblical texts, which explains the modifying statement "though not a biblical text" in the above quotation. Perhaps one way of visualizing the categories would be as follows:



The Nash Papyrus, then, is classified as: (1) non-biblical (main category) and (2) liturgical (subcategory). One must simply be aware that, according to the above typology, when the Nash Papyrus is called "liturgical" as *opposed* to biblical, the opposition is being made on two different category levels.

Numerous questions about these categories continue to surface. For example, are the terms always used in the same sense? If the Nash Papyrus had been found in a Qumran cave, would it, as a non-biblical, liturgical text, have been categorized in the Chronological Index of the Texts from the Judaean Desert of DJD XXXIX in the non-biblical category? Based on the measurable quantitative and qualitative levels I have investigated, Nash falls well within the ranges of other "biblical" manuscripts.⁹

⁹ I am interested here in all extant witnesses to a particular biblical pericope, regardless of the circumstances in which the textual artifact might have been created or put to use. For example, 4QDeut^a is "not a manuscript of the complete book of Deuteronomy but contains excerpts: almost all of Deut 8:5–10 and 5:1–6:1, in that order, on four complete columns and two partially damaged columns." Sidnie White Crawford, "41. 4QDeut^a", DJD XIV (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), pg. 117. See also Sidnie Ann White, "4QDt^a: Biblical Manuscript or Excerpted Text?" *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*, edited by H. W. Attridge, J. J. Collins, and T. H. Tobin; College Theology Society Resources in Religion 5. (Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1990), 13–20. Since 4QDeut^a includes the Decalogue pericope, I include it in my comparisons of biblical texts.

PHYLACTERIES (TEFILLIN)

There are several unique characteristics of *tefillin* texts that one should note. The first and most obvious feature is their small size and the correspondingly tiny letters written on them. The text is so compact in cases like the *tefillin* XQ Phyl 1–4 that words are sometimes divided at the ends of lines, a practice not found in any other Hebrew texts.¹⁰ The latter parts of the divided words are generally written, not at the beginning of the next line (although that does occur occasionally), but in available space left over from the line above, or if that line was full, in the empty line beneath. That sometimes caused crowding with the last word of that line when it was written, so it, in turn, would be divided and its latter part would be placed below in the succeeding line. In XQ Phyl 2 even the *Tetragrammaton* was divided. Surprisingly, however, the *tefillin* exhibit a higher occurrence of *plene* spellings than the scrolls and later codices, where much more space is available to include them! There is a wide range in the frequency of *plene* spellings among the *tefillin*, however. 4Q137 has sixty-one *plene* spellings where MT has defective, and only two defective spellings where MT has *plene*. On the other hand, XQ Phyl 3 has only three net *plene* more than MT. All *tefillin* and *mezuzot* have a greater net *plene* count than MT. Therefore, while compactness was optimized for letter size and for fullness of the lines of writing, there was no sparing of the *matres lectionis*.

Unlike scrolls and codices, *tefillin* and *mezuzot* parchments were generally not ruled. On close inspection both the straightness of the writing as well as the interline spacings are remarkably smooth and regular. In addition to these rather amazing features, Y. Yadin notes:

The scribe of the *tefillin* was an expert who in most cases managed to invest the letters with their formal form in spite of their extremely small size. His style of calligraphy can be characterised as ‘formal,’ in the terminology of N. Avigad and F. M. Cross.¹¹

¹⁰ For details on the mode of writing, see Yigael Yadin, *Tefillin from Qumran* (XQ Phyl 1–4) (Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society and the Shrine of the Book, 1969), 21–22. These four phylacteries have the siglum “XQ” because their provenance is unknown, though it is thought that they originate from Qumran. These phylacteries are the only ones from the Dead Sea that were found within their compartments in the leather pouch, still folded and tied. What is known about their acquisition along with superb photography documenting every step of their removal from their leather containers is found in Yadin.

¹¹ Yadin, *Tefillin from Qumran* (XQ Phyl 1–4), 22.

In DJD XXXIX all *tefillin* and *mezuzot* texts from the Dead Sea are listed separately from the “biblical texts.” The indistinct terminology of what constitutes a “biblical” text is noted in the volume:

The notion of what constitutes a biblical scroll is not always clear, and accordingly the following list is necessarily based on the views of the scholars publishing these texts ... Phylacteries and *mezuzot*, although containing segments of Hebrew Scripture, are excluded from the main list (but included in the appendix) since they are not biblical texts in the usual sense of the word. By the same token, one could exclude other texts which may have served liturgical purposes, such as scrolls containing both biblical Psalms and other hymnic material, but as these scrolls have been given biblical names, they are included in the present list.¹²

I agree that both the material and text sequences exhibited in the *tefillin* and *mezuzot* texts differ from other materials and sequences in which, at the same period, the same textual content is found. However, in respect to the textual content that they offer, no reason became evident not to include them in this study, as was demonstrated in the previous statistical comparisons.

¹² Tov, ed., DJD 39, 166.

12

APPLICATION OF FORMULAIC METHODS TO DECALOGUE TEXTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPROACH

What does one do with variant data that emerge from a collation of manuscripts? What text-critical role does this data play? If the theoretical basis is one of a single written original, methodologies (such as stemmatology) will attempt to reconstruct that original by reducing the number of variants for a given reading to one; the other readings will be discarded based on certain criteria or rules that the textual critic applies. An entirely different approach would be to let all readings of all manuscripts stand as equals and view them as legitimate traditions for some communities at some time and in some place.¹

In this section I wish to tread on middle ground. Without positively stating that there was no single original, I wish to show under what circumstances multivalent traditions might be considered acceptable. When might they fall within certain limits of acceptability? I describe below methods I have employed that define in practice what I mean both by "formula" and "limits of acceptability."

METHODS FOR IDENTIFYING FORMULAS AND THE IMPACT ON TEXT CRITICISM

I make no attempt here to be comprehensive. The methods and examples presented here are only illustrative and could be extended to a much fuller investigation. I have employed two strategies in an attempt

¹ By "all readings" I do not mean that there can never be such a thing as a scribal error. I refer here to issues where alternate texts make sense; they are only "different" in some way from the "standard" text.

to identify formulas in the Decalogue texts. The first strategy is based on the technique of text-string matching, but I did not constrain the search by morphological form; the second is based on key word proximity searches. By “key word” a subjective element is naturally introduced into the method. The first method uncovers nearly static formulae, the second method uncovers formulae with a greater degree of variation. The tool I used in carrying out these searches is the application *Bibloi* (version 8.0, 2004) from Silver Mountain Software. The procedure also involves a certain element of intuition and some investigative “detective” work that cannot here be fully documented. It is also greatly facilitated by familiarity with the text under investigation.

I illustrate here the method with an example from the first section of the Decalogue, where the prologue to the Decalogue reads: “I am Yahweh your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slaves.” I note that the only non-orthographic variant of all extant witnesses examined is the Nash Papyrus, which apparently omitted the phrase “house of slaves,” as I noted earlier. After examining evidence for a formula, I will integrate into the discussion text-critical and other possible reasons for the omission of that phrase.

The passage begins with the long form of the independent personal pronoun **אֲנִי**, which occurs less frequently (359 times) than the short form **אני** (874 times). When I add the second word of the text (יהוה), I learn that the phrase **אֲנִי יְהוָה** occurs only 14 times in the Hebrew Bible. For sake of comparison, I note that the string **אני יהוה** occurs 213 times. After adding two more words, **אֱלֹהִים** (all forms) and **אֲשֶׁר**, only two occurrences result from the search: the Decalogue texts of Exod 20:2 and Deut 5:6. My preliminary determination is that I have found no fixed formula in Biblical Hebrew, since the phrase occurs only twice, and then in the identical context. However, a search for the same text string using **אני** instead of **אֲנִי** produces the following six occurrences:

Exod 29:46

וַיֵּדְעוּ
כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
לִשְׁכֵּנִי בְּתוֹכָם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם:

And they will know that

I am Yahweh their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt
to dwell among them; I am Yahweh their God.

Lev 19:36

מֵאֲזֵי צֶדֶק אֲבִי־צֶדֶק אִפֶּת צֶדֶק וְהֵן צֶדֶק יִהְיֶה לָּכֶם
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

Just balances, just weight, a just ephah, and a just hin you shall have.
I am Yahweh your (pl.) God who brought you (pl.) out of the land of Egypt.

Lev 20:24

וְאָמַר לָכֶם אַתֶּם תִּירְשׁוּ אֶת־אֲדָמָתָם וְאֲנִי אֶתְנַנֶּה
לָכֶם לְרִשְׁתָּהּ אֲתֶנָּה אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־הִבְדַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִן־הָעַמִּים:

And I said to you, You shall possess their land, and I will give it to you
to possess it,
a land flowing with milk and honey.
I am Yahweh your (pl.) God who has separated you from the peoples.

Lev 25:38

אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
לִתֶּת לָכֶם אֶת־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים:

I am Yahweh your (pl.) God who brought you (pl.) out of the land of Egypt
to give you the land of Canaan, to be your God.

Lev 26:13

אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם
מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִהָיִיתָ לָּהֶם עֲבָדִים
וְאֲשַׁבֵּר מִטַּת עַלְכֶּם וְאוֹלֵךְ אֶתְכֶם קוֹמָמִיּוֹת:

I am Yahweh your (pl.) God who brought you (pl.) out of the land of Egypt
from being their slaves; and I broke the bars of your yoke, and I
made you walk in an upright position.

Num 15:41

אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

I am Yahweh your (pl.) God who brought you (pl.) out of the land of Egypt
to be your God; I am Yahweh your (pl.) God.

For comparison the text as it is found in Exod 20:2 and Deut 5:6 is given below:

אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים:

I am Yahweh your (sg.) God who brought you (sg.) out of the land of Egypt from the house of slaves.

The formula emerges, along with additional formulae. The formula can be expressed as follows, broken down by elements in their fixed sequences:

- (1) I [2 options]
- (2) YHWH
- (3) God [+ poss. pron.: 2. sg./pl. m., 3. pl. m]
- (4) who brought out [+ obj. suff.: 2. sg./pl. m., 3. pl. m]
- (5) from the land of Egypt

The rule of consistency between possessive pronoun and object suffix is observed when the formula is employed. Additional associated formulaic expressions are:

- (1) A repeated: "I YHWH, God [+ poss. pron.: 2. sg./pl. m., 3. pl. m]"
- (2) The phrase "to be your God"
- (3) A reference to slavery in two forms: "from being their slaves" / "from the house of slavery"

One exception to the main formula is Lev 20:25, which has "who has separated you from the peoples" instead of "who has brought you out of the land of Egypt." The substituted phrase occurs only here, though the next verse repeats the word "separated."

Other expressions that surface here only once turn out to be formulae used in other contexts, such as "to give you/them the land of Canaan" (5x: Exod 6:4; Lev 25:38; Num 35:14; Ps 105:11; 1 Chr 16:18), and in some of those passages occur other formulae that occur also in yet other passages. The two-word string found in Exod 29:46 composed of the root שָׁכַן ("dwell") plus the preposition בְּתוֹךְ ("in the midst of," as independent preposition or with suffixes) occurs thirteen times; in all but one it is Yahweh who dwells among his people (in Zech 8:8 Yahweh's people dwell in Jerusalem).

Out of a single specific search strategy springs forth a series of formulaic studies that appears almost unending, but tantalizing for the

insights that might open up new ways of thinking about textual variants as variable modes of expression.

The text-critical apparatuses of *BHS* and Rahlfs *Septuaginta* of the seven occurrences of the main formula under discussion show that it is stable in the manuscripts: no variants are recorded either for the formula or for the rest of the text in each verse. With one exception: at Lev 26:13 *BHS* provides two text-critical notes on the expression "from being their slaves."

The second note indicates that the word "their" ("to them") is missing in the Septuagint. The Septuagint text reads: "from your being slaves" (ὄντων ὑμῶν δούλων).

The first note reads that the entire phrase is missing in the Targum (Onkelos), and the variant is classified as "homtel," or homeoteleuton. Since the last words of the phrases "from the land of Egypt" and "from being their slaves" both end in the same two letters in Hebrew,² the text-critical note suggests that the Targumist simply skipped the second phrase. The situation is not quite as simple as *BHS* indicates, however. For the phrase "from being their slaves" is found in Sperber's edition of Targum Onkelos (the edition cited in *BHS* for Targum variants), with no text-critical note there indicating the existence of manuscripts where it is omitted.³ This could simply be an error of record in the apparatus of *BHS*. I suspect, however, that the *BHS* editor was not thinking in terms of a formulaic approach to the text. Noticing that the *exact text* "from the house of slaves" was not present in Targum Onkelos, he marked that text in *BHS* as omitted in the Targum. What was not observed, and not recorded in the apparatus of *BHS* is the fact that in its place stood the phrase "from being their slaves," the formulaic equivalent to "from the house of slaves."

Nonetheless, the text-critical cause is insightful. For, simply noting that "from the house of slaves" was omitted in the Targum, the editor attributed its omission, not to any social or cultural causes, but rather to homeoteleuton.

Our situation now invites a search of the expression "from the house of slaves," in order to test to what extent it can be considered formulaic.

² Additionally, the third letters of each word are so similar in form that they are sometimes confused in the Qumran scrolls, and the words "Egypt" and "slaves" each have five letters).

³ Alexander Sperber, ed., *The Bible in Aramaic Based on Old Manuscripts and Printed Texts. Vol. I: The Pentateuch According to Targum Onkelos* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 212.

The phrase occurs thirteen times.⁴ According to the text-critical apparatuses of *BHS* and Rahlfs *Septuaginta*, the phrase is stable in all its occurrences. There are no manuscripts listed where it is omitted, with one exception. The phrase is not found in the Septuagint of Josh 24:17, along with additional text following the phrase.

In his publication of the Nash Papyrus, Cook cites in a footnote the suggestion of an E. J. Pilcher, who considered the omission of "from the house of slaves" intentional. Citing Pilcher (hence the quotation marks):

"the authorities of the Synagogue, living in the midst of a fanatical and turbulent population, may have considered it prudent to refrain from publicly describing their land of residence as a house of slaves," thus avoiding a phrase "which might be considered as casting an aspersion upon the country or its inhabitants."⁵

Offord concurs with the explanation:

Much as the Jew abhors the deletion of any fragment of his sacred scriptures he felt it was necessary to omit those words as being offensive to any Egyptian reader of the text.⁶

Peters, on the other hand, considered its omission either a case of homeoteleuton after the preceding phrase, or caused through the influence of a series of parallel expressions, which occurs in other passages cited.⁷ The second explanation is, in other words, a formulaic one. Peters says that in other parallel passages, the phrase is also missing. The first parallel Peters cites is Lev 11:45, which reads:

כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה הַמַּעֲלֶה אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהִיטֵל לָכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים

For I am Yahweh the one bringing you *up* from the land of Egypt, to be your God.

⁴ Exod 13:3*, 14*; 20:2; Deut 5:6; 6:12; 7:8'; 8:14; 13:6, 11; Josh 24:17; Judg 6:8'; Jer 34:13 [LXX 41:13]; Mic 6:4. The formula is "from Egypt, from the house of slaves" (indicated in the list of references with the asterisk *), or "from the land of Egypt, from the house of slaves" (no marking), or simply "from the house of slaves" (indicated in the list of references with an apostrophe [']); the phrase is split up in Judg 6:8).

⁵ Cook, "A Pre-Masoretic Biblical Papyrus," 37, n. 3.

⁶ Offord, "The Newly Discovered Pre-Massoretic Hebrew Papyrus," 39.

⁷ "Der Ausfall begreift sich wie durch zufälliges Ausbleiben ... so durch den Einfluß einer Reihe von Parallelen, in denen die Worte fehlen, so in Lv 11,45; 25,45; Nm 15,41; Ps 81,11." Peters, *Die älteste Abschrift der zehn Gebote*, 22.

We uncover here another variation of the formula. It can use the Hiphil of **יצא** or **עלה**, i.e. “bring out” or “bring up,” and it does so numerous times.

