HERMENEUTICS OF TEXT CRITICISM

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Today, as not since the seventeenth century perhaps, biblical text critics and translators are finding their consciousness raised about the hermeneutics operative in their work. By hermeneutics is meant conscious understanding of what the nature, or ontology, of the Bible is, and the effect text critical decisions have in view of that understanding. In post-modern terms one realizes that different hermeneutics are operative according to what one, or one’s identity community, believes or thinks the text actually is; and different communities, including schools of thought, may hold quite different views about the nature of the text.

It was when Martin Luther started translating Hebrew biblical texts in 1523 that he began to realize the problems involved in the principle of sola scriptura. Out of wrestling with the text critical problems that have to be addressed before wrestling with the equally difficult problems in rendering a responsible translation of the textual readings chosen, Luther came up with the hermeneutic principle of res et argumentum. Words, he said, must be in the service of meaning and not meaning in the service of words.¹

Res for Luther was the gospel of Jesus Christ, while argumentum had three themes, oeconomia, politia and ecclesia. If a passage did not accord with ecclesia, then it belonged to the category of either the politics or the economy of the time from which the text arose. Where there was multivacency in a word or text, even after grammar had been fully respected, one chose the possibility which accorded with the res. Wherever the rabbis gave a meaning not in accord with the res, one rejected it; and if the

translator could work through the rules of grammar or with vowel points to make a passage accord with the res, he was to do so. Thus Luther's hermeneutic led eventually to the denigration of the authenticity of vowel points and to the long debate which would endure through the eighteenth century, at least, about the authority of vowel points. Luther was convinced that the vocalization of the consonantal text was a Masoretic invention designed in part to thwart 'original' readings favorable to New Testament understandings of them.

With some variations among the various reformers, Luther's hermeneutic became the attitude held by most Christian scholars toward the text of the Hebrew Bible. This eventually led the young Oxford scholar, Benjamin Kennicott, inspired in part by Houbigant, to make his collations in the latter half of the eighteenth century without regard, for the most part, to vowel pointing. As Luther continued his program of translation, especially in the years 1529 to 1541, he came to view some texts as inherently corrupt. A result of Luther's hermeneutic may be seen in the Latin translation of the Bible in 1551 by Sebastien Chatillon (Castalio, Castellio); wherever the Hebrew seemed to Chatillon corrupt he retroverted a Hebrew text from Greek or Latin witnesses, or simply emended by conjecture.

Modern text criticism, as practiced by many scholars until recently, was thereby launched. Luther's attitude toward Masoretic vocalization, and even his view of the extent of corruption in transmission of the text, have persisted into modern scholarship long after Luther's basically Christian hermeneutic was abandoned. Chatillon's conjectures were followed in nine specific textual cases by Louis Cappel (Cappelus), sixteen by Charles Francois Houbigant, and some also by Wellhausen. In most cases those indebted to Chatillon did not acknowledge the debt but simply perpetuated the new reading; and another aspect of modern text criticism was initiated: perpetuating unattributed conjectural readings, and even errors in actual readings, from one apparatus to another as though they had somehow become a part of the textual tradition.

The debates precipitated by Luther's hermeneutic, as well as his attitudes toward the textual situation of the First Testament, would continue to flare up from time to time, especially into the eighteenth century but also from time to time until recently. By the time of Johann David Michaelis in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the concept of text criticism and its methods were fairly well set for two centuries

to come. Text criticism had as its task to establish a Hebrew text as close to what could be thought the original as possible, but without regard to a *res* in either the Second Testament or in non-Christian Jewish literature. The hermeneutic of Louis Cappelus in his seventeenth century *Critica Sacra* was by Michaelis’ time adopted in the field generally: one should study Scripture as one would any ancient secular literature, that is, one should work toward establishing a text which reflected the thought of the original author as closely as possible, without regard to a *sensus plenior* or a “messianic second sense.” Clearly the shift in hermeneutics enunciated by Luther had been critically modified, though not abandoned.

The difference was in the fact that most Christian text critics, whether they cited him or not, had clearly heard Baruch Spinoza’s call of 1670 to write a history of formation of the biblical text — because therein only, he insisted, would the truth of the Bible be found, namely in the original thoughts and intentions of ancient biblical authors. Confidence in scholarly ability to reconstruct the history of formation of the biblical text, and with it authorial intentionality (‘truth’), became an integral part of ‘modern’ modes of thought. Biblical ‘higher criticism’ as a modern discipline was thereby launched.

Before the discovery of the Judaean Desert Scrolls, which have by now affected nearly every aspect of text criticism, the basic scholarly hermeneutic at work in text criticism had begun to come under scrutiny. The so-called history of the formation of the text was constantly under revision, with the intentions of ancient biblical authors varying according to the scholar, or the school of thought of which he or she was a part, or on external information concerning a historical period or site. One scholar’s or one school’s attitude or conviction about what a biblical author “surely intended” would differ considerably from that of another, and it was that attitude or hermeneutic which influenced the way by which a textual or versional witness was selected, or a conjecture proposed. Every trident of the text, past and present, brings his or her hermeneutics to the text. In effect, there has not been a clear differentiation between higher and lower criticism, that is, between a history

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of the formation of texts and a history of the transmission of texts. The former has
tended to overshadow the latter, if not overwhelm it. There can be little question
that exegesis plays an important though limited part in text criticism, but by the
beginning of this century it had begun to dominate it.

The attempts at reform of BHS over against BHK, even by some of the same
editors, reflected the newer more sober attitude. The number of outright conjectures
suggested in the apparatuses was considerably reduced. And with the introduction
of Gerard Weil’s massora there was in evidence a growing respect for the text of
Leningradensis, and of the Tiberian Ben Asher traditions, but still almost total
disregard of the te’amim, particularly in the parsing of poetry, as may be seen in the
mise en page of anything construed to be poetry.5

The history of transmission of the text has been dominated in this century by the
debate between Kahle and de Lagarde, and whether that history demonstrated a
move from the one to the many (de Lagarde) or from the many to the one (Kahle).
Early decisions based on the plurality of text forms, particularly from Qumran
Cave 4, were based on the Kahle-Lagarde debate; one or the other was declared to
have been right.6 But by the late 1960s the scene had considerably changed: the
history of transmission of the text of the First Testament was being reviewed,
revised and rewritten, so that the two current principal First Testament text-critical
projects are based firmly on that revision, the Hebrew University Bible Project and
the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project of the United Bible Societies.

