

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE TEXT OF THE HEBREW / ARAMAIC AND GREEK BIBLE USED IN THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUES

I. *Hebrew/Aramaic Texts*

This study focuses on the biblical texts used in the ancient synagogues in the original languages and in Greek translation. We are faced with enigmas at all levels because of our fragmentary information regarding the ancient synagogues¹—their social, religious, and physical structure—let alone the text of the Bible used in these institutions. Since the data regarding the institutions is insufficient, it would therefore appear that inadequate evidence is available for an analysis of the topic under investigation, and that we would have to learn from inference only, especially from rabbinic and other sources with regard to the reading from the Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek Bibles. However, this is one of those fortuitous situations in which archeology comes to our aid, since two biblical scrolls were found at the site of a synagogue, namely under the floor of the Masada synagogue.² We are even more fortunate, since it appears that the evidence unearthed at Masada corroborates other archeological and literary evidence regarding the use of biblical texts. We

¹ See especially the questions raised by L. I. Levine, "The First-Century Synagogue, New Perspectives," *STK* 77 (2001) 22–30 and idem, *The Ancient Synagogue*.

² The burned remains of scrolls in the Ein Geddi synagogue derive from a later period (probably 250–300 CE); see the description by D. Barag in *The New Encyclopedia of the Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (ed. E. Stern; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, Ministry of Defense, Carta, 1992) 1200 (with bibliography). The definition of the early synagogue is *not* expanded to include houses of prayer in general, so that the buildings of the Qumran community are excluded from the analysis. While it is unknown where in Qumran communal prayers took place, such prayers were held in Qumran and Scripture was read at such occasions. However, we have no way to know which of the Scripture texts found in Qumran was read at such occasions. See further below. On the other hand, Binder's detailed analysis suggests that Qumran may be considered a synagogue, in the main because the holy places of the Essenes (not necessarily that of the Qumran community!) were called *synagogai* by Philo, *Prob.* 80–83, and because he identified certain *loci* as rooms for communal prayers. See D. D. Binder, *Into the Temple Courts—The Place of the Synagogues in the Second Temple Period* (SBLDS 169; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999) 453–68.

first turn to the evidence from Masada, and afterwards to some general observations about the use of Scripture in the original languages.

1. *The Evidence from Masada*

Two scrolls were found under the floor of the Zealot synagogue (room 1043):

MasDeut (1043/1–4) [Mas 1c]

MasEzek (1043–2220) [Mas 1d]

The archeological evidence is described by Yadin, who noted that the scrolls were found in two pits carefully dug under the floor of the synagogue. The scrolls were deposited at the bottom of the pits which afterwards were filled with earth and stones.³ A more detailed description is provided by Netzer.⁴ The scrolls were buried under the ground, and hence most scholars presume this burial to be sound evidence for the practice of a *genizah*. However, Thiede suggested that at an earlier stage the scrolls were located in a room behind the *'aron ha-qodesh*,⁵ and that “when the Romans approached, the scrolls were hastily buried under the floor, and when the Romans arrived and found the synagogue, they burnt furniture and other objects and threw them into that room.” Although the details in this description may be hypothetical, it is not impossible that the burial does not necessarily point to a *genizah*, and that the scrolls were indeed buried for safekeeping against destruction by the Romans. In any event, the assumption that this was a *genizah* is not crucial to our analysis of the texts, and it is more important to stress that the building was a synagogue.

Beyond these considerations, the only solid piece of evidence concerning the Masada fragments is that two scrolls of Deuteronomy and Ezekiel were buried under the floor of the synagogue. Why these specific scrolls, and not others, were buried there remains unknown since only fragments of the scrolls have been preserved. Possibly these scrolls, or segments of them, were damaged at an earlier stage or were otherwise deemed unfit for public reading, rendering their religious storage in a special burial place (*genizah*) mandatory. The Zealots probably buried these scrolls during their sojourn at Masada (thus providing us with a *terminus ante quem* for the copying and storage, namely 73 CE). The burial in separate pits probably shows that the scrolls were discarded at different times. Note that the scrolls probably

³ Y. Yadin, *Masada, Herod's Fortress and the Zealots' Last Stand* (London: Weidenfeld and Nickolson, 1966) 187.

⁴ E. Netzer, *Masada III*, 407 ff.

⁵ C. P. Thiede, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Jewish Origins of Christianity* (Oxford: Lion Publications, 2000) 74.

represented two individual books, and were not segments of larger scrolls. That is, the Deuteronomy scroll probably was not part of a larger Torah scroll, and the Ezekiel scroll did not contain all of the Later Prophets. If the scrolls had been larger, it is probable that some additional fragments would have been preserved.⁶ The Deuteronomy scroll contains the very end of the book (Deut 32:46-47; 33:17-24; 34:2-6), as well as an attached unscribed handle sheet, and it is not impossible that the last sheet(s) were damaged due to excessive use (cf. the re-inking of the last column of 1QIsa^a), and hence was/were placed in storage without the remainder of the book.

The two scrolls found in an ancient synagogue provide some information about texts used in that institution. It would be unusual to assume that these scrolls were not used in the synagogue itself, and had only been brought there in order to be buried. Such an assumption could be made about a larger community such as a city, but would not be in order for Masada. The following details are known about the contents and other features of the scrolls found under the synagogue at Masada:

a. The text of the two scrolls is identical to that of the medieval MT, and much closer to the medieval text than the proto-Masoretic Qumran scrolls.⁷ This feature pertains also to the other five biblical scrolls found elsewhere at three different locations at Masada. The scrolls differ from the medieval manuscripts no more than the latter differ among themselves.

b. With regard to their physical features, the two Masada scrolls were probably luxury scrolls.⁸ The main distinguishing features of luxury scrolls are their large top and bottom margins, always more than 3.0 cm, and sometimes extending to 5.0, 6.0, or 7.0 cm. Thus the top margin of the Ezekiel scroll measures 3.0 cm, while that of the Deuteronomy scroll is 3.4 cm. Also the only other Masada scroll for which these data are known, MasPs^a, has a top margin of 2.4 cm and a bottom margin of 3.0 cm. Luxury scrolls also usually have a large number of lines, 42 in the cases of MasDeut and MasEzek, and 29 in the case of MasPs^a.

c. As a rule, *de luxe* scrolls are characterized by a small degree of scribal intervention, as may be expected from scrolls that usually were carefully written. The fewer mistakes that are made, the fewer the corrections needed. However, scribal intervention pertains not only to

⁶ Several *haftarot* are read from Ezekiel, but the burying of an Ezekiel scroll under the floor in the Masada synagogue is not necessarily connected to the reading cycle.

