

## THE COINCIDENTAL TEXTUAL NATURE OF THE COLLECTIONS OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURES

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The textual theories that have been launched over the past two centuries depict the presumed development of various aspects of the textual transmission, but do not sufficiently clarify the *textual* background of the diverse Hebrew and translational collections. It is probably fair to say that the textual background of the authoritative collections included in the Masoretic Text (MT), Septuagint (LXX), and Peshitta remains unknown. An analysis of these data is basic for our understanding of these collections and has implications for our perception of the books that are authoritative in Judaism and in several forms of Christianity.<sup>1</sup> More is known about the background of the Scripture of the Samaritans and of that of Roman Catholics, incorporating the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP) and the Vulgate, since both of them are rather uniform.<sup>2</sup>

Our working hypothesis suggests that these collections, in Hebrew and translation, are textually heterogeneous because the collections were composed of scrolls of a different nature and background. Therefore, the collections embody several elements of internal inconsistency. This is more pronounced in the translations than in the Hebrew MT. We do not claim that the collections show no planning at all. We merely suggest that, in addition to visible elements of planning, we should also recognize many unplanned elements. All these elements

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<sup>1</sup> This includes the Scripture of Arameans, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Maronites, and Melkites. See the edition by G. Lamsa, *The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts* (22nd edition; Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1981).

<sup>2</sup> The SP is part of a larger group (the SP group) including several so-called pre-Samaritan Qumran scrolls (4QpaleoExod<sup>m</sup>, 4QExod-Lev<sup>f</sup>, and 4QNum<sup>b</sup>, and secondarily also 4QDeut<sup>n</sup> and possibly 4QLev<sup>d</sup>). This text was used or quoted by two of the manuscripts of 4QRP (4Q158, 364) and by Jubilees and 4QTestimonia. See my paper "The Biblical Texts from the Judaean Desert – An Overview and Analysis of the Published Texts," in: (E.D. Herbert and E. Tov (eds.) *The Bible as Book – The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (London: British Library & Oak Knoll Press in association with The Scriptorium: Center for Christian Antiquities, 2002), pp. 139–166.

together shaped the present textual shape of the authoritative collections. We turn to the *textual* form of the books included in these canons, not to the selection of the books contained in them.<sup>3</sup>

The *historical* question to be posed regarding the texts included in the authoritative collections is which stage(s) in the textual transmission of these books is (are) reflected in a given collection of sacred writings.

In the case of *Jewish traditional Scripture*, from among the many Hebrew texts available in the last centuries BCE, the proto-Masoretic text was chosen as the central text by what may be considered the central stream in Judaism, defined as proto-Pharisaic, Pharisaic, proto-rabbinic, or rabbinic. MT was selected from among a number of available texts, and at the same time it was shaped by these circles, to a small or great extent,<sup>4</sup> and perpetuated by them.

However, these historical assumptions do not bring us any closer to understanding the textual nature of MT. That text cannot be defined in textual terms, such as harmonizing, non-harmonizing, close to the original text or remote from it, expansionistic or minimalist, pure or corrupt.<sup>5</sup> The extant textual theories have not succeeded in illumi-

<sup>3</sup> Thus, for example, we do not study the question of why Baruch and Ben Sira were included in the canon of the LXX. The study of the textual features of these texts can be subdivided into historical and textual-transmissional aspects. Some sound replies may be offered, but other replies remain hypothetical.

<sup>4</sup> See the examples analyzed by A. Geiger, *Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der inneren Entwicklung des Judenthums* (Breslau: Julius Hainauer, 1857); A. Rofé, "The Onset of Sects in Postexilic Judaism," in: J. Neusner (ed.), *Essays in Tribute of H.C. Kee* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988) 39–49.

<sup>5</sup> It is unclear whether the textual status of early books differs in some way from that of the later books. It is possible that the text of the late MT books would be closer to the original form(s) of these books than the text of the early books, since in the latter case a longer time had passed between the last editorial stage and the text frozen in MT. However, that assumption is not necessarily correct. The fact that the early books reflect earlier orthography systems than the late books shows that the spelling systems of the earlier books were updated to a smaller extent than may be expected. By the same token, exponents of late Hebrew are reflected especially in the late biblical books, while the language of the earlier books has not been updated. See A. Hurvitz, *The Transition Period in Biblical Hebrew, A Study in Post-Exilic Hebrew and Its Implications for the Dating of Psalms* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1972); R. Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew – Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose* (HSM 12; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1976); M. Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition: The Language of the Book of Ezekiel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990); R.M. Wright, *Linguistic Evidence for the Pre-Exilic Date of the Yahwistic Source* (London: T&T Clark International, 2005); A. Hurvitz, "Can Biblical Texts be Dated Linguistically? Chronological Perspectives in the Historical Study of Biblical Hebrew,"

nating the background of MT to the same degree that, for example, the Qumran scrolls have elucidated the SP. MT forms the basis for explaining the other texts, but its own nature and background remain a mystery.

When turning to the ancient translations, we deal mainly with the shape of the LXX and Peshitta, incorporating the collections of sacred writings in Greek and Syriac.<sup>6</sup>

Our study pertains to the background of the variety within each of these sources. We suggest that this variety was created at an early stage, in the *archetypes* of the Hebrew and translational texts. Our working hypothesis is that much coincidence was involved in the inclusion of individual scrolls in these archetypes. In some cases, the lack of planning is visible even in differences between *parts* of the same book in MT or the LXX, implying that at an earlier stage compositions included in the archetype could have consisted of a number of small or large scrolls, sometimes of a different nature.

