

Shaping Text Through Song: The Influence of Singing Upon Processes of Textual Interpretation and Variation in the Dead Sea Scrolls

A thesis submitted to the University of
Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of
Humanities

2023

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Word Count: 81,386

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations used are according to *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd ed., Billie Jean Collins, project director; Bob Buller, publishing director; John F. Kutsko, executive director (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press), 2014. In addition, the following recent lexical works are referred to as follows:

HAWTTM Kratz, Reinhard G., Annette Steudel and Ingo Kottsieper, eds.
*Hebräisches und aramäisches Wörterbuch zu den Texten vom Toten Meer
 Einschließlich der Manuskripte aus der Kairoer Geniza*. 2 vols. Berlin: De
 Gruyter, 2017–18. Available online at: [https://lexicon.qumran-
 digital.org/v1/index.html#dictionary-iframe](https://lexicon.qumran-digital.org/v1/index.html#dictionary-iframe)

ThWQ Fabry, Heinz-Josef, Ulrich Dahmen and George J. Brooke, eds. *Theologisches
 Wörterbuch zu den Qumrantexten*. 3 vols. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2011–16.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the influential role played by singing as a performative medium within processes of textual interpretation and variation during the late Second Temple Period, as reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls. On the basis of the research conducted, singing is argued to be a prominent and widespread mode of performance in the late Second Temple Period, and a medium which exerted considerable influence within and upon processes of textual composition, interpretation and transmission. These complex processes result in the variation of textual forms, leading to the conclusion that sung performance (of various kinds) functioned as one factor (among many) contributing to the widespread pluriformity of textual traditions evident in the manuscripts found at or near Qumran. This thesis acts primarily, therefore, to illuminate textual processes by highlighting a previously unconsidered yet influential factor: the function of singing.

The argument is advanced in four stages, corresponding to the four parts of the thesis: first of all, scholarship relating to singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls is reviewed, identifying and highlighting issues which inform the direction of research. Appropriate theoretical models are identified and developed through inter-disciplinary conversation between three scholarly fields, namely: musicology, orality studies, and textual criticism of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The third stage of argument consists of in-depth textual and literary case studies, using the theoretical models developed in part two as interpretative tools which direct the focus of exegesis. These case studies yield multiple insights as to the way that singing was conceived in Late Second Temple Literature and the role that singing as a performative medium was understood to play, particularly in relation to textuality and textual processes. The texts selected as case studies include Psalm 154/Syriac Psalm II (11Q5 XVIII), David's Compositions (11Q5 XXVII), a portion of the Second Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice (as found in fragment 2 of 4Q400) and a portion of the Seventh Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice (as found in 4Q403 1 I).

Finally, in part four of the thesis, text-critical data is addressed, in order to assess whether there is any evidence among the manuscripts found at or near Qumran of textual variation that could potentially be tied to singing as a causal factor. The data presented in part four is purely illustrative in nature: establishing that the kind of data that fits the hypothesis concerning the influence of singing within textual processes exists in abundance.

DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express deep gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor and co-supervisor, Dr Svetlana Khobnya and Dr Samuel Hildbrandt. I have benefitted from Svetlana's support and encouragement since my MA studies, and I owe her a great deal. I am grateful for her confidence in my abilities, her pastoral support, her constant willingness to offer guidance and re-assurance whenever needed, her patient pragmatism in the face of my over-zealous perfectionism, her enthusiasm for my writing and research, her keen scholarly eye, her teaching and her friendship. Svetlana trusted me to fully explore the paths of research that motivated me, even when they led in unexpected directions! I am also grateful for the multiple opportunities she has given me to teach, and the trust she has shown in me to be able to take responsibility for students and teaching materials. I have grown a great deal as both a researcher and a teacher under Svetlana's mentorship.

Dr Samuel Hildebrandt has become a valued friend as well as a source of wisdom and guidance. His scholarly discernment and critical insight always result in fresh and valuable perspectives, and our shared interests mean we are never short of something to discuss. There is also a compassionate, balanced and human aspect to Samuel's scholarly approach which has provided necessary counterweight to my anxious tendencies.

I would not have been able to complete this project without the guidance, encouragement and specialist expertise of Professor George Brooke, offered with exceptional generosity on an informal basis. Professor Brooke has read everything that I have written, and can always be relied upon to respond with prompt and incisive critique. Professor Brooke's own scholarship has shaped my thinking in profound ways, and his searching criticism and rigorous standards of precision in expression, treatment of evidence, and construction of argument have continually provoked me to learn more and to sharpen my thinking. His advice has shown me the way into a specialist field and his support has enabled me to begin to find my feet there. I am also grateful to Professor Hindy Najman for taking the time to listen to my research in its latter stages and for offering some vital guidance and encouragement. Her work has been similarly influential in shaping the way that I think about Second Temple Literature.

My thanks go to Dr Dwight Swanson, whose teaching (probably unbeknownst to him) sparked my initial interests in textual criticism and the Dead Sea Scrolls. He is therefore partly, though indirectly, responsible for the direction of my research, and he exemplified for me an alternative path of faithful scholarship. Svetlana must also take some credit for her determination that I should take “Contextualising Scripture” and be exposed to a wider cross-section of Second Temple Literature!

I am very grateful to have been afforded the opportunity to be part of a vibrant teaching team at Nazarene Theological College. We have enjoyed great friendship and fellowship together in our shared task over recent years. I have particularly benefitted from the example and experience of Dr Kent Brower in this setting, and from his advice as an internal reviewer.

Nazarene Theological College and the Ehrhardt Seminar at the University of Manchester have provided rich, stimulating and collegiate research communities within which to operate. I have made many valuable friends and acquaintances among fellow doctoral students and have been exposed to a wide variety of high-class biblical and theological scholarship. The Ehrhardt Seminar quickly revealed to me a scholarly standard to which I aspired, and afforded the opportunity to rub shoulders with outstanding senior scholars who were generous with their time and expertise. I am particularly grateful to those, in addition to Professor Brooke, who helped me directly, such as Professor Philip Alexander, Professor John Healey, and Professor Peter Oakes, whose Philippians reading group provided a stimulating diversion from the Scrolls.

Nazarene Theological College is a haven of supportive, faithful community and rich scholarship, and is rare in its qualities. I am grateful to those that lead the College and set the tone for the community, and must thank particularly Dr Deirdre Brower-Latz, Dr Peter Rae, and Michael Kane in that regard. I am also ever-grateful to the superb office and administrative staff at the College, who exercise their duties with great skill, professionalism, patience, and warmth, and have on numerous occasions compensated for my own deficiencies. Heidi Wright and Robert Rae deserve special mention.

My time in Jerusalem at the Hebrew University had such a profound impact on me that it is difficult to quantify or express, and I am most grateful to the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature for awarding me the Matlow Student

Scholarship. This grant and period of focused study in Jerusalem enabled me to draft chapter five of my thesis and to bring the whole project towards its final stage of completion. It was an exceptional privilege to work under Professor Noam Mizrahi, whose skills as a scholar and linguist were inspirational, and are always exercised with exceptional charm, finesse, generosity and hospitality. I made many valuable friends during my stay, and must acknowledge some by name. I must thank Beatriz Riestra and the curators at the Israel Antiquities Authority for allowing me access to view the manuscripts I was working on. My thanks go to Dr Ruth Clements, Ruchama Roth, and Shlomo Brand at the Orion Center for their welcome and administrative support. I would like to thank my friends at the Albright Institute for making me feel at home, and Dr Michael Johnson and Dr Drew Longacre in particular for their welcome, their friendship, and for stimulating discussions. I am also grateful to Professor Carl Ehrlich for a sense of companionship and some very timely advice. It was a joy to meet and befriend colleague John Dik and family. Most of all from my time in Jerusalem I must thank Chananya Rothner, for going so far above and beyond the call of duty to show hospitality to an alien, for welcoming me into his home, synagogue and archaeological team, and for sharing my thrill at exploring Qumran and the caves for the very first time.

Finally, and most importantly, I must thank my family, without whose support and sacrifice I could never have dreamt of embarking on a project like this, let alone completing it. I could not have done this without the love and the spiritual, emotional and material support of Mum, Dad, Trevor, Mark and Linda. I will be ever grateful. Words cannot express my thankfulness for Emily, my companion and co-worker in all things, who shares my vision for life and vocation, and for my two boys, Immanuel and Eden. They have not only had to share me with my books, but have too often had to share some of the cost and burden of my stress. I hope that they will also share in the satisfaction and joy that comes as a result of completing this work.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Thesis Statement

The Dead Sea Scrolls reflect the fact that in the late Second Temple Period singing functioned as a prominent and widespread mode of performance which exerted considerable influence within and upon processes of textual composition, interpretation and transmission. These complex processes result in the variation of textual forms, leading to the conclusion that sung performance (of various kinds) functioned as one factor (among many) contributing to the widespread pluriformity of textual traditions evident in the manuscripts found at or near Qumran.

1.2 Methodology

Having identified issues arising from previous scholarly discussion of singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the argument set forth below is advanced in four stages: firstly, by identifying issues raised in previous scholarship; secondly, by establishing theoretical frameworks; thirdly, in the analysis of case studies; and finally, through assessing text-critical evidence of variants potentially related to liturgical performance. The core evidence gathered in support of the proposed hypothesis is presented in the case studies found in chapters four and five, though the argument would not be intelligible without the theoretical frameworks established on the basis of chapters two and three. The theories explored in section 2.3 and chapter three are developed in response to two key lines of evidence: firstly, the pluriformity of textual traditions represented in the manuscripts found at or near Qumran, and secondly, evidence of the interactive relationship between singing and text. The first concept arises from text-critical discussions in Dead Sea Scrolls research.¹ The latter draws on the field of musicology, a scholarly discipline which offers vital research findings for theoretical discussions of the relationship between music and text.² Theories developed on the basis of these two apparently unrelated fields of research act as conceptual lenses through which the primary texts addressed in part three are interpreted. The “interactive relationship between

¹ See chapter two below.

² See chapter three below.

singing and text” simply refers to the fact that whenever and wherever words are sung, they occur as part of processes in which those words influence the composition and/or adaptation of the music that is performed, and the music influences the composition and/or adaptation of the text. Whenever text has been composed with or set to music at any point in its history, these two aspects have inevitably exerted mutual influence upon each other. Accordingly, for any text that has ever been set to music at any point in its history of composition and development, music has influenced the interpretation and transmission of that text. The reverse is also true, in that the character of musical performance has inevitably been influenced by the text. The pervasive and inherent quality of this interactive relationship means that frequently—if not always—singing has in a very real way shaped the surviving form of a such a text, either through the compositional process, the interpretative process (coloured by musical setting), or an adaptive process according to new musical settings. These comments anticipate the arguments of chapters three and six particularly, and are fully explored and argued there.

The case studies in chapters four and five are close readings of selected texts from among the Dead Sea Scrolls which aim to implement a multi-faceted approach to the analysis and interpretation of ancient texts. These analyses incorporate relevant insights on the basis of material, text-critical and philological evidence, considering social and historical aspects where possible and according to necessary limitations. My approach is cautious with regard to socio-historical reconstructions, in part because I frequently aim to draw attention to previously unconsidered variables which cast doubt upon overly specific reconstructions and suggest new explanatory alternatives for textual phenomena. This concern is related to the desire to place material and textual evidence front and centre, recognising that fresh analyses are frequently challenging the widely accepted socio-historical reconstructions of previous scholarship.³ I aim to implement a methodology that recognises the hard distinction between

³ An outstanding example of the analysis of textual and material data facilitating new social and historical reconstructions is provided in Charlotte Hempel’s work on the Serekh traditions at Qumran, for example: *The Qumran Rule Texts in Context: Collected Studies*, TSAJ 154 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013); “Rules,” in *T&T Clark Companion to the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. George J. Brooke and Charlotte Hempel (London/New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018), 405–13; *The Community Rules from Qumran: A Commentary*, TSAJ (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020); “Community Formation in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Beyond the Watershed Paradigm,” in *Emerging Sectarianism in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Continuity, Separation, and Conflict*, ed. John J. Collins and Ananda Geysler-Fouché, STDJ 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 119–144. Ongoing Scrolls research has also highlighted the mistaken assumption of previous scholarship that the Qumran finds are altogether the scribal product of a community based at the nearby settlement. In contrast, it is now clear that many manuscripts likely originated from other locations and were brought to Qumran, and some predate the settlement at Qumran: Hindy Najman, “The Vitality of Scripture Within and Beyond the ‘Canon’,” *JSJ* 43 nos. 4/5 (2012): 497–518,

so-called “higher” and “lower” criticisms as a misleading dichotomy, in accord with George Brooke’s compelling critique of the ongoing application of these terms in Biblical scholarship.⁴ Text-critical issues cannot and should not be handled as if they are unrelated to questions of social and historical context, and text-critical data in turn constitute a vital body of evidence upon which social and historical reconstructions must depend.⁵

I also embrace a general approach to interpretation of the Dead Sea Scrolls which avoids assuming a strong categorical boundary between so-called “biblical” and “non-biblical” textual traditions attested among the manuscripts found at or near Qumran. It is widely recognised that the term “biblical” is anachronistic and inappropriate for the period in question, and that categories and boundaries of canonical formation which were developed in later centuries by rabbinic and patristic authorities by no means account satisfactorily for the evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the contexts of religious thought reflected therein.⁶ We are dealing with material from a pre-canonical period when the establishment of authority in texts was based on different criteria from those set out for later canons. It will become apparent, therefore, in the course of discussing previous scholarship on singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls, that I am sceptical towards theories that over-emphasise a qualitative distinction between “biblical” psalmody and “non-biblical” psalmody at Qumran, at least to the extent that the discussion is framed using this dichotomy.⁷ Diachronic and qualitative diversity must be recognised throughout the poetic and liturgical texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, regardless of the presence or absence of texts in known biblical canons.⁸ It is for these reason

509–10, esp. n31; Mladen Popović, “The Manuscript Collections: An Overview,” in Brooke and Hempel, 37–50, 44.

⁴ George J. Brooke, “The Qumran Scrolls and the Demise of the Distinction Between Higher and Lower Criticism,” in *Reading the Dead Sea Scrolls: Essays in Method*, EJL 39 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 1–17.

⁵ See note 3 above.

⁶ Najman and Tichelaar’s preliminary discussion of problems relating to the naming and classification of texts found at Qumran treats these issues clearly and succinctly: Hindy Najman and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, “A Preparatory Study of Nomenclature and Text Designation in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *RevQ* 26 no. 3 (2014): 305–25.

⁷ See page 42 below.

⁸ See Mika S. Pajunen, “Differentiation of Form, Theme, and Changing Functions in Psalms and Prayers,” *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 33, no.2 (2019): 264–76. I have made some further comments on this issue and the “biblical/non-biblical” dichotomy in relation to liturgical texts in Jonathan M. Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer: Applying Genre Theory to Some Persisting Problems in the Categorisation of Liturgical Texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *Advances in Ancient, Biblical and Near Eastern Research* 2/2 (2022): 11–47. When referring in this discussion to “known biblical canons” and the “Masoretic Corpus”/ “Masoretic 150” I am acknowledging the diversity of known biblical canons (both Christian and Jewish) and the variety between their collections of Psalms (when comparing, for instance, the Masoretic 150 Psalms canonical for Jews and Protestants, and Greek, Coptic and Syrian traditions, which preserve additional Psalms). I refer, however, to psalms which are not preserved as canonical in any of these traditions, and have been routinely labelled as “non-

that this thesis is not concerned with reconstructing a specific function or liturgical setting for individual texts, but is instead focused on illuminating processes of textuality.

This point must be borne in mind whether comparing individual manuscripts or comparing collections of psalms (such as the Hodayot, or 11Q5). The dating of individual Psalms found within the Masoretic collection of 150 (which ultimately became canonical for Jews and for Christians) is highly contentious, as is the dating and origin of collections such as the Masoretic corpus or the 11Q5 psalter.⁹ The question of the genesis and development of any collection of ancient psalms is complex, and scholarly research into the Dead Sea Scrolls has only complicated the picture further.¹⁰ Categorising psalms among the Dead Sea Scrolls as consisting of two essentially different kinds (“biblical” and “non-biblical,” or “canonical” and “non-canonical”), and then using that essential distinction as the primary framework for interpretation, instantly distorts conclusions on the grounds of an anachronism.¹¹ Another misleading assumption that the identification of some manuscripts as “liturgical” in character leads to the conclusion that they are therefore less authoritative than manuscripts produced for other scribal purposes.¹² Though this is an extensive debate, there is no reason to assume

biblical” or “non-biblical.” The Hodayot, Barkhi Nafshi, and 4Q380–1 are just some such examples which have survived among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

⁹ Peter Flint’s comprehensive study of Psalms manuscripts among the Dead Sea Scrolls illustrates well some of the ways that the finds at Qumran have impacted scholarly debate concerning such issues: Peter W. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms*, STDJ 17 (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

¹⁰ See David Willgren, *The Formation of the “Book” of Psalms: Reconsidering the Transmission and Canonization of Psalmody in Light of Material Culture and the Poetics of Anthologies*, FAT 2 volume 88 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016). For a general view on the development of the Masoretic Psalter, see Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Eric Zenger, *Psalms 2: A Commentary on Psalms 51–100*, trans. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 1–2. Flint’s treatment of the Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls is again indicative of the way that discoveries in the Judean Desert have shaped this discussion: Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*.

¹¹ This approach nonetheless characterises much past research on the Dead Sea Scrolls of supreme value and importance, particularly during and prior to release of the full corpus for scholarly examination in the 1990’s. Though these categories have been reconsidered and need to be re-imagined, they nonetheless represent a vital and necessary stage in Qumran scholarship while the full corpus of texts gradually emerged into the light over a period of some forty-five to fifty years. In this vein, a study like Eileen Schuller’s “The Use of Biblical Terms as Designations for Non-biblical Hymnic and Prayer Compositions,” in *Biblical Perspectives: Early Use and Interpretation of the Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the First International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 12-14 May 1996*, ed. Michael E. Stone and Esther G. Chazon, STDJ 28 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 207–22; is of great value, yet I propose a methodological re-consideration of her categories in the light of subsequent scholarship. The necessary implementation of categories such as “biblical” and “non-biblical” while the full corpus of scrolls was still emerging is illustrated by such comments as those of Schuller (in her editorial preface) and Devorah Dimant in an early volume of the journal *Dead Sea Discoveries* (Devorah Dimant, “Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha at Qumran,” *DSD* 1 no. 2: 1994, 151–9, 152–3; Eileen M. Schuller, “Preface,” *DSD* 1 no. 2: 1994, 149–50).