Peters’ suggestion is strengthened on the basis of the additional formulaic variations found in many texts throughout the Hebrew Bible. While, in isolation, the omission of the phrase in Nash is counter to all other textual evidence *for that particular pericope*, which might suggest a scribal error, when one compares its connection in a formulaic structure with other instances of similar formulas we find: (1) the phrase is not always included in texts with parallel formulation, and (2) in texts where the phrase generally is to be found, isolated evidence among the manuscripts shows it to be missing.

This formulaic comparison in no way proves that other reasons for the absence of the phrase are invalid. It simply shows another explanation is possible, with the ultimate text-critical implication that the omission of the phrase in Nash does not have to be viewed as an error, but simply as an alternate reading, though for this pericope a minority reading.⁸

FORMULAS VIRTUALLY “SET IN STONE”?

A possible objection can be raised against the formulaic variability explanation just provided. While formulas may vary from passage to passage, they can become quite fixed in their specific *loci*, as we already noticed. This may have served the function of memory, not just of the formula, but of where a specific instance of a formula can be found among a group of texts. I note several examples from the Decalogue.

First, returning to the introductory phrase “I am Yahweh your God ...,” one notices that Exod 20:2 and Deut 5:6 are the only ones in which the suffix “your/you” are in the singular; further, the formula opens only here with the long form of the independent pronoun. So while the formula has many variations throughout the Hebrew Bible, as soon as one reads or hears: **אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶשְׁכֵּן**, not only can one complete the passage effortlessly, but one immediately knows its context, though its location can be one of two passages. So while the Decalogue may be thought to begin with a “stock” formula, the formula is so modified that it uniquely identifies its role as opening the Decalogue pericope.

⁸ The Nash reading could have been caused by an error of memory, as Nash is sometimes argued to be copied from memory rather than from another text. I thank Sidnie White Crawford for this additional consideration.

In examining the parallel texts in Appendix 3, one notices several sections where there is no or very little shading (indicating differences among the readings), and no word designated by "omit." When one takes into consideration only non-orthographic variants, many sections in fact are entirely stable. A particularly long formula is found at Exod 20:4b / Deut 5:8. It is extant in a large number of manuscripts, and among all of them collectively there are only three minor variants. The formula is: "which is in the heavens above, and which is in the earth below, and which is in the waters under the earth."

The formula occurs in this exact wording only in the Decalogue texts. In Deut 4:39, Josh 2:11, and 1 Kgs 8:23 the formula omits the last section "and which is in the waters under the earth" and uses the preposition **עַל** ("upon") before "earth" instead of **בְּ** ("in"). The Decalogue formula is very regular, with three-fold repetition of the relative, and with the conjunctive "and" before the second and third sections. It is ordered from top to bottom, with appropriate adverbs associated with each noun.

Another exceptionally stable formula is found in Exod 20:11a / Deut 5:14d⁹, composed of the same three elements of the previous formula and in the same sequence (heaven, earth, sea) with an additional component: "for (in) six days Yahweh made the heavens, and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them." The direct object particle occurs before each object-noun, but the conjunctive "and" is missing on the second element. This builds two paired units: (1) the heavens and the earth, (2) the sea and all that is in them. The formula occurs elsewhere, but with much variation.¹⁰

A full investigation of manuscript variants in each instance of a formula's occurrence would provide a test for two opposing forces: (1) the impact of formulaic specificity on textual stability, and (2) the impact of formulaic variability on textual multivalence.

In observing the ways in which varieties of formulaic phrases surface, I observe two phenomena with parallels in the field of modern information technology: fuzzy matching and hyperlinking. Fuzzy matching essentially involves matching to approximate or inexact values. Google searches apply the same principle. If one wishes to search for an exact character string, one places quotations marks around the search

⁹ The phrase does not occur in Deut 5:14d of MT, but it is in 4Q134 and LXX B.

¹⁰ Exod 20:11; Hag 2:6; Ps 69:35; 96:11; 135:6; 146:6; Neh 9:6 (twice!). The results were from a proximity search using the key words "heavens," "earth," and "sea" within two words of each other. Three additional results surface as the number of intervening words is increased to four, with a maximum value of intervening words set by the software at twenty.

text. Otherwise, Google will perform a search and ignore, for example, the "values" of upper and lower case, the presence or non-presence of a hyphen, and certain small words, especially at the beginning of a phrase such as "a" or "the" (as is also true of library catalogue search engines). Hyperlinking is now commonly understood: an underlined word or phrase, when "clicked," links to some other relevant location or target predetermined by the web developer. The application to formulaic searching in texts such as early Jewish writings utilizes the same two concepts. If one wishes to "link" to other instances of a specific formula, one can choose to find exact matches, but those may only be few or none. If, however, allowance is made for some modifications, or approximations (inexact values) in the search to be conducted, such as using a synonym of a word in my initial text string, changing a relative pronoun plus finite verb construction for one with a definite article plus participle, altering the order of the terms, or simply entering what one believes may be "key words," allowing for some number of intervening words to occur between them (proximity search), other instances of the same formula are located.

One also finds formula clusters, or, using modern programming terminology, formula "modules."¹¹ "I am Yahweh your God" is a module. "Who brought you out / brought you up from" is a module, as are "from the land of Egypt" and "from the house of slaves / from being their slaves." Attached to some of these modules one finds this one: "with a strong hand and an outstretched arm" which is found with multiple modifications, such as "with great power and with an outstretched arm," but never "with an outstretched hand and a mighty arm."

A FORMULA FOR "MURDER-ADULTERY-THEFT"?

The order "heaven-earth-sea" is fixed in at least the two different formulae examined above. The reverse order "sea-earth-heaven" never occurs in the Hebrew Bible,¹² although the order "sea-heaven-earth"

¹¹ The similarities between human logic systems and computer models of those systems are explored in fields such as Artificial Intelligence and Computational Linguistics, such that parallel terminology between these technical fields and modern textual studies/oral studies programs is not surprising. The use of terms such as "polymorphism" and "fuzzy logic" in Computer Science and related technologies is very much analogous to the ways in which philologists apply them to human language.

¹² Key words searched with the number of intervening words set to the maximum value of twenty.

occurs in Gen 1:26, 28.¹³ There is a preferred order. The commandments “do not murder,” “do not commit adultery,” and “do not steal,” also exhibit a preferred order in the manuscripts, but there is extensive variability. Various reasons are given for specific sequences of these three commandments. David N. Freedman thinks there was a time when the order “was not fixed, and different sequences were popular at different times and areas” but that the later fixed order “was a deliberate act instigated by the Deuteronomistic Historian.”¹⁴ William Loader thinks the order that places adultery first in the series may be “an adjustment in the light of prominence given to wives in the final prohibition in Deuteronomy” though he also admits “to the possibility that it [LXX] may be preserving an order found already in some Hebrew manuscripts.”¹⁵

A formulaic approach does not provide additional insight in this particular case. It can be observed in the relative numbers of extant manuscripts containing the three commandments that there is a pyramidal arrangement of evidence for the respective orders found. From the greatest number of witnesses to the least (see Appendix 2 on Exod 20:13–15 / Deut 5:17–19), we have:

1. murder-adultery-steal: 8 witnesses
2. adultery-murder-steal / adultery-steal-murder: 2 witnesses each
3. murder-steal-adultery: 1 late minuscule

The picture becomes less clear when evidence from other passages in the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and other sources is included.¹⁶

Perhaps the simplest explanation is gained by visually comparing the three commandments (in the order of Exodus MT):

לא תרצח לא תנאף לא תגנב

or in vertical array:

לא תרצח
לא תנאף
לא תגנב

¹³ Heaven-sea-earth, earth-sea-heaven, and earth-heaven-sea, do not occur.

¹⁴ Freedman, *The Nine Commandments: Uncovering a Hidden Pattern of Crime and Punishment in the Hebrew Bible*, 94–95.

¹⁵ William Loader, *The Septuagint, Sexuality, and the New Testament: Case Studies on the Impact of the LXX in Philo and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 8.

¹⁶ For the most detail, see Freedman, *The Nine Commandments: Uncovering a Hidden Pattern of Crime and Punishment in the Hebrew Bible*, 85–108.

The similarities are extensive: all three have the same number of letters. All begin with the same two letter word לָא, and the second word begins with ת (preformative for 2. sg. impf.), producing the potential for a double case of homoiographon; and there are *three* of these two-word elements, not just two.

No witness places “steal” first in the list, perhaps because it was considered of less import than the other two. However, steal is not always last. In fact, in its second position it is ahead of murder twice, and once it is ahead of adultery. But, perhaps the order is *increasing* in magnitude of the crime?! Explanations are likely to continue to be brought forth.

Rigidity co-exists with fluidity. While the order of the three varies, they are *always* in the same relative position (as I enumerate them: 6, 7, and 8). Never do any of these occur in positions 1–5 or 9–10. There are no variants that introduce a fourth term. When לָא תִנְאֶפֶךָ was found to have been typeset in a transliteration of the Nash Papyrus as לָא תִנְאֶפֶךָ, where the metathesis of the ט and נ just happened to form another Hebrew word (resulting in: “you shall not become angry”), it was quickly detected as a typographical error and corrected. This section of the Decalogue might have made sense with that reading—“do not murder, do not be angry, do not steal.” This is a reasonable progression. A New Testament scholar might have associated it with Jesus’ saying in Matthew’s account of the Sermon on the Mount: “You shall not commit murder ... but I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty ...” (Matt 5:21–22). But the text traditions of the Decalogue were apparently not that variable.

We find here, then, an example of the principle of variation within limits. The absolute order varied, but the relative order never varied (they were always in the range 6–8), and the specific items forbidden were always the same three. What we can never be completely sure of in every case is whether or not the variation limits we observe in the manuscripts represent conscious limits among those who lived with, and by, these texts.

Formulaic analysis can be thought of as a bridge, situated in a middle position between two related approaches to understanding patterns of textual messaging: identification of fixed word pairs (or clusters) and identification of motifs or themes. Formulas are not as limited or as rigid as word-pairs, but they possess tighter structural forms than motifs or themes. We have a progression of approaches to the study of a text: (1) word and form (why this word/form and not another one?); (2) word groups (pairs or clusters: why these terms and why this order?); (3) formulae (what are the limits of variability; with which other formulae or formulaic modules do they occur; how are they constructed?); (4) motifs

(why and how does this subject, theme, or idea recur?). Other approaches, such as rhetorical criticism (why this structure?), also enter into the picture.

It appears to me that textual criticism has generally remained focused on the first area—word and form. It is time to consider parameters, conditions, and methods for the inclusion of other analytical approaches to text into the text-critical process. The formulaic approach is one among many.

13

LETTER CONFUSION IN THE PROPHETS

WAW OR YOD IN HABAKKUK 2:4?

Textual multivalence traceable to the confusion of a single letter led to textual variations in a passage of fundamental theological import in the writings of the New Testament and in rabbinic Judaism. That multivalence does not seem to have evoked any serious theological controversy. The multivalent traditions remain intact in their respective *loci*.

THE TEXT OF HABAKKUK 2:4B

The Masoretic text of Hab 2:4b reads: וְצַדִּיק בְּאַמּוּנָתוֹ יֵחִיָּה, “and a just one, by his trust/steadfastness/trustworthiness/faithfulness (he) will live.” Two English translations render as follows: “but the righteous live by their faith (n. Or *faithfulness*)” (NSRV); “But the righteous man is rewarded with life for his fidelity” (JPS). The key theological terms that receive great attention are “righteous,” “faith, fidelity,” and “live.” I wish to focus on the seemingly trivial pronominal suffix “his.”

PAUL’S FOUNDATIONAL THEOLOGY AND ITS ALTERNATE TEXTUAL FORMS

Paul cites Hab 2:4b as a fundamental principle upon which are based key components of his theology of “faith” in the book of Romans. He introduces the phrase with “as it is written.” The text of Rom 1:17b reads:

καθὼς γέγραπται, Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται.

as it is written, “But the just one, by faith, shall live.”

There is a one-to-one correspondence on the lexical level with the key theological terms found in the Hebrew text: (1) צַדִּיק > δίκαιος; (2) אֱמוּנָה > πίστεως; (3) יְהִי > ζήσεται. In addition, other elements correspond as well, such as the preposition ב rendered as ἐκ, and the copulative *waw* rendered as δὲ. In Paul's citation the noun "righteous (one)" receives the definite article (׳ו), which lacks its equivalent in the Hebrew text, but that can be explained on the basis of the less frequent use of the definite article in Hebrew poetic (and prophetic) texts. Other than this difference of the article, there is one other difference: the Hebrew text has the pronominal suffix "his" appended to the word אֱמוּנָה, but it is not found in Paul's citation. The text-critical apparatus of NA²⁷⁽⁸⁾ shows a variant reading: the original reading of the fifth century Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (which became a twelfth century palimpsest) has ἐκ πίστεως μου, "from *my* faith." We have two traditions in New Testament manuscripts, each of which differ from the Hebrew Masoretic text. So we have three distinct versions of the text: (1) "by his faith" (MT); (2) "by faith" (majority of NT mss.); (3) "by my faith" (C*).

The Septuagint text¹ reads: ἐκ πίστεως μου. The text-critical apparatus notes that the third century (C.E.) Washington codex shows a text correction indicating the μου should be omitted, and there are other witnesses that actually omit the μου. This minority reading corresponds exactly with the primary reading of Rom 2:4, while the primary reading of LXX corresponds to the minority reading of Rom 2:4. But no manuscript of either the LXX or NT has the pronoun "his" found in the Masoretic Text.

There are no Hebrew manuscripts from the Dead Sea that offer a reading of this part of the verse. Unfortunately, the Habakkuk Peshar (1QpHab), which has text just up to this point, is missing the *lemma* Hab 2:4 at the bottom of column VII. The *peshar* to Hab 2:4 is extant; it begins at the top of the column XIII. I translate it as follows:

Its interpretation: (It) concerns all who do the law in the house of Judah, whom God will rescue from the house of judgment, on account of their grief, and their trust [faith] in the Teacher of Righteousness.

The word "their trust" is written: ואמנתם, with the plural masculine suffix "their." This probably reflects the reading "his" in the *lemma*, since by the word "righteous one" Habakkuk would be referring to a class of

¹ Joseph Ziegler, ed., *Duodecim prophetae*, 3rd ed., Septuaginta, Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum, vol. XIII (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 264.

people and not a single individual. Hence, commentaries pluralize; so “his trust” would become “their trust” in the interpretation.

Among the Dead Sea Scrolls Hab 2:4 is extant in the Greek manuscript of the Minor Prophets 8HevXII gr.² which reads ΕΝ ΠΙΣΤΕΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ, an exact rendering of the Hebrew Masoretic text. Now it is well known that the Greek Minor Prophets scroll from Nahal Hever often agrees with MT against other Greek manuscripts, as it does in this case.³

To complete the testimony of manuscripts, we include an additional citation of Hab 2:4b in Gal 3:11, where it appears exactly as in Rom 1:17b, without any pronoun. NA²⁷⁽⁸⁾ provides no variant readings.

Now the phrase is cited only one other time in NT writings. It is found in the anonymous book of Hebrews (which most scholars today would not ascribe to Paul.) Heb 10:38 reads:

ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται

But *my* just one, by faith, shall live

Here not only do we have the pronoun *my* instead of *his* or none at all, the pronoun is in an entirely different position than every other known textual witness. The text-critical apparatus of NA²⁷⁽⁸⁾ notes that some manuscripts omit μου (agreeing with the primary reading of Rom 1:17b and that of Gal 3:11), while others have the order ΕΚ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ ΜΟΥ (in agreement with the primary LXX reading).