Two Projects

The Hebrew University Bible Project was instigated by the recovery of Aleppensis
in 1948, but also in part by the recovery of Qumran Cave 1 at about the same time,
the period of the Israeli War of Independence. Moshe Goshen-Gottstein, Shemaryahu
Talmon and Chaim Rabin formed the HUBP and launched the journal, Textus.7

5The whole issue of constraints entered into a text needs full discussion. Every presentation
of a text, including word spacing, open and closed line spacing, paragraph division, vowels,
accents, superscriptions, paragraph headings, titles, stichometric arrangements, etc., whether
in antiquity or in more recent modes of mise en page, stems from an understanding of
the text.

6See the contributions by F. M. Cross in Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text, eds.
F. M. Cross and S. Talmon (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975); and see now E.

7See the articles by I. Ben-Zvi and M. Goshen-Gottstein in Textus 1 (1960) 1–58.
The United Bible Societies' HOTTP was launched in 1969 when Eugene Nida formed a six-person committee to deal with the new situation in First Testament text criticism comparable to the four-person committee he had formed in 1955 to work on Second Testament text critical problems of particular concern to the translation program of the UBS. The principal reason for the formation of the two UBS projects stemmed from problems encountered by the hundreds of translation committees around the world, especially committees made up largely of nationals in the so-called third world countries. In historical perspective the problems the translation committees faced were a direct result of the lack of clear distinction in western scholarship between the two histories, the history of formation of the texts of the Bible and the history of transmission of the texts. This is not a criticism leveled at any one group or school of thought but is basically an observation of what had been happening for at least a century and a half. The distinction between the literary history of the formation of a given text and its history of transmission is rarely neatly drawn. But it is equally clear that some text critics allow the lack of clear distinction to permit exegesis to affect text critical judgments considerably more than should be. When difficult texts were encountered, the national translation committees would inevitably turn to recent western translations of either testament and immediately run into the confusion. In the cases of the problematic textual problems they needed help on, the translations consulted would almost always reflect different text critical solutions which resulted in widely varying translations based on them. The situation engendered confusion among the committees, especially those who had been led to believe in the 'objectivity' of western scholarship. They needed help and Gene Nida and the UBS tried to provide it by establishing the two text critical projects.

The basic reason they needed help stemmed from the fact that the confusion was patent in the popular western translations done around mid-century. Whereas the RSV (1952) was still basically a formal equivalence translation based on its being the authorized heir in the USA of the King James Version and hence constrained by the latter's hermeneutic of translation based on the received MT. The first two editions of the Bible de Jerusalem, the Revidierte Luther Bibel, and the New English Bible, among others, tended to present translations based on a high percentage of variant readings, and especially conjectures. And, of course, these varied widely according to the text critical views of the translators as to what a passage "ought to have said," given 'modern' attitudes about consistency and coherency in ancient
compositions, and the ability (or lack of it?) of modern scholars to discern what the ‘original’ text should have said. The situation multiplied the problems that indigenous committees encountered when they turned to the recent translations, in the old colonial languages of their newly independent countries, where they often found translations of biblical passages only recently composed. Fortunately, translations by the 1970s had begun to become considerably more sober and text critically responsible; note especially the third edition of BJ (the New Jerusalem Bible) and now the Revised English Bible.

In a strange turn of history, the NRSV went in the opposite direction and abandoned the formal equivalence type translation of the KJV that had been retained by the RSV. The NRSV changed character essentially and incorporates translations of a much higher percentage of emended and conjectured texts than its predecessor. This was undoubtedly due to the considerable influence in the USA, and on the NRSV committee, of a current school of text critical theory which is centered in ‘modern’ efforts to reconstruct history based on a text critical method which seeks to establish, as far as possible, ‘original’ biblical texts.

The first discussions we had on the HOTTP, beginning in 1969, indicated the need to arrive at a consensus on the history of transmission of the text, which would then be the foundation of everything else we did. The amazing thing, as I look back, is how soon the consensus emerged. Dominique Barthélemy had been working on the history of the stabilization of the Hebrew text since well before the publication of his Devanciers d’Aquila (1963), based on his early work on the Greek Dodecapropheton from Nahal Hever.\(^6\)

The committee was, of course, familiar with his work but did not accept its consequences for understanding the history of transmission of the text without some initial resistance; there was considerable debate. I am convinced that the similar reconstruction on the part of the HUBP played a minor role in the consensus;

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we had to work it through ourselves. With no collusion or direct influence, the two groups arrived at similar conclusions based on the data available to both.

History of Transmission

The history of transmission of the text falls into four periods: I, that of the so-called Ur-text; II, that of the received text; III, that of the Masoretic Text.

Both groups agree that period I falls outside the province of text criticism in sensu stricto. There are no autographs of any portion of biblical literature, and even if there were there would undoubtedly be radical discussion about its status as a witness; and that would depend directly on one’s hermeneutic of text criticism. While the text critic needs to be aware of everything that goes on in discussions of so-called original texts, as well as aware of all the disciplines of biblical criticism and their ever-changing results, it is not the province of text criticism to reconstruct original texts before they became the kind of community property which repetition and recitation create.

Period II begins with the earliest extant biblical manuscripts and extends through to the completion of the first phase of stabilization of the text, that is, the destruction of the Second Temple and the conquest of Jerusalem. These are texts accepted by believing communities as authoritative and functionally canonical for them. They are no longer in the province only of schools or other narrowly defined groups responsible for their preservation and existence. This period is marked by a limited degree of textual fluidity. Even within groupings of texts (not to say families or recensions) there is a measure of textual fluidity, including inner-Hebrew and inner-Greek literary developments. This is the period of the Qumran literature, the Greek translations of various books (so-called LXX), citations and quotations of Scripture in Early Jewish and Christian literature.

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It is crucial to the whole text critical enterprise to understand the nature of the witnesses in period II, and their relative fluidity. Tradents of all sorts, copyists, midrashists, translators, teachers and preachers had and have two equally important responsibilities, the one to the past and the other the present — the one to the Vorlage and the other to the community the tradent served. In the period from which we now have so many manuscript witnesses, the second period, the interest Scripture and tradition held for the people of the time was in their relevance to their hopes and fears in the culturally strange, enticing and yet threatening Hellenistic-Roman world. Tradents were not simply academic types who had some time on their hands. Their interest was in tapping wisdom and light from the past, specifically the ‘prophetic past’, to understand the present. Tradents wanted their communities to understand what they were copying or translating for them. Paraphrases and facilitating translations of texts, accepted by the community as authoritative, or truly derived from that ‘prophetic past,’ were common in the period. These are what the text critic calls intentional changes. The tradent knew the text was relevant to community problems and concerns and wanted the people to understand the text being transmitted. And, of course, it was the tradent’s understanding of the relevance of the text which would be conveyed. What other understanding would he or she have shared?

