

THE ADDITIONS TO BEN SIRA AND THE BOOK'S MULTIFORM TEXTUAL WITNESS¹

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The Wisdom of Ben Sira contains numerous supplemental and interpretive additions present to varying degrees in the extant textual witnesses. The nearly unanimous consensus on the origin of the additions for more than a century has been that they originated in a revision of the Hebrew text, and from there were copied into the Greek, Latin, and Syriac versions in the process of translation and transmission. This study takes a textual approach to evaluate this theory by considering the relation of the additions among the recovered Hebrew manuscripts and ancient versions. Before analyzing the data, a brief description of the history of scholarship is necessary.

A. HISTORY OF SCHOLARSHIP

Soon after the discovery of the Hebrew manuscripts of Ben Sira many scholars began to theorize that the additions witnessed in some Greek manuscripts and to a lesser extent Lat and Syr originated in a secondary form of the Hebrew text (HebII).² According to this view, the expanded

¹ I wish to thank Professor Michael V. Fox for supervising the initial research for this thesis at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

² H. Herkenne, *De Veteris Latinae Ecclesiastici: Capitibus I-XLIII* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1899), 11; idem., *Die Textüberlieferung des Buches Sirach* (Biblische Studien 6/1-2; Freiburg: Herder, 1901), 137; R. Smend, *Die Weisheit des Jesus Sirach erklärt* (Berlin: Reimer, 1906), xci-xcii; A. Fuchs, *Textkritische Untersuchungen zum hebräischen Ekklesiastikus* (Biblische Studien 12/5; Freiburg: Herder, 1907), 21-22, 112-18; W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), xcvi; N. Peters, *Das Buch Jesus Sirach oder Ecclesiasticus übersetzt und erklärt* (Exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament 25; Münster: Aschendorff, 1913), lxiii; G. H. Box and W. O. E. Oesterley, "The Book of Sirach," in *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (ed. R. H. Charles; Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), 278; A. Vaccari, *De Libris Didacticis* (Institutiones Biblicae 2/3; Rome, 1935), 62. A notable exception is M. S. Segal, who affirmed that some additions were of

Hebrew recension, like all Hebrew manuscripts of Ben Sira, virtually disappeared in the Middle Ages and is no longer extant in its entirety. This remains the assumption for most contemporary scholars and can be found in any source that treats the textual history of the book.³

If this theory represented an early consensus, there was no agreement on the identity of those who produced the revision. Very early Adolf Schlatter defended the unity of the additions and attributed them to an Alexandrian school of the Jewish philosopher Aristobulus of Paneas.⁴ J. H. A. Hart, followed by W. O. E. Oesterley, argued that the additions are to be ascribed to a Pharasaic source.⁵ Eventually these theories were abandoned in favor of an Essenian origin.

The first full-scale study of the additions was that of Conleth Kearns in his 1951 doctoral dissertation, "The Expanded Text of Ecclesiasticus."⁶ Kearns accepted the widespread view that the additions in the versions ultimately derived from a Hebrew recension and, following Schlatter,

Greek origin ("The Evolution of The Hebrew Text of Ben Sira," *JQR* 25 [1934]: 106–9).

³ For a few examples, see P. W. Skehan and A. A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* (AB 39; New York: Doubleday, 1987), 55–60; G. Sauer, *Jesus Sirach/Ben Sira: Übersetzt und erklärt* (Das Alte Testament Deutsch Apokryphen 1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 26, 35; M. Gilbert, "Methodological and Hermeneutical Trends in Modern Exegesis," in *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: Studies on Tradition, Redaction, and Theology* (ed. F. V. Reiterer; B. Ego and T. Nicklas; Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Series 1; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 3–5; W. Th. van Peursen, *The Verbal System in the Hebrew Text of Ben Sira* (SSLL 41; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 15. Introductions and reviews of research describe the same hypothesis, e.g., F. V. Reiterer, "Review of Recent Research on the Book of Ben Sira (1980–1996)," in *The Book of Ben Sira in Modern Research: Proceedings of the First International Ben Sira Conference* (ed. P. C. Beentjes; BZAW 255; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), 26; J. Marböck, "Das Buch Jesus Sirach," in *Einführung in das Alte Testament* (ed. E. Zenger, et al.; Studienbücher Theologie 1,1; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1995), 285–92; M. A. Knibb, "Language, Translation, Versions, and Text of the Apocrypha," in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Studies* (ed. J. W. Rogerson and J. M. Lieu; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 168–70.

⁴ A. Schlatter, *Das neu gefundene hebräische Stück des Sirach: Der Glossator des griechischen Sirach und seine Stellung in der Geschichte des jüdischen Theologie* (Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie I, 5–6; Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1897), 163–76, 190f. This view has been taken up by G. L. Prato ("La lumière interprète de la sagesse dans la tradition textuelle de Ben Sira" in *La sagesse de l'Ancien Testament* [ed. M. Gilbert; Gembloux: Duculot; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979], 317–46), and followed in part by N. Calduch-Benages, "Ben Sira y el Canon de las Escrituras" *Gregorianum* 78 (1997): 362; Gilbert, "Methodological and Hermeneutical Trends," 13.

⁵ J. H. A. Hart, *Ecclesiasticus: The Greek Text of Codex 248* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), 272–320; Oesterley, *Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach*, xcvi–xcix.

⁶ C. Kearns, "The Expanded Text of Ecclesiasticus: Its Teaching on the Future Life as a Clue to Its Origin" (Ph.D. diss.; Rome: The Pontifical Biblical Commission, 1951).

argued for their theological coherence across the versions. This unity allowed Kearns to speak of “*the expanded text*” (author’s emphasis), which is “the original text of Sirach as editorially expanded under the influence of a definite school of religious thought.”⁷ Thus, for Kearns, the additions represent what remains extant of a single, purposeful revision of the book.⁸ Kearns’ hypothesis of a coherent Hebrew recension underlying all the additions has been influential in Ben Sira scholarship,⁹ due in large part to the approval given by Joseph Ziegler in the Göttingen Septuagint edition and by Patrick Skehan and Alexander Di Lella in their Anchor Bible commentary.¹⁰

In addition, Kearns postulated an Essenian origin for this Hebrew recension because of thematic parallels drawn between the additions to Ben Sira and the documented beliefs and practices of the Essenes and the literature thought to be prized by them.¹¹ The latter included the book of *Jubilees*, *Enoch*, and the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*.¹² He updated his thesis in light of the Qumran discoveries in his short commentary on Ben Sira in the New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture.¹³ While assuming that the residents of Qumran were an Essene community, Kearns argued that the book of Ben Sira was highly valued at Qumran. In addition to the Ben Sira fragments found there (2Q18, 11QPs^a), the ousted Zadokite line of priests, extolled throughout Ben Sira, particularly in 50:1–24, was prominent in Qumran. Kearns

⁷ Kearns, “Expanded Text,” 57.

