

BIBLICAL CRITICISM AND CONFESSIONAL DIVISION FROM
JEAN MORIN TO RICHARD SIMON, c. 1620-1685

THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

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GONVILLE AND CAIUS COLLEGE

CAMBRIDGE
SEPTEMBER 2016

ABSTRACT

Biblical criticism and confessional division from Jean Morin to Richard Simon, c. 1620-1685

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This thesis aims to make a significant contribution to our understanding of the history of biblical criticism in the seventeenth century. Its central objective is to put forward a new interpretation of the work of the Oratorian scholar Richard Simon. It does so by placing Simon's work, above all his *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (1678), in the context of the great increase in critical study of the text of the Bible that occurred after 1620. The problems and questions that confronted European scholars at this time were profound, as new manuscript discoveries combined with existing learned and polemical debates in such a way that scholars were forced reconsider their opinions on the history and text of the Old Testament. Rather than study these works solely in the discrete tradition of the history of scholarship, however, this thesis shows why they have to be considered in the context of the print culture that made their production possible, the confessional divisions that shaped and deepened the significance of their philological arguments, and the intellectual cooperation, exchange, and disagreement that determined how contemporaries understood them.

The results of this research contribute to existing scholarship in several significant ways, of which four stand out for special emphasis. First, through extensive archival research it markedly revises our current understanding of the work of, among others, Jean Morin, Louis Cappel, Johannes Buxtorf II, James Ussher, Brian Walton, and Richard Simon. Second, it shows that the history of biblical criticism must consider the work of Catholic scholars in the same level of detail as Protestant scholars. Third, it breaks the link between innovative philological and historical work and radical theological or political thought. Fourth, it calls into doubt the current consensus that seventeenth-century scholarly life is best understood through the concept of the international and inter-confessional 'Republic of Letters'.

DECLARATION

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being currently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution. Finally, it does not exceed the prescribed word limit specified by the History Degree Committee.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Libraries and Archives

ANF	Archives Nationales, Paris
AUB	Amsterdam Universiteitsbibliotheek
BAV	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome
BG	Bibliothèque de Genève
BML	Biblioteca Medicea Laurenzia, Florence
BMR	Bibliothèque Municipale de Rouen
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris
BSHPF	Bibliothèque de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français, Paris
BSM	Bayrische Staatsbibliothek, München
BUB	Universitätsbibliothek Basel
BV	Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Rome
KB	Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen
LUB	Leiden Universiteitsbibliotheek
MPM	Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp
OBL	Bodleian Library, Oxford
ZZB	Zentralbibliothek Zürich

Introduction

1

In the late 1670s rumours began to spread about an imminent publication, said to be a 'critical history' of the Bible.¹ By the spring of 1678, Henri Justel, the well-connected Huguenot scholar then based in Paris, had more than mere rumour to go on, as he forwarded to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz a copy of the work's table of contents, together with a catalogue of the authors cited.² Justel probably obtained this directly from the shop of Louis Billaine, the libraire who by this time had become one of Paris's most prominent booksellers, which included being the official publisher for the order of Saint Benedict.³ Billaine had ensured that the author of the work followed the steps required to have a work legally published in the French capital, obtaining a *privilege* following approval by the censor and syndic of the Sorbonne, Edme Pirot.

At this moment, disaster struck. Nicolas Toinard had seen the table of contents and forwarded it post-haste to Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, then tutor to the Dauphin. Bossuet reacted violently against the work, later recalling his verdict that it was 'a mass of impieties and a bastion of libertinage'.⁴ Bossuet took immediate action: the work was banned by the Conseil du Roi, the vast majority of its first print run destroyed, and its author expelled from the Congregation of the Oratory.⁵

How far Richard Simon could have foreseen his *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* would provoke such a response is unclear. The scattered comments and references to Simon's participation in Parisian intellectual life that can be found through the early to mid-1670s indicate that he cannot be painted as a neophyte, unaware of the

¹ Erste Reihe, ed., *Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Allgemeiner Politischer und Historischer Briefwechsel*, vol. II: 1676-1679 (Leipzig: Otto Reichl Verlag, 1927), §262. Henri Justel to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 30 July 1677, p. 285.

² Reihe, ed., *Allgemeiner Politischer und Historischer Briefwechsel*, vol. II, §386. Henri Justel to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, [n. d.], p. 400. The letter is undated but placed in this edition as the last from 1678. References to Easter and indications the work would be published soon show it dates from spring that year.

³ On Louis Billaine, see, Henri-Jean Martin, *Librairie, pouvoirs et société à Paris au XVII^e siècle* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1999 [1969]), vol. II, pp. 708-20.

⁴ C. Urbain and E. Levesque, eds., *Correspondance de Bossuet*, vol. XIII: *Janvier 1701 - Octobre 1702* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1920), §2143. Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet to A. M. de Malézieu, 19 May 1702, p. 309, 'un amass d'impietés et un rempart de libertinage'. I leave 'libertinage' untranslated owing to its specific connotations in seventeenth-century French. See, René Pintard, *Le libertinage érudit dans la première moitié du XVII^e siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris: Boivin, 1943).

⁵ For the first steps against Simon's work, see BNF Ms. Français 21743, esp. fols. 166^r-178^v. See also, Patrick J. Lambe, 'Biblical Criticism and Censorship in Ancien Régime France: The Case of Richard Simon', *Harvard Theological Review* 78 (1985), pp. 149-77; April G. Shelford, 'Of Sceptres and Censors: Biblical Interpretation and Censorship in Seventeenth-Century France', *French History* 20 (2006), pp. 161-81.

apparently radical implications of his work.⁶ Even without these scattered comments the tone of Simon's work – something contemporaries were much more attuned to, and which can be inferred from Bossuet's accusation of *libertinage* – and his decision to write in the vernacular, suggest some distance from the Latinate world of the *respublica literaria*. Other sources indicate there were some problems in publishing the work. Writing to Leibniz in October 1677, Friedrich Adolf Hansen reported that he had reason to doubt whether the 'critical history' would be printed, since the author was having some problems being granted a *privilege*.⁷ Yet Simon does not appear to have anticipated the strength of Bossuet's reaction, and his vain protestations, which apparently included the offer of re-writing the work in Latin, do not suggest he had seriously considered that his erudite work of biblical criticism would be burnt as detrimental to faith in general.⁸

Perceptions of Simon's achievement in the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, and of his biblical criticism more generally, have built on the image created by Bossuet's prohibition. It led scholars to seek to identify the source of Simon's apparently radical novelty, and to discuss in particular the influence on him of Benedict de Spinoza's *Tractatus theologico-politicus* (1670).⁹ A touchstone of these enquiries has been a belief in the importance of a series of seventeenth-century scholars and polemicists, notably Thomas Hobbes, Isaac La Peyrère, and Spinoza, who openly denied the Mosaic authorship of the first five books of the Old Testament, collectively known as the Pentateuch.¹⁰

Simon's apparent agreement with Hobbes, La Peyrère, and Spinoza, on the authorship of the Pentateuch, took on added significance in the context of his scholarly credentials. The *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* was significant not simply as a seminal moment in the development of a historical-critical approach to the Bible. In framing a new way of understanding the biblical text while undermining his contemporaries' faith

⁶ Paul Auvray, *Richard Simon (1638-1712): Etude bio-bibliographique avec des textes inédits* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974), pp. 20-31.

⁷ Reihe, ed., *Allgemeiner Politischer und Historischer Briefwechsel*, vol. II, §270. Friedrich Adolf Hansen to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 4 October 1677, p. 296.

⁸ Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 47-51.

⁹ Paul Auvray, 'Richard Simon et Spinoza', in *Religion, érudition et critique à la fin du XVII^e siècle et au début du XVIII^e* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967), pp. 201-214; Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 64-66; Richard Popkin, 'Cartesianism and Biblical Criticism', in *Problems of Cartesianism*, Thomas W. Lennon, John M. Nicholas, and John W. Davis eds., (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1982), pp. 61-81; J. D. Woodbridge, 'Richard Simon's Reaction to Spinoza's "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus"', in *Spinoza in der Frühzeit seiner religiösen Wirkung*, K. Gründer and K. W. Schmitt-Biggeman eds., (Heidelberg: L. Schneider, 1984), pp. 201-26; Maria Cristina Pitassi, *Entre croire et savoir: Le problème de la méthode critique chez Jean Le Clerc* (Leiden: Brill, 1987, esp. pp. 11-19; Justin Champion, 'Pere Richard Simon and English Biblical Criticism, 1680-1700', in *Everything Connects: in Conference with Richard H. Popkin*, James E. Force and David S. Katz, eds., (Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 39-61.

¹⁰ See, Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 450-452; Jean Bernier, *La critique du Pentateuque de Hobbes à Calmet* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2010).

in its inerrancy, Simon's work could be taken to inaugurate a crucial shift in early modern intellectual history, as the accumulated erudition of late humanist scholarship was submitted to new forms of critical interrogation.¹¹

These arguments have nonetheless left historians of Richard Simon's work and career to grapple with a few uncomfortable facts. Simon never showed any desire to leave the Catholic Church and never ceased to protest that Bossuet and others had misunderstood his work and the intentions behind it. If the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* underlined the uncertainties that surrounded the text of Scripture, this was only in order, Simon averred, to show all the more clearly the role of the Catholic Church's magisterium as its authoritative interpreter.¹² This claim is not without plausibility. Throughout the early modern period Catholic scholars and polemicists had endeavoured to undermine Protestant faith in the self-authenticating inerrancy of Scripture by arguing that its textual instability required an additional source of authoritative judgement. Simon might assume that his work put him in good Catholic company.

2

The supposed contrast between Simon's confessional allegiance and his biblical criticism has been maintained largely because scholars have not yet reconstructed the context in which these two sides of Simon's life and work coexisted. As a field of study in its own right the history of early modern biblical scholarship has only recently begun to be written. The subject was largely ignored by early contributions to the history of classical scholarship. These works, most often written by practising classicists, focused almost exclusively on the earlier figures in their own discipline and told narratives that reflected that preoccupation. They began with the earliest instances of philological study in the ancient world, generally Hellenistic Alexandria's scholar-poets, made brief reference to the ninth and twelfth centuries, offered an account of the revival of classical learning

¹¹ Scott Mandelbrote, 'Biblical Hermeneutics and the Sciences, 1700-1900: An Overview', in *Nature and Scripture in the Abrahamic Religions: 1700-Present*, Scott Mandelbrote and Jitse M. van der Meer eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2008), vol. 1, esp. pp. 8-12.

¹² See, J. Steinmann, *Richard Simon et les origines de la critique biblique* (Brouges-Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1960); Pierre Gibert, *L'invention critique de la Bible: XV^e-XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 2010).

during the Italian Renaissance and its continuation in sixteenth century France, and culminated in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century Germany.¹³

The history of early modern textual criticism, similarly, was until recently written almost exclusively from the standpoint of scholars working in Greek and Latin. Mark Pattison's acknowledgement of Isaac Casaubon's preference for early Christian Greek did not prevent him viewing that scholar's refutation of Cesare Baronius as more than an unhelpful distraction, which saw him sucked into the 'theological vortex'.¹⁴ Neither Giorgio Pasquali nor Sebastiano Timpanaro devoted much space to the implications of the Hebrew and Old Testament studies for their subjects.¹⁵ E. J. Kenny's *The Classical Text* followed this pattern and argued that classical scholars generally pursued their studies in isolation from other fields of historical thought.¹⁶

The lack of interest shown by classical scholars in the history of biblical scholarship has not been compensated for from within the field of biblical studies. Scholars of the Bible – with some notable exceptions – have not been overly preoccupied with tracing the history of their own discipline.¹⁷ Instead, the field has been left to historians interested in the emergence of the historical-critical method.¹⁸ As Scott Mandelbrote has recently shown, the terms in which this question was asked were for the most part framed by nineteenth-century scholars.¹⁹ The influential Gotthard Victor Lechler's *Geschichte des Englischen Deismus* (1841) ascribed the genesis of German historical-critical methodology to the reception of mid-eighteenth-century English deism. Other

¹³ See Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *History of Classical Scholarship*, trans. Alan Harris (London: Duckworth, 1982); J. E. Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship*, 3 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 1903-1908); Rudolph Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968); Rudolph Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship from 1300 to 1850* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); L. D. Reynolds and Nigel Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: a guide to the transmission of Greek and Latin literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

¹⁴ Mark Pattison, *Isaac Casaubon, 1559-1614* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1875), p. 333, although see also pp. 354-383. See further, Anthony Grafton, 'The Messrs. Casaubon: Isaac Casaubon and Mark Pattison', in his *Worlds Made by Words: Scholarship and Community in the Modern West* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009), 216-230.

¹⁵ Sebastiano Timpanaro, *The Genesis of Lachmann's Method*, ed. and transl. Glenn W. Most (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 61; Giorgio Pasquali, *Storia della Tradizione e Critica del Testo* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1962 [1934, 1952]), p. 20.

¹⁶ E. J. Kenny, *The Classical Text: Aspects of Editing in the Age of the Printed Book* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 20-23.

¹⁷ The most notable exception has been the essays of Moshe Goshen-Gottstein. See, Moshe Goshen-Gottstein, 'Foundations of Biblical Philology in the Seventeenth Century. Christian and Jewish Dimensions', in *Jewish Thought in the Seventeenth Century*, I. Twersky and B. Septimus eds. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), pp. 77-94; Moshe Goshen-Gottstein, 'The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament: Rise, Decline, Rebirth', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 102/3 (1983), pp. 365-99.

¹⁸ Peter T. van Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century: Constantijn L'Empereur (1591-1648) Professor of Hebrew and Theology at Leiden* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), p. 3, described this as 'the greatest problem of every history of biblical scholarship'.

¹⁹ Mandelbrote, 'Biblical Hermeneutics and the Sciences', esp. pp. 22-26.

German scholars, like H.-J. Kraus and H. G. Reventlow, argued that it was essential to search for older, more foundational origins, and pointed towards the long-term ramifications of the Reformation doctrine of *sola scriptura*.²⁰

More recent historiography has taken its point of departure from Paul Hazard's *La crise de la conscience européenne* (1935), as scholars have considered the historical-critical method less a product of the Reformation or mid-eighteenth-century English deism than part of a general shift that occurred in European intellectual culture in the late-seventeenth century.²¹ Hazard's *crise* has since been replaced by alternative concepts that describe more explicitly the nature and content of this intellectual change. These include, most notably, the *Frühaufklärung*, the Early Enlightenment, and the Radical Enlightenment.²² The place of the historical-critical method in these histories is a contributory one, since in order for 'Enlightenment' to occur older authorities had to be replaced, and in the case of the Bible this was epitomized by the historical-critical method, especially as defined according to Spinoza's *Tractatus theologico-politicus*.²³

The thesis that the late seventeenth century witnessed the creation of the historical-critical method has consequently defined the terms in which the work of earlier scholars has been studied. The application of textual criticism to the sacred texts has been taken to be equivalent to damaging the foundations of revealed religion. From this point of view early seventeenth-century scholars are made to look like Spinoza *avant la lettre*, their work important above all for what it teaches us about the decline of Scripture's authority. Rather than tell us about the real preoccupations of such scholars, however, many of these arguments in fact repeat and rehearse the claims of other early modern polemicists, ranging from orthodox Protestants committed to the absolute

²⁰ H.-J. Kraus, *Geschichte der historisch-kritischen Erforschung des Alten Testaments von der Reformation bis zur Gegenwart* (Neukirchen Kreis Moers: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, 1956), pp. 3-4, 37-38; Henning Graf Reventlow, *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World* (London: SCM Press, 1984); Klaus Scholder, *The Birth of Modern Critical Theology: Origins and Problems of Biblical Criticism in the Seventeenth Century* (London: SCM Press, 1990). See further, van Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship and Rabbinical Studies*, pp. 1-9; Dmitri Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion: Paganism, Judaism and Christianity in European Historiography from Reformation to "Enlightenment"', *The Historical Journal* 55 (2012), pp. 1118-1119.

²¹ Paul Hazard, *La Crise de la conscience européenne, 1680-1715*, 3 vols. (Paris: Boivin et Cie, 1935).

²² See, for example, Martin Mulsow, *Moderne aus dem Untergrund: radikale Frühaufklärung in Deutschland 1680-1720* (Hamburg: F. Meiner, 2002); Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*; Jonathan I. Israel, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man 1670-1752* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); on Israel's work, see especially, Antoine Lilti, 'Comment écrit-on l'histoire intellectuelle des Lumières? Spinozisme, radicalisme et philosophie', *Annales HSS* 64 (2009), pp. 171-206; Wiep van Bunge ed., *The Early Enlightenment in the Dutch Republic, 1650-1750* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

²³ See, for example, F. E. Manuel, *The broken staff: Judaism through Christian eyes* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 164-4, 181-3; Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, pp. 409-435; Travis L. Frampton, *Spinoza and the rise of historical criticism of the Bible* (New York: T. & T. Clark International, 2007).

integrity of every 'jot and tittle' of the Hebrew text, to early eighteenth-century free-thinkers, keen to turn the findings of erudite scholarship to their own purposes.

3

To respond to these accounts of Richard Simon's scholarship, and seventeenth-century intellectual history more generally, it would not be sufficient simply to present a reinterpretation of his work. Instead, it is necessary to reconstruct the context in which Simon's biblical criticism should be understood. This study takes its inspiration from recent contributions to the history of scholarship that have shown how the historian must recreate not only the intellectual but the specific social, cultural, confessional, and print contexts in which the work of each scholar took place. The most influential exponent of this approach has been Anthony Grafton, whose study of Joseph Scaliger represents the most notable study of a single scholar.²⁴

The new approach has led historians to appreciate the extent to which early modern scholars lived and worked in disciplines and contexts quite different to those of today. This has been true at a practical as well as intellectual level. To uncover the history of early modern scholarship is to consider the range of activities it encompassed, which included undertaking a *peregrinatio academia*, engaging in learned correspondence, compiling catalogues, collecting books and manuscripts, and editing and commenting on ancient texts. The importance of these practices has meant that rather than considering published contributions in isolation, scholars increasingly recognise the necessity of reconstructing how intellectual life took place in the full range of its contexts.²⁵

²⁴ Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship*, vol. I: *Textual Criticism and Exegesis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983); Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship*, vol. II: *Historical Chronology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Anthony Grafton, 'Protestant versus Prophet: Isaac Casaubon on Hermes Trismegistus', in his *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in the Age of the New Science 1450-1700* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 145-161; Anthony Grafton, 'Correctores corruptores? Notes on the Social History of Editing', in *Editing Texts/Texte Edieren*, ed. Glenn W. Most (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1998), pp. 54-76; and most recently, Anthony Grafton and Joanna Weinberg, *"I have always loved the Holy Tongue." Isaac Casaubon, the Jews, and a Forgotten Chapter in Renaissance Scholarship* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011); Anthony Grafton, *The Culture of Correction in Renaissance Europe* (London: The British Library, 2011). I do not take Grafton alone to have inaugurated or contributed to this field, as references below will indicate. His work, however, represents the most significant contribution by a single scholar to the discipline as a whole.

²⁵ See, for example, H. Zedelmaier and M. Mulsow, eds., *Die Praktiken der Gelehrsamkeit in der frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 2001); Mario Biagioli, *Galileo, Courtier: The Practice of Science in the Culture of Absolutism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

One new focus has been the institutional contexts that fostered scholarship, in royal or princely courts, ecclesiastical libraries, universities, monasteries, and law courts. As this range of settings indicates, scholarship was integral to the intellectual culture of early modern Europe. In few areas has this been more clearly demonstrated than in the study of ecclesiastical history and patristics. Momigliano's thesis that the ecclesiastical use of documentary evidence led to innovations in historical method has been deepened by studies that have shown how this occurred in concrete and specific cases, as scholarship was remodelled and redirected to suit confessional interests and priorities.²⁶ These studies have gone further than show that scholars simply wrote with the concerns of their patrons or ecclesiastical superiors foremost in their mind. Instead, it has become increasingly evident that confessional or political concerns were shared by the scholars themselves, and shaped their work.²⁷

This has had the positive effect of underlining just how ecumenical early modern scholarship was, embracing Jewish, Christian, and oriental antiquity in addition to Greco-Roman. In some cases the advance of modern scholarship itself has made the concerns of early modern scholars more readily appreciable: the work of Momigliano, Glenn Bowersock, and Peter Brown, among others, has demonstrated the degree to which the centuries that gripped early modern scholars were likewise central ones in the history of the Mediterranean world.²⁸ Isaac Casaubon's interests in later Greek texts, and especially his interest in the study of the Greek Fathers, have become understandable in ways that eluded the generations following Pattison.²⁹

There is still, however, a tension at the heart of some of these works, as historians of scholarship grapple with how far contemporary political, ecclesiological, or theological concerns stood in tension with the 'rhythms and codes' of scholarship.³⁰ The clearest example of this tension has perhaps been the field of early modern Arabic studies. Reflecting on the work of Jan Loop on Johann Heinrich Hottinger, Scott

²⁶ Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), esp. pp. 132-152. See, especially, Jean-Louis Quantin, *Le Catholicisme classique et les Pères d'Église* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1999); Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity. The Construction of the Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Simon Ditchfield, *Liturgy, sanctity, and history in Tridentine Italy: Pietro Maria Campi and the preservation of the particular* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

²⁷ See, most recently, Jan Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger: Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

²⁸ See, in general, Glen Bowersock, Peter Brown, and Oleg Grabar, eds., *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Post-Classical World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

²⁹ Grafton and Weinberg, "I have always loved the Holy Tongue".

³⁰ Jean-Louis Quantin and Christopher Ligota, 'Introduction', in *History of scholarship: a selection of papers from the Seminar on the History of Scholarship held annually at the Warburg Institute*, C. R. Ligota and J.-L. Quantin eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 12.

Mandelbrote has observed that one cannot avoid the conclusion that Arabic studies were in a sense 'sanitised' by being brought into the fold of biblical scholarship and ecclesiastical history, thereby diverting students from the study of Islamic history, philology or literature proper.³¹

Yet, historians of scholarship have been too keen to identify moments at which purely scholarly concerns appeared to triumph over confessional ones. When Loop underlined the extent to which Hottinger's scholarship was directed by his 'divine mission', he could not avoid implicitly praising Hottinger's contemporary, Louis Cappel, as 'one of the few exceptional figures in the history of scholarship' who had freed his 'biblical work from ideological baggage'.³² By challenging Loop's interpretation of Cappel's work, the present study will show how doubtful it is that learned and confessional concerns can be separated in early modern biblical criticism. Throughout the seventeenth century any statement about the status or history of the different versions of the Old Testament text had confessional implications, and contemporary scholars worked firmly within that context. As we will see, however, this did not necessarily limit scholars to repeating their own version of confessional orthodoxy but could, instead, lead to more sophisticated treatments of the biblical text from within a confessionally-understood perspective. This dissertation will suggest that the separation of criticism from confessional concerns was a result of, rather than a cause of or factor in, the history of seventeenth-century criticism.

The tension between scholarly and confessional concerns also had implications for early modern intellectual culture. Even the most historically sensitive accounts of early modern scholarly interaction have until very recently maintained this is best understood through the concept of the 'Republic of Letters', a supranational and cosmopolitan network that allowed scholars to cross and even transcend political and religious boundaries.³³ The main question facing historians has been whether the scholars participated in the interests of Erasmian toleration, or whether they were chiefly interested in their own scholarly preoccupations.³⁴

³¹ Scott Mandelbrote, 'Jan Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger: Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Seventeenth Century* (review)', *The Library* 16 (2015), p. 205.

³² Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, p. 112.

³³ Anthony Grafton, 'A Sketch Map of a Lost Continent: the Republic of Letters,' *Republics of Letters* 1 (2009), pp. 12-13, is a judicious account that still maintains this point. The same can likewise be said for, Quantin and Ligota, 'Introduction', p. 12. It has, however, been Quantin's work that more than any other has increasingly shown the limits of this approach. See, generally, Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity*.

³⁴ For the former, see, Paul Dibon, 'Les échanges épistolaire dans l'Europe savante du XVII^e siècle', *Revue de Synthèse* 81 (1976), pp. 31-50; Françoise Waquet, 'Qu'est-ce que la République des Lettres? Essai de

This has led to two problems. First, historians have frequently focused attention on scholars who appear to fit one of these models. Second, and more important, it has meant that disputes in the 'Republic of Letters' have frequently been treated as the breaking of a shared set of personal codes and social norms, rather than real points of intellectual disagreement. By promoting a sense that seventeenth-century scholars shared a common set of interests and concerns it has led to an overly anodyne treatment of many of the period's the most important intellectual disagreements. It has also obscured the degree to which scholars used and exploited learned communication for intellectual objectives that went beyond purely scholarly concerns. In charting the course of study and debate over the Bible that spanned the seventeenth century, this thesis as a whole will demonstrate the shortcomings of an approach that conceptualises scholarly life principally through the notion of the 'Republic of Letters'.

4

Although this dissertation contends that the study of seventeenth-century biblical criticism has yet to be tackled with the same degree of sophistication as the history of other aspects of early modern scholarship – notably chronology, patristics, and Arabic studies – there have been a series of important scholarly contributions that cannot be overlooked. The single most important work on the subject is François Laplanche's monumental *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire* (1987).³⁵ Laplanche's study, however, although particularly strong on Louis Cappel, is marked by a reluctance to consider the work of Catholic scholars independent of Protestants ones, a point exemplified by his cursory treatment of Jean Morin and Richard Simon. Another seminal contribution has been

sémantique historique', *Bibliothèque de l'École de Chartes* 147 (1989), pp. 473-502; Hans Bots and Françoise Waquet, *La République des Lettres* (Berlin: De Boeck, 1997); Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture*, pp. 469-535. For those who have claimed that it was primarily a community of scholars, interested in the scholarly concerns of the community as a whole, see, Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: conduct and community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 1-10, 226-243; April Shelford, *Transforming the Republic of Letters: Pierre-Daniel Huet and European Intellectual life, 1650-1720* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2007), esp. pp. 1-40; Noel Malcolm, 'Hobbes and the European Republic of Letters', in his *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), esp. pp. 540-541; Nicholas Dew, *Orientalism in Louis XIV's France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 16-40; Dmitri Levitin, 'John Spencer's *De legibus Hebraeorum* (1683-1685) and Enlightened Sacred History: A New Interpretation', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 76 (2013), pp. 49-92.

³⁵ François Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré et l'histoire. Érudits et politiques Protestants devant la Bible en France au XVII^e siècle* (Amsterdam & Maarssen: Holland University Press, 1986).

Noel Malcolm's essay on 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible', which dispelled the misconception that La Peyrère, Hobbes and Spinoza were making original contributions to biblical scholarship when they denied that Moses could have been the author of the Pentateuch. Rather, Malcolm argued, their contributions should be understood as derivative of the tradition of detailed scholarship that ran from Andreas Masius through Cappel to Simon.³⁶ The point was wholly persuasive, and supplies the premise of this thesis; but it is a starting-point not a substitute for further research into that tradition.

Two further scholars whose work in this field must be mentioned are Scott Mandelbrote and Nicholas Hardy. Mandelbrote's series of essays on the history of the Septuagint now comprise the most important body of work assembled by a single scholar in the field.³⁷ My work will attempt to extend Mandelbrote's by showing how the study of the Septuagint was connected to that of the Hebrew and Latin versions. These different versions of the biblical text presented more than critical problems, as arguments for or against one edition or translation also entailed a series of confessional implications. Mandelbrote's work has never overlooked this. Yet it will be argued here that it is only by studying the history of scholarly debate over these different versions that the full ramifications of specific arguments relating to each version can be grasped.

This point has in part been brought out by Hardy's incisive examination of Cappel's and Morin's work, made in a chapter of his wide-ranging thesis on the 'ars critica' in early modern England.³⁸ This study extends Hardy's work on both these scholars. Where Hardy's discussion of Morin's work was relatively brief, and made as a contrast to the work of the Scottish humanist Patrick Young, this thesis studies the full range of Morin's publications. Hardy's analysis of Cappel most notably demonstrated

³⁶ Noel Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible: The History of a Subversive Idea', in his *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 383-431. Two other scholars' work should briefly be mentioned. Jürgen C. H. Lebram, 'Ein Streit um die Hebräische Bibel und die Septuaginta', in *Leiden University in the Seventeenth Century: An Exchange of Learning*, Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer and G. H. M. Posthumous Meisjes eds. (Leiden: Brill, 1975), pp. 21-63, contains important insights but does not develop these at length, nor use much material beyond the available printed sources. Henk J. de Jonge, 'The study of the New Testament', in *Leiden University in the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 65-109, is still the best account of seventeenth-century New Testament criticism, which largely lies beyond the scope of this study.

³⁷ Scott Mandelbrote, 'The authority of the Word: manuscript, print and the text of the Bible in seventeenth-century England', in *The Uses of Script and Print, 1300-1700*, Julia C. Crick and Alexandra Walsham eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 135-56; Scott Mandelbrote, 'English Scholarship and the Greek Text of the Old Testament, 1620-1720: the impact of Codex Alexandrinus', in *Scripture and Scholarship in Early Modern England*, Ariel Hessayon and Nicholas Keene eds. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 74-93; Scott Mandelbrote, 'Origen against Jerome in Early Modern Europe', in *Patristic Tradition and Intellectual Paradigms in the Seventeenth-Century*, Silke-Petra Bergjan and Karla Pollmann eds. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), pp. 105-135; Scott Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', in *Isaac Vossius (1618-1689) between Science and Scholarship*, Eric Jorink and Dirk van Miert eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 85-117.

³⁸ N. J. S. Hardy, 'The *Ars critica* in Early Modern England', Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oxford, 2012.

that Cappel's central objective was not the application of antiquarian and erudite scholarship to the Bible, but an argument for the use of a specific critical methodology drawn from secular and New Testament criticism. The study presented here agrees with Hardy's central insight, but extends it in two principal ways. First, it studies in detail an extensive range of published and unpublished texts not considered in Hardy's work. Second, it demonstrates the process by which, in the period that followed the *Critica sacra*'s publication, Cappel attempted to modify his central arguments to make them acceptable to his Protestant contemporaries in the context of Old Testament criticism.

5

The problems confronted by seventeenth-century biblical scholars in the period before Richard Simon had their roots in Hellenistic Alexandria. The translation of the Scriptures from Hebrew into Greek and the subsequent adoption of that Greek translation by the early Church began a process whereby the relationship between the different versions of the same texts in different languages became entangled with the history of the different religious groups, who claimed their translation as the authentic witness to revelation.³⁹ The anxiety evoked by the existence of these different versions of the same texts in different languages was shared by Jews and Christians.⁴⁰ On the Jewish side this resulted in the production of new Greek versions of the Hebrew Bible, the most famous of which have become known to posterity by the names of their supposed translators, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion.⁴¹ Christians, united in the first four centuries by their use of the Septuagint, from an early stage appealed to the superiority of their Scriptures to those of their Jewish adversaries.⁴² They made two mutually reinforcing claims: the Hebrew Scriptures had been altered or corrupted by their Jewish custodians,

³⁹ See, generally, Tessa Rajak, *Translation and Survival: The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁴⁰ Theodor Dunkelgrün, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture: The Confluence of Textual Traditions in the Making of the Antwerp Polyglot Bible (1568-1573)', Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, 2012, p. 2.

⁴¹ On which, see, Natalio Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible*, trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 109-153. The extent to which the Jews ceased using the Septuagint completely is increasingly being challenged. See, Nicholas de Lange, 'Jewish Greek Bible versions', in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. I: *From 600 to 1450*, Richard Marsden and E. Ann Matter eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 56-68.

⁴² Martin Hengel, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture. Its Prehistory and the Problem of its Canon* (Edinburgh and New York: T. & T. Clark, 2002).

and the Christians' divinely inspired Septuagint represented both a more correct text and also the true witness to God's revelation.⁴³

The problem these multiple versions created was first confronted systematically in Greco-Roman Late Antiquity. Through the use of extensive scholarly and financial resources, a large library, and the relatively recent technical innovation of the codex, Origen of Alexandria prepared a series of codices that contained the Old Testament in six parallel columns.⁴⁴ Origen not only presented these different versions of the text, but applied text-critical techniques to them. In the Septuagint column he noted with an asterisk a word or passage in the Hebrew Bible absent in the Greek and provided an obelus for the reverse, providing the text with a critical apparatus that was as powerful as it was unprecedented. Origen's Hexapla made vivid the differences between the ancient versions, enabling comparative textual study on a vast scale. Its potential would be confirmed some two centuries later when Jerome of Stridon would use the same library and materials for his own trilingual scholarship.⁴⁵

The late fifteenth century offered a striking parallel to third and fourth century Caesarea: Byzantine scholars and Oriental Christians along with Sephardic refugees brought their manuscripts and linguistic skills to Italy, and from there to Northern Europe, while technical innovations in the field of printing quickened and widened the pace and scope of learning's transmission. With Origen and Jerome as their models, Renaissance humanists, foremost among them Desiderius Erasmus and Lorenzo Valla, applied the philological techniques they used on the Greek and Roman classics to the biblical texts.⁴⁶ In the fifty years between 1515 and 1565 multilingual scholarship was

⁴³ Hengel, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture*, pp. 25-56.

⁴⁴ Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2006), esp. pp. 86-132. For the innovation of the codex, see Colin H. Roberts and T. C. Skeat, *The Birth of the Codex* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).

⁴⁵ Adam Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Megan Williams, *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

⁴⁶ John Monfasani, *Greeks and Latins in Renaissance Italy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); Alastair Hamilton, 'Eastern Churches and Western Scholarship', in *Rome Reborn: The Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture*, ed. Anthony Grafton (Washington D.C.: The Library of Congress and the Vatican Library, 1993), pp. 225-250; On early printed editions of the Bible see, Paul Saenger and Kimberly van Kampen eds., *The Bible as a Book: The First Printed Editions* (London: The British Library, 1999); Paul Needham, 'The Discovery and Invention of the Gutenberg Bible, 1455-1805', in *The Medieval Book: Glosses from Friends and Colleagues of Christopher de Hamel*, James H. Marrow, Richard A. Linenthal and William Noel eds. (t Goy-Houten: Hes & De Graaf, 2010), pp. 208-241. On Origen and Jerome in early modern Europe, see most recently, Mandelbrote, 'Origen against Jerome in Early Modern Europe', pp. 105-135; and more generally, Jerry H. Bentley, *Humanists and Holy Writ: New Testament Scholarship in the Renaissance* (Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press, 1983); Alastair Hamilton, 'Humanists and the Bible', in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. Jill Kraye (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 100-117; Henk J. de Jonge, 'Novum Testamentum a nobis verum: The essence of Erasmus' edition of the New Testament', *Journal of Theological Studies* N. S. 35 (1984), pp. 394-413.

institutionalised in libraries, colleges, and universities, spread through the exchange of learned letters, and culminated in remarkable polyglot editions of the Bible.⁴⁷

In each context that humanist learning developed it was tied to a specific institution, a specific set of scholars, and, especially in the case of biblical scholarship, specific religious positions. Few examples illustrate these facts better than the Complutensian Polyglot Bible, commissioned by Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros. Describing the work's *mise-en-page* in the preface to the work, Cisneros outlined how the version of Jerome had been placed between the 'Synagogue and the Church of the East', the Roman Church's Latin between the 'two thieves' either side, the Hebrew and the Greek.⁴⁸ This had not prevented critical study of the texts, and Cisneros himself also underlined the efforts to which he and the team of scholars he had employed had gone to in order to present the 'most correct' and 'most ancient' manuscripts.⁴⁹ They had not merely reproduced these manuscripts but taken on the text-critical arguments of Jerome, Valla, and Erasmus, in order to improve the versions they presented, which in the case of the Old Testament had required recourse to the Hebrew, and in the case of the New Testament, to the Greek.⁵⁰

In the years following 1550 further tensions were created as different confessions came to emphasise the authority and authenticity of particular versions of the biblical text, and consequently their superiority to the other texts and traditions. The standard Protestant position was that the Hebrew text – in practice the Masoretic vowel-pointed text printed in Jacob ben Chaim's second edition of the *Biblia Rabbinica*, published in Venice in 1525 – was the inspired and inerrant word of God.⁵¹ The Catholic counterpart

⁴⁷ For the trilingual colleges, see, Basil Hall, 'The Trilingual College of San Ildefonso and the Making of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible', in *Studies in Church History*, ed. Geoffrey J. Cuming (Leiden: Brill, 1969), pp. 114-146; Henri de Vocht, *History of the Foundation and Rise of the Collegium Trilingue Lovaniense, 1517-1550* (Leuven: Bibliothèque de l'Université, 1951-5); André Tuilier ed., *Histoire du Collège de France*, vol. I: *La Création (1530-1560)* (Paris: Fayard, 2006).

⁴⁸ Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, 'Prologus ad lectorem', in *Vetus testamentum multiplici lingua nunc primo impressum et imprimis Pentateuchus Hebraico Graeco atque Chaldaico idiomate adiuncta unicuiusque sua latina interpretatione* (Alcalá de Henáres: Arnaldo Guillén de Brocar [1517]), vol. I, sig. iii^v, 'Mediam autem inter has latinam beati Hieronymi translationem velut inter Synagogam et Orientalem Ecclesiam posuimus: tamquam duos hinc et inde latrones medium autem Iesum hoc est Romanam sive Latinam ecclesiam collocantes'.

⁴⁹ De Cisneros, 'Prologus ad Lectorem', sig. iii^r, 'Ubi cumque latinorum codicum varietas est: aut depravatae lectionis suspitio (id quod librorum imperitia simul et negligentia frequentissime videmus) ad primam scripturae originem recurrendum est: sicut beatus Hieronymus et Augustinus ac caeteri ecclesiastici tractatores admonent: ita ut librorum Veteris Testamenti sinceritas ex Hebraica Veritate, novis autem ex Graecis exemplaribus examinetur'.

⁵⁰ See, Dunkelgrün, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture', pp. 28-39, who also provides a useful summary and critique of twentieth-century secondary literature.

⁵¹ Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible', p. 414.

to this claim originated in the fourth session of the Council of Trent, when it decreed that the Vulgate was the Roman Catholic Church's authoritative text.

At no point, it should be recognised, were these general positions held by all the members of either confession, and however useful they may be as rough outlines of confessional positions, they do not express the opinions of a good number of Catholic or Protestant scholars. What they did present were points of tension, where disputes could occur within and between confessions. Biblical humanism became increasingly difficult to practise in late sixteenth-century Spain and Italy. Italian biblical humanists, or those based in Italy such as Andreas Masius, came under great pressure when papal policy turned against Hebraic studies, and especially the use of the Talmud, after 1550.⁵² These problems only increased as León de Castro campaigned against the work of Benito Arias Montano, whose Antwerp Polyglot Bible, de Castro argued, threatened the infallibility of the Vulgate as it had been established by the Council of Trent.⁵³ Such apparent tensions between erudition and theology could be felt by Reformed scholars too, especially when historical studies stepped outside the limits established by theological exegesis. While Joseph Scaliger's work in technical chronology could by implication question the Old Testament's inerrancy, even he was unwilling to publish his view that what came to be called the *textus receptus* of the New Testament would require a new recension from earlier textual witnesses.⁵⁴

Theodor Dunkelgrün has argued in this context that early modern Catholic scholars had to navigate a conflict between two conceptions of the biblical text: the first, from 'tradition', according to which the authority and authenticity of a particular version was derived from the magisterium of the Church; the second, from 'history', whereby the authority of a text was derived from the philological study of its translation and scribal

⁵² Fausto Parente, 'The Index, the Holy Office, the Condemnation of the Talmud, and the Publication of Clement VIII's Index,' in *Church, Censorship and Culture in Early Modern Italy*, ed. Gigliola Fragnito (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 163-193; Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, *The Censor, the Editor, and the Text: The Catholic Church and the Shaping of the Jewish Canon in the Sixteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Dunkelgrün, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture', pp. 364-381.

⁵³ Dunkelgrün, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture', pp. 229-236. He also recognised it could bring into question the divine inspiration of the Septuagint, and with it the significant parts of Apostolic and patristic literature

⁵⁴ Antony Grafton, 'Chronology and its discontents in Renaissance Europe: the vicissitudes of a tradition', in *Time: Historians and Ethnographies*, D. Owen Hughes and T. R. Trautmann eds. (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1995), pp. 139-66; Anthony Grafton, 'Scaliger's Chronology: Philology, Astronomy, World History', in *Defenders of the Text*, pp. 104-144; and, most recently Anthony Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', in *Isaac Vossius (1618-1689) between Science and Scholarship*, Eric Jorink and Dirk van Miert eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2012), esp. pp. 43-49; Henk J. de Jonge, 'The Study of the New Testament in the Dutch Universities, 1575-1700', *History of Universities* 1 (1981), 113-129.

transmission.⁵⁵ As Dunkelgrün presents it, the vitality and vehemence of the debates of this period can only be understood in the context of pious participants realising that these conceptions are 'logically irreconcilable'.⁵⁶ This may be true in the sixteenth century. This dissertation will argue, however, that in the first third of the seventeenth century a view emerged that did reconcile these positions, as Jean Morin showed how a thoroughgoing notion of the Church's role guaranteeing the text's authority and authenticity could provide the foundation on which the textual criticism of the Old Testament was justified.

Morin's work was a challenge to his contemporaries: it demanded that the texts of the Bible be considered in historical and critical terms and that the result of doing so would be to recognise the superiority of the versions used by the Catholic Church. Much of the subsequent half century of scholarship on the Old Testament took place as a debate about how far Morin's presentation of this problem led to the answer he proposed. What made the debates of this period especially dramatic, however, was that the challenge posed by Morin's work coincided with the circulation and then publication of Louis Cappel's *Critica sacra*, in which Cappel attempted to refound Protestant criticism of the Old Testament by incorporating methods of secular and New Testament criticism. For subsequent scholars, especially, Johannes Buxtorf II, James Ussher, and Brian Walton, the challenge was to combine the compelling aspects of Cappel's case, but do so without succumbing to the dilemma posed by Morin. The great problem these Protestant scholars faced was how to write a history of the Hebrew text that did not simultaneously appear to undermine its authority. The scholar who finally met Morin's challenge, while also integrating the central insights of Cappel's work into an account of the history of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, was the Catholic, Richard Simon.

6

This dissertation is made up of six chapters. Chapter One considers Morin's early work as an editor and critic of the biblical text in early-seventeenth-century Paris. It shows Morin's editions of the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch have to be seen from two perspectives. First, as the cultural products of lay and ecclesiastical patronage. Second, as

⁵⁵ Dunkelgrün, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture', pp. 40-41, Dunkelgrün does imply that this dichotomy existed for all scholars but I do not think it entirely captures the position of Protestant scholars.

⁵⁶ Dunkelgrün, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture', p. 41.

intellectual products of Morin's innovative text-critical approach to biblical scholarship, formed in the context of his confessional preoccupations.

This account of Morin's early career is the basis of Chapter Two, which examines his major critical works of the 1630s, the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae* (1631), the *Exercitationes biblicae* (1633), and the *Diatriba elenctica de sinceritate hebraei graecique textus dignoscenda* (1639). By analysing Morin's treatment of Greek and Hebrew textual traditions separately the chapter demonstrates how and why Morin's criticism posed such a challenge to his Protestant and Catholic contemporaries. This point is brought out by an analysis of his early correspondence with Patrick Young on the Septuagint, and his arguments with the Protestants Arnold Boate and Francis Taylor and the Catholic Siméon de Muis on the Hebrew text.

Chapter Three considers the origin, content, and publication history of Louis Cappel's *Critica sacra* (1650). The chapter has three sections: the first shows how Cappel's work must be understood in the context of the period 1610-1634; the second demonstrates that the significance of Cappel's work lies in his attempt to apply the methods of secular and New Testament criticism to the Old Testament; the third, how the problems Cappel faced attempting to print the *Critica sacra* were in large part owing to the Protestant and Catholic reception of Morin's work.

This provides the setting for Chapter Four, which studies the responses to Cappel's *Critica sacra* by two Protestant scholars, Johannes Buxtorf II and James Ussher. The objections raised by Buxtorf II and Ussher inaugurated the start of a complex process through which scholars integrated the fundamental objectives of the *Critica sacra* into the confessionalised setting of Old Testament scholarship. The chapter further shows, however, that Buxtorf II and Ussher differed extensively from one another. Where Buxtorf II rejected any appeal to the role of the ancient versions in emending the contemporary Hebrew text, Ussher in contrast accepted Cappel's thesis in a modified form, rejecting only any recourse to the Septuagint or Samaritan Pentateuch. The chapter also argues that far from simply repeating timeworn claims about the integrity of the Hebrew text, Buxtorf II recognised the extent of textual variation within the Hebrew tradition. Drawing extensively on earlier Jewish scholarship, including the work of Menachem di Lonzano, Buxtorf II's proposals for how to edit the Hebrew Bible laid the groundwork for later scholars such as Johannes Leusden and Everardus van der Hooght.

Chapter Five shows that if the first half of the 1650s was dominated by responses to the *Critica sacra*, the agenda for the second was instead set by three scholars who accepted

Cappel's central insights. In the *Prolegomena* to the London Polyglot Bible (1653-7) Brian Walton became the first Protestant scholar to use Cappel's work as the basis for a new Protestant *philologia sacra*. Jean Morin's final publication, the long-awaited Part II of the *Exercitationes biblicae* (1660), presented the first detailed history of Jewish learning. Isaac Vossius, meanwhile, mounted a series of arguments in favour of the Septuagint against the Masoretic Hebrew text. The result of these studies was twofold. First, the history and status of the Masoretic Hebrew text was firmly brought into doubt, even among Protestant scholars. Second, by the mid-1660s a new context for the discipline of biblical scholarship had emerged, as scholars integrated the central insights of Cappel's work into the confessional field of Old Testament criticism as practised by Morin, Ussher, and Buxtorf II.

Chapter Six shows how these developments form the essential context for understanding Richard Simon's *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*. It argues that Simon's central achievement was to refute the arguments of Morin and Vossius by providing the first extensive history of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. This account of Simon's work is in part based on the first scholarly analysis of the extant remains of Simon's own library, now held by the Bibliothèque Municipale in Rouen. In studying the annotations made in BMR A 559, Simon's copy of Menasseh ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica* (1631-5), the chapter shows the degree to which Simon's work was rooted in an extensive study of the Hebrew manuscripts held by the library of the Oratory in Paris. In showing how far Simon's work was based on manuscript research, this study corrects earlier scholarship that mischaracterised the relationship between Simon and his scholarly predecessors.

Chapter 1

Jean Morin's editions of the Bible in Catholic Intellectual Culture, c. 1625-1630

There was 'no one', Simon wrote in the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, who had written more, and with more learning, on biblical criticism, than his predecessor at the Oratory, Jean Morin.⁵⁷ Beginning with an edition of the Septuagint with parallel Latin translation in 1628, continuing through a series of studies of the Samaritan, Greek, and Latin versions of the Bible in the 1630s, and culminating in the posthumous publication of the Part Two of his *Exercitationes biblicae* in 1660 on the Hebrew text and tradition, Morin's work interrogated the history and text-critical status of all the principal texts of the Bible. Morin's life and work, however, have only been the subject of one complete study, Simon's own '[V]ita Johannis Morini'.⁵⁸ Following this, only Paul Auvray's short article has covered the whole of Morin's career.⁵⁹ Studies by François Laplanche, Peter Miller, Noel Malcolm, and Jan Loop have dealt, in varying degrees of detail and accuracy, with Morin's early works on the Old Testament text. Unfortunately, these suffer from at least two shortcomings.⁶⁰ First, for Morin's correspondence they rely on the letters published in the *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis* (1682), without considering the important additional letters and documents held by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, and the Biblioteca Laurentiana Medicea. Second, they persistently attribute to Morin a number of opinions, most notably that the Hebrew Bible was intentionally corrupted by its Jewish custodians, which were by no means his

⁵⁷ Richard Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (Rotterdam: Reinier Leers, 1685) p. 464, 'Il n'y a personne qui ait plus écrit sur la Critique de la Bible, & même avec plus d'érudition, que le P. Morin Prêtre de l'Oratoire'. Unless specified otherwise, all references to the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* are to this edition.

⁵⁸ [Richard Simon], 'Vita Johannis Morini', in *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, ed. Richard Simon, (London: George Wells, 1682), pp. 1-117.

⁵⁹ Paul Auvray, 'Jean Morin (1591-1659)', *Revue Biblique* 66 (1959), pp. 397-413.

⁶⁰ François Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, esp. pp. 227-9, 236-7, 315-322; Peter N. Miller, 'An Antiquary between Philology and History: Peiresc and the Samaritans', in *History and the Disciplines: The Reclassification of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Donald R. Kelley (New York: The University of Rochester Press, 1997), pp. 163-184; Peter N. Miller, 'Les origines de la Bible polyglotte de Paris: *Philologia sacra*, contre-réforme et raison d'état', *XVII^e Siècle* 194 (1997), pp. 57-66; Peter N. Miller, 'Making the Paris Polyglot Bible: Humanism and Orientalism in the Early Seventeenth Century', in *Die Europäische Gelehrtenrepublik im Zeitalter des Konfessionalismus / The European Republic of Letters in the Age of Confessionalism*, ed. Herbert Jaumann (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001), pp. 59-85; Peter N. Miller, 'A Philologist, a traveller and an antiquary rediscover the Samaritans in seventeenth-century Paris, Rome and Aix: Jean Morin, Pietro della Valle and N.-C. Fabri de Peiresc', in Helmut Zedelmaier and Martin Mulsow eds., *Die Praktiken der Gelehrsamkeit in der frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 2001), pp. 123-47; Noel Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible', esp. pp. 418-20; Jan Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, esp. pp. 102-122.

most important or innovative arguments and which changed significantly during the course of his career.⁶¹

The shortcomings of these earlier studies have important consequences for understanding the scope of Morin's own work and ambitions and also developments in seventeenth-century biblical criticism more generally. Morin's work posed a serious challenge to his contemporaries. He not only insisted that the Bible be subject to critical scrutiny, but that the result of doing so would be to recognise that the texts of the Catholic Church, and above all the Septuagint, were preferable to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Morin's argument mattered because it subsequently framed how his contemporaries understood the confessional significance of the text and history of the Old Testament. Much of the next half a century of biblical scholarship, as we will see, can be best understood as an extended attempt to come to terms with, and eventually go beyond, the problems Morin had set. As a prelude to a sustained analysis of Morin's critical studies of the biblical text, this chapter considers the place of Morin's work in the broader intellectual and print-context of Counter-Reformation France and charts the origin and the significance of his editions of the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch.

I. Editing a Catholic Septuagint

1

The process of reform, renewal, and reassertion that occurred in the late sixteenth-century Roman Catholic Church included a vast philological and editorial programme to publish authorised Catholic editions of works that underpinned the faith, namely the Bible, the works of the Fathers, and the liturgical texts of the Roman rite and liturgy.⁶² The origins of this project were in Rome, but by the early seventeenth century the ambition was held by leading figures in the French episcopacy, notably including Morin's first patron, the Cardinal Du Perron. Morin's edition of the Septuagint was a product of

⁶¹ Two exceptions that avoid this shortcoming are Mandelbrote, 'English Scholarship and the Greek Text', pp. 74-93; Hardy, 'Ars critica'.

⁶² See, P. Petitmengin, 'Les éditions patristiques de la Contre-Réforme romaine', in *I Padri sotto il torchio. Le edizioni dell'antichità cristiana nei secoli XV-XVI*, ed. M. Cortesi (Florence: Sismel, 2002), pp. 3-31. See, more generally, from an extensive literature, Ditchfield, *Liturgy, sanctity, and history in Tridentine Italy*; Quantin, *Le Catholicisme classique*, esp. pp. 25-64; Jean-Louis Quantin, 'Du Chrysostome latin au Chrysostome grec: Une histoire européenne (1588-1613)', in *Chrysostomosbilder in 1600 Jahren: Facetten der Wirkungsgeschichte eines Kirchenwaters*, eds. Martin Wallraff and Rudolf Brändle (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), pp. 267-346.

this culture, in which scholarly preoccupations met the demands of confessional polemic and Church patronage. In the preface to the work, however, Morin did much more than merely present the text: his argument for the text-critical superiority of the Septuagint in comparison to the Hebrew text of the Bible – one marked by the use of new evidence drawn from the Samaritan Pentateuch – represented a new and challenging development in biblical scholarship.

2

Morin had entered the erudite culture of Counter-Reformation France following his conversion from Protestantism. Born into a Huguenot family in Blois, Morin studied Latin and Greek at La Rochelle and Hebrew and Theology at Leiden, then taught by Wilhelm Coddæus and Franciscus Gomarus respectively.⁶³ His faith shaken by disputes over the theology of Jacob Arminius, Morin returned to France to continue his studies in Paris, where he converted to Catholicism and entered the circle of Cardinal Jacques Davy du Perron and then Bishop Sébastien Zament, before becoming a member of the recently-founded Congregation of the Oratory in March 1618.⁶⁴ Between 1618 and his taking up near-permanent residence in the Oratory in Paris in the late 1620s, Morin was made Superior of the Oratory's house in Orléans, transferred to take up the same position in Angers in order to assist the local Bishop, Charles Miron, and spent a short time in England in the retinue of Henrietta Maria.⁶⁵

Morin impressed his superiors, both in the Oratory and in the French Catholic Church. The Oratory's founder and Superior General, Pierre de Bérulle, wrote on several occasions to Guillaume Gibieuf, then Superior of the Paris house, praising Morin's abilities and indicating he should expect higher things.⁶⁶ Miron also wrote frequently

⁶³ Auvray, 'Jean Morin', pp. 397-398. For further information regarding Morin's family in Blois, see, J. Bernier, *Histoire de Blois* (Paris: François Muguet, 1683), pp. 573-582. This early biography can be complemented with the generally reliable, Louis Batterel, 'Jean Morin', in *Mémoires domestique pour servir à l'histoire de l'Oratoire*, vol. II: *Les PP. de Condren et Bourgoing*, A.-M.-P. Ingold and E. Bonnardet eds. (Paris: Alphonse Picard et fils, 1903), pp. 435-468, though note much of the information in these still relies on Simon's account. For more on Hebrew teaching in Leiden at this time, see J. C. H. Lebram, 'Hebraïsche Studien zwischen Ideal und Wirklichkeit an der Universität Leiden in den Jahren 1575-1619', *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 56 (1975-1976), pp. 317-357.

⁶⁴ Auvray, 'Jean Morin', p. 398. For Morin's entry to the Oratoire, see, ANF, M623, fol. 49^r, where it is recorded Morin entered the Congregation on the 19 March, rather than the 16 March given by Auvray.

⁶⁵ Auvray, 'Jean Morin', pp. 398-399. On the Oratory's house in Angers, see, Jacques Maillard, *L'Oratoire à Angers aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1975).

⁶⁶ Jean Dagens, ed., *Correspondance du Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle*, vol. II: 1619-1624 (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer 1937), §449. Pierre de Bérulle to Guillaume Gibieuf, 18 October 1623, p. 408.

whenever Morin's talents were required elsewhere to ensure he would soon return to his service.⁶⁷ It was in this context that Morin's first publication established his footing as a scholar by, as Miller has put it, using ecclesiastical history to unite the heirs of de Thou with those of Bérulle.⁶⁸ His *Exercitationum ecclesiasticarum* (1626), dedicated to Pope Urban VIII, had two sections that each contributed to this end.⁶⁹ The first examined the history of Papal authority, establishing its temporal priority and subsequent primacy but also giving due regard to the powers held by the patriarchs and primates in the Eastern and Western empires.⁷⁰ Morin's Gallican readers would no doubt have approved the significance given to the Primate of Arles.⁷¹ The second of Morin's sections was his first foray in what became an abiding interest: the history of penitence. This required less deft balancing: it was enough to show that there was nothing currently ordered or practised in the Catholic Church that had not been approved by the Fathers and Apostles.⁷²

If one of Morin's objectives was to establish his reputation, he undoubtedly succeeded. As early as May 1626 Claude Bertin, the Oratory's representative in Rome, wrote to Bérulle with the rumour that the Pope himself had enjoyed reading Morin's

⁶⁷ Dagens, ed., *Correspondance de Bérulle*, vol. II, §449. Pierre de Bérulle to Guillaume Gibieuf, 11 August 1624, p. 484. For Miron's further demands for Morin's return, see Jean Dagens, ed., *Correspondance de Pierre de Bérulle*, vol. III: 1625-1629 (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1939), §548. Pierre de Bérulle to Guillaume Gibieuf, 15 August 1625, p. 68, written from Oxford where Bérulle, like Morin, was with Henrietta Maria.

⁶⁸ Miller, 'Making the Paris Polyglot', pp. 72-73.

⁶⁹ Jean Morin, *Exercitationum ecclesiasticarum* (Paris: Antoine Estienne, 1626), sigs. aij^r-aiij^v.

⁷⁰ Morin, *Exercitationum ecclesiasticarum*, pp. 40-45.

⁷¹ Morin, *Exercitationum ecclesiasticarum*, pp. 184-188. Owing to reasons of space I cannot here examine at length the problems these and other questions in ecclesiastical history would soon cause Morin following the publication of his *Histoire de la délivrance de l'Eglise chrétienne par l'empereur Constantin* (1630). The Pope and other Cardinals in Rome were particularly affronted by the work's frontispiece, in which Charlemagne was depicted presenting a map of Italy to the Pope with the instruction '*Italos parere jubebo*', to which the Pope replied '*Tu mihi quodcumque hoc regnū*'. Further problems were caused by Morin's argument that the baptism of Constantine happened in Nicomedia, rather than Rome. For the purposes of this thesis, what matters from Morin's perspective was that he was able to repair the damage done to his reputation in Rome, being welcomed there by Cardinal Francesco Barberini in 1639, and would, following his return to Paris, function as one of the Papal Nuncio's essential sources for information. For Morin's defence of his work on Constantine, see, BAV Barb. Lat. 2185, Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, 27 July 1630, fols. 58^r-61^v, of which a draft, with some variants, was printed in Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §27. Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, 27 July 1630, pp. 151-158. The concerns in Rome, as is apparent from this letter, were originally reported by Claude Bertin. It was subsequent to this that further reports from Rome related directly the disquiet caused by the frontispiece and Constantine's baptism. See, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §28. René Gezauld to Jean Morin, 9 September 1630, pp. 159-161. Others, however, wrote to Morin to confirm their agreement with his case. See, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §33. Pierre Halloix to Jean Morin, 14 January 1632, pp. 170-172. For Morin in Rome, see, esp. BAV, Borg. Lat. 46, fols. 207^r-259^r, which records Morin's presence and, on occasion, his opinions at the congregation held on the new edition of the *Eucologium graecum*. See further, Ingo Herklitz, 'The Academia Basiliana. Greek Philology, Ecclesiastical History and the Union of the Churches in Barberini Rome', in *I Barberini e la cultura Europea del seicento*, Sebastian Schütze and Francesco Solinas eds. (Rome: De Luca Editori D'Arte, 2007), pp. 147-154. For Morin's relationship with the Papal Nuncio in Paris, see especially, Pierre Blet, *Correspondance du nonce en France Ranuccio Scotti (1639-1641)* (Rome: Imprimerie de l'Université Grégorienne, 1965), *passim*. For further on Morin's reputation in Rome, see, J. A. G. Tans and H. Schmitz, eds., *Pasquier Quesnel devant la Congrégation de l'Index* (Martinus Nijhoff: The Hague, 1974).

⁷² Morin, *Exercitationum ecclesiasticarum*, p. 18, for this neat summary.

work.⁷³ Rumour of the Pope's favour appears to have emboldened Morin and his superiors at the Oratory to seek more readers in Rome, and to this end more exemplars were sent from Paris.⁷⁴ Other readers contacted Morin directly. Aubertus Miraeus, Deacon of Antwerp Cathedral and an ecclesiastical historian, wrote to Morin to express his approval of Morin's use of ecclesiastical antiquity to confute the 'heretics' and encourage true believers.⁷⁵ With his reputation increasing, Morin's superiors can by late 1627 be found searching for ways to use his learning. The then Papal Nuncio in Paris, Cardinal Giovanni Francesco Guido del Bagno (commonly known as Bagni), wrote to Francesco Barberini in Rome with word that a response was needed to Pierre du Moulin's recent *Nouveauté du papisme* (1627), and that Bérulle had suggested Morin for the task.⁷⁶ Morin's position at this stage was therefore evident: while he lived in an order that gave him the space to develop his own vocation, he was still also answerable to his patrons and superiors.⁷⁷

3

In the wake of Du Perron's use of the Greek Fathers to best Philippe Du Plessis-Mornay at Fontainebleau in May 1600 the Assemblies of the Clergy began to provide a series of regular financial grants to Paris's leading printer-publishers, first Claude Morel and then Antoine Estienne and Sebastian Cramoisy, to finance the editing and publishing of patristic texts.⁷⁸ As Jean-Louis Quantin has shown, the early impetus for this scheme

⁷³ Dagens, ed., *Correspondance de Bérulle*, vol. III, §598. Claude Bertin to Pierre de Bérulle, 5 May 1626, p. 199.

⁷⁴ Dagens, ed., *Correspondance de Bérulle*, vol. III, Claude Bertin to Guillaume Gibieuf, 15 July 1626, p. 199.

⁷⁵ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XI. Aubert Miraeus to Jean Morin, 11 July 1628, pp. 153-154.

⁷⁶ Dagens, ed., *Correspondance de Bérulle*, vol. III, §693, Jean-François Guido del Bagno to Francesco Barberini, 3 December 1627, pp. 342-343. Note that Bagni was well aware Morin had dedicated the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticarum* to the Pope and that he had done well for Charles Miron. For more on Bagni's nunciature and his relationship to Barberini, see, Auguste Leman, *Recueil des instructions générales aux nonces ordinaires de France de 1624 à 1634* (Paris: Édouard Champion, 1919), pp. 77-162.

⁷⁷ See, Charles E. Williams, *The French Oratorians and Absolutism, 1611-1641* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), esp. pp. 260-262, for this dimension of the Oratory, formally agreed following Bérulle's death at the first General Assembly of the Congregation on 2 August 1631.

⁷⁸ See, Louis Doutreleau, 'L'Assemblée du clergé de France et l'édition patristique grecque au XVII^e siècle', in *Les Pères de l'Eglise au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 1993), pp. 99-116; see, generally, Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs et société*, vol. 1, pp. 99-189. On the Assemblies of the Clergy, see, Louis Servet, *Les Assemblées du clergé de France: origines, organisation, développement* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1906); Michel Péronnet, 'Naissance d'une institution: les assemblées du clergé', in *Pouvoir et institutions en Europe au XVI^e siècle* (Paris: Vrin, 1987), pp. 249-261; Joseph Bergin, *The Politics of Religion in Early Modern France* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), pp. 133-55.

came from the Jesuit Fronton du Duc's work to edit John Chrysostom.⁷⁹ Where Fronton's Greek text replaced the earlier Protestant editions of Chrysostom's work, his new Latin translation was designed to add to the Catholic arsenal in inter-confessional disputes. As Fronton explained, the point of the Latin translation was to verify the meaning of the Greek, in order that Protestants would not be able to object, when Catholics had recourse to Chrysostom, that they translated his words unfaithfully.⁸⁰

Fronton had also worked towards publishing a Greek edition of the Bible, which would contain the Greek text as it stood in common use in Jerome's day, complete with Origenic critical sigla to indicate where it diverged from the Septuagint.⁸¹ Fronton's death in September 1624 cut short his work before its completion, and any chance his work had of being published in the short-term was made unlikely by the following Assembly of the Clergy in 1625.⁸² There, plans were instead finalised for a new edition of the Septuagint in Greek with facing Latin translation in order to provide a Catholic counterpart to the previous Basel edition.⁸³ It was first announced by Léonard Destrappes at the session of the Assembly held on the 6 November, where 8000 livres were marked out to the booksellers Sebastien Cramoisy and Antoine Estienne for printing the edition, and thereafter to finish printing Chrysostom's works.⁸⁴

The details of how Morin came to be the editor of this edition are not entirely clear. The report of the 1628 Assembly indicates he was selected for the role by a commission of the four Bishops made up of François de Harlay de Champvallon, Louis de Vervins, Gabriel de l'Aubespine, and Simon Le Gras, who had been delegated by the Assembly to see to the 'impressions, manuscrits, et corrections'.⁸⁵ In the network of patronage that worked behind the scenes it is tempting to conjecture that an important role was played by François de Harlay, who shared a printer with Morin in Antoine

⁷⁹ Quantin, 'Du Chrysostome latin au Chrysostome grec', pp. 288, 328-332.

⁸⁰ Quantin, 'Du Chrysostome latin au Chrysostome grec', p. 332.

⁸¹ Peter Lambeck, *Commentariorum de augustissima bibliotheca caesarea vindobonensi* (Vienna: Matthaeus Cosmerovius, 1665), Fronton du Duc to Sebastian Tenggagel, 13 January 1621, p. 162. Note that this corrects the later description, given by Claude Sarrau and others, that Fronton intended to publish an edition of the Septuagint. See, Elizabethanne Boran, ed., *The Correspondence of James Ussher 1600-1656*, vol. III: 1640-1656. *Letters no. 475-680* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2015), §546. Claude Sarrau to James Ussher, 9 November 1648, p. 952.

⁸² On which, see, Jean-Pierre Nicéron, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des hommes illustres dans la république des lettres*, vol. XXXVIII (Paris: Briasson, 1738), Jacques Sirmond to Sebastian Tenggagel, 2 September 1636, p. 136,

⁸³ A. Duranthon, ed., *Collection des procès-verbaux des Assemblées générales du clergé de France depuis l'année 1560*, vol. II (Paris: Guillaume Desprez, 1768), p. 566.

⁸⁴ Duranthon, *Collection des procès-verbaux*, p. 566.

⁸⁵ Duranthon, *Collection des procès-verbaux*, p. 635.

Estienne, and with whom Morin would exchange letters in the 1630s.⁸⁶ What is clear is that the edition as a whole should be seen as one part of the senior Gallican clergy's attempt to take control of biblical and patristic learning for the Catholic side.

The substance of the edition, however, was Morin's. Morin's Greek text largely reprinted the edition of the Septuagint that had been published in Rome in the late sixteenth century. This edition was first planned under Pope Gregory XIII, when at Cardinal Felici Peretti's instigation a commission led by Cardinal Antonio Carafa began the work.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, it was only published in 1587, following Peretti's ascension to the Papacy as Pope Sixtus V.⁸⁸ The copy-text used by the editors was the text of the Septuagint published in 1518 by Aldus Manutius, yet they introduced an extensive number of changes drawn from a range of manuscripts in Rome and elsewhere, above all Codex Vaticanus⁸⁹. For Morin and later seventeenth-century scholars, it was that celebrated manuscript that the Sixtine Septuagint represented. For the Latin, rather than the Vulgate, Morin used the translation based on the Sixtine edition by Flaminius Nobilius, which had been published in Rome in 1588.⁹⁰ Building on the earlier work of Pedro Chacon and Fulvio Orsini, Flaminius's Latin text attempted to use early Latin citations and their collation with the Greek manuscript tradition to reconstruct the 'Vetus Latina', the Latin version of the Bible that predated the Vulgate.⁹¹ Morin also included the additional readings presented in both these editions. In the case of the Greek text these had been added by Pierre Morin (no relation to Jean), who notably provided readers with a range of readings from the other ancient Greek translations originally included in Origen's Hexapla.⁹²

Morin justified his work in the preface to the edition, where his combination of learning and polemic framed the confessional politics of text-critical biblical scholarship in new terms. This preface provides *in nuce* the argument that Morin would spend much of the rest of his career attempting to convince his contemporaries to accept. It had a clear polemical point: against Protestant champions of the Hebrew original, Morin

⁸⁶ See, for example, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §34. Jean Morin to François de Harlay de Champvallon, 22 August 1632, pp. 172-174.

⁸⁷ See, F. Amann, 'Die römische Septuagintarevision im 16. Jahrhundert', *Biblische Zeitschrift* 12 (1914), pp. 116-24.

⁸⁸ See further, T. M. Law, 'A History of Research on Origen's *Hexapla*: From Masius to the *Hexapla* Project', *Bulletin of the Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* 40 (2007), pp. 32-33.

⁸⁹ See, most recently, Scott Mandelbrote, 'When Manuscripts Meet: Editing the Bible in Greek during and after the Council of Trent', in *For the Sake of Learning: Essays in Honor of Anthony Grafton*, A. Blair and A.-S. Goejing eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2016), esp. pp. 256-57.

⁹⁰ Law, 'A History of Research', p. 33.

⁹¹ Mandelbrote, 'When Manuscripts Meet', p. 258.

⁹² Law, 'A History of Research', pp. 33-34; Mandelbrote, 'When Manuscripts Meet', pp. 258-59.

argued instead for the superiority of the Septuagint. To justify his claim Morin wielded a series of arguments, framed in terms of the relevant histories of the different versions of Scripture. Morin presented the Septuagint as the version of the Church: used at the time of Christ and Apostles, and subsequently by the Church in the East and West.⁹³ This meant it was the Christian version of the text of the Bible in the era before Jerome, and in that time scholars such as Origen, Lucian and Hesychius had, like Catholic scholars in the previous century, endeavoured to edit and produce 'completely correct' editions.⁹⁴

The Hebrew text could hardly claim such a venerable descent. As the Fathers reported, there was clear evidence the Jews had tampered with the Scriptures.⁹⁵ In addition to intentional corruption, there were also detailed text-critical explanations to account for variations between Hebrew text and the Septuagint. Above all, Morin argued, the late invention of the Hebrew vowel points had meant the text's meaning had been uncertain until a much later date than the Apostolically-sanctioned Septuagint.⁹⁶ Morin catalogued the errors and problems that could be found in the text where, in contrast to the careful custodianship of the Septuagint by the Church, it had been copied and transmitted by Jewish scribes whose efforts were at best dubious, imprecise, and inaccurate, and, at worst, guilty of outright corruption.⁹⁷

These arguments were underpinned by Morin's study and comparison of extant manuscripts. Morin did more than point out that the earliest surviving Hebrew manuscripts were much more recent than those of the Septuagint. For the first time in early-modern scholarship he presented evidence drawn from the Samaritan Pentateuch. Jerome's well-known testimony had indicated the Samaritan text was of truly venerable antiquity, written in the script used by the Jews from the time of Moses to that of the fall of the First Temple. Morin outlined how the manuscript before him in the library of the Oratory matched Jerome's account, and underlined that at a number of the *loci* Jerome

⁹³ Jean Morin, 'Ad lectorem praefatio', in his *Vetus Testamentum secundum LXX*, vol. I (Paris: Antoine Estienne, 1628), §2. References are to paragraph numbers. Note that in addition to Estienne some title-pages were issued carrying the names other Parisian *libraires*, including Sebastian Chappelet, Nicolas Buon, and Claudius Sonnius.

⁹⁴ Morin, 'Ad lectorem praefatio', §10-13, with the quotation at §13 referring to all three ancient editors: '[E]a igitur reverentia huic diuinae & propheticae editioni exhibita semper est, ut nouam translationem moliri auderet nemo, curarent vero omnes ut quam castigatissime publicaretur'.

⁹⁵ Morin, 'Ad lectorem praefatio', §14-15.

⁹⁶ Morin, 'Ad lectorem praefatio', §16-17.

⁹⁷ Morin, ed., 'Ad lectorem praefatio', §23-39, for a lengthy catalogue of how errors could have crept into the Hebrew text, which included, for example, §23, the transposition of letters, §25, letters deleted or corrupted either by mistake or on purpose, §30, sections forgotten or removed, §34, the confusion of proper names and nouns.

had mentioned – notably Genesis 4:8 and Exodus 12:40 – the Samaritan text agreed with the Septuagint against the Hebrew.⁹⁸

Morin's preface represented in condensed form one of the seventeenth century's most powerfully reasoned attacks on the Hebrew text of the Bible. It was more than a simple argument designed to bolster the position of the Catholic Church. Catholic opinion prior to Morin had not often put such weight on the authority of the Septuagint. As Nicholas Hardy notes, even as Cardinal Carafa and others printed the 1587 edition at Rome, one of its supervisors Latino Latini expressed his and Cardinal Sirleto's doubts that the manuscript on which it was based reflected the original Septuagint.⁹⁹ Further, although the Council of Trent had not prohibited the study of versions besides the Vulgate, the understanding that it had done so had become widely shared. Morin's decision to use Nobilius's Latin translation of the Septuagint, rather than the Vulgate, appeared on the face of it to undermine Roman insistence on the authority of that translation.¹⁰⁰

Morin's intention was quite different. In publishing the Sixtine Septuagint with Nobilius's Latin translation he was making the case in favour of the Septuagint as an independent textual tradition. This meant the companion Latin translation had to closely follow the text of the Septuagint: it would defeat the point to publish the text of the Vulgate that more closely reflected the Hebrew text. Morin's overall ambitions were in this sense twofold. First, Morin argued against his Protestant contemporaries that the text of the Septuagint tradition, and especially that represented by Codex Vaticanus, was superior on text-critical grounds to the Hebrew text. Second, in a point directed to members of all confessions, Morin wanted to establish how vital this text was as the witness to the canonical text of the primitive Church. Morin's presentation of the evidence was not intended to prove that the Sixtine Septuagint was without faults and he fully admitted the problems inherent in the transmission of all texts. A better understanding of these, however, would not lead to him or his contemporaries rejecting Scripture or, as Miller has it, leave 'the sacred text exposed'.¹⁰¹ Instead, it would lead to recognition that all scholars should have an interest in the history and text-critical status of the text of the Bible, safe in the knowledge that, as Catholics, such inquiries did not impinge on the text's authority, which depended on the Church.

⁹⁸ Morin, 'Ad lectorem praefatio', §7-8.

⁹⁹ Hardy, 'Ars critica', p. 201.

¹⁰⁰ This is the claim made by Peter Miller. See, Miller, 'Making the Paris Polyglot Bible', pp. 76-77.

¹⁰¹ Miller, 'Making the Paris Polyglot Bible', p. 77; Morin, 'Ad lectorem praefatio', §39.

II. Publishing the Samaritan Pentateuch: Morin's Catholic defence of the Paris Polyglot Bible

1

Europe's leading scholars keenly followed the publication of Morin's edition. Then resident in Aix-en-Provence, Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc had high hopes for the work and endeavoured to obtain a copy through his Parisian contacts.¹⁰² Marin Mersenne, the Minim Friar then resident in Paris, was better placed, and in a letter to the Protestant theologian André Rivet briefly summarised the central argument of Morin's preface. The readings of the Samaritan Pentateuch, he outlined, indicated that the Septuagint was a purer text than previously considered, a point that had grave consequences for the Hebrew.¹⁰³ It seems likely Rivet replied sceptically, since Mersenne reiterated his point in two further letters, assuring Rivet that he himself had visited the Oratory and examined the Pentateuch, finding it just as Morin had described. Its publication, Mersenne outlined, would show where the Hebrew had been 'corrupted' and 'diminished', and in consequence would be seen as much less reliable than commonly imagined.¹⁰⁴

These letters indicate the dramatic effects that contemporaries anticipated the Samaritan Pentateuch might have on European scholars' views on the Bible. The implications it held for the relative merits of the Greek and Hebrew texts were almost certainly one of the reasons Bérulle encouraged Guy-Michel Le Jay to include it among the other versions in his Paris Polyglot Bible. As we will see, Morin's involvement in editing this edition has to be understood in the context of a complex network of

¹⁰² See, for example, Philippe Tamizey de Larroque, ed., *Lettres de Peiresc aux frères Dupuy*, vol. I: *Décembre 1617 - Décembre 1628* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1888), §XCVII. Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc to Dupuy, 19 February 1628, p. 536; De Larroque, *Lettres de Peiresc*, vol. I, §CXXVII Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc Peiresc to Dupuy, [n. d.], p. 675. On the correspondence of the *frères Dupuy*, see, Jérôme Delatour, 'Les frères Dupuy et leurs correspondances', in *Les grands intermédiaires culturels de la République des lettres: études des réseaux de correspondances du XVI^e au XVII^e siècles*, Christiane Berkvens-Stevelinck, Hans Bots et Jens Häselser eds. (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005), pp. 61-101.

¹⁰³ Paul Tannery, ed., *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne*, vol. II: *1628 - 1630* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1926), §116. Marin Mersenne to André Rivet, 30 October 1628, p. 113-114. On Mersenne's correspondence, see, Hans Bots, 'Marin Mersenne, 'secrétaire général' de la République des Lettres (1620-1648)', in *Les grands intermédiaires culturels de la République des lettres*, pp. 165-181.

¹⁰⁴ Tannery, *Correspondance de Mersenne*, vol. II, §121. Mersenne to Rivet, 25 December 1628, p. 154, 'J'ay aussi veu le Pentateuche Samaritain, manuscrit très ancien, peut-estre du temps de S. Hierosme'; Tannery, *Correspondance de Mersenne*, vol. II, §126. Mersenne to Rivet, 28 February 1629, pp. 203-204, 'J'ay veu l'exemplaire Samaritain qui est veritable tel que la Preface le décrit. Certes si les Juifs n'ont jamais accusé les Samaritains d'avoir corrompu le Pentateuque qu'ils recevoient, je treuve cette objection merueilleusement forte pour monstrer ou que l'Hebreu a esté corrompu, tronqué et diminué, ou du moins qu'il n'a pas une telle certitude comme l'on s'imaginait'.

patronage that promoted the work. More important, but hitherto unknown, was that Morin had a further role in this project. In the context of three possible Polyglot Bible projects vying for Roman permission in the late 1620s, Morin presented a Catholic defence of the text-critical choices of the Paris Polyglot Bible, in the process convincing the Roman authorities and revealing even more clearly his view of the confessional implications of biblical scholarship.

2

Scholarly interest in the Samaritan language, religion, and sacred texts, had been kindled nearly a century earlier by Guillaume Postel's *Linguarum duodecim characteribus differentium alphabetum introductio* (1538).¹⁰⁵ Postel's analysis confirmed Jerome's earlier observations, most notably his claim in the prologue to the Book of Kings that the script used by the Samaritans was that formerly used by the Hebrews. This script, Jerome suggested, fell into desuetude among the Hebrews during the Babylonian captivity, who following their return, used the Square or Assyrian script.¹⁰⁶ Jerome's claim gave scholars an insight into the historical changes that the Bible, and the language and script in which it was written, had undergone. As Anthony Grafton has shown, it was Joseph Justus Scaliger who pursued these implications furthest. In a letter written to Richard Thomson in 1607 Scaliger used the equivalence of the Samaritan alphabet to the Phoenician as the starting point for an increasingly ambitious sketch of the history of the Ancient Near East, in which the Hebrew language and script came to be viewed as the end, rather than the beginning, of a historical process.¹⁰⁷

What Scaliger lacked was Samaritan texts. He took steps to rectify this deficiency, sending letters to the Samaritan community in Cairo. In the first (1583) and second

¹⁰⁵ See, James G. Fraser, 'Guillaume Postel and Samaritan Studies', in *Postello, Venezia, e il suo mondo*, ed. Marion Leathers Kuntz (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1988), pp. 88-117.

¹⁰⁶ See, Jerome, 'Praefatio Hieronymi in Libros Samuel et Malachim', in *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 28 (Paris: Garnier fratres, 1889), cols. 593-4.

¹⁰⁷ Paul Botley and Dirk van Miert, eds., *Joseph Scaliger: The Correspondence*, vol. 7: *January 1607 to February 1609* (Geneva: Droz, 2012), Joseph Justus Scaliger to Richard Thomson, 1 October 1607, pp. 299-300. One point this recent modern edition of Scaliger's letters should not be allowed obscure is which letters, and in which form, were available to contemporaries, following the publication of Daniel Heinsius's edition, which represented a substantial collection. For the letter referred to here, see, Daniel Heinsius, ed., *Josephi Scaligeri Epistolae omnes quae reperiri potuerunt* (Leiden: Bonaventure and Abraham Elzevir, 1627), pp. 517-20. See further, Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger*, vol. II, p. 737.

(1598) editions of *De emendatione temporum* he encouraged others to follow his lead.¹⁰⁸

Although these ambitions were disappointed in his lifetime, the aspiration was taken up by the next generation of European scholars. Facilitating this was the opening of Eastern markets for the merchants of the English Levant Company and its French and Dutch competitors in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This had meant permanent diplomatic missions were established in Constantinople, Smyrna, and Aleppo, and other cities, which increasingly provided scholars with the means and contacts to obtain ancient and eastern texts not yet available to scholars further West.¹⁰⁹

One such was the Samaritan Pentateuch. In the fifteen years between 1615 and 1630 a series of scholars, notably Peiresc, James Ussher, and Jacob Golius, had copies imported into Europe.¹¹⁰ The Oratory's manuscript was obtained from the Samaritan community in Damascus by the Roman traveller, Pietro della Valle, who had previously been disappointed in attempts to obtain one in Cairo and Nablus. Della Valle was acting on the commission of Achille de Harlay de Sancy, the future Bishop of Saint-Malo, who was then French Ambassador to Constantinople.¹¹¹ Throughout his time in this position de Sancy had collected Hebrew and other manuscripts, often working to obtain them for the then keeper of the Bibliothèque du Roi, Jacques-Auguste de Thou.¹¹² He also appears to have cultivated his own interest in Hebrew, which he studied in Constantinople.¹¹³ De

¹⁰⁸ Scaliger's letters were first recovered by Peiresc, in 1629, and they were among the materials Peiresc sent to Morin early in the 1630s. See, Miller, 'An Antiquary between Philology and History', p. 166 esp. fn. 22. They were first published from Morin's translations by Richard Simon. See, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §1. and §2., pp. 119-130. See, Joseph Justus Scaliger, *De emendatione temporum* (Paris: Mamert Patisson, 1583), p. 208; Joseph Justus Scaliger, *De emendatione temporum* (Leiden: Plantin/Raphelengius, 1598, [second ed.]), p. 627.

¹⁰⁹ See generally, Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom and Learning*.

¹¹⁰ On Peiresc, see, Miller, 'An Antiquary between Philology and History', p. 166; on Ussher, see, Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom and Learning*, pp. 78-85; Ussher's main intermediary for these was Thomas Davis, an English Merchant based in the Levant. See, for an example of their correspondence relating to the Samaritan Pentateuch, Elizabethanne Boran, ed., *The Correspondence of James Ussher 1600-1650*, vol. I: 1600-1627. Letters 1-232 (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2015), §151. Thomas Davis to James Ussher, 29 August 1624, p. 283. On Golius, whose copy was written in Damascus and procured by a Venetian merchant, Antonio Doratus, see Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger* p. 119. For a general checklist, see, James G. Fraser, 'Checklist of Samaritan Manuscripts Known to Have Entered Europe Before 1700', *Abr-Nahrain* 21 (1982-83), pp. 99-117.

