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Taking Stock of Biblia Hebraica Quinta[1]

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Three fascicles of Biblia Hebraica Quinta (BHQ) have now appeared: *General Introduction and Megilloth* (2004), *Ezra and Nehemiah* (2006), and *Deuteronomy* (2007). They are beautifully produced and deserve a place on the shelf of every serious student of the Hebrew Bible. They will interest anyone who accepts the possibility that the received texts of the books of the Hebrew Bible contain intentional changes and inadvertent errors that distinguish them from texts of the same books that circulated earlier on within the chain of tradition.

Biblia Hebraica Quinta 18. General Introduction and Megilloth. Ruth (Jan de Waard). Canticles (Piet B. Dirksen). Qoheleth (Yohanan A. P. Goldman). Lamentations (Rolf Schäfer). Esther (Magne Sæbø). Gen. ed. Adrian Schenker et al.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004.

Biblia Hebraica Quinta 20. Ezra and Nehemiah (David Marcus). Gen. ed. Adrian Schenker et al.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006.

Biblia Hebraica Quinta 5. Deuteronomy (Carmel McCarthy). Gen. ed. Adrian Schenker et al.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007.

BHQ, I am happy to report, is being made available in electronic[2] format.

Text criticism is not a subject that interests everyone. The (proto-) masoretic text, many will point out, has served Jewish readers well since the second century CE, and, albeit indirectly, Western Christians since the Vulgate of Jerome. Alongside official Aramaic *targumim*, the masoretic text remains normative in rabbinic Judaism. The masoretic text, furthermore, is now the point of departure for exegesis in all branches of western Christianity.[3]

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1 I wish to thank Adrian Schenker, BHQ's general editor, for taking the time to respond to an earlier draft of this essay. Of course, the views expressed in the essay remain my own.

2 Information is available on the website http://www.logos.com/products/details/3108.

3 The masoretic text is, first and foremost, the vocalized, accented text of the Hebrew Bible contained in a series of carefully executed codices of the 10th-11th centuries of the current era: e.g., Codex Aleppo (MS Ben-Zvi Institute 1), Codex Leningradensis (= I Firk. B 19a), British Museum Or. 4445, Codex Cairensis (Gottheil 34), Codex Sassoon 507, and Codex Leningradensis II Firk. B 17). Proto-masoretic texts are earlier texts without vocalization,

There is much to be said for sticking with the masoretic text. Seamless participation in a stream of interpretation that has flowed without ceasing for more than two millennia is thereby secured. But there is also something to be said for the attempt to describe text forms of the books of the Hebrew Bible that existed before and alongside the proto-masoretic text forms in Second Temple times and beyond.

Non-masoretic text forms of the books of the Hebrew Bible played an important role in the early history of the literature's reception. In some cases, via translation into Greek and other languages, they are read as Holy Scripture to this day in orthodox branches of Christianity. Many Jews depended on non-proto-masoretic text forms of the books of the Hebrew Bible, in Hebrew and/or in translation, up to and beyond the fall of the Second Temple, even after proto-masoretic text forms of the same books became the text of choice among other Jews. Philo, Josephus, Matthew, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, to cite well-known examples, depended on text forms of the books of the Hebrew Bible that differ significantly from the text forms of the same books that came to be embedded in the *textus receptus* of rabbinic Judaism. If a non-masoretic text form of the Hebrew Bible was the text through which Philo, Josephus, Matthew, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews sought to hear God speak, what hinders us from a similar quest today?

The task of describing and reconstructing details of the text that circulated „once upon a time," before the (proto-) masoretic text became normative for Jews and, albeit indirectly, for many Christians, can in some sense be understood as an act of devotion. The biblical text as it would have looked like *then*, not the text as it has come to be, is brought to life again. The text of old, one may argue, is yet able to communicate through the words it contains.

But intractable problems arise should one argue that a non-masoretic text form of a book of the Hebrew Bible, if it appears to represent a more pristine form of the text than does the masoretic form, must in consequence become the form in which scripture is received. The transmitted errors and intentional modifications that form part of the masoretic text should not be thought to disqualify said text from functioning as Holy Scripture. Said errors and intentional changes, it is possible to affirm, have positively rather than negatively contributed to the life of the people who treated and continue to treat the text form in which they are found as Holy Scripture. I would so affirm. But my interest in received texts of the books

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accents, and other features of MT but whose consonantal text is almost identical to MT. Examples from Qumran include 1QIsa^{b} and 4QJer^{c}, and the Hebrew texts found elsewhere in the Judean desert. A non-masoretic text form of a biblical book preserves a text whose content and / or arrangement differ from the masoretic text in significant ways. For example, the Pentateuch is known to us in multiple forms: MT (and proto-MT); Samaritan (and pre-Samaritan 4QpaleoExod^{m} and 4QNum^{b}); LXX and its Vorlage, insofar as it is reconstructible (and affine 4QExod^{b}, 4QLev^{d}, 4QDeut^{q}); and texts from Qumran that do not align overwhelmingly with MT, Samaritan, or LXX.

of the Hebrew Bible which predate the received text thereof we refer to as the masoretic text, is not thereby diminished. The first translators of the books of the Hebrew Bible into Greek; the scribes and readers of 4QJosh[a], 4QSam[a], 4QJer[b], and 4QJer[d]; Jewish authors of the caliber of Philo and Josephus; and Christian authors of the caliber of the authors of Matthew and Hebrews, heard God speak to them through non-proto-masoretic texts in their possession. Perhaps we are not so dimwitted as to be unable to do likewise.

BHQ aims to describe „the earliest attainable form(s) of the text" of the Hebrew Bible „based on the available evidence" (*General Introduction*, XV). That ought to include, in a host of cases, non-proto-masoretic forms of the text. In this essay, I examine the degree to which the fascicles published so far acquit themselves in this respect. Along the way, I offer reflections on the whither and wherefore of text criticism of the Hebrew Bible.

1. Preliminaries

For an introduction to BHQ which complements the one provided in BHQ 18, I refer the reader to an essay[4] by one of BHQ's editors, Richard D. Weis. It appeared in *TC* 7 (2002) [= TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism[5]].

Typos and stylistic infelicities in the published fascicles are few and far between. The editorial committee invites readers to submit lists of observed errors to a designated electronic address: bhq@dbg.de.