⁸ Kearns asserts that in the case of GrII, for example, though no single manuscript witnesses all the additions, the complete recension had existed in specific manuscripts, and the present additions extant in the manuscripts are only a partial witness to the “linguistic features and doctrinal system of the Heb II which underlies Gr II” (“Expanded Text,” 17).

⁹ Contra F. Böhmisch, who writes: “Daß die Erweiterungen in den Textformen des Sirachbuches nicht auf eine *einheitliche* Revision im hebräischen Text zurückzuführen sind, ist mittlerweile anerkanntes Ergebnis der Forschungsgeschichte am Sirachbuch” (“Haec omnia liber vitae: Zur Theologie der erweiterten Textformen des Sirachbuches,” *SNTSU* 22 [1997]: 162; emphasis original). In actuality, it has been assumed by nearly all scholars with the exception of Segal and Prato.

¹⁰ See Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, 55. In fact, the dissemination of Kearns’ theory is due almost exclusively to Skehan and Di Lella’s discussion, since few scholars have seen his unpublished dissertation.

¹¹ This element of Kearns’ work was not explicitly adopted by Skehan and Di Lella, who refrained from mentioning any connection with the Essenes.

¹² Kearns, “Expanded Text,” 264–85.

¹³ C. Kearns, “Ecclesiasticus, or the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach,” in *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* (ed. R. C. Fuller, et al.; London: Nelson, 1969), 541–62.

also noted that the aforementioned pseudepigrapha with parallels to the additions were found at the site.

More recently, Thierry Legrand has furthered Kearns' hypothesis with a new investigation into the theology of the additions and their connection to the Essenes.¹⁴ Legrand, like Kearns, assumed the Essenian hypothesis of the Qumran site, and thus considered the Qumran literature to be Essenian writings. He deemed 11QPs^a, which includes Sir 51:13–30, to be an Essenian apocryphal book of Psalms, and, following Kearns (1969), thereby tied the Essenes to the redaction history of the book. Further, in his study of links between the additions to Ben Sira and Essenian writings, Legrand included Qumran literature such as the Rule of the Community and the Damascus Document, along with a larger corpus of literature supposed to be linked with the Essenes: *1 Enoch*, the book of *Jubilees*, *4 Esdras*, *2 Baruch*, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, and the *Psalms of Solomon*. In these writings Legrand found thematic similarities with the additions to Ben Sira and thus reaffirmed Kearns' hypothesis.

Franz Böhmisch has taken a different approach, postulating a “pluralistische Kanontheologie” for the various text-forms of Ben Sira, which seeks to identify each with a particular religious community.¹⁵ Thus the target group (Zielgruppe) of the grandson's translation comprises “those living abroad who wish to acquire wisdom and are disposed to live their lives according to the Law” (Prologue 34–36), of GrII, those in the Egyptian diaspora who have been educated in popular philosophy, and of HebII, a Jewish readership.

Before investigating each textual witness in detail, we must define the sigla that previous scholarship has used to describe the proposed textual layers of the book. The original monograph from the hand of Ben Sira is referred to as HebI, the original Greek translation of the grandson as GrI, and the alleged recension of HebI with additions and rewritings as HebII. According to the standard hypothesis, these additions from HebII made their way into certain Greek manuscripts, des-

¹⁴ T. Legrand, “Le Siracide: Problèmes textuels et théologiques de la recension longue” (Ph.D. Diss.; Strasbourg: Université de Strasbourg, 1996). Currently my only access to Legrand's work is his own short summary of the thesis found online: http://www.premiumorange.com/theologie.protestante/enseignants/legrand/these_resume.pdf. See also idem., “Siracide” in *Introduction à l'Ancien Testament* (ed. T. Römer, J.-D. Macchi and C. Nihan; Monde de la Bible 49; Genève: Labor et Fides, 2004), 667–69.

¹⁵ F. Böhmisch, “Die Textformen des Sirachbuches und ihre Zeilgruppen,” *Protokelle zur Bibel* 6 (1997): 87–122; idem., “Theologie der erweiterten Textformen,” 160–80.

ignated as GrII. Since the original translation of Ben Sira's own grandson was presumably before the Hebrew recension, in theory his *Vorlage* contained no additions. Additions are also present in the Latin and Syriac, but the sigla "LatII" and "SyrII" should be avoided, since these text traditions do not witness two distinct text-forms. Kearns called the recension represented by HebII and subsequently GrII, Lat, and Syr "the expanded text of Ben Sira," or SirII.

B. THE GREEK ADDITIONS

I will first outline the features of GrII, since it is the best witness to an expanded recension of Ben Sira and then briefly introduce the Lat additions before considering the evidence for a revision of the Hebrew text underlying these additions.

The Greek version of Ben Sira is well known for having two variant text-forms, one corresponding roughly to the original composition of Ben Sira (GrI) and the other to an expanded form with numerous additions of a bicolon or more (GrII). According to Kearns and Ziegler, GrII was not a new, independent translation, but rather an expansion of the grandson's original Greek translation (GrI) based on HebII.¹⁶ Whereas GrI is represented by the uncials A, B, C, and S, and the cursives that follow them, the additions are present in select families of cursives. According to the consensus theory, which assumes the additions unique to Latin are witnesses to no longer extant GrII readings, none of the extant manuscripts fully witnesses the GrII recension. Instead, its readings (i.e., additions) are only partially attested to varying degrees in some cursive manuscripts influenced by GrII.¹⁷ Ziegler categorizes these witnesses to GrII into two manuscript groups: the origenic or hexaplaric (the O-group) and the lucianic (the L-group).¹⁸ One witness in particular, Codex 248, contains a large number of the GrII additions

¹⁶ Kearns, "Expanded Text," 17–18; followed verbatim by J. Ziegler, *Sapientia Jesu Filii Sirach* (Septuaginta 12/2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980), 74.

¹⁷ Kearns, "Expanded Text," 17–18.