⁷ For a detailed analysis of the Masada texts, see S. Talmon in *Masada VI*, 149; E. Tov, "A Qumran Origin for the Masada Non-biblical Texts?" *DSD* 7 (2000) 57-73, especially the Appendix.

⁸ See chapter 10*, § 3 and *Scribal Practices*, 125-9.

the correction of mistakes, but also to the insertion of scribal changes. The number of scribal interventions in MasEzek is one per 18 lines, in MasDeut one per 17 lines, and in MasPs^a one per 85 lines.⁹

In all three criteria, the characteristics of the luxury biblical scrolls have been prescribed in rabbinic literature for the copying of Scripture scrolls, with regard to the size of the top and bottom margins,¹⁰ the paucity of scribal intervention,¹¹ and precision in the copying (see below).

At the beginning of this study, attention was drawn to the physical evidence for specific biblical scrolls found in a synagogue environment. We now turn to the other archeological and literary evidence for the use of specific biblical texts in the synagogue. We will not dwell on the more general question of evidence for reading from Scripture in the original languages, Hebrew and Aramaic, in religious gatherings. It seems to us that this question has been sufficiently treated, especially in a study by Schiffman,¹² and previously also by Perrot,¹³ Levine,¹⁴ and Safrai, the latter with regard to rabbinic sources.¹⁵ Passages in Philo, Josephus,¹⁶ and the NT (Luke 4:16-21; Acts 15:21; 17:1) refer to the regular reading of Scripture in synagogues in the original languages as well as in translation. The reading from the Torah in a religious gathering is mentioned also in the writings of the Qumran community. It is unknown how this reading took place, but 4QDamascus Document clearly refers to the public reading from Scripture¹⁷ and 4QHalakha A (4Q251) 1 5

⁹ See chapter 9, § 3 and chapter 10, § 3.

¹⁰ See *Scribal Practices*, xxx-xxx.

¹¹ See *Scribal Practices*, xxx-xxx.

¹² L. Schiffman, "The Early History of Public Reading of the Torah," in *Jews, Christians, and Polytheists in the Ancient Synagogue—Cultural Interaction during the Greco-Roman Period* (ed. S. Fine; London/New York: Routledge, 1999) 44–56.

¹³ C. Perrot, "The Reading of the Bible in the Ancient Synagogue," in *Mikra*, 137–59; idem, "Luc 4:16-30 et la lecture biblique dans l'ancienne synagogue," in *Exégèse biblique et Judaïsme* (ed. J. E. Ménard; Strasbourg, 1973) 170–86.

¹⁴ L. I. Levine, "The Development of Synagogue Liturgy in Late Antiquity," in *Galilee through the Centuries: Confluence of Cultures* (ed. E. M. Meyers; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1999) 123–44; idem, *The Ancient Synagogue*, 135–43.

¹⁵ S. Safrai, *The Jewish People in the First Century—Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions* (ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern; CRINT, Section One, Volume Two; Assen–Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1976) 908–44, 945–70. For the reading cycles, see especially J. Mann and I. Sonne, *The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue: A Study in the Cycles of the Readings from Torah and Prophets*, vols. 1–2 (Cincinnati: Mann-Sonne Publ. Committee, 1940–1966).

¹⁶ For both authors, see the analysis by Schiffman, "Early History," 46–8 (n. 12 above).

¹⁷ The combination of several fragments of parallel manuscripts, as reconstructed by J. M. Baumgarten, *DJD XVIII* provides the full picture. See 4QD^a (4Q266) 5 ii 1–3, 4QD^b (4Q267) 5 ii 3–5, 4QpapD^b (4Q273) 2 1 and the analysis of Schiffman, "Early History," 45–6.

mentions such reading on the Sabbath, while 1QS VI 6–8 is less specific.¹⁸ That scrolls were stored in the synagogue, first in an adjacent room and later in a special niche or in an *'aron ha-qodesh*, is established by an early source such as Luke 4:16–21. According to these verses, Jesus entered the synagogue in Nazareth, a scroll of Isaiah was handed to him, unrolled it, read the text, and rolled the scroll back after use.¹⁹ Storage of such scrolls in the synagogue is also mentioned in rabbinic literature²⁰ and is established for several synagogues starting with the synagogue of Dura Europos in the mid-second century CE and that of Khirbet Shema in the mid-third century.²¹

2. Indirect Evidence about Specific Texts Used in the Synagogue

The two scrolls found under the floor of the synagogue at Masada are identical to the medieval MT, and hence were forerunners of that text. The external features of these scrolls are those of luxury editions. When assessing now the other manuscript finds from the Judean Desert together with some literary evidence, we will better understand the textual situation in Israel around the turn of the era.

The only location at which ancient Hebrew and Aramaic scrolls have been found in Israel is the Judean Desert. This is a small region, but we believe that the corpora found there include texts deriving from other places within Israel, thus presenting us with a clear picture of the texts used in the whole country, even though a judgment on the origin of each individual scroll remains hypothetical. Some of the Qumran scrolls were close to the medieval MT, although almost never as close as the scrolls from the other sites in the Judean Desert. These proto-Masoretic scrolls, forming the largest group at Qumran, must have been based on the texts that were identical to the medieval text such as found at Masada and other sites. Of the other texts found at Qumran, some had close connections to the Hebrew source of the LXX, while others were of the “vulgar” type, often written in a very free orthography and often freely editing the biblical text. As far as we know, none of these groups of texts

¹⁸ For an analysis, see M. Fishbane, “Use, Authority and Interpretation of Mikra at Qumran,” *Mikra*, 339–77.

¹⁹ From several ancient sources it is also evident that synagogues contained a collection of Scripture scrolls in a special place (*'aron ha-qodesh*), while the name “library” would probably be a little exaggerated for such a collection. Likewise, the implication of Acts 17:10–11 is that Scripture scrolls were stored in the synagogue. *Y. Meg.* 3:73d specifically mentions the keeping of separate scrolls of the Torah, Prophets, and Hagiographa in synagogues.

²⁰ See Safrai, *The Jewish People*, esp. 927–33, 940 (see n. 15 above).