We start with the ancient versions. With the exception of Jerome's Vulgate and Saadya Gaon's much later Arabic version, in antiquity all translation projects of Hebrew Scripture were undertaken over the course of several generations. There were no planning committees for the Greek, Syriac, and Aramaic versions. These enterprises simply grew stage by stage. In the case of the Greek Torah, the translation may have started as an official project, but the subsequent Greek translation enterprises were executed by individuals, and this pertains also to the Aramaic and Syriac versions. Some time after the completion of these translations, the archetypes of the present collections of translated Scriptures were composed, again without a master plan. As a result, these collections contained translations of various types, both because there was no quality control and because no other scrolls were available.

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in: A. Lemaire and M. Saebo (eds.), *Congress Volume, Oslo 1998* (VTS 80; Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 143–60.

<sup>6</sup> Our investigations of these collections of authoritative writings would not have been possible without drawing upon an additional source for comparison, the Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic manuscripts found in the Judean Desert. These texts provide us with many early precursors of the medieval texts of the MT, SP, and the Targumim, and of the LXX as represented in manuscripts of the 4–5th centuries CE. At the same time, the Dead Sea Scrolls also provide us with a variety of Hebrew texts for the analysis. For several biblical books the Qumran manuscripts present us with three, four, five, or more different textual forms, differing in small or large details.

## I. LXX

The group of Greek Scripture texts contained in the collection of the “LXX,” such as represented, for example in the critical editions,<sup>7</sup> represents a heterogeneous group of texts, not only regarding their translation character, but also with regard to their date and status (official as opposed to private). Some of the books included in the “LXX” were added to the Greek corpus only at a late date, usually replacing earlier, freer renderings.

The books of the LXX contain an amalgam of several different translations. The clearest case is that of Samuel-Kings. Within these books, 2 Sam 11:2–1 Kings 2:11 and 1 Kings 22–2 Kings 25 contain the so-called *kaige*-Th revision. A similar revision is contained in the “LXX” of Ruth, Lamentations,<sup>8</sup> and Ecclesiastes, the latter ascribed to Aquila.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, many other units are strikingly diverse.

Four different aspects of this variety are involved:

(1) *Why do the various translation units display different translation styles?* For example, the translation of Joshua is often free, while that of its neighbor Judges in both the A and B texts is rather faithful to their underlying Hebrew texts.<sup>10</sup> The translation of the OG version of 1 Kings (3 Kingdoms) is relatively literal,<sup>11</sup> while that of the adjacent 2 Kings (4 Kingdoms) is much closer to its underlying text. The same pertains to other historical books, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles, which are slavishly literal. Similarly, the Greek versions of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Minor Prophets are rather literal, while the translation of Isaiah is free and in places very free. The book of Psalms is presented in a very literal Greek version, while the now adjacent translations of Job and Proverbs are very free and paraphrastic.

<sup>7</sup> A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta, id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1935); the various volumes edited by the Septuaginta Unternehmen: *Septuaginta, Vetus Testamentum graecum auctoritate academiae litterarum gotttingensis editum* (Stuttgart: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1926–).

<sup>8</sup> Possibly other sections of the “LXX” collection also contained such a late revision, see D. Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d’Aquila* (VT.S 10; Leiden: Brill, 1963), pp. 34 ff.

<sup>9</sup> See Barthélemy, *Devanciers*, pp. 21–30.

<sup>10</sup> In the case of Samuel, that *Vorlage* was often identical to 4QSam<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> The exegetical sections in that translation were probably translated from a Hebrew text deviating from MT. See my study “3 Kingdoms Compared with Similar Rewritten Compositions,” in: A. Hilhorst (et al. (eds.), *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino García Martínez*, JSJSup 122; Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 345–366.

In an earlier study we suggested that the discrepancies between these versions reflect the diverse personal approaches of the translators.<sup>12</sup> We did not find a connection between the content of the biblical book and its translation style, nor were we convinced by other explanations of these internal discrepancies. The apparent heterogeneity of these translations or, in modern terms, the lack of guidelines caused Greek Scripture to be a very uneven collection.

(2) *Why does the translation character sometimes change in the middle of a book?* The alternation of different text types in the Greek manuscripts of 1–4 Kingdoms underscores the impression that the present collection of LXX books is an amalgam of different text types, late and early, original and revised.

The attention of scholars has been directed to the question of why our manuscripts display a mixed text, at times original and at times revised. Thus section bg of Kingdoms starting in the middle of a book (at 2 Sam 11:2 according to Thackeray [n. 13] and Barthélemy [n. 14]) and ending at 1 Kgs 2:11, contains such a revision. Section gd starting at 1 Kings 22 contains a revision as well.

As for the *incipit* of section bg, Thackeray asserted that the OG translation had been purposely omitted by the first translator due to its content (“the story of David’s sin and the subsequent disasters of his reign”) and filled in by a later translator.<sup>13</sup> Barthélemy likewise suggested that *kaige*-Th retouched only this section because of his interest in its contents.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, Shenkel admitted that “the reason for beginning the KR<sup>15</sup> at 10:1 is not yet apparent.”<sup>16</sup>

Similarly, no plausible solution has been suggested for the *incipit* of section gd. Thackeray again ascribed the change of translation type to theological factors, while Barthélemy, followed by Shenkel, suggested that section gd started at 1 Kings 22 because the LXX inverted the

<sup>12</sup> See my study “Approaches towards Scripture Embraced by the Ancient Greek Translators,” in: U. Mittman-Richert et al. (eds.), *Der Mensch vor Gott – Forschungen zum Menschenbild in Bibel, antiken Judentum und Koran. Festschrift für Herrmann Lichtenberger zum 60. Geburtstag* (Neukirchener: Neukirchen, 2003), pp. 213–228.