BHQ is the successor project of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS). It remains a diplomatic edition of a single medieval manuscript, Codex Leningradensis, to the point that obvious errors in the codex are now reproduced in the body of the edition and only corrected in footnotes. It is also a new product with a number of innovative features. An obvious BHQ improvement vis-à-vis BHS is that run-on lines, with overflow text placed on the line above or below and preceded by a bracket, have been eliminated.

In the following, five aspects of BHQ serve as springboards for wider-ranging reflections: (1) production schedule; (2) format; (3) treatment of poetry; (4) updateability; and (5) advantages and disadvantages vis-à-vis a parallel project, OHB. The critical remarks I offer are not meant to diminish the massive achievement BHQ to date represents.

4 Information is available on http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/vol07/Weis2002-x.html.
5 Information is available on http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/TC-main.html.

2. Production Schedule

BHQ was originally scheduled for completion between 2005 and 2007. Three fascicles have so far appeared, with others sure to appear before long. It is now[6] stated that the project will reach completion by 2010. It seems more likely that it will not be completed until 2012 at the earliest.

How does that compare to the production schedules of three related projects of interest to students of the Hebrew Bible?

The Hebrew University Bible Project (HUBP) is the collaborative effort of a team of Israeli scholars. At base it is a diplomatic edition of a single medieval manuscript, Codex Aleppo. A massive number of variants from a variety of sources are collected in a multi-tiered apparatus, with limited discussion thereof.

Two of the finest scholars in the field served in succession as general editor of HUB: Moshe H. Goshen-Gottstein and Shemaryahu Talmon. A sample edition of a portion of the book of Isaiah appeared in 1965, the definitive „Part One Part Two" of Isaiah [Isa 1–22] in 1975, volume 2 [Isa 22–44] in 1981, and volume 3 [Isa 45–66] in 1993. Jeremiah appeared in 1997, Ezekiel in 2004. It is said that work is progressing on the Twelve Prophets.

Mikraot Gedolot HaKeter is under the editorship of Menachem Cohen. It is another Israeli endeavor, this time out of Bar-Ilan University. For more detailed information on this exciting project, go to http://www.jewishlibraries.org/ajlweb/publications/proceedings/proceedings2004/aronson.pdf.

The latter project is not nearly as well-known as it deserves to be. The volumes contain an extremely accurate Hebrew text based on Codex Aleppo and, where Codex Aleppo is not preserved, other early medieval mss. It also contains the notes of the masorah parva and masorah magna with case-by-case explanations; Targum Onkelos or the Targum to the Prophets according to a critical edition that supersedes all previous editions; and texts of the great commentary tradition of Rashi, Kimchi, Ibn Ezra, and others based on the best extant mss., not print editions. All components of HaKeter are presented in an easy-to-read format.

The most obvious gifts HaKeter makes to the text criticism of the Hebrew Bible are its critically established Targum texts. For a handy guide to the best critical editions of the Targumim, see the notes in CAL[7]. It is of interest that the texts chosen for CAL in the case of Targum for Qoheleth and the Targum for Ruth are not the same as those chosen by BHQ. Collation of the texts chosen for CAL makes sense in preparation for the definitive edition of BHQ.

Publication of HaKeter began with the General Introduction together with Joshua and Judges in 1992, and now embraces Genesis, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings,

6 Information is available on the website http://www.scholarly-bibles.com/advanced_search_result.php?keywords=Quinta&X=0&Y=0.

7 Information is available on http://cal1.cn.huc.edu/searching/targum_info.html.

Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Psalms, with Exodus in press. The long-awaited English edition of the General Introduction to HaKeter is also in preparation. HaKeter will probably be completed before BHQ is.

The *Oxford Hebrew Bible* (OHB), under the general editorship of Ronald Hendel, is in the launch phase. The team, like that of BHQ, is international in scope. OHB is the most innovative text-critical project on the docket. Its goal is to produce a critical text of the Hebrew Bible in line with a massive amount of cutting-edge research now in progress. Parallel recensions of portions of the Hebrew Bible will be presented insofar as they are reconstructible by text-critical means.

An introduction to the project and samples are available on http://ohb.berkeley.edu/ , including a sample page of OHB Deuteronomy details of which are discussed below. A production schedule, so far as I know, has not been made public.

One thing is clear. It would be premature to consign your BHS to a genizah just yet. You will need it for the foreseeable future, not least because the text-critical focus of BHQ is narrower than that of BHS. The fact deserves thorough notice. As Weis states, „A unit of variation will be noted in the apparatus only when one or more variants among the surviving textual witnesses exist, *not* – as Rudolph Kittel indicated in the preface to the first edition of the *Biblia Hebraica* [1905] – when there is a perceived exegetical difficulty regardless of the presence or absence of variation among the witnesses."

This, in my view, is the chief drawback of BHQ. It mutilates the field of text criticism by eliminating from consideration an aspect of the discipline as traditionally understood: to wit, that covered in chapter eight of Emanuel Tov's *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* under the rubric of „conjectural emendation."[8] BHK, the predecessor of BHS, gave a bad name to this text-critical endeavor. Tov defends the practice but not its misuse.

2.1 In Defense of Conjectural Emendation

A controlled use of conjecture in the realm of text-criticism is to be welcomed, and need not signal disrespect for the received text. It is a both/and proposition, as examination of the *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh* will demonstrate.[9] Extreme care is taken in that edition to present an accurate Masoretic text. At the same time, a long string of conjectural emendations are deemed worthy of inclusion in the textual footnotes to the English translation. The notes relate in the first in-

8 Emanuel Tov: *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible,* 2. ed., Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001 [1992], p. 351–369.

9 *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh*, 2. ed., Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1999 [1985].

stance to the Hebrew text. Other conjectural emendations are reflected in the translation without an accompanying footnote.

It might have been better if NJPSV translated MT as graciously as possible even when the text is in apparent disorder, and relegate a translation of the text as it seems best to reconstruct it to a footnote. Moshe Greenberg argued this point.[10]

But it must be admitted that the production of an unadulterated translation of MT poses challenges of its own. Greenberg, to be sure, showed the way. In his Ezekiel commentary, he offers a translation which is unintelligible when MT is unintelligible.[11] For example, Greenberg translates Ezek 11:21a as follows: 'But those whose hearts go after their heart-of-loathsome-and-abominable things' (p. 186). He footnotes the fact that the Hebrew is strained, and offers a conjectural emendation as a remedy. The remedy is defended in the comment (p. 191).

