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Frédérique Michèle REY, Stefan SCHORCH,
Sophie ROBERT-HAYEK (eds.)

URTEXT AND VARIANCE

The Quest for the Texts of the Hebrew Bible



PEETERS

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4QNUM^b LXX VS. MT SP: EVIDENCE FOR NON-LINEAR PROCESSES IN THE TEXTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOOK OF NUMBERS FROM A NEGLECTED VARIANT PATTERN

Kirsten M. SCHÄFERS

The state of research relating to the textual history of the Book of Numbers has improved substantially since the nineties, as is demonstrated by a short overview of achievements.¹ The publication of 4QNum^b and 4QLev–Num^a made available a significant amount of text documented at Qumran.² LXX studies have flourished and produced several editions and annotated translations³ as well as research on the Greek version(s) of Numbers and the work of its translator(s).⁴ The Samaritan Pentateuch and the other Samaritan textual traditions have become firmly established as an important field of study. However, for the Book of Numbers, the publication

* This article presents an English version of a set of results from my doctoral dissertation (Ruhr University Bochum, Germany), now published in *Textentstehung und Texttradition im Numeribuch: Paradigmatische Erkundungen Non-Linearität, Varianz und Verdichtung in Num 25*. Supplements to the Textual History of the Bible 9. Leiden: Brill, 2025. Preliminary findings were presented in the paper “Dealing with the Elusive ‘Urtext’ in Pentateuchal Research: Recent Developments in the Textual History of the Book of Numbers and How to Implement Them into Pentateuchal Exegesis” at the conference “Urtext, Archetype, Fluidity or Textual Convergence? The Quest for the Texts of the Hebrew Bible,” November 5–7th, 2019, Metz (France). I am indebted to the organizers and participants of the conference for their encouraging comments and helpful hints during the discussions at Metz. I also wish to thank Emanuel Tov, Jerusalem, Stefan Schorch, Halle, and Jan Dietrich, Bonn, for their helpful comments on previous versions of this article. I wish to thank Luis Lütkehellweg, Niklas Wichmann, Julia Saal and Olaf Pakosch, Bonn, for their meticulous help in copy-editing this article.

¹ For a more detailed and contextualized description of the editions and the achievements in the field see the history of research in Schäfers, *Textentstehung*.

² Jastram, “4QNum^b,” Ulrich, “4QLev–Num^a,” and most recently Tigchelaar, “Identifying.” For the other Numbers fragments from Qumran and the further evidence from the Judean Desert cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 67–68, 79–80, 82–83, 110–11, and see ch. 3.2.

³ Wevers, *Numeri*; idem, *Notes*; idem, *Text History*; Dorival, *Nombres*; Flint, “Numbers;” Rösel and Schlund, “Arithmoi.”

⁴ Cf., recently, e.g. Kim, *Authorship*; Ziegert, *Diaspora*; and the history of research in Evans, “Numbers.”

of the new edition from Halle is still pending.⁵ Meanwhile, for the Peshitta, a quasi-diplomatic edition of MS B.21 Inferiore Milan and an English translation were completed.⁶ These accomplishments have enabled an ongoing reassessment of the textual evidence in light of the developments in the field of Pentateuch textual history as well as in text-critical theory and practice over the last 30 years. However, a concise “Textual History of the Book of Numbers,” which systematically incorporates all the evidence available and at the same time reflects the state-of-the-art in text-historical research and text-critical theory, remains yet to be written.⁷ Consequently, historical-critical research on the Book of Numbers also seldom systematically considers all the text-historical data.⁸

One reason for these desiderata is the lack of consensus on some core issues in textual history and textual criticism. For the Pentateuch, there is a diversity of text shapes and types attested next to each other.⁹ Still,

⁵ On the project, cf. also Schorch, “Editio Maior.” Already published volumes are idem, *Leviticus*, in 2018, and idem, *Genesis*, in 2021. For the other books Tal, *Samaritan Pentateuch*, and Tal/Florentin, *Ḥamishah Ḥumshe Torah*, can substitute for the outdated edition of von Gall, *Pentateuch*. Phillips, *Samaritan Version*, has major methodical and material shortcomings and is not useful, cf. the well-founded critical judgement of Robker, review of *The Samaritan Version* (by Phillips).

⁶ Hayman, “Numbers;” *Antioch Bible. Numbers*. The evidence of the Peshitta version of Numbers (esp. with its frequent readings with LXX and many of these shared with SP, cf. the list in Dorival, *Nombres*, 46–47, and Tov, “Shared Tradition,” 290–91), is not in the focus of this article, but it is important for any text-historical evaluation of Numbers, cf. Schäfers, *Textentstehung* 259, 350–52 et passim; eadem, “Anger,” 150–53.

⁷ The new handbook “Textual History of the Hebrew Bible” (THB) treats the data primarily with respect to textual traditions and less with a focus at each single book. Thus, a comprehensive synthesis for the textual history of the individual books of the Pentateuch is not provided, cf. Lange and Tov, *THB 1A* (2016); idem, *THB 1B* (2017), 3–246, and the overview in Tov, “Publication.” On THB see also note 11. The often-cited Pike, “Book of Numbers,” on the Qumran evidence is still helpful but outdated, as well as the broader overview given in Rösel, “Textüberlieferung.”

⁸ Most recent commentaries and monographs on the Book of Numbers, e.g., Schmidt, *Das vierte Buch Mose* (ATD 2004); Seebass, *Numeri* (BKAT 2003–2012); Achenbach, *Vollendung* (2003), almost entirely miss a systematic engagement with the recent findings on the textual history of the book. They do, of course, evaluate many readings and have many philological remarks, but these remain selective and stay bound to the respective single case without any systematic evaluation of tendencies and phenomena in a broader perspective. The same holds true for most of the articles and smaller studies in the field. Exceptions to this rule deal most often with the Balaam Pericope (Num 22–24) and the Daughters of Zelophehad (Num 27; 36), cf., e.g., Robker, *Balaam* 2019; and Kislev, “Vocabulary;” idem, “Innovation.” For general reflections on the often-missing mutual exchange between “biblical” and “Qumran scholars” cf. Römer, “Qumran;” Fuller, “Thoughts.”

⁹ Of course, the situation in the Pentateuch is different from books like, e.g., Jeremiah, Joshua or Judges. Nevertheless, these are only quantitative but not qualitative differences.

this evidence often eludes a genetic explanation, which is subject of current debates. While for Judean Desert scrolls there is widespread agreement about the multiformity of the so-called biblical¹⁰ manuscripts, there is no agreement about the interpretation and further evaluation of this evidence.¹¹ The same holds true for the text-historical relation of the scrolls to the textual traditions of MT, SP, LXX, and the other ancient versions.¹² Ever since the successive editing of the Judean Desert evidence, text-historical theorizing has circled around the models of “local text families” (Albright/Cross), “group texts” (Talmon), “textual variety” (Tov), and “successive literary editions” (Ulrich).¹³ In this context, the *Urtext* hypothesis, and, often relating to it, the preponderance of the alleged proto-Masoretic text have increasingly been challenged in the textual research of the last decade, e.g., by Brooke,¹⁴ Ulrich,¹⁵ and Debel.¹⁶ However, there

¹⁰ For the debate on this anachronistic label, which is used only for pragmatic reasons here, cf., e.g., Crawford, “Rewritten Bible,” 133–34; Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 187–99. I follow the pragmatic definition of Lange, *Handbuch*, 2, 14–15. He also counts the RP-texts (except for 4QRP^a) under this label, thereby differing from the older classification by Tov and his exclusion of the texts from the list of Pentateuch scrolls, cf. Tov, “D. Biblical Texts,” 165–70. However, cf. idem, “Forms,” 17–18; idem, “4QReworked Pentateuch,” 77; and see the inclusion into the lists in idem, *Revised Lists*, 112–13. On the statistical impact of this question, see below note 59.

¹¹ A consensus on the textual developments is still to be found. The recent “Textual History of the Hebrew Bible” attests to this situation by its diplomatically giving an equal share to each of the positions. Cf. Lange in the introduction to Lange and Tov, *THB*. 1A, XIII: “The aim of THB is not to create a single coherent argument [...]. Rather, THB is a reference work that allows for room for scholarly disagreement among its contributors.” Cf. also ibid., XVIII, and the distribution of responsibilities in the volume between Lange and Tov ibid., XV. For comments on the overall concept of THB cf. Tov, “Publication.”

¹² Cf., e.g., Crawford, “Interpreting,” 68, and now eadem, “Textual Criticism.”

¹³ For a comprehensive overview of the development of these theories and their predecessors cf. Teeter, *Scribal Laws*, 208–39; see also Crawford, “Understanding,” 60–66.

¹⁴ Cf. Brooke, “Qumran Scrolls,” 7–9.

¹⁵ For his hypothesis of “variant” or “multiple literary editions” and the rejection of an *Urtext* cf., i.a., Ulrich, “Production;” idem, “Growth;” idem, “Composition.” In idem, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, esp. 1–45, he seems to have slightly modified his position. He now concedes that there might be not only a genetic relation between the extant versions of a certain book but also an unknown pristine version “n” as “the latest non-preserved version” to which these versions go back, cf. ibid., 44–45. For the Book of Numbers, he sees “clear evidence” for three “successive editions” that we know of: n + 1 MT and LXX, n + 2 4QNum^b, n + 3 4QRP, cf. idem, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 315; idem, “Evidence,” 47. For his view on the 4QRP scrolls, also labeled 4QPentateuch or 4QPent?, cf. idem, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 188–94.

¹⁶ Cf. Debel, “Editions;” idem, “History;” idem, “Rewritten Bible.” See also his unpublished 2011 Leuven dissertation, supervised by B. Lemmelijn: *The Pluriformity of Pluriformity: A Reassessment of the Hermeneutical Framework for the Text-Critical Analysis of the Hebrew Bible*. Debel builds upon the hypotheses of Brooke and Ulrich and

are also signs of a significant rollback. In his recent publications, Tov has proposed a two-block model for the textual history of the Pentateuch that prominently puts the alleged proto-Masoretic text line at the origins of the textual development.¹⁷ Simultaneously, general methodological and hermeneutical problems on the principles and axiomatic presuppositions of textual criticism resurface in the field, affecting the research on the Book of Numbers.

These problems exemplarily condense in the case of 4QNum^b. Although often labeled “pre-Samaritan,” this manuscript is simultaneously perceived as representing a text type standing in between the traditions known from LXX and SP, but also exhibiting unique features.¹⁸ On closer examination, its text-historical and text-critical evaluation turns out to be less clear and consensual than might be indicated by the label “pre-Samaritan.”¹⁹ This label mainly accounts for the so-called large-scale expansions²⁰ that 4QNum^b exclusively shares with SP.²¹ Apart from highlighting these shared

expands on propositions by Lemmelijn, “Doing;” eadem, *Plague*, esp. 25–27; eadem, “Influence,” cf. more recently also eadem, “Studying;” eadem, “Textual Criticism.”

¹⁷ Cf. first considerations in Tov, “Dead Sea Scrolls;” idem, “Textual Development;” idem, “Transmission;” and then idem, “Development;” idem, “Popular Jewish LXX-SP Texts.” See also the summary in idem, “2.1 Textual History of the Pentateuch,” 8–14. Most of these studies were republished in idem, *Textual Developments*. The findings are now included in idem, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed.

¹⁸ For an overview of the material characteristics of the scroll, cf. Jastram, “4QNum^b,” 205–13. For a short history of research, cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 80–82; idem, “2.2.1 Manuscript Evidence,” 29–30.

¹⁹ Note also the diverging categorization of manuscripts as “pre-Samaritan,” with a consensus only on 4QpaleoExod^m and 4QNum^b, cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 18: 4QpaleoExod^m and 4QNum^b; Tov, “Biblical Texts,” 147: 4QpaleoExod^m, 4QExod–Lev^f, 4QNum^b, also 4QDeutⁿ (secondarily) and 4QLev^d (unsure); idem, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 108: 4QpaleoExod^m, 4QExod–Lev^f, 4QNum^b, 4QRP^a, and 4QRP^b; idem, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., 175: “4QpaleoExod^m, 4QExod–Lev^f, 4QNum^b (which is secondarily also close to LXX), and possibly also 4QLev^d. The biblical scrolls 4QRP^a (4Q158) and 4QRP^b (4Q364) are either part of the SP group or close to it.”

²⁰ There is no common and consistent terminology for designating and discriminating larger and smaller text pluses in the versions, cf. for Numbers, e.g., Kartveit, *Origin*, 265 et passim; Tov, “Samaritan Pentateuch,” 402 et passim; idem, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 324 et passim. Moreover, Schorch, “Fortschreibungen,” 113–15, and Hjelm, “Deuteronomic Addenda,” 19, have pointed to the hermeneutical and diachronic presuppositions implied in labels like “additions,” “expansions,” “harmonizations” etc. Since there is consent on the secondary nature of the large SP-like pluses in 4QNum^b, I will stick with the term “large-scale expansions” in these cases. For the sake of an open-ended description and evaluation of the textual data, however, I will use the designation “large(-r)/small(-er) text pluses” in all other cases.

²¹ Cf. the [reconstructed] evidence for Num [12:16b]; 20:13b; 21:11b, 12b, 20b, [22b, 23b]; 27:23b; [31:20b]. For Num 4:14b (with LXX); 10:10b; 13:33b; 14:40b, 45b the manuscript is too fragmentary or missing completely. Jastram, “4QNum^b,” 215, argues that “there is no reason to suppose their [i.e., the expansions; KMS] absence.” However,

features, the text-historical value of the label “pre-Samaritan” is limited.²² The label suggests a linear development from a pre-Samaritan to a Samaritan text shape, which is inconsistent with the overall data. Furthermore, it tends to veil the existence of multiple and diverging variant patterns in 4QNum^{b23} and fails to account adequately for those variants, small-scale pluses, and unique features in 4QNum^b that go beyond the aforementioned “pre-Samaritan” features.²⁴ Thus, labeling the manuscript “pre-Samaritan” may be useful for emphasizing the fact that there must have been some point of contact between the text tradition represented in SP and the manuscript of 4QNum^b or its *Vorlage(n)* but apart from that should not imply any further linear-genetic conclusions.²⁵

Recently, scholars have proposed more precise and less anachronistic categories for the Qumran manuscripts.²⁶ These should target the various scribal techniques and attitudes toward the scriptural texts rather than projecting the distinctive shapes and traditions of the later versions back into their prehistory, and then again pressing the similarities with the versions (over against the dissimilarities) towards a linear (even purposeful) development.²⁷ This shift in perspective not only necessitates renewed and

facing the unique features of 4QNum^b regarding other phenomena (e.g., transpositions, the unique text plus in Num 36:2–5, and the reading against SP in Num 25:4), this is by no means a safe assumption to work with. There is no standardized method for numbering these expansions. For pragmatic reasons, I follow Tov, “Rewritten Bible Compositions,” 62–63 note 16. For a more nuanced solution, cf. Kartveit, *Origin*, 266, 270–71, 311–12.

²² Note the early, cautious view of Rösel, “Textüberlieferung,” 218, who is reluctant to use the label “pre-Samaritan” and stresses that 4QNum^b cannot be unambiguously identified with one of the major textual traditions. Despite the strong relation to SP, each variant should be evaluated on its own terms.

²³ For details, see below ch. 1.1.

²⁴ Cf. also the critique by Crawford, “Pentateuch,” 123–25, who argues against presuming SP as the “model or chief exemplar” of the pre-Samaritan texts.

²⁵ Another problem – to be left aside here – is that the label insinuates a clear-cut distinction between Samaritan and pre-Samaritan features, a distinction that gets more and more blurred in recent research, cf. Schorch, “Fortschreibungen;” idem, “Gerizim Commandment;” idem, “Samaritan Version;” Schenker, “Textgeschichtliches;” but see also Tov, “Tenth Commandment,” and the discussion of the recent developments in Gallagher, “Samaritan Pentateuch;” Fabry, “Licht.” On the divergent and, at the same time, convergent nature of Num 25:4^{SP} in comparison with the large-scale expansions see Schäfers, *Textentstehung*, 306–15.

²⁶ Cf. esp. Crawford, “Interpreting,” with reference to the whole discussion of the labels in use, but also Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 25–26, 314–15; Tov, “Development,” 8–9, and see below note 241.

²⁷ Cf., e.g., Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 315: “At the close of the Second Temple period the Masoretic Text, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the Septuagint were not identifiable text types; their texts for each book are simply copies of one edition or other then currently available. Accordingly, they lose their function as standard categories for classifying

in-depth examinations of the small-scale differences in the versions and the manuscripts.²⁸ It also raises the question of how to more properly examine the text-historical relationships between the scrolls and the versions more effectively in order to acquire deeper insights into the textual history of the Pentateuch in the 3rd c. BCE–1st c. CE. However, when it comes to 4QNum^b, these urgent questions have often remained untreated because most studies that deal with this manuscript still focus on the so-called large-scale expansions known from SP.²⁹

This article will respond to this situation by taking a certain variant pattern of text pluses in 4QNum^b as a case in point: 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP. Other than the large-scale expansions shared by SP and 4QNum^b and the general counting of readings with and against MT LXX SP, these cases have been mostly neglected in reconstructing the textual history of the Book of Numbers. They give reason for assuming a less straight and linear development of the versions than that conventionally proposed. A close analysis of this variant pattern will reveal that the stemmatic integration of 4QNum^b into the textual history of the Book of Numbers as proposed by Jastram, Lange, and Tov³⁰ exhibits certain blind spots where this pattern cannot be integrated. Rather, the results indicate a multi-staged and non-linear process of textual transmission, which at some point even does not allow unequivocal reconstruction. Thus, the analysis of the variant pattern 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP presented in this paper adds to a deeper understanding of the textual character of 4QNum^b in particular and the textual history of the Book of Numbers in general. It also contributes

the biblical scrolls. Furthermore, because they are not text types or standard texts, neither should they serve as standards against which other texts should be, or not be, ‘aligned.’” Most recently, Pajunen, “Textual Plurality,” 18–23, emphasized the problem that only the data fitting stemmatic relations with the later versions are highlighted and vertical versus horizontal relations are preferred.

²⁸ Esp. Zahn, *Rethinking*, 135–77, esp. 136–37, and Tov, “Samaritan Pentateuch;” idem, “Textual Harmonization;” idem, “Septuagint of Numbers;” idem, “Popular Jewish LXX-SP Texts,” advocate for taking this kind of data into account more seriously – albeit from partly different theoretical assumptions and text-historical frameworks. Cf. also the important contribution by Teeter, *Scribal Laws*, in this respect.

²⁹ Cf., e.g., Ziemer, *Kritik*, 638–56; Ben-Dov, “Text Duplications;” van der Meer, “Exclusion;” Schorch, “Fortreibungen;” Hjelm, “Deuteronomic Addenda;” Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 36–39; Zahn, *Rethinking*, 135–77; eadem, “Samaritan Pentateuch;” Kartveit, *Origin*, 266–88; Tov, “Rewritten Bible Compositions,” esp. 60–68. In his more recent research, Tov has pointed out the importance of evaluating the small differences in 4QNum^b, cf. Tov, “Samaritan Pentateuch,” 402–3, see also notes 28, 75, and below ch. 1.1.

³⁰ Cf. esp. Jastram, “Comparison,” 266, see also idem, “2.2.4.4 Numbers;” Lange, *Handbuch*, 173; Tov, “Development,” 27; idem, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., esp. 380–82. For details, see the following chapter.

to methodological and text-historical issues that have proven crucial in recent research.

The investigation will proceed as follows. *First*, the background for the evaluation of the said variant pattern will be established by indicating the state of research and the main lines of problem that will guide the investigation of the cases.³¹ *Second*, a detailed analysis of the 18 cases will be conducted, followed by a summarized evaluation of the results from a methodological perspective. *Third*, the conclusions will be presented. This study proposes some adjustments to the reconstruction of the textual development of the versions of Numbers transmitted by 4QNum^b, LXX, SP, and MT. In a final outlook, a preliminary conclusion is provided regarding the evidence for multiple stages and non-linear processes in the textual development of the Book of Numbers, indicating also further possible consequences of the results for textual history.³²

1. Main Lines of Problem for the Analysis

The main lines of problem that will guide the analysis of the cases derive from the status quo of research on 4QNum^b and from general issues in textual criticism and textual history. Therefore, the following overview will show how these two aspects are closely connected and point out the resulting research questions for the analysis.

1.1 *Differences and Blind Spots in the Extant Evaluations of the Data from 4QNum^b*

Three overall evaluations of the data in 4QNum^b are available, published by Jastram, Lange, and Tov. They come to slightly differing counts of the variant patterns in the divergences of the scroll compared with the textual traditions of MT, LXX, and SP. The three proposals come to even more diverging conclusions in evaluating the data and in their genetic contextualization of the manuscript. However, none incorporates the variant pattern in question, 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP, into the stemma building. These differences and the blind spots can only partly be traced back to the statistical data. Rather, they emerge from differing text-historical

³¹ This part builds upon a set of results from the text-historical chapters from Schäfers, *Textentstehung*, 107–95, where I discuss the issues and positions summarized here in more detail. Cf. *ibid.* also for further bibliographical references.

³² These parts of the paper give a slightly revised and updated English version of the analysis in Schäfers, *Textentstehung*, 195–254.

presuppositions and methodical decisions in the evaluation. This becomes clear from the following overview.³³

The editor of the scroll, Nathan Jastram, conducted the most influential evaluation of the data in 4QNum^b.³⁴ His dissertation lists detailed information and concludes that the scroll reads with SP in 42%, with MT in 37%, and with LXX in 35% of the variants, while 28% of the readings are judged independent.³⁵ Jastram has revised these statistics in a later study with figures that are almost comparable to those of his initial counting (with slightly higher matches for SP and MT): from the readings, 44% agree with SP, 39 % with MT, 35% with LXX, and 27% are independent.³⁶ Although the statistics indicate that 4QNum^b cannot be clearly associated with one of the textual traditions of the versions, he argues that a qualitative text-critical evaluation reduces the weight of the agreements with MT

³³ These diverging positions are not entirely comparable because they differ not only in their text-historical framework, but also in their depth and scope. Nevertheless, they represent the major stemmatic contextualizations of 4QNum^b available. There is, of course, also Ulrich's hypothesis of three successive literary editions of Numbers, see above note 15. It is based only on the evidence of the large-scale expansions and will thus not be included in this overview. The concluding chapters 3 and 4 will come back to this hypothesis.

³⁴ The edition of the scroll in Jastram, "4QNum^b," gives only an overview of the data. It is based on the detailed analysis in idem, *Book of Numbers*, which was complemented by two further studies: idem, "Text;" idem, "Comparison." Most recently, Jastram has summarized his view again in idem, "2.2.4.4 Numbers."

³⁵ Jastram does not give the overall number of words and fragments preserved in the scroll, but see idem, "Text," 177: 1522 words or fragments thereof. The percentages are calculated based on 217 "preserved variants" from which he evaluates 191 statistically (ten so-called subvariants, 14 variants in names, and two unsecure variants are excluded). Additionally, he separately counts 112 "reconstructed variants." The statistics include cases of multiple matches and exclude orthographical variants, cf. idem, *Book of Numbers*, 224–26, see also the summary in idem, "4QNum^b," 213, 215. Note that Lange, *Handbuch*, 81; idem, "2.2.1 Manuscript Evidence," 29–30, cites Jastram, "4QNum^b," 213, 215, with SP 42%, MT 37%, LXX 31%, and independent readings 23%, but this is a mistake in the citation, which results in a conflation of two different statistics from Jastram's results. The numbers cited for agreements with LXX (31%) and for the independent readings (23%) belong to a different statistic where Jastram includes the reconstructed variants (there, SP has 47% and MT 33%).