<sup>13</sup> H. St. J. Thackeray, “The Greek Translators of the Four Books of Kings,” *JTS* 8 (1906–1907), pp. 262–278 (263).

<sup>14</sup> Barthélemy, *Devanciers*, p. 141.

<sup>15</sup> That is the *kaige*-Th recension. Shenkel started section bg at 2 Sam 10:1, and not at 11:2, on the basis of textual evidence rather than the contents of the chapters.

<sup>16</sup> J.D. Shenkel, *Chronology and Textual Development in the Greek Text of Kings* (HSM 1; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 118.

order of the preceding two chapters 20 and 21.<sup>17</sup> Neither of these theories is convincing, I suggest.

Since previous theories could not explain adequately the alternation of unrevised and revised sections in the manuscripts of the LXX, I suggest that this alternation derived from a purely mechanical factor.<sup>18</sup> The OG translation of Jewish Scriptures required many scrolls, and large books like Samuel-Kings would have been included in several scrolls.<sup>19</sup> We suggest that the archetype of the manuscripts of the Greek 1–4 Kingdoms was composed of scrolls consisting of different translation types,<sup>20</sup> probably because the compiler of the archetype was unable to obtain scrolls of the same nature, or was unaware of their mixture.

Likewise, the differences in translation character between the two parts of the LXX of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1–28; Jeremiah 29–Bar 3:8 according to the LXX) may have been caused by the juxtaposition of two scrolls of a different nature.<sup>21</sup> The first scroll contained the OG translation, while the second one was revisional. The division point between the two types occurred exactly in the middle of the book according to the sequence of the chapters in the LXX. Similar differences have been spotted between the three segments of Ezekiel (chapters 1–27; 28–39; 40–48).<sup>22</sup> The differences between the various parts of these prophetic books are not as dramatic as in the case of 1–4 Kingdoms, yet they are very clear and can only be explained by technical factors such as the juxtaposition of scrolls of a different nature.

<sup>17</sup> Barthélemy, *Devanciers*, 42; Shenkel, *Chronology*, 63.

<sup>18</sup> See my doctoral dissertation: *The Septuagint Translation of Jeremiah and Baruch: A Discussion of an Early Revision of Jeremiah 29–52 and Baruch 1:1–3:8* (HSM 8; Missoula, Mont. 1976).

<sup>19</sup> This assumption is not supported by Qumran evidence for Hebrew scrolls except for the Torah scrolls. See E. Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (STDJ 54; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2004), p. 181.

<sup>20</sup> 2 Samuel (Kingdoms) was contained in two different scrolls (2 Sam 1:1–10:1; 2 Sam 10:2–1 Kgs 2:11).

<sup>21</sup> See n. 14. Our view was not accepted by S. Soderlund, *The Greek Text of Jeremiah: A Revised Hypothesis* (JSOTS 47; Sheffield, 1985), pp. 153–192 on which see the review by J.G. Janzen, “A Critique of Sven Soderlund’s *The Greek Text of Jeremiah: A Revised Hypothesis*,” *BIOSCS* 22 (1989), pp. 16–47; T.S.L. Michael, “Bisectioning of Greek Jeremiah: A Problem to Be Revisited?” *BIOSCS* 39 (2006), pp. 93–104.

<sup>22</sup> See H. St. James Thackeray, “The Greek Translators of Ezekiel,” *JTS* 4 (1902–1903), pp. 398–411; Tov, *Jeremiah and Baruch*, 135–51. On the other hand, P.D.M. Turner, *The Septuagint Version of Chapters i–xxxix of the Book of Ezekiel*. Diss. Oxford University, 1970 believes in the unity of the translation.

The juxtaposition of different scrolls of Samuel–Kings, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel would have occurred in the archetype of the collection of Greek sacred writings, probably in the last century BCE or the first century CE.<sup>23</sup> Also, in the classical world, large compositions were subdivided into independent units (scrolls), often regardless of their content.<sup>24</sup>

(3) Why do Greek manuscripts sometimes differ from book to book? For example, codex Vaticanus preserves the best pre-Hexaplaric text in all Scripture books, while in Isaiah it contains a Hexaplaric text.<sup>25</sup> This scribe, like other ones, must have copied from scrolls of a different type.

(4) A related issue: *Why do the various translation units display different types of Hebrew Vorlagen?* Some of the Greek books reflect a text very close to MT, as in the case of the *kaige*-Th sections in Kingdoms. On the other hand, the *Vorlage* of the Greek text of some books differed much from MT. I refer, for example, to the short texts underlying the Greek Jeremiah, Ezekiel and 1 Samuel 16–18. Additional large differences are visible between the MT and LXX of Joshua and Proverbs, Esther and Daniel.<sup>26</sup> The reason for these differences is that different individuals translated the books of Greek Scripture at different times from diverse Hebrew scrolls that reflect different stages in the development of the Hebrew books.

The question at stake is not the divergence itself between the Greek and Hebrew books, but rather why these divergences appear in cer-

<sup>23</sup> See Tov, *Jeremiah and Baruch*, 161–8.

<sup>24</sup> See Th. Birt, *Das antike Buchwesen in seinem Verhältniss zur Litteratur* (Berlin, 1882; repr. Aalen: Scientia, 1971), pp. 131–140; F.W. Hall, *A Companion to Classical Studies* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), pp. 7–8; F.G. Kenyon, “Book Divisions in Greek and Latin Literature,” in: H.M. Lydenberg and A. Keogh (eds.), *William Warner Bishop: A Tribute* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), pp. 63–76 (especially 73–74); idem, *Books and Readers in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1951), pp. 64–70; J. van Sickle, “The Book-Roll and Some Conventions of the Poetic Books,” *Arethusa* 13 (1980), pp. 5–42; H.Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven, Conn. and London: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 42–66.

