

A Text-Critical Analysis of Lamentations 1:7 in 4QLam and the Masoretic Text

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ABSTRACT

Taking the contributions of the Dead Sea scrolls to the discipline of Old Testament (OT) textual criticism as its point of departure, this study provides a text-critical analysis of the wordings of Lam 1:7 in 4QLam and the Masoretic Text (MT). The aims of the analysis are twofold. Firstly, it seeks to determine how the variant readings in the two Hebrew textual representatives of the verse came into being during the process of transmission. Secondly, it establishes how the differences in wording affect the content of the verse. The study concludes that the data provided by such a text-critical analysis can be relevant to biblical interpretation if two conditions are met. Firstly, the textus receptus and/or original text should not be treated as the only legitimate representative(s) of an Old Testament writing's content. Secondly, the differences in the wordings between the textual representatives should be shown to affect the content of a passage.

A INTRODUCTION

The interpretation of OT writings is a complex endeavour. This complexity pertains to the nature of these writings as historical, literary and religious literature¹ and the view that they are "pragmatic entities"/"performative literature"/"Mitteilungsliteratur" that form part of acts of communication.² In order to do justice to the historical, literary and religious nature of the OT writings and the processes of communication, the exegete must, *inter alia*, take into consideration the intricacies of the different literary forms or genres exhibited by these writings, the characteristics of narratives and Biblical Hebrew poetry, comparative literature from other cultures of the Ancient Near East, the findings of archaeological excavations, the composite nature of many of the writings and the processes that were involved in their *Textgeschichte*, as well as reconstructions of the different historical periods in which the writings developed. In the process of reading and rereading the OT writings, exegetes must also be sensitive to the role that their own contexts, knowledge, worldviews,

¹ See Louis C. Jonker and Douglas G. Lawrie, eds., *Fishing for Jonah (Anew): Various Approaches to Biblical Interpretation* (Stellenbosch: African Sun Media, 2005), 236-237.

² Louis C. Jonker, "Reading with One Eye Closed? Or: What you Miss When you Do Not Read Biblical Texts Multidimensionally," *OTE* 19/1 (2006): 63.

interests, beliefs and prejudices play in the creation of meanings.³ Moreover, the complexity of biblical interpretation is exacerbated by the fact that the OT writings exist in multiple textual versions. These representatives of the OT writings' texts include the available Hebrew manuscripts and the ancient translations that were based on Hebrew *Vorlagen*, namely the LXX, Peshitta, Vulgate and the Targums. The quotations of OT passages in other writings, such as the Qumran documents and the rabbinic literature, also qualify as textual representatives.⁴ Textual criticism is the discipline in biblical research in which these different textual representatives of the OT writings are studied.⁵ Text-critics study the different forms of the wordings in the textual representatives of the OT writings and attempt to determine how scribes created variant readings during the processes of copying and translation. They also analyse textual problems and corrupt readings. The traditional goal of textual criticism is to collate and compare the textual representatives, eliminate the surviving scribal errors and then reconstruct the "original text" (or *Urtext*) of the OT writings.⁶ If the text-critic is of the opinion that none of the extant textual representatives preserve the original reading, it can be restored by means of conjectural emendation. Concerning the textual problems and corrupt readings in the Hebrew manuscripts, the text-critic can make use of comparative philology in order to find a solution to the perceived difficulty. Instead of emending the wording of a difficult passage, the text-critic searches the cognate Semitic lan-

³ See Ferdinand E. Deist, "Eksegese as 'Leeskompetensie,'" *NGTT* 30/1 (1989): 56-63.

⁴ Arie van der Kooij, "Textual Criticism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Studies* (ed. John W. Rogerson and Judith M. Lieu; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 581.

⁵ See Arie van der Kooij, "Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible: its Aim and Method," in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov* (ed. Shalom M. Paul et al.; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003), 729-739; Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2nd rev. ed.; Minneapolis/Assen: Fortress Press/Van Gorcum, 2001); Ernst Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblica Hebraica* (2nd rev. and enlarged ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); P. Kyle McCarter, *Textual Criticism: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986); Ralph W. Klein, *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: From the Septuagint to Qumran* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974); Ferdinand E. Deist, *Witnesses to the Old Testament* (Pretoria: NGKB, 1988); Ferdinand E. Deist, *Towards the Text of the Old Testament* (Pretoria: NGKB, 1978).

⁶ Van der Kooij, "Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible," 721, argues that the goal of textual criticism is to arrive at the earliest attainable form of an OT writing. This refers to the wording which lay at the root of all the attested differences between the textual representatives.

guages (especially Aramaic, Syriac and Arabic) for suitable meanings for the Hebrew words in question.⁷

From this perspective, textual criticism serves the interpretation of OT writings by providing the exegete with pristine forms of the writings' wordings. The exegesis of the OT writings can then be based on texts that are free from errors and textual problems, as Würthwein notes: "[Textual criticism] attempts to ferret out all the errors and alterations (variants) that have occurred, and to achieve on the basis of scholarly principles a Hebrew text providing a solid foundation on which higher criticism, exegesis, etc., can build."⁸ Lemmelijn⁹ also argues that it is methodologically incorrect to study a passage from either a literary (in the sense of *Literarkritik*) and/or theological perspective without first engaging text-critically with the different textual representatives of the passage in question.

Although original readings, accidental scribal errors and difficulties in the textual representatives are the major foci of text-critical analyses, the establishment of the earliest forms of the wordings of OT writings is not the only way in which the discipline concerns itself with the content of these writings. OT text-critics also study readings that were intentionally created by scribes during the process of transmission. Examples of such deliberate scribal modifications are linguistic and stylistic changes, harmonisations, exegetical changes and additions to the wording of passages. These deliberate alterations show that some scribes took the liberty of altering the content of the writings which they copied and translated. Accordingly, Emanuel Tov states that

textual critics are not merely interested in readings that were presumably contained in *the* or *an* original text; the study of ancient manuscripts also tells us the story of the history of the Hebrew language, of ancient exegesis, and of the history of ideas, how new ideas were developed and how earlier ideas were changed.¹⁰

Text-critics therefore treat the different Hebrew manuscripts and ancient translations of OT writings not only as witnesses to the original Hebrew readings, but also as witnesses to the content of the writings. In the approach to

⁷ James Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 1-13.

⁸ Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, 105.