¹¹¹ See further, Fraser, 'Checklist', pp. 20-21. See also, most recently, Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, p. 107, whose claim that della Valle obtained a Samaritan Pentateuch (today, BNF, Ms. Sam. 2) and Samaritan Pentateuch Targum in Aramaic (today, BAV, Ms. Sam. 2) and 'gave the manuscripts to Achille Harlay de Sancy' should be corrected on two counts. First, de Sancy commissioned della Valle to obtain the Samaritan Pentateuch. Second, della Valle did not give them both to de Sancy but kept the Samaritan Pentateuch Targum for himself, only subsequently lending it to Morin.

¹¹² For their correspondence, see, BNF, Ms. Fr. 6514. Some parts of this have been published, see, Henri Omont, *Missions archéologique françaises en Orient aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1902), pp. ii-ix.

¹¹³ See, Francis Richard, 'Achille de Harlay de Sancy et ses collections de manuscrits hébreux', *Revue des Études juives* CXLIX (1990), pp. 417-447, esp. pp. 424-426, which includes a catalogue of the manuscripts

Sancy brought the manuscript back with him from Constantinople and it was one of a large number he donated to the library of the Oratory, whose Congregation he joined on his return in 1619.¹¹⁴

There was no indication in Morin's preface to the Septuagint that he intended to publish an edition of the Samaritan text. On first glance this is surprising, since it appears self-evident that the first printed edition would burnish the reputation of its editor, the learned institution to which he belonged, and his confession. Some contemporaries shared this view. Lacking the requisite types in England, Ussher sent one of his copies to Louis de Dieu in Leiden so that the 'university of Scaliger' could claim the distinction.¹¹⁵ De Dieu's failure to print an edition meant it was to Ussher's disappointment that it was Morin – and the Catholic side – who claimed the prize.

Morin's edition of the Samaritan text was published as part of an existing project, the nine-volume work published in 1645 that was subsequently known as the Paris Polyglot Bible, but was at the time most commonly known as the 'Bible royale' or 'the great worke of the Bible'.¹¹⁶ The origins of the Paris Polyglot were in late sixteenth-century Rome, where the proposal – endorsed by Pope Gregory XIII – was first advanced by Giovanni Battista Raimundi.¹¹⁷ Raimundi proposed to add the languages of the Levant – Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopic, and Slavic – to the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Aramaic, of the Complutensian and Antwerp Polyglot

now at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France known to have been in de Sancy's collection. See also, on de Sancy, Moïse Schwab, 'Trois lettres de David Cohen de Lara', *Revue des études juives* XL (1900), pp. 95-98.

¹¹⁴ Richard, 'Harlay de Sancy', p. 421, see also pp. 426-442, for an invaluable list of Hebrew manuscripts known to be in de Sancy's collection, some of which include marginalia from Jean Morin and Richard Simon. For de Sancy's being received as a member of the Oratory on 12 November 1619, see ANF, M 623, fol. 65^{r-v}.

¹¹⁵ Elizabethanne Boran, ed. *The Correspondence of James 1600-1650*, vol. 2: 1627-1640. *Letters 233-474* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2015), §294. James Ussher to Louis de Dieu, 1 October 1629, p. 475, 'Cujus voto aliqua ex parte fuerit satisfactum: si ex Academia cujus ille [Scaliger], dum vixit: ingens fuit ornamentum, primum in lucem prodeat tamdiu desideratum venerandae antiquitatis monumentum. Verum properato hic opus: ne hanc vobis desponsam jam et destinatam laudem, alius praereptum eat'.

¹¹⁶ Paul Tannery, ed., *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne*, vol. II: 1628-1630 (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1926), §116. Marin Mersenne to André Rivet, 30 October 1628, p. 106, and *passim* for 'la bible Royale'; Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. 2, §397. James Frey to James Ussher, 15/25 June 1635, p. 665, for 'the great worke of the Bible'.

¹¹⁷ On Raimundi, see, G. Duverdiér, 'Les caractères de Savary de Brèves et la présence française au Levant au XVII^e siècle', in *L'Art du livre à l'Imprimerie Nationale* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1973), esp. p. 70; John Robert Jones, 'The Arabic and Persian Studies of Giovanni Battista Raimundi (c. 1536 - 1614)', Warburg Institute, University of London M. Phil thesis, 1981; John Robert Jones, 'The Medici Oriental Press (Rome 1584-1614) and the Impact of its Arabic Publications on Northern Europe', in *The 'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth Century England*, ed. G. A. Russell (Leiden and New York: Brill, 1994), pp. 88-108; G. E. Saltini, 'Della Stamperia Orientale Medicea e di Giovan Battista Raimundi', *Giornali Storici degli Archivi Toscani* 4 (1860), pp. 257-308; Alberto Tinto, *La Tipografia Medicea Orientale* (Lucca: M. Pacini Fazzi, 1987).

Bibles.¹¹⁸ Raimundi's scheme failed to come to fruition following Gregory XIII's death. Yet Raimundi's plans for the Polyglot, and his ambitious plans for Eastern learning more generally, found supporters in successive French ambassadors to Rome, first the Cardinal Du Perron and subsequently François Savary de Brèves.

Of these it was de Brèves who embraced the full range of Raimundi's ambitions. De Brèves's plans ranged from the publication of Arabic texts for missionary purposes to the establishment of a new 'Collège Polyglotte des Langues Orientales' in Paris.¹¹⁹ While still in Rome de Brèves founded an oriental printing press, having his own Arabic and Syriac types cut, employing the printer Stefano Paolino who had previously worked with Raimundi, hiring a Turkish assistant, and recruiting as editors the Maronite scholars Vittorio Scialac (Nasrallah Shalaq al-ʿAquri) and Gabriel Sionita (Jibraʾil al-Sahyuni).¹²⁰ The first publication of the 'Typographia Savariana' was an Arabic translation of Roberto Bellarmine's *Doctrina christiana* in 1613, which was followed a year later by a Psalter in Arabic.¹²¹ One of de Brèves's chief aims, which he discussed in correspondence with his cousin-in-law de Thou, was to print an edition of the Bible in Arabic with a Latin translation.¹²²

De Brèves's recall to Paris in 1614 did little to discourage him: he brought back his printing press, types, and manuscripts, his collaborators, Husain of Buda, Stefano Paolino, Gabriel Sionita and a third Maronite scholar, Jean Hesronita (Yuhanna al-Hasruni), who replaced Scialac. Although the college scheme failed to win support, de Brèves's printing press and the Maronite scholars were installed in the Collège des

¹¹⁸ Giovanni Battista Raimundi, ed., *Liber Tasriphi compositio est senis Alemami* (Rome: Typographica Medicea, 1610), sigs. §2r-§4v, for Raimundi's later presentation of the project. See also, G. Saltini, 'La Bibbia Poliglotta Medicea secondo il Disegno e gli Apparecchi de Gio. Battisti Raimondi', *Bollettino italiano degli studi orientali* 22 (1882), pp. 490-495; Alberto Tinto, 'Un Diario di Giovanni Battista Raimondi (22 Giugno 1592 - 12 Dicembre 1596)', *Archivio Storico* 151 (1993), esp. pp. 674-675. There was an important missionary dimension to Raimundi's work. See, generally, Alastair Hamilton, 'Eastern Churches and Western Scholarship', pp. 225-249; Bernard Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la réforme catholique (Syrie, Liban, Palestine, XVIII^e-XVIII^e siècles)* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1994).

¹¹⁹ G. Duverdier, 'Les caractères de Savary de Brèves', pp. 69-87; G. Duverdier, 'Les impressions orientales en Europe et le Liban', in *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, ed. Camille Aboussouan (Paris: Unesco, 1982), pp. 157-73. Still useful, however, is, Jacques Lelong, *Discours historiques sur les principales éditions des Bibles Polyglottes* (Paris: André Pralard, 1713). Before taking up his position in Rome de Brèves had been French Ambassador to the Sublime Porte during the years 1591-1604, upon the cessation of which he set out on an extensive journey though the Levant and North Africa, which kindled his interest in the Arabic speaking Christians. See, Jacques du Castel, *Relation des voyages de M. de Brèves, tant en Grece, Terre-Sainte, et Égypte, qu'aux Royaumes de Tunis & Arger* (Paris: N. Gasse, 1628). See further, for his itinerary, BNF, Ms. Fr. 19896. On the Collège, see, BNF, Dupuy 812, Savary de Brèves to Jacques-Auguste de Thou, 27 November 1611, fol. 195r.

¹²⁰ Duverdier, 'Les impressions orientales', pp. 159-161.

¹²¹ Duverdier, 'Les impressions orientales', pp. 160-161.

¹²² BNF, Dupuy 812, Savary de Brèves to Jacques-Auguste de Thou, 15 September 1612, fol. 237r. The Arabic manuscript is now BNF Ms. Ar. 1. For two inventories of de Brèves's manuscripts, see BNF. Ms. Fr. 15528 and BNF Ms. Dupuy 673.

Lombards, with Sionita and Hesronita receiving pensions.¹²³ At this stage it was Du Perron who became the crucial figure. Du Perron's objectives went beyond de Brèves's proposal for an edition of the Bible in Arabic and Latin. The plan Du Perron urged de Thou and de Brèves to complete was instead a new edition of the Antwerp Polyglot, which revised and improved that edition's versions of the Targums and also added the Syriac and Arabic translations.¹²⁴ Du Perron twice presented this scheme to the Assembly of the Clergy and a contract was drawn up with a series of Paris's leading printers.¹²⁵ Unfortunately, the contract also contained the provision these printers could establish a new *Compagnie des usages* and the agreement collapsed following the Parlement's refusal to ratify this stipulation.¹²⁶ With the deaths of de Thou in 1616 and Du Perron in 1617, and de Brèves's fall from political favour following the assassination of Concino Concini, the project lost its patrons, and the prospects for its successful completion appeared bleak.¹²⁷

The Paris Polyglot Bible was saved by the patronage of the Parisian advocate Guy-Michel Le Jay, who in the late 1620s committed himself to financing the venture. Le Jay followed Du Perron's design: a new edition of the Antwerp Polyglot Bible with the addition of the Arabic and Syriac versions. The links between the two projects, however, were somewhat tenuous, with the precise history of the project in the ten years between them still to some degree uncertain.

Both Maronite scholars, Sionita and Hesronita, had initially remained in Paris and continued to seek patronage for their own work, especially the Arabic edition of the Bible.¹²⁸ Although Stefano Paolino returned to Rome in 1616, he was replaced by Jérôme Blageart, with whom the Maronites printed an Arabic grammar and an edition of the

¹²³ See, H. Omont, 'Projet d'un Collège Oriental a Paris au début du règne de Louis XIII', *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île de France* 22 (1895), pp. 123-127; for the pensions, see Joseph Auguste Bernard, *Antoine Vitre et les caractères orientaux de la Bible Polyglotte de Paris. Origines et vicissitudes des premiers caractères orientaux introduits en France avec un specimen de ces caractères* (Paris: Dumoulin, 1857), p. 5. Sionita was made a Professor at the Collège de France in 1618, see Duverdier, 'Les impressions orientales', p. 169.

¹²⁴ Lambeck, *Commentariorum de augustissima bibliotheca caesarea vindobonensi*, Jacques-Auguste de Thou to Sebastian Tengnagel, 4 May 1615, p. 160, 'Librarij nostri novam Bibliorum editionem parant, cui post Hispanam & ultimam Antuerpianam, meliorem paraphrasin Chaldaicam sive Syriacam & Arabicam versionem in Vetus & Novum Testamentum addent cum interpretatione Latinâ peculiari. Illustrissimus Cardinalis Perronus opus urget, & vicaria opera ad eam rem utitur'.

¹²⁵ Duranthon, *Collection des procès-verbaux*, pp. 214-215, 345-346. For this contract, see, BNF, Cinq cents de Colbert 255, fol. 145r, 'Contrat passé avec des libraires et imprimeurs de Paris pour l'impression d'un Bible polyglotte, 1615'.

¹²⁶ Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs, et société*, vol. 1, pp. 446-447.

¹²⁷ Duverdier, 'Les impressions orientales', p. 170.

¹²⁸ Duverdier, 'Les impressions orientales', p. 170; Alastair Hamilton and Francis Richard, *André du Ryer and oriental studies in seventeenth century France* (London: Arcadian Library, 2004), p. 43.

Geographia Nubiensis (1619).¹²⁹ They also continued to seek patronage to publish the Bible in Arabic, which led to them being promised 8000 livres by the Assembly of the Clergy in Blois, in 1619.¹³⁰ The grant never reached them, and in Sionita's preface to his 1625 edition of the Psalter in Syriac he castigated the prelates responsible for this.¹³¹

It was in 1625 that Du Perron's plan was presented again to the Assembly of the Clergy.¹³² It is unclear who the 'libraire' responsible for this proposal was. The leading candidate is Antoine Vitré, who by now had taken over the use of de Brèves's types and had published Sionita's edition of the Psalter.¹³³ This connection means it is entirely plausible Vitré learned of Du Perron's plan from Sionita. The Assembly initially approved the scheme, but went back on its decision following a petition from the *Compagnie des Libraires* – now led by Sebastian Cramoisy and Antoine Estienne – who had agreed to the 1615 proposal. The Assembly then considered the progress made in the Chrysostom edition, eventually deciding that rather than support the Polyglot Bible the money should be used to complete that edition and also be used to finance an edition of the Septuagint, which we have already encountered as the version edited by Morin.¹³⁴ It was only in 1628, when Le Jay took up the project, and with private, rather than clerical patronage, that the Paris Polyglot project proceeded.

As this reveals, the decision to publish the Samaritan Pentateuch – and, following correspondence with della Valle, the Samaritan Pentateuch Targum – was made at a late stage in the planning for the Paris Polyglot Bible. Le Jay's interest in the Samaritan Pentateuch was ignited by Morin's discussion of it in the preface to his Septuagint edition.¹³⁵ Le Jay consulted Cardinal Bérulle, both for his advice on whether to publish the manuscript and, at the same time, to request permission to print an edition of the

¹²⁹ Gabriel Sionita and Jean Hesronita, *Grammatica Arabica Maronitarum* (Paris: Typographia Savariana [Jerome Blageart], 1616), sig. a ij^r, for the dedication to Du Perron; Gabriel Sionita and Jean Hesronita eds., *Geographia nubiensis* (Paris: Jerome Blageart, 1619), sig. a ij^r, for the dedication to Guillaume du Vair.

¹³⁰ Duranthon, *Collection des procès-verbaux*, p. 341.

¹³¹ Gabriel Sionita, ed., *Liber Psalmorum* (Paris: [Antoine Vitré], 1625), sig. [aiij^{r-v}].

¹³² Duranthon, *Collection des procès-verbaux*, pp. 565-566.

¹³³ On Vitré, see, Georges Lepreux, *Gallia Typographia*, vol. I: *Série Parisienne (Paris et l'Île-de-France)* (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1911), pp. 525-536.

¹³⁴ Duranthon, *Collection des procès-verbaux*, p. 566. No other work of secondary literature has thus far recognised or tried to account for the precise course of the Paris Polyglot project during these years, and what the relative role of Vitré, and others, was. The 1619 grant was based on the proceeds from the sale of the Chrysostom edition and from editions of the Roman liturgy and other such texts. It seems that what Estienne and Cramoisy successfully claimed in 1625 was that this amount was owed to them, rather than another *libraire* (who I conjecture was Vitré). Hence the amount awarded to them in 1625 to continue publishing Chrysostom and also publish the Septuagint was 8,000, matching the amount promised earlier in 1619.

¹³⁵ Jean Morin, *Opuscula hebraeo-samaritica* (Paris: Gaspard Meturas, 1657), sigs. a ij^{r-v}.

manuscript. It was apparently only once this decision was taken that Morin was chosen by Le Jay and Bérulle to edit and translate the manuscript.

This account clarifies the nature of Morin's involvement with the project. In general terms, it is hard to avoid the suggestion that Morin's account of the potential confessional significance of the Samaritan Pentateuch convinced Le Jay and Bérulle to publish the Samaritan Pentateuch.¹³⁶ For Morin himself, the Polyglot Bible also offered the opportunity to confirm his earlier claims, publishing in full the evidence on which they rested. Yet the role played by Le Jay means that the final edition cannot be taken as a straightforward indication of Morin's own approach to the text and history of the Bible. In particular, criticism of Morin's practice by later scholars, above all the absence of a critical apparatus, appears misplaced.¹³⁷ Morin himself had an abiding interest in the variant readings, and it would eventually be on his initiative that they were published in 1657. Instead, Morin has to be seen as an editor and advisor, whose place in the project was closely linked to the mechanisms of lay and ecclesiastical patronage that had likewise seen him put in charge of the edition of the Septuagint. This is not to understate Morin's importance. As we will now see, there was a further contribution Morin made to the project, one fundamental in seeing it published, and whose history has until now gone unknown.

3

By the 1620s there were three polyglot projects in preparation in Catholic Europe. To comply with the decrees of the Council of Trent relating to all future editions of the Bible, each of these required Papal approval.¹³⁸ As in the case of the Paris Polyglot Bible, so in the other two, organised by Andreas de Leon and Balthasar Moretus, respectively, it was Plantin's Antwerp Polyglot that provided the model for their work. Neither, however, was satisfied with simply reprinting the Antwerp Polyglot but instead sought to produce Polyglot Bibles that were more fitting for Catholic readers.

¹³⁶ This, in particular, would be confirmed by the separate preface written by Morin that was included in the final edition of the Polyglot.

¹³⁷ Miller, 'Samaritans in seventeenth-century Paris', p. 142.

¹³⁸ On this decision, see, H. Jedin, *Geschichte des Konzils von Trent*, vol. II: *Erste Trienter Tagungsperiode 1545/47* (Friburg-im-Breisgau: Herder, 1957), p. 57; G. Denzler, *Kardinal Guglielmo Sirleto (1514-1585): Leben und Werk* (Munich: M. Hueber, 1964), pp. 118-120.

This was not surprising: the Antwerp Polyglot had been extensively criticised by Leon de Castro, among others, who mounted a campaign against what its recent historian, Theodor Dunkelgrün, has shown was its editorial team's sophisticated text-critical defence of the Hebrew text and the work of its Jewish scribes and editors.¹³⁹ De Castro was the leading theologian in Europe who campaigned to turn the Council of Trent's decrees regarding the Vulgate into a belief in the Vulgate's infallibility.¹⁴⁰ De Castro strongly criticised the decision of the Antwerp Polyglot's to give the Hebrew text authority relative to the authorised version of the Church, publishing alongside it Sanctes Pagnini's Latin translation rather than the Vulgate, and using the Hebrew text to correct and improve the Targums.¹⁴¹ Others agreed: in 1576 the Congregation of the Council, having ruled that changing even a single word or syllable of the Vulgate was prohibited, stated that the Antwerp Polyglot would have been condemned had it not already been published.¹⁴² The one fatal weakness in de Castro's position – the Council of Trent did not specify the edition of the Vulgate to which it ascribed authority – was overcome by 1592, when the publication of the Clementine Vulgate finally provided a single version of the Vulgate they could appeal to as authoritative.¹⁴³

The objections of de Castro and others to the Antwerp Polyglot were made in the context of two other interpretations of the Council of Trent's decrees. First, some, such as the Parisian Professor of Hebrew Siméon de Muis, argued that Trent's decree meant that the Vulgate was considered authentic only in relation to other Latin translations. Second, others held that Trent recognised the Vulgate as the authentic text of the Church, but argued that its authority only extended to matters pertaining to faith and morals.¹⁴⁴ Trent's decision, it followed, had no implications for the relative merits of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin versions as textual editions.

The early seventeenth-century Polyglot Bible projects were conceived in the context of these competing Catholic traditions. The Minor Friar Andreas de Leon

¹³⁹ Dunkelgrün, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture', see, pp. 363-365, 449.

¹⁴⁰ Hildebrand Höpfl, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sixto-Klementinischen Vulgata* (Freiburg-im-Breisgau: Herder, 1913), p. 30.

¹⁴¹ Höpfl, *Beiträge*, p. 107. For further on the editorial choices made by the editors of the Antwerp Polyglot, and especially the role of Benito Arias Montano, see, Dunkelgrün, 'Multiplicity of scripture', *passim*.

¹⁴² Piet Van Boxel, 'Robert Bellarmine, Christian Hebraist and Censor', in *History of Scholarship: a selection of papers from the seminar on the history of scholarship held annually at the Warburg Institute*, Christopher Ligota and Jean-Louis Quantin eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 264. See also, Xavier-Marie le Bachelet, *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1911), p. 8.

¹⁴³ On this point, see, Dunkelgrün, 'Multiplicity of Scripture', p. 44, who highlights that in authorising the Vulgate while in calling for a new authoritative edition the Council of Trent had actually ascribed authority to a text that did not yet exist.

¹⁴⁴ For a discussion of these, see, van Boxel, 'Robert Bellarmine, Christian Hebraist and Censor', pp. 258-259.

proposed to reprint the Antwerp Polyglot with a series of changes that brought it in line with de Leon's interpretation of the Tridentine decree.¹⁴⁵ De Leon would replace both the Greek and Latin texts printed by the Antwerp Polyglot. For the Latin he would change the Antwerp Polyglot's edition of Pagnini's text for the 1592 Clementine Vulgate.¹⁴⁶ For the Greek, where the Antwerp Polyglot had used either the Aldine or Basel editions as a base text before correcting it using the text printed in the Complutensian Polyglot, de Leon would substitute the Sixtine version of the Septuagint, together with its Latin translation edited by Nobilius.¹⁴⁷ De Leon's largest criticism of the Antwerp version was of the Targums, which he claimed contained particularly corrupt texts, interpolated and changed by generations of Rabbinic scholars.¹⁴⁸ He proposed to replace these with a version written in Syriac he had obtained from Pope Gregory XIII, who had been given it by Raimundi.¹⁴⁹ This version, de Leon averred, was approved by a council made up of Roberto Bellarmine and a number of Maronite scholars.¹⁵⁰

De Leon's project soon ran into financial problems. He had intended to obtain the Papal patronage for the work, and the Holy See had agreed. Rome set two conditions: the Bible would have to be named the 'Biblia Pontificia', rather than the 'Biblia Regia', and it would have to include the Arabic text, with a Latin translation. While de Leon agreed to include the Arabic, he objected to renaming the work, and instead secured the support of the King of Spain, Philip III.¹⁵¹ The latter's death once more left the project without a patron. Here de Leon was fortunate: Cardinal Francesco Barberini, the nephew of the new Pope, Urban VIII, was then in Madrid as a special envoy to the court. De Leon presented his scheme to Barberini who agreed to publish it in Rome, and promised to see to it upon his return. De Leon gave Barberini the first five volumes of the Antwerp edition with his marginal corrections, and these were transported to Rome to await de Leon's presence there to complete the work. Illness and old age prevented

¹⁴⁵ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §III. Andreas de Leon to Guy-Michel Le Jay, 29 July 1628, pp. 131-139, pending further research, this letter is currently the main source for information on de Leon's project.

¹⁴⁶ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §III. Andreas de Leon to Guy-Michel le Jay, 29 July 1628, p. 132.

¹⁴⁷ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §III. Andreas de Leon to Guy-Michel le Jay, 29 July 1628, p. 132. On the complicated question of the Greek text of the Old Testament used in the Antwerp Polyglot, see, Dunkelgrün, 'Multiplicity of Scripture', p. 210.

¹⁴⁸ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §III. Andreas de Leon to Guy-Michel le Jay, 29 July 1628, pp. 132-136.

¹⁴⁹ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §III. Andreas de Leon to Guy-Michel le Jay, 29 July 1628, p. 133.

¹⁵⁰ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §III. Andreas de Leon to Guy-Michel le Jay, 29 July 1628, p. 137.

¹⁵¹ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §III. Andreas de Leon to Guy-Michel le Jay, 29 July 1628, pp. 137.

this from happening, and the prospects for de Leon's project, for the time being, hung in the balance.¹⁵²

The third planned Polyglot Bible was even more closely based on the Antwerp Polyglot. It was the design of Balthasar Moretus, the grandson of Christoph Plantin and the inheritor of his firm in Antwerp.¹⁵³ Like de Leon, Moretus framed his project in Catholic terms. Moretus radically changed the order of the Antwerp Polyglot's columns: he decided the Vulgate, rather than the Hebrew text, would be in the first column, indicating that it 'exceeds the others in authority and perfection'.¹⁵⁴ With the Hebrew placed in the second column, the third would contain the Sixtine edition of the Septuagint, which Moretus intended to divide by chapter according to the Vulgate, followed by Nobilius's Latin text. At the base of the page would be the Aramaic Targums and the Arabic, both with Latin translations.¹⁵⁵ Moretus's proposal was also shaped by Roman guidance regarding the confessional politics of Old Testament editions: while planning the design he had corresponded with Cardinal Scipione Corbelluzzi in Rome, who had advised him to print the Sixtine edition of the Septuagint.¹⁵⁶

Moretus had begun work on the Polyglot by the early 1620s. To edit the texts and track down the required manuscripts he employed the Jesuit Petrus Lansselius. In order that Lansselius could carry out the work, Moretus successfully petitioned the Superior General of the Jesuits, Mutio Vitelleschi, in November 1621, to secure Lansselius's temporary transfer from Douai to Antwerp.¹⁵⁷ Lansselius's work on the Polyglot continued throughout the 1620s, with Moretus paying for his board in Antwerp and covering the Jesuit's expenses for a number of secretaries.¹⁵⁸ Moretus also financed a series of trips for Lansselius to obtain additional manuscripts.¹⁵⁹

What Moretus lacked was permission from the Holy Office to publish the work. To this end he attempted to send Lansselius to Rome to present his plans in late 1626.

¹⁵² Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §III. Andreas de Leon to Guy-Michel le Jay, 29 July 1628, pp. 138-139.

¹⁵³ For this project see, generally, Dirk Imhof, *A never realised edition. Balthasar Moretus's project of a polyglot bible* (Antwerp: Plantin-Moretus Museum, 2014), to which I am indebted for bringing to my awareness a number of the sources at the Plantin-Moretus Museum. Imhof's work does not exhaust these sources. Further, it also does not consider the relevant material in Roman archives, or connect in detail the final failure of Moretus's project with the successful Paris edition.

¹⁵⁴ MPM, AP 119, p. 129, 'Designatio Balthasaris Moreti pro excudendis Bibliis Pontificiis Urbani VIII'.

¹⁵⁵ MPM, AP 119, p. 129, 'Designatio Balthasaris Moreti pro excudendis Bibliis Pontificiis Urbani VIII'.

¹⁵⁶ BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Balthasar Moretus to Francesco Barberini, 4 March 1627, 44^v. On the additional problem of the Targums, see Imhof, *A never realised edition*, pp. 12-13.

¹⁵⁷ MPM, AP 138, Balthasar Moretus to Mutio Vitelleschi, 19 November 1621, p. 44 (copy).

¹⁵⁸ Imhof, *A never realised edition*, p. 26.

¹⁵⁹ For attempts to obtain these manuscripts from Thomas Erpenius in Leiden, see MPM, AP 139, Balthasar Moretus to Franciscus II and Justus Raphelengius, 8 June 1624, p. 158; on the trips financed by Moretus, see Imhof, *A never realised edition*, pp. 24-25.

For this he required explicit permission from Vitelleschi in Rome, and wrote to him again for this purpose. Vitelleschi's initial reply was ambiguous and did not clearly indicate whether Lamselius could make the journey to Rome. This was followed, shortly after, with permission being denied.¹⁶⁰ It was at this stage, in February 1627, that Moretus wrote directly to Francesco Barberini for the first time. In this letter he set out his ambitions for the project, related how he had taken up Corbelluzzi's advice on the Septuagint, and recounted Lamselius's failed attempt to go to Rome.¹⁶¹ Barberini however, for reasons yet to be uncovered, did not reply to Moretus's letter, nor to a second one he sent the following year.¹⁶² The prospects for Moretus's scheme did not look promising.

It was at this point that the fate of the three projects came together in Rome. While de Leon and Moretus had approached the Holy See to seek either help or permission, Le Jay and his collaborators in Paris, indicating their degree of Gallican independence, had not taken any such steps. It was instead de Leon who brought the Paris project to Rome's attention. Having learnt of the Paris project he wrote to Le Jay at the end of July 1628 with a proposal: instead of preparing his own versions, Le Jay could print the work de Leon had already completed.¹⁶³ Le Jay declined de Leon's proposal. In response, de Leon wrote directly to the Holy Office in Rome, informed them of the Paris Polyglot project, and warned that they were intending to reprint the Antwerp Polyglot without any extensive changes.¹⁶⁴ There was no attempt being made, de Leon insisted, to correct the texts of the Targums. Most seriously, de Leon warned, Le Jay and his collaborators had taken no steps to ensure their work would be fitting for Catholic scholars: they were printing the Antwerp edition's text of the Septuagint, rather than the Sixtine edition.¹⁶⁵

Having been informed of Le Jay's plans, Rome swung into action. A Congregation was established to investigate the matter, composed of three Cardinals, Ottavino Bandini, Giovanni Mellini, and Desiderio Scaglia, and six theologians, the Jesuit Fathers Fioravanti and Cornelius à Lapide, Dom Hilarion, the Roman Professor Branti, a

¹⁶⁰ BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Balthasar Moretus to Francesco Barberini, 26 February 1627, 44^v.

¹⁶¹ BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Balthasar Moretus to Francesco Barberini, 26 February 1627, 43^r-44^v.

¹⁶² BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Balthasar Moretus to Francesco Barberini, 31 March 1628, 45^r-46^v.

¹⁶³ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §III. Andreas de Leon to Guy-Michel le Jay, 29 July 1628, pp. 138-139.

¹⁶⁴ ANF, M 234, Claude Bertin to Pierre de Bérulle, 8 February 1629, [n. p.]. This letter was in part published in Dagens, *Correspondance de Bérulle*, vol. III, pp. 687-689.

¹⁶⁵ ANF, M 234, Claude Bertin to Pierre de Bérulle, 8 February 1629, [n. p.]; Dagens, *Correspondance de Bérulle*, vol. III, p. 687.

member of the Clerics Regular Minor, and Claude Bertin.¹⁶⁶ At the Committee's first meeting on 7 February 1628 each member presented his opinion on the question, and following this a report was presented by the three Cardinals to the Pope. On the basis of this report Urban VIII ordered that all work be halted on the ongoing projects until a decision could be reached.¹⁶⁷ Urban VIII ordered Cardinal Mellini to write post-haste to the Papal Nuncio in Paris, Cardinal Bagni, and have him immediately halt the printing of the Paris edition.¹⁶⁸ Mellini also wrote a short letter with the same instructions to Bérulle, and told Bertin to do the same.¹⁶⁹ In this letter Bertin also indicated that the Papacy hoped for Bérulle's help in the matter to decide which projected edition ought to be continued.¹⁷⁰

Although we lack evidence as to whether Bérulle did halt the printing, what is known is the role he played to ensure it was the Paris Polyglot that received Papal approbation. Bérulle followed Bertin's advice. The latter had indicated that in de Sancy and Morin the Oratory possessed two men whose 'knowledge of languages' put them in the best position to answer the Holy See's questions.¹⁷¹ It was Morin that Bérulle chose for this task, as his hitherto unnoticed, lengthy letter to Bertin outlining and justifying the Paris Polyglot Bible confirms. The letter can now be found in the Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Rome, and in it one can see exactly how Morin used his understanding of the textual traditions of the Bible to justify the Paris Polyglot project in Catholic terms to the Papal authorities, a justification that would lead to it, rather than de Leon or Moretus's schemes, being granted permission from Rome.¹⁷²

In his letter Morin set out to refute the two claims made against the work by de Leon: that the version of the Septuagint that had Papal approbation should be included, and that the Targums should be replaced with new versions. Morin, his letter revealed,

¹⁶⁶ ANF, M 234, Claude Bertin to Pierre de Bérulle, 8 February 1629, [n. p.]; Dagens, *Correspondance de Bérulle*, vol. III, pp. 687-688. Bertin is one of the overlooked figures of this period in the Oratory's history, but his role in Rome was vital throughout this period, as a study of Bérulle's correspondence reveals. For an uncritical biography, to which much more could be added, see, Louis Batterel, *Mémoires domestiques pour servir à l'histoire de l'Oratoire*, vol. 1: *Les Pères de l'Oratoire qui ont vécu sous Mgr le Cardinal de Bérulle*, ed. A.-M.-P. Ingold (Paris: Alphonse Picard, 1902), pp. 94-102.

¹⁶⁷ ANF, M 234, Claude Bertin to Pierre de Bérulle, 8 February 1629, [n. p.]; Dagens, *Correspondance de Bérulle*, vol. III, p. 688.

¹⁶⁸ ANF, M 216, Giovanni Mellini to Giovanni Francesco Guido del Bagno, 8 February 1629, fol. 50^{r-v}.

¹⁶⁹ ANF, M 216, Giovanni Mellini to Pierre de Bérulle, 8 February 1629, fol. 50^r.

¹⁷⁰ ANF, M 234, Claude Bertin to Pierre de Bérulle, 8 February 1629, [n. p.]; Dagens, *Correspondance de Bérulle*, vol. III, p. 688.

¹⁷¹ ANF, M 234, Claude Bertin to Pierre de Bérulle, 8 February 1629, [n. p.]; Dagens, *Correspondance de Bérulle*, vol. III, p. 688, 'Je vous supplie très humblement de m'écrire sur ce sujet une lettre que ie puisse montrer à Messieurs les Cardinaux de cette congrégation et aux théologiens consultants d'icelle. Les Pères de Sancy et Morin y seraient bien plus utiles que moi qui n'ai pas l'intelligence des langues'.

¹⁷² BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 71^r-75^v.

had made this case before. According to Morin, Le Jay himself had first intended to substitute the Sixtine for the Antwerp version of the Septuagint.¹⁷³ Having consulted several learned men in Paris – among whom we can undoubtedly number Morin himself – Le Jay had been prevailed on to keep the Antwerp Polyglot's text in the Paris Polyglot.

Morin's argument was a detailed summary that built on the implications of the preface to his edition of the Septuagint. It would be a grave mistake, he told Bertin, to publish a polyglot edition of the Bible that contained both the Hebrew text from the Antwerp polyglot and the Greek text of the Sixtine Septuagint. Such an edition would face four textual problems inherent in the typographical design of a polyglot Bible that included the parallel presentation of the Bible in different languages. By putting the Antwerp Hebrew text and Sixtine Greek along side each other one would instantly notice four things: first, verses that the Hebrew had and the Septuagint lacked, or vice versa; second, verses found in different chapters across the different versions; third, verses found in the same chapter but in different places; and fourth, verses unique to either edition that would have to be placed outside the text.¹⁷⁴

This was more than a typographical problem. Although the variants between the Greek and the Hebrew, Morin himself recognised, were not in themselves of great importance, readers would nonetheless see that in the majority of cases the Latin text would frequently agree with the Hebrew against the Septuagint.¹⁷⁵ This opened the doors to the claim – one Morin no doubt foresaw the Protestants making – that the Septuagint could be criticised as a corrupt text, full of textual problems, and not one that could stand when measured against the *Hebraica veritas*. Morin was under no illusions about the problems that confronted the historian of the Septuagint, which included recognising that even the best contemporary manuscripts, including Codex Vaticanus, presented scholars with serious problems. Yet these considerations did not contradict his two central points: the unreliability of the Hebrew text and the superiority of the textual tradition of the Septuagint, the best printed edition of which was the Sixtine Septuagint based on Codex Vaticanus. Morin's purpose in arguing for the separation of the Antwerp Polyglot's Hebrew text from the Sixtine edition of the Septuagint was not to suggest the Greek text of the Antwerp polyglot should be preferred to the papally-authorised Sixtine text. It was quite the reverse: Morin sought to separate the two in order to defend the

¹⁷³ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 72^v.

¹⁷⁴ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 71^{r-v}.

¹⁷⁵ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 72^r.

superior Sixtine text, and with it the status of the independent textual tradition of the Septuagint.¹⁷⁶

In the Paris Polyglot, as in the Antwerp edition, Morin outlined, the other versions were presented in a way that meant their translations provided so many additional interpretations of the Hebrew text.¹⁷⁷ This had in some instances determined the versions that had been printed, such the Antwerp Polyglot's printing of Pagnini's Latin translation, rather than the Vulgate. The Greek text had been affected even more in this regard, as the Antwerp text had in places been emended to meet the Hebrew. Morin presented this reality as the modern imitation of ancient practice: the Complutensian and Antwerp editors were the successors of Origen, who had been the first to use the Hebrew as a guide by which to emend the Greek text. Indeed, Morin framed the Antwerp text in these terms. It was a continuation of the subsequent corruption of the fifth column of Origen's Hexapla where subsequent scribes had over time failed to copy the asterisks and obelisks by which Origen had indicated what was original to the Hebrew and Greek texts.¹⁷⁸ Morin's defence of including the Greek text edited to meet the Hebrew ran against his critical interpretation of the evidence regarding the Septuagint: it should be included not because it was a superior version or one authorised by the Church, but because the main point of the Polyglot was to illustrate the Hebrew text. Morin's letter was in this sense a complete repudiation of the notion of 'accommodation' subsequent historians have argued was central to the Polyglot enterprise. Morin reveals quite a different understanding of the form, one rooted in the confessional politics of biblical editing.¹⁷⁹

Morin also took issue with the claims de Leon lodged against the Targums. In the first place, he explained, the stakes were less significant since the Aramaic texts were not canonical for Jews or Christians.¹⁸⁰ This being said, Morin had little time for the allegation that the Aramaic texts presented in the Antwerp Polyglot had 'twenty-thousand errors'. This was not to doubt that they contained a large number of places that should be corrected. These could be dealt with under three headings: those related to faith, those related to morals, and finally those related to the facts of textual transmission

¹⁷⁶ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 73^{r-v}.

¹⁷⁷ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 72^v.

¹⁷⁸ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fols. 72^v-73^r. Note that Morin did not think this was Origen's purpose, only the consequence of his editorial activity. On which point, see Chapter Two.

¹⁷⁹ Miller, 'Making the Paris Polyglot', pp. 60-61, 84.

¹⁸⁰ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 73^v.

and interpretation that were unique to unvocalised texts in languages such as Aramaic.¹⁸¹ The first category required little discussion since it involved very few cases, and these – not identified by Morin – confined to the Psalms. The second was more important and, as Morin acknowledged, involved a great number of variants previously touched on by Montano and Elijah Levita. Here however, Morin largely avoided discussion of the issue by recalling his earlier observation that these texts were not canonical, therefore any such variants the editor objected to could, as in the case of the Antwerp Bible, be excised from the text and, if necessary, added in an apparatus either at the foot of the page or in a separate volume.¹⁸²

Morin considered the third form of textual variation in the greatest detail. Above all, Morin focused on what had become the vexed question of the role of vowel points in Oriental languages. It was the absence of these, he argued, that led to such a large number of variants – and even errors – between different versions of the same text. Morin put his finger on the nexus of the problem: no matter how much reason and judgement an editor brought to bear on each variant, it could rarely reach a matter of certainty. This being so, the editions published in the second Venice edition far exceeded the Antwerp text in terms of their reliability: they had been approved by Elijah Levita, undoubtedly the greatest Jewish grammarian of the last century, whose judgement was much to be preferred to Montano's.¹⁸³

This was not, Morin acknowledged, a problem restricted to the Aramaic texts alone. As he had emphasised in his preface to his edition of the Septuagint, the Hebrew text of the Old Testament suffered from a similar problem, such that Jacob ben Chaim and Levita had underlined the large number of variants that could be found in the Pentateuch.¹⁸⁴ The Paris Polyglot would attempt to render the best text it could. The editor of the Hebrew and Aramaic was Philippe d'Aquin, a Jewish convert who understood Hebrew, Aramaic, Rabbinic and Talmudic Hebrew as well as Morin himself knew French. Before him would be the Antwerp Polyglot, two editions of the Bomberg Rabbinic Bible, and Buxtorf's recent edition. Through the collation of these different versions of the same textual tradition, Morin averred, d'Aquin should be able to resolve the majority of the text's problems.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 73^v.

¹⁸² BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fols. 73^v-74^r.

¹⁸³ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 74^{r-v}.

¹⁸⁴ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 74^v.

¹⁸⁵ BV, Ms. Carte Allaci 161, Jean Morin to Claude Bertin, 22 March 1629, fol. 74^v.

Morin concluded by underlining the central point of his argument: any attempt to correct the Latin or Greek texts of the Bible by the Hebrew would be severely misguided, since each of the textual traditions had to be understood in terms of their individual histories. How far it was this specific argument that the Cardinals and theologians assembled in Rome were persuaded by is still, unfortunately, unclear. What is known is that it was the Parisian Polyglot, supported by Bérulle, but justified on the basis of Morin's letter to Bertin, that was given the go ahead out of the three competing projects. Barberini ultimately never responded to Moretus's pleas, and it was left to the latter to concede in April 1631 that he had given up all hope for his own scheme.¹⁸⁶

4

By early 1630 Morin had played a crucial role in two different editions of the biblical text. For both of these he composed extended justifications of the textual choices he had made, and revealed a detailed awareness of the problems inherent in the question of scriptural multiplicity.¹⁸⁷ The Sixtine edition of the Septuagint was vital for the history of the Church, and its text had to be understood in the history of its use in that context. Its antiquity and authority were not challenged by the readings of the Hebrew text since the latter's own modernity, and especially its vowel points, was its fundamental weakness, whereas the Sixtine Septuagint had the antiquity of its tradition confirmed by the Samaritan Pentateuch. The Paris Polyglot Bible, in contrast, was orientated towards the interpretation of the Hebrew text. The confessional implications of including the Sixtine Septuagint on the same page as the Hebrew were too serious to countenance, and in their place the Antwerp edition's Greek text had to be preferred. In each of these cases Morin confronted the confessional implications of scholarship in the context of the traditions of the Old Testament text, and justified the two different editions of the Bible in those terms. He did this, however, by attempting to use a sophisticated critical and historical argument to construct a new account of the history of the texts that would defend the versions of the Church.

¹⁸⁶ MPM, AP 89, Balthasar Moretus to Francesco Barberini, 5 April 1631, p. 135

¹⁸⁷ On this concept, see, Dunkelgrün, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture', p. 1-2.

Chapter 2

Jean Morin's Catholic Biblical Criticism, c. 1628-1640

When James Ussher wrote to Louis de Dieu from Dublin on 9 June 1632 he gave a blunt appraisal of Morin's recent publications, the preface to the Sixtine Septuagint and the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae in utrumque samaritanorum pentateuchum* (1631). The 'monk's book' was a 'foolish piece of work', since in arguing that the Hebrew text was 'corrupt and distorted', Morin had inadvertently weakened the authority of the Vulgate through his valorisation of the Greek and Samaritan codices.¹⁸⁸ Ussher's verdict reflected the pressing confessional issues raised by Morin's biblical criticism in the 1630s. In the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, the *Exercitationes biblicae* (1633), and the *Diatribae elencticae de sinceritate hebraei graecique textus dignoscenda* (1639), Morin argued that the text of the Septuagint – above all as represented by Codex Vaticanus – should be preferred to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Morin's work had two important consequences. First, both his work and the debates it generated between him and his Protestant and Catholic contemporaries forced scholars to think about the confessional significance of the Old Testament in historical and critical terms. Second, in shaping the terms in which Catholics and Protestants throughout Europe thought of the relationship between the different versions of Scripture, from the 1630s and into the early 1640s, Morin set the stage for the interpretation the central claims of Louis Cappel's *Critica sacra* (1650).

¹⁸⁸ Boran, *Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. II, §354. James Ussher to Louis de Dieu, 9 June 1632, p. 586, 'monarchum illum, de quo ad D. Rivetum scripsit Marinus Marsenius [sic], non alium quam Johannem Morinum fuisse suspico, qui tum in proluxa illa Praefatione editioni τῶν ἑβδομήκοντα (quae Lutetiae anno 1628 Graeco-Latina prodit) praefixa, tum in Exercitationibus Ecclesiasticis (quas in Samaritanum Pentateuchum ibidem anno 1631. evulgavit) ex Graecorum et Samariticorum codicum fide. Hebraeum nostrum textum corruptum et depravatum esse, stultissima opere astruere conatus est. Stultissima enim quid ni dixerim? cum eadem ipse opera sua sibi caedat vineta, et (quod probe est a te animadversum) Vulgatae editionis Latinae auctoritatem pariter enervet'.

I. Morin, the Septuagint, and confessional division

1

As early as June 1628 Morin had planned to write a lengthy work dedicated to expanding the argument he had made in the preface to his edition of the Septuagint. As he put it to Jérôme Aleandro, he could not bear it that contemporaries 'illegitimately' praised the integrity of the Jewish texts at the expense of Catholic ones.¹⁸⁹ In a letter from 1631 to Barberini Morin repeated this claim in precisely the same terms: through a comparison of the extant Hebrew, Greek, and Latin sources, he would show how the Septuagint and Jerome's Vulgate could be vindicated from the aspersions of Jewish and heretical scholars.¹⁹⁰

One answer to this question, Morin recognised, was provided by patristic and medieval testimony: Hebrew texts were unreliable because they had been intentionally altered by Jewish scribes in their hatred of Christianity.¹⁹¹ The opinion of many of the Fathers, this had become widespread in modern times, Morin explained, because of the thirteenth-century Spanish Dominican Ramon Martí's *Pugio fidei*. Martí's work was drawn on by later scholars and theologians, notably Porcheti de Salvaticis, whose work was in turn mined by Pietro Galatino for his *De arcanis Catholicae veritatis* (1518).¹⁹² Morin himself had hinted in the 1628 preface that he shared this view, and his lengthy recapitulation of the views of the Fathers, Martí, and Galatino, have given the vast majority of subsequent scholars the impression that he supported this position throughout his career.¹⁹³ Even at this early stage, however, Morin distanced himself from this view. In his extensive perusal of rabbinic books and Hebrew manuscripts, Morin claimed, he had never encountered a single example of Jewish fraud.¹⁹⁴ Morin instead argued that Jewish negligence, ignorance, and the uncertainties and calamities of Jewish history, especially in

¹⁸⁹ BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Jean Morin to Jerome Aleandro, 2 June 1628, fol. 54r.

¹⁹⁰ BAV, Barb. Lat. 6510, Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, 15 April 1631, fol. 111r.

¹⁹¹ Jean Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae, de Hebraei Graecique textus sinceritate, germana LXXII. Interpretum translatione dignoscenda, illius cum Vulgata conciliatione, & iuxta Iudaeos divina integritate, totiusque Rabbinicae antiquitates, & operis Masorethici aera, explicatione, & censura* (Paris: Antoine Vitre, 1633), p. 13.

¹⁹² Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 15-19. See further, Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews. The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1982).

¹⁹³ For a recent example, see, Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, pp. 107-8, 'In a series of publications [the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*; *Exercitationes biblicae*; *Diatriba elenctica*] ... Morin went to great lengths to find proof for the traditional anti-Jewish accusation that the Jews, "in odium Christianorum" ... had deliberately corrupted and altered the Hebrew text'.

¹⁹⁴ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 37, 'Quantum enim Rabbinicas historias, librosque secretiores euoluendo & scrutando hactenus assequi potui, nullam tam atrocis criminis [sic] illis impingendi causam necessariam animadverti.

the period following the fall of the Second Temple, were powerful enough explanations to explain the shortcomings of Jewish custodianship.¹⁹⁵

It was only, however, in the posthumously published Part Two of the *Exercitationes biblicae* (1660) that Morin set out this history of Jewish scholarship. In Part One his focus was on the editions of the church, the Septuagint and Vulgate. Morin refused to give the Catholic texts special treatment by virtue of their necessarily inspired origins. He accepted the latter in the case of both the Septuagint and the Vulgate, but in neither case did he argue that this provided any insurance for the subsequent transmission of the text.¹⁹⁶ Morin was emphatic: since no 'sane man' could think we have the autographs of Jerome, let alone those of Moses and the Prophets, the task that scholars of the Old and New Testament faced was to assess the history of the text itself, and above all how to analyse and interpret the copies, copies of copies, and ancient translations that were available.¹⁹⁷

Morin argued in favour of applying textual criticism to the Bible because his identification of the locus of scriptural authority was not dependent on its textual integrity. This was a necessarily Catholic view: the authenticity and canonicity of scripture were based on the authority of the Church declaring which versions constituted such.¹⁹⁸ Morin had little time for those who argued, following de Castro, that Trent's decree referred to the Vulgate's text-critical superiority. The Vulgate was authorised by a Church Council, and to the extent this decision impinged on the text it only meant it contained nothing contrary to faith or *bonos mores*.¹⁹⁹ This verdict did not extend to the minutiae of judging individual cases of textual error, or even problems in chronology that divided the Septuagint from the Vulgate.²⁰⁰

This left Morin with a historical and textual challenge: he wanted to demonstrate that the Septuagint and Vulgate were superior texts to their Hebrew counterparts without simply appealing to the authority of the Church, but instead establish their text-critical superiority.²⁰¹ Morin's biblical criticism was thus based on the idea that it was possible to isolate these different textual traditions. These were identified less according to strictly text-critical criteria, but rather in terms of a given text's custodians, such as, in the case of the Hebrew text, the Tiberian Masoretes. The task of the critic, as Morin presented it,

¹⁹⁵ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 37-38.

¹⁹⁶ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 301-303.

¹⁹⁷ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 60-66.

¹⁹⁸ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 119-120, p. 200.

¹⁹⁹ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 301.

²⁰⁰ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 320-321.

²⁰¹ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 45.

was to assess historically how reliable these custodians were, how extensively their work had changed or altered the text, and how far, therefore, the text which they received was then in turn reflected in the text they bequeathed to subsequent generations. One side of this was the deprecation of Jewish custodianship, which would be the subject of Part Two of the *Exercitationes biblicae*. The other involved constructing a coherent account of the textual history of the Septuagint and the Vulgate. Morin dramatised the significance of his problem in the opening chapter of the *Exercitationes biblicae*: can it be supposed that the Catholic Church has been such a negligent custodian of the sacred texts that one was forced to turn to the synagogue?²⁰²

2

The Septuagint was of unequivocal importance in early Christian history as the version of the Bible known to Christ, the Apostles, the early Church. All Catholics, and even Heretics interested in the history of the primitive church, had an interest in it.²⁰³ As Morin presented it, the problem facing scholars was not simply that there were no manuscripts that provided an accurate witness to the text of this period. What had marked the Septuagint's history were the unfortunate consequences of Origen's otherwise well-intentioned editorial intervention in the first half of the third century. The key text was Origen's Hexapla. Across a series of six columns Origen had set out in parallel the readings found in a series of different versions of scripture.²⁰⁴ These were the Hebrew in Hebrew characters, the Hebrew transliterated into Greek, and four Greek Jewish versions: Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Septuagint. The Septuagint column was not simply the text as Origen had received it. Instead, he had edited it with reference to the Hebrew text: an asterisk indicated a word or passage present in the Hebrew and absent from the Greek, an obelisk a word or passage present in the Greek and absent from the Hebrew. To fill the gaps where the Septuagint lacked what was in

²⁰² Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 3, though see also pp. 1-6, and pp. 11-12.

²⁰³ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 393-394.

²⁰⁴ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 158-160. Note, Morin thought that Origen had begun by editing the Tetrapla, that is the four Greek versions, and thereafter added the two further columns of the Hebrew tradition. Morin was also aware that Origen had added further columns with additional Greek texts to the existing six, creating the Octapla. Here I focus on the implications of Morin's account of the Hexapla, since it is that edition which held the most significance for Morin's account of the Septuagint. On how early modern scholars understood Origen's work more generally, see Mandelbrote, 'Origen against Jerome in Early Modern Europe', pp. 106-135.

the Hebrew, Origen had not made his own translations but taken the text from the other Greek translations, most frequently Theodotion.²⁰⁵

The precise intentions behind Origen's work have long divided scholars. Morin based his interpretation of Origen's overarching ambitions on the account given in the latter's *Letter to Africanus*. As this quite clearly showed, it had not been Origen's intention to emend the Septuagint by reference to the Hebrew nor, just as importantly for Morin, had it been his intention to correct the Septuagint by reference to the other Greek versions.²⁰⁶ The chief end of the Hexapla was in fact controversial. Origen and his contemporaries were confronted with Jewish opponents, who would routinely impugn the Christians' sacred texts, either by highlighting absences in the Greek or additions not present in the Hebrew. The Hexapla was designed to give Christians a textual resource to provide much needed assistance in their arguments with Jews.²⁰⁷

Origen's editorial intervention had had serious consequences for the text of the Septuagint. It was not feasible to copy the whole of the Hexapla, yet practice had revealed the value of the Septuagint column: at a glance it gave the text used by the Church while also serving its crucial apologetic role in dispute with Jewish opponents.²⁰⁸ Scribes had therefore copied the Septuagint column and it subsequently circulated independently. In itself this would have been perfectly acceptable, as Morin had no doubt that Origen had carried out the work accurately. Subsequent scribes, however, had failed to copy Origen's system of sigla reliably and even, oblivious to their meaning, ignored them entirely. The text they created was new mixed text, in which it was no longer possible to discern which parts came from the original Septuagint Origen had inherited, and which had been interpolated out of Theodotion.²⁰⁹

Morin's account of Origen's work also had a second purpose. It made it possible to understand why Jerome had felt it necessary to translate the Vulgate from the Hebrew text. To understand, Morin argued, Jerome's decision it was necessary to grasp the textual problem he confronted at the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth centuries. At that time there were as many Latin versions as there were codices, created either by editors adding or subtracting words at will to try and realign the text with the

²⁰⁵ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 159.

²⁰⁶ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 160-161.

²⁰⁷ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 160. Morin gave what is in principle the same explanation as Sebastian Brock in the twentieth century. See, Sebastian P. Brock, 'Origen's aims as a Textual Critic of the Old Testament', *Studia Patristica* 10 (1970), pp. 215-218. For a recent discussion of the problems and questions presented by the Hexapla, see, Grafton and Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book*, pp. 116-124.

²⁰⁸ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 159.

²⁰⁹ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 174-175.

Septuagint or by the carelessness and delusion of scribes.²¹⁰ The Greek versions were not immune to the same problems. From causes ranging from scribes ignoring or truncating Origen's sigla and simple carelessness three textual groups had arisen in Greece, the East (i.e. Palestine, Syria), and Egypt, whose versions subsequently became known by the supposed editors of their recensions, Lucian, Origen, and Hesychius.²¹¹

To resolve the problems caused by the multiplicity of scripture Jerome was to find only one solution. It was true, Morin admitted, Jerome had first attempted a version of the Greek based on Origen's work. This did not prove a lasting solution to the problems created by the different versions.²¹² Thereafter, for both the Old and New Testaments, Jerome had decided to return *ad fontes*, and translated the Old Testament from the Hebrew, the New Testament from the Greek. Jerome's translation, taken up and confirmed by the authority of the Church, was the version of the Church for a period exceeding the next thousand years. There was no justification, Morin averred, for heretics to take issue with the text. As the single version in use throughout that period there was no disputing its authority, and although it had a number of textual problems, these could be easily emended through comparison of the various witnesses.²¹³

To make his case Morin had to do more, however, than give an account of the history of the Septuagint's transmission. Since he wanted to argue that the versions available to him and his contemporaries were superior to their Hebrew equivalents he also needed to demonstrate which of the contemporary editions – and which of the extant manuscripts – should be preferred. To do this Morin also had to be able to demonstrate that it was possible to separate the different Greek versions from one another and provide a method by which one could determine what was original to the Septuagint. For contemporary Protestant scholars this had yet to become a problem: since they had chiefly studied the Septuagint as a means to an end – the better understanding of the Hebrew text – they had not yet begun to think about the Septuagint and other ancient Greek translations as independent textual traditions. In his *Veterum interpretum graecorum in totum vetus testamentum fragmenta* (1622), for example, Johannes Drusius, Professor of Hebrew at Franeker from 1585, had assembled fragments of the ancient Greek translations.²¹⁴ Drusius had not, however, indicated which parts of

²¹⁰ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 175.

²¹¹ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 175.

²¹² Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 175-177.

²¹³ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 179.

²¹⁴ Johannes Drusius, *Veterum interpretum graecorum in totum vetus Testamentum fragmenta*, ed. Sixtus Amama (Arnhem: Johannis Janssonius, 1622).

Theodotion had been added to the Septuagint, and which parts had not. This was entirely in keeping with his aim: far from using the fragments to study the history of the Greek translations Drusius's two main objectives were to illustrate the history of the Hebrew through giving alternative glosses and readings and when possible cast doubt on the Vulgate's translation.

In the final chapter of the *Exercitationes biblicae* Morin outlined precisely how scholars could begin to disentangle the Greek traditions and reach some conclusions about the text of the Septuagint. This was not a claim about the Septuagint's original text, which Morin did not think would be recoverable, at least on the basis of the manuscripts discovered so far. It was instead the suggestion that scholars could trace how the text appeared at different moments in history.²¹⁵ To this end Morin proposed a series of tests by which a version of the Greek Old Testament text could be assessed. The first two depended on unpicking the unfortunate consequences of Origen's editorial work. Scholars should first consider whether passages known to be marked with an asterisk (i.e. in the Hebrew but not in the Greek) were absent, and that those marked with an obelisk were present (i.e. in the Septuagint but not in the Hebrew). Texts that had the largest number of passages with asterisks absent, but those containing obelisks present, should be preferred.²¹⁶ The further tests were based on patristic evidence: to consider whether the position and placement of verses and chapters in a manuscript or edition reflected an order known to be original to the Septuagint and to compare passages given by the Fathers with the extant manuscripts and printed editions.²¹⁷

When combined these four points gave Morin a method through which scholars could begin to sift the Greek versions.²¹⁸ Morin's proposal was reliant on two kinds of evidence. First, it required patristic editions and manuscripts that either preserved material directly from the Septuagint or testimony as to the versions of the text found in the different Greek editions. Patristic Catenae and commentaries were particularly valuable. Such would include, for example, Procopius of Gaza's commentary on Isaiah that preserved details about which parts of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion had been added to the Septuagint.²¹⁹

²¹⁵ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 387-389.

²¹⁶ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 390-391.

²¹⁷ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 390-391.

²¹⁸ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 391.

²¹⁹ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 405-410.

The second was manuscript or printed material that provided direct testimony about Origen's work in the Hexapla.²²⁰ Most valuable were those instances in which Origen's sigla had been fully preserved. The late sixteenth century, Morin explained, had seen one particularly significant advance in this field in the shape of Andreas Masius's *Iosuae imperatoris historia* (1574).²²¹ This provided scholars with a book from the Syro-Hexapla, a seventh-century Syriac translation by Paul of Tella of the Septuagint column of Origen's Hexapla, including the Origenic diacritical apparatus, reproduced in Masius's edition in the form of an annotated recension of the Greek text.²²² Paris's libraries and great collections were also useful. Morin had access, for example, to the codex he and his contemporaries knew as Codex Rupifucaldianus (now Codex Marchalianus), a manuscript of the Prophets whose marginal annotations includes readings from Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and also Origenic passages marked with the Hexaplaric sigla.²²³

If seventeenth-century scholars, in addition to the usual processes of dissemination, transmission, and corruption, were still living with the consequences of Origen's work, Morin attempted to show them a way in which this could be turned to their advantage. To do so Morin provided a detailed introduction to the different versions of the Greek Old Testament then known to scholars.²²⁴ The three principal versions were the Complutensian, Aldine, and Sixtine editions. Morin had subjected these to the four trials he had set out and come to a conclusion that would hardly have surprised readers of his 1628 preface: the Sixtine Septuagint, based on Codex Vaticanus, represented the closest witness to the text of the Septuagint.²²⁵ Second to this was the first edition of the Aldine, published in 1518, which Morin considered to far exceed the Complutensian text, a version he found had been edited throughout to agree with the Hebrew text.²²⁶ Morin was not averse to highlighting difficult evidence: there were at least some Origenic additions from the Hebrew present in Codex Vaticanus, which could

²²⁰ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 400-405.

²²¹ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 431-438.

²²² On the Syro-Hexapla, see, S. P. Brock, *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2006), p. 47; Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context*, pp. 353-354. On Masius, see, Theodor Dunkelgrün, 'The Hebrew Library of a Renaissance Humanist: Andreas Masius and the Bibliography to his *Iosuae Imperatoris Historia* (1574), with a Latin Edition and an Annotated English Translation', *Studia Rosenthaliana* 42-43 (2010-2011), pp. 197-252; Dunkelgrün, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture', pp. 364-467.

²²³ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 412-415.

²²⁴ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 391-397.

²²⁵ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 391.

²²⁶ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 393-394. On the Complutensian text, see now, Séamus O'Connell, *From Most Ancient Sources: The Nature and Text-Critical Use of the Greek Old Testament Text of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006).

be found when one compared it with patristic testimony.²²⁷ The point was that Morin was only in a secondary sense interested in these individual manuscripts. His main aim was to show how these could be used to reconstruct the text of the Septuagint at a given point in its history. The method Morin had devised was critical and historical, using an interpretation of the editorial changes made by Origen as a way for scholars to reach back to the text of the Septuagint at the time the Hexapla was created. This method was soon to be tested.

3

The significance of Codex Vaticanus could only be challenged by the discovery of a manuscript that contained a text Morin's four trials indicated was closer to the Septuagint. It was somewhat serendipitous therefore that just as Morin was writing the *Exercitationes biblicae*, so were English Protestants studying a text that appeared to offer just such a prospect. Given to Charles I by the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople, Cyril Lucaris, this codex was, as Thomas Roe put it, 'the greatest antiquity of the Greeke church'.²²⁸ Written in a large uncial hand without accents or breathing marks, the manuscript contained a copy of the entire Bible in Greek, including Apocrypha, and two epistles attributed to Clement, Bishop of Rome, and written to the Church of Corinth.²²⁹ This manuscript also came with an impressive tradition, according to which it had been written by the virgin martyr, Thecla, the supposed date of whose death meant it exceeded in age any manuscript used by earlier Catholic editors. This codex, now known as Codex Alexandrinus, appeared to offer Protestant scholars a manuscript that could rival the best sixteenth-century editions.

This had confessional implications. The most important developments in Septuagint scholarship to this point, especially the Complutensian, Aldine, and Sixtine editions, had been Catholic projects. They, like the preface to Morin's own edition of the Septuagint, demonstrated how important the Septuagint was as a text of the Old

²²⁷ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 415.

²²⁸ Samuel Richardson, ed., *The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe* (London: S. Richardson, 1740), p. 618. See further, Matthew Spinka, 'Acquisition of the Codex Alexandrinus by England', *Journal of Religion* 16 (1936), pp. 10-29; Mandelbrote, 'English Scholarship and the Greek Text', pp. 78-80.

²²⁹ Scot McKendrick, 'The Codex Alexandrinus: or the dangers of being a named manuscript,' in *The Bible as Book: The Transmission of the Greek Text*, Scot McKendrick and Orlaith O'Sullivan eds. (London: British Library, 2003), 1-16. For a reproduction, see E. M. Thompson, ed., *Facsimile of the Codex Alexandrinus* (London: British Museum, 1879).

Testament and a document of Christian antiquity. The possibility that the Protestants might have obtained a superior text was disconcerting for Catholic scholars. One such was Lucas Holstenius. Holstenius was a Lutheran scholar from Hamburg who in 1624 had converted to Catholicism in Paris and thereafter come under the patronage of Cardinal Francesco Barberini. Living in Rome from 1627 onwards, working first for Barberini and eventually becoming first custodian of the Vatican Library, Holstenius was one of Europe's most confessionally-entrenched scholars.²³⁰ This was evident in his reaction to hearing of the Protestant acquisition of Codex Alexandrinus.²³¹ In a letter to Peiresc in March 1637, Holstenius outlined the nature of the threat. As Drusius's example had already shown, Patrick Young – who was known to be editing the text – could use this new manuscript to undermine the Sixtine edition of the Septuagint.²³² Holstenius was looking to mount a pre-emptive response from the Catholic side. While surveying the Cardinal's library he had come across an exceedingly old manuscript of the Twelve Minor Prophets that also included the Origenic diacritical apparatus.²³³ In Holstenius's first reports to Peiresc, he had commented on how its readings could be used to reinforce the authority of the Vulgate.²³⁴ Now however, he instead emphasised that with the Protestants' having taken possession of Codex Alexandrinus, the manuscript of the Minor Prophets could be used as the basis for a revision of the Sixtine Septuagint, to improve its text before any publication on Young's part. To this end he was urging his patron, Cardinal Barberini, to agree to his plans.²³⁵

Holstenius's reaction to Protestant possession of Codex Alexandrinus differed markedly from Morin's. In the final chapter of the *Exercitationes biblicae* Morin commented that he had been reading Young's recent publication of Clement of Rome's

²³⁰ On Holstenius, see, F. J. M. Blom, 'Lucas Holstenius (1596-1661) and England, in *Studies in Seventeenth-Century English Literature, History and Bibliography*, ed. G. A. M. Janssens and F. G. A. M. Aarts (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1984), pp. 25-39; Peter J. A. N. Rietbergen, 'Lucas Holste (1596-1661), scholar and librarian, or: the power of books and libraries', in his *Power and Religion in Baroque Rome: Barberini Cultural Politics* (Brill: Leiden and Boston, 2006), pp. 256-295.

²³¹ Holstenius had already been perturbed by the Protestant acquisition of the *Marmora Arundeliana*, Barocci manuscripts, and the transport of other Greek manuscripts from Mount Athos to England. See, J. F. Boissonade, ed., *Lucae Holstenii Epistolae ad diversos* (Paris: J. Gratiot, 1817), §XVIII. Lucas Holstenius to Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, 24 November 1628, pp. 115-116. For more on these transfers, and the burgeoning Greek holdings of Oxford's libraries, see, Mandelbrote, 'English Scholarship and the Greek Text', pp. 80-81.

²³² Boissonade, *Epistolae ad diversos*, §XLVI. Lucas Holstenius to Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, 7 March 1637, pp. 292-293.

²³³ Boissonade, *Epistolae ad diversos*, §CVIII. Lucas Holstenius to Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, 30 May 1636, p. 500.

²³⁴ Boissonade, *Epistolae ad diversos*, §XLIV. Lucas Holstenius to Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, 4 December 1636, pp. 276-277.

²³⁵ Boissonade, *Epistolae ad diversos*, §XLVI. Lucas Holstenius to Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, 7 March 1637, pp. 292-293.

Epistle to the Corinthians.²³⁶ The provenance of these letters – which were thought to have been written in the late first century CE – as part of Codex Alexandrinus appeared to confirm their authenticity. For Young, as Hardy has shown, they were useful not solely for their ecclesiastical importance, since they provided important testimony for the appointment of Bishops in the days of the Apostles, but also for the evidence they presented of the history of the Greek language, both in the late first-century Mediterranean and in the longer tradition of the Greek patristic writing.²³⁷

Morin undoubtedly valued this important witness to the practice and governance of the early Church.²³⁸ Reading it as he finished the *Exercitationes biblicae*, however, his first concern was to summarise his opinion on Clement's quotations from the Old Testament. He touched on several facets of Clement's testimony, which included the observation that it contained quotations from apocryphal books no longer extant and sections where the Father quoted from memory, rather than word for word. Even in the latter case, Morin insisted, it appeared he based his recollection on an edition closer to the Greek, rather than Hebrew version.²³⁹ Morin underlined that Clement's use of Greek indicated that version of the scripture familiar to him reflected what was known as the Septuagint, and above all a version that most closely resembled the text published in the Sixtine edition.²⁴⁰

Young's edition of Clement seems to have provoked Morin to obtain a transcription of some readings from Codex Alexandrinus.²⁴¹ For this he sent a request via

²³⁶ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 420; Patrick Young, ed. and transl., *Clementis ad Corinthos epistola prior* (Oxford: John Lichfield, 1633). On Young's work, I am indebted to the accounts given in Mandelbrote, 'English Scholarship and the Greek Text', pp. 82-85; Hardy, 'Ars critica', pp. 220-239.

²³⁷ Hardy, 'Ars critica', p. 164.

²³⁸ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 420. Hardy had not noticed Morin had already referred to and praised this work here, hence his comment, 'Ars critica', p. 226, that 'Morin showed little interest in Young's edition of Clement'.

²³⁹ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, pp. 421-423.

²⁴⁰ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 420.

²⁴¹ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XLV. Robert Philip to Jean Morin, 5 June 1634, pp. 243-244, where Philip confirms that he has received 'ce que vous [Morin] avez demandé il y a long temps du MS. des 70'. It is not easy to specify precisely what this was, that is to say whether it was a transcription of a passage or a sample of variant readings. The following letter, §XLVI. Robert Philip to Jean Morin, 16 October 1634, p. 245, described them as 'les diversités entre les exemples des 70 que vous aviez demandé écrite par Mr. Junius mesme'. In his response to Comber however, §XLIII. Jean Morin to Thomas Comber [without date but post-October 1634, responding to §XLIV. Thomas Comber to Jean Morin, 29 September [Old Style] 1634, pp. 238-242], p. 236, Morin describes it as 'illius quaedam specimina legi, quae Vir eruditissimus, & clarissimus Junius, cum R. Patre Philippo communicanda descripsit'. I think it's most probable in this case that Father Philip gives the closest description of the request, since he had no reason to be so precise had Morin only been sent a transcription of a single passage. One thing that is interesting is that Young had apparently sent a diplomatic transcription. See, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, p. 274. The letters between Morin, Comber, and Philip are not in the correct chronological order, as a careful study of their contents reveals. The reconstruction outlined here – note especially the reversal of letters §XLIII and §XLIV – and taken up throughout the

his fellow Oratorian, the Scottish Catholic priest Robert Philip, then in England as confessor to Queen Henrietta Maria.²⁴² Morin received these transcriptions in or just after June 1634. Shortly afterwards, in correspondence with the Dean of Carlisle, Thomas Comber, he revealed his rather damning verdict that the manuscript was evidently not 'a pure and sincere text of the Septuagint'.²⁴³ It suffered, Morin explained, from two clear problems. First, it contained interpolations to make it agree with the Hebrew, shared with the passages from Theodotion that Origen had included in the Hexapla. Linked to this, Morin noted, passages Origen had marked with obeli had also in places been deleted.²⁴⁴ Second, it also apparently contained passages – albeit generally of little importance – that were absent from both the Hebrew and the Greek. This, joined with the knowledge that the manuscript was supposedly of Alexandrian origin, meant that it was probably an example of the Hesychian recension, a point that illustrated how much less carefully that version had been edited than the one by Origen.²⁴⁵

How Morin had approached the readings he had been sent can be easily reconstructed. Upon receiving the 'few sheets' from Father Philip he submitted them to the procedure he had outlined in the final chapter of the *Exercitationes biblicae*. This is confirmed when we consider his final remarks to Comber: he had easily reached his conclusions by comparing the readings with precisely the two sorts of evidence that his method demanded, patristic, in the form of Procopius's Greek text of Isaiah, and Origenic, in the form of Masius's *Iosuae imperatoris historia*.²⁴⁶

Morin did not venture to send his verdict to Young. This only came four years later in August 1638. It was prompted by Young's publication of a catena of patristic

account suggests a correction to the accounts given by Hardy, '*Ars critica*', p. 158, and Mandelbrote, 'English Scholarship and the Greek Text', pp. 82-83. Their account of events was possibly put on the wrong track by not noticing Morin had already read Young's edition of Clement as he was finishing the *Exercitationes biblicae*. This was printed by late 1633. See, Philippe Tamizey de Larroque, ed., *Lettres de Peiresc*, IV: *Lettres de Peiresc à Borriilly, à Bouchard, et à Gassendi. Lettres de Gassendi à Peiresc. 1626-1637* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1893), §LXXXVIII. Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc to Pierre Gassendi, 24 December 1633, p. 397. Morin had had copies delivered to others by January 1634. See BNF, Ms. Baluze 209, Jacques Boulduc to Jean Morin, 18 January 1634, fol. 160^r.

²⁴² The letter itself is not longer extant. For confirmation of it, see, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, XLV. Robert Philip to Jean Morin, 5 June 1634, p. 243. Morin and Philip had known each other at least since their time serving in the entourage of Henrietta Maria, when Morin and Philip were among the priests who accompanied her in 1625. See, ANF, M623, fol. 110^r.

²⁴³ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XLIII. Jean Morin to Thomas Comber [c. October-November 1634], p. 236, 'Textus ille non est 70 Interpretum purus & sincerus textus'.

²⁴⁴ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XLIII. Jean Morin to Thomas Comber [c. October-November 1634], p. 236. Morin added that if Comber wished to know more about Origen and his employment of these two sigla, he should consult his *Exercitationes biblicae*.

²⁴⁵ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XLIII. Jean Morin to Thomas Comber [c. October-November 1634], p. 237.

²⁴⁶ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XLIII. Jean Morin to Thomas Comber [c. October-November 1634], p. 237.

commentaries on Job that had first been compiled by Nicetas, the eleventh-century Bishop of Heraclea.²⁴⁷ In addition to this, Young also included the text of Job taken directly from Codex Alexandrinus.²⁴⁸ Young prominently announced the authority of this manuscript in the preface. 'The manuscript's great age was confirmed by its palaeography, as the book was neither divided according to chapters nor were the words themselves separated on the page.'²⁴⁹ These features were further confirmed by the citations of the Septuagint made by the Fathers in the catena, as well as a fragment of Origen's letter to Africanus that was placed before the text of Job itself.²⁵⁰ All in all, Young's work was well summarised in the frontispiece, where it announced that the text of Job was the 'true and genuine translation of the Seventy Elders'.²⁵¹

Morin received a copy of the *Catena* from Young via Robert Philip in April or May 1638.²⁵² Other duties kept him from replying initially and, when he did, his response appeared to represent a much more restrained judgement than his earlier letter to Comber.²⁵³ In contrast to the damning verdict he had given Comber, Morin was now apparently willing to concede that the edition of Job showed Young's text could be said to be 'a true and genuine' copy of the Septuagint.²⁵⁴ Morin, however, had refined this description. Just because Codex Alexandrinus was a 'true and genuine' version of the Septuagint did not, Morin argued, mean that it was free from 'naevi' and 'mendae', which had likewise been in the manuscript it had no doubt been copied from. These were features of all texts, and they did not necessarily undermine the manuscript's use for the study of the textual tradition that most concerned Morin. It would be going too far to suggest this letter therefore represented a change of opinion on Morin's part.²⁵⁵ Rather,

²⁴⁷ Patrick Young, *Catena graecorum patrum in beatum Iob, collectore Niceta Heracleae Metropolitae* (London: Typographus Regius, 1637).

²⁴⁸ Young, *Textus Iobi στιχηρος, iuxta veram et germanam Septuaginta seniorum interpretationem* [separate title-page], in Patrick Young, ed., *Catena graecorum patrum in beatum Iob* (London: Typographus Regius, 1637). As the title-page read: 'Ms. Codice, & totius orbis antiquissimo, ac praestantissimo'. I will indicate clearly 'Textus Iobi' when I mean to refer to that pagination, rather than that of the *Catena*.

²⁴⁹ Young, *Catena graecorum patrum in beatum Iob*, sig. ¶4^r.

²⁵⁰ Young, *Textus Iobi*, sig. A2^{r-v}.

²⁵¹ Young, *Catena graecorum patrum in beatum Iob*, sig. ¶1^r, 'iuxta veram & germanam Septuaginta Seniorum interpretationem'. For further discussion of Young's edition, see Hardy, 'Ars critica', pp. 221-226.

²⁵² Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, p. 273. Note that in this case I disagree with Hardy's assumption that Morin wrote directly to Young, see Hardy, 'Ars critica', p. 226. Morin's letter was evidently in part a letter of thanks to Young, and the restrained tone of obligation is evident throughout the letter.

²⁵³ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, see esp. pp. 287-288, where it is evident Morin is doing his best not to offend Young.

²⁵⁴ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, p. 274, 'pedibus manibusque in tuam eo sententiam, Editionem illam veram esse & germanam 70 Interp. interpretationem'.

²⁵⁵ Mandelbrote, 'English Scholarship and the Greek Text', p. 83.

Morin was conceding Codex Alexandrinus's antiquity to Young so that he could convince the Protestant scholar to adopt his more sophisticated approach to the textual history of the Septuagint.²⁵⁶

To this end Morin presented Young with the detailed series of trials he had set out in the *Exercitationes biblicae*. Although it is true, as Hardy has argued, that on the face of it these represented a 'devastating rebuttal' of Young's grandest claims for Codex Alexandrinus, Morin actually framed them in such a way that they supported the authority of the manuscript, albeit within his own history of the text.²⁵⁷ He advised Young to begin with the first two trials and complete a detailed collation of the presence or absence of passages marked with the Origenic critical sigla, a test that could be best begun with precisely those same texts he had mentioned to Comber: Procopius's commentary on Isaiah and Masius's *Iosuae imperatoris historia*.²⁵⁸ Following this Young should consult patristic citations, and compare the readings in Alexandrinus with those from the 'oldest' Fathers.²⁵⁹ These were, Morin put it, 'most certain proofs' to establish the authority of the manuscript of the Septuagint, as he had shown in his assessment of Codex Vaticanus in the *Exercitationes biblicae*.²⁶⁰ The lesson that Young should learn was twofold: first, to become adept at using these trials, which confirmed the antiquity of Young's text; second, and in a point rich with implications for contemporary confessional Europe, to recognise that these established the textual tradition of the Septuagint on a footing independent of the 'modern' Hebrew edition.²⁶¹

The second half of Morin's letter focused on the relationship between the extant versions of the Septuagint that met his newly reformulated definition of a 'true and genuine' text, which were Codex Vaticanus, Codex Alexandrinus, and the Aldine edition.²⁶² The differences between these texts originated in the fourth century 'trifaria varietas', the recensions of Origen, Hesychius, and Lucian. This threefold variation had been bequeathed to posterity, where the different versions were subsequently interpolated and changed according to the will of their copyists, often through an

²⁵⁶ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, pp. 275-276.

²⁵⁷ Hardy, *Ars critica*, p. 226.

²⁵⁸ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, pp. 276-277.

²⁵⁹ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, p. 277.

²⁶⁰ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, p. 277, 'quae ... certissima sunt argumenta'.

²⁶¹ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, pp. 277-278.

²⁶² Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, p. 280, where Morin dismissed the 'farragoes', that is mixed editions, of the Complutensian Polyglot, Frankfurt (and therefore also Basel), and the Antwerp Polyglot.

emendation out of Aquila or Theodotion that generally brought the text closer to the Hebrew.²⁶³

To judge which manuscript was to be preferred, Morin argued, the vital task was to search out which version most closely returned to Origen's, whose editorial work had clearly marked the differences between the Hebrew and the Septuagint texts. Morin concluded that a careful comparison of the extant evidence – agreement between the Septuagint versions against the Hebrew, between manuscripts containing Origenic diacritical sigla, and through comparison with patristic catena – still revealed Codex Vaticanus was the best witness.²⁶⁴ In respect of Young's codex Morin's verdict had not changed since his letter to Comber: its Egyptian origins meant it reflected the Hesychian recension, and the larger number of interpolations where it had apparently been emended with reference to the Hebrew ultimately downgraded it as a text.²⁶⁵ Morin did not reject Codex Alexandrinus entirely, admitting that even Codex Vaticanus contained interpolations that Young's text could correct.²⁶⁶ Morin concluded on an equally conciliatory note, outlining how a newly-discovered manuscript, as well-written as Young's and no less old than Origen, could quite conceivably replace Codex Vaticanus in his estimations.²⁶⁷

What is striking about Morin's arguments is how far they separated him from many contemporary Protestant and Catholic scholars. Young did indeed take up his suggestion to collate fragments from Procopius and other sources with Alexandrinus.²⁶⁸ Yet, in a sign as to how difficult it was even for hard evidence to destroy confessional presuppositions, Young never formulated a theory to describe the Septuagint's history. Above all, what Young lacked in comparison to Morin was the willingness to treat the Septuagint independently from the Hebrew and, following that, historically situate the textual tradition of the Septuagint in the context of the known facts of its transmission. As his extant notes reveal, Young could not escape comparing readings found in the Greek tradition with what he knew to be the 'Hebraica veritas'.²⁶⁹ To accept Morin's points Young would have had to go beyond Protestant reliance on the Hebrew original, a step he was unwilling to take.

²⁶³ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, pp. 279-281.

²⁶⁴ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, pp. 281-284.

²⁶⁵ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, p. 279.

²⁶⁶ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, p. 285.

²⁶⁷ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LIV. Jean Morin to Patrick Young, 26 August 1638, p. 288.

²⁶⁸ Hardy, '*Ars critica*', pp. 225-229, an account to which I am indebted to for its discussion of Young's work.

²⁶⁹ LUB, Ms. VMI 4, fol. 2^a. Referred to by Hardy, '*Ars critica*', p. 229.

Holstenius's main concern, unlike Morin's, remained with the authority of contemporary Roman Catholic editions. He did sketch the outline of a plan to publish a corrected edition of the Sixtine Septuagint using his manuscript of the Twelve Prophets, in addition to Codex Marchelianus and others, but the principles on which he intended to base this revision are unclear.²⁷⁰ In the event it was the Roman authorities who showed their own unwillingness to consider any such publication.²⁷¹ Yet, what really marked Holstenius's perspective in comparison to Morin's was how far Holstenius continued to perceive Young's work as a dangerous threat. Where Morin had presented a historical and critical account of the Septuagint that convincingly undermined Young's views, Holstenius saw Young as a second Drusius determined to undermine Roman Catholic Scripture, and through the late 1640s and early 1650s left unanswered Young's persistent requests to have some readings from the manuscript of the Twelve Prophets.²⁷²

One scholar did reach a position on the Septuagint that was close to Morin's. This was James Ussher, who writing to Young in 1639 felt none of Morin's careful restraint regarding Codex Alexandrinus. 'I can most certainly assure yow [sic]', Ussher declared, that the manuscript 'is not the pure Septuagint'.²⁷³ Ussher, like Morin, argued that it undoubtedly showed the signs of being interpolated by Origen with material from Theodotion. For Ussher, the key piece of evidence was Origen's *Letter to Africanus*, in which Origen outlined that the Hebrew text of Job contained a large series of lines not found in the Septuagint. These appeared to be present in both Alexandrinus and also the Sixtine Septuagint, meaning that both had originally been inserted with asterisks. Ussher argued that none of the existing Greek witnesses that he was aware of provided a text that was free enough of the Origenic interpolations to be a reliable indication of the Septuagint.²⁷⁴ This meant that while Ussher agreed with Morin's historical approach, his conclusions differed extensively. For Ussher the route back to the Septuagint would instead involve tracking down Old Latin translations that would provide surer witnesses of the pre-Origenic text. Ussher's own 'just tractate' on the Septuagint, however, was not

²⁷⁰ Boissonade, *Epistolae ad diversos*, §XLVI. Lucas Holstenius to Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, pp. 291-292.