<sup>25</sup> See J. Ziegler, *Isaias, Septuaginta, Vetus Testamentum graecum auctoritate Academiae Litterarum göttingensis editum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), pp. 38–40.

<sup>26</sup> For a description, see my study “The Nature of the Large-Scale Differences between the LXX and MT S T V, Compared with Similar Evidence in Other Sources,” in: A. Schenker (ed.), *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible. The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuaginta Reconsidered* (SCS 52; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 2003), pp. 121–144.

tain books and not in others. Why does the LXX reflect a short text in Jeremiah and Ezekiel and not in its neighbor, Isaiah? Why does the LXX differ so much from MT in Joshua and not in its neighbor Judges? Why does the Greek text of Proverbs differ so much recensionally from MT,<sup>27</sup> and not in Psalms or Job. And why does the LXX of Exodus 35–40 differ so much from MT, more so than in any other section of the Torah? In all these cases, we cannot give sound replies. It may be that during the last stage of the development of Hebrew Scripture, the text changed more in these books than in others. But it is also possible that the choice of source text made by the ancient translators was often coincidental. Was it a coincidence that a short Hebrew text like 4QJer<sup>b,d</sup> was chosen for the Greek translation, and not a scroll of the type of 4QJer<sup>a,c</sup> that is very much similar to MT? I believe that in some cases coincidence was involved. Thus, the translator of the Greek Isaiah chose a manuscript that was close to MT, but possibly at the time of the translation there also existed scrolls of Isaiah that deviated somewhat or much from MT. Such Hebrew scrolls, unknown to us, may have been beyond the reach of the translator of this book. At the same time, I do believe that in some cases the *Vorlage* of the LXX reflects an earlier stage than the archetype of MT.<sup>28</sup> As a result, we will never know how much coincidence was involved in the choice of Hebrew manuscripts by the Greek translators.

Summarizing this paragraph, we note that much coincidence was involved in the creation of the archetype by combining scrolls of various types and in the creation of the LXX based on different types of Hebrew scrolls.

<sup>27</sup> I believe that the LXX's large deviations reflect a recensionally different book. See my paper "Recensional Differences between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint of Proverbs," in: H.W. Attridge et al. (eds.), *Of Scribes and Scrolls, Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins Presented to John Strugnell on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday* (College Theology Society Resources in Religion 5; Lanham, Maryland/New York/London: The College Theology Society University Press of America, 1990), pp. 43–56. Revised version: *The Greek and Hebrew Bible – Collected Essays on the Septuagint* (VTS 72; Leiden/ Boston/Cologne: Brill, 1999), pp. 419–31.

<sup>28</sup> See the study mentioned in n. 26.

## II. PESHITTA

The diversity of the translation units in the Peshitta resembles that of the LXX. The Christian community of the East created the Syriac translations based on Jewish sources,<sup>29</sup> and chose the books of the Peshitta as their sacred writings. These translation units derived from different circles, as shown in detail by Bloch and Weitzman,<sup>30</sup> although the discrepancies between them are smaller than in the case of the LXX.

## III. TARGUMIM

We are faced with several different Targumim for the Torah, three for Esther, two for Job, as well as single ones for the Prophets and other Writings. These translations vary considerably, ranging from fairly literal to extremely paraphrastic, the latter containing collections of midrashim (Esther, Canticles). However, there is a misleading aspect in comparing the variety of the Targumim with that of the LXX and Peshitta since the latter two provide single translations for each biblical book, while the Targumim present us with multiple parallel translations of a different nature. Therefore, when comparing Targumim of

<sup>29</sup> Some scholars have shown that this translation contains a distinct substratum of Jewish exegesis, especially in the Torah. Y. Maori, *The Peshitta Version of the Pentateuch and Early Jewish Exegesis* (Hebrew; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1995) claimed that the translation derived from Jewish-Rabbinic circles. Likewise, M.P. Weitzman, *The Syriac Version of the Old Testament: An Introduction* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 56; Cambridge, 1999) suggested that the Peshitta derived from Jewish non-Rabbinic circles. Other scholars claimed that the translation originated within the Christian community; the evidence is reviewed in detail by P.B. Dirksen, "The Old Testament Peshitta," in: M.J. Mulder (ed.), *Mikra, Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (CRINT, Section Two, Vol. 1; Assen-Maastricht/Philadelphia, 1988), pp. 255–297 (295), who concludes that "no decisive arguments for either Christian or Jewish authorship have been advanced."

<sup>30</sup> J. Bloch, "The Authorship of the Peshitta," *AJSLL* 34–35 (1917–1919), pp. 215–223; Weitzman, *The Syriac Version*, 164–205: "In the Writings, the profiles vary sufficiently to suggest that almost every book has its own translator" (p. 186). "P has been shown to be the work of different translators; the number perhaps lies in the region of fifteen. This diversity, however, is only part of the picture. There is also a network of linking features which unite all the translators, and show them to have been working on the same greater project" (p. 203). "It would be better to view P as the work of a number of different translators, who nevertheless considered themselves colleagues in a single school" (p. 205).

the same Scripture book, discrepancies between them are acceptable, because they were created by different individuals.

#### IV. MT

The element of coincidence in the creation of the archetype of MT is slighter than in the case of the mentioned translations because the MT collection was more homogeneous and carefully transmitted than the collections of authoritative writings in translation. Nevertheless, we suggest that also the archetype of MT displays some internal discrepancies that were created by the juxtaposition of scrolls of a different nature. These discrepancies come to light in (a) the textual idiosyncrasies of the book of Samuel, (b) the special nature of the Elohist Psalter, and (c) the special nature of Jeremiah 27–29.