⁹ Bénédicte Lemmelijn, "As Many Texts as Plagues: A Preliminary Report of the Main Results of the Text-Critical Evaluation of Exod 7:14-11:10," *JNSL* 24/2 (1998): 111-12. She maintains that "textual criticism is indispensable as a first phase in the study of a Biblical pericope, for the textual witness chosen to be used as a basis for the literary study has to be evaluated. In addition, the text-critical study can often contribute to the recognition of fundamental data, important to the literary study of the text."

¹⁰ Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 258-259 (italics in original).

textual criticism where the textual representatives are analysed primarily as witnesses to the content of OT writings, text-critics attempt to discern how the intricate web of agreements and disagreements between the textual representatives affect the content of the writings. The aim of text-critical analyses in this approach to the discipline is to gain a better understanding of the ways in which the textual representatives present the content of the OT writings.¹¹

B THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE QUMRAN MANUSCRIPTS TO OLD TESTAMENT TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Before the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls between 1947 and 1956, the main Hebrew representatives of the OT books were the medieval Masoretic manuscripts. Indirect evidence for independent Hebrew readings was also obtainable from those ancient translations that were based on Hebrew *Vorlagen*. The textual finds in the eleven caves near Khirbet Qumran now afford the text-critic with a wealth of new textual data that is of an early date and in the original languages. The textual situation at Qumran can aptly be described as one of textual plurality. Comparisons of the Qumran manuscripts (which are, with a few notable exceptions, very fragmentary) with the textual representatives of OT writings that were available prior to the Dead Sea discoveries reveal a convoluted web of agreements and disagreements in wordings. The new textual data have not only revitalised the discipline of OT textual criticism,¹² they have also compelled scholars to rethink previous theories regarding the development of the texts of OT writings and to formulate fresh theories in this regard.¹³ The fact that the wordings in some Qumran manuscripts witness to a stage in the literary growth of particular writings has important implications for the relationship between the disciplines of historical criticism and textual criticism.¹⁴

¹¹ See Gideon R. Kotzé, "A Text-Critical Analysis of the Lamentations Manuscripts from Qumran (3QLam, 4QLam, 5QLam^a and 5QLam^b): Establishing the Content of an Old Testament Book According to its Textual Witnesses among the Dead Sea Scrolls" (D.Th. diss., University of Stellenbosch, 2011), 22-23.

¹² Ronald S. Hendel, "Qumran and a New Edition of the Hebrew Bible," in *Scripture and the Scrolls* (vol. 1 of *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*; ed. James H. Charlesworth; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 150.

¹³ See Eugene Ulrich, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Biblical Text," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (vol. 1; ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam; Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill, 1998), 79-100; Emanuel Tov, "A Modern Textual Outlook Based on the Qumran Scrolls," *HUCA* 53 (1982): 11-27; Frank M. Cross and Shemaryahu Talmon, eds., *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975).

¹⁴ Concerning *Textgeschichte*, Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 315, draws the distinction between the stages of literary growth (when the content of OT writings was still developed) and transmission (the copying of the writings when they were completed from the perspective of content). Whereas historical criticism deals with the stage of literary growth, textual criticism focuses on the stage of transmission

Some scholars have also questioned whether a single "original text" should still be the goal of textual criticism.¹⁵ Moreover, manuscripts such as 11QPs^a and the document known as "Reworked Pentateuch" (4Q364-367) have led scholars to rethink their suppositions about what constitutes a "biblical" writing.¹⁶

It is against the background of the contributions of the Dead Sea scrolls to OT textual criticism and the abovementioned approach to this discipline in which the available textual representatives are treated as witnesses to the content of OT writings that this study will focus on the different wordings of Lam 1:7 in the MT (as represented by Codex Leningradensis) and one of the Lamentations manuscripts from Qumran, 4QLam. The wordings of these manuscripts will be subjected to a text-critical analysis which aims to discover how the readings in the two Hebrew versions were created during the process of transmission. The analysis will not, however, be concerned primarily with the (re)construction of the putative original text of the verse; rather it will seek to explain how the differences in wording between 4QLam and the MT came into being. The first steps of the text-critical procedure involve a comparison of the textual representatives of Lam 1:7 (4QLam and the MT, in this case) and an examination of the variant readings. This examination aims to identify (in dia-

of the OT writings. On the relationship between historical criticism and textual criticism, see George J. Brooke, "The Qumran Scrolls and the Demise of the Distinction Between Higher and Lower Criticism," in *New Directions in Qumran Studies* (ed. Jonathan G. Campbell, William J. Lyons and Lloyd K. Pietersen; London: T & T Clark, 2005), 26-42; Johann Cook, "The Relationship between Textual Criticism, Literary Criticism and Exegesis – An Interactive One?" *Textus* 24 (2009): 119-132; Bénédicte Lemmelijn, "What Are We Looking for in Doing Old Testament Text-Critical Research?" *JNSL* 23/2 (1997): 69-80; Adrian Schenker, ed., *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible: The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003); Herman-Josef Stipp, "Textkritik – Literarkritik – Textentwicklung: Überlegungen zur exegetischen Aspektsystematik," *ETL* 66 (1990): 143-159; Herman-Josef Stipp, "Das Verhältnis von Textkritik und Literarkritik in neueren alttestamentlichen Veröffentlichungen," *BZ* 34 (1990): 16-37; Arie van der Kooij, "Zum Verhältnis von Textkritik und Literarkritik: Überlegungen anhand einiger Beispiele," in *Congress Volume Cambridge 1995* (ed. John A. Emerton; Leiden/New York/Köln: Brill, 1997), 185-202.

¹⁵ Emanuel Tov, "The Status of the Masoretic Text in Modern Text Editions of the Hebrew Bible: The Relevance of Canon," in *The Canon Debate* (ed. Lee M. McDonald and James A. Sanders; Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002), 247-248; Eugene Ulrich, "Multiple Literary Editions: Reflections Toward a Theory of the History of the Biblical Text," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1999), 114-115.

¹⁶ For a helpful summary of the issue, see Syrianna Metso, "When the Evidence Does Not Fit: Method, Theory, and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods* (ed. Maxine L. Grossman. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 12-14.

logue with other scholars) the most plausible reasons for the creation of the variants. These *variae lectiones* might have been the result of various types of scribal errors such as dittography, haplography and the confusion of letters, or they might have been deliberately introduced by scribes.¹⁷ Evaluation of variants, where one reading is judged to be earlier than the other one, remains an important part of the analysis, given that the later reading could have developed (directly or indirectly) from the earlier reading. The next step in the procedure is to establish how the differences in wording affect the content of Lam 1:7. I submit that such a text-critical analysis can afford the exegete with useful data concerning the content of the verse that are relevant to the complex endeavour of biblical interpretation.