¹⁸ For a list of the manuscript families, see Ziegler, *Sapientia*, 114. See also idem., "Hat Lukian den griechischen Sirach rezensiert?" *Biblica* 40 (1959): 210–29; idem., "Die hexaplarische Bearbeitung des griechischen Sirach," *Biblische Zeitschrift Neue Folge* 4 (1960): 174–85; idem., "Die Vokabel-Varianten der O-Rezension im griechischen Sirach," in *Hebrew and Semitic Studies Presented to Godfrey Rolles Driver* (ed. D. W. Thomas; Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), 172–90.

and is thus thought to be the closest witness to the GrII recension.¹⁹ Some of the additions are also quoted in the Greek patristic writings, for example, Clement of Alexandria, Chrysostom, Antonius Melissa, and Maximus Confessor,²⁰ with Clement (d. 215) in particular suggesting an early date for at least some of the GrII readings.²¹

Ziegler's critical edition denotes 160 cola as GrII.²² (Note that Skehan and Di Lella's count of 300 cola is incorrect.²³) These additions, often of a colon or more, appear in the body of Ziegler's text, but in smaller print, and some shorter additions found in the GrII manuscripts are noted in the apparatus. To be precise, not all of the additional readings are additions in the sense that someone purposely added them to the book. Ziegler classified as GrII any extra material that is not found in the GrI text tradition, but in more than a few instances extra cola are present for other reasons.²⁴ For example, some GrII plusses can be shown to be original to Ben Sira because the absence of the material in GrI breaks the poetic structure (4:23b).²⁵ That GrI lacks the material may be due to a damaged *Vorlage* or scribal error. In fact, Segal has convincingly shown that despite being translated approximately fifty years after the original composition, the Hebrew exemplar to the original Greek translation was not an exact copy of Ben Sira's autograph and contained a substantial number of scribal errors and sections of damaged text.²⁶ Thus, these "additions" would have been introduced into

¹⁹ See Hart, *Ecclesiasticus: The Greek Text of Codex 248*.

²⁰ Kearns, "Expanded Text," 17.

²¹ L. Hartman, "Sirach in Hebrew and Greek," *CBQ* 23 (1961): 445; H. P. Rüger, *Text und Textform im hebräischen Sirach: Untersuchungen zur Textgeschichte und Textkritik der hebräischen Sirachfragmente aus der Kairoer Geniza* (BZAW 112; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970), 112, 115.

²² J.-M. Auwers counts 135 stichs ("L'apport du texte long du Siracide au lexique du grec biblique," in *Interpreting Translation: Studies on the LXX and Ezekiel in honour of Johan Lust* [ed. F. García Martínez and M. Vervenne; Leuven: Peeters, 2005], 33).

²³ All of the numbers of additions for the different versions in Skehan and Di Lella's commentary are erroneously doubled. They misinterpreted Kearns' designation of stichoi (plural of stichos) as distich and thus sought to convert the number from bicola to cola. In this case, they understood Kearns' count of 150 stichoi as 150 distichs and doubled it (*Ben Sira*, 55).

²⁴ Cf. M. H. Segal, "The Evolution of the Hebrew Text of Ben Sira," *JQR* 25 (1934): 100.

²⁵ Perhaps 1:21 as well (Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, 142-43), though see M. Gilbert, "L'addition de Siracide 1,21: Une énigme," in *Palabra, Prodigio, Poesía: In Memoriam P. Luis Alonso Schökel* (ed. V. Collado Bertomeu; Analecta Biblica 151; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2003), 317-25.

²⁶ Segal, "Evolution of the Hebrew Text," 93-98.

the Greek tradition later in transmission to correct the Greek toward the Hebrew text. Skehan and Di Lella have argued that some other lines considered GrII result from scribal blunders such as displaced lines (5:9c), doublets of two alternative readings (2:5c; 13:25), or textual corruption (3:19).²⁷ In these instances, then, it is more accurate to refer to such lines as “plusses” than “additions,” a term that implies a purposeful supplement to the book.

C. THE LATIN ADDITIONS

The Latin translation of Ben Sira is essentially the same in the *Vetus Latina* and Vulgate versions, except for the later addition of the grandson's Prologue and the Praise of the Fathers (chapters 44–50). Latin may be said to reflect GrII, since it has 43 cola in common with GrII²⁸ and many of its 75 unique cola²⁹ resemble the long form (often a bicolon) of the GrII additions.³⁰ But do all these unique additions go back to GrII readings no longer extant? Some of them undoubtedly do. In a later section, however, I will argue that not all the Lat additions are best explained by a GrII *Vorlage*.

One peculiarity of GrII and Lat is that nearly all the additions occur within the first 24 chapters of the book. Exceptions include 25:12 and the extended plus at 26:19–27, though the latter may be original to Ben Sira.³¹ Other plusses occur in later chapters, but most appear not to be additions for many of the reasons cited above. For example, 30:11b–12a,d are likely due to textual corruption, 30:20c to dislocation, and 47:9c to influence from Syr.³² In the case of 41:9a and 42:15d, their presence in the very early Masada scroll might suggest that they are original

²⁷ See Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, ad loc.

²⁸ 1:5, 1:7, 10cd; 3:7a; 10:8cd; 12:6c (Lat 12:4c); 13:14; 16:22c (Lat 16:22d); 20:8cd (Lat 20:4); 23:38; 24:18ab (Lat 24:24ab); 25:12 (Lat 25:16); 26:19–27 (G. Rizzi, “Christian Interpretations in the Syriac Version of Sirach,” in *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: Studies on Tradition, Redaction and Theology* [ed. A. Passaro and G. Bellia; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008], 286). The addition of 11:15–16 is present only in late 13th century Latin manuscripts.

²⁹ According to the list in Smend, *Weisheit des Jesus Sirach*, ic–cxiii. Skehan and Di Lella again erroneously interpreted 75 stichoi as 75 distichs (Ben Sira, 56).

³⁰ Whether the Greek exemplar for the Old Latin was a GrII manuscript or some of these additions made their way into the Lat tradition later in transmission is debated.

³¹ Peters, *Buch Jesus Sirach*, 218; Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, 351; though cf. e.g., Segal, “Evolution of the Hebrew Text,” 108.

³² See Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, ad loc.

to Ben Sira. Even if some of these extra lines are genuine additions, the concentration of additions in chapters 1–24 is unique and not easily explained. Perhaps the most sensible reason relates to the genre of the first part of the book: the proverbial nature of sentence literature would easily allow for the incorporation of external aphorisms and maxims.

D. AN UNDERLYING HEBREW VORLAGE?

We may now question whether the additions witnessed in GrII and Lat derive from a Hebrew *Vorlage*. It is often alleged that the Hebrew manuscripts witness two different text-forms that correspond roughly to GrI and GrII.³³ H. P. Rüger understood his “HebII,” witnessed in MS A, to correspond to some extent to GrII when he wrote that GrII and Syriac are “the nearest relatives” (die nächste Verwandte) to HebII.³⁴ W. Th. van Peursen interprets him to mean that “HebI approximates the *Vorlage* of GrI, HebII that of the Syriac text and GrII,”³⁵ and G. L. Prato similarly writes: “GI et GII se rapportent probablement à HI et HII.”³⁶ Johannes Marböck as well reflected the same understanding in his short introduction to Ben Sira: “Gr I kommt der in HsB der Geniza und in Masada bezeugten älteren hebr. Textform bzw. dem Original nahe, während Gr II einer jüngeren hebr. Textform (HsA) nahesteht.”³⁷ In what follows I will outline the Hebrew additions and investigate whether the extant Hebrew manuscripts are a witness to HebII, the alleged *Vorlage* of GrII. I will do this by first considering the evidence for Hebrew counterparts to the GrII additions and thereafter comparing the nature of unique Hebrew additions to that of GrII additions.