TEXT-CRITICAL EXPLANATION: CONFUSION OF LETTERS

What could account for all these variations? One explanation can be offered by first noting the similarity in the retroverted Hebrew texts of the four readings found in various Greek renderings:

[The] just one by faith	צדיק באמונה
[The] just one by his faith	צדיק באמונתו
[The] just one by my faith	צדיק באמונתי
My just one by faith	צדיקי באמונה

² Beate Ego *et al.*, eds., *Minor Prophets*, Biblia Qumranica, Vol. 3B (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 132. For the editio princeps, see Emanuel Tov, *The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (8HevXIIgr)*, DJD VIII (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990; reprinted with corrections 1995).

³ This situation raises questions about which Greek manuscripts are thought to belong to “the Septuagint” and which belong to the more generic category “Old Greek,” but that is an issue that lies outside the focus of this chapter.

As for the second and third readings, the explanation is quite easy: the letters ך and ך in the Dead Sea Scrolls are often very difficult to differentiate. It is therefore easy to understand how a reading “my” could be mistaken for “his,” or vice versa. Other confusions are also possible. The letters ך and ך can be confused in some manuscripts (especially if the characteristic bottom left foot of the ך is missing). In addition, the top left corners of those letters have slight protrusions upward (mostly with ך), and/or toward the left (mostly with ך). It is conceivable that in some manuscript(s) an original ך or ך, written small and too close to a ך formed a ligature that was read as a ך. Thus, a manuscript where the scribe wrote either ך or ך at the end of the word was read as ך, giving rise to the reading without the pronoun. Similarly, the top left corner of the letter ך often has a slight stroke upward, or to the left, or at an angle (left and upward). It is conceivable that the ך itself could have been read as ך (producing “my righteous one”), or vice versa, that an original ך was written with the ך small and too close to the ך, so that it formed a ligature that was read simply as ך. As far as the extant evidence is concerned, we do not know of a case where ך was confused with ך, producing the reading “his just one,” but should that reading ever surface in manuscripts yet to be discovered, it can already be explained as either original, or derived via confusion of the upper left stroke of the ך.

In other words, *all* variant readings found in all Greek and Hebrew manuscript traditions in which Hab 2:4 is written, translated, commented on, or cited in the NT, can be accounted for by possible scribal recognition errors. This could mean that the first copy of Habakkuk really intended only one reading, but through a series of scribal slips, four readings resulted, all of which were primary readings in some text that ultimately became canonized and standardized by religious communities. *This* multivalence of reading has been fully accepted even by modern textual critics, because the different readings are located in separate texts, each of which carries its own separate set of manuscript evidences. The point to note here is simply this: multivalent readings that are believed to be traceable to a single written original are not always problematic for textual criticism. They only become a problem when there are multiple readings competing for the same space within a textual unit.

One should not overlook an alternate possibility—that a scribe took no pains to carefully distinguish his ך from his ך in some cases because the text made sense, in some way, either way. The reading is left intentionally open to allow for both options.

Now the exegetical options for the variant readings “my just one shall live by faith,” “the just one shall live by faith,” “the just one shall

live by my faith," and "the just one shall live by his faith," are quite varied. In the case of "my faith," the pronoun "my" refers to Yahweh (Hab 2:4). What does it mean for someone to live by Yahweh's trust/faith? In the case of "his faith," the pronoun "his" refers to the righteous one. What does it mean that the just one should live by *his* (own?) faith. If the reading is "my just one" then we may have a mere declaration that anyone who wants to be considered a just one of Yahweh will live by trust/faith, without further demarcation.

The primary theological argument by Paul can be made independent of the issue of the pronoun. The issue of which pronoun, or where it should occur, does not enter into the theological framework of Romans or Galatians.

What all four extant traditions have in common is a "formula" composed of three elements: (1) a just one (which is found in the singular in all the earliest Hebrew and Greek manuscript traditions); (2) the word "trust/faith" (which is found in the singular in all traditions); and (3) the verb "live" (which is found in the 3. sg. imperfect/future in all traditions); and, in addition, the formula calls for these three words to occur in this precise order (as they are in all traditions).

THE TALMUD ON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

There is a discussion in the Talmud tractate *Massekhet Makkot* 23b–24a in which Hab 2:4 is cited to settle a discussion about which and how many principles are to be considered as fundamental. The passage is cited here without the additional discussions between each section:⁴

[THEREFORE GAVE HE THEM TORAH (TEACHINGS) AND MANY COMMANDMENTS . . .] R. Simlai when preaching said: Six hundred and thirteen precepts were communicated to Moses, three hundred and sixty-five negative precepts, corresponding to the number of solar days [in the year], and two hundred and forty-eight positive precepts, corresponding to the number of the members of man's body. Said R. Hamnuna: What is the [authentic] text for this? It is, Moses commanded us torah, an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob, 'torah' being in letter-value, equal to six hundred and eleven, 'I am' and 'Thou shalt have no [other Gods]' [not being reckoned, because] we heard from the mouth of the Might [*sic*] [Divine].⁵

⁴ I have added the references in parentheses.

⁵ By gematria on the word Torah, תורה — t (ת) = 400, o (ו) = 6, r (ר) = 200, h (ה) = 5.

David came and reduced them to eleven [principles], as it is written (Ps 15), A Psalm of David. Lord, who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy holy mountain?—[i] He that walketh uprightly, and [ii] worketh righteousness, and [iii] speaketh truth in his heart; that [iv] hath no slander upon his tongue, [v] nor doeth evil to his fellow, [vi] nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour, [vii] in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but [viii] he honoureth them that fear the Lord, [ix] He sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not, [x] He putteth not out his money on interest, [xi] nor taketh a bribe against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved. 'He that walketh uprightly.'

Isaiah came and reduced them to six [principles], as it is written (Isa 33:15), [i] He that walketh righteously, and [ii] speaketh uprightly, [iii] He that despiseth the gain of oppressions, [iv] that shaketh his hand from holding of bribes, [v] that stoppeth his ear from hearing of blood, [vi] and shutteth his eyes from looking upon evil; he shall dwell on high.

Micah came and reduced them to three [principles], as it is written (Mic 6:8), It hath been told thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord doth require of thee: [i] only to do justly, and [ii] to love mercy and [iii] to walk humbly before thy God.

Again came Isaiah and reduced them to two [principles], as it is said (Isa 56:1), Thus saith the Lord, [i] Keep ye justice and [ii] do righteousness [etc.].

Amos came and reduced them to one [principle], as it is said (Amos 5:4), For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, Seek ye Me and live.

To this R. Nahman b. Isaac demurred, saying: [Might it not be taken as,] Seek Me by observing the whole Torah and live?—But it is Habakuk who came and based them all on one [principle], as it is said (Hab 2:4), But the righteous shall live by his faith [וַיִּצְדִּיק בַּאֱמוּנָתוֹ יְיָהוָה].⁶

True to the Masoretic tradition, it is "his faith." So it is also found in its only two occurrences in Midrash Rabbah.⁷

⁶ Text from Kantrowitz, *Judaic Classics*. The text in brackets is from Kantrowitz.

⁷ The word **בְּאֱמוּנָתוֹ** occurs only here in the Talmud, but this is also the only place Hab 2:4 is cited in the Talmud. Habakkuk 2:4 is cited in Midrash Rabbah, Shemoth 23.5 and Koheleth 3.11, and there it is also **בְּאֱמוּנָתוֹ**.

OTHER VERSIONS

It appears that we have a split in the tradition along Jewish and Christian lines that began with the Septuagint. All extant Hebrew readings have "his faith." All extant Greek readings (including NT citations) have something other than "his faith." However, the Vulgate reads "in fide sua" in Hab 2:4, so Jerome appears here to have read his Hebrew *Vorlage* as the later Masoretic text has it. For the NT references, the Vulgate reflects the primary Greek readings in each case.⁸

The Peshitta of Hab 2:4 reads *without* a pronominal suffix (*bhymnwṭʿ*), so it reflects a reading like Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11. The Peshitta of Heb 10:38 however has "my faith" and not "my just one."

There does remain, however, a split in the traditions. All ancient Hebrew renderings uniformly have "his faith." The tradition is multivalent only in the versions and in the NT citations of the versions. Modern text-critical editions of the versions and version citations have left the variant readings intact in their respective *loci*.⁹

PEACEFUL SURRENDER OR VIOLENT VICTORY? AMOS 9:10–11 AND ITS MULTIPLE FORMS

It has already been noted that New Testament citations from the Old Testament are often more similar to the Septuagint than to the Hebrew Masoretic text, where the latter two differ. Sometimes the New Testament provides unique readings. On other occasions, the three texts track together generally well, but diverge, perhaps at a single phrase, then return to a state of congruence.

The quotation of Amos 9:10–11 in Acts 15:16–18 entails a complex set of these scenarios. Generally, LXX tracks MT well, except for one phrase;

⁸ Heb 10:38 reads "iustus autem meus ex fide vivit," but two Latin mss. omit "meus" (as did also a few Greek mss.).

⁹ A recent study undertakes to demonstrate that the modifications that the Hebrew text experienced as it was translated into Greek and then incorporated into the argument of Heb 10:37–38 was ideally suited to the specific theological view and agenda of the author of Hebrews. See Radu Gheorghita, *The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews: An Investigation of Its Influence with Special Consideration to the Use of Hab 2:3–4 in Heb 10:37–38*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2, 160 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2003). See also Alan C. Mitchell, "Review of: The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews: An Investigation of Its Influence with Special Consideration To the Use of Hab 2:3–4 in Heb 10:37–38," *Theological Studies* 65, no. 4 (2004).

the New Testament appears to add an element to that LXX phrase, and deviates in other ways from both LXX and MT. The texts follow.

AMOS 9:10–11 AND ITS NEW TESTAMENT CITATION

The primary readings of MT, LXX, and NT at Acts 15:16–18 are:

MT	LXX	NT
11 בְּיָוֶם הַהוּא	11 ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ	16 Μετὰ ταῦτα
אָקִים	ἀναστήσω	ἀναστρέψω καὶ
אֶת־סֶכֶת דָּוִיד	τὴν σκηνὴν Δαυὶδ	ἀνοικοδομήσω
הַנִּפְלֵת	τὴν πεπτωκυῖαν	τὴν σκηνὴν Δαυὶδ
וְנִדְרֹתַי	καὶ ἀνοικοδομήσω	τὴν πεπτωκυῖαν
אֶת־פְּרִצֵּיהֶן	τὰ πεπτωκότα αὐτῆς	
וְהִרְסֹתֵי	καὶ τὰ κατεσκαμμένα αὐτῆς	
אָקִים	ἀναστήσω	καὶ τὰ κατεσκαμμένα αὐτῆς
וּבְנִיתִיהָ	καὶ ἀνοικοδομήσω αὐτήν	ἀνοικοδομήσω
בְּיָמַי עוֹלָם:	καθὼς αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ αἰῶνος,	καὶ ἀνορθώσω αὐτήν,
לְמַעַן	12 ὅπως	
יִירָשׁוּ	ἐκζητήσωσιν	17 ὅπως ἂν
אֶת־שְׂאֵרֵית אֲדוֹם	οἱ κατάλοιποι τῶν ἀνθρώπων	ἐκζητήσωσιν
		οἱ κατάλοιποι τῶν ἀνθρώπων
וְכָל־הַגּוֹיִם	καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη,	τὸν κύριον
אֲשֶׁר־נִקְרָא	ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται	καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη
שְׁמִי	τὸ ὄνομά μου	ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται
עַל־יָהּ	ἐπ' αὐτούς,	τὸ ὄνομά μου
נֶאֱמַר יְהוָה	λέγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς	ἐπ' αὐτούς
עֲשֵׂה זֹאת:	ὁ ποιῶν ταῦτα.	λέγει κύριος
		ποιῶν ταῦτα
		18 γινωστὰ ὑπ' αἰῶνος

English Translations

11 In that day

I will raise up
the booth of David
that has fallen,
and I will build up
its breaches
and its ruins
I will raise up,
and I will build it
as in the days of old,
12 in order that
they may possess
the remnant of Edom

and all the nations
over whom
my name is called,
says Yahweh
who does this.

11 In that day

I will raise up
the booth of David
that has fallen,
and I will rebuild
its breaches
and its torn down parts
I will raise up,
and I will rebuild it
as in the days of old,
12 in order that
the remnant of the people
may seek

and all the nations
over whom
my name is called,
says the Lord God
who does these things.

16 After these things

I will return and

I will rebuild
the booth of David
that has fallen,

and its torn down parts
I will rebuild
and I will restore it,

17 in order that

the remnant of the people
may seek
the Lord,

and all the nations
over whom
my name is called,
says the Lord
who makes these things
18 known from of old.

ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTUAL DIFFERENCES

In this section I will only address the variant associated with the reading of Amos 9:12. The main differences between the Hebrew text on the one hand, and the LXX and NT on the other, may lie in two ancient, but otherwise unattested variants in the Hebrew text:

- (1) יִרְשׁוּ for יִדְרְשׁוּ (possess > seek), indicating a confusion of ד for ר.
- (2) אֲדָם for אֲדָמָם (Edom > adam), indicating a different vocalization (and perhaps a defectively written אֲדָמָם).

The differences in *meaning* are “significant” in the sense that one comes away from these texts with entirely different concepts. Are people seeking, and if so, what are they seeking? Or are people being dispossessed, a term often employed in the language of violent conquest?

OTHER VERSIONS

The Aramaic Targum of Amos 9:11–12 expands upon the concept of conquest:

11 At that time, I will set up again the kingdom of the house of David that has fallen; I will rebuild their cities and set up their congregations anew.

It shall rule over all the kingdoms and it shall destroy and make an end

of the greatness of armies; but it shall be rebuilt and reestablished as in the days of old,

12 so that the house of Israel, who are called by my name, may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations, says the Lord.¹⁰

The Syriac Peshitta of Amos 9:11–12 reads much like MT:

11 In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen and close up its breaches, and I will raise up its ruins and I will build it as in the days of old, and as in the years of many generations.

12 For they shall possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord who does these things.¹¹

RECENT STUDIES

In a recent article Johan Lust has focused on the term “Edom,” not as it occurs in Amos 9, but in the book of Ezekiel.¹² Lust has shown that the word “mankind” (*’adam*) and the name “Edom” are engaged as puns in Ezek 34:31 and 36:37–38 and in their surrounding contexts. Lust observes that *’adam* occurs “before and after a cluster of sayings against ... ‘Edom’” and later he concludes that the “framework of the Edom oracles emphasizes that in the near future *’adam* will live on the mountains of Israel, not *’edom*.”¹³ The observations I make here follow up on Lust’s remark at the conclusion of his article, that “an investigation into the links between this play [in Ezek] and that found in Amos 9:12 ... will have to be conducted on another occasion.”¹⁴

Like many names in the Hebrew Bible, the name Edom is introduced with a word play, though the pun on that name is delayed. At his birth he is called “reddish” (אֶדְמוֹנִי) but named Esau (a different word play on “hairy,” Gen 25:25). Later we are told that the reason for the name Edom was because he asked for “red stuff” (הָאֶדָם)—that word occurs twice, back-to-back, in “twin” fashion (Gen 25:30).

¹⁰ Translation from Kevin J. Cathcart and Robert P. Gordon, *The Targum of the Minor Prophets*, The Aramaic Bible, Vol. 14 (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1989), 96.

¹¹ Lamsa, *Holy Bible from the Ancient Eastern Text*: George M. Lamsa’s Translation from the Aramaic of the Peshitta.

¹² Johan Lust, “Edom—Adam in Ezekiel, in MT and LXX,” in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich*, ed. Peter W. Flint, Emanuel Tov, and James C. VanderKam, *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, Vol. 101 (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

¹³ *Ibid.*, 389 and 395.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 400, n. 29.

Lust's article shows an additional word play involving 'adam / 'edom: one is to be substituted for the other—"Israel will again be populated by אדם, replacing אֱדוֹם."¹⁵ A proximity search of the terms אדם and אֱדוֹם turns up an additional passage in which this word pair forms a word play—Ezek 25:12–14, which also forms an intricate ring:

Thus says the Lord God,
 Because **Edom** has acted against the house of Judah
 By taking vengeance,
 and has incurred grievous guilt,
 and avenged themselves upon them
 Moreover thus says Yahweh God,
 I will also stretch out My hand against
Edom
 and cut off **man** (אָדָם) and beast
 from it
 And I will lay it waste;
 from Teman even to Dedan
 they will fall by the sword
 I will lay my vengeance on **Edom** by the hand of My
 people Israel.
 Therefore, they will act in **Edom** according to My anger and
 according to My wrath;
 thus they will know My vengeance, declares the Lord God.