C 4QLAM AND THE OTHER LAMENTATIONS MANUSCRIPTS FROM QUMRAN

Before turning to the text-critical analysis of the wording of Lam 1:7 in 4QLam and the MT, it is necessary to sketch the formal features of the Qumran manuscript. 4QLam is one of four manuscripts of Lamentations that were found in the caves near Khirbet Qumran. Two small fragments of leather containing individual words from Lam 1:10-12 and Lam 3:53-62 were recovered from cave 3 (3QLam).¹⁸ Cave 5 yielded two fragmentary Lamentations manuscripts, 5QLam^a and 5QLam^b. The former preserves parts of Lam 4:5-8 (fragment 1 column I), Lam 4:11-15 (fragment 1 column II), Lam 4:15-20 (fragment 1 Column III), Lam 4:20-5:3 (fragment 1 column IV), Lam 5:4-12 (fragment 1 column V) and Lam 5:12-17 (fragment 1 column VI).¹⁹ The solitary fragment of 5QLam^b contains words from Lam 4:17-20.²⁰ 4QLam is the largest of the four Qumran manuscripts of Lamentations. It exists in four fragments and presents portions of Lam 1:1-18 and a few words from Lam 2:5. Columns I and II of the scroll have eleven lines of writing, while the third column only has ten lines of script, although it is almost double the size of the other two columns. The scroll was unruled and written as prose in a running text. The script is characterised as a semi-formal Herodian type that can be dated, on palaeographical grounds,

¹⁷ See Kotzé, "A Text-Critical Analysis of the Lamentations Manuscripts," 23.

¹⁸ Maurice Baillet, "Lamentations," in *Les "Petites Grottes" de Qumran: Exploration de la Falaise, Les Grottes 2Q, 3Q, 5Q, 6Q, 7Q à 10Q, Le Rouleau de Cuivre* (ed. Maurice Baillet, Jozef T. Milik and Roland de Vaux; 2 Vols; DJD 3; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 95.

¹⁹ Jozef T. Milik, "Lamentations (Premier Exemplaire)," in *Les "Petites Grottes" de Qumran: Exploration de la Falaise, Les Grottes 2Q, 3Q, 5Q, 6Q, 7Q à 10Q, Le Rouleau de Cuivre* (ed. Maurice Baillet, Jozef T. Milik and Roland de Vaux; 2 Vols; DJD 3; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962a), 174-177.

²⁰ Jozef T. Milik, "Lamentations (Second Exemplaire)," in *Les "Petites Grottes" de Qumran: Exploration de la Falaise, Les Grottes 2Q, 3Q, 5Q, 6Q, 7Q à 10Q, Le Rouleau de Cuivre* (ed. Maurice Baillet, Jozef T. Milik and Roland de Vaux; 2 Vols; DJD 3; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962b), 177-178.

to the period stretching from 30 B.C.E. to 1 C.E.²¹ Compared to the wordings of Lam 1 in the MT and the ancient translations, 4QLam preserves a large number of variant readings and is, therefore, a unique representative of the wording and content of this chapter.²² The wording of Lam 1:7 in 4QLam is a good example of this manuscript’s unique character.

D TEXT-CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF LAMENTATIONS 1:7 IN 4QLAM AND THE MT²³

4QLam זכורה יהוה [כּוֹן] מִכְּאוּבוֹנוֹ אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ מִיְמֵי קֶדֶם
בְּנִפֹּל [עַמָּה] בְּיַד צָר וְאֵין עֹזֵר צָרִיהָ שְׁחָקוּ עָלָהּ
[] מִשְׁבְּרִיהָ

Remember O YHWH [al] our pains that existed from days of old. When her [people] fell in/by the hand of a foe and there was no helper, her foes laughed about [] her ruins.

MT זָכְרָה יְרוּשָׁלַם יְמֵי עֲנִיָּהּ וּמְרוֹדֶיהָ כָּל מַחְמֹדֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ מִיְמֵי קֶדֶם
בְּנִפֹּל עַמָּהּ בְּיַד־צָר וְאֵין עֹזֵר לָהּ רְאוּתָהּ צָרִים שְׁחָקוּ עָלָהּ מִשְׁבְּרֶיהָ: ס
Jerusalem remembers the days of her affliction and homelessness,²⁴ all her precious things that existed from days of old. When her people fell in/by

²¹ For a detailed description of these and other formal features of 4QLam, see Kotzé, “A Text-Critical Analysis of the Lamentations Manuscripts,” 28-32.

²² For a summary of the variant readings in 4QLam, see Kotzé, “A Text-Critical Analysis of the Lamentations Manuscripts,” 32-37.

²³ The following editions of texts were used for the text-critical analysis: 4QLam: Frank M. Cross, “4QLam,” in *Qumran Cave 4 XI: Psalms to Chronicles* (ed. Eugene Ulrich et al.; DJD 16; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 229-237; MT: Rolf Schäfer, “Lamentations,” in *Biblia Hebraica quinta editione cum apparatus critico novis curis elaborato: General Introduction and Megilloth* (ed. Adrian Schenker et al.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004), 54-72, 113*-136*; Septuagint: Joseph Ziegler, *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Göttingensis editum XV: Jeremias, Baruch, Threni, Epistula Jeremiae* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976); and Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta: Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes: Editio altera quam recognovit et emendavit Robert Hanhart* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006); Peshitta: Bertil Albrektson, *Studies in the Text and Theology of the Book of Lamentations: With a Critical Edition of the Peshitta Text* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1963); Vulgate: Robert Weber, *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem: Editionem quintam emendatam retractatam praeparavit Roger Gryson* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007); Western recension of the Targum: Étan Levine, *The Aramaic Version of Lamentations* (New York: Hermon Press, 1976); Yemenite recension of the Targum: Albert van der Heide, *The Yemenite Tradition of the Targum of Lamentations* (Leiden: Brill, 1981).