##### a. *Textual Idiosyncrasies of the Book of Samuel*

The frequently corrupt nature of the MT of Samuel (as compared with the LXX and 4QSam<sup>a</sup>) presents a distinct textual feature. Examples have been provided by a long list of commentators from O. Thenius<sup>31</sup> and J. Wellhausen<sup>32</sup> in the nineteenth century to McCarter<sup>33</sup> and Cross-Parry-Saley<sup>34</sup> in modern times, the latter referring especially to 4QSam<sup>a</sup>. All these scholars note the many corruptions in MT, but they do not try to explain this situation other than by assuming a faulty scribe. However, we suggest that the book of Samuel in MT was coincidentally more corrupt than the other books, while at the same time this book reflected several theological idiosyncrasies:

<sup>31</sup> O. Thenius, *Die Bücher Samuels* (KEH 4; Leipzig: Weidmann'sche Buchhandlung, 1842) xxviii–xxix.

<sup>32</sup> *Der Text der Bücher Samuelis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1871) 16. For a summary of these views, see A. van der Kooij, "De tekst van Samuel en het tekstkritisch onderzoek," *NTT* 36 (1982), pp. 177–204.

<sup>33</sup> P.K. McCarter, Jr., *I Samuel, II Samuel* (AB; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1980, 1984).

<sup>34</sup> F.M. Cross, D.W. Parry, R. Saley, E. Ulrich, *Qumran Cave 4.XII: 1–2 Samuel* (DJD XVII; Oxford: Clarendon, 2005). The statistics of these corruptions are summarized in F.M. Cross and R.J. Saley, "A Statistical Analysis of the Textual Character of 4QSamuel<sup>a</sup>," *DSD* 13 (2006), pp. 46–54.

a. 1–2 Samuel contains many theophoric names originally consisting of *Baal* which were replaced with *boshet*, “shame.”<sup>35</sup> These changes form a subgroup of so-called nomistic corrections, that is, changes made in accord with the *Torah* (*nomos*).<sup>36</sup>

b. MT inserted various theological changes in the presumably earlier text of the LXX and 4QSam<sup>a</sup> of 1 Samuel 1–2<sup>37</sup> Likewise, the text common to MT and 4QSam<sup>a</sup> in 1 Sam 2:9a, lacking in the LXX, represents a theological elaboration on the main theme of the Song of Hannah.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> For an analysis, see my *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2d rev. ed.; Minneapolis and Assen: Fortress Press/Royal Van Gorcum, 2001), pp. 267–268. For a different view, see M. Tsevat, “Ishboshet and Congeners, The Names and Their Study,” *HUCA* 46 (1975), pp. 71–87; S. Schorch, “Baal oder Boschet? Ein umstrittenes theophores Element zwischen Religions- und Textgeschichte,” *ZAW* 112 (2000), pp. 598–611. These names may be compared with parallels in Chronicles. Even though Chronicles was composed after Samuel, its text often preserves earlier textual traditions. Therefore, this phenomenon pertains to the scribe(s) rather than to the author of the biblical books.

<sup>36</sup> These changes have been described by A. Rofé with examples from Samuel in its LXX and 4QSam<sup>a</sup> versions, including one example from MT: A. Rofé, “The Nomistic Correction in Biblical Manuscripts and Its Occurrence in 4QSam<sup>a</sup>,” *RevQ* 14 (1989), pp. 247–254; idem, “The Piety of the Torah-Disciples at the Winding-up of the Hebrew Bible: Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2; Isa. 59:21,” in: H. Merklein et al. (eds.), *Bibel in jüdischer und christlicher Tradition—Festschrift Johann Maier* (Frankfurt a. M., 1993), pp. 78–85. For earlier analyses, see I.L. Seeligmann, “Researches into the Criticism of the Masoretic Text of the Bible,” *Tarbiz* 25 (1956), pp. 118–139 (Heb. with Eng. summ.) – revised version in: M. Weinfeld (ed.), *A Biblical Studies Reader* 1 (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1979), pp. 255–278; idem, “Indications of Editorial Alteration and Adaptation in the Massoretic Text and the Septuagint,” *VT* 11 (1961), pp. 201–221. Similar examples from the LXX of Joshua were analyzed by L. Mazon, “A Nomistic Re-working of the Jericho Conquest Narrative Reflected in LXX to Joshua 6:1–20,” *Textus* 18 (1995), pp. 47–62.

<sup>37</sup> The main difference between MT on the one hand and the LXX and 4QSam<sup>a</sup> on the other is that in certain episodes in the latter two texts, Hannah acts as the main character, while in MT there are two main characters, Hannah and Elkanah. The impression is created that MT did not wish to assign certain actions to Hannah since she was a woman, as it would not have been appropriate for a woman to have played such a central role, especially not in the cult (see 1:23, 24, 25, 28; 2:11). MT ascribed actions to Elkanah that in an earlier version had been ascribed to Hannah. Also Wellhausen, *Samuel*, 42 prefers the reading of the LXX in 1:28, arguing that it would not make sense for the Greek text to suppress the involvement of Elkanah, which has been mentioned in detail in v 24. Especially difficult is 2:11 in MT: since, at this juncture, Hannah should be considered the main character, it is strange that nothing is said in this verse about her movements. It is thus likely that some statements about Elkanah replaced an earlier story.