³⁶ These percentages can be calculated from the absolute numbers given in Jastram, "Comparison," 285: 108× with SP, 94× with MT, 85× with LXX, 66× independent. It has to be noted, though, that *ibid.*, 289, he gives 45% for readings with SP and 39% for readings with LXX, while indicating that orthographical and grammatical variants were not counted. His calculations are based on a revised reference quantity: The number of preserved variants in the calculation (243) is higher than in his dissertation, because he now counts 210 preserved variants from which he excludes eight "subvariants" but then adds 41 so-called "intertwined variants," cf. *ibid.*, 267 with note 11. For the reconstructed variants, he counts 115 cases (112 reconstructed variants minus 16 reconstructed "subvariants," plus 17 "intertwined with preserved variants," plus two "intertwined with reconstructed variants," cf. *ibid.*, 267 with note 12.

and links the manuscript more closely to SP and LXX: “If the variants are weighed rather than merely counted, it becomes clearer that 4QNum^b SP LXX share more significant secondary readings than 4QNum^b MT, and thus are more closely related.”³⁷ The patterns of agreement then receive a graded weight for the genetic reconstruction. The agreements with SP are judged most significant, mainly with regard to the large-scale expansions, followed by the independent readings, and then the correspondences with LXX.³⁸ This general evaluation is based on analyzing various correspondence patterns for different variant types, such as text plus, minus, and “divergent readings,” which are documented in the dissertation. The stemma building is guided not only by the number of cases for a pattern but also by the evaluation of their “significance” along the categories “original,” “undecided” or “secondary.”³⁹

As a result, Jastram categorizes 4QNum^b – in the wake of Cross’ “local texts” theory – as a late and distinct representative of a Palestinian text type characterized by its extensions (“expansionistic Palestinian text type”). In this text type he also includes SP and the LXX(-*Vorlage*), with which 4QNum^b shares a common predecessor, a hyparchetype. The readings shared with SP and LXX point to this common origin, whereas the text pluses and the readings shared with SP indicate revisions exclusively in the branch of SP and 4QNum^b. The independent readings of 4QNum^b are considered further adaptations of the text after the splitting off from both the LXX and then the proto-SP traditions.⁴⁰ Jastram explicated the resulting stemma graphically in his later study.

³⁷ Jastram, “4QNum^b,” 215, see also 213.

³⁸ Cf. Jastram, “4QNum^b,” 215.

³⁹ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 224–34. In his later study, he additionally discriminates the cases with regard to their extent into “major,” “moderate,” and “minor” variants, cf. idem, “Comparison,” esp. 274. The results are similar.

⁴⁰ Cf., Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 233–34 (full quote due to the difficult accessibility of the dissertation): “The text of 4QNum^b is a text in the same tradition as the text of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Where readings of the pattern QG vs. SP M are preserved, it is likely that the text of SP was later corrected toward that of M. On the other hand another explanation should be sought for readings of the pattern QG>SP M. The close relationship between Q and Sam, and between Q and G, lends support to the theory that these texts are derived from a common ancestor, the ‘Palestinian’ text type. That the text of Q is not simply a conflation of the two texts of SP and G is evident from a number of times Q has a shorter reading than G. The additions and interpolations found only in Q show that this expansionistic tradition was active beyond the time when the text of G split away from the main tradition (after which the major ‘Samaritan’ interpolations were added), and even beyond the time when the text of SP split away from that tradition (after which the peculiar interpolations of Q were added). It is probable, then, that major expansionistic editorial activity took place in the Palestinian tradition into the first half of the first century B.C., continuing at least until shortly before 4QNum^b was

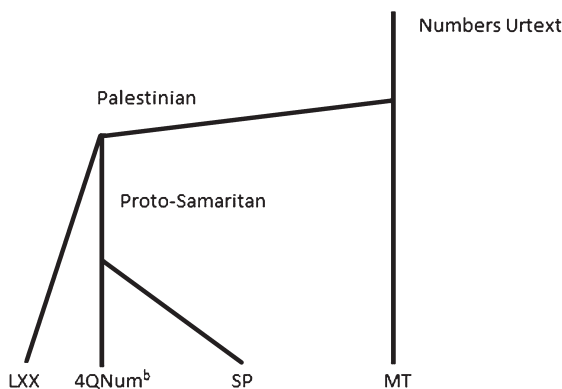


Figure 1: Reproduction of the Stemma for 4QNum^b in Jastram, “Comparison,” 266.

The relatively high number of correspondences with LXX vs. SP and MT – our variant pattern in question – contradicts this hypothesis and thus forms a blank spot in the stemma.⁴¹ If 4QNum^b LXX SP share a hyparchetype, from which LXX on the one hand and a shared branch of 4QNum^b SP on the other evolved, there is no room for readings shared by 4QNum^b LXX exclusively.⁴² They should have been part of the shared branch of 4QNum^b SP, too, and should also be documented in SP.

written.” The classification “Palestinian text type” is also given in idem, “Text,” 197–98; idem, “Comparison,” 266, but did apparently not make its way into the DJD edition, cf. idem, “4QNum^b,” 213, 215.

⁴¹ According to Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 229, it is the “second most common pattern” for text pluses. Ibid., 227–29, 232, he counts:

- deviating readings: 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP: 11x, thereof 5x original, 2x undecided, 4x secondary, of which 3 are classified as significant;
- text pluses: 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP: 23x, thereof 4x original, 4x undecided, 16x secondary, of which 8 are classified as significant.
- reconstructed text pluses 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP: 18x, thereof 1x original, 4x undecided, 13x secondary, of which 4 are classified as significant.

In idem, “Comparison,” 278–79, he provides corrected figures and lists (but it is not clear to me how the data in the appendices of that study corresponds with these figures):

- deviating readings: 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP: 9x, thereof 3x original and 3x secondary;
- text pluses: 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP: 23x, thereof 4x original and 16x secondary.

This data results in a total of at least 32 documented cases in which 4QNum^b LXX do not agree with MT SP, of which seven cases represent original and 19 cases secondary readings according to Jastram. However, he gives no explicit lists of the actual passages for the patterns. For the passages of the text pluses, cf. the data in ch. 2 and note 100.

⁴² The pattern 4QNum^b MT vs. LXX SP, which is attested six times, is also problematic in this framework. On the significance of these cases, see below ch. 3.1 with note 204.

Jastram sees this problem and tries to explain readings shared by 4QNum^b LXX exclusively in two ways. Variant readings shared by 4QNum^b LXX may not be extant in SP because of later readaptations of SP to MT. Text pluses shared exclusively with LXX find another explanation, because the available evidence does not suggest that longer readings in SP would have been shortened secondarily in SP to adapt the text to MT.⁴³

According to the principles of his evaluation, Jastram divides the cases into “original,” “undecided,” and “secondary” text pluses. He then mostly tries to explain how it could have come about that 4QNum^b and LXX share four “original” pluses in Num 23:3; 25:16; 32:30; 36:1. He assumes an accidental secondary text loss in MT and SP that must have occurred independently (!) in both text traditions due to haplography.⁴⁴ Jastram excludes other possible options of genetic affiliation or textual conflation resp. corrections. He admits that his explanation presupposes a “remarkable coincidence” and thus stays an unfirm conclusion.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, despite appearing “unlikely,” it seems the “least objectionable” hypothesis to him, given the already known affiliations between the versions.⁴⁶ However, the text pluses that he classifies “secondary” are also a problem for his stemma, because there is no exclusive connection between 4QNum^b and LXX that would explain them. Compared with the reasoning about the “original” text pluses, Jastram seems to invest less effort in explaining the existence of the secondary pluses.⁴⁷ From the 16 “secondary” text pluses, four classify as “significant” (Num 13:23; 22:11[2×]; 35:21). He argues that, except for Num 13:23, these text pluses “*could* have developed independently.”⁴⁸

In sum, Jastram’s explanation of the cases stays very hypothetical and can thus not convince without further ado. It is also a bit selective, because

⁴³ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 229, 233 (see the full quote in note 40).

⁴⁴ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 227–30, 233–34, idem, “Text,” 178–81.

⁴⁵ Cf. Jastram, “Text,” 181. Citation *ibid.*

⁴⁶ Jastram, “Text,” 180 (citations above *ibid.*): “Three possibilities initially present themselves: both [MT SP; KMS] may have been derived from the same corrupt text; one of the traditions may have been ‘corrected’ toward the other; or the same scribal error may have occurred independently in the two traditions. The first two possibilities are rendered unlikely by what we know about the two traditions.”

⁴⁷ This is even more astonishing with regard to his general rules of genetic evaluation; cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 225–26: “Agreement in original readings means that the reading has escaped corruption in two texts; it need not reveal a special relationship between the two texts. On the other hand, agreement in error can be very significant in establishing a relationship between two texts, especially if it can be shown that the error would not have arisen independently in the two texts.”

⁴⁸ Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 229 note 11 (emphasis by Jastram). For Num 13:23, he assumes once more that the text plus disappeared in SP during a revision toward MT.

not all extant cases receive a corroboration with regard to the stemma. Additionally, his decisions seem to be influenced by text-historical presuppositions about the development of the text traditions on the one hand and by the aim to reconstruct textual development mostly as a linear-genetic process on the other, without testing the outcome of further possible explanations. Thus, there is a strong reason for analyzing this pattern anew and testing the proposed stemma against other possible explanations. This seems even more mandatory since later evaluations of the scroll build upon Jastram's analysis but do propose diverging stemmata while not referring to the pattern 4QNum^b LXX vs. SP MT at all.

Armin Lange presents a short general characterization of the scroll, which gives a lot of credit to Jastram's research. However, Lange has slightly different figures that seem to be based on his own counting. For 1517 preserved words or fragments, he counts 197 diverging readings compared with MT, LXX, or SP (including two intra-Hebrew variants). 4QNum^b reads 68× with and 129× against MT, 76× with and 121× against SP, 73× with and 135× against LXX, and 62× independently, equating the following percentages for the readings: 39% with SP, 35% with MT, 37% with LXX, and 32% independent. Lange thus finds a slightly higher percentage of agreement with LXX and independent readings than Jastram (LXX: 35%; independent: 27%/28%), while his percentage for agreement with SP and MT is slightly smaller than Jastram's (SP: 42%/44%; MT 37%/39%). Despite these differences, Lange puts an even stronger emphasis on the relationship to SP than Jastram. He characterizes 4QNum^b as a "pre-Samaritan textual witness, which is close to LXX and has independent tendencies."⁴⁹ His simplified stemma in the handbook, however, has no exclusive relationship between SP LXX 4QNum^b. It also leaves no space for readings exclusively shared by LXX 4QNum^b.

Lange's stemma also differs from Jastram's in assessing the antiquity of the proto-Masoretic text line, which reflects Lange's differentiated categorizing of the texts and his high valuation of the independent texts. In his examination of the evidence for the books of the Pentateuch, he emphasizes independent readings and multidirectional correspondences between the witnesses.⁵⁰ Particularly important in his model is the significance of the independent texts, which make a genetic inference to a

⁴⁹ Lange, *Handbuch*, 82: "ein präsamaritanischer Textzeuge [...], der G nahesteht und eigenständige Tendenzen hat" (English translation from German: KMS).

⁵⁰ "Generell lässt sich feststellen, daß nicht nur die eigenständigen Handschriften einen signifikanten Anteil von Lesarten anderer Texttraditionen aufweisen. Dies deutet auf eine Interaktion zwischen den verschiedenen Texten hin und zeigt, daß sie sich gegenseitig beeinflusst haben." Lange, *Handbuch*, 156; cf. also 149–51, 155, 169.

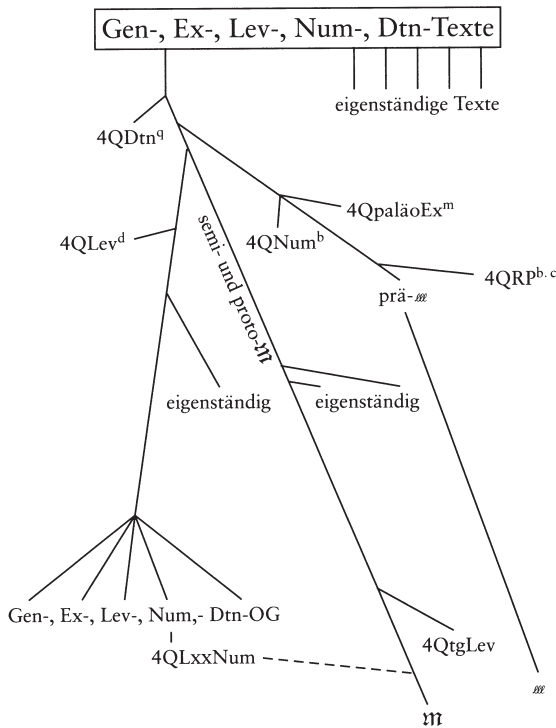


Figure 2: Simplified Overview of Selected Textual Witnesses and Traditions in Lange, *Handbuch*, 173.

quasi proto-Masoretic original text impossible.⁵¹ Given the high number of such manuscripts, he considers them “not exception but the rule of Second Temple textual reality.”⁵²

For tracing this line of problem, the genetic implications and consequences of statistics, counting, and categorizing are crucial.⁵³ This becomes

⁵¹ Lange, “Dead Sea Scrolls,” 293: “Non-aligned texts of the Pentateuch are hence not always late deviations from the Pentateuch’s semi- and proto-Masoretic texts but occur early in the textual history of the Pentateuch, too.”

⁵² Lange, “Plurality,” 57. He also assumes that other hitherto unknown text types may be hidden under that general label, cf. idem, *Handbuch*, 150, 155, and 158. See also Debel, “Editions,” 170: “If such a large amount of texts is lumped together in the residual group and cannot be assigned to one of the more specific categories, then the most natural conclusion is that the classification should be reconsidered.”

⁵³ These problems have been discussed controversially in recent research. Nevertheless, at the same time, the conventional way to synthesize on the evidence is the first reference point for most studies. For general reflections and examples for Ps, 1/2 Sam, and the Twelve, cf. most recently Pajunen, “Textual Plurality.”

most apparent in the diverging counting and categorizing of the extant Pentateuch manuscripts from Qumran by Lange and Tov as presented in Table 1.⁵⁴

Category ⁵⁵	Lange 2009	Tov 2008	Tov 2012
L: semi-Masoretic	2 (5%)	24 (52%)	22 (48%)
L/T: proto-Masoretic; T: M-like	2 (5%)		
L: semi-Masoretic/ pre-Samaritan	11 (27,5%)		
L/T: pre-Samaritan	2 (5%)	3 (6,5%)	5 (11%)
L/T: Hebr. LXX- <i>Vorlage</i>	2 (5%)	2 (4,5%)	1 (2%)
L: independent/ T: non-aligned	21 (52,5%)	17 (37%)	18 (39%)
overall number of mss	40	46	46

Table 1: Differences in Counting and Categorization Relating to the Pentateuch Mss from Qumran by Lange and Tov

Table 1 shows that the differences between Lange and Tov are mainly in the numbers of pre-Samaritan, proto-Masoretic and independent texts. For the pre-Samaritan texts, there is consensus only about 4QNum^b and 4QpaleoExod^{m56}, making the entire category a product that mostly works based on the evidence of the large-scale expansions. All other correspondences with SP in the scrolls are sorted differently. While Tov considers all texts equally close to SP and MT as proto-Masoretic/M-like⁵⁷, Lange takes

⁵⁴ The data for the columns “Lange 2009” and “Tov 2008” is compiled from Lange, *Handbuch*, 153–56, esp. 155, see also *ibid.*, 6–8, 16–20, who also incorporates Tov, “Biblical Texts.” The data in the column “Tov 2012” is compiled from Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 108–9. Because the two are the only scholars to have published typologies for the entire material, I limit myself here to these two propositions. They represent standard reference points of a scholarly discourse with many intermediate positions, often related to individual texts. For a similar table see also Lange, “1.2.2: Jewish Texts,” 125. The numbers have not changed; cf. also *idem*, “2.2.1 Manuscript Evidence,” 2–23. For a similar listing and comparison of the positions of Tov and Lange, cf. Crawford, “Interpreting,” 64–68.

⁵⁵ L = Lange; T = Tov.

⁵⁶ Cf. above note 19.

⁵⁷ Tov has differentiated his terminology in several steps. *Idem*, “Biblical Texts,” and earlier publications use the label “proto-Masoretic.” In *idem*, “Forms,” 11–13; *idem*, “Text,” 171–84, cf. also *idem*, “Dead Sea Scrolls,” 48–51, he has introduced a further sub-distinction of the proto-Masoretic texts, distinguishing an “inner” and an “outer circle” of these textual witnesses. Except for 4QGen^b whose provenience is debated, cf. Lange,

a more differentiated approach, introducing three categories instead of one: semi-Masoretic texts with a deviation from MT > 2%; proto-Masoretic texts where this score is < 2%, and semi-Masoretic/pre-Samaritan texts that are equally close to SP and MT. This is how the striking contrast of 5% to 24% resp. 22% of proto-Masoretic texts emerges.⁵⁸ A similar deviation can be observed for the independent/non-aligned texts where Lange counts six or three manuscripts more. He arrives at a significantly higher percentage of independent texts of 52.5%, which is also influenced by his sorting of the other data and his reduced total number of manuscripts. Thus, the independent texts have the same weight in Lange's overview as the proto-Masoretic texts have in Tov's.⁵⁹ The Masoretic drift in Tov's classifications

Handbuch, 44–45. Tov's "inner circle" comprises the mss from sites other than Qumran, which correspond to the consonantal text of MT, or have the same degree of divergence as between its medieval textual witnesses. The "outer circle" includes the mss from Qumran, which have a higher number of differences. In Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 31–32, 108–9, he then uses the designation "M-like" for hinting to the higher degree of deviation from MT in the scrolls found at Qumran in contrast to scrolls found at other sites, which are now exclusively labeled "proto-Masoretic." This corresponds to the use of "proto-Masoretic" and "MT-like" in his more recent publications. On his use of the terminology, cf. Tov, "Proto-Masoretic."

⁵⁸ Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 108, does note that M-like texts "in a few cases, are equally close to M and SP," but this is not mapped statistically. The classification by the subcategories "inner" and "outer circle," too, is not congruent with that of Lange. With Lange, the proto-Masoretic category would correspond to the inner circle, but he includes 4QDtn^c and 4QDtn^e, cf. idem, *Handbuch*, 18 note 38. Similarly, while Lange's semi-Masoretic group is categorically analogous to Tov's outer circle, he adds only 4QGen–Exod^a and 4QpaleoGen–Exod^d here. Tov adds three further mss and would like to integrate an additional 20 through indirect evidence, cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 16–19. Even if one concedes that the three categories of Lange correspond to Tov's one proto-Masoretic/M-like category, it is not to be overlooked that Lange classifies here altogether only 15 manuscripts, while Tov has 24 (2008) and 22 (2012). With Tov's new two-block model the detailed classifications of the mss got reconsidered once more, see on that below.

⁵⁹ Of course, these statistics are determined by the differing overall number of manuscripts that Lange and Tov consider categorizable. Lange integrates only 40 categorizable mss although he includes 4QRP^b; c; d; e into the statistics, while Tov counts 46 mss without including 4QRP^b; c; d; e into the statistics cited here yet (but see note 10). In contrast to Tov, Lange excludes i.a. 1QExod; 4QExod^d; e; 4QDtn^m. The fragments of 1Q3 also generate an important statistical impact. With Ulrich, "Revised Edition," Lange, *Handbuch*, 17, 66–68, distinguishes two mss [1Q3, frgs. 1–11, 12?, 15?(paleoLev–Num^a); 1Q3, frgs. 16–19, 22–23, 12?, 15?, 20?(paleoLev^b?)] which he excludes from the number of categorizable manuscripts. In contrast, Tov, "D. Biblical Texts," 169, counts two mss (1Q3, frgs. 1–7, 22–24[paleoLev]; 1Q3, frgs. 8–21[paleoNum]). Idem, *Revised Lists*, 115–16, lists three mss, but they are de facto counted as one (1Q3, frgs. 1–15[paleoLev–Num^a]; 1Q3, frgs. 22–23[paleoLev^b]; 1Q3, frgs. 16–21[paleoNum^b]). In idem, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 108–9, they seem to be counted as three mss for the statistics. In idem, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., 135, the overall number is reduced again to 40 texts plus 21 Tefillin plus 4QRP^{a–c}, see below.

For a detailed breakdown of the counting to the respective mss and the mss included and excluded, cf. Schäfers, *Textentstehung*, 142–62.

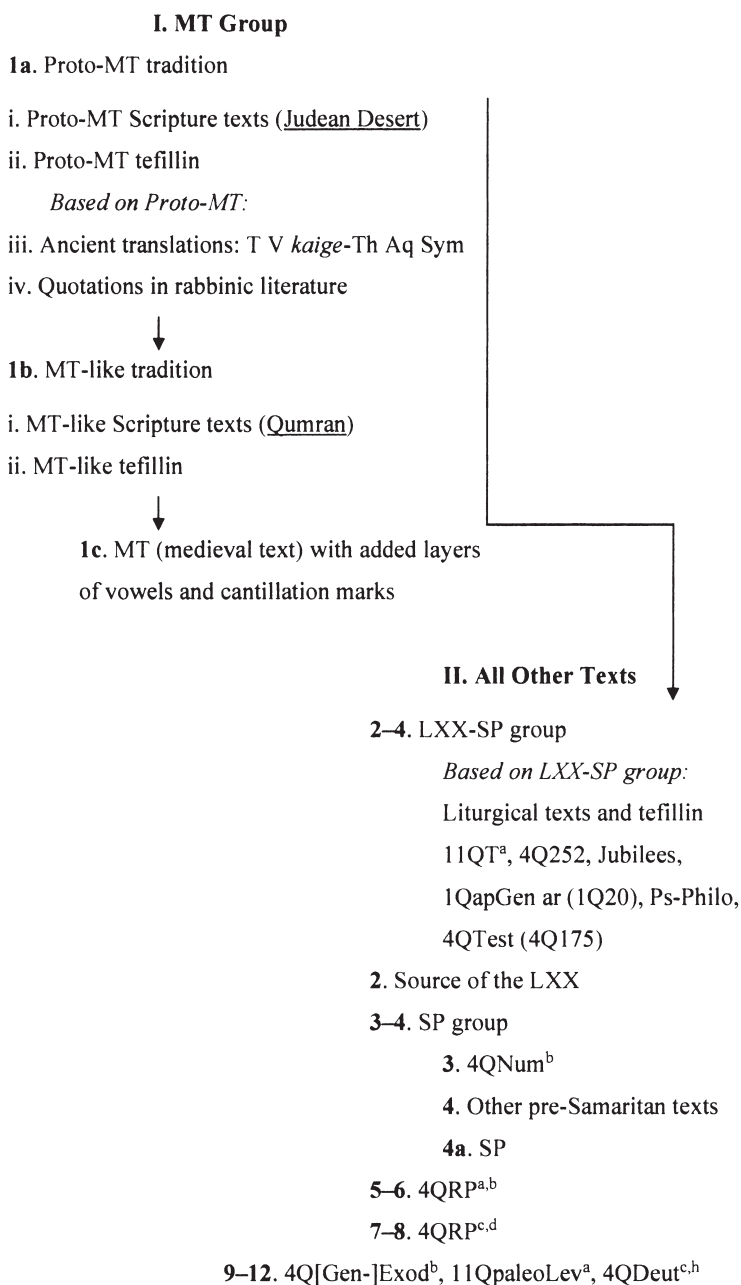


Figure 3: Tentative Stemma for the Two-Block Model in Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., 382.

has received much critique.⁶⁰ It is worth noting since it is not only significant for counting and categorizing but leads to different syncretical text-historical models. An increased impact is visible in Tov's new two-block model that introduces another text-historical option into the discussion.⁶¹

Although the stemma is tentative and not all its details are figured out by now, several important features of the model are discernible. First, it must be noted that the problem of the independent/non-aligned texts and the MT-like texts stays crucial. Tov assembles a proto-Masoretic tradition and a "MT-like tradition" to a "MT group" in block I and places them genetically before all other text types. The latter he summarizes in a second block (block II), which is supposed to have emerged from the MT-block via a common precursor of LXX and SP. As an "appendix," he mentions four non-aligned texts that cannot be assigned to either block. Remarkably, the chronologically younger text witnesses are placed genetically at the top, including the very few proto-Masoretic texts from Qumran (4QGen^{b?}) and those from the other sites.⁶² In 2012, Tov also counted 22 MT-like and 18 non-aligned texts (see Table 1 above). He now sees major problems in clearly assigning these texts to branches in the stemma so that a large number of manuscripts are not included in the stemma.⁶³ Tov has outlined new statistics for the Qumran evidence in the 4th edition

⁶⁰ Cf. Kreuzer, "Text," 134–35; Lange, "Textual Plurality," 46–56; Debel, "Editions," 169–70; Crawford, "Understanding," 64–69.

⁶¹ For a description, cf. Tov, "Development," 8–22. See also the literature in note 17 and most recently idem, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., esp. 380–82. The updated stemma adds a section 1c. for the Medieval MT. Liturgical texts and Tefillin are now only displayed one time as based on the LXX-SP group and the lower twigs are resorted to 5–6. 4QRP^a; ^b and 7–8. 4QRP^c; ^d.

⁶² Cf. Tov, "Development," 10.