²⁷¹ Boissonade, *Epistolae ad diversos*, §XLVI. Lucas Holstenius to Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, p. 292.

²⁷² Boissonade, *Epistolae ad diversos*, §XLVI. Lucas Holstenius to Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, pp. 292-293.

²⁷³ J. Kemke, ed., *Patricius Junius (Patrick Young), Bibliothekar der Könige Jacob I und Carl I von England* (Leipzig: M. Spigatis, 1898), §148. James Ussher to Patrick Young, 27 August 1639, p. 93.

²⁷⁴ Kemke, *Patrick Young*, §148. James Ussher to Patrick Young, 27 August 1639, pp. 93-94.

forthcoming, and would not be published until 1655, in the aftermath of Louis Cappel's *Critica sacra*.²⁷⁵

What further separated Ussher and Morin were their respective positions on the Hebrew text. Ussher would show, in his replies to Cappel, that he was basically optimistic when it came to the Hebrew text: the editors had done a good job of preserving the original readings, and modern editors could improve on these efforts and emend what had been written through recourse to the extant available manuscripts and ancient versions. In contrast, Morin's textual history of the Septuagint and the Vulgate was paired with a remarkably deprecating account of the Hebrew tradition. While Morin's account of the role of ecclesiastical authority determined the authenticity of the Septuagint and the Vulgate, he still wanted to argue that their relative textual instability had not prevented them from being more reliable traditions as a whole. To make this case Morin had to construct a critique of the Jewish tradition that was so extreme that he provoked responses from Catholic, in addition to Protestant, scholars.

II. Morin, Siméon de Muis, and the status of the Hebrew tradition

1

The counterpart to Morin's account of the history of the Septuagint and Vulgate was his denigration of the history of the Jewish textual tradition, and above all the illegitimate degree of integrity contemporaries claimed for the Hebrew Scriptures. Morin's work on the Jewish tradition had two components. First, in addition to bolstering his account of the Septuagint's reliability, Morin also used the Samaritan Pentateuch to argue that it showed an alternative Oriental tradition revealed the shortcomings of the Jewish tradition. Second, he mapped out a critique of the whole history of Jewish scholarship. Both these sides of Morin's work provoked a response from the Parisian Professor of Hebrew, Siméon de Muis, whose work turned the debate into a confrontation between the value of the Hebrew and Greek traditions that framed how contemporary readers conceived of the problem of the relationship between the two texts into the early 1640s

²⁷⁵ Kemke, *Patrick Young*, §148. James Ussher to Patrick Young, 27 August 1639, p. 93, 'Concerning which and all other particulars, that concern the History of the Septuagint, and the variety of the editions thereof, I shall not be unwilling to make up a just Tractate (in a far different manner than hitherto performed)'.

Morin's *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae* came directly from his work editing the Samaritan Pentateuch and translating it into Latin. Begun with the modest aim of providing some context for the forthcoming edition, Morin's preface indicated that the work had subsequently become more substantial. Indeed, its growth was such that it was eventually at the urging of the printer, Antoine Vitré, that he had to somewhat abruptly finish the fourth and final 'Exercitatio'.²⁷⁶ This haste captures the broader context in which Morin composed the work. Although from the outset the decision had been made to print the Oratory's manuscript, throughout the period 1629-1633 Morin used all the means at his disposal to acquire further manuscripts and readings of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Foremost among these was the Samaritan Pentateuch Targum held by Pietro della Valle, which reached Morin just before he finished the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*.²⁷⁷ Other important manuscripts – notably the Samaritan Trilog, now Ms. Barberini Orientalia 1 – were sent from Aix-en-Provence by Peiresc. Finally, in 1633, Morin received a list of variants from one of Ussher's copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch sent to him from England by Thomas Comber.²⁷⁸

As in the case of the Septuagint, Morin approached these texts from the perspective of different historically-situated textual traditions. His consideration of the Samaritan Pentateuch likewise depended on establishing, at least in outline, the history and practices of the Samaritans, and consequently their reliability as custodians of the text of the Pentateuch. This was not easy, however, since Morin lacked documents written by the Samaritans themselves.²⁷⁹ Using the Old Testament, Josephus, and a range of Talmudic and early-medieval sources, Morin endeavoured to establish the legitimacy of the Samaritan beliefs and practices. He refuted Jewish accusations that the Samaritans

²⁷⁶ Jean Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae in utrumque Samaritanorum Pentateuchum* (Paris: Antoine Vitré, 1631), sigs. *iii^jv- e^r.

²⁷⁷ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, pp. 370-371. See also, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XXI. Jean Morin to Pietro della Valle, 30 January 1631, pp. 194-195. The manuscript was transmitted by Claude Bertin who was travelling in the entourage of the Roman Nuncio.

²⁷⁸ Philippe Tamizey de Larroque, ed., *Lettres de Peiresc aux frères Dupuy*, vol. II: *Janvier 1629 - Décembre 1633* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1890), §LIII. Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc to Pierre Dupuy, 23 May 1631, pp. 277-280; Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XXXVIII. Jean Morin to Thomas Comber, 25 May 1633, p. 198, for the variants to Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus; *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XLIII. Jean Morin to Thomas Comber, [post October 1634], pp. 235-236, for Leviticus (which Comber inadvertently sent twice), Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Note, this gives the clearest evidence that this letter and the following one, XLIV. Thomas Comber to Jean Morin, 29 September 1634, pp. 238-242, are placed in the wrong chronological order. XLIV. sees Comber confirm he is sending Morin the final set of variants, p. 239, and XLIII. sees Morin confirm he has received these, pp. 235-236.

²⁷⁹ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, p. 14.

practised idolatry, defended the sophistication of the Samaritan computus, and, above all, underlined the significance of the fact that the Samaritans used the script of the ancient Hebrews.²⁸⁰ As Jan Loop has recently highlighted, Morin thereby set out a line of argument that was and would be increasingly used in seventeenth-century erudition, as scholars presented cognate oriental traditions as a more authentic and reliable alternative to the Jewish tradition.²⁸¹

As Morin turned to study the texts themselves, his first objective was to establish whether the Samaritan copies represented a coherent textual tradition in opposition to the Jewish. As Morin wrote to Jerome Aleandro towards the end of 1628, he had no need for more than 'four or five' chapters to be transcribed, since all he wanted to know was whether Pietro della Valle's Samaritan Pentateuch Targum agreed 'word for word' with the Oratory's Samaritan Pentateuch.²⁸² Positive results from the comparison with della Valle's manuscript were only further confirmed upon receipt of Peiresc's manuscripts and the variant readings sent from England by Thomas Comber. As Morin explained to each of his correspondents, what this clarified was the relationship between the different traditions of the text of the Bible: the consideration of variants had demonstrated the differences between the Samaritan and the Jewish versions of the text.²⁸³ Morin was not unwilling, as Miller has claimed, to exploit the benefits accrued from comparison.²⁸⁴ It was rather that he had a different end in view than Peiresc. Where Peiresc was interested chiefly in questions regarding the history and language of the Samaritans, and what this could tell him about the history of the ancient Near East, Morin was interested in the textual criticism of the different traditions of the Bible.²⁸⁵

This account of Samaritan textual tradition established, Morin turned to how it could be used to undermine the Hebrew text. Morin had two objectives: to demonstrate the reliability of the readings found in the Samaritan Pentateuch, and to demolish misplaced faith in the so-called *Hebraica veritas*. For the first of these, Morin repeated and discussed the testimony from Jerome, which he had deployed in the preface to the

²⁸⁰ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, pp. 81, 31-54, 83-158.

²⁸¹ Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, p. 108.

²⁸² BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Jean Morin to Jerome Aleandro, 1 December 1628, fol 58r, 'sufficient quatuor aut 5 capita: codicem enim illum edere numquam mihi proposui. an cum Samaritano Hebraico ad amussim consentiant, et verbum de verbo sit redditum scire tantum amebam, quod ex quatuor aut 5 capitibus facileprehenditur'. For the undated copy made from the draft version, see Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §X. Jean Morin to Jerome Aleandro, [n. d.], pp. 151-152.

²⁸³ For examples, see, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XV. Jean Morin to Pietro della Valle, 6 May 1630, pp. 169-170; *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §XLIII. Jean Morin to Thomas Comber, [c. October-November 1634], p. 236.

²⁸⁴ Miller, 'Samaritans in seventeenth-century Paris', p. 130, p. 142.

²⁸⁵ On Peiresc, see Miller, 'An Antiquary between Philology and History', pp. 170-174.

Sixtine Septuagint. For the second, he showed how the readings of the Samaritan Pentateuch agreed with the readings of the other ancient versions. Morin culled thirty chronological and text-critical examples from Genesis alone to show where the Septuagint, Samaritan, Vulgate, and Syriac text all agreed against the Hebrew.²⁸⁶

As this begins to indicate, the extent of Morin's Hebrew studies cannot be dismissed, and his critique of the Jewish tradition came from someone well versed in biblical and post-biblical Jewish literature. He was comfortable reading the Bible in Hebrew and took little time to be able to read the Samaritan script. Further, while in Paris he had received instruction from the Jewish convert Philippe d'Aquin, whose knowledge of these fields Morin had praised in his defence of the Paris Polyglot Bible.²⁸⁷ With a grounding in Aramaic he was also able to read and translate – albeit sometimes imperfectly – the Talmud and later Jewish literature. This meant Morin could delve independently into the technical Jewish works pertaining to the transmission of the text, which notably included Jacob ben Chaim's introduction to the second edition of the Bomberg Rabbinic Bible and Elijah Levita's *Massoreth ha-Massoreth*.²⁸⁸ To these Morin added recent works by Christian scholars, most notably Johannes Buxtorf's *Tiberias* (1620), a work that even more than Sebastian Munster's earlier part-translation into Latin of Levita's work, introduced Christian readers to the Masorah.

These works did little to persuade Morin that the Jewish tradition was accurate or reliable. He outlined and contrasted the agreement found between the Greek, Latin, and Samaritan textual traditions with the variation found throughout the Hebrew.²⁸⁹ Morin took in turn the different forms of variant readings found in the Hebrew as so many indications of the degree of textual uncertainty present within the tradition as a whole. He treated the 'Eastern' and 'Western' readings, the lists of *ketiv-geri* (written one way in the text but read another way according to the marginal reading), and variations between

²⁸⁶ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, pp. 284-294.

²⁸⁷ Simon, 'Vita Morini', pp. 108-109, where Simon also adds that Morin received help in the Masorah from a Bolognese Jew ('Judaus Bolonia oriundus'). I have not yet been able to track down who this was.

²⁸⁸ For a modern edition of both of these, see, Christian D. Ginsburg, ed. and transl., *Jacob ben Chajim ibn Adonijah's Introduction to the Rabbinic Bible, Hebrew and English...and the Massoreth ha-Massoreth of Elias Levita, Being an Exposition of the Massoretic Notes on the Hebrew Bible or the Ancient Critical Apparatus of the Old Testament* (New York: KTAV, 1968 [1867]). On Jacob ben Chaim see, Bertram Eugene Schwarzbach, 'Les éditions de la Bible hébraïque au XVI^e siècle et la création du texte massorétique', in *La Bible imprimée dans l'Europe moderne XV^e-XVIII^e siècle*, ed. Bertram Eugene Schwarzbach (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1999), pp. 16-67. On Levita, see, above all, Gérard Weil, *Élie Levita: Humaniste et Massorète (1469-1549)* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1963). See also Gérard Weil, "Une leçon de l'humaniste hébreu Elias Lévitā à son élève Sébastien Munster," *Revue d'Alsace* 95 (1956), pp. 31-40.

²⁸⁹ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, pp. 306-307.

words written 'full' or 'defective', as so much evidence for the instability of the Hebrew text.²⁹⁰

These were only part of an even larger problem resulting from the inadequacies of the Masoretic apparatus itself. For Jacob ben Chaim, Levita, Buxtorf and a large number of Morin's Protestant and Catholic contemporaries, the Masoretic apparatus had ensured that the Hebrew Bible had been securely transmitted to the present. It was, in that memorable rabbinic phrase, a 'fence for the law'.²⁹¹ For Morin, in contrast, it was quite the opposite: the Masorah was instead indicated, and was a rich source for, the errors and discrepancies that bedevilled the Hebrew tradition. Convinced of the Masorah's relative lack of antiquity, Morin nevertheless chose not to press the point. Instead, he focused on one apparent weakness faced by the Masorah's defenders: even they could not deny the problems that had been created by the desuetude into which the Masorah had fallen in the centuries between the time of its creation and that of Jacob ben Chaim and Levita. Morin drew on the remarks of Jacob ben Chaim and Levita themselves, who had noted and even emphasised the decline of Masoretic scholarship in the period preceding them.²⁹² This being so, Morin asked, how could defenders of the Hebrew tradition claim its inerrancy when even the foremost authorities admitted they were the ones who cleansed it from error?²⁹³

In making these claims Morin had a notable sixteenth-century precedent. Wilhelmus Lindanus's *De optimo Scripturas interpretandi genere* (1558) had drawn on Levita and Jacob ben Chaim as rich sources whose contents could be turned against their authors and used to undermine the Hebrew tradition.²⁹⁴ Where Morin could go beyond Lindanus was by using the new evidence presented by the Samaritan Pentateuch, whose scribes, Morin argued, far exceeded their Jewish counterparts in terms of consistency, accuracy, and reliability. As Morin had earlier explained in a letter to Aleandro, he had reached this conclusion by diligently comparing the text of Genesis in the Hebrew and

²⁹⁰ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, pp. 308-315. For more on these, see, Christian D. Ginsburg, *The Massoreth ha-Massoreth of Elias Levita* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader & Dyer, 1867), *passim*; Christian D. Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible* (New York: KTAV, 1966), pp. 137-157, 183-186, 197-240; Israel Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, ed. and transl. E. J. Revell (New York: Scholars Press, 1980), pp. 49-64.

²⁹¹ For Isaac Casaubon's use of the phrase, proverbial to Christian scholars by this time, see, Grafton and Weinberg, *"I have always loved the Holy Tongue"*, p. 308.

²⁹² Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, pp. 337-340. For Levita's own testimony, see further, Ginsburg, *The Massoreth ha-Massoreth*, p. 94, where Levita notes how Masoretic studies had declined so far that many scribes had begun to use them for the decoration of the manuscript.

²⁹³ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, p. 341.

²⁹⁴ See, recently, Dunkelgrun, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture', esp. pp. 247-255.

Samaritan versions.²⁹⁵ One series of examples Morin highlighted, in this letter and in the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, was the Rabbinic 'mysteria' that had accrued to explain why some words were written defectively. Deploying the same examples he had given to Aleandro, Morin argued that these indicated the lack of care taken by Jewish scribes, since in all these cases the words could be found 'fully and perfectly' written in the Samaritan codices.²⁹⁶ Morin finished his critique of the Jewish tradition with further examples of divergences between Hebrew manuscripts noted in the Masorah, once more with corroborating evidence from the Samaritan Pentateuch.²⁹⁷ He could even attest to finding such variants himself by comparing six Hebrew manuscripts found in the library of the Oratory with those four in the Bibliothèque du Roi, and one owned by the patron of the Paris Polyglot Bible, Le Jay.²⁹⁸

Morin's work was a striking attack on the Hebrew tradition – even for a Catholic. In seeking to establish the Samaritan as an alternative tradition to the Hebrew Morin endeavoured to prove that an additional Oriental witness confirmed the readings of the Church's Greek and Latin texts, while also undermining the reliability of the Hebrew. Morin's position was not without its problems. It was undoubtedly an attempt to redress the balance in favour of Morin's confessionally-preferred texts, and as such it is worth noting that in this work Morin did not put forward in full his historically-considered position on the history of the Septuagint and Vulgate, preferring to fall back on arguments in favour of their miraculous origin, rather than subsequent transmission.²⁹⁹ More importantly still, as Ussher indicated, Morin's arguments had a further difficulty: was it possible to maintain that the Jew's texts were as corrupt as Morin claimed, and still have faith in the Vulgate? This was a question Morin would soon be forced to confront directly.

²⁹⁵ BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Jean Morin to Girolamo Aleandro, 2 June 1628, fol. 54^v, 'cum per otium licui, integram Genesos librum hebraicum cum Samaritano diligenter contulisse'.

²⁹⁶ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, pp. 316-335, esp. pp. 321-323. See further, BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Jean Morin to Girolamo Aleandro, 2 June 1628, fol. 54^v, for a discussion of what Morin claimed was the only full version of נֶעֱרָה in the Pentateuch, with other instances being written defectively נֶעֱר, such as Gen. 24:14. Whereas in the Samaritan Hebrew Pentateuch the latter is written fully. BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Jean Morin to Girolamo Aleandro, 1 December 1628, fol. 58^{r-v}. For a printed copy of a draft of the latter, see, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §10. Jean Morin to Girolamo Aleandro, [s.d.], pp. 151-152, for Morin's discussion of Genesis 1:14, written defectively מֵאֲרָת in the Hebrew compared to the Samaritan's full מֵאֲרָת.

²⁹⁷ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, pp. 346-354.

²⁹⁸ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, pp. 360-369.

²⁹⁹ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, p. 306, where Morin's statements in favour of the other traditions clearly do not represent his considered position, expressed already in summary form in the 1628 preface to the Septuagint, and soon to be published in the *Exercitationes biblicae*.

Morin's attacks on the Hebrew tradition, spread across the preface to the Sixtine Septuagint, the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, and the *Exercitationes biblicae*, provoked a series of rejoinders by contemporary scholars. As we have seen, Ussher was particularly brutal in his assessment of the 'monk's' work, and it was from two men in his circle, Francis Taylor and Arnold Boate, that the first Protestant response was published in 1636.³⁰⁰ This was followed, from the Protestant side, by Johann Heinrich Hottinger's *Exercitationes anti-morinianae* (1644). Morin's most determined opponent, however, was the Catholic Professor of the Collège de France, Siméon de Muis. What a study of this debate reveals, and what accounts of Morin's biblical criticism thus far have overlooked, is that when faced with de Muis's attack, Morin was forced to rethink and refine a series of his earlier arguments. This debate did not finish of its own accord, but was quietly ended by Marin Mersenne in the interest of peace in the Catholic intellectual world, a fact that serves to underline how far current scholarly accounts of the 'Republic of Letters' have unduly minimised real moments of intellectual disagreement.

De Muis's relative historiographical obscurity is not reflected in the verdicts of his contemporaries.³⁰¹ In response to Hottinger's request that he name the most learned Hebraic and Talmudic scholars in contemporary Europe, Johannes Buxtorf II had little difficulty answering that, in the case of France, none was equal to de Muis.³⁰² Buxtorf II's high praise was widely shared. In the prefatory matter of de Muis's posthumous *Opera omnia* (1650), Pierre Gassendi and Jean de Voisin joined the rest of de Muis's colleagues at the Collège de France in paying tribute to his erudition.³⁰³ As Buxtorf II's judgement indicates, de Muis's reputation spread beyond Catholic Paris, such that James Ussher and Louis Cappel could likewise be numbered among those who had a high opinion of his work.³⁰⁴

³⁰⁰ Francis Taylor and Arnold Boate, *Examen praefationis Morini in Biblia graeca de textus ebraici corruptione, & graeci autoritate* (Leiden: Johannes Maire, 1636).

³⁰¹ For brief comments, see Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, pp. 191, 228-229; Malcom, 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible', pp. 420; Hardy, *'Ars critica'*, pp. 217-218; Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, pp. 106-107.

³⁰² ZZB, Ms. F 51, Johannes Buxtorf II to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 7 September 1642, fol. 86^r.

³⁰³ Siméon de Muis, *Opera omnia*, ed. Claude d'Auvergne (Pars: Matthieu and Jean Henault, 1650).

³⁰⁴ Ussher had also written a tribute to de Muis to be placed in the front matter to his *Opera omnia*, only to be told that only Catholic authors' tributes were to be printed. See, Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §566. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 16/26 September 1650, p. 983. One peculiarity of this, however, is that the editors did actually include Buxtorf II's letter to de Muis from 30 July 1636. See, de Muis, *Opera omnia*, sigs. i iii^v-i iiiij^r. For Cappel's appreciation of de Muis's work on the Psalms, see Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, p. 191.

For Catholic and Protestant contemporary alike de Muis was above all known for two works: his 'literal and historical' translation and commentary of the Psalms and his polemic with Morin over the status of the Hebrew text of the Bible and the reliability of its Jewish scribes and critics. These two sides of de Muis's career were closely connected. De Muis's work on the Psalms relied both on the authority of the Hebrew text and also on the reliability of the Jewish tradition generally, as his sources were more frequently Abraham Ibn Ezra, Solomon Jarki, and David Kimhi, than the Fathers. This recourse to rabbinic scholars did not in principle lead de Muis to dismiss the Christological import of the Psalms, as Laplanche has argued; rather it showed that Jewish authors could be used to support Christian interpretations.³⁰⁵ In the case of the most well known Christological Psalms, such as Psalm 16, de Muis showed that a literal reading in line with the Jewish tradition still, typologically, supported the traditional Christian interpretation.³⁰⁶ Further, de Muis's Latin translation of the Hebrew, far from undermining the Vulgate, for the most part confirmed its readings and, where necessary, showed that most disagreements were minor, doing little to affect the sense of the text. De Muis was more than willing to admit the implications of his account of the Hebrew text and Jewish tradition: if the Vulgate had to be corrected or emended, it could only be done on the basis of the Hebrew text.³⁰⁷ Morin's apparent demonstration of the instability of the text of the Hebrew tradition therefore represented a dangerous challenge.

De Muis responded to Morin at the earliest opportunity, and in the preface of his new two-volume edition *In omnes Psalmos commentarius literalis et historicus* (1630) took aim at Morin's preface to the Septuagint with a short dissertation 'On the authority and truth of the Hebrew version'.³⁰⁸ This was followed by two pamphlets, the *Assertio veritatis hebraicae* (1631), against the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, and the *Assertio hebraicae veritatis altera* (1634),

³⁰⁵ Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, p. 191 and p. 859, f.n. 81. Note that Laplanche persistently argues that the Professors of the Collège de France are an example of how academic positions and other social factors could influence intellectual positions, a point he does not consistently make in the case of Protestant Professors of Hebrew, like Constantijn L'Empereur, or Johannes Buxtorf and Johannes Buxtorf II. Laplanche's unwillingness to treat Catholic work in the same way as Protestant ones is the largest single weakness in his account, whose remarkable length and detail have obscured just how focused it is on the Academy of Saumur.

³⁰⁶ Siméon de Muis, *In omnes psalmos commentarius literalis et historicus*, vol. I, (Paris: Ioannis Petit-Pas, 1630), pp. 62-65. For important comments regarding the role and place of typology in early modern historical thought, see, Hardy, 'Ars critica', pp. 57-60, where Hardy clarifies the key point that types and the antitypes that fulfilled them were fundamentally historical, since the historical facts and their typological significance were inseparable.

³⁰⁷ Siméon de Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis autoritate ac veritate', in his *In omnes psalmos commentarius literalis et historicus*, vol. I, (Paris: Jean Petit-Pas, 1630), p. 20.

³⁰⁸ Siméon de Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis autoritate', pp. 11-20. This was also reprinted as the first part of the *Assertio veritatis hebraicae* (1631).

against the *Exercitationes biblicae*.³⁰⁹ While each of these took issue with the specific arguments and examples in Morin's separate works, together de Muis presented a coherent defence of the Hebrew tradition that Morin was forced in part to concede.

His scholarly and academic work dependent on the reliability and integrity of the Hebrew Bible, de Muis took aim above all at Morin's early support for the claim that the Jews had purposively corrupted Scripture. Morin had levelled this charge most prominently in the preface to the Sixtine Septuagint and had implied it – albeit in slightly modified form – in the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*. De Muis roundly rejected Morin's claim, and rebuked his references to patristic testimony. Of the Fathers, Jerome's testimony denying Jewish corruption should be given the most weight since only he was learned enough in Hebrew questions to be able to assess the evidence.³¹⁰ De Muis also provided lengthy excerpts from a series of recent Catholic scholars, appealing above all to the verdict of Cardinal Roberto Bellarmine. De Muis underlined Bellarmine's point that although it was not inconceivable Jews could have intentionally altered the Scriptures, it seemed remarkably unlikely when one considered any number of the most prominent Christological passages had been left unchanged.³¹¹

De Muis's vindication of the Jews from accusations of willful corruption was reinforced by his defence of Jewish traditions of critical scholarship. Unlike many of his Protestant contemporaries, de Muis had little difficulty taking up Levita's arguments that the Masoretic scholars lived well into Christian times and that the vowel points and accents were late additions to the text, most likely originating from the time 'just after' Jerome.³¹² Far from rendering the Hebrew codices uncertain, the Masoretic scholars responsible for their invention were exemplary scholars, whose work was designed to safeguard and protect the transmission of the text from one generation to the next.³¹³

This argument was not new for a Catholic scholar, and de Muis once again reproduced excerpts from earlier writers in support of his case. This included Benito Arias Montano, whose preface to the eighth volume of the Antwerp Polyglot, 'De varia in hebraicis libris lectione, ac de mazzoreth ratione atque usu', had robustly defended the

³⁰⁹ Siméon de Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae adversus exercitationes in utrumque Samaritanorum Pentateuchum* (Paris: Jean Libert, 1631); Siméon de Muis, *Assertio hebraicae veritatis altera* (Paris: Jean Libert, 1634).

³¹⁰ De Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis', p. 11-12.

³¹¹ De Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis', pp. 12-13; de Muis, *Assertio hebraicae veritatis altera*, pp. 19-22.

³¹² De Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis', p. 14.

³¹³ De Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis', p. 14; De Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae*, pp. 130-150, esp. pp. 147-149; De Muis, *Assertio hebraicae veritatis altera*, pp. 37-38.

Masoretes.³¹⁴ Much of Montano's account was dependent on Levita's *Massoreth ha-Massoreth*. Montano, however, departed from Levita when it came to the question of the exact era in which the Masoretes lived. Rather than following Levita, who clearly indicated they lived in post-Talmudic times, Montano preferred to emphasise the Masorah's pre-Christian origins in order to vouchsafe its authority as an integral part of ancient Hebrew tradition.³¹⁵

De Muis, in contrast, constructed a defence of Masoretic scholarship within the chronology suggested by Levita. To be sure, de Muis acknowledged, errors and mistakes had entered the text at some points in its transmission. The work of the Masoretes however, the 'sacred critics', had minimised these, and where necessary restored the text.³¹⁶ There was no way the careful scholarly practices of the Masoretes could be discussed in terms of the Masoretes' corruption of text.³¹⁷ Morin's criticism of the Masoretic apparatus as riddled with errors was thoroughly misguided. The relative unanimity of the Masorah across different manuscripts illustrated the degree of care the Masoretes had taken creating an apparatus to safeguard the text.³¹⁸ De Muis's arguments were reinforced by Protestant scholarship: Buxtorf had shown through collation how straightforward it was for scholars to note and emend the few mistakes that were found in the Masorah.³¹⁹ The Jewish critical apparatus was testimony to Jewish diligence, not carelessness or corruption.³²⁰

His general defence of the Jewish tradition established, de Muis also responded to Morin's examples of variant readings found between manuscripts of the Hebrew text, and between the Hebrew text and the other ancient translations. For the most part de Muis affirmed, with Bellarmine's support, these variants did little to change the sense of individual passages, let alone alter places of real importance.³²¹ More important, there was a real difference in method between Morin and de Muis. Morin's textual criticism, as we have seen, depended on comparing the manuscript witnesses of different textual traditions. It was on this basis that scholars could begin to reconstruct the text of the Septuagint at the time of Origen's intervention. De Muis advocated a different kind of

³¹⁴ Benito Arias Montano, *De varia in Hebraicis libris lectione, ac de mazgoreth ratione atque usu* (Antwerp: Plantin, 1572). This short treatise is commonly bound as the fourteenth unit in Vol. 8 of the Antwerp Polyglot.

³¹⁵ Dunkelgrün, 'The Multiplicity of Scripture', pp. 285-286, Montano in fact avoided all mention of the precise origin of the vowel points.

³¹⁶ De Muis, *Assertio hebraicae veritatis altera*, pp. 37-39.

³¹⁷ De Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae*, pp. 145-149.

³¹⁸ De Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae*, pp. 152-153.

³¹⁹ De Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae*, p. 153.

³²⁰ De Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae*, pp. 165-166.

³²¹ De Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae*, pp. 189-192.

criticism. In the case of small textual variants – both between Hebrew manuscripts and between Hebrew and Samaritan manuscripts – de Muis argued that conjectural emendation on the basis of Hebrew grammar was generally preferable to relying on manuscript readings.³²²

As a Catholic scholar de Muis also had to clarify the implications of his defence of the Hebrew tradition in relation to the decrees of the Council of Trent. As we have seen, Catholics had interpreted Trent's decrees relative to the authority and authenticity of the Vulgate in a series of ways: as a complete declaration in favour of the Vulgate; that it was the preferred version among the Latin versions; as a claim that the Vulgate was without blemish in *fides* and *mores* as the Church's official version. De Muis favoured the second of these, and he set out testimony from earlier Catholic scholars and theologians to support his claim that Trent had declared in favour of the authenticity of the Vulgate only in the sense that it was to be preferred to the other Latin versions.³²³ It was a decree relating to the version used in official worship, rather than a prescriptive judgement determining which of the ancient versions scholars should use. This interpretation allowed de Muis to justify his own translation of the Psalms into Latin. If the Hebrew versions were corrupt, de Muis put it, this had to have occurred before or after the time of Jerome. If before, why had Jerome praised the 'Hebrew truth' of the Psalms so highly? If after, why does Jerome's Latin translation from the Hebrew agree so closely with today's Hebrew text?³²⁴ The divergences in the present Latin translation from the Hebrew could be recognised as minor errors, relating to single words, and his own version of the Psalms could legitimately correct and emend these by using the Hebrew text.³²⁵

De Muis's critique forced Morin to confront the largest single complaint that could be levelled at his treatments of the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Samaritan texts: how far did Morin treat the Hebrew tradition with the same degree of historical sophistication as the Greek and Latin? Although de Muis's works were only published as pamphlets, rather than lengthy treatises, they still posed this problem acutely. As Buxtorf II would put it to Marin Mersenne, reflecting on the argument between de Muis and Morin in

³²² De Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis', p. 14.

³²³ De Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis', pp. 16-17.

³²⁴ De Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis', p. 18.

³²⁵ De Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis', pp. 18-20.

1646: it could be conceded that Morin exceeded de Muis in the extent of his learning, but it did not automatically follow the same could be said for his judgement.³²⁶

De Muis's work is important beyond its relationship to Morin's. De Muis's defence of the Masoretes in the context of Levita's work – de Muis would in 1639 add that he also agreed with Louis Cappel's account in the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* (1624) – indicates how historical accounts of the post-Talmudic Jewish traditions of scholarship could be used to defend, rather than undermine, the Hebrew Scriptures.³²⁷ In the hands of a Catholic like de Muis the defenders of the Hebrew text could go beyond Buxtorf's reliance on the antiquity of the Hebrew vowel points towards a more sophisticated understanding of the historical transmission of the text in the hands of its Jewish custodians. There is reason to appreciate the extent to which De Muis's work shows the continued presence a long-term counter-current in post-Tridentine Catholicism that held knowledge of the Hebrew tradition was essential to fully understanding the status and history of the Biblical text, and which reached its full fruition in the sophisticated reformulation of Richard Simon, some half a century later.

4

Morin did not respond directly to de Muis's criticism until 1639. According to the account given in the *Diatriba elenctica*, before then he had only read de Muis's response to his *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, had not read de Muis's work on the Psalms, and only leafed through de Muis's reply to the *Exercitationes biblicae* in a friend's library.³²⁸ It seems probable, however, that despite his claims to the contrary Morin had read de Muis's *Assertio veritatis hebraicae* before publishing the *Exercitationes biblicae*. Above all, this would explain Morin's increasingly prominent denials that he had ever accused the Jews of malicious corruption of the Scriptures. This had clearly been suggested in the preface to the Septuagint edition and implied in the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*. In the *Exercitationes biblicae*, however, Morin was adamant he had never encountered a single example of

³²⁶ Cornélis de Waard and Armand Beaulieu, eds., *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne religieux minime*, vol. XIV: 1646 (Paris: CNRS, 1980), §1436. Johannes Buxtorf II to Marin Mersenne, 23 February/5 March 1646, p. 102.

³²⁷ Siméon de Muis, *Castigatio animadversionem M. Ioannis Morini, Blesensis, in censuram exercitationum ecclesiasticarum ad pentateuchum samaritanum, sive, Hebraicae veritatis assertio tertia* (Paris: Guillaume Pelé, 1639), p. 159. This raises the question of whether de Muis had read Cappel's work before the 1630, 1631, or 1634 works. It is not mentioned there but it is not inconceivable he could have read it.

³²⁸ Jean Morin, *Diatriba elenctica de sinceritate hebraei graecique textus dignoscenda* (Paris: Antoine Vitré, 1639), pp. 327-328.

Jewish fraud and claimed that his arguments in respect of the Hebrew textual tradition did not depend on this point.³²⁹ It is very difficult to see this as anything other than Morin attempting to modify his position in light of de Muis's attack, a point de Muis himself underlined at the start of his *Assertio hebraicae veritatis altera*.³³⁰

Morin's decision not to respond immediately to de Muis did not prevent contemporaries from following de Muis's rejoinders, and weighing the merits of both positions. One keen observer was Mersenne, whose Minim library acquired copies of all the works issued in the exchange.³³¹ Mersenne's high regard for Morin was evident throughout his letters to Rivet, something matched only by his scepticism that others, especially Morin's later Protestant critics, could better the Oratorian's case.³³² There are signs that other Catholic readers approved even more enthusiastically of Morin's arguments. In a 1635 lecture on the Septuagint at the Academia Basiliana in Rome, Pietro La Sena repeated a series of claims in favour of the authority of the Septuagint that bear such a striking resemblance to Morin's *Exercitationes biblicae* that it is difficult not to think he had drawn them directly from that work.³³³

The approval Morin's arguments earned among his fellow Catholics was in sharp contrast to the views of his Protestant readers. Even Morin's apparent attempt to mitigate his criticism of the Hebrew tradition in the *Exercitationes biblicae* did little to persuade them that his work was anything other than an attack on the Protestant Scriptures. Writing to Johann Rudolph Stucki in Zurich in December 1634 Louis Cappel outlined how far he saw both the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae* and *Exercitationes biblicae* as efforts to demonstrate the 'corruption' and 'distortion' of the Hebrew tradition.³³⁴ Cappel appeared pleased to add that at least de Muis had soundly responded to Morin on that score. Unlike many Protestants, however, it should be noted Cappel did not dismiss

³²⁹ Morin, *Exercitationes biblicae*, p. 37, 'Quantum enim Rabbinicas historias, librosque secretiores euoluendo & scrutando hactenus assequi potui, nullam tam atrocis criminis [sic] illis impingendi causam necessariam animadverti.

³³⁰ De Muis, *Assertio hebraicae veritatis altera*, pp. 2-4.

³³¹ See, Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible', p. 420, f.n. 129.

³³² See, Paul Tannery, ed., *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne religieux minime*, vol. III: 1631-1633 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1946), §209. Marin Mersenne to André Rivet, 20 November 1631, p. 225; Cornélis de Waard, ed., *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne religieux minime*, vol. IV: 1634 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955), §311. Marin Mersenne to André Rivet, 8 February 1634, p. 70; Cornélis de Waard, ed., *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne religieux minime*, vol. VII: Janvier - Juillet 1638 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955), §645. Marin Mersenne to André Rivet, 20 January 1638, pp. 25-26.

³³³ BAV, MS Barb. Lat. 1783, esp. fols. 6^{r-v}. I owe my knowledge of this manuscript to Ingo Herklotz. See Herklotz, 'The Academia Basiliana', p. 149.

³³⁴ ZZB, Ms. Z II 473, Louis Cappel to Johann Rudolph Stucki, 29 December 1634, item 53.

Morin's work entirely: if Stucki had yet to see either Morin or de Muis's works he would endeavour to send them, since both were worth reading.³³⁵

While Cappel apparently came to Morin and de Muis's work on the basis of his own interests, other readers were purposively enlisted. De Muis himself wrote to a series of prominent Protestant scholars to publicise his work and request their advice and support. In a letter to Rivet, de Muis wrote that all his associates in Paris agreed with his arguments in the service of 'common truth'.³³⁶ Indeed, he averred, he was astonished that Protestants had left Morin's attack on the Hebrew tradition unanswered for so long.³³⁷ De Muis would later make sure to send copies of his subsequent works to the Netherlands, both for Rivet, and also for other Hebraists in Leiden, including Constantijn L'Empereur and Louis de Dieu.³³⁸ In August 1635 De Muis wrote to Buxtorf II to ask if he had any advice or corrections for his most recent reply to Morin.³³⁹ As we will see, these represent the elements of an important network of scholars who, by the 1640s, would play crucial roles in the saga of the publication of Louis Cappel's *Critica sacra*, and whose understanding of that work took shape in the context created by Morin and de Muis's argument.

Where the opinions of Protestant scholars were slightly more divided was over the question of whether de Muis had convincingly refuted Morin. Cappel appeared to think so.³⁴⁰ This was also, in part, an opinion shared by Hottinger, whose own reply to Morin focused entirely on the Samaritan Pentateuch since he felt de Muis had successfully refuted the other parts of Morin's work.³⁴¹ On this Buxtorf II initially agreed with Hottinger.³⁴² Others were less persuaded. Among these were Francis Taylor and Arnold Boate, young men who were part of James Ussher's circle but also close to L'Empereur and de Dieu in Leiden. They composed at least two responses to Morin: a work against Morin's preface to his edition of the Septuagint, published in 1636 as

³³⁵ ZZB, Ms. Z II 473, Louis Cappel to Johann Rudolph Stucki, 29 December 1634, item 53.

³³⁶ LUB, BPL 285, Siméon de Muis to André Rivet, 12 February 1632, fol. 203^r.

³³⁷ LUB, BPL 285, Siméon de Muis to André Rivet, 12 February 1632, fol. 203^r.

³³⁸ For an example, see, Cornélis de Waard, ed., *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne religieux minime*, vol. VIII: *Avril 1638 - Décembre 1639* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963), §816. Marin Mersenne to André Rivet, 29 January 1640, p. 82.

³³⁹ BUB, G I 62, Siméon de Muis to Johannes Buxtorf II, 19 August 1635, fol. 170^r.

³⁴⁰ ZZB, Ms. Z II 473, Louis Cappel to Johann Rudolph Stucki, 29 December 1634, item 53.

³⁴¹ See, BUB, G I 58, Johann Heinrich Hottinger to Johannes Buxtorf II, 31 January 1642, fol. 17^r.

³⁴² ZZB, Ms. F 44, Johannes Buxtorf II to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 1 March 1642, fol. 28^r, 'De Morino et Simeone de Muis quod scribis, tecum sentio, Simeonem de Muis felicissimè et orthodoxè planè Morinum refutasse, ut nesciam quomodo solidius et elegantius id fieri potuisset'. Buxtorf II was only making this judgement on the basis of having read Morin's *Execitationes ecclesiasticae*, see ZZB, Ms. F 44, Johannes Buxtorf II to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 17 January 1644 fol. 59^v. It is possible that had Buxtorf II been aware of all Morin's publications by this stage he would have agreed with Taylor, Boate, Ussher, Selden, L'Empereur and de Dieu.

Examen praefationis Morini in Biblia Graeca, and a further response to his *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae* that was ultimately left in manuscript.³⁴³ Replying to Buxtorf II's question as to why such a work was necessary, following de Muis's, Boate replied that he and Taylor had only received de Muis's works after they had finished their first response to Morin and were halfway through the other.³⁴⁴ Although they thought a good deal of de Muis's work, they still felt more needed to be said, and that in many ways he had not completely overturned Morin's arguments. This opinion, Boate added, he knew was shared by John Selden and the Leiden Professors L'Empereur and de Dieu.³⁴⁵ In Taylor's own reply to Buxtorf II's letter he added that Ussher had also written to him to say de Muis had not done enough, suggesting that de Muis's Catholicism had prevented him from subjecting Morin to the necessary interrogation.³⁴⁶

Taylor and Boate's work did not attempt to ape de Muis's, even if they began with the Augustinian quotation de Muis – and other Catholic defenders of the Hebrew text – had likewise embraced: 'More trust should be placed in the tongue out of which the translators have translated'.³⁴⁷ In the *Examen* Taylor and Boate argued that the authors of the New Testament had by no means followed the Septuagint, as Morin had claimed. To this end they systematically culled direct and indirect quotations from the Old Testament used in the New. Unable to perform the impossible task of showing that the New Testament's authors had used the Hebrew text in every citation, Taylor and Boate argued that the New Testament's authors had not sanctioned any specific edition as the official one: they had cared more for the general sense of the Old Testament passage they were using, not its precise words.³⁴⁸ Taylor's and Boate's argument was that scholars should concern themselves with the sense of Scripture, rather than the words, which meant that they denied textual criticism in the form practised by Morin was legitimate.

³⁴³ It was decided, apparently on L'Empereur and the other Leiden scholars' advice, not to publish the reply to the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*. See, BUB, G I 62, Francis Taylor to Johannes Buxtorf II, 15 July 1638, fol. 32r.

³⁴⁴ BUB, G I 62, Arnold Boate to Johannes Buxtorf II, 31 March 1636, fol. 59r.

³⁴⁵ BUB, G I 62, Arnold Boate to Johannes Buxtorf II, 31 March 1636, fol. 59r.

³⁴⁶ BUB, G I 62, Francis Taylor to Johann Buxtorf II, 17 April [n.d. c. 1636], fol. 53r, 'Multa sunt in Morinum seuerius dicenda, et maiore cum libertate examinanda, quam Muisis religio, aut regio patiantur'. This letter, although without the year, clearly post-dates Taylor's first letter to Buxtorf II, to which Buxtorf had apparently replied with the question about why Taylor had not mentioned de Muis. See, BUB, G I 62, Francis Taylor to Johannes Buxtorf II, 28 August [n.d. c. 1635?], fol. 44r. I date this to August 1635 since Taylor and Boate's replies to Buxtorf II's both date from March/April 1636. The letters travelled with merchants going to and from the Autumn and Spring fairs at Frankfurt.

³⁴⁷ Francis Taylor and Arnold Boate, *Examen praefationis Morini in Biblia graeca de textus ebraici corruptione, & graeci auctoritate* (Leiden: Jean Maire, 1636), p. 8.

³⁴⁸ Taylor and Boate, *Examen praefationis Morini*, pp. 10-11.

Although Morin thought little of Taylor and Boate as scholars, telling Mersenne that in his opinion they hardly understood Hebrew, he nonetheless decided it was essential to reply to the 'heretics', especially lest 'more simple' Catholic readers read their work without having seen his own.³⁴⁹ It was on this occasion that he also took the chance to reply to de Muis's earlier attacks. The response Morin made to his Protestant and Catholic opponents was the same: both had mistakenly supposed his 'scopus' was simply to undermine the Hebrew text in order to replace it with the superior Greek version.³⁵⁰ Instead, Morin argued that his purpose was to submit the Hebrew tradition to the same level of text-critical analysis as was customary, either in the Greek and Latin traditions or more generally in the field of New Testament criticism.³⁵¹ What he offered was a way of understanding the differences that had arisen between the ancient versions.³⁵² Morin demonstrated this in the context of the textual variations that existed between the Greek and Hebrew versions, as he outlined what he took to be the three main explanations for these different readings: first, passages vocalised one way in the Hebrew, another in the Greek; second, changes resulting from the mistranscription of single Hebrew letters; and third, errors or mistakes that had arisen in the Hebrew tradition.³⁵³ In the examination of each of these Morin underlined the extent to which other Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish authors had pointed out many of these same examples, even if rarely so systematically.

Taylor and Boate's rejection of his work, Morin argued, amounted to a rejection of the basic principles of textual criticism, an art whose practitioners, even in sacred studies, had included Catholic and Protestant alike in the study of both the Old and New Testaments. Morin's objective was not to undermine Scripture but rather to establish its text securely, and accordingly he claimed to apply the same level of scrutiny to the Hebrew and Greek and Latin texts. When Morin had called the Septuagint 'authentic' he

³⁴⁹ Morin, *Diatriba elentica*, p. 11.

³⁵⁰ Morin, *Diatriba elentica*, p. 13, and then p. 198, for the reiteration of his 'scopus'. See, Hardy, '*Ars critica*', p. 108, for the use of the technical term 'scopus', frequently found in humanist rhetoric to denote the intention behind a piece of writing.

³⁵¹ Morin, *Diatriba elentica*, p. 229. It should be noted here that Morin did still think there were some instances where the Hebrew text intentionally avoided a series of Christological readings. See, Jean Morin, 'Diatribes Appendix Nonnulla Diuinitatis & Incarnationis Iesu Christi D. N. illustrissima testimonia in Hebraeo textu nunc corrupta, Talmudis, Masorae, & antiquissimorum Rabbiorum autoritate pristinae sinceritati restituuntur', in his *Diatriba elentica*, pp. 249-318. Note, however, that Morin avoided simply accusing the Jews of changing the text. He instead constructed a model for how changes could have crept into the text: when presented with different readings across different manuscripts or different ways of vocalising the text Jews scribes had chosen readings contrary to Christian ones. See, *Diatriba elentica*, pp. 303-318. This argument was not repeated Part II of the *Exercitationes biblicae*.

³⁵² Morin, *Diatriba elentica*, pp. 21-22.

³⁵³ Morin, *Diatriba elentica*, pp. 28-31.

had meant in the context of the edition used by the Church in the first four centuries after Christ.³⁵⁴ He did not ascribe this to Codex Vaticanus, which was 'true and genuine' only in the sense that it was not 'false or forged', rather than that it was entirely free of errors.³⁵⁵ This was the main and sole business of what Morin described as 'criticism', discerning the difference between genuine and spurious in an attempt to discover what was original to the text or author.³⁵⁶ His central point, in his study of the Hebrew text, was to show that Jewish scribes were as likely to commit mistakes as Greek or Latin ones, and thus their manuscripts could not automatically be preferred.³⁵⁷

Morin clarified the implications of his arguments still further in his response to de Muis. The difference between them was nowhere more evident than in their approach to manuscript evidence. De Muis's grammatical approach to minor textual variants had led him to ask Morin why the Oratorian concerned himself so deeply with such apparently minor matters as the collection of minute textual variants.³⁵⁸ Morin's reply was unequivocal, and in its implications forced him to refine his position on the history of the ancient versions. The differences between the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Syriac texts indicated they were made from three different, albeit each very ancient, versions of the Hebrew text. To these, the Samaritan Pentateuch added a fourth. Agreement between all these versions but not the Hebrew indicated that a scribal mistake or omission had crept into the Hebrew.³⁵⁹ Added to this, the relative novelty of the 'Masoretic' text of the Hebrew bible meant it could not be used to correct the other versions. Thus, Morin's careful, even conservative textual criticism, based on the authority of the Church, had led him to an argument novel in its implications: by following these variants – especially errors – scholars could recover in outline the features of lost moments in the Hebrew tradition, whose outlines could, it would follow, be discerned in the text of the Septuagint and other ancient versions.

In the final published contribution to the dispute, de Muis's *Hebraicae veritatis assertio tertio*, it became evident that Morin's clarifications had reached the real crux of the matter between them. Two examples exemplify this point. First, De Muis admitted he failed to see what Morin could mean by the claim that a text – in this example the Samaritan Hebrew Pentateuch – was 'pure' or 'sincere' and not mean that that text itself

³⁵⁴ Morin, *Diatriba elenctica*, pp. 141-142.

³⁵⁵ Morin, *Diatriba elenctica*, p. 144.

³⁵⁶ Morin, *Diatriba elenctica*, pp. 144-145.

³⁵⁷ Morin, *Diatriba elenctica*, p. 229.

³⁵⁸ See, for example, de Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae*, pp. 165-166.

³⁵⁹ Morin, *Diatriba elenctica*, pp. 360-363.

was a replica of the archetypal version.³⁶⁰ What de Muis had not grasped was Morin's attempt – here as in his letter to Young – to refine his contemporaries' understanding of what a 'sincere' text meant. It should mean 'sincere' or 'pure' in contrast to 'false', but not in the sense of completely free from the problems that all texts underwent in the process of their transmission. Second, although de Muis accepted that the ancient versions clearly differed from one another, he disagreed that this could be explained on the grounds that each represented different Hebrew *Vorlage*.³⁶¹ In place of Morin's text-critical hypothesis, de Muis thought it more probable that the differences originated with the translators, who had simply chosen to translate the basic Hebrew text differently.³⁶² It would be difficult to put the distance between the de Muis and Morin's positions more starkly. De Muis was a learned Hebraist who sought to interpret the Bible through the Jewish rabbinic tradition combined with a detailed knowledge of Hebrew grammar; Morin was a textual critic who wanted to understand precise moments in the history of the Bible's textual traditions.

The debate between de Muis and Morin was yet to finish, even if the last published contributions had been made. The end of the public dispute, however, came not from the participants themselves, but from Mersenne. Mersenne knew both men and had clearly come to regret the degree of enmity apparently building between them.³⁶³ As he put it to Morin, the 'principal' question between them had been decided: both men now agreed that the Jews had not 'intentionally and maliciously corrupted their Hebrew Bible'.³⁶⁴ Mersenne's intervention was enough to dissuade either from publishing again. This did not preclude the exchange of letters – that should be seen as semi-public since Mersenne himself offered to send copies to Rivet – between the two men facilitated by Mersenne himself.³⁶⁵ A lengthy response to de Muis's *Assertio veritatis hebraicae tertia*, sent by Morin from Rome, was met by de Muis's riposte, which largely focused on criticising

³⁶⁰ De Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae tertia*, pp. 48-50.

³⁶¹ De Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae tertia*, pp. 75-76.

³⁶² De Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae tertia*, pp. 76-77.

³⁶³ Cornélis de Waard, *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne religieux minime*, vol. IX: *Du 2 janvier 1640 au 6 août 1640* (Paris: CNRS, 1965), §833. Marin Mersenne to Jean Morin, 2 March [1640], p. 175.

³⁶⁴ Waard, *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne*, vol. IX, §833. Marin Mersenne to Jean Morin, 2 March [1640], p. 175, [following a suggestion to end to quarrel] 'puisque vous devenez d'accord du principal, à sçavoir que les Juifs n'ont pas expressement et malicieusement corrompu leur bible hebraique?'

³⁶⁵ Waard, *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne*, vol. IX, §833. Marin Mersenne to Jean Morin, 2 March [1640], p. 175, where Mersenne had a copy of a lengthy letter by de Muis to Morin but, since Morin was then in Rome, did not want to post it owing to the cost. See also, Waard, *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne*, vol. IX, §852. Marin Mersenne to André Rivet, 24 April 1640, p. 283, where Mersenne confirms both that de Muis's letter was written in reply to a lengthy one from Morin, and his offer to send copies of the letter to Rivet.

in detail Morin's Hebrew translations and by implication his knowledge of Hebrew grammar.³⁶⁶

The inconclusive end of the debate should not lead us to underestimate its importance, either for Morin and de Muis or even, more generally, for biblical criticism in the seventeenth century. In the first instance it had forced Morin to reconsider his views on the Hebrew text and the reliability of its custodians. De Muis's defence of Hebrew scholarship had persuaded Morin to concede he denied the Jews had ever maliciously corrupted Scripture. As we shall see, this would also contribute to the development of Morin's account of the whole history of Jewish biblical scholarship, only published posthumously in Part II of the *Exercitationes biblicae* in 1660. Further, it had also forced Morin to outline in more detail his own conception of biblical criticism, one that demonstrated he was willing to accept some role for the comparison of variant readings across the different textual traditions. More generally, the debate had by 1640 clarified two alternative approaches to the Hebrew Bible, the Jewish tradition, and the relationship between the ancient versions. These positions were not only evident from the publications themselves, but also, as we have seen, in de Muis's active attempts to enlist Protestant supporters on his side against Morin. The significance of this for the reception of the Louis Cappel's *Critica sacra* would soon be seen.

³⁶⁶ Morin's letter to de Muis is unfortunately no longer extant. For the letter from de Muis to Morin, see, BNF, Ms. Baluze 209, fol. 176^r-178^v.

Chapter 3

Criticism and confession between Louis Cappel and Jean Morin

In the early 1640s Louis Cappel, Professor of Hebrew and then Theology at the Protestant Academy of Saumur, visited the library of the Oratory in Paris. It was his first visit to the Congregation and there he met one of the members, Jean Morin. Together, for something approaching an hour, the two men viewed and considered the Hebrew, Syriac, Aramaic, Rabbinic, and, quite possibly, Samaritan manuscripts held by the library.³⁶⁷ This meeting came at a particularly important moment in Cappel's career, as he continued his attempts to publish his *Critica sacra*. Rejected from publication in the Protestant centres of Leiden and Geneva, Cappel's seminal work would only eventually see the light of day in the very different context of Catholic Paris, thanks in large part to Morin's intervention.

Cappel's *Critica sacra* had the distinction of provoking even more heated responses from members of his own confession than the opposing one. Cappel's work appeared to many of his co-religionaries as a dangerous threat to the status of the Hebrew text, one that appeared to some to follow directly in Morin's footsteps in his support for the Septuagint. The bracketing of Morin and Cappel's work, however, then as now, obscures how much their approaches to the biblical text differed. Where Morin was focused on understanding the history and text-critical implications of different textual traditions, Cappel instead attempted to avoid these sorts of problems entirely by arguing that Old Testament critics should embrace the methods common to secular and New Testament critics. Bypassing questions regarding specific manuscripts or readings, Cappel argued that critics should attempt to use the contemporary Masoretic text, the ancient versions, and conjecture, in order to reconstruct the readings of a lost Hebrew archetype. Cappel framed his argument in Protestant terms. Yet the *Critica sacra* embodied a rejection of the central principles of the *philologia sacra* as understood by many of his Protestant contemporaries. The work's eventual publication began a

³⁶⁷ Louis Cappel, *De critica nuper a se edita. Ad reverendum et doctissimum virum Dom. Iacobum Usserium, Armachanum in Hibernia Archiepiscopum. Epistola Apologetica, in qua, Arnoldi Bootii temeraria criticae censura refellitur* (Saumur: Isaac Desbordes, 1651), p. 28, where Cappel's description of this happening more than seven years ago would indicate 1642 or 1643 the most probable date of its occurrence.

complex process, whereby scholars attempted to integrate Cappel's central claims into the confessional field of Old Testament criticism as understood by Morin and Ussher.

I. Louis Cappel's biblical scholarship from the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* (1624) to the completion of the *Critica sacra* (1634)

1

'Nothing more stupid could be said or thought', Scaliger wrote to Buxtorf in 1606, than the suggestion the vowel points of the Hebrew Bible were coeval with the text itself.³⁶⁸ Scaliger's opinion was by no means novel among Protestant scholars and theologians: it had been the view of many of the first and second generation of reformers, including Sebastian Munster, Paul Fagius, Jean Mercier, and Petrus Martinus; it was also the view of some of his most learned contemporaries, including Isaac Casaubon and Johannes Drusius, and it was also held in the following generations by Thomas Erpenius, Hugo Grotius, Samuel Bochart, and Brian Walton, among others.³⁶⁹

The argument for the vowel points' relative novelty had been made by Elijah Levita as early as 1538. His dense but compelling *Massoreth ha-Massoreth* argued that the traditional Jewish opinions – that they were either 'given on Sinai' by Moses himself or, more commonly, devised by Ezra and the Men of the Great Synagogue – failed to produce any persuasive evidence in their favour.³⁷⁰ Instead, Levita argued, the vowel points were invented by the Masoretes, the Tiberian scholars whose remarkable

³⁶⁸ Paul Botley and Dirk van Miert, eds., *Joseph Scaliger: The Correspondence*, vol. 6: *May 1605 to December 1606* (Geneva: Droz, 2012), Joseph Justus Scaliger to Johannes Buxtorf, 13 June 1606, p. 438, 'De apicibus vocalibus Hebraeorum, tam mihi constat rem novam esse, quam eos falli qui natos una cum lingua putant, quo nihil stultius did potuit aut cogitari'.

³⁶⁹ See, Richard A. Muller, 'The debate over the vowel points and the crisis in orthodox hermeneutics', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 10 (1980), pp. 53-56; and, Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, p. 215, for the earlier Reformers. On Casaubon and Drusius, see, Grafton and Weinberg, *"I have always loved the Holy Tongue"*, pp. 324-328. For the other specific cases, see, Thomas Erpenius, ed., [Louis Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* (Leiden: Johannes Maire, 1624), sigs. (a2)^r-(a4)^r; B. L. Meulenbroek, ed., *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, vol. 6 ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1947), §2313. Hugo Grotius to Louis Cappel, 13 October 1635, pp. 280-281. On Walton, see below, Chapter Five. My point here is to resist those accounts, such as that most recently given by Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, p. 104, that consistently present this as the 'standard' Protestant opinion when so many leading Protestant scholars did not hold it. I also think further research will come to show a much wider range of opinions existed on this question within Protestantism than current historiography allows.

³⁷⁰ Ginsburg, ed., *Massoreth ha-Massoreth*, pp. 103-121. See further, Weil, *Élie Lévi*, pp. 286-343.

philological learning preserved the vocalisation of the Hebrew Bible at the time when its language had finally disappeared as a living tongue.³⁷¹

The boldness of Scaliger's assertion belied the potentially problematic place this argument had come to hold for Protestant scholars by the early seventeenth century. In the decades following the publication of Levita's work Catholic polemicists and theologians had exploited Levita's argument and used the late-dating of the Hebrew vowel points as one further way of undermining Protestant faith in the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture.³⁷² Few contemporary Protestants feared the implications of the Catholic position more vividly than Buxtorf: if the vowel points were a human invention then it followed their authority was likewise only human, and their reading ultimately arbitrary: where did this leave 'the certitude of the Hebrew text'?³⁷³ Buxtorf's *Tiberias* (1620), the fruit of over fourteen years work since Scaliger's stinging reply, was his attempt to respond, ultimately, to Levita's argument. He mounted a defence of the tradition Jewish ascription of the points to Ezra and the Great Synagogue, underlining that this vouchsafed Calvinist faith in the integrity of the contemporary Hebrew text of the Bible.³⁷⁴

Appearing just a few years later, in 1624, Louis Cappel's anonymously published *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* could not but be viewed as a response to Buxtorf.³⁷⁵ Its origin, however, predated the *Tiberias*. Following his early studies in Sedan and a *peregrinatio academia*, which included stays in Oxford and Leiden, Cappel was appointed Professor of Hebrew at the Academy of Saumur in December 1613.³⁷⁶ As Cappel explained to Buxtorf, his work on the vowel points developed as he studied to prepare for his teaching. The question had become a point of dispute between Louis and his brother, Jacques Cappel, Professor of Hebrew and Theology at the Academy of Sedan.³⁷⁷ Having composed what became the first half of the work, Louis had given it to Jacques for his opinion, and Jacques subsequently forwarded it to Buxtorf.³⁷⁸ Having learnt

³⁷¹ Ginsburg, ed., *Massoreth ha-Massoreth*, p. 131.

³⁷² Muller, 'The debate over the vowel points', pp. 54-57; Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra and the Bible', pp. 414-422.

³⁷³ Johannes Buxtorf, *Tiberias sive commentarius Masorethicus* (Basel: Ludwig König, 1620), sig.): (3^r-v).

³⁷⁴ Buxtorf, *Tiberias*, pp. 94-131. See further, Stephen Burnett, *From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies: Johannes Buxtorf (1564-1629) and Hebrew Learning in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 203-229.

³⁷⁵ [Louis Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* (Leiden: Johannes Maire, 1624).

³⁷⁶ See, in general, Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, pp. 181-190.

³⁷⁷ BUB, G I 62, Louis Cappel to Johannes Buxtorf, 10 July 1622, 107^r. On Cappel's family, see, J. H. M. Salmon, 'Protestant Jurists and Theologians in Early Modern France: The Family of Cappel', in *Die Rolle der Juristen bei der Entstehung des modernen Staates*, ed. Roman Schnur (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, 1986), pp. 357-79.

³⁷⁸ BUB, G I 62, Louis Cappel to Johannes Buxtorf, 10 July 1622, 107^r. See also, BUB, G I 62, Jacques Cappel to Johannes Buxtorf, 9 September 1619, 124^r.

Buxtorf had possession of it, Cappel took it upon himself to write directly to him to suggest he also submit the second half of the work for Buxtorf's verdict.³⁷⁹

Buxtorf's judgement was not immediately forthcoming, and when it arrived it was hesitant, not the resounding dismissal of a young scholar's work implied by subsequent historians.³⁸⁰ Buxtorf allowed that the evidence about the history of the origins of the Masorah and vowel points was complex, and that for the most part it did contradict his claims that they originated with Ezra and the men of the Great Synagogue.³⁸¹ The silence regarding the points in the Targums and the Talmud was shared with Jerome, and the post-Talmudic Jewish literature provided no evidence in his favour. Buxtorf warned, however, that this meagre evidence was inversely related to the seriousness of the question: 'if their inventors are recent, and R. Asher and R. Naftali or others not long before them devised the points, what certainty and authority can they have?'³⁸² The best course of action would be to refrain from considering this 'most subtle and profound' question in public.³⁸³

Cappel agreed completely with Buxtorf's assessment of the evidence. As he put it: '[I]f only you could somewhere establish with solid reasons and unshakeable evidence the Ezran or Mosaic origin of the points'.³⁸⁴ Unfortunately, Cappel added, he strongly doubted that any such testimony would be forthcoming. Further, although Louis's brother, Jacques, had found Buxtorf's 'theological' arguments compelling, he himself had not, and would not stop examining the matter further.³⁸⁵ Alert to Buxtorf's warning he was still unsure whether to publish the work. He chose to seek a third opinion from the

³⁷⁹ BUB, G I 62, Louis Cappel to Johannes Buxtorf, 10 July 1622, 107^{r-v}.

³⁸⁰ Goshen-Gottstein, 'Foundations of Biblical Philology', p. 91, a view endorsed most recently by Jan Loop. See, Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, p. 110.

³⁸¹ ZZB, Ms. F 45, Johannes Buxtorf to Louis Cappel (copy), 1 January 1623, fol. 247^v, 'In locis Talmudicis, quae punctorum vocalium et accentuum videntur facere mentionem, illud me semper (ante longe quam scriptum tuum legi) perplexum tenuit, de potestate potius quam figuris ea intelligenda esse. In Targum centena loca notavi, quae indicant eos autores ex textu non punctato notas. Difficile est explicatu quod, si ante Hieronymum punctata exemplaria exstiterunt, ne minimo quidem rumore id a Iudaeis praeceptoribus unquam cognoverit, et posteritati revelaverit, etiamsi vel propter raritatem, vel propter auctoritatem non licuisset exemplar videre, famam tamen non tacuisset'. I give these passages in full owing to their significance.

³⁸² ZZB, Ms. F 45, Johannes Buxtorf to Louis Cappel (copy), 1 January 1623, fol. 247^v, 'Si vero recentes sunt autores, et vel R. Ascher, et R. Naphtali, aut alii non diu ante eos ipsorum autores sunt, quae tunc punctorum certitudo vel auctoritas'.

³⁸³ ZZB, Ms. F 45, Johannes Buxtorf to Louis Cappel (copy), 1 January 1623, fol. 247^v, 'Hinc probe agnosco, difficile esse argumentum de antiquitate punctorum. Interea etiam pessimas et periculosissimas consequentias ex novitate punctorum non satis ex animo meo evellis, quae etiam eo me pertrahunt ut putem non expedire publice hanc quaestionem subtilis et profundis in scholis vel voce vel editis libris tractari.'

³⁸⁴ BUB, B I 62, Louis Cappel to Johannes Buxtorf, 1 March 1623, fol. 113^r, 'Utinam possis aliquando Punctorum originem Esdram vel Mosem solidis rationibus et firmis argumentis adstruere'.

³⁸⁵ BUB, B I 62, Louis Cappel to Johannes Buxtorf, 1 March 1623, fol. 113^r.

Leiden Orientalist Thomas Erpenius. In 1623 he sent him the manuscript together with a note that Erpenius could begin making moves to publish the work if he saw fit. Erpenius seized the initiative: he published the work anonymously without warning Cappel in advance, and added a preface in which he concurred with Cappel's judgement, noting that he himself had defended it in public as early as 1610.³⁸⁶

Cappel's argument in the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* was in outline a restatement of Levita's position: the vowel points had been invented and added to the text by the Tiberian Masoretes in the period following the completion of the Talmud, which meant at some point after 500 CE. Cappel went beyond Levita's work in two ways. Where Levita had made his case as part of a broader commentary and introduction to the Masorah, the entire *scopus* of Cappel's work was the question of the vowel points. With the first half of the book considering arguments from testimony, history, grammar, and 'theology', the second refuting his opponents under the same headings, Cappel considered and appraised the question rigorously and systematically, and developed at length Levita's passing comments relating to the historical development of the points from a simple to a more complex system, and a wider use of parallel evidence from other Oriental languages.

What chiefly distinguished Cappel's work from Levita's was the way in which he argued that the vowel points' relative novelty posed no threat to his fellow Protestant readers. Levita's work had at its core a more conservative thesis than subsequent Catholic polemicists, or later historians, have often acknowledged.³⁸⁷ When Levita argued for the vowel points' late dating he also explained that he still considered these to be based on ancient traditions that could be traced back to the authors of the biblical books and ultimately even to Moses.³⁸⁸ As an explanation of how the reading tradition of the unpointed Hebrew text was passed from one generation to the next, Cappel agreed with Levita's point.³⁸⁹ Cappel only endorsed it, however, with a series of modifications that altered the force of Levita's account. For Cappel the oral tradition was by no means completely reliable, and the ancient translations clearly indicated that unpointed Hebrew

³⁸⁶ Erpenius, 'Praefatio', in *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, sig. (a2)^v. For Cappel's account of this event, which he gave on at least two occasions without deviating from the point that he had not intended Erpenius to publish it, at least without giving prior notice, see, LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 17 June 1625, fol. 7^r; Louis Cappel, 'Vindiciae Arcanum Punctuationis', in *Commentarii et notae criticae Vetus Testamentum*, ed. Jacques Cappel (Amsterdam: P. ad J. Blaeu, 1689), p. 798. These correct Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, p. 215, who misrepresents Cappel's position towards the work's publication.

³⁸⁷ See, Grafton and Weinberg, *"I have always loved the Holy Tongue"*, p. 311, for Isaac Casaubon's recognition of this point.

³⁸⁸ Ginsburg, ed., *Massoreth ha-Massoreth*, pp. 109-112.

³⁸⁹ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, pp. 259-260.

codices had been read in different ways at different times. The most notable case in this respect was the Septuagint, for anyone who studied the question would find that it could not have been made from a pointed text akin to the contemporary Hebrew version.³⁹⁰ The same could also be said for the Aramaic Targums, the other Greek versions, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, Jerome's Latin translation, the rest of the Greek and Latin fathers, and the ancient Jewish writers Josephus and Philo.³⁹¹ Underlying Cappel's work were two claims about the nature of the Hebrew tradition: since there was no doubt Hebrew scribes had meticulously copied the Hebrew Bible's consonantal text, then it followed the only way such variant readings could have arisen was from alternative vocalisations of that unpointed text.³⁹²

Cappel was well aware this modification of Levita's argument would prove troubling to his Protestant contemporaries. In the crucial last section of the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* Cappel attempted to show why, rather undermine the authority of the Hebrew text, his approach was in fact the only way to defend it against their Catholic opponents. Cappel confronted the arguments Buxtorf's letter had posed as 'theological arguments' – the argument that if the vowel points were the mere invention of the Masoretes then they were merely of human, rather than divine authority – by putting forward an interpretive principle that would come to define his biblical criticism.³⁹³

In place of single textual details Protestants instead needed to focus on the 'series orationis', by which Cappel meant the sense that was 'more true or fitting' for the passage or sentence as a whole.³⁹⁴ Against Buxtorf Cappel argued that once this principle was grasped then it would become clear that the placement of the points was not an arbitrary invention, but rather something that could be reached through literary and text-critical analysis. This was an indubitable 'canon' through which the vast majority of ambiguous words or parts of sentences would be clarified.³⁹⁵ Cappel was open about the degree of latitude this could give the interpreter: if more than one sense was equally probable then, providing neither conflicted with the *analogia fidei*, both could be accepted.³⁹⁶

Cappel's confidence that this posed a solution to Buxtorf's fears was palpable. Even were one to grant that the Hebrew text had never been pointed, that Christians had never had instruction from Jewish teachers, and that the only text one had was the 'most

³⁹⁰ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, pp. 42-58.

³⁹¹ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, pp. 58-73.

³⁹² [Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, pp. 59-60.

³⁹³ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, p. 283.

³⁹⁴ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, p. 289.

³⁹⁵ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, p. 293.

³⁹⁶ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, p. 289.

untrustworthy' Septuagint, it would still be possible to reach the same sense of the Hebrew text that was available in contemporary pointed editions.³⁹⁷ As Nicolas Clenard had claimed, and Thomas Erpenius had confirmed, such a method could be used to interpret Arabic texts, and it would work in the case of Hebrew.³⁹⁸ As we will see, few of Cappel's contemporaries would share his confidence.

2

The final page of Cappel's *Critica sacra* indicated he had finished the work on 4 October 1634. Following the completion of the *Arcanum punctationis revelatum* Cappel had continued teaching at Saumur, while also editing John Cameron's *Myrothecium Evangelicum* (1632) and writing a short treatise on how to read unpointed Hebrew texts.³⁹⁹ The first glimpse we have of him working on the *Critica sacra* is a letter to Buxtorf II, written in June 1628. Once Cameron's work and a few pieces of business for his brother Jacques were concluded, Cappel wrote, he intended to focus on a 'work on the variant readings on the Old and New Testaments'.⁴⁰⁰ By the end of 1632 Cappel wrote to André Rivet that while he had a good deal more to do on the 'Treatise on the variant readings of the Old and New Testaments' he was already thinking about where, and by whom, it could be published.⁴⁰¹

Almost all subsequent accounts of the *Critica sacra*, including that by François Laplanche, have begun with the problems created by Cappel's Catholic and, even more notably, Protestant contemporaries, who repeatedly thwarted his attempts to publish the work over the next fifteen years.⁴⁰² The *Critica sacra* was, however, conceived and written in such a different context that consideration of the conflicts that shaped its later reception frequently obscure, rather than explain, Cappel's central arguments and intentions. As the letters to Buxtorf II and Rivet from 1628 and 1632 indicate, the *Arcanum punctationis revelatum* did not irrevocably harm his standing even among those

³⁹⁷ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctationis revelatum*, pp. 308-309.

³⁹⁸ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctationis revelatum*, pp. 310.

³⁹⁹ John Cameron, *Myrothecium Evangelicum* (Geneva: P. Aubert, 1632), published with a 'Spicilegium' by Cappel himself, a sample of a longer set of annotations on the Bible. For Cappel's role in editing Cameron's work, see the preface to the *Myrothecium*. See further, Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, pp. 194-195; Axel Hilmar Swinne, *John Cameron, Philosoph und Theologe (1579-1625)* (Hildesheim: Verlag Dr. H. A. Gerstenberg, 1972), pp. 63-4. For a summary of Cappel's preoccupations in these years, see his own letter to Buxtorf II, BUB, G I 62, Louis Cappel to Johannes Buxtorf II, 27 June 1628, fol. 116^r.

⁴⁰⁰ BUB, G I 62, Louis Cappel to Johannes Buxtorf II, 27 June 1628, fol. 116^r.

⁴⁰¹ LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 30 December 1632, fol. 16^r.

⁴⁰² Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, l'histoire*, pp. 224-229.

who believed in the vowel points' antiquity. Rivet replied to Cappel favourably following its publication in 1624, was responsible for sending copies of the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* to France following Erpenius's death, and offered to host Cappel in Leiden should the Academy of Saumur have to close temporarily owing to financial problems in 1627.⁴⁰³ Following his father's death in September 1629, meanwhile, Buxtorf II asked Cappel to write a short prefatory note for Buxtorf's *Concordantiae biblicorum hebraicae* (1631), a tribute Cappel only refrained from writing since he feared it would render the work unpalatable to Catholic and Jewish scholars.⁴⁰⁴ Where Morin addressed his contemporary Catholic readers, therefore, Cappel's work was conceived and written in a Protestant context, in which Cappel was not attempting to undermine the Hebrew text, but rather to re-state its meaning and integrity at a new level of sophistication. To begin with the assumption that it brought the text into doubt is to make a comment not about Cappel's work, but about the relationships between confessional positions and the biblical text that Cappel himself was attempting to change.

Placing the *Critica sacra* more firmly in the context of the late 1620s and early 1630s also clarifies the degree to which its critical claims were connected to the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*. In the *Critica sacra* Cappel redeployed the interpretative principle he had earlier called his 'canon'. The basic definition Cappel gave was unchanged throughout: the reading should be chosen that gives the 'truer, clearer, apter, neater, and more fitting meaning, which coheres better with what precedes and follows it, is closer and more aligned with the intentions and overall scope of the writer, and more conforming and concordant to the pattern of the whole of Scripture, in whatever manuscript the reading occurs'.⁴⁰⁵

The use of this principle in the *Critica sacra* was an extension of its use in the earlier work. Where in the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* Cappel indicated it could be used to adjudicate between readings found in the Masoretic text and the Septuagint, in the *Critica sacra* it became the measure to determine the most probable readings of a lost

⁴⁰³ See, respectively, Louis Cappel, 'Criticae adversus iniustum censorem iusta defensio', in his *Critica sacra* (Paris: Sebastian Cramoisy, 1650), p. 629. Henceforth referred to as 'Iusta defensio'. LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 17 June 1625, fol. 7r; LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 20 February 1627, 8r.

⁴⁰⁴ BUB, G I 62, Louis Cappel to Johannes Buxtorf II, 23 August 1630, 118r.

⁴⁰⁵ Louis Cappel, *Critica sacra* (Paris: Sebastian Cramoisy, 1650) p. 303, 'Ea nempe lectio indubitato melior est, atque praeferenda, quae sensum parit in se veriolem, planiorem, aptiorem, concinniolem, commodiorem, consequentibus & antecedentibus magis cohaerentium, menti & scopo scriptoris propiorem atque congruentiorem, ac totius scripturae analogiae magis conformem, concordemque, in quocumque tandem Codice illa lectio occurrat'.

Hebrew archetype.⁴⁰⁶ Books I-V demonstrated this systematically, taking in turn variants within the Hebrew text, between the Hebrew text and the New Testament, between the Hebrew text and the Masorah, between the Hebrew text and the Septuagint, and between the Hebrew text and the other ancient versions. Finally, in Book VI, Cappel outlined how the principle could go beyond judging variant readings alone, since it could even, in carefully circumscribed circumstances, judge and emend by conjecture where evident errors had entered the text.⁴⁰⁷

The novelty of Cappel's work was not, as subsequent historians have claimed, its unwavering application of antiquarian and historical scholarship to the text of the Bible.⁴⁰⁸ As Cappel put it in his discussion of the Aramaic Targums, he was not very 'curious' to inquire precisely when their authors lived since that was not relevant to his purpose.⁴⁰⁹ Rather, as Nicholas Hardy's recent work, especially his study of seventeenth-century New Testament criticism, has shown, Cappel's innovation was to take critical principles developed in secular and New Testament criticism and apply them to the Old Testament.⁴¹⁰ Cappel defended his approach in precisely these terms: Theodore Beza and Isaac Casaubon had shown it was legitimate to apply conjectural emendation to problems or errors in the New Testament.⁴¹¹ In the context of the New Testament this was to some degree unproblematic: the relative fixity of the Greek New Testament among Protestants and the absence of debates over the primacy of different translations had allowed editors and critics some latitude when it came to assessing textual variants. The contrast with the Old Testament could not be starker. There, as we have seen in the case of Morin's work, decisions about variant readings took on extensive implications, conducted as they were in terms of entire textual traditions and the whole history of the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew texts and their respective custodians.

Cappel's defended his method in theological and text-critical terms through two sets of sets of arguments. First, Cappel placed his account of the Bible's textual variants within a broader theological scheme to guarantee their authority. Cappel's theological argument reiterated the point he had made in the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*: if more than one variant was equally plausible and both cohered with the *analogia fidei* then both should be accepted. Further, Cappel suggested, they should be embraced, taken as

⁴⁰⁶ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, pp. 293-294.

⁴⁰⁷ For the limits Cappel defined in this case, see, Cappel, *Critica sacra*, pp. 424-425.

⁴⁰⁸ For recent claims to this effect, see, Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, p. 185; Levitin, 'From Sacred History to the History of Religion', p. 1126; Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, p. 112.

⁴⁰⁹ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 323.

⁴¹⁰ See further, Hardy, *'Ars critica'*, pp. 210-211.

⁴¹¹ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 423.

examples of God's providential wisdom in allowing two or more equally valuable readings to come from the same passage.⁴¹² As such these *variae lectiones*, far from being evidence of scribal carelessness, had become parts of Scripture imbued with an inherent theological value.

The second argument was text-critical. Cappel indicated that he would not change the text as it stood. Rather, the objective would be to print a new edition where the variant readings could be listed in the margins and chosen when appropriate.⁴¹³ At a glance the reader could consult these and choose which was more fitting to Cappel's canon and 'correct' the text appropriately.⁴¹⁴ In this, it appears, Cappel had a venerable model, one which he may have hoped would have proven particularly appealing to his contemporary Hebraists. Cappel's proposal promised in essence to imitate the account he had given of the Jewish Masoretes who, either from culling variant readings or providing their own critical conjectures had, from reverence for the text as they had received it, placed their alternative readings in the margin.⁴¹⁵

Cappel's work was dependent on culling variant readings from a wide range of modern printed editions and, if possible, ancient manuscripts. Hardy's otherwise excellent treatment of Cappel as a conjectural critic in the mould of secular and New Testament scholars overstates his lack of interest in searching for new readings.⁴¹⁶ Part of Cappel's problem was his location. Based in Saumur with a lengthy series of duties in the Academy, and without the remuneration necessary to, for example, to purchase a copy of the Paris Polyglot, it was simply beyond Cappel's means to become one of Europe's premier manuscript hunters.⁴¹⁷ This did not prevent him trying to obtain new readings. When Cappel learnt Jacob Golius had returned from the Levant with a copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch, he wrote to Golius to find out whether he intended to publish the manuscript, indicating how keen he was to know its readings providing it was 'old and well written'.⁴¹⁸ At the very least, Cappel hoped, Golius might be able to collate the text

⁴¹² Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 304.

⁴¹³ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 434. I also therefore take issue with Hardy's comments, '*Ars critica*', pp. 209-210, that Cappel never concerned himself with questions relating to an edition of the Bible.

⁴¹⁴ This was quite clearly Cappel's intention and he was not solely, as Hardy has it, interested in finding readings to 'illuminate' the text, see, Hardy, '*Ars critica*', p. 211.

⁴¹⁵ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 127.

⁴¹⁶ Hardy, '*Ars critica*', p. 206.

⁴¹⁷ KB, Bollings brevsamling U 167, Louis Cappel to Jean Morin, 18 January 1647, 2^r, for Cappel's problems regarding the Paris Polyglot's cost. He also, however, had yet to receive from Golius or any other source the set of variants between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the contemporary Hebrew, and here requested them from Morin. He had obviously only had time to briefly inspect the manuscripts during his visit to the Oratory.

⁴¹⁸ LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 25 January 1630, fol. 11^r.

with the 'modern Hebrew'.⁴¹⁹ Three and a half years later, in 1633, Cappel was still attempting to obtain these readings from Golius.⁴²⁰ These readings, as he explained in the *Critica sacra*, were vital in places where it was difficult to determine which sense was superior between the different readings, something that often occurred between the Masoretic Hebrew and Septuagint. In those cases, the weight of the Samaritan on the side of the Septuagint could be used to 'correct' the Hebrew.⁴²¹ As he later relayed to William Eyre, for this reason he was disappointed he had been unable to consult the Samaritan version before completing the *Critica sacra*.⁴²²

Cappel did not, however, study manuscripts and the history of different textual traditions in the same way as Morin and Ussher. Instead, he argued, Old Testament critics should be able to choose indiscriminately between all the variant readings present in the ancient versions. In practice this meant, as Cappel replied to Eyre, even the worst manuscript might furnish at least one good usable reading.⁴²³ Cappel's point was again based on the argument of the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*. In this work Cappel's precise historical claim was that the points had been added no earlier than 500 CE. As he later explained to Morin, he was not concerned to be more specific than this, unless of course the Oratorian could produce reliable testimony to indicate a precise date.⁴²⁴ The importance of 500 CE was in part owing to the absence of the points in the Talmud, which Cappel like Levita assumed had been completed at around that date. The date was also part of Cappel's justification of his critical method and practice. It meant that all the principal ancient versions he used as a basis for variant readings – the Hebrew, the Septuagint, the fragments of the other Greek versions, the Samaritan, and the Vulgate – had been made on the basis of unpointed Hebrew texts. This meant that when he chose between variant readings, Cappel could argue he was not impugning the underlying consonantal text – although he admitted that this varied in some cases owing to scribal error – so much as indicating which vocalised reading most fitted his 'canon'.⁴²⁵

⁴¹⁹ LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 25 January 1630, fol. 11^r, 'J'ecris un mot à M. Golius que j'appren estre enfin de retour avec force livres et entr'autres un Pentateuche samaritain. S'il est veil et *bonae notae* je désireroie fort qu'il se peust mettre en lumière...ou du moins qu'il s'en fist une collation exacte avec le texte hébreu d'aujourd'huy, et qu'on marquast toutes les différences et dissonnances qui se trouveroient entre les deux'.