²⁴ The word מְרוֹדֶיהָ in the MT is difficult. Wilhelm Rudolph, *Das Buch Ruth. Das Hohe Lied. Die Klagelieder* (KAT; Gerd Mohn: Gütersloher Verlaghaus, 1962), 206 suggests that מְרוֹדֶיהָ as an *Abstraktplural* deriving from the root רוּד. My translation follows this suggestion. For other proposals regarding the understanding of מְרוֹדֶיהָ,

the hand of a foe and there was no helper for her, foes saw her, they laughed about her downfall.

A comparison of the two Hebrew versions of Lam 1:7 reveals a number of interesting differences. Firstly, the main verb of the initial tricolon²⁵ in the MT, זָכְרָהּ, is a *qal* perfect feminine singular form with יְרוּשָׁלַם as its subject. I read both the phrases יְמֵי עֲנִיָּה וּמְרוֹדֶיהָ and כָּל מַחְמַדֶּיהָ as direct objects of זָכְרָהּ. Conversely, in the wording of 4QLam, the main verb is an imperative (זְכוֹרָה) with YHWH as the one called upon to remember.²⁶ The phrase יְמֵי עֲנִיָּה וּמְרוֹדֶיהָ is absent from the wording of the Qumran manuscript and instead of כָּל מַחְמַדֶּיהָ it has [כּוֹל מִכְאוּבוֹנָה].

According to Hobbins,²⁷ the original wording of the initial part of verse was זָכְרָהּ יְרוּשָׁלַם יְהוּה הָעֵנִי וּמְרוֹדֶיהָ וְכָל מַחְמַדֶּיהָ אֲשֶׁר וְהִי מִיְמֵי קֶדֶם.²⁸ On his hypothesis, the wordings of the MT and 4QLam are corruptions from the original text. Hobbins²⁹ suggests that the original main verb was an imperative, but when it was misconstrued as a perfect form with Jerusalem as the subject, יְהוּה was changed into יְמֵי at some stage during the process of transmission. In contrast to Cross³⁰ and Schäfer,³¹ who regard מַחְמַדֶּיהָ in the MT as a corrupt reading, Hobbins³² maintains that it is original, but he emends the preceding word to read כָּל. He therefore substitutes the noun כָּל with a *qal* perfect third-person plural form of the verbal root כָּלָה ("to come to an end"/"to be finished"). מַחְמַדֶּיהָ then serves as the subject of this verb. He attributes the corresponding reading in the MT to an aural misapprehension of his proposed original read-

see Dominique Barthélemy, *Critique Textuelle de l'Ancien Testament: Isaïe, Jérémie, Lamentations* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 864-865.

²⁵ If the Masoretic accents are taken as the point of departure, the opening clauses of Lam 1:7 in the MT can be lineated as a tricolon. See Raymond de Hoop, "Lamentations: The Qinah-Metre Questioned," in *Delimitation Criticism* (ed. Marjo Korpel and Josef Oesch; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2000), 95-96.

²⁶ According to Frank M. Cross, "Studies in the Structure of Hebrew Verse: The Prosody of Lamentations 1:1-22," in *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth: Essays in Honor of David N. Freedman* (ed. Carol L. Meyers and Michael O'Connor; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 140, the imperative form in 4QLam is the equivalent of זָכְרָהּ (*zokrâ*) in the Tiberian vocalisation.

²⁷ John F. Hobbins, "Lamentations 1-5: The Corpus Introduction," 15 [cited 4 Aug. 2011]. Online: http://ancienthebrewpoetry.typepad.com/ancient_hebrew_poetry/2006/05/index.html.

²⁸ The vowels in this reconstructed original text represent Hobbins's suggestion for how the words would have been pronounced at the time of the text's composition in the sixth century B.C.E.

²⁹ Hobbins, "Lamentations 1-5: The Corpus Introduction," 16.

³⁰ Cross, "4QLam," 232.

³¹ Schäfer, "Lamentations," 55.

³² Hobbins, "Lamentations 1-5: The Corpus Introduction," 16.

ing.³³ With regard to 4QLam, Hobbins³⁴ argues that the absence of ירושלם in this manuscript was the result of homoioarcton. The copyist’s eye jumped over ירושלם to יהוה, given that the consonants at the beginnings of these two words look very similar (ירו and יהו). In his critical apparatus, Hobbins characterises מכאובנו in 4QLam as a facilitated reading, suggesting that a scribe consciously attempted to ease what he considered to be a difficulty or awkwardness in a text.³⁵

Although Cross also thinks that both 4QLam and the MT are corrupt, he gives an alternative explanation for the readings preserved in these two Hebrew versions. He reconstructs the original text as follows: זכרה יהוה מרודיה אשר מימי קדם.³⁶ According to Cross,³⁷ the reading זכורה יהוה in the Qumran manuscript is preferable to its counterpart in the MT. The change from יהוה to ירושלם occurred as a result of assimilation to the subject of the verb in the initial clause of v. 8.³⁸ Cross also argues that the expanded wording of the MT, which contains the phrase ימי ענייה ומרודיה, was created by means of a conflation with a similar reading in Lam 3:19 (זכר-עניי ומרודי).³⁹ From the perspective of Cross’s proposed original text, the readings כל מכאובנו [כונ] and כל מחמדיה in 4QLam and the MT respectively, are both departures from an earlier reading מרודיה (כל).⁴⁰ Concerning the reading in the MT, Cross claims that the

words מחמדיה (v. 11 4QLam) and כל מחמדיה (v 10) are presumably the cause of the “assimilation” or anticipation triggering the error. The text of M in its present form preserves a doublet: ומרודיה כל מחמדיה. The inappropriateness of מחמדיה, “her delights,” in this context is evident.⁴¹

He goes on to note that

³³ Hobbins, “Lamentations 1-5: The Corpus Introduction,” 16.

³⁴ Hobbins, “Lamentations 1-5: The Corpus Introduction,” 16.

³⁵ Adrian Schenker et al., eds., *Biblia Hebraica quinta editio cum apparatu critico novis curis elaborato. General Introduction and Megilloth* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004), xc.

³⁶ Cross, “Studies in the Structure of Hebrew Verse,” 140-141.

³⁷ Cross, “4QLam,” 233.

³⁸ V. 8 in the MT opens with the clause חטא חטאה ירושלם. The corresponding reading in 4QLam is slightly different: חטוא חטאה ירושלם. Whereas חטוא can be interpreted as an infinitive absolute, חטא in the MT acts as an internal object of the verb חטאה. Concerning internal objects in Biblical Hebrew, see Wilhelm Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* (ed. Emil Kautsch; trans. Arthur Ernest Cowley; 2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), 366-367.