While it is commonly assumed that the Hebrew manuscripts attest a significant amount of evidence to suggest a Hebrew basis for the additions in the versions, in actuality there are only three genuine long additions common to the Hebrew manuscripts and versions that are

³³ Ibid., 58.

³⁴ Rüger, *Text und Textform*, 112, cf. 104–6.

³⁵ van Peursen, *Verbal System*, 17.

³⁶ Prato, “lumière interprète,” 319.

³⁷ Marböck, “Buch Jesus Sirach,” 286.

possible candidates for a Hebrew *Vorlage*: 3:25, 11:15–16, and 16:15–16 (10 cola).³⁸ The additions read as follows.³⁹

Si 3:25

באין אישון יחסר / אור
ובאין דעת תחסר חכמה

κόρας μὴ ἔχων ἀπορήσεις φωτός,
γνώσεως δὲ ἀμοιρῶν μὴ ἐπαγγέλλου.

הַן גַּלְמָה לֹא כְּחֵלֶה נִחְסַר עֲשֵׂי נִסְחָהּ אִם
וְכֵן נִסְחָהּ אִם כֵּן גַּלְמָה לֹא כְּחֵלֶה נִחְסַר עֲשֵׂי נִסְחָהּ

Si 11:15–16

[.] כמה ושכל / והבין דבר מיי הוא
חטא ודרכים ישרים מיי הוא
שכלות / והו[.] לפשעים נוצרה
ומרעים רעה עמם

σοφία καὶ ἐπιστήμη καὶ γνῶσις νόμου παρὰ κυρίου,
ἀγάπησις καὶ ὁδοὶ καλῶν ἔργων παρ' αὐτοῦ εἰσιν.
πλάνη καὶ σκότος ἀμαρτωλοῖς συνέκτισται,
τοῖς δὲ γαυριῶσιν ἐπὶ κακία συγγηρᾷ κακία.

וְכֵן גַּלְמָה נִחְסַר עֲשֵׂי נִסְחָהּ אִם
וְכֵן גַּלְמָה נִחְסַר עֲשֵׂי נִסְחָהּ אִם
וְכֵן גַּלְמָה נִחְסַר עֲשֵׂי נִסְחָהּ אִם
וְכֵן גַּלְמָה נִחְסַר עֲשֵׂי נִסְחָהּ אִם

Si 16:15–16

יִי הַקְשָׁה אֶת לֵב פֶּרַעַה אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדָעוּ
שִׁמְעֵשׂוּ ~ / מַגּוּלִין תַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם רַחֲמִי
יִרְאוּ לְכָל בְּרִיּוֹתָיו וְאוּרוֹ / וּשְׁבָחוּ חֵלֶק לִבְנֵי אָדָם

κύριος ἐσκήρυνε φαραω μὴ εἰδέναι αὐτόν,
ὅπως ἄν γνωσθῇ ἐνεργήματα αὐτοῦ τῇ ὑπ' οὐρανόν.
πάση τῇ κτίσει τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ φανερόν,
καὶ τὸ φῶς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ σκότος ἐμέρισε τῷ Ἀδαμ.

וְכֵן גַּלְמָה נִחְסַר עֲשֵׂי נִסְחָהּ אִם
וְכֵן גַּלְמָה נִחְסַר עֲשֵׂי נִסְחָהּ אִם

³⁸ Kearns included 15:14b, 15c; and 31:6d, which appear in Heb and Syr, but Di Lella later showed these to be retroversions (A. A. Di Lella, *The Hebrew Text of Sirach: A Text-Critical and Historical Study* [Studies in Classical Literature 1; The Hague: Mouton, 1966], 119, 127; Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, 269, 380–81). The shared “plusses” noted above that are lacking in GrI but should not be considered additions are 4:23b; 30:20c; 41:9a; and 42:15d.

³⁹ All texts are quoted from the following sources unless otherwise noted: P. C. Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew: A Text Edition of all Extant Hebrew Manuscripts and a Synopsis of all Parallel Hebrew Ben Sira Texts* (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Ziegler, *Sapientia Jesu Filii Sirach*; the Syriac text comes from a preliminary version of the Leiden Peshitta project, graciously provided by Wido van Peursen.

ܐܝܬܝܗܘܢ, ܡܠܝܬܐ ܕܠܝܬܐ ܕܝܬܐ
ܐܝܬܝܗܘܢ ܕܠܝܬܐ ܕܝܬܐ

In these additions Greek and Syriac agree at key points against Hebrew MS A. In 11:15–16 GrII and Syr witness “knowledge of the law” (γνῶσις νόμου, ܠܝܬܐ ܕܝܬܐ) where MS A reads “knowing how to speak” (הבין דבר), “love” (ἀγάπη, ܥܠܡܐ) where MS A has “sin” (ܚܬܐ), and a verb meaning “to grow old” where the Hebrew reads “to be formed” (נוצרה). In 16:15–16 GrII and Syr read “his light and his darkness” (τὸ φῶς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ σκότος, ܡܠܝܬܐ ܡܝܬܐ) against MS A’s “his light and his praise” (ואורו ושבחו). In 3:25 GrII and Syr witness a negative imperative where MS A reads “wisdom is lacking” (ܬܚܫܬܐ ܚܝܒܐ). This suggests two possibilities: (1) Syr and GrII both drew from a Hebrew original, which has been altered in the Genizah manuscripts, or (2) Syr drew from GrII, and their presence in the Genizah manuscripts represents a later retroversion. While the possibility of retroversion is always to be considered since the Genizah manuscripts were in contact with the versions for hundreds of years during transmission,⁴⁰ Segal is correct to note that since Syr does not otherwise appear to know or draw from GrII, these verses likely represent three Hebrew additions that made their way into the versions.⁴¹

Some have used smaller correspondences between GrII and the Hebrew manuscripts to postulate a larger Hebrew basis for GrII. For example, Ziegler cited the difference of a single letter in 15:16 where “man sieht deutlich, daß hebr. Hs. B die Vorlage für GrI und die hebr. Hs. A die Vorlage für GrII bildete.”⁴² There GrI corresponds to the reading of MS B, which witnesses the imperfect תשלח, whereas some GrII manuscripts follow the imperative שלח witnessed by MS A.