⁶³ Only four non-aligned manuscripts (4Q[Gen–]Exod^b; 11QpaleoLev^a; 4QDeut^c; ^h) are mentioned. In Tov's opinion, the deviations hint to relations with other texts but are not significant enough to assign them to a separate branch. "[T]hey may reflect transitional stages between texts mentioned in the stemma." Tov, "Development," 18–19. Ibid., 19 note 51, he adds that "their number could have been smaller or larger." See now also idem, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., 380 note 156. The group "1b. MT-like traditions" emerges secondarily from the proto-MT twig. Idem, "Development," 11; idem, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., 63, names 4QGen^g; 4QpaleoGen–Exodⁱ; 4QExod^c as examples for MT-like texts from Qumran. Idem, "Development," 20, states: "In addition, there are 20 texts that could reflect either MT or SP; in the past I included them with MT but I now realize that they cannot be included in any statistics." Idem, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., 136, now speaks of 18 "indecisive texts that are either MT-like or pre-Samaritan" and 21 "non-aligned texts." Ibid., 381, he states: "The table does not include all the Qumran Scrolls. Several are too fragmentary to be included in a stemma. Further, the classification does not include a group of texts whose major deviation from the others is in their spelling system, especially in the case of the texts written in the QSP+."

of his *Textual Criticism* from 2022 that merge the block model with the typologies. From 64 texts (40 Torah texts, 21 Tefillin, 4QRP^{a-c}) considered “sufficiently extensive for text analysis,” 38% (1 + 7 + 17 Tefillin) belong to block two. 8QPhyl I is considered the only representative of proto-MT (2%) while the remainder of the evidence is divided into 18 “indecisive texts that are either MT-like or pre-Samaritan”⁶⁴ (28%) and 21 “non-aligned” (32%) texts.⁶⁵ When comparing these statistics with the chart analyzed above, the changes become obvious. Tov has now statistics that look very similar to Lange’s counting and typology. Through the introduction of the Tefillin, however, the overall number of the manuscripts in the statistics raises and the overall percentages of block two are thus comparable to those of the “non-aligned” (32%) and the “indecisive” (28%) sections. These last two categories in fact make up for 60% percent of the texts but they have no place in the two-block stemma.

Typology ⁶⁶	Lange 2009	Tov 2008	Tov 2012	Tov 2022	Stemma
L: semi-Masoretic	2 (5%)	24 (52%)	22 (48%)		—
L/T: proto-Masoretic; T: M-like	2 (5%)			1 (2%)	Block I: Proto-MT
L: semi-Masoretic/ pre-Samaritan	11 (27,5%)			18 (28%)	—
L/T: pre-Samaritan	2 (5%)	3 (6,5%)	5 (11%)	6 (9%)	Block II: LXX-SP group (38%)
L/T: Hebr. LXX- <i>Vorlage</i>	2 (5%)	2 (4,5%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	
Tefillin reflecting “either the LXX or SP”	—	—	—	17 (27%)	
L: independent/ T: non-aligned	21 (52,5%)	17 (37%)	18 (39%)	21 (32%)	—
overall number of mss	40	46	46	64	1 + 7 + 17 Tefillin

Table 2: Updated Overview of the Statistics of Lange and Tov

⁶⁴ Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., 136 note 64: 4QGen^c; d; e; f; g; j; 1QExod; 1QpaleoLev–Num^a; 4QLev^b; c; e; 2QDeut^c; 4QDeut^d; e; f; g; i; o. Ibid., note 63, informs that 4QLev–Num^a and 4QpaleoDeut^f are now excluded from this group.

⁶⁵ Cf. Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., 135–36.

⁶⁶ L = Lange; T = Tov.

The persisting problem can only be highlighted here as an important structural and hermeneutical blind spot. Further analysis cannot be pursued here, but the conclusion in ch. 3.2 will revisit this subject.

With Tov's proposal, there is a shift in the general assumptions about the text-historical developments against which 4QNum^b is contextualized. The model also reopens the discussion about the direct genetic relations of this scroll to other textual traditions. Moreover, the methodical presuppositions on which the text groups in block II are based make the renewed analysis of 4QNum^b crucial for a better understanding of the text witnesses and traditions assembled in that block.

Block II derives from block I. Not all affiliations in this block are detailed out by now. However, the preeminent role of the LXX-SP group is emphasized as follows: "Most likely the kernel of this text block, the LXX-SP group, derived from the MT block, and at a later stage several branches and twigs branched off from it."⁶⁷ The LXX-SP group, characterized as "Palestinian,"⁶⁸ presupposes a "common LXX-SP base"⁶⁹ and divides into several parts. *First*, the Hebrew LXX-Vorlage.⁷⁰ *Second*, the SP group, which may also go back to one ancestor.⁷¹ In this subgroup, Tov discriminates the following "three layers, listed in historical sequence"⁷²: 4QNum^b, other pre-Samaritan texts, and, deriving from the latter, SP. Due to the tentative character of the stemma, it is not entirely clear how these three layers are connected genetically to each other and the alleged ancestors in the model. Nevertheless, Tov points out that SP is based on a pre-Samaritan text and that this latter group of texts is thought of as "pre-SP twigs" of the "SP branch."⁷³ For 4QNum^b, Tov emphasizes the special character of that scroll by setting it apart from the other two layers in the group. This is justified by the exclusive correspondences with LXX. Tov assumes that a single and relatively early pre-Samaritan tradition had these features and witnessed a transitional stage between LXX and SP.⁷⁴

⁶⁷ Tov, "Development," 11. For the following, see now also idem, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed.

⁶⁸ Tov, "Development," 11, but cf. the earlier critique of this label in idem, "Samaritan Pentateuch," 406.

⁶⁹ Tov, "Development," 15, see also 12–15.

⁷⁰ Cf. Tov, "Development," 15–16.

⁷¹ Tov, "Development," 16: "There may well have been a single text composed by an individual rather than a group of texts at the base of the SP group since the exegesis embedded in this text seems to reflect the thinking of an individual." For this base text, the relationship to an alleged common ancestor of the LXX-SP group is not entirely clear in the model since Tov states *ibid.*, 17: "The SP group forms a popularizing offshoot of MT or a similar text."

⁷² Tov, "Development," 16.

⁷³ Tov, "Development," 17.

⁷⁴ Tov, "Development," 16–17: "[...] a single pre-Samaritan text resembling 4QNum^b reflecting a transition stage between the LXX and the SP [...]." *Ibid.*, 17 note 43:

In sum, the model gives more credit to the special character of 4QNum^b than the other proposals. Tov departs substantially from the high valuing of the large-scale expansions shared with SP.⁷⁵ However, the details for the relations between the LXX-*Vorlage* and the SP group stay unclear with regard to the data in 4QNum^b. This is even more important as Tov argues that most harmonizations in LXX already go back to the Hebrew *Vorlage*.⁷⁶ Like Jastram, Tov assumes a common LXX-SP base for his LXX-SP group. Hence, the question arises how the transitional stage between LXX and SP assumed for 4QNum^b fits with the assumption of two branches, the LXX-*Vorlage* and the possible common ancestor of the SP group. The problem of LXX 4QNum^b-exclusive elements not appearing in SP remains unsolved. This blank can partly be explained by the tentative construction of the stemma, but is also an outcome of a methodical decision, as will now be explained.

In his evaluation of the data for the Book of Numbers, Tov does not evaluate the patterns of agreement with 4QNum^b (or other scrolls) as a distinct group because he only addresses the different matching patterns between MT, SP, and LXX.⁷⁷ The pattern 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP is noted several times but not addressed or evaluated systematically with regard to the stemma. The focus is on the division of the two blocks and their successive genetic relationships. This hypothesis is mainly supported by the observation that there are more secondary harmonizing elements in the manuscripts and text traditions of block II than in those of block I.⁷⁸ While acknowledging that there are also some “original” readings in the evidence from block II,⁷⁹ Tov focuses on harmonizations as “*Leitfehler*,” which, according to him, are secondary “by definition” and justify the two-block

“Typologically, 4QNum^b probably presents the oldest representative of the SP-LXX group, reflecting more significant agreements with the LXX than the other texts.”

⁷⁵ This is mainly based on a critique of Jastram’s statistics. Tov urges for: a) counting and weighing not only the readings with but also those against the respective versions and b) for taking the large-scale expansions out of the statistics in order to gain clearer insights into the small convergences and divergences, cf. idem, “Samaritan Pentateuch,” 402–3, see also idem, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 183.

⁷⁶ Cf. Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 186–87. Here, Tov significantly departs from previous research that mostly assumed that these phenomena were rather attributable to the – allegedly unreliable – translator, cf. for example Rösler, “Septuaginta,” 29–30, and the further literature cited in Tov, *ibid.*

⁷⁷ Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers;” idem, “Textual Harmonization;” cf. also idem, “Samaritan Pentateuch;” idem, “Popular Jewish LXX-SP Texts;” idem, “Palestinian Source.”

⁷⁸ This result goes back to a reevaluation of the data for the Pentateuch in a series of studies, cf. Tov, “Shared Tradition;” idem, “Textual Harmonization,” and the literature listed *ibid.*, 32 note 2.

⁷⁹ Cf. Tov, “Development,” 11–12.

hypothesis.⁸⁰ Tov defines harmonizations as the alignment of one detail in a text with another detail in the same or another text triggered by a discrepancy between the two: “Harmonization is recognized when a detail in source A is changed to another detail in source A or in source B because they differ.”⁸¹ He distinguishes harmonizations determined (a) by the immediate context or (b) by a more distant context. He argues that these harmonizations are usually deliberate, are often found in literal speech, and reveal a specific intertextual program of unification. Additionally, there are (c) additions or extensions of a subject or object based on context. These are probably unintentional.⁸² Tov excludes the small alterations in category (c) from his analysis, because they seem unintentional. In contrast, he assumes that the cases from categories (a) and (b) go back to conscious, intentional editing and even “reflect a certain conception, almost ideology.”⁸³

In line with this methodological decision, Tov lists for 4QNum^b only those cases that, in his view, document harmonizations. All these cases are text pluses, the most frequent category in the pattern, and strongly emphasized by Jastram.⁸⁴ The results, however, often differ from Jastram’s evaluation.⁸⁵ According to his general methodological claims, Tov treats the harmonizations as textual variants, not as literary variants.⁸⁶ Accordingly,

⁸⁰ Tov, “Textual Harmonization,” 32, 51 note 48; see also idem, “Development,” 14 note 34.

⁸¹ Tov, “Textual Harmonization,” 31.

⁸² Cf. Tov, “Textual Harmonization,” 34, see also idem, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 188.

⁸³ Together with problematic cases that cannot be clearly distinguished from stemming from the translation technique of the LXX, non-harmonizing pluses or changes, “formulaic additions,” cases with an unknown source of a possible harmonization, and inconclusive differences between LXX SP and MT, cf. Tov, “Textual Harmonization,” 34–35 (citation 34).

⁸⁴ Tov, “Samaritan Pentateuch,” 398: five harmonizing text pluses (Num 22:10 [listed as 22:11, because Tov proposes to put the additional **לֵאמֹר** at the beginning of v. 11], 11[2×], 18; 26:33). Idem, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 185: six harmonizations (Num 22:11[2×], 18; 25:16; 26:33; 35:21). As the cases of Num 22:10; 23:3; 36:1 are discussed, but without indication to the sharing of the pluses by LXX and 4QNum^b, the problem of taking into account the evidence of 4QNum^b only in passing becomes obvious. Another puzzling omission is the reference to the shared pluses in Num 30:9 since *ibid.*, 192, he does in turn discuss the unique pluses of LXX in this verse. In idem, “Palestinian Source,” 34 and note 73, he has now listed seven cases (22:11; 23:3; 25:16; 26:33; 32:30; 35:21; 36:1) from the pattern, which he classifies as “medium-sized harmonizing pluses.”

⁸⁵ See the analysis in ch. 2.

⁸⁶ According to Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 265–66, the scope of textual criticism is limited to the discrimination of literary and textual variants with only the latter being subjected to text-critical evaluation. Textual variants can be intentional or non-intentional and go back to later “copyist-scribes.” Literary variants go back to earlier “author-scribes” and “editor-scribes,” cf. *ibid.*, 283–84. Harmonizations classify as phenomena from the later transmission stage of the texts that were inserted by copyist-scribes, cf. *ibid.*, 258.

cases that exhibit possibly literary variants are excluded from the evaluation, and no possible literary-historical developments or consequences are addressed. Because of the often-ambiguous nature of the cases, this procedure might suggest more clarity than actually given by the evidence.⁸⁷

The overview of the status quo in research has revealed ample reason for assuming that the pattern 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP is significant for understanding the textual character of 4QNum^b and its stemmatic contextualization. Here, the text pluses of this pattern seem to have the strongest impact. If at all, their evidence has been considered selectively: “original” pluses with Jastram and “harmonizations” with Tov. These evaluations have also operated under rather linear presuppositions about the development of the text forms and give much credit to (proto-)MT as the alleged ancestor of the versions.⁸⁸ The insights into the diverging presuppositions of the extant proposals allow us to formulate the guidelines for the present evaluation and its methodical background.

1.2 *Guidelines for the Analysis and Methodical Background*

Taking the text pluses of the pattern 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP as a case in point, the investigation will conduct a renewed analysis of *all* documented text pluses from the pattern. This analysis will also engage with the extant evaluations of the cases⁸⁹ and compare how differing presuppositions and methodological decisions sometimes lead to differing results.

⁸⁷ See the changes in the lists referred to in note 84 and cf. Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 322, where some of the harmonizations are included in a list of evidence for small pluses in LXX that could hint to “Different Literary Editions of Numbers.” Ibid., 324–26, he discusses the problem that distinguishing between literary and textual variants often lacks clarity, but Tov urges for making a decision in each case.

⁸⁸ As discussed above, this is a bit different with Lange but, nevertheless, he also assumes a linear development.

⁸⁹ Jastram’s text-critical comments in idem, *Book of Numbers*; idem, “Text,” will serve as a starting point. Since the dissertation is not published in print, most of his comments will be reported to the reader in a briefly cited or paraphrased form. If case evaluations by Tov (cf. the literature in note 77) and in Rösel, “Textüberlieferung,” are available, they will be included, too. Apart from that, this group of text pluses has not been analyzed *en bloc* and within the framework of a stemmatic question up until now. At the same time, evaluations of particular cases from this group have not taken into account the evidence of the pattern as a distinct group of cases, cf. esp. Robker, *Balaam*, 69–127; Seebass, *Numeri 10,11–22,1*; idem, *Numeri 22,2–36,13*; Wevers, *Notes*; Dorival, *Nombres*; Rösel and Schlund, “Arthmoi,” all ad loc. with differing (and sometimes even missing) evaluations. This is why I will refrain from referring systematically to the occasional evaluations of particular cases in this literature and other commentaries etc.

This text-critical analysis is informed by current methodological problems in the field and will pay attention to how these substantially influence the evaluation of the cases.

A certain asynchrony between the textual evidence and the text-critical tools at hand has emerged in terms of methodology.⁹⁰ The textual research is increasingly confronting the methodology with the “variant textuality”⁹¹ and the overlapping and intertwining phases of literary production and textual transmission shown in the textual evidence. Scholars express a strong need for retooling⁹² as the method’s tools and aims fail to fulfill the final goal of satisfactorily understanding the data.⁹³ Though some methodological

⁹⁰ For the following diagnosis, cf. the detailed discussion in Schäfers, *Textentstehung*, 107–41.

⁹¹ In his recent publications, Tov uses the term “textual plurality” in the context of his two-block model that implies a genetic structure of the evidence unfolding from the proto-Masoretic text line, cf. idem, “Development,” 5, but cf. now idem, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., esp. 119–31, coming back to “textual variety” also against the background of his two-block model. Ulrich quite similarly speaks of “textual pluriformity,” but he is much more cautious regarding genetic implications and rather intends to emphasize that multiple editions coexisted which were all perceived as authoritative, cf. idem, “Growth,” 55; idem, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 20, 171. Instead of highlighting plurality or pluriformity, I have proposed to characterize the situation in the 3rd c. BCE–1st c. CE textual evidence as “variant textuality,” cf. Schäfers, *Textentstehung*, esp. 106–7. I herewith take up Tov’s older term “textual variety,” cf., e.g., idem, *Textual Criticism* 2001, 117 et passim, valuing its descriptive potential. The term “variant textuality” is not only open for differing genetic explanations on the one hand and multiple non-linear phenomena on the other. It also spotlights the methodological and theoretical challenges that derive from dealing with textual variance as a quality that transforms conventional notions of and axiomatic presuppositions about textuality. This is why I prefer the term “variance” to “fluidity” (cf., e.g., most recently Mäkipelto, “Approach”) because the latter term only focuses on what is detectable in comparison *between* text versions but does not proceed to rethinking the ideal qualities ascribed to the thing “text” *as such*. Here, I take up insights from philological discussions in other disciplines, cf., e.g., Cerquiglini, *Éloge*; Jansohn and Plachta, *Varianten*; Baisch, *Textkritik*; Mitterauer et al., *Textkritik*; Bosse and Fanta, *Textgenese*; and most notably Adam, *textes*. I also substantially build on the plea by Brooke, “Qumran Scrolls,” 16, that “textual criticism needs to move beyond a quasi-ontological view of the text, as if the text has some absolute form somewhere that can be determined before its meaning is then realized through other methodological approaches; there needs to be a move toward a more functional view of the text.” For a comparable approach, cf. Martin, *Multiple Originals*, see also Troxel, “‘Text.’”

⁹² Cf. exemplarily the early claims by Stipp, “Textkritik;” idem, “Verhältnis,” and most recently Mäkipelto, “Approach;” Crawford, “Pentateuchs.”

⁹³ Cf. the still valid survey of textual history and textual criticism by Kreuzer, “Text,” from 2002 who comes to the conclusion: “Während die Methodik der Textkritik im Wesentlichen gleich blieb, hat sich das Ziel der Textkritik in einer bestimmten Hinsicht erheblich verändert. [...] Wir sind mit Qumran gewissermaßen in einer Überschneidungszone, wo einerseits die Gestalt des kanonischen Textes zumindest teilweise noch im Werden ist, und wo von der anderen Seite die textkritische Rückfrage an ihre Grenzen kommt.” (Ibid., 146–47)

proposals have been published in the past few years,⁹⁴ there is currently a lack of consent on the following:

- a) The description of the aims of textual criticism
- b) The definition of the target text to reconstruct
- c) The methodologically reflected operationalization of dealing with undecidable variants and literary vs. textual phenomena.

At the same time, the *Urtext* hypothesis is integral for most text-critical methodologies and closely linked to their hermeneutical foundations.⁹⁵ Any text-critical evaluation of readings must contend with the paradox that the method seeks to explain existing readings genetically and diachronically, and hence necessarily includes a form of *relative Urtext* hypothesis in hermeneutic respect.

Nevertheless, the evidence available does not allow unequivocally inferring an *absolute Urtext* hypothesis as a text-historical presupposition – at least by now.⁹⁶ Therefore, it seems appropriate to distinguish a hermeneutic-methodological *relative Urtext* principle from the text-historical *absolute Urtext* assumption proper. This allows accounting for the genetic and linear implications of the method without forcing the evidence into any kind of *Urtext* hypothesis. Also, it leaves room for the possibility that there might not have been an *Urtext* in a narrower sense at all and the possibility that the evidence is too fragmentary to be properly reconstructed. It also allows refraining from an entirely linear explanation of the evidence at certain points of the analysis if needed and continuing it by dealing with a variant text shape.

Accordingly, a modified description of the aims and functions of textual criticism helps navigate the situation. Textual criticism aims to

⁹⁴ In spite of the numerous claims for retooling, actual new methodological instructions are sparse. Apart from Tov's manual *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, cf. esp. Lemmelyn, "Studying;" eadem, "Textual Criticism" (cf. also note 16); Martin, *Multiple Originals*; Müller, "Textgeschichte." These recent proposals have not made their way into the standard introductions and method books yet.

⁹⁵ This is not always reflected explicitly in the literature, but cf. Martin, *Multiple Originals*, 14–21; Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 1–2, 263–65; and the remarks in Utzschneider and Nitsche, *Arbeitsbuch*, 40; Dahmen, *Psalmen- und Psalter-Rezeption*, 6.

⁹⁶ Cf., e.g., Martin, *Multiple Originals*, 59: "Until all the available textual evidence has been thoroughly evaluated, I do not have a clear idea of what the 'original' text might have been, or how one would construct a convincing argument for such an 'original' should it be proposed." A differing position is advocated by Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 163–67. His appraisal for the *Urtext* assumption is de facto also closely connected with his plea for the preponderance of the proto-Masoretic text line, cf. *ibid.*, 169–90; see also *idem*, "Dead Sea Scrolls;" *idem*, "Myth;" *idem*, "Enigma;" *idem*, "Formation."

discriminate older text shapes and readings from younger ones *as far as possible* and to assess their (if possible: genetic) relationships within the realm of the “variant textuality” in the 3rd c. BCE–1st c. CE.⁹⁷ This modification comes with several advantages. Rather than fixating the task on reconstructing a single (or multiple successive) target text(s) exclusively, this definition open-endedly allows for a whole spectrum of text-historical hypotheses. Rather than artificially distinguishing textual and literary history, the whole evidence can be studied together and readings must not be eliminated from the evaluation prematurely and based on unsure decisions about their textual or literary nature. Focusing on the relative fitting of the data into the evidence available takes into consideration that, by now, in text-critical analysis, a definite starting point and a definite target point are not given without further ado.⁹⁸

Against this background, the analysis will address a set of interconnected methodological issues:

- How to deal with inconclusive or undecidable variants?
- How to discriminate haplography and dittography due to *homoiooteleuton* and *homoioarcton* from *Fortschreibung* by *Wiederaufnahme* – a frequent challenge when dealing with text pluses?⁹⁹
- How far can harmonizations be unequivocally identified as such?
- How far it is helpful and adequate to discriminate “later” textual cases of text pluses from “earlier” literary ones, as suggested by Tov?
- How far can the categories “original” and “secondary” be applied usefully and where does the available text-historical evidence set the limits for these genetic judgements?

This methodical perspective also guides the evaluation of the results regarding the following aspects: the chances and limits of the stemmatic options, the categorizing of 4QNum^b and other manuscripts, and the textual development of the Book of Numbers.

⁹⁷ This general aim builds on the research of Crawford, Ulrich, Brooke, Müller, Lemmelijn, Debel, Martin, and others and leads the way for the more detailed and broader scoped modification of exegetical textual and literary criticism that I have proposed and applied in Schäfers, *Textentstehung*, see also note 196.

⁹⁸ It is worth noting that moving away from a text-historically *absolute Urtext* principle does by no means imply a complete leveling of the possibilities of analysis in the sense of an “anything goes” or a “nothing goes.” Rather, a *relative Urtext* notion makes it possible to work on an argumentatively justified and text-historically as well as methodologically reflected basis and makes it possible to reckon with non-linearity and variance in text production and tradition.

⁹⁹ Cf., e.g., Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 220–21; Ziemer, *Kritik*, 67–70, and the examples *ibid.*, 368, 662, 671, 678–92; Pajunen, “Textual Plurality,” 12.

2. Text Pluses 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP

2.1 Case Analysis

4QNum^b documents 18 significant text pluses that fit the pattern 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP: Num 12:6; 13:23; 18:30; 22:9, 10, 11(2×), 17, 18; 23:3; 25:16; 26:33; 30:9(2×); 31:48; 32:30; 35:21; 36:1.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ It is not entirely clear how Jastram reaches his counting of 23 text pluses und 11 (resp. 9) variants of the pattern in question (on the counting, see above note 41), because he gives no explicit list of the cases involved. Seven more cases classify as text pluses of the pattern, from which some could have added to Jastram's counting, but they are not included in the present list.