⁴²⁰ LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 7 May 1633, fol. 19^r.

⁴²¹ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 211. Note however, it is the weight of the reading that is found preferable when two readings otherwise appear problematic, not the authority of the manuscripts *per se*.

⁴²² Louis Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 632.

⁴²³ Louis Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 633.

⁴²⁴ KB, Bollings brevsamling U 167, Louis Cappel to Jean Morin, 18 January 1647, 1^v.

⁴²⁵ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, *inter alia*, pp. 13, 51, 216, 303-305, 325, 354-356.

For one of the ancient versions this created a historical and textual problem: how could Cappel explain the extent of the differences between the Septuagint and the Masoretic text? Cappel had a difficult balancing act. He wanted to defend both as valuable sources for alternative readings, but at the same time he needed to try and avoid the impression his work aped Morin's, denigrating the Hebrew tradition in favour of the Septuagint. Cappel avoided debate on the origins of the Septuagint. It was sufficient to note that it had been made long before Jesus Christ, was accepted and used by the Hellenistic Jews, and subsequently by the first Christians.⁴²⁶ Cappel did reject what Morin's claim – one that would also be made by Ussher – that Origen had interpolated the Septuagint with the other Greek versions.⁴²⁷ If one examined them, Cappel argued, one would find that the extent of the differences indicated this was extremely unlikely.⁴²⁸ Similarly, there was no danger of contamination from the other ancient Greek versions: these were not accepted by the Church and only used amongst the learned.⁴²⁹

The Septuagint's problem was more mundane: it had suffered at the hands of its scribes and editors who had added glosses to the text, which could, in the hands of a careful editor, be removed.⁴³⁰ This meant, as Cappel emphasised, that no single manuscript, such as Codex Vaticanus, represented a 'completely pure' version of the Septuagint.⁴³¹ Yet, Cappel's analysis of the Septuagint really was in many ways remarkably favourable and optimistic compared to the minute examination conducted by Morin and Ussher. For Cappel the Septuagint was a valuable source of variant readings, whose transmission had been no more or less chaotic than the other versions. What made Cappel's claim important were the implications it held for the Hebrew text: the Septuagint's relative textual stability meant it indicated how dramatically 'the Hebrew codex which the Seventy translators used differed from that which we use today'.⁴³²

What did this mean for the Hebrew text and the authority of its Jewish custodians? Cappel's justification of the Septuagint's use in textual criticism had left him in a quandary, since he now had to explain why the Masoretic Hebrew text differed from it so extensively. Further, he also had to explain why, in a way that cohered with his account of the Septuagint, the rest of the ancient versions were in general so much closer

⁴²⁶ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 213.

⁴²⁷ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, pp. 214-215.

⁴²⁸ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 214.

⁴²⁹ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 214.

⁴³⁰ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, pp. 214-215.

⁴³¹ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, pp. 215, 319.

⁴³² Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 299.

to the Masoretic text.⁴³³ Cappel's solution was to find a moment of textual disruption in the history of the Hebrew version. He traced this to Antiochus IV Epiphanes' desecration of the Temple and his confiscation and burning of the sacred text in the early second century BCE.⁴³⁴ This, Cappel argued, had two contradictory results. First, it had undoubtedly damaged and 'confused' the Hebrew text.⁴³⁵ It had also, however, wrought a change in Jewish scribal practice. Antiochus' spoliation had made the Jews much more keenly attached to the sacred word, and subsequently their conservation of the text was remarkably more assiduous than it had been before.⁴³⁶ In the long term, this was clearly the origin of the Masoretes' mentality.⁴³⁷ The *ketiv-geri*, for example, originated with these exemplary Jewish critics who, rather than interfere with the text they had received, preferred to place the correct reading in the margin.⁴³⁸ It was this attentive conservation of the text, in the context of a continuous oral tradition, Cappel argued, that meant that as a whole the Hebrew text was 'emendantior' than all the other ancient translations.⁴³⁹

Cappel's engagement with the history of the texts was designed to free Old Testament critics from arguments over the 'external' reasons why one codex, manuscript, or textual tradition should be preferred to another.⁴⁴⁰ Unlike secular and New Testament critics, Cappel could not avoid confronting this question, and at least relativising the objections that might be raised by either Catholic or Protestant opponents. He did not dismiss study of the history of the text, but argued that if one wanted to restore the text of the Old Testament one had to apply his 'canon' to all the available ancient readings. Only on the basis of these 'internal' reasons could critics decide which reading was preferable.⁴⁴¹ The *Critica sacra* went beyond any previous work in undermining the notion that any single text could be a uniquely authoritative witness to the text of the Old Testament. This had in a sense also been Morin's point, when by 1639 he argued that each of the ancient versions represented a different Hebrew text. What Cappel promised in the *Critica sacra*, however, went much further. The application of his 'canon' to extant manuscript readings did more than trace the history of concrete moments in the textual tradition: it was designed to recreate the probable readings of a once-complete text of the Old Testament that no longer existed.

⁴³³ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 324.

⁴³⁴ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 302.

⁴³⁵ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, pp. 302-303.

⁴³⁶ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, pp. 302-303.

⁴³⁷ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, pp. 302, 306.

⁴³⁸ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, p. 127.

⁴³⁹ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, pp. 304-306.

⁴⁴⁰ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, pp. 302-304.

⁴⁴¹ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, pp. 303-305.

II. Louis Cappel, Protestant scholarship, and the publication of the *Critica sacra*

1

In December 1644 Claude Sarrau wrote to André Rivet in The Hague ruing the 'poor state' of the French Protestant churches, deprived of either the freedom or the means to publish the works of their foremost scholars.⁴⁴² By the time of Sarrau's letter ten years had passed since Cappel had finished the *Critica sacra*, and throughout that time he had been trying to have the work published. In France Cappel faced the restrictions of the French publishing trade, which meant that if he wanted the work published in France it would require approbation by the relevant Catholic authorities.⁴⁴³ Still, his ideal choice would have been to publish the work in Saumur where he could have 'corrected and directed' the work himself.⁴⁴⁴ The financial and technical shortcomings of the local printers only added to the problems posed by the need to obtain a *privilege*.⁴⁴⁵ Other options were the printers in foreign Protestant centres of learning. But there he faced additional difficulties. The *Critica sacra*, like Cappel's other works, was apparently written in a poor hand, full of abbreviations, and required a corrector who could proof-read the Hebrew references.⁴⁴⁶ This diminished Cappel's alternatives, as it was evident Cappel would need the cooperation of either a learned corrector or local scholars to print the work properly. Overcoming these obstacles would be a lengthy and difficult process that would culminate with the work's publication some fifteen years after its completion.

⁴⁴² Hans Bots and Pierre Leroy, eds., *Correspondance intégrale d'André Rivet et de Claude Sarrau*, vol. II: *Le République des lettres au début de la régence (Mai 1643 - Décembre 1644)* (Amsterdam and Maarssen: APA - Amsterdam University Press, 1980), §CCCII. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 23 December 1644, p. 467, 'L'estat povre de nos Eglizes nous fait rechercher au loing ce que nous ne trouvons pas chés nous, asç[avoir] liberté et commodité de produire et publier les doctes ouvrages de nos grands hommes'.

⁴⁴³ See, in general, Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs, et société*, vol. 1, pp. 440-471.

⁴⁴⁴ B. L. Meulenbroek, ed., *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, vol. 10 ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), §4330. Louis Cappel to Hugo Grotius, 10 October 1639, p. 659.

⁴⁴⁵ Meulenbroek, ed., *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, vol. 10, §4330. Louis Cappel to Hugo Grotius, 10 October 1639, p. 659.

⁴⁴⁶ LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 25 January 1630, fol. 11r, for the evidence of the fact that Cappel seems to have written all his works using a large amount of abbreviations. Here he offered to send Rivet a key for the compositors to decipher them. Cappel continued this practice into the 1640s. See, Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance intégrale*, vol. II, §CCLXXVIII. Sarrau to Rivet, 17 September 1644, p. 383, where Sarrau confirms he has forwarded a key to Cappel's abbreviations for the compositors working on Cappel's reply to Johannes Cloppenburg. Upon receiving the *Critica sacra* Rivet was amazed that someone who sent his work to be read in manuscript by so many readers wrote so poorly. See, Hans Bots and Pierre Leroy, *Correspondance intégrale d'André Rivet et de Claude Sarrau*, vol. III: *Orthodoxie et hétérodoxie au sein de la réforme vers le milieu du XVIIe siècle (Décembre 1644 - Septembre 1646)* (Amsterdam and Maarssen: APA - Holland University Press, 1982), §CCCXV. Rivet to Sarrau, 20 February 1645, p. 51. On print correction generally in early modern Europe, see most recently, Grafton, *The Culture of Correction*.

Until now scholars have settled largely for the account of the *Critica sacra*'s publication given by Laplanche.⁴⁴⁷ Laplanche's work is a useful outline of Cappel's struggle to have his work published. It suffers, however, from two problems. First, it treats the publication before discussing the content of the *Critica sacra*, which makes it very difficult to separate Cappel's intention in writing the work from the diverse verdicts reached by his Protestant and Catholic contemporaries. Second, it fails to show why it was important that the struggle to publish the *Critica sacra* coincided with the wider dissemination of Morin's works, Morin's debate with de Muis, and Cappel's own disputes with Buxtorf II. The result was that Cappel's work, potentially contentious in itself, became a point of controversy between Protestants in part because of the distinctive context in which it became known to them, as it appeared to be one part of a broader attack on the Hebrew Scriptures and the Protestant *philologia sacra*.

2

Cappel's first concern for the *Critica sacra* in the mid-1630s had been for the quality of its printed text. Doubting anyone could match the dedication Erpenius had shown with the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, his own town of Saumur provided an ideal location for the work's publication.⁴⁴⁸ The printers, however, would not countenance publishing the work without a *privilege*.⁴⁴⁹ To this end Cappel wrote to Hugo Grotius to act on his behalf with the relevant authorities in Paris.⁴⁵⁰ Grotius, who had strongly approved of Cappel's *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* and also endorsed the *Critica sacra*, was willing to intercede for Cappel.⁴⁵¹ It was Cappel's misfortune however, that the Professeur du Roi to whom they sent the work was none other than Siméon de Muis.

Considering that de Muis had only just published his second treatise against Morin's work, his verdict regarding Cappel's is in hindsight unsurprising. Having only read Book I – on variant readings between the different books of the Old Testament –

⁴⁴⁷ Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, pp. 224-229.

⁴⁴⁸ Meulenbroek, ed., *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, vol. 6, §2436. Louis Cappel to Hugo Grotius, 11 January 1636, pp. 470-471.

⁴⁴⁹ Meulenbroek, ed., *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, vol. 6, §2436. Louis Cappel to Hugo Grotius, 11 January 1636, pp. 470-471.

⁴⁵⁰ Meulenbroek, ed., *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, vol. 6, §2436. Louis Cappel to Hugo Grotius, 11 January 1636, pp. 470-471.

⁴⁵¹ For Grotius's earlier judgement on these two works, see, Meulenbroek, ed., *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, vol. 6, §2313. Hugo Grotius to Louis Cappel, 13 October 1635, pp. 280-281.

de Muis was unequivocal that he would not countenance the book's publication.⁴⁵² The *Critica sacra*, de Muis wrote to Cappel, unnecessarily brought the Hebrew text into doubt. The variant readings Cappel had highlighted between Samuel I to Kings II and Chronicles I-II had already been explained by the Jewish commentators, above all Kimhi and Abravanel.⁴⁵³ Cappel had little regard for de Muis's response. The central purpose, he asserted, of the *Critica sacra* was to separate the idea of the Hebrew text from the readings of individual Hebrew manuscripts. Unlike the 'forced' and even 'ridiculous' Jewish solutions, which were based on the assumption one could not in the slightest depart from the Masoretic text, his work had provided a coherent explanation of the origin of the variant readings, and his 'canon' a method to adjudicate between them in a way that safeguarded the integrity of the text as a whole.⁴⁵⁴

De Muis avoided further debate with Cappel, but did send him via Grotius a series of annotations and comments he had made to Book I of the *Critica sacra*. What had struck de Muis, as his first letter had also indicated, was the threat he felt Cappel posed to the integrity of the Hebrew text as a whole. De Muis agreed with Morin and Cappel that the vowel points were a late addition to the text. Where he departed from both was when they used this fact to argue that the Hebrew text had to be considered in the context of the other ancient versions.⁴⁵⁵ De Muis strongly rejected Cappel's proposal that readings from the 'interpolated' and unreliable Samaritan text could be used to improve the Hebrew text.⁴⁵⁶ Worse still was Cappel's preference for the Septuagint.⁴⁵⁷ De Muis read Cappel's work through the eyes of someone who had just read Morin's, where it was the apparent similarities, rather than the differences, that were most problematic.

Refused publication in Paris, Cappel turned to Protestant Europe. For this he needed the approbation of his local synod in Anjou, which he received in June 1639.⁴⁵⁸ Following an unsuccessful attempt in the Netherlands, Cappel sent the *Critica sacra* to Geneva in early 1640, where Friedrich Spanhiem had agreed to help publish the work.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵² Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 635.

⁴⁵³ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 635.

⁴⁵⁴ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', pp. 635-636. Cappel states here that his letter was dated the 11 April 1636.

⁴⁵⁵ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', pp. 636-7. There is no date given for de Muis's annotations.

⁴⁵⁶ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 638.

⁴⁵⁷ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', pp. 642-43.

⁴⁵⁸ Unfortunately no transcripts from this Synod survive beyond a small entry found in the Archives municipales de Saumur, relating to the Saumur Academy. See, Didier Boisson, ed., *Actes des Synodes Provinciaux: Anjou-Touraine-Maine* (Geneva: Droz, 2012), p. 316. For Cappel's upcoming presentation of the work to the Synod, see, LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 19 March 1639, fol. 27^v. For the permission granted, see, Meulenbroek, ed., *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, vol. 10, §4330. Louis Cappel to Hugo Grotius, 10 October 1639, p. 659.

⁴⁵⁹ Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, p. 225; LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 12 September 1640.

There, however, its publication was prevented by the opposition of Jean Diodati and Alexander Morus.⁴⁶⁰ The precise reason for either Morus's or Diodati's opposition has not been uncovered. Later letters from Diodati to Buxtorf II reveal that by then he strongly opposed Cappel's work.⁴⁶¹ At the time such reasons were not forthcoming. Buxtorf II gave a series of possible reasons to other correspondents, ranging from the refusal of the pastors in Saumur to support Diodati's new French translation of the Bible, to his reaction to the decision to allow John Cameron's 'Arminian' and 'heterodox' works to be published in the city.⁴⁶² Cappel attributed it to jealousy on Diodati's part, since he had allowed himself to be represented in the affair by Spanheim.⁴⁶³ As this indicates, the first Protestant reactions to the *Critica sacra*, from Grotius and the Parisian theologians to their fellow religionaries in Geneva, were by no means entirely critical. As Spanheim had acted as Cappel's representative, so too did the Professor of Hebrew and at that time Rector in the Geneva Academy, David Le Clerc, who wrote to Buxtorf II that he entirely supported the work's publication.⁴⁶⁴

His Swiss hopes disappointed, Cappel explored a series of options in France. A joint venture was considered between the Elsevier printing press in the Netherlands and that of l'Erpinière's in Saumur.⁴⁶⁵ Cappel initiated this through Claude Sarrau, the Parisian parlementaire who would become one of his staunchest supporters, and whose backing, together with that of Grotius, would be remembered in the *Critica sacra*'s preface.⁴⁶⁶ This project fell through, since, as Rivet relayed, the Elsevier's press was occupied and would not be available for over a year.⁴⁶⁷ Following this Cappel tried, again through Sarrau's mediation, to have the work published in Caen at the printing press recently established

⁴⁶⁰ On the opposition of both men at that time, see, BUB, G I 64, David Le Clerc to Johannes Buxtorf II, 27 April 1646, fol. 500r. I am currently working on an edition of David Le Clerc's correspondence.

⁴⁶¹ BUB, G I 64, Jean Diodati to Johannes Buxtorf II, 23 August 1646, fol. 20r; BUB, GI 64, Jean Diodati to Johannes Buxtorf II, 1 November 1647, fol. 22r.

⁴⁶² BUB, Fr. Gryn. II 23a, Johannes Buxtorf II to Johann Rudolph Stucki, [n. d.] May 1641, fol. 8r. For further on the arguments created by the decision to allow Cameron's works to be published in Geneva, see, BUB, G I 64, David Le Clerc to Johannes Buxtorf II, 26 January 1641, fols. 452r-453r.

⁴⁶³ LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 8 October 1642, fol. 31r.

⁴⁶⁴ BUB, G I 64, David Le Clerc to Johannes Buxtorf II, 27 April 1646, fol. 500r.

⁴⁶⁵ LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 8 October 1642, fol. 31r. On the l'Erpinières, see, Émile Pasquier and Victor Dauphin, *Imprimeurs & Libraires de l'Anjou* (Anjou: Société Anonyme de l'Ouest, 1932), pp. 266-268; for the Saumur trade generally, see, Jean-Paul Pittion, 'Aspects of the History of the Saumur Protestant Book Trade (1601-1684)', in *That Woman! Studies in Irish Bibliography. A Festschrift for Mary 'Paul' Pollard*, Charles Benson and Siobhán Fitzpatrick eds. (Dublin: The Liliput Press, 2005), pp. 194-212; Louis Desgraves, *Répertoire bibliographique des livres imprimés en France au XVIIe siècle*, vol. I (Baden Baden: Heitz, 1978), pp. 142-245; for the Elseviers, the fullest account is still, Alphonse Willems, *Les Elzevier: histoire et annales typographiques* (Brussels: G. A. van Trigt, 1880).

⁴⁶⁶ Cappel, *Critica sacra*, sig. e iiiijr.

⁴⁶⁷ Hans Bots and Pierre Leroy, *Correspondance intégrale d'André Rivet et de Claude Sarrau*, vol. I: *La République des lettres à la fin du règne de Louis XIII (Septembre 1641 - Mai 1641)* (Amsterdam and Maarssen: APA - Holland University Press, 1978), §CXIV. André Rivet to Claude Sarrau, 26 January 1643, p. 387.

by Pierre de Cardonnel.⁴⁶⁸ De Cardonnel worked closely at this time with Samuel Bochart, and would eventually publish his *Geographia sacra* in 1646. Bochart would become one of Cappel's strongest supporters, and even had de Cardonnel employ a copyist to make a copy of the whole of the *Critica sacra* for him at this time.⁴⁶⁹ Despite Sarrau's ongoing efforts to intercede with Chancellor Séguier, however, de Cardonnel's press faced such a series of delays and difficulties at the hands of the authorities that Cappel had to seek an alternative.⁴⁷⁰

Cappel and Sarrau once more looked to the Netherlands. This was a logical choice. It was in Leiden that Erpenius had seen the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* through Jean Maire's press. Sarrau, who had by now established a regular correspondence with Rivet in The Hague, made this point on several occasions: 'The one who [Maire], in your [Rivet's] *quartiers*, printed Cappel's *Arcanum punctuationis* would not be found wanting'.⁴⁷¹ Leiden had a further attraction, as Erpenius had seen to the earlier work's correction, so now could the current Professors of Hebrew and Arabic at the University, L'Empereur and Golius respectively, imitate their predecessor. Rivet's replies were initially promising, and in his letters to Sarrau he appeared to be doing his best to have the work published.⁴⁷²

It was at this stage that the imminent publication of the *Critica sacra* began to converge with Cappel's other scholarly preoccupations in a way that posed a direct and unavoidable challenge to scholars and theologians in Switzerland and the Netherlands. The *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* had been widely accepted in France. Sarrau, for example, considered the argument in favour of the vowel points' antiquity an old and antiquated opinion, put to rest even while Buxtorf was still alive.⁴⁷³ The lack of a decisive reply to Cappel's work, however, meant that rather than put to rest it was stuck in a period of extended hibernation, only to be revived in learned circles in the late 1630s and early 1640s.⁴⁷⁴ The first indication of this was Franciscus Gomarus's *Davidis Lyra* (1637),

⁴⁶⁸ See, Noel Malcom, 'Pierre de Cardonnel (1614-1667)', in his *Aspects of Hobbes*, pp. 269-273.

⁴⁶⁹ Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §XCII. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 17 June 1644, p. 301.

⁴⁷⁰ Malcolm, 'Pierre de Cardonnel', pp. 271-272.

⁴⁷¹ Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCXLVIII. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 10 June 1644, p. 294, 'Celui qui imprima en vous quartiers son *Arcanum Punctuationis* ne s'en pas mal trouvé'.

⁴⁷² Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCXLIV. André Rivet to Claude Sarrau, 30 May 1644, p. 282, although note that Rivet warned even at this stage there were some misgivings from the printers, since war in England and Germany meant the market for Cappel's work likely to be diminished.

⁴⁷³ See, Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCLX. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 22 July 1644, p. 332.

⁴⁷⁴ This was a point Cappel himself underlined, see Louis Cappel, *Ad novam Davidis lyram animadversiones* (Saumur: Isaac Desbordes, 1643), sigs. A2^v-A3^r, 'Editus quidam est ante annos XVII. a doctissimo & Clarissimo Erpenio liber cui titulum fecimus, *Arcanum Punctuationis*, in quo sententia illa vulgo recepta

a contribution to the study of Hebrew poetic verse that depended on the antiquity of the vowel points.⁴⁷⁵ Cappel had little time for Gomarus's assumption. Soon after having read it he wrote to Rivet outlining his two main criticisms: he himself had already disproven the antiquity of the points and, in addition to that, there was no way of knowing whether Hebrew poetry had long or short syllables.⁴⁷⁶ Cappel composed a stinging reply to Gomarus, in which he publicly revealed himself as the author of the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* for the first time.⁴⁷⁷

As Cappel began openly to propagate his views on the history of the Hebrew vowel points, so did opposition to the *Critica sacra* begin to be voiced from the Protestant side. One of the first to raise concerns was Samuel Petit, Professor of Theology, Hebrew, and Greek, at the Protestant Academy of Nîmes. Lacking Petit's original letter we have to infer from Sarrau's reply the nature of his objections. Petit had apparently inveighed against what he perceived as the work's attack on the Hebrew text. Sarrau defended Cappel, denying that the *Critica sacra* either threatened Scripture or claimed the liberty to change and interpolate it at will.⁴⁷⁸ Cappel's aim was twofold. First, where a 'better and more fitting reading' could replace the text given or pointed by the Masoretes, the critic could choose that without any undue harm done to the sacred word.⁴⁷⁹ Second, Cappel's demonstration of the origins of various diverse readings between the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew codices – for example, through haplography, dittography, the transposition of letters – did nothing to impugn the overall authority of the Hebrew, especially since they would only be placed in the margin.⁴⁸⁰ Sarrau's reply was a clear restatement of the basic argument Cappel had made in the *Critica sacra* to justify his practice, albeit noticeably without his broader theological underpinning, yet it appears to have done little to appease Petit, who instead conveyed his concerns more widely among other Protestant scholars, among them Rivet in The Hague.

videtur valide satis a nobis confutata, neque visus est hactenus (quod ego quid sciam) aliquis qui eam adversus nostras rationes adstruendam atque defendendam suscepit'.

⁴⁷⁵ See, Isaac Baroway, "'The Lyre of David': A Further Study in Renaissance Interpretation of Biblical Form", *English Literary History* XVII (1950), pp. 115-35; and most recently, Kristine Louise Haugen, 'Hebrew Poetry Transformed, or Scholarship Invincible between Renaissance and Enlightenment', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* LXXV (2012), esp. pp. 10-13.

⁴⁷⁶ LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 3 April 1643, fol.

⁴⁷⁷ Cappel, *Ad novam Davidis lyram animadversiones*, sigs. A2^v-A3^r.

⁴⁷⁸ Peter Burmann, ed., *Marquardi Gudii et doctorum virorum ad eum epistolae et Claudii Sarraui epistolae* (Utrecht: Francis Halman, 1697), §XVIII. Claude Sarrau to Samuel Petit, 19 January 1640, p. 22.

⁴⁷⁹ Burmann, ed., *Marquardi Gudii*, §XVIII. Claude Sarrau to Samuel Petit, 19 January 1640, p. 22, 'Quandoquidem Masorethici apices utpote ἀνθρώπινον ἔκρημα, nos non ligant, ubicunque diversa punctorum ratio meliorem & commodiorem fundit sensum, nihi vetare, quin priori neglecta posteriori adhaeremus: quod magno cum fructu fieri posse infinitis exemplis, per singula puncta decurrendo, demonstrat'.

⁴⁸⁰ Burmann, *Marquardi Gudii*, §XVIII. Claude Sarrau to Samuel Petit, 19 January 1640, p. 22.

These concerns about Cappel's arguments converged in Leiden in the summer of 1644 and set in train a series of events that put paid to Cappel's hopes to publish the *Critica sacra* in Protestant Europe. Rivet played a central role. He was Cappel and Sarrau's contact in the Netherlands and the link between Saumur and Paris and Leiden.

Throughout their exchanges, Rivet never revealed to Sarrau his own doubts about Cappel's work. As soon as he had it in his hands, he assured the Parisian parlementaire, he would do 'everything in my power' to publish the *Critica sacra*.⁴⁸¹ The only doubts he expressed related to the question of the correction of such a complex work without the author present.⁴⁸²

The degree to which these were in large part expressions of the common social obligations that ran through seventeenth-century intellectual culture is revealed in his other correspondence. In these letters Rivet repeatedly expressed the doubts he held about Cappel's entire *oeuvre*. His concerns had been raised by Petit, who had sent him a warning about the *Critica sacra* by late 1642. Rivet had then written to Spanheim, now Professor of Theology in Leiden, to ask how true it was that Cappel's work had a 'dangerous design'.⁴⁸³ Spanheim had supported Cappel's work in Geneva, and still apparently defended the Saumur scholar. Cappel had, he told Rivet, included all the 'antidotes' necessary to prevent any poisonous consequences being drawn from his observations.⁴⁸⁴ Sarrau also defended Cappel. His interpretation of the *Critica sacra* followed the defence he had given to Petit: it was an admirable work that demonstrated the Greek translations came ultimately from two causes, the divergent punctuation of the text or the confusion of similar letters.⁴⁸⁵ Only the 'ignorant' or 'ill-willed' could resent the great service Cappel had done for the 'majesty of Holy Scripture'.⁴⁸⁶ As he reiterated in

⁴⁸¹ Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCLI. André Rivet to Claude Sarrau, 25 June 1644, p. 304, '[P]our le Criticus de Mons. Cappel, je feray tout mon possible pour luy donner tout contentement au public, quand j'auray entres les mains.

⁴⁸² Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCLV. André Rivet to Claude Sarrau, 4 July 1644, p. 317.

⁴⁸³ I have not been able to locate the letter Petit sent Rivet amongst the latter's correspondence, now for the most part held by Leiden's Universiteitsbibliotheek. For the report of Petit's concerns, however, see, BSM, Lat. 10383, André Rivet to Friedrich Spanheim, 18 December 1642, fol. 40^r, 'J'ay veu des lettres de Mons. Petit, qui en parloit comme d'un dangereux dessein, et trouvoit estrange que les Pasteurs de Paris y prissent goust.'

⁴⁸⁴ Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. I, §CXIV. André Rivet to Claude Sarrau, 26 January 1643, p. 387, 'Monsieur Spanheim y a porté tout ce qu'il a peu, et asseuré qu'il a mis tous les antidotes necessaires contre ceux qui voudroient tirer du poison de ses observations'.

⁴⁸⁵ Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. I, §CXIX. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 6 February 1643, p. 393.

⁴⁸⁶ Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. I, §CXIX. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 6 February 1643, pp. 393-394, 'C'est une piece admirable que la Critique de Mr Cappel: par elle se concilient la plus part des diverses interpretations Grecques principalement que nous avons de l'écriture; d'ou l'origine de ceste difference est demonstrée quasi tousiours sourdre de deux causes: d'avoir lu diversement faute de

June 1644: 'it's an exquisite work' that reveals Cappel's prodigious research. Spanheim and Sarrau's reassurances did little to dispell Rivet's fears.⁴⁸⁷

Rivet wrote to Buxtorf II shortly after receiving word Sarrau intended to send the *Critica sacra* to Leiden, revealing that it was not only the *Critica sacra* but the whole range of Cappel's ambitions that troubled him. Rivet praised Buxtorf II's recent *Dissertationes philologico-theologicae* (1645), emphasising how pleased he was that Buxtorf II had shown 'that the Hebrew vowel points' were 'not a human invention'.⁴⁸⁸ He expressed his concerns relating to the soon-to-arrive *Critica sacra*, in which – a sign of the views expressed by Petit – Cappel apparently attempted to argue in favour of the Septuagint against the Hebrew.⁴⁸⁹ Upon receiving it the first thing would be to analyse how far this was true, and ensure it would not be published if it contained anything contrary to 'orthodox' belief. Rivet had two further fears. First, he was concerned Cappel's work would support their Catholic opponents by putting forth arguments that confirmed the Hebrew text's corruption.⁴⁹⁰ Rivet's concerns here undoubtedly stemmed from Morin's work. As we have seen, from 1629 onwards Rivet had been in regular correspondence with Marin Mersenne, and had followed with disquiet the works of Morin – and de Muis's replies – throughout the 1630s. Second, Cappel's 'freer criticism', he warned, was in itself extremely suspect, and of the utmost danger in sacred studies.⁴⁹¹

Where Rivet tailored the presentation of his views to his correspondents, the opinion of the Leiden Hebraists was unambiguously negative. With the second half of the manuscript still being copied for Bochart, Sarrau forwarded the 'first part' and the appendix in late 1644; it reached Rivet in The Hague by February 1645, and he forwarded it to L'Empereur in Leiden.⁴⁹² L'Empereur's unequivocal rejection of Cappel's

pointcs, ou [394] d'avoir confondu *litterae affines*. C'est un travail prodigieux et qui peut faire extremement servir a la Maiesté de la Sainte Escripture. Les ignorants et malins trouvent à redire a tout et qui voudroit s'y arrester ou contenter tou le monde, il ne faudroit iamaïs rien faire. Il suffit de plaire aux scavants et aux equitables'.

⁴⁸⁷ Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCXLVIII. Sarrau to Rivet, 10 June 1644, p. 294, 'C'est un ouvrage exquis et qui le verra, louera la grande et curieuse recherche et le travail incroyable de l'auteur'.

⁴⁸⁸ BUB, G I 59, André Rivet to Johannes Buxtorf II, 25 June 1644, fol. 44r, '[U]t ostendes, vocalium Ebraicarum notationem in Sacris Biblijs humana non fuisse instituti'.

⁴⁸⁹ BUB, G I 59, André Rivet to Johannes Buxtorf II, 25 June 1644, fol. 44r, 'Clariss. Cappellus paratam habet Sacram Criticen [sic], in qua innumera Veteris Testam. loca expendit, et Ebraea conatur ad interpret. Graecam LXX inflectere.'

⁴⁹⁰ BUB, G I 59, André Rivet to Johannes Buxtorf II, 25 June 1644, fol. 44r, 'primum erit videndum si nihil sit quod in ὁρθοδοξίαν incurrat, vel communibus adversarijs ansam praebeat sententiam suam de Ebraea textu corrupto confirmandi, et nostris versionibus insultandi'.

⁴⁹¹ BUB, G I 59, André Rivet to Johannes Buxtorf II, 25 June 1644, fol. 44r, 'Et certe in talibus liberior Critice mihi admodum suspecta est, & in sacris periculosa'.

⁴⁹² Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCLXXXIX. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 28 October 1644, p. 421, where Sarrau states that the 'first part' and the 'Appendix' make up roughly half the

work reached Sarrau soon after. He could not in good conscience, L'Empereur had told Rivet, recommend the *Critica sacra* to the printers: it was dangerous, leaving nothing in Scripture certain and giving anyone the freedom to contest even the clearest places.⁴⁹³ Golius shared L'Empereur's opinion, and Sarrau's repeated appeals, and those by Bochart and Saumaise, were to little avail.⁴⁹⁴ By August 1645, Rivet told Sarrau the decision was final: a work that rendered all of Scripture in doubt, and even attributed *σφάλματα* and *ἄπορα* to the sacred authors themselves, undermined the certitude of the sacred text.⁴⁹⁵

L'Empereur's judgement is interesting for more than the fact it agreed with his fellow Protestants, Buxtorf II, Rivet, Golius and others, on the consequences Cappel's work held for the certainty of scripture. It also bears striking similarities to de Muis's verdict. L'Empereur and de Muis objected to Cappel's work for a series of common reasons that show confessional opinions did not determine scholarly ones but were, rather, only one part of each scholar's configuration of a coherent opinion that embodied both confessional and learned concerns. For de Muis this required a reliable Hebrew tradition that underpinned his confidence in the Vulgate, for L'Empereur a divinely-authorized Hebrew text that provided certainty in matters of faith. As Professors of Hebrew who made wide use of rabbinic interpretations in a Christian context, they agreed these provided the securest explanations of any apparent problems, and especially what appeared to be internal contradictions, in the Hebrew text. De Muis had argued that the inconsistencies Cappel had highlighted between Samuel I to Kings II and

work. The Appendix is the 'Qvaestio de locis Parallelis Veteris & Noui Testamenti', a study of the quotations of the Old Testament used by New Testament authors written against Zacharie Vaillant, from Orléans, in which Cappel argued that the Apostles did use the Septuagint. Vaillant had argued in contrast references to the Septuagint were included only by later Christians, accomodating the Gospels to the version they used. See, Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCLXX. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 26 August 1644, p. 361. Initially Cappel had planned for the Appendix to be his response to Johannes Cloppenburg, see Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCL. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 17 June 1644, p. 301, but he decided to printed that work independently of the *Critica sacra*. See, Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCLXIII. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 31 July 1644, p. 342. Sarrau's comments which mean the Leiden Hebraists' judgement was most probably based on Books 1-3, Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. II, §CCLXXIX. Claude Sarrau to André Rivet, 28 October 1644, p. 421.

⁴⁹³ Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. III, §CCCXXXIV. André Rivet to Claude Sarrau, 8 May 1645, p. 114, 'il n'y a que trois jours que j'avoy ici Mons. l'Empereur, qui me dit ouvertement qu'en bonne conscience il ne le [the *Critica sacra*] pouvoit recommander aux Imprimeurs, qu'il estoit obligé au contraire par conscience de declarer que cette critique est dangereuse, et que si on la suit, il n'y aura rien de certain en l'Ecriture, qu'on se donnera licence de contester les lieux les plus claires.

⁴⁹⁴ Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. III, §CCCXXXVI. André Rivet to Claude Sarrau, 15 May 1645, p. 120.

⁴⁹⁵ Bots and Leroy, *Correspondance d'André Rivet*, vol. III, §CCLIX. André Rivet to Claude Sarrau, 14 August, 1645, p. 188, 'Monsieur l'Empereur ... me dit que par la Critique de Mons. Cappel il n'y a rien en l'Ecriture qu'on ne puisse revoquer en doubte, et qu'attribuant aux sacréz escrivains mesmes *σφάλματα* et *ἄπορα* toute la certitude du texte sacré est esbranlée.'

Chronicles I-II could be solved by consulting Kimhi and Abravanel, a point which L'Empereur confirmed in advance in his own extensive use of Abravanel to solve the apparent contradictions between II Samuel 8:4 and I Chronicles 16:4.⁴⁹⁶

Few scholars appreciated L'Empereur and de Muis's arguments more than Buxtorf II. Rivet's letter had reached Buxtorf II just as he had just finished his *Dissertationes philologico-theologicae*, a series of dissertations that restated the rabbinic case for the antiquity of the Hebrew tradition, language, and script.⁴⁹⁷ This work was produced as part of a division of labour between Buxtorf II and his Zurich confidant, Hottinger, as from 1643 to 1644 both men endeavoured to reply to the parts of Morin's theses in the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae* left unanswered by de Muis, who had focused on the post-Ezra Masoretic material. Both Buxtorf II and Hottinger also sent letters – and in Hottinger's case a copy of the *Exercitationes anti-Morinianae* – to de Muis in Paris, updating him on their common struggle against Morin.⁴⁹⁸

Buxtorf II's restatement of the priority, authority, and stability of the Hebrew tradition was best displayed in his 'Dissertation on the letters of the Hebrews'. This work's target was not Cappel, as Jan Loop has recently suggested, but instead a series of other earlier scholars. Foremost among them was Morin, who in the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae* had argued extensively in favour of the thesis that the Samaritan script had been used by the ancient Hebrews.⁴⁹⁹ Buxtorf II first adduced the evidence in favour of the Hebrew script's antiquity: the unanimity of testimony from Jewish sources and even Christian sources, the attachment of the Jews to their customs that rendered it unlikely

⁴⁹⁶ Constantin L'Empereur, *De Legibus Ebraeorum forensibus liber singularis* (Leiden: Elsevir, 1637), p. 169.

⁴⁹⁷ Johannes Buxtorf II, *Dissertationes philologico-theologicae* (Basel: Ludwig König, 1645), note however that individual dissertations have individual title pages, and indicate they were printed at different times.

⁴⁹⁸ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXIX. Johann Heinrich Hottinger to Siméon de Muis, 22 May 1645, pp. 345-348; BLM, Ashburnham 1877, Johannes Buxtorf II to Siméon de Muis, 24 [month illegible owing to tear] 1645, fol. 61r.

⁴⁹⁹ See, Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, p. 117. Loop's assertion that Buxtorf II was already chiefly writing against Cappel overlooks the fact that Cappel had not yet made the subject of the ancient Hebrew script one of his main points of contention. Indeed, it was Cappel who responded to Buxtorf II's argument in this field with his *Diatriba, de veris et antiquis Ebraeorum literis* (Amsterdam: Louis Elzevir: 1645). Confirmation that Buxtorf II's target extended to Morin's critique of the Hebrew tradition can be found in the *Dissertationes philologico-theologicae*, where Morin's specific arguments, in addition to the general case on the Samaritan script, were frequently criticised. See, for example, Johannes Buxtorf II, 'Dissertatio de literis Hebraeorum [1643]', in his *Dissertationes philologico-theologicae*, sects. 16, 20, 51, 52, 57 (references to sections since the individual dissertations do not have page numbers). For further confirmation, see a series of Buxtorf II's letters where he makes clear Morin is the prime target, ZZB, Ms. F 44, Johannes Buxtorf II to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 31 July 1643, fol. 47v (copy); BLM, Ashburnham 1877, Johannes Buxtorf II to Siméon de Muis, 24 [month illegible owing to tear] 1645, fol. 61r. See also, BUB G I 58, Johann Heinrich Hottinger to Johannes Buxtorf II, 21 August 1643, fol. 87v, 'Tractatum, qui tuus est, de characteris Hebraeorum valde desidero. Contra Morinum calum te stringeri ad assertionem ejus refutandam, scripsisti'.

they would change their script, and even less probable that Ezra would have altered it.⁵⁰⁰ To refute Morin's case, Buxtorf II returned to a well known sixteenth-century argument: the ancient Hebrews had used two scripts, the holy and authentic square script and the common or civil script, and it was the latter that was used by the Samaritans.⁵⁰¹ Morin's identification of places of agreement between the Samaritan and Septuagint texts could therefore easily be explained. There were two Pentateuchs, the pointed Hebrew and the unpointed Samaritan, and the Septuagint had been made from the unpointed text. This explained their agreement, but also confirmed their inferiority to the Hebrew.⁵⁰²

Buxtorf II's work stayed largely, as he put it, within his boundaries 'in Palestine and Babylonia', and constituted an extensive marshalling of rabbinic and historical arguments in favour of the antiquity and stability of the Hebrew text and tradition.⁵⁰³ To Hottinger, in contrast, fell the obligation to refute Morin's account of the Samaritan Pentateuch.⁵⁰⁴ Hottinger drew on extensive resources to wield an array of historical and textual arguments against Morin. During his *peregrinatio academia* in Leiden he had had access to two copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch.⁵⁰⁵ One of these was the copy owned by Golius.⁵⁰⁶ The other belonged to Ussher, which he had loaned to de Dieu in 1629.⁵⁰⁷ To these Hottinger added the *Liber Josuae*, an authentic Samaritan document of the sort Morin had lacked. This Samaritan Chronicle in Arabic had been sent to Scaliger by the Samaritan community in Cairo in 1584 and Hottinger had copied it during his stay in Leiden.⁵⁰⁸

Hottinger combined these sources to attack Morin's main contention that the Samaritans' reliability as custodians of their version of the Pentateuch meant the

⁵⁰⁰ Buxtorf II, 'Dissertatio de literis Hebraeorum', sects. 1-16, 23, 34-37.

⁵⁰¹ Buxtorf II, 'Dissertatio de literis Hebraeorum', sects. 43-51.

⁵⁰² Buxtorf II, 'Dissertatio de literis Hebraeorum', sect. 45. This argument was indebted to Azariah de' Rossi's claim that the Septuagint was translated from an Aramaic version. See, Azariah de' Rossi, *The Light of the Eyes*, ed. and trans. Johanna Weinberg (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 192-193. On this, see further, Joanna Weinberg, 'Azariah de' Rossi and LXX Traditions', *Italia* 5 (1985), pp. 7-35.

⁵⁰³ ZZB, Ms. F. 51, Johannes Buxtorf II to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 24 January 1644, fol. 108r, 'Ego intra meos terminos me contineo, Palaestina videlicet et Babylonia, nec facile ulterius exspatior'.

⁵⁰⁴ See, generally, Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, pp. 116-122.

⁵⁰⁵ On this *peregrinatio*, see, Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, pp. 11-18. See also, Johann Heinrich Hottinger, *Exercitationes anti-Morinianae* (Zürich: Joh. Jacob Bodmer, 1644), sigs.)() (2^v -)() (3^v.

⁵⁰⁶ Now, LUB, MS Or. 6. Golius's unwillingness to respond to Cappel's repeated attempts should temper the report of his 'famous' generosity given by Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, p. 15.

⁵⁰⁷ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. I, §294. James Ussher to Louis de Dieu, 1 October 1629, p. 474. On this copy, see further, J. G. Fraser, 'Ussher's Sixth Copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch', *Vetus Testamentum* 21 (1971), pp. 100-102.

⁵⁰⁸ On Hottinger's copying of this in Leiden, see, Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, p. 119. Hottinger had intended to publish this manuscript but he never completed the edition. It was only eventually published in the nineteenth century. See, T. W. J. Juynboll, ed., *Chronicon Samaritanorum Arabice conscriptum, cui titulus est Liber Josuae* (Leiden: S. & J. Luchtmans, 1848).

Samaritan Pentateuch ought to be preferred to the Hebrew text. In the first third of the work Hottinger attacked the history of the Samaritans, deploying all the relevant evidence drawn from Jewish sources that presented them as a heretical sect.⁵⁰⁹ The *Liber Josuae* provided further ammunition: by comparing long passages where it diverged from the Hebrew text and the account given by Josephus, Hottinger argued that it supported his claim that the Samaritan sources were untrustworthy.⁵¹⁰ Hottinger made an extensive series of comparisons between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the other versions. But where Morin had highlighted the agreements between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint, Hottinger instead emphasised those places where it appeared the Samaritan revealed a corrupt reading of the Hebrew. Such included, mistakes made in the copying of Hebrew letters, the intentional alteration of passages to support Samaritan claims against the Jewish opponents, and the variant readings found between different Samaritan Pentateuchs.⁵¹¹

Hottinger and Buxtorf II's works were well received by those who already shared their opinion. L'Empereur, for example, was among those who wrote to Buxtorf II applauding his efforts.⁵¹² The *Exercitationes anti-morinianae* (1644) was even applauded in Paris where Jean Daillé, a supporter of Cappel's work, warmly approved Hottinger's stinging attack on Morin.⁵¹³ One reader of Hottinger's work, however, felt quite differently. Cappel had met Hottinger during the latter's *peregrinatio academia* and into the 1640s they had remained intermittent correspondents.⁵¹⁴ His interest in Hottinger's work was palpable: even before receiving a copy from Hottinger in July 1644 he had read the *Exercitationes anti-morinianae* unbound in a bookshop.⁵¹⁵ Cappel wrote that he could only approve Hottinger's design, shared with Boate and de Muis, to overturn Morin's work. The Oratorian's real aim was evidently to subvert Scripture in order to replace it with the tradition of the Catholic Church.⁵¹⁶ Unfortunately, Cappel continued, there was little chance that either he, Hottinger, or their fellow Protestants, could successfully defeat such opponents unless they gave up three commonly held theses: first, that the Hebrew vowel points were coeval with the Hebrew letters, added by Moses or Ezra; second, that

⁵⁰⁹ Hottinger, *Exercitationes anti-morinianae*, pp. 1-26.

⁵¹⁰ Hottinger, *Exercitationes anti-morinianae*, pp. 63-72.

⁵¹¹ Hottinger, *Exercitationes anti-morinianae*, pp. 43-45, 63-72, 98.

⁵¹² ZZB, Ms. F 44, Johannes Buxtorf II to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 10 September 1644, 87^r (copy).

⁵¹³ ZZB, Ms. F 44, Jean Daillé to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 14 November 1644, fol. 83^r (copy).

⁵¹⁴ See, O. F. Fritzsche, 'Johann Heinrich Hottinger', *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie* 11 (1868), p. 241. Unfortunately Hottinger's letters to Cappel are no longer extant. A number of those sent from Cappel to Hottinger are now held by Zürich's Zentralbibliothek, with some copies in Basel's Universitätsbibliothek.

⁵¹⁵ ZZB, Ms. F 51, Louis Cappel to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 2 August 1645, fol. 436^r.

⁵¹⁶ ZZB, Ms. F 51, Louis Cappel to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 2 August 1645, fol. 436^r.

the contemporary Jewish letters were identical to the ancient Hebrew or Mosaic; third, that the contemporary Jewish text was an exact representation, without any variation in its letters or points, of the autograph version of Moses and the Prophets.⁵¹⁷

Cappel's letter had struck at the three pillars of *sacra philologia* as practiced by Hottinger, Buxtorf II, and L'Empereur: the antiquity of the vowel points, the age of the Hebrew script, and the integrity of the Hebrew text. It is not hard to see why, shortly after, Hottinger refused to countenance helping Cappel publish the *Critica sacra*.⁵¹⁸ Hottinger likewise forwarded a copy of Cappel's letter to Buxtorf II.⁵¹⁹ The Basel Professor's reaction could hardly have been stronger. His 'stomach turned', Buxtorf II told Rivet, when he saw what Cappel had argued, and he could not believe the liberties Cappel was apparently willing to take with the Hebrew text.⁵²⁰ If accepted, Cappel's argument did nothing less than 'overturn the principles of our sacred philology'.⁵²¹ Buxtorf II had grasped the nature of Cappel's challenge and would not accept Cappel's attempt to mitigate this through his sophisticated explanation of probable readings, imbued with theological value. Buxtorf II knew Cappel had already composed a new attack on his work on the ancient Hebrew script, and steeled himself to reply.⁵²² Unfortunately for Buxtorf II, however, Cappel's work was about to find a supporter who was willing, determined, and learned enough to publish the *Critica sacra*, and who would do so precisely in order to undermine Protestant belief in the *Hebraica veritas*.

⁵¹⁷ ZZB, Ms. F 51, Louis Cappel to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 2 August 1645, fol. 436^r, note I here disagree slightly with Loop's interpretation of this part of the letter, in Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*, p. 122. Cappel says these three points hold 'inter nostros', that is, he is making a point about his Protestant contemporaries in general and not, as Loop has it, Hottinger's 'three main hypotheses'.

⁵¹⁸ See, ZZB, Ms. F 51, Louis Cappel to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 17 August 1645, fol. 432^r, for the request; BUB, Ms. G I 58, Johann Heinrich Hottinger to Johann Buxtorf II, 28 October 1645, fol. 97^r.

⁵¹⁹ BUB, Ki. Ar. 198, Louis Cappel to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 2 August 1645, (copy), [unpaginated single quire]. I judge this to be in Hottinger's hand. Neither it – nor Buxtorf II's possession of it – were noted in Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger*.

⁵²⁰ LUB, BPL 285, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 1 September 1645, fol. 107^r.

⁵²¹ LUB, BPL 285, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 1 September 1645, fol. 107^r, 'Stomachum mihi movit nupera D. Capelli epistola ad Amicum quendam harum regionum, in qua nimium sibi visus est mihi indulgere circa Testum Sacrum Hebraicum, et ... Philologia nostra sacra principia convellere'.

⁵²² LUB, BPL 285, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 1 September 1645, fol. 107^r.

III. Jean Morin and the *Critica sacra*

On 16 November 1646 Mersenne wrote to Buxtorf II with the news that he had recently had in his hands 'Cappel's most learned book'.⁵²³ Cappel's work showed, Mersenne explained, that the Hebrew and Greek versions of the Old Testament contained an almost infinite number of variant readings, which included the omission or addition of different letters, words, and even whole lines. The work only needed to be granted a privilege, after which it would be printed.⁵²⁴ Mersenne was perhaps not quite as well connected as Valerian de Flavigny, Professor of Hebrew at the Collège de France, who, writing to Buxtorf four days earlier on the 12 November, had just received word the privilege had been granted and the publication would proceed forthwith.⁵²⁵ De Flavigny was well positioned to know since it had been from him and his colleagues at the Collège de France that Cappel's son, Jean, had already attempted to obtain permission to print the work. Colleagues and friends of de Muis who would soon publish his *Opera omnia*, de Flavigny and Claude d'Auvergne had refused to support a work that in their eyes attacked the Hebrew truth.⁵²⁶ Thus, Jean turned instead to Jean Morin, who having decided the work should be published enlisted the Jesuit Denis Petau and Mersenne himself, and together they prevailed with Chancellor Séguier.⁵²⁷

In sharp contrast to Cappel and Buxtorf II, for Morin and Cappel the dating of the vowel points had become one indication of the degree of common ground between the two scholars. Cappel wrote to Morin on the 18 January 1647, thanking him for his help in obtaining a privilege for the *Critica sacra*.⁵²⁸ Morin had apparently repeated to Cappel's son an account of the history of Masoretic scholarship akin to his letter to Buxtorf. Cappel reiterated the foundational point of the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum* – and *Critica sacra* – that his main concern was that the points had arisen some time after 500 CE. He was nonetheless still willing, like Morin, to attempt to fix the date. The basis for this was his developmental account sketched in the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*.

⁵²³ Cornélis de Waard and Armand Beaulieu, eds., *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne religieux minime*, vol. XIV: 1646 (Paris: CNRS, 1980), §1555. Marin Mersenne to Johannes Buxtorf II, 16 November 1646, p. 615, 'Erat mihi prae manibus liber Capelli in Hebraicis eruditissimi'.

⁵²⁴ De Waard and Beaulieu, *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne*, vol. XIV, §1555. Marin Mersenne to Johannes Buxtorf II, 16 November 1646, p. 615.

⁵²⁵ BUB, G I 62, Valerian de Flavigny to Johannes Buxtorf II, 12 November 1646, fol. 187^v.

⁵²⁶ BUB, G I 62, Arnold Boate to Johannes Buxtorf II, 1 November 1650, fol. 67^{r-v}. Boate was in Paris at this time and his letter gives what is the most detailed and reliable summary of the events surrounding the work's publication. He was on good terms with the Hebraists at the Collège de France and it is probable he heard it from one of them.

⁵²⁷ BUB, G I 62, Arnold Boate to Johannes Buxtorf II, 1 November 1650, fol. 67^{r-v}.

⁵²⁸ KB, Bollings brevsamling U 167, Louis Cappel to Jean Morin, 18 January 1647, 1^r.

Here he agreed with Morin: the history of the Masoretic apparatus – the Masorah magna and parva – had to be considered separately from the origin of the points. For the latter, Cappel emphasised that it appeared unlikely that all of these had been invented at one time. Rather they were likely the work of many generations, beginning in the sixth and then culminating in the eighth, ninth, or even tenth centuries. He likewise agreed on the Arabic testimony: whether the Arabs had borrowed from the Masoretes or vice versa was a difficult question, but what was clear was that Arabic texts had not been pointed until the seventh century, evidence of the study of science and letters in society that had begun to be civilised.⁵²⁹ Morin's response met Cappel on these terms, agreeing in principle with the Saumur scholar's argument, and began to attempt to refine their answers.⁵³⁰

Where Cappel and Morin still diverged was on the purposes to which they directed their work on the text of the Old Testament. In supporting the publication of the *Critica sacra*, as Boate and others in Paris at the time reported, Morin was pointedly using it to his confessional as well as learned advantage, continuing his criticism of the Hebrew text and tradition. For Morin there was also a local Catholic context. A series of ongoing disputes over the printing of the Paris Polyglot Bible had centred on the problems caused by Gabriel Sionita, the editor of the Arabic and Syriac texts.⁵³¹ This culminated in Sionita's imprisonment in 1639, and Morin – at the behest of Vitré and Le Jay – using his Roman contacts to bring a second Maronite scholar, Abraham Ecchellensis (Ibrahim al-Hakilani), from Rome to finish the editing and translating of the Arabic and Syriac texts.⁵³² This led to enduring enmity between the two sides, as the Professors of the Collège de France, especially de Flavigny and Auvergne, strongly resented what they perceived as a mistreatment of their colleague Sionita by Le Jay, Morin, and others.

These disputes were more than purely personal. De Muis had died in 1644 and de Flavigny and Auvergne continued his work, publishing an edition of his *Opera omnia* that

⁵²⁹ KB, Bollings brevsamling U 167, Louis Cappel to Jean Morin, 18 January 1647, 1^r-2^r.

⁵³⁰ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXII. Jean Morin to Louis Cappel, 11 March 1647, pp. 399-409.

⁵³¹ Lelong, *Discours historique*, pp. 104-204, 386-553, still gives the best account of these events and all subsequent accounts are almost entirely based on it.

⁵³² BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, 26 May 1640, fol. 65^r, where Morin requests that Ecchellensis be given leave to travel to Paris; Simon, *Ecclesiae antiquitates orientalis*, §LVIII. Jean Morin to Abraham Ecchellensis, 3 August [1640], pp. 298-299, where Morin has received word this would be permitted. Ecchellensis arrived at the end of 1640. For Ecchellensis's own later autobiographical memoir, see, Mireille Issa and Joseph Moukazel, 'Abraham Ecchellensis Maronite biographie faite par Carlo Cartari', *Tempora* 18 (2007-09), pp. 155-195. On Ecchellensis generally, see, P. J. A. N. Rietbergen, 'A Maronite Mediator between Seventeenth-Century Mediterranean Cultures: Ibrahim al-Hakilani, or Abraham Ecchellense (1605-1664) between Christendom and Islam', *Lias* 16 (1989), pp. 13-41.

included the three attacks on Morin in 1649. This edition was published in the context of a heated debate between Ecchellensis and de Flavigny, caused by de Flavigny's reaction to the Paris Polyglot's preface that, as he explained to Buxtorf II, unjustifiably criticised the Hebrew in order to bolster the Greek and Latin editions.⁵³³ In a series of defences of the Hebrew text de Flavigny restated the case de Muis had made in the previous decade, defending, in Augustinian terms, the 'purity of the Hebrew fount'.⁵³⁴ To this he added a series of *Epistolae* directed against the Paris Polyglot. He criticised the editors, Morin, d'Aquin, and Ecchellensis.⁵³⁵ He rejected the alterations d'Aquin made, which in modifying and attempting to correct and improve the text of the Antwerp Polyglot, had needlessly distorted it.⁵³⁶ Above all, he castigated Ecchellensis's work on the Arabic and Syriac texts, especially Ecchellensis's work on the book of Ruth.⁵³⁷

In his response Ecchellensis wrote that he could not believe de Flavigny's work, which implicitly brought the Vulgate into doubt, had come from a 'Catholic man'.⁵³⁸ Ecchellensis had two chief objectives. First, he restated a Catholic position in defence of the Vulgate: the Vulgate was 'authentic' since it had been declared authentic by the Council of Trent, as the Hebrew had once been authorised by Ezra and the Great Synagogue.⁵³⁹ Second, Ecchellensis reiterated – albeit with less sophistication than Morin – the traditional Catholic critique of the Hebrew text and tradition. The Hebrew text, Ecchellensis argued, had been intentionally distorted by the rabbis, and unintentionally altered by unreliable Jewish copyists.⁵⁴⁰ The late origin of the Hebrew points meant there were an 'infinitude' of small variants throughout the Oriental versions, a point on which the Maronite Ecchellensis argued his familiarity with unpointed Aramaic and Syriac texts gave him an advantage over de Flavigny.⁵⁴¹ Morin's support of the *Critica sacra* was correctly seen as continuing Ecchellensis's argument against the Hebrew text, and for the

⁵³³ BUB, G I 62, Valerian de Flavigny to Johannes Buxtorf II, 12 November 1646, fol. 186^r.

⁵³⁴ Valerian de Flavigny, *Pro sacro-sanctae editionis hebraicae authentica veritate oratio apologetica habita X. Cal. Martij in nouo Franciae auditorio* (Paris: [n. p.], 1646), pp. 3-4.

⁵³⁵ Valerian de Flavigny, *Epistola in quae de ingenti biblicorum opere quod nuper Lutetiae Parisiorum Hebraei, Graeci, Latini, Chaldaei, Samaritani, Syri, & Arabici prodit, ac ei praefixa praefatione* (n. p. [Paris]: n. p., 1646), pp. 9-10. This is henceforth referred to as '*Epistola [prima]*'.

⁵³⁶ Valerian de Flavigny, *Epistolae [prima]* pp. 21-34.

⁵³⁷ De Flavigny, *Epistolae [prima]*, pp. 16-21.

⁵³⁸ Abraham Ecchellensis, *Epistolae apologetica prima* (n. p. [Paris]: n. p., 1647), p. 57. There followed, Abraham Ecchellensis, *Epistola apologetica altera* (n. p. [Paris]: n. p., 1647). Ecchellensis responded here to, De Flavigny, *Pro sacro-sanctae editionis hebraicae authentica veritate*; De Flavigny, *Epistola [prima]*; Valerian de Flavigny, *Epistolae altera in qua iterum de ingenti biblicorum opere septilingui, quod non ita pridem Lutetia Parisiorum prodit* (n. p. [Paris]: n. p. 1646).

⁵³⁹ *Epistolae apologetica prima*, pp. 54-58; Issa and Moukazel, 'Abraham Ecchellensis Maronita biographie', p. 175.

⁵⁴⁰ Ecchellensis, *Epistolae apologetica prima*, pp. 45-48; Issa and Moukazel, 'Abraham Ecchellensis Maronita biographie', p. 175.

⁵⁴¹ Ecchellensis, *Epistolae apologetica prima*, pp. 37-38. See further, Rietbergen, *Power and Religion*, pp. 318-319.

next twenty years the Hebraists of the Collège de France, de Flavigny, Banneret, and d'Auvergne, continued de Muis's correspondence with Buxtorf II in Basel, attempting to coordinate a response to Cappel's work.⁵⁴²

Debate in Catholic circles over the *Critica sacra* arose beyond Paris. News of the *Critica sacra*'s publication had reached Rome, where its apparent threat to Tridentine orthodoxy had clearly caused concern.⁵⁴³ A letter clarifying some aspects of the work's publication had been received from the brothers Dupuy.⁵⁴⁴ The letter explained that Petau had supported the work's application to obtain a privilege, since although it was written by a 'heretic', it contained nothing 'contrary to the Apostolic see'.⁵⁴⁵ Its great accomplishment was that in undermining the Protestants' reverence for the Hebrew text it had provoked extensive disputes amongst them, as Buxtorf II and Boate strove to respond to Cappel's work. The letter also added that the Parisian Hebraists were likewise against the work's publication, illustrating the complex situation in Paris.⁵⁴⁶

In his letter from late 1653, Cardinal Barberini outlined the Romans' concerns to Morin. For all its success against the Protestants, debate in Rome nonetheless centred on whether the *Critica sacra* went against the Council of Trent's decrees, which were the bounds of Catholic orthodoxy that protected against bad translators and those who would edit and publish and scripture without supervision.⁵⁴⁷ The *Critica sacra* threatened to put in private hands decisions about the correction of the sacred text that – especially following Clement VII's edition – were reserved for the Church, and ultimately the Pope, alone.⁵⁴⁸ Barberini's concern clearly applied to Cappel's work, but as Hardy has pointed

⁵⁴² See the letters, BUB, G I 62, fols. 188r-220r.

⁵⁴³ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXI. Francesco Barberini to Jean Morin, [n. d.], p. 427. This letter is undated but must predate 25 November 1653, which is the date of Morin's reply. See, BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, fol. 76v. As Hardy has also pointed out, '*Ars critica*', p. 216, this letter is misdated in Simon's edition as 1 December 1653, see, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXII. Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, [25 November 1653], p. 445. The two letters do differ in places, but I will refer to the edition published by Simon except in cases where the differences are significant. There is an additional third version of Morin's letter, BAV, Barb. Lat. 3150, fols. 477r-486r, which was the version prepared for the Roman censors and has only minor differences from BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, fols. 73r-76v. My research on Cappel's Roman reception is ongoing.

⁵⁴⁴ BAV, Barb. Lat. 2150, fol. 476r, where it is described as an extract of a letter from 'i signi Puteani di Parigi'. It definitely precedes Barberini's letter to Morin. They wrote, for example, fol. 476r, that they thought Cappel had already died, a point which Barberini repeated to Morin. See, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXI. Francesco Barberini to Jean Morin, [n. d.], p. 429. Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXII. Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, 1 December 1653 [actually, 25 November 1653], p. 431, 'Ludovicus Cappel adhuc vivit annum agens ultra 70; non modo haereticus est sed etiam haereseos Minister & Praedicator, atque in Academia Salmuriensi Hugonotica linguae Hebraicae Professor'.

⁵⁴⁵ BAV, Barb. Lat. 2150, fol. 476r.

⁵⁴⁶ BAV, Barb. Lat. 2150, fol. 476r.

⁵⁴⁷ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXI. Francesco Barberini to Jean Morin, [n. d.], p. 427-428.

⁵⁴⁸ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXI. Francesco Barberini to Jean Morin, [n. d.], p. 428.

out, they could also relate to the arguments of the Parisian Hebraists.⁵⁴⁹ De Muis, for example, had not only interpreted the decision of the Council of Trent to relate only to the Latin versions, but also published his own translations of the Psalms. In Rome, so far removed from heresy, Barberini averred, they still had to take care that not only error, but also undue curiosity and boldness that it could cause it, were kept under control.⁵⁵⁰

Morin's reply defended the *Critica sacra* in Catholic terms. Cappel's work had overturned the Protestants' arguments in favour of the Hebrew text's integrity and stability. In so doing it had overcome a series of significant problems, above all the apparent unanimity of the Hebrew tradition created by the fact that only relatively late Hebrew manuscripts were extant.⁵⁵¹ This meant it had proven Morin's claims in the *Diatriba*: all the other ancient editions had to be considered as witnesses to other ancient Hebrew texts. Faced with this textual instability across all the ancient and modern versions, Morin averred, the Protestants' pillar of faith was destroyed and certainty was only possible under the authority of the Church.⁵⁵²

For Morin, this in no way contravened Trent's decree. There were two senses in which that could be interpreted: either it forbade Catholics from any textual criticism or comparison of the ancient versions, or it ruled out any private individual altering the Clementine Vulgate without Papal authority. The latter was quite out of the question, and even Cappel himself refrained from seeking to change the text of the Bible, preferring to place the variant readings he found in the margins in imitation of the scholarly circumspection and religious veneration of the Masoretes.⁵⁵³ To deny the former, however, and rule out the sort of careful textual criticism ultimately represented by Morin's own work, was to interpret Trent against any number of the sixteenth century's leading Catholic scholars. Bellarmine himself had even outlined the precise circumstances in which it was legitimate to alter the Vulgate on the basis of the other ancient editions.⁵⁵⁴ It was perfectly acceptable to consider variant readings of the other ancient versions and other Latin manuscripts, especially when they contributed to a better understanding of

⁵⁴⁹ Hardy, '*Ars critica*', p. 216.

⁵⁵⁰ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXI. Francesco Barberini to Jean Morin, [n. d.], p. 429.

⁵⁵¹ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXII. Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, [25 November 1653], p. 433.

⁵⁵² Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXII. Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, [25 November 1653], p. 434.

⁵⁵³ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXII. Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, [25 November 1653], pp. 443-445.

⁵⁵⁴ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXII. Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, [25 November 1653], p. 438.

the history of the sacred text.⁵⁵⁵ To think texts could escape the variants caused by their transmission at the hands of human scribes and scholars was to fall prey to a Protestant dogma, which Cappel's *Critica sacra* had decisively overturned.

Morin's interpretation of Cappel's work was a powerful one, and one that prevented it from being put on the *Index librorum prohibitorum*. In Paris and elsewhere in Protestant Europe more generally it was also quite clearly the view taken by the *Critica sacra*'s opponents. Buxtorf II, Boate, Ussher, and the Professors of the Collège de France, read Cappel's work as Morin presented it. In a series of replies these scholars refused to accept that either that Cappel's use of the Septuagint and Samaritan texts, or his 'canon' and the probable readings it gave, provided the certainty necessary for the Hebrew text to remain the secure pillar of their faith. Cappel did not remain silent in the face of this opposition, and in the ensuing years he would attempt to reframe his arguments, replying to Buxtorf II and Ussher in such a way that it began a process whereby the *Critica sacra*'s central insights were integrated into a new Protestant biblical criticism.

⁵⁵⁵ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXXII. Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, [25 November 1653], pp. 440-442.

Chapter 4

The Protestant response to the *Critica sacra*

Having failed to prevent the publication of the *Critica sacra*, Cappel's Protestant detractors knew it would have to be confronted in print. The task was duly taken up, and scholars including Johannes Buxtorf II, Arnold Boate, and James Ussher published extensive replies to the work. The sophistication of these responses has often been underestimated. This is especially true in the cases of Buxtorf II and Ussher. Far from simply repeating time-worn claims about the integrity of the Hebrew text, they advanced a series of learned objections to Cappel's work that should be taken seriously. The points raised by Buxtorf II and Ussher inaugurated the start of a complex process through which scholars integrated the fundamental objective of the *Critica sacra* – the application of the methods of secular and New Testament criticism to the Old Testament – into the confessional setting of historical scholarship on the Old Testament.

I. Johannes Buxtorf II against the *Critica sacra*

1

Johannes Buxtorf II was not among those who had seen a copy of the *Critica sacra* before it was published. What he had received, however, by 1646, was a series of extracts from the work.⁵⁵⁶ These, together with the reports of correspondents such as Rivet and Hottinger, had done enough to persuade him of the threat the work posed. His concerns at the prospect of the *Critica sacra* being published equalled those of his fellow Protestant Professors in Leiden and Zurich, L'Empereur, Golius, and Hottinger. As he put it to Rivet, he 'detested' Cappel's work with 'all his heart', considering it 'sacrilegious rather than sacred' and a danger to sacred philology.⁵⁵⁷ Buxtorf II's reasoning, as he made clear in a letter to the Genevan Theodore Tronchin, echoed that of his father when faced with

⁵⁵⁶ BG, Archives Tronchin 29, Johannes Buxtorf II to Theodore Tronchin, 14 March 1646, fol. 41^r.

⁵⁵⁷ LUB, BPL 285 I, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 12 March 1646, fol. 108^r, 'Ego Criticam illam tota corde abominor, et non pro sacra, sed pro sacrilega habeo'.

Cappel's first work thirty years earlier: if Cappel's appeal to the value of variant readings was granted, how could the 'word of God have any certainty?'⁵⁵⁸

Buxtorf II did not wait for the *Critica sacra*'s publication to issue his first criticism. This came in a chapter of his *Tractatus de punctorum, vocalium, et accentuum, in libris Veteris Testamenti Hebraicis, origine, antiquitate, et auctoritate* (1648).⁵⁵⁹ This work was presented as a comprehensive refutation of Cappel's *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*. Its origin, however, was quite different. Buxtorf II had considered it a logical step, following the completion of his *Dissertationes philologico-theologicae*, to deal in the same way with the question of the age of the Hebrew vowel points.⁵⁶⁰ As he outlined to Rivet in early 1645, his main objective would be to put forward the evidence for the antiquity of the vowel points that could be gleaned from Jewish sources. His targets were broad, and he indicated the work was directed against the authority of Scaliger as much as Cappel.⁵⁶¹ Buxtorf II's plans changed in the late summer of 1645 when – having learned of Cappel's critique of his work in the *Diatriba, de veris et antiquis Ebraeorum literis*, and, just as importantly, received a copy from Hottinger of Cappel's recent letter that threatened to 'overturn' the principles of Protestant *philologia sacra* – he transformed the projected volume into a full-blown refutation of the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*.⁵⁶²

Divided in two parts, Buxtorf II's *Tractatus de punctorum origine* first rejected each of Cappel's arguments in favour of the vowel points' post-500 CE origin, from authority, history, grammar, and theology, and then restated the case his father had made in *Tiberias* for their invention by Ezra and the men of the Great Synagogue. Underlying Buxtorf II's work was the same 'theological' principle as held by his father: the unique status of the sacred word demanded that the vowel points were endowed with divine authority.⁵⁶³ It

⁵⁵⁸ BG, Tronchin 29, Johannes Buxtorf II to Theodore Tronchin, 14 March 1646, fol. 41r, 'Si ita sit ... quam Verbi Dei certitudinem habemur?'

⁵⁵⁹ The work had been encouraged by André Rivet and Friedrich Spanheim and was subsequently dedicated to them. See, LUB, BPL 285 I, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 1 September 1645, fol. 107r. Hereafter referred to as '*Tractatus de punctorum origine*'.

⁵⁶⁰ LUB, BPL 285 I, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 1 April 1644, fol. 103r.

⁵⁶¹ LUB, BPL 285 I, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 1 September 1644, fol. 104r. For indications of the plan of the work, see, LUB, BPL 285 I, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 15 February 1645, fol. 105r; LUB, BPL 285 I, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 12 March 1645, fol. 106r.

⁵⁶² LUB, BPL 285 I, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 1 September 1645, fol. 107r. See also, Johannes Buxtorf II, *Anticritica: seu vindicatio veritatis hebraicae: adversus Ludovici Cappelli criticam quam vocat sacram, eiusque defensionem* (Basel: Ludwig König, 1653), p. 10.

⁵⁶³ Johannes Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum, vocalium, et accentuum, in libris veteris testamenti hebraicis, origine, antiquitate, & auctoritate: Oppositus Arcano punctuationis revelato Ludovici Cappelli* (Basel: Ludwig König, 1648) p. 419.

was only the authority of Ezra and the Great Synagogue that vouchsafed revelation by providing a link for the secure transmission of earlier oral traditions.⁵⁶⁴

Although Buxtorf II's work refuted Cappel's point-by-point, the extensive series of arguments from authority, history, and grammar, restated the positions of his father's *Tiberias*. These included such arguments as: all the Jewish sources, with the exception of Levita, argued for the point's antiquity, the 'greater part' of them agreeing in their Ezran origin; the history of Jewish learning following the destruction of the Second Temple only indicated the great demise of Jewish learning in Palestine at the moment Cappel claimed the points were invented; the later Masoretes were only responsible for the Masorah, counting and compiling the text's essential 'fence', not the invention of the vowel points; the *Zohar*, according to both an ancient work, evidently mentioned their existence; the men of the Great Synagogue knew Aramaic, so the Aramaic terms used to describe the vowel points and accents revealed little of their origin.⁵⁶⁵ As in *Tiberias*, so in the *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, the centre of these arguments was a unifying historical thesis: Jewish learning had reached a zenith in the era of Ezra and the Great Synagogue, and subsequently what marked the Jewish tradition was the dedication with which this heritage had been adhered to and preserved.

Where Buxtorf II had to go beyond his father's work was when it came to the implications of Cappel's arguments, specifically in light of the use to which Cappel would put them in the *Critica sacra*. Buxtorf had known the Septuagint and other ancient versions posed some problems for his arguments. He avoided dealing with these at length, simply stating that it was inconceivable one could prefer the *rivulae* to the *fons*.⁵⁶⁶ For Buxtorf II this problem could not be ignored. Writing in the mid-1640s he could appreciate how closely Cappel's understanding of the history of the ancient versions was linked to his work on the vowel points. Further, he was aware that the *Critica sacra* would develop this account to justify using the ancient translations' variant readings and critical conjecture to suggest alternatives to the Masoretic Hebrew text.⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶⁴ Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, p. 362, and *passim* pp. 211-233.

⁵⁶⁵ The following references indicate where Buxtorf made the case in *Tiberias* and the subsequent reiteration by Buxtorf II in the *Tractatus de punctorum origine*: Buxtorf, *Tiberias*, pp. 129-9, 28-30, 49, 74-5, 90, 74; Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, pp. 313-5 and 318; 376-79; 339; 68-69; 192-3; 335 and 363-4.

⁵⁶⁶ Buxtorf, *Tiberias*, p. 91.

⁵⁶⁷ This, indeed, was a central theme of the extracts Buxtorf II had been sent, which he transcribed in part in his letter to Theodore Tronchin, and then printed more extensively in the *Tractatus de punctorum origine*. See, BG, Tronchin 29, Johannes Buxtorf II to Theodore Tronchin, 14 March 1646, fol. 41^r. Printed in Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, pp. 278-9, beginning at line 23, 'Textum hodiernum Hebraeum' and running to p. 279, line 6, although the copy sent to Tronchin gives the final section in abbreviated form. It is unclear from whom Buxtorf II obtained the specimen. He states in the letter he received it from a friend who had been sent a copy, which makes Hottinger a possible source. The other italicised quotations

Buxtorf II did not appeal to an unsophisticated belief in the integrity of the *textus receptus*. He insisted that he did not suppose the Hebrew text as it stood was identical to the autographs of Moses and the Prophets, or that no small faults could have entered the text.⁵⁶⁸ He could not agree with Sanctes Pagninus who had been among those to claim that in the Hebrew text one would not find a single error.⁵⁶⁹ The Hebrew tradition, indeed the pages of the Hebrew Bible itself, readily acknowledged this in the *ketiv-qeri* variant readings (which Buxtorf II thought originated in the critical comparison of manuscripts), the disputes between 'Western' and 'Eastern' scholars and between ben Asher and ben Neftali, and the esteem given to 'correct' codices, some of which, such as Codex Hillel, had won widespread fame.⁵⁷⁰

Buxtorf II instead developed in rudimentary form the two key lines of argument Protestant scholars would deploy against Cappel's work. First, he denied that the other ancient versions provided either authoritative or reliable alternatives to the Hebrew. Second, he argued that the Hebrew text had been transmitted with an unparalleled level of stability in comparison to all other texts. The key text in the first argument was the Septuagint. Buxtorf II proposed a variety of historical and text-critical reasons to undermine any sense in which the Septuagint could be thought to offer an alternative to the Hebrew. He emphasised the uncertainties concerning the Septuagint's *Vorlage*, rehearsing, without endorsing, Azariah de' Rossi's claim that it had been made from an Aramaic Targum.⁵⁷¹ The uncertainty of the text's origin was reflected in the vagaries of its transmission. The errors present in the text today were only underlined by the repeated ancient attempts to make new – and more accurate – translations.⁵⁷²

One line of argument on which Buxtorf II put special emphasis accepted Cappel's account of the origin of the Septuagint, but attempted to use that account to undermine the Septuagint's significance. Buxtorf II argued that since pointed and unpointed Hebrew texts had both existed at the time the Septuagint was translated, the

for Cappel's argument Buxtorf II reproduces in the *Tractatus de punctorum origine* were undoubtedly part of the same set of extracts, with the exception of some quotations from the *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*.

⁵⁶⁸ Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, p. 281, 'Neque enim existimo tales esse, ut in nullo plane punctulo, apiculo, aut literula, a primis Moses & Prophetarum autographis, apographa unquam discesserint, aut nullum omnino vitium vel levissimum in eos irreperit'.

⁵⁶⁹ Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, p. 281.

⁵⁷⁰ Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, pp. 281-282. For further on each of these, see, Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-critical edition*, pp. 183-86, 197-240, 241-286; Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, §92-110, 153-58.

⁵⁷¹ Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, pp. 126-33. On de' Rossi's views, see especially Joanna Weinberg, 'Azariah de' Rossi and Septuagint traditions', pp. 7-35. Buxtorf II distanced himself, however, from de' Rossi's argument in his later *Anticritica*. See, Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, p. 552, where Buxtorf II ruled that they did not translate from an Aramaic paraphrase but may have been able to consult one if necessary.

⁵⁷² Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, pp. 122-5, 290-91.

most probable explanation of differences between it and the Hebrew text was the Septuagint's translators had used one without points. This meant Buxtorf II could accede to Cappel's basic thesis for the origin of the translation, an unpointed Hebrew text, but avoid the consequences Cappel drew, as it was consequently inferior to ancient pointed texts.⁵⁷³ The differences between the two texts were rooted in the specific choices made by the translators: the Septuagint was not a reliable guide to the Hebrew text it was based on.⁵⁷⁴

Denying that it was possible to work back from an ancient translation to variant readings of an ancient Hebrew *Vorlage* allowed Buxtorf II to pivot to his second major point. If such a degree of variation had ever existed, why was there no evidence from within the Hebrew tradition?⁵⁷⁵ Any such would have had to have existed before or after the Masoretes. In the case of the former, Cappel could not provide a single quotation from the Talmud, Midrashim, or ancient Cabbalistic works that demonstrated the sort of textual instability he claimed, while, in that of the latter, no such variation could have possibly entered the text following the completion of the Masoretic apparatus.⁵⁷⁶ Cappel, Buxtorf II averred, had no response to the consistency of the Hebrew tradition. Concluding his case Buxtorf II culled quotations from Jewish sources that warned against modifying the text or the risks involved in applying human conjecture to the divine word, finishing with Siméon de Muis's resounding conclusion in favour of the certainty of the Hebrew text of the Bible.⁵⁷⁷

2

As Cappel later told Rivet, he could not believe Buxtorf II had published a response to a work he had not even read, especially without giving him the chance to defend himself in advance.⁵⁷⁸ This alone justified him penning a response. Other developments meant the matter was even more pressing. In 1647 and 1648 the controversy over the theological ideas of Cappel's colleagues in Saumur, Moïse Amyraut and Josué de la Place, had also

⁵⁷³ Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, p. 119.

⁵⁷⁴ Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, pp. 118-9.

⁵⁷⁵ Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, pp. 283-84.

⁵⁷⁶ Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, pp. 284.

⁵⁷⁷ Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, pp. 295-303. The quotation from de Muis, pp. 302-3, could have been taken from either the preface to his edition of the Psalms or the reprint of the same text in his first reply to Morin. See, de Muis, 'De hebraicae editionis autoritate ac veritate', pp. 19-20; de Muis, *Assertio veritatis hebraicae*, pp. 63-67.

⁵⁷⁸ LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 3 June 1650, fol. 42^r.

come to a head, as Pierre Du Moulin, Friedrich Spanheim, and Antoine Garrissoules, among others, published tracts against them.⁵⁷⁹ The conflict between Buxtorf II and Cappel had become one part of a broader dispute over Saumur's Academy that divided scholars and theologians throughout Reformed Europe.⁵⁸⁰ As Cappel pitied the fortunes of 'poor Saumur', attacked on all sides, so Buxtorf II pledged he would do his part in the struggle against them.⁵⁸¹ While the *Critica sacra* was being printed in Paris Cappel wrote a systematic critique of Buxtorf II's attack on his work in the *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, finishing it in time for the 'Iusta defensio' to be included in the *Critica sacra*'s appendices.⁵⁸²

Cappel seized on Buxtorf II's acknowledgement that the Hebrew text had changed over time. It was precisely this point, Cappel emphasised, that he had laboured over in the *Critica sacra*, attempting to persuade the 'common' theologians who regarded any such claim as impious.⁵⁸³ This basic agreement was the foundation of Cappel's defence of his project. The challenge was to persuade Buxtorf II that if one accepted this point, then the arguments of the *Critica sacra* necessarily followed: lacking Mosaic or Ezran autographs Protestant scholars had to use all the available versions, and in places critical conjecture, to emend those places where the sense of the Hebrew text could be shown to be inadequate, or the alternative versions superior, in light of his canon.⁵⁸⁴

Cappel began by outlining the common ground between his and Buxtorf II's assessment of the stability of the textual tradition of the Hebrew Bible. He did not claim that the Hebrew text had been subject to any substantial alterations or corruptions or that the most frequent variants were anything other than minor changes.⁵⁸⁵ It was true, he admitted, they differed over the extent of these variants. Where Buxtorf II held they were so minor as to never change the sense of the text, Cappel argued that such a

⁵⁷⁹ See, F. P. van Stam, *The controversy over the theology of Saumur, 1635-1650. Disrupting debates among the Huguenots in complicated circumstances* (Amsterdam & Maarssen: APA-Holland University Press, 1988), pp. 355-376.

⁵⁸⁰ See, for example, BUB, G I 58, Johann Heinrich Hottinger to Johannes Buxtorf II, 20 August 1648, fol. 331r, writing against the 'three false hypotheses' from Saumur.

⁵⁸¹ LUB, BPL 300, Louis Cappel to André Rivet, 30 July 1648, fol. 38r, 'Au reste, on nous court sur de tous costes, M^r. du M[oulin] d'un part, M^r. Sp[anheim] d'une autre, M^r. votre frere d'une autre, M^r. Garris[oules] d'une autre, M^r. Buxt[orff II] d'une autre, tanquam agmine facto, pour opprimer le povre Saumur'. For Buxtorf II's view, see, LUB, BPL 285 I, Johannes Buxtorf II to André Rivet, 3 September 1649, fol. 109r.

⁵⁸² Louis Cappel, 'Criticae adversus iniustum censorem iusta defensio', in his, *Critica sacra*, pp. 559-650. Following this Cappel did at length mount an even more extensive rejoinder on the subject of the vowel points that would, however, only be published posthumously in Amsterdam in 1689.

⁵⁸³ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 561.

⁵⁸⁴ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', pp. 561-3.