³⁹ Cross, “4QLam,” 233.

⁴⁰ Cross, “4QLam,” 232-233.

⁴¹ Cross, “4QLam,” 232-233.

4QLam for an original מרודיה reads מכאובנו (for מכאוביה), either as a revision of the rare word under the influence of מכאוב and מכאובי later in the lament (vv 12, 18), or much more likely, as a correction, conscious or unconscious, of the impossible מחמודיה in its manuscript tradition: כל מכאוביה > כל מחמודיה.⁴²

These suggestions offered by Hobbins and Cross regarding the ways in which the variant readings were created during the processes of transmission have much to commend them. It is noteworthy, however, that proposals for various types of scribal errors feature prominently in their discussions of the different wordings of the verse's opening cola in 4QLam and the MT.⁴³ Although these proposals provide plausible explanations of how the differences between 4QLam and the MT came into being, studies of biblical and non-biblical manuscripts among the Dead Sea scrolls have shed light on the creativity with which ancient scribes transmitted literary writings.⁴⁴ The quantitative and qualitative differences between copies of the same writing among the Qumran manuscripts show that some scribes felt free to add, omit and change details of the wordings of the literary writings which they copied. These changes affect the content of the writings.⁴⁵ In the light of these findings, the view that all

⁴² Cross, "4QLam," 233. See also the comments of Schäfer, "Lamentations," 114*.

⁴³ See also Robin B. Salters, *Lamentations* (ICC; London/New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 54.

⁴⁴ See Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Textual Study of the Bible – A New Outlook," in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (ed. Frank M. Cross and Shemaryahu Talmon; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 321-400.

⁴⁵ In some cases, the quantitative and qualitative differences between Qumran manuscripts of OT writings lead scholars to conclude that different literary versions of the writings existed in antiquity. Furthermore, some readings in Qumran manuscripts of OT writings agree with readings in the ancient translations and the Samaritan Pentateuch over against the readings in the MT. For examples, see the following studies (and the literature quoted there): James R. Davila, "New Qumran Readings For Genesis One," in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins* (ed. Harold W. Attridge, John J. Collins and Thomas H. Tobin; Maryland: University Press of America, 1990), 3-11; Bénédicte Lemmelijn, "The So-Called 'Major Expansion' in SamP, 4QpaleoExod^m and 4QExod^j of Ex 7:14-11:10: On the Edge between Textual Criticism and Literary Criticism," in *X Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies: Oslo, 1998* (ed. Bernard A. Taylor; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), 429-439; Leonard J. Greenspoon, "The Qumran Fragments of Joshua: Which Puzzle are They Part of and Where Do They Fit?," 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* (ed. George J. Brooke and Barnabas Lindars; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 159-194; Julio T. Barrera, "Textual Variants in 4QJudg^a and the Textual and Editorial History of the Book of Judges," *RevQ* 54 (1989): 229-245; Eugene Ulrich, *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus* (Missions: Scholars Press, 1978); Arie van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen des Jesa-*

ancient scribes were slavish copyists, who tried to copy literary writings as accurately as possible, has become untenable. At least some scribes deliberately contributed to the development of the wordings of literary writings.⁴⁶ Accordingly, not all the differences between manuscripts of the same writing should be classified as "errors." From this perspective, it becomes necessary to establish whether any of the differences between the opening clauses of Lam 1:7 in 4QLam and the MT can be attributed to the creative hands of scribes.

In the first eleven verses of Lam 1, a third-person narrator describes the misfortunes suffered by the city of Jerusalem. The reversal of her fortunes and the contrast between her glorious past and her miserable present conditions are recurring themes in these verses.⁴⁷ Only in v. 9 and v. 11, personified Jerusalem momentarily assumes the role of speaker and calls on YHWH to see and take note of the self aggrandisement of her enemies and her insignificance. It is therefore unlikely that an imperative addressed to YHWH was placed in the mouth of the narrator in the original version of the verse, given that the narrator merely reports on Jerusalem's sorrowful circumstances in the first eleven

jabuches (Fribourg/Göttingen: Universitets-verlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981); Emanuel Tov, "Some Aspects of the Textual and Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah," in *Le livre de Jérémie: Le Prophète et son Milieu, les Oracles et leur Transmission* (ed. Pierre-Maurice Bogaert; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1981), 145-167; Peter W. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms* (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Peter W. Flint, "The Book of Canticles (Song of Songs) in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Perspectives on the Song of Songs/Perspektiven der Hohe-liedauslegung* (ed. Anselm C. Hagedorn; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 96-104. These studies on the Qumran manuscripts of different OT writings, which represent only a small sample of the many that are devoted to the subject, show, *inter alia*, that the relationship between historical criticism and textual criticism must be worked out for each writing individually, since the qualitative and quantitative differences and agreements and disagreements between the extant textual representatives vary from one writing to the other.

⁴⁶ In this regard, Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2004), 24-25, writes: "The approach of scribes to literary texts changed over the course of the centuries; with regard to the biblical text it also differed from one milieu to another, and above all from person to person ... The function of the scribe was less technical and subordinate than is implied by the medieval and modern understanding of the word. The earlier scribes were involved not only in the copying of texts, but to a limited extent also in the creative shaping of the last stage of their content. Expressed differently, at one time scribes often took the liberty of changing the content, adding and omitting elements, sometimes on a small scale, but often substantially ... The nature of this creative scribal activity requires us to conceive of the persons involved as scribes-editors, who were not only active in the transmission of texts, but also in the final stage of their creative edition."

⁴⁷ Paul R. House, *Lamentations* (WBC; Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004), 338-339.

verses and the imperatives in vv. 9 and 11 are voiced by personified Jerusalem. Accordingly, I suggest that זכרה ירושלם is the earlier reading. The phrase ימי עניה ומרודיה might have been part of the original text, but since it is absent from the wording of 4QLam, it is possible that a scribe added it under the influence of the similar phrase in Lam 3:19.⁴⁸ Scholars have a hard time in finding an appropriate interpretation of the phrase.⁴⁹ This strengthens the notion that the phrase is out of place in the opening clauses of Lam 1:7.

