

2

Pentateuch

∴

2.1 Textual History of the Pentateuch

2.1.1 Torah as a Unit

The description of the textual history of the five books of the Torah as one unit is justified because they were joined together and considered a single unit by the biblical authors and subsequent generations.

As a result, the phrases סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה “book of the Law,” סֵפֶר תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה “book of the Law of Moses,” and תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה “Law of Moses” are used frequently in Scripture, both in Deuteronomy and in the later books. The fact that most Torah scrolls found in the Judean Desert contain single books and not the complete Torah derives from the technical limitations determined by the maximum size of these scrolls (each of the five books of the Torah is sizeable and together they encompass twenty-two percent of the Hebrew canon in MT). At the same time, four Qumran scrolls contain two books, and the 4QRP scrolls contain between two and five books (4QGen-Exod^a [→ 2.2.1.1.1], 4QpaleoGen-Exod^l [→ 2.2.1.1.2]; 4QRP^a [Genesis–Exodus]; 4QRP^b [Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; → 2.2.1.7.1]; 4QRP^c [Genesis–Deuteronomy; → 2.2.1.7.2]; 4QExod-Lev^c; 4QRP^d [Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; → 2.2.1.7.3]; 4QLev-Num^a; → 2.2.1.7.10). Muri (→ 2.2.1.2.6) probably contained Genesis–Numbers as well as Deuteronomy. In later centuries, scrolls containing the complete Torah became the norm, as may be learned from the references to such scrolls in rabbinic literature.

The unity of the Torah is also visible at the scribal-textual level since the individual books of the Torah underwent several similar textual developments: 1) The orthography of the five Torah books in MT is more conservative than that of most other books, especially in Exodus and Leviticus (see below, → 2.1.3); 2) The character of the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of the Torah differs from that of other books (see below, → 2.1.5); 3) The Samaritan sacred writings are limited to the Torah, although a Samaritan version of Joshua is

also known (→ 1.2.3); 4) By far the largest number of textual branches is known for the Torah, deriving from its special popularity (see below, → 2.1.5); 5) Within the careful transmission of the Scripture books in MT, the Torah may have been given special care, as suggested by a relatively large number of cancellation dots (*puncta extraordinaria* [→ 1.5]; ten out of fifteen in the whole Bible) and the relatively small number of *Qere* readings in the Torah (→ 1.5).

2.1.2 Extant Witnesses (→ 2.2; → 2.4)

2.1.2.1 Earliest Textual Evidence

The earliest textual evidence for the Torah, dating to the mid-third century B.C.E., is among the oldest for Scripture as a whole. It is probably no coincidence that five of the eight oldest paleographically dated scrolls contain segments of the Torah (4QExod-Lev^f dated to 250 B.C.E. [→ 2.2.1.7.9], 4QpaleoDeut^s dated to 250–200 B.C.E. [→ 2.2.1.10], 4QExod^d dated to 225–175 B.C.E. [→ 2.2.1.8], and 6QpaleoGen and 6QpaleoLev, both dated to 250–150 B.C.E. [→ 2.2.1.8; → 2.2.1.10]).

The earliest remnants of the Old Greek version, usually dated to 285 B.C.E. (→ 1.3.1.1.5), are a century later: Greek scrolls and codices dating from the second century B.C.E. onwards were discovered in the Judean Desert and Egypt (→ 1.3.1.1.6).

There is no older evidence for the Torah, with the exception of the silver rolls from Ketef Hinnom dating to the seventh or sixth century B.C.E. (see Tov, **TCHB*, 111; → 2.2.5.3), which may be disregarded in the present context since they do not contain a proper biblical text.

Close connections between Torah texts and later books reflect different types of literary links, but little solid evidence is available about possible variants in the later books that quote from the Torah. This pertains to the relation between Ezekiel and Leviticus and that between Jeremiah and Deuteronomy. On the other hand, the Chronicler reflects many textual variants as well as orig-

inal readings when compared with the Torah, for example in the genealogical lists in the first chapters of 1 Chronicles. However, the date of the variants in Chronicles cannot be determined as they may derive from any period in the transmission of that book, either from the time of the Chronicler himself or from a later period. In another area, the so-called paleo-Hebrew Torah fragments from Qumran do not precede the time of the fragments written in the square script, as they are dated to the Hasmonean period or later (→ 2.2.1).

2.1.3 Textual Features Common to the Torah Books

The five books of the Torah share various textual features. Some of them reflect the stage of the combined Torah scrolls, while others preceded that stage.

- The orthography of MT cannot be presented as consistent or uniform, neither in the Torah nor in the other books. Nevertheless, the five books of the Torah share certain spelling features that set them apart from the other books. It has been suggested that the Torah and Kings reflect a more conservative (defective) orthography than the rest of the biblical books and that they also contain the highest degree of internal consistency; in the Torah, this description applies especially to Exodus and Leviticus.¹
- Harmonization is a major feature characterizing most Torah texts, especially the Hebrew source of LXX (→ 1.3.1.1.12), SP (→ 1.2.3), and the pre-Samaritan Qumran scrolls. Though harmonization occurs to some degree in all Scripture books, noticeable for example in LXX-Cant, the various texts of Samuel–Kings//Chronicles and

¹ Thus F.I. Andersen and A.D. Forbes, *Spelling in the Hebrew Bible* (BibOr 41; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1986), 312–18. A. Murtonen, “The Fixation in Writing of Various Parts of the Pentateuch,” *VT* 3 (1953): 46–53 notes that the Decalogue and the book of the covenant (Exodus 20:22–23:33) are more defective (and hence earlier) than the other segments of the Torah and, by the same token, he found differences between the various Pentateuchal sources.

the parallel chapters in such books as Psalms, Jeremiah 52//2 Kgs 24:18–25:30, it features as a major phenomenon in the Torah in the non-legal sections and in the phraseology of the legal sections, probably due to its popularity (see below, → 2.1.5).

- Larger number of textual branches than in other books (see below, → 2.1.5).

Special Textual Features in Leviticus

The book of Leviticus differs textually from the other Torah books. Only in this book are there no frequent differences between the textual sources such as evidenced for the other four Torah books (see below, → 2.1.4). If we link this situation to the fact that the orthography of this book is among the most conservative in Scripture (see above in this paragraph), we note that this book was changed very little in the period for which we have textual evidence. This situation derives from the fact that Leviticus contains only legal sections that were not submitted to major rewriting. This is not to say that scribes did not rewrite laws, but in the period for which we have textual sources, only scant textual evidence has been preserved for such rewriting. Some legal rewriting is recognizable in the 4QRP texts (→ 2.2.1.7) and the Hebrew *Vorlage* of LXX-Exod 35–40 (→ 1.3.1.1.12), both probably reflecting exegetical rewriting based on a text like MT.

2.1.4 Literary Variants

Some of the groups of differences between the textual sources (usually blocks of variants) reflect different literary stages of the biblical books, and hence pertain to the literary development of Scripture books. Two groups of such variants may shed light on the Documentary Hypothesis (see below, → 2.1.4.2).

2.1.4.1 Literary Variants in the Torah

Literary differences between MT and the other textual sources are recognized in several concentrations. The first two groups received much attention in scholarship, and the others less so:

- 1) Editorial innovations of the SP group as compared with MT and LXX (→ 1.2.3);
- 2) Literary and exegetical innovations of three manuscripts of the 4QRP cluster (4QRP^{c,d,e});²
- 3) Differences between MT, LXX, and SP in *Genesis 5 and 11* in genealogies, in which three possible tendencies are recognized. It seems that MT is not recensional in *Genesis 11*, but may be so in *Genesis 5*. On the other hand, the *Vorlage* of LXX and SP probably revised MT or a similar text in both chapters in a certain direction, in similar, yet different ways. I posit two recensions (SP, LXX) and one text (MT) in *Genesis 11*, and possibly three recensions in *Genesis 5*. The analysis of these chronological systems pertains to the primacy of MT, LXX, SP, or another system in these chapters, and is irrelevant for the source-critical analysis;³
- 4) *Gen 31:46–48* appear in LXX in the sequence 46, 48a, 47. In vv. 45–46, Jacob and his relatives erect a pillar and make a mound. According to LXX, Laban announces that this mound will be a witness between the two (v. 48a), and afterwards they name the place “Mound of Witness” (v. 47). MT+⁴ places the Aramaic and Hebrew names (v. 47) before Laban’s statements (v. 48a), probably representing a later addition located in different places in MT+ and LXX;
- 5) *Num 10:34–36*. In LXX, the order of these verses differs from MT+ (35, 36, 34). The sequence of LXX, in which v. 35, referring to *the Ark*, comes immediately after v. 33, where the Ark is also mentioned, is possibly more natural, while in MT+ v. 34 comes between the two. The differing sequences were created by the late addition in