<sup>38</sup> That addition to the original text reinterprets in a certain way the examples of the changes in the fate of the individual given in vv 4–8. According to this reinterpretation, the sudden changes described in those verses do not exemplify the strength of God, but the power of loyalty to God. It is the person who is loyal to God who will experience an improvement in his condition, and it is the wicked (that is, the

g. The MT of Samuel shows additional signs of theological reworking.<sup>39</sup>

Samuel holds a special place in MT as shown by the mentioned unrelated features, its frequently corrupt nature and its theological tendencies. The scroll that was included in the archetype of MT coincidentally was somewhat corrupt. However, its other features were not coincidental, since MT's theological changes characterized the persons who created the last stage of that book. The theological editing was probably inserted in a somewhat corrupt scroll before it was included in the collection of sacred writings, because otherwise we do not know why Samuel underwent more extensive theological editing in MT than the average biblical book, while this book does not provide more occasions for such changes than other books.

#### b. *The Special Position of the Elohistc Psalter*

The background of the special status of the second and the greater part of the third book of Psalms has not been clarified. In these two Psalter books, *elohim* is the dominant divine name, while in the other three Psalter books *YHWH* is the main appellation for God.<sup>40</sup> This pertains to Psalms 42–72 (book 2) and Psalms 73–89 (book 3).<sup>41</sup> The differences are most clearly visible in the parallel Psalms 14 and 53 where the

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ones who are not loyal to God) who will experience a deterioration in his condition. This reinterpretation found in MT and 4QSam<sup>a</sup> of v 9a was probably added after the completion of the MT text of the Song. For an understanding of the background of this verse, it is important to note that the specific use of  $\text{אשׁר}$ , “wicked,” as describing persons who are disloyal to God, occurs mainly in Ezekiel, Psalms and the Wisdom literature. It was the intention of the person who added v 9a that the contents of this verse would be applied to vv 4–8.

<sup>39</sup> For example, 1 Sam 2:22 MT as opposed to the LXX and 4QSam<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>40</sup> The following statistics are provided by O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament, An Introduction* (New York/Evanston, 1965), p. 449: Psalms 42–83: *YHWH* 43, *elohim* 200; remainder of the Psalter: *elohim* 29, *YHWH* 642 (in Psalms 84–89 *YHWH* 31, *elohim* 7).

<sup>41</sup> Probably Psalms 84–89, all or in part, have not been submitted to this revision (see n. 40). However, according to Gese, Psalm 84 belongs to the Elohistc Psalter: H. Gese, “Die Entstehung der Büchereinteilung des Psalters,” in idem, *Vom Sinai zum Zion: Alttestamentliche Beiträge zur biblischen Theologie* (Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie 64; München: Kaiser, 1974), pp. 159–167 (162). According to F. Brown, S.R. Driver and C.A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 44, Psalms 84–85 are Elohistc, and according to L. Joffe, “The Elohistc Psalter: What, How, and Why?,” *SJOT* 15 (2001), pp. 142–169 (169) all these Psalms (84–89) contained the Elohistc Psalter. According to H.-J. Kraus, *Psalmen I* (Neukirchen-Vluyn; Neukirchener Verlag, 1966) xvi these six Psalms were added to the Elohistc Psalter after that had been completed.

formulation of Ps 53:3–7 strongly suggests that the Elohist Psalter replaced the earlier *YHWH* with *elohim*.<sup>42</sup> The usual explanation given for the wording of the Elohist Psalter is the shunning away from the use of the Tetragrammaton,<sup>43</sup> a feature that is also noticeable in various scribal practices in the Qumran scrolls.<sup>44</sup> The replacement of *YHWH* in the Elohist Psalms was not complete, however, since forty-three occurrences of that name were overlooked by the reviser. This oversight caused Goulder to doubt the very assumption of revisional activity,<sup>45</sup> but no revisional activity in the realm of Hebrew Scripture was ever consistent. Joffe has reviewed the various alternative explanations for the evidence.<sup>46</sup> For example, some scholars emphasize that not only the predominance of *elohim* in the Elohist Psalter needs to be explained, but also that of *YHWH* in the other segments.<sup>47</sup> However, there is nothing unusual in the predominance of the name *YHWH* in the Psalms or any other book of Hebrew Scripture since that was the main name of Israel's God.<sup>48</sup> According to Joffe, this editorial process "was unrelated to and therefore predates any hesitation to pronounce the Tetragrammaton."<sup>49</sup>

We do not know at which stage the second and third books of the Psalter were submitted to a revision of the divine name, and we do not understand why this reviser would have limited himself to these two books. Therefore, these changes must have been inserted at an early

<sup>42</sup> Cf. 14:2, 4, 7 // 53:3, 5, 7 and 40:14a, 17 // 70:2a, 5. Note also the phrase אֱלֹהֵיךָ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי in 43:4; 45:8; 50:7 as well as Psalm 82:1 "God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment" (NRSV) where we would have expected *YHWH* in the first stich.

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, R. Kittel, *Die Psalmen* (KAT; Leipzig: Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1914), p. xxii.

<sup>44</sup> See Tov, *Scribal Practices*, pp. 218–221.

<sup>45</sup> M.D. Goulder, *The Psalms of the Sons of Korah* (JSOTS 20; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982), p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> Joffe, "Elohistic Psalter"; see also *eadem*, "The Answer to the Meaning of Life, the Universe and the Elohist Psalter," *JSOT* 27(2002), pp. 223–235.

<sup>47</sup> G.H. Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (SBLDS 76; Chico, Ca., 1985), pp. 196–197: "[t]he really striking feature of these data is not so much the reduced occurrence of the name *YHWH* in the 'Elohistic Psalter' as it is the *almost complete elimination* of *elohim* as a designation for the God of Israel elsewhere."