²¹ For the evidence and an analysis, see E. M. Meyers, “The Torah Shrine in the Ancient Synagogue,” in *Jews, Christians, and Polytheists*, 201–23 (see n. 12 above).

had a close connection to the texts used in the synagogue. Nor did the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX derive from temple circles, even though the Epistle of Aristean § 176 stated that Eleazar the High Priest himself sent the Torah scroll to Egypt for the purpose of translation.

The texts that are relevant to the present analysis are those that are close to the medieval MT. It is strange that a discussion of ancient texts resorts to medieval sources, but the nature of the medieval copies helps us in the characterization of the ancient texts. Focusing on the consonantal framework of the medieval text, MT, and disregarding the medieval elements of that text (vowels, accents, Masorah), we note that MT was the only one used in earlier centuries in rabbinic circles. This is the only text that is quoted in rabbinic literature, and is used for the various targumim. Also, the extra-textual details of MT discussed in rabbinic literature, such as the open and closed sections, scribal notations, versification, as well as reading from Scripture, refer exactly to this text. It is therefore assumed that the text that was carefully transmitted through the centuries was previously embraced by rabbinic circles. We would even go so far as to assume that these texts were based on the scroll found in the temple court, but more on this below. First we focus on the evidence from the Judean Desert.

The texts from sites other than Qumran published in the 1990s together with Murabbaʿat texts edited in *DJD* II,²² show beyond doubt that we should posit two types of Masoretic scrolls, an inner circle of proto-rabbinic scrolls that agree precisely with codex L and a second circle of scrolls that are very similar to it. (Codex L [Leningrad codex B19^A] is chosen as the best complete representative of the medieval text.) Most scrolls found at Qumran belong to this second circle, with only a few texts belonging to the first group.²³ On the other hand, *all* the scrolls found at sites in the Judean Desert other than Qumran belong to the inner circle of proto-rabbinic scrolls. Thus, the 23 texts that were found at these sites²⁴ agree with L to such an extent that they are actually identical with that manuscript. The only differences between the proto-Masoretic scrolls from various sites in the Judean Desert and L pertain to a few details in orthography, minute details in content, paragraphing, and the layout of some individual Psalms. At the same time, these texts always agree with L against the LXX.

The differences between these scrolls and L are negligible, and in fact their nature resembles the internal differences between the medieval

²² For a list of the publications of all the biblical texts, see chapter 10*, § 1.

²³ See chapter 4*, § B.

²⁴ For a list, see chapter 10*, § A.

manuscripts themselves. Accordingly, the small degree of divergence between L and texts from the Judean Desert, mainly the texts outside Qumran, allows us to regard these texts as belonging to the same group, or in our terminology, the inner circle of proto-rabbinic texts.²⁵ This inner circle contained the consonantal framework of MT one thousand years or more before the time of the Masorah codices. This applies also to the second circle of Masoretic texts.

The texts of the inner circle of proto-rabbinic texts are usually written in *de luxe* editions, and they display very little or no scribal intervention. In both parameters, these texts follow the instructions given in rabbinic literature.

The second circle of ancient scrolls is that of most proto-Masoretic texts found at Qumran. These scrolls deviate more from L than the scrolls of the first circle, they are less precise, reflect more scribal intervention, and usually are not written in *de luxe* editions.

We now turn to some thoughts concerning the background of the two groups of scrolls, trying to connect them to data known from rabbinic sources.

The text which is traditionally known as the medieval MT, and earlier representations of which were found in the Judean Desert, was embraced by the spiritual leadership of Jerusalem. It is therefore often called the “proto-rabbinic”²⁶ or “proto-Masoretic” Text.

All the copies of the proto-rabbinic group of texts such as those found at all sites in the Judean Desert excluding Qumran were to all intents and purposes identical, or at least an attempt was made to make them so as shown by the precision in copying.²⁷

In retrospect, it was probably to be expected that the people who left the Hebrew scrolls behind in the Judean Desert possessed biblical scrolls that closely reflected the instructions of the Jerusalem spiritual center for

²⁵ Some medieval manuscripts are almost identical to one another in their consonantal text, such as L and the Aleppo Codex. However, other codices from Leningrad and elsewhere are more widely divergent from these two choice manuscripts. Thus the degree of divergence between the Tiberian and Babylonian codices resembles that between the Judean Desert scrolls and any medieval source. Young, “Stabilization” provides statistics that highlight the large amount of agreement between the medieval manuscripts of MT and the Masada manuscripts as opposed to a smaller amount of such agreement with the proto-MT scrolls from Qumran.

²⁶ See chapter 10*, n. 57.

²⁷ The agreements of these ancient scrolls with L pertain to the smallest details. Thus the agreement between MasLev^b and the medieval text pertains even to the intricacies of orthography, including details in which the orthography *ad loc.* goes against the conventions elsewhere in the book such as the defective תמי[ם] in Lev 9:2, 3 (col. I 11, 13) and the defective *hiph'il* form ויקרבו in Lev 9:9 (col. I 21). This has been pointed out in detail by Talmon in his edition of these texts (see n. 7).

the writing of Scripture scrolls. This characterization which applies to the rebels of Masada and the freedom fighters of Bar Kochba was stressed in 1956 by Greenberg for the texts from Murabba'at on the basis of the scanty evidence then available: "... since the spiritual leaders of this Second Revolt against Rome (132–135) were some of the most eminent Rabbis, there is no question as to the orthodoxy of this group."²⁸ Some scholars even stress the priestly influence on the leadership of the revolt.²⁹

To find ancient and medieval identical textual evidence is not **very common**, but it represents an unusual situation requiring explanation. We therefore turn to the question of how such textual identity was achieved, among the scrolls from the Judean Desert internally, between these scrolls and the temple copies, and these scrolls and the medieval manuscripts. The logic prevailing today could not have been different from that of ancient times. It seems to us that identity between two or more texts could have been achieved only *if all of them were copied from a single source, in this case (a) master copy (copies) located in a central place, until 70 CE probably in the temple, and subsequently in another central place (Jamnia?)*. The textual unity described above has to start somewhere and the assumption of master copies is therefore necessary.³⁰ The depositing and preserving of holy books in the temple is parallel to the modern concept of publication as implied by various references in rabbinic literature,³¹ and can be paralleled by evidence from ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome.³²

²⁸ M. Greenberg, "The Stabilization of the Text of the Hebrew Bible," *JAOS* 76 (1956) 157–67, esp. 165.