⁵⁸⁵ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', pp. 564-5.

position was untenable since he had demonstrated the contrary. He allowed only that the sense of passages relating to 'faith and religion' stood unaltered.⁵⁸⁶

What Buxtorf II had failed to grasp was the origin of this relative consensus. It was not the result of the text's pristine transmission from Ezra and the Great Synagogue. According to Cappel, the accuracy of Jewish scribes had changed over time and only in much later periods had increased Jewish diligence and expertise minimised the number of variant readings.⁵⁸⁷ This was based on the historical argument Cappel set out in the *Critica sacra*. The crucial event was Antiochus IV Epiphanes' despoliation of the Second Temple. As a reaction to his desecration of the Scriptures the Jews were imbued with a new reverence to diligently maintain the Hebrew text, whose results were seen in the more extensive disparities between the Septuagint, based on a pre-Antiochene Hebrew text, and all the subsequent versions based on post-Antiochene Hebrew manuscripts.⁵⁸⁸ The history of the post-Antiochene Hebrew text was one of increasing textual stability, a process that could be glimpsed indirectly by comparing it with the other ancient Greek translations, Aramaic paraphrases, and the Vulgate. The culmination of this process was with the Masoretic scholars, who had finally stabilised the Hebrew text.⁵⁸⁹ Once one grasped this Buxtorf II's appeal for evidence of textual variation from within the Hebrew tradition was misplaced.⁵⁹⁰ Since that tradition was indelibly marked by the Masoretic reformation, all the other ancient versions had to be considered as so many iterations of different Hebrew texts. It was only in this way, Cappel put it, that one could think correctly about the difference between the original Hebrew archetype considered 'in itself' and contemporary Hebrew manuscripts.⁵⁹¹

Cappel justified his critical method as a fundamentally Protestant endeavour. Like Buxtorf II he maintained the priority and centrality of the Hebrew text, but did so without succumbing to what he saw as a mistaken, even slavish, adherence to 'today's Jewish text'.⁵⁹² He did not mean to imply that any other version could be preferred to the contemporary Hebrew text. It was the version divine providence had transmitted to the present day and provided the basis and foundation on which the examination of variants began. What it did not equate to was the Hebrew text as it had once existed, which was

⁵⁸⁶ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 566.

⁵⁸⁷ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 565.

⁵⁸⁸ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 565.

⁵⁸⁹ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', see, on the versions, pp. 565, 569-70, and on the role of the Masoretes, p. 579.

⁵⁹⁰ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', pp. 569-70.

⁵⁹¹ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 603, 'Verum aliud est ipse authenticus textus Hebraeus in se consideratus, aliud hodiernus codex Iudaicus'.

⁵⁹² Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', p. 571.

precisely what Cappel would employ the methods of secular and New Testament criticism to reach. Cappel explained how his proposal for a new edition of the Bible met the demands of his method: having the current Hebrew text printed as it stood, surrounded by alternative readings in the margins, meant one could begin to work back to that original Hebrew archetype.⁵⁹³

3

The polemic was now in full swing. Buxtorf II's contacts in Paris and Geneva kept him updated on the progress of the *Critica sacra* through the press and he knew before he obtained a copy that Cappel had responded to him.⁵⁹⁴ As soon as Buxtorf II received the work he began to compose his reply, rapidly completing the *Anticritica, seu Vindiciae veritatis hebraicae* (1653). In the *Anticritica* Buxtorf II did not, as he explained to Ussher, attempt to refute Cappel point-by-point, as Cappel had done in the 'Iusta defensio'.⁵⁹⁵ This would have rendered the work interminably long, and involved needless repetition.⁵⁹⁶ Instead, he divided it into two parts. The first refuted the 'general foundations' of Cappel's method, as outlined in the 'Iusta defensio'. The second provided a systematic examination of all the possible types of variant readings Cappel discussed, revealing the 'vanity' of Cappel's claims that the other ancient versions presented legitimate alternatives to the Hebrew.⁵⁹⁷

Buxtorf II's response to Cappel reiterated, and then worked through the implications of, the two key arguments presented *in nuce* in the *Tractatus de punctorum origine*. First, Buxtorf II argued that it was impossible to work back from the ancient versions to putative manuscripts of the Hebrew text. Underlying this claim was his abiding concern for the divine authority of the Hebrew text and the level of certainty required to alter it: as in the case of the vowel points, Cappel was arguing for a degree of

⁵⁹³ Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', pp. 602, 605-7.

⁵⁹⁴ ZZB, F 51, Johannes Buxtorf II to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 13 March 1650, fol. 246^r.

⁵⁹⁵ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §604. Johannes Buxtorf II to James Ussher, 6 November 1652, p. 1060. Buxtorf II had earlier outlined the same to Arnold Boate, who felt the method Buxtorf II proposed would not be sufficient to provide a full refutation of Cappel's work. See, Boran, ed., *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §579. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 15/25 March 1651, pp. 997-998.

⁵⁹⁶ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §604. Johannes Buxtorf II to James Ussher, 6 November 1652, pp. 1160-61.

⁵⁹⁷ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §604. Johannes Buxtorf II to James Ussher, 6 November 1652, pp. 1160-61.

merely human reasoning that could not be permitted in the context of divine Scripture.⁵⁹⁸ Buxtorf II broke new ground justifying this claim in literary-critical terms. He enumerated a litany of reasons to show that apparent differences between the Hebrew text and the other ancient versions depended on the translators. These ranged from the claim that the translator(s) had translated for sense, rather than word-for-word, to those that the translator(s) had taken too much liberty with the text, were too inexperienced to translate reliably, or had simply been negligent in their work.⁵⁹⁹ The result was that the ancient versions could not be considered alternative Hebrew texts in the way Cappel claimed.

The counterpart to Buxtorf II's critical arguments was his alternative account of the history of the Hebrew Bible. Buxtorf II adamantly denied that the actions of Antiochus IV Epiphanes had inaugurated any shift in Jewish attitudes towards Scripture.⁶⁰⁰ Buxtorf II stood by the account his father had presented in *Tiberias*. Ezra and the men of the Great Synagogue were exemplary critics, who had diligently re-established and fixed the text of the Hebrew Bible, giving it the form it would subsequently be kept in by generations of Jewish scholars.⁶⁰¹ This completely ruled out Cappel's claims regarding the differences between the Septuagint and the Hebrew text. It was inconceivable that in the short period between the Great Synagogue and the Septuagint's translation a great number of variant readings could have been created within the Hebrew textual tradition.⁶⁰² Adding this to Cappel's own admission that the Jews had been diligent custodians of the text in the Common Era, Buxtorf II had little doubt that the Hebrew Bible's textual history was without parallel: it could not be dealt with in the way Cappel claimed since it had a unique history.⁶⁰³ His ringing condemnations of Cappel's use of the adjectives 'today's', 'Jewish' or 'Masoretic' to describe the Hebrew text, and with them the implicit disavowal of the continuity and unanimity of the Hebrew text since Ezra, was his most emblematic point.⁶⁰⁴

His account of the history of the Hebrew text established, however, Buxtorf II was willing to admit there were minor variant readings within the Hebrew tradition. Buxtorf II also allowed that some of these could even meet Cappel's own definition of a

⁵⁹⁸ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 323-325, for a series of Cappel's 'dangerous' claims on this score.

⁵⁹⁹ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 68-74.

⁶⁰⁰ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 92-3.

⁶⁰¹ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, p. 92.

⁶⁰² Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 93, 118-19.

⁶⁰³ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 121-125.

⁶⁰⁴ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, p. 157.

'double' literal sense.⁶⁰⁵ Further, he pointedly rebuked Cappel for implying that he supposed Hebrew scribes never erred.⁶⁰⁶ As Buxtorf II developed his argument, it became clear that his considered position did not simply reiterate that of earlier Protestant scholars. To take one notable example, it meant he implicitly disagreed with his own father's claims to the contrary. In his 1618 edition of the *Biblia Rabbinica* Buxtorf reprinted without change the consonantal text of the 1546-8 edition.⁶⁰⁷ As Buxtorf made plain in the introduction, the text could not have been improved by manuscript collation: the text stood as the 'most ancient and most true' down to the smallest point and only an impious man would 'add, remove, or change anything in any way'.⁶⁰⁸ The contrast with Buxtorf II is vivid. In the *Anticritica* Buxtorf II put it to Cappel that should anyone find any legitimate variant reading or error in the received text he would not only be willing to put it in the margin but even emend the text itself.⁶⁰⁹ This was no hypothetical ploy, it simply depended on Cappel reporting an alternative reading drawn from a Hebrew manuscript.⁶¹⁰

Buxtorf II's position in the *Anticritica*, and the way in which he departed from what has come to stand as the position of Reformed orthodoxy, provides one indication of the deep shifts that had begun to occur in seventeenth-century biblical criticism. To inaugurate this change in Protestant scholarship Buxtorf II was as much indebted to Jewish as Christian scholarship. The critical and editorial practices he advocated reflected an established tradition of Jewish attitudes towards the text. Chief among these was Jacob ben Chaim's introduction to his edition of Bomberg's *Biblia Rabbinica*. As Jacob ben Chaim put it, the task was not to rely on conjecture, but to examine two or three manuscripts, following them where they agreed, and choosing, where they differed, the readings that appeared most clear and correct.⁶¹¹ Buxtorf II's position in the *Anticritica* represented a post-Cappel extension of Jacob ben Chaim's views. As Buxtorf II put it: he

⁶⁰⁵ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, p. 215.

⁶⁰⁶ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 268-9, 284.

⁶⁰⁷ On this, see Burnett, *From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies*, pp. 172-176.

⁶⁰⁸ Johannes Buxtorf I, ed., *Biblia sacra hebraica & chaldaica cum masora ... ac selectissimis hebraeorum interpretum commentariis* (Basel: Ludwig König, 1618), unpaginated preface, [fol. 1^r], 'Textum Hebraeum in antiquissima & verissima sua puritate & substantia, in minimo etiam apice, reliquimus. Impius enim, quisquis ei aliquid vel addiderit vel detraxerit, aut quovis modo in eo quid mutaverit'. See also, Burnett, *From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies*, p. 174.

⁶⁰⁹ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 284-287.

⁶¹⁰ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, p. 284, and, more generally, pp. 268-300.

⁶¹¹ Jacob ben Chaim ibn Adonijah, *Introduction to the Rabbinic Bible*, ed. Christian D. Ginsburg (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 2nd Ed., 1867), p. 39.

fully accepted Cappel's critical appraisal of how to judge variant readings, differing only in his demand that they could only be sought in Hebrew sources.⁶¹²

Buxtorf II's understanding of the manuscript traditions of the Hebrew Bible was also formed on the basis of more recent Jewish scholarship. In mid-1649 Buxtorf II had had one of his correspondents, Christian Friedrich Crocius, seek out a number of books for him in Italy.⁶¹³ From Venice, Crocius replied that he had located one of those on Buxtorf II's list.⁶¹⁴ This work was little less than the seventeenth century's most important published work of Jewish biblical scholarship, the treatise *Or Torah*, one of ten pieces by Menachem di Lonzano published together under the title *Shtei Yadot* in Venice in 1618.⁶¹⁵ *Or Torah* was the result of Lonzano's extensive travels throughout the Ottoman Empire, during which time he collated 'ancient' codices held by Jewish communities in Jerusalem, Damascus, and Aleppo. Although Lonzano's work continued the late-medieval genre of collections of Masoretic readings, represented above all by R. Meir Abulafia's *Masoret Seyag LaTorah*, it also represented, as Dunkelgrün has recently shown, the transformation of this tradition in the age of print.⁶¹⁶ Rather than solely working with manuscripts, Lonzano undertook his collation of the text of the Pentateuch using two printed editions of Jacob ben Chaim's version, the 1544 quarto and 1548 Rabbinic Bible.⁶¹⁷ The consequences of Lonzano's choice were twofold. First, it established Jacob ben Chaim's text as the text by which to gather variant readings. Second, in listing such a series of variant readings, Lonzano implicitly undermined the pretension of Jacob ben Chaim's text to present the definitive edition of the Masoretic tradition.⁶¹⁸

⁶¹² Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 218, 833-34.

⁶¹³ See the quotation from Crocius's letter in, M. Kayserling, 'Richelieu, Buxtorf Père et Fils, Jacob Roman. Documents pour servir à l'histoire du commerce de la librairie juive au XVII^e siècle', *Revue des études juives* 8 (1884), p. 80.

⁶¹⁴ Kayserling, 'Richelieu, Buxtorf Père et Fils, Jacob Roman', p. 80.

⁶¹⁵ On Lonzano generally, see, María Teresa Ortega Monasterio, *Texto Hebreo Bíblico de Sefared en el Or Torah de Menahem de Lonzano* (Madrid: CSIC, 1980); M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, 'Foundations of Biblical Philology', esp. pp. 84-6; J. Penkower, 'R. Menachem di Lonzano's "Or Torah": editions of the work and editions of the Bible edited on the base of it (1618-2010) [Hebrew]', *Italia* 21 (2012), pp. 33-89, I am very grateful to Theodor Dunkelgrün for sending me a copy of this article; Jordan S. Penkower, *Masorah and Text Criticism in the Early Modern Mediterranean. Moses ibn Zabara and Menahem de Lonzano* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2014). The major unpublished work from this period was Jedidiah Solomon ben Abraham Norzi's *Minḥat Shai*, which was only published in the eighteenth century. See, Goshen-Gottstein, 'Foundations of Biblical Philology', pp. 84-85; Jordan S. Penkower, 'The First Printed Edition of Norzi's Introduction to *Minḥat Shai*: Pisa 1819', *Quntres: An Online Journal of the History, Culture, and Art of the Jewish Book* 1 (2009), pp. 9-22.

⁶¹⁶ Theodor Dunkelgrün, "Never Printed Like This Before". *Johannes Leusden, Joseph Athias, and the Hebrew Bible (1659-1667)* (Amsterdam: Menasseh ben Israel Instituut, 2014), p. 68.

⁶¹⁷ Menahem di Lonzano, *Or Torah*, in his *Shtei yadot* (Venice: 1618), fol. 3^r.

⁶¹⁸ On both these points, see, Dunkelgrün, "Never Printed Like This Before", p. 68.

Buxtorf II was not the first Christian scholar to draw on Lonzano's work, as none other than Jean Morin had made extensive use of the *Or Torah* in his *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*. Buxtorf II and Morin's recourse to Lonzano's work could hardly have been more different. Morin took up Lonzano's detailed references to different readings across Hebrew manuscripts as so much additional evidence against the reliability of Hebrew manuscripts and the Hebrew textual tradition. A recent Jewish authority provided a further patina of legitimacy to his claims.⁶¹⁹ For Buxtorf II, Lonzano's work confirmed his underlying thesis and presented a programme for future scholars. In the first case, the sorts of detailed collations of minor textual variants Lonzano had undertaken proved the underlying reliability of the text as a whole.⁶²⁰ In the second, Buxtorf II hailed Lonzano's work towards critically improving the Hebrew text, and called on contemporary scholars to imitate his example.⁶²¹

Buxtorf II's appreciation of Lonzano's work, and its contribution to his own understanding of the Hebrew text, helps to crystallise the differences between him and Cappel. Buxtorf II's call to collate manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible for minute textual variants was based on a thoroughgoing sense of the antiquity and authority of the Masoretic tradition that was completely at odds with Cappel's attempt to use criticism to reach a pre-Masoretic Hebrew archetype. Cappel's failure to seek out additional manuscript evidence was only one of the most glaring aspects of a much deeper division between the two that extended to the whole of the Jewish scholarly tradition. Buxtorf II argued that – since Cappel's work had no manuscript collations – the part he thought most promising was the section on variants drawn from Jewish post-biblical works.⁶²² There he was only disappointed: Cappel had apparently had little time – or available resources – to do the work required. He had himself noted such variants in the course of his own work, but they related almost entirely to differences in relatively minor matters of orthography, often only regarding full or defective readings.⁶²³

The stark contrast between Buxtorf II and Cappel was epitomised in their respective visions of how the biblical text should be edited. Both would begin with the Protestant *textus receptus*, the text of the 1525 *Biblia Rabbinica*. According to Cappel this text would then be surrounded with variant readings placed in the margins, to which one

⁶¹⁹ See, for example, Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae*, p. 347.

⁶²⁰ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 833-4. Not also that Buxtorf II supposed the same lessons could be drawn from Jacob ben Chaim's work.

⁶²¹ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, p. 202.

⁶²² Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, p. 806.

⁶²³ Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 808-809.

could then apply his canon. Beginning with the same text Buxtorf II would instead have edited it according to the best readings found in available, and authoritative, Hebrew manuscripts. It is much to be regretted that in both cases these designs went unfulfilled. Cappel never would begin work on such an edition, and Buxtorf II never published a new edition of the Hebrew Bible.

What has hitherto been overlooked is that Buxtorf II did begin work on such a project. The evidence in support of this is fragmentary, yet suggestive. Responding to John Owen in the *Considerator considerator* (1659) Brian Walton declared that should Owen require proof of the diverse variant readings in the Hebrew text, he should look no further than Buxtorf II's *Anticritica*.⁶²⁴ Furthermore, Walton reported, Buxtorf II's most recent letters promised even surer proof, since they revealed Buxtorf II was working on his very own 'Critica sacra', a collection and study of variant readings based on a number of Hebrew manuscripts.⁶²⁵ Walton detailed the prospectus of the work, which included a whole section on how to emend a new edition of the Hebrew text.⁶²⁶ This, Walton outlined, would be appended to Buxtorf II's own edition of the Hebrew Bible. Unfortunately, it is still unclear quite what happened to Buxtorf II's Hebrew Bible. Yet, its existence, and the plan for the 'Critica sacra' appended to it, vividly illustrate Buxtorf II's scholarly ambitions.

Rather than a conflict between a pathbreaking textual critic and a traditional Reformed Hebraist the debate between Buxtorf II and Cappel represented two different ways of thinking critically about the text of the Bible. If Buxtorf II ultimately failed to publish his Hebrew Bible and 'Critica sacra', the case he made for a new edition was soon successfully realised in Amsterdam at the press of Joseph Athias. Athias's new editions of the Pentateuch (1659) and then the whole Hebrew Bible (1661) were based on the principles Buxtorf II had elaborated: the collation of Hebrew manuscripts and the study of Jewish scholarship, especially Lonzano's work.⁶²⁷ Johannes Leusden, a Calvinist scholar deeply versed in Buxtorf II's works, prefaced the 1661 edition. Leusden's debt to Buxtorf II was evident in his only extant letter to the Basel Professor. Leusden applauded Buxtorf II for the paths he had opened for subsequent scholars, unabashedly

⁶²⁴ Brian Walton, *The Considerator Considered: Or, A brief view of certain Considerations upon the Biblia Polyglotta, the Prolegomena and Appendix thereof* (London: Thomas Roycroft, 1659), p. 130.

⁶²⁵ Walton, *The Considerator Considered*, p. 131.

⁶²⁶ Walton, *The Considerator Considered*, pp. 131-132.

⁶²⁷ Dunkelgrün, "Never Printed Like This Before", pp. 70-71, 86-89.

declaring that 'I agree with you in virtually all philological questions'.⁶²⁸ Leusden's own 1667 Hebrew Bible, a remarkable combination of Jewish and Christian textual traditions, can also be taken to mark the culmination of Buxtorf II's ambitions, providing an edition of the Hebrew Bible that eventually, via Daniel Ernst Jablonski and Everardus van der Hooght, became the basis for the principal subsequent printings of the Hebrew Bible until the twentieth century.⁶²⁹

For our purposes there is a further lesson here. What the conflict between Buxtorf II and Cappel indicates is that Cappel's defence of his work in the 'Iusta defensio' had to some degree begun to obscure precisely what it was that was at the heart of his critical method. The central point of the *Critica sacra* was to bypass arguments over manuscript evidence, and instead apply the same sort of criticism that had been used in New Testament and secular criticism to the text of the Old Testament. Trying to justify this before his Protestant contemporaries Cappel instead characterised it as using variant readings from the ancient versions as a way of reaching the lost archetypal Hebrew text. This put Cappel in a difficult position: he wanted to use the readings in the ancient versions without conducting the sort of minute historical and philological study of those versions that his contemporaries demanded. In his debate with James Ussher, as we will now see, this even lead Cappel to modify his own method, as the two men began a process whereby the central arguments of the *Critica sacra* were tamed by the confessional demands of Protestant Old Testament scholarship.

II. James Ussher, the Septuagint, and the *Critica sacra*

1

Cappel's staunchest supporters were French Protestants 'north of the Loire'.⁶³⁰ Among the Ministers of Charenton Jean Daillé was a particularly prominent advocate on

⁶²⁸ BUB, G I 59, Johannes Leusden to Johannes Buxtorf II, 22 August 1663, fol. 324r, 'Sententiam tuam in omnibus ferè quaestionibus philologicis approbo'. Dunkelgrün's excellent discussion in "*Never Printed Like This Before*" does not highlight Leusden's specific debts to Buxtorf II.

⁶²⁹ Dunkelgrün, "*Never Printed Like This Before*", pp. 73-75, 92-94.

⁶³⁰ Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré et l'histoire*, pp. 319-20, and for the geography of French Protestantism from which the term originates, pp. 1-8. As Laplanche shows, their defence of Cappel was likewise matched by their support for Amyraut and de la Place. In the 'Iusta defensio' and *Anticritica* Cappel and Buxtorf II both

Cappel's behalf. Having been sent a copy of Buxtorf II's *Tractatus de punctorum origine* by François Turretini, Daillé replied by underlining his doubts regarding Buxtorf II's case. The Basel Professor, Daillé wrote, had more successfully revealed the opinion of the rabbis than the truth of the question.⁶³¹ Following the *Critica sacra*'s publication in 1650, Daillé wrote to Hottinger in Zürich, defending Cappel's work and deploring the tone Buxtorf II and Arnold Boate had used against him.⁶³² Daillé's support for Cappel was matched by that shown by Samuel Bochart, who wrote to Cappel in June 1650 to congratulate him on the publication of the *Critica sacra*. Bochart underlined Cappel's comprehensive defeat of Buxtorf II on the subject of the vowel points, while consoling him that if few of his contemporaries could appreciate the *Critica sacra*, posterity would, in his case as in Jerome's, give him eventual vindication.⁶³³

As Bochart's letter made clear, the opposition to the *Critica sacra* in some Protestant quarters, notably in the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, and Southern France, could be fierce. The publication of Buxtorf II's work, combined with the circumstances of the *Critica sacra*'s publication, had led to a hardening of attitudes against Cappel. Theodore Tronchin, David Le Clerc, Friedrich Spanheim, and André Rivet, among others, all shifted position as the argument developed, and initially relatively impartial or favourable opinions of Cappel turned to disapproval.⁶³⁴ One distinctive

printed letters they had received in support of their respective positions. See, Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', pp. 627-3, 646-7; Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 344-351.

⁶³¹ BG, Ms. Fr. 486, Jean Daillé to François Turretini, 2 September 1647, fol. 109r. Following the *Critica sacra*'s publication, Daillé also sent two further letters attempting to mollify Cappel's Genevan opponents. See, BG, Ms. Fr. 486, Jean Daillé to François Turretini, 4 April 1650, fol. 116r, and BG, Ms. Fr. 486, Jean Daillé to François Turretini, 8 June 1650, fol. 117r.

⁶³² ZZB, Ms. F 53, Jean Daillé to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, Paris 1 January 1651, fol. 106r-v. Cappel would even publish a letter from Daillé in support of his work in his *Epistola apologetica*, written against Boate. See, Cappel, *De critica nuper a se edita*, p. 104, where the reference to the author of the letter was only 'Vir longe doctissimi & excellentissimi Verbi Dei Ministri'. Cappel revealed it was Daillé in his later response to Ussher. See, Louis Cappel, 'De Bootii ad Buxtorfium insana adversus Cappelum appendice', in his *Ad Dn. Iacobi Usserii Armachani Archiepiscopi epistolam Lud. Cappelli responsio* (Saumur: P. Girard, 1653), p. 40. Cappel likewise included a letter from the Rouen Minister Jean-Maximilien de Langle, see, *Epistola apologetica*, pp. 102-4, and *Ad Dn. Iacobi Usserii*, p. 40.

⁶³³ Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. Conrart, vol. XI, Samuel Bochart to Louis Cappel, 13 June 1650, fol. 1204r-v, printed in *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* XI (1863), pp. 54-55.

⁶³⁴ For Theodore Tronchin, see, BUB, G I 64, Theodore Tronchin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 27 July 1647, fol. 66r. David Le Clerc, Professor of Hebrew in Geneva, was taken by François Laplanche to be one of Cappel's supporters in Geneva, see Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, p. 321, where Laplanche affirms this 'without doubt'. This was initially true insofar as Le Clerc had at first supported the work's publication in Geneva. Le Clerc changed his views decisively following the *Critica sacra*'s publication at the hands of the Catholics in Paris. He subsequently declared strongly in favour of Buxtorf II. See, BUB, G I 64, David Le Clerc to Johannes Buxtorf II, 22 October 1650, fol. 541r, and, for Le Clerc's final judgement in favour of the *Anticritica*, BUB, G I 64, David Le Clerc to Johannes Buxtorf II, 3 May 1653, fol. 571r. I am currently preparing a separate study on David Le Clerc. On Friedrich Spanheim, compare his favourable initial reaction to the *Critica sacra*, see above p. 99, with his later support for Buxtorf II. See, Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, p. 347. André Rivet's position was always to some degree ambiguous but it changed from relative neutrality, see above pp. 89-90, to outright opposition. See, Buxtorf II, *Anticritica*, pp. 346-46.

development following the work's publication was the widening of opposition to include theologians such as Gisbert Voetius and Samuel Maresius. Their disapproval of Cappel's work was driven by distinctly theological or polemical concerns, which included the threat it apparently posed to the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture, a sense that Cappel's work was one further component of the purportedly dangerous new theology emanating from Saumur, and the succour Cappel's work apparently gave to the traditional claims of Catholic polemic.⁶³⁵

One of the most persistent opponents of Cappel's work in the period following the *Critica sacra*'s publication was Arnold Boate. Based in Paris from 1644, Boate was an important conduit between Cappel's chief scholarly adversaries, facilitating the exchange of letters and organising and encouraging responses to Cappel's work. His Parisian contacts were not limited to Protestants, extending to the circles of the Cabinet Dupuy and the Hebraists of the Collège Royale, Valerian de Flavigny, Jean Banneret, and Claude d'Auvergne.⁶³⁶ Boate also had a longstanding relationship with Ussher, who had been his patron in Ireland, and for whom he fulfilled a number of services in Paris, which ranged from collating manuscripts to enabling the exchange of letters between Ussher and his European correspondents, notably Buxtorf II.⁶³⁷

Boate can be numbered among those whose view of Cappel's work became increasingly negative in the late 1640s. In a series of letters exchanged with Cappel in the

⁶³⁵ Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, pp. 302-06, 310-313, provides a useful survey of these objections, which I will not cover in detail here. Their existence though should be noted for the long-term reception of Cappel's work, and also since these concerns were also shared by Buxtorf II, Boate, Hottinger, and others. The point I would underline, however, is that there is a clear difference between the objections made by a good number of these – chiefly theologians, based especially the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, notably in the latter case often Lutherans – and the cases put by Buxtorf II, and even more so by Ussher, which have thus far been obscured or overlooked. Both Voetius and Maresius should be singled out: Voetius since he played a notable role encouraging others to reply, including Buxtorf II and Boate; Maresius, since his later opposition to Johannes Leusden's *Biblia Hebraica* demonstrates the sort of biblical scholarship advocated by Buxtorf II and Leusden differed extensively from that held by leading contemporary Reformed theologians, thereby further undermining the idea that this period witnessed an uncomplicated Reformed perspective, one which Buxtorf II's own work has often mistakenly been taken to embody. See, for example, BUB, G I 59, Gisbert Voetius to Johannes Buxtorf II, 30 July 1663, fol. 53^{r-v}; Boran, *Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §584. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 27 August/6 September 1651, p. 1007, who notes he had likewise received a letter from Voet against Cappel. Boate's later response to Cappel and Morin would be dedicated to Voet, see, Arnold Boate, *Vindiciae seu apodixis apologetica, pro hebraica veritate, contra duos novissimos & infensissimos eius hostes Johannem Morinum et Ludovicum Capellum*, London: T. Pullen, 1653, sig. a ij. On Maresius, see, BUB, G I 59, Samuel Maresius to Johannes Buxtorf II, 8/18 January 1653, fol. 133^r. On Maresius's later objections to Leusden, see, Theodore Dunkelgün, "'Like a Blind Man Judging Colors': Joseph Athias and Johannes Leusden defend their 1667 Hebrew Bible", *Studia Rosenthaliana* 44 (2012), esp. pp. 88-97.

⁶³⁶ For examples of Boate's interaction with these Parisian circles, see, for example, Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §536. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 5 March 1648, p. 932; Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §541. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 15/25 April 1648, p. 938. These examples could be multiplied.

⁶³⁷ See, for example, Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §566. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 16/26 September 1650, p. 981.

summer of 1645 he had praised Cappel's *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, admitting it had disproved Buxtorf's *Tiberias*.⁶³⁸ Yet, even at this stage, Boate added a series of caveats that revealed the limited degree to which he could accede to the consequences Cappel had drawn. Boate agreed with Levita's position: the vowel points' post-Talmudic origin did not mean any words were vocalised other than they should be, since the vocalisation of the text followed long-established and impeccably reliable oral traditions. Boate's reply also signaled his reservations regarding Cappel's broader project, warning that if any changes were proposed to the received text, they could only be added on the basis of certain, not merely probable, reasons.⁶³⁹

By 1650 Boate's tempered scepticism had become a dramatic warning, as he insisted nothing could be 'more dangerous' than Cappel's work being made public.⁶⁴⁰ The extent of Boate's opposition to Cappel was shaped by the circumstances of the *Critica sacra*'s publication. As we have seen, in the 1630s Boate had co-authored with Francis Taylor two responses to Morin's work and it was the Oratorian's role in the work's appearance that left him most concerned.⁶⁴¹ Morin's involvement meant Boate saw the publication of Cappel's work entirely through the lens of inter-confessional polemic, as a Catholic attempt to undermine Protestant faith in the Hebrew text's surety.⁶⁴² Such was the level of Catholic support for the *Critica sacra*, Boate emphasised, that he himself had faced a great deal of trouble obtaining permission to print his response.⁶⁴³

In the *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine et authenticia* (1650) Boate demonstrated the degree to which he shared Buxtorf II's views, both on Cappel's work and on the history and status of the biblical text: like Buxtorf II, Boate admitted the Hebrew text as it stood differed from its original, while denying that any changes were more than minor; like Buxtorf II, Boate emphasised throughout the consistent diligence of post-Ezran Jewish scholarship; and like Buxtorf II, Boate argued that apparent variant readings between the ancient translations and the Hebrew text had to be attributed to the

⁶³⁸ Printed in, Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', Arnold Boate to Louis Cappel, July 1645, p. 646, and Arnold Boate to Louis Cappel, August 1645, pp. 646-7. I have found no subsequent comments by Boate that indicate Cappel misrepresented or misquoted these letters.

⁶³⁹ Printed in, Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', in his *Critica sacra*, Arnold Boate to Louis Cappel, August 1645, pp. 646-7. As this letter made clear, p. 647, Boate had not yet read the *Critica sacra*. He did, however, shortly after composing this letter, have the opportunity to see Book IV, Cappel's study of variant readings from the Septuagint. See, Boate, *De Textus Hebraici*, p. 1. As he indicates there, it was only after seeing the whole of the *Critica sacra* that he felt confident to judge the work with certainty.

⁶⁴⁰ BUB, G I 62, Arnold Boate to Johann Buxtorf II, 10 February 1650, 64r.

⁶⁴¹ BUB, G I 62, Arnold Boate to Johann Buxtorf II, 10 February 1650, 64r.

⁶⁴² BUB, G I 62, Arnold Boate to Johann Buxtorf II, 1 November 1650, 67r-v. Boate was especially disappointed that de Flavigny and d'Auvergne had failed in their contest with Morin and Petau to prevail with Chancellor Séguier.

⁶⁴³ BUB, G I 62, Arnold Boate to Johannes Buxtorf II, 1 November 1650, 67r.

translators, rather than to textual instability in the Hebrew tradition.⁶⁴⁴ In some cases Boate added literary-critical observations that were subtler than Buxtorf II's. Boate criticised Cappel's canon on the grounds that it potentially mischaracterised the relationship between an original text and its extant witnesses: far from 'more fitting', the original text may have been obscure or rebarbative.⁶⁴⁵

What distinguished Boate's work from Buxtorf II's was how he responded to the *Critica sacra* as if it had been written in support of Morin's work. Where Buxtorf II considered the application of Cappel's canon by systematically working through all the ancient versions and other sources of variant readings, Boate focused almost entirely on how far the *Critica sacra* favoured the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch at the Hebrew's expense.⁶⁴⁶ Boate avoided extensive discussion of the Samaritan Pentateuch since Hottinger had already proven the worth of Morin's – and therefore Cappel's – claims.⁶⁴⁷ Boate thought it enough to add that he had consulted the Samaritan manuscript kept in Robert Cotton's library, from which he could confirm Hottinger's arguments regarding the number of errors it contained relative to the Hebrew.⁶⁴⁸

The bulk of Boate's work was directed against Cappel's use of the Septuagint. The apparent plausibility Cappel's work had in the case of the other ancient versions, since it appeared they had at least been made from Hebrew manuscripts that more or less resembled the Hebrew text as it stood, disintegrated when it came to the Septuagint. The differences between it and the received Hebrew text were so extensive, Boate argued, that any preference expressed for the Septuagint necessarily meant systematically preferring it instead of the Hebrew text. The thrust of Cappel's work, Boate reasoned, was in this sense identical to Morin's.⁶⁴⁹ Boate deployed a plethora of claims to undermine the Septuagint. These included historical arguments. Boate argued, for example, that the *Letter of Aristeas* only mentioned the Pentateuch so Cappel should restrict himself to those first five books, that there was no evidence the ancient Jews held the Septuagint in high esteem, and that Cappel himself admitted the post-Antiochene Hebrew text had been more reliably transmitted than the Septuagint.⁶⁵⁰ Other literary-critical arguments repeated, specifically with reference to the Septuagint, Buxtorf II's

⁶⁴⁴ Boate, *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine*, see esp. pp. 1-3, 18-20, 33-36. I here refer specifically to Buxtorf II's arguments in the *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, which as we have seen contained in nuce the arguments of the *Anticritica*.

⁶⁴⁵ Boate, *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine*, p. 82.

⁶⁴⁶ Boate, *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine*, esp. pp. 14-18.

⁶⁴⁷ Boate, *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine*, p. 21.

⁶⁴⁸ Boate, *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine*, pp. 21-22.

⁶⁴⁹ Boate, *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine*, pp. 14-15.

⁶⁵⁰ Boate, *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine*, pp. 16-20, 33.

claim that all the variants between an original text and its translation should be attributed to the translator.⁶⁵¹ Boate's response had effectively bypassed the originality of Cappel's work and ultimately misrepresented it. Yet it did so with enough plausibility that it contributed to a perception among some Reformed theologians that the *Critica sacra* had ultimately taken Morin's side, and should be understood as favouring the Septuagint over the Hebrew.⁶⁵²

Cappel's response was not long in coming. In the *Epistola apologetica* he attempted to defuse Boate's most pointed line of attack, and throughout the work distanced himself from Morin. Cappel denied any 'friendship' with Morin, a man he had met on only two occasions.⁶⁵³ More important, he underlined that the *Critica sacra* had been planned and written before he had seen Morin's publications. As a better guide to his sources of inspiration, Cappel insisted, one should consult Johannes Drusius's work on the Hebrew text or Jerome's on the Septuagint.⁶⁵⁴ Where Morin had denigrated the Hebrew text to promote the Septuagint and Vulgate, Cappel reiterated that the central thrust of his work was to understand the Hebrew text.⁶⁵⁵

Responding to Boate's other arguments, Cappel demonstrated the extent of the differences that separated him and Boate, not to mention Buxtorf II. Cappel justified his practice, explaining why, in the context of his work on the vowel points, his Protestant contemporaries should accept his use of probable variant readings for determining the archetypal text of the Hebrew Bible. Buxtorf II and Boate's major critical claim was incorrect: if one studied and analysed the variant readings in the way Cappel proposed then it became clear one could understand why they had arisen, and in providing an explanation of their origin also show the way to improve the text. Further, these could often be traced to scribal mistakes, rather than the caprice of the translators.⁶⁵⁶ What Cappel for now avoided doing, however, precisely because it was inimical to his method, was go any further than the *Critica sacra* and 'Iusta defensio' already had in meeting the historical challenge presented by Boate's letter. He had no desire – or he would argue need – to detail the actual history of the ancient versions he appealed to, since providing

⁶⁵¹ Boate, *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine*, pp. 33-56.

⁶⁵² Boate's next publication also explicitly continued this line of attack, evident even from its very title. See, Boate, *Vindiciae seu apodixis apologetica, pro hebraica veritate, contra duos novissimos & infensissimos eius hostes Johannem Morinum et Ludovicum Capellum*.

⁶⁵³ Cappel, *Epistola apologetica*, p. 28.

⁶⁵⁴ Cappel, *Epistola apologetica*, pp. 29-30.

⁶⁵⁵ Cappel, *Epistola apologetica*, pp. 18-25.

⁶⁵⁶ Cappel, *Epistola apologetica*, pp. 48-50.

they were valid sources of variant readings he had no need to know every fact about their transmission.

2

Boate and Cappel's letters were both addressed to James Ussher. Where Boate opened by underlining his and Ussher's familiarity, discussing the conversation he and Ussher had had in London on the subject of the *Critica sacra* some time earlier, Cappel's did so with a more specific intention, appealing directly to the Prelate and scholar to render a verdict in the dispute between him and Boate.⁶⁵⁷ Both sides considered Ussher's ecclesiastical authority and scholarly credentials made him an impeccable choice. This view was widely shared. Although Buxtorf II thought Cappel impudent in publicly nominating Ussher, he could not condemn the choice. Indeed, writing to Boate he himself called on Ussher to arbitrate the dispute.⁶⁵⁸ Forwarding Buxtorf II's request Boate likewise reiterated it, beseeching Ussher to adjudicate where the truth lay.⁶⁵⁹ Boate had good reason to be confident Ussher would decide in his favour. He had already requested Ussher submit a short letter on the questions at issue, which he had appended to his own reply to Cappel. In the letter Ussher agreed with Boate on the illegitimacy of using the Septuagint or Samaritan Pentateuch to emend the Hebrew.⁶⁶⁰ Cappel evidently knew of this letter before he proposed Ussher's taking up the question, but his respect of the Archbishop's learning and presumed impartiality, and his confidence in his own work, had not stopped him initially proposing the idea, one he repeated in a series of letters he sent to Ussher in 1651.⁶⁶¹

The appeals from Boate, Buxtorf II, and Cappel, were made to Ussher as a scholar who had systematically studied the Bible's different versions and traditions throughout his career. As early as 1607, as his well-known letter to William Eyre shows, Ussher had begun to consider the history of the Septuagint and the question of the antiquity of the Hebrew vowel points. Ussher had been provoked by his critical view of

⁶⁵⁷ Boate, *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine*, p. 1; Cappel, *Epistola apologetica*, pp. 3-4.

⁶⁵⁸ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §584. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 6 September 1651, pp. 1007-8, where Boate gives a quotation from Buxtorf II's letter to him from 2 June 1651.

⁶⁵⁹ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §584. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 6 September 1651, p. 1008.

⁶⁶⁰ Boate, *Epistola de textus hebraici veteris testamenti certitudine*, James Ussher to Arnold Boate, 28 July 1650, sigs. M iij^r-[M iij^r]. This letter was not included in the recent edition of Ussher's correspondence.

⁶⁶¹ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §581. Louis Cappel to James Ussher, 6 August 1651, p. 1005; Boran, *Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §587. Louis Cappel to James Ussher, p. 1011.

Scaliger's willingness to employ conjecture in the study of the Bible. This was, Ussher put it, fine insofar as Virgil was concerned, but hardly appropriate to Scripture.⁶⁶² Eyre's response was no less revealing than Ussher's as to the nature of the problems the two scholars were considering even at this stage, setting out a prospectus for a two-part study of Scripture, the first a prolegomena on the different versions and the second detailing variant readings. As Scott Mandelbrote has shown, in this British context Eyre anticipated that far from undermining the place of the Hebrew, multilingual study might instead support the authority of Scripture by demonstrating the relative similarity of the surviving texts.⁶⁶³

Although Ussher's response to Cappel was his first significant published contribution to biblical criticism, we have already seen him following, and in some cases participating in, the major developments that occurred following 1620. Prompted by Scaliger, Ussher was one of the first to import a copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch into Europe.⁶⁶⁴ Ussher was generous with his manuscripts, using the newly-imported Samaritan text to assist John Selden with biblical chronology.⁶⁶⁵ Ussher was also keenly aware of the confessional implications of these studies. He attempted, first through Selden, and then de Dieu, to win the prize of the first published edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch for the Protestant cause. Above all, as seen in his letter to Patrick Young, Ussher shared Morin's view that the Old Testament had to be understood in terms of its historically-situated manuscript traditions. All this considered, there is little doubt why Boate, Cappel, and Buxtorf II, felt Ussher was an eminently qualified judge.

Ussher's verdict came down squarely against Cappel's case that the variant readings of the Septuagint or Samaritan Pentateuch could be used to emend the

⁶⁶² Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. I, §9. James Ussher to William Eyre, 21 December 1607, pp. 21-22. Hardy, 'Ars critica', p. 63, notes that in so doing Ussher put it that Scaliger 'rarely reached "verisimilitude"', one of the lower standards in the Aristotelian epistemological hierarchy.

⁶⁶³ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. I, §10. William Eyre to James Ussher, 24 March 1607, pp. 35-43. See, Mandelbrote, 'The authority of the Word', pp. 147-8. Ussher would reprint this letter in his reply to Cappel. See, James Ussher, *De Textus Hebraici Veteris Testamenti variantibus lectionibus ad Ludovicum Cappellum Epistola* (London: J. Flesher, 1652), pp. 25-36. Ussher's decision to reprint this letter was in response to Cappel's claim that Eyre had subsequently come to embrace his opinion on the question of the Hebrew vowel points, to which Ussher replied 'how different' the Eyre who wrote to him was from the Eyre that apparently wrote to Cappel. See, Ussher, *De Textus Hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, p. 21. There Ussher also underlined that in contrast to Eyre his position had never changed. For Cappel's printing of extracts from two letters from Eyre, see, Cappel, 'Iusta defensio', William Eyre to Louis Cappel, 15 September 1634, pp. 629-30, and, William Eyre to Louis Cappel, 4 April 1635, pp. 630-32.

⁶⁶⁴ See, Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom*, pp. 78-85, for discussion of this and Ussher's collection of other manuscripts, including a Syriac copy of the Old Testament.

⁶⁶⁵ John Selden, *Marmora Arundelliana* (London: John Bill, 1629), sigs. ¶¶f-§v. For Ussher's assistance, see, Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. I, §190. Ussher to John Selden, [late August?] 1625, p. 326. This included sending Selden transcriptions of Genesis 5 and the chronological information from Genesis 11, for which, see, Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. I, §242, James Ussher to John Selden, 30 November 1627, pp. 403-407.

Hebrew.⁶⁶⁶ Ussher's scepticism regarding the Septuagint was unremitting.⁶⁶⁷ He drew heavily on patristic evidence, outlining how Origen's letter to Julius Africanus revealed the additions and subtractions that had been made to the Greek texts of Job and Esther.⁶⁶⁸ He also appealed to Jerome's testimony: the Septuagint text of Daniel had undergone such changes that the Christian Churches were obliged to replace it with the version translated by Theodotion.⁶⁶⁹ The lesson of these disparities was clear, and Ussher concluded his discussion in words that evoked his early criticism of Scaliger: since the 'Seventy' translators 'play around so much', and add, subtract, and manipulate the text at will, it was simply impossible to work back reliably from it to the Hebrew.⁶⁷⁰

Ussher also provided an outline of an alternative account of the Septuagint's history. According to Ussher, there had once been an accurate translation of the Pentateuch, completed in the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (283-246 BCE). This version had subsequently become confused with a second Greek version, a looser translation of the whole Old Testament made in the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor and Cleopatra (c. 180-145 BCE). This second translation was made by necessity following Antiochus IV Epiphanes' persecution and, Ussher had it, had consequently been made on the basis of the Hebrew text as it stood at that time, rather than the original Hebrew text used by the Seventy.⁶⁷¹ The upshot of Ussher's account was to turn Cappel's own case against himself. As Cappel agreed Antiochus's desecration of the Temple had created a new fervour among the Jews to maintain their Hebrew text, so he now had to admit, Ussher insisted, that any changes between the Greek text and the Hebrew had to be traced to the shortcomings of the Greek's transmission. Ussher's further point was that the Greek text as it stood offered no guide to a pre-180 BCE Hebrew text.⁶⁷²

⁶⁶⁶ Published as, James Ussher, *De textus hebraici veteris testamenti variantibus lectionibus ad Ludovicum Cappellum Epistola* (London: J. Flesher, 1652). This letter has been reprinted with English translation in the recent edition of Ussher's correspondence. See, Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, §599. James Ussher to Louis Cappel, [June?] 1652, pp. 1028-1051.

⁶⁶⁷ A good deal of Ussher's argument repeated some of the comments he had made to Young. See also, Kemke, *Patrick Young*, §148. James Ussher to Patrick Young, 27 August 1629, p. 93.

⁶⁶⁸ Ussher, *De Textus Hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, pp. 8-10.

⁶⁶⁹ Ussher, *De Textus Hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁷⁰ Ussher, *De Textus Hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, pp. 11-12, 'Nam etsi in aliis interpretibus, vel paraphrastis etiam, qui sententiam textus originarii exprimendam sibi proposituerant, ubi eorum codex a nostro variaverit, dignosci aliquando possit: in iis tamen idem praestari posse non est expectandum, quibus tam multa Scripturae, quam transferendam susceperant, *ad libitum* & addere & subducere ludus est'.

⁶⁷¹ Ussher, *De Textus Hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, p. 13.

⁶⁷² Ussher, *De Textus Hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, p. 13.

Ussher's rejection of the Samaritan Pentateuch was based on the same, fundamentally historical, rather than literary critical, reasoning.⁶⁷³ This represented a change of view on Ussher's part. He had initially been impressed by the closeness of the Samaritan and Hebrew text. As he wrote to Selden in 1625, with the exception of 'some few places' the Samaritan agreed with the Hebrew text 'almost in every letter'.⁶⁷⁴ Having seen Morin's exploitation of those differences, Ussher's view of the text rapidly dimmed. As his letter to de Dieu revealed, by June 1633 Ussher held that the 'heresiarch' Dositheus was responsible for the corruption of the Hebrew text at the hands of the Samaritans.⁶⁷⁵

The vital testimony he had discovered, Ussher reported, was in Book 230 of Photius's *Bibliotheca*, where it was stated Dositheus had 'adulterated the Mosaic Pentateuch' with 'countless corruptions'.⁶⁷⁶ Ussher provided two pieces of evidence in support of this claim. First, the changes made to the chronologies of the Patriarchs.⁶⁷⁷ Second, additions to Exodus 20:17 and Deuteronomy 5:21 and alterations in Deuteronomy 11:29-30 and 27:4, all of which were made to sanction divine worship in Shechem.⁶⁷⁸ Ussher's argument was the same in both cases. The Samaritan text had, like the Septuagint, evidently undergone a process of intentional editorial revision that rendered the text unreliable as a basis on which to suggest alternative readings to the Hebrew. To explain these changes, especially those relating to alterations to the Patriarch's chronologies, Ussher suggested that Dositheus had conflated the Hebrew text as used by the Palestinian and Babylonian Jews with the Greek text used by the Hellenistic Jews.⁶⁷⁹

Ussher's work shared evident similarities with Buxtorf II and Boate's replies to Cappel. Indeed, his criticism of both the Septuagint and the Samaritan versions was also

⁶⁷³ See also, Boate, *De textus hebraici*, James Ussher to Arnold Boate, 29 July 1650, pp. 93-95, where Ussher first published this thesis. It was only in Ussher's own letter to Cappel that he clearly outlined his own account of the Samaritan text's history.

⁶⁷⁴ Boran, *Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. I, §190. James Ussher to John Selden, [late August?] 1625, p. 326, 'But generallye the Samaritan accordeth with the Hebrew text (some places only excepted) almost in every letter'.

⁶⁷⁵ Boran, *Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. II, §368. James Ussher to Louis de Dieu, 13 June 1633, pp. 609-610. Ussher made this comment in the broader context of a discussion of Morin's work, and also the rumour of a reply against Morin written by Claude Saumaise. No such work was ever published.

⁶⁷⁶ Ussher, *De textus hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, p. 18, 'apud Photium, in Bibliotheca [cod. 230] Decreti Synodici Eulogii Patriarchae Alexandrini in Samaritanos editi argumentum exponentem, tandem reperi, librorum Mosaicorum a Samaritis receptorum depravatores fuisse Dositheum'. See, Photius, *Bibliothèque*, vol. V: *Codices 230-241*, ed. and transl. René Henry (Paris: Société d'Édition 'Le Belles Lettres', 1967), pp. 59-60.

⁶⁷⁷ Ussher, *De textus hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, p. 19. The two cases from Deuteronomy, for example, saw the Samaritan Pentateuch substitute the Samaritan community's Mount Gerizim for the Hebrew text's reading of Mount Ebal.

⁶⁷⁸ Ussher, *De textus hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, pp. 19-20.

⁶⁷⁹ Ussher, *De textus hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, p. 19.

paired with a defence of the stability of the Hebrew text and the reliability of the Hebrew tradition, transmitted from Ezra and the Great Synagogue to today. Ussher defended the deep antiquity of the Masorah itself as a defence of the Hebrew text's integrity, dating it like Arias Montanus to an era well before the Septuagint.⁶⁸⁰

To suppose, however, with François Laplanche and others, that Ussher's work was entirely akin to Boate and Buxtorf II's, overlooks one vital difference between their positions.⁶⁸¹ Although Ussher sided with Boate on the question of the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch and his view of the Hebrew text more generally, he nonetheless accepted a version of Cappel's main thesis that was inimical to Boate. In the final paragraphs of his letter Ussher revealed that he actually agreed with Cappel's fundamental claim that one could emend the Hebrew text by using variant readings from the ancient translations. What Ussher attempted to do was modify this thesis, and render it more in tune with the sort of historical study of the biblical text he favoured. Hence, Ussher presented a further criterion, attempting to limit the solely literary-critical thrust of Cappel's claim: if the majority of the ancient translations agreed with today's Hebrew text then one could not change the current Hebrew reading on the basis of a later translation. If this was not the case, and if the variant reading was therefore sufficiently venerable, then Ussher allowed, all things being equal, 'one should return to your [Cappel's] canon'.⁶⁸²

3

Boate and Cappel's reactions to Ussher's letter indicated the degree to which Ussher had nuanced the debate between the two sides. Although Boate was gratified with the broadside levelled against the Septuagint and Samaritan texts, he was dismayed at the

⁶⁸⁰ Ussher, *De textus hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, pp. 14-17.

⁶⁸¹ Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré, et l'histoire*, p. 300, describes Ussher's work — without noting its origin as a judgement between the Boate and Cappel — as a more courteous version of Boate's work, which characterised Cappel's *Critica sacra* as 'too systematic' ('trop systématique'). Also adding at p. 307 that the principal reproach by Buxtorf II, Boate, and Ussher to Cappel's work was Cappel's disdain for manuscript authority. The version of events given here differs from both these positions. A more recent work that also overlooks where Ussher differed from Buxtorf II and Boate is Hardy, *'Ars critica'*, p. 212.

⁶⁸² Ussher, *De textus hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, pp. 21-22. Given its importance for the argument here, I quote this passage in full: 'Ex quibusdam Veterum interpretationibus excerpi aliquas posse variantes textus Hebraici lectiones: ex vulgata Graeca versione, & editione Samaritana, nullas. In variantibus lectionibus, magnam antiquitatis exemplarium unde eae sunt desumptae rationem esse habendam: & ubi ea quibus antiquiores Interpretes sunt usi cum hodie recepta Hebraici textus lectione consentiunt, non esse eam eo nomine sollicitandam, quod posteriorum vel Interpretum vel aliorum etiam, Hebraicorum exemplarium lectio ab ea discrepet. Denique, ubi caetera omnia reperiuntur paria, ad illum tuum recurrendum esse Canonem: ut ex variantibus lectionibus ea praeferatur, quae sensum parit commodiorem, atque consequentibus & antecedentibus magis cohaerentem'.

ground Ussher had conceded.⁶⁸³ There was some confusion here. Ussher had taken Boate's acknowledgement that the Hebrew text the ancient translators used had on occasion differed from the text as it stood to indicate that Boate also allowed for variant readings to be taken from those ancient translations.⁶⁸⁴ In fact, as Boate replied to Ussher in his first letter after having read Ussher's work, that 'neither is, nor ever was my meaning', and throughout his work had 'most plainly' said the contrary.⁶⁸⁵ The rest of Boate's letter was a remarkable reiteration of this position, dramatically different in tone to the rest of his deferential correspondence with Ussher. Boate declared that he could never accept the collation of variant readings from the Septuagint or 'any other ancient translations', since such were only ever conjectural, and quite destitute of any certainty.⁶⁸⁶

Boate's reaction differed appreciably from Cappel's, who seized on what he saw as Ussher's fundamental agreement with his argument. As Cappel wrote to Ussher in January 1653, it would be unnecessary for him to alter his opinion since Ussher was already so close to agreeing with him.⁶⁸⁷ The key point, Cappel underlined, was that in contrast to Buxtorf II and Boate, both he and Ussher agreed that one could emend the Hebrew through recourse to the ancient translations.⁶⁸⁸ The emphasis Cappel placed on the agreement between him and Ussher on this point was matched by a tendency to understate the degree of their difference when it came to the question of the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch. Cappel did not accept Ussher's case, yet he was uninterested in considering in any further detail the sort of historical minutiae Ussher had brought to bear on the versions' history, especially that of the Septuagint.⁶⁸⁹

Cappel attempted to bridge the gap between him and Ussher with a two-pronged strategy. First, while assuring Ussher that he had no ambition to put the Samaritan or Septuagint text ahead of the Hebrew, he nonetheless reiterated some of the general

⁶⁸³ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §600. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 11/21 July 1653, p. 1052.

⁶⁸⁴ Ussher, *De textus hebraici Veteris Testamenti*, p. 5.

⁶⁸⁵ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §600. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 11/21 July 1653, p. 1052, 'You will be pleased to give me leave to tell you, that that neither is, nor ever was my meaning; that I say no such thing in the place quoted by you ... and that my whole Epistle, from the beginning to the end, is full of Passages, wherein I most plainly say the contrary'.

⁶⁸⁶ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §600. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 11/21 July 1653, pp. 1052-3, 'Quod neque ex Septuaginta, neque ex ullo alio Veterum Interpretum quocunque, possunt ullae Hebraici textus Variæ Lectiones colligi, nisi conjecturales ad summum, omni prorsus certitudine destitutæ'.

⁶⁸⁷ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §606. Louis Cappel to James Ussher, 13 January 1653, p. 1064.

⁶⁸⁸ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §606. Louis Cappel to James Ussher, 13 January 1653, p. 1064. Cappel's published reply to Ussher reiterated this point. See, Louis Cappel, *Ad Dn. Iacobi Usserii Armachani Archiepiscopi epistolam Lud. Cappelli responsio* (Saumur: P. Girard, 1652), pp. 25-26.

⁶⁸⁹ Cappel, *Ad Dn. Iacobi Usserii Armachani Archiepiscopi epistolam ... responsio*, pp. 17-18.

historical reasons why they could be considered legitimate sources of variant readings. As the Septuagint – irrespective of its origin – had been used by Christ, the Apostles, and the Church in the first four centuries, so too the Samaritans and their version had a history that extended well beyond Dositheus, and Ussher's attempt to reduce this textual tradition to a single heretic was unpersuasive.⁶⁹⁰

As Cappel admitted, however, he considered his real point to hold even if Ussher still refused to grant these historical claims.⁶⁹¹ The second part of Cappel's strategy attempted to shift the debate from the historical to the literary critical, and to consider individually the different sorts of variant readings he was proposing, whether of single letters and words or whole sentences, all of which – he was perhaps unduly confident – could be resolved through the application of his canon.⁶⁹² Even here Cappel did his best to bring his and Ussher's positions into closer agreement. Cappel recognised that what separated him and Ussher was how one interpreted Ussher's central conclusion regarding the use of the ancient versions. What was problematic, Cappel insisted, was that Ussher appeared to imply the contemporary Masoretic text, rather than an archetypal ancient Hebrew manuscript, should be the basic measure for judging these variant readings. Cappel, who of course wanted to argue that a better reading could be found in any version, reformulated Ussher's conclusion: should all things be equal, including the degree of probability according to his canon, that reading should be preferred which was found in the most ancient and best written manuscript.⁶⁹³ Conceding this point to Ussher went against the point of Cappel's method. That he was willing to modify his argument in this way indicates how far he was willing to go to meet Ussher's case.

Ussher's biblical criticism following the exchange with Cappel continued to combine his studied, and confessionally-motivated, opposition to the Septuagint with his abiding interest in the history of the ancient versions. Cappel's general historical claims regarding the Septuagint were unpersuasive because Ussher – and for that matter Morin

⁶⁹⁰ Cappel, *Ad Dn. Iacobi Usserii Armachani Archiepiscopi epistolam ... responsio*, pp. 12-16, 18-19.

⁶⁹¹ Cappel, *Ad Dn. Iacobi Usserii Armachani Archiepiscopi epistolam ... responsio*, p. 19.

⁶⁹² Cappel, *Ad Dn. Iacobi Usserii Armachani Archiepiscopi epistolam ... responsio*, pp. 14-16, for example, considered each of the different types of variant readings Cappel assembled in the context of the Septuagint.

⁶⁹³ Cappel, *Ad Dn. Iacobi Usserii Armachani Archiepiscopi epistolam ... responsio*, p. 22, I quote this in full: 'Mallem ego sic loqui, in variantibus lectionibus, quae pariter bonum, commodum & convenientem sensum gignunt, si qua necessario eligenda est, eam esse praeferendam quae in antiquiore ac melioris notae & commatis codice occurrit, non enim nego codicum antiquitati aliquid esse tribuendum, quum sensus incommodus non obstat, at lectionem duram, incommodam, perplexam, aut vero falsam, minusque veram, convenientem & cohaerentem illi praeponere quae sensum fundit longe convenientiore, eo duntaxat nomine quod ea reperitur in antiquiore aliquo codice, & vetustiore exemplari, mihi id videtur non satis congruum, & a recta ratione alienum.'

– was precisely interested in uncovering the actual history of the Septuagint. Ussher grasped the value of Cappel's method as a tool, one which he allowed could be applied in certain circumstances, but its ambitions were quite distinct from the history of the text of the Septuagint he hoped to provide, one that would undercut Morin's claims as to its value in comparison to the Hebrew tradition. It seems probable that Ussher perceived this difference between their respective interests and approaches, since unlike Buxtorf II he never broke with Cappel entirely, nor, like Boate, did he lambast the author of the *Critica sacra* personally, but instead, as his letter to Cappel from October 1653 showed, called for them both to maintain cordial relations despite their opinions on the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch.⁶⁹⁴ This being said, the extent of their differences, Ussher warned, would appear shortly in the next volume of his *Annales* and, he implied, would also prove true should he finish his next project, a treatise on the Septuagint.⁶⁹⁵

Ussher's long-promised *De graeca Septuaginta, interpretum versione syntagma* (1655) set out his considered view on the history of the Septuagint, reiterating while extending the account given in his response to Cappel. Ussher was keen to emphasise from the outset that he did not lack reverence for the Septuagint, the text whose origin he considered reliably reported by the *Letter of Aristeas*, the pseudonymous work that narrated the history of the translation of the Hebrew law at the court of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. What Ussher sought to do was separate the history of this version, the properly considered 'original Septuagint', from the 'Septuagint' subsequently known to the Fathers, the true history and significance of which had until now been misunderstood.⁶⁹⁶

Ussher's first task was to show that the available evidence indicated the original Septuagint differed from the text subsequently known as the 'Septuagint'. To this end he gleaned two pieces of evidence from the Aristean account, supported in each case by the further authority of the ancient Jewish sources Philo and Josephus. First, the *Letter of Aristeas* proved it was only the Pentateuch that had been translated, rather than the whole of the Bible.⁶⁹⁷ Second, the Ptolemaic translation was lauded for its closeness to the

⁶⁹⁴ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §642. James Ussher to Louis Cappel, 27 October 1653, p. 1091.

⁶⁹⁵ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §642. James Ussher to Louis Cappel, 27 October 1653, p. 1091. Ussher had earlier indicated he planned to write such a work in his letter to Patrick Young. See, Kemke, *Patrick Young*, §148. James Ussher to Patrick Young, 27 August 1629, p. 93,

⁶⁹⁶ James Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta, interpretum versione syntagma* (London: John Crook, 1655) p. 4. To limit the risk of confusion, which does sometimes occur even in Ussher's account, this section will use 'original Septuagint' to refer to the Septuagint thought to be translated by the Seventy, and 'Septuagint' (in inverted commas throughout) to refer the version Ussher argued was created under Ptolemy VI Philometer.

⁶⁹⁷ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, pp. 5-6.

Hebrew version, translated word-for-word, something that could not be said of the extant versions of the Greek text, nor the quotations given in patristic sources.⁶⁹⁸

To disentangle the history of the original Septuagint from the 'Septuagint', Ussher posited an alternative moment when a second translation could have been made. This came in the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor and Cleopatra, when the recently-fled Onias IV was granted the permission to found a Jewish Temple in Leontopolis. In a mirror of the Aristean account, the push for the new translation came not from Onias IV and other Jewish inhabitants, but from the gentile curiosity the new temple's founding had – presumably – prompted.⁶⁹⁹ This translation, Ussher argued, was done by a single translator, who thought little of adding, detracting, or changing the text as it stood, providing – he could not resist remarking – an example that would later inspire the Samaritan heretic Dositheus.⁷⁰⁰ Ussher had thus developed in full the theory he had sketched briefly in his response to Cappel, presenting what amounted to a recasting of the Aristean account, but put to his purposes. Where the Aristean account had been designed to augment the authority of the text, Ussher's new version was purposively intended to sap it.

It was this translation, the first complete version of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, which thereafter spread throughout the world of the Hellenistic Jews. This began the process by which knowledge of the original Septuagint was steadily eroded.⁷⁰¹ Although Christ and the Apostles knew of some private copies of that original Septuagint, they necessarily preached in the common Greek version known to the people.⁷⁰² This meant the reputation of this version, shortly also translated into Latin, gradually rose throughout the first century CE.⁷⁰³ As the Bible of both the Hellenistic Jews and the Early Church, it gradually accrued independent authority. At some point in this period a key moment, Ussher postulated, came in Alexandria, when the publicly used version of the whole Bible in Greek usurped the title 'Septuagint' from those few privately-held copies of the original Septuagint.⁷⁰⁴ With the usurpation came the development and embellishment of the Aristean legend, and it was consequently no coincidence that it was Justin Martyr who was the first Christian author that described this version as the

⁶⁹⁸ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, pp. 7-9.

⁶⁹⁹ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, pp. 22-23.

⁷⁰⁰ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, p. 23.

⁷⁰¹ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, pp. 24-5.

⁷⁰² Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, p. 25.

⁷⁰³ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, p. 24, Ussher did not put a precise date on the earliest Latin translation.

⁷⁰⁴ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, p. 29.

'Septuagint', repeating the accounts he had no doubt heard at source from the Alexandrian Jews during his visit to Alexandria.⁷⁰⁵

The complement to Ussher's account of the rise of the 'Septuagint' was his explanation of what happened to the original Septuagint, the version of the Pentateuch translated by the Seventy and deposited in the library at Alexandria. It had indeed remained there, Ussher allowed, until the middle of the first century BCE. Unfortunately it, together with the library itself, perished in the conflagration that began following Julius Caesar's attack in 48 BCE.⁷⁰⁶ Its replacement was soon provided by Herod, who sent the library two copies, one in Hebrew and one in Greek. The Greek, however, was not the original Septuagint, but only a copy of the common Greek text as it stood in use among the Jews in Syria and Palestine at the time. This version Cleopatra subsequently had placed in the Serapeum, and it was this text that scholars and theologians, notably Tertullian and John Chrysostom, would mistake as the definitive text of the original Septuagint.⁷⁰⁷

The result of Ussher's account was that by roughly the mid-second century there were two different texts that could be called the 'Septuagint', neither of which was the original Septuagint. The first was the common Greek version, which had slowly accrued such credit but, since it had been in use throughout the Jewish Hellenistic and Christian world, was undergoing an uncertain process of transmission. The second was the specific manuscript of the 'Septuagint' held by the Serapeum in Alexandria.⁷⁰⁸ The history of these two versions came together in Origen's Hexapla. Ussher took each of Origen's supposed editions of the Bible – the Tetrapla, Hexapla, and Octapla – in turn. In a crucial move, which broke noticeably with Morin's account, Ussher interpreted the 'six copies' described by Jerome, Eusebius, and Epiphanius, to mean the Hexapla was so-called not on account of its six columns, but rather since it contained six different versions.⁷⁰⁹ As such, Ussher argued, allowing for the Hebrew text, the Hebrew transliterated into Greek, Aquila, Symmachus, the 'Septuagint' and Theodotion, there would only be five versions, as the Hebrew text and its transliteration could only count once.⁷¹⁰ Ussher solved the problem of the missing sixth version by arguing Origen provided the equivalent of two 'Septuagint' texts. The first followed the version

⁷⁰⁵ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, pp. 30-31.

⁷⁰⁶ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, p. 31.

⁷⁰⁷ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, pp. 31-33.

⁷⁰⁸ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, p. 34.

⁷⁰⁹ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, pp. 50-51.

⁷¹⁰ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, p. 51.

deposited in the Serapeum, to which Origen had had frequent access in Alexandria, and stood as the 'Septuagint' proper. The second represented the common Greek text as it stood in Origen's day, and it was to this text Origen had added the diacritical sigla.⁷¹¹

As Ussher's account concluded, the problems facing the historian of the Greek text only mounted further as he surveyed the history of the common Greek text following Origen's intervention, tracing the implications of the 'trifaria varietas' that had marked all manuscripts to his day. Ussher's account of the Lucianic and Hesychian recensions agreed for the most part with Morin's earlier discussion.⁷¹² Where he parted from the Oratorian was in his discussion of the history of Origen's text, the version Morin had seen as the route back to the Septuagint. He argued that Eusebius and Pamphilus had not published the unmarked edition of the 'Septuagint' as held by the library at Alexandria. Instead they had published two versions of the 'Septuagint', the common Greek text, one with, and one without, the diacritical sigla.⁷¹³

Where did this leave the contemporary manuscripts and editions, and what hope was left for any scholar interested in the original Septuagint? Ussher was emphatic: to that original text there was no way back, since no extant manuscript could reveal its contents. Nor could scholars even hope to recover the edition of 'Septuagint' held by the Serapeum, since it had not been republished by Eusebius and Pamphilus and all remains of the Hexapla had been lost. The only text scholars could attempt to recover was the common Greek version, edited by Origen in the Hexapla and subsequently published in two different forms by Eusebius and Pamphilus.⁷¹⁴ Yet, was even this possible? Ussher was equivocal, in part since he consistently emphasised the problems faced by any student of the Greek text. Ussher's account of the contemporary manuscript evidence was remarkably pessimistic, and he continued, as we have seen in his response to Young, to suggest that the Greek texts that existed, even in the best manuscripts, had been so interpolated with Theodotion, and edited unreliably elsewhere, that there was little reason to be hopeful even that version of the 'Septuagint' could be reliably recovered.⁷¹⁵ In early letters Ussher had held out the prospect of locating Old Latin translations based on the common Greek text, but such a prospect went unremarked here.

⁷¹¹ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, p. 51.

⁷¹² Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, pp. 68-72.

⁷¹³ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, pp. 75-77, esp. p. 77.

⁷¹⁴ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, p. 80.

⁷¹⁵ Ussher, *De graeca Septuaginta*, pp. 81-101.

Ussher's *De graeca Septuaginta* has never before been extensively studied, yet it was a vital contribution to the great mid-seventeenth-century debate on the history of the biblical text. Although he went unnamed, it is evident that Ussher's chief target throughout was Morin, whose historical account of the Septuagint Ussher undermined at every point. Yet, Ussher's work was prompted in the immediate context by Cappel's *Critica sacra* and subsequent defences, whose claim that one could use the Greek text to emend the Hebrew seemed to Ussher a dangerous capitulation to Morin. More generally, this account shows how Ussher has been miscast as a straightforward opponent of Cappel's work, more or less identical to Boate and Buxtorf II. In contrast to those scholars, Ussher fully recognised that ancient translations could be used to emend the Hebrew text. While he would not countenance the extent to which Cappel had hoped to directly introduce secular and New Testament criticism into Old Testament criticism, Ussher had attempted to square his faith in the reliability of the Hebrew text with a measured appeal to textual criticism in certain given circumstances. Ussher recognised the *Critica sacra*'s power, but felt it had to be tamed, and used within the accepted confines of confessional scholarship.

Seeing Ussher in this light means it should be viewed as a striking, but not necessarily unsurprising, coincidence that in the same letter in which Ussher informed Cappel he would soon begin work on a critical tractate on the Septuagint, he also told him about a new Polyglot Bible being printed in England, one that would contain not only a long-awaited collation of Codex Vaticanus and Alexandrinus, but also an edition of the Samaritan text.⁷¹⁶ Although he did not mention it, Ussher had been one of the first and most important promoters of this project. Together with Selden he had stood as a 'learned and eminent' authority in support of the work.⁷¹⁷ He had likewise been counted among those listed as important advisors to the editors and also one of the signatories to the initial letter seeking subscribers.⁷¹⁸ Finally, Ussher also willingly lent his own manuscripts to the London Polyglot's editors, five of which, including Arabic, Syriac, and Samaritan manuscripts, would be found in the hands of the editors at the time of Ussher's death in 1656.

⁷¹⁶ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §642. James Ussher to Louis Cappel, 27 October 1653.

⁷¹⁷ [Brian Walton], *A Brief Description of an Edition of the Bible*, (London: [R. Norton for Timothy Garthwait, 1653]).

⁷¹⁸ [Brian Walton], *Propositions concerning the Printing of the Bible in the Original and other Learned Languages* (London: R. Norton, 1653).

As such, one might think, the London Polyglot could be considered the crowning moment in Ussher's career as a biblical critic, one which finally completed the project William Eyre had outlined long ago. Yet, while Ussher's cooperation with the editors and their associates aptly indicates his distance from Boate and how far he was from being the unqualified opponent of Cappel's work he has been portrayed as, the completed project shifted decisively away from Ussher's vision. The London Polyglot Bible's *Prolegomena*, an extensive survey and history of the texts and editions of the Bible by Brian Walton, would instead mark the passing of the confessional criticism of the Old Testament that Ussher's career embodied.

Chapter Five

Biblical criticism after the *Critica sacra*

If the first half of 1650s was dominated by responses to the *Critica sacra*, the agenda for the second was instead set by three scholars, Brian Walton, Jean Morin, and Isaac Vossius, who accepted Cappel's central insights and also opposed Buxtorf II and Ussher's accounts of the history of the Hebrew text. Yet their agreement on these points gives little indication of their main scholarly objectives. In the *Prolegomena* to the London Polyglot Bible Walton became the first Protestant scholar to use Cappel's work as the basis for a new Protestant *philologia sacra*. Morin's final publication, the long-awaited Part Two of the *Exercitationes biblicae*, presented a detailed critical history of Jewish learning. Vossius, who shared Morin's belief in the shortcomings post-Second Temple history of Hebrew scholarship, mounted a series of historical and critical arguments in favour of the Septuagint against the Masoretic Hebrew text. The result of these studies was twofold. First, the history and status of the Hebrew text was firmly brought into doubt, even among Protestant scholars. Second, by the mid-1660s a new context for the discipline of biblical scholarship had emerged, as scholars integrated the central insights of Cappel's work into the confessional field of Old Testament criticism as practised by Morin, Ussher, and Buxtorf II.

I. Brian Walton and the London Polyglot Bible (1653-1657)

1

Writing from Edinburgh to William Spang in London in October 1647, Robert Baillie lamented the current state of Europe's Protestant presses: '[O]ur poor [Protestant] printers of old', such as Robert Estienne and his descendants, had given 'many a fair volume of new brave books, in all languages', and yet now 'we gett [sic] no new printed books of any note, but from the Popish presses at Paris only'.⁷¹⁹ Few works stood out more for Baillie than the recently published Paris Polyglot.⁷²⁰ This situation would soon

⁷¹⁹ David Laing, ed., *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, vol. III (Edinburgh: R. Ogle, 1841-42), Robert Baillie to William Spang, 13 October 1647, pp. 23-24.

⁷²⁰ Laing, ed., *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, vol. III, 13 October 1647, p. 24.

change. Printed for Thomas Roycroft in London, Protestant scholars edited and published a Polyglot Bible that surpassed the three previous Roman Catholic versions of Alcalá, Antwerp, and Paris.⁷²¹ As even Jean Morin admitted, the London Polyglot Bible was 'le plus grand, et le plus auguste ouvrage qui ait jamais esté entrepris en cette matiere'.⁷²²

2

The London Polyglot Bible was chiefly the work of Brian Walton, who developed, edited, and organised the project. Walton had obtained his B.A. and then M.A. in Cambridge, in 1619 and 1623, and thereafter been Rector of St. Martin's Orgar in London from 1628.⁷²³ He was deprived of his position in 1641 following disputes over the payment of tithes and his introduction of Laudian ceremony.⁷²⁴ Following this Walton removed to Oxford and was incorporated as Doctor of Divinity in 1645. It was at this time, immersed in a world shaped by Laudian patronage for Oriental studies, that Walton made crucial connections with figures such as Edward Pococke, Samuel Clarke, and Ussher, among others, who would be deeply involved with the project.⁷²⁵ Walton

⁷²¹ For what is still the fullest single study of the London Polyglot Bible, now well in need of updating, see, Henry John Todd, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Right Rev. Brian Walton*, 2 vols. (London: F. C. & J. Rivington, 1821). Recent studies include, Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom*, pp. 201-210; Peter N. Miller, 'The "Antiquarianization" of Biblical Scholarship and the London Polyglot Bible (1653-1657)', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 63 (2001), pp. 463-482; Nicholas Keene, 'Critici Sacri: biblical criticism in England c. 1650-1710', Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2004, pp. 57-115. See also the remarks in, Mandelbrote, 'The authority of the Word', pp. 148-150; Mandelbrote, 'English Scholarship and the Greek Text', pp. 86-88. The account presented in this thesis presumes, to some degree, familiarity with these earlier accounts since, for reasons largely of space, it does not pretend to be comprehensive, especially with regard to the printing of the Polyglot itself or the specific contributions of individual collaborators. Its main focus is to offer an alternative account of Walton's overall design for the project and then a detailed analysis of his *Prolegomena* in light of the new interpretation of seventeenth-century biblical criticism offered thus far.

⁷²² BAV, Barb. Lat. 6510, Jean Morin to Cardinal Francesco Barberini, 8 February 1658, fol. 122r.

⁷²³ See, for Walton's life, D. S. Margoliouth, 'Walton, Brian (1600-1661)', rev. Nicholas Keene, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [ODNB], Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008.

⁷²⁴ In addition to the ODNB, see also, Todd, *Memoirs*, vol. I, pp. 4-25; Keene, 'Critici sacri', pp. 58-60.

⁷²⁵ This is put neatly by Todd, vol. I, *Memoirs*, p. 27, 'That Dr. Walton formed at Oxford his design of publishing a Polyglot Bible, has been often asserted and never questioned'. It is reiterated in most of the modern accounts, see, Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom*, p. 203; Keene, 'Critici Sacri', p. 60. The one scholar who goes beyond this is Miller, 'The London Polyglot Bible', p. 468, who speaks of the 'patronless Polyglot' following Laud's execution, an idea not completely inconceivable, but given without any evidence in support of Laud's patronage or involvement. On the general context, see, Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'Laudianism and Political Power', in his *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans. Seventeenth Century Essays* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1987), pp. 40-119; Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'The Church of England and the Greek Church', in his *From Counter-Reformation to Glorious Revolution* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1992), pp. 83-111. On Laud's patronage of Arabic at Oxford and his sponsorship of Pococke and John Greaves in the Levant, see, Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom*, pp. 105-115, 127-146.

subsequently returned to London after Oxford's fall in 1646, and it was there, from the house of his future father-in-law, William Fuller, that the project for the London Polyglot Bible was set in motion in the early 1650s.

Walton's overarching motivations were deeply shaped by the fate of the English Church during the civil war. Characterising the work in a letter to Buxtorf II, Walton described it as an act of service done for the church in the midst of strife.⁷²⁶ As Walton outlined in the project's initial 'Brief Description', this act of service had two aspects. First, it continued the Church's rightful role as the guardian of Scripture, to whose custody their care had been committed.⁷²⁷ Second, the attempt to collect and publish the best and most reliable texts of the Bible was an antidote to contemporary sectarian contention: the authoritative interpretation of the Church would replace the discord caused by the imposters who arrogated this role for themselves.⁷²⁸ As we will see, Walton's thoroughgoing sense of the role of the Church, both in the past and in the present, decisively shaped his biblical criticism.

The London Polyglot Bible also embodied a series of scholarly ambitions. Although these took shape in the context of all the earlier Polyglot Bibles, it is very probable that the publication of the Paris Polyglot Bible in 1645 was a crucial inspiration.⁷²⁹ Walton never ceased to emphasise where the London Polyglot would prove superior to the Paris edition. One dimension of this was cost. If the Paris Polyglot was justly celebrated for its stateliness and typography, so too was it prohibitively expensive. Walton's design was intended to be a relatively affordable alternative. Another was in the London Polyglot's *mise-en-page*, which vastly increased its convenience from a scholarly perspective. The Paris Polyglot's first four volumes had followed the Antwerp Polyglot's model, printing on each page the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Aramaic versions. The later volumes then printed, with their Latin translations, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Samaritan Hebrew Targum, and the Arabic and Syriac (volumes VI-IX). This meant any scholar hoping to compare all the versions needed two volumes open at once. The

⁷²⁶ BUB, G I 62, Brian Walton to Johannes Buxtorf II, 20 January 1656, fol. 4^{r-v}. Indeed, the greater part of the project's collaborators were men like Walton who had lost their ecclesiastical or university posts as a result of the events of the 1640s. See, Todd, *Memoirs*, vol. I, pp. 163-318.

⁷²⁷ [Walton], *Brief Description*, two unpaginated sheets.

⁷²⁸ BUB, G I 62, Brian Walton to Johannes Buxtorf II, 20 January 1656, fol. 4^r. See also, [Walton], *Brief Description*; Brian Walton, 'Praefatio', in Brian Walton, et als., eds., *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta* (London: Thomas Roycroft, 1657), vol. I, sig. C^r.

⁷²⁹ [Walton], *Brief Description*, where Walton places the work in the context of the Complutensian, Antwerp, and Paris Polyglots, although also noting the important editions by Bomberg, Vatable, Buxtorf, Estienne, Munster, and Hutter. Most of these editions would, together with the *Opera* of Origen and Jerome, and Origen's Hexapla, sit on the shelf behind Walton in an engraved portrait of Walton by Pierre Lombart, set opposite the Polyglot's title-page.

London Polyglot Bible, in contrast, printed all the given versions on each double page spread. Morin himself underlined the extent of the London Polyglot's improvement in this regard.⁷³⁰

Two of the improvements outlined in the 'Brief Description' reveal Walton's views on the London Polyglot Bible's contribution to biblical criticism. First, Walton intended to improve the texts of the existing published editions, either by correcting them using additional manuscript witnesses or by publishing better versions.⁷³¹ Walton's most notable departure from the Paris Polyglot in this regard involved the Septuagint. As we have seen, Morin's justification for reprinting the Antwerp Polyglot's text of the Septuagint had been to preserve the authority of the Sixtine Septuagint. In contrast to this, Walton demonstrated that his project would not be constrained by the confessional politics of editing in the same way. Instead he specifically highlighted the need to print the text he considered the single most authoritative edition of the Septuagint, rather than one edited to meet the 'modern Hebrew'.⁷³² The London Polyglot would consequently replace the version of the Septuagint printed in the Paris Polyglot with the text of the 1587 Roman Septuagint. This text, based on Codex Vaticanus, Walton thought was 'without doubt the most *authentick* of any yet extant'.⁷³³

Walton's concern for the critical value of his work extended beyond the versions printed in the text. The second great difference in comparison to the Paris Polyglot was that Walton also planned to add a volume containing additional tracts and an extensive selection of variant readings. This volume was for more than mere accumulation. Walton intended to insert at the front an '*Extract out of Capellus his Critica Sacra and others concerning the various readings*'.⁷³⁴ The purpose of these extracts was clear: Cappel's work would provide an instruction to the reader for how to think of and use the variant readings contained in the sixth volume. At the same time that Cappel, Ussher, Boate, and Buxtorf II were engaged in their dispute over the text of the Old Testament, Walton designed a Polyglot Bible that specifically reflected Cappel's critical preferences.

The significance of Walton's editorial choices was not lost some of the earliest readers of the 'Brief Description'. Foremost among these was Arnold Boate. Boate's initial judgement, based on a specimen page sent to him by Ussher, was relatively evenhanded. He criticised the quality of the work, whose large number of faults had left

⁷³⁰ BAV, Barb. Lat. 6510, Jean Morin to Cardinal Francesco Barberini, 8 February 1658, fol. 121v.

⁷³¹ [Walton], *Brief Description*.

⁷³² [Walton], *Brief Description*.

⁷³³ [Walton], *Brief Description*.

⁷³⁴ [Walton], *Brief Description*.

it fit 'to be thrown into the fire'.⁷³⁵ Boate also questioned the need for parts of the work: instead of printing widely-available texts it would have been better to print only the Syriac, Aramaic, Arabic, Ethiopian, and Samaritan Targum.⁷³⁶ Still, Boate admitted, in general he thought 'very well' of the project.⁷³⁷ Boate's opinion swiftly changed when he saw the full text of the 'Brief Description'. He strongly disagreed with the 'honour' given to the 'Adulterine Samaritan *Pentateuch*' and, worse still, the description of the 'Modern' Hebrew text. What he could not countenance, above all, was how the 'Brief Description' made 'so great an account of the *Critica Capelli*' and its 'Chimerical' variant readings.⁷³⁸ What Boate recognised was the degree to which Walton's project from the outset accepted the case Cappel had made in the *Critica sacra*. Although Boate would not live to see it, Walton's *Prolegomena* would confirm that his fears were entirely justified.