On the other hand, such textual fluidity was of necessity limited. If, in order to make a text sound relevant, that text was altered to the point of obscuring recognition of it by the community, the whole point would have been lost. What one sees in pre-exilic references to earlier authoritative traditions, such as the Exodus-Wanderings-Entrance traditions, the Davidic traditions, the patriarchal traditions, etc., is sufficient fluidity to be easily adaptable in the newer speech or composition, but also sufficient stability to be recognizable by the community as their own authoritative identity-granting traditions.¹⁰ No two recitals in the prophets, for instance, of the Exodus event are alike, and yet they all are clearly recognizable for what they are. It is no different from the balance the modern tradent must strike in current similar traditioning processes such as preaching, writing a commentary, or

translating. In fact, one of the major aspects of canonical criticism, in its emphasis on canon as function (*norma normans*), is recognition of the similarities, as well as differences, between ancient tradents and more recent ones.\(^{11}\) What goes on in modern believing communities with regard to the traditioning process is not unlike what went on in antiquity. This kind of fluidity continues even after stabilization of the text, as can be seen in dynamic and functional equivalent translations as well as in homilies and commentaries. The difference is that stabilization induced different modes of adapting the stable text to render it once more relevant and fluid, with the concomitant rise in generally accepted hermeneutic rules to gain some control over the exercise.\(^{12}\)

Period III, the era of the received text, was characterized by the remarkable stability of all extant witnesses by the end of the first century of the common era. These are the biblical manuscripts from the non-Qumran caves (and a few from Qumran such as 1Q1\(^b\)), which date from late in the first century into the second, and from Masada, as well as Aquila and Theodotion, and citations in rabbinic literature (in contrast to those in the Second Testament and other early Jewish literature). These mark the beginnings of Formative Judaism, in Jacob Neusner’s terms. This is also called the proto-Masoretic period in text-critical terms, in contrast to the earlier pre-Masoretic manuscripts. It extended until the ninth century when we begin to have codices extant from the Ben Asher family.\(^{13}\) In the gap between the second-century witnesses and the Tiberian, there is precious little, mainly Jerome’s work and citations in rabbinic and patristic literature. The stabilization process of rectifying fluid texts to the proto-Masoretic, that one sees so clearly in the Dodeca-propheton from Hever, continues in Jerome’s belief in *Hebraica Veritas*.

Period IV is then the period of the MT proper, especially the remarkable work in

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the five generations of the Ben Asher family. There are some 31 MT mss which date up to 1100.\textsuperscript{14} The trajectory from limited fluidity in text form, in the second period, to almost complete stability in the third, is amazing to behold.\textsuperscript{15} There is no other literature in any culture quite like it. Constraints inserted into the text, both for understanding and for stability, make it truly unique as a body of literature. The Masoretes, despite Luther’s and most Christian exegetes’ doubts, clearly inherited a system of reading the text which reached back into antiquity.\textsuperscript{16}

\textbf{Modus Operandi}

Our UBS committee worked almost from the start with the dual perspective of the history of stabilization of the text and the history of stabilization of canon. We always started with the assumption that the MT meant something intelligible whether or not it was anywhere near what an ‘original’ reading supposedly had been; and we obligated ourselves first to understand what meaning the MT conveyed, whether we finally accepted the MT or a variant.\textsuperscript{17} We formed the distinct impression that modern preference for a variant or conjectured reading often had led scholars to rush to the judgment that an MT reading was corrupt or unintelligible. Then we would do the same for other witnesses, especially the Judaean Desert scrolls and

\textsuperscript{14}This figure will be considerably expanded in the light of the work currently being done by M. Beit-Arie and his team in the National Public Library in St. Petersburg (Leningrad) where there are apparently thousands of uncatalogued MSS, many fragmentary, of the MT. Beit-Arie claims that it should now be possible to write a detailed history of the Masoretic movement; see “Exhuming the Hebrew Secrets of St. Petersburg,” \textit{The Jerusalem Post International Edition}, Week ending 12 Oct 91, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{15}M. J. Mulder is, however, undoubtedly correct to point out that even so the process of stabilization is not yet totally complete; see “The Transmission of the Biblical Text,” in \textit{Mikra}, eds. Mulder and Sysling (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988) 132. This observation should be made in conjunction with Goshen-Gottstein’s landmark study (\textit{Biblica} 48 [1967] 243–290) which clearly showed that the later MSS, with precious few exceptions, of the sort collated by Kennicott and de Rossi, have little text critical value.

\textsuperscript{16}One of the unexpected results of our work on the HOTTP was the gradual realization that in some of the Tiberian MSS the masoretic contributions are more reliable than those of the scribe who penned the consonants; see \textit{CTAT} 3 (1992) cxxviii–cxxliii. This evaluation will be reflected in the current preparation of BHQuint by our successor committee. Note also our observation that while the masoretes were rabbanite, they enjoyed close relations with and underwent influence by Qaraite in the Galilee at the time.

\textsuperscript{17}There are, of course, some generally recognized improbabilities in MT.
the versions. We respected each witness enough that we were reluctant to judge a reading corrupt or 'uncertain' until we had exhausted every other possible avenue. We attempted to discern the conceptuality lying back of a variant text or reading in each witness we deemed of value. This sometimes requires doing a structure analysis of the pericope in which a variant apparently lurked. The basic tenet of canonical criticism works in text criticism as well: respect for the conceptual world on which a supposed variant is based, not only the concept of the individual scribe or translator, or later writer citing the text in question, but also the conceptual world of the community for which the text was intended.

Because we dealt with problems referred to us by the UBS translations department, our first task was always to trace in modern scholarship the origins of suggested emendations and conjectures in the translations the UBS nationals consulted. These were usually found already in seventeenth to nineteenth century criticism. After researching the scholarly reasoning offered for rejecting an MT reading and accepting a variant or conjectured text, we then turned to the ancient witnesses to discern as well as possible why a supposed variant appeared in those cases. This sometimes led to a judgment as to whether we were dealing with a text critical or an ancient literary problem. In conjunction with that work we researched pertinent modern studies that involved archaeological, philological and other data relating to the passage at hand.