²⁹ See D. Goodblatt, "The Title *Nasi* and the Ideological Background of the Second Revolt," in *The Bar Kokhva Revolt—A New Approach* (ed. A. Oppenheimer and U. Rappaport; Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1984) 113–32.

³⁰ This suggestion was already voiced by Krauss, *Talmudische Archäologie*, III.171 and Lieberman, *Hellenism*, 22.

³¹ Thus Lieberman, *Hellenism*, 85–7; M. Kister, "In the Margin of Ben-Sira," *Leshonenu* 47 (1982–1983) 134–5 (Heb.); M. A. Friedman, "Publication of a Book by Depositing it in a Sanctuary: On the Phrase 'Written and Deposited'," *Leshonenu* 48–49 (1983–1984) 49–52 (Heb.); M. Kister, "Additions to the Article *בשילי ספר בן סירא*," *Leshonenu* 53 (1988–1989) 36–53 (Heb.). The Talmudic phrase used for this action is *כתוב ונתת* and similar phrases, for which cf. also the terms used by Josephus as quoted below. The parallels adduced by Friedman include references to the temple and the *שירה*.

³² See J. Leipoldt and S. Morenz, *Heilige Schriften—Betrachtungen zur Religionsgeschichte der antiken Mittelmeerwelt* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1953) 89–91, 165–71; Beckwith, *Old Testament Canon*, 80–86; M. Haran, "Scribal Workmanship in Biblical Times—The Scrolls and the Writing Implements," *Tarbiz* 50 (1980–1981) 70–71 (Heb.). These parallels in external sources were stressed much in Kutscher's argumentation in favor of the assumption of master scrolls in the temple: Kutscher, *Language*, 82.

This is a mere hypothesis, but hopefully we found a missing link by reinterpreting passages in rabbinic literature referring to ancient copies. Rabbinic sources deriving from a period later than the Judean Desert evidence provide descriptions of earlier textual procedures, which were partly also their own. In these descriptions we read about a master copy of the Torah found in the temple court, and about scrolls copied from or revised according to that copy. The term *sefer ha-‘azara* (ספר העזרה, with a variant ספר עזרה, the book of Ezra)³³ probably referred only to the Torah,³⁴ but it stands to reason that the other Scripture books were also found in the temple. Thus, according to *m. Yom.* 1.6 the elders of the priesthood read to the High Priest on the eve of the Day of Atonement from Job, Ezra, Chronicles, and Daniel.³⁵ Incidentally, rabbinic literature usually speaks of a single scroll of the Torah in the temple court, while a *baraita* mentions the three scrolls found in the temple,³⁶ but even this source implies the creation of a single source on the basis of the majority readings among the three scrolls, each time involving a different type of majority.³⁷ These Scripture books, together with the master copy of the Torah were probably part of a temple library.³⁸ It should be admitted that the evidence for the existence of the books of the Prophets and Hagiographa in the temple is based on limited evidence, more so on inference relating to the unified textual tradition of these books. Little is

³³ See *m. Kel.* 15.6; *m. Moed Qatan* 3.4; *b. b. Bat.* 14b; *b. Yoma* 69a-b; *y. San.* 2.20c. This variant, occurring among other things in *m. Moed Qatan*, is considered the original reading by Beckwith, *Old Testament Canon*, 84, 102.

³⁴ This 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 the next note).

³⁵ Josephus speaks three times of ancient writings “laid up/deposited” in the temple (*Ant.* III 38 and similarly elsewhere), referring to pericopes in Exodus, Deuteronomy, and Joshua. However, *pace* Beckwith, *Old Testament Canon*, 84 it seems that Josephus did not refer to the biblical books, but to additional ancient writings. See *Ant.* III 38 (Exod 17:6), IV 302–304 (Deuteronomy 32) and V 61 (Josh 10:12–14).

³⁶ See *y. Ta’an.* 4.68a (cf. *Sof* 6.4 and Abot de R. Nathan B chapter 46). For a thorough analysis, see S. Talmon, “The Three Scrolls of the Law That Were Found in the Temple Court,” *Textus* 2 (1962) 14–27. Earlier studies are: J. Z. Lauterbach, “The Three Books Found in the Temple at Jerusalem,” *JQR* 8 (1917–1918) 385–423; S. Zeitlin, “Were There Three Torah-Scrolls in the Azarah?” *JQR* 56 (1966) 269–72. Both studies were reprinted in *The Canon and Masorah of the Hebrew Bible—An Introductory Reader* (ed. S. Z. Leiman; New York: Ktav, 1974).

³⁷ The problems of the unclear depiction of the procedures followed were discussed at length by Talmon (see previous note) within the framework of his own explanations.

³⁸ Thus already Blau, *Studien*, 110–11. The founding of such a library by Nehemiah was mentioned in 2 Macc 2:13–15 (“books concerning kings, prophets, David, and royal letters”). Josephus mentions a temple library on various occasions (e.g., *Ant.* III 38; IV 303; V 61), among other things with regard to the copy of the Jewish Law taken as spoil by Titus (*B.J.* VII 150, 162). For further references and an analysis, see A. F. J. Klijn, “A Library of Scriptures in Jerusalem?” *TU* 124 (1977) 265–72.

known about these temple scrolls,³⁹ and they cannot be dated.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the little that is known about them is consonant with the texts from the Judean Desert (except for Qumran). We suggest that the internal identity of this group of texts, subsequently perpetuated in the medieval tradition,⁴¹ was created because they were copied from or revised according to the master copies in the temple. It also seems that the type of scrolls found in the Judean Desert⁴² is referred to in rabbinic literature.

We surmise that a carefully copied biblical text such as found in the Judean Desert is mentioned in rabbinic literature as a “corrected scroll,” *sefer muggah*.⁴³ The temple employed professional *maggihim*, “correctors” or “revisers,” whose task it was to safeguard precision in the copying of the text: “*Maggihim* of books in Jerusalem received their fees from the temple funds” (*b. Ketub. 106a*).⁴⁴ This description implies that the correcting procedure based on the master copy in the temple was financed from the temple resources which thus provided an *imprimatur*. This was the only way to safeguard the proper distribution of precise copies of Scripture. Safrai even suggests that the pilgrims who came to Jerusalem had their biblical texts corrected by the temple scribes.⁴⁵ These

³⁹ Gordis, *Biblical Text*, xl, on the other hand, assumes that “anonymous scholars” chose a precise manuscript and deposited it in the temple “between the accession of Simon the Maccabean (142 B.C.E.) and the destruction of the Temple (70 C.E.)”