"Adam" (man, mankind) is centered between two occurrences of Edom on either side. As Edom has exacted vengeance, so vengeance will be enacted on the 'adam of Edom.

How might these word plays impact our text-critical analysis of the variant versions of Amos 9:12 / Acts 15:17? In the Ezekiel passages each occurrence of either 'adam or Edom retains its primary meaning; the word play does not appear to be one of *double entendre*. In Acts 9:12 the textual evidence competes for the reading and its associated meaning in the same space. It appears that only a loose connection can be made: if 'adam and Edom are used in word plays in their separate occurrences where they retain their separate meanings, at least the *idea* of word play is established, from which we may infer that in a given instance elsewhere, particularly in a context in which *either* reading makes sense, a reader may exercise an option, either consciously or not, in what to read.

¹⁵ Ibid., 400.

But how could the text string of MT, or that of LXX or NT in retroverted translation possibly reflect their readings? Beginning with MT, we have the consonantal text as follows:

למען יירשו את שארית אדם

in order that they may possess the remnant of Edom

By reading *'adam* for אדם (we will drop the ו) and substituting a ד for a י in יירשו, the reading becomes:

למען ידרשו את שארית אדם

in order that they may seek the remnant of mankind

That would make a wonderful thought, and it would work especially well with the following phrase. The entire clause would read: "in order that they may seek the remnant of mankind and all the nations upon whom my name is called." But that is not a reading found among our extant variant traditions. Rather, the reading of LXX "in order that the remnant of mankind will seek" requires two more adjustments, one graphical, and one syntactic: first, the direct object particle את must be removed, resulting in:

למען ידרשו שארית אדם

Second, the phrase שארית אדם must become the subject of ידרשו, with the singular noun שארית acting as a collective coordinated with the plural verb. (Or, ידרשו becomes singular ידרש). But the phrase then ends with an incomplete thought: "in order that the rest of mankind will seek"—seek what? As awkward as that reading may appear to us, the Greek equivalent is found in LXX. Perhaps the awkwardness was later felt by the writer of Acts, who then supplied an appropriate object for "seek"—"the Lord." Now in some later Greek manuscripts of Amos 9:12 the word με ("me") is inserted in the position where the direct object particle is found in MT. The direct object particle only needs to receive a final *yod* in order for the following reading to correspond to manuscripts with με, thus:

למען ידרשו אתי שארית אדם

in order that they may seek me—(namely), the remnant of mankind
= in order that the remnant of mankind may seek me

This reading arises from a relatively straightforward orthographic adjustment. Perhaps the reading "the Lord" as the object of "seek" then occurred as an interpretive step to identify more specifically who was

meant by “me.” The only possible orthographic explanation for the reading “the Lord” would involve a fusion of the letters of *'adonai*, creating visual confusion with the direct object particle **את**, as follows:

את > את > אדני

Or, in the reading of **את**, the reader saw (expected) **אדני**.

This orthographic “solution” seems “stretched”—one would want to find other examples of this type of fusion/confusion. It seems especially doubtful that one of the most common and meaningful of the divine names would be confused with a semantically empty, syntactic-only marker of a direct object. But that implies an act of will, and variants can be caused by many factors at the subconscious level. At any rate, the orthographic-textual options are numerous, as are text-interpretive ones, and I must admit that, not only have I not been able to convincingly explain how the various multivalent forms of this text arose, but in the process I have added to the existing multivalent readings by creating an option to which no extant manuscript attests.

PART FOUR

AGENDAS

14 AUDIENCES AND AGENDAS

DIFFERENT AUDIENCES; DIFFERENT STYLES

Compare the following quotations from Maas and Ehrman on the task of textual criticism in the light of non-extant original compositions.

Maas on Greek and Latin classical works:

We have no autograph manuscripts of the Greek and Roman classical writers and no copies which have been collated with the originals; the manuscripts we possess derive from originals through an unknown number of intermediate copies, and are consequently of questionable trustworthiness.¹

Ehrman on the New Testament writings:

What good is it to say that the autographs (i.e., the originals) were inspired? We don't have the originals! We have only error-ridden copies, and the vast majority of these are centuries removed from the originals and different from them, evidently, in thousands of ways.²

Three pages later Ehrman repeats:

It is one thing to say that the originals were inspired, but the reality is that we don't have the originals—so saying they were inspired doesn't help me much, unless I can reconstruct the originals. Moreover, the vast majority of Christians for the entire history of the church have not had access to the originals, making their inspiration something of a moot point. Not only do we not have the originals, we don't have the first copies of the originals. We don't even have copies of the copies of the originals, or copies of the copies of the copies of the originals. What we

¹ Maas, *Textual Criticism*, 1.

² Bart D. Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005), 7.

have are copies made later—much later. In most instances, they are copies made many centuries later. And these copies all differ from one another, in many thousands of places. As we will see later in this book, these copies differ from one another in so many places that we don't even know how many differences there are. Possibly it is easiest to put it in comparative terms: there are more differences among our manuscripts than there are words in the New Testament.³

These two textual critics describe circumstances exactly parallel to each other and make similar observations, but with entirely different styles. Ehrman's passion and stair-step repetition patterns (a rhetorical device) drive home his point in language loud and clear. Maas is emotionless. What all textual scholars know is that variations exist across the ranges of classical manuscripts, music scores, Shakespearean plays, cuneiform tablets, Egyptian tomb and monument writings, writings of the world's current religions, and many other writings. These variations exhibit fundamentally the same pattern: as the number of manuscripts increases, so also the number and type of variants increase. It is the nature of information transfer; it is the nature of texts. What could account for the diverse manners in which Maas and Ehrman articulate these facts about copies of ancient texts?

Authors do not always provide explicit information about how their personal backgrounds or how their current philosophical or methodological positions have played a role in their publications. Ehrman gives us that background in detail at the beginning of his book. His audience is clearly demarcated.

In the same year of the publication of *Misquoting Jesus*, the fourth edition of another book co-authored by Ehrman with B. Metzger (who was the sole author in the book's previous editions) appeared: *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*. The "Preface to the First Edition" printed in the new fourth edition begins with the following assessment (written by Metzger) of the text-critical concern with the New Testament:

The necessity of applying textual criticism to the books of the New Testament arises from two circumstances: (a) none of the original documents is extant, and (b) the existing copies differ from one another. The textual critic seeks to ascertain from the divergent copies which

³ Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus*, 10.

form of the text should be regarded as most nearly conforming to the original.⁴

This book addresses the same topic as Ehrman's *Misquoting Jesus*, but it proceeds with markedly different content and style; it reads like Maas. Consequently Ehrman targets two different audiences in his books: *Misquoting Jesus* is directed primarily to a religious audience that in Ehrman's view holds to an untenable definition of "inspiration." *The Text of the New Testament* is aimed at a more academic audience.

The differences between Maas and *The Text of the New Testament* on the one hand, and *Misquoting Jesus* on the other, are significant in several substantive areas beyond the mere difference of style and rhetoric. The hyperbolic, sensational style becomes problematic in what it connotes.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Maas stated that extant manuscripts are separated from the originals "through an unknown number of intermediate copies." Ehrman wrote that we do not possess "copies of the copies of the copies of the originals." Maas states the gap as simply unknown; Ehrman, taken literally, positively tells us that the oldest existing copy of a New Testament writing is *at least* a fourth generation removed from the original. Of course, we do not know that. We do know that manuscripts could be preserved for centuries in antiquity. For example, the manuscripts dating to the third century B.C.E. that were found in caves near Qumran were three hundred years old at the time that they were known by the first century C.E. inhabitants of the Qumran community. With New Testament documents dating from the early second century C.E., it is not unthinkable, from a strictly chronological and even a geographical perspective, that some New Testament manuscripts are potentially second or third generation copies.

For Maas, the distance of a manuscript from its original makes its reading "of questionable trustworthiness." For Ehrman, we know that "we have only error-ridden copies." That, of course, depends upon one's assessment of what constitutes an "error." Some variant readings, as I have demonstrated, do not require them to be handled as errors.

Maas does not provide an estimate of the total number of variants in classical works, or in any single classical work. Ehrman calculates that NT

⁴ Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), xiv.

variant readings are in the “thousands,” or “many thousands,” and while “we don’t even know how many differences there are” we apparently do know that “there are more differences among our manuscripts than there are words in the New Testament.” Taken literally, that would be over 138,020 differences among the manuscripts.⁵ Statistically, Ehrman’s statement does not provide evidence of the idea he intends to convey. If we are to take the approximately 5,700 Greek manuscripts that contain all or part of the New Testament⁶ as that number, then the number of differences, assuming for the sake of demonstration a total of 140,000 differences in all those manuscripts combined, would on average amount to only 24.6 *per manuscript*. Now some of those manuscripts contain only small fragments, such as the papyri, but those represent the minority of manuscripts.⁷ Many manuscripts contain significant sections of, or even entire, New Testaments. When one also considers that most differences involve small issues of spelling, the situation does not seem as chaotic as the sensational mode of expression—more differences than words of the New Testament—connotes to a less informed reader.

⁵ According on one internet source, using as a base text the *Analytical Greek New Testament* text supplied by Silver Mountain Software’s *Bibloi* program, there are 138,020 words in the NT. The compiler notes: “Due to the large number of *textual variations* in the surviving biblical manuscripts, the *exact number of words* is slightly different in each ancient and medieval Greek manuscript.” Retrieved 2007-04-04 from <http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/NT-Statistics-Greek.htm>.

⁶ Metzger and Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 52.

⁷ The most recent list of numbered NT mss. includes 118 papyri, 318 uncials, 2,880 minuscules, and 2,436 lectionaries, for a total of 5,752. The numbers of manuscripts of each type are derived from the current “Fortführung der Handschriftenliste” at the Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung INTF web site (http://www.uni-muenster.de/NTTextforschung/KgLSGII06_12_12.pdf), retrieved 2007-04-04. However, due to merged and missing items within the lists, the end numbers cannot simply be added, so the number 5,700 is likely a good round estimate.

THE PROBLEMATIC OF POPULARIZING TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Dead Sea Scrolls exhibits, the publication of books especially relating to early Christian movements,⁸ and the film industry,⁹ have made a significant contribution to raising the level of popular consciousness about ancient texts, particularly the texts of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament. Meanwhile, textual scholars still struggle among themselves to find ways to sift, analyze, understand, articulate, and display the mass of new textual data that is being generated, not only by new discoveries, but also through computer-aided methods of text and manuscript analysis. Popularizing selections from this mass of data, especially through sensational messaging, can become counterproductive to its intended goal—which is, or should be, to help people become more informed about the state of our ancient texts.

DIFFERENT VIEWS ON DIFFERENCES

What may be a completely meaningless variant to one person may be highly significant to another. What is a “significant” variant? This is an entirely subjective matter. Even the tiniest orthographic variant may upset an entire theological structure built upon a concept of text so literally “set in stone” that it cannot tolerate even the slightest variation. Such might be the case, for example, with systems of meaning based on the patterns or arrays of letters, or for those in which *gematria* is key to the understanding of continuous texts. If you change one letter (make a *plene* reading defective), the numbers will not add up, and that could be significant.

For a palaeographer even the *shape* of a letter can carry a high level of significance. The palaeographer pays close attention to tiny details of the forms of letters, and observes how those forms change shape and size through the ages and across geographical areas. The information acquired through such palaeographic analysis is often crucial to ascribing date and provenance to a manuscript. For scholars and non-scholars

⁸ The impact of two books in particular has been sensational: Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code* and multiple publications on *The Gospel of Judas* (in 2007: J. Archer and F. J. Malony; H. Krosney and B. Ehrman; J.-Y. Leloup; E. Pagels and K. King; J. Robinson; and in 2006: B. Ehrman, R. Kasser and M. Meyer; B. Ehrman; N. T. Wright).

⁹ For example, Mel Gibson’s *The Passion of the Christ*, with actors speaking Aramaic and Latin.

alike, a re-assignment of a manuscript date might be considered a significant event.

There is no doubt that many religious controversies in the past and present derive from issues relating to textual variations. It may or may not be the case that the variants themselves were created in response to those controversies. It may be that the variations already existed and were simply appropriated into later controversies as proof texts. In that case the variants themselves originally had nothing to do with those controversies. They may have had a different function, perhaps one of *double entendre* to add depth to a text's meaning, or perhaps they were representatives of the kind of multivalence of text that served to communicate larger *common* aspects of meaning using different words as the carriers.

The "significance" attached to variants is thus closely related to our understanding of communication practices and intents, to particular areas of scholarly specialization, as well as our subjective views of what we believe to be "significant" about a text and its variant forms. In academic practice, it would be best simply to avoid the term "significant," or at the minimum explain in what context the term applies. Variants can be categorized using typologies less inclined to lead to misunderstandings.

The larger issue to be considered is one of audience. To whom is information to be imparted, and how might that information transfer be carried out in the most efficient and meaningful manner possible? Textual scholars devote extensive study to issues of the *Sitz im Leben* and to contextual and discourse markers in order to gain a deep and accurate understanding of the texts of ancient cultures. That same devotion needs to be applied to contemporary information transfer as well.

15

TO WHERE FROM HERE?

This book has argued for the recognition of multivalence and its incorporation into the text-critical endeavor. How should that task be carried out in practice? What do we do with all the textual data we have collected, analyzed, and sorted, having concluded that our task is not always or necessarily to reduce all variants to a single reading?

What we do with our textual data depends on what we want to know about it and what purposes are to be served by it. There are currently two primary methods for displaying textual data: standard text-critical editions and parallel text alignments. Each of these methods can be improved with certain modifications. Other options should be explored and developed.

STANDARD CRITICAL EDITIONS

If we continue to construct text-critical editions in a standard print format with single primary text blocks accompanied by a text-critical apparatus containing variant readings, we must somehow alert the users of the employment (or possible employment) of word play so that, where applicable, variant readings are shown to reflect one of the intended or possible meanings. Translators of these texts into modern languages can then also assess how they will incorporate word play and other literary devices into their versions.¹ Other variants should be categorized according to all reasonable causes, which may be scribal changes (inadvertent or conscious) and/or reflections of formulaic

¹ Issues of translation theory are thus connected with the practice of textual criticism. For a treatment of these issues for Bible translators, see among others Jan de Waard and Eugene A. Nida, *From One Language to Another: Functional Equivalence in Bible Translating* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986).

variability that resided in the earliest strata (oral or written) of our texts. In such cases it may be difficult to decide which text to designate as "primary" (and place in the main body) and which to designate as "variant" (and place in the apparatus). This is an inherent weakness of the traditional printed text-critical edition. How should one handle text-critical notes that may evolve into extended textual commentaries? Several approaches for printing this information are currently in use: (1) production of an accompanying volume, as is found in Metzger's *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*,² (2) inclusion of a separate section in the same volume that provides the text, as is the practice of the fascicles of *BHQ*, (3) delineation of variant information into multiple apparatuses with detailed notes on each variant, as is carried out with the Hebrew University Bible (HUB).³

PARALLEL TEXTS

Certain sections in Rahlfs *Septuaginta* (such as the book of Judges) contain two versions of the text on each page: the upper page half is the text of Codex Alexandrinus (A); the lower page half is the text of Codex Vaticanus (B). Each text has its own text-critical apparatus. The Old Greek textual tradition of Judges is so multivalent that the editor decided not to choose one manuscript over the other. When one wishes to cite "the Septuagint reading" from this edition, one must choose A or B (if they differ) and inform the reader of that choice and, ideally, of any alternate readings.