At the same time we also turned to the great rabbinic and Qaraite commentators of the middle ages to see their judgments about the morphological and syntactic situation of the text. We came to have especially high regard for the Qaraite lexicographers, especially those who wrote in Judeo-Arabic. Because they had learned the basic concepts and principles of grammar from Arabic grammarians (and not from classical grammarians, as European scholarship has) they often had far sharper observations to make about a word or phrase than scholars since the Renaissance. Their knowledge of the Hebrew language was based on a CD-Rom-like knowledge of the entire text of the Tanakh, which western scholars simply do not have. Since we operated as a team, different members of the committee and their assistants took on the research work necessary to come up with all these data. We agreed from the start that printed critical editions of texts often betray the biases of competence, interest, and hermeneutics of the modern editor, no matter how renowned.
An Analogy

A major problem in text criticism was one addressed every time the committee met. Since we eschewed purely scholarly conjectures with no basis in the witnesses, but obligated ourselves to suggest for translators only what can be found in actual ancient and medieval manuscripts of texts and versions bequeathed to us by ancient believing communities, we could only work with extant texts from period II through period IV, that is, the Judean Desert scrolls and the Greek and other witnesses through to the great Tiberian codices. The policy that we adopted was that we would attempt, by the most scrupulous text critical methods possible, to arrive at suggesting the most responsible extant reading, that is, from when the texts had become functionally canonical for believing communities in Early Judaism, and were no longer the peculiar province of individuals or schools. This meant, as noted above, that we needed to know as much about the history of formation of the text, that is, what scholarship since Spinoza could tell us about the text, as we knew about the history of transmission of the text. But in truth, we found that the best we could do, or any current scholarship could do, in discerning the intention of ‘original authors’ was elusive and fraught with indeterminacy. Because of what we had learned about Early Judaism from study of the Judean Desert scrolls, we found ourselves in a post-modern frame of mind fully conscious of the fact that observers, like ourselves, are always a part of the observed. We sought rather to choose the most critically responsible available reading that had become functionally canonical for Early Judaism.

In fact, we all brought all we knew about current scholarship on the problems addressed to bear on our discussions, but only after we had done all the necessary work of a text critical nature. We tried to make judicious judgments about what seemed really valuable for us in modern scholarly study. When potentially true variants loomed on the horizon, we obligated ourselves to debate issues and take sides, to make sure we had before us the full data and the strongest arguments possible about them. This was the reason we finally voted on each evaluation. This was in part to make sure we did not perpetuate the tendency in scholarship to arrive at a reading attractive to a particular hermeneutic, or view of the text, and make hasty judgments about which readings were ‘corrupt’ or ‘genuine.’ We all had the experience of arriving at our annual four-week sessions with a clear view about some of the readings we had prepared work on, only to be persuaded in session of quite a different view, precisely because we obligated ourselves collectively
to build up arguments as strong as possible on both sides of a variant reading (after eliminating pseudo-variants), often to the point of seeing the legitimacy of both, but having to make a decision. Not a few times we decided on a particularly difficult reading as text critically responsible, but suggested to the translators the wisdom of an early and frequent facilitating option for current believing communities that had well served ancient (or medieval) such communities.

The best way to illustrate the exercise is by analogy to an archaeological dig. Sometimes we came to the point of admitting that what were left, in the MT and/or other witness, were but 'beautiful ruins' of what we could judge was probably the 'original' literary composition in question. After we had probed as far back into the beginning of period II as our data permitted, we would then reconstruct from those ruins what we felt might have been the original literary structure — just as an architect on a dig does from the surviving ruins of an ancient monument, in the light of the available pertinent history involved. But once we had looked at the proposed conjectured 'drawing' of what might have been, we would prescind from the retrojection to look once more at what ancient believing communities had actually bequeathed us, that is, at what could be called functionally canonical, and on the basis of that and rigorous text critical method, make our judgment on what reading to choose. We admitted on occasion that if we were working alone as scholars in the historian's workshop we might not be so constrained. But in such commentaries or studies we would make it clear that we were working as historians, attempting with imagination to reconstruct 'original' moments, and not as text critics. This, of course, induces comments about what 'history' means in post-modern terms.\textsuperscript{18}

Parallel Texts

Such discussions were informed by the observation that we not infrequently have among early witnesses parallel texts that recount the same story but are quite different in conceptuality, each with its own integrity. Because Emanuel Tov targets a much earlier date than we as the aim of text criticism, that is, the sixth century BCE, he deemphasizes the number of parallel texts among the witnesses.\textsuperscript{19} I have elsewhere argued that structure analysis of passages containing variants, that have been otherwise tested as 'true,' may reveal quite different concepts lying back of

\textsuperscript{18}For an overview of the current situation, see L. G. Perdue, \textit{The Collapse of History} (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994).

\textsuperscript{19}\textit{Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible} (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993) 313–349.
the two or more witnesses, concepts which support the variants in the different witnesses where found, but not necessarily in a projected Vorlage or 'original.'\(^{20}\)

A prime example of such a 'true' variant is in the almost universal acceptance of the LXX (and 1QIs\(^5\)?) reading ימיה in Isa 40:6. However, structure analyses of Isa 40:1–11 in MT (Qumran?) and in the LXX indicate two quite different concepts of what is going in the Isaiah 40 text. It is a good example of disregarding the integrity of the two witnesses in order to pillage one to correct the other. The MT presents itself as minutes of a meeting of the heavenly council with reports about what was said (40:3 and 6) in council in response to the commission given by God to the council (40:1–2), followed by specific commands to a single member (40:9). In that context MT Isa 40:6 clearly reports that after one voice had cried, “Proclaim,” another voice asked what he should proclaim. The LXX, on the other hand, reports a totally different scene in which the deity addresses priests in 40:2, one of whom apparently speaks up in the first person in 40:6. Modern scholarship brings to Isa 40 the modern critical knowledge that this is where the Second Isaiah begins, a prophet distinct from the First Isaiah; therefore, he should have a personal prophetic 'call' passage recorded as well.\(^{21}\) Some scholars who otherwise follow the work of Frank M. Cross in seeing in Isa 40:1–8(–11) a report of a meeting of the heavenly council, still see within it, as in Isa 6:1–13, a 'prophetic call' to the exilic prophet scholarship since the late eighteenth century has come to call the Second Isaiah.\(^{22}\)


But neither MT nor LXX, in and of themselves, supports such a concept. This has led other scholars to deny that a call passage is even hinted at within the report of the heavenly council deliberations of Isa 40. Christopher Seitz has offered the most probing study of Isa 40:1–11 to date, reading it in the full context of the sixty-six chapters of the Book of Isaiah, and in a redactional-critical mode without resorting to pre-critical views.