<sup>48</sup> Besides, the book of Psalms is a book of artistic creations, and the predominance of *YHWH* as compared with *elohim* in most Psalms needs no explanation. Joffe, "Elohistic Psalter," 165 discards these alternative explanations in detail, concluding that "[a]ll the evidence presented points toward the Elohist Psalter being the result of a highly skilled editorial process."

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 165–6.

stage, before these two books were combined with the other three collections to form the present book of Psalms.<sup>50</sup> We suggest that when the archetype of this book was composed, the five books of the Psalter were contained in five different scrolls, and some or all of these scrolls had undergone an Elohist revision. It is possible that only the second and third books were revised; alternatively, all five books may have been revised. In any event, by coincidence two revised and three unrevised scrolls were juxtaposed in the master copy of the Psalter. This revision took place at an early date, possibly before the creation of MT, since it is presupposed by all ancient sources. Among other things, the Greek translation rather consistently distinguished between the equivalents *elohim-theos* and *YHWH-kyrios*. The Qumran copies of the Psalter are based on the MT-form of the Psalter since the Elohist Psalms do not appear *seriatim* but are dispersed in the Qumran Psalters in various sequences.<sup>51</sup>

The revision by the Elohist reviser involved relatively small changes; there is no evidence that this reviser made any changes beyond those relating to the divine name. That the Elohist Psalter existed at one time independently can be seen from its duplication of a Psalm also included in the first book (Psalms 14 // 53).

### c. *The Special Position of Jeremiah 27–29*

Chapters 27–29 of Jeremiah in MT differ rather consistently from the remainder of Jeremiah in three groups of small details:

1. The name of the king of Babylon is spelled in the MT of chapters 27–29 in its later form, *Nebuchadnezzar* (except for 29:21 *Nebuchadrezzar*),<sup>52</sup> while in the remainder of the book it occurs in its original form, *Nebuchadrezzar*.<sup>53</sup> Since the name of the king is lacking in all its occurrences in these chapters in the LXX (as well as often

<sup>50</sup> Thus also A. Weiser, *The Psalms – A Commentary* (London: SCM Press, 1962), p. 99: “If the whole Psalter had been assembled when this Elohist revision was carried out, it would be incomprehensible why that action was confined to this group of Psalms.” A similar idea was suggested by J. Ben-Dov in *Shnaton* 17 (2007), p. 344 in a review of F.L. Hossfeld, *Psalms 2* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, Fortress: 2005).

<sup>51</sup> For details, see the list in P.W. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls & the Book of Psalms* (STDJ 17; Leiden/New York/Cologne: Brill, 1997), pp. 257–264. On the other hand, in MasPs<sup>a</sup>, the Psalms of the Elohist Psalter appear in the MT sequence.

<sup>52</sup> Eight times. Elsewhere, this form occurs in 2 Kings (6 x), Esther (1 x), Daniel (21 x), Ezra-Nehemiah (6 x), Chronicles (5 x).

<sup>53</sup> Twenty-nine times. This form also occurs in Ezekiel (4 x).

elsewhere in the Greek version), these added names in MT of chapters 27–29 may be recognized as a linguistically later layer.<sup>54</sup>

2. Most theophoric names in Jeremiah are of the long type, for example, *Yirmeyahu* (241 x altogether). The shorter theophoric names ending with *-yah* form a minority in the book (73 x).<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, in chapters 27–29 the short forms prevail with 35 instances<sup>56</sup> as opposed to 8 long forms.<sup>57</sup> These shortened forms are a sign of Late Hebrew, and accordingly their frequency rises in Chronicles and in the Qumran scrolls.<sup>58</sup> The present MT form of these chapters thus is later than that of the other chapters.<sup>59</sup>

3. While in the book as a whole the short title “Jeremiah” prevails,<sup>60</sup> in chapters 27–29 the long formula “Jeremiah the prophet” appears eight times in MT as opposed to 3 occurrences of the short formula.<sup>61</sup> With its short formulas in chapters 27–29,<sup>62</sup> the LXX holds a middle course, but is less close to the practice of MT in these chapters than in

<sup>54</sup> For an analysis of other secondary elements of the MT layer not represented in the LXX, see my studies “Exegetical Notes on the Hebrew Vorlage of the LXX of Jeremiah 27 (34),” *ZAW* 91 (1979), pp. 73–93. Revised version: *The Greek and Hebrew Bible* (1999), pp. 315–331; “The Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah in the Light of Its Textual History,” in: J.H. Tigay (ed.), *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 211–237. Revised version: *The Greek and Hebrew Bible* (1999), pp. 363–384; “The Characterization of the Additional Layer of the Masoretic Text of Jeremiah,” in: B.A. Levine et al. (eds.), *Frank Moore Cross Volume* (EI 26, Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1999), pp. 55–63. See also H.-J. Stipp, *Das Masoretische und alexandrinische Sondergut des Jeremiabuches, Textgeschichtlicher Rang, Eigenarten, Triebkräfte* (OBO 136, Freiburg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994).

<sup>55</sup> Gedalyah 4x, Gemariah 1x, Habaziniyah 1x, Hananyah 10x, Hilkiyah 1x, Hoshaiyah 2x, Jaazaniah 1x, Jeconiah 3x, Irijah 2x, Kolaiah 1x, Maaseiah 4x, Neriah 7x, Nethaniah 12x, Zephaniah 4x, Seraiah 5x, Shelemiah 2x, Shemaiah 3x, Shephatiah 1x, Yirmeyah 9x. These figures include chapters 27–29.