Similarly, the first fascicle of *Biblia Qumranica* offers full-text, side-by-side alignments of all Qumran texts of the Minor Prophets, along with Septuagint and Masoretic texts.⁴ This edition also employs textual shading with different border patterns to highlight textual differences across the manuscripts. The edition is only a synopsis and does not include a textual commentary, which would be a welcome addition.

² Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft and United Bible Societies, 1994). This book is described on the title page as follows: "A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (Fourth Revised Edition)."

³ Moshe H. Goshen-Gottstein, *The Book of Isaiah: Sample Edition with Introduction*. (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1965).

⁴ Ego et al., eds., *Minor Prophets*.

COMBINATION OF CRITICAL APPARATUS, PARALLEL TEXTS, AND TEXT-CRITICAL COMMENTARY

A promising printed format is envisioned by the Oxford Hebrew Bible Project (OHB).⁵ Where multiple ancient editions are evident, these are printed side-by-side and aligned as closely as practical. An extensive text-critical apparatus is included, followed by a full text-critical commentary.⁶

OTHER OPTIONS

The parallel layout of texts on a printed page (in either rows or columns) becomes increasingly impractical as the number of texts increases. At some point the physical size of a printed page becomes too restrictive to display all textual information that may be of interest to the reader or researcher. If we want to know all of the available extant material for a particular reading, we must be able to display texts in a variety of ways, comparing them this way and that, this reading against that reading. The technology to facilitate all this exists and is already employed in commercial software products as well as in specialized applications, such as those currently under development at the Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung and described in the "Projekte" section of their web site.⁷ A data-driven, menu-supplied application can easily make any type of comparison possible, with options for including or excluding textual witnesses, and with links supplied to text-critical discussions.

The issues at stake here must address the integration of purpose and technology. We must first be clear on purpose. If our purpose is to determine, or designate, the text that comes closest to a putative written original, we must first come to understand that such a purpose may entail an inaccurate view of textual history and may therefore be impossible to fulfill. If we wish nevertheless to provide a single text to an end user, we should do so making it clear to the user that the text supplied is

⁵ For a full discussion of theory and method behind OHB, see Ronald Hendel, "The Oxford Hebrew Bible: Prologue to a New Critical Edition," *VT* 58 (2008): 324–351.

⁶ For sample editions of OHB, see Sidnie White Crawford, Jan Joosten, and Eugene Ulrich, "Sample Editions of the Oxford Hebrew Bible: Deuteronomy 32:1–9, 1 Kings 11:1–8, and Jeremiah 27:1–10 (34 G)," *VT* 58 (2008): 352–366.

⁷ <http://www.uni-muenster.de/NTTextforschung/> > Projekte

one among many found in different forms at different times and in different places throughout the text's transmission history.

Often we simply want information about a reading, or a set of readings. We may not wish to read all available texts, or make our own comparisons, or enter data into our own spreadsheets or databases. We may wish to examine existing textual data and submit a variety of queries regarding our texts. The data used for the Decalogue analysis in this book are being entered into a web-based format which will make them available online in a searchable format in such a way that researchers may be able to run their own queries and obtain their answers, and so that they may check the accuracy of the data.

The audio component of textual histories should not be neglected. The most recent edition of *Singer of Tales* includes a CD-ROM which contains not only the entire text of the printed book in searchable format, but also audio recordings of the printed epic poems that give back to the text the voice from which it was created in the first place. Acoustic devices in the written text would come to life if given back their audio forms.

The most exciting concept of which I am aware is the digital edition described by Ronald Hendel for the OHB:

The OHB apparatus will not be a prison-house of variants, where secondary readings are (literally and figuratively) marginalized. To this end we envision a DVD or web supplement to each volume, in which the apparatus will expand in several dimensions. The electronic version will link each verse in the critical text to its apparatus, and ideally will have the capacity to supplement each lemma at a click into parallel lines of the text of each version. Each lemma which is discussed at greater length in the chapter of text-critical commentary will be connected to that discussion by a link. A grand desire is to link each explanation with other explanations from other studies—such as the *BHQ*—and to discussions of inner-Greek and inner-Aramaic phenomena in such works as *La Bible d'Alexandrie* and *The Aramaic Targums*. Some of these desires are precluded by law and technology. Nonetheless, such an expanded electronic apparatus is our goal and will make the OHB a more fruitful work.⁸

As Hendel observes, a major obstacle lying in the way of text-critical progress along these lines is one of access. Technological issues will undoubtedly become increasingly less problematic. More vexing are the

⁸ Ronald Hendel, "The Oxford Hebrew Bible: Prologue to a New Critical Edition," *VT* 58 (2008): 349.

issues of copyright that will have to be resolved before we can all be benefited, once we have conceptually agreed that more information is better, however multivalent our theoretical views, and however multivalent our intended uses may be.

APPENDIX 1: EXTENDED CITATIONS FOR CHAPTER 1

1. pg. 26, n. 36: Tobin, *Messiah*, 13

The task of editing *Messiah* is onerous because the Autograph in places is indistinct or almost illegible, the composer's intentions not always clear, his alterations often difficult to decipher. Smith himself in several places misinterpreted the Autograph, and his team of copyists repeated his misinterpretations; Handel, like many another composer, thought one thing and inadvertently wrote another; some of the important primary and secondary manuscript copies have been altered not only by an obvious crossing-out and superimposing of the alteration but also by knife-erasure and rewriting so that the alteration is likely to remain unperceived except under microscopic examination. In some cases no form of scientific examination can disclose when or by whom the alterations were made. In the course of the years the MSS. have been rebound. During rebinding not only were the edges of his pages trimmed (so removing what might have been valuable evidence in the form of marginal notes) but quite possibly an air or chorus was removed or another inserted. There is, in fact, evidence of this mis-binding in the Tenbury-Dublin copy.

2. pg. 26, n. 38: Tobin, *Messiah*, 13

The true purpose of research is not merely to place yet another definitive and *Urtext* publication upon library shelves, not merely to disclose the many textual inaccuracies that through repetition have become accepted, but rather to produce a definitive and *Urtext* edition. Definitive, in that it contains all the music of the work extant in the composer's own hand, together with any non-autograph settings of whose authenticity there is satisfactory evidence; *Urtext*, in that all the

composer wrote is so printed that it is clearly to be seen; and an edition which, being faithful not merely to the composer's text but also to his intentions, will enable whoever may be so inclined, scholarship apart, to perform the composer's work as the composer himself would have wished to hear it, with the forces and balance and in the style of his period. Such an edition is of necessity an interpretation, but an interpretation in the light of scholarship and with all that is editorial made obvious by the use of a special editorial type.

3. pg. 30, n. 52: Cerquiglini, *In Praise of the Variant*, 34

In the Middle Ages the literary work was a variable. The effect of the vernacular's joyful appropriation of the signifying nature suited to the written word was the widespread and abundant enjoyment of the privilege of writing. Occasionally, the fact that one hand was the first was probably less important than this continual rewriting of a work that belonged to whoever prepared it and gave it form once again. This constant and multifaceted activity turned medieval literature into a writing workshop. Meaning was to be found everywhere, and its origin was nowhere. Usually an anonymous literature, its onymous state is a modern fantasy ... or else an admirable medieval strategy ... In this way it is a literature that is in conflict with the authenticity and uniqueness that textuary thought connects with aesthetic production ... The medieval situation is a fine example of the premodern. Consequently, it is disorienting to a philology that originated at the beginning of the nineteenth century when the text gained its almost perfect and immutable reproduction, attested contents, and legal paternity. In the generalized authenticity of the medieval work, all that philology could see was a lost authenticity. Medieval philology is the mourning for a text, the patient labor of this mourning. It is the quest for an anterior perfection that is always bygone, that unique moment in which the presumed voice of the author was linked to the hand of the first scribe, dictating the authentic, first and original version, which will disintegrate in the hands of all the numerous, careless individuals copying a literature in the vernacular.

4. pg. 37, n. 72: Mosher, *Papyrus Hor*, 11

With respect to the quality of the texts in the six documents, they are very corrupt. In comparing the Akhmim texts against the standardized versions from Thebes and Memphis, one can observe all sorts of errors: miscopied signs, garbled words, dittographies, haplographies, hieratic to hieroglyphic errors. Some signs, words, or phrases occasionally face

the wrong direction, and words are randomly written backwards, as if the scribes suffered from occasional dyslexia. From Spell 144 onward, the texts are further corrupted with the random omission of signs, words, phrases, and even short passages from the texts. The result is that the texts from Spell 144 onward are so thoroughly mangled that they not infrequently appear to be an unintelligible sequence of characters, words, or short phrases. Throughout, it is absolutely clear that the scribes had no idea what the texts said or what they were supposed to say. Most spells can be identified today only because enough of the texts are recognizable when compared with the standardized texts from Thebes and Memphis.

What is of considerable interest, however, is that the texts in the Akhmim papyri are virtually identical to each other. That is, the same basic corruption per spell is found in each of the documents, which makes it clear that this general corruption was not the result of carelessness on the part of an individual scribe who prepared a given document. Rather, the master manuscripts used to produce the individual documents all contained the same corruption ... That is not to say that the individual scribes did not also make mistakes. Each document contains the typical types of errors found when copying from one document to another ...

APPENDIX 2:

SOURCES FOR ENGLISH AND GERMAN BIBLES

ENGLISH BIBLES:

Wycliff c. 1380

Online at: http://wesley.nnu.edu/biblical_studies/wycliffe/. Conrad Lindberg, ed., *King Henry's Bible MS Bodley 277: The Revised Version of the Wycliff Bible, Vol. III: Proverbs–II Maccabees* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1999). Josiah Forshall and Frederic Madden, eds., *The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments with the Apocryphal Books, in the Earliest English Versions made from the Latin Vulgate by John Wycliffe and His Followers*, vol. 3 (Oxford: The University Press, 1850).

Coverdale 1535

Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.) / 2063.3.

Matthew 1537/1550

Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.) / 2087.3. (Note: "The Old Testament selections are the 'Matthew' Bible version (i.e. the translation of William Tyndale edited by John Rogers), revised by Richard Taverner, further revised by Edmund Beke, who edited the whole.")

Great 1539

Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.) / 2068.

Geneva 1560

The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 Edition, with an Introduction by Lloyd E. Berry, (Madison, Milwaukee and London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

Bishop's 1568

Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.) / 2099.2. Spellings change by 1595 (STC/1808:01): breasts (4:10a), breastes (4:10b; 7:12[15]).

Douay 1609

Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.) / 2207. On the title page: "The holie Bible faithfully translated into English, out of the authentical Latin. Diligently conferred with the Hebrew, Greeke, and other editions in diuers languages. With arguments of the bookes, and chapters: annotations. tables: and other helps, for better understanding of the text: for discourse of Corruptions in some late translations: and for clearing Controversies in Religion. By the English College of Doway."

Authorized Version 1611

Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.) / 2216.

GERMAN BIBLES

Luther 1534

The first complete Luther Bible, from the facsimile photographed from the copy in the Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek in Weimar: Martin Luther, *The Luther Bible of 1534*, vol. 2 (Cologne: Taschen, 2003). The umlaut over the *u* is printed as a small superscript *e*.

Luther 1545/1580

The last edition published before Luther's death in 1546: D. Martin Luther, *Die gantze Heilige Schrifft Deudsch*, Wittenberg 1545 [von] Martin Luther. Letzte zu Luthers Lebzeiten erschienene Ausgabe. Hrsg. von Hans Volz unter Mitarbeit von Heinz Blanke. Textredaktion: Friedrich Kur, 2 vols. (München: Rogner & Bernhard, 1972). A 1580 edition has the same readings.

Luther 1728

Verlag Johann Jacobs Schöps in Leipzig and Zittau. Copy in possession of Glenn and Angelika Jones of Kiel, Germany, whom I thank for providing digital images of relevant passages from this volume.

Luther 1743

Germantown (PA). Christoph Saur. Early American Imprints. First series; no. 5128. So read later editions from Chistoph Saur, and from Ernst Ludwig Baisch in Philadelphia, 1775.

Luther 1755

Nürnberg. In Verlegung der Johann Andrea Endterischen Handlung.

German 1899

Die Bibel, oder die ganze Heilige Schrift des alten und neuen Testaments (New York: Amerikanische Bibel-Gesellschaft, 1899). There is no declaration that it is a Luther Bible.

Luther 1928

Stuttgart. Privileg. Württembergische Bibelanstalt.

APPENDIX 3: DECALOGUE TEXT COMPARISON

TEXTS AND SOURCES: EXODUS

HEBREW WITNESSES

Sigla	Source	Refer.	Type	Date
MT / L	<i>BHS</i> / Leningrad	20:2–17	edition/ codex	1008–1010 CE
SP	Sadaka	20:2–17	edition	?
4Q11 = 4QpaleoGen-Ex	DJD IX	20:2	scroll	100–25 BCE
4Q149 = 4Qmez ^a	DJD VI	20:7–12 or: Dt 5:11–16!	mezuzah	?
Nash	Burkitt (1904), Würthwein (1952)	20:2–17	leaf	2 nd / 1 st c. BCE

GREEK WITNESSES

LXX A	Wevers	20:2–17	edition	5 th c. CE
LXX B	Wevers	20:2–17	edition	4 th c. CE
LXX F	Wevers	20:2–17	edition	5 th c. CE
P. Oxy. 4442 (P 4442)	Oxyrhynchus Papyri LXV	20:10–17	papyrus	2 nd c. CE

TEXTS AND SOURCES: DEUTERONOMY

HEBREW WITNESSES

MT / L	<i>BHS</i> / Leningrad	5:6–21	edition/ codex	1008–1010 CE
SP	Sadaka	5:6–21	edition	?
4Q37 = 4QDeut ^j	DJD XIV	5:6–21	scroll/ excerpts	50 CE
4Q41 = 4QDeut ⁿ	DJD XIV	5:6–21	scroll/ excerpts	30–1 BCE
4Q42 = 4QDeut ^o	DJD XIV	5:9	scroll	75–50 BCE
4Q128 = 4QPhyl ^a	DJD VI	5:6–14	phylactery	200–50 BCE
4Q129 = 4QPhyl ^b	DJD VI	5:6–21	phylactery	200–50 BCE
4Q134 = 4QPhyl ^s	DJD VI	5:6–21	phylactery	200–50 BCE
4Q137 = 4QPhyl ⁱ	DJD VI	5:6–21	phylactery	200–50 BCE
4Q139 = 4QPhyl ^l	DJD VI	5:7–21	phylactery	200–50 BCE
4Q142 = 4QPhyl ^o	DJD VI	5:6–16	phylactery	200–50 BCE
1Q13	DJD I	5:7,9,14,21	phylactery	200–50 BCE?
XQPhyl 3 = XQ-3	Yadin	5:6–21	phylactery	200–50 BCE

GREEK WITNESSES

LXX A	Wevers	5:6–21	edition	5 th c. CE
LXX B	Wevers	5:6–21	edition	4 th c. CE
LXX F	Wevers	5:6–21	edition	5 th c. CE
LXX W	Sanders Facsimile	5:6–16	codex	5 th c. CE
Chester Beatty (CB VI)	Papyrus VI	5:6–21	papyrus	2 nd c. CE

Decalogue Preface

Exod 20:2

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מארץ	הוצאתיך	אשר	אלהיך	יהוה	אנכי
SP	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מארץ	הוצאתיך	אשר	אלהיך	יהוה	אנכי
4Q11	non	non	non	מאן	וצאתיך	non	non	non	non
Nash	omit	omit	מן	מארץ	תיך	אשר	אלהיך	יהוה	non
LXX	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מארץ	הוצאתיך	אשר	אלהיך	יהוה	אנכי

Deut 5:6

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מארץ	הוצאתיך	אשר	אלהיך	יהוה	אנכי
SP	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מארץ	הוצאתיך	אשר	אלהיך	יהוה	אנכי
1Q13	בדים	non	non	non	non	non	non	יה	א
4Q37	עבד	מבית	צרים	non	non	אן	אלהיך	יהוה	אנכי
4Q41	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מארץ	הוצאתיך	אשר	אלהיך	יהוה	אנכי
4Q129	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מן	הוצאתיכה	אשר	אלהיכה	וה	non
4Q134	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מארץ	תיך	non	אלהיכה	יהוה	אנכי
4Q137	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מארץ	הוצאתיכה	אשר	אלהיכה	יהוה	אנכי
XQ-3	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מארץ	הוצאתיך	אן	אלהיך	יהוה	אנכי
LXX	עבדים	מבית	מצרים	מארץ	הוצאתיך	אשר	אלהיך	יהוה	אנכי