GrI	εκτενεις	MS B	באשר תחפץ תשלח י[דיך]
GrII	εκτεινον	MS A	באשר תחפץ שלח ידיך

⁴⁰ Di Lella has argued for instances of retroversion from the Syriac text, including 5:4; 15:14bc; 15:15b; 31:6cd; 35:13 (*Hebrew Text*, 106–47), though Rüger contests many of these (*Text und Textform*).

⁴¹ Segal, “Evolution of the Hebrew Text,” 107–8.

⁴² Ziegler, *Sapientia*, 83. He also noted 15:14 where Gr follows MS B with הוּא as the subject of the verse and Lat follows MSS A and B^{ms} by reading the more explicit אלהים (ibid.). This case, however, does not display an inner-Greek variant but rather a difference between the Gr and Lat traditions.

Rudolf Smend similarly cited 5:11, where GrII adds a word at the end of each line to approximate the reading of MS C against MS A.⁴³ However, even in this instance, like 15:16, the underlying Hebrew manuscripts display a variation rather than an addition. Smend did cite 16:3c as one example of additional material in the Hebrew manuscripts also found in GrII. Assuming that GrI represents the original reading of Ben Sira (= *כי טוב אחד מאלף*), both MS A and B add *עושה רצון [אל]* to yield *כי טוב אחד עושה רצון מאלף*, a reading reflected in Chrysostom and partially in GrII manuscripts. Though *עושה רצון* here may rightly be called an addition, it does not provide an example of an addition of a line or more like those typical of GrII. Therefore, while some differences between GrI and GrII reach back to an underlying Hebrew variation, it should not be surprising that the two Greek manuscript traditions (GrI and GrII) would sometimes reflect variants of the other textual traditions of the book. Thus, these few examples do not provide a basis to extrapolate a Hebrew *Vorlage* for other GrII readings.

One may also look to the citations of Ben Sira in the rabbinic literature for a witness to Hebrew *Vorlagen* underlying the GrII (and Latin) readings. Though some assert that GrII is supported by many of the Talmudic citations,⁴⁴ none of the numerous quotations of Ben Sira in the rabbinic literature cited by Schechter, Smend, and Segal correspond to a substantial GrII addition.⁴⁵ Wright gives one example, the small addition of “with a bill of divorce” in 25:26 (not extant in the Hebrew MSS), attested in Codex 248 and Syriac, and quoted in Sanhedrin 100b.⁴⁶ However, on the whole, it may be said that while GrII additions are found in the writings of the early church fathers in Greek, Hebrew counterparts are not found in the rabbinic writings.

There are still other possibilities for detecting an underlying Hebrew *Vorlage* for the Greek additions. First, Kearns follows Smend in asserting that some of the shorter additions in the versions have a “Hebrew cast.”⁴⁷ While this is undoubtedly the case, this criterion proves ulti-

⁴³ Smend, *Weisheit des Jesus Sirach*, xcii–xciii.

⁴⁴ Oesterley, *Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach*, xciii–xciv; Kearns, “Ecclesiasticus,” 548; idem., “Expanded Text,” 18–19; Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, 57.

⁴⁵ See S. Schechter, “The Quotations from Ecclesiasticus in Rabbinic Literature,” *JQR* 3 (1891): 682–706; Smend, *Weisheit des Jesus Sirach*, xlvi–lvi; Segal, “Evolution of the Hebrew Text,” 133–40.

⁴⁶ B. G. Wright, “B. Sanhedrin 100b and Rabbinic Knowledge of Ben Sira,” in *Treasures of Wisdom: Studies in Ben Sira and the Book of Wisdom. Festschrift M. Gilbert* (ed. N. Calduch-Benages and J. Vermeylen; Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 48.

⁴⁷ Kearns, “Expanded Text,” 58.

mately inconclusive, since compositional Greek can have a Semitic cast as well, as is well known from some New Testament writings.⁴⁸ Second, it is possible that the surrounding context of an addition differs in the Greek and Hebrew witnesses and the addition fits better with the Hebrew context. However, my investigation into GrII has found no conclusive examples. Third, Gilbert has argued in one instance that understanding an underlying Hebrew best explains the GrII reading. In GrII 1:10cd he asserts that Greek ὄρασιν “see” may have mistakenly understood an underlying form of אר “fear” as a form of רא “see.”⁴⁹

ἀγάπησις κυρίου ἔνδοξος σοφία,
οἷς δ’ ἂν ὀπτάνηται, μερίζει αὐτὴν εἰς ὄρασιν αὐτοῦ.

Love of the Lord is glorious wisdom,
And to whom he appears he imparts her so that they may see him.

Pancrattus Beentjes, however, disagrees noting that “fear” would be an unlikely counterpart to ἀγάπησις “love” in v. 10c.⁵⁰

Therefore, of the approximately 150 additional lines in GrII (and numerous more in Lat), only 3 distinct additions (10 cola) can be shown to have an underlying Hebrew *Vorlage*. This is not to suggest that none of the unique GrII additions go back to a Hebrew *Vorlage*. Moreover, conclusions based on a lack of evidence can never be absolute, especially since the extant Hebrew manuscripts offer only an incomplete and fragmentary witness to the Hebrew text.⁵¹ We may simply point out however that the theory of an underlying Hebrew *Vorlage* for the additions in the versions is a hypothetical construct that has little support from the extant textual witnesses. Its existence can by no means be demonstrated from the textual evidence, and, consequently, we can no longer take for granted that the GrII and Lat additions derive from a HebII recension.

But what of the unique Hebrew additions in the manuscripts? Might these additions attest to a systematic reworking of the Hebrew text, and

⁴⁸ C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 171–91.

⁴⁹ M. Gilbert, “Voir ou craindre le Seigneur? Sir 1,10d” in *Biblica et Semitica: Studi in memoria di Francesco Vattioni* (ed. L. Cagni; Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, Series Minor 59; Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1999), 247–52.

⁵⁰ P. C. Beentjes, “Full Wisdom is from the Lord,” in *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: Studies on Tradition, Redaction, and Theology* (ed. F. V. Reiterer; B. Ego, T. Nicklas; Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Series 1; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 146.

⁵¹ Approximately a third of the book is not extant in the recovered Hebrew manuscripts (Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, 53; Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 23).

might they be of the same nature as those of GrII, suggesting a common origin? Though Fuchs' analysis of the Hebrew manuscripts yielded 90 plusses in total, two-thirds of them are alternate readings or wordings of the original.⁵² Only about 25 are editorial additions of interpretive or doctrinal significance.⁵³ Many of these constitute variants or additions of only a few words, which starkly contrast the numerous long additions of an entire bicolon characteristic of GrII. Besides the three Hebrew additions noted above, the few longer additions in the Hebrew manuscripts can in many cases be explained as doublets of alternative readings. While Rüger may be right to conclude that MS A represents a more expanded text than the other Hebrew manuscripts, it is emphasized that this "expanded" text has little in common with GrII and is not a witness to its alleged *Vorlage*.