¹² For some representative points of view in this regard, see: Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 202–27; Anthony Ferguson, “A Comparison of the Non-Aligned Qumran Texts of Qumran to the Masoretic Text,” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018), 363; Shemaryahu Talmon, “Pisqah Be’emša Pasuq and 11QPs^a,” *Textus* 5 (1966): 11–21, 11–12, 21; Moshe H. Goshen-Gottstein, “The Psalms Scroll (11QPs^a): A

(in the absence of evidence to the contrary) that texts produced for liturgical use were not perceived to possess a high-level of scriptural authority in comparison with other texts (whatever precisely “scriptural authority” might mean in the period in question). Some form or forms of the Book of Psalms were widely attested and quoted at Qumran, and Psalms were the subject of *peshet* commentary.¹³ This is an indication that at least some liturgical texts carried considerable authority, though this point alone does not prove anything with regard to *manuscripts* intended for liturgical use. Nonetheless, the theory that a manuscript was intended for liturgical use is not enough in its own right to assume a lower level of authority for the text it carries. To state the point bluntly, the “liturgical” (or otherwise) character of a manuscript is practically irrelevant to the question of scriptural authority.

Though such language as “biblical” and “non-biblical” is at times pragmatic and unavoidable, and might therefore at times be constructive, when it is employed as a categorisation tool or an interpretative lens it is both misleading and counter-productive. Such categorisations act as a framework for research and inevitably have a significant shaping impact upon subsequent analysis and results.¹⁴ It is important, therefore, to avoid (as far as possible) the use of categories which are demonstrably inadequate.

It is preferable when addressing psalms found at Qumran to work with a keen awareness of the vibrancy, creativity, and (in some respects) continuity of sacred writing and practice throughout the entire period of late Second Temple Judaism.¹⁵ This principle applies whether the psalms in question are dated as early or late, found individually or in a collection, and whether they are familiar from canonical collections or not. For these reasons, when speaking of “psalms,” this thesis is referring to a data set which theoretically includes all psalms found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, whether they have been previously categorised as “canonical/canonized,” “biblical/non-biblical” or otherwise. The Dead Sea Scrolls do not reflect merely the rote reproduction of static textual traditions, but participation in an ongoing, sacred, creative process, which manifests itself in the reproduction and development of existing authoritative literary works, as well as through the composition of new literary

Problem of Canon and Text,” *Textus* 5 (1966): 22–33; Patrick W. Skehan, “A Liturgical Complex in 11QPs^a,” in *CBQ* 35 no. 2 (1973): 195–205.

¹³ For collections of Psalms among the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 150–71. Ps. 68 is subject to “peshet” commentary in 1Q16, Pss. 37 and 45 in 4Q171, and Pss. 118, 127 and 129 in 4Q173.

¹⁴ For further discussion of this problem, see Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer.”

¹⁵ This spirit of continuing religious and literary vibrancy is captured and expressed in Hindy Najman’s concept of “the vitality of scripture.” Najman, “Vitality of Scripture.”

works.¹⁶ Furthermore, as some studies highlight the important role of memory in scribal transmission, it is possible that music (perhaps “liturgically” performed) may have aided or facilitated processes of memorisation and recall.¹⁷

Even this distinction, however, is not essential, as new compositions continually depend upon, interact with, and re-present existing traditions. Consequently, pre-existing texts at times appear to be in a state of continual development.¹⁸ These vibrant, creative processes give rise to complex intertextual relationships which can be perceived at many levels, and are observable through material, text-critical, philological, and literary phenomena. It is not possible to divide these complex inter-relationships between simple and essential categories of “biblical” and “non-biblical.” Neither is it possible to divide them in terms of two simple and distinct textual processes, such as rote copying versus creative composition and embellishment.¹⁹ Though some manuscripts display a clear scribal concern to reproduce accurately an existing textual form down to fine details, and others show that scribes were also content to add or extend material to various extents, these are not two consistently distinct approaches which give rise to separate categories of scribal production.²⁰ Scribal creativity and variation can co-exist with a concern for the finer details of the text, and manuscripts found at Qumran exhibit a multiplicity of scribal features and characteristics which cannot be straightforwardly categorised in these terms.²¹ Textual variation takes a plethora of forms, ranging from “micro” differences to additions and omissions on a “macro” scale. Textual variety should, accordingly, not always be seen in terms of deliberate changes

¹⁶ Najman, “Vitality of Scripture.”

¹⁷ See, for example: Jonathan Vroom, “The Role of Memory in *Vorlage*-based Transmission: Evidence from Erasures and Corrections,” *Textus* 27 (2018): 258–73.

¹⁸ Najman, “Vitality of Scripture”; Michael Segal, “4QReworked Pentateuch or 4QPentateuch?” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Fifty Years after Their Discovery. Proceedings of the Jerusalem Congress, July 20-25, 1997*, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman, Emanuel Tov and James C. Vanderkam (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society in cooperation with the Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum, 2000), 391–9; Molly Zahn, *Genres of Rewriting in Second Temple Judaism: Scribal Composition and Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), esp. chapters three, four, and seven.

¹⁹ Brooke, “Higher and Lower Criticism,” 3, 5, 11–13; Jonathan D. H. Norton, “The Question of Scribal Exegesis at Qumran,” in *Northern Lights on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Nordic Qumran Network 2003-2006*, ed. Anders Klostergaard Peterson et al., STDJ 80 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 135–54.

²⁰ Evidence of scribal corrections reflects a concern for precision in the form of a text. The discussions cited in notes 18 and 19 problematise the over-simplified distinction between creative freedom and rote copying, however, and attention to textual detail does not necessarily equate to an absence of scribal intervention or exegetical influence. Norton’s examples in *Contours in the Text* illustrate the coupling of detailed scribal precision with exegetical adaptation: Jonathan D. H. Norton, *Contours in the Text: Textual Variation in the Writings of Paul, Josephus and the Yahad*, LNTS 430 (London: T & T Clark, 2011), 82–103.

²¹ Brooke, “Higher and Lower Criticism,” 3, 5, 11–13; Norton, *Contours*, 82–103; “Scribal Exegesis.” Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, “The Scribes of the Scrolls,” in Brooke and Hempel, 524–33, esp. 527–9.

to a text. Conscious changes may of course occur, but textual variety should be seen as natural and inherent feature of complex process of oral-written transmission and interpretation throughout. Section 2.3 of this thesis reviews some of the scholarship and theories which have sought to interpret such variations.

Part Four examines text-critical data in order to address the question “how might adaptation related to musical performance be reflected in observable textual variants?” The evidence presented does not aim to furnish proof but rather to illustrate possibilities. It is not, therefore, argued that any specific unit of textual variation can be conclusively tied to singing or musical performance as a singular or direct cause. Rather, this latter stage of the thesis seeks to answer the questions: “if singing were to influence text in the ways hypothesised above, what kinds of textual phenomena would we expect to see?”, and furthermore “are such phenomena evident among the manuscripts found at or near Qumran?” This methodological approach is based on certain text-critical presuppositions related to the discussion in section 2.3, namely that it is rarely possible to establish conclusively a simple and direct cause for any singular instance of textual variation, as a plethora of variables and potentialities always exist in complex causal processes of which we are largely ignorant. Drawing attention to the potential influence of singing and musical adaptation thus serves to highlight these complexities by examining a potentially significant causal factor which has not been previously considered in any systematic way.

As an experiment in assessing the possibility of identifying variants related to liturgical performance, this analysis uses a number of different criteria. One of the types of variants considered concerns minor differences between two copies of a psalm text, or between a newly composed psalm and a pre-existing psalm which it quotes. Such a variant is considered to be of significant interest when it changes the syllable count of the verse and no other compelling explanatory causes are apparent. This is not argued to be proof of variation directly caused by singing, but an example of the kind of variation that might appear as a result of the processes in which singing plays an influential role. Other variants considered relate to those elements of psalms that have been widely identified in previous scholarship as markers of liturgical usage. These include: superscriptions and titular designations such as שיר, מזמור and תהלה, technical musical terms, plural imperative calls to praise, first person plurals, times for prayer and worship, and descriptions of musical performance or communal

praise.²² If scholars are willing to accept these features as indicators of liturgical performance, then variations of these textual features can at least be considered as variants potentially related to liturgical performance. The case for such consideration is considerably strengthened when there are no compelling alternative text-critical explanations for the variant in question. Again, the direct causality of singing cannot be proved, but such cases would illustrate that the kind of variation one would expect to see as a result of the processes explored in this thesis do indeed exist. Furthermore, the comparison of variants in a composition such as Psalm 33, for example, helps to illustrate what is and what is not possible to conclude in response to a variety of text-critical phenomena.

1.2.1 Selection of Case Studies

Concerning the choice of case studies in part three, many other texts could have been selected and would have provided important fuel for the discussion, offering support for my line of argument from a variety of perspectives. Chief among those contending alternatives were Hodayot and the hymn that is found in 1QS IX–XI, in addition to a variety of non-canonical psalms, though some discussion and analysis of 4Q380–1 does in fact play a role in part four of this thesis. The examples chosen for special attention in part three are Psalm 154 and David’s Compositions from 11Q5, and the second and seventh Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice as found in 4Q400 and 4Q403. In the examination of text-critical data in part four, Psalm 33 and 4Q381 15, 2–3 also act as case studies on a smaller scale. They are not included as stand-alone case studies in part three however, because they are integral to the text-critical discussion of part four, and because they are not subject to the same depth of analysis as the texts analysed in part three—they are considered only from a text-critical perspective.

The examples in part three were chosen because they gave rise to the most significant insights during the course of research. Psalm 154 sparked the initial idea for this thesis, due to its conglomeration of themes relating to orality (singing, teaching, meditation), textuality (Psalms, Torah, Wisdom and instruction) and liturgy. The insights gleaned there led to the formulation of these primary research questions: if singing played a significant role in

²² Daniel K. Falk, “Liturgical Texts,” in Brooke and Hempel, 423–34, 424; Shem Miller, “The Role of Performance and the Performance of Role: Cultural Memory in the Hodayot,” *JBL* 137/2 (2018): 359–82, 361–2, 365–8; Schuller, “Reflections,” 174, 176–83.

processes of textual transmission and interpretation, what influence did it have upon those processes? Was it, potentially, a contributing factor leading to the widespread pluriformity of textual traditions evident among the Dead Sea Scrolls? With these questions in mind, and following a literature review of scholarship relating to singing, orality, and textual pluriformity among the Dead Sea Scrolls, my initial research involved conducting a survey and preliminary analysis of Hebrew terms relating to singing. This survey suggested multiple candidates for additional case studies. David's Compositions (also found in 11Q5) raised many important issues for consideration along the same lines, by way of connected references to songs, sacrifice, scribal activity and musical composition. The Seventh Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice also stood out as a candidate because it revealed a specific linguistic phenomenon which sheds considerable light on both the function of singing in late Second Temple Literature and the relationship between singing and textuality. It therefore provides compelling evidence from a very different literary collection in response to the same research questions.

In part four, Psalm 33 and 4Q381 provide useful test cases and illustrative examples for the purpose of assessing text-critical data in light of the proposed hypothesis. 4Q381 emerged as a significant example of the kinds of re-use of existing textual traditions that occurred systematically among the so-called "non-canonical" psalms analysed and first published by Eileen Schuller in 1986. These psalms demonstrate the way that quotations of existing psalms were adapted in new compositions. Psalm 33, on the other hand, provides a useful test case because it is attested among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and evidences some variation of textual elements related to liturgical performance when compared with the Masoretic Text and Septuagint. It also contains further instances of textual variation which invite alternative explanations, and thereby serves as a convenient illustration of the range of types of textual variation that can occur in psalms, and the necessary limitations that must be applied to any speculation concerning the possible liturgical character of such variants.

The choices of case studies were all dictated, therefore, primarily by the research questions being addressed and the developing line of argument. Because these selected texts offered so much material for discussion, the scope of research could not be spread further without compromising the depth and utility of the analysis, and without cutting out other important aspects of the overall argument. Each part of the thesis is crucial to the building argument and necessary for framing the contribution to scholarship. The argument would not be coherent

without preparatory discussion of previous scholarship and key operative theories (parts one and two), and would have no grounding or illustrative power without some discussion of actual text-critical data, as found in part four. The case studies in part three, therefore, had to be restricted to those that played a key role in supporting the line of argument, in preference to a wide-ranging or even exhaustive survey of passages relating to singing among the Dead Sea Scrolls. It may be questioned as to whether a small selection of case studies supporting a particular line of argument skews the data, leaving open the possibility that a global assessment of texts related to singing would produce different results. The present thesis, however, does not attempt to extend its claims beyond the evidence presented and assessed herein. The insights and conclusions drawn out below become evident through analysis of this particular selection of texts, and whatever further conclusions might be drawn on the basis of a wider survey, we can at the very least identify significant modes of thought in Second Temple Jewish literature that are reflected in these works.

It is evident from the discussion of previous scholarship in chapter two that the key issues at hand do not concern the propensity of material or language relating to singing that exists among the Dead Sea Scrolls.²³ Whether a survey is measured according to the amount of vocabulary relating to singing or the sheer range and extent of psalmody among the Dead Sea Scrolls, the data is plentiful. Rather, the difficulties arising from previous scholarly discussion concern the question as to how such language and texts are to be *interpreted* with regard to liturgical performance.²⁴ For this reason, a selection of in-depth case studies is preferred to an exhaustive survey, due to the fact that the breadth of material covered by such a survey would mean that any discussion of specific texts would be brief and shallow in comparison, and would fail to grapple seriously with the methodological and interpretative complexities involved in a discussion of the role of singing within processes of textuality. It is the combination of singing and textuality as research interests that constitutes the primary distinguishing factor and contribution of the present thesis.

²³ See below, pages 39–54.

²⁴ Again, see the various lines of discussion reviewed in pages 39–54.

1.2.2 Terminology Related to Singing

An exhaustive study would require a full survey of a wide spectrum of terms relating (or potentially relating) to singing, at least including Hebrew roots שיר, זמר, הלל, רנן, ידה, and even ברך in some contexts, along with related Aramaic terms. Furthermore, I will argue on the basis of my case studies that Hebrew שיה and הגה also need to be included in this discussion. Though resources such as the *Theologisches Wörterbuch zu den Qumrantexten*, the *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Wörterbuch zu den Texten von Toten Meer und Ben Sira*, and the *Dead Sea Scrolls Concordance* provide invaluable tools and reference materials, even establishing and organising basic statistics for references to singing is a task fraught with multiple difficulties.²⁵ The common approach of dividing references between “biblical” and “non-biblical” manuscripts creates significant methodological problems, as alluded to above, and discussed further in chapter two.²⁶ Whether to include reconstructions or partial reconstructions of words presents another difficulty, due to the fact that some partial reconstructions may be tenuous, and other words that have not survived can in fact be reconstructed with a high-level of certainty, due to the formulaic character of the material. For this reason, each case involving reconstruction needs to be considered in its own right.

The significance of “titular” usage of terms related to singing (in psalm superscriptions, for instance) has been challenged, and the many such references cannot therefore be included as references to singing without considerable prior argumentation. Similarly, the occurrence of musical metaphors has been cited in support of the view that literary references to singing cannot be treated as indicators of actual liturgical practices in the late Second Temple Period.²⁷ These complexities result in a number of implications for the current thesis: firstly, as observed above, the primary issue to be addressed does not concern the extent of references to singing, but the way in which such references are to be interpreted. Secondly, to move the scholarly discussion forward, an engagement with a few texts in greater depth is deemed preferable to an exhaustive survey which fails to grapple significantly with the interpretative issues presented by individual cases. Finally, it is worth re-iterating that the contribution of this thesis does not consist of a survey of references to singing, but a

²⁵ Bibliographic reference for *ThWQ* and *HAWTTM* can be found under “Abbreviations” in the front matter of this thesis.

²⁶ See pages 14–18 and 41.

²⁷ Schuller, “Reflections,” 181–2.

particular line of argument concerning the potential causal relationship between singing and textual variation.

For the above reasons, the following thesis does not include a comprehensive survey of references to singing, nor a comprehensive survey of terms relating to singing. However, several relevant terms of vocabulary are discussed in some depth according to the needs of the research aims—that is, as dictated by the content of the chosen case studies. Those terms singled out for discussion are רִנָּן, הִגָּה, and שִׁיר, all of which are subject to detailed word studies.

1.2.3 Scholarly Ambivalence Concerning Evidence for Singing

It is necessary to address at the outset another problematic area that has previously been perceived as a barrier to scholarly attempts to identify evidence for singing as a liturgical practice among the Dead Sea Scrolls: that of terminology and definitions related to singing and the liturgical function of texts. Although liturgical practices in general have been the subject of a great deal of discussion within Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship, when it comes to the function of poetic texts the role of singing has been given relatively little attention.²⁸ In 2003, Eileen Schuller addressed questions of the function of poetical texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and specifically evidence for singing as a liturgical practice.²⁹ Schuller surveys textual evidence from Qumran to come up with the kind of results that she characterises as at times “meagre” and on the whole inconclusive.³⁰ One of the ways that Schuller’s paper serves the scholarly community, however, is to illustrate that the task is beset with problems from the very start. Indeed, in her “state of the question” conference address published fourteen years later in 2017, she uses the opportunity to highlight just how many unanswered questions persist concerning the functions of Psalms and Hymns in the late Second Temple

²⁸ Eileen Schuller’s “state of the question” conference address illustrates well the number of unanswered questions that persist in this area: Eileen M. Schuller, “Functions of Psalms and Prayers in the Late Second Temple Period,” in *Functions of Psalms and Prayers in the Late Second Temple Period*, ed. Mika S. Pajunen and Jeremy Penner (BZAW 486; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 5-23.

²⁹ Eileen M. Schuller, “Some Reflections on the Function and Use of Poetical Texts Among the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Liturgical Perspectives: Prayer and Poetry in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 19-23 January, 2000*, STDJ 48, ed. Esther G. Chazon (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 173–89.

³⁰ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 175-188, esp. 176.

Period.³¹ One of the difficulties she draws particular attention to is the suitability (or lack thereof) of terminology in the area of liturgical texts and functions.³²

Terminology and categorisation are problem areas for Qumran scholarship in general, as is apparent from the project that Hindy Najman and Eibert Tigchelaar embarked upon in 2014 addressing nomenclature and text designation in the Dead Sea Scrolls.³³ Such issues are difficult to negotiate because they are so intimately involved with the ways that we formulate concepts and theories. With reference to the Dead Sea Scrolls in general, widely used terms and categories are fundamental to the way that we think and communicate about the texts as a collection, the site of Qumran itself, and the character of the community that existed there and the movement of which it was a part. With regard to liturgical practices, the issue of terminology is likewise tied up with scholarly constructs and perceptions, which are perhaps more influenced by the subjective contemporary experience of scholars than is generally acknowledged.³⁴

There is a startling lack of clarity and precision when it comes to the language that is used in these areas. Taking the term “liturgical” itself as a starting point, the difficulties become immediately apparent. Schuller acknowledges that scholars who discuss “liturgical” matters may well mean different things when they use this term, and points out that a dichotomy between “liturgical” and “devotional” or “public” and “individual” is somewhat difficult to sustain, and is also in danger of anachronistically imposing modern categories upon the manuscripts found at or near Qumran.³⁵ In Daniel Falk’s recent overview of liturgical texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, he acknowledges the problem, but makes the apparently pragmatic choice to define liturgy as “any set of rituals performed as part of the community’s religious system of service to God.”³⁶ Although this is a helpful working definition, Falk goes on to specify that “private, spontaneous prayers and rituals” are excluded from the definition, as are “ritual behaviours governing personal and social life such as social interactions, food preparation and toilet practices.”³⁷ These specific delineations are somewhat more problematic—if private prayers and rituals are practiced, they are part of the community’s

³¹ Schuller, “Functions,” 5-23.