From a text critical point of view, at a minimum one might wish that a translation of MT would footnote every case in which it disregards its base text in favor of an alternative, including every instance in which the vocalization of the consonantal text and / or the syntactic construal MT preserves is overridden. If this were done, the need for text criticism in these instances would be immediately obvious. By definition, each footnoted locus would constitute a text critical flashpoint.

This is not to say that every rough patch in MT by definition requires text critical attention, or that smooth passages never do. In the case of smooth passages, it is usually impossible to guess when a scribe cleaned up a difficult passage unless a non-masoretic witness to the text points in that direction. To this extent, but to this extent only, I concur with paragraph 31 in Weis's essay in which he defends the decision not to discuss passages because a surviving textual witness does not exist that attests to the correct reading. I disagree. On the face of it, even examples for which a text critical solution is obvious (ר/ד interchanges, etc.) will be left unsolved by BHQ if a surviving textual witness attesting to it does not exist.

To return to the example of Ezekiel: unless someone is simply tone-deaf to what Ezekiel is likely to have said in his day, and to what his editor, who may have been himself, is likely to have written down, it is impossible not to correct MT Ezekiel in a number of instances, with or without the support of an extant variant reading.

If this is the case, BHQ's narrow focus is ultimately in need of a corrective.

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10 Moshe Greenberg, "The New Torah Translation," *Judaism* 12, 1963, 226–237; repr. with additional note in idem, *Studies in the Bible and Jewish Thought*, JPS Scholar of Distinction Series, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1995, 245–260.

11 Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* AB 22, Garden City: Doubleday, 1983; *Ezekiel 21–37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* AB 22A, Garden City: Doubleday, 1997.

2.2 The Goal of Text Criticism of the Hebrew Bible: A Reconstruction of proto-MT or multiple early text Forms?

To continue with the example of Ezekiel, it might seem that a reconstruction of the text as it might have appeared at some point in time before or apart from the standardization of the text reflected in MT, is not a concern of the BHQ team. On this view, OG Ezekiel, which witnesses to a shorter and probably earlier recension of the text, might safely be set to one side. Those who have read Barthélemy might be tempted to surmise that the BHQ team would follow him in this respect.[12]

In point of fact, it cannot be said that the BHQ editors are in lock-step agreement with Barthélemy's approach to the text criticism of the Hebrew Bible.

Schäfer's edition of Lamentations may illustrate. Schäfer is not averse to preferring a text that deviates from MT based on the testimony of non-proto-MT textual witnesses. His discussion of Lam 1:7 is a case in point. He opts for a text that is in part based on 4QLam and in part based on conjectural emendation.

I would defend a text far closer to MT than is the text Schäfer prefers at Lam 1:7.[13] But I applaud his willingness to prefer a text at odds with MT if evidence and reasoning point him in that direction.

The goal of Schäfer's text criticism is unrelated to a reconstruction of proto-MT. It conforms instead to the goal of BHQ as stated in the *General Introduction*, to wit: the aim of BHQ in rendering judgments in its apparatus is to point to the earliest form(s) of the text attainable on the basis of the available evidence (XV). Schäfer fulfills this aim to the letter.

To be sure, the '(s)' appended to 'form' in BHQ's statement of purpose is not a detail of minor import. Proto-MT is one among several early forms of a number of biblical books for which evidence is available. For example, there are enough proto-MT Isaiah materials among the Qumran finds to allow for a reconstruction

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12 That OG Ezekiel reflects the existence of a separate edition of the book is a presupposition of the text-critical discussions of MT Ezekiel in Dominique Barthélemy, (ed.): *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament 3: Ézéchiel, Daniel et le 12 Prophètes,* OBO 50/3, Fribourg: Éditiones Universitaires, Göttingen: V&R, 1992. As such the role it plays in text critical determinations made by Barthélemy's team, relating as they do to the edition of the book reflected in MT Ezekiel, is minimal.

13 For a full presentation of his preferred text, see Rolf Schäfer, „Der ursprüngliche Text und die poetische Struktur des ersten Klageliedes (Kgl 1): Textkritik und Strukturanalyse im Zwiegespräch", in: *Sôfer Mahîr: Essays in Honour of Adrian Schenker Offered by the Editors of Biblia Hebraica Quinta,* ed. Yohanan A. P. Goldman, Arie van der Kooij and Richard D. Weis, VTSup 110, Leiden: Brill, 2006, 239–259. For an alternative to Schäfer's preferred text at Lam 1:7, see the present writer's „In Search of Prosodic Domains in Ancient Hebrew Verse: Lamentations 1–5 and the Prosodic Structure Hypothesis" (2006) ad loc (http://ancienthebrewpoetry. typepad.com/ancient_hebrew_poetry/files/lam_15_in_search_of_prosodic_domains.pdf).

of a number of details of proto-MT at variance with MT Isaiah. The situation is different in the case of the book of Lamentations.

To return to the example of Ezekiel: it will be interesting to see the tack BHQ takes. A presentation of the long and short versions of the book would be helpful. In addition, BHQ Ezekiel ought to discuss conjectural emendations like those proposed by Greenberg, a scholar whose record as a respecter of MT is unquestioned.

To be sure, the note in the *General Introduction* to the effect that „some additional cases that have long been treated as text critical cases on the basis of other criteria (e.g., exegetical difficulty), but are not true text critical cases, have been included in the apparatus of BHQ" (XIII), marks an improvement over the prohibitive formulation of Weis already quoted. But it does not go far enough, as I demonstrate below.

2.3 A Pluriform Bible

The '(s)' appended to 'form' in BHQ's statement of purpose suggests that BHQ's intended answer to the question that appears as the title of the preceding paragraphs is „multiple." The available evidence often allows us to reconstruct plural versions of a given text. In the nature of the case, this is what needs to be done and what a number of scholars already do. I will argue again that reconstruction should not shy away from a judicious use of conjectural emendation. The commentary of Michael Fox on Proverbs may serve to illustrate.[14]

The point of departure of Fox's comment is the MT. He exegetes the masoretic form of the text even in those instances in which, on text-critical grounds, he reconstructs a text alternative to it based on other witnesses or by means of conjectural emendation (at 2:18; 3:3, 8, 15, 18; and so on).