3

The task of promoting the project spanned much of 1652 and 1653. Although granted approbation by the Council of State on the 11 July 1652, Walton was unsuccessful in his bid to obtain a subsidy of £1,000.⁷³⁹ The cost of the work was instead met by subscriptions.⁷⁴⁰ We can catch only faint traces of the process by which these were raised. John Evelyn, for example, relating in his diary for 11 November 1652 that John Pearson had proposed to him the 'promoting of the work'.⁷⁴¹ Nevertheless, it seems that by May 1653 at least £9,000 had been promised, and that by late summer the £1,500 that was

⁷³⁵ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §613. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, [30 April/10 May 1653], p. 1073. The letters §612 and §613 sent from Boate to Ussher are the subject of some confusion, as detailed by Boran, p. 1071, f.n. 3. What is not in doubt is that both were written by Boate, whose interpretation I am here chiefly interested in.

⁷³⁶ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §612. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, [30 April/10 May 1653], p. 1072, and Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §613. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, [30 April/10 May 1653], pp. 1073-4.

⁷³⁷ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §613. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, [30 April/10 May 1653], p. 1073.

⁷³⁸ Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §615. Arnold Boate to James Ussher, 7/17 May 1653, p. 1077.

⁷³⁹ Mary Anne Everett Green, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1651-1652* (London: Longman, 1877), p. 328. For the hoped-for subsidy, see Walton's letter to Edward Pococke, printed in Leonard Twells, 'Life of Dr. Pocock', in Leonard Twells, ed., *The Theological Works of the Learned Dr. Pocock* (London: Leonard Twells, 1740), vol. I, p. 49.

⁷⁴⁰ See, generally, S. L. C. Clapp, 'The Beginnings of subscription publication in the seventeenth century', *Modern Philology* 29 (1931), pp. 199-224. [Walton], *Brief Description*. See, for the initial request for submissions, [Brian Walton], *Propositions concerning the Printing of the Bible in the Original and other Learned Languages* (R. Norton: London, 1653).

⁷⁴¹ E. S. de Beer, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, vol. III: *Kalendarium, 1650-1672* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 78.

needed to begin work had been raised.⁷⁴² The work proceeded rapidly. Printing of the first volume, containing the Pentateuch, had begun by October 1653 and was finished by late summer 1654. The second and third volumes, containing the rest of the Old Testament, were finished in 1655 and 1656, following which the fourth, fifth, and six volumes – on which several presses were by then working at once – were complete by late 1657. The prefatory material was completed in early 1658.⁷⁴³

The eventual six volumes for the most part reflected the design set out six years earlier. The most extensive differences came in the sixth volume of variant readings. This was no longer introduced with excerpts from Cappel's and others' work on the variant readings, whose inclusion had been rendered unnecessary by Walton's *Prolegomena*. Gone too were some of the variant readings collected and published by earlier continental scholars. In their place was the work completed by Walton and his assistants in the mid-1650s. The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint provide two examples of the nature of these changes. In the case of the Samaritan text, Walton had been unable to locate a copy of the collations sent by Comber to Morin.⁷⁴⁴ In their place he included a collation by John Lightfoot and Edmund Castell of the Samaritan Pentateuch with the Hebrew text and the Septuagint and also Castell's own critical notes on the Samaritan text.⁷⁴⁵ In the case of the Septuagint, Walton and his assistants again exceeded their initial plans. In addition to reprinting the Sixtine Septuagint they also printed a running collation of this text with Codex Alexandrinus, placed in the main volumes of the work. This, as we will see, reflected Walton's critical judgement regarding the pre-eminent status of these two manuscripts. The additional volume of variant readings also contained a much more extensive series of collations from prominent manuscripts, including the Cotton Genesis, Codex Marchelianus, and the Barberini Codex of the Minor Prophets.

The scope of the six volumes can be taken to represent the culmination of a century and a half of biblical scholarship since the publication of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible. More important, the scholarly value of the London Polyglot Bible should

⁷⁴² Twells, 'Life of Dr. Pocock', p. 50.

⁷⁴³ Twells, 'Life of Dr. Pocock', p. 52. For the testimony that several presses were working concurrently on the final volumes, see, John Lightfoot, *The Whole Works*, vol. XIII: *The Journal of the Proceedings of the Assembly of Divines from January 1 1643, to December 31, 1644. and Letters to and from Dr. Lightfoot*, ed. John Rogers Pitman (London: J. F. Dove, 1824), §19. Brian Walton to John Lightfoot, 28 April 1657, pp. 361-62.

⁷⁴⁴ Brian Walton, ed., *Ad Biblia sacra polyglotta appendix* [= *Biblia sacra polyglotta*, vol. VI] (London: Thomas Roycroft, 1657), third pagination, p. 19.

⁷⁴⁵ Walton, ed., *Ad Biblia sacra polyglotta appendix*, third pagination, pp. 1-34. On these, see also, Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. XIII, §2. Brian Walton to John Lightfoot, 2 January 1653/4, pp. 348-49; Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. XIII, §5. Brian Walton to John Lightfoot, 14 June 1654, p. 351. Other new notes and collations included those by Samuel Clarke on the Aramaic Targums, Herbert Thorndike on the Syriac Old Testament, and Edmund Castell on the Ethiopic.

not be underestimated. In the range and extent of the materials it published, it put the critical study of the biblical text on a new footing. This can be most effectively gauged by comparing the careers of two scholars, the bulk of whose working lives fell either before or after the work's publication. Louis Cappel, based in Saumur, had had to make do his entire career without a copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch.⁷⁴⁶ At a stroke the London Polyglot made this available, remedying the failures of Cappel's best efforts – and those of the Republic of Letters more generally – to intercede with Golius for a collation of his copy. The mine of textual variants that would have enriched Cappel's work immeasurably was in contrast merely the starting point of Richard Simon's work. From the outset of his work Simon enjoyed access to the texts, notes, and variant readings, printed in the London Polyglot Bible's six volumes, which he drew on to fill the margins of his own copy of the Hebrew Bible and other books.⁷⁴⁷ Simon even used the London Polyglot Bible as the basis for his planned future edition of the Polyglot. The London Polyglot Bible was thus a watershed in the development of biblical criticism, providing scholars with a basis for their work that had been unavailable to scholars of Cappel's generation.

4

When the first volume of the London Polyglot Bible was distributed to the subscribers they were instructed not to bind it, but wait for the prefatory materials. Their contents had been indicated at the close of the 'Brief Description', where Walton had noted in closing that the work would be prefaced with '[D]ivers *Prolegomena*' on the 'several Editions and Translations, their *Antiquity, Authority, and Use*'.⁷⁴⁸ This short additional line somewhat understated the final result, as over 102 folio pages Walton set the Bible, its texts, languages, and different versions and translations, into their respective histories. The scale of Walton's work, however, and its accumulation of erudition, has prevented scholars from appreciating how deeply his work was rooted in the scholarly debates of the early 1650s.⁷⁴⁹ With scholars riven between the views of Buxtorf II, Cappel, and

⁷⁴⁶ See, for evidence Cappel was still attempting to obtain a collation or copy of the Samaritan text into the 1650s, Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, §627. James Ussher to Louis Cappel, 27 October 1653, pp. 1091-92.

⁷⁴⁷ See, for example, BMR, A559, Menasseh ben Israel, ed., *Biblia Hebraica* (Amsterdam: Menasseh ben Israel, 1631-5), vol. I, see, for example, p. 8^{r-v}.

⁷⁴⁸ [Walton], *Brief Description*.

⁷⁴⁹ See, for alternative recent interpretations, Keene, 'Critici Sacri', p. 105; Miller, 'The London Polyglot Bible', pp. 463-482.

Ussher, Walton attempted to combine the views of Ussher and Cappel in a reconstituted Protestant *philologia sacra*.

The *Prolegomena* were based on fundamentally Protestant assumptions. Walton was unequivocal that the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament stood in a uniquely privileged position in comparison to the other versions. It was to these, and these alone, that Walton referred when in *prolegomena* four and seven, respectively, he spoke of the 'principal' or 'original' texts.⁷⁵⁰ Walton's grounds for this were clear: only these two texts could be considered 'authentic' since they were the only ones dictated by the Holy Spirit.⁷⁵¹ There was no sense in which the authority of a Church Council, as Morin argued, could determine the texts' authenticity.⁷⁵²

The autographs of these original texts had in both cases entirely perished, and Walton was under no illusion that their copies were immune to the shortcomings of any transmitted by fallible men. No one of 'sane mind' could deny that through the sloth, ignorance, or temerity of scribes, variant readings and errors could have entered the text.⁷⁵³ Walton was not, however, without confidence that the Hebrew and Greek texts had in general been well preserved. He rejected entirely the possibility of Jewish corruption of the Hebrew texts, either before or after Christ.⁷⁵⁴ Indeed, Walton claimed, the idea that the Hebrew or Greek Scriptures had been altered in anything more than minor ways was repugnant to 'divine providence' itself.⁷⁵⁵ Walton explained this preservation historically. Although the Church was not responsible for determining the text's authority, it had acted as a safe depository for the texts. Through the Church 'learned and pious' men had always existed who both held the Scriptures in their safekeeping and emended the text where errors had inadvertently crept in.⁷⁵⁶

The value of the other ancient versions was directly related to their importance as ancient and reliable witnesses to the original texts. Far from detracting from the authority of the Hebrew or Greek texts they provided evidence in favour of the stability and authority of those texts. As Walton had put in the 'Brief Description', the 'harmony and

⁷⁵⁰ Brian Walton, *Prolegomena*, in *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta*, vol. I, Brian Walton et als. eds. (London: Thomas Roycroft, 1657), IV. §1, 2, 16; and esp. VII. §1. All references to the *Prolegomena* will be made to *prolegomenon* and section, rather than page, to facilitate ease of reference with all published editions.

⁷⁵¹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VII. §16-17.

⁷⁵² Walton, *Prolegomena*, VII. §16.

⁷⁵³ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VI. §1, 'quis sanæ mentis negare potest, leviores quasdam labeculas, et errata quaedam ex scribarum et Typographorum oscitantia, ignorantia, vel audacia irrepere potest?'

⁷⁵⁴ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VII. §5-6. Although it should be noted, Walton did agree with Morin's argument that when presented with two equally probable alternatives the Jews probably choose the reading less favourable to Christianity. See, Walton, *Prolegomena*, VII. §7.

⁷⁵⁵ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VII. §5.

⁷⁵⁶ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VII. §6.

consent' of the different versions represented nothing less than 'the voice of God testifying from heaven'.⁷⁵⁷ To justify this claim Walton again appealed to the role of the Church. It was to the Church in the era of the Apostles that the true sense of Scripture had been entrusted, and through which that sense had then been expressed in the ancient translations.⁷⁵⁸ This explained the historical status and significance of the versions and also justified the *mise-en-page* of the London Polyglot itself, which presented the '*originall Text*' in one view, with so many versions 'approved by the *Church* in her purest time, which bear witness to the *Authority* and the *Integrity* of the *Originalls*, and serve as so many glosses to represent the true sense and meaning of them to the succeeding ages'.⁷⁵⁹

Walton's sense of the versions' fundamental agreement with the original texts did not mean he denied the existence of genuine 'variant readings' between them. What mattered, Walton argued, was to recognise the extent to which their existence was circumscribed. As Cappel, Amama, Bochart, and de Dieu had shown, there was no question the Scriptures varied in matters necessary to salvation.⁷⁶⁰ Variant readings only related to historical details, chronology, proper nouns, and, most commonly, small points of grammar or scribal mistakes. The existence of variants in these areas did not undermine Scripture's authority. What Buxtorf II and others had failed to see was that instead of fearing variant readings, Protestants should understand how they could contribute to 'preserving, correcting, and rightly understanding' the 'true reading' of the text.⁷⁶¹

The crucial debate between Cappel, Buxtorf II, and Ussher, had been whether one could correct the original text by the versions, and the degree to which, consequently, one could consider the versions as valid witnesses to alternative, but now lost, manuscripts of the Hebrew text. Walton attempted to strike a fine balance between the partisans of both sides. He was emphatic that 'generally speaking' one should prefer the 'original' texts to the versions. The 'original' text had to be the measure by which those were judged. This enabled Walton to underline that he was not proposing to take

⁷⁵⁷ [Walton], *Brief description*.

⁷⁵⁸ Walton, *Prolegomena*, V. §3.

⁷⁵⁹ Walton, *The Considerator Considered*, pp. 7-8.

⁷⁶⁰ Miller, 'The London Polyglot Bible', p. 476, notes this important point but slightly misrepresents it. Cappel's point was not quite that there were two sorts of 'Scriptural text', as Miller has it, but that Scripture could be about two sorts of 'things' ('duo ... rerum genera'). When Cappel spoke of things 'necessary to salvation', he meant that these sort of truths existed securely above the level at which he described criticism operating, not that he thought even those passages were necessarily immune from minor textual errors, for example.

⁷⁶¹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VI. §5, 'Vanum esse istorum metum, et vtilitates non spernendas habere variarum lectionum collectionem. Multum enim facit ad veram lectionem tum conseruandam, tum restituendam, eiusque rectam intelligentiam'.

all the differences in the versions as true variant readings: many were from the lapses of scribes, some were mistaken translations, and others often indicated paraphrastic expansions. Further, unlike Cappel, Walton underlined the categorical difference between applying criticism to sacred and secular texts, ruling out the conjectural emendation of Scripture in all but the fewest of place where the text was 'absurd and plainly false'.⁷⁶²

Yet, with these caveats in place, Walton reiterated Cappel's fundamental argument. In the case of the variant readings, both between manuscripts of the original and between the original and the versions, one had to consider each variant individually and see if one could explain its origin, understand how it had occurred, and propose which reading was more probable.⁷⁶³ This was a case of 'moral', not 'mathematical', certainty, and those who pretended to demand the latter misunderstood the level of proof required in critical and historical studies.⁷⁶⁴

Walton's treatment of the vital question of how to decide which readings were more probable demonstrated the degree to which he continued the process of taming the *Critica sacra*, a process which Cappel himself had begun in his reply to Ussher. In the case of a single given manuscript Walton fully accepted that Cappel's canon could determine the more likely reading of the original archetype.⁷⁶⁵ What Walton did not allow, as Cappel had argued in the *Critica sacra*, was that this could apply to variant readings taken from different manuscripts. Instead, Walton followed Cappel's modification of his own argument in the reply to Ussher. Where Cappel had spoken only in general terms, however, that *ceteris paribus* one should prefer the reading present in the oldest manuscript, Walton put forward a series of four rules to provide the basis on which probable judgements should be made. First, *ceteris paribus*, the reading in an older manuscript should be preferred to that in a more recent manuscript. Second, that which agreed with the most and best manuscripts should be preferred to that which agreed with fewer, or less good manuscripts; one excellent manuscript preferred to twenty negligently written. Third, and only if the first and second options had not decided the question, could Cappel's canon could be chosen – again *ceteris paribus*. Fourth, where on the basis of these rules it was not evident which manuscript should be preferred, then it was up to the critic simply to judge which reading should be followed. Walton concluded his list by

⁷⁶² Walton, *Prolegomena*, VI. §12.

⁷⁶³ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VI. §10.

⁷⁶⁴ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VI. §11.

⁷⁶⁵ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VI. §6.

underlining the degree to which he hoped he had circumscribed the principles of the *Critica sacra*. He warned that the received reading was not to be departed from with temerity, but modestly, and with reason to expect the final judgement of the Church.⁷⁶⁶

Walton, like Ussher, had engaged deeply with Cappel's work, but the force of their conclusions pointed in very different directions. Ussher accepted Cappel's justification for the use of variant readings from the ancient versions. But he had circumscribed this on two counts. First, even more extensively than Walton, he had limited Cappel's recourse to secular and New Testament criticism, allowing scholars only to consider variant readings present in ancient manuscript witnesses. Second, he had placed this inside a history of the texts that underlined the pre-eminent stability of the Hebrew text as an ancient textual tradition, while also repudiating any recourse to two of the most prominent alternatives, the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch. Walton's work on the first of these points went further than Ussher's in defining the circumstances in which one could consider a variant reading as more probable, but in principle he agreed with Ussher's limitation of Cappel's point, one which in his reply to Ussher Cappel himself had conceded. What Walton proceeded to do, however, was take on the challenge presented by Ussher's historical work. Instead of placing his new critical account inside an overarching account of the stability of the Hebrew text, Walton constructed an alternative historical account that justified the critical appeal to all the other ancient versions, including the Samaritan Pentateuch and Septuagint. The result was that Walton opened the door to the historical study of all the versions as possibly containing genuine readings of an ancient Hebrew *Vorlage* in a way Ussher had been fundamentally opposed to.

5

Despite Walton's deep debts to Buxtorf, Buxtorf II, de Muis, and Ussher, his *Prolegomena* constituted a categorical repudiation of their vision of the history of the Hebrew text. Walton did not present this as a complete narrative. He considered separately the general history of the Hebrew language and script, in *prolegomena* one to three, the status and integrity of the 'original' Hebrew text, in *prolegomenon* seven, and the Masoretic apparatus, in *prolegomenon* eight. These architectonic choices had important implications. Where

⁷⁶⁶ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VI. §6.

Buxtorf II and Ussher had underlined how the Hebrew text had been conserved through time since Ezra, Walton's work began to separate the stages through which the Hebrew text original to Ezra had changed and altered over time. The result was that Walton's work implicitly underlined how far the original Hebrew autographs and the contemporary Masoretic Hebrew text differed.

The first three *prolegomena* provided the historical setting in which to consider the Bible as a historical document, taking in turn the origin of language, the origin of the alphabet, and the history of the Hebrew language. Walton's account of the historical vicissitude of these subjects was essentially a synthesis, based almost entirely on the studies of Scaliger, Gerardus Vossius, Samuel Bochart, and others.⁷⁶⁷ What mattered was that Walton was the first Protestant scholar following the publication of the *Critica sacra* to construct a comprehensive treatment of the Bible founded on three crucial points. First, that the Samaritan script was originally used by the ancient Hebrews. Second, that the Hebrew vowel points were a late addition to the text. Third, that the Hebrew autographs of Moses, Ezra and the other prophets differed appreciably from the contemporary Hebrew text, necessitating textual-criticism practised by Cappel in the *Critica sacra*. Walton's work was thus a Protestant *philologia sacra* founded on precisely the three points Cappel himself had outlined in his letter to Hottinger more than ten years earlier.

Walton's presentation of his arguments on the Samaritan script and Hebrew vowel points emphasised the degree to which they were settled questions for serious scholars.⁷⁶⁸ On the question of the Samaritan script, Walton argued that all but the most obstinate had long been satisfied with the epigraphic evidence.⁷⁶⁹ For those still unwilling to concede, he also added a series of, by now well known, pieces of evidence from ancient testimony.⁷⁷⁰ On that of the vowel points Walton considered Cappel's case unanswerable.⁷⁷¹ The fears of Buxtorf II and others that the certainty of the text would fall were a mere 'hobgoblin', a point of last resort to force their contemporaries to take the side of antiquity.⁷⁷² Walton underlined that the implications of this question had been

⁷⁶⁷ Although Walton and Cappel exchanged letters in the 1650s, there is no evidence to prove an earlier connection between the two.

⁷⁶⁸ See, Walton, *Prolegomena*, III. §29.

⁷⁶⁹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, III. §30-31.

⁷⁷⁰ Walton, *Prolegomena*, III. §29-37.

⁷⁷¹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, III. §38, 'Omnium vero hoc argumentum accuratissime tractavit Clariss. Lud. Capell. libro de punctuationis arcano reuelato: cuius lectio omnes fere a praeiudicio liberos in hanc sententiam petraxit'.

⁷⁷² Walton, *Prolegomena*, III. §51, 'Hoc vero est μαρμολύκειον illud, quod multos etiam doctos ab altera sententia deterret'.

fundamentally misunderstood. He reiterated Levita's point: the vowel points Masoretic – and merely human – origin did not make them unreliable, or the sense of the text uncertain, since they represented long-standing, and ultimately divinely-authorised, oral tradition.⁷⁷³

Walton's eighth *prolegomenon* on the Masorah fulfilled a number of functions. It provided, in the first instance, an explanation of what the Masorah was, giving a short introduction to its principal features. More importantly, however, Walton also investigated the history of the Masoretic apparatus. Walton was unable to put forward a complete narrative of its development. There are obvious reasons for this. There were no evident precursors as historians of the post-Ezran Hebrew text in the sense that Walton understood it. Cappel, as we have seen, had no real interest in this subject, while Morin's brief comments in the *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae* had been purposely designed to undermine the Hebrew text, rather than write its history. What made matters more difficult, Walton conceded, was that he took a dim view of the Jews own historical accounts, which were fables from which nothing certain could be drawn.⁷⁷⁴

Walton's brief historical survey of the Masoretic text's development attempted to chart a careful course between overstating either its antiquity or its novelty. The Masoretic text, Walton underlined, could not simply be considered a post-500 CE creation. If the vowel points were evidently from that era this did not hold true for other aspects. The Talmud appeared to mention a series of its features, including letters written larger or smaller than others, suspended letters, and inverted letters. This was no reason to go to the other extreme and, like Buxtorf and others, trace the Masorah to the era of Ezra and the men of the Great Synagogue. The suspended letters and other features could hardly be attributed to such 'prophets', being instead redolent of rabbinic 'superstition'. Further parts of the Masorah confirmed this. To argue that Ezra and others were responsible for the *ketiv-queri* readings, for example, was to suppose the 'prophets' themselves were ignorant of the text's true reading, something no one in 'sound mind' could affirm.⁷⁷⁵

Walton's own tentative sketch instead drew on and extended Cappel's thesis regarding the influence of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. He did this by attempting to put Cappel's conjectural suggestions firmly in the context of ancient Jewish history. Walton traced the Masorah not to the Jews in general, as Cappel had, but specifically to the post-

⁷⁷³ Walton, *Prolegomena*, III. §52.

⁷⁷⁴ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §12.

⁷⁷⁵ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §12.

Machabean growth of the Pharisees. According to Walton, their interest in the sense of the text, combined with an increased diligence in seeking to conserve it, resulted in the creation of the first parts of the Masoretic apparatus. Walton conjectured that this began with counting the number of words and verses, eventually culminating in the post-500 CE addition of the vowel points and accents.⁷⁷⁶ In its final form the Masorah was the result of a long-term process that had its origins in a specific Jewish sect, and whose texts and manuscripts were directly inherited by the traditions of post-Second Temple rabbinic Judaism.

In attributing the Masorah, and by implication the Masoretic text itself, to the Pharisees and subsequent Jewish rabbis and critics, Walton's work had important consequences. First, the Masorah could not be linked with Ezra and the era of the Prophets. As such, it had only human, not divine, authority. This conclusion freed Walton to consider the Masoretic text critically, and reject elements that he considered more redolent of Jewish superstition than reliable scholarship. These included specific features of the text's orthography, including the letters written larger than others, suspended letters, inverted letters, and other features.⁷⁷⁷ Walton was similarly critical of other aspects of the Masorah. Where Ussher had appealed throughout his career to the figures given for the numbers of letters in a book, or the middle letter in a given book of the Pentateuch, as categorical evidence of the text's long-term stability, Walton countered that even in the Hebrew tradition these figures were uncertain, and often varied between different manuscripts.⁷⁷⁸ The partisans of the Masorah magna, Walton argued, had thoroughly overstated its value, since as even Buxtorf had admitted, it was in extensive need of correction itself.⁷⁷⁹ All told, rather than appealing to these superstitious or imperfect Jewish precursors, Christian scholars would do better to consult modern Christian reference works, such as Buxtorf's own *Concordantiae bibliorum hebraicae*.⁷⁸⁰

Instead of undermining the Hebrew text, however, Walton argued that this understanding of the Masoretic text's creation should be used to refine modern critical practice. One of the most important examples of Walton's approach was the case of the *ketiv-geri* readings. As we have seen, Walton argued that these could not have originated with Ezra and the Great Synagogue: to propose this denied the Holy Spirit's operation in

⁷⁷⁶ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §12.

⁷⁷⁷ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §13-16.

⁷⁷⁸ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §15.

⁷⁷⁹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §14.

⁷⁸⁰ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §15.

Ezra's day, since the original text could only have had one correct reading.⁷⁸¹ Walton posited they had been added to the text both before and after the Talmud, arguing that in their final form they represented the work of the Tiberian Masoretes.⁷⁸² Thus far, Walton for the most part agreed with Cappel. Where Cappel, however, had argued they came from a combination of critical conjecture and manuscript collation, Walton argued that they came strictly from manuscript collation.⁷⁸³ This had important implications. According to Jewish tradition one always followed the *qeri*, but Walton demonstrated that the other ancient versions could on occasion follow either the *qeri* or the *ketiv*. For Walton this meant that the *ketiv-qeri* preserved the readings of ancient, but now lost, Hebrew texts, ones which had been used as the basis for the other ancient translations.⁷⁸⁴

The result of Walton's historical treatment of the Hebrew text was that he had definitively separated the Masoretic text as it stood from the 'original' Hebrew text. Where Ussher's account of how one could emend the Hebrew text using the ancient versions rested on a thoroughgoing sense of the Hebrew text's long-term stability, Walton had demonstrated historically that the ancient versions offered a window to alternative Hebrew texts. Emending the Hebrew text by them was not falsely correcting the original by the ancient versions, but attempting to return to the genuine original Hebrew reading, rather than the Masoretic *textus receptus*. Walton had done little less than set Cappel's modified account of his own work in his letter to Ussher on a secure historical foundation.

What should be emphasised is that Walton did not suppose this would extensively change the Hebrew text as it stood. Although the Vulgate or the Syriac translations made on the basis of the Hebrew presented some variant readings, the real lesson drawn from a comparison of them with the Hebrew was their fundamental agreement. This soundly defeated those who attempted to use them to argue for that text's corruption.

By contrast, what marked Walton's account of the use of the ancient versions was that he became the first Protestant scholar following Morin and Cappel to argue in favour of the critical value of the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint. Walton set his account of the Samaritan Pentateuch, in *Prolegomenon* eleven, in a general historical survey of Samaritan history and religious practice that drew much more on Morin's work

⁷⁸¹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §23.

⁷⁸² Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §23-24.

⁷⁸³ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §25.

⁷⁸⁴ Walton, *Prolegomena*, VIII. §26.

than Hottinger's.⁷⁸⁵ Walton rejected the 'calumnies' made against the Samaritans by their Jewish opponents, which had been rehearsed and discussed so extensively by Hottinger.⁷⁸⁶ Far from a being heretical sect, in their religious beliefs and practices the Samaritans were for the most part identical to the Jews, except in their worship at Mount Gerizim, their acceptance of the Pentateuch alone, and their rejection of Pharisaic tradition.⁷⁸⁷ Walton was unsure of the precise circumstances of the Samaritan Pentateuch's origin. What mattered was that there was no doubt that it was, as Morin had put it, a 'genuine' rather than 'spurious' text, whose variant readings should be considered in the same way as the other ancient versions.⁷⁸⁸ The great value of the Samaritan Pentateuch, Walton emphasised, was that it confirmed the reliability of the Hebrew itself, to which it was generally so close despite having been held for some two thousand years by the Jews' enemies.

Walton combined his general defence of the Samaritan Pentateuch with a studied rejection of Ussher's claims regarding the text's purported Dosithean origin. Walton allowed that Dositheus had been the leader of an ancient sect, and would have had the opportunity to distort or corrupt some exemplars of the Samaritan text. Yet, even Ussher's key source, Photius' *Bibliothecae*, showed that Dositheus had many opponents even in Alexandria, let alone among the other Samaritan communities in Shechem, Damascus, Cairo, and elsewhere. It was completely implausible to think he could have corrupted all the extant copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch.⁷⁸⁹ There were further problems with Ussher's account. All ancient testimony agreed that Dositheus was a messianic imposter. Yet, Walton argued, there was not a single plausible change to the Pentateuch in support of any such claim. How persuasive could Ussher's argument be if the text lacked precisely the sort of changes such an imposter would have made?⁷⁹⁰ This was not to say Walton denied there were intentional changes made to the Samaritan text. These however only related to worship on Mount Gerizim, rather than Mount Ebal, which reflected the Samaritans own ancient disagreement with the Jews over the correct place of worship, and had little to do with Dositheus.⁷⁹¹

Walton still had to confront the great problem presented by Morin's work: how to explain the agreement in places between the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch

⁷⁸⁵ Walton, *Prolegomena*, XI. §1-5.

⁷⁸⁶ Walton, *Prolegomena*, XI. §7.

⁷⁸⁷ Walton, *Prolegomena*, XI. §6.

⁷⁸⁸ Walton, *Prolegomena*, XI. §17.

⁷⁸⁹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, XI. §11.

⁷⁹⁰ Walton, *Prolegomena*, XI. §11.

⁷⁹¹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, XI. §6, 11.

against the Hebrew. Ussher's argument had been a solution to this question. The readings shared by the Samaritan text and the Septuagint were a reflection of Dositheus' redaction of the Samaritan text from Hebrew and Greek witnesses. Walton, in contrast, argued that these agreements revealed the ancient Hebrew tradition itself was subject to variation. The agreement of the Samaritan Pentateuch in places with the Septuagint, and in places with the Masoretic Hebrew text, indicated that the Septuagint had followed one ancient reading, and the Hebrew tradition another.⁷⁹² What was needed, Walton argued, was a suitably qualified scholar to collate the Samaritan text with the Hebrew and Septuagint, and then attempt to work out which variants could be traced to variants between these ancient Hebrew codices.⁷⁹³

Walton did not think that the Samaritan text exceeded or equalled the value of the Masoretic Hebrew text as a witness to these pre-Masoretic Hebrew texts. Walton pointedly emphasised this in his discussion of the 'authority and use' of the Samaritan text, where he outlined that the transmission of Samaritan text did not have the same divinely-sanctioned status as that of Hebrew. The Samaritan text had 'no other authority' than that of the 'other ancient versions', which should be emended and improved above all by reference to the Hebrew.⁷⁹⁴ What Walton had done was attempt to strike a delicate balance. He had liberated the Samaritan Pentateuch from the confessional politics of the debate created by Morin and set it in his new *philologia sacra* that allowed Protestant scholars to consider it like the other versions, but he was also adamant that it was not to stand in competition with the Hebrew text.

Walton's account of the Septuagint in *prolegomenon* nine also broke the mould of previous Protestant accounts. Walton underlined from the outset his deep sense of the historical importance of the Septuagint as a monument of the Synagogue and Church, one respected, venerated, and revered by the Hellenistic Jews, Christ and the Apostles, and the Church Fathers. It was the translation that formed the basis for all the other versions – except the Syriac – of ancient Christianity and was vital for understanding true dogma, church rite, and the history of the ancient councils of the Church.⁷⁹⁵ This historical appreciation of the Septuagint's significance was the basis for Walton's

⁷⁹² Walton, *Prolegomena*, XI. §13, 'Quod vero cum Graecis in quibusdam conuenit codex Samaritanus vbi Graeca versio ab Hebraeo discrepat, hoc potius probat Hebraicos codices in minutis quibusdam discrepasse, et LXX. vnam lectionem sequutos fuisse, Masorethas alteram.'

⁷⁹³ Walton, *Prolegomena*, XI. §16.

⁷⁹⁴ Walton, *Prolegomena*, XI. §17, 'Aliam igitur auctoritatem non concedimus eorum Pentateucho quam aliis antiquis exemplaribus, quae iniuria temporum vel scribarum negligentia naeuos et maculas quasdam contrahere poterant, quae ex aliorum codicum collatione maxime Hebraicorum veterumque Interpretum'.

⁷⁹⁵ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §1.

subsequent analysis. Alert to attacks on the work by recent 'critics', Walton attempted to write a comprehensive defence of the Septuagint.⁷⁹⁶ This was aimed at two sets of opponents. First, Walton had to take on critics of the *Letter of Aristeas*, notably Juan Luis Vives and Joseph Scaliger, who had questioned its reliability as an account of the Septuagint's origin. Second, Walton had to mount a sustained refutation of Ussher's work, especially as presented in *De graeca Septuaginta*. Where Ussher had attempted to undermine the history of the Septuagint at every stage of its transmission, Walton endeavoured to rewrite its history to restore it to its rightful place as the most venerable of the ancient versions.

The reliability of the *Letter of Aristeas* had not been an issue in the debate between Cappel and Ussher. As Walton underlined, even Ussher had accepted it as a reliable account of the Septuagint's origin. Earlier scholars had been much more willing to question the letter's account. In his commentary on Augustine's *De civitate Dei* (1522) Vives doubted whether the *Letter of Aristeas* was as ancient as it claimed.⁷⁹⁷ Above all, as Walton emphasised, Scaliger stood as the great opponent of the Aristeian legend.⁷⁹⁸ In the *Thesaurus temporum* (1606) Scaliger had levelled a series of arguments against the work's authority.⁷⁹⁹ Two key claims were historical: the reference Aristeas made to the existence of all the twelve tribes was anachronistic in the third century BCE, when 'ten of them had been deported to Media at the time of Hezekiah'; the librarian, Demetrius of Phalerum, who was depicted in the *Letter of Aristeas* as presiding over the project, had died at the beginning of Ptolemy II Philadelphus's reign.⁸⁰⁰ Scaliger also added a series of stylistic considerations that condemned the text. It was 'obvious to anyone' that the three letters supposedly quoted word-for-word in the text were in fact by the putative author.⁸⁰¹

Walton decisively rejected Scaliger's characterisation of the *Letter of Aristeas*. There was, he argued, hardly any work among Jews or Christians 'more certain or more venerable'.⁸⁰² Walton countered each of Scaliger's specific claims. The fragments of Aristobulus, preserved in Book 13 of Eusebius' *Demonstratio Evangelica*, quite clearly

⁷⁹⁶ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §1.

⁷⁹⁷ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §4.

⁷⁹⁸ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §4.

⁷⁹⁹ See, further, Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger*, vol. II, pp. 706-707.

⁸⁰⁰ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §4. On Demetrius of Phalerum, see, Abraham Wasserstein and David J. Wasserstein, *The Legend of the Septuagint from Antiquity to Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 23-24.

⁸⁰¹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §4.

⁸⁰² Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §4, 'In hac historia, qua nulla fere inter Iudaeos vel Christianos certior vel illustrior'.

agreed with the *Letter of Aristeas* in their account of Demetrius' role.⁸⁰³ On the question of the twelve tribes, Walton argued that even Ussher allowed the Aristeian account was plausible: Salmanassar had not removed all of the tribes, but left some of the inhabitants, and it was their descendants who were referred to in the letter.⁸⁰⁴ To rebut Scaliger's statements on the style of the letter Walton appealed to the judgement of Scaliger's contemporary, Isaac Casaubon. Walton printed a series of notes made by Casaubon.⁸⁰⁵ In them Casaubon demonstrated his evident respect for Aristeas, that 'most ancient' author, whom no student of Greek language or antiquity would 'regret' having read.⁸⁰⁶ Indeed, Casaubon claimed, he had no doubt that 'he [Aristeas] is the very one who was present at the events recorded here'.⁸⁰⁷

Walton combined the refutation of Scaliger with a justification of the Aristeian account. Rather than simply repeat the Aristeian description Walton constructed a version of the letter that justified it as a genuine historical account, one which disavowed the legends that had accreted to the story in the works of the Church Fathers.⁸⁰⁸ Walton rejected, for example, the claim first made by Justin, that the translators had been separated into individual cells, and from these miraculously agreed in their translations.⁸⁰⁹ Instead, as the *Letter of Aristeas* itself revealed, the translation had taken place in a single large hall, where the elders were able to argue and discuss whether the translation was correct.⁸¹⁰ What Walton did have to contend with were the more remarkable aspects of the Aristeian account. Could one believe that the translation was completed in seventy-two days as Aristeas, followed by Josephus and others, asserted? Walton thought so. He posited that one had to imagine each translator being given one chapter per day to translate, and at the end of each day's labour all these were read aloud and then agreed on or changed.⁸¹¹

As Walton's account developed his preoccupations shifted, and he turned from Scaliger's specific objections to a general refutation of Ussher's work. Even here the

⁸⁰³ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §4.

⁸⁰⁴ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §4.

⁸⁰⁵ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §4. These notes are now OBL, Ms. Casaubon 60, fols. 247^r, 253^r. They were sent to Walton by Isaac Casaubon's son, Meric Casaubon.

⁸⁰⁶ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §4, quotation from Casaubon, 'Credimus admodum antiquum esse, et plane eiusmodi, quem non legisse poeniteat studiosus, aut Graecae linguae aut antiquitatis'.

⁸⁰⁷ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §4, quotation from Casaubon, 'Itaque ille ipse est qui rebus gestis interfuit, quae hic memorantur'.

⁸⁰⁸ See, generally, Wasserstein and Wasserstein, *Legend of the Septuagint*, pp. 97-131.

⁸⁰⁹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §9. On Justin, see, Wasserstein and Wasserstein, *Legend of the Septuagint*, pp. 98-100.

⁸¹⁰ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §9.

⁸¹¹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §10.

Aristean account gave Walton some problems. This was nowhere clearer than on the crucial question of whether the Seventy had translated the whole of the Old Testament or solely – as Aristean evidently asserted – the Hebrew law. Walton argued that the evidence here was equivocal. Those, such as Ussher, who argued that only the Pentateuch had been translated had done so principally to undermine the Septuagint's authority, rather than establish the truth of the question.⁸¹² Against this view Walton pursued two contrasting lines of argument. First, he amassed other ancient testimony that indicated the whole of the Bible had been translated: only Jerome among the Church Fathers had doubted as much and even he only appeared to be repeating Jewish testimony.⁸¹³ Second, Walton attempted to underplay the significance of the question, and put forward a view reminiscent of Cappel's: since he held the Septuagint was a human translation, it ultimately did not matter whether the whole work had been accomplished by the Seventy, or in the century which followed.⁸¹⁴ The key point was that it had always been used by the ancient Jews, Christ and the Apostles, and the early Church.⁸¹⁵

Walton rejected Ussher's claims that any other ancient Greek translations had usurped the place of the Septuagint. He underlined the degree to which Ussher's arguments, although detailed, were almost entirely conjectural, frequently lacking a single piece of ancient testimony to support them.⁸¹⁶ There was simply no evidence, for example, relating to the existence of any Greek translation of the Old Testament other than the Septuagint in the period before Christ.⁸¹⁷ Walton opposed Ussher's account of the version supposedly deposited in the library at Alexandria following its destruction in 48 BCE. There were any number of grounds on which one could propose an alternative version of events that was more probable than Ussher's. The Septuagint could have been removed during the fire itself. Alternatively, following the fire it could have been replaced by a second faithful copy found among the Hellenistic Jews, not a poorly executed more recent translation. On this latter point Walton felt no one 'in sound mind' could truly doubt Tertullian's testimony in the way Ussher had.⁸¹⁸

Walton similarly argued that Ussher's animosity towards the Septuagint, rather than his objective appraisal of the evidence, had determined his views on Origen's

⁸¹² Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §11.

⁸¹³ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §11.

⁸¹⁴ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §11.

⁸¹⁵ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §11.

⁸¹⁶ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §18.

⁸¹⁷ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §18.

⁸¹⁸ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §18.

Hexapla. In contrast to Ussher, Walton portrayed Origen as a serious textual-critic, one who, having recognised the problems that had entered the common Greek text of his day, retrieved the manuscript of the Septuagint from the Library at Alexandria.⁸¹⁹ It was this, as the unanimous testimony of Jerome, Eusebius, and Ruffinus confirmed, that had then been placed in the Septuagint column of the Hexapla. Walton also emphasised that there was no evidence, as Ussher had supposed, that the Hexapla was so called because of the number of versions, rather than the number of columns.⁸²⁰ Contemporary manuscript evidence, as much as ancient testimony, could confirm this point. The Hexaplaric annotations taken from the Barbarini manuscript of the Prophets, or the material published by Masius, presented four different Greek texts, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Septuagint, with no references to an additional version of the Septuagint.⁸²¹

Walton's assessment of the contemporary manuscript evidence shared little of Ussher's scepticism. As we have seen, Walton's sense of the value of Codex Vaticanus and Codex Alexandrinus had led him to print both in the main volumes of the Polyglot Bible. This reflected his belief that the two texts represented 'genuine' versions of the Septuagint. Walton underplayed the degree to which either manuscript had been interpolated by material from Theodotion, as Ussher had claimed. Indeed, Walton argued, they should be thought to represent, at least for the most part, the text of the Septuagint as it had stood in the time of the early Church until that of Jerome.⁸²² Walton consequently stressed the value he hoped scholars would find in comparing the text of Codex Vaticanus with the running collation of Codex Alexandrinus.⁸²³ What remained somewhat equivocal in Walton's work was precisely how he thought scholars should use this evidence. He did not directly criticise Morin or Ussher's assessments of this evidence, nor did he offer a precise method for the use of Codex Vaticanus and Codex Alexandrinus or additional Hexaplaric remains in order to work back to an even earlier version of the Septuagint.

Walton's history of the Septuagint justified it as a valuable ancient version, one that could be used like any other to emend the Hebrew. What Walton still had to clarify

⁸¹⁹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §21.

⁸²⁰ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §23.

⁸²¹ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §23.

⁸²² Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §32, 34. In relation to Codex Alexandrinus, for example, Walton argued: 'Discrepantia inuenitur maxime in propriis nominibus, in quibus inter omnes libros antiquos discrimen saepius occurrit. Haec tamen non efficiunt, vt non sit verae et genuinae Versionis Sept. exemplar, prout apud antiquos Ecclesiae Patres extabat. Mixtam enim Editionem non esse, probant additamentorum Theodotionis sub asteriscis absentia, et eorum quae obelo notata sunt praesentia'.

⁸²³ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §34.

was the historical relationship between the Septuagint and the Hebrew text and, following that, the critical implications of this. As in the case of the Samaritan Pentateuch, Walton's account here subtly modified Cappel's earlier conjecture regarding the pre-Masoretic history of the Hebrew text. Like Cappel, Walton allowed that the pre-Antiochene Hebrew scholars had been less diligent than those who followed.⁸²⁴ What mattered for understanding the history of the Septuagint and Hebrew text, was that each had also become the property of different Jewish – and eventually Christian – groups. The text now known as the Masoretic text was, as we have seen, in reality the descendent of the post-Antiochene Jewish text used by the Pharisees. This text represented only one version of the pre-Antiochene Hebrew text, a second of which, Walton argued, was given by the Septuagint. While Walton could therefore refer the reader to the litany of examples of variant readings in Book 4 of the *Critica sacra*, he nonetheless differed from Cappel regarding the historical origin of these differences.

Walton did not avoid the implications of his account: in some cases the Septuagint preserved the genuine reading of pre-Antiochene Hebrew texts in contrast to the Masoretic. Perhaps the best example of this was in the case of biblical chronology. Walton was particularly critical of recent contributions to the subject. In July 1656 he wrote to Lightfoot that the more he read, the less he was satisfied, above all for the chronology of the 'first times, wherein many, I fear, have wearied themselves to little purpose'.⁸²⁵ Candidates for Walton's misgivings probably included Ussher's recent *Annales* (1650-54), which presented a chronology chiefly according to the Masoretic Hebrew text.⁸²⁶ Yet, Walton's reservations may well have extended to the chronology included in the prefatory material of the London Polyglot itself. There, Walton had included a biblical chronology compiled by Cappel.⁸²⁷ This was an abridged version of his recently-published *Chronologia sacra* (1655).⁸²⁸ Drawing his materials from Scaliger, Cappel had attempted to reconcile the divergent chronologies found in the Masoretic Hebrew, Septuagint, and Samaritan texts.⁸²⁹ Cappel argued that both the Septuagint and Samaritan

⁸²⁴ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §59.

⁸²⁵ Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. 13, §XVII. Brian Walton to John Lightfoot, 23 July 1656, p. 360.

⁸²⁶ On Ussher's chronological work, see generally, James Barr, 'Why the world was created in 4004 B.C.: Archbishop Ussher and biblical chronology', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* LXVI (1985), pp. 575-608; Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', pp. 59-60.

⁸²⁷ Louis Cappel, 'Chronologia sacra', in *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta*, vol. I, first pagination, pp. 1-30. As Walton reported to Lightfoot, Cappel himself had offered this piece to Walton together with a description of the First Temple. See, Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. XIII, §22. Brian Walton to John Lightfoot, 2 February 1657/8, p. 364.

⁸²⁸ Louis Cappel, *Chronologia sacra* (Paris: Edmond Martin, 1655). On Cappel's work chronological work, which has not been extensively studied, see Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', p. 59.

⁸²⁹ Cappel, *Chronologia sacra*, sig. [a iiij].

versions showed signs of intentional alteration. The Septuagint, in particular, had had its chronology of the patriarchs extended, either by the translators themselves or by a later 'corrector', in order to avoid suspicion that they reached virility too early, considering their long lifespans.⁸³⁰

In contrast to Ussher and Cappel, Walton was deeply sceptical about the chronology of the Masoretic Hebrew text.⁸³¹ He gave a series of reasons for his suspicion: the Masoretic Hebrew chronology, for example, was too short to accommodate the growth of the Assyrian kingdom or the increase of the Jewish population in Egypt.⁸³² Other points against the Masoretic chronology could be drawn from the chronologies of the patriarchs. Chapter 3 in the Gospel of Luke presented a genealogy of Jesus that included Cainan, the 'son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem'. In the corresponding place in the Old Testament at Genesis 10:22, where the sons of Shem were given, there was no mention of Cainan in the Masoretic Hebrew text, but he did appear in the Samaritan and Septuagint texts. As Walton put it, here the 'Holy Evangelist' himself appeared to prefer the Septuagint to the Hebrew.⁸³³

In support of the Septuagint's chronology Walton also appealed to the testimony of Josephus, which on several occasions appeared to draw on sources much closer to it than the contemporary Masoretic text. Josephus had impeccable credentials: he was a Jewish priest and had undoubtedly consulted the Jewish priestly archives.⁸³⁴ Indeed, as Josephus himself put it in the introduction to his response to Apion, he had drawn his materials from the sacred texts just as he had found them. This was crucial. Here was evidence that came directly from a source that might otherwise be thought to support the Masoretic text, the text of the Pharisees. What this showed, Walton averred, was that in those days the readings of the Hebrew manuscripts had varied.⁸³⁵ There may well have been those who favoured the Masoretic text, but there still existed manuscripts in Hebrew that supported the reading of the Septuagint. Although he would not rule *ex cathedra* on the question, and admitted certainty was elusive, Walton concluded that on the basis of the available evidence he preferred the Septuagint's chronology to the Hebrew.⁸³⁶

⁸³⁰ Cappel, 'Chronologia sacra', pp. 2-3.

⁸³¹ On Walton's chronology, see also, Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', pp. 61-62.

⁸³² Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §63.

⁸³³ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §64.

⁸³⁴ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §60.

⁸³⁵ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §59, 61-62.

⁸³⁶ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §65-66.

Even before the *Prolegomena* had been printed, Walton's text-critical decision to print the versions as they stood, without editing them to meet the Hebrew, provoked some objections. In a letter circulated to subscribers and delivered with the first volume of the work Walton warned against the 'cavils' of 'idle and envious persons', who thought the transpositions of some chapters and verses in the different versions were errors, since they differed from the Hebrew.⁸³⁷ This was hardly the case. In fact, although in the Septuagint at Exodus Chapters 36-38 and the Samaritan Hebrew at Exodus Chapter 30 had a series of such transpositions, in Walton's view this in fact 'shew [sic] the Copies to be ancient and genuine'.⁸³⁸

The first published attack on Walton's work indicated just how some Protestant theologians were beginning to view recent contributions in biblical criticism. This came in the form of a treatise included in John Owen's *A Vindication of the Purity and Integrity of the Hebrew and Greek Texts of the Old and New Testament* (1658).⁸³⁹ Owen heavily criticised Walton and his collaborators: like the Catholic Church, they had detracted from the 'fulnesse and perfection' of the Bible's 'original' texts.⁸⁴⁰ Owen's overriding concern was that Walton's recourse to the evidence of the other versions might bring into doubt the authority of a text he considered to be original. As this further implies, Owen's account extended to a restatement of the fundamental pillars of the *philologia sacra* as earlier defended by Hottinger and Buxtorf II, which Cappel and Walton had undermined in their efforts to prove the ancient priority of the Samaritan to the Hebrew square script, and the suggestion that the vowel points were a recent edition to the text.⁸⁴¹

Walton soon replied to Owen's work. Like Owen's, Walton's *The Considerator Considered* was also written in English, with Walton specifically criticising Owen for exposing the erudite work of scholars to 'popular hatred'.⁸⁴² Divided into two parts, the first addressed the question of the dating of the vowel points, the second the place of the ancient versions in the context of the Hebrew. All told, it constituted a complete restatement of the positions of the *Prolegomena*. Where Walton went beyond that work

⁸³⁷ Brian Walton, 'An advertisement to the Subscribers and others, unto whom any Copies of the first volume of the Bible shall be delivered', in Todd, *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 70.

⁸³⁸ Brian Walton, 'An advertisement to the Subscribers', pp. 69-70.

⁸³⁹ John Owen, 'The Integrity & Purity of the Hebrew and Greek Text of the Scripture, with Considerations on the *Prolegomena* and *Appendix* to the late *Biblia Polyglotta*', in his *Of the Divine Originall, Authority, self-evidencing Light, and Power of the Scriptures* (Oxford: Thomas Robinson, 1659).

⁸⁴⁰ Owen, *Of the Divine Originall*, sigs. *2^r-*3^v.

⁸⁴¹ Owen, *Of the Divine Originall*, sigs. A^r-A3^r.

⁸⁴² Walton, *Considerator considered*, p. 21.

was in the degree to which he presented his work as a defence of Protestant biblical scholarship in general. Without dwelling on their alternative accounts of the variant readings, Walton was especially keen to emphasise the parallels between his work and that of Ussher and Buxtorf II.⁸⁴³ Both these scholars, Walton argued, had likewise acknowledged that the Hebrew text was not as it had been in its autographs and had ultimately recognised the need for critical intervention.⁸⁴⁴ Above all, he argued that when Buxtorf II's planned edition of the Bible was published, 'the superstitious conceit of the Hebrew Copies not varying in any thing will clearly vanish'.⁸⁴⁵ As we have already seen, however, Buxtorf II's work would unfortunately never appear.

Walton's work reveals the degree to which the arguments and implications of Cappel's *Critica sacra* were by no means incompatible with a thoroughly Protestant approach to biblical scholarship. Indeed, it is not implausible to suggest that it was precisely Walton's deepest ambition to convince at one stroke all his fellow Protestant scholars, be they the partisans of Cappel, Ussher, or Buxtorf II. To this end, it is much to be regretted that although we have Buxtorf II's fulsome praise for the first three volumes of the London Polyglot, we lack his replies to Walton following his reading of the *Prolegomena*. Further studies will be necessary to see more generally how far an approach similar to Walton's was subsequently adopted, especially among continental scholars amenable to Cappel's work, such as Samuel Bochart, Jean Daillé, Louis Tronchin, and Étienne Le Moyne, and even more so among the English scholars and churchmen, such as John Pearson and Edward Pococke. The context in which these scholars considered Walton's work, however, would be quite different to the one in which he had planned it. Even as the *Prolegomena* was first circulating, two scholars, Jean Morin and Isaac Vossius, would publish a series of works that threatened the delicate balance that Walton's work had attempted to strike.

⁸⁴³ Walton, *Considerator considered*, pp. 51-57, 124-34. At p. 275, Walton even claimed, for example, the Buxtorf II would have expressed genuine agreement with Cappel even on the question of the age of the Hebrew script, for example, were it not for the memory of his Father.

⁸⁴⁴ Walton, *Considerator considered*, see esp. pp. 46-57.

⁸⁴⁵ Walton, *Considerator considered*, pp. 132-134.

II. Jean Morin and the history of Jewish learning

When Jean Morin published the *Exercitationes biblicae* in 1633, he not only indicated that Part Two, on the Hebrew text, would soon be forthcoming, but also provided a table of contents. This work did not appear. Possibly sidelined by the debate with de Muis, Morin published nothing further on the Hebrew or Samaritan texts throughout the 1640s. Indeed, not even the attacks on his work by Buxtorf II in the *Dissertationes philologico-theologico* or by Hottinger in the *Exercitationes anti-morinianae* prompted a response. Often preoccupied with his studies in positive theology, it was only in the late 1650s that Morin finally published the results of thirty years of work and reflection on the Hebrew and Samaritan texts. In Part Two of the *Exercitationes biblicae* (1660) Morin presented a monumental historical dissection of the Jewish scholarly tradition that posed a serious challenge to the authority of Jewish learning and the reliability of the Hebrew Bible.

1

In January 1647, Buxtorf II wrote to Hottinger emphasising how 'eagerly' he awaited Morin's imminent letter.⁸⁴⁶ Correspondence between Morin and Buxtorf II was orchestrated by Mersenne, who had first suggested the idea to Buxtorf II, and then acted as a go-between for the exchange of letters.⁸⁴⁷ In Buxtorf II's initial letter to Morin, he focused almost entirely on those subjects in sacred learning that divided them most acutely: the age of the Hebrew script, the reliability of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and the age of the Hebrew vowel points. On the subject of the antiquity of the Hebrew script he rehearsed the arguments of the 'Dissertatio de literis Hebraeorum', reiterating that Morin's preference for the Samaritan script overlooked the near-unanimous Jewish testimony in favour of the antiquity of the Square Hebrew script.⁸⁴⁸ Willing to admit variant readings in the Hebrew text, Buxtorf II took issue with Morin for claiming this brought into doubt the entire 'purity and sincerity of the Hebrew [Scriptures]'.⁸⁴⁹ Above all, since he had recently finished the *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, Buxtorf II focused on the question of the vowel points. His central point focused on

⁸⁴⁶ ZZB, Ms. F 45, Johannes Buxtorf II to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, 20 January 1647, fol. 173v.

⁸⁴⁷ De Waard and Beaulieu, *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne*, vol. XIV, §1453. Marin Mersenne to Johannes Buxtorf II, 31 March 1646, pp. 182-183.

⁸⁴⁸ BLM, Ashburnham 1877, Johannes Buxtorf II to Jean Morin, 6 August 1646, fol. 63^{r-v}.

⁸⁴⁹ BLM, Ashburnham 1877, Johannes Buxtorf II to Jean Morin, 6 August 1646, fol. 63v.

Jewish learning: could Morin provide any Jewish testimony earlier than Levita that supported the late-dating of the Hebrew vowel points?⁸⁵⁰

Morin's lengthy reply to Buxtorf II was cast in the image of his letter to Patrick Young ten years earlier, its measured tone masking a powerful rebuttal. While accepting some of the small corrections Buxtorf II suggested to some of his rabbinic translations, Morin nonetheless stood firm on the crucial questions. He reiterated, for example, his position on the textual criticism of the Bible: one could not assume that a variant reading between the Hebrew Old Testament or Greek New Testament and the other ancient versions necessarily meant one could assume the fault lay with the translation.⁸⁵¹

What Morin grasped was that to undermine Buxtorf II's arguments one would have to confront Buxtorf II on his own ground, and show how the evidence from Jewish testimony Buxtorf II relied on throughout could be turned against him. Nowhere was this more so than on the question of the vowel points. Buxtorf II, Morin argued, was incorrect to think that Levita was the only Jewish scholar who held this opinion when in fact the majority of the Jewish scholars who lived from 1000-1300 CE had also embraced it.⁸⁵² On first glance this appears a somewhat unlikely claim, as Buxtorf II's own marginal annotations to Morin's letter correctly showed, some of these had quite clearly supported Buxtorf II's position.⁸⁵³ Where Morin claimed Kimhi and Abravanel in favour of the late dating of the points, Buxtorf II scrawled in the margin: 'Nihil minus: nam illi diserté contrarium profitentur sententiam'.⁸⁵⁴

Morin's point was more sophisticated than it appeared. He was attempting to shift the terms of the debate: rather than make it an argument about the origin of the vowel points, he instead made it a question about the history of Jewish learning, one that focused on known facts regarding the dates of the Masoretes' existence. Jewish grammatical works such as Aben Ezra and others did indeed indicate that they believed the Masoretes lived later than the Rabbis.⁸⁵⁵ In the draft version of the letter Morin noted a view he would later put forward in Part II of the *Exercitationes biblicae*, arguing that parts of the Talmud suggested it was as late as 700 CE, which made it possible to argue the

⁸⁵⁰ BLM, Ashburnham 1877, Johannes Buxtorf II to Jean Morin, 6 August 1646, fol. 64^r.

⁸⁵¹ BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 165^r. There is also a version of this letter in the *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*. See, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXX. Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, pp. 349-396, which differs in some important details from the version Morin sent to Buxtorf II.

⁸⁵² BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 165^r.

⁸⁵³ BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 165^r.

⁸⁵⁴ BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 165^v, marginal annotation in Buxtorf II's hand.

⁸⁵⁵ BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 165^v.

Masoretes could not be placed much earlier than 800 CE.⁸⁵⁶ Perhaps realising this gave Buxtorf II a concrete point to argue against, in the version Morin posted he removed all reference to these dates, saying only that the testimony he adduced demonstrated 'the Masoretes are later than the Talmudic scholars'.⁸⁵⁷ Following this, Morin dismissed the Zohar as a much later work than Buxtorf II supposed and challenged him to find a single clear reference to the vowel points in the Talmud.⁸⁵⁸ Finally, Morin put it: compare and then admit the similarities that could thus be adduced between unpointed Hebrew manuscripts of the sixth or seventh centuries and their contemporaneous Latin and Greek counterparts, 'written as if a single word'.⁸⁵⁹

Morin's argument constituted a reconstruction of the history of Jewish scholarship. His first point was based on Cappel's *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*: not only did the writers before Jerome never mention the points, the versions they produced actually demonstrated the text must have been vocalised differently. His second noted that the tractate Masekhet Soferim went through every detail about Jewish textual preparation but made no mention of the vowel points.⁸⁶⁰ These two facts established, Morin outlined a history of Jewish learning in the late antique and early medieval period. There were at least two groups of Masoretes. The first, in the West, had made a recension of the text, and worked on what became the Masoretic apparatus. Their texts were then inspected by the Babylonians, who noted the two hundred or so variants; these would become the 'Western' and 'Eastern' readings. Later Masoretes revised these texts. They spoke Aramaic and Syriac but, living under Arab dominion, saw how the unvocalised text was being mistranslated into Arabic and therefore invented the points in order to fix the text's meaning. In this they were not without precursors: Morin thought it more than likely that in this they were inspired by pointed Arabic texts. Those most

⁸⁵⁶ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXX. Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, pp. 370-371.

⁸⁵⁷ BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 165^v, 'Hinc αυτομάτως, nullasque per ambages colligitur Masorethas Talmudicis posteriores esse'. For the deleted passage, see, Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXX. Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, pp. 370-371, which reads: 'Aliter quam ut dictum est de Masorethis sentire non poterant, antiqui illi Grammatici, cum Masoretharum aetati proximi essent. Cum enim Talmud ante annum 700 vulgari apud Judaeos non potuerit, certe primi Masorethae, qui literas & dictiones sacras recensuerunt, vix annum à Christo octingentesimum antecedere potuerunt'.

⁸⁵⁸ BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 166^r.

⁸⁵⁹ BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 165^v.

⁸⁶⁰ BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 167^r. Note, this passage also confirms the claim that Morin removed the dates in order to leave Buxtorf II without concrete points to dispute, other than the fact that the Tractate was later than the Talmud. The draft, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXX. Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, pp. 380, reads, 'Secundum argumentum ex libro Sophrim, qui post publicatum Talmud compositus est, hoc est intra annum Christi 700 & 800'. The version sent, fol. 167^r, '[S]ecundum argum. petitur ex libro Sophrim, qui post publicatum Talmud compositus est'.

responsible for this were Levita's Tiberian Masoretes, whose work thereafter circulated throughout the Jewish world, culminating in the work of ben Asher and ben Nephthali. Once this was seen, Morin argued, one could also explain the extraordinary effervescence of Jewish grammatical treatises in the early part of the millennium, based on the now-pointed texts.⁸⁶¹ Buxtorf II rejected the way in which Morin had changed the terms of the question: '[O]ne thing is the invention of the points, another the work of the Masoretes'.⁸⁶² Yet it is not clear that he, like Young earlier, could persuasively respond.

2

Although Morin did not publish his work on the Hebrew and Samaritan text following his debate with de Muis, he had not stopped working on and considering these problems. It is true that there are some indications that Part Two of the *Exercitationes biblicae* was well advanced by the late 1630s. In June 1644 Morin wrote to Holstenius that his 'vast' work on the Hebrew text and Jewish tradition had been finished for nearly seven years.⁸⁶³ Yet, the references to works published throughout the following decades, including Cappel's *Critica sacra* and Walton's *Prolegomena*, show that Morin did not stop revising the work.⁸⁶⁴ During this time he also continued to extend his research on the history of the vowel points, consulting Ecchellensis – then back in Rome – for evidence regarding the vocalisation of other Oriental languages.⁸⁶⁵

What motivated Morin to finally publish his work on Jewish themes is unfortunately unclear, although it is tempting to speculate he was prompted by the contribution he thought they made to the debates between Buxtorf II, Ussher, Cappel, and Walton. The first of these publications was the *Opuscula hebraeo-samaritana* (1657), in which Morin published the collations of the various editions of the Samaritan Pentateuch he had gathered in the early 1630s and also added a series of shorter dissertations, including one that put forward the account of the origin of the vowel points based on his study of the Jewish grammarians, expounding at length the argument he had put to

⁸⁶¹ BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 167^r-169^r.

⁸⁶² BUB, G I 62, Jean Morin to Johannes Buxtorf II, 13 November 1646, fol. 165^r, '[A]liud est punctationis inventis, aliud Masorethicum [sic] opus', marginal annotation in Buxtorf II's hand.

⁸⁶³ BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Jean Morin to Lucas Holstenius, 3 June 1644, fol. 105^v.

⁸⁶⁴ Jean Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae* (Paris: G. Meturas, 1660), see, for example, pp. 392, 608, 623, 631.

⁸⁶⁵ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §LXXVIII. Jean Morin to Abraham Ecchellensis, 8 October 1653, pp. 422-423.

Buxtorf II ten years before.⁸⁶⁶ The second was Part Two of the *Exercitationes biblicae*, finally published in 1660 after Morin's death in 1659.⁸⁶⁷

The work constituted in large part a recapitulation of the main themes of Morin's earlier publications. Throughout the reader was left in little doubt that his main objective was to undermine the authority of the Hebrew text and the status of Jewish learning more generally, as part of a comprehensive assault on the sources of Protestant religion. Morin had continued to refine his arguments. Categorically denying any instances of intentional Jewish corruption, Morin instead put forward a critical and historical discussion of the shortcomings of the Hebrew tradition. Morin took aim at the most recent Protestant attempts to square good critical practice with the demands of confessional belief.

Morin struck at Cappel's claim – notably repeated by Walton – that Protestants could confront all the variant readings Scripture presented, since those points that were essential to salvation were immune from error. Morin underlined that at least two places of pre-eminent Christological importance, Genesis 49:10 and Psalm 22:17, had both been subject to minor scribal changes that had potentially immense significance for Christian belief.⁸⁶⁸

Morin broke new ground in the detail of his treatment of the Jewish tradition as a whole. Rather than limit his analysis to the Bible alone Morin now presented a sweeping account of the whole of Jewish learning as it had existed in the era following the destruction of the Second Temple, taking in order the Jewish historiography of the period, the social and political history of the Jews from the first to the eighth centuries, the dates at which the principal texts of rabbinic Judaism were composed, and the development of the Masoretic Bible and its attendant apparatus.

The purpose behind this vast array of learning was frequently transparent. Morin undertook an extensive program of redating designed to undercut the authority of the texts of rabbinic Judaism. According to Morin, early Christian scholars of Hebrew – perhaps too inclined to unquestioningly accept the views of their Jewish teachers – had vastly overestimated the antiquity of almost every prominent work of the Jewish

⁸⁶⁶ Jean Morin, *Opuscula hebraeo-samaritica*. Morin sent copies of this work to Rome. See BAV, Barb. Lat. 6510, Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, 8 February 1658, fol. 122^r; BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Jean Morin to Lucas Holstenius, 1 March 1658, fol. 108^r. Barberini had received his by May, see BNF, Baluze 209, Francesco Barberini to Jean Morin, 6 May 1658, fol. 151^r. For the work on the vowel points, see, Morin, *Opuscula hebraeo-samaritana*, pp. 226-258 [first pagination].

⁸⁶⁷ On the publication of this work, see, BUB, G I 62, Jean Banneret to Johannes Buxtorf II, 7 October 1660, fols. 214^r-215^r.

⁸⁶⁸ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 631-32.

tradition, including the Mishnah, the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds.⁸⁶⁹ Morin employed two forms of argument to estimate the actual date of a given work. First, he examined whether works that were thought to be extremely early were referred to by Christian scholars familiar with contemporary Jewish life and practice, such as Origen, Epiphanius, and Jerome.⁸⁷⁰ Second, he looked for moments of anachronism, such as references to the Goths or the Turks. Using such arguments, Morin argued that the Mishnah was unknown before 400 CE and most probably only completed by around 500 CE, that the Jerusalem Talmud dated to the early seventh century, and the Babylonian Talmud to the time of the division between Karaites and Rabbinic Jews in the early eighth century CE.⁸⁷¹ Morin proceeded systematically through the whole Jewish literary and scholarly tradition, arguing that text after text, the Aramaic paraphrases, the halakhic midrashim, the Zohar, and many others, were much later than commonly supposed.⁸⁷²

Morin's work was based on a serious thesis regarding the history of Jewish learning. His central claim was that the Jews were fundamentally unreliable as authorities on their own history. Historical writing, Morin underlined, was a late development among the Jews, with few genuine works predating 1000 CE.⁸⁷³ Those that did pre-date the millenium were problematic since they provided no guide to events that followed those narrated by Josephus. The *Seder Olam Rabbah* had little real history in it that was not simply taken from Scripture.⁸⁷⁴ The *Josippon* fared similarly: it could be dated to the fifth or sixth century and did not cover in any detail Jewish history following the fall of the Second Temple.⁸⁷⁵ Even when historical writing developed amongst the Jews, it did not do so with the sophistication required. Abraham ibn Daud's *Sefer ha-Qabbalah* and Abraham Zacuto's *Sefer yuhasin* were more like '*catenae*' that connected Jewish traditions of learning, rather than true historical works.⁸⁷⁶

What this allowed Morin to argue was two things. First, it meant that he was able underline how little scholars could firmly know about Jewish history, especially in the era between the Second Temple and 1000 CE.⁸⁷⁷ Lack of information was compounded by scholarly limitations. This could include the failure of Jewish historians to consult works

⁸⁶⁹ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), p. 291.

⁸⁷⁰ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), see, for example, of this sometimes quite repetitive practice, pp. 295-97, 298-99, 301-303.

⁸⁷¹ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 297, 298-99, 303-04.

⁸⁷² Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 318-42, 349-350, 358-369.

⁸⁷³ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), p. 223.

⁸⁷⁴ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 230-32.

⁸⁷⁵ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 233-34.

⁸⁷⁶ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 242-44.

⁸⁷⁷ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 250-57.

in other languages.⁸⁷⁸ More seriously, it meant Jewish historians frequently accepted errors that vitiated their work as a whole, as Morin discussed in turn the problems caused by Jewish discussions of Persian chronology, the legendary ages some rabbis were said to have attained, and inaccuracies concerning the chronology of Christ.⁸⁷⁹ The most important implication of Morin's work was that it had unsettled the authority of the history of Jewish beliefs and practices: works thought to be ancient were more modern, and the sources used to study them rarely reliable, meaning that one could no longer know who their original authors were.

Morin's second argument pushed in a different direction. Even while explicitly critical of Jewish historians he still – perhaps inadvertently – demonstrated that it was possible to think in more historically accurate terms about the history of Jewish learning. Underlying his work was the recognition that the lack of detailed historical writing in the Jewish tradition was not necessarily the product of ignorance, but rather the result of other interests: Jews in the period following the Second Temple were more concerned with legal or mystical thought than historical writing.⁸⁸⁰ Other preoccupations would only emerge in time, above all the rise of critical and grammatical studies following the Jewish encounter with Arabic traditions.⁸⁸¹ The result was that – however partially – Morin had constructed a suggestive narrative of the development of Jewish learning based on an extensive and critical interrogation of the original sources.

It was on the basis of this historical account that Morin was able to present an extensive – if frequently extremely conjectural – discussion of the formation of the Masoretic text of the Bible and its apparatus. Morin's encounter with the scholarship of the 1640s and 1650s appears to have significantly altered his views. In the contents page to the 1633 edition of the *Exercitationes biblicae* Morin had listed his discussion of the Hebrew Bible and the Masorah solely in terms of errors and mistakes that entered the text. In the 1660 publication, in contrast, not only was Morin's treatment more extensive, it was also much less directly polemical: rather than focus solely on the Masoretes' work in terms of the errors they introduced into the text, his approach was in many ways very close to Walton's, as he discussed each feature of the Masoretic text as the product of Hebrew criticism.

⁸⁷⁸ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), p. 261.

⁸⁷⁹ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 274, 280-3, 288.

⁸⁸⁰ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), p. 350.

⁸⁸¹ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 430, 525-29.

Morin's account consequently presented a telling collection of contrasts, as his continued desire to undermine Protestant Scripture stood in some tension with his recognition of the genuine achievements of the Masoretes. Two examples illustrate this. In his discussion of the vowel points Morin highlighted the distance between biblical Hebrew and the time of the Masoretes to weaken the authority of the tradition.⁸⁸² Yet he also drew on Levita's work to explain that the Masoretes succeeded in bringing to perfection a system that preserved the correct pronunciation of the text in an era when Jews lived in societies increasingly dominated by Arabic.⁸⁸³ Morin still lamented the number of errors that had entered the text itself. Yet, he now acknowledged how far the Masoretes had joined a genuine reverence for the text with an application to its critical improvement.⁸⁸⁴ The *ketiv-queri* variant readings should be taken as a genuine attempt by these scholars to leave the consonantal text unaltered, while selecting the most probable reading when faced with a multiplicity of choices presented by separate works composed on the subject.⁸⁸⁵ It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Morin's acknowledgement on the final page of the work, that on occasion one could emend the text of the ancient versions using the Masoretic Hebrew text, was based on a combination of the reading of Cappel's *Critica sacra* with a newfound appreciation of the work of the Masoretes.⁸⁸⁶

What was important about Part Two of the *Exercitationes biblicae* was often less Morin's extensive and frequently conjectural interpretation of individual problems, and more the combination of the scope of his ambition and the way in which he had begun to treat the history of Jewish learning. Morin's work finally provided a complement to his earlier study of the Greek and Latin texts and traditions, setting the Hebrew Scriptures and the history of Jewish scholarship firmly within a detailed historical account. Further, Morin had done this while also putting forward an intriguing and potentially persuasive outline of the development of Jewish learning in the first millenium after Christ, and the place of the Masoretic text within it. The result was an ambiguous achievement. There could be no disguising Morin's ambition to undermine the Jewish tradition at every point, and in so doing replace the texts of his Protestant contemporaries with those of the Church. Yet, Morin had also revealed that a thorough analysis of the Masoretes' work could not avoid a grudging acknowledgement of their genuine critical practice. Subsequent scholars would take up and use both sides of Morin's work. Where Isaac

⁸⁸² Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 509-10.

⁸⁸³ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), p. 544.

⁸⁸⁴ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 572-73, 604-05.

⁸⁸⁵ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 604-07.

⁸⁸⁶ Morin, *Exercitationes ecclesiasticae et biblicae*, (second pagination), pp. 633-34.

Vossius would mount a defence of the Septuagint based in part on Morin's demolition of Hebrew learning, Richard Simon would in contrast take Morin's historical approach to the Bible and Jewish learning and his critical acknowledgement of the Masoretes' achievement to craft a new history of the Hebrew text.

III. After Walton and Morin: Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint

1

In 1669 Herbert Thorndike wrote to John Lightfoot to seek his opinion on Part Two of the *Exercitationes biblicae*. It was undeniable, Thorndike admitted, that Morin had made a powerful case. Morin's work had conclusively revealed the 'gross ignorance of the Jews', even on the subject of their own history.⁸⁸⁷ It no longer seemed possible to hold that, with the exception of the Talmud, the Jews' books were written by the authors whom they claimed.⁸⁸⁸ Yet all was not lost. Although Morin plainly hoped to deprive Protestant scholars of the 'use and benefit' of such works, Thorndike nonetheless thought such an 'ill consequence' could be 'resisted or prevented'.⁸⁸⁹ The basis for Thorndike's confidence was that an alternative set of texts could provide a measure by which to confirm or repudiate parts of the Jews' later writings. All that was needed, that is, were 'the books of the New Testament, the Greek translation of the Old, the Apocrypha, Josephus, and Philo'.⁸⁹⁰

Scepticism about the Hebrew text and Jewish tradition, this suggests, had for some Protestant scholars reached such a point that they favoured recourse to an alternative ancient set of Hellenistic Jewish texts. Indeed, just one year after Thorndike's letter, the scholar who had done most to further this view, Isaac Vossius, was encouraged to move to England. Petitioned by John Fell, Dean of Christ Church and at

⁸⁸⁷ Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. XIII, §68. Herbert Thorndike to John Lightfoot, 18 May 1669, p. 443.

⁸⁸⁸ Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. XIII, §68. Herbert Thorndike to John Lightfoot, 18 May 1669, p. 443.

⁸⁸⁹ Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. XIII, §68. Herbert Thorndike to John Lightfoot, 18 May 1669, pp. 443-444, 'But whereas his opinion seems to tend to deprive us of the use and benefit of their books, by taking away the authority and credit of them that have done Christianity so much service by illustrating the Scriptures, I do think with myself upon what grounds so ill a consequence may be resisted or prevented'.

⁸⁹⁰ Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. XIII, §68. Herbert Thorndike to John Lightfoot, 18 May 1669, p. 444, 'so long as we have the books of the New Testament, the Greek translation of the Old, the Apocrypha, Josephus, and Philo, we do not want a test for those things which are found to agree with them in the Jews' writings; and by that agreement to settle us in the intent and meaning of them; and thus far it is no prejudice to the authority of that which we read in them, that we do not know the authors of them'.

that time planning the creation of his new learned press, Vossius, it was hoped, would bring to fruition that great project of seventeenth-century English biblical scholarship, the publication of an authoritative edition of the Septuagint based on Codex Alexandrinus.⁸⁹¹

Vossius had a long-standing interest in this manuscript. Writing to Ussher in 1650, while he was still Queen Christina of Sweden's librarian, he had expressed his hopes that Patrick Young's edition would soon be published.⁸⁹² Vossius's curiosity was rekindled in the summer of 1659 and he attempted to have the manuscript sent to him in The Hague. Interceding in England for Vossius was his uncle, Franciscus Junius the Younger. Junius, together with Thorndike, had initially been optimistic at Vossius's chances.⁸⁹³ These hopes soon proved to be misplaced, as Junius's requests to Bulstrode Whitlocke were ultimately unsuccessful. This initial setback did little to change Vossius's curiosity about the manuscript, and his views on the quality of its text seem only to have increased after consulting the collations printed in the London Polyglot. Vossius was further reinforced in his opinion when he received a detailed description of the manuscript from Thomas Browne. Browne confirmed the manuscript was truly venerable, written in a continuous, uncial script, and undoubtedly dating from only a century or two following Athanasius.⁸⁹⁴

Vossius's interest in Codex Alexandrinus hinged on the value he thought it held as the best witness to the text of the Septuagint. This had become a pressing matter for Vossius, as he was in the middle of a series of vituperative debates with a number of Dutch theologians over the relative merits of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Old Testament. The debates themselves often represent a much less sophisticated version of those we have considered between Morin, Cappel, Buxtorf II, Ussher, and Walton,

⁸⁹¹ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 132, John Fell to Isaac Vossius, 12 March 1670. At the outset of I should acknowledge my great debt throughout this section to Scott Mandelbrote's article, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint'. What follows will attempt to extend Mandelbrote's work, situating Vossius's work more deeply in the context of the history of seventeenth-century biblical criticism, rather than present a complete reinterpretation. See also, David S. Katz, 'Isaac Vossius and the English Biblical Critics 1650-1689', in *Scepticism and Irreligion in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Richard H. Popkin and Arjo J. Vanderjagt eds. (Leiden: Brill, 1993), pp. 142-84.

⁸⁹² Boran, *The Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. III, §568. Isaac Vossius to James Ussher, 5 October 1650, p. 986.

⁸⁹³ Sophia Georgina van Romburgh, ed., *"For My Worthy Friend Mr. Franciscus Junius". An Edition of the Correspondence of Francis Junius F. F. (1591-1677)* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), §199. Franciscus Junius the Younger to Isaac Vossius, 24 June 1659, pp. 901-905, where on p. 905 Junius reported Thorndike believed at one stage the plan 'likely to succeed'. See further, van Romburgh, *"For My Worthy Friend"*, §200. Franciscus Junius the Younger to Isaac Vossius, 18 July 1659, p. 907; van Romburgh, *"For My Worthy Friend"*, §209. Franciscus Junius the Younger to Isaac Vossius, pp. 914-915.

⁸⁹⁴ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 259, Thomas Browne to Isaac Vossius, 3 December 1660. Vossius himself, it seems, was able to consult the manuscript during his own visit to England in the mid-1660s. See, LUB, BPL 1923, Emery Bigot to Daniel Heinsius, 15 May 1664, fol. 43r.

where a more strident defence of the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament was met on Vossius's side by an equally forceful case for the Septuagint. These features were indicative of broader trends: the publication of Isaac La Peyrère's work and John Owen's debate with Brian Walton in English were two further examples that, by the end of the 1650s, the problems and questions considered by earlier biblical scholars were becoming increasingly widely discussed. Yet Vossius's work was also taken seriously by contemporary scholars. Pierre-Daniel Huet, Étienne Le Moyne, and Samuel Bochart were among those who responded to his work with lengthy and detailed letters. Vossius's intervention marks the culmination of a remarkable series of shifts in biblical criticism that had occurred since the publication of Cappel's *Critica sacra*, as a Protestant author defended – on counter-intuitively Protestant grounds – the unique value of the Septuagint rather than the Masoretic Hebrew text.

2

In the *Thesaurus temporum* Scaliger had published a series of apparently ancient gentile chronological records. Most notable of all were the Egyptian dynast lists compiled by Manetho of Sebennyto and a corresponding series for the ancient Chaldeans by Berosus, priest of Bel.⁸⁹⁵ Extending back to the period before the Creation itself, these sources posed a serious question for the authority of sacred chronology, and with it that of Bible itself. Scaliger provided a deft, if not entirely convincing, solution to this problem. Through the concept of 'proleptic' time Scaliger was able to run the Julian calendar before Creation and include the figures in his larger chronological framework.⁸⁹⁶ The challenge posed to the status of sacred chronology remained, and in the generations that followed scholars attempted to reconcile the seeming contradictions to preserve the biblical account.⁸⁹⁷ In the mid to late 1650s, however, the publications of the French Huguenot Isaac La Peyrère and the Jesuit Martino Martini threatened to push the debate into uncharted and possibly dangerous territory.

⁸⁹⁵ See, Anthony Grafton, 'Joseph Scaliger and Historical Chronology: The Rise and Fall of a Discipline', *History and Theory* 14 (1975), pp. 156-185, esp. pp. 170-171; Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger*, vol. II, pp. 681-728.

⁸⁹⁶ Grafton, 'Joseph Scaliger and Historical Chronology', p. 172.

⁸⁹⁷ Grafton, 'Joseph Scaliger and Historical Chronology', pp. 173-181; Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', pp. 63-64.

Although initially circulated in Paris in the 1640s, La Peyrère's two tracts, the *Prae-adamitae* and *Systema theologicum*, were only published in Amsterdam in 1655.⁸⁹⁸ The *Prae-adamitae* presented a reinterpretation of the doctrine of original sin, based on La Peyrère's reading of Romans 5:12-14. This depended on a new account of the standing of Adam, who, La Peyrère argued, was not the first man, but only the father of the Jews, and from whom sin had been imputed back onto the rest of the gentiles.⁸⁹⁹ In the *Systema theologicum*, completed in some form by 1648, La Peyrère substantially developed his thesis. In line with his project of diminishing Adam's significance, Book 3 of the *Systema theologicum* saw La Peyrère significantly downgrade the authority of the Book of Genesis. Events such as the Flood, for example, had only affected the Hebrews, rather than mankind in general. La Peyrère's critique extended to the Pentateuch itself: rather than an inspired text written by Moses himself, it represented a much later compilation, little short of 'a heap of Copie confusedly taken'.⁹⁰⁰ La Peyrère's work appealed directly to the evidence from gentile chronology. Indeed, according to La Peyrère the crucial stimulus for the development of his work between the *Prae-adamitae* and the *Systema theologicum* was his reading of Claude Saumaise's *De annis climacteris* (1648).⁹⁰¹ Where Saumaise was highly critical of the ancient astronomical, astrological, and chronological records, La Peyrère pounced on the detailed presentation of data from the Chaldeans, Babylonians, and Egyptians, as so much more evidence in favour of his pre-Adamite theory. La Peyrère's use of this material, together with his attack on the Mosaicity of the Pentateuch, elicited a storm of controversy and the work was shortly sent to the pyre in Holland. It had, nonetheless, posed a serious challenge, one to which Vossius's work would be a genuine rejoinder.

Martini's *Sinicae historiae* (1658) similarly threatened the authority of sacred chronology.⁹⁰² Until this point, as Anthony Grafton highlights, Chinese chronology had

⁸⁹⁸ See, J. Doedes, 'Vijf drukken van Is. De la Peyrères *Praeadamite*, uit het jaar 1655', *Studiën en bijdragen op 't gebied der historisch theologie* 4 (1880), pp. 238-42; for its initial early circulation, see, Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible', pp. 393-395. On La Peyrère's work generally, see, R. H. Popkin, *Isaac La Peyrère (1596-1676), His Life, Work, and Influences* (Leiden: Brill, 1987).

⁸⁹⁹ See, Popkin, *Isaac La Peyrère*, pp. 42-59, 69-79, for discussion on how this was crucial for La Peyrère's messianic speculations.

⁹⁰⁰ This quotation is here taken from the contemporary English translation. See, Isaac La Peyrère, *A Theological system upon the presupposition that men were before Adam* (London: [n. p.], 1655), p. 208.

⁹⁰¹ Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible', p. 394.