<sup>56</sup> Gemariah 29:3; Hananiah 28:1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 15, 17; Hilkiyah 29:3; Jeconiah 27:20, 28:4, 29:2; Kolaiah 29:21; Maaseiah 29:21, 25; Shemaiah 29:31, 31, 32; Zedekiah 27:12, 28:1, 29:3; Zephaniah 29:25, 29; Yirmeyah 27:1; 28:5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 12, 15; 29:1.

<sup>57</sup> Shema'yahu 29:24; Yirmeyahu 29:27, 29, 30; Yoshiyahu 27:1; Zidkiyahu 27:3, 29:21, 22.

<sup>58</sup> See Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (IQIs<sup>a</sup>)* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 4–5.

<sup>59</sup> As far as we can tell, the transcriptions in the LXX does not distinguish between the long and short forms (see Yirmeyah/Yirmeyahu, Hananiah/Hananyahu).

<sup>60</sup> Ninety-one times as opposed to 23 occurrences of the long formula “Jeremiah the prophet.”

<sup>61</sup> 28:12; 29:27, 30.

<sup>62</sup> 28:5, 6, 10, 11, 15; 29:1, 29. In 28:12, the LXX reflects a different formulation.

the rest of the book. Elsewhere, the LXX often lacks the long formula<sup>63</sup> or has the short formula.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, in these chapters, the long phrase “Hananiah the prophet” prevails in MT as opposed to the short phrase in the LXX.<sup>65</sup>

Chapters 27–29 in MT thus differ from the remainder of the book in small details that were presumably changed or added at a late stage in the development of the book. These chapters deal with the same interconnected themes: Jeremiah’s polemic against the false prophets and the idea that Babylon cannot be overthrown. The assumption that these three chapters were once contained in a small scroll is therefore inescapable.<sup>66</sup> By implication, the complete book of Jeremiah was originally contained in several small scrolls.<sup>67</sup> Only at the very last stage were the contents of these small scrolls transferred to one or two large scrolls, and at that stage the little scroll containing chapters 27–29 coincidentally reflected a reality of the book different from that of the other chapters. This process must have happened at a relatively late stage in the development of the book since these chapters contain different literary sources (chapter 27 is a Dtr reworking of the prophet’s own words [sources A + C], while chapters 28 and 29 contain the biographer’s account [source B]).<sup>68</sup> We somehow have to combine the assumption of the two editions (editions I and II) of Jeremiah, and that of the special character of chapters 27–29 in MT.<sup>69</sup> It seems to us that the editor of MT (edition II) took for chapters 27–29 a little scroll that coincidentally differed from the scrolls of the other chapters of Jeremiah. Alternatively, that little scroll underwent a different fate in the course of the transmission.

<sup>63</sup> 20:2; 25:2; 38:9; 46:1; 47:1; 49:34; 50:1.

<sup>64</sup> 32:2, 34:6, 36:8, 26; 37:2, 3, 6, 13; 42:4; 46:13. Only in 42:2; 43:6; 45:1; 51:59 do both texts have the long formula. For comparative tables, see J.G. Janzen, *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah* (HSM 6; Cambridge, Mass.: 1973), pp. 145–148.

<sup>65</sup> 28:5, 10, 12, 15, 17. The full phrase “Hananiah son of Azur the prophet” occurs in both texts at the beginning of the story (28:1).

<sup>66</sup> The separate circulation of these three chapters has been posited by other scholars. See N. Sarna, “The Abortive Insurrection in Zedekiah’s Day (Jer 27–29),” in: M. Haran (ed.), *H.L. Ginsberg Volume* (EI 14; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1978), pp. 89\*–96\* (92\*–93\*) with earlier literature; B. Sommer, “New Light on the Composition of Jeremiah,” *CBQ* 61 (1999), pp. 646–666.

<sup>67</sup> This is not an unusual assumption in view of the writing of part of the book in a single scroll according to chapter 36.

<sup>68</sup> See W. Rudolph, *Jeremia* (HAT; 2nd edition; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1958), p. 158.

<sup>69</sup> See the studies mentioned in n. 54.

## V. SUMMARY

We set out to test our working hypothesis according to which the collections of authoritative Scripture, in Hebrew and translation, are textually heterogeneous because their contents were often not planned in the modern sense of the word. The major reason for this diversity is connected to the fact that the collections were composed from single scrolls of a different nature and background. We attempted to base this assumption on various examples relating to the LXX, Peshitta, and MT. Also the Qumran corpus is heterogeneous, but that collection did not contain a sealed corpus of authoritative writings so that its heterogeneity is not reflected in any one final group of writings. Lack of planning should be expected in antiquity, but since several collections of ancient Scripture became the basis for Judaism and various Christian denominations, we have to delve into their prehistory. MT has become the basis for Judaism. It is a rather good text, but we cannot close our eyes to the fact that at an earlier time the collection now named MT was composed from scrolls of a different nature. The LXX translation has become hallowed Scripture within Christianity, but we should realize that the collection of ancient Jewish Greek Scripture formed a very diverse and unplanned collection. From a *textual* point of view one could even say that the fact that this specific group of Greek translations, and not another, has become Christian Scripture is coincidental. For example, had the Greek translators found a different form of Daniel and Esther, without the so-called Additions, the Christian canon would have been different. Coincidence was an important factor in the compilation of the archetypes of the collections, and this factor has to be taken seriously into consideration. Textual transmission is likewise plagued by coincidence, as are all archeological excavations.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> See A. Millard, "Only Fragments from the Past: The Role of Accident in Our Knowledge of the Ancient Near East," in: P. Bienkowski et al. (eds.), *Writing and Ancient Near Eastern Society, Papers in Honor of Alan R. Millard* (London/London: T & T Clark, 2005), pp. 301–319.

