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

GIDEON KOTZÉ (UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH)

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.

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,

interests, beliefs and prejudices play in the creation of meanings. 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.

Textual criticism is the discipline in biblical research in which these different textual representatives of the OT writings are studied. 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. 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-

---

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

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 indispensible 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.  

**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, 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. 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.

---

11 See Gideon R. Kotzé, “A Text-Critical Analysis of the Lamentations Manuscripts from Qumran (3QLam, 4QLam, 5QLamᵃ and 5QLamᵇ): 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.


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. Moreover, manuscripts such as 11QPs and the document known as “Reworked Pentateuch” (4Q364-367) have led scholars to rethink their suppositions about what constitutes a “biblical” writing.

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-

---


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. 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). 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). The solitary fragment of 5QLam\(^b\) contains words from Lam 4:17-20. 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,

---

to the period stretching from 30 B.C.E. to 1 C.E.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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 MT\textsuperscript{23}

4QLam

Remember O YHWH [all] 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

Jerusalem remembers the days of her affliction and homelessness,\textsuperscript{24} all her precious things that existed from days of old. When her people fell in/by

\textsuperscript{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.

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


\textsuperscript{24} The word יראתיה in the MT is difficult. Wilhelm Rudolph, \textit{Das Buch Ruth. Das Hohe Lied. Die Klagelieder} (KAT; Gerd Mohn: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1962), 206 suggests that יראתיה as an \textit{Abstraktplural} deriving from the root ירהו, My translation follows this suggestion. For other proposals regarding the understanding of יראתיה.
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 tricolon\(^\text{25}\) in the MT, יְרַשְׁלוֹם נָעַת מְנוֹרָה, is a qal perfect feminine singular form with יְרַשְׁלוֹם as its subject. I read both the phrases יְרַשְׁלוֹם נָעַת מְנוֹרָה and יְרַשְׁלוֹם נָעַת מְנוֹרָה as direct objects of יְרַשְׁלוֹם. Conversely, in the wording of 4QLam, the main verb is an imperative (הָנה) with יְרַשְׁלוֹם מְנוֹרָה as the one called upon to remember.\(^\text{26}\) The phrase יְרַשְׁלוֹם מְנוֹרָה is absent from the wording of the Qumran manuscript and instead of יְרַשְׁלוֹם מְנוֹרָה it has רַשְׁלוֹם מְנוֹרָה.[\(\text{2}\)]

According to Hobbins,\(^\text{27}\) the original wording of the initial part of verse 1:7 was יְרַשְׁלוֹם נָעַת מְנוֹרָה.\(^\text{28}\) On his hypothesis, the wordings of the MT and 4QLam are corruptions from the original text. Hobbins\(^\text{29}\) suggests that the original main verb was an imperative, but when it was misconstrued as a perfect form with Jerusalem as the subject, היה was changed into יה וּמְנוּרָה at some stage during the process of transmission. In contrast to Cross\(^\text{30}\) and Schäfer,\(^\text{31}\) who regard מְנוֹרָה in the MT as a corrupt reading, Hobbins\(^\text{32}\) maintains that it is original, but he emends the preceding word to read כל. He therefore substitutes the noun כל with a qal perfect third-person plural form of the verbal root נָעַת ("to come to an end"/"to be finished"). נָעַת 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-

---


\(25\) 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.


\(28\) 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.


\(30\) Cross, “4QLam,” 232.


With regard to 4QLam, Hobbins argues that the absence of יהושע in this manuscript was the result of homoioarcton. The copyist’s eye jumped over יהושע to יהודו given that the consonants at the beginnings of these two words look very similar (יה ויה). In his critical apparatus, Hobbins characterises מַמָּדָּה 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.  

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: יהודו והרוהי אֱלֹהִים מָרָדְמֵהו. According to Cross, the reading יהודו in the Qumran manuscript is preferable to its counterpart in the MT. The change from יהודו to יהושע occurred as a result of assimilation to the subject of the verb in the initial clause of v. 8. Cross also argues that the expanded wording of the MT, which contains the phrase יִמְעַרֶהּ וּמוֹרָדְמֵהוּ, was created by means of a conflation with a similar reading in Lam 3:19 (וּמֹרָהָהּ וּמַמָּדָּה). From the perspective of Cross’s proposed original text, the readings מַמָּדָּה וּמוֹרָדְמֵהוּ in 4QLam and the MT respectively, are both departures from an earlier reading מַמָּדָּה (מֹרָדוּ). Concerning the reading in the MT, Cross claims that the words מַמָּדָּה (v. 11 4QLam) and מַמָּדָּה (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: יהודו מַמָּדָּה. The inappropriateness of מַמָּדָּה, “her delights,” in this context is evident.