⁴⁰ The fact that the spelling and language of the Torah and Former Prophets were not modernized when at later times new practices were in vogue, as witnessed by parallel segments in Chronicles, may be used as proof that the exact shape of the Torah and Former Prophets was not changed after the time of the Chronicler. A case in point may be the name of Jerusalem, written without a *yod* in the early books and four times with a *yod* in Chronicles, once in Jeremiah and once in Esther, and thus as a rule in the nonbiblical Qumran scrolls. Nevertheless, the spelling of the earlier books was not modernized. See Kutscher, *Language*, 5.

⁴¹ This point was stressed by Gordis, *Biblical Text*, xxvii who suggested that “it, therefore, seems reasonable to identify the *ספר העורה* (or *ספר עורה*) with the ancient, highly regarded manuscript which became the archetype for all accurate codices.”

⁴² It is not impossible that these texts were official texts, possibly from synagogues, brought by fugitives to the Judean Desert during the first and second revolt (I owe this suggestion to R. Deines, Tübingen).

⁴³ For an initial analysis of the *sefer muggah*, see Blau, *Studien*, 97–111; Krauss, *Talmudische Archäologie*, III.170–71.

⁴⁴ מניחי ספרים בירושלים היו נוטלין שברן מתרומת הלשכה. *Y. Sheq. 4.48a* has an interesting variant to this text, viz. בניחי ספר העורה היו נוטלין שברן מתרומת הלשכה. which should probably be translated as “the revisers of <Bible scrolls according to> the scroll of the temple court ...” (similarly Gordis, *Biblical Text*, xxvii).

⁴⁵ S. Safrai, *Pilgrimage at the Time of the Second Temple* (Heb.; Tel Aviv: Am Hasefer, 1965) 203 = idem, *Die Wallfahrt im Zeitalter des Zweiten Tempels* (Forschungen zum Jüdisch-Christlichen Dialog 3; Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1985) 262. Safrai’s views are based upon *m. Mo‘ed Qatan 3.4* according to Rashi’s interpretation (“on the middle days of the three

scrolls must have been used everywhere in Israel,⁴⁶ for public reading as well as for instruction, public and private, as suggested by *b. Pesah*. 112a, where one of the five items R. Akiba urged his student R. Simeon was: “and when you teach your son, teach him from a corrected scroll.” Another such precise copy was the scroll of the king, which accompanied the king everywhere. *y. San*. 2.20c and Sifre Deuteronomy 160⁵⁰ tell us that this scroll was corrected “from to the copy in the temple court in accordance with the court of seventy-one members.”⁵¹ At the same time, *b. Ketub*. 19b mentions a *sefer she’êno muggah*, “a book that is not corrected” which one could not have in his house any longer than thirty days.⁵²

On purely abstract grounds it was suggested above that textual identity could have been achieved only by copying from a single source, and such a procedure is actually mentioned in rabbinic literature. The copying from or correcting according to a master copy ensured that its text was perpetuated in the precise copies used everywhere in Israel, among other things in the Judean Desert texts, in quotations in rabbinic literature, most Targumim, and subsequently in the medieval Masoretic manuscripts. It is therefore suggested to identify the precise proto-Masoretic texts found in the Judean Desert as some of the “corrected scrolls” mentioned in rabbinic literature.

regalim one is not allowed to correct even one single letter, not even from the scroll in the temple court”).

⁴⁶ Similarly S. Safrai in Safrai, *The Jewish People* [see n. 15] 905: “Problems related to the transmission of the text and authenticity of various books of the Bible were examined in the Temple; copyists and correctors sat in the Temple and worked to supply books to those who needed them in the land of Israel and in the Diaspora <my italics, E. T.>. There was a bible in the Temple called ‘the book of the court’ on the basis of which books were corrected.”

⁵⁰ Ed. Finkelstein (New York/Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1993) 211. The complicated description of the correcting procedure in *t. San*. 4.7 is probably based on the wording in *y. San*.

⁵¹ In another context, we read in *y. Ket*. 2.26b: “a corrected scroll like those which are designated as the books of Assi.” Lieberman, *Hellenism*, 25 adds: “From the context it is obvious that these corrected books were written by Assi himself whose handwriting was well known.” For a discussion of the scroll of the king, see Blau, *Studien*, 106–7.

⁵² Interestingly enough, Rashi explains this book as not only containing the Torah, but any part of Scripture.

The various pieces of this description are supported by negative and positive evidence at Qumran: the assumed “corrected copies” were found at various places in the Judean Desert, but not at Qumran. The Qumranites were not bound by the copying practices of the temple circles, as is clear not only from the absence of these copies from Qumran, but also from the textual variety and a large number of corrections and new orthographical and morphological practices reflected in the Qumran texts probably produced by a scribal school active in Qumran and other places. At the same time, a sizeable number of a second circle of proto-MT texts like 1QIsa^a, 4QSam^b, 4QJer^a, 4QJer^c was found at Qumran. These scrolls resemble the nature of the “corrected copies” with regard to their closeness to the medieval MT, but they were less precise. Possibly they were copied from the “corrected copies,” probably not in Qumran.⁵⁴

In our description of the temple practices, we do not know when copies were first deposited in the temple and when they became model copies.⁵⁵ One possibility would be that as late as the early Hasmonean period a master copy was instituted in the temple court because of the extant textual plurality, but neither an early nor a late date can be supported convincingly. Also the opposite idea that the master copy resulted from a procedure of standardization cannot be supported either, not only because in our view such a conscious procedure never took place,⁵⁶ but also because different Bible texts continued to coexist with the master codex. Over the course of a long time there must have been an approach of textual rigidity in the temple and its circle of influence, while in other circles textual freedom was the rule.

Central to our description is the idea that the temple had sufficient authority over parts of the population to impose upon them a specific form of the Bible text. This authority did not pertain to all of Israel, for other texts continued to be in use. These texts, such as ancient texts similar to the *Vorlage* of the LXX, a group of texts similar to the SP, and imprecise texts such as the Torah of Rabbi Meir and several Qumran texts, circulated alongside the corrected copies.

⁵⁵ It is unclear when a copy of the Torah is first attested to in the temple. Blau, *Studien*, 99 goes back as far as the period of Hezekiah when according to 2 Chr 19:8 a copy of the Torah guided priests, Levites, and others. However, for this early period the evidence is unclear, while it is more stable for the period of Josiah when according to 2 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 34 a book of the Torah was found in the temple. At the same time, the existence of a Torah scroll in the temple in 2 Kgs 22:8 does not necessarily prove the existence of a collection of books (library) in the seventh century BCE —pace A. Lemaire, “Writing and Writing Materials,” *ABD* 6 (1992) 999–1008 (1005).