- different places of the “Song of the Ark” (vv. 35–36), which originally was not included in its present position;
- 6) *Different Literary Editions of Numbers in LXX and MT+ Visible in Small Details?* In LXX-Num, small pluses appear in Num 2:7, 14, 20, 22, 29 (same plus in all verses); 3:10; 7:88; 10:6a; 14:23 = Deut 1:39; 23:3 (= 4QNum^b); 23:7 = 24:2, 23; 32:30 = context; 36:1 = 27:1. In Num 9:22–23, LXX has a shorter text (MT+ adds details from vv. 21–22; 13:33; 15:35). The two traditions differ twice in important sequence details. In the census in Numbers 1, in the *Vorlage* of LXX, Gad (MT+ vv. 24–26) follows Manasseh (vv. 34–35). The position of Gad in MT+ is less appropriate, after Reuben (vv. 20–21) and Simeon (vv. 22–23), probably influenced by the sequence in Num 2:10–16 (Reuben, Simeon, Gad). The same change also took place in LXX-Num 26, where Gad was moved from the triad Reuben-Simeon-Gad (vv. 5–18) to vv. 24–27, following Issachar.
 - 7) *LXX-Exod 35–40* possibly reflects a Hebrew version that is very different from MT, but further research needs to be carried out on these difficult chapters (see below, → 2.1.4.2).

2.1.4.2 The Documentary Hypothesis

Within the analysis of the relevance of textual sources to the literary history of the Torah, a discussion of their relation to the so-called Documentary Hypothesis is in order. When examining the textual sources on which the Documentary Hypothesis is based, we found only one, the Masoretic Text. In the historical-critical analysis, non-Masoretic sources are taken into consideration all the time, while the theory of the Documentary Hypothesis is based exclusively on MT, with one possible exception, LXX-Exod 35–40. This being the case, we may also formulate our conclusion in a positive way, noting that the Documentary Hypothesis is based on the combined evidence of all the textual sources, including MT.⁵ This situation is not

² The other two manuscripts of 4QRP, 4QRP^{a,b}, belong to the SP group (→ 1.2.3).

³ See my study “The Genealogical Lists in *Genesis 5* and *11* in Three Different Versions,” in Tov, *Collected Writings* 3, 221–38 and the bibliography mentioned there. Elaborating on his earlier work, *Genesis 1–11*, R. Hendel repeated in a later study that three different recensions were at work in ch. 5: “A Hasmonean Edition of MT *Genesis*?: The Implications of the Editions of the Chronology in *Genesis 5*,” *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 1 (2012): 1–17.

⁴ The symbol MT+ refers to the evidence of the MT group (MT, T, S, V).

⁵ Actually, MT provides the base for almost all literary theories. The Dtr revisions of Joshua–2 Kings and Jeremiah

the result of coincidence. It implies that all the textual sources reflect the assumed combination of the Pentateuchal documents to the same extent. It also implies that this literary activity took place before the textual sources branched off in different directions. Such an assumption necessarily has implications for our view of the original status of the Scripture text.

If this assumption is correct, the conclusions are intriguing from a textual point of view since we found virtually no additional evidence in the non-MT sources relevant to the Documentary Hypothesis. However, we could also claim that we should not even expect significant ancient variants in the non-Masoretic texts because, as a rule, MT is the most original witness in the Torah, and the other sources are secondary (see below, → 2.1.5). Harmonization is the major driving force behind all these non-Masoretic texts (→ 1.3.1.1.12; → 1.2.3).

By way of exception to this assumption, the following two sets of data could be relevant to the Documentary Hypothesis, although my study reached negative conclusions in this regard (see Tov, “Source Criticism”):

1) The main challenge to the Documentary Hypothesis from textual sources lies in the realm of the *divine names*. In my view, the few known variants in Hebrew sources are negligible. Equally insignificant are the variations in SP. On the other hand, the divine names in LXX do deserve attention. They have often been discussed in the literature, especially since the appearance of Baudissin’s monumental monograph on *Kyrios*, which contains a wealth of data.⁶ Most of these variations pertain to deviations from the standard LXX equivalents, *יהוה*/κύριος “Lord” and *אלהים*/θεός “God.” Some of the non-standard renderings (θεός “God” for *יהוה* “Lord” and κύριος “Lord” for *אלהים* “God”) could have been created by the translators, who might

seemingly reflect earlier pre-Dtr layers, but this is not the case. See Tov, “Source Criticism.”

⁶ W.W. Graf von Baudissin, *Kyrios als Gottesname im Judentum und seine Stelle in der Religionsgeschichte* (2 vols.; Giessen: Töpelmann, 1926–1929).

have lacked a fixed translation vocabulary at the beginning of their work. In such a scenario, the LXX evidence would be irrelevant. On the other hand, if LXX were based on differing Hebrew readings, this evidence should be taken into consideration.

However, in my view, this is not the case, with the possible exception of Genesis 1–11, in which LXX appears to differ frequently from the other sources. The equivalents in LXX could be relevant to the Documentary Hypothesis, and this issue was debated much at the beginning of the twentieth century (see below).

It has often been suggested that the unusual equivalents of LXX in these chapters reflect Hebrew variants, possibly shedding light on the Documentary Hypothesis. In Gen 2:4b–3:24, in particular, this suggestion is intriguing. MT of this unit (source J) uses mainly (20×) *יהוה אלהים* “Lord God” and also features *אלהים* “God” in 3:1b–5 (5×). If LXX reflects a different Hebrew text, this chapter in LXX would present a different grouping of *יהוה אלהים* “Lord God” (13×) and *יהוה* “Lord” (7× + 5×). This evidence would somewhat alter the analysis of the divine names, but in my view it is irrelevant to the Documentary Hypothesis.

The LXX renderings of the divine names in Genesis were brought to bear on the Documentary Hypothesis, especially at the beginning of the twentieth century,⁷ and in 2011 by Carr,⁸ but no firm suggestions have been made. One argument against the relevance of LXX for the Documentary Hypothesis was presented by Dahse, who claimed that scores of inner-Greek variants uproot the validity

⁷ See H.M. Wiener, *Pentateuchal Studies* (London: Elliot Stock, 1912); H.M. Wiener, *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism* (London: Elliot Stock, 1913), 13–41; J. Skinner, *The Divine Names in Genesis* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914); H.M. Wiener, *The Pentateuchal Text: A Reply to Dr. Skinner* (London: Elliot Stock, 1914) [reprinted from *BSac* 71 (1914): 218–68]; J.B. Harford, *Since Wellhausen: A Brief Survey of Recent Pentateuchal Criticism* (London: Hunter & Longhurst, 1926) [reprinted from *Expositor*, 1925]; Hendel, *Genesis 1–11, 35–39 likewise assumes that the LXX representation of the divine names reflects Hebrew variants, but he did not connect the evidence to the Documentary Hypothesis.

⁸ Carr, *Formation, 106–10.

LXX lacks and adds sections. Knohl stresses the fact that LXX lacks the incense altar (MT-Exod 35:15; 37:25–28), although that translation does mention incense in Exod 38:25 = MT-Exod 37:29. According to Knohl, LXX reflects a first compositional layer that mentioned only the *olah* altar, while the later MT refers to two altars.¹⁷ Likewise, according to Kuenen, Aejmelaeus, Schenker, and Carr,¹⁸ the Hebrew text underlying LXX preceded the more developed MT. LXX-Exod 35–40 differs more from the instructions in Exodus 25–31 than those of MT-Exod 35–40, and for Aejmelaeus this is reason enough to consider LXX earlier than the somewhat harmonized version of MT.¹⁹ Therefore, I delay a decision regarding this LXX text; the mentioned midrashic elements in this translation may point to its secondary nature.

2.1.5 Textual Development of the Torah

By its very nature, textual criticism deals with the written stage of the development of a composition. This description therefore focuses on the textual history of that composition starting with the earliest textual evidence, disregarding oral development. Thus, by definition, this analysis does not refer to the comparison or recording of different parallel stories in the Torah.

Our description takes the textual evidence as its point of departure, and not any of the textual theories on the history of the Scripture text, such as de Lagarde's theory of the original text, Kahle's theory of early parallel texts, or the local texts theory (→ 1.1.1.2; → 1.2.1). All these abstract theories derived from general ideas and not the evidence itself. In contrast, the following description attempts to be

text-based, but is not necessarily more objective than any of the others.

No solid facts are known about the textual condition of the Torah prior to 250 B.C.E., that is, the period of the first Qumran fragments (→ 2.1.2.1 above; → 2.2.1.7.9), and therefore whatever happened before the third pre-Christian century is mere speculation. For example, scholars speculate on the original text(s) of the biblical books and on the number of copies that circulated in ancient Israel in early times. Large-scale differences between texts, such as in Genesis 5 and 11 (see above, → 2.1.4.1) may have been created in these early centuries, but it is hard to date these and similar developments.