⁹⁰² It should be noted that there is a question regarding Vossius's relationship to Martini, who was in Amsterdam in 1653 and 1654, and when Vossius first read Martini's work. See, Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', p. 93, f.n. 37, who clarifies a series of earlier confusions. Vossius had at least read Martini's work by May 1659. See, Isaac Vossius, *Castigationes ad scriptum Georgii Hornii de aetate mundi* (The Hague: Adriaan Vlacq, 1659), pp. 38-42. This was highlighted by Weststeijn, T., 'Spinoza sinicus: An Asian Paragraph in the History of the Radical Enlightenment', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 68 (2007), p. 544.

only been available at third hand through Juan González de Mendoza's *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del gran reyno de la China* (1586).⁹⁰³ This was the form, for example, in which it was known to Scaliger and, through his work, to La Peyrère.⁹⁰⁴ Martini's work was based on apparently genuine Chinese chronological records. In separating real from mythological emperors Martini appeared to demonstrate conclusively that Chinese dynasties antedated the Flood.

In *De vera aetate mundi* (1659) Vossius argued that the problems facing orthodox chronologers could be solved at a stroke if the chronology of the Septuagint was preferred to that of the Masoretic Hebrew text.⁹⁰⁵ Where for Scaliger and others the Hebrew text had dated creation to 3,950 BCE, Vossius instead showed that according to the Septuagint it was 1,440 years older, dating the creation instead to 5,390 BCE.⁹⁰⁶ For Vossius this simple move preserved the chronology of sacred history. It was preferable simply on rational grounds, since it meant the patriarchs' age at reaching puberty was proportional to their longevity.⁹⁰⁷ It also straightforwardly solved the problems presented by the Chinese annals, which could now be included within the biblical time frame without any danger of impiety.⁹⁰⁸ The case of the other gentile records was on the face of it more difficult, since even using the alternative chronology one still had to account for the apparently vast totals recorded by Manetho and Berosus. Vossius solved this problem by bypassing it: none of these gentile records could be taken seriously.⁹⁰⁹ Vossius put it that Manetho had evidently rearranged the Egyptian local dynasties into a single long series in order to lengthen Egypt's chronology.⁹¹⁰ Taking each set of gentile records in turn, Vossius's reinterpreted each to show how they could best be adapted to fit the Septuagint's chronology.

Vossius's arguments were not purely chronological. He also deployed historical and critical arguments in a manner untypical of Protestant critics to undermine the Hebrew text's authority. He vividly underlined the changes and vicissitudes the Hebrew text had undergone: if Moses were to come back to life he would be unable to follow even the smallest part of the contemporary Jewish Bible, written as it was in Chaldean

⁹⁰³ Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', p. 44.

⁹⁰⁴ Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', p. 43.

⁹⁰⁵ For more extensive discussions of Isaac Vossius's chronological work than I can provide here, see, Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', pp. 62-84; Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', pp. 91-94.

⁹⁰⁶ Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, p. LV.

⁹⁰⁷ Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, p. VIII.

⁹⁰⁸ Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, p. XLVII. See further, however, Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', pp. 82-83.

⁹⁰⁹ Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, pp. XXIX-XXX.

⁹¹⁰ Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, pp. XXXVI-XLIV.

rather than Samaritan letters, and read according to the Masoretic points.⁹¹¹ Vossius added to this stern criticism of the reliability of Jewish scribes: who, he asked, could be so lacking in judgement to think that God had always directed the hands of the Jewish copyists, from whose manuscripts one could cull as many variants as words?⁹¹² This was not to dismiss entirely the 'more diligent' efforts of the Masoretes. Yet Vossius, reading their efforts against the grain, argued that they had simply imposed a degree of uniformity on the textual tradition that made all the extant manuscripts appear similar. What made matters worse, Vossius asserted, was that they had done so only by judgement and conjecture, without any manuscript collations, and especially without consulting the Septuagint.⁹¹³ Vossius did not condemn Jewish tradition entirely, but restricted his claims to the post-Second Temple era of the rabbis. Since, Vossius argued, the chronology of Josephus, a Hebrew priest, was so much closer to the Septuagint, then the Hebrew must have changed only after that time.⁹¹⁴

Vossius's work was a pamphlet rather than a learned folio, and he wore his learning lightly, with the *De vera aetate mundi* lacking any scholarly apparatus and only making a few passing references to other scholars.⁹¹⁵ Yet, Vossius evidently drew extensively on the contemporary debates over the history of the Bible and the relative merits of its versions that had spanned the previous decades. It is possible, as Grafton has recently suggested, that Vossius was 'first' inspired by Walton's *Prolegomena*, which, as we have seen, shared Vossius's advocacy of Josephus and support for some aspects of the Septuagint's chronology.⁹¹⁶ But since neither Walton nor the series of additional arguments Walton made in favour of the Septuagint's chronology were mentioned by Vossius – arguments which he could have have usefully repeated – it seems more probable that only afterwards did Vossius acquire a detailed knowledge of Walton's work. Evidence from Vossius's correspondence appears to confirm this: it was only later in 1659 that Herbert Thorndike, then in Utrecht, was arranging to send the volumes of the London Polyglot Bible he had brought with him to Vossius.⁹¹⁷

⁹¹¹ Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, p. VI, 'Si itaque revivisceret Moses, ne unum quidem apicem in Judaeorum libris adsequeretur, cum literas habeant a Chaldaeis, puncta vero & apices a Massoretis.'

⁹¹² Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, pp. V-VI.

⁹¹³ Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, pp. VI-VII.

⁹¹⁴ Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, pp. XXV-XXVI.

⁹¹⁵ On this point, see, Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', p. 42; Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', p. 94, who underlines that Vossius's work was 'deliberately controversial'.

⁹¹⁶ Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', p. 62.

⁹¹⁷ OBL, Ms. D'Orville 469, Herbert Thorndike to Isaac Vossius, 6 December 1659 fol. 337^{r-v}. See also, to corroborate, AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 333, Herbert Thorndike to Isaac Vossius, [n. d.]; AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 334, Herbert Thorndike to Isaac Vossius, 2 March [v.s.] [n. d. 1660?].

The scholar to whom Vossius most enthusiastically acknowledged his debt was Louis Cappel. Vossius's awareness of Cappel's work was longstanding. As early as 1650 he had received a series of letters from Claude Sarrau, who had outlined both his own warm opinion of Cappel's work and also the misplaced criticism it had received even before it was read.⁹¹⁸ Vossius was well aware of the opposition Cappel's work had faced in the Netherlands and the praise he lavished on it was almost certainly measured to generate controversy.⁹¹⁹ Vossius underlined how Cappel's 'outstanding' work, the *Critica sacra*, not only demonstrated the extent of the differences between Jewish manuscripts, but also the errors and omissions that indelibly marred the text. Further, and even more important, Cappel had also indicated the solution to these problems: scholars should consult the Septuagint to learn the true reading.⁹²⁰ As this indicates, Vossius's reading of Cappel's work was hardly in line with Cappel's own intentions. Instead, Vossius had done something quite remarkable. He presented Cappel's work in the same way as Arnold Boate, framing it as an argument for the superiority of the Septuagint over the Hebrew text. Rather than deplore this, Vossius had embraced and emphasised it, seizing the opportunity to present a stunning refutation of La Peyrère's work.

Vossius's *De vera aetate mundi* provoked an intense exchange of pamphlets with a number of theologians from the Dutch Republic. One prominent critic was Georg Hornius, who restated a case for the integrity and stability of the Hebrew text and its chronology, and the corresponding shortcomings of the Septuagint and other ancient translations, based almost entirely on the arguments of Buxtorf and Ussher.⁹²¹ Other responses from Johannes Coccejus, Antonius Hulsius, and Christiaan Schotanus, also contributed to the controversy. The objections to Vossius's work had two underlying themes. First, to these theologians, a number of whom had also responded to La Peyrère, Vossius's work appeared to present a grave threat to the authority of Protestant Scripture. Hornius, for example, introduced his first reply with the comment that he did not doubt Vossius's work was done in good faith, but feared that if it were accepted no

⁹¹⁸ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 9, no. 4, Claude Sarrau to Isaac Vossius, 26 March 1650. For a printed edition, see, Burmann, *Marquardi Gudii et doctorum virorum ad eum epistolae*, Claude Sarrau to Isaac Vossius, 26 March 1650, pp. 228-229.

⁹¹⁹ See, Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', pp. 90-94. For Vossius's evident awareness of the positions of those who opposed the *Critica sacra*, see, Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, p. VII.

⁹²⁰ Vossius, *De vera aetate mundi*, p. VII.

⁹²¹ See, for the course of the controversy between Vossius and Hornius, G. Hornius, *Dissertatio de vera aetate mundi, qua sententia illorum refillitur qui statuunt Natale Mundi tempus annis minimum 1440 vulgarem aeram anticipare* (Leiden: Elsevier, 1659); Vossius, *Castigationes ad scriptum Georgii Hornii*; G. Hornius, *Defensio dissertationis de vera aetate mundi contra castigationes Isaaci Vossii* (Leiden: Elsevier, 1659); Isaac Vossius, *Auctarium castigationum ad scriptum de aetate mundi* (The Hague: Adriaan Vlacq, 1659); G. Hornius, *Auctarium defensionis pro vera aetate mundi* (Leiden: Elsevier, 1659).

Church in the world would ever have had a true version of the Scriptures, since all were ultimately based on Hebrew manuscripts.⁹²² Many went further. In correspondence with Buxtorf II the Deventer Professor of Theology Henricus van Dienst remarked that Vossius's 'novelties' made his work essentially akin to La Peyrère's.⁹²³

The second theme of these exchanges was the progressive vulgarisation of the debate. This was true of the forms of the publications themselves, all of which were short pamphlets. It was also increasingly true of the audience that could follow the debate, with Vossius's work soon translated into Dutch.⁹²⁴ A crucial factor that contributed to this increasing vulgarisation was institutional, as Vossius's strongest opponents were not critics, but rather Professors of Theology who worked in the universities of the Dutch Republic.⁹²⁵ As such, in addition to fears about the implications of Vossius's work for the Hebrew text, there was also the sense that Vossius had strayed into questions that were beyond the proper concern of the critic. Among theologians abroad this sentiment was also widely held. Browne and Thorndike reported from England that theologians there were just as uncomfortable with a philologist such as Vossius encroaching on the preserve of theology.⁹²⁶

Vossius's responses underlined this aspect of the debate, as he emphasised how his work depended on his experience as a textual critic and manuscript scholar. Indeed, until *De vera aetate mundi* Vossius was known above all as an editor and textual critic of Christian and classical texts, whose editions of works such as the letters of Ignatius and the geography of Pomponius Mela were based on extensive manuscript research conducted during lengthy stays in France and Italy. Throughout the debates Vossius underlined how this direct experience deeply informed his views, scornfully dismissing Hornius's – admittedly unsophisticated – sense of textual transmission.⁹²⁷ The most vivid example of this came in Vossius's reply to Schotanus. Where Schotanus had taken exception to Vossius's 'hyperbolic' account of the state of the text of the New Testament, Vossius retorted Schotanus had clearly never consulted the actual manuscripts for himself, as he had done comparing variant readings from ten or twelve

⁹²² Hornius, *Dissertatio de vera aetate mundi*, p. 3.

⁹²³ BUB, G I 59, Henricus van Dienst to Johannes Buxtorf II, 12 March 1659, fol. 189r.

⁹²⁴ Isaac Vossius, *Discours van den Rechten Ouderdom der Wereldt* (Amsterdam: Jan Hendrickzoon, 1660).

⁹²⁵ Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', p. 94, underlines the significant role played by theologians with associations with Leiden University.

⁹²⁶ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 9, no. 213, Thomas Browne to Isaac Vossius, March 1659; AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 250, Herbert Thorndike to Isaac Vossius, 24 May 1661.

⁹²⁷ Vossius, *Castigationes*, sigs. *3r-*4r.

manuscripts in the library of Cardinal Barberini in the Vatican.⁹²⁸ Vossius then, not only approached the text of the Old Testament with a detailed knowledge of precisely the sort of textual criticism from which Cappel had drawn his own methodology, but he also wielded this knowledge directly to refute his theologically-minded opponents.

Among Vossius's friends and scholarly contemporaries more generally the reception of his work differed appreciably. From England both Browne and Thorndike reassured Vossius that the misgivings of the theologians had little effect on their high opinion of his work.⁹²⁹ From France, especially in the circles where Cappel's work had been approved, Vossius's work also received a positive response. Emery Bigot wrote in early March 1659 that both he and Jean Daillé were impressed with how Vossius had destroyed the most heterodox aspects of La Peyrère's work.⁹³⁰ Bigot had no doubt that if Cappel were still alive he too would have approved of Vossius's chronological scheme, as would Jean Morin – had he not died nine days previously.⁹³¹ Others were more circumspect, among them Samuel Bochart. He recognised and entirely approved of Vossius's ambition to impose 'silence on the atheists by making Moses agree with profane history'. This did not lead him to embrace Vossius's work.⁹³² Bochart acknowledged that the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament had minor faults, but he could not accept a position that depended on arguing these texts had been subject to greater changes, such as alterations and transpositions of entire clauses.⁹³³ Even so, Bochart was still a willing accomplice in Vossius's polemical conflicts, forwarding his own additional comments for Vossius to include in his later replies.

3

In 1661 and 1663 Vossius collected his replies to his critics, publishing them together with new studies as *De Septuaginta Interpretibus* and *Appendix ad librum de LXX Interpretibus*. These saw Vossius continue his work on sacred chronology. *De Septuaginta interpretibus*

⁹²⁸ Isaac Vossius, *De septuaginta interpretibus, eorumque translatione & chronologia dissertationes* (The Hague: Adriaan Vlacq., 1661), p. 416.

⁹²⁹ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 9, no. 213, Thomas Browne to Isaac Vossius, March 1659; AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 250, Herbert Thorndike to Isaac Vossius, 24 May 1661.

⁹³⁰ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 9, no. 215, Emery Bigot to Isaac Vossius, 7 March 1659.

⁹³¹ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 9, no. 215, Emery Bigot to Isaac Vossius, 7 March 1659.

⁹³² AUB, Ms. RK III E. 9, no. 216, Samuel Bochart to Isaac Vossius, [11 April] 1659.

⁹³³ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 9, no. 216, Samuel Bochart to Isaac Vossius, [11 April] 1659. I differ here slightly from the interpretation given in Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', p. 93, who seems to me to underplay Bochart's reservations regarding Vossius's case.

contained a canon of sacred chronology, drawn from the Bible and Josephus.⁹³⁴ What marked Vossius's work as it developed was the degree to which he extended his argument from its original focus on chronology to make the much broader claim that the Septuagint as a whole should be preferred to the Masoretic text of the Old Testament. This was most clear in the piece entitled 'De Septuagint interpretibus', where Vossius put forward the outline of a general account of the history and authority of the Septuagint. It should be noted that even here Vossius's account was by no means comprehensive, and frequently the full scope of his claims has to be gathered from all the different pieces contained in the collections from 1661 and 1663.

One consistent theme throughout Vossius's work was his unremitting hostility to the Masoretic text of the Old Testament. In his replies to Horn, Hulsius, and Schotanus, Vossius never ceased to emphasise the carelessness and ignorance of Hebrew scribes. In 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', Vossius went further, and criticised the Hebrew text more strongly than even Morin had been willing to. Where Morin had repudiated any suggestion the Hebrews had deliberately and maliciously altered the Hebrew text, Vossius argued strongly in favour of this, repeating the well-worn series of alleged manipulations to Christological passages.⁹³⁵ The result was that Vossius had turned Ussher's position on the Samaritan text and Septuagint against the Hebrew text itself: one could not use it to emend the other versions since it had been intentionally altered.

Vossius's claims were not limited to the Hebrew text. Instead, mirroring Morin's recent publication of Part Two of the *Exercitationes biblicae*, he extended his attack to encompass the entire Jewish scholarly tradition as it had existed following the fall of the Second Temple. Vossius was certainly aware of Morin's work, and his copy Part Two of the *Exercitationes biblicae* has a large number of dog-eared pages.⁹³⁶ Yet, Vossius outdid Morin in his dismissal of Jewish learning. Vossius insisted, for example, that God had deprived the Jews of all knowledge of chronology.⁹³⁷ Worse still, as soon as one studied their books in detail one learned the Jews were even ignorant on the subject of the Hebrew language itself, let alone other matters.⁹³⁸ Vossius placed this account in a long-term historical vision intentionally designed to sap the well-known Protestant positions

⁹³⁴ On this, see, Grafton, 'Isaac Vossius, Chronologer', pp. 80-81. Vossius's chronology was based on the principle that from such sources one could only construct a reliable chronology for the period in which the Hebrews had had a state.

⁹³⁵ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus et eorundem translatione', in *De septuaginta interpretibus*, pp. 18-25.

⁹³⁶ Vossius's copy has the shelfmark, LUB, 517 A 1.

⁹³⁷ Vossius, *De Septuaginta interpretibus*, sig. c^v.

⁹³⁸ Isaac Vossius, 'Responsio ad objectiones Anthonii Hulsii', in Isaac Vossius, *Appendix ad librum de LXX interpretibus. Continens responsiones ad objecta aliquot theologorum* (The Hague: Adriaan Vlacq, 1663), pp. 55-56.

of Buxtorf and others. Vossius agreed with Buxtorf that Ezra and the men of the Great Synagogue had been exceptionally learned Jewish scholars. The following period, and especially the early Christian era, had been marked by a precipitous decline from which Jewish learning had never recovered. Vossius underlined this point in his response to Schotanus: the knowledge of Hebrew possessed by Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, the authors of the Chaldean paraphrases, and of the Talmud was solely based on the learning gained from the Septuagint.⁹³⁹ As Anthony Grafton has recently remarked, for a man who came from a family of Hebraists, Vossius's hyperbolic claims in this regard are striking.⁹⁴⁰

Vossius did not intend to reject Jewish learning entirely, but instead argued in favour of a different set of Jewish writers to those responsible for the Masoretic text and the post-Second Temple Jewish scholarly tradition. He appealed to the tradition of ancient Hellenistic Jewish scholarship, extending from the translators of the Septuagint to Josephus and Philo.⁹⁴¹ Vossius's claim was that through these texts one could glimpse Jewish learning unaffected by subsequent rabbinic distortions. Vossius's 'chronologia sacra' was presented not simply as a biblical chronology but as an ancient 'pre-rabbinic' chronology, based on Josephus and the Septuagint.⁹⁴² Vossius underlined that it was through these ancient Hellenistic texts and traditions that one could glimpse the Jewish learning drawn on by Christ and the Apostles, and through them the early Church.⁹⁴³ Vossius was unrelenting in making this point. He systematically rejected, for example, the places Cappel had enumerated in the *Critica sacra* to show that in some instances the authors of the New Testament followed the Hebrew, rather than the Septuagint.⁹⁴⁴

When it came to the Septuagint itself, Vossius wanted to establish at least three fundamental arguments about the text's history and authority. First, that it was a venerable and irreproachable translation, whose origin was vouchsafed by the testimony of the *Letter of Aristeas*, Philo, and Josephus. Second, that its transmission was more

⁹³⁹ Vossius, 'Epistola ad cl. virum Christianum Schotanum', in *Appendix ad librum de LXX interpretibus*, pp. 169-170, 'Jam vero si putas Aquilam, Symmachum, Theodotionem, Chaldaeos Paraphrastas aut Thalmudistas ullam habuisse Hebraeae linguae cognitionem, praeter illam quae ex LXX interpretum versione propagata est, falleris omnino quam gravissime. Ne unius quidem vocabuli significationem possis ostendere quae non ab illis promanarit interpretibus. Ubicumque ab horum expositione hodierni recedunt Rabbinii, istic mera figmenta & deliria comminiscuntur'.

⁹⁴⁰ Grafton, 'Issac Vossius, chronologer', p. 79.

⁹⁴¹ See, for example, Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', p. 84.

⁹⁴² Isaac Vossius, 'Chronologia sacra. Ad mentem veterum hebraeorum et praecipue Josephi exposita', in *De septuaginta interpretibus*, p. 104. At p. 237, Vossius underlined these 'true' figures had been distorted by Jews following the fall of the Second Temple.

⁹⁴³ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', pp. 1-2, 25.

⁹⁴⁴ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', pp. 76-83.

reliable than that of the Masoretic text, not only because it was used by the ancient Hellenistic Jews and the early Church, but also because it better reflected the ancient Hebrew exemplar on which it had been based. Third, that both these former points could be supported on the basis of the extant manuscript evidence.

It was in 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', the first piece published in the 1661 collection, that Vossius presented his overarching account of the history and status of the text of the Septuagint. Vossius's account of the origin of the Septuagint largely restated that presented in the *Letter of Aristeas*, with Vossius, like Walton before him, rejecting the objections of Scaliger and others.⁹⁴⁵ What Vossius added to Walton's work were small details and modifications specifically designed to undercut the claims of his own Protestant detractors. Two examples stand out in this respect. First, Vossius sought to disarm any critics who claimed that the Septuagint was based on anything short of an exemplary Hebrew manuscript. This had been one part of Buxtorf II's strategy, when he claimed that the Septuagint was translated on the basis of an inferior unpointed Hebrew manuscript. It was clear from Demetrius of Phalerum's letter given in the *Letter of Aristeas*, Vossius argued, that even before the Septuagint there had been a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures in the Alexandrian library.⁹⁴⁶ This was based on a version in the Samaritan script, somewhat negligently written, and much less accurately translated. The successful request for a copy of the Scriptures from Eleazar the High Priest rectified this problem by providing an excellent exemplar in the then preferred square script, a codex written according to the 'most accurate and faithful' Ezran copy.⁹⁴⁷ Vossius had taken the traditional Protestant claim regarding Ezra's text, but used it to bolster the authority of the Septuagint.

A second aspect of the Aristeian account presented more difficulties. The problem, also encountered by Walton, was to explain the claim of both of Vossius's preferred ancient Jewish authorities, the *Letter of Aristeas* and Josephus, that the Seventy only translated the Pentateuch or Hebrew law. Vossius evidently found this point awkward for his case, and would come to argue in his first response to Simon that the

⁹⁴⁵ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', pp. 7-12.

⁹⁴⁶ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', p. 14. See further, Thackeray, *The Letter of Aristeas*, §30, p. 11, for the section of the letter it seems most likely Vossius was referring to. On the testimony of Aristobulus implying the same, also referred to by Vossius on p. 14, see, Henry Barclay Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900), pp. 1-2.

⁹⁴⁷ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', p. 14, 'Nullum itaque dubium, quin codex, quo LXX usi sunt interpretes, ad ipsam Esrae editionem exactissime & fidelissime fuerit expressus, ominoque pro stultis habendi sunt qui eos vitiosum exemplar secutos esse contendunt'.

Seventy had translated the whole of the Old Testament.⁹⁴⁸ In 'De Septuaginta interpretibus' Vossius attempted to strike a delicate balance, one that followed the accounts of the *Letter of Aristeas* and Josephus but did not undermine the authority of the translation of the rest of the Old Testament. Vossius began by agreeing with Aristeas and Josephus: at first, it was true, only the Pentateuch had been translated.⁹⁴⁹ He then postulated that following the King's approval of the translation of the Pentateuch the rest of the books had subsequently been translated. The translation, Vossius admitted, had not been undertaken by the Seventy as a whole, but singly, or in small groups. This explained why the translation of those books was not necessarily as precise as the Pentateuch and also why there were some differences in style between the books.⁹⁵⁰ Still, Vossius reiterated, all of these books, even with some small errors admitted, were still to be preferred to the Hebrew.⁹⁵¹

The extent to which Vossius would deploy every argument at his disposal to bolster the authority of Septuagint was nowhere more evident than when it came to the question of the status of the Septuagint as a translation. Vossius confronted two problems. First, the question of whether the Septuagint was a divinely inspired or a human translation. This debate had ancient roots. Against the weight of the accreted Septuagint legends stood Jerome's description of the Seventy as 'translators not prophets'. Second, how far variant readings between the Septuagint and the Hebrew text should be attributed to the translators themselves or to the subsequent copyists. This question was at the heart of the debates between Cappel, Buxtorf II, Boate, and Walton. Attributing the differences between the Hebrew text and the Septuagint to the translators, Buxtorf II and Boate undermined the authority of any text other than the Hebrew; attributing them predominantly to the copyists, Cappel and Walton legitimised the translation, validating it as a source of variant readings. The two questions could therefore be kept separate. For Buxtorf II and Ussher the Septuagint was not divinely inspired and its differences from the Hebrew chiefly came from the human shortcomings of the translators; for Cappel and Walton the Septuagint was a reliable human translation, whose greatest differences from the Hebrew came from subsequent scribal errors.

⁹⁴⁸ Isaac Vossius, 'Responsio ad objectiones nuperae criticae sacrae', in Isaac Vossius, *De Sibyllinis aliisque quae Christi natalem praecessere Oraculis. Accedit ejusdem responsio ad objectiones nuperae criticae sacrae* (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1679), p. 10, where Vossius outlined his change of position.

⁹⁴⁹ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', pp. 1-2, 25.

⁹⁵⁰ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', pp. 15-16.

⁹⁵¹ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', p. 16.

Where Vossius departed from these earlier Protestant accounts was that he attempted to solve all these problems in a way that redounded to give the Septuagint the greatest possible authority. Like Cappel and Walton, he defended the Seventy as translators, systematically considering detailed examples from the biblical books to demonstrate precisely how and why the Greek text was accurate as a translation.⁹⁵² Any shortcomings in the text were necessarily the product of later scribal errors. Vossius also argued, however, that if any version of the Bible could be properly thought to be inspired, it was the Septuagint.⁹⁵³ Vossius appealed to the extensive range of ancient testimony in his favour, from both Christian and Jewish sources.⁹⁵⁴ Vossius even explained away ancient Jewish testimony that ran against his case, such as Josephus's claim in *Contra Apionem* that the era of prophecy had ceased with the reign of Artaxerxes. What Josephus meant, Vossius argued, was that there were no more prophetic books composed, not that prophecy itself had finished.⁹⁵⁵

For some, Vossius's attempt to combine the two positions created a problem: if the Septuagint's translators were divinely inspired, why, or on what grounds, could one also suppose the translation was human in the way Cappel and Walton had argued? Vossius himself resolved any apparent difficulties by arguing that divine inspiration provided the 'true sense', the translator the actual 'words'.⁹⁵⁶ Pressed on this point in letters by Le Moyne and Huet, Vossius stuck fast to this position. Responding to Richard Simon's later reiteration of the opinion of Jerome, Cappel, and Walton, Vossius argued that in the context of the Septuagint there was no difference between 'translation' and 'prophecy'.⁹⁵⁷

Vossius's work was primarily a defence of the Septuagint in terms of its origin, rather than a fully developed history of its subsequent transmission akin to Morin or Walton's work. Vossius frequently noted, for example, his complete opposition to Ussher's *De graeca Septuaginta*. Yet since Ussher had failed to provide extensive evidence in support of his case, Vossius considered his objections necessarily vitiated.⁹⁵⁸ Vossius's view of the Septuagint's transmission, supported by its use in the ancient Church and the evidence of contemporary manuscripts, was much the same as Cappel's. The Septuagint

⁹⁵² Vossius, *De Septuaginta interpretibus*, pp. 34-58.

⁹⁵³ Vossius, *De Septuaginta interpretibus*, pp. 83-84.

⁹⁵⁴ Vossius, *De Septuaginta interpretibus*, p. 84.

⁹⁵⁵ Vossius, *De Septuaginta interpretibus*, p. 86, Vossius would return to this subject in his *De Sibyllinis aliisque quae Christi natalem praecessere Oraculis*.

⁹⁵⁶ Vossius, *Appendix ad librum de LXX Interpretibus*, sig. () 3^r.

⁹⁵⁷ Vossius, 'Responsio ad objectiones nuperae criticae sacrae', pp. 5-6.

⁹⁵⁸ See, for example, Vossius, 'Responsio ad objectiones Anthonii Hulsii', p. 73.

had suffered in the same way as other texts owing to the carelessness of its scribes, and it was the role of the critic to attempt to emend it in line with a presumed archetype.⁹⁵⁹

Where Vossius differed from Cappel was the overall conception of the Bible within which he placed this argument. Where Cappel had sought to preserve the Septuagint as a source of variant readings for the Hebrew text, Vossius was instead arguing that the Septuagint, not the contemporary Masoretic Hebrew, was the best indication of the ancient Hebrew text.⁹⁶⁰

In the collected replies published in 1663, the *Appendix ad librum de LXX Interpretibus*, Vossius indicated that he had nonetheless formed an opinion on some aspects of the Septuagint's editorial history. Pressed by his opponents who argued that these ancient editors had emended the Septuagint with reference to the Hebrew text, Vossius was forced to state his own position on Origen as an editor of the Septuagint and also the status of the texts that had circulated as the 'trifaria varietas', the versions of the Septuagint that according to Jerome circulated under the names of Origen (via Eusebius and Pamphilus), Lucian, and Hesychius. Unlike Walton, Vossius showed little enthusiasm for Origen's work as an editor, insisting that Origen's real interest in the Hexapla and his other works was to show Christians the readings present in the Jewish versions.⁹⁶¹ Origen simply included the text of the Septuagint faithfully, without attempting to edit it himself.⁹⁶²

In sharp contrast to his interpretation of Origen's work was Vossius's account of the work of the other ancient editors, Lucian and Hesychius.⁹⁶³ Of these, Vossius especially underlined the role of Hesychius. It was Hesychius, who, realising some Greek manuscripts had been emended with reference to the Hebrew, attempted to restore the original Greek reading.⁹⁶⁴ There was a further implication to Vossius's account of Hesychius as an ancient editor of the Septuagint. Since he followed the established view, put forward by Morin, Ussher, and Walton, that Codex Alexandrinus was representative of the Hesychian recension, it meant that one of the most celebrated extant manuscripts

⁹⁵⁹ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', pp. 25-30.

⁹⁶⁰ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', p. 25.

⁹⁶¹ Vossius, 'Responsio ad objectiones Anthonii Hulsii', p. 43, pp. 84-85.

⁹⁶² 'Responsio ad objectiones Anthonii Hulsii', pp. 84-85. Vossius argued that Origen had only interpolated the Septuagint with material from Theodotion in a few minor cases.

⁹⁶³ Vossius, *Appendix ad librum de LXX Interpretibus*, sig. () () 2^{r-v}. Vossius was unclear on this point, here arguing both Lucian and Hesychius had attempted to edit and improve the text of the Septuagint but, on pp. 84-85, suggesting it was only Hesychius.

⁹⁶⁴ Vossius, 'Responsio ad objectiones Anthonii Hulsii', pp. 43, 84-85, 'Hesychium vero cum putat exemplaria Graeca reformasse ad codices Hebraeos, etiam tum adparet illum nescire quid dicat aut quid scribat. Unum id Hesychius studuit ut veterem LXX interpretum lectionem quam fidelissime restitueret'.

of the Septuagint, Codex Alexandrinus, was based on the most authoritative ancient editor's work.⁹⁶⁵

Vossius's history of the Septuagint and his views of Codex Alexandrinus therefore came together in his plan to publish a new edition of the Septuagint. Vossius outlined this ambition in 'De Septuaginta interpretibus' and continued to repeat it throughout the 1660s, notably to Paul Colomiès in 1665 and Jean Chapelain in 1668.⁹⁶⁶ Indeed, Scott Mandelbrote has recently uncovered evidence that shows Vossius was actively working on such a project.⁹⁶⁷ Other scholars also contributed. In addition to Junius and Browne in England, Bigot in France helped Vossius to obtain a series of collations.⁹⁶⁸ Yet, for all this, Vossius left evidence only of his overarching ambitions, not of a definite scheme for the edition's execution. What is clear is that he aimed to complete a new edition of the Septuagint, rather than simply an edition of Codex Alexandrinus. Despite his great respect for this manuscript, Vossius's general views on the history of Septuagint's textual transmission indicated that he could not accept this manuscript as the sole basis for reconstructing the original Septuagint. This is confirmed by Vossius's interest in obtaining from Bigot and other scholars all the available manuscript evidence.

How Vossius intended to use these resources remains uncertain. The best clue comes from Jean Chapelain, who reported that Vossius's edition would be 'of great consequence', especially since it would be supported by his 'observations and reconstructions [of the text]'.⁹⁶⁹ This reveals the degree to which Vossius intended to work back as closely as possible to the original Septuagint, and include a series of *notae criticae* discussing the problems involved. What did this plan specifically entail? Did Vossius intend to apply Cappel's critical method to the evidence presented by the available manuscripts? Or alternatively, would he follow the procedure suggested by Morin, and hinted at in Vossius's own 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', of carefully separating the genuine from the spurious using all the available manuscript evidence and

⁹⁶⁵ Vossius, *Appendix ad librum de LXX Interpretibus*, sig. () () 2^v; Vossius, 'Responsio ad objectiones Anthonii Hulsi', p. 43, p. 85, 'Si quis scire velit qualis fuerit hujus labor, is codicem consulat Alexandrinum, qui ipsissimam, nisi fallor, exhibet Hesychii editionem'.

⁹⁶⁶ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', p. 17; Paul Colomiès, *Opuscula* (Paris: Sebastian Mabre-Cramoisy, 1668) pp. 142-143. For Chapelain, see below, p. 196.

⁹⁶⁷ Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', p. 89, esp. f.n. 21 and f.n. 22.

⁹⁶⁸ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 238, Emeric Bigot to Isaac Vossius, 15 December 1661.

⁹⁶⁹ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 154, Jean Chapelain to Isaac Vossius, [probably 1668, for which see Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', p. 87], 'La nouvelle Edition que vous me dites de *la Version des Septante* sera d'une fort grande consequence sur tout si elle est appuyée et illustrée de vos observations et restitutions'.

especially the Origenic critical sigla?⁹⁷⁰ In that work Vossius suggested that he had uncovered a new way to achieve this.⁹⁷¹ His ultimate lack of success suggests he may have been overconfident.

4

Writing to Vossius following *De Septuaginta interpretibus*, Etienne Le Moyne, then Protestant minister in Caen and later Professor of Theology in Leiden, admitted that Vossius had acquitted himself well against those who spewed forth their bile against him.⁹⁷² Yet, he also wished Vossius had been able to show a degree of moderation in his own work. While Le Moyne fully admitted the faults of the contemporary Hebrew text, this hardly meant one should think that divine providence had been more concerned to conserve the text of the Septuagint. Rather, Le Moyne counselled in a manner reminiscent of Cappel, one could in some cases use the Hebrew to correct the Septuagint, and in others the Septuagint to correct the Hebrew.⁹⁷³ To do so, Le Moyne put it in another letter, would render to each text its due, and would keep biblical critics to the path set before them by Walton, Cappel, and Ussher.⁹⁷⁴

Le Moyne's measured reproach indicates the degree to which Vossius's work had by no means stepped beyond the bounds of scholarly respectability. This is also shown, for example, by the assistance and encouragement shown to Vossius by Thorndike, Fell, Huet, Bochart, and Bigot. Biblical criticism had changed: the debates of Cappel and his opponents, and the subsequent work of Walton, had ultimately resolved the problem set before scholars by Morin all those years earlier, finally allowing even Protestant critics to consider all the versions of the Old Testament without the confessional implications Morin had spelt out. These had not, to be sure, disappeared, but they had become more complex, and the relationship between a scholar's confessional allegiance and his view on the Bible was now for many scholars much more malleable. Vossius himself, for

⁹⁷⁰ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', p. 17. Richard Simon felt that Vossius's failure to give a detailed interpretation and account of the role of the Origenic sigla in his work on the Septuagint was one of Vossius's chief shortcomings. See, [Richard Simon], *Bibliothèque critique* (Amsterdam: Jean Louis de Lormes, 1708), vol. I, pp. 78, 178-79.

⁹⁷¹ Vossius, 'De Septuaginta interpretibus', p. 17, 'Sed nos Deo favente instaurabimus aliquando hanc versionem [of the Septuagint], viamque aperiemus planiorem & minus fallacem, quam hactenus factum sit, qua adulterinis separatis vetus & genuina, quoad fieri possit, reducat scriptura'.

⁹⁷² AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 234, Etienne Le Moyne to Isaac Vossius, 25 February 1662.

⁹⁷³ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 234, Etienne Le Moyne to Isaac Vossius, 25 February 1662.

⁹⁷⁴ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 310, Etienne Le Moyne to Isaac Vossius, [n. d.] 1662.

example, although he had radically jettisoned the Hebrew text, had still remained within a Protestant setting, outlining the way in which a single text, the Septuagint, ultimately provided a sufficiently reliable basis for Protestant faith. A Catholic counterpart to Vossius or Le Moyne could in this sense be Huet, who while agreeing with Vossius on the Masoretic Hebrew text, was, like Le Moyne, suspicious of according such repute to the Septuagint alone.⁹⁷⁵ Huet was a sophisticated successor to Morin, who argued that the answer was instead to return to and study the ancient Greek and Latin versions of the early Church.⁹⁷⁶

What this can be taken to indicate is that by the 1660s biblical criticism had become a recognisable scholarly subject. The debates inaugurated by Morin, and fundamentally transformed by Cappel's work, had forged a new scholarly field in which it was possible to think and argue about the text and history of the Bible in a new way, whether Catholic or Protestant. This had had important consequences for one specific version of the Old Testament. What had become especially evident, following the reception of Cappel's work, and thereafter of Morin's and Vossius's contributions, was the scepticism with which an array of Catholic and Protestant scholars had come to regard the Masoretic Hebrew text of the Old Testament. As we saw at the outset of this section, this even spurred Protestant scholars such as Thorndike to see Vossius's return to the Septuagint as an entirely viable option. Only one scholar, Brian Walton, had attempted to write more than a sketch of the history of the Hebrew text, which took on board the implications of Cappel and Morin's work without, as Morin's later work had, simply using as a means to denigrate it. Yet Walton's work was in many respects unsuccessful. His Protestant insistence on the original texts of Scripture was ultimately difficult to square with his all-too-fragmentary history of the Hebrew text. This work, furthermore, had then been followed by Morin and Vossius's attacks. It would take the work of a scholar only just entering this learned world to transform this situation. Richard Simon would take up the challenge presented by Walton, Morin, and Vossius, and craft a pathbreaking new history of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, in the process transforming his contemporaries' understanding of the history of the Bible itself.

⁹⁷⁵ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 234, Pierre-Daniel Huet to Isaac Vossius, 22 November 1661.

⁹⁷⁶ AUB, Ms. RK III E. 10, no. 234, Pierre-Daniel Huet to Isaac Vossius, 22 November 1661.

Chapter 6

Richard Simon and the remaking of seventeenth-century biblical criticism, 1665-1685

Jean Morin, Richard Simon wrote to his friend and patron Hyacinthe de la Roque in March 1679, had been so stubbornly convinced of the value of the Septuagint, Samaritan Pentateuch, and Vulgate, that he had entirely neglected the 'true original of the Bible', the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.⁹⁷⁷ Simon wrote this as one who had been Morin's successor at the Oratory, only to be expelled from the Congregation on the basis of Bossuet and others' reaction to his *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (1678). The *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* embodied a categorical repudiation of Morin's work as a scholar, and put forward for the first time an extensive and detailed history of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. This achievement has until now been obscured, however, as previous scholars have all too often understood Simon's work only in the context of Spinoza's *Tractatus theologico-politicus* (1670). The following chapter presents a new interpretation of what it takes to be the central ambition of Simon's project. It argues that the eventual printing of Simon's work in 1678 has separated it from the debates and arguments that chiefly shaped its contents. Following a new account of the composition of Simon's work, the chapter analyses Simon's account of the history of the Hebrew text, before concluding with a detailed study of how Simon attempted to use the methods and shared assumptions of seventeenth-century biblical criticism to justify his work to his learned contemporaries in the period immediately following its prohibition.

I. Richard Simon and the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (1678)

1

The records and memoirs of a Parisian literary cenacle that met in the years 1670-1 preserves one of the earliest indications of Richard Simon's scholarly ambitions: '[A member] of the Oratory, aged twenty-eight years. In two years he has read, in order, almost all the Fathers. He is very learned in languages. He wants to criticise all the Bibles

⁹⁷⁷ Richard Simon, *Lettres choisies*, ed. [Antoine-Augustin] Bruzen [de] la Martinière (Amsterdam: Pierre Mortier, 1730), vol. I, §5. Richard Simon to Hyacinthe de la Roque-Hue, 10 March 1679, pp. 27-28.

which have been published in the last two hundred years. *Critica criticorum*'.⁹⁷⁸ Simon's own views and preoccupations were well represented throughout this collection, and range from comments on the history of the Septuagint and Josephus to the Greek and Latin Fathers, the work of Erasmus and the relationship between France and Rome.⁹⁷⁹ Criticising Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole's response to Jean Claude, Simon placed himself in select company, remarking that there were hardly six men in Paris qualified to judge their work.⁹⁸⁰ As François Diroys succinctly put it, 'Le P. Simon, genie de critique'.⁹⁸¹

Diroys was well placed to offer this judgement. He was then close to Simon and, Simon later reported, read and approved an early version of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*. As such, Diroys can be counted among a number of 'learned and discerning' judges whose opinion Simon had sought on his work's most difficult questions.⁹⁸² Simon was somewhat imprecise in his reports of when this took place. In his *Réponse a la Lettre de M. Spanheim* (1679) he indicated that the 'greatest part' of the work had been written for ten years.⁹⁸³ In a letter from February 1679 he commented that it had been 'at least seven' since Diroys had seen it.⁹⁸⁴ In either case – 1669 or 1672 – the force of Simon's remark was the same: much of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* was conceived and begun in a period much earlier than that in which it was published.

Crucial in this instance were the years Simon spent at the Oratory in Paris, which he entered definitively in 1662.⁹⁸⁵ The role of Simon's first superior, Jean Bertad, should be singled out, both for his teaching and also for the wider role he played in Simon's

⁹⁷⁸ Jean Lesaulnier, ed., *Port-Royal insolite* (Paris: Kincksieck, 1992), p. 391, 'Le. P. Simon. De l'Oratoire, aagé [sic] de 28 ans; en deux ans il a presque lu, en courant, tous les Pères. Il est fort savant dans les langues. Il veut critiquer toutes les Bibles qu'on a faites depuis deux cents ans. *Critica criticorum*.' This is a critical edition of BNF NAF 4333. I refer to Lesaulnier's edition throughout. Lasaulnier makes a strong case in favour of Jean Deslyons as the author of this collection.

⁹⁷⁹ Lesaulnier, *Port-Royal insolite*, see p. 634 (on the Septuagint), pp. 292, 347, 374, 673 (patristics), pp. 676-8 (Arnauld and Nicole), pp. 680-81 (France and Rome), pp. 692-93 (Erasmus).

⁹⁸⁰ Lesaulnier, *Port-Royal insolite*, p. 679, 'Pas six personnes a Paris qui puissent juger de la *Responce a Claude*'.

⁹⁸¹ Lesaulnier, *Port-Royal insolite*, p. 632.

⁹⁸² Richard Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (Amsterdam: Reinier Leers, 1685), sig. ****2^r. All references to the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* will be to this edition. I have, however, also checked them in each instance against the copy of the original 1678 edition held by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, BNF Réserves, A. 3498. This copy was originally owned by Pierre-Daniel Huet.

⁹⁸³ [Richard Simon], *Réponse a la lettre de M. Spanheim* (Amsterdam: Daniel Elsevier, 1680), p. 121.

⁹⁸⁴ Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. IV, §IX. Richard Simon to P. d[u] B[rueil], February 1679, p. 57.

⁹⁸⁵ See, generally, Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 9-31. Following his early education in Dieppe, with the Oratorians, and in Rouen, with the Jesuits, Simon had first moved to join the Oratory in Paris in 1658. He left shortly afterwards, however, possibly owing to lack of funds, and it was only thanks to the patronage of de la Roque that Simon was able to return to Paris. In the city from 1659-1662 he followed lectures at the Sorbonne and undertook an extensive programme of reading in theology and ecclesiastical history, Protestant and Catholic, and began studying Hebrew and Syriac. See further, Richard Simon, 'Notice autobiographique', in Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 200-201. This 'notice autobiographique' was required of all members of the Oratory. Simon's is dated to 23 January 1673.

early development as a scholar. In the *Entretiens sur les sciences* (1683) Bernard Lamy, Simon's contemporary at the Oratory, indicated the emphasis Bertad placed on positive theology and above all the study of the Bible in its historical setting and in its original languages.⁹⁸⁶ Bertad's emphasis on these subjects led him to be particularly understanding of Simon's own scholarly interests, excusing Simon from unnecessary theological or other work in order to continue his studies. Indeed, according to Bruzen de la Martinière, this even included spending an hour per day with Simon reading Scripture, patristic, or critical works.⁹⁸⁷ Simon himself acknowledged Bertad's role in furnishing him with 'a great number of fine books', which de la Martinière claimed included the London Polyglot Bible and John Pearson's *Critici sacri*.⁹⁸⁸ Bertad also provided a form of institutional memory between Simon and his great predecessor at the Oratory, Jean Morin. Bertad had known Morin personally. As Simon later reported, Bertad had even travelled with Morin to Saumur where they visited Louis Cappel.⁹⁸⁹ Bertad almost certainly played a significant role as a conduit between the two Oratorian critics.

In addition to Bertad, the Oratory was also of great importance for Simon in providing the opportunity for manuscript research. As Simon wrote to de la Roque in 1665, it had been his great good fortune to become a member of an institution that contained 'such rare treasures'.⁹⁹⁰ Simon first had access to these manuscripts in 1664 when he was appointed as an assistant to Charles Le Cointe in the Oratory's library.⁹⁹¹ Simon's main role was to catalogue the extensive collection of Hebrew manuscripts that had been donated to the library by de Sancy.⁹⁹² This catalogue is still extant, and shows

⁹⁸⁶ See, Bernard Lamy, *Entretiens sur les sciences, dans lesquels on apprend comme l'on se doit servir des Sciences, pour se faire l'esprit juste, & le coeur droit* (Lyon: Jean Certe, second ed. 1694), pp. 309-11. See also, François Girbal, *Bernard Lamy (1640-1715). Étude biographique et bibliographique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964), pp. 10-13.

⁹⁸⁷ [Antoine-Augustin Bruzen de la Martinière], 'Eloge historique', in Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. I, p. 6.

⁹⁸⁸ Simon, 'Notice autobiographique', p. 201, 'A esté reçu dans l'Institution de Paris et dirigé par le R. P. Bertad qui luy permit d'estudier et luy fournit un grand nombre de bons livres'; [Bruzen de la Martinière], 'Eloge historique', pp. 6-7.

⁹⁸⁹ Simon, *Lettres choisies*, §5. Richard Simon to Hyacinthe de la Roque-Hue, 10 March 1679, pp. 28-39. Simon could not resist underlining that on this visit Cappel had encouraged Morin to apply himself more diligently to the study of Hebrew grammar.

⁹⁹⁰ Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. I, §3. Richard Simon to Hyacinthe de la Roque-Hue, 20 October 1665, pp. 13-14, 'Vous me sollicitez [sic] du bonheur que j'ai de me trouver presentement dans une Maison dont la Bibliothèque contient de si rares tresors'. For an even fuller account of the range of manuscripts held by the Oratory, and Simon's familiarity with them, see, Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. II, §13. Richard Simon to Henri Justel, 1673, pp. 92-97. On the Oratory's manuscripts, see, Richard, 'Achille de Harlay de Sancy'.

⁹⁹¹ Simon, 'Notice autobiographique', p. 201. See also, Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 20-21.

⁹⁹² See, Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. II, §27. Richard Simon to Henri Justel, 1685, p. 187.

the extent of Simon's familiarity with these Hebrew and Rabbinic texts even by the mid-1660s.⁹⁹³

What mattered was that far from simply making a catalogue of the manuscripts, Simon also began to study them.⁹⁹⁴ In his later reply to Jean Le Clerc, the *Réponse au livre intitulé Défense des sentimens de quelques Theologiens de Hollande* (1687), Simon recounted how having read extensively among de Sancy's collection he also began to make notes, culling variant readings from manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible and recording them in the margins of a copy of Menasseh ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica* (1631-35).⁹⁹⁵ Simon added that he had done the same for the other ancient versions.⁹⁹⁶ This reflected what was evidently one of Simon's main working practices. Writing to Henri Justel in 1673 Simon noted that he had compared printed editions of Jewish works with the manuscript copies in the Oratory's library, and made significant annotations in his own copy of Bomberg's *Biblia Rabbinica*.⁹⁹⁷ When he came to prepare his own edition of a Polyglot Bible, in the mid-1680s, the basis for Simon's work was similarly a copy of the London Polyglot into which he pasted additional sheets of paper, on which he noted the corrections he wanted to make or the variants he hoped to add.⁹⁹⁸

The majority of these Bibles and other books have subsequently been lost or destroyed. Simon suffered some serious losses during the English bombardment of Dieppe in 1694. These included a copy of the Septuagint, throughout which he had written variant readings drawn from Greek writers that were absent from Nobilius's edition.⁹⁹⁹ Simon's *Biblia Rabbinica* and his copy of the London Polyglot Bible were among those lost in later years.¹⁰⁰⁰ Yet, until now overlooked, Simon's copy of ben

⁹⁹³ BNF, Ms. Hébreu 1295, fols. 31^r-47^r, entitled 'Catalogus Librorum Orientalium qui in bibliotheca Oratorii Parisiensis asservantur, descriptus a P. Ric. Simon'. See also, Richard, 'Achille de Harlay de Sancy', p. 433.

⁹⁹⁴ See, Simon, 'Notice autobiographique', p. 201.

⁹⁹⁵ [Richard Simon], *De l'inspiration des livres sacrés: Avec une Réponse au Livre intitulé, Défense des sentimens de quelques Theologiens de Hollande sur l'Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament* (Rotterdam: Reinier Leers, 1687), p. 62, 'peu d'années après ayant été appelé dans une maison où il y avoit un grand nombre de Livres MSS. qui avoient été apporté du Levan, il en lut une bonne partie, & qu'il écrivit aux marges d'un Exemplaire de la Bible de Menasseh ben Israel les diverses leçons de plusieurs Bibles MSS'.

⁹⁹⁶ [Simon], *Réponse au Livre intitulé, Défense des sentimens*, p. 62.

⁹⁹⁷ Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. II, §XIV. Richard Simon to Henri Justel, 1673, pp. 96-97.

⁹⁹⁸ [Simon], *Réponse au Livre intitulé, Défense des sentimens*, p. 62.

⁹⁹⁹ Jacques Le Brun, 'Vingt-quatre lettres inédites de Richard Simon (1632-1712)', *Lias* 20 (1993), §12. Richard Simon to Michel le Quien, 22 August 1694, p. 93. On the losses Simon incurred in this incident, see, Auvray, *Richard Simon*, §1. Richard Simon to Jean-Alphonse Turretini, 14 September 1694, pp. 216-217. See also, Valerie Neveu, 'La bibliothèque de Richard Simon', *Bulletin du bibliophile* (1998), pp. 67-68.

¹⁰⁰⁰ For these later losses, see, Neveu, 'La bibliothèque de Richard Simon', pp. 68-79. As Neveu shows, the majority of these can be traced to the years of the French Revolution. These unfortunately also included the loss of almost all the manuscripts Simon had left. Compare the catalogue compiled by Neveu with that of Jean Saas: Jean Saas, 'Notice des manuscrits de M. Richard Simon, et des livres apostillés de sa main,

Israel's *Biblia Hebraica* is still extant.¹⁰⁰¹ Its margins, rich in notes from the Hebrew manuscripts of the Oratory and other sources, including the London Polyglot Bible, confirm precisely the comments Simon made to Le Clerc, corroborating his claims about the work that went into the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*. It would be wrong to underestimate how long this must have taken. As Simon indicated in the preface to the 1678 edition of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, he had had these manuscripts at his disposal for 'a long time', and 'not being attached to any work', had had time 'to meditate at leisure on a work of this importance'.¹⁰⁰² Yet its existence means that more credence should be given to Simon's claims regarding his work than has often been done.

One further claim which should be reconsidered on the basis of the evidence presented by the extant remains of Simon's library is his repeated insistence that the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* was originally written in Latin, and in a much longer form, before being translated and abridged for publication.¹⁰⁰³ This is difficult to square with the rest of Simon's published *oeuvre*, which, with the important exception of the *Disquisitiones criticae* (1683), was almost entirely in French. Yet, it agrees completely with the remains of Simon's working practices. All the notes that fill the margins of Simon's copy of ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica*, a copy of Roger Daniel's edition of the Septuagint, or Jerome's *Opera omnia*, for example, are in Latin.¹⁰⁰⁴ On occasion Simon also included in the front matter of his books a short summary or discussion of a book's provenance, significance, or main arguments. All of these, ranging from his copy of Patrick Young's edition of Clement to his copy of Menachem di Lonzano's *Or Torah* are entirely in Latin.¹⁰⁰⁵ This evidence is not conclusive, but together with that gleaned from the margins of Simon's books, it begins to paint a more compelling picture of Simon as a scholar diligently working through manuscripts, writing in Latin, and as such not as far

qu'il a légués à la bibliothèque de l'Église métropolitaine de Rouen', in his *Notice des manuscrits de la bibliothèque de l'Église métropolitaine de Rouen* (Rouen: 1746), pp. 32-70.

¹⁰⁰¹ BMR A 559, Menasseh ben Israel, ed., חמשה חומשי תורה [= *Biblia Hebraica*], (Amsterdam: Menasseh ben Israel, 1631-35). See, Neveu, 'La bibliothèque de Richard Simon', §3, p. 87. Neveu recognised the possible significance of these volumes but did not actually study them. I am currently preparing an extended study of these volumes and what they tell us about Simon's biblical scholarship and his critical practices.

¹⁰⁰² Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, sig. ***2^r.

¹⁰⁰³ Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. I, §26. Richard Simon to John Hampden, 25 November 1684, p. 233; [Simon], *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. II, p. 465; [Simon], *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. III, p. 280.

¹⁰⁰⁴ See, passim, in BMR A 559, ben Israel, ed., *Biblia Hebraica*; BMR m 3378 (Rés.), John Biddle, ed., *Vetus testamentum graecum ex versione Septuaginta interpretum*, (London: Roger Daniel, 1653), esp. pp. 851-914; BMR A 361, Jerome, *Opera omnia*, ed. Adam Tribbechov (Frankfurt: Christian Genschius, 1684).

¹⁰⁰⁵ BMR A 797, Patrick Young, ed., *Clementis ad corinthos epistola prior* (Oxford: Johannes Lichfield, 1633), unpaginated front matter; BSM 4 A. Hebr. 480 m, Menachem di Lonzano, *Shtei yadot* (Venice: 1618) [Hebrew], unpaginated front matter.

from the world of Bochart and Huet as Jacques Le Brun, John Woodbridge, and others have claimed.¹⁰⁰⁶

Other evidence confirms the plausibility of Simon's argument for the history of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*'s composition, demonstrating the extent and range of his knowledge of biblical criticism by the early 1670s. One of Simon's first letters to de la Roque from 1665 consisted of an extensive discussion of the relative merits of Morin's life and work.¹⁰⁰⁷ In the same year Simon described Claude Hardy, the Parisian *advocat* and orientalist, as his 'repertoire pour les livres rares'.¹⁰⁰⁸ The lack of letters from the rest of the 1660s is unfortunate, but the fuller picture given by those of the early 1670s reinforces, rather than contradicts, this impression. In a series of letters to Isaac La Peyrère in 1670 Simon expressed views completely at one with those of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*: a confident dismissal of cabbalistic Jewish works, based on his inspection of manuscript copies in the Oratory's library, distrust of ancient gentile chronological sources, and a suspicion – shared with Scaliger – of the reliability of the works of the ancient Hellenistic Jews.¹⁰⁰⁹ Spending time with the Pignerol Jew, Jona Salvador, Simon discussed Jewish history and customs, surveyed the Hebrew manuscripts of the Oratory, considered the provenance of the library's edition of the Zohar, and assessed the significance of the library's copy of a Kairaites commentary on the Pentateuch.¹⁰¹⁰ From regularly reading together, Simon remarked, he discovered Salvador to be extremely practised in reading the 'Talmud in the Jewish manner, but 'very ignorant' when it came to the Masorah and biblical criticism.¹⁰¹¹

It is therefore entirely plausible that the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* had been completed in some form by this early stage. Only towards end of the 1670s, however, did Simon decide to publish it. This decade saw Simon publish an extensive

¹⁰⁰⁶ For the strongest claims in this regard, equating Simon and his work with figures such as Pierre Bayle, see, Jacques Le Brun and John Woodbridge, 'Introduction', in their Richard Simon, *Additions aux Recherches curieuses sur la diversité des langues et religions d'Edward Brerewood* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1983), esp. pp. 36-39.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. I, §3. Richard Simon to Hyacinthe de la Roque-Hue, 20 October 1665, pp. 13-18.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. I, §4. Richard Simon to Hyacinthe de la Roque-Hue, 25 October 1665, p. 19, 'M. Hardy qui est mon Repertoire pour les Livres rares'.

¹⁰⁰⁹ See, for example, Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. II, §1. Richard Simon to Isaac La Peyrère, 20 May 1670, pp. 2-11; Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. II, §3. Richard Simon to Isaac La Peyrère, 4 June 1670. Following his conversion to Catholicism and qualified abjuration of the *Prae-adamitae* and *Systema theologicum*, La Peyrère had retired to Oratorian seminary of Notre Dame des Vertus. See Popkin, *Isaac La Peyrère*, pp. 18-19.

¹⁰¹⁰ Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. III, §2. Richard Simon to Claude Hardy, 1670, pp. 8-13; Simon *Lettres choisies*, vol. II, §2. Richard Simon to Isaac La Peyrère, 27 May 1670, pp. 14-15. On Jona Salvador, see, Bertram Eugene Schwarzbach, 'Le témoignage de Jona Salvador sur les Juifs de Paris au XVII^e siècle', *Revue des Études Juives* 155 (1996), pp. 469-478.

¹⁰¹¹ Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. III, §2. Richard Simon to Claude Hardy, 1670, p. 12.

series of works. These included a striking intervention in the debate over the sacraments between Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole and Jean Claude, which underscored critical and linguistic shortcomings on both sides of that dispute, as well as translations of works by Leone da Modena and Girolamo Dandini.¹⁰¹² By the mid to late 1670s Simon had also composed a number of other works, some of which would only be published in the early 1680s, including a historical comparison of Christian and Jewish customs and traditions, and a work on the history of ecclesiastical benefices. In two specific cases, Simon's lack of financial means is known to have caused him to direct his scholarly energies specifically to earn money.¹⁰¹³ First, he composed an extensive series of additions to Edward Brerewood's *Enquiries touching the Diversity of Languages and Religions* (1614) for the Protestant printer Mme de Varennes, Anne Cailloué.¹⁰¹⁴ Second, Simon was enlisted, apparently through the mediation of Frémont d'Ablancourt and Henri Justel, to work on a new French translation of the Bible, organised by the ministers of Charenton in concert with those in Geneva. Although Simon supplied some pages discussing the nature of biblical translation together with some sample translations the project ultimately ran aground following the Genevan discovery of Simon's involvement.¹⁰¹⁵

The breakdown of Simon's work on the Genevan Bible project had significant repercussions. It meant he withdrew his work on the Brerewood project from de

¹⁰¹² Richard Simon, *Fides ecclesiae orientalis* (Paris: Gasparus Meturas, 1671); Leone da Modena, *Ceremonies et coutumes qui s'observent aujourd'hui parmi les Juifs*, [ed. and transl. Richard Simon], (Paris: Louis Billaine, 1674); Girolamo Dandini, *Voyage du Mont Liban*, [ed. and transl. Richard Simon], (Paris: Louis Billaine, 1675). For more on Simon's intervention in the debate between Arnauld and Nicole and Claude, which for reasons of space I can only here briefly mention, see esp., Lasaulnier, *Port-Royal insolite*, pp. 613-614, 675-680; Jacques Le Brun, 'Entre la Perpétuité et la Demonstratio Evangelica', in *Leibniz à Paris (1672-1676)*, *Studia Leibnitiana: Supplementa* 18 (1972), pp. 1-13; Jacques Le Brun and John D. Woodbridge, 'Introduction' in their *Additions aux Recherches curieuses sur la diversité des langues et religions d'Edward Brerewood* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1983), pp. 17-20; Quantin, *Le Catholicisme classique*, pp. 291-356; John D. Woodbridge, 'La "grand chasse aux manuscrits": la controverse eucharistique et Richard Simon', in *Conflits politiques, controverses religieuses: essais d'histoire européenne aux 16^e-18^e siècles*, Ouzi Elyada and Jacques Le Brun eds. (Paris: École des haute études en science sociales, 2002), esp. pp. 168-175.

¹⁰¹³ On Simon's lack of financial security and the range of other roles he occupied to assuage these problems, which included a series of stints in the 1660s teaching at the Collège de Juilly, see, Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 29-30.

¹⁰¹⁴ For the final publications, see, [Richard Simon], 'Comparaison des Ceremonies des Juifs, & de la discipline de l'Eglise, avec un discours touchant les differetes Messes, ou Liturgies qui sont en usage dans tout le monde', in his *Ceremonies et coutumes qui s'observent aujourd'hui parmi les Juifs* (Paris: Louis Billaine, 1681); [Richard Simon], *Histoire de l'origine et du progrès des revenus ecclesiastiques* (Francfort: Fred. Arnaud [= Rotterdam: Reinier Leers], 1684); Le Brun and Woodbridge, *Additions aux recherches curieuses*. The letters of Henri Justel confirm that Simon had completed these works in the mid to late 1670s and would probably have published them earlier had not events surrounding the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* intervened. See, respectively, OBL, Ms. Smith 46, Henri Justel to Thomas Smith, 17 November 1677, fol. 261^r; BSHPF, Ms. 811, no. 19 Henri Justel to Daniel Findekeller, 6 October 1676; BSHPF, Ms. 811, No. 27, Henri Justel to Daniel Findekeller, 3 January 1677.

¹⁰¹⁵ The entire details of this episode are still unclear, not least since they subsequently became a point of dispute between Simon, Jacques Basnage, and Jean Le Clerc. See, Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 36-38; Le Brun and Woodbridge, 'Introduction', pp. 20-29; Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré et l'histoire*, pp. 565-567.

Varennnes.¹⁰¹⁶ De Varennnes had had a copy of it made, however, and the discovery of this led to the most important recent attempt to date the composition of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, by John Woodbridge. Since, Woodbridge argued, it was apparent Simon reused parts of the Brerewood materials in the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, then it meant he must have been working on it still at that late stage, thereby undermining Simon's own claims that the work was for the most part finished by the early 1670s.¹⁰¹⁷ Further, it meant Woodbridge could mount a reassessment of Simon's overall ambitions in the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* itself, restating against Auvray the central significance of Spinoza's role.¹⁰¹⁸

There are reasons to be cautious of accepting Woodbridge's account. In the first place, pending further discoveries, the relationship between the material in the Brerewood manuscript and in the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* is not as clear-cut as Woodbridge claims. It is just as likely that Simon used the material prepared for the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* in the Brerewood document – even perhaps basing it on the same Latin original – as he did the other way round.¹⁰¹⁹ More important, in the context of the presentation of seventeenth-century biblical criticism presented thus far, one simply does not need to look for the general links Woodbridge makes between Spinoza and Simon's historical and critical approach to the Bible: these assumptions had been shared by biblical critics since the time of Masius, and had become especially well-known in the decades following Morin and Cappel's contributions. Simon was in many ways confronting the central questions facing a biblical scholar in the early 1660s, and the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* as a whole confronts those problems, rather than problems raised specifically by Spinoza.

Instead, a more likely scenario is that Simon had largely drafted – possibly in Latin – the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* by the early 1670s, and then continued to work on – and translate it – during that decade. The *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, it can be proposed, reflects two subtly different periods in Simon's scholarly career. The first, the extensive years of study spent in the library of the Oratory from roughly 1665–1671, and the second, the years during which he was revising and condensing the work, and quite possibly translating it into French, from 1671–77. Even if that chronology is too neat, thinking about it in these terms also helps explain why the nature of the work –

¹⁰¹⁶ Le Brun and Woodbridge, 'Introduction', p. 27.

¹⁰¹⁷ Woodbridge, 'Richard Simon's reaction', pp. 213.

¹⁰¹⁸ Woodbridge, 'Richard Simon's reaction', pp. 215–20. For Auvray's position, see, Auvray, 'Richard Simon et Spinoza', pp. 201–14.

¹⁰¹⁹ Woodbridge, 'Richard Simon's reaction', p. 213.

and Simon's own preoccupations – have frequently proved so difficult for historians to pin down. The *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* was a work of scholarship, conceived in direct response to the Latin works by Morin, Cappel, Walton and Vossius, but it was also written in French, reflecting the broader shifts in French literary culture that were occurring by the 1670s.¹⁰²⁰ The measure of Simon and his work was well-captured by Henri Justel, writing to Thomas Smith in November 1677: a 'learned man' Justel wrote, has written a book entitled the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, a work that may be 'full of singular and *hardis* things, but it should certainly sell [well]'.¹⁰²¹

2

There was 'no one', Simon wrote in the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, who had written with more, or with more learning, on biblical criticism than his predecessor at the Oratory, Jean Morin.¹⁰²² As early as 1665, Simon had admired Morin's *Exercitationes biblicae* as a work that contained 'an infinity of useful things and a deeply profound erudition'.¹⁰²³ Among his contemporaries, Simon remarked, such was Morin's reputation that many still entered blindly into his opinions.¹⁰²⁴ This was problematic, however, because despite Morin's learning, he had committed one fatal error of judgement: in seeking above all to undermine the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and with it the authority of Protestant Scripture, Morin had ultimately vitiated his work from a scholarly perspective.¹⁰²⁵ Simon also argued that Morin's own position was in itself contradictory, since he was hard-pressed to explain why, if the Septuagint was as reliable as he claimed, Jerome had felt it necessary to return to the *Hebraica veritas*.¹⁰²⁶ Morin was hardly unique

¹⁰²⁰ On these shifts, see, Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs et société*, vol. 2, pp. 623-25, 775. Simon himself, for example, underlined the degree to which the great success of the Jansenists was in part owing to the excellent French of their publications. See, Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. IV, §1. Richard Simon to Muzio Dandini, 20 June 1672, pp. 5-6. It is further worth underlining, for example, that the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, does not contain any Hebrew or Greek type. See, Richard Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (Paris: Louis Billaine, 1678), *passim*. This was also true of the 1685 edition.

¹⁰²¹ OBL, Ms. Smith 46, Henri Justel to Thomas Smith, 16 November 1677, fol. 260r, 'Une homme savant a fait un livre intitulé l'histoire Critique du texte de la Bible ... Ce livre est un ouvrage plein des choses singuliers et hardis mais qui pourront débiter'.

¹⁰²² Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 464, 'Il n'y a personne qui ait plus écrit sur la Critique de la Bible, & même avec plus d'érudition, que le P. Morin Prêtre de l'Oratoire'.

¹⁰²³ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 470, 'Ce qui n'empêche pourtant pas [Morin's 'prejudice' for certain versions], qu'on ne trouve dans ses Livres une infinité de choses utile & une tres-profonde érudition'.

¹⁰²⁴ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 464.

¹⁰²⁵ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 464-5.

¹⁰²⁶ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 466-7.

in this regard. According to Simon the great majority of earlier writers, ranging from the ancient Jews and the Christian Fathers to contemporary Catholic and Protestant authors, had been influenced above all by their 'préjugés', their own partial opinions.¹⁰²⁷ This included the most recent biblical critics, as Morin's stubborn opposition to the rabbis had been met by Buxtorf I and Buxtorf II's equally strong preference in their favour.¹⁰²⁸ Likewise Isaac Vossius, whose work on the Septuagint, as Simon put it, had avoided one extreme only in order to embrace another.¹⁰²⁹

Simon presented his work as a remedy to this situation. Conserving, as far as possible, the authority of both the 'original Hebrew' and other versions, he would show himself without due partiality for either the Greek, Latin, or Hebrew texts, and keep, as he put it, the just mean required to find the truth.¹⁰³⁰ What this meant in practice, Simon explained, was that he would examine the Hebrew text and its versions by the 'ordinary rules of criticism'.¹⁰³¹ Simon introduced this as a return to the best practice of the most learned fathers, imitating the work of Origen and Jerome. In fact, what it entailed above all was a complete embrace of the methods represented by Louis Cappel's use of secular and New Testament criticism, as deployed in the *Critica sacra*, and the extensive discussions of other scholars in Pearson's *Critici sacri*.¹⁰³² Thus, Simon's claim from the outset was that his work would in part replace arguments based on confessional considerations with those based on the type of detailed stylistic and critical arguments represented by the work of Cappel, Grotius, and Drusius.¹⁰³³

Where Simon went beyond these critics was in claiming that his work also combined criticism with history. Simon's use of the term 'histoire', 'historia', to narrate the origin and transmission of the Bible, rather than an account of events, was an innovative use of the term. It was much more specific than Spinoza's discussion of 'historia' in the *Tractatus theologico-politicus*, which encompassed the method for interpreting Scripture, the reconstruction of the history of the biblical text, and the equivalent

¹⁰²⁷ Richard Simon, 'Preface de l'Auteur', in his *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, sig. ****2^r.

¹⁰²⁸ Simon, 'Preface de l'Auteur', in his *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, sig. ****2^r.

¹⁰²⁹ Simon, 'Preface de l'Auteur', in his *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, sig. ****3^r. See also, Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 479-80.

¹⁰³⁰ Simon, 'Preface de l'Auteur', in his *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, sig. ****3^r.

¹⁰³¹ Simon, 'Preface de l'Auteur', in his *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, sig. ****3^r.

¹⁰³² Simon, 'Preface de l'Auteur', in his *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, sig. ****2^{r-v}. Simon never avoided underlining his appreciation of Cappel's work, whose 'judgement' was second to none, and whose 'excellent work' was vital for anyone who wanted to understand or study the Bible.

¹⁰³³ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 443, for Simon's appreciation of Drusius's work.

procedure conducted in natural philosophy.¹⁰³⁴ Simon's use of the term could just as probably been taken from Brian Walton. In the *Prolegomena* to the London Polyglot Bible Walton had described the reconstruction of the 'historia' of the Septuagint, which was to say, by who, when, on what occasion it was made, with which manuscripts and, more generally, what its sources were.¹⁰³⁵ What Simon did was generalise this notion, apply it to each of the sacred books' origin and transmission, and in that sense extend its usage in line with Walton's actual practice.

This matters because while we lack definitive evidence concerning Simon's reading of Spinoza, we can follow Simon's extensive engagement with Walton's work. In his *Prolegomena*, Simon pointed out, Walton had examined the relevant questions much more deeply than any of his contemporaries, adeptly judging the best authors to follow and avoiding the shortcomings of most Protestant accounts.¹⁰³⁶ In this way Walton had maintained a fine balance in his discussion of the relative merits of the original Hebrew text and the ancient versions.¹⁰³⁷ Yet Walton's work had in the final analysis failed to present an entirely coherent account.¹⁰³⁸ Although Walton had begun to chart the history of the Hebrew text, he had also advocated a specifically Protestant emphasis in divine providence maintaining and ensuring the integrity of the original texts of Scripture. Above all, Walton had followed Cappel and other Protestant critics in claiming that divine providence had ensured that passages of fundamental importance for religion had been left unaltered. Walton had not simply asserted this, but argued that throughout history the Church had guaranteed it. It was because of these failings that, despite his historical account of the Hebrew texts and different versions, and his modified acceptance of Cappel's work, Walton still insisted that the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament enjoyed a special status, and were the texts others had to be measured by.¹⁰³⁹

¹⁰³⁴ On this, see especially, Benedetto Bravo, 'Critique in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries and the Rise of the Notion of Historical Criticism', in *History of scholarship*, Ligota and Quantin eds., esp. pp. 184-185.

¹⁰³⁵ Walton, *Prolegomena*, IX. §1-2.

¹⁰³⁶ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 481-82, 'Comme son Recueil est plus étendue, & même plus exact que tous les autres qui avoient été faits avant lui sur le même sujet, on peut aussi dire qu'il a examiné plus à-fond & avec plus d'exactitude que les autres, ces sortes de Question, dont une partie regarde la Critique du Texte Hebreu, & l'autre partie la Critique des Versions. Il a eu assez de jugement, pour choisir les meilleurs Auteurs qui avoient écrit sur les matieres dont il tratoit, & en même tems assez de capacité, pour ne suivre pas toujours aveuglément les préjugés d'une infinité de Protestans'.

¹⁰³⁷ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 483.

¹⁰³⁸ Simon also criticised a number of Walton's specific arguments. See, for example, Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 494-501.

¹⁰³⁹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 494.

Simon upset the delicate balance that Walton had attempted to maintain. Lacking the original text, Walton simply could not hold that his appeal to the Church was enough to guarantee his Protestant account of the integrity of Scripture.¹⁰⁴⁰ Revisers or other figures in the Church capable of maintaining or revising the text were not prophets or divinely-inspired copyists, and were liable as anyone to err and commit mistakes. Walton had consequently misconceived the role of the Church: it had corrected or emended texts not on the basis of criticism, but on the basis of tradition.¹⁰⁴¹ Divine providence, in this sense, was concerned with the purity of doctrine, not the preservation of the Scriptures themselves from corruption.¹⁰⁴² At most, Simon allowed, the Church could guarantee the preservation of the Bible as a book, but it could not control the changes the text itself might undergo, since texts might suffer extensive corruption on even the most vital points.¹⁰⁴³

For Simon, the root of Walton's problem was that his notion of the 'authentic' text of Scripture did not provide a coherent basis for the historical analysis of the text's actual transmission and the critical evaluation of its present status. The crux of the matter was what it meant to call Scripture 'authentic'. There were, Simon argued, two senses in which this could be taken. First, the 'real and proper' sense, referred to a text that was the original version in distinction to a copy. According to this definition of 'authentic', Simon noted, there were properly speaking no 'authentic' Scriptures extant.¹⁰⁴⁴ The second sense was that used by 'jurists and councils', referring chiefly to those texts that a given authoritative body had authorised as 'authentic'. This, Simon argued, denoted the 'true signification' of the word.¹⁰⁴⁵ It was on this basis that the Council of Trent had declared the Vulgate was 'authentic', authorising it to be used in worship on the basis of its antiquity and lack of error relative to all the other Latin versions.¹⁰⁴⁶

Simon's account of the integrity of Catholic tradition, combined with his precise definition of an 'authentic' text, meant that unlike Walton he was free to characterise his work as a critical inquiry into every aspect of the Bible's textual history.¹⁰⁴⁷ This was a thorough restatement of the Catholic defence of biblical criticism that had also been the basis of Morin's work. Where Simon differed from Morin was in arguing that this

¹⁰⁴⁰ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 494-5.

¹⁰⁴¹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 493.

¹⁰⁴² Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 495.

¹⁰⁴³ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 493.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 265.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 265.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 266.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 8.

understanding of the roles of authenticity and tradition should not change the centrality of the 'original' texts of Scripture in comparison to the versions.¹⁰⁴⁸ If one wanted to study the history of the Old Testament the main objective had to be the history and criticism of the Hebrew text. Only once that had been established and clarified could the critic then proceed to the study of the different ancient versions, and following that, the works of modern critics.

In its design the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* therefore promised above all to clarify the relationship between the original text of the Bible and its subsequent translations. Understood thus, the underlying basis of Simon's work can from the outset be viewed as a reasoned balance between the two styles of biblical criticism represented by Morin and Cappel's work. Simon fully accepted Morin's detailed demonstration that one had to consider the texts of the Bible as specific historically-situated traditions. Yet he also agreed with Cappel's overarching ambition to use the critical methods of secular and New Testament criticism to reach back to as early an edition of the texts as possible. Simon's work also replied to both: arguing against Morin in favour of the study of the Hebrew text, and against Cappel that Old Testament criticism had some signal factors that differentiated it from secular criticism. What Simon proposed was to continue Walton's attempt to historicise Cappel's work, but by doing so on the basis of thoroughly Catholic notions of authenticity, tradition, and the Church, be able to present a coherent and critical history of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. The result would demonstrate the shortcomings of Morin's work on the Hebrew, Greek, and Samaritan texts, and in so doing present a new basis for biblical criticism itself.

3

The difference between Simon and his precursors was nowhere more evident than in their respective considerations of the origin of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Neither the Catholic Morin, nor the Protestant scholars Cappel, Ussher, Buxtorf II, Walton, and Vossius, had specifically addressed this question in detail. While there had been debate over the question of the Hebrew vowel points or the history of the Samaritan script, all these critics ultimately agreed that the Bible as it stood was traceable to Ezra and the men of the Great Synagogue. The general belief that the Pentateuch, for

¹⁰⁴⁸ See, Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, sig. ****3^r, pp. 8-11, 269-70.

example, was properly speaking Mosaic in origin, was for them simply assumed to be common ground, rather than a point of dispute.

These problems were not in themselves novel, and had previously been considered by a series of Jewish and Catholic scholars and theologians. Foremost among the earlier writers was Ibn Ezra, whose use of the phrase 'it is a secret' indicated in several places anachronisms or other difficulties in parts of the text of the Pentateuch that suggested they had a post-Mosaic origin.¹⁰⁴⁹ Ibn Ezra's analysis of these points was extended by subsequent scholars, including Alfonso Tostado Ribera de Madrigal, known as 'Tostatus', Andreas Masius, Cornelius à Lapide, and Jacques Bonfrère.¹⁰⁵⁰ Simon was deeply familiar with these works. In his copy of ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica*, for example, he marked and described at Deuteronomy 1.1 how Ibn Ezra's commentary had highlighted that the use of the phrase 'beyond the Jordan' was one of twelve possible places that could be offered as evidence of non-Mosaic authorship.¹⁰⁵¹ Similarly, the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*'s opening chapters were littered with references to Masius, à Lapide, and Bonfrère.¹⁰⁵² These, it should be underlined, were well-known and widely-available texts, and consequently it is very probable that Simon had read them at an early stage in his work.¹⁰⁵³

For Simon, writing in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, these questions had become problematic in a way they had not been for earlier generations of Catholic scholars. Thomas Hobbes, La Peyrère, and Spinoza had extended the arguments of those earlier scholars and used them to develop positions pointedly designed to undermine the authority of the Hebrew text.¹⁰⁵⁴ In the *Systema theologicum* La Peyrère used the anachronisms mentioned by à Lapide and Bonfrère to argue not simply that parts of the Pentateuch had been added later, but that the text as a whole was non-Mosaic.¹⁰⁵⁵ The Pentateuch was the work of a final compilation and redaction by someone else, who had left 'many things confus'd and out of order, obscure, deficient, many things omitted

¹⁰⁴⁹ See, Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible', pp. 402-04.

¹⁰⁵⁰ See, generally, Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible', pp. 398-413.

¹⁰⁵¹ BMR, A 599, ben Israel, *Biblia Hebraica*, vol. I, p. [ק"י], Deut. 1:1, (marginal annotation). Simon did not, it should be noted, mark these places systematically throughout the Pentateuch. This is the only one where Simon marked the place and highlighted its significance with a marginal comment.

¹⁰⁵² See, for example, Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 31-32, although such are *passim* in the first eight chapters of Book One.

¹⁰⁵³ For a useful list of printings of à Lapide's work, see, A. Williams, *The Common Expositor: An Account of the Commentaries on Genesis 1527-1633* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1948), p. 276. Martin also underlined the number of times à Lapide and Bonfrère's commentaries were printed in France, above all in the period before 1667, see, Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs et société*, vol. I, p. 118, and vol. II, p. 599.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra and the Bible', pp. 383-398. It is unclear how far Simon was aware of Thomas Hobbes's claims on this point and at what date.

¹⁰⁵⁵ See the useful table illustrating these in Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra and the Bible', p. 412.

and misplaced'.¹⁰⁵⁶ In the *Tractatus theologico-politicus* Spinoza not only offered a comprehensive list of places as evidence of the Pentateuch's non-Mosaicity, but turned the traditional orthodox claim against itself: the text was not simply refined and emended by Ezra, but Ezra himself was its author.¹⁰⁵⁷

Even the daring suggestion of La Peyrère and Spinoza, however, that the books of the Bible, and even the Pentateuch, were the result of a later process of compilation and redaction, was indebted to earlier, entirely orthodox, scholarship. In his *Iosuae imperatoris historia* Masius had provided a similar account of Ezra's role in the redaction of the Bible, suggesting that it was in fact Ezra who was responsible for the compilation of the books of Joshua, Judges, Kings, and 'others' from a collection of 'dispersed' and 'scattered' materials 'mixed together in annals', arranging them into a single volume.¹⁰⁵⁸ Although Masius generally stated Ezra only added material to the Pentateuch 'here and there', at one point he appeared to go further, arguing that there was indeed the possibility that the Mosaic books 'in their present form' were composed 'by Ezra' rather than Moses.¹⁰⁵⁹ Even more importantly, Masius underlined the implications of his general point: the ancient Jews had undoubtedly kept ancient diaries and annals from which such accounts could have been compiled.¹⁰⁶⁰

Simon took Masius's central point that the texts as they stood originated with compilers such as Ezra but developed and extended it. According to Simon, Ezra was only one example of figures known as 'public scribes'. Common across the Ancient Near East, it was these men who were responsible for writing and maintaining official archives and annals.¹⁰⁶¹ Indeed, Simon posited, it seemed plausible Moses had instituted this role himself, versed as he was in the learning and practices of the Egyptians.¹⁰⁶² In the Hebrew Republic these public scribes had a special significance. Simon brought together testimony from Josephus, Eusebius, and Jewish tradition, to show that these public scribes were the 'prophets' of the Hebrew state, and it was their task to collect and conserve the most important acts and occurrences of the Hebrews in the public

¹⁰⁵⁶ [La Peyrère], *Theological system*, pp. 204-208.

¹⁰⁵⁷ [Benedict de Spinoza], *Tractatus theologico-politicus* (Hamburg: Henricus Künrath [Amsterdam: Jan Rieuwertsz.], 1670), pp. 112-114. On the publishing history of the *Tractatus theologico-politicus*, see, Charles Singer, 'The pseudonym of Spinoza's publisher', *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1 (1937), pp. 77-78.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Andreas Masius, *Iosuae imperatoris historia* (Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1574), second pagination, p. 2.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Masius, *Iosuae imperatoris historia*, second pagination, p. 301. On this point, see especially Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Ezra, and the Bible', p. 408.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Masius, *Iosuae imperatoris historia*, second pagination, p. 2. Masius's claims would later be discussed and considered by à Lapide and Bonfrère.