Fox also discusses traditional forms of the text beyond MT. OG and Peshitta Proverbs receive particular attention (360-423). Fox argues that OG Proverbs is a translation of a base text that deviated from MT Proverbs in terms of arrangement and content. The reconstructed Hebrew base text is described as a „recension" of the book of Proverbs on a par with MT Proverbs. As such it is worthy of attention in its own right, not only as a quarry of materials of use in reconstructing the archetype anterior to it and MT.

In sum, Fox comments on three Hebrew text types of the book of Proverbs: MT Proverbs, the reconstructed Vorlage of OG Proverbs, and a text of Proverbs which is neither one nor the other, but which merits consideration as a plausible reconstruction of the text from which the other two, in specific instances, derives. It is the reconstructed text that is the basis of his full commentary.

To bring back the discussion to BHQ: if BHQ Proverbs ends up avoiding discussion of the instances in which Fox reconstructs via conjectural emendation a

14 Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 1-9*, AB 18A, New York: Doubleday, 2000.

text at odds with all extant witnesses, it will be doing its target audience a grave disservice. After all, the text Fox arrives at against all extant witnesses is (also) the result of analogical reasoning of a specifically text critical nature.

The labeling of resolutions of „exegetical difficulties" by conjectural emendation as „not true text critical cases" is unfortunate. They are more than that, but in many cases, they are not less than that.

3. Format

Upon completion, BHQ is slated to be issued as a single volume containing text, masorah, and apparatus. An accompanying volume is expected to contain the other components of the fascicles that are now coming out: an introduction to each textual unit, notes on the masorah parva, notes on the masorah magna, notes on the critical apparatus, and an index of cited works.

That may not be realistic. Text, masorah, and apparatus of the three BHQ fascicles published so far exceed their equivalents in BHS by 70 per cent in cumulative girth (283 vs. 167 pages). The projected single-volume edition will be bulky (more than 2700 pages). Based on the fascicles published to date, the commentary to the text and apparatus will require three volumes, not one.

I'm happy with the format of the individual fascicles of the *editio minor*, but I urge the BHQ committee to explore alternatives to their planned final editions. The *Handausgabe* of MT I would wish to have is different from the one that is contemplated. I provide details in the next section.

4. Treatment of Poetry

According to James Sanders in his review of BHQ 18, „Another highly commendable trait of BHQ is that of presenting the text honoring the *te'amim* or masoretic accent marks."[15] Would that this were true.

Instead, the editors still go about deciding when a text unit is poetry and when it is not, and then give their interpretation of its stichometry, not that of MT. For example, Schäfer trisects Lam 1:1 where MT bisects it. Schäfer is right to do so, but that is beside the point. Either an edition of MT honors the prosodic implications of the neumes MT preserves, or it does not. BHQ does not. That is, it does not always do so.

The problem reappears in BHQ Jeremiah, of which Weis offers a sample page. Jer 23:5-6 and 9 are treated as poetry, Jer 23:1-4, 7-8 are not. Once again, an editor's opinion intrudes into what is otherwise a faithful edition of Codex Lenin-

15 James A. Sanders, review of BHQ 18, *RBL* 5, 2005.

gradensis. The codex does not register a distinction between prose and poetry in Jeremiah. Neither should a diplomatic edition of it.

My dream *Handausgabe* of Codex L would include the following components: an introduction to and contextualization of L at the crossroads between Karaite and Rabbanite Judaisms; a diplomatic edition of L, with editorial decisions about poetry and stichometry eliminated; a glossary of terms for the masorah parva; a table of accents and an introduction to them as a representation of recitative prosody; a multi-tiered apparatus (variant readings attested in other carefully executed Masoretic codices; in the mass of medieval manuscripts; in rabbinic literature; the Vulgate, Targum, and Peshitta (where proto-masoretic); and in proto-masoretic texts from the Judean desert); introductions to the books limited to a discussion of the aforementioned witnesses; and notes on the masorah parva and masorah magna. All MT and proto-MT, all the time.

A dream companion volume would include the following: the earliest text(s) attainable based on the available evidence, if necessary on facing pages, with editorial decisions about poetry, stichometry, and other unit delimitations included; an apparatus containing a full account of significant variants attested in the ancient versions, the texts from the Judean desert, rabbinic literature, and medieval biblical manuscripts; commentary thereto, and introductions to the books covering all the text traditions.

Still another desideratum: a volume that presents the texts without the familiar orthography, vocalization, syntactic and prosodic representations, unit delimitations, and mise en page of MT. Only in the presence of the absence of these features is the student of the text alerted to alternative construals of the text that were avoided in the interpretative traditions that have come down to us (almost always *rightly* avoided, but the other operative word here is *almost*).

No, my name is not Joseph, but perhaps this dream will come true, or something like it, some day.

5. Updateability

The issue of updateability is a pressing one given the pace of progress in the field of text criticism of the Hebrew Bible. It is understandable that a text critic might do his or her work with great care and yet fall short of fully engaging with the relevant secondary literature.

The volume dedicated to Ezra-Nehemiah edited by David Marcus may serve to illustrate. It is undoubtedly a piece of exemplary scholarship, but it is cause for astonishment that interaction in its pages with the groundbreaking work of Dieter Böhler is limited to signaling disagreement with Böhler's main thesis, to wit:

„Gα reflects a Hebrew Vorlage earlier than the MT" (10*).[16] Marcus, as is his prerogative, concludes otherwise, but a discussion of the pros and cons of the Mowinckel-Pohlmann-Böhler school of thought (the relevant contributions of Mowinckel and Pohlmann are not even registered by Marcus), in general and on a case-by-case basis, would have made the textual commentary immensely more valuable than is now the case.

This is part of a larger pattern of avoidance which bedevils the volume. Loci which cry out for text-critical comment and are discussed at length in the major commentaries (Rudolph, Williamson, Blenkinsopp, and Clines) are liquidated in short order or passed over in silence. The result is that BHQ 20 is of marginal interest to the text-critical study of Ezra-Nehemiah.

This is not acceptable. Between now and the issuance of the *editio maior*, Marcus would do the field a service if at a minimum he added to his volume an extended discussion of the following passages: (the reconstructed Vorlage of) 1 Esd 2:23 / Ezra 4:21; 1 Esd 5:45 / Ezra 2:70; 1 Esd 5:46 / Ezra 3:1; 1 Esd 6:8 / Ezra 5:8; 1 Esd 7:9 / Ezra 6:18; 1 Esd 8:78 / Ezra 9:9; 1 Esd 8:88 / Ezra 10:1; and 1 Esd 9:1 / Ezra 10:6.