- 1) Num 16:2: 4QNum^b ואנשי LXX και ἄνδρες > MT SP אנשי.
- 2) Num 26:30[34^{LXX}]: 4QNum^b לאחיעזר LXX τῷ Ἀχιζέρ > MT SP אחיעזר SP אחיעזר. At the same time, 4QNum^b LXX SP agree on the spelling of the name against MT, but note that some SP-Mss read like MT, cf. von Gall, *Pentateuch*, ad loc. Note also that the τῷ is documented i.a. in the *d*, *t*, and *n* group, but is missing in the largest part of the Greek text tradition including LXX^{A B}, cf. Wevers, *Numeri*, ad loc. On the decision to include the τῷ into the critical text, see Wevers, *Notes*, 442–43. Ibid., note 26, he even suspects 4QNum^b to “be parent to” the LXX reading.
- 3) Num 31:50: 4QNum^b ועגיל LXX και περιδέξιον > MT SP עגיל.
- 4) Num 28:14: 4QNum^b 2^o יהיה LXX ἔσται > MT SP. Although this text plus is also documented by LXX, there are too many (dis-)agreements of other patterns with the other versions to let 4QNum^b simply go with LXX. The significant variation in the list of the drink offerings is comparable to the variation in the vow formula in Num 30:9 (see also the remarks in note 156). However, other than in Num 30:9, the evidence in Num 28:14 presents a complicated assemblage of different patterns: MT: ונסכיחם חצי ההין יהיה לפר ושלישית ההין לאיל ורביעת ההין לכבש יין ואת עלת: חדש בחדשו וְחֶדְשִׁי הַשָּׁנָה: SP: ונסכיחם חצי ההין יין לפר האחד ושלשית ההין ורביעת ההין לכבש האחד יין ואת עלת השנה בחדשו לחדש השנה: 4QNum^b: [ו]נסכיחם חצי ההין [ו]היה לפר ושלשית ההין לאיל [ו]רביעת ההין יין יהיה [ו]לכבש האחד [ו]זאת עלת החדש בחדש השנה LXX: ἡ σπονδὴ αὐτῶν τὸ ἥμισυ τοῦ ἵν ἔσται τῷ μόσχῳ τῷ ἐνί, καὶ τὸ τρίτον τοῦ ἵν ἔσται τῷ κρι τῷ ἐνί, καὶ τὸ τέταρτον τοῦ ἵν ἔσται τῷ ἀμνῷ τῷ ἐνί οἶνου· τοῦτο ὀλοκαυτωμα μῆνα ἕκ μῆνος εἰς τοὺς μῆνας τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ.
- 5) Num 12:6: 4QNum^b יהיה LXX-Mss καὶ εἶπεν κς (58-376 b 44 f¹²⁹ n Ps-AU spe 31), cf. καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοῦς κς (V d⁴⁴ t Cyr II 592) > LXX^{rell-730 799*} καὶ εἶπεν MT SP ויאמר, see on this below note 104.
- 6) Num 22:14: 4QNum^b ויאמרו אליי LXX^{A F M V} Ο' - G C' and Mss καὶ εἶπον αὐτῷ > MT SP ויאמרו LXX^B and Mss καὶ εἶπαν, see on this below in the discussion of Num 22:9.
- 7) Num 23:3: 4QNum^b ואנוכי LXX^{A V} C' and Mss ἐγὼ δὲ πορεύσομαι > MT SP ואלכה LXX^{B F M} O and Mss καὶ πορεύσομαι. This case also includes a variant (imperfect instead of cohortative), it will be treated below together with the listed text plus in that verse.

Cases 1–3 are excluded from the analysis because they are too small. Case 4 is excluded the situation in the verse is complex. Cases 5–7 are excluded from the list due to their unclear status in the Greek text history, but they will be commented on in the analysis.

These 18 text pluses differ in their length with seven small text pluses of one word length (Num 12:6; 13:23; 18:30; 22:9, 10, 17; 26:33) and eleven larger text pluses of two or more words (Num 22:11(2×), 18; 23:3; 25:16; 30:9(2×); 31:48; 32:30; 35:21; 36:1). In the latter group, Num 23:3; 32:30 stand out because they exhibit very extensive text pluses of more than a half verses length. The 18 text pluses differ also in their characteristics with respect to form and genre. The cases can be divided into the following two groups based on length with subdivisions referring to their form and content:¹⁰¹

1. Small text pluses (one word) with a more technical character:
 - a) Prepositional objects and prepositions: Num 12:6; 13:23; 18:30; 22:9; 22:17
 - b) Introduction of a direct speech Num 22:10
 - c) Introduction of a list: Num 26:33
2. Langer text pluses (two and more words) providing additional content:
 - a) Additional addressees of a direct speech: Num 25:16; 36:1
 - b) (Parts of a) formula/formulaic language: Num 30:9(2×); 31:48; 35:21
 - c) Content with reference to the closer context: Num 22:11(2×); 22:18; 23:3; 32:30
 - [d) Content with reference to a remote context: [Num 13:23]].¹⁰²

It should be noted that especially the text historical status of the *b* group and the *d*, *t*, *n* group, which frequently support the readings discussed here along with other Greek text traditions, needs further research, cf. Schäfers, "Eigenart."

There is not much research on readings in 4QNum^b shared with Greek mss in the Pentateuch that I know of. The fact that the 4QNum^b readings were not available when the LXX edition was made, together with the quite imprecise noting of the agreements in Jastram's edition does not help either. Wevers did include some of the 4QNum^b evidence in his later *Notes* but did so quite inconsistently with footnotes evaluating the readings of 4QNum^b more than once contradicting the judgement in the main text, cf. the critique of Jastram, review of *Notes on the Greek Text of Numbers* (by Wevers). In the evaluation of the Greek Scrolls, we have a more in depth treatment of the Qumran evidence by Wevers, cf. Wevers, "Early Revision;" idem, "Dead Sea Scrolls." Unfortunately, it is more interested in the scrolls' contribution to finding the original Septuagint than in evaluating the agreements with the codices and the mss traditions with regard to a textual pre-history of the LXX text streams, cf., however, Quast, "Character," who, i.a., stresses the evidence of the *b* group.

¹⁰¹ Here, I am partly building upon the categories proposed by Tov, "Textual Harmonization;" idem, "Septuagint of Numbers," and Zahn, *Rethinking*, 135–77; eadem, "Samaritan Pentateuch," for different phenomena of harmonization resp. text pluses.

¹⁰² The reconstructed text plus in Num 13:23 is added to the list but not counted because it will be treated in the analysis of Num 13:23, too.

In the following sections, the evidence is analyzed in this order, taking into account the major lines of problem from ch. 1.2.¹⁰³

2.1.1 Small Text Pluses (One Word) with A More Technical Character

a) Prepositional Objects and Prepositions: Num 12:6; 13:23; 18:30; 22:9; 22:17

In Num 12:6; 13:23; 22:9, 17, a (prepositional) object is made explicit by 4QNum^b LXX, against MT SP. Additionally, 4QNum^b LXX agree with an additional determinative article + מן in Num 18:30, which is also included into this group. All these cases can be understood as smoothening the syntax so that a secondary (and potentially unconscious) insertion is the most likely explanation. Some peculiarities in detail, however, can be detected:

Num 12:6:

MT:	וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמֹעוּנָא דְּבָרִי אִם־יִהְיֶה נְבִיאֲכֶם יְהוָה בְּמִרְאָה אֵלָיו אֲתוֹדֵעַ בְּחִלּוֹם אֲדַבֵּר־בוֹ:
SP:	וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמֹעוּ נָא דְּבָרִי אִם יִהְיֶה נְבִיאֲכֶם יְהוָה בְּמִרְאָה אֵלָיו הַתּוֹדֵעַ וּבְחִלּוֹם אֲדַבֵּר בּוֹ:
4QLev–Num ^a :	וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמֹעוּ נָא דְּבָרִי אִם יִהְיֶה נְבִיאֲכֶם יְהוָה בְּ[מִרְאָה א]ֵלָיו אֲתוֹדֵעַ [בְּחִלּוֹם אֲדַבֵּר בּוֹ]
4QNum ^b :	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה ¹⁰⁴ אֵלֵיהֶם [שְׁמֹעוּ נָא דְּבָרִי אִם יִהְיֶה נְבִיאֲכֶם בְּמִרְאָה אֵלָיו אֲתוֹדֵעַ וּבְחִלּוֹם] אֲדַבֵּר בּוֹ

¹⁰³ In the following textual analysis, the Hebrew and Greek texts are taken from the following editions: BHS; DJD; Wevers, *Numeri*; Tal, *Samaritan Pentateuch*. Any supralinear scribal corrections in 4QNum^b are not specifically marked but are given integrated into the main text since they do not affect the cases analyzed here. The textual comparison for the pattern 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP is highlighted with corresponding simple underlining. In some verses, there are further variants and/or text plus that show divergent patterns of agreement between the witnesses. Most of these cases are also indicated – graphically differentiated – by corresponding underlining, but only commented on as far as it seems necessary.

¹⁰⁴ Here, 4QNum^b goes with several Greek manuscripts, which read καὶ εἶπεν ᾧ πρὸς αὐτοὺς (ms 58 and 376, the *b* group, ms 44 from the *d* group, the *f* group without ms 129, the *n* group and the Latin Ps-AU spe 31), cf. καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ᾧ (V *d*⁴⁴ t Cyr II 592). Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 117, explains the Tetragrammaton as a later insertion that happened successive to the secondary integration of the אליהם and he assumes that “[...] the partial testimony of G¹ may show that at a later date some [Greek; KMS] manuscripts were revised toward a Hebrew source including the tertiary addition of יהוה.” This explanation seems very complicated to me. A multi-stepped clarification of first the addressees (אליהם) and then the subject (יהוה) of the speech could have been motivated by the graphical similarity of אליהם and אלהים in order to prevent reading or scribal error through metathesis. A modern example for the likeness

LXX: καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς Ἀκούσατε τῶν λόγων μου· ἔάν γένηται
 προφήτης ὑμῶν κυρίῳ, ἐν ὁράματι αὐτῷ γνωσθήσομαι, καὶ ἐν
 ὕπνῳ λαλήσω αὐτῷ.

In Num 12:6, 4QNum^b LXX explicitly indicate the addressees of YHWH's speech in front of the *'Ohel Mo'ed* by אֶל־יְהוָה. As a result of this, the whole divine speech presents itself no longer as an announcement about the status of prophets in general and about the outstanding role of Moses but as a speech that is addressed directly to Miriam and Aaron. This fits the second part of the speech in v. 8b, which refers to the actions of the two siblings reported in vv. 1–2. It also fits the consequences: “and the anger of YHWH was kindled against them” (v. 9). However, the first part of the speech (vv. 6–8a) cannot connect as smoothly with the introduction of speech. Without the introduction, “and he spoke *to them*,” it is possible to understand the explanation about the difference between conventional prophets on the one hand and Moses with his unique nearness/closeness to God on the other hand as a message that is delivered to all of Israel. This reading is even emphasized by the phrase “if there is a prophet among *you*”¹⁰⁵ (v. 6b) because the enclitic personal pronoun 2. pers. pl. would hardly refer to Miriam and Aaron alone. Provided that, it is also possible to assess the shorter text as the easier text and the longer text as the more difficult one. Consequently, the text-critical evaluation gets complicated, which is even more problematic if it remains unclear at which point in the textual history the shared source of the readings in 4QNum^b and LXX must be assumed.

These issues are particularly important because the literary history of the verses in question has been highly disputed. A frequent assumption is a reworking or *Fortschreibung* in vv. 6–8a.¹⁰⁶ If this is correct, the

of that metathesis can be found in Wevers, *Notes*, 186 note 10: “4QNum^b added יהוה אלהים [sic!] as subject.” In view of the Greek evidence, however, I would suggest that the reading of 4QNum^b and in the Greek manuscripts go back to either an early Hebrew text who was the *Vorlage* or an early Greek tradition that somehow made its way into 4QNum^b. This seems an easier solution than assuming a later revision of the Greek manuscripts towards a Hebrew source differing from MT. Such a source becomes more and more unlikely in Late Antiquity and Medieval Ages. On the phenomenon of 4QNum^b readings coinciding with LXX-mss readings, especially in the *b* group and the *d, t, n* group, cf. note 100.

¹⁰⁵ The Hebrew syntax is difficult here. A common proposal is to read נביא בכם (see, e.g., BHS). Among others, Ashley assumes a so-called “broken construct chain,” cf. idem, *Book of Numbers*, 220–21 note 7; a similar text is also documented by Vulg. and VL. Against MT, LXX translates the following יהוה, which is only loosely integrated into the syntax as a dative object, corresponding to ליהוה, cf. BHS. For the reconstruction without יהוה at that position in 4QNum^b, cf. Jastram, “Text,” 186–87.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Seebass, *Numeri* 10,11–22,1, 60–75.

difficulties with having אֱלֹהִים in the introduction would have only occurred after the *Fortschreibung* so that a loss or deletion of אֱלֹהִים could also be judged as a secondary smoothening of the text. Jastram's conclusion that the longer reading is a harmonizing secondary insertion¹⁰⁷ can thus not be followed without reservations.

It is also important to note that the parallel witness of 4QNum–Lev^a (one of the rare overlaps of both witnesses) has not preserved the introduction of the speech. The editor, however, reconstructs the text according to MT, but the manuscript is very fragmentary at that point. The integration of the fragments into col. XXXII or XXXIII, which themselves can be reconstructed only tentatively, is difficult.¹⁰⁸

Num 22:9 presents an easier case:

Num 22:9:

MT:	וַיִּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל-בִּלְעָם וַיֹּאמֶר מִן הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה עִמָּךְ:
SP:	ויבא אלהים אל בלעם ויאמר מִן האנשים האלה עמך:
4QNum ^b :	ויבוא [אלוהים] אל ב[לעם ויאמר] אֱלֹי מִן האנשים האלה [עמך]
LXX:	καὶ ἦλθεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸς Βαλαάμ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Τί οἱ ἄνθρωποι οὗτοι παρὰ σοί;

Without any syntactical need, the additional אֱלֹי in 4QNum^b makes explicit that Balaam, who is already mentioned as an object in the first part of the sentence, is the one addressed by *Elohim*. According to Jastram, the plus can be evaluated as harmonization and, therefore, as secondary.¹⁰⁹ This is a reasonable explanation, although non-genetic textual variance concerning small grammatical elements is possible in cases like this one.¹¹⁰ A similar case is documented in 22:14: 4QNum^b has an additional אֱלֹי marking the addressees of the direct speech, while it is missing in MT SP. The Greek text tradition is divided. The longer text is found in LXX^{A F M V} *O''-G C''* and in a number of mss, including *b* and *d t n*, reading εἶπον αὐτῷ,¹¹¹ while only LXX^B and 426 53'-129 71-509 319 read

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 117.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Ulrich, "4QLev–Num^a," 153, 169–70. On the textual character of 4QNum–Lev^a cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 68–69, and below ch. 3.2.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 137. Concerning the diverging question particles in Num 22:9 with 4QNum^b MT vs. LXX SP, see note 204.

¹¹⁰ See also the variation in Num 22:16 with אֱלֹי (4QNum^b) vs. לו (MT SP) and LXX (αὐτῷ) being somewhat inconclusive. Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 141–42 with notes 60 and 61, who lists evidence for both translations in LXX in Num 22.

¹¹¹ With variations in: εἶπ> αὐτῷ 458; εἶπεν αὐτῷ 528 75; εἶπον πρὸς αὐτον (αὐτῶς) 59; εἶπον αὐτον 16'-46-500'-529-616*; εἶπαν αὐτῷ 344^{me}. Note that, again, the *b* group and the *d, t, n* group have the reading, which is also attested in 4QNum^b.

εἶπαν.¹¹² Wevers concludes: “The reading of B+ is probably original nonetheless.”¹¹³ His argument seems to be influenced by the division between the use of classical εἶπον in the one set of text witnesses and the Hellenistic εἶπαν in LXX^B and the other manuscripts. This should, however not influence the decision regarding αὐτῶ.

In Num 22:17, the additional prepositional object in 4QNum^b LXX smoothens the syntax and thus seems to indicate a secondary insertion.

Num 22:17:

MT: כִּי־כָבֵד אֶכְבֹּדְךָ מֵאֵד וְכָל אֲשֶׁר־תֹּאמַר אֵלַי אֶעֱשֶׂה וּלְכָה־נָּא קְבֵה־לִי אֶת הָעַם הַזֶּה:

SP: כִּי כָבֵד אֶכְבֹּדְךָ מֵאֵד וְכָל אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵלַי אֶעֱשֶׂה וּלְכָה נָּא אֶת הָעַם הַזֶּה:

4QNum^b: כִּי־אֶכְבֹּדְךָ מֵאֵדָה וְכָל אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵלַי אֶעֱשֶׂה לְכָה וּלְכָה [ה] נָּא קְבֵה לִי אֶת הָעַם הַזֶּה

LXX: ἐντίμως γὰρ τιμήσω σε, καὶ ὅσα ἂν εἴπῃς, ποιήσω σοι· καὶ δεῦρο ἐπικατάρασαι μοι τὸν λαὸν τοῦτον.

As for the Hebrew text, it is possible that the following *ולכה* has triggered or supported an insertion by unconscious dittography. At the same time, these observations would also allow for a secondary loss of text by haplography. Therefore, Jastram rightly concludes that the case is “difficult to decide.”¹¹⁴

Besides, 4QNum^b SP MT exhibit a text plus (*מואדה/מאד*) against LXX. Jastram suspects a secondary loss in the Hebrew *Vorlage* of LXX due to *homoioteleuton* with *אֶכְבֹּדְךָ*, which would even work with a more defective orthography (ך and ד).¹¹⁵ It should be noted, though, that assuming a loss due to *homoioteleuton* is not necessarily compelling as long as only one or two similar letters are involved.

The additional prepositional object *אלי* in MT SP [4QNum^b] against LXX is of even greater interest. While Tov does not list the additional *לכה* among the harmonizing pluses in LXX vs. MT Sam, he nevertheless includes the *אלי* in the cases of the pattern MT SP vs. LXX postulating the plus’s source text to be found in Num 22:16.¹¹⁶ This reasoning is not particularly convincing on closer examination because there is no exact equivalent for the plus in Num 22:16. However, if one refers to the entire

¹¹² See also the translations of Arab Arm Bo^A Sa⁴ Syh^L.

¹¹³ Wevers, *Notes*, 368.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 142.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 142.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 198.

deictic pronominal structure in Num 22:16–17 as a parallel, this reasoning may also explain the additional **לכה**. It thus becomes obvious that excluding a priori all the text pluses that seem to be purely syntactic and do not seem to originate in harmonization is problematic in methodological respects; it may lead to missing out on important evidence. In contrast, collecting, counting, and evaluating all evidence seems safer before introducing categories such as “harmonization” in order to exclude evidence from the data.

In Num 13:23[24^{LXX}], MT SP also read the *lectio brevior* and *difficilior*. In contrast, the longer text with the additional prepositional object **בה** in 4QNum^b LXX does not exhibit the logical problems in the MT SP phrase **זמרה ואשכול ענבים אחד**: “a branch and one cluster of grapes (**בה**) *on it*.” At the same time, there is no trigger for haplography that could have led to a secondary loss of **בה**. Thus, Jastram explains the plus as a secondary addition.¹¹⁷

Num 13:23[24^{LXX}]:

MT:	וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד-נַחַל אֲשָׁכָל וַיִּכְרְתוּ מִשָּׁם זְמוּרָה וְאֲשָׁכָל עֲנָבִים אֶחָד וַיִּשְׂאֶהוּ בְּמוֹט בְּשָׁנִים וּמִן-הָרְמוֹנִים וּמִן-הַתְּאֵנִים:
SP:	וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד נַחַל אֲשָׁכָל וַיִּכְרְתוּ מִשָּׁם זְמוּרָה וְאֲשָׁכָל עֲנָבִים אֶחָד וַיִּשְׂאוּ בְּמוֹט בְּשָׁנִים וּמִן הָרְמוֹנִים וּמִן הַתְּאֵנִים:
4QNum ^b :	וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד נַחַל אֲשָׁכָל וַיִּרְגְּלוּ אוֹתָהּ וַיִּכְרְתוּ מִשָּׁם זְמוּרָה וְאֲשָׁכָל עֲנָבִים אֶחָד בָּהּ וַיִּשְׂאוּ בְּמוֹט וּמִן הָרְמוֹנִים וּמִן הַתְּאֵנִים [
4QRP ^c 32,12–14:	וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד נַחַל אֲשָׁכָל וַיִּרְגְּלוּ אוֹתָהּ וַיִּכְרְתוּ מִשָּׁם זְמוּרָה וְאֲשָׁכָל עֲנָבִים אֶחָד בָּהּ וַיִּשְׂאוּ בְּמוֹט בְּשָׁנִים] [וּמִן הָרְמוֹנִים וּמִן הַתְּאֵנִים
LXX:	καὶ ἦλθον ἕως Φάραγγος βότρυος καὶ κατεσκέψαντο αὐτήν· καὶ ἔκοψαν ἐκαίθην κλήμα καὶ βότρυν σταφυλῆς ἕνα ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἦραν αὐτὸν ἐπ’ ἀναφορεῦσιν, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ῥοῶν καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν συκῶν.

Jastram deduces from the average length of the lines in the manuscript that 4QNum^b originally read **וירגלו אותה** and shared the second, more content related plus preserved in LXX καὶ κατεσκέψαντο αὐτήν (“and they spied it out”). Two observations collide in the evaluation of this case. One the one hand, MT SP have the shorter text. On the other hand, haplography due to *homoioarcton* is an option in the longer text (**וירגלו אותה ויכרתו**). Therefore, Jastram accepts the case as “ambiguous” and “hard to decide.”¹¹⁸ Concerning the text plus **בשנים** in MT SP, however, he suspects a clarifying

¹¹⁷ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 122.

¹¹⁸ Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 186.

addition because its absence in 4QNum^{b119} LXX cannot be explained with a loss due to haplography.¹²⁰

Jastram's conclusions should be supplemented with three further observations on the versions of Num 13:23. They contribute to another category among the text plusses (4.d) "Content with reference to a remote context" [Num 13:23]. Given their connection to the other findings on Num 13:23, they will be discussed already here and not later in the paper.

First, it should be noted that the text plus וירגלו אותה seems odd in terms of semantics because Num 13–14 uses תור and not רגל without any exception. In contrast, Deut 1:24a^b, b (ויבאו עד-נחל אשכל וירגלו אותה) has רגל and could have been the textual source of a harmonizing addition in Num 13:23.¹²¹ This observation increases the probability of the plus being a secondary addition. Furthermore, the accusative marker with the enclitic feminine personal pronoun (אותה) creates a grammatically difficult longer text because, other than in the Greek text (φάραγξ), the antecedent remains unclear. The closest antecedent in the context would be the "branch" (זמורה), which makes no sense because a "branch" cannot get "spied out." The "wadi" (נחל) is masculine and does not qualify. Thus, the enclitic personal pronoun must refer to the "land" (ארץ) as in Deut 1:24.¹²² The connection to the land is also tenuous there, as the term "land" is only referenced once in Deut 1:22. However, unlike Num 13:23, there is no other potential fem. antecedent to be found in between. These observations show that the longer text implies tensions, entailing grammatical and logical problems.

Second, there is a shared longer reading of MT LXX (καὶ ἤσαν αὐτὸν) against SP and the reconstructed text of 4QNum^b ([וישא]), the former presenting a smoother syntax as נשא is rarely used intransitively. With MT and LXX sharing a reading against the other witnesses, the case crisscrosses the other variant patterns in the verse. Since it would likewise

¹¹⁹ Again, reconstructed from the average length of lines, cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 186.

¹²⁰ See Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 186–87. Cf., however, Wevers, *Notes*, 202, who suspects that the translator consciously omitted it.

¹²¹ Tov, "Septuagint of Numbers," 190, explains the text plus in LXX as harmonizing with v. 21 where LXX also reads κατεσκέψαντο. However, in v. 21, MT uses תור and not רגל. Under the premises of a Hebrew *Vorlage* for the harmonizing text pluses this is a problem. In Deut 1:24 κατεσκόπευσαν (from κατασκοπέω = homonym to κατασκέπτομαι/κατασκοπέω which the translator of Num-LXX uses throughout) equivalents רגל. Taking into account the evidence from 4QRP^c (see below) it seems also more persuasive to assume a Hebrew *Vorlage* וירגלו for LXX.

¹²² The phrase "spying out the land" (רגל [את] הארץ) is frequently used in the historical books, cf. Deut 1:24; Josh 6:22; 7:2; 14:7; Judg 18:2, 14, 17; 1 Chr 19:3.

be a problem not to indicate the object of “carrying” in Greek, it is also possible that the translator added the pronoun.

It is instructive to consider the witness of 4QRP^c for Num 13:23 in evaluating the whole picture. The manuscript predates 4QNum^b by several decades.¹²³ Lange characterizes the manuscript in terms of its multiple independent readings, its readings shared with SP (besides the large-scale editorial insertions), and the rare cases in which 4QRP^c reads with and not against LXX. He summarizes: “4QRP^c represents an independent text that resulted from a reworking of a pre-Samaritan textual witness.”¹²⁴ Except for the enclitic personal pronoun discussed above, 4QRP^c always documents the longer text in Num 13:23. The variants exhibit the following pattern:

- 1× 4QRP^c 4QNum^b LXX (בה | ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ) > MT SP¹²⁵
 1× 4QRP^c [4QNum^b] LXX (וירגלו אותה | καὶ κατεσκέψαντο αὐτήν) >
 MT SP
 1× 4QRP^c MT SP (< בשנים [4QNum^b] LXX
 1× 4QRP^c [4QNum^b] SP (וישאו) vs. MT LXX (וישארו | καὶ ἤραν αὐτὸν).