³² Schuller, “Functions,” 12-14.

³³ Najman and Tigchelaar, “Nomenclature.”

³⁴ Schuller makes this observation on the basis of her own experience in “Functions,” 18.

³⁵ Schuller, “Functions,” 18-19.

³⁶ Falk, “Liturgical Texts,” 423.

³⁷ Falk, “Liturgical Texts,” 423.

religious service to God. In which case, does the dividing line between liturgical and non-liturgical in Falk's definition lie between the "spontaneous" and the "systematic" elements? If spontaneous acts of prayer or ritual are conceivable, should they rightly be excluded from our study of liturgical practices at Qumran? Do they require an alternative descriptor, such as "devotional"? If so, they fall foul of the dichotomising trap that Schuller has already identified as unsustainable and inconsistent.³⁸ Can spontaneous corporate prayers, songs, or rituals be envisaged as possibilities? If so, does not the dichotomy between public, systematic liturgy and private, spontaneous devotion break down again?

In a similar vein, the exclusion of social behaviours and matters relating to food preparation also leads us into some knotty complexities. One of the implications of the analysis of texts that I offer below is that we may have to reckon with corporate singing of praise (which presumably qualifies as a "liturgical" practice according to Falk's definition) as intimately related to the community's eating and drinking together.³⁹ It is not clear, then, why matters specifically relating to the *preparation* of food or "ritual behaviours governing...social life" might not be considered "elements of the community's religious system of service to God."⁴⁰ Falk's definition is useful, and indeed necessary, in order to establish some boundaries to the conversation. Unfortunately, however, it highlights the problems and complications that attend attempts to establish such boundaries. Perhaps, as Schuller is nudging us to consider, we need some drastic re-appraisal of the kinds of a categories we are using to approach and define this literature.⁴¹ We may need to persevere with fresh attempts to inhabit the perspective of the texts themselves, using terms and categories "from within" in an "emic" approach that has already been exemplified by some scholars, and to recognise that frequently our definitions of terms such as "liturgical" expose considerable subjectivity and are in danger of distorting our interpretations through anachronism.⁴² By investigating more

³⁸ Schuller, "Functions," 18-19.

³⁹ See pages 106-9, and 122-3 below.

⁴⁰ Falk, "Liturgical Texts," 423.

⁴¹ Schuller, "Functions," 12-14.

⁴² See George J. Brooke, "Aspects of the Theological Significance of Prayer and Worship in the Qumran Scrolls," in *Prayer and Poetry in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature: Essays in Honor of Eileen Schuller on the Occasion of Her 65th Birthday*, ed. Jeremy Penner, Ken M. Penner and Cecilia Wassen (STDJ 98; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 35-54, 37; "Reading, Searching and Blessing: a Functional Approach to Scriptural Interpretation in the חד" in *The Temple in Text and Tradition: A Festschrift in Honour of Robert Hayward* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2015), 140-56, as well as Eileen Schuller's previous suggestions for alternative terminology referred to in Schuller, "Functions," 12. The identification of "emic" terminology is also beset with difficulties, and is not necessarily the answer to this problem, as I have argued elsewhere: Darby, "Beyond Definitions of Prayer."

closely some of the textual evidence reviewed below, we may begin to see that some of the boundaries we perceive between categories such as “liturgical,” “devotional,” “social” and “spontaneous” are inappropriately drawn, and that new categories can perhaps begin to be shaped and defined by the conceptual frameworks that lie within and behind the texts themselves.

However, though this attention to an “emic” perspective (the attempt to view an issue from within the contextual world of the texts) indeed disrupts scholarly categories that have become fairly settled in the study of liturgy among the Dead Sea Scrolls, the solution is not as simple as identifying categories on the basis of key Hebrew terms, such as תפילה, ברכה, מזמור, שיר, תהילה. There is no guarantee that ancient authors and audiences understood these various terms to refer to consistently distinct genres or categories—in fact, the evidence points in an alternative direction, that these monikers in the primary literature clearly *do not* relate to fixed categories, and frequently overlap partially or (at times) entirely.⁴³ For this reason, though in depth studies of these terms in their literary context will help to formulate richer definitions and a more precise understanding of what a “prayer,” “songs” or “blessing” was understood to be and do in the ancient world, these will not lead us to discrete and distinct emic categories or definitions.⁴⁴ An “etic” reader perspective is unavoidable in the construction of categories, and the observer of ancient texts plays an active role in shaping categories for analysis. Categories and definitions can still be either effective or ineffective, but they can never be entirely “emic,” and must never be entirely “etic”—they are formed through a dialectic process of research and analysis. Appropriate to the needs of the current analysis, therefore, I offer some working definitions below in section 1.2.5.

Why is this discussion of terminology relevant to the study in hand? Apart from highlighting some methodological hurdles and a potential contribution to scholarship, we can see that similar problems attend previous studies that have themselves played down the possibility of discovering meaningful evidence for singing as a liturgical practice among the Dead Sea Scrolls. I would like to use Schuller’s 2003 article again as an example, in order to demonstrate that there may be a great deal more scope for discussing singing as a liturgical

⁴³ Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer”; which draws on Molly Zahn’s work garnering insights from genre theory, in particular with regard to fluid and overlapping categories and the limitations of static definitions: Zahn, *Genres*, 56–73.

practice than has been previously acknowledged.⁴⁵ It is important to address some of these issues before embarking on an investigation of singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls, because I am challenging the conclusion that there is little of use to be discovered among the texts found at or near Qumran concerning singing as a liturgical practice.⁴⁶ This is a conclusion that effectively nullifies the testimony of large amounts of literary evidence among the scrolls relating to singing, and I would like to attempt to re-instate such material as valuable evidence for the use of song as a liturgical practice. The first step in re-instating the evidence is to identify problems within lines of argument that have written it off as inconclusive to the point of silence.

1.2.4 Problems of Definition and Categorisation

The problem of terminology and definition presents itself when Schuller addresses the question of the function of poetical texts, and fourteen years later she underlines it as a persisting difficulty: how are we to define prayer, and how are we to define poetry?⁴⁷ How and why do we distinguish between psalms, hymns, poems and songs? A working definition of prayer that has been put to use in the past is that of “an address to God” or similarly “any form of human communication directed at God.”⁴⁸ When defined in these inclusive ways, the majority of biblical Psalms and songs from Qumran are instantly subsumed under the rubric of prayer. This thoroughly blurs lines of distinction that are almost universally assumed to lie somewhere between prayer, poetry, psalms or singing as categories, but are rarely clearly expressed or defined.

Schuller’s 2003 article accepts the assumption that prayer and poetry constitute two different types of material as a starting point for the discussion, but this immediately creates a problem.⁴⁹ Once multiple sources have been identified as belonging to the category of “prayers” (such as 4Q503 (Daily Prayers); 4Q504, 506 (Words of the Luminaries); 4Q507-509, 1Q34 (Festival Prayers); 4Q400-407, 11Q17 (Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, also referred to by Schuller as “prayers for the sabbath”), a body of other compositions apparently

⁴⁵ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 173-89.

⁴⁶ Eg Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 183-7.

⁴⁷ Schuller, “Functions,” 12.

⁴⁸ Esther G. Chazon, “Prayers from Qumran and their Historical Implications,” *DSD* 1 issue 3 (1994): 265-84; Schuller, “Functions,” 13; cf. also Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 173.

⁴⁹ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 173.

remains, which must necessarily contain any other poetry, songs and psalms that exist.⁵⁰ This is despite a number of facts that should give us pause for thought, such as the following: firstly, in the case of certain literary collections, these apparently distinct categories of prayer, poetry and psalms might overlap substantially, if not entirely.⁵¹ Secondly, though we have (as yet) no satisfactory or agreed criteria for distinguishing between these categories, a large portion of relevant literature has already been excluded from consideration. Thirdly, the following observations further illustrate the problem: the compositions in 4Q400-407 repeatedly carry the title “song” (שיר) and not “prayer.” 4Q503 speaks of “blessing” (another under-defined category) and not “praying” as such (although it does refer to “speaking”, אמר, in line 17). 4Q507-509 together speak of blessing (ברך), praising (ידה) and rejoicing (שמח), and the term for prayer (תפלה) occurs only three times in reconstructed portions of text.⁵² Reading a conglomeration of terms such as these, there is no justification for the assumption that we can categorise these texts as “prayers,” while defining the function of “prayer” (again, by assumption) in such a way that excludes the possibility of singing, and places those “prayer texts” in a separate category to “poetry.”⁵³

Working on the basis of these assumptions, however, Schuller goes on to address poetic texts as a distinct category, and only then asks the question as to whether any such texts show evidence of liturgical usage such as singing.⁵⁴ The criteria that she uses to identify a text as a candidate for liturgical usage consist of formal and linguistic markers: biblical designations such as שיר, מזמור and תהלה; imperative calls to praise; first person plurals; “temporal expressions that may indicate times to worship”; and statements about worship.⁵⁵ Schuller’s fundamental conclusion is that none of these markers can provide conclusive evidence that texts were used liturgically or indeed sung.⁵⁶ This conclusion, however, is the result of the previous steps of categorisation, definition and identification outlined above that have

⁵⁰ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 174-5.

⁵¹ For further discussion of overlapping categories, see Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer,” esp. 15, 29, 40–4; and Zahn, *Genres of Rewriting*, 60–1.

⁵² I have used Abegg’s Accordance Bible Software version for this brief survey. Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg, Jr. and Edward M. Cook (eds.), *Qumran Non-biblical Manuscripts: A New English Translation* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009), Accordance Bible Software version 3.2; based upon the book: Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg, Jr. and Edward M. Cook (eds.) *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New English Translation*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005).

⁵³ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 174-5.

⁵⁴ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 175-77.

⁵⁵ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 176-83.

⁵⁶ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 176-88.

reduced the pool of admissible evidence to a selection of texts that is deceptively small and the criteria of identification to a narrow and exclusive set of features. In response, two important observations are necessary: firstly, these criteria are the very kinds of markers that Schuller accepts as straightforward indicators of the liturgical function of “prayer” texts, yet when the question of singing is concerned, she presses the point and concludes that they cannot offer conclusive evidence as to liturgical function.⁵⁷ This case of methodological inconsistency is the unfortunate consequence of the problems that we have already identified concerning the lack of clearly defined terms and the unwarranted assumptions with reference to categories that are typical of discussions of liturgical practices. Again, it must be acknowledged that Schuller herself highlights these problems in 2017—she is not unaware of the difficulties, and in her recent reflection on this field of research, she is herself calling scholars to address the issue.⁵⁸

Secondly, as Schuller’s application of these criteria to the identification of prayer texts demonstrates, such markers *are* in fact useful for the positive identification of liturgical texts, as Falk has also pointed out, and as a number of scholars along with Schuller have demonstrated.⁵⁹ The important point that Falk makes is that such markers “cannot reliably serve to exclude texts that lack these features.”⁶⁰ Simply put, then, there are a number of widely accepted formal and linguistic criteria that can indeed help us identify texts that were used liturgically. What we cannot do is use these criteria to *exclude* evidence for singing as a liturgical function, or pre-judge the question as to precisely *how* the texts were used by categorising them in advance without careful justification. Having introduced the challenges that assumptions around the categorisation of texts and a lack of clearly defined terminology have posed to some previous scholarly investigations of singing as a liturgical practice, these issues will receive some further discussion in chapter two.⁶¹ Despite these complexities and challenges, it is nonetheless necessary by means of introduction to offer some basic working definitions that will be operative in the course of this study, in order to aid clarity and avoid confusion in the course of discussion.

⁵⁷ Regarding prayer texts: Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 174; regarding singing: 176-183.

⁵⁸ Schuller, “Functions,” 12-14.

⁵⁹ Chazon, “Prayers from Qumran,” 273-4. Falk, “Liturgical Texts,” 424; Miller, “Role of Performance,” 360-1; Bilhah Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* (STDJ 12; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 47-88; Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 174.

⁶⁰ Falk, “Liturgical Texts,” 424.

⁶¹ See section 2.2.2 below.

1.2.5 Definition of Terms for the Purpose of this Study

Though I have argued elsewhere that static, fixed definitions present more problems of categorisation to the interpreter than they solve, it is necessary for clarity in the course of the following discussion to offer some basic working definitions of certain key terms that will be used frequently.⁶² The complex challenges involved in developing an appropriate definition of “singing” are addressed at some length in chapter three.⁶³ In the course of that discussion and on the basis of musicological theory, it emerges that all speech possesses musical elements, and that singing and speech exist along a continuum. It is thus difficult to draw a specific and definitive line between speech and singing, and performative expressions such as “chant” or “canting” are categorised as types of singing. Despite these difficulties, and despite the methodological pitfalls which attend the application of static definitions in general, a working definition is developed and proposed for purposes of clarity in this thesis.⁶⁴ Singing is thus defined as “the act of manipulating, arranging, or adapting vocalised sound by defining tonality in order to produce a melody.”

The difficulty involved in categorising and delineating between terms such as psalm, hymn, and prayer has already been discussed, and the line of argument advanced here does not necessitate a fixed or prescriptive definition for these terms, as will become apparent in the course of discussion. “Liturgy,” however, is a term that is used with high frequency, is key to many aspects of the debate, and is open to a wide variety of interpretations.⁶⁵ A basic explanation of my own use of the term is therefore necessary. “Meditation” is another term that is key to the following thesis and open to a variety of interpretations in both ancient and contemporary settings, and though the meaning of related Hebrew terms is treated in detail in chapters four and five, it is also necessary to offer a basic working definition here. Some comment, in the pursuit of clarity, must also be offered in terms of defining “prayer,” though this is a highly problematic issue in Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship.⁶⁶ Working definitions are therefore offered below for each of these terms, and these definitions are intended to be

⁶² Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer.”

⁶³ See section 3.5 below.

⁶⁴ For the problems which attend the use of static definitions as tools, see Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer.”

⁶⁵ An adapted version of the following paragraphs is included in a piece which has been submitted for consideration to be published in the volume of conference proceedings from the International Organisation of Qumran Studies meeting in August 2022.

⁶⁶ Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer”; Schuller, “Functions,” 12–13.

simple, inclusive, and broad enough to facilitate discussion in the course of this thesis. These definitions are not intended to be universally applicable in any way.⁶⁷

As indicated above, Falk and Schuller have both acknowledged the lack of consensus within Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship concerning what is meant by the term “liturgy.”⁶⁸ Concerns to root a definition in ancient modes of thought might turn to LXX’s use of λειτουργία as an equivalent to Hebrew עבודה, suggesting priestly service in the tabernacle or Temple as conceptual referents.⁶⁹ Though Classical Greek usage may suggest a more general concept of public service, this includes explicit references to service of the gods, and the idea of public service to the state or *polis* should not in any case be divested of religious connotations.⁷⁰ For late Second Temple Jewish Literature, therefore, divine service with its background in the Temple cult should be seen as a prime frame of reference for understanding the concept of λειτουργία.

Unsurprisingly, λειτουργία does not, therefore, correspond precisely to modern notions of liturgy, which are diversely shaped according to varieties of contemporary religious practice. Schuller has also observed that it is hard to avoid the (often unconscious) influence of personal religious background when attempting to define liturgical practices, even in academic discourse.⁷¹ Without making the pretence that absolute objectivity is ever possible in this regard, it appears necessary to be particularly wary of definitions shaped by modern religious assumptions. It is also worth noting that the key aspect of “divine service,” while corresponding only partially to modern conceptions of liturgy, also overlaps partially with usage of the term “worship” in modern English. In popular usage, this term is somewhat disconnected from an etymological or literal sense of “bowing down” which is inherent to Hebrew and Greek verbs often translated as “worship,” such as חוה/חזה in the *hithpael* form or προδκύνέω in Greek.⁷² For these reasons, a broad definition of “liturgy” is

⁶⁷ Though lexical reference works for the Dead Sea Scrolls are available in terms of *DCH*, *ThWQ*, and *HAWTTM* (partially complete), even in the case of the sophisticated and comprehensive entries that comprise *HAWTTM*, a definition of terms cannot be based on these dictionary definitions for the reasons outlined in 1.3 and in the discussion immediately following. In depth word studies are indeed necessary, yet are only part of the necessary process in the task of definition. Furthermore, critical engagement and further reflection and refinement is required on the basis of even the best of these dictionary articles, as chapters four and five illustrate.

⁶⁸ Falk, “Liturgical Texts,” 423; Schuller, “Functions,” 18.

⁶⁹ Eg Ex 38:21, 39:40, Num 3:7, 26, 31.

⁷⁰ LSJ, “λειτουργέω,” 1036; “λειτουργία,” 1036.

⁷¹ Schuller, “Functions,” 18–19.

⁷² BDB, 1005; HALOT, 295; DCH, 8:316–19.

employed here which embraces any activity consciously offered as divine service or worship. Furthermore, following the suggestion of Schuller, this definition is not assumed to exclude acts of private, individual devotion, which can also be understood as offerings of divine service and worship.⁷³

Though in contemporary discourse, “meditation” is a term loaded with multiple connotations, in connection with Jewish literature from the late Second Temple Period I use it to refer to a contemplative practice which consists of reflecting upon sacred texts and traditions or upon the character of the divine. My reasons for formulating the definition in these particular terms will become clear in the course of the analysis, though it is worth observing at the outset that this use of the term “meditation” corresponds with a long-established convention in English translations of the Hebrew Bible wherein Hebrew terms such as *הגה* and *שיח* are conveyed as “to meditate” or in terms of “meditation,” as is the case in familiar examples, for instance, such as Joshua 1:8 and Psalm 1:2. This usage is suggestive of the fact that the phenomenon discussed below is also evident in a number of places within the Hebrew Bible, as is discussed briefly towards the end of chapter five.⁷⁴

As intimated above, obtaining a definition of prayer is a task which is beset with persisting and unresolved problems in Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship, and which requires genuine engagement with historical and contemporary theological reflection on the topic.⁷⁵ Discussion of the necessary issues therefore extends far beyond the bounds of the present thesis. To illustrate the kinds of problems involved in very brief terms, it must be clearly stated that a definition long applied in Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship is inadequate for the task. The formulation of prayer as “any form of human communication directed at God” falls foul of multiple theoretical problems and has resulted in unavoidable methodological inconsistencies, yet continues to be applied in recent scholarship.⁷⁶ “Human communication directed at God” fails to acknowledge the possibility of prayer as potentially “two-way” communication, that is to say, including communication addressed *to* humans *by* God, despite

⁷³ Schuller, “Functions,” 18–19.

⁷⁴ See section 6.3.7 below.

⁷⁵ For the persisting problems pertaining to the definition of prayer in Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship, see Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer.”

⁷⁶ This working definition was acknowledged as insufficient by Chazon when she applied it in 1994, yet it has not been improved upon, and is applied and narrowed yet further by Falk in his 2018 overview of liturgical texts: Chazon, “Prayers from Qumran,” 266; Falk, “Liturgical Texts,” 423. I have explored these issues in greater depth in Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer.”

the fact that this element is explicit and prominent in a large proportion of prayer literature from the period.⁷⁷ It also excludes the “horizontal” aspect of prayer that functions communicatively between human participants, forms of meditative prayer that may not include verbalisation or address of any kind, and embodied expressions of prayer that do not include verbalisation. Jewish and Christian traditions have deep and rich histories of theological reflection concerning prayer and ritual performance, and such reflection must be engaged at a deeper level in order to be able to set on a fixed definition of prayer, if such a thing is necessary for constructive analysis.