⁵⁶ Thus also A. S. van der Woude, *Pluriformiteit en uniformiteit — Overwegingen betreffende de tekstoverlevering van het Oude Testament* (Kampen: Kok, 1992).

Like Lieberman, we assign a central task to the temple in the diffusion of corrected copies of Scripture. But in our model, one central text was in the temple, and the corrected copies circulated in Israel, while according to Lieberman the precise copies as a group were located in the temple. Lieberman's model, written before the scrolls were known, is discussed here briefly as it has been influential on the scholarly discussion.⁵⁷ On the basis of Greek evidence from Hellenistic Alexandria, Lieberman distinguished between "inferior" (φαιλότερα) biblical texts used by the people, "popular" texts used in "many" synagogues as well as in schools and *baté midrash* (κοινότερα or *vulgata*, "widely circulated"), and "exact scrolls" (ἡκριβωμένα) in the temple. This model is based solely on external parallels and not on any extant Hebrew texts (except for the so-called Severus scroll or "book of R. Meir," some readings of which are quoted in rabbinic literature, which Lieberman considers to be representative of the *vulgata*).⁵⁸ *Pace* Lieberman it stands to reason that in synagogues⁵⁹ and *bate midrash* use was made only of corrected scrolls. The aforementioned descriptions in rabbinic literature point in this direction⁶⁰ and furthermore, various discussions in rabbinic literature revolve around the exact spelling of words, such as in *b. Sukk.* 6b, various examples in *b. Sanh.* 4a, and *b. Menah.* 93b (Lev 16:21 ידו / ידי), all of which would require the availability of exact copies.⁶¹ This assumption is also supported by the two precise scrolls found under the floor of the synagogue at Masada. Therefore, Lieberman's view that the precise scrolls were found *only* in the temple is unlikely.⁶² Furthermore, it seems that the evidence cannot be fitted into a three-fold division. Temple circles and rabbinic Judaism probably thought only in terms of two groups, namely "exact scrolls" ("corrected scrolls") written according to

⁵⁷ Lieberman, *Hellenism*, 22–7. The second edition of this chapter (1962) did not revise the first edition of 1950.

⁵⁸ By the same token, this text may be described as "inferior" because of its many phonetic mistakes.

⁵⁹ Lieberman's views on the type of Bible text used in synagogues are unclear. On p. 22 he says that the "popular" Bible texts were used in "many synagogues and in the schools." But on p. 26 he states: "It seems likely that they used for the same purpose [viz., rabbinic exegesis] the current vulgar text, although they officially recognized the Temple copy of the Bible as the only genuine one for the use in the synagogue service." Lieberman does not state how this official text was introduced to the synagogues. He could not have referred to the precise copies, as these were described on p. 22 as "the copies of the temple."

⁶⁰ See the aforementioned quotation from *b. Pesah.* 112a.

⁶¹ Much material has been collected by Y. Y. Yellin, *Hdqdwq kyswd bhikh* (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1973) 336–56.

⁶² According to Talmon, "Three Scrolls," 14 (n. 36 above), Lieberman was of the view that "only books of the first category were considered suitable for the public reading in the synagogue," but this description does not represent what Lieberman, *Hellenism*, 22 said.

rabbinic instructions and all other scrolls. The people probably did not think at all in terms of textual groups, as evidenced, for example, by the variety of texts held at Qumran. Modern scholars will find it difficult to divide the known evidence into three different groups, since Lieberman's model is both deficient⁶³ and excessive.⁶⁴

Finally, the evidence of the *tefillin* from the Judean Desert supports our thesis. The majority of the *tefillin* found at Qumran, written in the Qumran scribal practice, contain combinations of the four sections prescribed in rabbinic literature and additional ones, among them the Decalogue and Deuteronomy 32, while some contained only sections not prescribed by the rabbis.⁶⁵ At the same time, a minority of *tefillin* found at Qumran, written in the orthography of MT, reflect the prescriptions of the rabbis. While the Qumran evidence is divided, mainly pointing to non-rabbinic systems, the *tefillin* from other sites in the Judean Desert only reflect the rabbinic instructions, thus further underlining the connection between these sites and the Jerusalem center.

In sum:

a. Two groups of proto-MT scrolls are distinguished:

- The texts found in sites in the Judean Desert other than Qumran belong to the same family as the Masoretic medieval texts. This tradition is reflected also in the biblical quotations in rabbinic literature, as well as in most Targumim. These scrolls are therefore considered as the inner circle of the proto-MT family. The link between these sites and the Jerusalem center is further underlined by the evidence of the *tefillin*.

- Similar texts from Qumran deviate from the medieval tradition in some details, they are less precise, and they do not conform with the rabbinic instructions for writing Scripture scrolls in technical details. These scrolls belong to the second circle of proto-MT scrolls.

b. The rebels of Masada and the freedom fighters of Bar Kochba possessed Hebrew and Greek biblical scrolls that closely reflect the instructions of the Jerusalem spiritual center, as expected, since they were influenced by them also in other ways.

c. Identity between two or more texts could have been achieved only if all of them were copied from a single scroll, probably the master copy of each biblical book as preserved in the temple until 70 CE.

⁶³ The model has no room for early precise texts different from MT like 4QJer^{b,d}. These are also exact scrolls, but for the temple circles, which adhered only to the proto-Masoretic texts, these scrolls were not acceptable.

⁶⁴ It seems that the distinction between inferior and popular scrolls is unrealistic, both with regard to the available evidence and the *Sitz im Leben* of these texts.

⁶⁵ For an analysis, see chapter 4* and *Scribal Practices* 270–71.

d. The carefully copied identical biblical texts found in the Judean Desert probably belong to a group that is mentioned in rabbinic literature as “corrected scrolls.” These texts, which must have been extant in various places in Israel, were copied from or corrected according to the master copies found in the temple court.

To these conclusions, two remarks are added:

a. The analysis is based on rabbinic sources, but even if these sources are conceived of as tendentious or irrelevant,⁶⁶ most of our textual assumptions are still valid. For the unusual identity between the ancient and medieval sources of MT remains a given probably to be explained through the assumption of a master copy and careful copying and production of *de luxe* copies such as found in the Judean Desert.

b. This study refers only to the transmission of MT, not to its quality. Even its inferior readings were transmitted carefully, as is often the case in Samuel.