If זכורה יהוה is accepted as the original reading, זכורה יהוה, the variant in 4QLam, might well have been deliberately created by a scribe during the process of transmission. The same holds true of the reading [כנ]ל מכאובנו, the direct object of the verb זכורה. In my opinion, מכאובנו is graphically too far removed from מחמדיה (and מרודיה, Cross's suggested original reading) to have been created accidentally through the confusion of letters, or another kind of scribal error. מכאובנו might constitute a facilitation, as Schäfer and Hobbins suggest, but this characterisation of the reading leaves the first-person plural pronominal suffix of the word unaccounted for. In the MT and the ancient translations, personified Jerusalem refers to herself in the first-person singular in those parts of the chapter where she is the speaker. The first-person plural suffix of מכאובנו would then have been out of place if it were the case that the city was also the speaker in 4QLam. However, there is evidence in the wording of other verses of Lam 1 in 4QLam that a scribe wanted to make the narrator the only speaker in the lament. In v. 11, the speaker calls upon YHWH to see that "I have become insignificant/worthless/despised" (כיא הייתי זולל). In the wording of this subordinate clause as it appears in the manuscript from Qumran, the word זולל is masculine singular.⁵⁰ The gender of the accompanying

⁴⁸ This suggestion leaves ימי unexplained. It might have been added before עניה ומרודיה under the influence of the prepositional phrase מימי in the subordinate clause אשר היו מימי קדם later in the verse.

⁴⁹ Some scholars decide to omit the phrase, while others translate it as though there is a preposition ב ("in") before ימי. The phrase would then make better sense in the context and the awkwardness of two very different direct objects for זכרה would be removed. In this regard, see the comments of Robin A. Parry, *Lamentations* (THOTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 49; and Adele Berlin, *Lamentations: A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 46. Salters, *Lamentations*, 56, and Robert Gordis, *The Song of Songs and Lamentations: A Study, Modern Translation and Commentary* (New York: KTAV, 1974), 154, propose that ימי עניה ומרודיה should be interpreted (with Ibn Ezra) as an adverbial accusative of time ("in the days of her affliction and homelessness"). On the basis of such an understanding of the phrase, it might be suggested that a scribe added עניה ומרודיה in order to incorporate the "contrast motif" into the opening cola of the verse: "In the days of her affliction and homelessness, Jerusalem remembers all her precious things that existed from days of old."

⁵⁰ Hurowitz notes that the form in 4QLam might represent the earliest example of the traditional Jewish interpretation of the word, which relate it to the Hebrew word

verb’s first-person subject (הייתי) must therefore also be masculine. It follows from this that the narrator speaks these words in 4QLam. Conversely, in the MT, the counterpart of זולל has a feminine form: זוללה. This implies that personified Jerusalem is the speaker in the MT’s version of this clause. An analogous difference is found at v. 13. In the final clause of this verse in the MT, personified Jerusalem says that YHWH “made me desolate, ill all day long” (נִתְנַנֵּי שִׁמְמָה כָּל־הַיּוֹם דָּוָה). The feminine singular form of the participle שִׁמְמָה and the feminine adjective דָּוָה mean that the personified city is the referent of the first-person object suffix of the verb נִתְנַנֵּי. The equivalent of this clause in 4QLam reads as follows: נִתְנַנֵּי שׁוּמָם כּוֹל הַיּוֹם וּדְ[וֹ]י (“He has left me deserted and faint all day long”). The masculine form of the participle שׁוּמָם and the masculine form of the adjective וּדְ[וֹ]י implies that, in 4QLam, these words are spoken by the narrator. One can detect in these subtle changes to the wording of vv. 11 and 13 a ploy on the part of a scribe to let the narrator be the speaker throughout these verses. From the perspective of such a ploy, the readings זכורה יהוה and זכורנו ל[כו] in 4QLam’s version of Lam 1:7 can also be interpreted as deliberate scribal alterations. On this proposal, a scribe created the reading מכאובנו from an earlier reading with the narrator and those whom he represents (his community or group) as the referent of the first-person plural pronominal suffix. The change of ירושלם into יהוה and the concomitant presentation of the initial verb as an imperative would then also reflect the scribe’s concern to make the narrator the focus of this verse. Arguably, a scribe introduced these changes so that v. 7 would begin with the narrator’s appeal to YHWH to take the pain suffered by him and his community to heart.⁵¹ This pain is intricately linked to what happened to Jerusalem, as the second part of the verse makes clear.

The second part of the verse shows three more differences between 4QLam and the MT. The words לָהּ רָאוּהָ are absent from the wording preserved in the manuscript from Qumran. This minus can be attributed to homoioteleu-

זולל, “glutton.” He goes on to argue that the form in the MT should be understood in light of the Akkadian word *zilulû* (“vagabond”/“tramp”/“peddler”). Accordingly, he translates the final clause of Lam 1:11 as follows: “See O Lord and look, for I have become a beggar.” See Victor A. Hurowitz, “זוללה = Peddler/Tramp/Vagabond/ Beggar: Lamentations I 11 in Light of Akkadian *zilulû*,” *VT* 49/4 (1999): 542-545.

⁵¹ A (male) first-person speaker is also found in the MT wordings of Lam 2, 3 and 4. These speakers are not necessarily identical, but it is noteworthy that they identify themselves closely with the plight of the people of Jerusalem, as does the narrator in the 4QLam wording of Lam 1. On the first-person speaker(s) in Lam 2, 3 and 4, see the discussion of Knut M. Heim, “The Personification of Jerusalem and the Drama of Her Bereavement in Lamentations,” in *Zion, City of Our God* (ed. Richard S. Hess and Gordon J. Wenham; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 150, 154-165. Concerning the different speaking voices in the MT wording of Lamentations, see also William F. Lanahan, “The Speaking Voice in the Book of Lamentations,” *JBL* 93 (1974): 41-45.

ton, given that לָהּ, רְאוּהָ and the form צָרִיָּה in 4QLam all end in a *hē*. The eye of a scribe could easily have skipped over לָהּ רְאוּהָ to צָרִיָּה.