This textual situation indicates the phenomenon of mixed text types that must have resulted from at least two *Vorlagen*. As previously stated, this is a frequent assumption for 4QRP^c. Still, the variant patterns in Num 13:23 show that the theory of a reworked pre-Samaritan *Vorlage* cannot completely account for the evidence because it does not explain the shared readings of 4QRP^c with 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP. As to the question of the “pre-Samaritan” character of 4QNum^b, the situation must be more complex. This question could only be answered by a more detailed examination of the manuscript and its variant patterns, which is not in the focus here. Nevertheless, the hint to cross contaminations in textual development should be noted.

Num 18:30 documents the additional preposition מן + article and can also be counted among the first group of text pluses.

Num 18:30:

MT: ואמרת אליהם בהרימכם את-חלבו מִמֶּנּוּ וְנָחֲשׁוּ לְלוּיִם כְּתִבּוּאָת גֵּרָן כְּתִבּוּאָת יִקָּב:

SP: ואמרת אליהם בהרמכם את חלבו מִמֶּנּוּ וְנָחֲשׁוּ לְלוּיִם כְּתִבּוּאָת גֵּרָן וְכְתִבּוּאָת יִקָּב:

¹²³ The editors, Tov and White (Crawford), paleographically date to 75–50 BCE, cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 41.

¹²⁴ Lange, *Handbuch*, 41: “Bei 4QRP^c handelt es sich um einen eigenständigen Text, der aus einer Überarbeitung eines präsamaritanischen Textzeugen entstand.” [English translation KMS].

¹²⁵ Note that 4QRP^c also has an additional בה in Num 13:20 (היש בה עץ אם אין בה) against MT (הישבה עץ אם אין) and all other witnesses.

4QNum^b: ואמרתה אליהם] בהרימכם את חלבו ממנו ונחשב לכם¹²⁶ תרומתכם כח]בואה מן הגורן וכתבואה] מן היקב

LXX: καὶ ἐρεῖς πρὸς αὐτούς Ὅταν ἀφαιρῇτε τὴν ἀπαρχὴν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ λογισθῇσεται τοῖς Λευίταις ὡς γένημα ἀπὸ ἄλωνος καὶ ὡς γένημα ἀπὸ ληνοῦ.

The reading מן היקב, which is shared with LXX (ἀπὸ ληνοῦ), does not necessarily represent a smoother syntax than the construct chain in MT SP. Jastram assumes that the verse has become secondarily harmonized with Num 18:27, according to which he has also reconstructed the first part of the list of the produce to be tithed: מן ונחשב לכם תרומתכם כדגן מן היקב¹²⁷ הגרן וכמלאה מן היקב. Two more text pluses in Num 18:30 documented only in 4QNum^b against MT SP LXX correspond with that list. This gives the impression that harmonization with Num 18:27 has occurred in multiple steps. To be sure, Jastram interprets the shared reading of 4QNum^b (לכם) and Vulg. (*vobis*) as a hint for an older text. MT SP LXX thus document a reworked textual status in which the explicit address to the Levites has been introduced in favor of more legal pragmatics that disambiguates the addressees of the statute but, on the other hand, interferes with the pragmatics of speech.¹²⁸ The older text, in turn, has motivated the insertion of תרומתכם in 4QNum^b, once again harmonizing with v. 27.¹²⁹ This is indeed a possible reconstruction that would point to several different textual statuses of v. 30 in the witnesses, displaying distinct grades of parallelism to v. 27 that build upon each other or are connected. Furthermore, it should be noted that the text pluses and variants occur in formulaic, legal contexts and language.

b) Additional Introduction of Speech: Num 22:10

In Num 22:10 4QNum^b contains an additional לאמר, introducing Balak's speech. Peshitta (ܠܐܡܪ) and Vulg. (*dicens*) also attest to an introduction of the reported speech and, with this broad attestation, widen the evidence well beyond the question of the relation between LXX and 4QNum^b.

¹²⁶ Here, 4QNum^b reads with Vulg. (*vobis*) against all other witnesses.

¹²⁷ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 128.

¹²⁸ Cf. the introduction of speech in 18:26(, 30) which presents the Levites as the addressees of Moses' speech.

¹²⁹ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 128.

Num 22:10:

MT: וַיֹּאמֶר בִּלְעָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים בְּלֶק בֶּן־צֹפֹר מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב שְׁלַח אֵלַי:

SP: וַיֹּאמֶר בלעם אל האלהים בלק בן צפור מלך מואב שלח אלי:

4QNum^b: וַיֹּאמֶר בלעם אל האלהים בלק בן צ[פור מלך מואב שלח] אֵלַי לְאַמֹּר

LXX: καὶ εἶπεν Βαλαάμ πρὸς τὸν θεόν Βαλάκ υἱὸς Σεπφὼρ βασιλεὺς Μωὰβ ἀπέστειλεν αὐτοὺς πρὸς με λέγων

Jastram does not find any triggers for haplography and assumes that the text plus is “probably secondary,” harmonizing v. 10 with v. 5 where Balak’s sending messengers to Bileam is narrated in the first place (וַיִּשְׁלַח מְלָאכִים אֶל־בִּלְעָם בֶּן־בְּעוֹר [...] לְקָרְאוֹ לוֹ לֵאמֹר).¹³⁰ Similar cases of additional or missing introductions of speech resp. markers of speech are documented in Num 5:6;¹³¹ Num 17:16–17[17:1–2^{LXX}]¹³² and in a reconstructed variant in 4QNum^b 18:26. Furthermore, Jastram points to frequent similar cases in 4QpaleoExod^m.¹³³ However, in all these cases, the missing or additional *לאמר* is only a question of (formulaic) style and does not affect the understanding of the sentences. In Num 22:10, the shorter text is slightly more difficult without the speech marker because it also serves as the only explicit introduction to the reported speech of Balak. This might very well hint at a secondary smoothening of the verse. The additional object αὐτοὺς (“them”) in LXX which can only refer to the messengers from v. 5 is explainable with exactly this intention. Since there is a lacuna in 4QNum^b at that point of the text, it is not discernible whether the verb had an enclitic personal pronoun. Thus, LXX αὐτοὺς may already display the next stage of harmonizing,¹³⁴ but the text of 4QNum^b remains unsure. On the other hand, the frequent cases of missing or additional speech markers in the versions attest to a certain textual variance regarding these small elements.¹³⁵ This may not necessarily be resolved by a one-way decision on an alleged “oldest text.”

¹³⁰ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 138.

¹³¹ LXX (+ λεγων) SP (+ *לאמר*) vs. MT and possibly also 4QLev–Num^a where the reconstructed length of the line seems to leave no space for an additional *לאמר*. However, note the general limitations of this reconstruction indicated by Ulrich, “4QLev–Num^a,” 167: “The reconstruction of lines 14–25 dictated by the arrangement of the extant fragments indicates that there were probably small quantitative variants from the text as preserved in M SP; all such difficulties can be solved on the assumption of the addition or omission of minor words or phrases in the scroll or in M SP.”

¹³² The λεγων (*לאמר*) is only documented in LXX against all other versions.

¹³³ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 187.

¹³⁴ The Hexapla having the αὐτοὺς under an obelus but not the λεγων may also point to that explanation.

¹³⁵ Especially since Peshitta (ܐܠܝܗܐ) and Vulg. (*dicens*) also attest an introduction of the reported speech!

The case is also instructive for illuminating the presuppositions that guide text-critical decisions. While in Jastram's usual line of argument, a text plus in LXX 4QNum^b, which shows no trigger for haplography, is most likely a secondary addition, Rösel values the attestation in both LXX and 4QNum^b as a hint for an "original" reading. For him, the question of whether a reading can be traced back to the work of the translator or not is an important guiding principle. In the latter cases, preference is often given to the alleged Hebrew LXX-*Vorlage* as the older text.¹³⁶ For Robker, in turn, the broad attestation, an alleged trigger for haplography, and the pre-Samaritan character of 4QNum^b give reason to decide for the longer reading as the older text.¹³⁷

c) Introduction of a List: Num 26:33

Another plus that smoothenes the syntax can be found in the list naming the daughters of Zelophehad in Num 26:33.

Num 26:33:

- MT: וַיִּצְלַחֲפָחַד בֶּן־חֲפֹר לֹא־הָיוּ לוֹ בָּנִים כִּי אִם־בָּנוֹת וְשֵׁם בָּנוֹת צִלְפָּחַד מַחֲלָה וְנַעֲזָה חֲגִלָּה מִלֶּכָּה וְתֹרַצָּה:
- SP: וַיִּצְלַחֲפָחַד בֶּן חֲפֹר לֹא הָיָה לוֹ בָּנִים כִּי אִם בָּנוֹת וְשֵׁם בָּנוֹת צִלְפָּחַד מַחֲלָה וְנַעֲזָה חֲגִלָּה מִלֶּכָּה וְתֹרַצָּה:
- 4QNum^b: וַיִּצְלַחֲפָחַד [בֶּן חֲפֹר לֹא הָיוּ לוֹ בָּנִים כִּי אִם בָּנוֹת] וְשֵׁם בָּנוֹת וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בָּנוֹת צִלְפָּחַד [מַחֲלָה וְנַעֲזָה חֲגִלָּה מִלֶּכָּה וְתֹרַצָּה]
- LXX: καὶ τῷ Σαλπαὰδ υἱῷ Ὁφερ οὐκ ἐγένοντο αὐτῷ υἱοί, ἀλλ' ἡ θυγατέρες· καὶ ταῦτα τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν θυγατέρων Σαλπαὰδ· Μααλὰ καὶ Νουὰ καὶ Ἐγλὰ καὶ Μελχὰ καὶ Θερσά.

The additional שמות and ואלה in 4QNum^b, which is also extant in LXX (καὶ ταῦτα τὰ ὀνόματα), displays a smoother syntax than the singular ושם in MT SP and can thus be classified as harmonization. Jastram considers Num 27:1; Josh 17:3 as possible references.¹³⁸ However, concerning the

¹³⁶ Cf. Rösel, "Textüberlieferung," 225, but see also the more cautious judgement (different *Vorlage* than MT) in Rösel and Schlund, "Arithmoi," 482. For Wevers, *Notes*, 365, however, "LXX smoothes out the text by adding the modifier [...] as well as the direct speech indicator."

¹³⁷ Robker, *Balaam*, 76: "The longer reading in G, V, and S is probably older than that of M and Smr. Scribes presumably overlooked לאמר due to *homoioarcton*, between אלי and לאמר. The attestation at Qumran in the generally pre-Samaritan text of 4QNum^b offers significant support to this postulation. Therefore, it will be regarded as the older reading and not merely as a harmonization with v. 5."

¹³⁸ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 158.

difficult singular form in MT SP, it might suffice to assume an internal harmonization motivated by the syntactical problems in Num 26:33.

The text pluses analyzed so far are only of one-word length and have a more syntactical than content-related dimension. This is different from the following cases, which are more extensive and significantly affect the content of the verses in question.

2.1.2 Larger Text Pluses (Two and More Words) Providing Additional Content

a) Additional Addressees of a Direct Speech: Num 25:16; 36:1

In Num 36:1, the priest Eleazar is introduced as an additional addressee for the speech that is delivered in front of Moses and in front of the princes by the heads of the fathers (houses) of the families. The evidence may give the impression of a rather technical case at first sight. The same applies to the additional command to speak to the Israelites in the introduction of the divine speech in Num 25:16. The narrated content, though, is significantly changed by the additional text and contributes to a different communication setting. Moreover, the change of addressees has a potential influence on literary-critical decisions.

Num 36:1:

- MT: וַיִּקְרְבוּ רָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת לְמִשְׁפַּחַת בְּנֵי-גִלְעָד בֶּן-מְכִיר בֶּן-מְנַשֶּׁה מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת בְּנֵי יוֹסֵף וַיְדַבְּרוּ לְפָנָי מֹשֶׁה וּלְפָנָי הַנְּשִׂאִים רָאשֵׁי אָבוֹת לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
- SP: ויקרבו ראשי האבות למשפחות בני גלעד בן מכיר בן מנשה ממשפחת בני יוסף וידברו לפני משה ולפני הנשיאים ראשי האבות לבני ישראל:
- 4QNum^b: [ויקרבו ראשי האבות למשפחת בנ] גלעד בן מכיר בן מנשה ממשפחות בני יוסף [וידברו לפני משה ולפני אל] עזר הכהן ולפני הנשיאים ראשי האבות לבני [ישראל]
- LXX: Καὶ προσῆλθον οἱ ἄρχοντες φυλῆς υἱῶν Γαλαὰδ υἱοῦ Μαχὶρ υἱοῦ Μανασσῆ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς υἱῶν Ἰωσήφ, καὶ ἐλάλησαν ἔναντι Μωσῆ καὶ ἔναντι Ἐλεάζαρ τοῦ ἱερέως καὶ ἔναντι τῶν ἀρχόντων οἰκῶν πατριῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ,

The double **ולפני** creates a formidable trigger for haplography. This is why Jastram judges the plus “probably original.”¹³⁹ Tov, however, points to the parallel text in Num 27:2 and considers the plus a secondary harmonization.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 180; idem, “Text,” 181.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 195, without indicating that 4QNum^b shares this plus at least through partly extant text with LXX. In contrast, the – much more fragmentary –

This is possible because the double **ולפני** could technically have also emerged from a *Fortschreibung* by “*Wiederaufnahme*.” It remains, however, unclear when this addition would have taken place – earlier in the literary history and then followed by text-historical loss due to haplography, or later in the transmission process as a small-scale addition to the text. Peshitta, who often shares readings with LXX, also documents the text plus and adds further weight to the evidence.

A similar case is Num 25:16, where the double **לאמר** can indicate both text-historical loss due to haplography caused by *homoioteleuton* and literary *Fortschreibung* by “*Wiederaufnahme*.”

Num 25:16:

MT: וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

SP: וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר:

4QNum^b: וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר דבר לבני ישראל לאמר¹⁴¹ [ל לאמר]

LXX: Καὶ ἐλάλησεν κύριος πρὸς Μωσῆν λέγων Ἀλάησον τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ λέγων

While Jastram stresses the double **לאמר** as a trigger for haplography and judges the reading to be “original,”¹⁴² Tov assumes a harmonization

evidence from 4QNum^b for the plus in Num 25:16 (see below), however, is included in the list, cf. *ibid.*, 192. Albeit, *ibid.*, note 29, he states with regard to Num 36:1: “This trend of harmonization is continued in 4QRP^c frg. 36 and 4QNum^b cols. XXXI–XXXII.” Tov refers to the differing sequence of chapters in 4QRP^c and 4QNum^b which closely link Num 27:1–11 and Num 36,1–12. For the text plus in question here, it is difficult to ascertain if it could have been attested by 4QRP^c which is fragmentary at that point. The average length of the lines speaks against such a conclusion, although the preceding line is also longer than the average, cf. DJD 13, 310.

¹⁴¹ Here, one must trust the reconstruction of Jastram, “4QNum^b,” relatively blindly, since it is not verifiable on the current photographs. “Earlier photographs of frg. 33a show two right arms beginning to branch off from the left downstroke of the *śin* from **ל** [ל] **ישראל** [י]. The downstroke of the *reš* is close to the *śin*. The *ʾalep* is sure, betrayed by the distinctive tick at the base of its left leg, more distinct on the fragment itself than on the photograph.” (*Ibid.*, 238.) Jastram reconstructs the text following LXX which is compelling in respect of the other shared pluses and the textual situation with a double **לאמר**. For the calculation of lines and spatia, I see no possibility to further verify the assumed length of the text plus under the given circumstances of the shrunk fragment, the fragmentary state of the scroll in l. 25, and the missing lines before. Here too, one has to rely on Jastram. It seems reasonable to keep in mind though that other longer or shorter speech request formulae like **דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אלהם** or **דבר אל בני ישראל** or **דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אלהם** and the like could theoretically as well have constituted the now lost text in 4QNum^b.

¹⁴² Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 152–53; *idem*, “Text,” 181. Supportively, he points to the text pluses shared by LXX and 4QNum^b in Num 36:1 and Num 32:30, where he also sees both harmonization and secondary textual omission through haplography (Num 36:1) or parablepsis (Num 32:30) as a possibility, see the comments above and below ad. loc.

based on v. 16a.¹⁴³ The harmonizing character of Num 25:16, however, is difficult to assess. V. 16a does not contain any hint for YHWH calling Moses to speak to the Israelites and thus fails to provide a source for harmonization. In search of internal reasons for a possible smoothening of the shorter text by an addition, it should be noted that it is unclear which reading is the more difficult (*lectio difficilior potior*). This becomes obvious from analyzing the formulaic speech requests in the Book of Numbers and in Exod–Lev.¹⁴⁴

Formulaic speech requests differ in terms of the pragmatics of the divine speech to be delivered as a command to the Israelites through Moses. There is a distinction to be made between introductions of speech to one-time concrete situational requests and introductions to general regulations and statutes that will apply in the future. In favor of the shorter text in Num 25:16, it should be noted that in Exod–Lev, both forms of divine commands can be delivered to Moses without being accompanied by any speech request formula at all. These cases simply go with *ידבר יהוה אל* [לאמר] *משה* or *ויאמר יהוה אל משה* [לאמר] as in Num 25:16^{MT SP}. However, in the Book of Numbers, these formulae almost exclusively introduce concrete situational requests, not general statutes, and are addressed to Moses

¹⁴³ Cf. Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 192; in idem, “Palestinian Source,” 34 note 73, he now proposes Num 25:10 as the source which also provides no compelling basis for the plus. Dorival, *Nombres*, 43, 466, also assumes a harmonization but attributes it to the translator who harmonizes with the Greek text of Num 5:5–6; 6:1; 9:9–10; 15:1–2, 17–18; 17:1–2[17:16–17^{MT}]; 19:1–2. Cf. similarly Wevers, *Notes*, 429; Seebass, *Numeri* 22.2–36, 13, 113, Rösel and Schlund, “Arithmoi,” 496. This is little convincing, not only because of the testimony of 4QNum^b but also because the concrete shape of the speech request (*ἀλάησον τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ λέγων*) as a supplement or continuation of a speech introduction from YHWH to Moses in Num-LXX occurs only in Num 5:6 (see also note 131); 9:10. The remaining passages, with the exception of 17:1–2; 19:1–2, give *Ἀλάησον τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἐρεῖς πρὸς αὐτούς* – again another formula, much more common in Num: *דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם*; cf. also Num 5:12; 33:51; 35:9–10, as well as Num 8:1 with Aaron, and Num 18:25 with the Levites as addressees. Num 19:1–2 is a special case because of the deviating speech introduction. On Num 17:1–2[17:16–17^{MT}] see note 132.

¹⁴⁴ The following analysis cannot be exhaustive, but tries to give a tentative overview. In particular, the distinction between the explicit transmission and the actual execution of a command that Moses is supposed to transmit cannot be discussed further here. Tententially, Moses’ mediatorial function seems to be implemented rather formulaically in later texts, esp. with regard to Aaron and Eleazar, and is no longer accompanied by an explicit notice stating his transmission of the divine speeches in the narrative, cf. for instance Num 8:1–3; 17:1–5 and the comments in Frevel, “Torah,” 32–33; Pyschny, *Führung*, 330. In addition, see also Grafius, *Reading*, 37–46, who examines the structure of command and execution in the Book of Numbers, but leaves out not only the textual history but also the evidence from Exod and Lev, presupposing a distinction between P and non-P and narrative and legislative texts. Nevertheless, some of his observation can be correlated with the following results.

alone. No calls to be delivered to or implicitly addressing the Israelites are directly introduced in this way, whether with an imperative, a jussive, or an infinitive absolute like in Num 25:17 (MT: צָרֹר, but cf. SP: צָרְרוּ; LXX: ἐχθραίνετε).¹⁴⁵ Thus, the shorter text can, in some respects, be viewed as the more difficult text.

In contrast, the phrasing of the text plus is also unusual for divine speech requests to Moses, requesting that he deliver a one-time situational command to the Israelites. The phrase דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר only introduces general rules and instructions that are intended to be effective for all future. From a formal viewpoint, it is striking that these are always legislative acts.¹⁴⁶ Execution of the speech request by Moses to the Israelites or execution of the respective command by the Israelites immediately afterward is seldom reported.¹⁴⁷ Given the legislative performance of God's speech that aims at permanent and future validity, this is also not necessarily intended. Similar observations can be made for the formulaic speech request דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם. Here, too, general provisions oriented to the future are given. Neither the delivery by Moses nor their implementation needs to be noted.¹⁴⁸ One unique exception can be found in Num 16:23–24. Here, דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר is used as a speech

¹⁴⁵ Cf., e.g., [לאמר] וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה in Num 3:40; 7:4, 11; 11:16; 17:25 et passim. This introduction of speech is never used for general statutes. For the more frequent [לאמר] וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה, cf. Num 8:5; 10:1; 13:1; 17:9; 20:7, 31:1 et passim. Num 14:26; 34:16, 18 are liminal cases that oscillate between an exhortation to Moses and an exhortation to the Israelites and could therefore be noted as exceptions to this rule. Another exception is Num 8:23–24, but it goes with the additional formula וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר לָלוּ.

¹⁴⁶ Exod 31:12–13 (keeping the Sabbath); Lev 4:1–2 (sin offering); 6:17–18 + אֶל אֹהֶרֶן (priestly share in the sin offering); 7:22–23 (fat and blood consumption); 7:28–29 (well-being offering); 12:1–2 (purity rules for women after birth); 23:23–24 (blast of trumpets); 23:33–34 (Feast of Booths); Num 9:9–10 (special rules for Passover under the conditions of impurity and on the road). Cf. also Num 6:23: דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר; 27:6: וְאֵל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תְּדַבֵּר לֵאמֹר. Exod 12:3 (Passover) also counts among these cases since the specification of the date is aimed at the future and not only at the concrete implementation in vv. 21–39. On Lev 21 (purity rules for the priests), cf. note 148.

¹⁴⁷ Only in Lev 23:44 with a summary notice for all feast times. Again, on Lev 21, cf. note 148.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Lev 1:1–2; 17:1–2; 18:1–2; 19:1–2; 22:17–18; 23:1–2, 9–10; 25:1–2; 27:1–2; Num 5:11–12; 6:1–2; 15:1–2, 16–17, 37–38; 33:50–51; 35:9–10, cf. also Num 18:25: וְאֵל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם, and 28:1; 34:1: וְאֵל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם. A special case is Lev 21:1–2: וְאֵל אֹהֶרֶן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם; 21:16–17: דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר (purity regulations for the priests). Here, the transmission of the divine precept by Moses is explicitly stated in Lev 21:24. The immediate observance and implementation of the precept is ad hoc constitutive and relevant to salvation for Israel. Another exception is Num 8:1–2: דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר (service to the lampstand) with the implementation in 8:3.

request to Moses for a one-time situational command. Different from Num 25:16–18,¹⁴⁹ Moses' delivery of the command to the Israelites is explicitly stated in Num 16:26, as is its execution in Num 16:27. Thus, while Num 16:23–24 is an exception, it is not entirely comparable to the case in Num 25:16.

In contrast, speech requests that respond to a concrete situation narrated in the text and deliver a one-time command, are more likely to use the phrase **דבר אל בני ישראל** or the construction **אמר אל x**. These are usually followed by a concrete command in the form of an imperative or a jussive to be executed once, the execution of which is also reported in the following text.¹⁵⁰

Against the background of these results, the assessment of the possible smoothening character of the text plus in Num 25:16 is dependent on the interpretation of the following divine command in Num 25:17–18:

<p>“17: Press the Midianites (in a hostile way) and smite them 18: for they are pressing you (in a hostile way) with their guile, (with) which they beguiled you in the matter of Pe’or and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a/the chieftain of Midian, their sister, who was slain on the day of the plague in the matter of Pe’or.”</p>	<p>17 צרור את המדינים והכיתם אותם: 18 כי צררים הם לכם בנכליהם אשר נכלו לכם על דבר פעור ועל דבר כזבי בת נשיא מדין אחתם המכה ביום המגפה על דבר פעור:</p>
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This divine command abruptly concludes Num 25's complicated narrative threads. It is difficult to see how it relates to the rest of the chapter. In terms of composition, the verses point to the war against Midian in Num 31. With this junction as the literary context for Num 25:16–18, Num 31 can be understood as the execution of the command. This would support reading Num 25:16–18 as a one-time situative command. However, the literary-historical relationship between the two chapters is difficult to assess because Num 31 begins with a renewed and different call for vengeance on Midian that is addressed to Moses alone (vv. 1–2). Moses immediately executes this command, who calls the Israelites for vengeance, enlists the fighters, and sends them to war (vv. 3–6). If the command in

¹⁴⁹ Num 31:3 cannot be understood as an execution of the speech command, since, with the root **נקם**, Moses' speech is clearly related to the preceding divine speech in Num 31:1–2.