Exod 20:2

- LXX A,F Ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὁ ἐξαγαγόν σε ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου
 ἐξ οἴκου δουλείας
- LXX B Ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὅστις ἐξηγάγον σε ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου
 ἐξ οἴκου δουλείας

Deut 5:6

- LXX A,W,CB Ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὅστις ἐξηγάγον σε ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου
 ἐξ οἴκου δουλείας
- LXX B Ἐγώ κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὁ ἐξαγαγόν σε ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου
 ἐξ οἴκου δουλείας

First Commandment

Exod 20:3

	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	פני	על	אחרים	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	omit
SP	פני	על	אחרים	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	omit
Nash	ני	non	אחרים	אלהים	ך	non	non	omit
LXX	פני	על	אחרים	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	omit

Deut 5:7

	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	פני	על	אחרים	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	omit
SP	פני	על	אחרים	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	omit
1Q13	פנן	על	non	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	כי
4Q37	non	non	non	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	omit
4Q41	פני	על	אחרים	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	omit
4Q129	non	non	non	non	non	non	לא	omit
4Q134	non	non	אחרים	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	omit
4Q137	פני	על	אחרים	אלהים	לכה	יהיה	לא	omit
4Q139	non	ען	אחרם	ם	non	non	non	omit
XQ-3	פני	על	אחרן	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	omit
LXX	פני	על	אחרים	אלהים	לך	יהיה	לא	omit

Exod 20:3

LXX οὐκ ἔσονται σοι θεοὶ ἕτεροι πλὴν ἐμοῦ

Deut 5:7

LXX A,W οὐκ ἔσονται σοι θεοὶ ἕτεροι πλὴν ἐμοῦ

LXX B,CB οὐκ ἔσονται σοι θεοὶ ἕτεροι πρὸ προσώπου μου

Second Commandment (Part 1)

Exod 20:4a

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	תמונה	וכל	פסל	לך	תעשה	לא
SP	תמונה	וכל	פסל	לך	תעשה	לא
Nash	non	non	non	non	תעשה	לא
LXX	תמונה	וכל	פסל	לך	תעשה	לא

Deut 5:8a

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	תמונה	כל	פסל	לך	תעשה	לא
SP	תמונה	וכל	פסל	לך	תעשה	לא
1Q13	תמונן	כל	non	non	non	non
4Q37	תמונה	non	פסל	לך	שה	non
4Q41	תמונה	וכל	פסל	לך	תעשה	לא
4Q134	תמונה	וכל	פסל	לך	תעשה	לא
4Q137	תמונה	וכל	פסל	לכה	תעשה	לא
4Q142	תמונה	non	non	non	non	non
XQ-3	תמונה	וכל	פסל	לך	תעשה	לא
LXX	תמונה	וכל	פסל	לך	תעשה	לא

Exod 20:4a

LXX οὐ ποιήσεις σεαυτῷ εἰδωλον οὐδὲ παντὸς ὁμοίωμα

Deut 5:8a

LXX A,W,CB οὐ ποιήσεις σεαυτῷ γλυπτον οὐδὲ παντὸς ὁμοίωμα

LXX B οὐ ποιήσεις σεαυτῷ εἰδωλον οὐδὲ παντὸς ὁμοίωμα

Second Commandment (Part 2)

Exod 20:4b

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	לארץ	מתחת	במים	ואשר	מתחת	בארץ	ואשר	ממעל	בשמים	אשר
SP	לארץ	מתחת	במים	ואשר	מתחת	בארץ	ואשר	ממעל	בשמים	אשר
Nash	לארץ	מתחת	ם	non	non	בארץ	ואשר	ממעל	בשמים	אשר
LXX	לארץ	מתחת	במים	ואשר	מתחת	בארץ	ואשר	ממעל	בשמים	אשר

Deut 5:8b

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	לארץ	מתחת	במים	ואשר	מתחת	בארץ	ואשר	ממעל	בשמים	אשר
SP	לארץ	מתחת	במים	ואשר	מתחת	בארץ	ואשר	ממעל	בשמים	אשר
1Q13	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	בשמים	non
4Q37	לארץ	מתחת	non	אש	non	non	non	non	בשמן ם	אשר
4Q41	לארץ	מתחת	במים	ואשר	מתחת	בארץ	ואשר	ממעל	בשמים	אשר
4Q42	non	מתחת	במים	ואשר	non	non	non	non	non	non
4Q128	non	non	non	non	non	ב	ואשר	ממעל	בשמים	ר
4Q129	לארץ	מתחת	במים	ר	non	non	non	non	non	non
4Q134	לארץ	מתחת	ב ים	אשר	non	non	ואש	ממעל	בשמן	אשר
4Q137	לארץ	מתחת	במים	ואשר	מתחת	בארץ	ואשר	ממעל	בשמים	אשר
4Q139	לארץ	מתחת	ים	non	non	non	non	non	non	non
4Q142	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	ב	אשר
XQ-3	לארץ	מתחת	מים	אשר	מתחת	ב ן	אשר	ממעל	בשמים	אשר
LXX	לארץ	מתחת	במים	ואשר	מתחת	בארץ	ואשר	ממעל	בשמים	אשר
LXX CB	לארץ	מתחת	במים	ואשר	מתחת	בארץ	ואשר	omit	בשמים	אשר

Exod 20:4b

LXX ὅσα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἄνω καὶ ὅσα ἐν τῇ γῇ κάτω καὶ ὅσα ἐν τοῖς ὕδατιν
ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς

Deut 5:8b

LXX A ὅσα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἄνω καὶ ὅσα ἐν τῇ γῇ κάτω καὶ ὅσα ἐν τῷ ὕδατι
ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς

LXX B,W ὅσα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἄνω καὶ ὅσα ἐν τῇ γῇ κάτω καὶ ὅσα ἐν τοῖς ὕδατιν
ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς

LXX CB ὅσα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ■ καὶ ὅσα ἐν τῇ γῇ κάτω καὶ ὅσα ἐν τοῖς ὕδατι
ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς

Second Commandment (Part 3)

Exod 20:5a

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit	תעבדם	ולא	להם	תשתחוה	לא
SP	omit	תעבדם	ולא	להם	תשתחוה	לא
Nash	omit	non	non	להם	תשתחוה	לא
LXX	omit	תעבדם	ולא	להם	תשתחוה	לא

Deut 5:9a

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit	תעבדם	ולא	להם	תשתחוה	לא
SP	omit	תעבדם	ולא	להם	תשתחוה	לא
1Q13	omit	תעבדם	לא	להם	תשתחוה	לא
4Q37	omit	non	non	non	non	לא
4Q41	omit	תעבדם	ולא	להם	תשתחוה	לא
4Q42	ל[הם]	[תעבד]	non	non	non	non
4Q129	omit	תעבדמה	ולא	להמה	תשתחוה	לא
4Q134	omit	non	ולא	להם	תשתחוה	לא
4Q137	omit	תעבדמה	ולא	להמה	תשתחוה	לא
4Q139	omit	non	non	non	non	לא
XQ-3	omit	תעבדם	ולא	להם	תשתחוה	לא
LXX	omit	תעבדם	ולא	להם	תשתחוה	לא

Exod 20:5a

LXX οὐ προσκυνήσεις αὐτοῖς οὐδὲ οὐ λατρεύσης αὐτοῖς

Deut 5:9a

LXX οὐ προσκυνήσεις αὐτοῖς οὐδὲ μὴ λατρεύσης αὐτοῖς

LXX CB οὐ προσκυνήσεις αὐτοῖς οὐδὲ [] λατρεύσης αὐτοῖς

Second Commandment (Part 4)

Exod 20:5b

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	קנא	אל	אלהיד	יהוה	אנכי	כי
SP	קנא	אל	אלהיד	יהוה	אנכי	כי
Nash	קנא	אל	אלהיד	יהוה	אנכי	non
LXX	קנא	אל	אלהיד	יהוה	אנכי	כי

Deut 5:9b

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	קנא	אל	אלהיד	יהוה	אנכי	כי
SP	קנא	אל	אלהיד	יהוה	אנכי	כי
1Q13	non	non	להיד	non	כי	כי
4Q37	קנן	אל	אלהיד	non	אנ	כי
4Q41	קנא	אל	אלהיד	יהוה	אנכי	כי
4Q42	non	non	non	יהוה	אנכי	י
4Q129	non	non	non	non	נכי	non
4Q134	קנא	אל	להיד	non	non	non
4Q137	קנא	אל	אלהיכ	יהוה	אנכי	כי
XQ-3	קנא	אל	אלהיד	יהוה	אנכי	כי
LXX	קנא	אל	אלהיד	יהוה	אנכי	כי
LXX W	קנא	אל	אלהיכ	יהוה	אנכי	כי

Exod 20:5b

LXX ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου θεὸς ζηλωτῆς

Deut 5:9b

LXX A,CB ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου θεὸς ζηλωτῆς
LXX B ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου θεὸς ζηλωτῆς
LXX W ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός υμῶν θεὸς ζηλωτῆς

Second Commandment (Part 5)

Exod 20:5c

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	על	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פקד
SP	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	על	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פקד
Nash	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	על	ם	non	non	non	פקן
LXX	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	על	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פקד

Deut 5:9c

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	ועל	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פקד
SP	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	על	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פקד
1Q13	non	רבעים	ו	לשים	non	non	non	non	עון	קד
4Q37	לשנאי	רבעים	non	שלש	non	non	non	non	non	non
4Q41	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	על	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פוקד
4Q128	לשנאי	רבעים	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non
4Q134	י	non	non	non	ועל	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פוקד
4Q137	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	ועל	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פוקד
4Q139	non	רבן	ועל	שלשים	ועל	non	non	non	non	non
4Q142	non	non	non	של	ועל	בנים	על	ת	non	non
XQ-3	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	על	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פקד
LXX	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	על	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פקד
LXX CB	לשנאי	רבעים	ועל	שלשים	על	בנים	על	אבות	עון	פקד

Exod 20:5c

LXX ἀποδιδούς ἁμαρτίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα ἕως τρίτης καὶ τετάρτης γενεᾶς τοῖς μισοῦσίν με

Deut 5:9c

LXX ἀποδιδούς ἁμαρτίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα ἐπὶ τρίτην καὶ τετάρτην γενεὴν τοῖς μισοῦσίν με

LXX CB ἀποδιδούς ἁμαρτίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα ἐπὶ τρίτην καὶ τετάρτην τοῖς μισοῦσίν

Second Commandment (Part 6)

Exod 20:6

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	מצותי	ולשמרי	לאהבי	לאלפים	חסד	ועשה
SP	מצותי	ולשמרי	לאהבי	לאלפים	חסד	ועשה
Nash	מצותי	ולשמרי	לאהבי	non	non	non
LXX	מצותי	ולשמרי	לאהבי	לאלפים	חסד	ועשה

Deut 5:10

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	מצותו	ולשמרי	לאהבי	לאלפים	חסד	ועשה
SP	מצותי	ולשמרי	לאהבי	לאלפים	חסד	ועשה
4Q37	non	ולשומר	non	non	non	non
4Q41	מצותי	ולשמרי	לאהבי	לאלפים	חסד	ועשה
4Q128	non	non	non	ל לפ	חסד	ועשה
4Q129	מ אותי	ולשמרי	non	non	non	non
4Q134	מצות	ולשמרי	לאהבי	לאלפים	חסד	ועשה
4Q137	ותי	ולשמרי	לאהבי	לאלפים	חסד	עושי
XQ-3	מצותו	ולשמרי	לאהבי	לאלפים	חסד	ועשה
LXX	מצותי	ולשמרי	לאהבי	לאלפים	חסד	ועשה

Exod 20:6

LXX καὶ ποιῶν ἔλεος εἰς χιλιάδας τοῖς ἀγαπῶσίν με καὶ τοῖς φυλάσσουσιν τὰ προστάγματά μου

Deut 5:10

LXX καὶ ποιῶν ἔλεος εἰς χιλιάδας τοῖς ἀγαπῶσίν με καὶ τοῖς φυλάσσουσιν τὰ προστάγματά μου

LXX CB καὶ ποιῶν ἔλεος εἰς χιλιάδας τοῖς ἀγαπῶσίν με κ[] φυλάσσουσιν τὰ πρ[]τάγματά μου

Third Commandment (Part 1)

Exod 20:7a

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	לשוא	אלהיך	יהוה	שם	את	תשא	לא
SP	לשוא	אלהיך	יהוה	שם	את	תשא	לא
Nash	לשוא	להיך	non	non	non	תן	לא
LXX	לשוא	אלהיך	יהוה	שם	את	תשא	לא

Deut 5:11a

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	לשוא	אלהיך	יהוה	שם	את	תשא	לא
SP	לשוא	אלהיך	יהוה	שם	את	תשא	לא
1Q13	non	non	non	non	non	תשן	א
4Q37	non	non	non	non	non	תן	לא
4Q41	לשוא	אלהיך	יהוה	שם	את	תשא	לא
4Q129	לאשו	אלהיכה	יהוה	שם	את	תשא	לא
4Q134	לשוא	אלהיך	non	non	non	non	non
4Q137	לאשו	אלהיכה	יהוה	ם	non	תשן	לא
4Q139	לאשו	יכה	non	non	non	non	Non
XQ-3	לשוא	אלהיך	יהוה	שם	את	תשא	לא
LXX	לשוא	אלהיך	יהוה	שם	את	תשא	לא

Exod 20:7a

LXX οὐ λήμψῃ τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου ἐπὶ ματαίῳ

Deut 5:11a

LXX οὐ λήμψῃ τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου ἐπὶ ματαίῳ

Third Commandment (Part 2)

Exod 20:7b

	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
SP	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
4Q149	לְשׁ	שְׁמוֹ	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	כֵּן	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	non
Nash	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	non	non	non	non	non	non	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
LXX A	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
LXX B	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	אֱלֹהִים	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי

Deut 5:11b

	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
SP	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
1Q13	non	מִו	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	non	non	non	non	non	יִן	לֹא	אִי
4Q37	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	יִנְקָה	non	non
4Q41	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
4Q129	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
4Q134	non	non	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
4Q137	non	non	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	כֹּל	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
4Q139	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
4Q142	non	non	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	כֹּל	non	non	non	non	non	non
XQ-3	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
LXX	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	אֶת	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי
LXX CB	לְשׁוֹא	שְׁמוֹ	אֶתִי	יֵשָׁא	אֲשֶׁר	omit	אֶת	omit	יְהוָה	יִנְקָה	לֹא	כִּי

Exod 20:7b

LXX A οὐ γὰρ μὴ καθάρῃσι κύριος τὸν λαμβάνοντα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ ματαίῳ

LXX B οὐ γὰρ μὴ καθάρῃσι κύριος ὁ θεός σου τὸν λαμβάνοντα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ ματαίῳ

Deut 5:11b

LXX οὐ γὰρ μὴ καθάρῃσι κύριος τὸν λαμβάνοντα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ ματαίῳ

LXX CB οὐ γ[] καθάρῃσι κύριος τὸν [] βάνοντα μου τὸ ὄν[] αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ ματαί[]

In CB the letters το ο of τὸ ὄνομα are written over and slightly right of μου; probably a correction of a misread אֶתִי ('who lifts up me'), to the traditional text שְׁמוֹ ('who lifts up my name').