A set of analogical observations might be advanced in the case of Sæbø's treatment of Esther in BHQ 18. According to Sæbø, G^{AT} is a redaction of the G text. He is entitled to his view. But Clines, Fox, and Jobes, who argue that G^{AT} is a translation of a Hebrew Vorlage, are no less entitled to theirs. So is Tov, who argues that it is a recension of a pre-existing translation towards a Hebrew text. This being the case, the decision not to systematically record variant readings from G^{AT} is unconscionable. The evidential basis on which Sæbø reached his conclusion, Tov his, and Clines, Fox, and Jobes theirs is not given to us.

A synoptic comparison and full presentation of early editions of Qoheleth and Canticles for which we have evidence is also in order. I explain why in the following paragraphs. If this is not practical in the print edition of BHQ, it might be offered in an online extension.

Goldman makes a persuasive case for the view that in „a number of places," MT „attests a revision to soften Qoheleth's criticisms addressed to the 'wise' and the 'righteous' (e. g., 7:19: [sic] 8:1)" (BHQ 18, 76*). A user-friendly version of this statement would consist of a concise presentation of all instances of ideolo-

16 Böhler, it might be noted, goes on to posit a second century BCE date for the recension of Ezra-Nehemiah reflected in MT (idem, „On the Relationship between Textual and Literary Criticism. The Two Recensions of the Book of Ezra: Ezra-Neh (MT) and 1 Esdras (LXX)", in: *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible. The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered,* ed. Adrian Schenker, SBLSCS 52; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003, 35–50; 48). This tallies with research from various quarters which posits the creation of revised editions of other biblical books in this century.

gical revision, with full citation of the evidence and reconstructed Hebrew Vorlagen.[17]

„[A]s Tov has demonstrated," Dirksen notes, both 4QCant[a] and 4QCant[b] reflect abbreviated editions of the book of Canticles (BHQ 18, *10). These early alternative editions of Canticles merit a full presentation. It is true that Tov is the closest thing to the oracle of Delphi the field of text criticism of the Hebrew Bible has, but a summary of Tov's arguments, not just a bare statement of his conclusion, would have been helpful. A more adequate introduction to and presentation of the Qumran Canticles evidence is found in another reference work, but in English translation only.[18]

BHQ Qoheleth and Canticles are less useful than they might have been because conjectural emendations with a high degree of plausibility from a text critical point of view are not discussed. Two examples may illustrate.

The difficulties of Qoh 2:12 are examined at length by Goldman (*72-*73). A conjectural emendation of Budde is duly noted but rightly rejected. However, the revocalization of two words proposed by Ginsberg and the ו/י interchange in another word suggested by Fox are left unmentioned. The plausibility of these suggestions from a text critical point of view, unlike Budde's, is indisputable. They merit discussion.

Cant 3:10-11 in the extant witnesses is problematic. Emendations offered by Graetz and Gerleman are plausible from the text critical point of view and persuasive from a literary and stylistic point of view. They are adopted by Fox and Exum.[19] Without alerting their readers to the fact, a number of recent translations emend similarly, in whole or in part (NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB; NJPSV emends also, in a footnote). Silent emendation, of course, should be forbidden, even if the emendation seems obvious. Dirksen's decision to silently omit reference to the problems the emendations address is likewise indefensible.

Dirksen also fails to discuss loci of text-critical interest for which divergent extant witnesses exist. For example, at Cant 8:13, the prosodic divisions of MT are reproduced, with the final word of the verse bereft of a companion. This is laudable. On the other hand, Fox argues in favor of an alternative division of the

17 A discussion of the relevant loci – 7:23–24; 8:1; 7:19 – is offered elsewhere: Yohanan A. P. Goldman, „Le text massorétique de Qohélet, témoin d'un compromise théologique entre les 'disciples des sages' (Qoh 7,23-24; 8,1; 7,19)" in: *Sôfer Mahîr: Essay in Honour of Adrian Schenker Offered by the Editors of Biblia Hebraica Quinta,* ed. Yohanan A. P. Goldman, Arie van der Kooij, and Richard D. Weis, VTSup 110, Leiden: Brill, 2006, 69–93.

18 Martin Abegg, Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, (ed.): *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible. The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time in English,* New York: HarperCollins, 1999, 612–618.

19 Michael V. Fox: *The Song of Songs and the Egyptian Love Songs*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985, 126–127; J. Cheryl Exum: *Song of Songs: A Commentary*, OTL, Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005, 138–139.

verse. He cites V in support. This is probably correct.[20] The locus merits discussion in the apparatus and comment.

Quite apart from the issues raised here, an online edition to BHQ is a desideratum. BHQ's usefulness would be enhanced if the online edition included discussions of loci like those alluded to in this review.

6. BHQ vs. OHB Deuteronomy: A Comparison

BHQ Deuteronomy 31:28–32:47 immediately strikes the eye of anyone who has worked directly with Codex Leningradensis (L). L's layout is not respected in BHQ 5. Instead, McCarthy carefully reconstructs the format prescribed in an extracanonical tractate of the Talmud entitled *Masseket Soferim*.[21] So does Aron Dotan in his edition of Codex Leningradensis,[22] and though Dotan and McCarthy agree on stichography, they disagree on other formatting details. Space does not permit a discussion of the disagreements here. McCarthy in BHQ 5 does not report L's formatting in a note. This is at odds with BHQ practice elsewhere. Sidnie White Crawford's OHB sample[23], which covers Deut 32:1–9, sets aside the stichographic arrangement of OHB's copy text (L), though line distinctions are preserved.

Given stichographic arrangements of האזינו and other poetic texts in manuscripts found at Qumran, Masada, and beyond, one might have wished for text-critical analysis thereof. It is not clear why features of ancient manuscripts which attest to traditional parses of the transmitted text should be neglected by text criticism.