Written documents must have existed from a very early period although the date of the beginning of the textual transmission is unknown. It is natural to assume that the textual transmission began when the compositions contained in the biblical books had been completed. However, limited copying had already begun at an earlier stage when segments of the Scripture books existed in written form prior to the completion of the composition process. A description of the transmission of the biblical text thus begins with the completion of the literary compositions and, to a certain extent, even beforehand.

It seems that each of the literary genres developed differently during the course of their textual transmission. Major differences between textual witnesses are probably found in all types of literature. On the whole, scribes who allowed themselves the liberty of changing the content did so more frequently in prose than in poetry segments because prose texts can be rewritten more easily than poetry. However, by way of exception, some poetic texts were nevertheless rewritten.²⁰ On the other hand, in the final stages of the literary development of the Torah such as reflected in the textual witnesses, little rewriting activity is evidenced in the reworking of legal sections. Thus, there are hardly any cases where a law has been

Vetus Testamentum Graecum 2.1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991).

¹⁷ Conversation 27.5.2013.

¹⁸ Kuenen, *Historico-Critical Inquiry*, 73; A. Aejmelaeus, "Septuagintal Translation Techniques: A Solution to the Problem of the Tabernacle Account," in A. Aejmelaeus, **Trail*, 116–30 (121); A. Schenker, "Der Ursprung des massoretischen Textes im Licht der literarischen Varianten im Bibeltex," *Text* 23 (2007): 51–67 (59–60); Carr, **Formation*, 104.

¹⁹ Aejmelaeus, "Tabernacle Account," 128–30.

²⁰ See the many examples adduced by Teeter, *Scribal Laws*, 118–74.

added or omitted in one of the textual witnesses. There are also almost no instances in which the core of a law has been harmonized to another one when they differed. For example, it would have been easy to adapt a law in Deuteronomy to a parallel one in Exodus, Leviticus, or Numbers or vice versa but, with very few exceptions, changes of this kind simply were not made. The editors/scribes knew the limitations of their activities, and had they inserted such changes in legal material, they would have been changing divine utterances and would have obliterated the differences between the Pentateuchal law codes. One major exception to this description is found in the small harmonizing additions (less frequently: changes) in LXX, and less so in the SP group and other sources based on the formulation of parallel laws, but as a rule they do not alter the content of the laws themselves.²¹

The textual development of the five books of the Torah differed from that of the other Scripture books, but this fact has escaped the attention of scholars²² with the exception of an important study made by Kahle on the basis of the limited evidence that was available to him in 1915.²³ The central position of the Torah be-

comes clear when the following three criteria are reviewed:

- 1) The percentage of copies of the individual books of the Torah found at Qumran (43%) is twice as high as its relative position among the Bible books (22.5%), and three times as high (62.5%) as the figures at the other Judean Desert sites.²⁴ Genesis and Deuteronomy were especially popular, not only among the Torah books, but also among the combined Scripture books, along with Isaiah and Psalms. The popularity of the Torah is also shown by the large number of its Targumim (Onqelos and three different Palestinian Targumim: Pseudo-Jonathan, the Fragment Targum, and the Targum included in Codex Neofiti [→ 2.4.3.3]). These manifold translations reflect the importance of the Aramaic versions of the Torah for rabbinic Judaism. For all other books, only a single Targum is known apart from the two Targumim of Esther (→ 13–17.1.3);
- 2) The Torah is unique in that its textual branches are much more numerous than those of the other Scripture books. In the other Scripture books, one finds attestations of a single textual branch (Judges, Job, Ruth, Qohelet, Lamentations, Psalms, and probably also Isaiah) and rarely of three branches (Joshua and Samuel), but usually of two different branches (MT and LXX), as in 1–2 Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Proverbs, Esther, Canticles, Daniel, Ezra–Nehemiah, and Chronicles. The large number of text branches in the Torah text indicates the wide exegetical activity displayed in the copies of the Torah, including completely rewritten segments. Such activity took place in spite of its special sacred character and, more likely, because of it. Paradoxically, because of its popularity, the text of the Torah was altered more than that of the other books;

²¹ See the many examples adduced by Teeter, *Scribal Laws*, 118–74.

²² For example, this aspect was not mentioned by G.J. Brooke, “Torah in the Qumran Scrolls,” in *Bibel in jüdischer und christlicher Tradition: Festschrift für Johann Maier zum 60. Geburtstag* (eds. H. Merklein et al.; Bonn: Anton Hain, 1993), 97–120; S. White Crawford, “The Qumran Pentateuch Scrolls: Their Literary Growth and Textual Tradition,” in *The Qumran Legal Texts between the Hebrew Bible and Its Interpretation* (eds. K. De Troyer and A. Lange; Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 3–16.

²³ P. Kahle, “Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Pentateuchtextes,” *TSK* 88 (1915): 399–439; repr. in P. Kahle, *Opera Minora* (Leiden: Brill, 1956), 3–37. This study is quoted according to the page numbers of the latter publication. When Kahle wrote his study in 1915, he was familiar with less than half of the Torah texts known today but, even within the triad of witnesses of MT, LXX, and SP, he sensed that they reflected a special reality that differed from that of the other Scripture books. Some of the major conclusions of that study may not be acceptable, but Kahle opened up the area of the Torah for wide investigation and he had important insights into the nature of SP and LXX.

²⁴ For the figures, see Tov, **TCHB*, 96–98 and E. Tov, “Some Thoughts about the Diffusion of Biblical Manuscripts in Antiquity,” in *Transmission of Traditions and Production of Texts* (eds. S. Metso et al.; STDJ 92; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 151–72.

- 3) The Torah is unique in that it is the only Scripture book in which *textual* features are recognizable, namely harmonizations and variants replacing problematic readings, all of which reflect a free approach to the text.

Thanks to the Qumran discoveries, we are now aware of many textual branches²⁵ of the Torah contained in groups of texts and individual texts, together constituting between ten and twelve branches.²⁶ In my view, all these texts, with the exception of the liturgical texts, enjoyed the status of authoritative Scripture texts. In the current state of knowledge (2016), the MT group may be considered as reflecting the oldest tradition of the Torah text, or the “trunk,” from which the other textual groups branched off, while the status of items 9–12 is unclear. A second scenario would be that all known texts would have branched off from a common trunk, but in my view the multitude of secondary readings in the non-MT texts precludes such an option. A third possibility would be the as-

²⁵ The nature of these “branches” in relation to the “tree” or the “trunk” is unclear because it is not known which part of the texts extant in the last centuries B.C.E. and the first century C.E. has been preserved until today. As a result, the distance between the various witnesses and their number cannot be assessed well. The term “branch” may in some cases seem exaggerated, and for some witnesses the term “twig” may be more appropriate (suggested by S. White Crawford, personal communication, 2015). For example, in the case of the SP group, I name the ancient pre-Samaritan scrolls together with the medieval sources as representing two twigs coming from a common branch. I consider the related pre-Samaritan text 4QNum^b a separate branch because of its idiosyncratic nature (see the remark below), but others may consider this a twig in the SP group. Likewise, the nature and number of the Reworked Pentateuch texts and liturgical texts needs to be further defined.

²⁶ All of these are “texts” with the exception of the SP group (SP and the pre-Samaritan texts), which reflects a recension. The most characteristic readings of the SP group were created by editorial changes inserted in the earlier text. For an analysis of these editorial changes, see M. Segal, “The Text of the Hebrew Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Materia Judaica* 12 (2007): 5–20; Tov, *HB, GB, and Qumran*, 57–70; M. Kartveit, *The Origin of the Samaritans* (VTSup 128; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 259–312; M.M. Zahn, *Rethinking Rewritten Scripture: Composition and Exegesis in the 4QReworked Pentateuch Manuscripts* (STDJ 95; Leiden: Brill, 2011).

sumption of three parallel stems, à la Paul Kahle, but this assumption has never been substantiated. Therefore I resort to the view of a single trunk, that of MT (block I), from which block II (all other textual traditions) branched off. The following list of the ancient Torah text includes all presumed textual branches of the Torah, listed in their presumed historical sequence.

- 1) MT (proto-Masoretic texts; → 2.2.2): all the texts found at the Judean Desert sites except for Qumran are virtually identical to the medieval text of MT (→ 1.2.2). Further, at Qumran we find many scrolls that are *close* to MT and are often named “MT-like” or “semi-Masoretic.” In my view (→ 2.1.6 below), the proto-Masoretic texts hold a central place in the development of the Torah text, while the great majority of the other texts represent later developments. The proto-MT group is reflected by Scripture texts from the Judean Desert, *tefillin*, most ancient translations and quotations in rabbinic literature. The MT-like group is reflected by Scripture texts from Qumran and *tefillin*.