Offering brief comments on two isolated examples of such reflection may help to illustrate the point. Stefan Reif, for instance, insists on a recognition of a wide range of embodied activities to be recognised as liturgy, yet maintains a narrower definition of prayer as “words addressed” to a deity.⁷⁸ It is not clear to me why “liturgy” and “prayer” should be quite so strictly demarcated in this sense, particularly in view of the fact that in the same passage of discussion Reif explicitly recognises prayer in the Ancient Near East as an activity expressed by the lifting of hands.⁷⁹ Verbalisation is, of course, itself an embodied expression, and a wider range of physical actions need also to be acknowledged as potential expressions of prayer. This accords with Judith Newman’s discussion of the Maskil’s intercessory prayer as presented in the Hodayot, which is enacted through bodily prostration.⁸⁰ Newman and Reif both emphasise the fact that liturgy should be understood to embrace a wide range of embodied practices, such as scribal activity, study, eating and drinking, fasting, meditation, private, personal and spontaneous prayer (as well as fixed and public prayer), sacrificial offerings, and the use of amulets.⁸¹ My contention here is that our understanding of prayer should also be widened to include some physical expressions beyond verbalisation. Robert Jenson draws on the connection between prayer and the offering of sacrifices when he characterises prayer as not only “acoustic,” but “tactile, olfactory” and “gustatory.”⁸² His

⁷⁷ See Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer.”

⁷⁸ Stefan C. Reif, “Prayer in Early Judaism,” *Prayer from Tobit to Qumran*, ed. Renate Egger-Wenzel and Jeremy Corley, ISDCL 1 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004), 439–64, 442; “Is Rabbinic Prayer a Liturgy or Essentially a Reading of Texts?” in Benedikt Kranemann and Claudia Bergmann, eds., *Ritual Dynamics in Jewish and Christian Contexts: Between Bible and Liturgy* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 11–27, 11–12.

⁷⁹ Reif, “Rabbinic Prayer,” 11–12.

⁸⁰ Judith H. Newman, *Before the Bible: The Liturgical Body and the Formation of Scriptures in early Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 107–140; 107–8, 120–1.

⁸¹ Newman, *Before the Bible*, 8. Reif, “Prayer in Early Judaism,” 442.”

⁸² Robert W. Jenson, “The Praying Animal,” *Zygon* 18/3 (1983): 311–25, 314–5. I am indebted to Dr Stephen Wright for introducing me to Jenson’s reflections on prayer.

reflection on these themes from the Hebrew Bible contributes to his formulation of prayer as engaging in a conversation with God which is two-way, and does not therefore consist merely in addressing speech to God, but in expecting response as part of an ongoing interactive discourse.⁸³

On the basis of these brief reflections on a brief and complex issue, I offer merely for the purposes of clarity of discussion in the present thesis a definition which is broad and basic enough to embrace the various aspects touched on above. Prayer is therefore understood herein as “communicative engagement with the divine,” a description which allows not only for human address directed towards a deity, but for interactive also conversation which includes the reception of divine speech, communal participation in the conversation of prayer, meditative reflection, and physical expressions beyond verbalisation alone.

1.2.5.1 Focus on Singing

Laying out definitions of “singing,” “liturgy” and “prayer” establishes enough clarity to emphasise at this point that “singing” is decidedly and particularly the focus of this thesis, as opposed to “liturgy” or “liturgical practices” understood in more general terms, or “prayer,” if understood as an umbrella term embracing singing. Two reasons for focusing on singing specifically can be expressed on the basis of these definitions: firstly, Hebrew terms such as שיר, זמר, הלל, רנן and ידה are understood frequently (though not exclusively in each case) to refer to singing specifically as defined above, as opposed to spoken prayer or liturgical practice in general.⁸⁴ The second reason is related, in that, consequently, singing (as defined for the purposes of this study) is thus strikingly prominent across a large and prominent cross-section of our primary sources. Key examples of the way that singing functions in our primary sources are presented and analysed in depth in chapters four and five. The specificity of singing as a particular form of liturgical practice cannot therefore be ignored, or watered down into generalist conceptions of liturgical practice or prayer more broadly conceived. Though the language of chapter six, when addressing text-critical data, frequently refers to “liturgical” features and practices in more general terms, this is not a capitulation from the assertion that singing is prominent and central to the argument. Rather, this more general language is an exercise in extreme caution regarding our ability to assert with confidence or

⁸³ Jenson, “Praying Animal.”

⁸⁴ It is further argued (in chapters four and five) that שירה and רגה can be added to this list.

specificity how any particular unit of textual variation came about. The text-critical evidence does not carry the weight of argument for the prominence of singing and its role in textual processes—such evidence and arguments are worked through and presented in the earlier chapters of the thesis. Chapter six instead presents illustrative evidence which demonstrates that the *kind* of textual phenomena related to liturgical performance that *could* be explained by singing abound among the manuscripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

1.2.5.2 Use of the Term “Variant”

In the course of the introduction so far, I have already used the term “variant,” which also needs to be clarified and qualified. In the application of traditional text-critical methods, it is often assumed that the designation “variant” necessarily refers to an instance of textual divergence from the form of the Masoretic Text. I do not share this assumption of the priority of the Masoretic Text, for reasons which are discussed more fully in chapters two and six.⁸⁵ I instead use the term “variant” to refer to *any* instance of textual difference when *any* two manuscript witnesses to a unit of text are compared. My use of the term never assumes, therefore, priority of one textual form or one manuscript tradition over another, apart from additional justification or argument.⁸⁶ I acknowledge that use of the term may not be ideal, due to its attendant problems, however I employ it according to the definition given above for purely pragmatic reasons in the absence of a preferable alternative.

1.2.5.3 Brief Note on Capitalisation of the Word “Psalms”

A brief note on the approach to capitalisation used in the following thesis is necessary, due to the fact that I have chosen to use both “Psalms” and “psalms” depending on context and intended meaning. Simply put, capitalised “Psalms” is used either when referring to a collection which ultimately attained the status of “canonical” for Jews and/or Christians, or to

⁸⁵ See pages 59–64 and section 6.3.4 below. For scholarly argument in support of this view, see Raymond Person Jr, “Text Criticism as a Lens for Understanding the Transmission of Ancient Texts in Their Oral Environments,” in *Contextualizing Israel’s Sacred Writings: Ancient Literacy, Orality, and Literary Production*, ed. Brian B. Schmidt, AIL 22 (Atlanta: SBL, 2015), 197–216, esp. 203–7.

⁸⁶ In clarifying my use of this particular term, I am cognisant of George Brooke’s searching critique of its applications in the following: George J. Brooke, “The Biblical Texts in the Qumran Commentaries: Scribal Errors or Exegetical Variants?” in Craig A. Evans and William F. Stinespring, eds., *Early Jewish and Christian Exegesis: Studies in Memory of William Hugh Brownlee*, Scholars Press Homage Series 10 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 85–100; “What is a Variant Edition? Perspectives from the Qumran Scrolls,” in Kristin De Troyer, T. Michael Law and Marketta Liljeström, eds., *In the Footsteps of Sherlock Holmes: Studies in the Biblical Text in Honour of Anneli Aejmelaeus*, Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 72 (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 607–22.

individual compositions which were eventually accepted as such. Lower-case “psalms” is used when referring to psalmic compositions which never attained this status, or to both “canonical” and “non-canonical” psalms collectively. It will already be apparent that, like most scholars of Second Temple Judaism, I seek to avoid using terminology such as “biblical/non-biblical” and “canonical/non-canonical” due to the fact that it is anachronistic and inappropriate with reference to the historical period in question.⁸⁷

1.3 Overview of Structure and Argument

The hypothesis set forth below rests upon four stages of argument which can be summarised under the following points. Firstly, the question as to whether the Dead Sea Scrolls reflect singing as a significant mode of liturgical performance in late Second Temple Judaism needs to be addressed. In the first instance, this is accomplished through an engagement with previous scholarship concerning singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls in chapter two. This survey, in addition to the discussion above, draws attention to earlier treatments of the topic and addresses past critiques which have taken a sceptical view as to the reliability of textual evidence for reconstructing singing as a liturgical practice.⁸⁸

The second stage of argument involves developing appropriate theories as to the relationship between music and text, in order to illustrate how these two modes of communication and performance can be understood to interact and exert mutual influence. The question is considered as to how this dynamic might effect changes in perception and interpretation as well as to the inscribed form of a text.⁸⁹ This stage of argument draws upon insights from the field of musicology, and theories developed in Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship and orality studies to explain and interpret the textual pluriformity evident among the manuscripts found at or near Qumran.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ See pages 14–18, 42, and 54–5.

⁸⁸ See section 1.2.3 above for an initial treatment of some of these issues.

⁸⁹ The influence of music upon perception and interpretation is also treated in section 6.2.3 below.

⁹⁰ Highlighted in particular are Judith Newman’s theory of “scribal formation,” and Jonathan Norton’s theory of “contours in the text.” See sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.5 below. As discussed there, Newman’s concept is expounded across a range of her works, including: Judith H. Newman, “The Communal Formation of the Maskil’s Self,” *DSD* 22/3 (2015): 249–66; “The Thanksgiving Hymns of 1QH^a and the Construction of the Ideal Sage through Liturgical Performance,” *Sibyls, Scriptures and Scrolls: John Collins at Seventy*, ed. Joel Baden, Hindy Najman and Eibert Tigchelaar, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 940–57; “The Formation of the Scribal Self in Ben Sira,” in “*When the Morning Stars Sang*”: *Essays in Honour of Choon Leong Seow on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Scott. C Jones and Christine Roy Yoder, BZAW 500 (London: De Gruyter, 2017), 227–38; “Scribal Bodies as Liturgical Bodies: The Formation of Scriptures in Early Judaism,” in *Is There a Text in This Cave? Studies in the Textuality of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of*

The third stage of argument explores selected primary texts from among the Dead Sea Scrolls as case studies in order to reveal ways that singing was conceptualised in relationship to textual processes in the late Second Temple Period. Through close readings, these case studies observe multi-faceted functions of singing in public liturgical settings, private devotional settings, and settings of communal instruction and study of Torah. Tools of material, literary, philological and text-critical analysis are employed to carry out these case studies.

The final stage of argument is illustrative in nature and addresses the question: if singing as a mode of performance can be understood to influence processes of transmission and interpretation, thereby acting as one potential factor in processes that lead to variation in the inscribed form of texts, is there any actual text-critical evidence among the Dead Sea Scrolls which might illustrate this phenomenon? This evidence is not required to prove the thesis, which is carried by the arguments and evidence presented in chapters one to five. It illustrates, however, the kinds of text-critical data that are likely to result from the influence of singing within the textual processes which are the focus of this thesis. It also suggests that such data is in plentiful supply among the Dead Sea Scrolls. It is crucial to acknowledge at this stage that no single variant or type of variant can be proved to have been caused as a direct result of singing. It is argued, however, that most variants can rarely be proved to have occurred as the result of any single factor, and that highlighting the potential influence of singing underlines the multiplicity of possibilities and complexities at work in any textual process that might contribute to pluriformity. It is therefore valuable to consider whether the kinds of variations that we might expect to result from the influence of singing are evident among the texts found at or near Qumran. The primary goal of addressing the text-critical data is therefore not to explain textual variants, but to illustrate that data fitting the hypothesis concerning the influence of singing within textual processes is in plentiful supply.

George J. Brooke, ed. Ariel Feldman, Maria Coată and Charlotte Hempel, *STDJ 119* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 83–104; *Before the Bible*. For Norton's concept, see his monograph *Contours*.

1.4 Contribution to Scholarship

The primary contribution of this thesis concerns the location of singing as a performative medium which exerts influence upon processes of textual transmission, interpretation and variation. This research constitutes the first full-length treatment of the role of singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls and is methodologically distinctive in its use of musicology as an interdisciplinary conversation partner concerning processes of textuality. The exploration of singing as a potential causal factor leading to specific textual variants is also distinctive with regard to Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship.

CHAPTER TWO: HISTORY OF SCHOLARSHIP

2.1 Introduction

The following survey aims to identify issues arising from scholarly research relating to the topic of singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls. In the context of the present thesis, this represents one of three large fields of research which are brought together in service of a focus upon the role of singing within processes of textual transmission. Those three fields are prayer and liturgy in the Dead Sea Scrolls, theories of orality and textuality, and textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible. In addressing the specific research questions of the current project, it is neither possible nor necessary to provide an exhaustive history of research for each of these areas. Rather, I offer a survey which highlights those works that either provide important background to the research questions addressed in this study, or are of direct relevance to the questions at hand. Previous research into prayer and liturgy in the Dead Sea Scrolls is also surveyed in section 2.2, and the phenomenon of textual variation becomes the focus in section 2.3, in which certain key theories concerning factors that influence textual variation are highlighted. Related aspects of musicological research and orality studies are also considered. Section 2.2 is concerned only with research relating to singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls, an area of inquiry which has not previously been brought to bear in discussions of textual variation. The key overarching research questions are as follows: what role does singing play in the literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls? Might singing as a medium of performance have exerted influence upon processes of textual transmission and interpretation in a way which ultimately leads to variations in the inscribed forms of texts? When reviewing the following literature, I will identify a series of problems arising from prior research relating to the various elements of my questions, and will also highlight suggestions for further research that have been identified by previous scholars.

2.2 Singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Issues Arising from Early Studies

In the decades following the initial manuscript discoveries at Qumran in 1947, a number of studies appeared which made initial observations concerning musical references among the texts found. One of the earliest examples was Eric Werner, an Austrian composer,

musicologist and theologian of comparative religion.¹ He offered significant comments on “Musical Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls.”² Werner speculated in 1957 that marginal signs in 1QIsa^a might be a form of ecphonetic musical notation.³ He compared them to a system of “neumes” (symbols of notation) that belong to a type of 5th–7th century hymn-singing in the Old Slavonic and Bulgarian Church.⁴ Werner was clear about the speculative character of his suggestions, but nonetheless posited direct or indirect connections between the traditions of the “Essenes” of Qumran, the Karaites, and the Old Slavonic and Bulgarian Churches.⁵

Werner also highlighted some aspects of musical interest in *The War Scroll*, *The Community Rule* and *the Hodayot*.⁶ In the course of his comments, he extends a conclusion that has been repeated several times in subsequent scholarship up to and beyond Eileen Schuller’s key article of 2003, which addresses the question of singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls directly.⁷ Werner contends that “all these references...” (those contained in the three works mentioned above) were usually “meant as well as understood *metaphorically*.”⁸ He proceeds to justify this conclusion on the basis of what he reads as analogous “purely allegorical” usage in the writings of Philo and the Apostle Paul.⁹ In a paper presented at the ISBL conference in 2018, David Skelton was right to take issue with this methodology and conclusion, even allowing for the greater readiness of earlier generations of Dead Sea Scrolls scholars to draw direct

¹ Israel J. Katz, “In Memoriam: Eric Werner (1901–1988),” *Ethnomusicology* 33/1 (1989): 113–19; Eric Werner, “Musical Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls: For Curt Sachs on His 75th Birthday,” *Musical Quarterly* 43 no. 1 (1957): 21–37, 26–27; *The Sacred Bridge: The Interdependence of Liturgy and Music in Synagogue and Church During the First Millennium* (London: Dennis Dobson; New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); *The Sacred Bridge: Liturgical Parallels in Synagogue and Early Church*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970).

² Werner, “Musical Aspects.”

³ Werner, “Musical Aspects,” 22–5.

⁴ Werner, “Musical Aspects,” 22–5.

⁵ Werner, “Musical Aspects,” 22–5. Werner is also happy to assume (with little supporting argumentation) a connection with later Christian monastic movements, which is somewhat symptomatic of the Christian assumptions that tended to colour earlier generations of Qumran scholarship.

⁶ Werner, “Musical Aspects,” 25–32.

⁷ Schuller, “Some Reflections.”

⁸ Werner, “Musical Aspects,” 26. Emphasis original.

⁹ Werner, “Musical Aspects,” 27–8. This assessment of musical references in the Dead Sea Scrolls as intended “metaphorically” has been repeated by: A.R.C. Leaney, *The Rule of Qumran and its Meaning* (London: SCM, 1966), 145; Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 180–1; Sylvio J. Scorza, “Praise and Music in the Qumran Community,” *The Reformed Review* 11 (1958): 32–6, esp. 35–6; John Arthur Smith, *Music in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 128–31. David Skelton challenges this contention in “Piping Hot Lyres: Instrumental Instruction in the Dead Sea Scrolls” (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the ISBL, Helsinki, 30 July–3 March 2018), 1–14. I am grateful to David Skelton for allowing me access to his paper and for permission to cite it.

lines of connection between texts found at or near Qumran and later Christian traditions.¹⁰ Skelton's critique and the issue of metaphorical usage are discussed in more detail below.¹¹

Werner believed that the Dead Sea Scrolls, while offering a new perspective on the history of the Second Temple Period, were "limited in scope," because they were "written by a sectarian group for its own use and could not claim universal authority."¹² Sixty years of subsequent scholarship has led us to a point from which we are able to view the origin of the manuscripts found at or near Qumran and their relation to wider expressions of Judaism in a very different light. It is now clear that many of the documents discovered at or near Qumran were likely to have originated elsewhere, and that the movement associated with the Qumran site had a long and complex history that was not restricted to a single geographical location, being also related to groups which were dispersed among Jewish society at large.¹³ The texts found at or near Qumran, therefore, have potential to yield a great deal of information about the character of Judaism in general during the late Second Temple Period, even when that information remains somewhat opaque, and they should not be regarded as "limited in scope" in the sectarian sense imagined by Werner.¹⁴ Large-scale reconstructions of Jewish liturgical practices such as Werner's need to be refreshed and re-considered in the light of our increased understanding of the texts from Qumran and the groups associated with them.

In 1958, Sylvio Scorza undertook a linguistic survey of "the major roots for expressing praise in the Hebrew of the Old Testament" as they appear at Qumran, however his study was also

¹⁰ Skelton, "Piping Hot Lyres."

¹¹ See section 2.2.4.

¹² Werner, *Interdependence*, 17.

¹³ For some examples of valuable studies that have contributed to refining our understanding of the movement associated with Qumran, its history, development, and relationship to the text artefacts, see: John J. Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community: The Sectarian Movement of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); "Beyond the Qumran Community: Social Organization in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 17/1 (2009): 351–69; Hempel, *Rule Texts in Context*; Sarianna Metso, "Whom Does the Term Yahad Identify?" In *Defining Identities: We, You, and the Other in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the IOQS in Groningen*, ed. Florentino García Martínez and Mladen Popović, STDJ 70 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 63–84; Carol A. Newsom, "'Sectually Explicit' Literature from Qumran," in *Rhetoric and Hermeneutics: Approaches to Text, Tradition and Social Construction in Biblical and Second Temple Literature*, ed. Carol A. Newsom, FZAT 130 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 111–30; Alison Schofield, *From Qumran to the Yahad: A New Paradigm of Textual Development for the Community Rule*, STDJ 77 (Leiden: Brill, 2009). Esther Chazon explains that liturgical materials from Qumran are likely to share a common heritage with liturgy in Judaism more widely, supporting the observation that Qumran documents are able to provide information about Jewish liturgical practices more generally: Esther G. Chazon, "On the Special Character of Sabbath Prayer: New Data from Qumran," *Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy* 15 (1992): 1–21.