OHB's apparatus and commentary discuss a total of 20 lemmata in Deut 32:1-9; BHQ 5 discusses 15 (adjusting for the fact that BHQ 5 treats the *crux interpretum* of 32:5 as a single lemma). The lemmata treated in OHB and left unnoted in BHQ 5 read as follows:

32:3 גדל M SP] <ה>גדל 4QDt^{b} (syn) §
32:4 פעלו M SP] פעליו*? G (τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ) (assim gram)
32:6 הֲלַיְהוָה M^{mss} SP] הֲ־לַיְהוָה M (gram); cf ταῦτα κυρίῳ G (prps explic) §
32:6 עשך M SP] ועשך* G (καὶ ἐποίησέν σε) (+ conj)
32:7 ימות M (cf Ps [sic] כימות Ps 90:15) G (ἡμέρας)] יומת SP (prps meta)

20 Fox, *Song of Songs*, 176–177.
21 Carmel McCarthy, "A Diplomatic Dilemma in Deuteronomy 32", in: *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 27, 2005, 22–32.
22 Aaron Dotan (ed.): *Biblia Hebraica Leningradensis. Prepared according to the Vocalization, Accents, and Masora of Aaron ben Moses ben Asher in the Leningrad Codex,* Peabody: Hendrickson, 2001, 305–308; 1241–1242.
23 Information is available on http://ohb.berkeley.edu/Deut 32 sample.pdf.

OHB's coverage of a greater number of loci is praiseworthy. BHQ makes the respectable choice of ignoring purely orthographical variants, but it is not clear why it sometimes notes differences with respect to lexis, gender, number, and presence/absence of the conjunction, and sometimes does not. Both BHQ and OHB miss a locus worthy of note and discussion in 32:4:

32:4 הוא M SP] יהוה* G (κύριος)

This explanation of the textual data in hand was proposed by Emanuel Tov.[24]

A lemma by lemma comparison of BHQ and OHB across Deut 32:1–9 demonstrates that BHQ and OHB are characterized by occasional errors of omission and commission. Sample OHB Deut is more careful to note variants attested in Qumran manuscripts; BHQ Deut, variants in the Targums. As is only to be expected, OHB and BHQ come to starkly different text-critical conclusions on more than one occasion. In documentation of the observations just made, I offer a discussion of three textual loci: Deut 32:2, 5, and 8–9. BHQ 5's strengths and weaknesses compared to those of the OHB sampler are thereby illustrated.

Deut 32:2

The apparatus to Deut 32:2 in the OHB sampler reads:

32:2 תזל M] ותזל [*sic*: should read ותאזל] SP G (καὶ καταβήτω) sim T^{J} S (+conj, assim v 1a [*sic*: should read v 1b] §

The apparatus to Deut 32:2 in BHQ 5 reads:

32:2 תִּזַּל V T^{OF} | prec cj Smr G S T^{JN} (facil-synt)

OHB's explanation of the variant (+conj, assim v 1a [*sic*: should read v 1b]) is more exact than that of BHQ (facil-synt). OHB sometimes supplies the actual reading, but on other occasions, without explanation, does not. SP's reading in this instance provides background for G's reading. OHB would be improved in this locus if it cited the textual data in full:

32:2 תזל M T^{O} (יתקבל) $T^{F\text{-}P}$ (יתקבל) $T^{F\text{-}VNL}$ (תתקבל) V (*fluat*)] ותאזל SP G (καὶ καταβήτω) sim T^{J} (ותתקבל) T^{N} (ויתקבל) S (ܐܬܢܚܬ) (+conj, assim v 1b)

24 Emanuel Tov: *Computer Assisted Tools for Septuagint Studies: The Parallel Aligned Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Texts of Jewish Scripture,* Bellingham: Logos Research Systems, 2003.

Deut 32:5

The apparatus to Deut 32:5 in the OHB sample[25] reads:

32:5 שִׁחֲתוּ [*sic*: should read שחתו] SP G (ἡμάρτοσαν) T (חבילו) S (ܫܚܠܗ) V (*peccaverunt*)] שִׁחֵת M (assim num) § || לא לו M [to add: sim V (*ei et non*)] לא לו SP G (οὐκ αὐτῷ) T (לא ליה) S (ܠ ܠܐ) (metath) § || בניו M] בני SP G (τέκνα) T (בניא) S (ܒܢܝ) (gram) § || בניו] + מומם M sim SP (מום) G (μωμητά) [to add, per Crawford's text-critical commentary: S (ܒܗܒܗ) T (לטעותא) V (*in sordibus*)] (explic) §

The apparatus to Deut 32:5 in BHQ 5 reads:

32: 5 שִׁחֵת לוֹ לֹא בָּנָיו מוּמָם (em scr) | διέφθιεραν αὐτῷ οὐχ υἱοί αὐτοῦ α′ σ′ V [*sic*: should be (V)] | שחתו לא לו בני מום Smr G [*sic*; should be (G)] S [*sic*; should be (S)] T^{Smr} (facil) | חבילו להון לא ליה בניא דפלחו לטעותא T^{O} (midr) | חבילו עובדיהון טביא בניא חבייא אשתכח מומא בהון T^{J} (T^{NF}) (midr) ‖ pref שִׁחֵת לוֹ לֹא בָּנָיו מוּמָם see α′ σ′ V ❖

With respect to שחת vs. שחתו, BHQ prefers the more difficult reading. On this view, שחתו pl attested in Smr G assimilates to the pls of 32:3 and 32:6. OHB suggests – less convincingly, in my view – that שחת sg in MT assimilates to the sg of 32:7 following.

OHB and BHQ differ in their explanation of לו לא MT vs. לא לו Smr G. ולא לו* V and ולו לא* S are not discussed: they are secondary in any case. For OHB, it is a case of metathesis; in BHQ's terminology, a transposition. For BHQ, it is a case of trying to avoid a text that is scandalous or derogatory. However, Smr in context reads: 'Those not his dealt corruptly – children of blemish; a perverse generation ... How could you ...?' This is no less harsh than the test preserved in MT. On the other hand, BHQ acutely notes that MT's accents read the underlying text against the grain so as to avoid a derogatory construal; BHQ provides an alternative accentuation.

With respect to בניו vs. בני, BHQ regards the latter as a facilitation. OHB thinks it may have „crept in, brought about by loss of ו by haplography (perhaps)' then retained because it made better grammatical sense." OHB's explanation is more exact. Parenthetically, the following principle might be noted: all other things being equal, the explanation of mechanical error rather than intentional change is to be preferred.

OHB and BHQ regard מומם M sim SP (מום) similarly: a „gloss" (BHQ); an „explicating plus" (OHB), but BHQ does not „prefer" the reading because no

25 Information is available on http://ohb.berkeley.edu/Deut 32 sample.pdf.

extant witness omits it. To be sure, Dillmann, Craigie, and Tigay (see OHB's excellent commentary) dissent. Explicating plusses, after all, like the ones we know from the textual history of Jer and Ezek, are clarificatory. The presumed addition of מום or מומם to the remainder of the text makes a difficult text more difficult still.