The following sources (2–12? = block II) probably derived from the proto-MT group (= block I), as most of them contain many secondary readings in comparison with MT although they contain primary readings as well. These sources probably branched off from MT as one large LXX-SP Palestinian group (2–4), from which again further branches and twigs developed. It seems now clear (2016) that the history of the text of the Torah should be understood in terms of two large text blocks, the group of MT and its congeners (1 = block I) on the one hand, and the LXX-SP group (2–4) and its congeners (5–8) on the other (= block II). Virtually all rewritten compositions are based on the second textual block, while the MT text is quoted only in rabbinic literature.²⁷ The status of texts 9–12 is unclear.

²⁷ See my study “The Textual Base of the Biblical Quotations in Second Temple Compositions,” forthcoming.

- 2) The first textual tradition that branched off from the LXX-SP base (→ 2.2.3)²⁸ was the *Vorlage* of LXX (→ 2.4.1), reflecting early as well as late elements. LXX remained closer to the common LXX-SP base than the SP group.
- 3-4) At a later stage, the SP (→ 2.2.4) group branched off from the common LXX-SP source. The SP group consists of three layers, in historical sequence: a single pre-Samaritan text 4QNum^b (3), reflecting a transition stage between LXX and the SP group, the other pre-Samaritan texts (4), and the medieval texts continuing the pre-Samaritan texts (4a).
- 5) Two additional texts (group 5) reflect a further development of the SP group, viz., 4QRPa (4Q158)²⁹ and 4QRPb (4Q364), but they differ substantially from SP since that group almost never inserts elements not found elsewhere in MT. On the other hand, group 5 inserts exegetical elements that are not found in any of the other witnesses (→ 2.2.1.7; → 2.2.3.4).
- 6-7) The next sources to depart from the SP group are two exegetical Torah scrolls, 4QReworkedPentateuch^{c-d}, each of them carrying individual features (→ 2.2.1.7; → 2.2.3.4). They contain running biblical texts intertwined with large and small exegetical additions such as an expanded Song of Miriam in 4QRP^c 6ai and 6c, not equaled by any other source. The two texts are clearly closer to LXX-SP than to MT.
- 8) Several liturgical texts display more agreements with LXX-SP than with MT: 4QDeut^{j,kl,n} (→ 2.2.1.7.17, → 2.2.1.7.18) that carried the same passages as the *tefillin*³⁰ and two groups of *tefillin* from Qumran.³¹ They probably were based on the LXX-SP group. In these texts, harmonization, including the addition of small pericopes, is the main textual-editorial feature. These texts probably carried authority as liturgical texts, but not as Scripture texts.³²
- 9-12) Appendix: Four texts are not exclusively close to any of the mentioned texts:³³ 4Q[Gen-]Exod^b (→ 2.2.1.7.7), 11QpaleoLev^a (→ 2.2.1.7.12),³⁴ 4QDeut^{c,h} (→ 2.2.1.7.15; → 2.2.1.7.16). Because many or most of the scrolls from antiquity have been lost, the impression is created as if these four frag-

²⁸ In all five books of the Pentateuch these two sources agree frequently in secondary readings, especially in harmonizing pluses. This agreement is extended to the so-called pre-Samaritan Qumran texts. Compared with MT, the two texts also have in common a revision of the genealogical lists in Genesis 5 and 11, in which clear revisional and hence secondary traits are recognizable. This understanding was initiated by Gesenius, **Pent. Sam.*, 24 who named the common text of the SP and LXX an "Alexandrino-Samaritan edition," and was continued in my own studies such as of Deuteronomy in Tov, **HB, GB, and Qumran*, 271-82.

²⁹ The 2011 study of M.M. Zahn, "Building Textual Bridges: Towards an Understanding of 4Q158 (4QReworked Pentateuch A)," in *The Mermaid and the Partridge, Essays from the Copenhagen Conference on Revising Texts from Cave Four* (eds. G.J. Brooke and J. Høgenhaven; Leiden: Brill, 2011), 13-32 stressed the independent nature of that text.

³⁰ 4QDeut^j contains sections from Deuteronomy 5, 8, 10, 11, 32 and Exodus 12, 13; 4QDeut^{kl} contains sections from Deuteronomy 5, 11, 32; 4QDeutⁿ contains passages from Deuteronomy 8 and 5.

³¹ See my forthcoming study "The *Tefillin* from the Judean Desert and the Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible." Two groups of *tefillin* are closely related to the LXX-SP text base as opposed to MT, one written in a conservative spelling pattern, often close to MT (4QPhyl C, D-E-F, R, S; 4QPhyl 4), while another one is written in the pattern of the Qumran Scribal Practice (4QPhyl A, B, G-H-I, J-K, L-N, O, P, Q).

³² The liturgical character of 4QDeut^j is the more likely because of its small size. See Tov, **HB, GB, and Qumran*, 37. Note further that both 4QDeut^j and 4QDeutⁿ start with Deut 5:1 and continue until the beginning of ch. 6. Both texts also contain a fragment that covers Deut 8:5-10. See Eshel, "4QDeutⁿ," 151.

³³ Because of their fragmentary condition, not all the Qumran texts that are probably non-aligned are included in this list. Probable candidates are: 4QGen^k; 4QExod^d, covering Exod 13:15-16 and 15:1, and thus omitting the narrative sections Exod 13:17-22 and Exodus 14, possibly containing an abbreviated Exodus text; 4QDeut^g, in some ways close to LXX (→ 2.2.1.6.3); 5QDeut (→ 2.2.1.5).

³⁴ See my study "The Textual Character of the Leviticus Scroll from Qumran Cave 11," *Shnaton* 3 (1978): 238-44 [Hebr. with Eng. summ.].

mentary scrolls deserve a special place in the stemma, but due to the loss of data the situation remains unclear.

This classification does not include texts whose major deviation from the others is in their orthographic character. Thus, many texts copied according to the so-called Qumran Scribal Practice reflect an orthography and morphology that diverge widely from the other texts. This practice is best known from 1QIsa^a, but is reflected also in several Torah scrolls and liturgical texts. A substantial group of *tefillin* is connected with the LXX-SP group. The status of 1QDeut^a and 4QDeut^{k2, m} is unclear. In any event, none of the texts written in the Qumran Scribal Practice is close to MT.

Owing to several uncertainties,³⁵ no precise number can be given for the textual branches in the Torah, but it is probably between ten and twelve, and much larger than the one to three branches in the other biblical books. In any event, the special sacred nature of the Torah, accepted by all, did not prevent its exegetical-literary and textual development as reflected in its widely divergent textual branches from the third century B.C.E. onwards. From our modern perspective, the opposite may have been expected, namely that the special sanctity of the Torah would have created a conservative approach of not allowing any changes in the text, as expressed by *b. Qidd. 30a*: “The ancients were called *soferim* because they counted every letter in the Torah.” However, this statement reflects a time much later than that of the Qumran scrolls and it pertains only to the proto-Masoretic manuscripts.³⁶ This talmudic dictum shows that our modern thinking is often wrongly

³⁵ The following uncertainties should be taken into consideration: 1) the SP group is counted as three units, see above, and not as two or one unit(s); 2) the exact number of the liturgical texts is unknown; 3) four “non-aligned” texts were singled out (9–12), but their number could have been larger.

³⁶ Jeremiah and Ezekiel also display recognizable features, namely a short text tradition (LXX and two Qumran scrolls) as opposed to a long one (MT and two Qumran scrolls), but these features were probably created at the literary-development stage of the books.

influenced by the character of only one segment of the transmission history of the Pentateuchal text, namely the proto-Masoretic tradition (see below, → 2.1.6).

All these data lead to the central question as to why so many textual branches were created in the Torah and not in the other books. In my view, this situation was due to the popularity³⁷ the Torah enjoyed because of its special sanctity.³⁸ The very act of inserting changes into each new copy of a Torah scroll, often creating a new textual branch, was acceptable in early times. In a way, each scribe created a new version of the composition that was equally as authoritative as its predecessors. Among the known textual sources, only MT disallowed such changes, at least after the mid-third century B.C.E., from which time the oldest scrolls are known (for the dichotomy and the other texts, see below, → 2.1.6).