¹⁵⁰ For **דבר אל בני ישראל**, cf. Exod 14:1–2, 15; 16:12; 25:1–2 (the execution is narrated in Ex 35–40); Lev 16:1–2; **דבר אל אהרן אחיך**; Num 17:1–2; **דבר אל אהרן הכהן**; 17:16–17. Only in Num 5:6 is this not the case, but see note 131 on the missing **לאמר**; another exception is Num 19:1–2. For **אמר אל x**, cf. Exod 7:19; 8:1, 12; 16:9; 33:5. The command to speak in Num 14:28, however, is not followed by an explicit execution.

Num 25:16–18 was originally composed without Num 31 in the context, it could also be understood as a general rule for Israel's future relations with Midian. Even without these literary-historical presuppositions and with Num 31 in the context, the same interpretation of Num 25:16–18 as general rule is possible. Then, Num 25:16–18 would provide a general rule and a second concrete call could be found in Num 31:1–3.¹⁵¹ Thus, the nature of the command in Num 25:16–18 is difficult to discern, and any decision must be made considering literary-historical presuppositions and consequences.

This situation complicates the evaluation of the text plus. If the command is understood as a one-time situative command to the Israelites to be delivered by Moses, the missing speech request and its execution in MT SP is unusual and can be judged a more difficult text,¹⁵² which could have triggered the addition of **דבר אל בני ישראל לאמר**. Conversely, the text of the plus is uncommon for speech requests preceding one-time situative commands and, in this respect, constitutes a difficult text, too – or it intensifies the possibility to read the command as a general rule, which can be seen as an easier reading in the context under certain presuppositions. Thus, the *lectio difficilior* is not easy to discern.

At this point, several text-critical decision aids coincide in opposite ways. On the one hand, the *lectio brevior potior* speaks in favor of MT SP. At the same time, it is impossible to say which reading is the more difficult one (*lectio difficilior potior*). Additionally, a decision on whether a harmonization is involved cannot be made without certain presuppositions and without including literary-historical reasoning. Finally, the evidence of the double **לאמר** can support both an argument for the assumption of a haplography and the assumption of *Fortschreibung* by “*Wiederaufnahme*.” The latter could have occurred at several points in the (literary) history of the text. In sum, the question of the valuation of the text plus as a textual or literary variant and the explanation of its genesis cannot be clearly answered in Num 25:16. Moreover, the case impressingly shows that an evaluation by purely textual criteria runs blindly; the discussion of the evidence should, in any event, include literary criteria and logics.

¹⁵¹ For the history of research, a detailed discussion of the problem, and a hypothesis on the literary history of the chapters cf. Schäfers, *Textentstehung*.

¹⁵² On the reading of MT (**צורר**) vs. SP (**צרר**) LXX (**Ἐχθραίνετε**) at the beginning of v. 17, the puzzling infinitive absolute in MT can also be valued as a slight harmonization since the speech is addressed to Moses and is thus not expected to begin with an imperative plural.

- b) Additional (Parts of a) Formula and Formulaic Language: Num 30:9; 31:48; 35:21

Three further pluses concern variations of formulae (Num 30:9; 35:21) or formulaic language (Num 31:48) through additional elements.

Num 30:9:

MT: ואם ביום שמע אישה יניא אותה והפר את־נדרה אשר עליה ואת מבטא שפתיה אשר אסרה על־נפשה ויהיה יסלח־לה:

SP: ואם ביום שמע אישה ינא אתה והפר את נדריה אשר עליה אן מבטא שפתיה אשר אסרה על נפשה ויהיה יסלח לה:

4QNum^b:¹⁵³ וא]ם ביום שמוע אישה יניא אותה והפר את [כול נדריה ואסריה]

LXX: ἐὰν δὲ ἀναγεύων ἀνανεύσῃ ὁ ἀνήρ αὐτῆς, ἢ ἂν ἡμέρα ἀκούσῃ, πᾶσαι αἱ εὐχαὶ αὐτῆς καὶ οἱ ὀρισμοὶ αὐτῆς, οὓς ὥρίσατο κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτῆς, οὐ μενοῦσιν, ὅτι ὁ ἀνὴρ ἀνένευσεν ἀπ' αὐτῆς, καὶ κύριος καθαριεῖ αὐτήν.

In Num 30:9, 4QNum^b and LXX attest the additional words כול and ואסריה (“her bindings/vows”). As Jastram mentions, this is a special case because the vow formula varies in all instances (Num 30:5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 15), providing different patterns in all witnesses, as demonstrated in Table 3.

אסריה	כל	אז	כל נדריה או אז	Sam M ^{30:15}
אסריה	וכל	כל	נדריה	Sam G ^{30:12}
אסרים	וכל	כל	נדריה	G ^{30:5}
אסר	וכל	כל	נדריה	M ^{30:5, 12}
ואסריה		כל	נדריה	Q Sam M ^{30:6} , Q Sam G ^{30:8} , Q G ^{30:9} , Sam ^{30:5}
ואסרים		כל	נדריה	G ^{30:6, 15}
ואסריה			נדריה	M ^{30:8} Q ^{ext}
ואסרה			נדריה	M ^{30:8} Ketib
			נדריה	אז Sam M ^{30:9}

Table 3: Overview of the Variation in the Formulaic Listing of the Vows in Num 30¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Only a part of the verse is preserved because it is placed at the bottom of a column and the beginning of the next one is not extant.

¹⁵⁴ The chart is taken from Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 170. The text for Num 30,9^{MT} must be corrected to the Sg. נדרה.

Therefore, Jastram considers that there might indeed have been an original form of the vow formula, even though it remains partly elusive: While it cannot be reconstructed in the case of כּוֹל, he considers the text in MT and SP to be the more original for ואסריה and the plus to be a harmonization, because the vows are always mentioned together.¹⁵⁵ However, it is not entirely comprehensible why both pluses are evaluated separately and are said to have entered the text one after the other. Either a general volatility of the formulaic phrase is to be assumed, which is what the above list suggests,¹⁵⁶ or both pluses are to be attributed to harmonization. Since LXX also has two unique pluses that use formulations comparable to vv. 7, 13,¹⁵⁷ a multi-staged phenomenon of harmonization can also be expected here.

Other than Num 30:9; 35:21, Num 31:48 displays narrative text in terms of genre, but the mentioning of the leaders of the military units has a formulaic character, especially in the second plus, which is contained only in 4QNum^b.

Num 31:48:

MT: וַיִּקְרְבוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הַפְּקָדִים אֲשֶׁר לְאַלְפֵי הַצִּבָּא שְׁרֵי הָאֲלָפִים וְשְׂרֵי הַמֵּאוֹת:

SP: ויקרבו אל משה הפקדים אשר לאלפי הצבא שרי האלפים ושרי המאות:

4QNum^b: וַיִּקְרְבוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה כּוֹל הַפְּקָדִים אֲשֶׁר לְאַלְפֵי הַצִּבָּא שְׁרֵי הָאֲלָפִים וְשְׂרֵי הַמֵּאוֹת הַבָּאִים [מִצִּבָּא] הַמִּלְחָמָה

LXX: Καὶ προσῆλθον πρὸς Μωσὴν πάντες οἱ καθεσταμένοι εἰς τὰς χιλιαρχίας τῆς δυνάμεως, χιλιάρχοι καὶ ἑκατόνταρχοι,

In this case, an additional כּוֹל alone would not be particularly astonishing,¹⁵⁸ but a connection with the second plus documented only in 4QNum^b also seems quite likely. If “all” leaders of the army must come to Moses, the further detail “those who came back from the war” (הַבָּאִים מִצִּבָּא הַמִּלְחָמָה) seems to aim at an even more precise indication of the persons involved. Jastram reconstructs the text according to Num 31:14 because it offers the closest parallel and fits into the available space.¹⁵⁹ So, a text-historically multi-staged phenomenon of harmonization or alignment could very likely be documented here. A trigger for a haplography cannot be

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 170–71.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. also the evidence for Num 28:14a where a similar variability in the listing of the drink-offerings can be observed in the versions; on that case see also note 100.

¹⁵⁷ For comments, see Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 192.

¹⁵⁸ Cf., e.g., the text plus in 4QNum^b 11:32 or the text minus in Num 25:4^{LXX}.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 173.

recognized in either case. However, as in other cases, it is not immediately obvious why a scribe should have considered this adjustment necessary. It should not be forgotten that such a small text plus could also be understood as a hint to a former non-intentional variability in the formulation of the text. The rule “every text plus that exhibits text that is also documented elsewhere in the context must be considered a harmonization and therefore necessarily secondary” should not be set absolute too hastily.

In Num 35:21, the text plus consists of the coined formula *מות יומת הרצח* (“the murderer must certainly be killed”) in a legislative text.

Num 35:21:

MT: או באיבה הקהו בידו וימת מות יומת המכה רצח הוא גאל הדם ימית את הרצח בפנעו בו:

SP: או באיבה הכהו בידו וימת מות יומת המכה רצח הוא גאל הדם ימית את הרצח בפנעו בו:

4QNum^b: [או ב]אבה הכהו ביד[ו וימות מות יומת] ת[המכה רוצח הוא] מות יומת הרוצח גואל הדם[ה] ימית את הרוצח[ה] בפנעו בו

LXX: ἢ διὰ μῆριν ἐπάταξεν αὐτὸν τῇ χειρὶ, καὶ ἀποθάνῃ, θανάτῳ θανατούσθω ὁ πατάξας, φονευτῆς ἐστίν· θανάτῳ θανατούσθω ὁ φονεύων· ὁ ἀγχοιστεύων τὸ αἷμα ἀποκτενεῖ τὸν φονεύσαντα ἐν τῷ συναντῆσαι αὐτῷ.

Here too, a source for possible harmonization can be identified (Num 35:16, 17, 18), but the longer text seems more difficult at first sight. In v. 21a it is already stated that the murderer must be killed: *מות יומת הוא המכה רצח* (“the one who smote must certainly be killed, he is a murderer”) before the additional text adds again *מות יומת הרצח* (“the murderer must certainly be killed”). No secondary loss of text due to haplography is well conceivable. Tov, therefore, considers the plus to be “tautological,”¹⁶¹ but still a harmonization because it can be observed for other cases that harmonization did not produce a “better” text.¹⁶² Jastram refers to the somewhat erratic plus, which can be found in 4QNum^b 35:18 (*מות המ[כה] יומת*). He suspects a merging of different formulations in both cases, which is regarded as secondary.¹⁶³ The pragmatics of the plus can perhaps be illuminated a little more by considering the structure of vv. 16–18. Here, it is first stated separately in each case that a certain deed makes

¹⁶⁰ 4QNum^b has a unique text plus here.

¹⁶¹ Tov, “Textual Harmonization,” 44.

¹⁶² Cf. Tov, “Textual Harmonization,” 44, see also idem, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 188.

¹⁶³ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 178–79.

someone a murderer (רצח הוא) before it is confirmed that the murderer must be killed in any case (מות יומת הרצח). Since in the context of asylum cities it is important to distinguish without doubt a murderer to be killed from a manslayer who is eligible for asylum, it might have seemed necessary to insert the killing formula here in the same form as in the other cases. In Hebrew, both the manslayer and the murderer are referred to as רצח and only additional details distinguish the legal status.¹⁶⁴ Here, the duplication of content would have been accepted in favor of the formal iteration. Again, a variability in the placement of formulaic phrases may also explain the text plus, as already observed in Num 30:9 and also documented in Num 28:14.

However, it is noteworthy that including the plus into a hypothetical older text would result in situation that, according to the rules of literary criticism, would necessitate assuming a literary-historical addition in vv. 20–21 even more urgently than was already discussed in research on this passage anyway.¹⁶⁵ While vv. 16–18 enumerate three possible cases of intentional homicide, each of which ends with the statement “he is a murderer, the murderer must certainly be killed” (רצח הוא מות יומת הרצח), a first conclusion already follows in v. 19, which states the resulting task of the blood avenger: “The blood avenger, he shall kill the murderer; when he meets him, he shall kill him” (גאל הדם הוא ימית את הרצח בפגעו). In contrast, the three cases of intentional killing listed in vv. 20–21a fall slightly behind. Structurally, they differ from the enumeration in vv. 16–18, because they do not conclude each individual offense with the formula (רצח הוא מות יומת הרצח). In v. 21b then follows once again the description of the task of the blood avenger, which is somewhat shorter than the phrase mentioned above in v. 19: “The blood avenger shall kill the murderer when he meets him” (גאל הדם ימית את). In 4QNum^b, there is a unique plus at this point. With the additional הוא, it displays a text that is even more similar to v. 19 in terms of structure: גואל הדם [הוא] ימית את הרצח [פגעו בו]. This plus can, of course, also be explained as harmonizing with v. 19.¹⁶⁶ However, if a literary critic were to find the longer text with the plus in v. 21a in MT resp. his or her reconstructed “oldest” text, it would necessitate assuming an addition or *Fortschreibung* of the provisions in vv. 20–21 by means of “*Wiederaufnahme*.” The formally different presentation of the three cases in vv. 20–21aa and the duplication of the killing formula

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Schmidt, “Leviten- und Asylstädte,” 104–5.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Seebass, *Numeri* 22,2–36,13, 436–37.

¹⁶⁶ So does Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 179.

(v. 18b, 21a[incl. plus]) together with the subsequently repeated mention of the blood avenging task (v. 19a–b₁, 21b) would strongly speak for this hypothesis, as Table 4 also illustrates.

v. 18b: <u>מֹת יוֹמֵת הָרָצָח:</u>	v. 18b: <u>The murderer must certainly be killed.</u>
v. 19: <u>גָּאֵל הַדָּם הוּא יָמִית אֶת הָרָצָח בִּפְגָּעוֹ בֶּן הוּא יִמְתְּנוּ:</u>	v. 19: <u>The blood avenger shall kill the murderer; when he meets him, he shall kill him.</u>
v. 20: <u>וְאִם בִּשְׂנְאָה יִהְיֶה אוֹ הִשְׁלִיךְ עָלָיו בְּצַדִּיָּה וְיָמָת:</u>	v. 20: <u>If he pushes him out of hatred, or throws something at him with malicious intent, and he dies, v. 21: or he smites him in hostility with his hand, and he dies, then he who has smitten must be killed, he is a murderer.</u>
v. 21: <u>אוֹ בְּאִיבָה הִכְהוּ בִידּוֹ וְיָמָת מוֹת יוֹמֵת הַמָּכָה רָצָח הוּא</u>	<u>The murderer must certainly be killed. The blood avenger[, he] shall kill the murderer when he meets him.</u>

Table 4: Illustration of Doubled Passages in the Longer Text of Num 35:18b–21 in 4QNum^b and LXX

Therefore, it is of great importance to be able to identify secondary harmonization as such without doubt, since an older longer text would influence the results in literary criticism.¹⁶⁷

A further group of cases shows additional content-relevant elements in a narrative passage or a direct speech that can also be found in other verses in the closer context.

- c) Additional Content with Reference to the Closer Context: Num 22:11(2×); 22:18; 23:3; 32:30

In Num 22:11 two text pluses appear in Balaam's rendition of Balak's speech, whose text can also be found in Balak's speech delivered by his messengers in v. 5 (וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב מִמְּלִי) and v. 6 (מִן הָאֲרָץ). Therefore, the assumption of a harmonizing alignment of the speech and the respective

¹⁶⁷ The same applies, for example, to the LXX-plus in Num 31:8, where the additional τοῖς τραυματίαις αὐτῶν at the end of the verse seems to be completely unmotivated as a harmonizing plus. On the contrary, an older longer text would let appear the mention of the names of the five kings of Midian as well as of Balaam as a supplement that can be discriminated by literary-critical means taking into account the doubled mention of the slain of Midian as indicating an insertion by "Wiederaufnahme," cf. Robker, *Balaam*, 211–12.

speech report suggests itself. Jastram and Tov also come to this conclusion.¹⁶⁸ However, slight triggers for a haplography due to *homoioarcton* can be identified (from והואה ועתה and from וגרשתיהו to ויאמר).

Num 22:11:

MT: הנה העם היצא ממצרים ויכס את־עין הארץ עתה לכה קבה־לי אתו אולי אוכל להלחם בו וגרשתיו:

SP: הו עם יצא ממצרים ויכס את עין הארץ ועתה לכה קבה לי אתו אולי אוכל להלחם בו וגרשתיו:

4QNum^b: הנה עם יצא ממצרים ויכס את עין הארץ והואה יושב ממולי ועתה לכה קוב[ה לי] אותו אולי אוכל[ל] להלחם בו וגרשתיהו[ן מן הארץ]

LXX: Ἰδοὺ λαὸς ἐξεληλύθειν ἐξ Αἰγύπτου, καὶ ἰδοὺ κεκάλυπεν¹⁶⁹ τὴν ὄψιν τῆς γῆς, καὶ οὗτος ἐγκάθεται ἐχόμενός μου· καὶ νῦν δεῦρο ἄρ᾽ αἰ μοι αὐτόν, εἰ ἄρα δυνήσομαι πατάξαι αὐτόν καὶ ἐκβαλὼν αὐτόν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς.

In addition, there are further text pluses and variants with other matching patterns between the versions in Num 22:11 that seem to be associated with the two cases mentioned. καὶ ἰδοὺ, which is used only in LXX, can be evaluated as a further alignment with v. 5 (הנה כסה).¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, 4QNum^b LXX SP read הנה עם יצא (“Behold, a people has come out”) at the beginning of the verse, while MT – unlike in v. 5 (הנה עם) – attests a definite participle construction: הנה העם היצא (“Behold, the people that has come out”). MT has not only the longer but also the more difficult text, as evidenced by the following ויכס. Jastram considers the shorter reading of 4QNum^b LXX SP to be original.¹⁷¹ For the genesis of the reading in MT, he offers possible explanations, which are plausible. A simple dittography of the *He* at the end of הנה could have led to the

¹⁶⁸ See Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 139; Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 185, 191. Here again, as in the case of Num 20:10, the outcomes of differing guiding presuppositions are traceable when comparing these judgements with the reasoning of Robker, *Balaam*, 76. He sees the first plus as an attestation of an older reading because of its attestation in 4QNum^b: “While it might be tempting to ignore this as a late harmonization during the course of reception history, it is attested in 4QNum^b, adding credence to its representing the older reading. It will be regarded as such here. It was presumably removed in the Hebrew traditions of M and Smr as redundant.”

¹⁶⁹ Wevers, *Notes*, 366, has opted for reading ἐκάλυπεν with largest part of the mss (except for the *d*, *t*, *n* group and Ms 527 with κατεκάλυπεν, cf. Num 22:5) and not κεκάλυπεν with LXX^B and Ms 71.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 191; Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 139. Cf. also note 169 for the change to aorist.

¹⁷¹ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 138, see also Rösel, “Textüberlieferung,” 225.

definite article in **העם**. Alternatively, the additional *He* could have resulted from a mistaken word division of a too narrowly written **הנהעם** that would have been divided into **הן העם** in the first step, and then would have been changed to the more common spelling **הנה העם**. Finally, the finite form **יצא** would have been understood as an attributive participle and would have been changed into a definite form to fit the (now) definite **העם**.¹⁷²

The example of Num 22:11 shows, as already noticed in Num 30:9; 31:48; 35:21, that the text pluses seem to be integrated into a dense network of successive chains of harmonization of smaller text elements. Their directions are not always unambiguous to discern, and their connection and diachronic genesis have not yet been sufficiently researched in terms of textual history.

A similar case can be found in Num 22:18 in Balaam's speech to Balak's messengers. 4QNum^b and LXX share a text plus at the end of the verse that corresponds to Balaam's recapitulation of his speech to the messengers in the conversation with Balak in Num 24:13. The plus can therefore be evaluated as harmonization.¹⁷³ Additionally, LXX has a unique variant (τοῖς ἄρχουσιν) that can also be evaluated as harmonizing with Num 22:13 (and possibly 22:35). The **עבדי בלק**, which are mentioned only here in Num 22–24, are changed into the **שרי בלק**, on the basis of Num 22:13–17 (and possibly 22:35).¹⁷⁴

Num 22:18:

- MT: וַיַּעַן בַּלְעָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־עַבְדֵי בַלַּק אִם־יִתֶּן־לִי בַלַּק מְלֹא בֵיתוֹ כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לֹא אוֹכֵל לַעֲבֹד אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי לַעֲשׂוֹת קְטָנָה אוֹ גְדוֹלָה:
- SP: וַיַּעַן בַּלְעָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל עַבְדֵי בַלַּק אִם יתֵן לִי בַלַּק מְלֹא בֵיתוֹ כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לֹא אוֹכֵל לַעֲבֹד אֶת פִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי לַעֲשׂוֹת קְטָנָה אוֹ גְדוֹלָה:
- 4QNum^b: וַיַּעַן בַּלְעָם וַיֹּאמֶר [אֶל־עַבְדֵי בַלַּק אִם יתֵן לִי] בַּלַּק מְלֹא[א] [בֵיתוֹ] כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב [לֹא] אוֹכֵל לַעֲבֹד אֶת פִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי לַעֲשׂוֹת קְטָנָה אוֹ גְדוֹלָה [ב]ל[בִּין]
- LXX: καὶ ἀπεκρίθη Βαλαάμ καὶ εἶπεν τοῖς ἄρχουσιν Βαλάκ Ἐὰν δῶ μοι Βαλάκ πλήρη τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ ἀργυρίου καὶ χρυσίου, οὐ δυνήσομαι παραβῆναι τὸ ῥῆμα κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτὸ μικρὸν ἢ μέγα ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ μου.

¹⁷² Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 138–39.

¹⁷³ Cf. Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 191 [“v. 13” has to be corrected into “24:13;” KMS]; Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 143, who reconstructs the preposition ב with LXX, which differs from 24:13 MT, but also considers it possible that original מ was misread as ב.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 191 [“Num 24:13” has to be corrected into “v. 13;” KMS].

The last two pluses in the group “Additional content related to the closer context” are more extensive than the examples discussed so far as they comprise more than one sentence, and they both display different characteristics.

Num 23:3 contains an extensive plus with an execution notice on Balaam’s speech from the first part of the verse: “And Balaam said to Balak, ‘Stand by your burnt offering. But I will go, perhaps YHWH will let me meet him, and what he lets me see, I will tell you.’ [*And he went.*] *And Balak stood beside his burnt offering. And Balaam met God. And he walked upon a bare height.*”

Num 23:3:

- MT: וַיֹּאמֶר בַּלְעָם לְבָלָק הַתִּיִצֵּב עַל־עֹלְתֶךָ וְאָלַכְהָ אוֹלִי יִקְרָה יְהוָה לְקִרְאָתִי וְדָבַר מִה־יִּרְאָנִי וְהִגַּדְתִּי לְךָ וְיִלְךָ שְׁפִי:
- SP: וַיֹּאמֶר בַּלְעָם אֶל בָּלָק הַתִּיִצֵּב עַל־עֹלְתֶיךָ וְאָלַכְהָ אוֹלִי יִקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְקִרְאָתִי וְדָבַר מִה־יִּרְאָנִי וְהִגַּדְתִּי לְךָ וְיִלְךָ שְׁפִי:
- 4QNum^b: [וַיֹּאמֶר בַּלְעָם אֶל בָּלָק הַתִּיִצֵּב עַל־עֹלְתֶיךָ וְאָלַכְהָ וְאֶנֹּכִי אֲלֶיךָ אוֹלִי יִקְרָה אֱלֹהִים לְקִרְאָתִי וְדָבַר מִה־יִּרְאָנִי וְהִגַּדְתִּי לְךָ] וְיִלְךָ וְיִתִּיצֵב בָּלָק עַל־עֹלְתוֹ וְבַלְעָם [נִקְרָה אֶל אֱלֹהִים וְיִלְךָ שְׁפִי]
- LXX: καὶ εἶπεν Βαλαάμ πρὸς Βαλάκ Παράστηθι ἐπὶ τῆς θυσίας σου, καὶ πορεύσομαι, εἴ μοι φανεῖται ὁ θεὸς ἐν συναντήσῃ, καὶ ῥῆμα, ὃ ἂν μοι δείξῃ, ἀναγγελῶ σοι. καὶ παρέστη Βαλάκ ἐπὶ τῆς θυσίας αὐτοῦ, καὶ Βαλαάμ ἐπορεύθη ἐπερωτῆσαι τὸν θεὸν καὶ ἐπορεύθη εὐθεῖαν.