An equally critical probe with structure analysis of Isa 40:1–11 in the LXX and Qumran (1QIs5) witnesses shows that those texts also exhibit concepts of what their tradents thought was going on in the text. The crux reading in 1Q5 40:6, ואמר לה, is indeterminate. It can be read, like the LXX at that point, “And I said.” Or it can be read in a post-exilic mode as a feminine singular participle referring appositionally to the herald, Zion or Jerusalem (40:9). A structure analysis of the Qumran witness, whether including only the first scribal hand at vv. 7–8, or including the insertion by the second hand which brought it into agreement with the MT at that point, would indicate no difference in concept from that perceived in the MT, except for how one reads the indeterminate ואמר לה in 40:6.

These observations do not necessarily invalidate a text-critical judgment that a scribal error has occurred in the MT reading. But they place burdens of proof on


26D. McBride apud D. Petersen, Late Israelite Prophecy: Studies in Deutero-Prophetic Literature and in Chronicles (SBLDS 23; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1977) 20. Cross and Westermann also see the feminine participles in 40:9 as appositional with Zion or Jerusalem as the herald.
arguments no one has yet convincingly advanced: and that is, first, how the MT 'error' came about; and, more importantly, second, why the concept lying back of the MT text should be cast aside in emending the text on the basis of other witnesses exhibiting their own conceptualities. Since the Qumran witness is indeterminate, the emendation basically rests on the LXX reading in a context which deserves to be heard in its own right before it, too, is pillaged and then set aside.

There are many passages in the Bible, not just those usually listed, which, when probed carefully, exhibit different understandings of what was going on in the passage. This does not necessarily mean that the different witnesses (usually MT, LXX and Qumran) had different Vorlagen. On the contrary, the likelihood is that the ancient tradents did what modern ones do, they transmitted what they and their communities understood the passage was about and chose the appropriate language to convey it. Not until the stabilization process was basically accomplished by the beginning of the second century of the common era did tradents intertextually restrain themselves to the point of accurate copying without regard to story line.\(^{28}\)

**Hermeneutics**

Since my thesis, in post-modern terms, is that one's understanding of the biblical text, or of a passage within it, is affected by the hermeneutics brought to it, I feel obligated to be clear about my own. When Jerome pursued his regard for *Hebraica Veritas* he created a situation which has yet to be resolved. When the Reformers then accepted his position and tried to validate the idea of *sola scriptura*, the situation became exacerbated. As long as there was the magisterium and tradition of the Church to fall back on, the situation was quite tolerable. When that was removed, for Protestants, all sorts of anamolies were created. This was apparently the reason a person like Isaac de la Peyrére reverted to Catholicism after having converted to Protestantism. The Western churches were left with a text based principally on the Hebrew, but with an order of books based vaguely on LXX tradition, creating a section called the Apocrypha.

The MT order of books made sense for Judaism. There was a theological history


\(^{28}\)J. Sanders, *From Sacred Story* (note 12 above) 175–191.
which went from creation in Genesis to the failures of the United Kingdom, the Northern Kingdom, then the Southern Kingdom by the close of 2 Kgs. The story that started with two promises to Abram and Sarai sees them gloriously fulfilled by 1 Kgs 10 after which everything went downhill to complete defeat by 2 Kgs 25. As the great anthems of the Torah (Exod 15 and Deut 32) declaim, and as the Song of Hannah stresses (1 Sam 2), God is the God of risings and fellings, what humans call success and what they call failure, what they call good and what they call bad. The one really stable part of the Bible in terms of sequence of books, Gen to 2 Kgs, is a radical presentation of that view of Reality. Then follow the Prophets, the books of the Three and the Book of the Twelve to explain the (hi)story just recited. A) It is not God who let us down; B) it is we who had let God down by all sorts of idolatry; C) God had sent prophets early and late to tell us how it really is in the divine economy; and D) we have another chance if in exile we take it all to heart that this is indeed the case, as stressed in Deut 29–33, and finally in most of the prophetic books themselves. Thereupon follows Chronicles, as the first book of the Ketuvim, with its new, optimistic attitude about the opportunities for individual responsibility in the New Israel, or Judaism. Chronicles offers a revisionist history that offers hope for obedience and repentance, even the repentance of a Manasseh who was the scapegoat in the Deuteronomic history (2 Chrons 33:12–13; see Prayer of Manasseh in some Apocrypha). Not only does it, in contrast to Kings, end on the optimistic note of the edict by Cyrus, thus stressing the continuing covenant relationship with the people corporately, it also suggests that some of the individual characters in the earlier drama were not totally without redeeming qualities. The Psalter then follows Chronicles with its opening declaration that the person whose delight is in Torah, and not in the way of the wicked, is blessed indeed. Jubilees and Sirach move even further in the direction of emphasis, following Ezek 18, on individual responsibility.


While in some LXX mss the Psalter at least follows close on Chronicles after Ezra-Nehemiah, the sequence is entirely lost in most Christian Bibles, and of course, finally also in the Baba Bathra 14b listing, hence the Second Rabbinic Bible. In the NRSV’s drive to use gender inclusive language for humans it obscured the celebration of individual responsibility in Ps 1.
A Jew is called to the service of God, and Judaism is the expression of that service. A major tenet of Judaism became the belief that it is possible to obey and please God, even though the primary history in Gen-Kgs (and eventually a theologian from Tarsus) leaves the clear impression that none was righteous, no not one. This was a new day; there was a new chance to be God’s people. The old Abram-Sarai promises were still operative, but now God’s Israel had had its heart circumcized by God (Deut 30:6), effecting what the people had not been able to do themselves despite prophetic pleas to do so (Jer 4:4; Deut 10:16). God, as great physician, through the pain and adversity wrought by the powerflows of the eighth to sixth centuries, conducted open-heart surgery on the people corporately (Jer 30:12–17, 31:33; Ezek 36:26–27; cf. Exod 15:26). This mode of signifying the defeat and the suffering of the people corporately was accompanied by the new possibility of individual responsibility (Jer 31:29; Ezek 18). After the Psalter usually comes the book of Job, which stands as a monument to the poet’s exposure and refutation of the friends’ attempts to apply the old prophetic principles of corporate responsibility to an individual’s suffering. And then comes Proverbs with its many suggestions as to how to live under One God in all those nooks and crannies of life unaddressed in the laws of Torah. And then before the up-beat ‘new history’ is resumed at the end of the codex in Daniel and Ezra-Nehemiah, in which individual responsibility within the corporate is demonstrated dramatically, there are the five scrolls to be read at the special feasts, and a fast, that relate the faith of individuals, and of the people as a whole, to the joys and sorrows of existence under One God. When the tri-partite canon as indicated by the great Tiberian mss became stabilized, it all adhered and made a clear statement about the nature of Judaism as understood by surviving Pharisaic-rabbinic Jews.32