The popularity of the Torah also brought about the creation of many new literary works, the so-called rewritten Bible compositions that reworked the stories and legal segments of the Torah: *Jubilees*, *Enoch*, 4–11QTemple, 4QApocryphon of Moses, and many additional Qumran compositions. These new compositions created additional textual branches in addition to those of the direct text witnesses. The biblical quotations in these texts were not based on MT, but on the popularizing pre-Samaritan text tradition and the Hebrew source of LXX, as is visible in 4QTest,³⁹ 4QComm Gen A (4Q252), 4–11QTemple,⁴⁰ *Jubi-*

³⁷ See Tov, “The Scribal and Textual Transmission of the Torah Analyzed in Light of Its Sanctity,” in *Pentateuchal Traditions in the Late Second Temple Period. Proceedings of the International Workshop in Tokyo, August 28–31, 2007* (eds. A. Moriya and G. Hata; JSJSup 158; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 57–72.

³⁸ In light of this, it is noteworthy that the copying procedures of the Torah were virtually identical to those of the other biblical books and all the non-biblical books. See Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 99–103, 108–18.

³⁹ In this sectarian text, each of the biblical sections reflects a different textual pattern: Exod 20:21 (a pre-Samaritan text combining MT-Deut 5:28–29 and 18:18–19 as in SP), Num 24:15–17 (undetermined character), and Deut 33:8–11 (very close to the non-aligned scroll 4QDeut^h).

⁴⁰ See E. Tov, “The Temple Scroll and Old Testament Textual Criticism,” *Erlsr* 16 (Harry M. Orlinsky Volume; eds. B.A. Levine

lees,⁴¹ the Genesis Apocryphon (probably),⁴² CD, and the Cave 4 scrolls of the *Damascus Document*.⁴³ The Qumran textual evidence relating to the scrolls that were brought to Qumran does not show a preponderance of these pre-Samaritan texts since the textual tradition that was close to the MT-like texts was more central for the Qumranites.

It is noteworthy that the popularity and frequent use of Isaiah and Psalms, representing different literary genres, did not create deviating text branches. Probably the scribes of these books did not feel at ease rewriting Isaiah's prophecies or the psalmic literature, while other scribes felt at ease reworking the stories of the Torah.

A description of the features of the textual branches of the Torah allows us to better understand the relation between them and to compose a genealogical tree (*stemma*) that displays these relations graphically. After all, we often try to express an opinion on the relation between all ancient texts as background material for the exegetical and textual comparison of these texts. This stemma pertains only to the Torah. At the top of the stemma⁴⁴ stand the sources that do not display

secondary features, namely proto-MT (1) continued by the medieval text. From this text branched off the "MT-like" texts, several *tefillin*, and several ancient versions (T, V, *kaige*-Th, Aquila, and Symmachus). Rather unexpectedly, contextual harmonization becomes the main criterion for characterizing the texts.⁴⁵ These harmonizations appear more in the Torah than in the other books, not because these books provide fewer occasions for harmonization, but because the scribes of the Torah scrolls endeavored to create what they considered to be near-perfect copies of the most sacred book of all.

The major group that branched off from MT was the common LXX-SP text. From it branched off in historical sequence: the Hebrew source of LXX (2) the SP group (3-4) and all other texts such as described above.

In this way, we are able to describe in broad strokes the development of the textual witnesses of the Torah. In my view, these proto-MT texts derived from a single copy or a very closely knit tradition. Most other texts branched off from that text or tradition, and their secondary features are often visible in their harmonizing character. Eshel had a premonition of the importance of this development when naming a group of Hebrew texts "harmonis-

and A. Malamet; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society/Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1982), 100–11 [Hebr. with Eng. summ.]; L.H. Schiffman, "The Septuagint and the Temple Scroll: Shared 'Halakhic' Variants," in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings: Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and Its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings (Manchester, 1990)* (eds. G.J. Brooke and B. Lindars; SBLSCS 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 277–97. I consider the *Vorlage* of this scroll "non-aligned," while Schiffman emphasizes the links between LXX and the Temple Scroll.

⁴¹ According to J.C. VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (HSM 14; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977), 137, *Jubilees* especially reflects readings of SP and LXX, texts that were "at home in Palestine." Similarly, Lange, **Handbuch*, 165.

⁴² See J.C. VanderKam, "The Textual Affinities of the Biblical Citations in the Genesis Apocryphon," *JBL* 97 (1978): 45–55.

⁴³ See the data provided by Lange, **Handbuch*, 158–64.

⁴⁴ A different type of *stemma* is presented by Lange, **Handbuch*, 173. Among the leading ideas of that *stemma* that differ from our own reconstruction are: 1) LXX preceded MT; 2) SP preceded MT; 3) 4QDeut⁹ ought to be positioned closer to LXX. In determining proximity between textual sources, com-

mon mistakes ("Leitfehler") are often taken into consideration. However, in my view, in the case of Hebrew Scripture too few sources have been preserved in order to make this argument a sound principle. Another type of *stemma* is presented in the exemplification of Kahle's ideas presented best in a chart in E. Sellin and G. Fohrer, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (10th ed.; Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1965), 567 in which the development of the text of the Torah is described as a three-branched tree (MT, LXX, and SP), presenting three text types. This chart illustrates the classical view of both the tripartite division and the character of the textual witnesses that remained standard in the research until the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls became truly felt. A further type of *stemma* of the text of Exodus is offered by R.S. Hendel, "Assessing the Text-Critical Theories of the Hebrew Bible after Qumran," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. T.H. Lim and J.J. Collins; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 281–302.

⁴⁵ Thus already E. Eshel, "4QDeut⁹." The importance of this textual and literary criterion is also stressed much by Carr, **Formation*, 90–98.

tic.”⁴⁶ I go one step further in recognizing harmonizing tendencies in all texts in block II.

Needless to say, this description sketches the development of the texts only in general lines. With regard to individual readings, we are reminded of the famous dictum of de Lagarde: “ich glaube ... das keine hds der LXX so gut ist, dass sie nicht oft genug schlechte lesarten, keine so schlecht dass sie nicht mitunter ein gutes körnchen böte.” [I believe ... that no manuscript of the LXX is so good that it contains no bad readings, and that not one is so bad that it does not contain an occasional pearl.]⁴⁷

2.1.6 Two Different Scribal Approaches toward the Sacred Status of the Torah

The Torah had a distinctive, sacred status that could have influenced all of its scribes to approach that book with special care and a lower level of scribal intervention than the other Scripture books. However, the evidence does not support such an assumption across the board. When examining the approach of scribes towards the Torah, a clear distinction can be made between two types of scribes (→ 1.2.2.3): 1) scribes of all the ancient Torah scrolls except for those of the proto-Masoretic tradition; and 2) scribes copying the proto-MT scrolls and subsequently MT. The Torah was greatly hallowed by all the scribes, more so than the other books. However, the adoption of this sanctity had different implications for different groups of scribes. In the period for which we have textual evidence (from 250 B.C.E. onwards), for the scribes of group 2 this sanctity implied an approach of not changing the content. On the other hand, all other scribes (group 1) approached that text like any other text, Scripture or otherwise, freely changing its content, language, small details, and orthography, thus multiplying textual variation. The two groups are unequally distributed among the known scrolls because group 1 contains many more different *types* of witnesses. On the other hand, among the Judean

Desert texts, the proto-Masoretic texts are the most frequent.⁴⁸

With regard to both groups, it should be emphasized that in most technical areas, scribes did not distinguish between biblical and non-biblical scrolls.⁴⁹ This conclusion pertains to the following parameters: writing materials; technical aspects of the writing (length of scrolls, sheets, and columns; number of columns per sheet; height of columns, margins, horizontal and vertical ruling; repair-stitching; patching; initial and final handle sheets; use of guide dots/strokes); writing practices, such as divisions between words, small sense units (stichs and verses), and larger sense units; the special layout of poetical units, scribal marks, correction procedures, and scripts.⁵⁰

2.1.6.1 Scribes of All the Texts Except for MT

The scribes of the many different Torah texts found in the Judean Desert together with the SP group and the *Vorlage* of LXX did not interpret the concept of sanctity in the same way as the scribes of the proto-MT texts. They display a free approach at all levels as is visible in the comparison of these sources with

⁴⁸ For a different opinion on the number of proto-Masoretic Torah scrolls that once existed, see → 1.2.2.2.3.

⁴⁹ Under these circumstances, it would not be unusual to find scribes who copied both a Torah scroll and other scrolls. Such a scribe has not been found, but relevant evidence has been found beyond the Torah in the scribe who copied the non-biblical texts 1QS, 1QSa, 1QSB, and the biblical 4QSam^c. The hand of this scribe is also visible in several corrections in 1QIsa^a. For further details regarding Qumran scribes who wrote more than one manuscript, see Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 23–24.