Following Tigay, and with full citation of the textual data:

בניו מומם] בניו אמונם M (err-phonol [contiguous glides] + err-graph/ phonol [similar sonorants/ graphs]) ‖ V (*filii ejus in sordibus*) (interp of מומם) ‖ SP (בני מום) S (ܒܢܝ ܡܘܡ) G (τέκνα μωμητά) T (לטעותא בניא דפלחו) (hapl of ו in בניו after י and מ in מומם before/after מ)

On this reconstruction, א disappeared through aphaeresis, and נ morphed into מ. Tigay, as OHB notes, conjectured similarly, but he emended *throughout* 32:5, which inevitably cast doubt on his core proposal. For אמון sg., cf. Deut 32:20. For the syntax and sense of שחת per this reconstruction, cf. Amos 1:11; Num 32:15. The sense of the whole: „His no-sons put an end to their loyalty towards him."

It seems better to treat בניו מומם as a textual unit; otherwise, variation across the Hebrew witnesses and the versions is impossible to follow. Note that BHQ διέφθιεραν αὐτῷ οὐχ υἱοί αὐτοῦ at the beginning of the lemma is missing elements with respect to its head שִׁחֵת לוֹ לֹא בָּנָיו מוּמָם.

A Theologically Revised Text: Deut 32:8–9

Most scholars agree that the masoretic text of Deuteronomy 32:8 reflects a theological revision of a more original text reflected in 4QDeut^{j} and the Septuagint. BHQ 5 and OHB concur on this point, but differ on details. Neither considers the possibility that the revision encompassed the first word of 32:9.

The apparatus to Deut 32:8-9 in the OHB sampler reads:

32:8 אֵל [*sic*: should read אל] 4QDt^{j} (אלוהים) G (θεοῦ)] יִשְׂרָאֵל [*sic*: should read ישראל] M SP (theol) § ‖ 9 כי M SP] וכי* G (καὶ ἐγενήθη) (+ conj) ‖ fin] + ישראל SP G (Ἰσραήλ) (explic)

The apparatus to Deut 32:8–9 in BHQ 5 reads:

32:8 :בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל Smr α′ θ′ σ′ V S (T^{J}) T^{ONF} (em scr) ‖ בני אלוהים 4QDeut^{j} G ‖ ἀγγέλων θεοῦ G^{Mss} (exeg) ‖ pref בְּ·נֵי אֱלֹ֫הִים 4QDeut^{j} G ❖ • **9** כִּי Smr V S T ‖ καὶ ἐγενήθη G ❖ • :נַחֲלָתוֹ 4QDeut^{q} V S T ‖ נחלתו ישראל Smr G ❖

BHQ correctly cites 4QDeut^{q} V S T in support of MT at the end of 32:8.

OHB and BHQ come to slightly different conclusions with respect to 32:8. Crawford's reconstruction traces the evolution of the passage step-by-step:

> First, the G reading, υἱῶν θεοῦ, may be retroverted as either בני אל or בני אל(ו)הים (=4QDeut^{j}). If the former is chosen, then it is easy to suppose that the Vorlage of M SP, wishing to change a polytheistic text to monotheistic orthodoxy, inserted the consonants ישר before אל, thus creating the reading בני ישראל. Finally, 4QDeut^{j}'s אלוהים is simply a scribal change, employing the more common term for „God."

It is doubtful, however, that אלוהים (בני) is an example of assimilation to the usual. The phrase only occurs once elsewhere (Job 38:7). More common: בני האלהים (Gen 6:2, 4; Job 1:6; 2:1) and בני אלים (Ps 29:1; 89:7).

Jan Joosten has recently offered an alternative, and in my view persuasive, reconstruction.[26] I suggest the following, not as a criticism of either BHQ or OHB, except insofar as they fail to cite all the relevant textual data, but as a way of reopening the question:

בני שר אל ויהי*] בני אל ויהי* G (ἀγγέλων θεοῦ καὶ ἐγενήθη) G$^{848\ 106c}$ (υἱῶν θεοῦ καὶ ἐγενήθη) (theol) 4QDt^{j} ([lacuna] בני אלוהים) (crrp of ויהי to והים) בני ישראל כי M SP α' θ' σ' V S (T^{J}) T^{ONF} (theol)

On Joosten's reconstruction, an original שׁ֫ר אֵל 'Bull El' was shortened in one stream of transmission, in keeping with later theological sensibilities, to mere אֵל. It is my proposal that καὶ ἐγενήθη G reflects ויהי by analogy with standard translation practice elsewhere, with the 4QDeut^{j} reading then seen to be the result of mechanical error. The כי attested in M SP V S T is then seen to be the second element in a revision whose other element in ישראל, likewise attested in M SP V S T. The theological revision is obtained with the smallest of changes. A translation of כי with „behold," on the other hand, is a weak expedient. It is doubtful that כי ever had such a meaning; to invoke it here is an example of exegetical desperation.

26 Jan Joosten, "A note on the text of Deuteronomy xxxii 8", in: *VT* 57, 2007, 548–555. Other recent treatments of note include: Michael S. Heiser, "Deuteronomy 32:8 and The Sons of God", in: *BibSac,* 158, 2001, 51–74; Innocent Himbaza, "Dt 32,8, une correction tardive des scribes. Essai d'intrepretation et de datation", in: *Bibl* 82, 2002, 527–548; W. Randall Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness. Humanity, Divinity, and Monotheism,* Leiden: Brill, 2003, 223–224.

The revised text reads thus:

בְּהַנְחֵל עֶלְיוֹן גּוֹיִם בְּהַפְרִיד֙ו בְּנֵי אָדָם
יַצֵּב גְּבֻל֙ת עַמִּים לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
כִּי חֵלֶק יהוה עַמ֙ו יַעֲק֙ב חֶבֶל נַחֲלָת֙ו

When the Most High gave nations their inheritance,
when he divided humankind,
he set the bounds of the peoples
according to the number of the children of Israel,
for the Lord's portion is his people.
Jacob, the lot of his inheritance.