The LXX, according to most surviving codices exhibits quite a different understanding of the Bible’s theological history. Instead of the prophetic corpus coming after the Deuteronomic history, where it gives case after case history of God’s having indeed sent prophets to tell the people well in advance what the divine economy was all about, most LXX mss put Chronicles, Esdras, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, Judith, Tobit and the Books of Maccabees right after Kings. The LXX thus presents a theological history that goes from creation through to the hellenistic

period just before Roman domination. And it was to that long stretch of theological history that the Early Church understood the Gospels, Acts and Epistles to be attached.\(^\text{33}\) Whereas the distinct section called Ketuvim in the basic MT order provided a canonical base for the New Israel, Judaism, to live lives of obedience in stasis, whether in Palestine or diaspora, the LXX, on the contrary, was still presenting God as very active on the international scene, very much as God had been since creation in the biblical story. The Prophets were placed after the Psalms and various types of Wisdom books to explain how God signifies history and how God’s people can live through it and still have hope. The function of the very same books of the Bible became quite different in the different canonical contexts, as rather dramatically is the case with the differing placements of Daniel.\(^\text{34}\)

Augustine did well to ask his friend, Jerome, why he went to such pains as he did to provide a Latin text of the Bible based on the (proto-MT) Hebrew text in the mss of his rabbinic tutor in Bethlehem. The Holy Spirit, Augustine claimed, had used the LXX throughout the history of the church and had done quite well, thank you. But Jerome did indeed provide the church a direct translation from the Hebrew which eventually replaced the Vetus Latina based on the LXX. Of course, Jerome knew that he would have to retain certain familiar phrases and passages to gain acceptance. Clearly the largely independent integrity of books such as Samuel, Jeremiah, Esther and Proverbs, as well as portions of other books, needs to be respected. I suspect that when further study is done we shall see the Greek forms of these books casting their light on the fuller LXX context than has heretofore been seen.

And that again puts the focus on hermeneutics. Jesus’ answer to the expert’s question in Luke 10:26 about how to inherit eternal life is to the point; the answer was a double question. “What is written in Torah, and how do you read it?” One

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\(^{33}\)What order of books (scrolls) the pre-Christian Greek versions had we may possibly never know. Since the Church preserved the LXX and its basic order in extant LXX mss served the Church so well, it is likely that it is a result of early Christian interest. See W. M. Swartley,Israel’s Scripture Traditions and the Synoptic Gospels (Peabody MA: Hendrickson, 1994).

\(^{34}\)See S. Talmon, “Oral and Written Transmission in Judaism,” in Jesus and the Gospel Tradition, ed. H. Wansbrough (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991) 121–158. Talmon makes the very engaging point that while comparison of the Gospels with rabbinic literature is questionable, comparison with other forms of Judaism, as represented in the Judaean Scrolls, may be very fruitful.
selects the pertinent passage to the issue at hand, but then it is a question of the
ermeneutics by which one reads the selected passage. While the Pentateuch shares
in part the form of a biography of Moses, it is caught up into a much larger
theological history whether in its MT guise or its LXX version, just as what looks
like a biography of Jesus is caught up into a genre called ‘gospel.’ Judaism set the
Pentateuch apart as Torah, and it has been the Written Torah for Judaism ever
since. Whether the pentateuch is viewed as Torah, or as the beginning of a longer
Deuteronomistic theological history, or an even longer LXX ‘history,’ the various
human biographies are caught up into something much larger than themselves.

Hermeneutically it makes a difference which way one reads the Pentateuch: as a
collection of laws embedded in a narrative, or as a narrative with laws contained in
it. The concept one has in mind of what a text is and does makes a difference in
how one makes text critical decisions. Luther counseled that where there are multi-
valencies one should choose the text which leads to the res, or the gospel as Luther
understood it. The translator’s choice of words, then, is inevitably determined by
the translator’s hermeneutics, or understanding of what the text is and conveys.

Two Recent Publications

The year 1992 saw the publication of two major contributions to First Testament
text criticism, Emanuel Tov’s Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, and Dominique
Barthélemy’s Critique textuelle de l’Ancient Testament, Vol. 3. The former is the
result of years of text critical study by one of the most respected and widely read
younger scholars in the field. The latter is the third in a projected set of seven
volumes of which Barthélemy is author based on the work done by the UBS HOTTP

35 See the writer’s review of M. Fishbane’s Garments of Torah: Essays in Biblical Hermeneutics
that which gives authority to the whole of Torah. My question is why select that particular
theophany as the authorizing moment, why not the pastoral call on Abraham and Sarah in
Genesis 12? For Christians the Torah is the beginning of a wondrous gospel story that reaches
its climax in God’s work in Christ. For Jews it is the beginning of a wondrous halachic
traditioning process that continues in Oral Law, responsa, etc., all celebrations of the belief
that it is possible to obey and to please God. See the writer’s “Torah and Christ” in Interpretation
29 (1975) 372–390. Recognition of this basic difference in hermeneutics in reading the same
text provides a firm basis for interfaith dialogue; again see “Intertextuality and Dialogue”
(note 4 above).

36 Tov’s TCHB (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992); Barthélemy’s CTAT 3 (Fribourg: Editions
universitaires, 1992).
since 1969. The latter is the result not only of our committee but of the mind of one of the most arresting geniuses in the field of text criticism. The latter resonates well with the concepts and method of the HUBP; the former reflects less of Tov’s early roots of study at Hebrew University in favor of his later work at Harvard. The two move in quite distinct directions in terms of concept and method.

Tov’s book is a model for how to present some of the best of recent work in text criticism. It can be read with great profit by a beginning university student and by the most seasoned text critic. It is clear and lucid and moves through the basics of text criticism to the more complex aspects of it. There are constant very helpful cross references throughout the book to earlier or later portions which explain terms and concepts.

Tov, however, does not wrestle seriously with the interrelation between text and canon, nor indeed with most of what is presented and argued in CTAT.\(^{37}\) While Barthélemy is cited in bibliographies to almost every section, large and small, of the book, there is precious little dialogue with his or our position. Tov ignores the implications of the history of transmission of the text espoused by both the HUBP and the HOTTP but instead, following the Albright/Cross school rests discussions of the task and aim of text criticism on the old debate between Kahle and de Lagarde that informed the field before the discovery of the Judaean Scrolls. In doing so he departs from most text critics in making the ‘aim’ for establishing the critically most responsible text of a majority of biblical books the fourth-third century stage, and argues instead for the aim being the sixth century in many cases.