⁵⁰ The rules for the writing of sacred texts recorded in *Massekhet Soferim* and in earlier rabbinic sources create the impression that they were devised especially for the writing of sacred books. However, most details recorded there pertain to writing practices employed in an identical way in non-sacred texts during the Second Temple period. For example, *Sop.* 1.15 states that texts that deviate from the norm regarding the indication of open and closed sections cannot be used as sacred writings. However, this practice, which is basically a paragraphing system, was followed in most compositions written in the Qumran period, biblical and non-biblical. Thus, the practice itself was not limited to the copying of Scripture, and hence was not sacred, but the tradition of indicating a specific type of paragraphing in a given instance in MT carried authority.

⁴⁶ Eshel, “4QDeut^a,” 117–54.

⁴⁷ De Lagarde, *Anmerkungen*, 3 n. 1.

the proto-MT texts and any of the sources of the other Scripture books:

- *Editorial intervention.* The various witnesses of the Torah (SP, many Qumran scrolls listed above in → 2.1.5, the *Vorlage* of LXX) reflect the same degree of editorial intervention as in the other books.
- *Orthography and morphology.* The scribal practice of applying a special, very full orthography and a special morphological system to a number of Qumran scrolls was used for Torah scrolls as well. This idiosyncratic orthography and morphology, best known from 1QIsa^a (→ 6.2.1.1), is found also in 1QDeut^a, 2QExod^{b?}, 2QNum^{b?}, 2QDeut^{c?}, 4Q[Gen]Exod^b, 4QExod^{d?}, 4QNum^b, 4QDeut^j V–XII, 4QDeut^{k1}, 4QDeut^{k2}, and 4QDeut^m. Most of these scrolls are also copied inconsistently and in careless handwriting.
- *Harmonizations.* The manuscripts of the Torah contain many harmonizing additions and changes in small details. Contrary to the majority view in the scholarly literature, this phenomenon actually prevails more in LXX than in the SP group (→ 1.3.1.1.12). Although there are no comparative statistics regarding the level of harmonization in the various Scripture books, we cannot avoid the impression that there are more such phenomena in the Torah than in the other books. There are many occasions for harmonization in the prose books from Joshua to 2 Kings and in Chronicles that have remained unharmonized. The absence of major harmonizing in the post-Pentateuchal books must be ascribed to a lack of interest in making the details in these books match one another. Presumably there was a constant interest in improving the divine message of the Torah; from a textual point of view, these improvements involved a great amount of freedom.
- *Scribal intervention.* A calculation of the average number of corrections in each scroll⁵¹ shows

⁵¹ The level of scribal intervention can be measured by dividing the number of lines preserved (in full or in part)

that the approach towards biblical texts including the Torah is not more careful than that towards non-biblical texts. At the same time, many biblical scrolls display a low level of scribal intervention, especially texts written in the paleo-Hebrew script⁵² as well as several other texts. Most other Torah texts hold an intermediate position regarding the amount of scribal intervention.

As a result, paradoxically, many scrolls of the Torah were rewritten and changed more extensively than the texts of other biblical books in the Second Temple period, due to the Torah's popularity resulting from its sanctity, thus causing increased textual variation (see above, → 2.1.5).

2.1.6.2 Scribes of the Proto-Masoretic Tradition

The major feature of the proto-Masoretic texts as compared with the other texts is their precision in matters of content and scribal conventions. This precision is also visible in the Torah pericopes included in the *tefillin* of the MT type (especially MurPhyl, 34SePhyl, and 8QPhyl I; see n. 31 above). These pericopes are written in the orthography of MT and reflect the pericopes prescribed in rabbinic literature, differing from the *tefillin* that contain different pericopes and are written in the Qumran Scribal Practice. Accordingly, the concept of sacredness adopted by the circle that perpetuated the proto-Masoretic text was that of not changing the Torah text, at least as it is known to us from the period of the mid-third century B.C.E. onwards.

Reflecting this approach, the proto-Masoretic texts found at the various sites in the Judean Desert other than Qumran were copied with great care.

by the number of instances of scribal intervention (linear or supralinear corrections, deletions, erasures, reshaping of letters). A high level of scribal intervention (an average of one correction in less than ten lines) is visible in 1QIsa^a and several other biblical scrolls, including two Torah scrolls: 4QDeut^m (Qumran scribal practice), 5QDeut, 4QJosh^b, 4QJudg^b, 4QIsa^a, 4QJer^a, 4QXII^c, 4QXII^e, 11QPs^a, 4QCant^b, 4QQoh^a. See the tabulations in Tov, **Scribal Practices*, 279–88, 332–35.

⁵² 4QpaleoGen-Exod^l (MT), 4QpaleoExod^m (SP), 4QpaleoDeut^r (MT), 11QpaleoLev^a (independent). See below.

They were internally identical, and virtually agree with the medieval MT. These texts differ as much from codex MT⁴ as the medieval manuscripts of MT differ from one another (Tov, *TCHB, 29–31). The MT-like manuscripts from Qumran are slightly more distant from the medieval manuscripts (Tov, *TCHB, 31–33). It seems to us that this identity could have been achieved only if all the manuscripts from the Judean Desert were copied from a single source, a master copy located in a central place, probably the temple until 70 C.E., and subsequently in another central location (Jamnia?).⁵³

Two features reflect the scribal care of the proto-Masoretic tradition:

- *Deluxe format.* A remarkably large percentage of the proto-Masoretic Judean Desert scrolls display a *deluxe* format,⁵⁴ reflecting scribal care. From 50 B.C.E. onwards, large *deluxe* scroll editions were prepared especially for proto-Masoretic biblical scrolls, and within that group,

⁵³ This identity is evident from the discussion in *b. B. Bat.* 14b and from the names of the three scrolls found in the temple court relating to passages in the Torah. See *m. Kelim* 15.6; *m. Mo'ed Qat.* 3.4; *b. B. Bat.* 14b; *b. Yoma* 69a–b; *y. Sanh.* 2.20c. This master copy is known from rabbinic sources as the *sefer ha-azara* probably referring only to the Torah, but it stands to reason that the other Scripture books were also found in the temple. In rabbinic literature, a scroll copied from this master copy was named a “corrected scroll,” *sefer muggah*. For this purpose, the temple employed professional *maggihim*, “correctors” or “revisers,” whose task it was to safeguard precision in the copying of the text. For example, “*maggihim* of books in Jerusalem received their fees from the temple funds” (*b. Ketub.* 106a). Tov, *TCHB, 29–31 suggested that some of these “corrected copies” were found in the Judean Desert at sites other than Qumran (the first circle), and that the MT-like copies found at Qumran (the second circle), which are more distant from MT, were copied from them.

⁵⁴ The assumption of *deluxe* editions is based on the following parameters: 1) Large margins usually accompany texts with a large format; 2) The great majority of the scrolls written in *deluxe* format reflect the medieval text of MT. Since the *deluxe* format was used mainly for scrolls of the Masoretic family, we assume that these scrolls followed the rules of the spiritual center of Judaism in Jerusalem, the same center that subsequently formulated the writing instructions that were transmitted in the Talmud and *Massekhet Soferim*; 3) As a rule, *deluxe* rolls had fewer mistakes that needed correction and are therefore characterized by a low level of scribal intervention.

mainly for the Torah.⁵⁵ In fact, *all* the scrolls from Naḥal Ḥever, Murabba'at, and Masada for which the margins are known are of this type, while MasLev^a (2.8 cm), MasLev^b (2.7 cm), and 5/6HevPs (2.5–2.7 cm) come very close (all the biblical scrolls found at these sites attest an unpointed text that is almost completely identical to the medieval consonantal text of MT).

- *Paleo-Hebrew Torah Scrolls.* The preserved Bible texts written in the paleo-Hebrew script contain only texts of the Torah and Job.⁵⁶ These ancient books were thus singled out for writing in the paleo-Hebrew script. Texts written in that script were copied more carefully than most texts written in the square script. Most of these paleo-Hebrew texts reflect the proto-Masoretic text, but since 4QpaleoExod^m (close to SP) reflects a different tradition, the very minimal scribal intervention should not be connected to the proto-Masoretic character of these scrolls, but rather to the milieu in which scribes wrote in this special script (Sadducees?).⁵⁷

2.1.7 Authoritative Status (→ 11.2.1)

The oldest part of Hebrew Scripture, the Torah, perceived as God's word, carried authority for all later generations, as is visible in the later Scripture books. The Torah influenced the prophets, exemplified by the influence of Leviticus on Ezekiel and that of Deuteronomy on Jeremiah. Likewise, the earlier historical books carried authority in the eyes of the Chronicler, who reworked them.

Before the time of the earliest textual witnesses from Qumran, that is, before the middle of the third century B.C.E., authoritative scrolls were circulating that contained different textual forms. It is necessary to make this assumption if LXX of the Torah was indeed prepared at the beginning of the third

⁵⁵ For a list, see Tov, *Scribal Practices, 125–29. The Torah scrolls are: 2QNum^a, 4QGen^b, 4QExod^c, 4QpaleoGen-Exod^d, 4QpaleoExod^m, 4QDeut^g 11, 4QDeut^{kl}, MurGen 1, MurNum 6, XHev/SeNum^b, 34SeNum, MasDeut. Among the thirty Judean Desert luxury scrolls, twelve (40 %) are of the Torah.