E. THE SYRIAC ADDITIONS

Now we may consider the affinities of Syr to the other versions in regard to additions. Kearns had counted 37 cola unique to Syriac itself, 24 of which make up one extended unit after 1:20, and 35 cola shared with GrII.⁵⁴ Of the common additions, the three additions cited above (3:25; 11:15–16; 16:15–16) likely derive from Hebrew *Vorlagen*, and 26:19–27 may be original to Ben Sira,⁵⁵ leaving 25:12 as the only possible candidate for dependence on GrII.⁵⁶ Though one might propose that 25:12

⁵² Fuchs, *Textkritische Untersuchungen*, 115.

⁵³ Note 4:27cd; 4:28cd; 6:17b; 6:22cd; 7:17cd; 11:15–16; 11:29cd; 11:30b; 12:11d; 12:14c; 13:2e; 14:12a; 14:14c; 14:16c; 15:15c; 16:3c; 16:11d; 16:15–16; 30:20c; 30:20d; 31:2cd; 31:6cd; 32:11d; 36:10b; 46:19ef; 51:20b (ibid., 111–15). Kearns cited the following as examples: 11:15–16; 15:14b; 15:15c; 16:15–16; 31:6d; 51:1 ("Ecclesiasticus," 548).

⁵⁴ Kearns, "Ecclesiasticus," 548; cf. idem., "Expanded Text," 15. Legrand similarly counts 75 lines in total beyond GrI ("Siracide," 668). Skehan and Di Lella again erroneously doubled Kearns' numbers to yield 70 cola in common in with GrII and 74 unique to itself (*Ben Sira*, 57). So also W. Th. van Peursen, *Language and Interpretation in the Syriac Text of Ben Sira: A Comparative Linguistic and Literary Study* (MPIL 16; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 77. M. D. Nelson, also apparently drawing from Kearns, doubled the count, claiming 35 and 37 distichs respectively (*The Syriac Version of the Wisdom of Ben Sira Compared to the Greek and Hebrew Materials* [SBLDS 107; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988], 7).

⁵⁵ So e.g., Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, 351.

⁵⁶ I take 3:19 and 4:23b not to be additions, the former corrupted in the versions and the latter original to Ben Sira (see Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, ad loc). The Syr text also lacks approximately 200 lines found in GrI (Legrand, "Siracide," 668), or perhaps more accurately 193 and a half (M. M. Winter, "The Origins of Ben Sira in Syriac [Part I]," VT 27 [1977]: 237).

(not extant in the Hebrew MSS) should be grouped with 3:25; 11:15–16; and 16:15–16 as having a Hebrew origin, its striking resonances with many of the GrII additions suggest that Syr 25:12 is a translation from GrII.⁵⁷ And just as Syr does not witness the GrII additions, neither does it witness any of the Lat additions.⁵⁸ We may conclude then that in terms of additional material Syr displays nearly absolute discontinuity with GrII and Lat.⁵⁹

Instead the Syriac text is characterized by numerous alterations, doublets, and variations of its own. While there is much debate on the identity of the Syr translator(s) and the possibility of a later revision, it is widely agreed that Syr reflects much translational freedom that allowed for interpretation and expansion.⁶⁰ Rüger may have been right to see Syr as a close relative to his “HebII,” even if we have shown this not to be the case for GrII. Both Syr and the “HebII” of MS A witness an “expanded” form of the book, but one which has undergone ubiquitous free interpretation and reworking, the former mostly by translators and the latter by copyists. This is quite different from the evidence found in GrII and Lat, which are instead characterized primarily by additions of a colon or bicolon rather than alterations. This suggests that neither the “HebII” of the medieval manuscripts nor Syr witness the alleged *Vorlage* of GrII.

F. A COMMON VORLAGE FOR ALL THE LATIN ADDITIONS?

Given the continuity of the GrII and Lat texts noted up to this point, might we assume that the 75 unique Lat cola derive from a Greek *Vorlage* and thus are a witness to non-extant GrII additions? Though Gil-

⁵⁷ Cf. GrII 1:10cd; 1:12; 1:18; 10:21; 17:18; 19:18–19.

⁵⁸ Winter, “Origins (Part I),” 237.

⁵⁹ Though Kearns has argued for a theological and thematic continuity between GrII additions and Syriac readings (“Expanded Text,” 61–66), van Peursen has shown that some of these themes rather stem from the translator’s own tendencies (*Language and Interpretation*, 34–35).

⁶⁰ See (in chronological order) Winter, “Origins (Part I),” 237–53; idem., “The Origins of Ben Sira in Syriac (Part II),” *VT* 27 (1977): 494–507; R. Owens, “The Early Syriac Text of Ben Sira in the Demonstrations of Aphrahat” *JSS* 34 (1989): 75; W. Th. van Peursen, “The Peshitta of Ben Sira: Jewish and/or Christian?” *Aramaic Studies* 2 (2004): 243–62; M. M. Winter, “Theological Alterations in the Syriac Translation of Ben Sira,” *CBQ* (2008): 300–312; Rizzi, “Christian Interpretations,” 277–308; R. Owens, “Christian Features in the Peshitta Text of Ben Sira: the Question of Dependency on the Syriac New Testament,” in this volume. For a summary of the Syriac translator’s interpretive tendencies, see van Peursen, *Language and Interpretation*, 77–96.

bert holds that the unique Lat additions derive from the Greek *Vorlage* of the original *Vetus Latina* translation,⁶¹ one significant area of thematic discontinuity may suggest that not all of them have an underlying GrII *Vorlage*. Here it is argued that the topic of afterlife, which underwent an evolution in the late Second Temple period, can shed light on the problem.

Jesus Ben Sira was very traditional in his understanding of Sheol and the afterlife. The mention of reward or punishment in the afterlife is not mentioned at all in the Hebrew text of the book.⁶² The grandson continues the same view in GrI.⁶³ GrII mentions or alludes to an afterlife a few times. The most explicit reference is 19:19, “those who do what is pleasing to him enjoy the fruit of the tree of immortality” (οἱ δὲ ποιοῦντες τὰ ἀρεστὰ αὐτῷ ἀθανασίας δένδρον καρπιοῦνται). Others include 2:9c, “for his reward is an eternal gift with joy” (ὅτι δόσις αἰωνία μετὰ χαρᾶς τὸ ἀνταπόδομα αὐτοῦ), and 16:22c, “a close examination will come for all in the end/at death” (καὶ ἐξέτασις πάντων ἐν τελευτῇ).