In our view, a combination of the literary evidence and that of the excavations at Masada shows that we may identify the texts used in the synagogue as the “corrected scrolls” mentioned in rabbinic literature. These scrolls contain the proto-rabbinic text. This situation probably prevailed in all of Israel, and many details known about these scrolls are in agreement with the instructions for the writing of Scripture scrolls written down at a later stage in rabbinic literature.

This argument possibly ties in with the assumption of Binder with regard to a close connection between the temple and the synagogues.⁶⁷ It stands to reason that the temple authorities would have been interested in maintaining the copy in the temple as the base for Scripture scrolls used everywhere in Israel, including synagogues.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Other data in rabbinic literature relating to the textual transmission are imprecise. Cases in point are the lists of “changes” by the Greek translators and of the so-called emendations of the Scribes.

⁶⁷ Binder, *Into the Temple Courts*, 343–50, 479–500 (see n. 2 above); L. Levine, “The First-Century Synagogue,” 26–7 (see n. 1 above) does not accept this view.

⁶⁸ The analysis referred only to scrolls copied and distributed in Israel, and not to the diaspora. The scrolls sent or brought to Alexandria for the translation of Greek Scripture did not derive from temple sources. See the remarks above. It is also unlikely that the vulgar text of R. Meir’s Torah, used in Rome in the third century CE, derived from the temple. Rabbinic literature preserves references to a Torah scroll taken by Titus to Rome as booty after the destruction of the temple. In a later period, this scroll was given by Severus (reigned 222–35 CE) to a synagogue that was being built with his permission. This scroll, also known as the Severus scroll, was of a vulgar type. From the scant information known about the contents of that scroll, it appears that its characteristic features are the weakening of the gutturals, the writing of non-final letters in final position, and the interchange of similar letters. For details, see J. P. Siegel, *The Severus Scroll and 1QIs^a* (SBLMasS 2; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1975). Also Josephus, *B.J.* VII 150, 162 mentions that a copy

II. Greek Texts Used in the Ancient Synagogues

Unlike the evidence for the Masada synagogue, there is no direct archeological data for the use of specific copies of *Greek Scripture* in synagogues in Israel or in the diaspora. It is likely that the Greek translation of the Torah was used in Egypt in the third and second centuries BCE, but this assumption cannot be proven.⁶⁹ At the same time, there is ample literary evidence for the notion that Scripture was read in Greek in religious gatherings of Greek-speaking communities from the first century BCE onwards.⁷⁰ Among other things,⁷¹ Philo refers to this custom in Alexandria.⁷² 4 Macc 18:10-18, possibly written in Egypt in the first century CE, expressly mentions the reading of the Law accompanied by reflections taken from the Prophets, Psalms, and Hagiographa. A liturgical use is indicated probably also in the last sentence in Expansion F to Esther which names the book of Esther as a whole “the Epistle of Phrurai [= Purim]” (ἐπιστολὴν τῶν Φρουραίων), regarded as an Epistle from Mordecai to the Jewish people concerning the feast of Purim. Further, the LXX was used by learned writers, such as Philo in Egypt in the middle of the first century BCE, Josephus in Rome at the end of the first century CE, as well as Pseudo-Ezekiel and other, less known, Jewish-Hellenistic authors.⁷³

For the use of Greek Scripture in Israel, probably the clearest reference is contained in the so-called Theodotos inscription from Jerusalem, usually ascribed to the first century CE. This inscription⁷⁴ states that “Theodotus, son of Vettenos a priest and *archisynagogos*, son of

of the Jewish Law was taken by Titus from the temple. However, it is unlikely that this was the main temple copy. The vulgar character of the Severus scroll would not have befitted scrolls found in the temple, and the information given by Josephus is very vague.

⁶⁹ Thus also G. Dorival in *Bible grecque*, 120.

⁷⁰ Early papyri of the Pentateuch from Egypt (P.Ryl. Gk. 458 [200–150 BCE] and P.Fouad [first century BCE]) show that the Greek translation was known in various parts of the country, but they do not necessarily prove use in religious gatherings.

⁷¹ For an early analysis of the evidence, see Frankel, *Vorstudien*, 48–61.

⁷² Philo, *Prob.* 81–82: “They use these laws <those of the Torah> to learn from at all times, but especially each seventh day, since the seventh day is regarded as sacred. On that day they abstain from other work and betake themselves to the sacred places which are called synagogues ...Then one of them takes the books and reads.” See further Philo, *Hypoth.* 7:13; *Moses* 2:215. The existence of Greek Torah scrolls is also referred to in *m. Meg.* 1.8; 2.1 and *t. Meg.* 4.13.

⁷³ The writings of these authors have been reviewed by P. W. van der Horst, “The Interpretation of the Bible by the Minor Hellenistic Jewish Authors,” in *Mikra*, 519–46.

⁷⁴ See J. B. Frey, *CIJ* (Rom: Citta del Vaticano, Pontificio Istituto di archeologia cristiana, 1952) II.232 f, No. 1404; B. Lifschitz, *Donateurs et fondateurs dans les synagogues juives* (CahRB 7; Paris: Gabalda, 1967) 70–71.

an *archisynagogos* and grandson of an *archisynagogos*, built this synagogue for the reading of the Law (εἰς ἀν[άγν]ωσ[ιν] νόμου) and the study of the commandments” The inscription is in Greek, and it may therefore be assumed that the synagogue was used by a Greek-speaking community. Hengel cautiously suggests that this synagogue was connected to the Greek-speaking synagogue of Roman freedmen mentioned in Acts 6:9 (Λιβερτῖνοι).⁷⁵ Another such synagogue, a “synagogue of the Alexandrians in Jerusalem” is mentioned in *γ. Meg.* 73d and *t. Meg.* 2:17.⁷⁶ On the other hand, the fact that several scrolls of Greek Scripture were found at Qumran does not indicate that these scrolls were read or used either privately or in religious gatherings. The nature of the Greek text finds in the Judean Desert is such that at all sites in that area there are indications of the active use of Greek as a living language in documentary papyri of different types, including in Nahal Hever where the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll was found together with documentary Greek papyri. Only at Qumran is this not the case, since, with the exception of a documentary text 4QAccount gr (4Q350), no documentary Greek papyri were found there; the literary Greek texts found at Qumran (mainly Scripture texts) were probably brought there because they happened to be among the possessions of one of the Qumranites.⁷⁷

When turning to the question of which text(s) of Greek Scripture was/were used in Greek-speaking communities, we are groping in the dark. Was it the text that we reconstruct as the OG translation such as reproduced in the critical editions of Rahlfs or the Göttingen Septuagint, or was it a different form, earlier or later? As for the possibility of earlier texts, several Qumran Torah scrolls (especially 4QLXXLev^a and 4QpapLXXLev^b) provide glimpses of a text earlier than the Göttingen model that is slightly more distant from MT than the main tradition of the LXX and uses a less fixed vocabulary of Hebrew-Greek equivalents than the main LXX tradition (cf. chapter 23*, § I,1).