⁵⁶ Note that the latter is traditionally ascribed to Moses.

⁵⁷ Thus Tov, *Scribal Practices, 248.

century B.C.E. (→ 1.3.1.1.5), since its *Vorlage* differed from MT, which probably already existed at that time. However, we have no further tangible evidence for textual plurality in earlier periods.

In the discussion of the status of Scripture scrolls before the first century C.E., we limit ourselves to the known evidence, thus necessarily focusing on the Judean Desert scrolls. The main question is, were *all* the copies of Scripture scrolls found there considered authoritative? There is no unequivocal answer to this question, since there is no consensus among scholars regarding the nature of many “biblical” scrolls.

Authoritative scrolls are scrolls that were considered to contain “Scripture,” which one could study, from which one could quote, which one could read in religious gatherings or in one’s personal meditation, and which formed the basis for religious practice, especially Halakha. I distinguish between such authoritative Scripture scrolls and scrolls with scriptural content, that is Scripture-like scrolls that were not considered to be Scripture, viz., partial Scripture scrolls, and liturgical scrolls. However, for many scholars, these liturgical and partial scrolls are also considered Scripture, thus complicating the analysis. We distinguish between three types of scrolls found at Qumran. This discussion pertains to Scripture as a whole, with a special application to the Torah.

- 1) *Authoritative Scripture Scrolls*. In the Qumran corpus, scholars count between 210 and 212 fragmentary Scripture scrolls found in eleven Qumran caves. This number also includes the following two groups, which in my thinking need to be removed from the main group, reducing the overall number of Scripture scrolls by some forty.
- 2) *Partial Scripture Scrolls*. A small number of Torah scrolls covering only parts of books were probably meant for personal use:
 - 4QExod^d, covering Exod 13:15–16 and 15:1, thus omitting the narrative sections Exod 13:17–22 and Exodus 14;
 - 4QDeut^g: This scroll probably covered only the Song of Moses.
- 3) *Liturgical Scrolls (or Personal Copies)*. The litur-

gical character of scrolls is presumed for several scrolls of the Torah and Psalms. The assumption of such a use for these scrolls is more commonly accepted for the Torah scrolls than for the Psalms scrolls. In the Torah, we can also easily posit an opposition between liturgical and other scrolls, while in the Qumran Psalms there is no visible opposition between the presumed liturgical scrolls and an MT Psalter since unmistakable copies of an MT Psalter were not found at Qumran (→ 10.2.1.1; → 10.2.2). In other words, the Qumran community did accept the Psalter as authoritative, but its Masoretic character, as in the Masada Psalters, cannot be established. Since the assumption of liturgical scrolls is not without doubt, it is also possible that these scrolls were prepared for personal use.

In the case of the Torah, a number of “Scripture” texts from the Judean Desert only contain segments of chapters that are also included in the *tefillin* and *mezuzot*,⁵⁸ as well as Deuteronomy 8,⁵⁹ and are therefore often described as liturgical.⁶⁰ The argument for their liturgical use is supported by the small size of several scrolls,⁶¹ precluding the possibility that they would have contained a complete biblical book. The liturgical use of these

⁵⁸ The *tefillin* and *mezuzot* are not regular biblical texts, although they consist of Torah passages, separated by a *vacat* in the middle of the line or a blank line. The range of textual variation in these texts reflects the known variants between biblical manuscripts, and is not specific to these excerpted texts. At the same time, the juxtaposition of different texts is not referred to in literary or text-critical analyses. The Scripture chapters from which excerpts are included in the Qumran copies of these *tefillin* and *mezuzot* are: Exodus 12, 13; Deuteronomy 5, 6, 10, 11, 32. See Tov, “Excerpted and Abbreviated Biblical Texts,” in **HB, GB, and Qumran*, 30–32.

⁵⁹ The assumption of liturgical use is based on an argument from silence, as other fragments of these scrolls may have been lost. Furthermore, in no case has a join between chapters been preserved in the scrolls mentioned below.

⁶⁰ For references to the liturgical use of some texts, see J.A. Duncan, **DJD XIV*, 79 and M. Weinfeld, “Grace after Meals,” *JBL* 111 (1992): 427–40.

⁶¹ 4QDeut^h: 14 lines; 4QDeutⁿ: 12–14 lines; 4QDeut^g: 11 lines; 4QPs^s: 8 lines.

scrolls would have included devotional reading from these chapters, privately or in religious gatherings.⁶²

While the mentioned liturgical and abbreviated scrolls probably were not considered authoritative Scripture texts, all others were. However, how can we prove this point? One person's Scripture-like scroll is another's Scripture. I suggest that the default assumption should be that most Qumran scrolls were authoritative.

This assumption implies that the individual scrolls carried authority before the complete Scripture canon existed. We suggest that all the Scripture scrolls found at Qumran were considered authoritative by the Qumran community, as well as by all persons and communities in ancient Israel, although in the latter case it is unclear which source other than tradition granted that authority. The assumption of the acceptance of scrolls as authoritative outside Qumran is necessary since probably most Qumran scrolls were brought there from outside. The concept of "Scripture" refers to all the books of the Hebrew Bible contained in MT, and possibly more. This view on the granting of authority at Qumran and in the Judean Desert in general is based on several arguments that are discussed in detail elsewhere.⁶³ Typical for this period is the mixture of texts in the sectarian composition 4QTestimonia (4Q175), which quoted from three scrolls of a differing textual nature (together with a quotation from a non-biblical composition, 4QapocrJosh^b [4Q379] 22), all of them considered authoritative. The first biblical quotation reflects SP in combining two Scripture verses that are remote in MT,⁶⁴ while the third one, from Deut 33:8–11, may have been based on 4QDeut^h, a textually

independent scroll.⁶⁵ The second quotation, Num 24:15–17, is of undetermined character. The different nature of these scrolls shows that the author of 4QTestimonia used different types of scrolls without being aware of their mixture.

The textual plurality of the Qumran corpus comes to light in these data:

- a) *Pluralistic collection.* The Qumran corpus is pluralistic,⁶⁶ due among other things to the different origin and nature of the scrolls that were imported into the community and copied locally.
- b) *Lack of preference for a specific biblical text in the biblical quotations included in the sectarian Qumran compositions.* No specific text or text group is preferred in these quotations, as analyzed in detail by Lange, **Handbuch*, 158–68.

The further back we go in time, the less the concept of the sanctity of the Torah influenced the textual transmission and, at an earlier stage, the final stage of editing. In the last centuries before the Common Era, the transmission of the Torah manuscripts as reflected in the Judean Desert texts was no more precise than that of the other books, except for the two features recognized (the use of *deluxe* Torah scrolls and of the paleo-Hebrew script; → 2.1.6.2) and they probably pertained only to certain groups within Judaism. This approach is also visible in the development of textual variety everywhere except for the Masoretic family.⁶⁷ Because of the great

⁶² 4QDeutⁱ, containing sections from Deuteronomy 5, 8, 10, 11, 32, and Exodus 12, 13; 4QDeut^{k1}, containing sections from Deuteronomy 5, 11, 32; 4QDeut^a, covering Deuteronomy 8, 5 (in that sequence). On the liturgical Psalms scrolls, see → 2.1.5 above.

⁶³ E. Tov, "Were Early Hebrew Scripture Texts Authoritative?" forthcoming.

⁶⁴ The two pericopes that are remote in MT (Deut 5:28–29, 18:18–19) are combined in SP (Exod 20:21). 4QRP^a (4Q158) frg. 6 likewise juxtaposes the two texts.

⁶⁵ See E. Tov, "The Contribution of the Qumran Scrolls to the Understanding of the LXX," in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings: Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and Its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings, Manchester, 1990* (eds. G.J. Brooke and B. Lindars; SBLSCS 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 11–47 (31–35); J.A. Duncan, "New Readings for the 'Blessing of Moses' from Qumran," *JBL* 114 (1995): 273–90; Lange, **Handbuch*, 163–64.

⁶⁶ See Tov, **TCHB*, 107–10; E. Ulrich, "Pluriformity in the Biblical Text, Text Groups, and Questions of Canon," in **Madrid Qumran Congress*, 1.23–41; A. Lange, "The Textual Plurality of Jewish Scriptures in the Second Temple Period in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Qumran and the Bible: Studying the Jewish and Christian Scriptures in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. N. David and A. Lange; CBET 57; Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 43–96.