¹⁴ Werner, *Interdependence*, 17.

limited by several factors at this early stage in Qumran research.¹⁵ He was, of course, only able to include in his research those documents which had been published by 1958, and he based his survey on the appearance of five specific Hebrew roots (הלל, ידה, זמר, רנן and שחה), as well as ברך on occasions when it is addressed directly to God.¹⁶ Scorza focused his discussion on *non-biblical* documents from Qumran, for understandable reasons—he would have taken the non-biblical manuscripts to reflect a sectarian point of view, chronologically subsequent to the books of the canonical Hebrew Bible which he understood to belong to Judaism more generally.¹⁷

As observed with regard to Werner’s research from the same era, we now have to acknowledge that Qumran scholarship in recent decades has problematised these basic methodological assumptions, calling into question dualities such as “sectarian” and “non-sectarian,” “canonical” and “non-canonical,” and complicating questions concerning the date and provenance of Qumran manuscripts.¹⁸ There may yet be pragmatic reasons to restrict a study of singing in the Scrolls to the so-called “non-biblical” literature, but questions also need to be asked about the role of “biblical” literature with regard to liturgical practices and singing. The relationship between so-called “biblical” and “non-biblical” psalms must be taken into consideration (for instance in a document such as 11QPs^a), as should the re-use of scriptural material in “non-canonical” psalms found at or near Qumran.¹⁹ A thorough exploration of singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls also needs to be expanded beyond a narrow word study so as to include questions of liturgical functions, materiality of manuscripts, and wider literary context. It is important to work on the basis that concepts relevant to the phenomenon of singing are not always restricted to the occurrence of specific words, though a survey of vocabulary and terminology related to singing is nonetheless of value. Such a survey would also need, however, to be widened beyond only those terms examined by Scorza, as I will argue below and demonstrate in the case studies of chapters four and five.²⁰

¹⁵ Scorza, “Praise and Music,” 32.

¹⁶ Scorza, “Praise and Music,” 32, 34–5.

¹⁷ Scorza, “Praise and Music,” 32.

¹⁸ See note 12 above and note 20 below. See also Eva Mroczek’s monograph that begins to re-imagine the world of Second Temple Judaism in light of recent Qumran scholarship and its challenges to concepts of canonicity: Eva Mroczek, *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

¹⁹ On this last point, see my comments at section 2.2.1 and on pages 53–5 below on the biblical/non-biblical dichotomy and Eileen M. Schuller, *Non-Canonical Psalms from Qumran: A Pseudepigraphic Collection*, Harvard Semitic Studies 28 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986).

²⁰ Scorza, “Praise and Music,” 32.

Schuller's assessment of Scorza's overview as a "somewhat literalistic reading of terminology" is justified, because although Scorza assumes a metaphorical reading for some passages, he also assumes that all the other occurrences of musical terminology are a straightforward and direct indication of contemporary liturgical practice.²¹ He does not offer supporting argumentation for either conclusion. Scorza's essay, however, should be taken only as an early foray into the material from Qumran with the question of singing and music in mind—a useful survey that raised the question at an early stage, yet not a thoroughgoing analysis or substantial thesis. We should not, however, write off the significance of the widespread vocabulary relating to singing that Scorza identifies on the grounds that his assumptions regarding liturgical function are not tested.²² On the contrary, an updated survey of vocabulary relating to singing throughout all the now-published manuscripts would be highly valuable. An exhaustive treatment of references to singing among the Dead Sea Scrolls raised by such a survey lies beyond the scope of the present study, however, due in part to the sheer number of texts of interest that emerge and the complex methodological and interpretative issues involved in assessing them. The more pressing concern in terms of the current thesis is to address questions as to how such references should be interpreted, and whether they can yield useful evidence concerning not only contemporary liturgical performance, but more particularly the performative function of singing in relation to textuality. The approach taken below is instead, therefore, to address a selection of key texts as case studies which can thus be treated in sufficient depth, and which include thoroughgoing discussions of key terms in service of the specific lines of argument developed.

Alfred Sendrey's 1969 monograph on "Music in Ancient Israel" is limited by conflicting views of the time regarding the provenance of the Dead Sea Scrolls.²³ He is resigned to uncertainty as to whether the Scrolls date from the Second Temple Period or are Karaite documents from the 7th Century C.E. or later.²⁴ Sendrey's reading of the Scrolls is that they "contain but scattered references to music, which do not vastly enrich our knowledge of the musical practice of this Jewish sect."²⁵ He goes on, however, to survey the texts that he

²¹ Scorza, "Praise and Music," 32–6.

²² Schuller refers to Scorza's survey of terminology, but the argument she goes on to advance questions (if not dismisses) the usefulness of such evidence for the purpose of reconstructing actual liturgical practice. Schuller, "Some Reflections," 180–3.

²³ Alfred Sendrey, *Music in Ancient Israel* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1969), 191.

²⁴ Sendrey, *Music*, 191.

²⁵ Sendrey, *Music*, 191.

considers most significant with regard to music—the War Scroll and the Hodayot—and arrives at a number of positive conclusions.²⁶ In the case of the Hodayot, he maintains that “[W]e may safely assume that these newly composed religious poems were performed more or less similarly to those of the canonical Psalter, that is in an appropriate musical setting, and either accompanied or unaccompanied by instruments.”²⁷ He argues his case on the basis of close readings and particular translations of Hebrew terms relating to music and singing that are employed in the Hodayot, and his method is not hindered by the caution that prevents later scholars from reading such language as a straightforward indication of contemporary liturgical practice.²⁸

Sendrey follows Gaster in assuming that the Community Rule was “a hymn chanted by the initiants when they were formally admitted to the community.”²⁹ Following discussion of the translation of the document, he argues on linguistic grounds that “it is clearly established that the daily prayers were rendered in a chanting fashion.”³⁰ I will discuss in chapter three the relationship between concepts such as chanting, canting and singing, but in light of Schuller’s later scepticism regarding the utility of musical language as an indication of actual liturgical function, we must conclude again that the interpretation of such terminology in the Dead Sea Scrolls relating to singing needs to be revisited and interrogated afresh as to its place in discussions of liturgical performance.³¹

It is clear from this brief survey of early studies relating to music and singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls that they represent only initial forays, nonetheless raising a number of significant questions and also exposing problems that need to be addressed. They are all necessarily constrained by limiting factors pertaining to the early decades of Qumran research. I turn now to consider the ways that some of these key issues were taken up by subsequent generations of scholars who turned their sustained attention to the subject of liturgical practices in the Dead Sea Scrolls, highlighting particularly the work of Eileen Schuller, Esther Chazon, and Daniel Falk, where their research intersects with the question of singing and the specific issues identified above.

²⁶ Sendrey, *Music*, 191.

²⁷ Sendrey, *Music*, 192.

²⁸ Schuller, “Biblical Terms,” 178–83.

²⁹ Sendrey, *Music*, 193; citing Theodor H. Gaster, *The Dead Sea Scriptures in English Translation* (Garden City, New York, 1956), 113.

³⁰ Sendrey, *Music*, 195.

³¹ Schuller, “Biblical Terms”; “Some Reflections,” 178–83.

2.2.1 Liturgical Function and the Re-Use of “Biblical” Terminology

Schuller makes the case that language relating to singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls is primarily a literary re-use of biblical terminology, which we cannot presume to be an indication of liturgical use among contemporary groups.³² She considers that evidence for contemporary practice must be sought elsewhere.³³ Her discussion of the term “Selah,” however, indicates the kinds of problems involved in reaching such a conclusion.³⁴ Having observed that Hebrew “Selah” is far less common in books IV and V of the Masoretic Psalter compared with books I to III, and that it is “uncommon” in Persian and Hellenistic compositions and “virtually unknown” in non-Masoretic Psalms from Qumran, Schuller concludes regarding the use of these terms that “[O]bviously this was a way of copying and imitating the biblical style by using a word whose true meaning was perhaps now totally unknown.”³⁵ She further asserts that there are “two possible ways of explaining why the author of 4Q381 would choose to close a Psalm in this way”: on the one hand, it might reflect an original “liturgical rubric.”³⁶ On the other hand, the original meaning having been lost, it might have been used as an imitation of biblical style, presumed to be a fitting conclusion to a Psalm.³⁷ Schuller’s position is that it is “extremely doubtful” that “Selah” retained any of its original sense when used in the non-canonical Psalms from Qumran.³⁸

It is important to recognise that even if Schuller’s reading of the evidence is correct, and the original sense of “Selah” was long lost by the time the non-canonical Psalms she refers to were composed, this does not rule out the possibility that the term could yet have performed a contemporary liturgical function. Even if contemporary tradents and worshippers did not have a precise knowledge of the original meaning of the term, they could easily have recognised it as having some kind of liturgical function, and interpreted it in their own terms

³² Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 44–46; “Biblical Terms,” 207–22; “Some Reflections,” 176–80. Van Bekkum has also highlighted the need to look much more closely at the significance and detailed character of the re-use of biblical material in liturgical compositions: Wout Jak Van Bukkem, “Qumran Poetry and Piyyut: Some Observations on Hebrew Poetic Traditions in Biblical and Post-Biblical Times,” in *Zutot 2002: Perspectives on Jewish Culture*, Zutot 2, ed. Shlomo Berger, Michael Brocke and Irene Zwiép (Dordrecht: Springer, 2002), 26–33, 26.

³³ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 188–9.

³⁴ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 44–6.

³⁵ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 44–6.

³⁶ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 45.

³⁷ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 45–6.

³⁸ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 45–6.

or imbued it with a new liturgical significance. The loss of the term's original meaning does not exclude the possibility that it could have been recognised as having liturgical significance and employed as such, even if not in precisely the same way as in previous generations.

“Selah” could also have been interpreted and employed liturgically in different ways in different times and places—in other words, we must also allow for the possibility of synchronic variety in liturgical practices as well as diachronic change. There are, therefore, more than just the two possible ways of interpreting its appearance in Psalms at Qumran that Schuller presents³⁹. This is an important point to acknowledge because we simply do not have evidence of the precise performative function of these terms in particular times and places, whether for earlier settings in the pre- and post-exilic periods or for later Persian and Hellenistic practices.⁴⁰ The argument is effectively, therefore, from silence. In contrast to Schuller's admirably cautious yet somewhat pessimistic conclusion, we need to re-assess the extent of the use of terminology relating to song at Qumran without assuming on the basis of silence that it is unlikely to relate to contemporary liturgical practice. This is not to condone the opposite naïve assumption that literary psalmody furnishes us with direct and accurate accounts of contemporary performance. Rather, it is necessary to suspend judgement in either direction in the absence of compelling evidence or argument. The present thesis attempts to offer both evidence and argument in a number of fresh directions. Furthermore, it should be noted that Schuller presents no direct evidence that the meaning of *Selah* was “totally unknown” by the time these Psalms were composed—it is an assumption that may or may not be correct, although the evidence of Psalm superscriptions in the Septuagint does indeed suggest that the translators responsible lacked accurate knowledge of the musical terms they were conveying.⁴¹

When Schuller sets out to address specifically the use of “biblical” terminology in “non-biblical hymnic and prayer compositions,” she restricts her study to terms as they appear in superscriptions/titles, while referring readers back to Scorza's work as a more general survey

³⁹ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 45–6.

⁴⁰ My emphasis here is pessimistic concerning the possibility of accurately reconstructing characteristics of musical and liturgical performance with any degree of specificity. I am not dismissing the possibility that scholarly research may contribute to and dramatically improve our understanding of the function of this term, for which, see: Ashley E. Lyon, *Reassessing Selah* (Athens: College and Clayton Press, 2021).

⁴¹ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 45. Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1–59: A Continental Commentary*, trans. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 32; Schuller, “Biblical Terms.”

of musical terminology in the Scrolls.⁴² I have already noted, however, that Scorza's study is severely limited in terms of its usefulness for the present objective, in part because the full range of now-published documents was not available to him for research at that early stage in Qumran scholarship, and in part because of his straightforward inference of liturgical function from the use of musical terminology—a methodology which must now be revised in light of Schuller's critique.⁴³

Schuller's analysis of hymnic superscriptions therefore highlights the need for a revised treatment of terminology relating to singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls, in the privileged era of scholarship in which the full series of DJD publications are available for research. Even Schuller's careful and nuanced discussion exhibits something of the lack of clarity that exists in the definition of terms relating to liturgical practices, in that the titles שיר, תהלה, הודות, תפלה, and מזמור are all subsumed under the category "prayers."⁴⁴ The absence of clear definitions concerning what constitutes concepts such as "prayer," "song" or "psalm"—particularly as to how they overlap or should be distinguished—is an ongoing difficulty that Schuller herself has more recently acknowledged.⁴⁵ Writing in 2017, she highlighted this very issue as a pressing need for future research, and it is one which presents a number of methodological challenges to discussions of liturgy and performance.⁴⁶

2.2.2 Categorisation and the Definition of Terms

Similar problems associated with the definition and categorisation of terms relating to liturgical practices surface frequently in scholarly discussions of Qumran prayer and liturgy. Among Esther Chazon's extensive work in these areas, she finds in "The Words of the Luminaries" (4Q504/4QDibHam^a) an example of a common liturgical practice within Judaism of the Second Temple Period regarding the "Special Character of Sabbath Prayer."⁴⁷ She characterises this practice as "Sabbath hymns" and "special prayers of praise" as opposed

⁴² Schuller is well aware of the problems associated with the terms "biblical" and "non-biblical." Schuller, "Biblical Terms," 208 (n5). Scorza, "Praise and Music" (see discussion on pages 42–3 above).

⁴³ Schuller, "Some Reflections," 180 (n33).

⁴⁴ Schuller, "Biblical Terms," 208.

⁴⁵ See sections 1.2.3, 2.2.2, and Schuller, "Functions," 12–14.

⁴⁶ Schuller, "Functions," 12–14. I explore these difficulties in some detail in Darby, "Beyond Definitions of Prayer."

⁴⁷ Chazon, "Sabbath Prayer," 2.

to “petitionary prayers” belonging to the other six weekdays.⁴⁸ When seeking information regarding singing, Chazon’s focus on the hymnic character of these texts and the element of praise offers valuable insight, as does her setting forth of a methodology for identifying common contemporary liturgical practices among the texts at Qumran.⁴⁹ However, her use of the terms “hymn,” “praise,” and “prayer” here indicate a further terminological difficulty concerning definitions and categories.⁵⁰ Not only do these terms lack satisfactory or collectively acknowledged definitions in Qumran scholarship, they also refer to complex and overlapping categories: prayers can be sung, and hymns can be prayed, being themselves a form of prayer whether spoken or sung.⁵¹ Praise can be an element of spoken or written prayer without being sung. Generally, in discussions of liturgical functions these terms are simply not defined, and the difficulties are not mentioned, despite the fact that scholars are clearly operating on the basis of differing assumptions.⁵²

Either some satisfactory definitions need to be established prior to contributions on the subject, or the complexity and existence of extensive overlap among these terms needs to be explicitly acknowledged. My suggestion is that we need to acknowledge the extent of overlap and blurred boundaries between these terms, and the impossibility of being able to draw hard and fast distinctions between them. This is not to say that categories cannot be employed, and clarity of understanding cannot be increased through the development of new categories. Currently established categories are inadequate, however, and the process of reconceptualising them is far from straightforward—indeed, the task of reconsidering our fundamental approach to categorisation is both necessary yet complex.⁵³ A blurring of the boundaries of categorisation need not be a hindrance to research—rather it provokes us to recognise the complexity that is inherent in the analysis of liturgical functions in any period, and particularly when examined from a historical distance of two thousand years. A re-drawing or eradicating of some lines of categorisation in the study of liturgical texts and functions is necessary, and while the resulting picture of liturgical practices in the period is

⁴⁸ Chazon, “Sabbath Prayer,” 2.

⁴⁹ Chazon, “Sabbath Prayer,” 2.

⁵⁰ Again, this is explicitly pointed out in Schuller’s “state of the question” address: Schuller, “Functions,” 12–14.

⁵¹ Schuller, “Functions,” 12–14.

⁵² Schuller, “Functions,” 12–14; Chazon, “Prayers from Qumran,” 265–7.

⁵³ For more on these challenges, see Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer”; Zahn, *Genres*, 56–73.

likely to lose some neatness and rigidity in its taxonomy, it may well provide a more constructive and indeed accurate model as a result.⁵⁴

Chazon is sensitive to these difficulties, as is evident throughout her work on prayer and liturgy in general and in this particular case from her observation concerning the practical distinction between petition and praise that 4QDibHam^a shares with other Jewish liturgical traditions.⁵⁵ However, when attempting to probe the question of the role of singing in liturgy, terminological uncertainties mean that although Chazon frequently uses terms such as “hymns,” “songs,” “benedictory praise,” “doxological,” and “joint human and angelic praise”—which could all be suggestive of singing—it is not explicitly clear whether or not she envisages singing as an actual performed aspect of these liturgical functions.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, Chazon’s discussion suggests that she is working with the operative assumption that these texts reflect singing as a significant aspect of liturgical performance for Judaism in the late Second Temple Period.

2.2.3 Liturgical Singing and its Settings

Falk also addresses directly the question as to whether or not the Dead Sea Scrolls reflect the practice of liturgical singing, and acknowledges that scholars are divided on the issue.⁵⁷ Although he frames the question according to what may have occurred “in the liturgy at Qumran,” his investigation of the issue acknowledges the complexity and perhaps impossibility of reconstructing a putative Qumranic liturgical practice.⁵⁸ As already observed, complexities concerning the provenance of Qumran texts and the growth and character of groups associated with the Qumran site and manuscripts found nearby mean that the texts may reflect the thought and practice of Second Temple Judaism more widely, and it can no longer be assumed (even of so-called “sectarian” texts) that literature found at Qumran informs us only of the idiosyncrasies of a divergent sect detached from broader Jewish

⁵⁴ I unpack this argument fully in Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer.” An example of a study that works with categories and definitions that are, in my opinion, too rigid to be sustainable, is Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer*.

⁵⁵ Chazon, “Sabbath Prayer,” 2.

⁵⁶ Chazon, “Sabbath Prayer,” 7–12.

⁵⁷ Daniel K. Falk, “The Contribution of the Qumran Scrolls to the Study of Ancient Jewish Liturgy,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 864–918, 881.