¹⁰⁶¹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 15-17.

¹⁰⁶² Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 16.

archives.¹⁰⁶³ Existing for the duration of the Hebrew state, it was to these figures, Simon conjectured, that we ultimately owe the final redaction of the Hebrew Bible as we know it, whether that had finally occurred with Ezra, with other members of the Sanhedrin, or in the cases of other books much later still.¹⁰⁶⁴

Simon's account of the Old Testament's scribal origins among the Hebrew 'prophets' or 'sacred pen-men' had two important implications. First, it safeguarded the overall inspiration of the Bible: the status of these scribes meant that the liberty accorded to them to add, remove, or change the text had no implications for its status as divine Scripture. Second, as a historical explanation of the text's origin it provided a way to consider a whole series of the text's features that were inexplicable if one held they originated from a single author. At a stroke this solved the difficulties posed by the anachronisms and other problems with the Pentateuch, pushed to such extremes by La Peyrère and Spinoza.¹⁰⁶⁵ It would be a mistake, however, to frame Simon's account of the scribal origins of the Bible simply as a response to La Peyrère and Spinoza's work. More importantly, he was arguing that scholars had to think about the text as a whole in a new way, and to try to understand the complex process of redaction and compilation behind the books as they stood. This included considering diversities of style within and between different books, the use of synonyms and repetitions as a feature of Hebrew prose, and parts of the text whose features – in places missing whole periods or betraying incomplete chronological records – appeared to reflect the process of compilation Simon described.¹⁰⁶⁶

Simon underlined how his account of the origin of the Hebrew text had important implications for contemporary textual critics. Although Simon thought highly of Cappel's work, he had one persistent criticism of Cappel's approach, which was that he had unnecessarily multiplied the number of variant readings.¹⁰⁶⁷ Simon struck here at Cappel's claim that the Old Testament could be treated in the same way as a secular text, on the assumption that the archetype of the Hebrew Bible, like the archetype of a piece of Latin poetry or prose, must have been 'better', 'truer', or 'more fitting', according to his canon. Cappel had likewise argued, for example, that orthographical irregularities, such as the different spelling of proper nouns in different books, represented later scribal mistakes. Simon did not disagree that there were some cases in which Cappel was

¹⁰⁶³ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 16.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 17-20.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 31-35.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 21-25, 38-39.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, sig. ***4^v, pp. 475-6.

correct. His point, however, was that the circumstances in which one could follow Cappel's canon changed once one grasped the origin of the Bible. Differences in the orthography of proper nouns, for example, could be traced to the scribal practices of those who compiled the original acts and annals, who were not as concerned with textual exactitude in the same way as modern critics.¹⁰⁶⁸ The central thrust of Simon's argument was to reject the general applicability of Cappel's canon, which assumed that the process of change was from the 'correct' original to the error-prone later copy. There were any number of cases – especially comparing the Hebrew with the Septuagint, or within or between different Hebrew books – where it was entirely plausible that the Hebrew original, an imperfect product of compilation, was less 'fitting', in Cappel's sense.¹⁰⁶⁹ Simon had completed the developments begun with Ussher, and continued by Walton: Cappel's work had not been rejected, but tamed by the best account scholarship could propose for the actual conditions of the Hebrew Old Testament's history.

Having presented his account of the origin of the text of the Hebrew Old Testament, Simon's next move indicated a further departure. Rather than narrate the post-Ezran and subsequent Masoretic history of the text, Simon instead turned to the history and text-critical significance of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Where all previous scholars, most notably Walton, had described the history of the Samaritan Pentateuch as a discrete subject, Simon instead integrated it into the general history of the Jewish textual tradition in Hebrew.

What mattered for Simon was that the Samaritan Pentateuch was a vital indication of the Hebrew text of the Pentateuch as it had existed in the period before the Jews' Babylonian Captivity. Simon thought this was straightforward to establish: there was no chance the Samaritans could have copied the text from the Jews following the Captivity, when the division between the communities had already arisen.¹⁰⁷⁰ Indeed, the fact that the Samaritans retained their script while the Jews used the Assyrian or Square script only confirmed this.¹⁰⁷¹ In the context of Simon's broader account of the history of the Hebrew text, however, this took on two significant implications. First, the Samaritan Pentateuch confirmed Simon's account of the Hebrew text's origin. It had to originate following the removal of the ten tribes, yet it contained all the places in the Masoretic text that could lead one to believe, following Aben Ezra, Tostatus, Masius, and others,

¹⁰⁶⁸ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 22.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 23-25.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 64.

¹⁰⁷¹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 66-7.

that the Pentateuch as it stood was not completely of Mosaic origin. Hence it proved that the Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuch both represented a pre-Captivity Jewish scribal culture: the *Vorlage* of the Masoretic text and the Samaritan Hebrew Pentateuch originated in an earlier process of redaction and compilation.¹⁰⁷² The second implication was that since following the Captivity there was little commerce between the two sects, it implicitly followed that it was not possible Ezra, or any other figure, could have made any extensive editorial changes, confirming therefore both texts as representative exemplars of the pre-Ezran text.¹⁰⁷³

Having established the plausible identity of the *Vorlage* of the Masoretic Hebrew text and the Samaritan Pentateuch, Simon proceeded to set out his assessment of the text-critical significance of the Samaritan Pentateuch as it stood. As the Pentateuch volume of his copy of ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica* reveals, Simon systematically collated the readings of the Samaritan Pentateuch with the Hebrew text printed in ben Israel's edition.¹⁰⁷⁴ Simon did not limit himself to the text of the Samaritan Hebrew Pentateuch alone, but extended his collation to include the whole of the Samaritan textual tradition, collecting variant readings drawn from the Samaritan Hebrew Targum and the Samaritan Arabic Targum.¹⁰⁷⁵ He also included an extensive number of variant readings given in Hottinger's *Anti-moriniana*, noting Hottinger's references to alternative readings found either in Golius's Samaritan Pentateuch in Leiden or, in some cases, readings that could be found in one of Ussher's manuscripts.¹⁰⁷⁶ Finally, Simon also added notes and comments made on the text by Edmund Castell in the sixth volume of the London Polyglot Bible.

Simon used his accumulated notes and variant readings to reject the sweeping generalisations of Morin and Hottinger, which, he underlined, were formed chiefly on the basis of their confessional positions.¹⁰⁷⁷ In principle Simon granted Morin's central claim that shared readings in the Samaritan text and the Septuagint could be preferred to the Masoretic Hebrew on the basis that it was likely they came from a shared *Vorlage*.

¹⁰⁷² Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 66.

¹⁰⁷³ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 66-67.

¹⁰⁷⁴ BMR, A 599, ben Israel, *Biblia Hebraica*, vol. I, *passim*. I have not yet worked out whether Simon conducted this on the basis of one of the printed editions or on the basis of the manuscript held by the Oratory.

¹⁰⁷⁵ BMR, A 599, ben Israel, *Biblia Hebraica*, vol. I, *passim*. It seems probable that Simon's source for these readings was volume six of the London Polyglot Bible. This conjecture is further supported by Simon's own reference to this source. See, Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 73.

¹⁰⁷⁶ See, for example, BMR, A 599, ben Israel, *Biblia Hebraica*, vol. I, p. א', Gen. 3:20, Simon noted: 'Hott. p. 98 notat in cod. Sa. Leyd. expungit כל [from אִם כָּל־חַי, 'mater [esset] cunctorum viventium] sed legi in cod. usser [sic] ubi quoque extat in Sa. ed. et in vers. sa.'

¹⁰⁷⁷ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 67.

Even here, however, Simon was cautious: some Samaritan communities knew Greek and it was entirely possible they could have used the Septuagint to correct the Samaritan Pentateuch.¹⁰⁷⁸ Simon had much less time for Morin's other claims. A thorough examination – as Rouen A 559 shows Simon had conducted – of full and defective letters revealed Samaritan copyists were as likely as their Hebrew equivalents to have added or removed *matres lectiones*.¹⁰⁷⁹ Where Morin had argued that problematic *ketiv* readings in the Hebrew text indicated the Samaritan text should be preferred, Simon instead noted that this often appeared to indicate Hebrew fastidiousness in copying the text directly before them, rather than correcting it. This meant it would have been preferable if the Samaritans had matched the Hebrews' scrupulous refusal to change the consonantal text.¹⁰⁸⁰ Simon was equally critical of Hottinger's claims. Where Hottinger had alleged changes in orthography of the Samaritan text originated with the mistakes of the Samaritan transcribers, Simon instead outlined that these were just as likely to have come from mistaken pronunciation.¹⁰⁸¹ Rather than quibbling over small changes between a *he* or a *heth*, which could be easily rectified, Hottinger would have done better to consult the citations to the Samaritan text found in the ancient Fathers, where he would have the general reliability of the text soundly justified.¹⁰⁸²

Against Morin and Hottinger, Simon outlined that the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Masoretic Hebrew text should be thought of as 'two copies of the same original', each of which 'had their faults and their genuine readings'.¹⁰⁸³ Where both readings appeared equally probable, Simon put it, it simply had to be accepted they represented two possible versions of the original text.¹⁰⁸⁴ Yet it would be wrong to say that Simon thought the two textual traditions were of equal weight. In particular, Simon argued that the most apparent difference between the two was a tendency in the Samaritan tradition to allow for more changes to be made to the text. Such included, of course, the well-known changes relating to Samaritan worship on Mount Gerizim.¹⁰⁸⁵ More seriously, Simon thought these changes reflected the deeper problem that the Samaritan text appeared to have been corrected throughout; frequently he found that obscurities in the

¹⁰⁷⁸ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 68.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 68-69. Morin had claimed the opposite in order to burnish the reliability of the Samaritan scribes. See above, Chapter Two, Sect. II.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 69-70.

¹⁰⁸¹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 71.

¹⁰⁸² Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 73.

¹⁰⁸³ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 76.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 69.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 74.

Hebrew text had been ironed out or resolved in the Samaritan text.¹⁰⁸⁶ If he had been dealing with a translation, as Simon put it, he would have argued that these changes were due to the translator. As it was he thought it was enough to suppose that scribes had altered places to render the Samaritan text more plausible.¹⁰⁸⁷ In one move Simon struck at Morin's claim that the Samaritan text was superior, and also showed why he was unwilling to accept Cappel's uniform application of his canon. Thus, Simon's general preference remained for the Masoretic text: when printed, it would only be necessary to include the readings from the Samaritan text as variants to the Hebrew.¹⁰⁸⁸

This preference was not based on a straightforward account of the Masoretic Hebrew text's post-Captivity stability. Simon allowed that, by the era of the Second Temple, the public scribes, and most likely Ezra and the men of the Great Synagogue, had in some sense prepared and authorised a version of much of what would later be known as the Hebrew Bible.¹⁰⁸⁹ This was not to be mistaken for a pristine, corrected, or final edition of the text, and Simon pushed back against Buxtorf's, Buxtorf II's, or Ussher's claims to the contrary. To grasp the extent of the variants between Hebrew manuscripts during the era of the Second Temple, Simon argued, one had to follow Cappel and Walton's lead and consider the Septuagint as a source of variant readings.¹⁰⁹⁰ Throughout his copy of ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica* Simon had included an extremely extensive – if not exhaustive – number of marginal annotations that detailed precisely where the Septuagint's translators had evidently read a different Hebrew text to that given in the Masoretic text.¹⁰⁹¹ Nevertheless, Simon was less willing than Cappel and Walton simply to assume that the Septuagint provided an alternative to an authoritative Hebrew *Vorlage*. According to Simon the Septuagint was created at a time when variation already existed between Hebrew codices, such that it provided one alternative, a glimpse of the period's textual instability, rather than a rule.¹⁰⁹²

Simon further broke with Walton and Cappel in his subsequent account of the Hebrew text in the period of the Second Temple. As we have seen, against Buxtorf's, Buxtorf II's, and others' claims regarding the post-Ezran stability of the Hebrew text, Cappel and Walton had both argued that the crucial moment in the history of the Hebrew text came following Antiochus IV Epiphanes' desecration of the Hebrew

¹⁰⁸⁶ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 74-75.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 74.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 73.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 26-28, 52-57.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 95-96.

¹⁰⁹¹ BMR, A 599, ben Israel, *Biblia Hebraica*, vols. 1-5, *passim*.

¹⁰⁹² Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 96-97.

Temple, following which the Jews became increasingly diligent in maintaining and conserving the Hebrew text. This claim was crucial since it provided an explanation for why the Hebrew text differed so extensively from the Septuagint, but did so in such a way that both could be seen as valuable sources of variant readings. Instead of acknowledging and then rejecting this conjectural account, Simon completely passed it over, omitting any mention of a claim that had been crucial to the earlier Protestant attempt to safeguard the authority and antiquity of the Masoretic text.¹⁰⁹³

Simon instead characterised the entire period of the Second Temple as one of instability for the Hebrew text. Worse still, it was to this time, he thought, that one could 'chiefly attribute' much of the 'confusion' currently found in the contemporary Hebrew text.¹⁰⁹⁴ Simon emphasised how the era during and subsequent to the Captivity had undermined the conditions in which the text could be reliably transmitted. It was impossible to suppose that new generations of scribes, whose first language was Chaldean, could be expected to follow and copy the text with the same exactitude as earlier generations whose mother tongue was Hebrew.¹⁰⁹⁵ All the features of the text Simon labelled as 'confusion' came from this source, including variations in orthography, confusions between Hebrew and Chaldean, and even the inclusion of Chaldean words in the text.¹⁰⁹⁶

Underlying Simon's account of the Hebrew text in the period from the Second Temple to the rise of the Masoretes was the deeper point that there was no evidence the Jews of this period were familiar with 'criticism'.¹⁰⁹⁷ As Simon reiterated throughout his discussion: since there was no grammar or criticism amongst the Jews at this time, it was wrong to expect them to be concerned with standards of textual exactitude acquired in eras when those disciplines had developed.¹⁰⁹⁸ Simon consequently emphasised that scholars had to take into account the broader Jewish cultural context in which references to the Scriptures were made. The New Testament, for example, revealed more that Christ and Paul were part of a culture founded on the basis of traditional – especially allegorical or parabolic – means of interpretation, which prioritised the accepted sense of

¹⁰⁹³ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 92-97.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 92, 'Je croi qu'on doit attribuer principalement à ces tems-là [from the return from the Captivity to Jesus Christ] une bonne partie de la confusion que se trouve aujourd'hui [sic] dans le Texte Hebreu'.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 92-93.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 94.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 96.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 92-92, 97-8, 100-01, 112-3.

a given passage rather than identifying its most correct manuscript versions.¹⁰⁹⁹ Philo and Josephus were equally clear examples that textual exactitude was never a predominant value.¹¹⁰⁰ This held true well into the period covered by the Talmud, which contained no indication of the existence of grammar or criticism. When the rabbis considered the Bible they did so in traditional ways, arguing over the allegorical interpretation of the text, or with the text's legal interpretation, rather than as critical scholars.¹¹⁰¹

If Simon's account of the Hebrew text's instability consequently struck at all previous Protestant claims to the contrary, including those by Cappel and Walton, he nonetheless did not claim this meant the reliability of the text itself was brought into question. He had very little time for Morin's insinuating repetition of Christian claims in favour of intentional Jewish corruption of the Scriptures and even less for Vossius's more recent repetition of these claims.¹¹⁰² In contrast, Simon detailed the degree to which the views of the early Church Fathers had no standing in critical questions. Their observations, at most, extended to views regarding the Septuagint in comparison to the other Jewish translations from Hebrew into Greek, and had no significance for the Hebrew text itself.¹¹⁰³ The only two Fathers whose opinions mattered, Origen and Jerome, both agreed the Jews had never intentionally corrupted the Scriptures.¹¹⁰⁴ Vossius and Morin's claims to the contrary only indicated they had misunderstood where Origen or Jerome were simply reporting other opinions as opposed to their own, or in the case of Jerome were mistakenly preferring his younger views to his older considered opinion.¹¹⁰⁵

As it developed, Simon's history of the post-Second Temple Hebrew text consequently began to demonstrate how far his account could acknowledge the necessary instability in the text caused by scribal transmission, without impugning the reliability of the tradition as a whole. Simon avoided either condemning completely the reliability of the Jewish tradition on the basis of minor variants or arguing in favour of an unrealistic degree of long-term stability. He allowed, for example, that even without the study of grammar and criticism among them there could have been some shifts in Jewish attitudes towards textual exactitude. In particular, he conjectured that the spur of

¹⁰⁹⁹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 97-98.

¹¹⁰⁰ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 98-99.

¹¹⁰¹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 114-115.

¹¹⁰² Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 101-102.

¹¹⁰³ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 102-105.

¹¹⁰⁴ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 106-111.

¹¹⁰⁵ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 109.

interreligious polemic might well have made the Jews more diligent in such questions.¹¹⁰⁶ The one point on which Simon was unequivocal, however, was that the text could only be thought of as close to fixed following the rise of the Masoretes.¹¹⁰⁷

For the history of these Simon drew deeply on the most recent works of critical scholarship, above all Part Two of Morin's *Exercitationes biblicae*. Some disagreement on points of detail excepted, Simon largely recapitulated Morin's outline of the activity of the Masoretic scholars for the redaction of the text, the development of the vowel points, and the eventual study of Hebrew grammar, all of which were indebted to Arabic precursors.¹¹⁰⁸ Simon's deep engagement with the Masoretic text and extant Hebrew manuscripts meant that as he turned to consider their work directly he began to clarify with more precision the nature of the Masoretes' achievement. This could be presented, as Simon himself framed it, as a *via media* between the judgements of the previous generations of scholars. Morin and Cappel had both undermined the authority of the Masoretes' work, whether directly, in the case of Morin, or more subtly, in the case of Cappel, whose argument in favour of the late-dating of the vowel points had emphasised the value of the consonantal text at the expense of the Masoretic apparatus.¹¹⁰⁹ In contrast, Buxtorf, Buxtorf II, and others, had too slavishly adhered to even the minutest parts of the Masoretes' work.¹¹¹⁰ The one scholar who had seen things more clearly, in this sense, was Walton. While his knowledge of the subject could have been deeper, Walton had grasped the crucial point that the Masoretes had to be understood as Jewish critics, whose work could and should be judged on the same score as the work of Greek or Latin critics.¹¹¹¹

This left Simon free, like Walton, to jettison parts of the Masoretes' work that he considered entirely superstitious, such as preserving some letters written larger than others, letters written above the line, inversed letters or spaces of the text left blank.¹¹¹² More generally, however, Simon underlined how far the Masoretes' work should be valued.¹¹¹³ In this sense Simon's work almost represented a more sophisticated recapitulation of Levita's much earlier appreciation of the work of the Tiberian Masoretes, whose work Simon emphasised preserved real value as an ancient tradition of

¹¹⁰⁶ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 100.

¹¹⁰⁷ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 112-113, 115-16.

¹¹⁰⁸ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 146-47, 166-178.

¹¹⁰⁹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 131-2, 147.

¹¹¹⁰ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 132-4.

¹¹¹¹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 133-34, 140-41, 153-58.

¹¹¹² Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 143-45.

¹¹¹³ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 134.

reading the text.¹¹¹⁴ The irregularities they preserved, for example, were only so many proofs of the vowel points' authenticity, the fact that it reflected the use of Hebrew rather than a reform on the basis of grammar.¹¹¹⁵ That the Karaites likewise accepted their work was only further evidence of its authority.¹¹¹⁶

What distinguished Simon's account, although this has hitherto been overlooked by scholarship, was that he set his analysis of the history and significance of the Hebrew text and the Masoretes' critical scholarship in the context of a systematic examination of extant Hebrew manuscripts. In this sense, as much as Simon's historical and critical account owed to the recent work of Morin, Cappel, and Walton, his work also rested on engagement with a series of other traditions of scholarship. Above all, it meant he drew deeply on earlier Jewish scholarship, and especially the editorial work done by Jacob ben Chaim in his preparation for the 1525 *Biblia Rabbinica*, the grammatical studies of Levita, and the tradition of Jewish interest in Hebrew manuscripts embodied in the seventeenth century by Menachem di Lonzano. Although Simon had not yet obtained a complete copy of the latter's *Or Torah* by the time he completed the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, he had at least seen an extensive series of extracts that allowed him to understand and absorb the central points of Lonzano's work.¹¹¹⁷

What Simon drew from this Jewish tradition of textual scholarship was an introduction to thinking about the relative authority and reliability of extant Hebrew manuscripts. These Jewish scholars agreed that manuscripts produced on the Iberian Peninsula represented the most correct exemplars of the Hebrew text available, providing the authoritative models against which others should be corrected. As Levita put it, in the context of his study of the Masorah, 'most of the correct Codices I found to be Spanish'.¹¹¹⁸ Jacob Ben Chaim had not only made the same point but underlined that it was these manuscripts that were the basis of the 1525 edition of the *Biblia Rabbinica*.¹¹¹⁹ As scholars now know, these judgements were ultimately correct: it would in time be

¹¹¹⁴ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 134-5.

¹¹¹⁵ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 148, where Simon specifically criticised Cappel for failing to give due weight to this point.

¹¹¹⁶ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 148.

¹¹¹⁷ Richard Simon, 'Catalogue des auteurs juifs', in his *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 542. Simon noted though that it was enough to gain an opinion of Lonzano's work: 'Je n'ai pû le trouver; on m'en a seulement communiqué quelques Extraits, d'où il a été facile de juger du reste.' See further, Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 130. Nevertheless, he would eventually succeed, and obtained a copy by March 1679. See, Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. I, §5. Richard Simon to Hyacinthe de la Roque-Hue, 10 March 1679, pp. 25-26.

¹¹¹⁸ Ginsburg, *The Massoreth ha-Massoreth*, p. 93.

¹¹¹⁹ Dunkelgrün, "Never Printed Like this Before", p. 66.

shown that it was these Spanish manuscripts that most closely match that pre-eminent Masoretic manuscript, the Aleppo codex.¹¹²⁰

What mattered was that Simon combined his study of these earlier Jewish scholars with his examination of manuscripts from Spain, Perpignan, and Germany, held by the library of the Oratory.¹¹²¹ The collection of Hebrew manuscripts bequeathed by de Sancy was rich in Sephardic manuscripts, to five of which Simon accorded special emphasis. These included a series of Sephardic manuscripts from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, Ms. Hébreu 13 and Ms. Hébreu 14 (then thought to be two parts of the same manuscript), Ms. Hébreu 23, and Ms. Hébreu 24.¹¹²² The final two deserve special emphasis. First, Ms. Hébreu 22, a manuscript that Simon thought dated from around the turn of the eleventh century.¹¹²³ Second, Ms. Hébreu 82, a manuscript that only included the Former and Later Prophets completed in Burgos in 1207, and written by Moses ben Solomon ha-Cohen for Todros ben Meir Abulafia.¹¹²⁴ Those in the library from Perpignan, Ms. Hébreu 7, and Germany, Mss. Hébreu 8-10, both written at the

¹¹²⁰ Penkower, 'The Development of the Masoretic Bible', pp. 277-283; Penkower, *Masorah and Text Criticism*, p. 27.

¹¹²¹ These manuscripts are now all held by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and I refer to them throughout by their modern shelfmarks. I give details in each place where the manuscript could be found when Simon consulted it and, where known, its shelfmark at that time.

¹¹²² BNF Ms. Hébreu 13 and Ms. Hébreu 14, thought until recently to be two parts of the same manuscript, are, in Simon's catalogue, BNF Ms. Hébreu 1295, fol. 31^r, 'LL. 58 and LL. 59, Bibliorum hebraicorum volumen complectens prophetas posteriores crassiusculis characteribus exarata cum masora'. BNF Ms. Hébreu 23 is: 'L.L. 56. BB. 31. Biblia hebraica quae characterem praegrandiolem nec inelegantem prae se ferunt; eademque non videntur admodum vetusi[m?] licet puncta recens addita fuerint contextui'. BNF Ms. Hébreu 24 is: 'L.L. 57. BB. 34. Biblia hebraica mediocri caractere exscripta cum notis masorethic[is]. Bibliorum volumen 1^{me} complectens Pentateuch. Paralipom. et Hagiograph'. For information as to the significance of the shelfmarks in the de Sancy collection, used here by Simon, see Richard, 'Achille de Harlay de Sancy' pp. 417-447. For modern descriptions of each of these manuscripts, see Javier del Barco, *Manuscrits en caractères hébreux conservés dans les bibliothèques de France*, vol. 4: *Hébreu 1 à 32, Manuscrits de la Bible hébraïque* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011) pp. 70-78, 142-53.

¹¹²³ In Simon's catalogue, BNF Ms. Hébreu 1295, fol. 31^r, 'L.L. 53. BB. 33. Biblia hebraica literis mediocribus iisdemque elegantissimis. Inde jam a sexcentis annis ut ex eorum scriptionis forma et cum aliis exemplaribus collatione judicare est, exarata addita quoque est masora cum punctis vocalibus manu recentiori.' See, del Barco, *Manuscrits de la Bible hébraïque*, pp. 134-139, who details that the manuscript is now thought to originate from the late thirteenth century. This manuscript would later be rated very highly by Simon's successor at the Oratory, Charles-François Houbigant. See, Charles-François Houbigant, *Prolegomena in scripturam sacram* (Paris: Claude Briasson and Laurent Durand, 1753), pp. 195-97, where the manuscript met all Houbigant's five points for guaranteeing a manuscript's authority, outlined on p. 195.

¹¹²⁴ In Simon's catalogue, BNF Ms. Hébreu 1295, fol. 31^r, 'L.L. 54. BB. 32. Bibliorum pars secunda quae prophetas priores et posteriores complectitur, literis uncialibus et perpolitibus exarata. universum opus biblicum ab annis ciciter quingentis a R. Mose sacerdote[.] In usum R. Theodori Levitae hannasi seu Judaeorum exulu[m] principis filii R. Meir Levitae qui similiter fuit hannasi[.] exscriptum fuit puncta vocalia manu recentiori contextu adjecta sunt, et ad oram libri variationes codicis hilleliani relata fuerunt. utraque etiam masora in eodem codice exhibetur'. This manuscript is in fact one of the oldest dated Hebrew manuscripts of the Middle Ages. See, Colette Sirat and Malachi Beit-Arié, *Manuscrits médiévaux en caractères hébraïques: portant des indications de date jusqu'à 1540* (Paris: Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique), vol. I, fasc. §1. Simon had a special appreciation for this manuscript, one that both he, and his Jewish guest Salvador, judged to be the finest they had ever seen. For Simon's judgement, see, Simon, *Histoire critique critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 121-122; for Salvador's, see, [Simon], *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. III, pp. 428-29.

start of the fourteenth century, would turn out to have what might be called negative value: Simon judged that their shortcomings confirmed Jewish assessment of the value of the Sephardic tradition.¹¹²⁵ Finally, it should be noted Simon was not limited to the library of the Oratory, but also used manuscripts in the Bibliothèque du Roi and the library of the Sorbonne. Of the manuscripts held by these libraries Simon emphasised the value of the Bibliothèque du Roi's Sephardic manuscript, now known as Ms. Hébreu 25.¹¹²⁶

Throughout his career Simon would underline the shortcomings of previous Christian scholars when it came to their use and understanding of Hebrew manuscripts. His common refrain was that seventeenth-century Christian editors had failed to appreciate how far the Sephardic manuscript tradition could be used to improve the state of the printed Hebrew text. In the *Bibliothèque critique*, for example, Simon remarked that he could not believe Morin and the other scholars who had prepared the Paris Polyglot Bible had failed to make use of the range of excellent material at their disposal.¹¹²⁷ Indeed, Simon put it, he could not think of them 'without anger' when he reflected on their failure to print a new edition of the Hebrew text using the best manuscripts in Paris.¹¹²⁸ Other scholars fell short because of the poor resources at their disposal. Simon detailed how lacking any access to manuscripts Cappel had unnecessarily multiplied variant readings that could have been corrected simply by consulting an alternative

¹¹²⁵ BNF Ms. Hébreu 1295, fol. 31^r, where BNF Ms. Hébreu 7 is 'L.L. 55; BB.30. Biblia hebraica Perpiniana ab annis 369 caractere haud impolito descripta a Iudaeo nomine Schelemo filio Raphaelis in usum suum. addita est masora simulque illius varia excerpta extant in fronte codicis et ad calcem, lectiones ben asher et ben neptali. dictionum literariumque pentateuchi exacta recensio in fronte eiusdem codicis cum aliis masorae animadversionibus habetur'. BNF Mss. Hébreu 8-10 are 'BA. 30, Biblia hebraica magnae molis caractere non adeo elegante, qualem praeferunt biblia munsteri aliaque librorum judaic[orum] editiones quae primo in germania cutae sunt ab annis ferme quadringentis exscripta ut ex illorum characteris forma et cum aliis codicibus quae eandem praeferunt scriptionis rationem eo[dem?] conficitur. In his pentateuchus cum paraphrasi Chaldaica Onk[elos]i hoc modo exhibetur ut versum contextus hebraici, semper alter versus paraphrasis excipiat. adiecta est utraque masora sub variis animalium plantarumque figuris'. See further, on both, del Barco, *Manuscripts de la Bible hébraïque*, pp. 46-59.

¹¹²⁶ Simon, 'Catalogue des auteurs juifs', p. 538, although there Simon noted that those in the Sorbonne were not especially valuable. For Simon's judgement of BNF Ms. Hébreu 25 – then 'côté 5' of the Bibliothèque du Roi – see, [Simon], *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. I, p. 367; [Simon], *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. III, pp. 426-7, where, at p. 426, Simon outlined to Jacques Lelong – to whom the original letter was addressed – that if he was in Paris he could show him the singular value of this manuscript. I presume this is also the manuscript Simon described, in his catalogue of Jewish authors, as the 'finest one could see'. See, Simon, 'Catalogue des auteurs juifs', p. 538. Later scholars would find Simon's judgement on this manuscript difficult to substantiate. See, Houbigant, *Prolegomena in Scripturam Sacram*, p. 211. For a modern description, see, del Barco, *Manuscripts de la Bible hébraïque*, pp. 156-163.

¹¹²⁷ Simon, *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. III, pp. 452-3. In the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, Simon likewise criticised Morin's failure to consult the 'rich' collection of Hebrew manuscripts at his disposal except in 'two or three places', and even then 'carelessly'. See, Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 117.

¹¹²⁸ Simon, *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. III, p. 427.

manuscript.¹¹²⁹ Buxtorf, and by implication Buxtorf II, had little chance to do good work when they could only consult poor and inexact German manuscripts.¹¹³⁰

Even scholars that had succeeded in publishing new editions fell short in Simon's estimations. Ben Israel's edition, for example, was not as perfect as its editor claimed. Ben Israel had, for example, left an empty space in the middle of Genesis 4:8 that Jacob ben Chaim and Lonzano both said was not present in the best manuscripts.¹¹³¹ Ms. Hébreu 25, held by the Bibliothèque du Roi, confirmed Jacob ben Chaim and Lonzano's claims.¹¹³² Simon was likewise critical of the 'most accurate' edition of the Bible published by Jewish scholars in Amsterdam in 1661, with a preface by Johannes Leusden introducing the work. Leusden described the use of two particular manuscripts, one from 1299 CE, with a figurative Masorah in the shape of dogs, cows, and other animals, and a second manuscript from Hamburg, said to have been written in Toledo in the eighth century.¹¹³³ Simon poured scorn on both of Leusden's manuscripts. The first, with its decorative Masorah and ornamental capital letters embossed in gold was evidently, Simon thought, German, French, or Italian. There was no doubt that scribes who annotated their work in such a way committed more errors. All the 'good Spanish manuscripts', in contrast, were written simply, clearly, and precisely.¹¹³⁴ Simon also dismissed Leusden's putative ancient Spanish manuscript. The claims relating to its age were evidently false, and it had probably been made to ape the celebrated – but long-lost – Codex Hillel. As such, the manuscript had no special authority.¹¹³⁵

Against these previous scholars and editors, Simon outlined how the study of Hebrew biblical manuscripts could lead to the improvement of the printed consonantal text of the Hebrew Old Testament. In the first instance this came from the insights they provided into Jewish scribal practice. One dimension of this was that it helped scholars become increasingly familiar with the various sources of scribal error. Through an extended discussion of Ms. Hébreu 7, for example, Simon explained how the points and other lines added to letters by some scribes had led to a good deal of confusion between

¹¹²⁹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 117. See also, Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. I, §V. Richard Simon to Hyacinthe de la Roque Hue, 10 March 1679, pp. 23-24.

¹¹³⁰ Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. I, §V. Richard Simon to Hyacinthe de la Roque Hue, 10 March 1679, p. 24.

¹¹³¹ [Simon], *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. III, p. 431. Simon made an extensive series of notes concerning this point in BMR, A 599, ben Israel, *Biblia Hebraica*, vol. I, p. 2^v (marginal annotation), which repeats precisely the same point.

¹¹³² [Simon], *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. III, p. 431.

¹¹³³ On these two manuscripts, see, Dunkelgrün, "Never Printed Like this Before", pp. 66-67.

¹¹³⁴ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 122-23, 126.

¹¹³⁵ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 123.

some letters, such as *mem* and *pe*, or *mem* and *beth*.¹¹³⁶ This could be confirmed by consulting the Septuagint, where places like Joshua 19:21 revealed the scribes of the Hebrew text at some point replaced שבע (Σαμαα) with שבע.¹¹³⁷ In other instances one could see where the scribes had inadvertently altered either proper names or the persons of nouns and verbs, errors and mistakes that could once more be confirmed and corrected either by consulting additional Hebrew manuscripts or other ancient versions.¹¹³⁸ This could extend to the omission of whole periods, a point Simon held responsible for the problems of the genealogies in Ezra and Chronicles.¹¹³⁹ In the German manuscript Ms. Hébreu 8, for example, Simon noted how a case of haplography at Genesis 5:31 had meant the scribe omitted the period between 'שנה' and 'שנה'.¹¹⁴⁰ The overall thrust of Simon's arguments was clear. He was proposing a further refinement of Walton's justification of Cappel's method, basing it on the identifiable and explainable changes that could be learned from the study of Hebrew manuscripts, rather than solely the attempt to construct a lost archetype.

Simon further underlined that the best Sephardic manuscripts could often present a consonantal text that was superior to that given either in the *textus receptus* or the Masoretic apparatus. The basis of this claim was rooted in Simon's study of the manuscripts themselves, which revealed the degree to which the uniformity of the Masoretic tradition had been overstated. Introducing his discussion Simon quoted at length the totals given in the Masorah for the numbers of words, parashot and sedarim, given in Ms. Hébreu 7, which, he underlined, conflicted with the totals given in the *Biblia Rabbinica*; even in this 'small matter', Simon put it, the Masorah was no 'fence for the law'.¹¹⁴¹ Simon's real focus, however, was to show the consequences of this for textual criticism. It meant that contemporary scholars should not rely on the *textus receptus* nor follow the Jews in regulating the Hebrew text on the basis of the Masorah, but instead seek the most probable reading by comparing all the best available manuscripts.¹¹⁴² This was precisely the point Simon underlined in the context of Ms. Hébreu 82, the early thirteenth-century manuscript of the Prophets. Although the manuscript had been

¹¹³⁶ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 126-127.

¹¹³⁷ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 127.

¹¹³⁸ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 128-29.

¹¹³⁹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 129.

¹¹⁴⁰ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 129.

¹¹⁴¹ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 139-40.

¹¹⁴² Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 141.

corrected according to the Masorah, Simon emphasised, the key was to prefer in places the manuscript's original consonantal text.¹¹⁴³

One vivid example of how this could work in practice came in Simon's discussion of the *ketiv-geri*. Simon argued that this part of the Masorah represented the reluctance of Jewish scribes to alter the consonantal text before them, even if it contained an evident mistake, and their choice instead to provide the correct reading in the margin.¹¹⁴⁴ Simon had little time for this Jewish respect towards the text: if it could be corrected, then it should be corrected.¹¹⁴⁵ To do so, Simon proposed that scholars should consult all the available manuscripts, looking especially for those places where the reading in the *geri* was actually included in the consonantal text. The records of Simon's studies reveal how far this was based on solid research: throughout his copy of ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica* Simon systematically noted where the reading in the consonantal text of a Spanish manuscript was as reported by the *geri*, and then in turn whether this was confirmed or not by the other ancient translations.¹¹⁴⁶ The result of this, Simon underlined, would correct the mistakes of earlier critics. Where Morin and Cappel, he argued, had indiscriminately amassed these readings as so many possible variant readings, he was offering a way to decisively diminish their number by up to as much as two-thirds.¹¹⁴⁷

Perhaps the most ambitious of Simon's claims was that by studying and considering the work of the Masoretic scholars one could even use their notes and lists gathered in the Masorah magna as a way to work back to readings that once existed in the pre-Masoretic Hebrew text. Simon's claim was that the lists compiled by the Masoretes could be used as sort of guide to how the readings in Hebrew manuscripts could change or vary through time. They should be seen, in this sense, as a collection of 'good rules' with which, by a 'good deal of reflection', one could then 'prove' the legitimacy of the ancient versions where it appeared they had read differently than the current Hebrew text.¹¹⁴⁸ Simon himself had done this, and had at one stage even translated a good deal of this material for his own benefit.¹¹⁴⁹ The sorts of points he highlighted were above all notes regarding the absence or presence of *matres lectiones*, or other letters that were commonly confused. If one compared these frequent sorts of

¹¹⁴³ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 121-22.

¹¹⁴⁴ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 141-42.

¹¹⁴⁵ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 142.

¹¹⁴⁶ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 122.

¹¹⁴⁷ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, p. 142.

¹¹⁴⁸ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 136-37.

¹¹⁴⁹ [Simon], *Réponse au Livre intitulé, Défense des sentiments*, p. 62.

textual variation with the texts of the ancient versions, Simon argued that it would be possible to predict how the text before the translators had once read.¹¹⁵⁰ The result was that scholars would no longer have to feel so attached to the reading of the contemporary Hebrew text, for in departing from it they would not be breaking with the Hebrew Bible entirely, but showing how the Hebrew critics' own work could be used to reach back to the lost texts of the Hebrew tradition.

In Book I of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* Simon presented what can justly be described as the first history of the Hebrew text of the Bible. All told, this embodied a striking answer to the claims against the Hebrew text's authority lodged by Morin and Vossius. Simon's work was not free from confessional considerations: he underlined throughout his career the problems Protestants could face when presented with the uncertainty of the Hebrew text and the degree to which his work was instead based, like that of Morin, on an alternative account of the role of the Church and tradition. Yet, unlike Morin, Simon was determined that the central focus of biblical criticism had to be the original texts of the Bible, which in the context of the Old Testament meant the Hebrew text. The result was a pathbreaking combination of the central insights put forward some half a century before by Morin and Cappel. Simon had used Morin's Catholic justification of biblical criticism to present a history of the texts in a way that Walton had ultimately been unable to, and thereby he could complete Walton's attempt to historicise Cappel's method. Simon completely allowed the value of Cappel's argument for the use of criticism, but only within the specific and known confines of the history of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, which he was the first to trace.

II. Richard Simon and the defence of biblical criticism

1

In his letter of July 1677 to Leibniz, Justel concluded that although the forthcoming 'critical history' of the Bible would be 'good and useful', it nonetheless contained a series

¹¹⁵⁰ Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 136-39. See also, Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, pp. 228-32, for Simon's detailed demonstration of the implications of this argument in the context of the Septuagint.

of 'hardies' claims.¹¹⁵¹ In highlighting two of these, that the canon of Scripture was only made after the Captivity and that the Sanhedrin could add or remove what they pleased, Justel seized on two points that were particularly threatening to a Protestant reader, since both were instances where Simon had used his Catholic notions of tradition and authenticity to go beyond Walton's work.¹¹⁵² Justel went further in a letter to Thomas Smith in November that same year, underlining the dangers of an account which contended that knowledge of the original Hebrew language was lost and that Moses was not the author of the books traditionally ascribed to him.¹¹⁵³ There was, however, no clean divide between Simon's Protestant and Catholic readers, with Justel's views being shared or reported by other Catholic contemporaries, including Emery Bigot and Pierre-Daniel Huet.¹¹⁵⁴

These concerns were apparently also shared by the authorities in Paris.¹¹⁵⁵ In October 1677 another of Leibniz's correspondents in Paris, Friedrich Adolf Hansen, reported that he had reasons to doubt whether the 'Critical History' on the Bible would be published, since the author was apparently having some problems being granted a *privilege*.¹¹⁵⁶ Yet, Simon, together with his *libraire* Louis Billaine, eventually succeeded in overcoming these problems, so that the work, following the approval of the censor and syndic of the Sorbonne, Edme Pirot, was granted a *privilege* and entered in the official register.¹¹⁵⁷ By the spring of 1678 Justel was able to forward Leibniz a copy of the work's table of contents, together with a catalogue of the authors cited.¹¹⁵⁸

¹¹⁵¹ Reihe, *Allgemeiner Politischer und Historischer Briefwechsel*, §262. Henri Justel to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 30 July 1677, p. 285.

¹¹⁵² Reihe, ed., *Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, §386. Henri Justel to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 30 July 1677, p. 285.

¹¹⁵³ OBL, Ms. Smith 46, Henri Justel to Thomas Smith, 17 November 1677, fol. 260^r.

¹¹⁵⁴ LUB, BPL 1923, no. 128, Emery Bigot to Nicolaas Heinsius, 2 June 1678. Pierre-Daniel Huet's comment was written at the end of his own copy of the 1678 edition. The page is dated '11 March 1679' and the ink and hand of the writing appears the same throughout the page. See, BNF Réserves, A. 3498, Richard Simon, *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* ([Paris: Louis Billaine, 1678]).

¹¹⁵⁵ This fact has hitherto been underplayed, or overlooked, by subsequent historians. See, in what is still the best overall account of Simon and his work during this period, Auvray, *Richard Simon*, p. 45, who claims that it Simon 'had obtained, apparently without difficulty', the approbation of Pirot. Whether or not Pirot was at this stage the cause of the difficulties would be worth further investigation.

¹¹⁵⁶ It is disappointing, considering what would shortly occur, that we have few details regarding these initial problems. See, Reihe, *Allgemeiner Politischer und Historischer Briefwechsel*, §270. Friedrich Adolf Hansen to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 4 October 1677, p. 296, 'Je doute de l'impression de la Critique Historique sur la bible, car je sais bien qu'on fait difficulté de donner un privilege à l'auteur'.

¹¹⁵⁷ See, BNF Fr. 21946, 'Enregistrements des Privileges Commencant au 23^e October 1673, p. 71, §520. The *privilege* is here granted to Louis Billaine and entered into the register on the 26 March 1678. What should be noted, however, is that the *privilege* is officially dated to the 20 November 1677, indicating that the problems reported by Hansen were apparently resolved by then. The whole entry has been unceremoniously crossed-out, with a note referencing the decision of the Conseil du Roi. On Billaine, see Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs et société*, vol. II, esp. pp. 708-720.

¹¹⁵⁸ Reihe, ed., *Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, §386. Henri Justel to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, [n. d.], p. 400.

It was at this moment disaster struck. Nicolas Toinard had seen the table of contents and forwarded it post-haste to Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, then tutor to the Dauphin. Bossuet reacted violently against the work, later recalling his verdict that it was 'a mass of impieties and a bastion of libertinage'.¹¹⁵⁹ Bossuet took immediate action: the work was banned by the Conseil du Roi, the vast majority of its first print run destroyed, and Simon was expelled from the Oratory.¹¹⁶⁰ A series of conferences and a *mémoire* Simon composed in defence of the work did little to change Bossuet's mind and Simon subsequently retired to Bolleville, where he had been awarded a position as curé in 1676 following work against the Benedictines.¹¹⁶¹

Bossuet's best efforts did not succeed in destroying all the printed copies of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*. Shortly following Bossuet's first moves against the work Justel had managed to obtain two exemplars, which he sent straight to England to the Bishop of London, Henry Compton, and the Earl of Clarendon.¹¹⁶² It was from these copies, and the circles connected to Compton, that the first replies to Simon's work emerged, written by Charles-Marie de Veil, Ezechiel Spanheim, and Isaac Vossius.¹¹⁶³ De Veil did little to address Simon's critical arguments, instead lambasting the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* as a work of confessional polemic in favour of Catholic tradition.¹¹⁶⁴ Spanheim's letter also made much of Simon's Catholicism, but added to this an

¹¹⁵⁹ See also, for Bossuet's later recollection, C. Urbain and E. Levesque eds., *Correspondance de Bossuet*, vol. XIII: (janvier 1701 - octobre 1702) (Paris: Hachette, 1920) §2143. Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet to A. M. De Malézieu, 19 May 1702, p. 309, 'un amass d'impietés et un rempart de libertinage'. For Simon's account of the events, see, Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. IV, §IX. Richard Simon to Père du Breuil, February 1679, pp. 52-60.

¹¹⁶⁰ For the first steps taken against Simon's work, see BNF, Ms. Fonds français 21743, esp. fols 166-78; for contemporary comment see OBL, Ms. Smith 46, fols. 258-72, which contains correspondence between Henri Justel and Thomas Smith from 13 October 1677-22 May 1678. See also, Anne Sauvy, *Œuvres saisis à Paris entre 1678 et 1701* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), p. 132; Lambe, 'Biblical Criticism and Censorship', pp. 149-77; Shelford, 'Of Sceptres and Censors', pp. 161-81; Auguste Bernus, *Richard Simon et son Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1969), pp. 96-140; Paul Auvray, *Richard Simon (1638-1712)* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1974), esp. pp. 39-53.

¹¹⁶¹ Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 47-51. For Simon's account of these conferences, and the details regarding his *Mémoire instructif*, see Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. IV, §9. Richard Simon to Père du Breuil, February 1679, pp. 52-55.

¹¹⁶² OBL, Ms. Rawlinson, C. 984., fols. 27-28, Henri Justel to Henry Compton, 13 April 1678. Reprinted in L. I. Bredvold, *The Intellectual Milieu of John Dryden: Studies in Some Aspects of Seventeenth Century Thought* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1934), pp. 159-161. See also, Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. IV, §9. Richard Simon to Père du Breuil, February 1679, p. 59. As Simon there outlines, a pirated edition of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, made on the basis of a manuscript copy of one of these copies in England, was published in Amsterdam by Daniel Elsevier. On this printing, see further, Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 67-68; Alphonse Willems, *Les Elzevier: histoire et annales typographiques* (Brussels: G. A. van Trigt, 1880), pp. ccxxii-ccxxlvi, 406, 410.

¹¹⁶³ On De Veil and Spanheim, see Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', pp. 102-105.

¹¹⁶⁴ Charles-Marie de Veil, *Lettre de Mr. De Veil, Docteur en Theologie & Ministre du Saint Evangile, a Monsieur Boile, de la Societe Royale des Science à Londres. Pour prouver contra l'Authheur d'un Livre nouveau intitulé, Critique du Vieux Testament, que La seule Ecriture est la Regle de la Foy* (London: M. Clark, 1678). De Veil, who was then staying at Compton's residence in Fulham, dated his letter to 14 May 1678, which presumably meant he had had a little time to consult the exemplar sent by Justel in early April.

increasing focus on what he described as Simon's 'Spinozist' arguments concerning the authorship of the books of the Bible and its attempt to treat the Bible in the same way as any profane book.¹¹⁶⁵ But in seeking to make up for the fact that Simon's work was not yet readily available, Spanheim spent so much time describing the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* that some, such as Pierre Bayle, thought him as much Simon's apologist as his censor.¹¹⁶⁶

Unlike de Veil and Spanheim, Vossius did at least attempt to craft a response to Simon's scholarship.¹¹⁶⁷ Vossius appended this to his work on the Sibylline Oracles, where in arguing that the Sibylline Oracles had a Jewish origin in Ptolemaic Alexandria, which meant they thereby preserved true prophecies of Christ that were only later corrupted by the rabbis, Vossius continued his earlier objective to replace one set of ancient Jewish witnesses with another, the Hellenistic Jews for the Rabbis.¹¹⁶⁸ Vossius's extensive attack on post-Second Temple Jewish learning – one that increasingly aroused the objections of his Protestant contemporaries – was an apposite counterpart to his response to Simon.¹¹⁶⁹ Although willing to address the 'most learned' Simon with the courtesy of a fellow scholar, Vossius ceded no ground on the question of the relative merits of the Greek and Hebrew texts of the Old Testament. Much of Vossius's work was a reiteration of his defence of the reliability of the Letter of Aristeas, the chronology of the Septuagint, and the shortcomings of Masoretic scholarship.¹¹⁷⁰ In some respects however Vossius even strengthened his earlier case: where he had previously allowed that only the Pentateuch had been translated by the Seventy, he now insisted that in fact his doubts on that score were misplaced and in fact they had translated the whole of the Old

¹¹⁶⁵ [Ezechiel Spanheim], *Lettre à un amy où l'on rend compte d'un livre, qui a pour titre, Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (Amsterdam: D. Elsevier, 1679). Many then, and since, have mistakenly ascribed the work to Friedrich Spanheim, Ezechiel's younger brother and Professor of Theology at Leiden from 1670. See, for correction and clarification on this point, Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', p. 104, fn. 83. Spanheim's letter is dated to the 10 December 1678 and was undoubtedly made on the basis of one of the two copies Justel had sent to England. See further, Mandelbrote, p. 104-05. For a general account of the debate between Simon and Spanheim, see, Lutz Danneburg, 'Ezechiel Spanheim's Dispute with Richard Simon: On the Biblical Philology at the end of the 17th Century', in *The Berlin Refuge: 1680-1700: Learning and Science in European Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 49-88.

¹¹⁶⁶ Elizabeth Labrousse, Anthony McKenna, Laurence Bergon, Hubert Bost, Wiep van Bunge, Edward James eds., *Correspondance de Pierre Bayle*, vol. III: *Janvier 1678 - fin 1683* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2004), §183. Pierre Bayle to Vincent Minutoli, 24 March 1680, p. 223.

¹¹⁶⁷ Scott Mandelbrote has recently highlighted Spanheim was staying with Vossius in Windsor in late 1679, and it was quite possibly him who encouraged Vossius to respond to Simon's work. On the quarrel between Simon and Vossius more generally, and especially the question of Compton's role, see, Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', pp. 100-06.

¹¹⁶⁸ Vossius, *De Sibyllinis Oraculis*, pp. 19-24.

¹¹⁶⁹ For some indications of Protestant objections to Vossius attacks on rabbinical learning, and, worse still, the Hebrew Bible, see, Twells, *Life of Dr. Pocock*, p. 74.

¹¹⁷⁰ Vossius, 'Ad objectiones nuperae criticae sacrae responsio', pp. 4-5, 7-8, 17-18, 38-43.

Testament.¹¹⁷¹ Railing against Simon's claim that he presented an unjustified prejudice in favour of the Septuagint, Vossius countered that his sole ambition was to prefer the univocal Christian truth of the Septuagint to the uncertainty of the mute Hebrew codex. Vossius also followed Spanheim's lead when he suggested that the uncertainty created by Simon's account of the authors of Scripture left him little better than Spinoza.¹¹⁷²

Simon felt that he could be dismissive of these critics. He admitted that Vossius was very able, but observed that his work had more subtlety than solidity, and that he would do better to concentrate on *belles-lettres* rather than biblical criticism.¹¹⁷³ Simon, nonetheless welcomed Vossius's attack. It provided him, as he told Bigot, with an opportunity to respond to all the criticism that had been levelled against his work.¹¹⁷⁴ Simon seized this opportunity, responding at length to de Veil, Spanheim, and, on several occasions, to Vossius.¹¹⁷⁵ As Simon's comment to Bigot might be taken to indicate, however, his responses to each of these scholars also embodied a general ambition to justify his biblical criticism, a subject that so few people, even in Paris, understood. From 1680-1684 Simon published a series of Latin works in which he attempted to justify the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* to contemporary scholars. Simon did not mount this defence in terms of the most innovative parts of his work. Instead, he reframed his argument, and attempted to show as persuasively as possible how far his work was ultimately based on irrefutable manuscript research.

Published in 1682, the *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis* aptly met this objective.¹¹⁷⁶ This publication, which contained a biography of Morin and a collection of letters by Morin and his correspondents, presented a context in which to consider Simon's own critical scholarship. No letter deserves more emphasis, in this respect, than Morin's letter to Barberini that defended Cappel's *Critica sacra* in terms of Catholic tradition.¹¹⁷⁷ In the prefatory biography of Morin, Simon presented an especially extensive discussion of this

¹¹⁷¹ Vossius, 'Ad objectiones nuperae criticae sacrae responsio', p. 10.

¹¹⁷² Vossius, 'Ad objectiones nuperae criticae sacrae responsio', p. 43.

¹¹⁷³ Simon, *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. III, pp. 37, 55.

¹¹⁷⁴ Simon, *Bibliothèque critique*, vol. III, p. 55, 'qu'il [Vossius] ne sçauroit me fait un plus grand plaisir, que d'écrire contre mon Histoire critique, parce qu'il me donnera lieu de lui faire une réponse, où je pourrai me justifier de tout ce qu'on m'a objecté'.

¹¹⁷⁵ See, Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Vossius and the Septuagint', p. 105, f.n. 87.

¹¹⁷⁶ Simon sent this work to Henri Justel to be published in England, where Justel had moved in the early 1680s. Justel entrusted the supervision of the work's printing to Edward Stillingfleet. Simon would have just cause to complain about the quality of the final publication, considering the large number of typographical mistakes, divergences between the contents and summaries of the letters, and the removal of a letter from Harlay de Sancy to Cardinal Bagni. See, Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. I, §82. Richard Simon to [John Hampden?], 20 January 1685, pp. 248-250. See further, Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 69-70.

¹¹⁷⁷ Simon, *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*, §82. Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, 25 November 1653 pp. 430-445. The autograph letter, with some relatively minor differences, is, BAV, Barb. Lat. 2185, Jean Morin to Francesco Barberini, 25 November 1653, fols. 73^r-76^v.

letter, underlining that it showed Cappel's work – and one can think, also Simon's – to contain nothing 'against Roman Catholic religion', and therefore worth being read by all the theologians in Paris who were so attached to the Vulgate.¹¹⁷⁸ If only, Simon added, Cappel had succeeded in his vision of publishing a new edition of the Bible in the way the *Critica sacra* had described.¹¹⁷⁹ The biography of Morin as a whole provided an even clearer indication of Simon's purposes. It at once extensively criticised the Congregation from which Simon had just been expelled, and also systematically undermined Morin's status as a scholar. It highlighted the shortcomings of Morin's account of the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch, the poor quality of his edition of the Samaritan text, his rudimentary knowledge of Hebrew, and the mistakes and errors that marred his interpretations of Jewish and Masoretic texts.¹¹⁸⁰ These stinging remarks offer a potent counterpoint to Simon's earlier appreciation of Morin's work in his letters to de la Roque and in the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* itself. True, even there Simon had criticised Morin, but it had always been balanced with an appreciation of Morin's achievements. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that in the *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis* Simon attempted to show he had been unjustly punished when he had so conclusively outdone his Oratorian colleague using the same materials.

More important still were two other projects, as Simon took the notes and materials he had prepared at the Oratory and set to work justifying his account of the Hebrew text and setting out in detail the implications of his critical arguments in a prospective new edition of the Bible. The *Disquisitiones criticae* (1683) has generally been overlooked by scholars. When discussed at all it is usually only briefly and in the context of Simon's debate with Vossius.¹¹⁸¹ Those scholars who have considered the work, further, have often dismissed it as summary of the less novel parts of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*.¹¹⁸² Most recently, however, Justin Champion has argued at length that Simon was not actually the author of the work. On the basis of the contents, language, and intention of the text Champion has argued that the work – in his view a 'more radical reading' of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* – was written by Simon's associate, the radical Whig politician John Hampden.¹¹⁸³

¹¹⁷⁸ [Simon], 'Vita Joannis Morini', p. 63-64.

¹¹⁷⁹ [Simon], 'Vita Joannis Morini', p. 66.

¹¹⁸⁰ [Simon], 'Vita Joannis Morini', pp. 22-5, 27-29, 93-97, 108-109.

¹¹⁸¹ Simon's first response to Vossius was printed as an appendix to this work. See, [Richard Simon], *Castigationes ad opusculum Isaaci Vossii de Sibyllinis Oraculis et responsionem ad objectiones nuperae criticae sacrae*, in his *Disquisitiones criticae* (London: Richard Chiswell, 1684), pp. 221-79.

¹¹⁸² See, for example, Bernus, 'Richard Simon', p. 134; Auvray, *Richard Simon*, p. 85.

¹¹⁸³ Champion, 'Pere Richard Simon and English biblical criticism', pp. 54-61.

Champion's case rested above all on the claim that the Latin text was identical – in Champion's words 'without variation, addition, or interpolation' – to the near-contemporaneous English edition, the *Critical Enquires into the Various editions of the Bible* (1684).¹¹⁸⁴ This matters since the rest of Champion's arguments, such as the claim the style and tone of the work is much more 'radical' and 'abrasive' than the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, are entirely based on the English rather than the Latin text.¹¹⁸⁵ A close analysis of the two texts, however, reveals they are by no means indistinguishable. The Latin, for example, has a series of additional sentences not present in the English.¹¹⁸⁶ The *Disquisitiones criticae* also had an extensive number of references not present in the *Critical enquiries*.¹¹⁸⁷ Further, and more seriously, on some occasions the English translator quite evidently misunderstood the Latin text.¹¹⁸⁸ These reasons alone suggest that the Latin version preceded the English.

This becomes more important when one considers the two translations in the context of Champion's broader claims. The treatment of Jewish scholarship is the best test case. Where, for example, Champion was correct regarding the somewhat more hostile references to the Jews in the *Critical enquiries*, this is not true of the *Disquisitiones criticae*. The tone and arguments used to describe and assess the work of the Masoretes and other Jewish subjects in the Latin edition closely match those Simon used in the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*. Indeed, far from dismissing the Masorah, as Champion claims, the author of the *Disquisitiones criticae* went out of his way to criticise Cappel, Morin, and other scholars, for failing to appreciate the Masoretes' work.¹¹⁸⁹ On a basic

¹¹⁸⁴ Champion, 'Pere Richard Simon and English biblical criticism', p. 52.

¹¹⁸⁵ Champion, 'Pere Richard Simon and English biblical criticism', pp. 58-59.

¹¹⁸⁶ See, for example, Simon, *Disquisitiones criticae*, p. 46, where from 'Verum non' to 'supersedeo' is absent in the English, p. 76, where from 'Sed his' to 'diligenter observentur' is absent in the English.

¹¹⁸⁷ These occur *passim*, such that it is surprising Champion does not note them. Indeed, his claim that the 'apparatus of scholarly reference' (p. 58) is absent entirely from this work conflicts directly with references given throughout the Latin text. These are, however, not present in the English version.

¹¹⁸⁸ These are frequent. A telling example in the context of this thesis occurs where Simon is discussing Menasseh ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica*, at *Disquisitiones criticae*, p. 37, where he refers to the Hebrew Bible published in Amsterdam edited 'by the Jew, Menasseh' (a Judaeo Menasse). The English translator evidently misunderstood this – and is apparently even ignorant of the edition – writing instead (*Critical enquiries* p. 40) 'printed at Amsterdam, by Judaeus Manasses', apparently thinking that was his name. It does not, to me, seem likely that the translator intentionally left it in Latin to mean the same sense as the original.

¹¹⁸⁹ See, Simon, *Disquisitiones criticae*, pp. 20-21, 23-24, 26, 34-5, 41, 46, 50-51, which are only a selection of the places where Simon directly praises Masoretic scholarship. For the specific criticism of Morin and Cappel for failing to appreciate such work, see, Simon, *Disquisitiones criticae*, pp. 23-4, 41. It should be said that Champion on this point also unfairly distorts Simon's actual position. At p. 59 Champion claims Simon described the Masoretes' work as the 'Deleriums of the feverish Jews'. Champion did not however give a reference for this quotation. The one place where it is used however (*Disquisitiones criticae*, p. 22, *Critical enquiries*, p. 24) is quite clearly referring to the mistaken ideas of the Jews concerning the origin of the Masorah, rather than the value of the Masorah itself.

level, then, there is no reason to doubt Simon could have been the author of the Latin original.

There are two further, even more compelling arguments to establish beyond reasonable doubt Simon's authorship of the work. These concern, first the materials used to create the *Disquisitiones criticae* and, second, the overall intention of the work in the light of the general account of Simon's scholarship presented here. Throughout the *Disquisitiones criticae* Simon added extensive references to the Hebrew manuscripts present in the Oratory. Since he had been expelled in 1678, however, these could not have been based on the manuscripts themselves but must have been taken from the notes he had made while studying there in the previous thirteen or so years. What a close comparison reveals is that in composing the *Disquisitiones criticae* Simon drew directly on the very volumes of ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica* that we have considered throughout this account. This explains why on several occasions Simon's lists of examples – for instance, relating to *ketiv-geri* – are drawn in sequential order from the same book, whether Joshua or 2 Chronicles.¹¹⁹⁰ In each case Simon was directly following the notes he had written in the margins of ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica*.¹¹⁹¹

Rather than craft an anodyne summary of his earlier work or a 'radical' extension of *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, Simon then used these notes and references as the basis for his most extensive attempt to justify his biblical criticism in the eyes of contemporary scholars.¹¹⁹² What distinguished the *Disquisitiones criticae* from the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* was Simon's treatment of the history and contemporary status of the Hebrew text. As in the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, Simon began by rehearsing his account of the origin of the Bible among the prophets or 'public scribes' responsible for gathering, ordering, and then redacting the text. But now Simon changed tack. Instead of considering the subsequent history of the text from the era of the Captivity to the Masoretes, a history he frequently admitted in the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* was conjectural, he turned to consider the evidence presented by Hebrew manuscripts. In a series of chapters Simon discussed at length the status and value of extant Hebrew manuscripts, how to judge their relative merits, their history, the opinions

¹¹⁹⁰ See, for example, Simon, *Disquisitiones criticae*, pp. 37-38, 48-51.

¹¹⁹¹ The examples from Chronicles II discussed in *Disquisitiones criticae*, pp. 37-38, for example, are all drawn directly from BMR, A 599, ben Israel, *Biblia Hebraica*, vol. V, pp. פט-פז.

¹¹⁹² See, however, Champion, 'Pere Richard Simon and English Biblical Criticism', p. 59, where it should be noted that one of Champion's arguments in favour of the work's purported 'radical' message is that it spoke in terms of 'this variety of reading', 'differences of reading', 'readings of the various copies', 'various readings'. As we have seen throughout this dissertation, this language was common to the earlier critics and accepted by figures as diverse as Cappel, Walton, Ussher, Vossius, and – albeit only in the context of the Hebrew tradition – Buxtorf II.

of Jewish tradition, the history, origin, role, and use of the Masorah, and the significance of variant readings not present in the Masorah. Where the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* had attempted to write a history of the Hebrew Bible, in the *Disquisitiones criticae* Simon attempted to show instead how far his arguments were based entirely on a rigorous analysis of the extant material.

In some cases, this saw Simon refashion the arguments from the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* to show how his deep familiarity with these sources rendered his judgement superior to his seventeenth century precursors. Take, for example, the case of the putative 'Codex Hillel', a manuscript referred to by earlier Jewish scholars including Kimhi and David Ganz as especially esteemed. Cappel and Buxtorf II, among others, had drawn on these Jewish works to make some conjectures regarding the origin of the manuscript and also to suggest whether the descriptions of the manuscript they gave matched their respective views on the Hebrew vowel points.¹¹⁹³ For Simon, Buxtorf II and Cappel's lack of familiarity with the best manuscripts had left them unable to consider this question. In contrast, he pointed out that he had studied no fewer than 'five Sephardic manuscripts' – Ms. Hébreu 13 and Ms. Hébreu 14, Ms. Hébreu 22, Ms. Hébreu 23, Ms. Hébreu 24, and Ms. Hébreu 82 – that contained marginal readings from Codex Hillel.¹¹⁹⁴ From these, Simon drew two conclusions. First, the sorts of minutiae – often relating to mappiq, dagesh, and other diacritical features – noted by Codex Hillel demonstrated that it had to be a manuscript that post-dated the Masoretes' work. Second, Simon advanced an entirely plausible suggestion for the manuscript's origin from a celebrated teacher in Spain, reflecting the Jewish sources who first mentioned the manuscript and that references to Hillel were only found in Sephardic, rather than German, manuscripts.¹¹⁹⁵

Simon also reinforced his arguments in much more precise detail. This was particularly evident in his discussion of different cases of the Masoretic *ketiv-queri*. In the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, as we have seen, Simon discussed the origin of these in general terms, and proposed that using Sephardic manuscripts one might be able to decrease extensively the number of variants by correcting the written text with the correct reading found in another manuscript. He had, however, given no precise examples of this. In the *Disquisitiones criticae* Simon went into extensive detail to justify this claim. He outlined how the Sephardic manuscripts had many fewer *queri* than the

¹¹⁹³ [Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum*, pp. 242-43; Buxtorf II, *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, pp. 352-54.

¹¹⁹⁴ Simon, *Disquisitiones criticae*, p. 13.

¹¹⁹⁵ Simon, *Disquisitiones criticae*, pp. 13-14.

textus receptus, and could be used to correct the text. He then proceeded to take in turn a number of detailed examples, drawn from directly from Ms. Hébreu 82. At Joshua 3:4, for example, the *ketiv* read 'בִּינִי', lacking the yod present in the *Qeri*, 'בִּינִי'.¹¹⁹⁶ As Simon noted, however, this full reading was in fact present in the Ms. Hébreu 82, thereby justifying his overarching claim relating to the origin of *ketiv-qeri*, and allowing him to emend the text on the basis of these alternative readings.¹¹⁹⁷ Simon had taken the basic theses of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, but established how far they were based on a rigorous and conclusive study of the extant manuscripts.

2

The shape of Simon's career following the prohibition of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* thus begins to come into focus. Simon had initially retired to Bolleville in 1679, and subsequently spent time both there and, especially from 1682 onwards, in Rouen and Paris.¹¹⁹⁸ Excluded from the Oratory, Simon decided to mount a defence of his biblical criticism. He consequently had recourse to the notes and volumes he did have at his disposal, above all the scores of entries made in ben Israel's *Biblia Hebraica* on the basis of the Oratory's holdings, and attempted to craft a reply which would conclusively demonstrate that his learning rested on an unimpeachable solidity unknown to earlier generations of scholars. Furthermore, he did this as he indicated in the letter to Bigot, in Latin, rather than French.¹¹⁹⁹ Where the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* had been aimed at a broader literary market in Paris, now Simon attempted to convince his learned contemporaries directly. As such, the most probable course of events was that Simon completed the Latin version of the *Disquisitiones criticae* and then gave or sent it to Hampden, who both saw the Latin text through the press and translated and published the English edition.¹²⁰⁰

¹¹⁹⁶ Simon, *Disquisitiones criticae*, p. 36. See further, BMR, A 599, ben Israel, *Biblia Hebraica*, vol. II, p. קמז; BNF, Ms. Hébreu 82, fol. 3^v.

¹¹⁹⁷ Simon, *Disquisitiones criticae*, p. 48.

¹¹⁹⁸ Auvray, *Richard Simon*, pp. 52, 72, where Auvray notes how difficult it is to trace Simon's precise movements at this time. Simon had definitely resigned the curé in Bolleville in August 1682, although there are signs he still had some connection to the position, as late as 1685 describing himself as 'prieur de Bolleville'. The evidence from his letters, with 40 between 1683 and 1694 dated to Paris compared to 4 from Rouen and 4 from Dieppe suggests that at least by that period Simon was spending the majority of his time in Paris.

¹¹⁹⁹ [Simon], *Bibliothèque critique*, p. 56.

¹²⁰⁰ Hampden was definitely in Paris and in correspondence with Simon in 1682. See, for example, Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. II, §24. Richard Simon to J[ohn] H[ampden], 1682, p. 169; Simon, *Lettres choisies*, vol. II,

This period of Simon's scholarship had a vivid final act. In August 1684 Simon outlined a plan for a new Polyglot edition of the Bible, one that would surpass the earlier editions of Paris and London. As Simon indicated in his later reply to Jean Le Clerc, this had been one of his preoccupations during his retreat in Bolleville, as he filled the margins of an edition of Walton's Polyglot with additional notes and corrections.¹²⁰¹ Like Morin's confessional justification of the Paris Polyglot Bible and Walton's critical legitimization of his project, Simon's proposal epitomised his vision of biblical criticism. In the volumes for the Old Testament Simon proposed four columns. These would contain: the Masoretic Hebrew text, Jerome's Vulgate, the text of the Sixtine Septuagint based principally on Codex Vaticanus, and Nobilius's edition of the Old Latin.¹²⁰² Presenting the Bible in its Hebrew, Greek, and Latin traditions, Simon then proposed to surround each column with an extensive set of variant readings, ones precisely correlated to the history of that textual tradition. In the case of the Septuagint, this would include fixing any *naevi* in the text using Codex Alexandrinus and thereafter adding in the margins variant readings drawn from manuscripts and printed editions, quotations from the Fathers, and variants from Arabic translations made on the basis of the Greek in the margin.¹²⁰³

In the case of the Hebrew, Simon went into even greater detail. It would include variants drawn from the Samaritan Pentateuch since, as the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* had argued, they were both rightly considered the same textual tradition.¹²⁰⁴ Simon also added he would weed out parts of the Masorah he thought unnecessary, such as suspended or inverted letters.¹²⁰⁵ The bulk of the Masorah, however, would be preserved as an integral part of the text.¹²⁰⁶ To this Simon would likewise add further relevant notes of variants from the works of Jewish scholars, above all Lonzano. Finally, Simon proposed to include additional variant readings drawn both from extant Hebrew manuscripts – especially the Sephardic manuscripts of the Oratory – and further variant readings from the other ancient versions where they revealed a possible alternative

§25. Richard Simon to J[ohn] H[ampden], 1682, p. 172, where Simon noted that he would 'soon have the honour' of seeing Hampden in Paris. It seems entirely plausible that Simon wrote the *Disquisitiones criticae* at some point between 1679-1682 when he was resident in Bolleville.

¹²⁰¹ [Richard Simon], *Réponse au Livre intitulé, Défense des Sentimens de quelques Theologiens*, p. 62.

¹²⁰² [Richard Simon], *Novorum biblicorum polyglottorum synopsis* (Utrecht: Frederic Arnold [= Rotterdam: Reinier Leers], 1684), p. 3.

¹²⁰³ [Simon], *Novorum biblicorum polyglottorum*, pp. 12-13.

¹²⁰⁴ [Simon], *Novorum biblicorum polyglottorum*, p. 4-5.

¹²⁰⁵ [Simon], *Novorum biblicorum polyglottorum*, p. 6.

¹²⁰⁶ [Simon], *Novorum biblicorum polyglottorum*, pp. 7-8.

reading to the present text.¹²⁰⁷ In this way, Simon proposed, it might well be possible for the scholar to begin to return to a Hebrew text other than that found imperfectly in contemporary Jewish tomes, one restored instead to the most ancient form of its earliest exemplar.¹²⁰⁸ To grasp what this entailed, and consider how far the most ancient version of the text attainable differed from its original, Simon might have added that scholars should consult the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*.

¹²⁰⁷ [Simon], *Novorum biblicorum polyglottorum*, pp. 8-10.

¹²⁰⁸ [Simon], *Novorum biblicorum polyglottorum*, pp. 10-11, 'Hac ratione Ebraicus Biblicorum Contextus obtinebitur non imperfectus, qualis extat in Judaeorum libris, sed antiquae formae praeceptorum exemplarium ope restitutus, & ex eo tanquam ex puriori fonte post hac Biblicorum Translationes hauriri poterunt'.

Conclusion

1

Reflecting on the troubled publication history of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* in his review of the work in the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, Pierre Bayle observed that Simon's scholarship would eventually be viewed in the same way as Jerome's: it was only once the tempest surrounding the work had passed that justice would be done to his achievements.¹²⁰⁹ The legacy of Bossuet's prohibition has lasted longer than Bayle might have expected, framing to this day how scholars have approached Simon's work. Simon's later career also contributed to this. Further studies will show how the series of works Simon had published in the Netherlands and their illicit importation into France, and above all his debate with Jean Le Clerc, did much to fix his reputation as a potentially dangerous threat to the Bible's authority.¹²¹⁰ This was compounded by Bossuet's enduring opposition, which extended to the campaign he waged in the early eighteenth century against Simon's new translation of the New Testament and was continued thereafter by Bossuet's close associate Eusèbe Renaudot, amongst others.¹²¹¹

2

It has been the central objective of this thesis to redress the misconceptions surrounding Simon's work and instead place it firmly in the context of the preceding half-century of intense debate over the text and history of the Old Testament. This debate was framed by Jean Morin's work, which argued that if one studied the Bible in historical and critical terms then the result would be to recognise the superiority of the versions of the Catholic Church. What made the disputes of this period particularly significant was that the response to Morin's challenge coincided with the circulation of Louis Cappel's *Critica sacra*, which attempted to import the methods from secular and New Testament criticism into Old Testament criticism. Seen from the perspective of Cappel's intentions, the

¹²⁰⁹ [Pierre Bayle], *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* (Amsterdam: Henri Desbordes, 1684), December Art. XI, pp. 511-12. In a separate study I consider the publication of Simon's work in the Dutch Republic and its treatment in the era's learned journals.

¹²¹⁰ An article on Simon's debate with Le Clerc is at an advanced stage of preparation.

¹²¹¹ See especially, John D. Woodbridge, 'Censure royale et censure épiscopale: Le conflit de 1702', *Dix-huitième siècle* 8 (1976), pp. 33-355. Renaudot moved swiftly to prohibit Simon's *Bibliothèque critique*. See, BNF NAF 7488, Eusèbe Renaudot to Chancellor de Pontchartrain, 26 July 1710, fol. 242r.

Critica sacra was the basis for a new Protestant biblical criticism concerned with the reconstruction of a lost Hebrew archetype. Seen from the perspective of the problems posed by Morin's work, it could all too easily be seen as a justification of the use of the other ancient versions, rather than the Hebrew, and on those grounds a dangerous capitulation to the Catholic side.

The eventual publication of the *Critica sacra* in 1650 began a decade of intense debate, chiefly among Protestant scholars. For some, such as Johannes Buxtorf II, this meant refining an alternative account of the Hebrew Bible's critical study, notably drawing on the work of Jewish scholars, in opposition to Cappel's work. For others this meant attempting to come to terms with Cappel's critical insights by successfully integrating them into the confessional setting of Old Testament criticism. Few were more ambitious, in this sense, than James Ussher, who attempted to combine an acceptance of Cappel's central claims with a complete reinterpretation of the history of the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch. The single most important contribution to this project was made by Brian Walton, whose *Prolegomena* to the London Polyglot Bible charted a historical account of the Bible in all its texts, languages, and versions, that would provide the basis for a new Protestant *philologia sacra*.

Walton had attempted to combine a historical and critical argument in favour of the Hebrew text's reliability with a continued Protestant insistence on its status as divine Scripture. This balance could be threatened. One possible danger was Isaac La Peyrère's challenge to the reliability of the traditional Mosaic account of the authorship of the Pentateuch. La Peyrère's work was not a product of scholarship, but it raised a legitimate question about the Bible's origin that Walton avoided confronting directly. Other publications soon challenged Walton's work at the level of scholarship. Part Two of Jean Morin's *Exercitationes biblicae* presented an extended attack on the Hebrew Bible and the authority of the whole tradition of Jewish scholarship. Isaac Vossius's work agreed with Morin's central claims, and argued that the only solution to the Hebrew text's and post-Second Temple Jewish tradition's weaknesses was recourse to an entirely alternative set of Hellenistic Jewish works, chief among them the Septuagint.

Simon's *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* embodied a stunning response to this predicament. As a Catholic, Simon embraced in a way Protestants could not the basis for biblical criticism outlined by Morin, whereby the Church's judgement regarding the text's authority and authenticity permitted scholars to investigate every aspect of its history. Unlike Morin, however, Simon was adamant that the result of this study would lead to a

renewed sense of the significance and central role of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament in biblical criticism. Biblical criticism and the demands of confession had not separated in Simon's work, but since the specific confessional point Simon emphasised was the general uncertainty of the Bible's text and meaning, the space in which criticism could operate had been dramatically enlarged. The novel accomplishment of Simon's *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* was that he used this conception of biblical criticism to put forward for the first time a detailed history of the Hebrew text. By combining this account of the Old Testament's history with the central insights from Cappel's *Critica sacra*, Simon completed the process begun in the 1650s, bringing together textual criticism and the specific demands of the Old Testament's history.

3

The new account of seventeenth-century biblical criticism presented by this thesis has a number of further conclusions. Four of these stand out for special emphasis. First, it demonstrates that historians of biblical scholarship must consider the work of Catholic scholars in the same level of detail as Protestant scholars. Second, it reveals there is no necessary link between innovative philological and historical work and radical theological or political thought. Third, by showing the most significant shifts in biblical criticism occurred as moments of intellectual disagreement between scholars, it calls into doubt the current consensus that seventeenth-century scholarly life is best understood through the concept of the international and inter-confessional 'Republic of Letters'. Finally, this thesis begins to suggest that in demonstrating how these scholars transformed how they and their contemporaries viewed the text and history of the Bible, the history of biblical scholarship should take a much more prominent place in our assessment of the most important changes that occurred in early modern intellectual history. What this study of Richard Simon concludes is that as it stands the precise nature of even the most significant of these changes are still only imperfectly understood. To this end, there can be no better way to close this thesis than consider where scholars should now address their attention.

One subject only briefly touched on in this thesis but deserving a much greater investigation is the history of seventeenth-century New Testament criticism. This would be especially important for understanding the full scope of Richard Simon's work, whose

critical histories of the New Testament were always presented as companion pieces to his work on the Old Testament. Yet, with the exception of the excellent studies by de Jonge and Hardy, which have focused on the history of textual exegesis in the first half of the seventeenth century, much of this ground remains uncharted. This would include, for example, the significant text-critical work of Étienne de Courcelles and Johann Saubert. An important general ambition for further work would be to challenge recent accounts of early eighteenth-century New Testament criticism that frequently underplay or overlook the achievements of seventeenth-century scholarship. This scholarship could again frame its approach from the perspective of Simon's work, setting out to test the tantalising remark by John Mill that it was specifically Simon's work on the New Testament that transported him into a 'new world' of scholarship.

In the context of the history of Old Testament criticism, there are three lines of inquiry that are especially pressing. One important objective is to examine in more detail the thesis suggested here that Morin's work represented a significant innovation on that of his precursors. The basis for further research has recently been provided by Theodor Dunkelgrün's detailed examination of the history of the editorial process behind the Antwerp Polyglot Bible. Dunkelgrün's work, however, culminated with the final publication of Antwerp Polyglot in 1572, leaving a period of nearly half a century between then and Morin for which the history of biblical criticism, especially on the Catholic side, is still only imperfectly known.

The scholars seeking to extend Dunkelgrün's work face a series of separate tasks. The first will be to complete a comprehensive study of Masius's *Iosuae imperatoris historia*. Crucial for Morin and Simon, amongst others, this work was a landmark in Catholic biblical criticism whose full dimensions and ambitions are still to be examined. A more general project will be to examine the fortunes of biblical criticism in late sixteenth-century Rome. One dimension of this will be to chart the difficult reception the Antwerp Polyglot Bible faced there, together with the broader shifts in the Catholic attitudes towards biblical criticism this process inaugurated. An important point of focus will be to study how the questions and problems raised by Montano's work encountered existing Catholic practices of editing the Bible, already established at Rome through Sirleto and others working on editions of the Bible in Greek and Latin. Scholars in need of further detailed study include Pierre Morin, Roberto Bellarmine, and Franciscus Lucas of Bruges. A final problem will be to consider the afterlife of the work of Montano and Masius

among Protestant scholars in the Northern Netherlands, following Franciscus Raphelengius's move to Leiden in 1586.

The second subject that requires further examination is the wider history of Old Testament criticism from 1660-1680. Bookended by the publications of Walton, Morin, and Vossius, and the completion of the *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament*, this period is notable in part for the relative lack of publications in the field compared to those before and after it. It has been argued in this thesis that many scholars at this time operated within the parameters established by their precursors, represented above all by Morin on the Catholic side, and Cappel and Walton on the Protestant side. Further studies will be needed of such figures as Pierre-Daniel Huet, Étienne Le Moyne, and Edward Pococke, among others, which focus especially on their unpublished notes and correspondence. Now that Simon's ambitions have been much more precisely clarified it will in future be possible to consider how and why his assessment of the problems facing the historian and critic of the Old Testament differed so extensively from theirs.

Finally what has to be assessed are the implications of the study presented here for the history of Old Testament criticism in the eighteenth century. Later historiography once traced the mark left by Bossuet's initial prohibition of Simon's *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* to Simon's apparent lack of subsequent influence.¹²¹² More recent scholarship has refined this picture, and begun to sketch Simon's contribution to the creation of the documentary hypothesis, especially the work of Jean Astruc, and his more general – if somewhat imprecisely defined – influence on scholars in France and Germany.¹²¹³ In demonstrating that Simon's work on the Old Testament entailed at least two specific innovations – his new history of the Hebrew text and his novel use of manuscript material – future research can begin to specify with much greater precision the relationship between Simon's work and later scholarship. For Simon's history of the Hebrew text, this means that we can trace how far ensuing scholars adopted Simon's overall framework without acknowledging its source. In the field of manuscript research, it means that we can start to consider the previously overlooked connection between Simon's work and that of subsequent scholars, including his successor at the Oratory

¹²¹² Ernest Renan, 'L'Exégèse biblique et l'esprit français', *Revue des Deux Mondes* XL (1865), pp. 238-45; Steinmann, *Richard Simon*, p. 7.

¹²¹³ Rudolf Smend, 'Jean Astruc: A Physician as a Biblical Scholar', in *Sacred Conjectures: The Context and Legacy of Robert Lowth and Jean Astruc*, ed. John Jarick (London: T & T Clark, 2007), pp. 157-173; Pierre Gibert, 'De l'intuition à l'évidence: la multiplicité documentaire dans la Genèse chez H. B. Witter et Jean Astruc', in *Sacred Conjectures*, pp. 174-89; John D. Woodbridge, 'German Responses to the Biblical Critic Richard Simon: From Leibniz to J. S. Semler', in *Wolfenbütteler Forschungen: Historische Kritik und Biblischer Kanon in der deutschen Aufklärung* 41 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1988), pp. 65-87.

Charles-François Houbigant and later figures such as Benjamin Kennicott and Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi.

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