He goes on to note that

---

35 Adrian Schenker et al., eds., Biblia Hebraica quinta editione cum apparatu critico novis curis elaborato. General Introduction and Megilloth (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004), xc.
37 Cross, “4QLam,” 233.
38 V. 8 in the MT opens with the clause יִמְעַרֶהּ וּמוֹרָדְמֵהו. The corresponding reading in 4QLam is slightly different: יִמְעַרֶהּ וּמוֹרָדְמֵהו. Whereas יִמְעַרֶהּ can be interpreted as an infinitive absolute, יִמְעַרֶהּ in the MT acts as an internal object of the verb וּמוֹרָדְמֵהו. 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.
4QLam for an original שְׁמַרְדֵּה (משמרות), either as a revision of the rare word under the influence of שְׁמַרְדֵּה and שְׁמַרְדֵּה later in the lament (vv 12, 18), or much more likely, as a correction, conscious or unconscious, of the impossible שְׁמַרְדֵּה in its manuscript tradition: כָּל שְׁמַרְדֵּה > כָּל שְׁמַרְדֵּה.

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. 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. 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. 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.
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. 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. 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

---

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.”

verses and the imperatives in vv. 9 and 11 are voiced by personified Jerusalem. Accordingly, I suggest that יכדה ירושלים 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. Scholars have a hard time in finding an appropriate interpretation of the phrase. This strengthens the notion that the phrase is out of place in the opening clauses of Lam 1:7.

If יכדה ירושלים is accepted as the original reading, יכדה ירושלים, 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 ילואֹת יְהוָה, the direct object of the verb יכדה. In my opinion, ילואֹת is graphically too far removed from יְהוָה (and יְהוָה address) to have been created accidentally through the confusion of letters, or another kind of scribal error. ילואֹת 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 ילואֹת 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" (יִכְדֶּה יְהוָה). In the wording of this subordinate clause as it appears in the manuscript from Qumran, the word יְהוָה is feminine singular. The gender of the accompanying

48 This suggestion leaves יכדה unexplained. It might have been added before יכדה under the influence of the prepositional phrase יכדה in the subordinate clause יכדה 앞 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 יכדה. The phrase would then make better sense in the context and the awkwardness of two very different direct objects for יכדה 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 יכדה 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 יכדה 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 (היהי) must therefore also be masculine. It follows from this that the narrator speaks these words in 4QLam. Conversely, in the MT, the counterpart of יִשְׁתַּמְּשָׁה (ולה) has a feminine form: שַׁמְּשָׁה. 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” (שמות יִשְׁתַּמְּשָׁה). The feminine singular form of the participle שַׁמְּשָׁה and the feminine adjective שַׁמְּשָׁה mean that the personified city is the referent of the first-person object suffix of the verb שַׁמְּשָׁה. The equivalent of this clause in 4QLam reads as follows: שַׁמְּשָׁה יִשְׁתַּמְּשָׁה (וּ). The masculine form of the participle שַׁמְּשָׁה and the masculine form of the adjective שַׁמְּשָׁה imply that the personified city is the referent of the first-person plural pronoun שַׁמְּשָׁה. The change of יִשְׁתַּמְּשָׁה into שַׁמְּשָׁה 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 יִשְׁתַּמְּשָׁה יִשְׁתַּמְּשָׁה are absent from the wording preserved in the manuscript from Qumran. This minus can be attributed to homoioteleu-
ton, given that ראה and the form in 4QLam all end in a he. The eye of a scribe could easily have skipped over ראה to هل ראה and.