The unrevised text would have read thus:

בְּהַנְחֵל עֶלְיוֹן גּוֹיִם בְּהַפְרִיד֙ו בְּנֵי אָדָם
יַצֵּב גְּבֻל֙ת עַמִּים לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי שׁ֙ר־אֵל
וַיְהִי חֵלֶק יהוה עַמ֙ו יַעֲק֙ב חֶבֶל נַחֲלָת֙ו

When Elyon gave the nations an inheritance,
when he divided humankind,
he set the bounds of the peoples
according to the number of Bull El's children,
and Yahweh's portion was his people,
Jacob, the lot of his inheritance.

7. Concluding Remarks

I have argued that the stated goal of BHQ is the correct one, but that the means BHQ allows itself to reach that goal need to be more inclusive. Proposed resolutions of textual difficulties based on analogical reasoning in the absence of support from extant witnesses deserve discussion, in a few instances adoption, by text critics. The examples found in Tov's *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* are well chosen. Many more merit evaluation, among which are those found in the commentaries of Greenberg and Fox.

I have also argued that the future of text criticism of the Hebrew Bible lies in the reconstruction of multiple early editions of its component books insofar as the evidence takes us. The stated goal of BHQ is assimilable to my argument, but the execution of BHQ in the cases of Ezra-Nehemiah and Esther is not. It is well and good that Marcus and Sæbø reject the proposals of others who regard Gα and G^{AT} as translations from Hebrew Vorlagen which may be characterized as among the earliest attainable forms of the text we have in the respective cases of Ezra-Nehemiah and Esther. It is not well and good that they fail to interact with said

proposals in a sustained fashion, or fail to include the relevant data on the basis of which an independent evaluation might be made.

The multiple early editions of Canticles and Qoheleth also deserve a fuller presentation and introduction than Dirksen and Goldman respectively offer.

According to Tov, „Both the Hebrew parent text of G . . . and certain of the Qumran texts . . . reflect excellent texts, often better than that of M."[27] *Better*, however, from a text-critical point of view; not necessarily from the point of view of a particular religious tradition.

To be sure, one must be careful not to prejudge matters from a religious point of view. Many religious traditions privilege one text tradition without excluding consideration of alternatives. To a limited extent, this dynamic is visible in medieval commentators like Rashi and ibn Ezra; to a greater extent, in modern interpreters like Greenberg and Fox cited above.

Within the Christian tradition, the question has been and continues to be distorted by apologetic considerations. The sooner Christians awake to the fact that the New Testament authors quote the Old Testament in a variety of divergent text forms and thereby demonstrate that all of them were considered legitimate for the purposes of teaching and preaching, the better.[28] It is not necessary, of course, to follow the New Testament's lead in this respect. On the other hand, a rejectionist approach to texts which are inferior from a text critical point of view, or are not (proto-) MT in type, has not a single New Testament leg to stand on.

Through which text form of the Hebrew Bible will the torah and prophets and writings reach into our lives today? The masoretic text form, or some other? Let each student of scripture answer the question according to his or her lights.

In my case, the answer is not either/or. It is both/and. Give me the (proto-) MT, and nothing but the (proto-) MT. Then give me a sense of the extant alternatives, insofar as the evidence takes us, in Second Temple times and beyond.

My most salient conclusions are not surprising, but important just the same. BHQ and OHB, while carefully done, provide an incomplete picture of the textu-

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27 Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 2. ed., Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001 [1992], 24. I also recommend an article by Peter Gentry, „The Septuagint and the Text of the Old Testament", in: *BBR* 16, 2006, 193–218. Gentry accepts the possibility that the parent text behind LXX is in some instances a superior text to MT on both large scale and small scale issues. He also argues that the texts in our possession are wont to do more than repeat the original text. In some instances, perhaps in MT as well, the autographs have been revised by later redactors so as to resignify them for a particular time, place, and readership. In Gentry's view, the non-resignified text is the one we should prefer.

28 Important discussions include Mogens Müller, *The First Bible of the Church: A Plea for the Septuagint*, JSOTSup 206, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996; Martin Hengel, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture: Its Prehistory and the Problem of Its Canon*, trans. Mark Biddle; introd. Robert Hanhart, Old Testament Studies, Edinburgh: Clark, 2001; R. Timothy McLay, *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003; Karen Jobes, "When God Spoke Greek: The Place of the Greek Bible in Evangelical Scholarship", in: *BBR* 16, 2006, 219–236.

al data in hand and are occasionally guilty of sins of omission and commission with respect to treated loci. It follows that BHQ and OHB are tools to be used alongside other relevant secondary literature and must be checked against the primary data. They do not replace either.

A truly satisfactory edition of the Hebrew Bible for the purposes of text criticism would be electronic in nature, and include hyperlinks to all relevant textual data – Hebrew and versional – such that *in situ* comparison of analyzed texts would be no more than a click away.

John F. Hobbins

Taking Stock of Biblia Hebraica Quinta

Der Aufsatz beschäftigt sich mit den bisher veröffentlichten drei Faszikeln der Biblia Hebraica Quinta (BHQ). Fünf Aspekte der BHQ sind Ausgangspunkt für weitere Überlegungen: 1. Der Editionsplan, 2. Das Buchformat, 3. Die Edition der poetischen Texte, 4. Die Möglichkeit späterer Textverbesserungen, 5. Vorteile und Nachteile im Vergleich mit dem Parallelprojekt Oxford Hebrew Bible (OHB). Der Verfasser kommt zu dem Ergebnis, dass BHQ und OHB zwar sehr sorgfältig gearbeitet sind, aber ein unvollständiges Bild der vorhandenen Textüberlieferungen geben. Bei den bisher veröffentlichten Texten begehen sie gelegentlich sowohl Tat- als auch Unterlassungssünden. Daraus folgt, dass BHQ und OHB Werkzeuge sind, die man nur neben weiterer relevanter Sekundärliteratur verwenden kann, und die man mit den Originaltexten vergleichen muss.

This review examines the three fascicles of Biblia Hebraica Quinta (BHQ) which have appeared to date. Five aspects of BHQ serve as springboards for wider-ranging reflections: (1) production schedule; (2) format; (3) treatment of poetry; (4) updateability; and (5) advantages and disadvantages vis-vis a parallel project, the Oxford Hebrew Bible (OHB). The essay concludes that both BHQ and OHB, though crafted with great care, provide an incomplete picture of the textual data in hand. So far as the texts so far published are concerned, they are occasionally guilty of sins of omission and commission. It follows that BHQ and OHB are tools that are to be used only alongside other relevant secondary literature and that must be checked against the primary data.