The Greek text differs somewhat from the extant and the reconstructed text of the plus in 4QNum^b. First, it is noticeable that ἐπορεύθη ἐπερωτῆσαι is the equivalent of the reconstructed נִקְרָה. Jastram points out that a comparable equivalence also occurs in Num 23:15 where the Greek text reads ἐγὼ δὲ πορεύσομαι ἐπερωτῆσαι in the place of וְאֶנֹכִי אֲקָרָה.¹⁷⁵ This can be explained as a translation choice that seeks to avoid the impression of an overly direct encounter between God and Balaam for theological reasons, but we cannot be sure that there was no וְיִלְךָ in the *Vorlage*. εὐθεῖαν for the difficult שְׁפִי can be explained as a translation choice, too.¹⁷⁶ The missing equivalent for the first וְיִלְךָ, however, must be assessed as a variant proper. Jastram supposes that it might have been lost due to *homoioarcton* with וְיִתִּיצֵב in the Hebrew *Vorlage* or by haplography in the Greek text (καὶ [ἐπορεύθη καὶ] παρέστη). This corruption in the

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Jastram, “Text,” 185, followed by Rösel, “Textüberlieferung,” 216.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Rösel and Schlund, “Arthmoi,” 486; Jastram, “Text,” 185, esp. note 12 with reference to Jer 3:2.

Greek text or its *Vorlage* would then have prevented an extensive haplography due to the double וילך at the beginning and the end of the verse, as it most likely happened in MT and SP. According to Jastram, this same opportunity for a haplography in MT SP, which can explain their shorter text, is a major indication that the text plus must be considered “original.”¹⁷⁷ It must be pointed out, however, that precisely this double וילך can also be evaluated as an indication for a literary *Fortschreibung* by means of “*Wiederaufnahme*,” as already seen for the analogue cases in Num 22:17; 25:16; 36:1. This *Fortschreibung*, of course, does not have to have occurred on the level of a later harmonization in the *Vorlage* of LXX and 4QNum^b, but could also have occurred earlier in the literary history and would then have resulted in a text loss later on, all the more so since the subject of the first וילך seems ambiguous, as it is unclear whether Balaam or Balak “goes.” However, Tov considers the plus a secondary harmonization, because it uses the same technique as in the pre-Samaritan text pluses in Exod 7–11, namely the alignment of command and execution.¹⁷⁸ Without further ado, the decision on the textual character of Num 23:3 cannot be made.

There is one more text plus in Num 23:3 in 4QNum^b (ואנוכי אלך) against MT SP (ואלכה). The Greek text tradition is somewhat divided in this case with LXX^{B FM'} O-29-707 f 321^{mg}-344^{mg} x⁻⁵²⁷ 392 z 59 799¹⁷⁹ reading the shorter καὶ πορεύσονται, while LXX^{A V} and the rest of the mss, especially *b*, *d t n* and the Catena group, read the longer ἐγὼ δὲ πορεύσονται. In light of the attestation of וואנוכי אלך in 4QNum^b, Wevers has reconsidered his critical text in the Göttingen Septuagint edition, in which he followed LXX^B, and has voted for ἐγὼ δὲ instead of the simple καὶ as the more original reading of the Greek text.¹⁸⁰ Rösel and Jastram consider the reading of 4QNum^b and LXX-Mss a harmonization with v. 15 (ואנוכי אקרה).¹⁸¹ This additional evidence slightly increases the probability of a secondary plus in the rest of the verse as well. As 4QNum^b reads יקרה with MT against SP LXX, it must be kept in mind, however, that the textual

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 147–48; idem, “Text,” 186. See also Rösel, “Textüberlieferung,” 216, with reference to the preceding לכה/לך, which may have contributed to an *aberratio oculi*.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 191–92, without reference to 4QNum^b, now included in the list in idem, “Palestinian Source,” 34 note 73; see also Zahn, “Samaritan Pentateuch,” 297–98, who draws parallels to the pragmatics of supplementation in the Lucianic/Antiochene texts and refers to 1 Sam 9:3.

¹⁷⁹ See also the Latin witness of 100 and Aeth Bo^B Sa Syh.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Wevers, *Notes*, 385.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Rösel, “Textüberlieferung,” 217. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 146, is a little more cautious, since he also sees an opportunity for text loss due to *homoioarcton*: וואנוכי א[לך].

situation in Num 23:3–4 is complex, with different diverging patterns of agreement between the versions.¹⁸²

The evaluation of another variant in Num 23:3 shows how contingent such decisions are, depending on the general presuppositions about the textual character of the versions: 4QNum^b LXX SP read אלהים against MT יהוה. While the attestation of אלהים in all three versions for Rösel is a reason to assume the originality of the reading,¹⁸³ it is precisely this pattern that gives reason for Tov to classify the reading as secondary harmonization, as he analyzes the evidence of the versions against the background of his two-block hypothesis.¹⁸⁴

The last case of the variant pattern in Num 32:30, which is now being examined, is just as extensive as the plus in Numbers 23:3, but the case is slightly different in that no clear textual basis and no sure reason for possible harmonization can be identified. Nor is there any discernible trigger for text omission. In 4QNum^b only a few letters are preserved, but נשיהם (“their wives”) is clearly legible. This word is missing in MT and SP, so its documentation in 4QNum^b is very revealing. From the column height and line length in col. XXVIII it can be seen that 4QNum^b must have had more text than MT and SP. Jastram has therefore reconstructed the verse according to LXX.¹⁸⁵ Certainly, the text in 4QNum^b may have been different from MT SP as well as from LXX. However, given the other exclusive matches, the probability of an identical or comparable text in LXX and 4QNum^b is very high.

Num 32:30:

MT: וְאִם-לֹא יַעֲבְרוּ חִלּוּצִים אִתְּכֶם וְנֶאֱחָזוּ בְּתִכְכֶּם בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן:

SP: וְאִם לֹא יַעֲבְרוּ חִלּוּצִים אִתְּכֶם וְנֶאֱחָזוּ בְּתִכְכֶּם בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן:

4QNum^b: ¹⁸⁶וְאִם לֹא יַעֲבְרוּ חִלּוּצִים אִתְּכֶם וְנֶאֱחָזוּ בְּתִכְכֶּם בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְהַעֲבִירוּ
¹⁸⁷אֶת-טַפָּם וְאֶת נְשֵׂיהֶם וְאֶת מְקִנֵיהֶם לְפָנֶיכֶם אֶל אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְנֶאֱחָזוּ

¹⁸² See on that below notes 204 and 205.

¹⁸³ Cf. Rösel, “Textüberlieferung,” 217: “Während die G im Bereich der Gottesnamen offenbar eine eigene Übersetzungsstrategie verfolgte, sind im Smr und 4QNum^b nur wenige Auffälligkeiten zu beobachten [...]. Daher scheint mir in 23,3 die Lesung אלהים die besser bezeugte und daher gegenüber dem MT vorzuziehende zu sein.” Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 147, is a bit more cautious and votes for “probably original” for the same reasons.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 195.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 175–77; idem, “Text,” 178–79.

¹⁸⁶ Instead of reconstructing καὶ διαβύβασετε as וְהַעֲבִירוּ (waw + imperative), Jastram has later opted for Wever’s reconstruction וְהַעֲבַרְתֶּם (w^c-qatal/consecutive perfect; in: Wevers, *Notes*, 543 note 32), because it better fits the w^c-qatal וְנֶאֱחָזוּ at the end of v. 29, cf. Jastram, review of *Notes on the Greek Text of Numbers* (by Wevers), 66.

¹⁸⁷ The reconstruction in Jastram, “4QNum^b,” gives the text only up to here, since lines 13–16 are missing in col. XXVIII. In idem, “Text,” 179, the entire verse is reconstructed and ends with וְנֶאֱחָזוּ בְּתִכְכֶּם בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן at the beginning of line 13.

4QLev–Num^a: וְאֵם לֹא יַעֲבְרוּ חֲלוּצִים אִתְּכֶם וְנֶאֱחָזוּ בַתְּכֶם] **בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן**
 LXX: ἐὰν δὲ μὴ διαβῶσιν ἐνωπλισμένοι μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν
 πόλεμον ἔναντι κυρίου, καὶ διαβιβάσετε τὴν ἀποσκευὴν
 αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας αὐτῶν καὶ τὰ κτήνη αὐτῶν πρότερα
 ὑμῶν εἰς γῆν Χανάαν, καὶ συγκατακληρονομηθήσονται ἐν
 ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ γῇ Χανάαν.

The plus contains an additional provision in Moses’ speech vv. 28–30, in which he announces to Eleazar, Joshua, and the heads of the tribal fathers’ houses the conditions for Reuben’s and Gad’s inheritance east of the Jordan:

29: If the Gadites and Reubenites cross the Jordan with you, each armed for battle before YHWH, and the land is subdued before you, you shall give them the land of Gilead as their property. 30: But if they don’t cross armed with you *to battle before YHWH, you shall bring their children, and their wives, and their cattle before you*, and they shall inherit among you the land of Canaan.

Unlike the previous examples, there is no trigger for an accidental text loss during transmission here. Moreover, a textual source for a possible harmonizing insertion cannot be clearly determined. The phrase **חֲלוּצִים יְהוּה** (“equipped to fight with you before YHWH”) appears in various variations in Num 32:17, 20, 21, 29, 32, but is never the same. For Jastram, this is a reason to evaluate the plus as “original” and to assume an *aberratio oculi*, which led to a line jump in the later transmission of the text.¹⁸⁸ Tov has not included the case in his earlier lists of harmonizations in 4QNum^b. He mentions it as a literary variant in his handbook, but he now lists the case as harmonization.¹⁸⁹

The *raison d’être* of the text plus for Jastram lies in v. 5, in the request of the Gadites and Reubenites to stay east of the Jordan: “Do not lead us across the Jordan/do not make us cross the Jordan (**אַל תַּעֲבִרְנוּ אֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן**).” Jastram concludes that it is reasonable to assume that the provisions stipulated by Moses mention not only the consequence of fulfilling the obligation to assist in the conquest of the land – East Jordanian land ownership (v. 29) – but also that of not fulfilling the obligation. In addition to the promised inheritance in Canaan, this would include a forced crossing of the Jordan in the latter case (v. 30): “What they were seeking to avoid was to be forced to cross the Jordan into Canaan. It would be fitting, then,

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 175–77; idem, “Text,” 178–80.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. the lists in Tov, “Samaritan Pentateuch,” 398; idem, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 188; idem, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 322; and now idem, “Palestinian Source,” 34 note 73.

that the conditions *originally laid by Moses* included the stipulation that the two and a half tribes would be forced to cross the Jordan into Canaan if they did not fulfill their obligations.”¹⁹⁰ However, this does not explain why the plus emphasizes that in the event of non-compliance with the obligation, *the children, the wives, and the herd property* of the Gadites and Reubenites are to be brought across the Jordan by the rest of the Israelites. The families and the livestock are not discussed in v. 5, but are the subject of the assurances articulated by the Gadites and Reubenites in vv. 16–19, 25–27. They want to build cities for their children (טף) and pens for their cattle (מקנה; κτήνη) *by now* and then to cross over with the Israelites for battle (cf. vv. 16–17, [24 וצאן]). Moses agrees with this wish in v. 24: “Build cities for your families (טף) and hurdles for your sheep (צאן; κτήνη), and do what your mouth has spoken.” In vv. 25–27, the petitioners assure once again that they will comply with the obligation: “25b: Your servants will do what my lord commands. 26: Our children (טף), our women (נשים), our herds (מקנה),¹⁹¹ and all our livestock¹⁹² will stay there in the cities of Gilead. 27: But your servants will cross over to the battle, each one armed for war before YHWH, as my Lord says.” The “wives/women” are mentioned only here in MT, SP, and LXX. Therefore, the phrase *את טפם ואת נשיהם ואת מקניהם* from the text plus has its closest equivalent in v. 26. The closest, but certainly not literal, parallel to the first part of the plus (*למלחמה לפני יהוה*) can be found in v. 29: *כל חלוץ למלחמה לפני יהוה*. The plus is thus very closely connected with the immediate context in terms of content and language, but, at the same time, cannot be fully explained by the simple insertion of text from other verses. Given the virulent problem of the “already and not yet” of the East Jordanian inheritance in Num 32, the plus clarifies the question what is to happen to the families and livestock that are potentially already settled in the sense of vv. 16–19, 24 if the agreement should not be fulfilled.

Based on these results, it would be necessary to further evaluate the plus’ influence on literary criticism in Num 32. This task cannot be pursued in this context. Instead, the investigation will conclude with a summarizing evaluation of the findings from the analysis, from which conclusions concerning the textual history of 4QNum^b and the Book of Numbers in general will be drawn.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 175–77; idem, “Text,” 178–80. Quote: *ibid.*, 179 [emphasis in the original].

¹⁹¹ SP resolves the peculiar asyndetic sequence of MT: *טפנו ונשינו ומקנינו*.

¹⁹² LXX does not mention the livestock twice here, but reads: *καὶ πάντα τὰ κτήνη ἡμῶν*.

2.2 Summarizing Evaluation from a Methodical Perspective

The text pluses of the group 4QNum^b LXX vs. MT SP are of different lengths and affect different levels of the text. While the short text pluses in the extent of only one word (Num 12:6; 13:23; 18:30; 22:9, 10; 22:17; 26:33) for the most part are rather relevant in terms of syntax, the longer pluses with an extent of two and more words (Num [13:23]; 22:11, 18; 23:3; 25:16; 30:9; 31:48; 32:30; 35:21; 36:1) are immediately relevant to the content.

The text pluses appear in different formal contexts or genres, namely in speech introductions (Num 12:6; 22:9, 10; 25:16; 36:1), direct speeches in narrative context (Num 22:11, 17, 18; 32:30), narration (Num 13:23; 23:3; 31:48), and legislative texts (Num 18:30; 30:9; 35:21). This fits Tov's observation that narrative and (less often) legislative texts are more likely to become the object of harmonization than poetic passages.¹⁹³ In some cases, a connection in terms of content can be discerned between a previous speech and the speech now being reproduced (Num 22:11, 18) or a request and its execution (Num 23:3). This is also a characteristic of the editorial technique that the large pre-Samaritan text pluses exhibit.

However, the text-critical evaluation of the examined text pluses has proven ambiguous in some cases. A first group of cases is only slightly problematic. The text pluses in Num [13:23]; 22:11 show only slight triggers for a possible secondary text loss by haplography due to *homoioarcton*. In these cases, a presumed harmonization by text insertion from other places usually outweighs the indications for a possible secondary text loss. Similar observations can be made for the pluses of other agreement patterns between the versions that were also analyzed above (Num 22:17; 23:3). In four cases (Num 22:17; 23:3; 25:16; 36:1), however, clear opportunities for haplography due to *homoioateleuton* can be observed, since a whole word before and at the end of the plus is identical. Jastram therefore considers these pluses to be "(probably) original" (Num 23:3; 25:16; 36:1) or "difficult to decide" (Num 22:17; [13:23]). On the other hand, Tov classifies Num 23:3; 25:16; 36:1 harmonizations. Text-critical and literary-critical decision-making rules collide in these cases. The analysis showed that such *homoioateleuta* could also result from literary *Fort-schreibung* using the technique of "*Wiederaufnahme*," with sometimes serious literary-critical weight (Num 23:3; 25:16) to be considered. As this could have happened at any level of the literary development of the

¹⁹³ Cf. Tov, "Septuagint of Numbers," 182.

text, further complication adds to these cases. Generally, it supports the view that simply ascribing the pluses to “later” processes of scribal harmonization as phenomena of purely transmissional nature falls short. Another rather difficult phenomenon is the pluses in legislative, formulaic textual contexts, which may not be clearly judged due to the observed variability of these textual elements. For this reason, Jastram considers Num 30:9 to be “difficult to determine” and Num 35:21 to be the “result of a conflation.” Tov, in contrast, sees a harmonization in Num 35:21. However, the evaluation revealed good reasons for a possible non-secondary character of the plus in Num 35:21, again with serious literary-critical potential. A special case is the extensive plus in Num 32:30 because, unlike other cases, it is difficult to speak of harmonization. The source for inserting the text cannot be clearly determined. Thus, Jastram concludes that the plus represents “original” text, while Tov has changed his earlier classification of the plus from “literary” to “harmonization.” Clearly determining the harmonizing character of a plus has proven difficult in several other cases, too (Num 23:3; 25:16; 35:12). Finally, the analysis of Num 12:6; [13:23]; 23:3; 25:16; 35:21 showed that the text pluses do not necessarily constitute the easier text.¹⁹⁴ It has proven fruitful to put the criterion of the easier vs. the more difficult text in relation to the criteria of literary criticism to navigate and explore inconclusive cases. Difficult texts indicate additions in literary criticism and thus are considered the younger texts, while the easier text hints to an older text stage. The seams resulting from the reworking of the text could as well have been smoothed out by later omission. As with the problem of haplography due to *homoio-teleuton* or *homoioarcton*, the criteriologies of textual and literary criticism collide.

Because of the results, the division of the pluses into the categories of earlier “literary variants” produced by “author-scribes” and later “textual variants” going back to the work of “copyist-scribes,” as proposed by Tov, creates more problems than it solves. While the plus in Num 32:30 can be classified relatively clearly as a literary variant that cannot be genetically explained, and the small syntactical pluses can be classified as textual variants, some of which can and some of which cannot be explained genetically, the borderline between the two categories is affected in the remaining cases. At least the pluses of two-or-more-word lengths

¹⁹⁴ This phenomenon is also noted by Tov, “Textual Harmonization,” 43–44; idem, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 188 (both with reference to Num 35:21), but he attributes it solely to the work of the later copyist-scribes who produced “often artificial, even tautological” text (ibid.).

cannot all be attributed to “late” harmonizations and could constitute other intentional interventions¹⁹⁵ or, as was discussed in some cases, even earlier text than the shorter version. From a methodical perspective, the a priori division of the textual development into an earlier literary phase of production and a later phase of textual transmission tends to veil that intentional interventions took place in both phases. These interventions do not exhibit qualitatively different logics regarding their techniques and their literary scope even though they may often differ gradually regarding their extent.¹⁹⁶

Instead of making an a priori diachronic distinction between textual and literary variants, it has proven useful to begin with a non-diachronic double perspective on readings, which remains open for both their analytical text-critical potential as textual phenomena and their literary-historical

¹⁹⁵ Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 3rd ed., 240, concedes: “There is a large gray area between the activity of copyists-scribes analyzed in this chapter and that of authors and editors.” For large parts, this problem emerges by the distinction of “textual” and “literary variants” in the first place since both categories contain small intentional insertions: “exegetical changes,” “harmonizations,” “explanatory and exegetical additions,” and “midrash-like changes and additions” (textual variants) vs. “minor differences” (literary variants), cf. *ibid.*, 240–56, 258–62, 268. Further blurring of the boundaries between the categories is added by the distinction of genetic and non-genetic cases. On the one hand, Tov distinguishes “variants that need to be evaluated (genetic variants)” from “variants that need not be evaluated (non-genetic variants)” (*ibid.*, 267–68) with only synonymous readings and “differences created in the course of the literary growth” in the latter category. At the same time, he is convinced that most literary variants are genetic, cf. *ibid.* 165–68.

¹⁹⁶ The need to intertwine textual and literary criticism is affirmed theoretically very often and urged for by textual scholars, cf., e.g., Mäkipelto, “Approach;” Crawford, “Pentateuchs,” but is less often operationalized in every-day historio-critical exegesis, esp. of the Pentateuch. One reason for this may lie in the absence of a comprehensive methodological framework for the connection of both perspectives. Another reason is the often-privileged status of MT. Plus, because of the crypto-*Urtext* orientation in methodology, exegetes also often feel forced to decide for only one reading to work with. As a sure and solid decision against MT is not that often possible in the Pentateuch, they not only stick with MT but also disregard readings that have been judged secondary completely. In the subsequent analyses of the respective texts, they do not appear again. What counts most, in my view, is the fact that literary and redactional criticism themselves work based on an *Urtext* assumption and consider literary history mostly as a linear process. Thus, a single “oldest” or “original” text (the *Urtext* of textual criticism) is needed to proceed with literary criticism within the logic of the conventional methodical framework. Material evidence does not suggest to be too sure about linear processes of textual production in the so-called literary history of texts. In Schäfers, *Textentstehung*, I have argued to give up on the presupposition that the qualities of the alleged two phases in the history of the text (literary and textual history) differ substantially. Instead, I have proposed (and applied) a methodological framework that reckons with the same characteristics in text production and text tradition: non-linear processes, variance as a quality of texts, and “Verdichtung” (densification) as a feature in the evolution of the meanings and possible intertextual relations of texts.

potential in the textual developments as literary phenomena. This includes the – albeit also ambiguous – qualitative distinction between more technical changes and errors and intentional changes with a content-related scope. The change in perspective helped explore whether the development can be genetically explained and whether their place in the text-historical development can be defined. In the latter case, the frequent limits of text-historical reconstruction were openly stated. Instead of a purely dichotomous perspective, it helps to work with the idea of a matrix that allows more fluid boundaries in which the cases can be located and evaluated. The following Table 5 illustrates this proposal.

	textual phenomena	literary phenomena
genetically explainable	text-critical evaluation	text-historical and literary-historical evaluation
not genetically explainable	aporia	to be left side by side

Table 5: Matrix for the Evaluation of Textual and Literary Phenomena

The evaluation of the results from a methodological perspective showed that a non-dichotomous approach, which is also informed by categories from literary criticism, leaves more room to account for the special characteristics of each one of the cases instead of simply treating them as intentional “errors” in the transmission. It remains to consider now what the categories “original” and “secondary” can explain in this context and what conclusions for the textual character of 4QNum^b and a stemmatic contextualization can be drawn.

3. Conclusions

3.1 *Conclusions Regarding the Textual Character of 4QNum^b and the Stemmatic Options*

The results demonstrate the importance to analyze the pluses from the pattern as a distinct group. The results also support the initial hypothesis that a common hyparchetype for SP, LXX and 4QNum^b, from which two text branches (one for LXX and one for SP and 4QNum^b) derived, as assumed by Jastram, is implausible. If one assumes such a branch, the pluses should also be extant in SP. This is also a problem in Lange’s model. The same holds true for Tov’s hypothesis of a common ancestor of the SP group, which also complicates the idea of a common origin for all texts

in block II. Although 18 cases might seem a relatively small number, it is not only significant compared with the number of text pluses from other patterns.¹⁹⁷ It is also too high in absolute figures for ignoring the evidence. At least the more extensive pluses of two and more words are significant for constituting textual affiliations, however, against this background, even the small pluses of one word with a rather syntactical or grammatical scope require explanation.¹⁹⁸ For this conclusion, it is negligible at first whether the pluses classify as “original” or “secondary,” irrespective of the difficulties that have been demonstrated in making the distinction from a methodological perspective.

The sorting of the evidence by these categories does lead to a reduced number of cases that are mainly taken into consideration by Jastram (“original”) and Tov (“secondary”) and thus may contribute to a less pressing overall picture of the evidence. However, problems arise in the extant stemmata regardless of which category one focuses on. As ambiguous as the category “harmonization” has proven to be, if one decides to use these cases as *Leitfehler*,¹⁹⁹ it inevitably questions the hypothesis of a common ancestor of the SP group. Harmonizations constitute conjunctive “errors” in this methodological framework²⁰⁰ and suggest an exclusive point of contact between the textual tradition of the LXX-*Vorlage* and the textual tradition behind 4QNum^b. Moreover, the excluded non-harmonizing cases still need an explanation, irrespective of classifying them as “original” or “secondary.” For cases judged “secondary,” the same applies as to the harmonizations if they are likely not to have developed independently. For the “original” readings, it is not sufficient to assume that the texts in block II can also contain “original” readings. It still needs to be explained why they are extant in LXX and 4QNum^b, but not in MT and SP, since these traditions then share “errors” against 4QNum^b LXX. In face of these problems, Jastram resorts to the assumption that the longer “original” text in MT and SP has each fallen out independently in both versions by accident. At the same time, he explains the secondary readings as having developed independently in 4QNum^b and LXX.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. the figures by Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 228–29: 4QNum^b vs. LXX SP MT (25); 4QNum^b SP MT vs. LXX (15); 4QNum^b SP vs. LXX MT (10; 5 thereof are the large-scale expansions); 4QNum^b LXX SP vs. MT (5).