The third-person feminine suffix of ראה is absent from its counterpart in the MT (נְזֵה). The translation equivalents in the LXX (of ἐγγερσάω and the Peshitta) 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 נְזֵה in the Peshitta and the independent personal pronoun וּמֹסֶק in the LXX do not necessarily imply that these translations were based on Vorlagen that contained a form such as ראה. 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 mem of ראה as a he.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 ראה as ראה. Nevertheless, irrespective of whether ראה is the original reading, its presence in 4QLam bolsters the view that ol ἐγγερσάω and וּמֹסֶק in the LXX and נְזֵה 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 יָשֵׁב in the manuscript from Qumran is the original reading and that the form יְשָׁבָה in the MT developed from the earlier reading through a confusion of the letters כ with י.55 This confusion of letters must have taken place at a time when the text was copied in a script in which the letter yod was not yet reduced in size and could have been mistaken for the left down stroke of the letter taw. Cross also points out that the reading in 4QLam is supported by the reading יָשֵׁב in the Peshitta (in spite of the difference in number). Although Albrektson maintains that the reading in the Peshitta is a satisfactory rendering of יָשֵׁב in the MT and, therefore, that it does not necessarily presuppose a different Hebrew Vorlage,56 it is, in my opinion, quite likely that יָשֵׁב in the Syriac translation was based on a reading such as יָשֵׁב.57 The form יָשֵׁב is related to the verbal root יָשֵׁב (‘to break’/‘to shatter’ in the qal and pi’el stem formations), whilst the noun יָשֵׁב derives from the verb יָשֵׁב (‘to break’/‘to shatter’ in the pe’al

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.
57 See also Salters, Lamentations, 59.
and pa‘el conjugations). The translation equivalents in the LXX,\textsuperscript{58} Vulgate\textsuperscript{59} and the two recensions of the Targum\textsuperscript{60} were nevertheless all based on Hebrew forms such as מָשָׁבְתָה in the MT. The latter is a hapax legomenon. Its meaning is uncertain and Kraus even describes it as “unverständlich.”\textsuperscript{61} Ehrlich\textsuperscript{62} and

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{58} There are two alternative equivalents for מָשָׁבְתָה 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 (τῇ) μετοικεσία 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 מָשָׁבְתָה as a derivative of the verb יש (“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 μετοικεσία αὐτῆς. However, it is also possible that the scribe who was responsible for the reading μετοικεσία αὐτῆς related מָשָׁבְתָה to the root מָשָׁ (“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 מָשָׁבְתָה מִפְּלִיטָה (“her settlement [in a foreign land]”) and proposes that the Greek equivalents were based on this purported original Hebrew reading.
\item \textsuperscript{60} The relevant part of the translation in the Western recension of the Targum of Lamentations reads as follows: יהוה מאכין דאלא בושיחא יאיב על טובי דפקס (“Oppressors saw her going into captivity. They laughed over her good, which ceased from her”) There appears to be a double interpretation of מָשָׁבְתָה in which it is derived from שָׁבָה (“to take captive”) and שָׁבָ (“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: יהוה מאכין דאלא בושיחא יאיב על טובי דפקס מיבינא (“Oppressors saw her, that they went into exile. They laughed over [the fact] that her good ceased from her”).
\item \textsuperscript{61} Hans-Joachim Kraus, Klagelieder (Threni) (BKAT; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchen Verlag, 1983), 22.
\item \textsuperscript{62} Arnold B. Ehrlich, Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel: Textkritisches, Sprachliches und Sachliches (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1914), 31.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Rudolph\textsuperscript{63} suggest that מشبهת should be vocalised as a singular noun and that it is a derivative from the root שבת in the sense of “collapse” or “downfall.”\textsuperscript{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 בג Eag (preposition + infinitive construct) indicates the moment in time when the action of the main verb occurs. In the MT, there are two main verbs, שמחות and לראות. 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 by\textsuperscript{65} the hands of the enemy and no one came to help her. Due to the scribal error whereby the words בג Eag were excluded, the wording of 4QLam only contains one main verb in its final clause (שמחות). This can therefore only relate adverbially to this verb. To my mind, מشبهות (“her ruins”) evokes a more vivid picture of Jerusalem’s physical destruction than does the variant מشبهות (“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.\textsuperscript{66}


\textsuperscript{65} The preposition of בג can either be a בֵּית לוכֵא or a בֵּיתוּן. 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 מشبهות 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.

\textsuperscript{66}
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. 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, 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.

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.


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.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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.


Kotzé, Gideon R. “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.


Dr. Gideon Kotzé, Department of Old and New Testament, University of Stellenbosch, Private Bag X1, Matieland, 7620. Email: gideonrkotze@gmail.com.