Doing so permits Tov to admit of, or allow evaluations of the historical worth of certain texts to influence his text critical decisions, a continuing interest of the Albright/Cross school. Such a position causes Tov to brush aside certain criticisms and to fail to dialogue seriously with differing positions, such as those of the HOTTP and even the HUBP. As judicious as most presentations in Tov’s book are, there is a general lack of wrestling with those positions. To illustrate the importance of recognizing the issue of hermeneutics of text criticism and translation, it might

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\(^{37}\)There seemed to be more recognition of the importance of understanding the text as canon in Tov’s earlier work, such as “The Original Shape of the Biblical Text,” *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* 43 (1991) 355–357; even so, like Cross he defends in all his work the position of de Lagarde and therefore argues strongly for making the attempt to recover where possible the single textual form that stood at the beginning of textual transmission (not, of course, ‘the’ original). See his carefully wrought discussion of “A New Description” of the development of the biblical text, 187–197, for how he understands text as canon.
be well to conclude with a comparison of Tov's treatment of an important text critical problem, with ours.

The problem is in the last verse of 1 Sam 10 and the beginning of 1 Sam 11. "The original, longer text of 1 Samuel 11 is probably preserved in 4QSam", while the text of ℓ κ Θ Υ is based on a scribal error, the omission of an entire section. According to this view, 4QSam preserves not an early stage in the growth of the book but what appears to be the original text, which was subsequently corrupted in ℓ κ Θ Υ."38 The Qumran witness has about five and a half lines found nowhere else, but they appear to explain what appears to be an abruptness in the MT and daughters. The MT reads, (10:27–11:1) "But some ne'er-do-wells asked, 'How can this one save us?' and they reviled him (Saul) and did not bring him a gift; but the latter made like he did not hear. Then Nahash, the Ammonite, went up and encamped at Yabesh Gilead...” The LXX reads, “But some ne'er-do-wells asked, 'How can this one save us?' and they reviled him and brought him no gifts. And it came to pass about a month later that Naas the Ammonite went up and encamped against Yabis Galaad...”

The plus in 4QSam provides an introduction to Nahash's proposal of gouging out the right eyes of all the able bodied men of Yabesh Gilead as a condition of a treaty that would spare Yabesh Gilead from probable total destruction (11:2). The introduction says Nahash had already gouged out the right eyes of the children of Gad and the children of Reuben, thus striking terror in all the children of Israel beyond the Jordan who still had their right eyes, namely seven thousand who had fled the Ammonites and found refuge in Yabesh Gilead. It goes on to say, presumably in 11:1, that "About a month later" Nahash went up and besieged Yabesh-Gilead...

What had seemed too brutal a condition for the proposed treaty between Nahash and the people of Yabesh Gilead now has a fitting explanation in that it was a policy of Nahash's toward arch-enemies or rebels, apparently a punishment well known from ancient documents. Nahash thus demands the same treatment for the men of Yabesh Gilead who had earlier escaped. Tov then gives four data which indicate the originality of the 4Q plus: a) it was apparently known to Josephus as were some other 4Q Sam texts; b) the 4Q text introduces Nahash in a more typical and formal manner than MT, or any other witness; c) the 4Q text eliminates the 'contextually difficult' phrase at the very end of 10:27 relating Saul's pretending not to hear the taunts and reviling of the "ne'er-do-wells" by having a graphically

38TCHB, 342.
similar expression serve as the first words of 11:1, “About a month later,” very similar to the LXX reading; d) 4QSam$^*$ reflects a reliable text generally while MT Samuel has many corruptions generally. Tov denies that the 4Q plus could be composed out of similar passages elsewhere, a phenomenon that was common in early Jewish literature.\footnote{A. Rofé, “The Acts of Nahash according to 4QSam$^*$,” IEJ 32 (1982) 129–133, sees the 4Q plus as a relatively late midrashic composition.} The 4Q plus would have been accidentally omitted at a very early stage since it is preserved in only one witness. Its omission would have been accidental.

CTAT1 was published in 1982. The problem of 1 Sam 10:27–11:1 is dealt with in six tightly composed pages. The presentation starts, as usual, with the modern history of the problem and the provenance of variants and conjectures. Cappellus was the first to suggest that קָנְחָרִי was what the LXX had read instead of קָנְחָרִי of MT. This was picked up by Ewald. Graetz ridiculed the conjecture as a grammatical monster. Driver felt it justified by a similar expression in Gen 38:24, but this has been seriously questioned. H. P. Smith conjectured קָנְחָרִי, the reading in 4Q. But Budde had objected to Smith’s conjecture since it does not conform to Hebrew prose, Neh 9:11 being a quotation of Exod 15:5, and the phrase in Gen 19:15 being conjunctival. F. M. Cross calls the expression archaic, where קָנְחָרִי was paraphrased and ‘modernized’ in 4Q to קָנְחָרִי. Cross cites קָנְחָרִי in Ugaritic as often written with the noun that follows without word divider, but gives no example.\footnote{F. M. Cross, “The Ammonite Oppression of the Tribes of Gad and Reuben: Missing Verses from 1 Samuel 11 Found in 4QSamuel,”” in Tov, The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Samuel (Jerusalem, 1980) 105–120, reprinted in H. Tadmor and M. Weinfeld, eds., History, Historiography and Interpretation (Jerusalem 1983) 148–158. Cross’ and Tov’s interest in the historical value of the text is clear. But see S. Pisano, Additions or Omissions in the Books of Samuel — The Significant Plusses and Minuses in the Massoretic, LXX and Qumran Texts (OBO 57; Fribourg–Göttingen, 1984) 91–98.} Cyrus Gordon cites a number of examples in Ugaritic where it is linked to pronominal suffixes. But when it precedes a noun it is regularly separated by a divider. There is one example without a divider with a noun, but it is probably a scribal error. These observations make it difficult to accept Cross’ affirmation on the face of it; his citation of Gen 38:24 as the only example in the Hebrew Bible has its own problems.