⁶⁷ Only a limited amount of textual variety was created within the Masoretic family.

interest in the Torah, a sizeable number of manuscripts and new compositions were circulating, which ultimately gave rise to greater textual variation in the Five Books of Moses than in the other books.

2.1.8 History of Research

The history of research of the Torah parallels that of the complete Bible, but some theories were developed specifically for the Torah. Surprisingly little has been written about the textual development of the Torah with the exception of Kahle's epoch-making study of 1915 (*"Untersuchungen") and the studies recorded below.

Until 1947, when the first Qumran scrolls were discovered, the biblical text was known from many textual witnesses, both Hebrew and translated, early and late. These texts were generally described according to a certain internal hierarchy. From the beginning of the seventeenth century, when SP became known in Europe, scholars presupposed the central status of MT, SP, and the Hebrew *Vorlage* of LXX, and placed the remaining textual witnesses in a subordinate relation to one or the other of them, usually described as recensions or text types. At the same time, the term *recension* is also used with the general meaning of textual tradition or simply text.

As a rule, the text of the Torah has been represented as an entity subdivided into three *recensions* or *text types*: MT (→ 2.2.2), SP (→ 2.2.4), and LXX (→ 2.4.1). Moreover, scholars regarded these three texts as central axes around which other texts formed three distinct groups. The text of the Prophets and Hagiographa was similarly presented as consisting of two recensions (there is no Samaritan text in these books), although nevertheless it was sometimes described as consisting of three groups as well. The theories, descriptions, and terminology changed from one generation to the next, but the assumption of a tripartite division of the texts of the Torah and also, occasionally, of the rest of the biblical books remained constant throughout. Likewise, the understanding that these three texts (or two of them) constitute the central pil-

lars of the biblical text remained constant, and far-reaching theories on the development of the biblical text, such as those of de Lagarde and Kahle, were based upon this belief.

The two conceptions described above developed as self-evident facts, although they have yet to be proven. From the seventeenth century until 1947, relatively few studies were written on the relation between the textual witnesses and the assumed development process of the biblical text. The first thorough description of its development is contained in Kahle, *"Untersuchungen," 1915. Before this time, scholars referred to the character of each textual witness separately, sometimes in connection with its relationship to MT.

Even though few comprehensive descriptions of the history of the biblical text were written in the period reviewed, the assumed relation between the textual witnesses was always reflected in the terminology used for these witnesses. This terminology is subject to passing tendencies and reflects the approach of scholars to the textual witnesses. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, the three main texts were usually described as "the Egyptian (or: Alexandrian) recension" (the reconstructed Hebrew *Vorlage* of LXX), "the Babylonian recension" (MT), and the "Samaritan recension" (SP).

A change in the terminology began to occur with the appearance of Kahle's influential study on the text of the Torah. Kahle called the three main witnesses of the Torah "drei Haupttypen des Pentateuchtextes."⁶⁸ In his view, "the three main types of the text of the Pentateuch" differed from one another recensionally, that is, each of them had undergone different recensional activity. Thus, in Kahle's opinion, MT did not always exist in its present form, but was created as the result of a process of revision of earlier texts in approximately 100 C.E. In fact, Kahle's innovation ("Texttypen," text types) was one of terminology rather than of the concept underlying it. The new terminology slowly penetrated the scholarly literature. The clearest exemplification of Kahle's ideas is to be

⁶⁸ Kahle, *"Untersuchungen," 436.

found in a chart presented by Sellin and Fohrer.⁶⁹ It should be noted that in the past (as in the present), no uniform terminology was applied to the textual witnesses. Various scholars used, and continue to use, different terms when referring to the same entity. For example, de Lagarde used the terms *recension* and *family* interchangeably, and this also applies to the mixed terminology used by those who adhere to the “theory of local texts.”

The studies undertaken and conclusions drawn are instructive for understanding scholarly opinion on the relation between the textual witnesses. These studies show the self-imposed limitations of the scholars’ approach, since they confined themselves to a comparison of the three so-called central texts mentioned above. Likewise, upon its discovery, each new source was immediately integrated into the existing framework of a bipartite or tripartite division. This approach can be illustrated by considering the evaluation of MT at a time when scholars still adhered to the view of there being two central recensions of the Torah (MT and LXX): When SP emerged as a new source in the seventeenth century, it was realized that 1,900 of the assumed 6,000 differences between SP and MT involved readings common to SP and LXX. Subsequently, an endless number of theories appeared concerning the special relation between SP and LXX. Such theories derived from the restricted view that the biblical text was current in a small number of recensions and that all textual witnesses necessarily belonged to one of them. In this case, it was suggested that LXX was translated from SP, or that SP was revised according to LXX, or, conversely, that LXX was revised according to SP. These and other theories show the limitations of an approach that was bound by the assumption of a tripartite or bipartite division of the textual witnesses of the Bible.

When the Qumran scrolls were found in 1947, scholars already had well-developed views concerning the transmission of the biblical texts. With the discovery of the first Qumran scrolls, these views, including the depiction of the relation between the textual witnesses, were not altered be-

cause it always takes time for the ramifications of new discoveries to be absorbed. Scholars continued to determine the place of the newly found scrolls within the framework of the tripartite division of the textual witnesses of the Torah that had been developed earlier. Scholars also continued the approach of previous generations in characterizing many Qumran scrolls as recensions or text types.

The assigning of individual Qumran texts to a particular text type is reflected in the literature from the appearance of the first volumes of the *DJD* series onwards, when most of the new scrolls were described as belonging to the MT “type,” while some scrolls were assigned to the LXX or SP “type.”

As an alternative to the generally accepted theory of a tripartite division of the textual witnesses, it was suggested by Tov in 1982 that the three above-mentioned textual witnesses constitute three of a larger number of *texts*.⁷⁰ This suggestion follows an assumption of a multiplicity of texts, rather than that of a tripartite division. However, not all the texts are unrelated to one another, since one can recognize among them two or more clusters. When analyzing those texts that include a few clusters, we should remember that only a few of a larger number of early texts have been preserved, thus complicating an exhaustive view of the relation between the known early texts.

Brooke, G.J., “Torah in the Qumran Scrolls,” in *Bibel in jüdischer und christlicher Tradition: Festschrift für Johann Maier zum 60. Geburtstag* (eds. H. Merklein et al.; Bonn: Anton Hain, 1993), 97–120.

Carr, **Formation*.

Eshel, E., “4QDeut^a: A Text That Has Undergone Harmonistic Editing,” *HUCA* 62 (1991): 117–54.

Kahle, **Untersuchungen*”; repr. in P. Kahle, *Opera Minora* (Leiden: Brill, 1956), 3–37.

Lange, **Handbuch*.

Lee, K.-J., *The Authority and Authorization of the Torah in the Persian Period* (Leuven: Peeters, 2011).

Skinner, J., *The Divine Names in Genesis* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914).

⁶⁹ See n. 44.

⁷⁰ “A Modern Textual Outlook Based on the Qumran Scrolls,” *HUCA* 53 (1982): 11–27.

- Teeter, D.A., *Scribal Laws: Exegetical Variation in the Textual Transmission of Biblical Law in the Late Second Temple Period* (FAT 92; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).
- Tov, E., "A Modern Textual Outlook Based on the Qumran Scrolls," *HUCA* 53 (1982): 11–27.
- Tov, E., "The Scribal and Textual Transmission of the Torah Analyzed in Light of Its Sanctity," in *Pentateuchal Traditions in the Late Second Temple Period: Proceedings of the International Workshop in Tokyo, August 28–31, 2007* (eds. A. Moriya and G. Hata; JSJSup 158; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 57–72.
- Tov, E., "Textual Harmonization in the Stories of the Patriarchs," in *Rewriting and Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: The Biblical Patriarchs in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. D. Dimant and R.G. Kratz; BZAW 439; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 19–50.
- Tov, E., "The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Proximity of the Pre-Samaritan Qumran Scrolls to the SP," in *Keter Shem Tov: Collected Essays on the Dead Sea Scrolls in Memory of Alan Crown* (eds. S. Tzoref and I. Young; Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and Its Contexts 20; Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2013), 59–88.
- Tov, E., "Textual Developments in the Torah," in *Discourse, Dialogue, and Debate in the Bible: Essays in Honour of Frank H. Polak* (ed. A. Brenner-Idan; Hebrew Bible Monographs 63; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2014), 236–46.
- Tov, E., "The Source of Source Criticism: The Relevance of Non-Masoretic Textual Witnesses," *forthcoming*.
- White Crawford, S., "The Qumran Pentateuch Scrolls: Their Literary Growth and Textual Tradition," in *The Qumran Legal Texts between the Hebrew Bible and Its Interpretation* (eds. K. De Troyer and A. Lange; Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 3–16.

Emanuel Tov