The Lat text, on the other hand, appears to be preoccupied with punishment and reward in the afterlife. First, we may note the following additional lines.⁶⁴

6:22c (23c)	quibus autem agnita est permanet usque ad conspectum Dei	but with them to whom [wisdom] is known, she continues even to the sight of God.
15:8	et viri veraces inveniuntur in illa et successum habebunt usque ad inspectionem Dei	but men that speak truth will be found with her, and will advance, even until they come to the sight of God.

⁶¹ M. Gilbert, “The *Vetus Latina* of *Ecclesiasticus*,” in *Studies in the Book of Ben Sira: Papers of the Third International Conference on the Deuterocanonical Books, Shime'on Centre, Pápa, Hungary, 18–20 May, 2006* (ed. G. G. Xeravits and J. Zsengellér; JSJSup 127; Leiden, Brill, 2008), 6–9; also idem., “Methodological and Hermeneutical Trends,” 5.

⁶² Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, 86; though see a more nuanced view in E. Puech, “Ben Sira and Qumran,” in *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: Studies on Tradition, Redaction, and Theology* (ed. F. V. Reiterer; B. Ego, T. Nicklas; Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Series 1; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 99–102.

⁶³ J.-S. Rey, “L’espérance *post-mortem* dans les différentes versions du Siracide,” in this volume.

⁶⁴ Latin texts cited from *Biblia sacra iuxta latinam vulgatam versionem 12: Sapientia Salomonis, Liber Hiesu Filii Sirach* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanus, 1964). Latin translations are adapted from Douay-Rheims.

17:23 (19)	[et postea resurget et retribuet illis retributionem unicuique in caput illorum] et convertet in interiores partes terrae	[And afterward he will rise up, and will render to them their reward, to every one upon their own head,] and will turn them down into the bowels of the earth.
18:22	quoniam merces Dei manet in aeternum	for the reward of God continues for ever.
24:22 (31)	qui elucidant me vitam aeternam habebunt	They who explain me will have life everlasting.
24:32cd (45)	penetrabo inferiores partes terrae et inspiciam omnes dormientes et inluminabo sperantes in Deo	I will penetrate to all the lower parts of the earth, and will behold all that sleep, and will enlighten all that hope in the Lord.
27:8 (9)	[si sequareis iustitiam adprehendes illam et indues quasi poderem honoris] et inhabitabis cum ea et proteget te in sempiternum et in die agnitionis invenies firmamentum	[If you follow justice, you will obtain her, and will put her on as a long robe of honor,] and you will dwell with her, and she shall protect you forever, and in the day of acknowledgment you will find a strong foundation.

Beyond these, Lat witnesses numerous translational alterations. We may note the following renderings as examples.

14:19	Gr	Give and take, and deceive your soul, because in Hades there is no seeking of luxury.
	Lat	Give and take, and justify your soul. Before your death do justice, for in hell there is no finding food.
21:10	Gr	The way of sinners is leveled out of stones, and at its end is the hole of Hades
	Lat	The congregation of sinners is like tow heaped together, and the end of them is a flame of fire
24:9 (14)	Gr	and until the age I will never fail
	Lat	and until the future age I will not cease to be
44:16	Gr	Enoch pleased God, and he was changed
	Lat	Enoch pleased God, and he was translated into paradise

In another instance the Lat translator simply avoids a Greek passage that suggests a bleak perspective on life after death. In 17:27–28 Greek reads:

Who will sing praises to the Most High in Hades
instead of the living and those who give thanks?
Since a corpse does not exist, acknowledgement has perished from it;
a living and healthy person will praise the Lord.

For this Latin substitutes:

Give thanks while you are living,
while you are alive and in health you shall give thanks,
and shall praise God and glory in his mercies.
How great is the mercy of the Lord, and his forgiveness to them that turn
to him!

These latter examples of translational adjustments suggest that the Latin translator had a special concern to express the post-mortem significance of one's deeds and therefore suppress the traditional view of Ben Sira. This interpretive tendency of the Latin translator along with the lesser emphasis on the afterlife in GrII suggests that some of the Latin additions on the afterlife of a line or more mentioned above may derive from the hand of the translator rather than a GrII *Vorlage*. Had all the GrII and Lat additions derived from a single source, each would be equally likely to witness updates on the afterlife. Thus there is a discontinuity between the versions in respect to the content of their additions: LatII speaks of the afterlife numerous times, while GrII only does so in very few instances, and HebI and GrI have no references.⁶⁵

G. CONCLUSIONS

This study has attempted to show that it is highly improbable that all the additions to Ben Sira originated in a systematic reworking of the Hebrew text as was formulated by Conleth Kearns and subsequently widely adopted in scholarship. Kearns' theory postulated a continuity among the text-forms of the book derived from their common origin, but I have argued for the following points of discontinuity. (1) There is very little evidence for an underlying Hebrew *Vorlage* for the numerous GrII and Lat additions—only three distinct additions. (2) Most of

⁶⁵ Kearns apparently did not recognize this discontinuity because he considered the GrII and Lat additions together as witnesses to a single recension.

the unique Hebrew additions consist of one or a few words in contrast to the characteristic longer additions of GrII and Lat. (3) The Syr text as well generally reflects ubiquitous cases of interpretations, variations, and doublets at the translational level, rather than long additions of the GrII and Lat variety. (4) In fact, the Syr text witnesses none of the GrII and Lat additions, proving that Syr is not a witness to a possible *Vorlage* for HebII. (5) Though some of Lat's unique additions undoubtedly derive from a Greek *Vorlage* no longer extant, many of its additions on the afterlife are likely from the hand of the translator rather than an underlying *Vorlage*. Therefore, the discontinuity among the versions suggests that the additions stem from any number of sources rather than a systematic revision of the Hebrew text.

Though we have not found grounds for a common origin for all the additions based on the textual evidence, the possibility remains that some originated from a single group or geographical location, perhaps the Essenes as Kearns and others maintain.⁶⁶ In fact, assuming the Qumran-Essene hypothesis, the connection between Ben Sira and Qumran has much to lend it,⁶⁷ and the phrase ⁶⁸לכל בריותיו ואורו וחשכו (‘‘he divided his light and his darkness to humans’’) in 16:15–16 in particular has resonances with Qumran literature like 1QS,⁶⁹ in which we find the dualism of light and darkness.⁷⁰ These links

⁶⁶ Cf. Wright, ‘‘B. Sanhedrin 100b,’’ 50.