Fourth Commandment (Part 1)

Exod 20:8

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit	omit	omit	omit	לקדשו	השבת	יום	את	זכור
SP	omit	omit	omit	omit	לקדשהו	השבת	יום	את	שמור
Nash	omit	omit	omit	omit	לן	השבת	יום	את	זכור
LXX	omit	omit	omit	omit	לקדשו	השבת	יום	את	זכור

Deut 5:12

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כאשר	לקדשו	השבת	יום	את	שמור
SP	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כאשר	לקדשהו	השבת	יום	את	שמור
4Q41	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כאשר	לקדשו	השבת	יום	את	שמור
4Q128	אלהיכה	יהוה	צוכה	non	non	non	non	non	non
4Q134	omit	omit	omit	omit	לן	ת	non	non	non
4Q137	אלהיכה	יהוה	צוכה	non	non	non	יון	את	שמור
4Q139	כה	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non
XQ-3	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כאשר	לקדשו	השבת	יום	את	שמור
LXX	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כאשר	לקדשו	השבת	יום	את	שמור

Exod 20:8

LXX μνήσθητι τὴν ἡμέραν τῶν σαββάτων ἀγιάζειν αὐτήν

Deut 5:12

LXX φύλαξαι τὴν ἡμέραν τῶν σαββάτων ἀγιάζειν αὐτήν
ὅν τρόπον ἐνετείλατό σοι κύριος ὁ θεός σου

LXX CB []λαξαι τὴν ἡμέ[] τα σαββατα ...

Fourth Commandment (Part 2)

Exod 20:9

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	מלאכתך	כל	omit	ועשית	תעבד	ימים	ששת
SP	מלאכתך	כל	omit	ועשית	תעבד	ימים	ששת
4Q149	מלאכתך	כל	את	ועשית	תעבד	non	non
Nash	מלאכתך	כל	omit	ועשית	תעבד	ם	non
LXX	מלאכתך	כל	omit	ועשית	תעבד	ימים	ששת

Deut 5:13

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	מלאכתך	כל	omit	ועשית	תעבד	ימים	ששת
SP	מלאכתך	כל	omit	ועשית	תעבד	ימים	ששת
1Q13	ך	non	non	non	ת	ימים	ת
4Q37	מלאכתך	non	non	non	non	non	non
4Q41	מלאכתך	כל	את	ועשית	תעבד	ימים	ששת
4Q129	מלאכתך	כל	את	ועשית	ך	non	non
4Q134	מלאכתך	כל	omit	ועשית	תעבד	ימים	ששת
4Q137	מלאכתך	non	את	ועשית	תעבד	ימים	ששת
4Q139	non	non	non	non	תע	ימים	ששת
XQ-3	מלאכתך	כל	omit	ועשית	תעבד	ימים	ששת
LXX	מלאכתך	כל	omit	ועשית	תעבד	ימים	ששת

Exod 20:9

LXX ἕξ ἡμέρας ἐργᾷ καὶ ποιήσεις πάντα τὰ ἔργα σου

Deut 5:13

LXX ἕξ ἡμέρας ἐργᾷ καὶ ποιήσεις πάντα τὰ ἔργα σου

Fourth Commandment (Part 3)

Exod 20:10a

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	אלהיך	ליהוה	שבת	השביעי	ויום	omit
SP	אלהיך	ליהוה	שבת	השביעי	ויום	omit
4Q149	non	non	non	non	ו	omit
Nash	אלהיך	non	non	non	וביום	omit
LXX A	אלהיך	omit	שבת	השביעי	ויום	omit
LXX B	לאֱלֹהֶיךָ	ליהוה	שבת	השביעי	ויום	omit

Deut 5:14a

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	אלהיך	ליהוה	שבת	השביעי	ויום	omit
SP	אלהיך	ליהוה	שבת	השביעי	ויום	omit
1Q13	אלהיך	לְ ה	שבת	י	ביום	כי
4Q41	אלוהיך	ליהוה	שבת	השביעי	וביום	omit
4Q129	אלוהיכֶּה	ליה	שבת	השבעי	ובין ם	omit
4Q134	אלהיך	ה	non	non	וב	omit
4Q137	אלוהיכֶּה	non	non	השב	וביום	omit
4Q142	אלו	ליהוה	בת	non	non	omit
XQ-3	אלהיך	ליהוה	שבת	השביעי	וביום	omit
LXX	אלהיך	ליהוה	שבת	השביעי	ויום	omit
LXX W	אלהיך	ליהוה	שבת	השביעי	יום	omit

Exod 20:10a

LXX A τῇ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ σάββατα τῷ θεῷ σου
 LXX B τῇ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ σάββατα κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ σου

Deut 5:14a

LXX τῇ δε ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ σάββατα κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ σου
 LXX W τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ σάββατα κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ σου
 LXX CB τῇ δε ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τι ἑβδόμῃ σάββατα κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ σου

Fourth Commandment (Part 4)

Exod 20:10b

	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	ואמתך	omit	עבדך	ובתך	ובנך	אתה	מלאכה	כל	omit	תעשה	לא
SP	ואמתך	omit	עבדך	ובתך	ובנך	אתה	מלאכה	כל	בו	תעשה	לא
4Q149	ואמתכה	omit	עבדך	כה	non	non	non	non	non	non	non
Nash	ואמתך	omit	עבדך	non	non	non	מלאכה	כל	בה	תעשה	לוא
LXX	ואמתך	omit	עבדך	ובתך	ובנך	אתה	מלאכה	כל	בו	תעשה	לא

Deut 5:14b

	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	ואמתך	omit	ועבדך	ובתך	ובנך	אתה	מלאכה	כל	omit	תעשה	לא
SP	ואמתך	omit	עבדך	ובתך	ובנך	אתה	מלאכה	כל	בו	תעשה	לא
1Q13	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	עשה	לא
4Q37	non	omit	non	non	non	non	מלאכה	non	non	non	non
4Q41	ואמתך	omit	עבדך	בתך	בנך	אתה	מלאכה	כל	בו	תעשה	לוא
4Q134	תך	בתך	עבדך	ובתך	ובנך	ה	non	כך	omit	ת שה	לוא
4Q137	תכה	ן	omit	ועבדכה	ובתכה	אתה	מלאכה	כל	בוה	תעשה	לוא
4Q139	non	non	non	ובתכה	ובנכה	תה	non	non	non	non	non
XQ-3	ואמתך	omit	ועבדך	ובתך	ובנך	אתה	מלאכה	כל	omit	תעשה	לא
LXX	ואמתך	omit	ועבדך	ובתך	ובנך	אתה	מלאכה	כל	בו	תעשה	לא
LXX B	ואמתך	omit	ועבדך	ובתך	ובנך	אתה	מלאכה	כל	בו	תעשה	לא

Exod 20:10b

LXX οὐ ποιήσεις ἐν αὐτῇ πᾶν ἔργον σὺ καὶ ὁ υἱός σου καὶ ἡ θυγάτηρ σου, ὁ παῖς σου καὶ ἡ παιδίσκη σου

Deut 5:14b

LXX A,W,CB οὐ ποιήσεις ἐν αὐτῇ πᾶν ἔργον, σὺ καὶ ὁ υἱός σου καὶ ἡ θυγάτηρ σου, ὁ παῖς σου καὶ ἡ παιδίσκη σου

LXX B οὐ ποιήσεις ἐν αὐτῇ πᾶν ἔργον, σὺ καὶ οἱ υἱοί σου καὶ ἡ θυγάτηρ σου, ὁ παῖς σου καὶ ἡ παιδίσκη σου

Fourth Commandment (Part 5)

Exod 20:10c

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	בשעריך	אשר	וגרך	ובהמתך	omit	omit	omit
SP	בשעריך	אשר	וגרך	בהמתך	omit	omit	omit
4Q149	non	non	non	non	non	וּחֲמוֹן	שְׁנֵי כֹהֵן
Nash	בשעריך	non	non	בן	וכל	וחמורך	שורך
LXX	בשעריך	אשר	וגרך	בהמתך	וכל	וחמורך	ושורך

Deut 5:14c

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	בשעריך	אשר	וגרך	בהמתך	וכל	וחמורך	ושורך
SP	בשעריך	אשר	וגרך	בהמתך	וכל	וחמורך	שורך
1Q13	non	א	רך	non	non	non	non
4Q37	non	non	non	בהמתך	non	non	non
4Q41	בשעריך	אשר	גרך	ובהמתך	omit	וחמורך	שורך
4Q128	non	non	non	בן	כול	non	non
4Q129	בשעריך	אשר	non	non	non	non	non
4Q134	בשעריך	ר	non	בהן	וכל	וחמורך	ושורך
4Q137	שען יכה	אש	וגריכה	ה	וכן	וחמורכה	שורכה
XQ-3	בשעריך	אשר	וגרך	בהמתך	וכל	וחמורך	שורך
LXX A,W	ישב בך	אשר	וגרך	בהמתך	וכל	וחמורך	ושורך
LXX B	ישב בך	אשר	גרך	בהמתך	וכל	וחמורך	ושורך
LXX CB	בשעריך	אשר	גרך	בהמתך	וכל	וחמורך	ושורך

Exod 20:10c

LXX ὁ βοῦς σου καὶ τὸ ὑποζύγιόν σου καὶ πᾶν κτήνός σου καὶ ὁ προσήλυτος
ὁ παροικῶν ἐν σοί

Deut 5:14c

LXX A,W ὁ βοῦς σου καὶ τὸ ὑποζύγιόν σου καὶ πᾶν κτήνός σου καὶ ὁ προσήλυτος
ὁ παροικῶν ἐν σοί

LXX B ὁ βοῦς σου καὶ τὸ ὑποζύγιόν σου καὶ πᾶν κτήνός σου ὁ προσήλυτος
ὁ παροικῶν ἐν σοί

LXX CB ὁ βοῦς σου καὶ τὸ ὑποζύγιόν σου καὶ πᾶν κτήνός σου καὶ ὁ προσήλυτος
ὁ ἐντός σου

Fourth Commandment (Part 6a)

Exod 20:11a

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	הָאָרֶץ	וְאֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	אֵת	יְהוָה	עָשָׂה	יָמִים	שֵׁשֶׁת	כִּי
SP	הָאָרֶץ	וְאֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	אֵת	יְהוָה	עָשָׂה	יָמִים	שֵׁשֶׁת	כִּי
4Q149	הָאָרֶץ	אֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	אֵת	non	non	non	non	non
Nash	הָאָרֶץ	וְאֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	non	יְהוָה	עָשָׂה	יָמִים	שֵׁשֶׁת	כִּי
LXX	הָאָרֶץ	וְאֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	אֵת	יְהוָה	עָשָׂה	יָמִים	שֵׁשֶׁת	כִּי
P 4442	non	non	הַשָּׁמַיִם	non	non	non	יָמִים	שֵׁשֶׁת	om.

Deut 5:14d

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit								
SP	omit								
4Q134	הָאָרֶץ	וְאֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	אֵת	יְהוָה	non	non	שֵׁשֶׁת	כִּי
LXX	omit								
LXX B	הָאָרֶץ	וְאֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	אֵת	יְהוָה	עָשָׂה	יָמִים	שֵׁשֶׁת	כִּי

Exod 20:11a

LXX A=F	ἐν γὰρ ἑξ ἡμέραις ἐποίησεν κύριος τὸν τε οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν
LXX B	ἐν γὰρ ἑξ ἡμέραις ἐποίησεν κύριος τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν
P.Oxy 4442	ἐν ἑξ ἡμέραις []ν οὐρανὸν []

Deut 5:14d

LXX A	(omit)
LXX B	ἐν γὰρ ἑξ ἡμέραις ἐποίησεν κύριος τὸν τε οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν

Fourth Commandment (Part 6b)**Exod 20:11a**

	15	14	13	12	11	10
MT/L	בם	אשר	כל	ואת	הים	את
SP	בם	אשר	כל	ואת	הים	את
4Q149	non	non	non	non	הימים	non
Nash	non	א	כל	ואת	הים	את
LXX	בם	אשר	כל	ואת	הים	את
P 4442	non	non	non	non	non	non

Deut 5:14d

	15	14	13	12	11	10
MT/L	omit					
SP	omit					
4Q134	בם	אשר	כול	ואת	ם	non
LXX	omit					
LXX B	בם	אשר	כל	ואת	הים	את

Exod 20:11a

LXX A=F καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς
 LXX B καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς

Deut 5:14d

LXX A (omit)
 LXX B καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς

Fourth Commandment (Part 7)

Exod 20:11b

	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	ויקדשהו	השבת	יום	את	יהוה	ברך	כן	על	השביעי	ביום	וינח
SP	ויקדשהו	השבת	יום	את	יהוה	ברך	כן	על	השביעי	ביום	וינח
Nash	ויקדשין	השביעי	non	את	יהוה	ברך	כן	על	השביעי	non	וינח
LXX	ויקדשהו	השביעי	יום	את	יהוה	ברך	כן	על	השביעי	ביום	וינח

Deut 5:14e

	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit										
SP	omit										
LXX	omit										
4Q134	ויקדשהו	בן	בת	non	את	יהוה	בן	כן	על	י	וינח

Exod 20:11b

LXX

και κατέπαυσεν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἐβδόμῃ διὰ τοῦτο εὐλόγησεν κύριος τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἐβδόμην καὶ ἡγάσεν αὐτήν

Fourth Commandment (Part 8)

Exod—

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit					
SP	omit					
LXX	omit					
Nash	omit					

Deut 5:14f

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	כְּמוֹךְ	omit	וְאִמְתִּיךְ	עֲבֹדֶיךָ	יָנוּחַ	לִמְעַן
SP	כְּמוֹךְ	omit	וְאִמְתִּיךְ	עֲבֹדֶיךָ	יָנוּחַ	לִמְעַן
1Q13	כְּמוֹ	omit	אֶתְךָ	non	non	non
4Q41	כְּמוֹךְ	omit	וְאִמְתִּיךְ	עֲבֹדֶיךָ	יָנוּחַ	לִמְעַן
4Q129	כְּמוֹ	omit	וְאִמְתִּיכָה	עֲבֹדֶיכָה	יָנוּחַ	לִמְעַן
4Q137	כְּמוֹכָה	omit	וְאִמְתִּיכָה	עֲבֹדֶיכָה	יָנוּחַ	לִמְעַן
4Q139	non	omit	וְאִמְתִּיכָה	עֲבֹדֶיכָה	יָנוּחַ	non
4Q142	כְּ	omit	מִתִּיכָה	non	non	Non
XQ-3	כְּמוֹךְ	omit	וְאִמְתִּיךְ	עֲבֹדֶיךָ	יָנוּחַ	לִמְעַן
LXX	כְּמוֹךְ	omit	וְאִמְתִּיךְ	עֲבֹדֶיךָ	יָנוּחַ	לִמְעַן
LXX W	כְּמוֹךְ	וְחִמְרֶיךָ	וְאִמְתִּיךְ	עֲבֹדֶיךָ	יָנוּחַ	לִמְעַן

Deut 5:14f

LXX ἵνα ἀναπαύσῃται ὁ παῖς σου καὶ ἡ παιδείσκη σου
ὥσπερ καὶ σύ

LXX W ἵνα ἀναπαύσῃται ὁ παῖς σου καὶ ἡ παιδείσκη σου καὶ τὸ υποζύγιόν σου
ὥσπερ καὶ σύ

Fourth Commandment (Part 9)

Exod—

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit					
SP	omit					
LXX	omit					
Nash	omit					

Deut 5:15a

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	מצרים	בארץ	היית	עבד	כי	וזכרת
SP	מצרים	בארץ	היית	עבד	כי	וזכרת
1Q13	non	בארץ	היית	עבד	כי	ת
4Q37	non	non	non	עב	כי	non
4Q41	מצרים	בארץ	היית	עבד	כי	וזכרתה
4Q129	non	non	non	non	כי	תה
4Q137	מ	בארץ	ה יתח	non	non	וזכ
4Q142	מצרים	בארץ	היית	עבד	כי	וזכרת
XQ-3	מצרים	בארץ	היית	עבד	כי	וזכרת
LXX	מצרים	בארץ	היית	עבד	כי	וזכרת