When we come closer to the synagogue environment, we find texts that were corrected according to the proto-rabbinic Hebrew text used in rabbinic circles, both BCE and CE. A major source for this assumption is the Greek Minor Prophets scroll from Nahal Hever dated paleographically to the end of the first century BCE (cf. chapter 23*, § I,10). This Greek scroll was revised according to the proto-rabbinic Hebrew

⁷⁵ M. Hengel, *The ‘Hellenization’ of Judaea in the First Century after Christ* (London/Philadelphia: SCM Press/Trinity Press International, 1989) 13.

⁷⁶ For a discussion, see E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (175 B.C.–A.D. 135) (ed. G. Vermes et al.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1979) II.76.

⁷⁷ See chapter 23*.

text, together with other parts of the Greek Bible, and all of these together are named the *kaige*-Th revision. This development implies that there were central forces in the Jewish world assuring that the text that had been made central in its original, Hebrew/Aramaic shape would be central also in its Greek shape. The fact that the Greek Minor Prophets scroll was found among the remains of the followers of Bar Kochba, linked to the Jerusalem religious circles, is not without importance. It probably implies that this Greek text had the *imprimatur* of the rabbinic circles. In this regard, it should also be mentioned that this scroll, together with other early revisional manuscripts of the LXX, represented the name of God not with κύριος but with paleo-Hebrew characters.⁷⁸

The find of the Minor Prophets scroll in Naḥal Ḥever probably implies that some of the followers of Bar Kochba read the Greek Scriptures in this revised version, and this may also have applied to other Greek-speaking communities in Israel.

By the same token, adherence to the similar revision of Aquila, one-and-a-half centuries later than that of *kaige*-Th, is visible in rabbinic literature, as most quotations in the Talmud from Greek Scripture reflect that translation (see the evidence collected by Reider⁷⁹ and Veltri⁸⁰) and *y. Meg.* 1:71c says about him יִפְיִיחַ מִבְּנֵי אֲדָם. This acceptance of the Jewish revision of Aquila by the Rabbis⁸¹ goes together with the rejection of the main tradition of Greek Scripture, the LXX. Such a rejection is reflected in several places in rabbinic literature, such as *Sof.* 1.7: “It happened once that five elders wrote the Torah for King Ptolemy in Greek, and that day was as ominous for Israel as the day on which the golden calf was made, since the Torah could not be accurately translated.” However, according to Veltri, if these traditions are properly analyzed, they do not prove the rejection of the LXX by the rabbinic sources.⁸² Since Veltri’s analysis is limited to a number of passages in the Talmud, and disregards the manuscript finds of early Greek Scripture texts from Israel and Egypt, it

⁷⁸ Scribes A and B of 8ḤevXIIgr (end of 1st century BCE); P.Oxy. 50.3522 of Job 42 (1 CE); P.Oxy. 7.1007 (leather) of Genesis 2–3 (3 CE); P.Vindob. Gr 39777 of Psalms 68, 80 in the version of Symmachus (3–4 CE); the Aquila fragments of Kings and Psalms (5–6 CE).

⁷⁹ J. Reider, *Prolegomena to a Greek-Hebrew & Hebrew-Greek Index to Aquila*, Ph.D. diss., Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, Philadelphia, 1916, 151–5.

⁸⁰ Veltri, *Eine Tora*, 186–90.

⁸¹ The Aquila fragments from the Cairo Genizah and the Fayoum probably show a wide distribution of use. Justinian in his *Novella* 146 from the 6th century (*PL* 69 [Paris: Garnier, 1878] 1051–4 settles an argument within the synagogue by allowing the use of Aquila’s version alongside that of the LXX: “... damus illis licentiam ut etiam interpretatione Aquilae utantur.”

⁸² Veltri, *Eine Tora*. See also my review in *Greek and Hebrew Bible*, 75–82.

should nevertheless be concluded that the LXX *was* rejected at least from a certain period onwards, described by Dorival as being from 100 CE.⁸³

Thus, the manuscript evidence shows a group of Jewish revisions of the LXX⁸⁴ in accordance with an ever-changing proto-rabbinic Hebrew text (see chapter 23*). These revisions reflected the need to use a Jewish-Greek text based on the content of the Hebrew Bible, often different from that of the Greek Bible. Several of these revisions antedated Christianity (*kaige*-Th [reflected among other things in 8HevXIIgr], P.Oxy. 7.1007, and P.Rylands Gk. 458). Whether or not the circles that moved away from the LXX were identical to those that are commonly named rabbinic is not known, but they were closely related. Note, for example, that *kaige*-Th is rightly described in the subtitle of Barthélemy's *Devanciers* as "sous l'influence du rabbinat palestinien."

The analysis of the Hebrew and Greek texts in ancient Israel points to the influence of the Jerusalem religious circles on the shape of the biblical text in the original languages and in Greek, as well as in Aramaic. Together with this trend, altogether different copies were scorned, so that the Samaritans were accused of falsifying the Torah⁸⁵ and the Greek translators were said to have inserted changes in the translation.⁸⁶ Had the LXX and SP not been preserved and the Qumran scrolls not been found, we would have known little about non-rabbinic copies of Hebrew Scripture.

⁸³ G. Dorival in *Bible grecque*, 120–22.

⁸⁴ A similar development is visible in the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament, which in the Gospels are often closer to MT than the main LXX text, and can often be linked with the *kaige*-Th tradition. For a summary and examples, see M. Harl in *Bible grecque*, 276–7.

⁸⁵ See *y. Sot. 7.23c, b. Sot. 33b* (זייפתם תורהכם) with regard to the addition in SP of מול שכם in Deut 11:30.

⁸⁶ See my analysis in *Greek and Hebrew Bible*, 1–20.