The third-person feminine suffix of צָרִיָּה is absent from its counterpart in the MT (צָרִיָּים). The translation equivalents in the LXX (οἱ ἐχθροὶ αὐτῆς) and the Peshitta (ܘܠܗܘܢܗܘܢ) agree with the reading in 4QLam. Cross argues that the reading of the MT is preferable to the one in the Qumran manuscript, whilst Schäfer claims that the agreement between 4QLam and the Greek and Syriac translations is the result of assimilation to the immediate context.⁵² According to Albrektson,⁵³ the suffix of ܘܠܗܘܢܗܘܢ in the Peshitta and the independent personal pronoun αὐτῆς in the LXX do not necessarily imply that these translations were based on *Vorlagen* that contained a form such as צָרִיָּה. He refers to the fact that the Syriac translator regularly added suffixes to words in his translation and the possibility that the Greek translator might have misread the *mēm* of צָרִיָּים as a *hē*.⁵⁴ However, the argument for a confusion of consonants can work both ways. In other words, it is equally possible that a scribe misread an original צָרִיָּה as צָרִיָּים. Nevertheless, irrespective of whether צָרִיָּה is the original reading, its presence in 4QLam bolsters the view that οἱ ἐχθροὶ αὐτῆς in the LXX and ܘܠܗܘܢܗܘܢ in the Peshitta were based on such a reading in the respective *Vorlagen* of these ancient translations.

The third difference between 4QLam and the MT in the final part of Lam 1:7 is found at the last word of the verse. Cross argues that מְשַׁבְּרִיָּה in the manuscript from Qumran is the original reading and that the form מְשַׁבְּרִיָּה in the MT developed from the earlier reading through a confusion of the letters רִי with תּ.⁵⁵ This confusion of letters must have taken place at a time when the text was copied in a script in which the letter *yôd* was not yet reduced in size and could have been mistaken for the left down stroke of the letter *tāw*. Cross also points out that the reading in 4QLam is supported by the reading ܘܠܗܘܢܗܘܢ in the Peshitta (in spite of the difference in number). Although Albrektson maintains that the reading in the Peshitta is a satisfactory rendering of מְשַׁבְּרִיָּה in the MT and, therefore, that it does not necessarily presuppose a different Hebrew *Vorlage*,⁵⁶ it is, in my opinion, quite likely that ܘܠܗܘܢܗܘܢ in the Syriac translation was based on a reading such as מְשַׁבְּרִיָּה.⁵⁷ The form מְשַׁבְּרִיָּה is related to the verbal root שַׁבַּר ("to break"/"to shatter" in the *qal* and *pi'el* stem formations), whilst the noun ܘܠܗܘܢܗܘܢ derives from the verb ܘܠܗܘܢܗܘܢ ("to break"/"to shatter" in the *pe'al*

⁵² Cross, "4QLam," 233; Schäfer, "Lamentations," 55.

⁵³ Albrektson, *Studies in the Text and Theology of the Book of Lamentations*, 61.

⁵⁴ With regard to the interchange of these two consonants, see Johann G. Eichhorn, *Introduction to the Study of the Old Testament* (London: Spottiswoode and Co., 1888), 181.

⁵⁵ Cross, "4QLam," 233.

⁵⁶ Albrektson, *Studies in the Text and Theology of the Book of Lamentations*, 61.

⁵⁷ See also Salters, *Lamentations*, 59.

and *pa'el* conjugations). The translation equivalents in the LXX,⁵⁸ Vulgate⁵⁹ and the two recensions of the Targum⁶⁰ were nevertheless all based on Hebrew forms such as מְשַׁבְּתָהּ in the MT. The latter is a *hapax legomenon*. Its meaning is uncertain and Kraus even describes it as “unverständlich.”⁶¹ Ehrlich⁶² and

⁵⁸ There are two alternative equivalents for מְשַׁבְּתָהּ in the main Greek witnesses to the wording of LXX Lam 1:7. The reading κατοικεσία αὐτῆς (“her dwelling”/“inhabited area”) is found in Codex Vaticanus, Codex Sinaiticus and minuscules 106, 130 and 538 (here the word is spelled with an eta instead of an epsilon). This is the reading favoured by Ziegler (*Septuaginta*, 469) and included in the Old Greek text of the Göttingen edition. Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Marchalianus, Codex Venetus and the majority of other Greek manuscripts contain the reading (τῆ) μετουκεσία αὐτῆς (“her deportation”/“her captivity”/“her living abroad”). Rahlfs (*Septuaginta*, 757) decided to include this reading in his *Handausgabe* of the LXX. The rendering κατοικεσία αὐτῆς is probably based on an understanding of מְשַׁבְּתָהּ as a derivative of the verb יָשַׁב (“to sit”/“to dwell”). According to Assan-Dhôte and Moatti-Fine, *Baruch, Lamentations, Lettre de Jérémie* (La Bible d’Alexandrie 25.2; Paris: Cerf, 2005), 200, the same interpretation of the Hebrew word gave rise to the rendering μετουκεσία αὐτῆς. However, it is also possible that the scribe who was responsible for the reading μετουκεσία αὐτῆς related מְשַׁבְּתָהּ to the root שָׁבַח (“to take into captivity”). Godfrey R. Driver, “Hebrew Notes on ‘Song of Songs’ and ‘Lamentations,’” in *Festschrift Alfred Bertholet zum 80. Geburtstag* (ed. Walter Baumgartner et al.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1950), 136 provides an alternative explanation for the two Greek equivalents. He postulates the existence of a hypothetical form מוֹשְׁבָתָהּ (“her settlement [in a foreign land]”) and proposes that the Greek equivalents were based on this purported original Hebrew reading.

⁵⁹ The reading *sabbata eius* probably reflects the influence of Jewish exegesis on Jerome. The midrash in *Lamentations Rabbah* 1:7 §34 also connects מְשַׁבְּתָהּ to שַׁבַּת (“Sabbath”). See, Abraham Cohen, “Lamentations,” in *Midrash Rabbah* (Vol. 7; ed. Harry Freedman and Maurice Simon. London: Soncino Press, 1961), 108.

⁶⁰ The relevant part of the translation in the Western recension of the Targum of Lamentations reads as follows: חזוהא מעיקיא דאזלא בשביתא חייכו על טובהא דפסק מבינהא (“Oppressors saw her going into captivity. They laughed over her good, which has ceased from her”). There appears to be a double interpretation of מְשַׁבְּתָהּ in which it is derived from שָׁבַח (“to take captive”) and שָׁבַח (“to cease”). See Philip S. Alexander, *The Targum of Lamentations: Translated, with a Critical Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes* (ArBib 17b; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2007), 115. The version in the Yemenite recension of the Targum is slightly different: חזוהא מעיקיא דאזלא בשביתא חייכו על טובהא די פסק מבינהא (“Oppressors saw her, that they went into exile. They laughed over [the fact] that her good ceased from her”).

⁶¹ Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Klagelieder (Threni)* (BKAT; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchen Verlag, 1983), 22.