It is uncertain whether Josephus (Antiquities VI, 68) read a text with the word as it is in 4Q or in LXX. But all three read it as the beginning of 11:1 rather than the end of 10:27. Josephus apparently also knew of the introduction offered in 4Q, but
the latter includes information about the 7000 escaping to Yabesh, not Josephus. All four witnesses pick up with 11:1, but Josephus places the introductory material (4Q plus) between יָדָּיו and אָנוּר, whereas 4Q places it before the first of the two elements. Actually then, all four of the witnesses have distinctive and different elements. Cross thinks that 4Q is the primitive witness, and that Josephus’ Vorlage had a double accident, a vertical dittography in which יָדָּיו כִּמּוֹדֶהשׁ occurred before the 4Q plus, and a homoeoteleuton (homoeoarchton?) resulting from the first accident. Josephus would have been personally responsible for putting the phrase before the plus or introductory material. This seems to be quite a complicated theory to explain how to move from the 4Q text to Josephus. Cross does not offer an explanation as to why the MT and Θ lack the plus. Ulrich has explained that the Old Greek had the plus which was then excised under influence of the MT, purely a conjecture.41 Kyle McCarter explains the lack as an extraordinary case of scribal inadvertrance; there would have been no haplography, nothing in the text would occasion it. The scribe simply skipped a paragraph.42

The Cross/Ulrich/McCarter/Tov hypothesis could be argued thus:

The Old Greek would have had the plus followed by the archaic expression יָדָּיו כִּמּוֹדֶהשׁ. 4Q would have modernized the crucial phrase to יָדָּיו כִּמּוֹדֶהשׁ. Josephus somehow acquired the 4Q plus mutluation after a dittography, and then arbitrarily displaced the element in the Greek account which had occasioned the dittography. In the pre-masoretic text, the whole introductory plus of 4Q preceding the יָדָּיו כִּמּוֹדֶהשׁ would have been extirpated by inadvertence, without any pretext of a textual accident or clear motive for the extirpation. All the actually extant Greek witnesses derive from a Greek textual situation in which the extirpation had taken place, based on the pre-masoretic text. Finally, the proto-masoretic text would have undergone a corruption from יָדָּיו כִּמּוֹדֶהשׁ to יָדָּיו כִּמּוֹדֶהשׁ and a transfer of this word (with its preceeding phrase) to the end of the preceeding verse. This corrupt form would have penetrated as a doublet into the Antiochian recension of Θ.

Cross views 1 Sam 11:1–11 as an independent narrative which has as motive the installation of the monarchy at Gilgal. McCarter well notes that the narrative is bracketted by textual flags (10:16–27a and 11:12–15) bearing on the reaction of the people to the choice of Saul as king. What we have is an old narrative integrated by Deuteronomic redaction into its account. Cross then underscores two arguments in

favor of the ‘originality’ of the introductory plus attested by 4Q and by Josephus. A) There is no parenetic or theological motive involved, just history: Nahash threatens the folk of Yabesh because they had given refuge to 7000 fugitives; B) the style of the introductory plus accords with the Deuteronomistic historian’s style, and he gives three expressions of the sort.

The response of the committee, enhanced by Barthélémy’s own searches, was as follows. 1 Sam 11:2b gives Nahash’s motive as a gratuitous threat designed to put fear into all Israel. Adding a story about Gad and Reuben would not have increased the threat. Judg 10:8, 17 and 11:4 had already stressed the aggressive attitude of the Ammonites toward Gilead. It is quite possible that Nahash arrogated the right to punish Yabesh which had earlier belonged to the Ammonites. These may be the ties uniting Yabesh to Benjamin (Judg 21:8–12) which drove Nahash to choose Yabesh as ideal for targeting a threat generally to all Israel. Cross’ second argument could be turned the other way round; the 4Q plus could have been added by a later editor. Tov stresses Dtr amplifications which characterize Edition II of Jeremiah (MT). Since current criticism has the tendency to see multiple redactional levels in the Dtr history, nothing would hinder seeing the introductory plus of 4Q as added even after MT and 6. That tradition simply would have wanted to facilitate the passage from chap. 10 to chap. 11. Such Dtr amplifications are done in the style of what was already there. The late and unstable character of the gloss could, therefore, be seen attested by two witnesses who differ on its point of insertion. 6 would have put נמנת from the end of chap. 10 to the beginning of chap. 11 to provide a smoother transition.43

There are five arguments in favor of the MT. A) C. F. Keil stressed the syntactic relations between 10:26ab and 27ab: they form contrasting statements about loyalty to Saul of most of the army but the disdain of the ne’er-do-wells. B) The expression כ ריח before a participle, or a nomen agentis, usually indicates a description of a manner or mode of action of the subject person. A number of examples can be given in which the word introduced by kaf does not indicate an object of comparison but the formal mode of the action (Exod 22:24; Hos 5:10; Job 24:14; Hos 11:4). C) The hiph’il of מינה most often has the meaning of “control oneself, keep silence” (2 Sam 13:20; 2 Kgs 18:36 = Isa 36:21; Isa 42:14; Jer 4:19; Ps 32:3, 50:21; Prv 11:12, 17:28). This meaning is quite in place here: “And when the ne’er-do-wells said,

‘How can this guy save us?’ and when they showed him their contempt in not bringing him a present, he conducted himself as one who keeps silent.” D) Saul then in 11:12–13 complements the disdain of his silence by refusing to take vengeance on the ne’er-do-wells; he would be king of all the people, even pre-election opponents, when installed. The theme of salvation of all Israel from the aggressiveness and enmity of Ammon is the link between the two passages, 10:17–27a and 11:12–14. Scholars have seen the hand of the Deuteronomists in the two passages. The redactor who inserted 11:1–11 in the course of his account interpreted it as a response to those who had doubted Saul’s ability to save them. And it was by Saul that Yahweh effected הָנֵר (11:13) in Israel. His detractors have been confounded. E) The principal argument in favor of the MT, finally, is in its arresting heterogeneity. Ø facilitated the account somewhat; then 4Q and Josephus went further in the same direction. With recent German exegetes (Rehm, Hertzberg, RL, Stoebé [1973] and Eu [1980]) the committee decided rather decisively that MT should be retained.

I use this as an example, not only because of the fact that Tov nowhere in his otherwise very impressive book takes seriously what the UBS HOTTP committee and Barthélemy in CTAT have done, but also because the hermeneutic operative in his concept of text criticism determines his choices as well as his view of the basic aim of the discipline. In post-modern terms the latter comment must be made of all positions, including one’s own. Tov, however, does not openly wrestle with it, or clearly state his hermeneutical position vis-à-vis other positions, even though it emerges as evident in his concern for historical value of the biblical text and the effect that has on the views he holds and the decisions he makes. Tov’s is a very important contribution to the history of text criticism in this century. It represents in effect a compromise between the views of the HUBP and of the Albright/Cross school. It will be influential throughout the discipline for decades to come, even though it virtually ignores other positions, as well as the possibility that a paradigm shift is currently taking place in the history of the concept, and hence the hermeneutics of text criticism.

As stated above; see also the clear statements to the point in CTAT 1, *67–*114, and more explicitly, perhaps, in CTAT 3, i–vii.