¹⁹⁸ Especially, since it is not always possible to draw these lines clearly as was shown in the cases of Num 12:6; 22:17.

¹⁹⁹ It should be noted though that the method of *Leitfehler* according to Maas is only applicable without further complications if no textual contamination (i.e., the combining of manuscripts by scribes) has taken place in the course of transmission, cf. Maas, *Textual Criticism*, 3 no. 6, 7–10 no.s 9 and 10. This is a presupposition that may not be supported by the evidence for 4QNum^b, see below.

²⁰⁰ Cf. Maas, *Textual Criticism*, 43.

While, in theory, there is indeed a certain chance that a shorter text may develop independently due to haplography by *homoioateleuton* or *homoioarcton*,²⁰¹ this explanation does not seem compelling in light of the whole evidence. In addition, it is unlikely for the cases in which no such triggers are involved anyway. For the secondary pluses of two-or-more-word length, in turn, an independent development in the traditions of 4QNum^b and LXX is highly unlikely. Instead of resorting to highly speculative assumptions at two points of the hypothesis, two alternative explanations suggest themselves more in line with the results. In contrast to the proposals of Jastram and Lange, these two solutions also depart from the overemphasizing of the text pluses shared with SP and refrain from aiming at all to linear affiliations between the versions. The first explanation operates under the assumption that a stemmatic solution is possible. The second explanation emphasizes the concerns that can be raised about the fragmentary evidence available and the variant nature of the texts in the three centuries BCE.

In the context of a stemmatic framework, it seems reasonable to assume that a *Vorlage* shared only by the predecessors of LXX and 4QNum^b was in use at a certain stage of textual history, i.e., a hyparchetype shared by LXX and 4QNum^b. This is true both with regard to secondary pluses and to those that are not necessarily secondary. This assumption cannot be easily transformed into a revised stemma due to the other patterns of agreement with the versions that 4QNum^b exhibits. In fact, the results require the assumption of contamination or conflation of *Vorlagen* at at least one point. The example of 4QRP^c shows that such processes have indeed taken place.

One possibility would be to assume a common *Vorlage* V⁺⁺ for the textual pre-stages of the *Vorlagen* of LXX and 4QNum^b, including the pluses in question. V⁺⁺ would have to have been preceded by at least one further *Vorlage* V⁺, in which the pluses and variants proper shared by 4QNum^b LXX SP vs. MT were contained.²⁰² From this *Vorlage* V⁺, the predecessor(s) of SP would then have branched off, which would then have been supplemented with the SP-exclusive pluses and readings of smaller and larger scope in several stages. In this model, the fact that 4QNum^b shares the large editorial text pluses with SP²⁰³ would have to be explained with

²⁰¹ Cf. the evidence discussed in Ziemer, *Kritik*, 67–70, and the methodical remarks of Maas, *Textual Criticism*, 45–46.

²⁰² Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 227, counts five text pluses and 14 variants proper of this pattern in 4QNum^b; idem, “Comparison,” 278–79, counts 13 cases of variants und nine cases of text pluses.

²⁰³ Cf. above note 21.

(MT)²⁰⁵ that cannot all be integrated easily into this model at first sight. Thus, the evidence is very conclusive for non-linear developments in the

In attempt to explain secondary variants shared with MT, Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 228, resorts once more to the hypothesis of textual errors that have developed independently: “Where Sam and G agree in error against Q and M it is possible that the errors arose independently in the traditions of Sam and G rather than that they came from a common source.” This may indeed be the case for Num 13:22; 22:9 but it seems too easy an explanation for the complicated textual situation in Num 23:3; 26:9.

²⁰⁵ The summarizing lists in Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 227–29; idem, “Comparison,” 278–79, disclose no variants from the pattern 4QNum^b SP vs. MT LXX while ten resp. nine text pluses and eleven reconstructed ones are counted. From these, five account for the large editorial pluses shared with SP, from the reconstructed pluses four add to that same list.

There are six rather than five remaining documented pluses, of which four are significant but three of them exhibit not simply longer but also different text, while two cases are not significant (18:26, 28: + את).

1) Num 13:21 וילכו ויבואו ויתרו | vs. ויעלו ויתרו | και ἀναβάντες κατεσκέψαντο) is probably harmonizing with v. 26, but there is further analysis needed because the phrasing is crucial of the literary critical division of P- and non-P passages in Num 13.

2) Num 23:4 וימצא מלאך אלהים את בלעם | [מלאך אלהים] את בלעם | vs. ויקר וימצא מלאך אלהים את בלעם | [וימצא מלאך אלהים] את בלעם | και ἐφάνη ὁ θεὸς τῷ Βαλαάμ) can be understood as a theological change in order to put more distance between Bileam and Elohim and/or aligning with Num 22:22–35, cf. SP Num 20:20; 23:5, 16. Jastram reconstructs with SP in Num 20:20; 23:5, but 4QNum^b is too fragmentary here to be sure and Num 23:16 is not preserved. For 23:3–4, cf. also Robker, *Balaam*, 108–9 incl. notes, who suspects that the verb קרה in v. 4 MT is a secondary harmonization with the also secondary קרה in v. 3, which originally read יראה. Note that 4QNum^b reads like MT here! Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 147, is rather skeptical to seeing a variant in 4QNum^b MT vs. SP, here. He counts the case as an orthographical variant, and has a good point.

3) Num 26:10 הארץ 2° > MT LXX) is a difficult case connected to multiple further pluses in the versions and to reconstructions in that verse by Jastram who sees a conflation of LXX- and SP- readings in 4QNum^b, cf. Jastram, *Book of Numbers*, 154, 203–4.

4) The plus in Num 32:25 [והצבי שב]ט המנשה | [והצבי שב]ט המנשה | vs. ויאומו בני | [ויואמו בני] | και εἶπαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ρουβὴν και οἱ υἱοὶ Γὰδ) harmonizes with the mentioning of Half Manasseh in vv. 33, 39–43. There is consistent editing in this respect in SP vv. 1, 2, 6, 25, 29, 31. Jastram reconstructs accordingly, where there is surrounding text in 4QNum^b preserved, with albeit good cause in vv. 1, 29 and less conclusively in v. 6. It is remarkable that all these cases appear in passages where there is strong editing in SP on the one hand and where there are also exclusive pluses with LXX in 4QNum^b on the other hand. This might corroborate the hypothesis of a selective editing of the scroll or its precursors with a forerunner of SP, but more research is needed on the complicated textual situation in 13:21 and 23:3–4. Of course, the fragmentary state of the evidence adds further uncertainties; see on that general problem below.

Additionally, there are five to six variants, which Jastram might have judged not worth including in the counting. Only 24:9 could be significant. LXX is inconclusive in at least three cases:

Num 13:20: (4QNum^b 4QRP^c בכרות SP בכרות vs. MT בכורי) variation of genus; LXX πρόδρομοι is more likely based on the fem. and not the masc. as in MT, cf. Jastram,

textual history of Numbers and for an early point of exclusive contact between the precursors of the LXX-*Vorlage* and those of 4QNum^b, but not all of the evidence fits into it swiftly. Nevertheless, the obstacles do not seem as severe as for the evidence of the investigated pattern against the extant stemmata and a good cause can be made at least for parts of the development.²⁰⁶

Another major objection from a methodological perspective, however, must be considered: The proposed adjustment of the stemma still tries to reconstruct as close and direct links between the textual traditions as possible, even though the textual development is reconstructed less linearly than before. Given the complex patterns of agreements, the variety of phenomena documented, and the fragmentary state of the evidence, no explanation model should be excluded prematurely. More complicated transmission models with several points of revision/recension,²⁰⁷ conflation, and/or contamination in the transmission process are also conceivable.²⁰⁸ Apart from that, a still more restricted conclusion remains a possible result for the time being: that the textual relationships cannot be reconstructed properly in a stemma due to the incomplete state of the manuscript evidence,²⁰⁹ complexity of the variant patterns, problems in text-critical evaluations, and frequent non-genetic variance of the texts.²¹⁰

Book of Numbers, 120–1; Num 20:24 (4QNum^b SP עמו vs. MT עמיו, LXX τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ inconclusive); Num 20:26 (4QNum^b יהפשת[טתה] vs. MT והפשת vs. MT והפשת, LXX καὶ ἔκδυσσον inconclusive); Num 24:9 (4QNum^b SP-Mss רבץ vs. MT SP שכב LXX ἀνεπαύσατο); in Num 31:30 (4QNum^b SP-Mss מן 4° < MT ומן LXX καὶ ἀπὸ) the overall syndetic structure in the verse varies in all witnesses; Num 32:26 (4QNum^b ומקניו SP MT-Mss vs. MT מקניו vs. > LXX). Depending on the method of counting, one might also add Num 27:3 (4QNum^b היה SP-Mss היה vs. MT SP היו LXX ἐγένοντο) to this list.

²⁰⁶ This is exactly the advantage of the relative approach outlined in ch. 1.2, which aims at genetic explanations if possible but refrains from pressing the evidence further into a complete genetic picture.

²⁰⁷ For recensional activity around the turn of the Common Era, see also the evidence of 4QLXXNum that seems to exhibit revisioning towards proto-MT, cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 110–11.

²⁰⁸ There is indeed also the possibility of 4QNum^b being a selectively revised text that follows none of its *Vorlagen* completely.

²⁰⁹ Not to mention the general problem implied in a text-critical evaluation of readings from extant, but fragmentary manuscripts vs. readings from text traditions that are only (completely) available in medieval manuscripts (MT and SP) or derive from a textual tradition reconstructed from later material evidence (late antique LXX manuscripts) turned into a virtual back translation (LXX-*Vorlage*).

²¹⁰ The investigation thus illustrates the opportunities and limitations of linear-genetic evaluations Cf. the rather pessimistic but well-founded situation analysis by Crawford, “Interpreting,” 68: “The classic approach of textual criticism, which aims to determine the place of manuscripts in recensions or families, seems to have reached an impasse with regard to pre-70 C.E. textual stemmata.”

Thus, further analyses are needed, which should also include and diachronically differentiate more closely the variants proper, shared by 4QNum^b LXX in addition to the text pluses, and the other patterns of agreement between the versions. In particular, the phenomenon of additions and variants successively based on each other, which came up in the analysis of Numbers 18:30; 22:11; 22:18; 30:9; 31:48; 35:21, needs further investigation. Likewise, the evidence from the other Numbers manuscripts, especially 4QLev–Num^a and 4QRP^c, needs to be included more systematically. Finally, these results should also be compared with the evidence for the other books of the Pentateuch to obtain a more detailed picture of shared revision processes and those that are limited to (a) certain book(s).²¹¹ Naturally, the very fragmentary state of 4QNum^b and the other manuscripts sets limits to such an analysis. For example, of the 45 passages where SP and LXX share harmonizing variants or pluses according to Tov,²¹² only four are contained in 4QNum^b, two of which have a slightly different text.²¹³ However, without a new evaluation based on a comprehensive and explicit listing of the patterns of variants and pluses in the Judean Desert manuscripts and the versions such analyses are not achievable. This desideratum can only be indicated here. Its treatment is planned for future studies. For now, the findings point to a far more complicated text-historical development of the Book of Numbers than was previously assumed in research, though it is impossible to reconstruct the entire process, at least for now, and many uncertainties remain. Despite these limitations, the evidence allows for some preliminary conclusions about the broader horizon of the textual history of the Book of Numbers.

3.2 *Outlook on Some Consequences of the Results: Evidence for Multiple Stages in the Textual Development of the Book of Numbers*

As a preliminary conclusion, the text-historical picture becomes further differentiated in favor of multi-staged editing processes in the Book of

²¹¹ This also raises the question of whether certain stages of revision or supplementation were limited to particular parts of books and, if so, why. This is a necessary question, not only because of the irregular distribution of the large editorial text pluses in SP and 4QNum^b. Also, with the smaller text pluses in LXX and 4QNum^b examined here, a concentration was found in the Balaam pericope in Num 22–24 as well as in the last part of Num 25–31, while only few and small text pluses are located in the first sections of the book (12:6; 13:23; 18:30). This distribution may also originate more profanely from the fact that in 4QNum^b no text has been preserved before Num 11 at all and that there are also larger gaps in the middle section.

²¹² Cf. Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 195–96.

²¹³ Cf. Num 21:21; 23:3; 28:14; 29:28.

Numbers. This result fits with the more general positions of Zahn and of Tov that were introduced at the beginning of this study.²¹⁴ Both scholars emphasize the significance of the small-scale pluses and harmonizations for the assumption of several stages in the text development for SP and LXX. In his most recent study on the LXX of Numbers, Tov notes:

In a way, editorial changes perfect the system of small-scale harmonizations at a higher literary level. The small-scale harmonizations [...] present attempts to make the text more congruous. The large-scale editorial intervention visible in the SP group reflects the next step on the ladder of perfecting the Torah. If my intuition is correct, the smaller harmonizations such as in the *Vorlage* of the LXX thus reflect a first step in the development of a free approach towards Scripture, while the editorial changes of the SP group reflect a second stage.²¹⁵

The results obtained in this investigation made it possible to characterize this assumption of a “first step” even further. A common ancestor for 4QNum^b, LXX, and SP turned out to be too easy and inconceivable an assumption, but also several stages in the process assumed by Tov could be made plausible. As this process also concerns the *Vorlage* of the Septuagint, with at least two successive phenomena to be distinguished (LXX 4QNum^b vs. SP MT and SP LXX [4QNum^b vs. MT), the period of origin of these adaptations gets extended further before the translation of the Book of Numbers into Greek. As already noted in ch. 1.1, Tov assumes that the LXX-specific harmonizations were already contained in the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX. The results of this investigation did not only find no contrary indications in general but could also find additional support for this hypothesis in some cases. This adds a further step into the assumed transmission process, which must be incorporated into the text-historical development dating before the translation into Greek. This translation is dated by the middle of the 2nd c. BCE at the latest,²¹⁶ but most researchers consider the first half of the 3rd c. BCE as the more probable period of origin.²¹⁷ Thus, the textual forms in question come so close to the first “recognizable shape”²¹⁸ of the Book of Numbers in the late Persian period that they cannot be ignored in good conscience, neither in a text-critical/-historical nor in a literary-historical respect.²¹⁹ Against this background,

²¹⁴ Cf. above notes 28, 75 and ch. 1.1.

²¹⁵ Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 183 note 9.

²¹⁶ Cf. Evans, “Numbers,” 59–60.

²¹⁷ Cf. Rösel, “Tora,” 100–2; Dorival, “Arithmoi,” 151–53.

²¹⁸ I use this term instead of “closure” or “Endtext” following Crawford, “Understanding,” 65–66.

²¹⁹ Tov, “Development,” 12, assumes a comparable date for his alleged block II ancestor: “The popular text that is presupposed by the common ancestor of the LXX and SP

the secondary text pluses and harmonizations, in particular, should also be interpreted as a continuation of literary history and not simply be rejected as genetically secondary in text-critical respect. In dealing with the smaller text pluses that 4QNum^b and LXX share, the guiding idea of the matrix proposed above allows us to distance ourselves from a purely dichotomous perspective. Thus, it is also not helpful to perceive these readings mainly as “deviating” from an alleged proto-Masoretic text.

At this point, the scope and capabilities of the categories “original” and “secondary” come into play again, together with the discussion about the limitations of categorizing manuscripts and the preponderance of an alleged proto-Masoretic text line. The question of whether a single “original” text should be assumed and how stable the first text form was, has still to be sufficiently clarified. We have no preserved evidence from the early preliminary stages and the source texts of the phenomena discussed here. Even if a single ancestor for MT, LXX, SP, and 4QNum^b should be provable, its text-historical character remains uncertain.²²⁰ In this investigation, the fact that a sufficient material link before our assumed *Vorlage* V+ is simply not there, illustrates this problem of limited preserved evidence. Even harking back to readings evaluated as “original” is a very relative undertaking against that background. If one follows optimistic presuppositions and tries to reconstruct the “oldest” text wherever possible, the outcome will still be a set of older and younger readings that can be diachronically differentiated at best but are not surely “original.”²²¹ Even if one had reconstructed all these “older” readings from all the evidence we have in the Judean Desert scrolls and the versions, how would that virtual text form still be best described in anachronistic terms as “proto-Masoretic”? It would still have many readings that are not in MT or are from the group that is called “independent,” a term that implicates that there are rather stable other text lines existent next to the “independent” reading.

group predated the time of the translation of the LXX, and therefore we find ourselves in the fourth century B.C.E. or earlier.”

²²⁰ It should be noted that the inference to an alleged proto-MT is by no means the only possible alternative, even though Tov, “Development,” 7, presents the options like that: “The placing of MT at the top of the stemma is based on the understanding that the LXX, the SP group, the exegetical texts such as 4QRP, the liturgical texts among which are the *tefillin*, and virtually all other texts display secondary features when compared with MT, especially in their harmonizing pluses. A second scenario would be the assumption that MT and the LXX-SP text derived from a common archetype, but the multitude of secondary readings in the non-MT texts makes such an option unlikely.”

²²¹ For a discussion of the relative value of “older” readings, cf. Finsterbusch, “Traditional Textual Criticism.”

While Tov, in his recent publications, has quite clearly postulated the primacy of the proto-Masoretic text line, he is a bit more cautious in the conclusion of his study of harmonizations in the LXX of Numbers:

The LXX of Numbers reflects secondary features in the history of the development of the text of that book, joined by the SP and most Hebrew textual witnesses of the Torah. They all stand in striking contrast with MT that contains very few instances of harmonization. Of course, MT need not be equated with the original text of Numbers, as each reading in the text needs to be judged in its own right. But it is remarkable that the Hebrew text used by the LXX of the Torah is inferior in quality than most other books of the LXX canon.²²²

However, this judgement on the LXX of Numbers can be contested in many cases.²²³ More importantly, the evidence of harmonizations does not change the fact that the evidence preserved for this book is much more limited than with the other books of the Pentateuch. Hence, the general problems of counting and categorizing outlined in ch. 1.1 have a heavy bearing when breaking down the data to the evidence for the Book of Numbers. By now, eleven manuscripts – or better, fragments thereof – are extant from Qumran plus four from other locations.²²⁴ Many of these are too fragmentary for categorization:

1QpaleoLev–Num^a(1Q3, frgs. 1–11, 12? 15? resp. frgs. 1–15)²²⁵; 2QNum^a(2Q6); 2QNum^b(2Q7); 2QNum^c(2Q8)²²⁶; 2QNum^{d7}(2Q9)²²⁷; 4QLev–Num^a(4Q23); 4QNum^b(4Q27); 4QLXXNum(4Q121); furthermore: 4QRP^b(4Q364); 4QRP^c(4Q365) + 4QT? (4Q365a); 4QRP^d(4Q366), plus the mss from other locations: MurGen–Exod.Num^a(Mur 1); 5/6HevNum^a(5/6Hev1a); XHev/SeNum^b(XHev/Se2); 34SeNum(34Se2).²²⁸

The differences in counting and categorization lead to a diverging overall text-historical picture of the earliest Hebrew Numbers manuscripts,²²⁹ as Table 6 illustrates:²³⁰

²²² Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 201.

²²³ See, e.g., the wealth of evidence analyzed for Num 25 in Schäfers, *Textentstehung*.

²²⁴ The list does not include unprovenanced artifacts from the antiquities market.

²²⁵ On these fragments, cf. note 59.

²²⁶ This ms may as well be an excerpt or the like, cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 79–80, and now idem, “2.2.1 Manuscript Evidence,” 22–23.

²²⁷ This ms may as well be an excerpt or the like, cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 79–80, and now idem, “2.2.1 Manuscript Evidence,” 22–23.

²²⁸ On the characteristics of these manuscript fragments and their editions cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 37–42, 55, 66–69, 79–83, on which idem, “2.2.1 Manuscript Evidence,” 23–52, is also based. For an older overview, cf. Pike, “Book of Numbers,” 168–75; Jastram, “Numbers, Book of”.

²²⁹ On 4QLXXNum see above note 207.

²³⁰ The data in the table is taken from the literature listed in note 54 and Tov, “Development” (“Tov 2016”). For Tov 2008/2012, I have again added the different specifications for the proto-Masoretic texts, cf. note 57.

Date	Manuscript	Categorization by Lange 2009	Categorization by Tov 2008/2012	Categorization by Tov 2016/2022
150–100 BCE	1QpaleoLev–Num ^a (1Q3) 4QLev–Num ^a	not categorizable ²³¹ independent	outer circle; M-like outer circle; M-like	MT-like or pre-Samaritan ²³² [no longer part of the M-like texts] ²³³
75–50 BCE	4QRP ^b 4QRP ^c 4QRP ^d	independent ²³⁴ independent ²³⁵ independent	[not included ²³⁶]	block II: “closely related to the SP group” ²³⁷
30 BCE–20 CE	4QNum ^b	pre-Samaritan	pre-Samaritan	block II: SP group
50–100 CE	XHev/SeNum ^b (XHev/Se2)	proto-Masoretic	inner circle; proto-Masoretic	block I: MT group
100–135 CE	MurGen–Ex.Num ^a (Mur 1)	proto-Masoretic	inner circle; proto-Masoretic	block I: MT group

Table 6: Classification of the Hebrew Numbers Mss Considered Categorizable According to Lange and Tov

While the paleographically oldest – and very fragmentary – manuscript available, 4QLev–Num^a, is labeled “independent” in Lange’s classification, as are the 4QRP-texts, Tov’s assignments of the manuscripts paint a different picture, in which the oldest manuscripts are M-like instead. The 4QRP-texts are considered later branches deriving from an LXX-SP group. This overall picture is as diverging as can be and it is dependent on the general tendencies in the text-historical models of the two scholars. For reconstructing the textual history of Numbers as such and in the context of the transmission of the Pentateuch, these categorizations are of little

²³¹ Lange and Tov differ in their sorting of the 1Q3-fragments, see above note 59.

²³² See Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., 136, together with note 64 above.

²³³ See note 64.

²³⁴ Statistically counted as independent, but going back to a reworking of a pre-Samaritan witness, cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 39.

²³⁵ Also statistically counted as independent, but going back to a reworking of a pre-Samaritan witness, cf. Lange, *Handbuch*, 41.

²³⁶ Tov has not always included the 4QRP-texts in his statistics but has emphasized the closeness to SP for 4QRP^c; ^d, cf. notes 10 and 59 and the literature cited there. Since these texts are now included in the tentative stemma for the new two-block model, I have included them into the table, too.

²³⁷ Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 4th ed., 380: “Closely related to the SP group are its congeners 4QRP^{a,b} (4Q158, 4Q364), slightly removed from SP since these texts added a layer of exegesis to the SP, and 4QRP^{c,d}, a little more removed from SP.”

help. The present investigation has confirmed that even the relatively uncontested label “pre-Samaritan” is too vague to account for a genetically informed description of 4QNum^b. This leaves us with only 4QpaleoExod^m as a witness consensually described with that label. This scroll does not have as many exclusive agreements with LXX as 4QNum^{b238} – one last proof to mention of the special character of the text-historical situation for Numbers.

What are the alternatives for accurately describing the characteristics of the textual witnesses? The diction of purity introduced by Tov appears to be rather unhelpful, as it employs qualifiers such as “inferior”²³⁹ and “pure”²⁴⁰ in the characterization of text types. As noted at the beginning of this article, two additional terms have already been introduced into the research discussion: “conservative” and “creative.”²⁴¹ These should also be used with caution given the still-unknown complete picture of the work of the “author-scribes” of the Torah in the 3rd–1st c. CE but should be preferred over a revaluation and devaluation of textual forms. However, this should not lead to a complete abandonment of the genetic question. The present study has shown that there is additional value in giving credit to the multiple patterns of agreement between the manuscripts and versions when, at the same time, taking into account the limits of our documented evidence and integrating our knowledge about the characteristics of text production and tradition.

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²³⁸ Cf. Jastram, “Comparison.”

²³⁹ Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 201, see the block quote above.

²⁴⁰ Tov, “Septuagint of Numbers,” 182: “MT also contains some harmonizing changes, but it reflects a *purier* text than the other witnesses.” (Emphasis KMS)

²⁴¹ Cf., e.g., Crawford, “Interpreting;” Tov, “Development,” 8–9: “popularizing.” However, the two terms also presuppose a certain idea and valuation of the textual development and of alleged editorial processes. These, too, are not without alternatives, cf., e.g., the positions of Ben-Dov, “Text Duplications;” idem, “Texts,” who characterizes the work of the scribes as “academic,” and Schorch, “Fortschreibungen;” idem, “Gerizim Commandment,” who emphasizes the text guided moment of the scribe’s work on the text surface.

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