⁶² Arnold B. Ehrlich, *Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel: Textkritisches, Sprachliches und Sachliches* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1914), 31.

Rudolph⁶³ suggest that *משבתה* should be vocalised as a singular noun and that it is a derivative from the root *שבת* in the sense of “collapse” or “downfall.”⁶⁴

Concerning the content of the second part of the verse, both Hebrew versions portray enemies’ *Schadenfreude* at the razing of Jerusalem and the capture of her inhabitants. The adverbial phrase *בנפל* (preposition + infinitive construct) indicates the moment in time when the action of the main verb occurs. In the MT, there are two main verbs, *רָאוּהָ* and *שָׁחֲקוּ*. Accordingly, this version of the final clause in Lam 1:7 states that foes saw the city and laughed about her collapse/downfall at the same time as her people fell into or by⁶⁵ the hands of the enemy and no one came to help her. Due to the scribal error whereby the words *לֵה רָאוּהָ* were excluded, the wording of 4QLam only contains one main verb in its final clause (*שָׁחֲקוּ*). *בנפל* can therefore only relate adverbially to this verb. To my mind, *משבריה* (“her ruins”) evokes a more vivid picture of Jerusalem’s physical destruction than does the variant *משַׁבְּתָהָ* (“her collapse”/“downfall”) in the MT: when the city’s inhabitants fell into/by the hands of an enemy, her foes laughed over her ruins.

E CONCLUSION

The data provided by a text-critical analysis concerning the nature and the origins of the differences in wording between textual representatives of OT writings can be seen as relevant to biblical interpretation, if two conditions are met. On the one hand, the fact mentioned in the introduction to this study that the OT writings exist in more than one textual version must be taken seriously. This means that one particular version of the wording of the passage, whether the putative original text or the Hebrew *textus receptus*, should not be treated as the *sole* legitimate representative of its content. On the other hand, the differences in wording must be shown to affect the content of the passage under scrutiny.⁶⁶

⁶³ Wilhelm Rudolph, “Der Text der Klagelieder,” *ZAW* 56 (1938): 102.

⁶⁴ See Berlin, *Lamentations*, 46; Delbert R. Hillers, *Lamentations* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 70; Hans Gottlieb, *A Study on the Text of Lamentations* (Århus: Det Laerde Selskab, 1978), 13-14; Thomas F. McDaniel, “Philological Studies in Lamentations I,” *Bib* 49 (1968): 53; Albrektson, *Studies in the Text and Theology of the Book of Lamentations*, 61; Max R. H. Löhr, *Die Klagelieder des Jeremia* (HAT; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1893), 3.

⁶⁵ The preposition of *בִּיד* can either be a *bêth locale* or a *bêth instrumenti*.

⁶⁶ This applies especially to variant Hebrew readings that were created deliberately by scribes. At the same time, it should be noted that not all scribal errors produce wordings that yield no sense. The reading *משַׁבְּתָהָ* in the MT version of Lam 1:7 is a case in point. Moreover, the renderings in the ancient translations are important indicators of how the Hebrew wordings of OT passages were interpreted in antiquity.

With regard to the first condition, the publication of the Qumran manuscripts of OT writings alerted scholars to the fact that the MT is not a homogeneous unit, nor is it, properly speaking, a "text type." It is rather a collection of individual Hebrew versions of certain authoritative writings, whose nature and quality vary from writing to writing. In antiquity, these versions were just one of, supposedly, many textual representatives of the writings. The Qumran scrolls in particular give evidence that other, equally valid, textual representatives were used and transmitted. It follows that the MT can no longer be seen as the *only* legitimate representative of the OT writings' wordings and, therefore, their contents.⁶⁷ Likewise, although the publication of the almost two hundred biblical manuscripts from Qumran place text-critics in a good position to create eclectic texts of the OT writings, as Hendel and Cross suggest,⁶⁸ the original texts of these writings should also not be viewed as the *only* valid bases for biblical interpretation. For, as some scholars point out, certain convictions underlie the views regarding the necessity of establishing the original texts to serve as the textual bases for exegesis. Not all scholars share these convictions.⁶⁹

Concerning the second condition, this study on Lam 1:7 demonstrates that 4QLam and the MT do indeed present two different versions of the content of the verse. The text-critical analysis sheds light on how scribes created the variant readings during the process of copying manuscripts and how these variants contribute to the differences in content.

⁶⁷ Lemmelijn, "As Many Texts as Plagues," 112. The MT is, of course, a very important textual representative and has enjoyed its eminent status because it is regarded as canonical by Jewish and Christian faith communities. See Tov, "The Status of the Masoretic Text in Modern Text Editions," 235.

⁶⁸ Hendel, "Qumran and a New Edition of the Hebrew Bible," 149-165; Frank M. Cross, "The Biblical Scrolls from Qumran and the Canonical Text," in *Scripture and the Scrolls* (vol. 1 of *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*; ed. James H. Charlesworth. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 67-75.

⁶⁹ Deist, *Witnesses to the Old Testament*, 5, argues that "the definition of textual criticism as a special branch of research that has to establish the 'correct' reading of a biblical text and as a procedure that precedes exegesis proper is a particularly Protestant one flowing forth from the *sola scriptura* principle." Moshe H. Goshen-Gottstein, "The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: Rise, Decline, Rebirth," *JBL* 102/3 (1983): 373, remarks that "we are allowed to ponder how large is the functional difference between the theologian's attempt to establish the 'true unchanged word of God' and the philologist's endeavor to recapture archetype or *Urtext*." Cross, "The Biblical Scrolls from Qumran and the Canonical Text," 74-75 also concludes that theological dogma will probably have the final say in decisions as to which form of the texts of OT writings are (re)constructed by scholars, in spite the fact that the Dead Sea scrolls should have an important impact on how texts are established.

From these perspectives and the results of the examination of the wordings of Lam 1:7 in 4QLam and the MT, it can be concluded that text-critical analyses in which the available textual representatives are treated as witnesses to the content of the OT writings can provide the exegete with data that are relevant to the interpretation of these writings. The study also illustrates that the Qumran manuscripts can have an important part to play in such analyses of Lamentations.⁷⁰

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⁷⁰ The scattered references to the ancient translations in the analysis of Lam 1:7 also allude to the fact that the LXX, the Peshitta, the Vulgate and the Targums should not be neglected in text-critical studies on Lamentations.

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