⁵⁸ Falk, “Contribution,” 881, 892–3, 897–98.

society.⁵⁹ Even if texts clearly express a sectarian mentality, the history of that “sect” was one of complex development over a long period of time, and is not best conceived using models of homogenous practice and communal life imagined in a singular and specific social setting.⁶⁰

Having identified, like Schuller, the difficulties involved in trying to incorporate the Qumran evidence into discussions of synagogue liturgy, Falk thereon relies upon Schuller’s 2003 article and the additional problems which she identifies for the remainder of his assessment.⁶¹ In this sense, his article does not contribute anything new to the specific question I am seeking to address. However, Falk contributes valuable observations elsewhere concerning settings and contexts for singing during the Second Temple Period.⁶² He asserts that “the singing of Psalms was a prominent part of worship at the Second Temple,” and, building on the valuable survey in his 1998 monograph, he draws from a wide range of sources in order to illustrate this point.⁶³ The resulting catalogue of explicit references to liturgical singing draws from the Hebrew Bible (Isa 30:29; Zech 14:17; 1 Chron 23:30–31; 2 Chron 30:21), Psalm superscriptions (Pss 29, 30), Ben Sira, Jubilees and 1 & 2 Maccabees, Philo and Josephus, the New Testament, rabbinic sources and texts from Qumran.⁶⁴

Falk is not attempting through this survey to suggest some kind of homogenous liturgical practice or direct lines of influence—rather, he is demonstrating that liturgical singing was a pervasive phenomenon that is attested in every significant branch of Second Temple literature throughout the period, and this not as a marginal feature, but as a prominent

⁵⁹ See Hempel, *Community Rules*, 8–9 for a summary of arguments which require us to recognise that the movement reflected in Rule manuscripts found at or near Qumran significantly pre-dated occupation of the site, as did the earliest Rule documents. The manuscripts found in the eleven caves near Qumran originated from a variety of geographical locations, and many pre-dated the occupation at Qumran (Popovic, “The Manuscript Collections,” 44). It is also evident that compositions attested in scriptural scrolls do not originate at Qumran. These simple facts necessitate reconstructions of the history of the movement reflected in the Community Rules which acknowledge its complex development over time and its place on the map of Second Temple Judaism more broadly, in contrast to conceptions of a marginalised sect consisting only (or primarily) of inhabitants at Qumran.

⁶⁰ See page 41(n13). Flint considers that the Great Psalms Scroll (11Q5/11QPs^a) was “compiled prior to the Qumran period” and suggests a more widespread usage among other Jewish groups that also advocated a solar calendar. See Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls*, 201; and page 113 below.

⁶¹ Falk, “Contribution,” 882–4; Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 173–89.

⁶² Falk, “Contribution,” 887–9.

⁶³ Daniel K. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers*, STDJ 27 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 194–9; “Contribution,” 887–9.

⁶⁴ Falk, *Festival Prayers*, 194–9; “Contribution,” 887–9.

liturgical practice in a variety of settings.⁶⁵ The settings he highlights (all of which are attested in several sources) are: pilgrimage festivals (including performance of skilled professionals and the participation of the assembly through refrains), feasts and ritual meals, temple worship, sabbath songs, victory celebrations, and daily songs at sunrise and sunset.⁶⁶ It is of particular relevance that Falk mentions possible examples of all but one of these settings attested in literature from Qumran, as well as an additional setting: that of apotropaic songs to ward off demons (11QPs^a and Songs of the Sage, 4Q510–11).⁶⁷ The only example that he does not mention explicitly in connection with Qumran is that of ritual meals or feasting, which is a possible setting that I highlight specifically in the analysis of Psalm 154/Syriac Psalm II from 11QPs^a below.⁶⁸ The Qumran texts and the settings for singing reflected in them that Falk has drawn attention to are worthy of further examination and research, but his demonstration of widespread attestation to the practice of liturgical singing in the Second Temple Period lends substantial support to the argument I am seeking to advance.⁶⁹

In a similar vein, though with strikingly different methodological assumptions, John Arthur Smith has attempted a large-scale overview of singing and its settings throughout the First and Second Temple periods, including in the enormous span of his survey evidence from Qumran, the New Testament, and Rabbinic sources.⁷⁰ Where Falk's approach is typified by caution when it comes to assuming continuities of tradition and praxis through time and across sectarian boundaries, Smith works with the opposite assumption: that lines of continuity can be assumed straightforwardly and confidently wherever apparent similarities exist. Thus, Rabbinic evidence can be called upon to elucidate Second Temple practices

⁶⁵ Falk, *Festival Prayers*, 194–9; “Contribution,” 887–9. It should also be noted that Falk argues elsewhere for a reconsideration of the popular idea that prayer replaced sacrifice and temple consciousness in the development of some Jewish groups, and he suggests that the Qumran evidence may in fact point to the opposite conclusion and a close link between institutionalized prayer and temple ideology. Daniel K. Falk, “Qumran Prayer Texts and the Temple,” in *Sapiential, Liturgical and Poetical Texts from Qumran: Proceedings of the Third Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Oslo 1998, Published in Memory of Maurice Baillet*, STDJ 35, ed. Daniel K. Falk, Florentino García Martínez and Eileen M. Schuller (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 106–26, 125–6. In this regard, see also Jeremy Penner, “With the Coming Light, At the Appointed Time of Night: Daily Prayer and Its Importance at Qumran,” *JAJ* 4/1 (2013): 27–47; and my own comments on the question of a sacrificial altar at Qumran and the connection between singing and sacrifice in chapter four, section 4.4.1 below.

⁶⁶ Falk, *Festival Prayers*, 194–9; “Contribution,” 887–9.

⁶⁷ Falk, “Contribution,” 888–9.

⁶⁸ See pages 106–9 and 122–3 below.

⁶⁹ The texts he mentions are: War Rule (e.g. 1QM XIV, 2; XV, 4–5; 4Q511 2 I, 8–9; 4QBer^a 7 I, 3–4; 1QS X; 1QH^a V, 12–14; XX, 4–11; 4Q334; Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q400–407; 11Q17); 4Q504 1 + 2 VII recto, 5–12. Falk, “Contribution,” 888–9.

⁷⁰ Smith, *Music in Ancient Judaism*.

reflected in the Hebrew Bible or literature found at Qumran with little or no additional argumentation beyond the observation of similarities and the assumption of continuous development. The New Testament is incorporated into this same schema, and a picture of broadly homogenous liturgical praxis and linear development emerges, frequently reliant on Emil Schürer's masterful yet increasingly dated work for historical underpinning.⁷¹ This approach requires little in the way of depth when it comes to marshalling the evidence from Qumran, which earns a mere four pages of discussion in a monograph of two-hundred and seventy-one pages.⁷² The brief discussion rests on the same contested assumptions about the nature and character of the "Qumran Community" that have been highlighted above as limiting factors upon the value of research from earlier generations of Qumran scholarship, as far as the purposes of the present study are concerned.

Smith, nonetheless, offers some useful observations in summary form regarding material relating to singing among the Dead Sea Scrolls, though the surface of the full range of relevant evidence remains barely scratched.⁷³ His monograph as a whole is highly valuable as a repository and overview of literary evidence pertaining to singing in Early Judaism and Christianity, and in light of its scope, cannot be expected to address the detailed vagaries of contemporary research in every field that it touches upon. The result, however, is that Smith's treatment of the functions and development of Early Jewish and Christian song should not be taken at face-value or as in anyway comprehensive and final, either on the grand scale of the meta-narrative he presents or in finer points of detail. Rather, it is an introduction to the various existing bodies of literary evidence for Early Jewish and Christian song, which each require far closer scrutiny before any substantial conclusions concerning specifics or continuities of liturgical practice can be reached.

Returning to contributions which focus upon the literature found at or near Qumran, it is worth underlining the fact that when Daniel Falk—a leading authority on prayer and liturgy in the Dead Scrolls—addresses the specific question of singing in 2010, he draws heavily from Schuller's 2003 article which I have already highlighted above.⁷⁴ This re-enforces the conclusion that Schuller's article is a key treatment of the topic, perhaps *the* key treatment of

⁷¹ Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, trans. rev. and edited by Geza Vermes et al., 3 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1973–1986).

⁷² Smith, *Music in Ancient Judaism*, 127–31.

⁷³ Smith, *Music in Ancient Judaism*, 127–32.

⁷⁴ Falk, "Contribution," 882–4; Schuller, "Some Reflections," 173–89.

the topic to date.⁷⁵ Even though her explicit and direct attention to this specific question of singing constitutes less than a single article, her observations rest on extensive prior research, and as with other authors who write on the topic of prayer and liturgy in the Qumran texts, there is much in the rest of her body of published work which relates to singing implicitly or indirectly. For these reasons, it is necessary to pay particular attention to the arguments which Schuller advanced in her 2003 article, and also to subsequent scholarly responses to that piece. Just as Schuller's explicit treatment of this topic is not extensive, so also responses to it are not numerous or large in scale.⁷⁶ In light of the specific aims and concerns of this project, however, they are nonetheless significant for deducing the state of the question within Dead Sea Scrolls research to date. I will therefore outline some key points of relevance from Schuller's article and responses to them.

Schuller begins by emphasising our uncertainty and lack of precise knowledge concerning communal prayer as reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls, and questions whether such evidence reflects sectarian usage or wider Second Temple practices.⁷⁷ Her observation is that when the discussion is widened to the use of psalms, hymns and prayers in liturgy, there is even less certainty or consensus among scholars.⁷⁸ Unfortunately, Schuller's focused attention on the question: "did the daily, Sabbath, and festival liturgies include the singing of poetical texts?" does little to assuage her pessimistic assessment.⁷⁹ As re-iterated by Falk, Schuller points out the tendency of previous studies to co-opt the evidence from Qumran as a stage within diachronic reconstructions of the development of liturgical practices from "biblical" records through to synagogue worship and the kinds of liturgical singing (such as *piyyutim*) that are evident in later Jewish liturgy.⁸⁰ These reconstructions tend to involve a reading back from Synagogue, Early Christian or Talmudic practices into the Qumran material, or reading "forward" from canonical evidence in ways that assume a diachronic continuity which may be

⁷⁵ This is further confirmed by the fact that Miller's recent contribution to the discussion highlights and responds to Schuller's same article: Miller, "The Role of Performance," 362, 365.

⁷⁶ Two of the most important examples have already been mentioned: Falk, "Contribution," and Miller, "Role of Performance."

⁷⁷ Schuller, "Some Reflections," 175.

⁷⁸ Schuller, "Some Reflections," 175.

⁷⁹ Schuller, "Some Reflections," 175.

⁸⁰ Falk, "Contribution," 881–2; Schuller, "Some Reflections," 176, 186–88. For early examples of this kind of diachronic reconstruction, see: Werner, *Interdependence*; 12, 17, 25–50; Sendrey, *Music*. Pajunen argues that greater sensitivity to diachronic changes in function and social setting is necessary in order to develop an improved classification and nomenclature for psalms and prayers: Pajunen, "Differentiation of Form." Van Bekkum also draws attention to the complexity of understanding the changing functions of Psalm texts over time in Van Bekkum, "Qumran Poetry and Piyyut," 26–9, 32–3.

plausible in theory, but has little basis in evidence.⁸¹ It is indeed a line of approach that is of very limited use when trying to interpret the texts found at or near Qumran in their own right, without prior assumptions of continuity with other early Jewish or Christian practices.

Schuller is sceptical about the presumption that the widespread use of musical terminology indicates the use of music (including singing) in contemporary liturgical practice.⁸² Her scepticism is justified on two grounds: her previous research into the re-use of biblical terminology relating to Psalms and singing, and the metaphorical character of references to singing.⁸³ I have already observed that Schuller's published research on terminology related to singing—upon which she relies in the article in question—was limited to a specific sub-section of evidence: superscriptions/titles used in the “non-canonical” Psalms.⁸⁴ As noted above, Scorza's earlier and more general survey is subject to even greater limitations: its brevity, and the smaller body of documentary evidence from Qumran available for research in 1958.⁸⁵ Their comments are based, therefore, on a very narrow sub-section of the available evidence. The data-set for research needs to be expanded considerably to include a fuller range of terminology relating to singing in the now-published corpus of texts from Qumran, and to address the question in greater depth, paying close and careful attention to relevant literary passages in an attempt to establish more clearly what they can and cannot tell us about the function of singing in relation to text. The case studies in chapters four and five of this thesis aim to contribute to both these objectives.

The assumption that extensive re-use of biblical language demonstrates a purely literary representation of tradition with no indication of musical performance must also be deconstructed. This assumption rests on a pre-supposed binary categorisation of texts and performance into “biblical” and “post-biblical” periods—a categorisation which was already

⁸¹ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 176, 186–88. Moshe Weinfeld and Torleif Elgvin have published studies identifying commonalities between Qumran texts and elements of Jewish liturgy in later historical periods. See, for instance: Torleif Elgvin, “Qumran and the Roots of the Rosh Hashanah Liturgy,” in Chazon, *Liturgical Perspectives*, 49–67; Moshe Weinfeld, “The Morning Prayers (Birkhoth Hashachar) in Qumran and in the Conventional Jewish Liturgy,” in *Normative and Sectarian Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, LSTS 54 (London, T & T Clark: 2005), 126–36. Falk argues, however, that “even quite impressive parallels between texts from Qumran and the rabbinic liturgy do not necessarily indicate direct relationship.” Falk, *Festival Prayers*, 17. Van Bukkem is more optimistic about the possibility of identifying continuities: Van Bekkem, “Qumran Poetry and Piyyut,” 29.

⁸² Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 176.

⁸³ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*; “Biblical Terms”; “Some Reflections,” 176.

⁸⁴ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*; Schuller, “Biblical Terms.”

⁸⁵ Scorza, “Praise and Music.”

problematic, and which has been fundamentally challenged by research into the texts found at or near Qumran. In the light of contemporary biblical scholarship, the literary development of biblical texts can no longer be neatly and simplistically restricted to a supposed “biblical” period which is completed before the late Second Temple times and is distinct from the period of extraordinary textual productivity from which the manuscripts found at or near Qumran date. This is not to deny that later psalmody makes conscious and extensive use of more ancient traditions and compositions, frequently re-interpreting and adapting literature to its own ends. Schuller’s own analyses of texts such as 4Q380–381 demonstrate this phenomenon beautifully.⁸⁶ The presence of re-used traditional material such as this does not, however, indicate that compositions which were once liturgically performed have now become “merely” literary, or are now only performed through the act of writing. Far from it—literary, poetic, and liturgical traditions are always diverse and are always intertwined, and surviving texts are vestiges of a vibrant and productive continuity of tradition that included performances in and through a variety of media, both oral and written.⁸⁷ The case studies presented in chapters four and five serve to illustrate but a small cross-section of these various aspects of performance.

2.2.4 The Question of Metaphorical Usage

A further problem concerns Schuller’s choice to disregard musical language as an indicator of liturgical function on the basis that it is used “metaphorically.”⁸⁸ This particular view requires some further engagement, because it potentially undermines the perceived value of a wealth of textual and literary evidence concerning singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls. I am aware of two recent lines of argument that have been put forward in response to this point.⁸⁹ In a paper presented at the 2018 ISBL conference, David Skelton challenged the conclusion that references to musical instruments in the Dead Sea Scrolls are metaphorical.⁹⁰ I agree with his objection to the assumption that re-used biblical terminology can only be employed figuratively, and thus cannot relate to any contemporary liturgical function.⁹¹ Skelton contends an important point concerning the interpretation of metaphor, in that “the metaphor must have

⁸⁶ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, esp. 32–8.

⁸⁷ One scholar who has argued for the thorough interweaving of oral and written aspects is David Carr, in David M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 3–14, 287–98.

⁸⁸ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 180–2.

⁸⁹ In Skelton, “Piping Hot Lyres”; and Miller, “Role of Performance.”

⁹⁰ Skelton, “Piping Hot Lyres,” 1.

⁹¹ Skelton, “Piping Hot Lyres,” 1, 12.

some basis in reality or it loses its communicative capability.”⁹² This point provides an important balance to Schuller’s scepticism concerning the usefulness of “metaphorical” language as an indicator of liturgical practice.⁹³ Miller also questions Schuller’s verdict, and contends that in his given examples of references to singing in the Hodayot, there is nothing to indicate a metaphorical usage, and that there is in fact clear evidence to the contrary.⁹⁴

Communicative power is drawn from the embeddedness of metaphorical meanings in the shared, lived experience of human cultures and societies.⁹⁵ What Schuller is really advocating is a limited, figurative metaphorical meaning that does not refer directly to any contemporary social practice.⁹⁶ This is an unnecessarily reductive conclusion that would actually require some weight of evidence and argument to uphold.⁹⁷ Surveys of settings and functions of singing in Second Temple Jewish and related contexts (such as those provided in vary degrees of depth by Falk, Smith, and Skelton, and reviewed above) in fact point in the opposite direction, suggesting that singing is a ubiquitous and commonplace practice throughout a wide variety of social and religious settings.⁹⁸ At this stage in the argument, there is not enough basis to accept the assumption that metaphorical references to singing and music are not related to known and commonplace contemporary practices. In contrast, extensive evidence for the use of music in a wide variety of settings during the period in question suggests that even where musical references function in some sense metaphorically, they are likely to have some correspondence with contemporary practice. It will also become apparent, in the course of analysis of Psalm 154 in chapter four, that interpreting the reference to singing there as an extended, figurative metaphor makes little sense in that particular literary context.

⁹² Skelton, “Piping Hot Lyres,” 12. This line of argument echoes the work of Lakoff and Johnson concerning the rootedness of all metaphor in behavioural experience: George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago, IL; London: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

⁹³ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 180–1.

⁹⁴ Miller, “Role of Performance,” 365.

⁹⁵ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*.

⁹⁶ Lakoff and Johnson use “figurative” to refer to metaphors that are extended “beyond the range of ordinary literal ways of thinking and talking into the range of what is called figurative, poetic, colorful or fanciful,” despite the fact that all language is rooted in metaphor. Metaphor in fact pervades every aspect of our language and conceptual framework, and can only be coherent or possess any communicative power due to being based in some way in actual behavioural experience (Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 3, 7–9, 13, 17–21).

⁹⁷ Further engagement with the work of Lakoff and Johnson on the subject of conceptual metaphors would strengthen this conclusion. Space does not, however, permit a fuller discussion here (Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*).

⁹⁸ Falk, “Contribution,” 887–9; Smith, *Music in Ancient Judaism*.

2.2.5 Graeco-Roman Associations as Contexts for Singing

A related aspect of Skelton's approach is worth highlighting, in that he brings extensive contextual information to bear concerning music in Greco-Roman society, and in doing so, he is in fact following Schuller's suggestion that parallels from the Hellenistic world might provide important evidence for singing beyond the uncertain conclusions she derives from the texts alone.⁹⁹ It might be possible to draw a great deal more insight from research into the influence of musical practices in Hellenistic culture and the influence of voluntary associations/*collegia*, as well as exploring the prominent role that music played in Hellenistic education and the influence that such a curriculum may have had upon the musical practices reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls.¹⁰⁰ The scope of this thesis does not allow for a sustained treatment of singing in Hellenistic contexts, as there is too much to say in terms of building an argument on the basis of internal evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls alone. This is an area of research that deserves far more attention and would be an important avenue for further study. It is clear, however, even from a brief survey such as Skelton's, and from an in-depth study of ancient musical instruments such as that of Joachim Braun, that the kinds of musical practices and instrumentation referred to in the Dead Sea Scrolls are, at the very least, entirely plausible as contemporary modes of performance in light of comparative evidence from Hellenistic sources.¹⁰¹

While I do not engage with Hellenistic associations as comparative evidence, a significant portion of chapter six is given to the role of music in the transmission of a Greek literary corpus, namely the New Testament manuscript tradition which lies behind the production of Codex Alexandrinus in the fourth century C.E.¹⁰² Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman have applied very similar research questions to that corpus, and their research and results offer some extremely valuable methodological insights for the purpose of addressing text-critical data in chapter six.¹⁰³ The theoretical significance of their study also receives some further attention in chapter two.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Schuller, "Some Reflections," 188–9; Skelton, "Piping Hot Lyres," 8–10.