Deut 5:15a

LXX καὶ μνησθήσῃ ὅτι οἰκέτης ἦσθα ἐν γῇ Αἰγύπτῳ

Fourth Commandment (Part 10)

Exod —

	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit							
SP	omit							
LXX	omit							
Nash	omit							

Deut 5:15b

	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	נְשִׁיָּה	וּבְזֹרַע	חֻזְקָה	בִּיד	מִשֶּׁם	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	וַיִּצְאֶךָ
SP	נְשִׁיָּה	וּבְזֹרַע	חֻזְקָה	בִּיד	מִשֶּׁם	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	וַיִּצְאֶךָ
4Q37	non	non	חֻזְקָה	non	non	non	non	non
4Q41	נְשִׁיָּה	וּבְזֹרַע	חֻזְקָה	בִּיד	מִשֶּׁם	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	וַיִּצְאֶךָ
4Q137	נְשִׁיָּה	וּבְזֹרַע	חֻזְקָה	בִּיד	מִשֶּׁם	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	וַיִּצְאֶךָ
4Q139	נְשִׁיָּה	וּבְזֹרַע	חֻזְקָה	non	non	non	non	non
XQ-3	נְשִׁיָּה	וּבְזֹרַע	חֻזְקָה	בִּיד	מִשֶּׁם	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	וַיִּצְאֶךָ
LXX	נְשִׁיָּה	וּבְזֹרַע	חֻזְקָה	בִּיד	מִשֶּׁם	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	וַיִּצְאֶךָ

Deut 5:15b

LXX καὶ ἐξήγαγέν σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου ἐκεῖθεν ἐν χειρὶ κραταιᾷ καὶ ἐν βραχίονι ὑψηλῷ

Fourth Commandment (Part 11)

Exod—/

	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit										
SP	omit										
LXX	omit										
Nash	omit										

Deut 5:15c

	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit	omit	השבת	יום	את	לעשות	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כן	על
SP	omit	omit	השבת	יום	את	לעשות	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כן	על
1Q13	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	יה	צוך	non	non
4Q37	non	non	השן	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non
4Q41	insert	ולקדשו	השבת	יום	את	לשמור	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כן	על
4Q129	omit	ולקדשו	השבת	יום	את	לעשות	כה	non	non	non	non
4Q137	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	ה	צוכה	כן	על
4Q142	non	שו	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non
XQ-3	omit	omit	השבת	יום	את	לעשות	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כן	על
LXX A,B	omit	ולקדשו	השבת	יום	את	לשמור	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כן	על
LXX W,CB	omit	ולקדשו	השבת	יום	את	לשמורך	אלהיך	יהוה	צוך	כן	על

Insert:

כי ששת ימים עשה יהוה
את השמים ואת הארץ את הים וכול אשר בהם
וינוח ביום השביעי על כן ברך יהוה
את יום השבת לקדשו

Deut 5:15c

LXX A	<div> <div> δια τούτο συνετάξεν σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὥστε φυλάξεσθαι</div> <div> <div>την</div> <div>ἡμέραν</div> <div>τῶν σαββάτων</div> <div>καὶ</div> <div>ἀγιάζειν</div> <div>αὐτήν</div> </div> </div>
LXX B	<div> <div> δια τούτο συνετάξεν σοι κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὥστε φυλάσσεσθαι</div> <div> <div>την</div> <div>ἡμέραν</div> <div>τῶν σαββάτων</div> <div>καὶ</div> <div>ἀγιάζειν</div> <div>αὐτήν</div> </div> </div>
LXX W	<div> <div> δια τούτο συνετάξεν σοι κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὥστε φυλάσσεσθαι σε</div> <div> <div>την</div> <div>ἡμέραν</div> <div>τῶν σαββάτων</div> <div>καὶ</div> <div>ἀγιάζειν</div> <div>αὐτήν</div> </div> </div>
LXX CB	<div> <div> δια τὸ συνετάξεν σοι [] ὁ θεός σου ὥστε [ἀξεσθαι σε</div> <div> <div>την</div> <div>[]</div> <div>ραν</div> <div>την</div> <div>σαββατα</div> <div>καὶ</div> <div>ἀγιάζειν</div> <div>αὐτήν</div> </div> </div>

Fifth Commandment (Part 1)

Exod 20:12a

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	omit	omit	omit	omit	אִמְךָ	וְאֵת	אֲבִיךָ	אֵת	כְּבֹד
SP	omit	omit	omit	omit	אִמְךָ	וְאֵת	אֲבִיךָ	אֵת	כְּבֹד
4Q149	non	non	non	כָּאֵשׁ	non	וְאֵת	הַ	אֵת	בְּדֹ
Nash	omit	omit	omit	omit	אִמְךָ	וְאֵת	אֲבִיךָ	אֵת	כְּבֹד
LXX	omit	omit	omit	omit	אִם	וְאֵת	אֲבִיךָ	אֵת	כְּבֹד
P 4442	omit	omit	omit	omit	אִמְךָ	וְאֵת	אֲבִיךָ	non	non

Deut 5:16a

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	צוּךְ	כָּאֲשֶׁר	אִמְךָ	וְאֵת	אֲבִיךָ	אֵת	כְּבֹד
SP	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	צוּךְ	כָּאֲשֶׁר	אִמְךָ	וְאֵת	אֲבִיךָ	אֵת	כְּבֹד
1Q13	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	non	כָּאֲשֶׁר	מְךָ	non	non	non	non
4Q41	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	צוּךְ	כָּאֲשֶׁר	אִמְךָ	וְאֵת	אֲבִיךָ	אֵת	כְּבֹד
4Q129	non	non	non	non	אִמְכָּה	וְאֵת	אֲבִיכָה	אֵת	כְּבֹד
4Q134	omit	omit	omit	omit	non	non	אֲבִי	non	כֹּבֶן
4Q137	אֱלֹהֶיכֶם	יְהוָה	צֶן	כָּאֲשֶׁר	אִמְכֶּה	וְאֵת	אֲבִי	אֵת	כְּבֹד
4Q139	non	non	צוּכָה	כָּאֲשֶׁר	אִמְכֶּה	וְאֵת	non	non	non
4Q142	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	כְּבֹד
XQ-3	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	צוּךְ	כָּאֲשֶׁר	וְאִמְךָ	omit	אֲבִיךָ	omit	כְּבֹד
LXX A	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	צוּךְ	כָּאֲשֶׁר	אִמְךָ	וְאֵת	אֲבִיךָ	אֵת	כְּבֹד
LXX B	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	צוּךְ	כָּאֲשֶׁר	אִמְךָ	וְאֵת	אֲבִיךָ	אֵת	כְּבֹד

Exod 20:12a

LXX τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα

P.Oxy 4442 []ρα σου καὶ τὴν [μητέρα σου] (inclusion of σου based on line length)

Deut 5:16a

LXX A τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα σου ὃν τρόπον ἐνετείλατό σοι κύριος ὁ θεός σου

LXX B τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα σου ὃν τρόπον ἐνετείλατό κύριος ὁ θεός σου

Fifth Commandment (Part 3)

Exod 20:12c

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L			לך	נתן	אלהיך	יהוה	אשר	omit	האדמה	על
SP			לך	נתן	אלהיך	יהוה	אשר	omit	האדמה	על
4Q149				נן	היכה	יהוה	non	non	non	non
Nash			לך	נתן	אלהיך	יהוה	non	omit	האדמה	על
LXX			לך	נתן	אלהיך	יהוה	אשר	הטובה	האדמה	על

Deut 5:16c

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L			לך	נתן	אלהיך	יהוה	אשר	omit	האדמה	על
SP			לך	נתן	אלהיך	יהוה	אשר	omit	האדמה	על
4Q41			לך	נתן	אלהיך	יהוה	אשר	omit	האדמה	על
4Q134	אלהיך	יהוה	צו	כאשר	אלהיכה	ה	אש	omit	האדמה	ל
4Q137			omit	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit	Omit
4Q139			לכה	נתן	non	non	non	non	non	Non
XQ-3			לך	נתן	אלהיך	יהוה	אשר	omit	האדמה	על
LXX			לך	נתן	אלהיך	יהוה	אשר	omit	האדמה	על

Exod 20:12c

LXX ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τῆς ἀγαθῆς, ἧς κύριος ὁ θεός σου δίδωσίν σοι

Deut 5:16c

LXX ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς [redacted] ἧς κύριος ὁ θεός σου δίδωσίν σοι

Sixth, Seventh, Eighth Commandments

Exod 20:13–15

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	תננב	לא	תנאף	לא	תרצח	לא
SP	תננב	לא	תנאף	לא	תרצח	לא
Nash	נב	לן	תרצח	לוא	תנאף	לוא
LXX A	תננב	לא	תנאף	לא	תרצח	לא
LXX B	תרצח	לא	תננב	לא	תנאף	לא

Deut 5:17–19

	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	תננב	ולא	תנאף	ולא	תרצח	לא
SP	תננב	לא	תנאף	לא	תרצח	לא
4Q41	תננב	לוא	תנאף	לוא	תרצח	לוא
4Q129	תננב	ולוא	תנאף	ולא	ח	non
4Q134	תננב	לוא	תנאף	לוא	צח	non
4Q139	non	non	non	ולוא	תרצח	לוא
XQ-3	תננב	לא	תנאף	לא	תרצח	לא
LXX A,F,W	תננב	לא	תנאף	לא	תרצח	לא
LXX B,CB	תננב	לא	תרצח	לא	תנאף	לא

Exod 20:13–15

LXX A	οὐ φονεύσεις	οὐ μοιχεύσεις	οὐ κλέψεις (= Mt 19:18; Mk 10:19; Origen?)
LXX B	οὐ μοιχεύσεις	οὐ κλέψεις	οὐ φονεύσεις (= P. 4442)

Deut 5:17–19

LXX A,F,W	οὐ φονεύσεις	οὐ μοιχεύσεις	οὐ κλέψεις
LXX B,CB	οὐ μοιχεύσεις	οὐ φονεύσεις	οὐ κλέψεις (CB reconstructed)

NOTE on order in P.Oxy. 4442, pg. 3 (=C'-422 et al.; Lk 18:20; Ro 13:9; Philo *Dec* 52)

οὐ μοιχεύσεις	οὐ φονεύσεις	οὐ κλέψεις
οὐ φονεύσεις	οὐ κλέψεις	οὐ μοιχεύσεις (= LXX minuscule ms. 84)
οὐ κλέψεις	οὐ φονεύσεις	οὐ μοιχεύσεις (= LXX minuscule ms. 799)

There are in the mss. for Exod and Deut at least four orders for the sixth through eighth commandments:

murder	adultery	steal	MT (Ex,Dt), SP (Ex,Dt), LXX-A (Ex,Dt), LXX-W (Dt), LXX-F
murder	steal	adultery	LXX-84
adultery	murder	steal	Nash, LXX-B (Dt), LXX-CB
adultery	steal	murder	LXX-B (Ex), P.Oxy.4442

Ninth Commandment

Exod 20:16

	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	שקר	עד	ברעך	תענה	לא
SP	שקר	עד	ברעך	תענה	לא
Nash	שוא	עד	ברעך	תענה	לוא
LXX	שקר	עד	ברעך	תענה	לא

Deut 5:20

	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	שוא	עד	ברעך	תענה	ולא
SP	שוא	עד	ברעך	תענה	לא
4Q41	שוא	עד	ברעך	תענה	לוא
4Q129	שו	עד	ברעך	תענה	ולוא
4Q134	non	non	ברעך	תענה	א
4Q137	שו	עד	non	non	non
XQ-3	שקר	עד	ברעך	תענה	לא
LXX	שוא	עד	ברעך	תענה	לא

Exod 20:16

LXX οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις κατὰ τοῦ πλησίον σου μαρτυρίαν ψευδῇ

Deut 5:20

LXX οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις κατὰ τοῦ πλησίον σου μαρτυρίαν ψευδῇ

Tenth Commandment (Part 1)

Exod 20:17a

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3		2	1
MT/L	רַעַךְ	אֵשֶׁת	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא	רַעַךְ	בֵּית	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא
SP	רַעַךְ	אֵשֶׁת	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	וְלֹא	רַעַךְ	בֵּית	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא
Nash	רַעַךְ	בְּ ת	אֵת	תַּתְּאוּהָ	וְאֵ	רַעַךְ	אֵשֶׁת	אֵת	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא
LXX	רַעַךְ	בֵּית	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא	רַעַךְ	אֵשֶׁת	—	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא

Deut 5:21a

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3		2	1
MT/L	רַעַךְ	בֵּית	omit	תַּתְּאוּהָ	וְלֹא	רַעַךְ	אֵשֶׁת	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	וְלֹא
SP	רַעַךְ	אֵשֶׁת	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	וְלֹא	רַעַךְ	בֵּית	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא
1Q13	non	non	non	non	וְלֹא	רַעַךְ	non	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	non
4Q37	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	תַּחֲמוֹד	אֵ
4Q41	רַעַךְ	בֵּית	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא	רַעַךְ	אֵשֶׁת	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא
4Q129	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	תַּחֲמוֹד	וְלֹא
4Q134	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit?	non	non	non	non	non
4Q137	יְכָן	בֵּין	omit	יָד	וְ	רַעַכָּה	אֵשֶׁת	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	וְלֹא
4Q139	רַעַכָּה	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	non	Non
XQ-3	רַעַךְ	בֵּית	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא	רַעַךְ	אֵשֶׁת	omit	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא
LXX	רַעַךְ	בֵּית	—	תַּתְּאוּהָ	לֹא	רַעַךְ	אֵשֶׁת	—	תַּחֲמוֹד	לֹא

Exod 20:17a

LXX οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πλησίον σου οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ πλησίον σου

Deut 5:21a

LXX οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πλησίον σου οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ πλησίον σου

Tenth Commandment (Part 2)

Exod 20:17b

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	לרעך	אשר	omit	וכל	וחמרו	ושורו	ואמתו	ועבדו	omit
SP	לרעך	אשר	omit	וכל	וחמרו	שורו	ואמתו	עבדו	שדהו
Nash	לרעך	אשר	omit	וכל	וחמרו	ורו	non	non	שך
LXX	לרעך	אשר	בהמתו	וכל	וחמרו	ושורו	ואמתו	ועבדו	שדהו

Deut 5:21b

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
MT/L	לרעך	אשר	omit	וכל	וחמרו	שורו	ואמתו	ועבדו	שדהו
SP	לרעך	אשר	omit	וכל	וחמרו	שורו	ואמתו	עבדו	שדהו
4Q37	non	non	non	non	non	שורו	non	non	non
4Q41	לרעך	אשר	omit	וכל	חמרו	שורו	אמתו	עבדו	שדהו
4Q134	לרעך	אשר	omit	וכל	וחמרו	שור	ואמתו	עבדו	שדהו
4Q137	non	non	non	non	וחמו	רו	ואמת	non	non
4Q139	non	non	non	non	non	non	ואמתו	עבדו	שך
XQ-3	לרעך	אשר	omit	וכל	וחמרו	שורו	ואמתו	עבדו	שדהו
LXX	לרעך	אשר	בהמתו	וכל	וחמרו	ושורו	ואמתו	ועבדו	שדהו

Exod 20:17b

LXX ουδε τον ἀγρον αὐτοῦ ουδε τον παῖδα αὐτοῦ ουδε την παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ οὔτε τοῦ βοῦς αὐτοῦ οὔτε τοῦ ὑποζυγίου αὐτοῦ οὔτε παντὸς κτήνους αὐτοῦ οὔτε ὅσα τῷ πλησίον σου ἐστιν

Deut 5:21b

LXX ουδε τον ἀγρον αὐτοῦ ουδε τον παῖδα αὐτοῦ ουδε την παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ ουδε τοῦ βοῦς αὐτοῦ ουδε τοῦ ὑποζυγίου αὐτοῦ οὔτε παντὸς κτήνους αὐτοῦ οὔτε ὅσα τῷ πλησίον σου ἐστιν

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