⁶⁷ Puech, ‘‘Ben Sira and Qumran,’’ 79–112, esp. 110–12. Cf. D. Flusser, ‘‘The Secret Things Belong to the Lord’ (Deut. 29:29): Ben Sira and the Essenes’’ in *Judaism of the Second Temple Period: Qumran and Apocalypticism* (trans. Azzan Yadin; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007), 293–98.

⁶⁸ Emended to reflect the more original reading of GrII and Syr.

⁶⁹ See Puech, ‘‘Ben Sira and Qumran,’’ 110–11; M. Philonenko, ‘‘Sur une interpolation essénisante dans le Siracide (16,15–16),’’ *Orientalia Suecana* 33–35 (1984–1986): 317–21. I agree with Puech that the resonances with the addition after Syr 1:20 are less certain (see T. Legrand, ‘‘Siracide [syriaque] 1,20c–z: une addition syriaque et ses résonances esséniennes,’’ in *Études sémitiques et samaritaines offertes à Jean Margain* [ed. C.-B. Amphoux, A. Frey, and U. Schattner-Rieser; Histoire du Texte Biblique 4; Lausanne: Éditions de Zèbre, 1998], 123–34). Gilbert is mistaken to question a Qumran origin for some of the additions on grounds that ‘‘Die in Qumran und Masada gefundenen Texte geben nur ein Sir.-Buch vom Typ Sir Hebr I wieder’’ (‘‘Jesus Sirach,’’ in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 17 [ed. A. Dassmann et al.; Stuttgart: Anton Herseman, 1995], 885), since the Qumran and Masada witnesses are not extant in the sections where most of the additions appear.

⁷⁰ See Philonenko, ‘‘interpolation essénisante,’’ 320. Note in particular 1QS III 18–19: וישם לו שתי רוחות להתהלך בם עד מועד פקודתו הנה רוחות האמת והעול במעון אור 18–19: תולדות האמת וממקור חושך תולדות העול (‘‘He gave to him two spirits so that he would walk with them until the moment of his visitation: these are the [two] spirits of truth and of injustice. In the fountain of light is the origin of truth and the source of darkness’’).

may suggest that perhaps the three additions shown above to have a Hebrew *Vorlage* originated at Qumran.⁷¹

Moreover, a couple cases of thematic continuity among the additions may suggest that some others derive from a single source. These include the association of fear of the Lord with love of the Lord, as noted by Gilbert,⁷² and Prato's identification of the theme of light in relation to wisdom.⁷³ However, the discontinuity among the versions outlined in this essay precludes the possibility that all the additions derive from the Essenes or Qumran or any other single source and therefore draws into question thematic and comparative studies that use continuity among some of the additions to extrapolate on the origin of all the additions. Thus, we do not speak of "the expanded text," as Kearns did. Instead, a "plurality of origin[s]" is posited.⁷⁴

In this we can agree with a few scholars who, even if assuming a larger Hebrew basis for the additions in the versions, nevertheless describe a diverse process of textual growth. Benjamin Wright, for example, speaks of an "ongoing process of expansion" among the different versions of Ben Sira rather than a "recension," a term which implies "a certain self-conscious and systematic reworking of a text from a particular point of view."⁷⁵ Instead, he asserts: "one may surmise the existence of numerous variant 'text types' or 'editions' of the book, some more variant than others."⁷⁶ Similarly Maurice Gilbert has stressed the gradual

is the origin of injustice").

⁷¹ Whether other *μερίζειν* ("apportioning") texts in GrII, particularly a cluster of additions in chapter 17 (1:10cd; 17:5, 18, 22), also have a Heb *Vorlage* is uncertain.

⁷² M. Gilbert, "Wisdom Literature" in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period* (ed. M. E. Stone; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 299–300; Skehan and Di Lella, *Ben Sira*, 340. This is most clearly set forth in 25:12, "Fear of the Lord is the beginning of love for him." Another example rests on Gilbert's translation of 1:12cd (φόβος κυρίου δόσις παρὰ κυρίου, καὶ γὰρ ἐπ' ἀγαπήσεως τρίβους καθίστησιν) as "The fear of the Lord is a gift from the Lord, for it sets [men] upon paths of love." Against this NETS translates the second lines as: "for he also establishes paths for love," taking the subject of the verb as "the Lord" rather than "fear of the Lord." Less clear associations mentioned by Gilbert include 24:18, "I [Wisdom] am the mother of beautiful love, of fear, of knowledge, and of holy hope," and 19:18, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of acceptance, and wisdom obtains love."

⁷³ Prato, "lumière interprète," 317–46.

⁷⁴ Gilbert, "Methodological and Hermeneutical Trends," 12.

⁷⁵ B. G. Wright, "Some Methodological Considerations on the Rabbis' Knowledge of the Proverbs of Ben Sira" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the SBL, New Orleans, 1990, online: <ftp://ftp.lehigh.edu/pub/listserv/ioudaios-l/Articles/bwsira>).

⁷⁶ Ibid. Cf. Hartman ("Sirach in Hebrew and Greek," 446 n. 6): "We are ... inclined to think that the Hebrew text of Sir existed in numerous shapes and forms and that the

accretion of the book.⁷⁷ He writes: "We must not imagine one official second edition, revised and expanded, but rather a long process of expansion. Not being acknowledged as a biblical book in Judaism, the text of the book of Ben Sira could freely incorporate doublets and additions, which were not necessarily transmitted in all manuscripts and all versions. The expanded text of Ben Sira, therefore, is multiform."⁷⁸

In summary, the dominant view that the additions to Ben Sira found in the ancient versions are the result of a systematic Hebrew recension cannot be proven by the textual evidence. While some of the additions may have originated from particular religious groups or geographical locations, and some even through an underlying Hebrew *Vorlage*, it is difficult to speak of a common origin for all the additions in the versions. Rather than speaking of a single expanded text, we may instead affirm the multiform state of the textual witnesses to Ben Sira.

process of freely 'editing' this text was carried on almost continuously by practically every scribe that copied it from about the middle of the 2d century B.C. till well into the Middle Ages."

⁷⁷ M. Gilbert, "The Book of Ben Sira: Implications for Jewish and Christian Traditions" in *Jewish Civilization in the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (ed. S. Talmon; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991), 81–91; cf. idem., "Wisdom Literature," 290–300.

⁷⁸ Gilbert, "Book of Ben Sira," 88. Also idem., "Methodological and Hermeneutical Trends," 11: "Changes and additions ... appear in Hebrew and Greek manuscripts in a rather chaotic way: one manuscript conveys some modifications and another, others. This signifies, it seems, that there was no 'second edition' as we would understand it, but a slow and progressive evolution of the text of Ben Sira, due to many hands, each scribe choosing such or such modification."