¹⁰⁰ Skelton, "Piping Hot Lyres," 8–10. See also: Sean Alexander Gurd, *The Origins of Music Theory in the Age of Plato* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019).

¹⁰¹ Skelton, "Piping Hot Lyres"; Joachim Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine: Archaeological, Written and Comparative Sources*, trans. Douglas W. Scott (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 222–49.

¹⁰² See section 6.2.2 below.

¹⁰³ Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman, "The Biblical Odes and the Text of the Christian Bible: A Reconsideration of the Impact of Liturgical Singing on the Transmission of the Gospel of Luke," *JBL* 133 (2014): 341–65.

¹⁰⁴ See section 2.3.6 below.

2.2.6 Angelic-Priestly Identity and Communion

Another area that Schuller suggests as an avenue for further research into singing is the self-understanding of the movement connected to the Dead Sea Scrolls as an angelic priestly community.¹⁰⁵ Because “[O]ne of the essential tasks of the heavenly angels is to sing the divine praises in songs and hymns,” the concept of angelic communion that pervades texts such as the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice may offer considerable clues as to the kinds of liturgical practices that those who preserved, copied and used these compositions engaged in.¹⁰⁶ This is a line of argument that Miller has taken up very effectively with regard to the Hodayot, and in the course of doing so he also questions the overly restrictive categorisation of texts suitable for singing that is employed by Bilhah Nitzan.¹⁰⁷ I share Miller’s critical response to Schuller’s reservations on the basis of metaphorical usage, as discussed above.¹⁰⁸

Miller’s arguments combine to convincing effect towards his goal of establishing “communal oral performance as a plausible sociolinguistic setting through a survey of internal evidence.”¹⁰⁹ By aiming to establish this setting with recourse to internal evidence, Miller contends an important point. Schuller does not dismiss the possibility that singing was an actual liturgical practice within groups associated with Qumran—rather, she is of the opinion that the texts alone do not provide enough evidence.¹¹⁰ Miller, on the other hand, is demonstrating that internal evidence can indeed reveal communal oral performance (including singing specifically) as a plausible setting.¹¹¹ I agree with this more optimistic assessment of the textual

¹⁰⁵ Devorah Dimant, “Men as Angels: The Self-Image of the Qumran Community,” in *History, Ideology and Bible Interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Collected Studies*, FAT 90 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 465–72; Crispin H.T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, STDJ 42 (Leiden: Brill, 2002); “Further Reflections on a Divine and Angelic Humanity in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *New Perspectives on Old Texts: Proceedings of the Tenth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 9-11 January, 2005*, ed. Esther G. Chazon, Betsy Halpern-Amaru and Ruth A. Clements, STDJ 88 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 185–98; “On Angels, Men and Priests (Ben Sira, the Qumran Sabbath Songs and the Yom Kippur Avodah),” in *Gottesdienst und Engel im antiken Judentum und frühen Christentum*, ed. Jörg Frey and Michael R. Jost, WUZNT 446 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 141–66; Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 188–9.

¹⁰⁶ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 189.

¹⁰⁷ Miller, “Role of Performance,” 362, 366; Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer*, 321–55. Regarding joining the angels in praise, see also Jeremy Penner’s comments on 4Q503 in Penner, “With the Coming Light,” 42–6; and my discussion of Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice in chapter five below.

¹⁰⁸ See section 2.2.4 above and Miller, “Role of Performance,” 365–6.

¹⁰⁹ Miller, “Role of Performance,” 361.

¹¹⁰ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 173–89.

¹¹¹ Miller, “Role of Performance,” 361.

evidence, and I hope to demonstrate that the phenomenon is far more widespread than the Hodayot. Miller goes on to explore the notion of communion with angels enacted through corporate praise as evidenced in the Hodayot. This is a potentially fruitful line of further research with regard to singing, if widened to incorporate a larger sample of literature from the manuscripts found at or near Qumran. Prime candidates for analysis are the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, which are discussed in chapter five below, including a section which focuses on singing and communal angelic-priestly identity.¹¹²

2.3 Influencing Textual Variation: Key Theories

Having surveyed previous scholarship related to singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls, I now turn to address research in the other two fields of inquiry which directly inform the present thesis: studies of orality and literacy, and textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible. Where textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible is concerned, my attention is given specifically to the way that textual pluriformity among the manuscripts found at or near Qumran has been interpreted, due to the focus of this thesis upon processes which lead to the variation of textual forms. In surveying both orality studies and textual criticism in connection with the Dead Sea Scrolls, the purpose of this chapter is not simply to present the findings of previous research, but to highlight particular theories that have been developed in recent decades which can serve as the theoretical basis for my analysis of textual and literary data in chapters four to six.

2.3.1 Textual Variation in the Dead Sea Scrolls

One of the most significant contributions of Dead Sea Scrolls research to our knowledge of Early Judaism has been to provide us with an unparalleled insight into processes of textual transmission. Concerning those texts that were eventually canonised within Jewish and Christian traditions, evidence of widespread variation among textual witnesses has stimulated decades of scholarly discussion concerning the status of the so-called “biblical” text during the centuries leading up to and around the turn of the Common Era. Labelling and categorising texts found at or near Qumran according to their differences is complex and

¹¹² Section 5.2 below.

problematic, and the variety of approaches that have been proposed is indicative of a range of alternative philosophies concerning textual criticism and its methodology.¹¹³

Emanuel Tov categorises such variations according to their degree of similarity or dissimilarity in comparison with previously known textual traditions such as the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint or the Samaritan Pentateuch, and his category of “non-aligned” texts denotes those texts that are not clearly closer in form to any one of these textual traditions than the others.¹¹⁴ He has recently discussed in detail the various terms that are used to describe texts from Qumran and other Judean desert sites that are very similar to the Masoretic text, such as “proto-Masoretic,” “pre-Masoretic,” and “semi-Masoretic,” and the theoretical significance of these various labels.¹¹⁵

The tendency to categorise differences in manuscripts as “variants” according to their degree of similarity or dissimilarity in comparison with the Masoretic Text in particular belies a prioritisation of the Masoretic tradition which the evidence of extensive pluriformity among the earliest manuscripts does not support.¹¹⁶ In extreme contrast to this view, there are

¹¹³ For a helpful summary of the various approaches to the interpretation of textual variation and pluriformity among the Judean desert texts, see: Armin Lange, “‘They Confirmed the Reading’ (y. Ta’an. 4.68a): The Textual Standardization of Jewish Scriptures in the Second Temple Period,” in *From Qumran to Aleppo: A Discussion with Emanuel Tov about the Textual History of Jewish Scriptures in Honor of his 65th Birthday*, FRLANT 230 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 29–80. Tov responds with an alternative reading of the evidence: Emanuel Tov, “The Myth of the Stabilization of the Text of Hebrew Scripture,” in *The Text of the Hebrew Bible: From the Rabbis to the Masoretes*, Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements 13 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 37–46. Shem Miller’s recent monograph also contains a helpful overview of the state of the question: Shem Miller, *Dead Sea Media: Orality, Textuality and Memory in the Scrolls from the Judean Desert*, STDJ 129 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 1–38. A major contrast in approaches to textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible is highlighted by Hendel’s defence of the HBCE project, which aims to produce the first eclectic critical edition of the Hebrew Bible: Ronald S. Hendel, *Steps to a New Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, TCSt 10 (Atlanta: SBL, 2016). Hendel engages with a number of prominent critics (in Hendel, *Steps*, 41–64), and some initial responses to the volume were offered in the form of reviews: Eugene Ulrich, review of *Steps to a New Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, by Ronald S. Hendel, *JSS* 63/2 (2018): 517–20; Arie Van der Kooij, review of *Steps to a New Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, by Ronald S. Hendel, *RBL* 20 (2018): 546–8; Emanuel Tov, review of *Steps to a New Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, by Ronald S. Hendel, *RBL* (2017): <https://www.bookreviews.org/bookdetail.asp?TitleId=11532>.

¹¹⁴ Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 111–12; *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert*, STDJ 54 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 332–5.

¹¹⁵ Emanuel Tov, “‘Proto-Masoretic,’ ‘Pre-Masoretic,’ ‘Semi-Masoretic,’ and ‘Masoretic’: A Study in Terminology and Textual Theory,” in *Found in Translation: Essays on Jewish Biblical Translation in Honor of Leonard J. Greenspoon*, ed. James W. Barker, Anthony LeDonne and John N. Lohr (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2018), 31–52.

¹¹⁶ See, as examples of this prioritisation, the approaches adopted in: Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts”; Russell Fuller, “John Owen and the Traditional Protestant View of the Hebrew Old Testament,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 20/4 (2016): 79–99; Peter J. Gentry, “The Text of the Old Testament,” *JETS* 52/1 (2009): 19–45; David L. Washburn, *A Catalog of Biblical Passages in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Text-Critical Studies 2 (Atlanta: SBL, 2002). For an example of an alternative approach that emphasises pluriformity in the

scholars who argue not only that the text of the Hebrew Bible was fixed at a time preceding the variable texts found at or near Qumran (and therefore existed *alongside* textual fluidity), but even that the majority of Tov's elusive "non-aligned" texts are in fact to be understood as variations *within* the dominant Masoretic tradition.¹¹⁷ According to Ferguson, despite all appearances to the contrary, these non-aligned texts (bar a few stubbornly "ambiguous" examples) in fact "belong" to the Masoretic tradition.¹¹⁸

The textual data have provoked numerous hypotheses concerning the development of the canon and text of the Hebrew Bible, and nearly seventy-five years on debate in these areas continues unabated.¹¹⁹ It is apparent from the divergence of scholarly opinion that the

earliest strata of evidence, see the essays in Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*, Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature (Leiden: Brill, 1999). Tov warns against the *a priori* assumption that MT constitutes an earlier or superior text: Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 11–12. See also Person, "Text Criticism as a Lens," 203–7.

¹¹⁷ Namely Ferguson, "Non-Aligned Qumran Texts," 1–4. Among scholars who envisage an early "fixed" or "stable" text, Gentry's statement is unequivocal: "Let me be absolutely clear: the consensus view that the text was standardized in the first century AD is wrong." Peter J. Gentry, "Text," 19–45, 45. Fuller asserts concerning the preservation of the Masoretic vowels that "The Aleppo and Leningrad codices accurately reflect the divinely inspired Hebrew text of Ezra." Fuller, "John Owen," 79–99, 86. Van der Kooij expresses preference for the view that a stable authoritative text (a "temple text") existed *alongside* fluidity of text, as opposed to the theory that an event or process of stabilization occurred at some point during the first century BCE or later: Arie van der Kooij, "Standardization or Preservation? Some Comments on the Textual History of the Hebrew Bible in the Light of Josephus and Rabbinic Literature," in *The Text of the Hebrew Bible: From the Rabbis to the Masoretes*, ed. Elvira Martín-Contreras and Lorena Miralles-Maciá, JAJ Supplements 13 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 63–78, 76. He is therefore an advocate of the view that an early and authoritative stable text was preserved. Bruno Chiesa also defended a more "traditional" approach to textual criticism, interpreting the plurality of texts at Qumran as deriving from a single recension of the text, in a fashion typical of ancient literary works: Bruno Chiesa, "Textual history and textual criticism of the Hebrew Old Testament," in *The Madrid Qumran Congress: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Madrid 18-21 March, 1991*, ed. Julio Treballe Barrera and Luis Vegas Montaner, vol. 1, STDJ 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 257–72.

¹¹⁸ Ferguson, "Non-Aligned Qumran Texts," 3, 464. A more detailed evaluation of a sub-set of Ferguson's analysis is offered in chapter six below, under section 6.3.4.

¹¹⁹ The following are further (purely illustrative) examples of some of the detailed and extensive debate on this issue. The approach taken in Hendel, *Steps*; is to some extent a reaction to prevailing norms within Qumran scholarship which have allowed the evident plurality among the data to modify and even re-define our understanding of textual development in such a way that demands new methods of critical approach. Hendel responds explicitly to the criticisms of Tov, Williamson, Brooke, Schenker and Tigchelaar, for which see the following: Brooke, "Higher and Lower Criticism," 7; Hendel, *Steps*, 41–2; Adrian Schenker and Philippe Hugo, "Histoire de texte et critique de l'Ancien Testament dans la recherche récente," in *L'enfance de la Bible hébraïque: L'histoire du texte de l'Ancien Testament à la lumière de recherches récentes*, ed. Adrian Schenker and Philippe Hugo, MdB 52 (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2005), 22–3; Eibert J. Tigchelaar, "Editing the Hebrew Bible: An Overview of Some Problems," in *Editing the Bible: Assessing the Task Past and Present*, ed. John S. Kloppenborg and Judith H. Newman, RBS 69 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 41–64, 51, 59; Emanuel Tov, review of *Steps to a New Edition* (by Ronald Hendel); *Textual Criticism*, 364; Hugh G. M. Williamson, "Do We Need a New Bible? Reflections on the Proposed Oxford Hebrew Bible," *Bib* 90 (2009): 164–67. See the reviews listed in n103 above as responses to Hendel's monograph. See also Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint: Collected Essays*, VT Supplements 167 vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2015); "The Publication of the Textual History of the Bible in Light of the Progress in Textual Scholarship," *HBAI* 6/2 (2018): 245–58; Eugene Ulrich, "Qumran Evidence for the Text and Canon of the Bible," in *Scribal Practice, Text and Canon in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Essays in Memory of Peter W. Flint*, ed.

evidence of textual plurality from Qumran can be interpreted in a number of ways. The fact of the *existence* of textual variation among the Qumran scrolls, however, is beyond dispute. As Tov expounds, textual variation was a known phenomenon prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, because the Septuagint and its recensions, the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Masoretic Text were already available for comparison.¹²⁰ The Qumran finds, however, have contributed a plethora of new data which demonstrate just how widespread and thoroughgoing textual variation was as a phenomenon in late Second Temple literature, and also the degree to which texts were changed, adapted and developed without evidence of discomfort or controversy on the part of the scribes involved.¹²¹ Textual plurality was apparently not an issue that needed to be explained away or justified, as it is for some interpreters today.¹²²

2.3.2 Interpreting Textual Variation: “Contours in the Text”

In 2011, Jonathan Norton published a developed version of his 2006 PhD thesis entitled: “Contours in the Text: Textual Variation in the Writings of Paul, Josephus and the Yahad.”¹²³ Although much of the monograph acts as supporting context for considering Paul as interpreter, the chapters on “Dead Sea Sectarians and Textual Plurality” and “Scribes and Textual Plurality” contain hypotheses which are crucial to the argument I want to develop in subsequent chapters concerning the interpretation of textual variation.¹²⁴ In his fourth chapter, Norton takes three examples of exegetical variation from Qumran, and through his analysis demonstrates that in each case interpreters were not only *aware* of more than one version of a given authoritative text, but that they *deliberately incorporated aspects of meaning* which derived from more than one text-form within their own reproduction and interpretation.¹²⁵ Norton calls these multiple aspects of meaning “contours,” and demonstrates ably that the most persuasive explanation for the phenomenon he highlights is that the interpreter responsible was both aware of more than one tradition of interpretation for a given “semantic

John J. Collins and Ananda Geysler-Fouché, *STDJ 130* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 7–22. See also the works cited in note 12 of page 15 in connection with debates concerning the character of the 11QPs^a collection of psalms, which have provoked widespread reconsideration of theories of the development of canon in the Second Temple Period and beyond. See also the discussion under section 6.3.4 below.

¹²⁰ Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 14–15.

¹²¹ Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 14–15.

¹²² See notes 1, 4 and 7 above.

¹²³ Norton, *Contours*.

¹²⁴ Norton, *Contours*, 82–120.

¹²⁵ Norton, *Contours*, 82–103. For exegetical variants, see also Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 262–75.

unit,” and that they chose to incorporate the resultant duality (or plurality) of meanings within their own transmission of the scriptural text.¹²⁶

If Norton’s argument can be upheld, the result is that we must envisage interpreters of scripture within Second Temple Judaism as being conscious of multiple “sense contours” belonging to a given text.¹²⁷ He summarises: “the copy of a traditional work functions as a cue for multiple exegetical ideas associated with given passages, rather than a rigid verbal record of, or monolithic monument to, a single semantic form.”¹²⁸ This is the case because texts exist as part of a larger “shared experience” of “exegetical practice” which is “discursive and oral.”¹²⁹ That is to say, a scribe’s inscription of a text (which might reflect his own interpretation or that of a previous scribe or authoritative interpreter) was not a reproduction of a static text-form, or even (according to Norton’s hypothesis) a reproduction informed by or combining a selection of static text-forms.¹³⁰ Rather, through shared experiences of oral performance, study, and instruction, authoritative interpreters are aware of “multiple exegetical ideas,” and are able to draw upon these and/or combine them when they commit the text to written form themselves.¹³¹

This hypothesis naturally invites us to consider the oral performative world that lies *behind* any given instantiation of an authoritative text—that is, the oral-exegetical world in which the text lives and to which it contributes, and which in turn influences a specific form of the text when it comes to be inscribed. In this way, a direct link is identified between the social function of texts and the physical data of textual “variants,” which are the particular focus of traditional approaches to textual criticism.¹³² It is this question of the impact of social function upon forms of text that my research addresses, proposing that the practice of singing was a significant aspect of the social and liturgical function of texts and the “oral-exegetical”

¹²⁶ In a later study Norton has addressed the question as to whether the scribe or an alternative (authoritative) individual should be considered as responsible for the recorded interpretation: Norton, “Scribal Exegesis.”

¹²⁷ Norton, *Contours*, 82.

¹²⁸ Norton, *Contours*, 112.

¹²⁹ Norton, *Contours*, 120.

¹³⁰ Norton, *Contours*, 104–5.

¹³¹ Norton, *Contours*, 112, 115–19.

¹³² It must be borne in mind that a term such as “variant” is not a neutral one, in that it implies deviance from an accepted norm. It is habitually employed in text-critical scholarship in such a way that assumes a particular known text-form (such as the Masoretic Text) to be prior or superior to other known versions. This is a problematic assumption, despite the fact that the issue is contested in text-critical scholarship. See further: Brooke, “What is a Variant”; Hendel, *Steps*; Lange, “They Confirmed the Reading”; and Tov, “Proto-Masoretic.” See also an explanation of my own use of the term in section 1.2.5.2 above.

world which shaped them. Singing is a means of instruction, transmission, and also reception of texts (as the case studies in chapters four and five will demonstrate), and it is therefore a potentially influential factor upon the variation of text-forms. Even if no direct causality can be established between singing as a medium and specific textual variants, my research aims to explore the hitherto neglected role of song within the dynamic interplay of orality and textuality inherent to processes of textual transmission.

2.3.3 Theories of Orality and Textuality

It needs to be acknowledged that the picture Norton paints of a “discursive and oral” environment is dependent upon certain influential orality theorists whose views continue to receive some criticism and provoke scholarly discussion.¹³³ Norton’s citations of Martin Jaffee’s insightful monograph “Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism, 200BCE–400CE” occur at key points in the construction of his argument, and the social setting of oral-exegetical performance that he envisages is largely based on Jaffee’s own hypothesis, as well as the (similarly influential) research of Walter J. Ong.¹³⁴

These offerings from Jaffee and Ong are part of a much larger scholarly discussion of concepts of orality and literacy which has been brought to bear on the field of biblical studies in a variety of ways since Hermann Gunkel pioneered his form-critical methods around the turn of the twentieth century.¹³⁵ The studies of Milman Parry in the nineteen-twenties and Alfred Lord in the nineteen-sixties represent further landmarks by virtue of their lasting influence, and in the nineteen-eighties Walter Ong built upon the foundations laid by his forbears Marshall McLuhan, Eric Havelock and Harold Innis.¹³⁶ Norton’s use of Ong and

¹³³ Those are, in particular, Martin Jaffee and Walter J. Ong, to be discussed below.

¹³⁴ Martin S. Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism, 200BCE–400CE* (Oxford: OUP, 2001); Norton, *Contours*, 110, 112, 115–16; Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982).

¹³⁵ See for instance: Hermann Gunkel, *The Legends of Genesis* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 1901); *The Psalms: A Form-Critical Introduction* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1967); *The Folktale in the Old Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987). Brooke has given a recent assessment and overview of many of the issues to be discussed below in relation to Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship, in “Orality and Written-ness in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Where Have We Got to and Where Are We Going?” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Ancient Media Culture*, ed. Travis B. Williams, Chris Keith and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, STDJ 144 (Leiden: Brill, 2023), 358–84.

¹³⁶ Eric A. Havelock, *The Literate Revolution in Greece and Its Cultural Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); *The Muse Learns to Write: Reflections on Orality and Literacy from Antiquity to the Present* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); Harold Innis, *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951); Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature 24 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960); Marshall McLuhan and Bruce R. Powers, *The*

Jaffee is key to his argument, but in light of subsequent scholarship, it should be noted that Jaffee's 2001 publication had already begun to modify Ong's hypothesis in an important alternate direction.¹³⁷

Up to and including Ong's *Technologizing the Word*, these scholars of orality are generally working within a paradigm that imagines a dramatic contrast between "orality" and "literacy" (or "textuality") as alternative and distinct kinds of media culture, which operate in dramatically different ways.¹³⁸ In this scheme, an oral culture precedes a textual or literary culture, which functions entirely differently and thoroughly supplants the characteristics of oral culture once it gains the ascendancy. This approach emphasises the extreme contrast between oral and literary modes of communication, and has been dubbed "The Great Divide Theory."¹³⁹ This "Great Divide" approach has been superseded by increasingly nuanced readings which discern a continuous interaction between oral and textual modes of communication throughout antiquity, rather than emphasising a theoretical shift through which a text moves from the dynamic oral paradigm to a calcified written form, or through which a culture moves from "oral" to "literate," signifying a dramatic change in modes of thought and communication.¹⁴⁰ Oral cultures are not supplanted by textual cultures, rather orality and textuality continue to interact, influence one other, and depend upon one another in different ways throughout ancient (and indeed recent) history.

This shift in understanding is evident to some extent in Jaffee's work, as he explores the inter-relationship between oral and textual modes.¹⁴¹ Already in 1997, Susan Niditch had thoroughly problematised the long-accepted bi-furcation of "oral" and "written" cultures, and despite some stiff criticism of her methodology by Alan Millard, her emphasis upon the "Oral World" in which all ancient Hebrew literature existed was generally embraced by scholars.¹⁴²

Global Village: Transformations in World Life and Media in the 21st Century (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Ong, *Orality*; Milman Parry, *L'Épithète Traditionnelle dans Homère: Essai sur un Problème de Style Homérique* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1928).

¹³⁷ Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth*; Norton, *Contours*, 110, 112, 115–16; Ong, *Technologizing*.

¹³⁸ See Evans' helpful summary in Paul S. Evans, "Creating a New 'Great Divide': The Exoticization of Ancient Culture in Some Recent Applications of Orality Studies to the Bible," *JBL* 136/4 (2017): 749–764, esp. 749–52.

¹³⁹ Evans, "Great Divide."

¹⁴⁰ Evans, "Great Divide," 749–52.

¹⁴¹ As observed by Loveday Alexander in her review of his book: Loveday Alexander, review of *Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Traditions in Palestinian Judaism, 200BCE–400CE*, by Martin S. Jaffee, *Shofar* 23/2 (2005): 156–8.

¹⁴² Alan Millard, review of *Oral World and Written Word: Orality and Literacy in Ancient Israel*, by Susan Niditch, *JTS* 49/2 (1998): 699–705; Susan Niditch, *Oral World and Written Word: Orality and Literacy in Ancient Israel*, (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1996).

In the following decade, Niditch's approach was developed in several different directions, three of which are helpfully reviewed and evaluated by Frank Polak.¹⁴³

As Polak observes, William Schniedewind's *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* still works fundamentally within a "Great Divide" paradigm—he charts the gradual shift from a "pre-literate" to a "literate" society, "the movement from orality to textuality."¹⁴⁴ Schniedewind therefore continues to emphasise cultural discontinuity between oral pre-history and the subsequent widespread development of literacy. Kawashima's focus is textual and literary, but he distinguishes within texts between traditional oral material and narrative material which is essentially literary.¹⁴⁵ David Carr, however, identifies and stresses what he calls an "oral-written matrix" as the dynamic structure within which texts influenced and enabled oral performance, and oral performance in turn influenced texts.¹⁴⁶ Carr is keen to emphasise the continual interplay between orality and literacy, rather than a historical shift from one kind of culture to another.¹⁴⁷ In Carr's view, following Niditch, the oral aspect predominates, as texts are understood to exist within and facilitate an "oral world," rather than oral forms being subservient to the production and re-production of texts.¹⁴⁸ The idea of an "oral-written" text has been developed and applied by Shem Miller with a direct focus on the Dead Sea Scrolls.¹⁴⁹

In Carr's view, when he writes that "Ancient corpora like the Bible were shaped for oral-written memorization and performance and education-enculturation," we see that although one of his valuable contributions is to illustrate the inextricable relationship between orality and textuality which always exists, he conceives that in this relationship the text exists *for the purpose of* enabling memorization, performance and education—that is, the text-medium is subservient to the oral.¹⁵⁰ Edenburg aims to redress this imbalance by drawing attention to

¹⁴³ Frank Polak, "Book, Scribe and Bard: Oral Discourse and Written Text in Recent Biblical Scholarship," *Prooftexts* 31/1 and 2 (2011): 118–40.

¹⁴⁴ Polak, "Book, Scribe and Bard," 119–22; William Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 1.

¹⁴⁵ Robert S. Kawashima, *Biblical Narrative and the Death of the Rhapsode*, ISBL (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Polak, "Book, Scribe, and Bard," 122.

¹⁴⁶ Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 287–8.

¹⁴⁷ Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 3–14, 287–98.

¹⁴⁸ Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 3–14, 287–98. Niditch, however, also promotes the idea of an oral-written continuum. See Newman, *Before the Bible*, 19 n45; Niditch, *Oral World*, 99–107.

¹⁴⁹ Shem Miller, "The Oral-Written Textuality of Stichographic Poetry in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 22/2 (2015): 162–88; "Oral-Written Textuality," chapter 3 in *Dead Sea Media*, 116–53; "Oral-Written Register," chapter 4 in *Dead Sea Media*, 154–87.

¹⁵⁰ Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 292–3.

evidence of intertextuality, which indicates that the processes that produce texts are not only oral/aural, but that they also involve conscious text work (of the kind typically imagined by traditional text critics).¹⁵¹ Edenburg's approach points in the direction of my own thesis, which aims to take stock explicitly of the relationship between oral medium and text. Carr identifies education as the primary social setting for "oral-written" processes, and reflects that an educational setting is now the primary aspect to which he gives attention when considering the socio-historical dimensions of any biblical text.¹⁵² In connection with the educational context, the role of singing as a mode of instruction within Second Temple Judaism has been a focus of David Skelton's work, and is a further indication that singing plays an important role in the "Oral World" envisaged by the likes of Niditch and Carr.¹⁵³

Evans' recent response to the contributions of Carr, Scniedewind and Kawashima offers some insightful perspective.¹⁵⁴ Although he welcomes the abolition of "The Great Divide," he cautions scholars to be wary of a trend which risks creating too large a perceived distance between an "exoticized" ancient textual culture and contemporary modes of thought and communication.¹⁵⁵ He dubs such an exaggerated contrast a "New 'Great Divide.'" ¹⁵⁶ On the one hand, his criticism serves to balance an emphasis upon oral culture over against textuality, as does Edenburg's critique from a different angle.¹⁵⁷ The perceived over-emphasis upon the alien characteristics of ancient attitudes towards text risks in Evans' view a distortion by means of "exoticizing" those cultures, and thereby overlooking evidence of textuality which may suggest different, less exotically "other" ways of engaging with texts.¹⁵⁸ Evans also helpfully draws attention to the considerable diversity of cultures and attitudes towards text in antiquity, cautioning us against a homogenizing view of ancient textuality.¹⁵⁹

These criticisms levelled against Carr (and by implication also Niditch) point to an important methodological recognition: by definition, we do not have direct access to antique "oral tradition"—we only have access to texts, and the *realia* of other archaeological evidence.

¹⁵¹ Edenburg, "Intertextuality."

¹⁵² Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 292–3.

¹⁵³ Skelton, "Piping Hot Lyres"; *Singers of Wisdom: Music and Pedagogy in Ben Sira and the Second Temple Period*, JSJSup (Leiden, Brill: forthcoming).

¹⁵⁴ Evans, "Great Divide," 749–64.

¹⁵⁵ Evans, "Great Divide," 751–2, 763–4.

¹⁵⁶ Evans, "Great Divide."

¹⁵⁷ Edenburg, "Intertextuality."

¹⁵⁸ Evans, "Great Divide," 751–2, 763–4.

¹⁵⁹ Evans, "Great Divide," 764.

Any evidential basis for understanding ancient orality is mediated to us via texts. For this reason, as Edenburg and Evans provoke us to acknowledge, we must continue to pay close attention to texts not *only* as by-products of a reconstructed “oral world,” but as artefacts in their own right. Recognising that frequently we only have access to *what a particular text* tells us, we must proceed as responsible and attentive text-critics and literary interpreters, without separating these initiatives from the task of the social-historian.¹⁶⁰ It is essential, however, that these literary and text-critical tasks are conducted in mind of what Brooke calls a “creative juxtaposition and interaction” between the oral and the written.¹⁶¹ Brooke cautions the modern reader against assuming that the “plethora of written evidence” indicates that the movement associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls “prioritised writing in all things.”¹⁶² Raymond Person has made numerous vital contributions which have advanced scholarly understanding of this “creative juxtaposition.”¹⁶³

More recently, the subtle and insightful work of Jacqueline Vayntrub has moved the discussion in some constructive new directions beyond “Great Divide” modes of thinking towards understanding Hebrew poetry “on its own terms,” observing the pervasive narrative framing of poetry as “character speech” which elevates the importance of the speaker’s own voice.¹⁶⁴ The speaker’s voice then becomes venerated in a different way when poetry becomes separated from a narrative framework and collected into anthologies.¹⁶⁵ This study lays out an approach that is highly attentive to literary claims and compositional character, moving beyond a conception of orality that is only concerned with the origins of texts.¹⁶⁶ Methodologically, Vayntrub’s work suggests that nuanced ways of paying attention to the way that singing is referred to and employed as a device for literary purposes might prove

¹⁶⁰ This approach is advocated by Norton, Brooke and Delamarter, who all draw attention to the need for text-criticism and socio-historical reconstructions to come together as part of an holistic approach: Brooke, “Higher and Lower Criticism”; Steve Delamarter, “Sociological Models for Understanding the Scribal Practices in the Biblical Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods*, ed. Maxine L. Grossman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 182–97; Norton, *Contours*, 106–7; “Scribal Exegesis,” 140–3.

¹⁶¹ Brooke, “Orality and Written-ness,” 379.

¹⁶² Brooke, “Orality and Written-ness,” 379. A rich and in-depth contribution to reflection on the relationship between orality and textuality is presented in Raymond F. Person, Jr., *From Conversation to Oral Tradition: A Simplest Systematics for Oral Traditions*, Routledge Studies in Rhetorics and Stylistics (London: Routledge, 2018).

¹⁶³ See, for instance: Raymond Person Jr., “The Ancient Israelite Scribe as Performer,” *JBL* 117/4 (1998): 601–9; “Text Criticism as a Lens”; *From Conversation to Oral Tradition*.

¹⁶⁴ Jacqueline Vayntrub, *Beyond Orality: Biblical Poetry on its Own Terms* (London: Routledge, 2019), 1–12, 217–20.

¹⁶⁵ Vayntrub, *Beyond Orality*, 1–12, 217–20.

¹⁶⁶ Vayntrub, *Beyond Orality*, 1–12.

more fruitful than readings which are overly concerned with establishing a specific social or liturgical setting, and particularly a putative “original” one.

Carr also draws attention to the need for further research in the area of what he describes as “elevated speech,” meaning the roles of singing, canting or poetry in memorisation and performance.¹⁶⁷ My current thesis attempts to address this lacuna in research to some extent, by focusing on the impact of singing upon processes of transmitting and inscribing texts. As will be made clear in chapter three, I do not treat singing as entirely distinct from categories of “canting” and “poetry.” Furthermore, the mechanics of memorisation are not in fact removed from the process of textualization, as Brooke’s exploration of memory and rewriting scripture demonstrates.¹⁶⁸ He shows that the individual and collective dimensions of memory should not be ignored when analysing processes of rewriting scripture, and identifies four features which may illuminate the memorialising process: embellishment/institutionalization, distortion/obligation, invention/organization, and forgetting/reconstruction.¹⁶⁹ The importance of what a text tells us about the purposes of memorialization for a given community is emphasized over against establishing the veracity of remembered events.¹⁷⁰ Again, we are pointed methodologically in the direction of taking texts seriously as artefacts without overlooking the vital role of the wider socio-historical context, and in this instance, the contribution of a careful analysis of psychological processes. Text-critical and socio-historical research must go hand in hand, as the two approaches are mutually dependent and beneficial, and are inextricably related.¹⁷¹ As Brooke’s essay indicates, textual changes cannot be interpreted without recourse to a larger sociological and psychological framework.¹⁷²

As Niditch and Carr rightly emphasise the oral world of scribes that influences texts, so Brooke draws our attention to additional social and psychological dynamics of memory processes that also exert an influence.¹⁷³ Judith Newman makes highly effective use of the application of psychological models and insights from the cognitive sciences in the

¹⁶⁷ Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 289.

¹⁶⁸ George J. Brooke, “Memory, Cultural Memory, and Rewriting Scripture,” *Reading the Dead Sea Scrolls: Essays in Method* (Atlanta: SBL, 2013), 51–65.

¹⁶⁹ Brooke, “Memory,” 64–5.

¹⁷⁰ Brooke, “Memory,” 59–61.

¹⁷¹ For arguments in support of this kind of holistic methodological approach, see Brooke, “Higher and Lower Criticism.”

¹⁷² Brooke, “Memory,” 57–65.

¹⁷³ Brooke, “Memory,” 57–65.

construction of her own theories of scribal formation and textual processes, which I will address in more detail below.¹⁷⁴ It is as part of this wider complex of psychological, social and liturgical dynamics, I will argue, that the role of singing plays its part in the formation of texts.

2.3.4 Musicology and Orality Studies

In section 2.2 a number of early studies relating to singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls were surveyed, including contributions from musicologists.¹⁷⁵ That work constituted treatments of musical references in the Scrolls which were either relatively brief, surface-level, or minor elements of studies with a much larger scope.¹⁷⁶ In the preceding section, the large extent to which biblical studies has drawn from research in the field of orality and literacy has also been made clear. With reference to the two fields of musicology and orality theory in general, however, there appears to be a deficit of research drawing insights from the former for the benefit of the latter, despite points of profound interconnectedness that exist between the two disciplines.¹⁷⁷

In 2010, ethnomusicologist Francisca Sborgi Lawson asked the question “Why Has Music Scholarship Been Ignored in Mainstream Orality-Literacy Studies?”, and went on to observe that in the other direction “the study of musical orality has been neglected in Western musicological scholarship.”¹⁷⁸ Lawson attends specifically to the interaction between musical notation and orality in analogy with discussions about literacy and orality in general, demonstrating the inter-relatedness of the two fields and the potential light that further studies in this direction could shed upon the relationships between musical orality and text.¹⁷⁹

Recently Gracia Grindal has also drawn attention to the impact that textualization can have upon both the musical and literary style of the composition of hymns and Psalms, as well as the reverse impact that particular cultural expressions of musical orality can have upon the shape and character of a text, affecting observable characteristics such as degrees of

¹⁷⁴ See, for instance: Newman, *Before the Bible*.

¹⁷⁵ Pages 39–45 above.

¹⁷⁶ Pages 39–45 above.

¹⁷⁷ See Francisca R. Sborgi Lawson, “Rethinking the Orality-Literacy Paradigm in Musicology,” *Oral Tradition* 25/2 (2010), *Project MUSE*, [doi:10.1353/ort.2010.0021](https://doi.org/10.1353/ort.2010.0021).

¹⁷⁸ Sborgi Lawson, “Orality-Literacy.”

¹⁷⁹ Sborgi Lawson, “Orality-Literacy.”

repetition, use of common poetic devices, and features of grammar and syntax.¹⁸⁰ In his study of Stravinsky’s “Musical Exegesis” of the Psalms, Joel LeMon has demonstrated the inevitable and unavoidable degree of interpretation and adaptation that occurs when setting any text to music.¹⁸¹ It seems not only that there is a deficit of research bringing together insights from musicology and orality theory to explore the relationship between singing and text in general, but that this kind of approach could have direct relevance for an investigation of the role of singing in textual transmission as reflected in the literature found at or near Qumran.

2.3.5 Influencing Textual Variation: Scribal Formation

Judith Newman makes a vital and original contribution to the investigation of psychological and sociological influences upon text by exploring what she calls the “shaping” of a scribe.¹⁸² Her work in this area exemplifies the kind of holistic approach that I have identified as necessary, and which the present study aims to build upon. Newman’s hypothesis—developed and explored in various directions across a series of publications—makes the explicit link between the personal formation of a scribe and the consequent impact upon what becomes the inscribed text.¹⁸³ In one instance, using Ben Sira as a test case, she illustrates the way that the scribe presents his own sense of personal formation through the disciplines of private prayer and praise.¹⁸⁴ The formation of the scribe influences the character of the scribe’s output, and therefore shapes the resulting textual product.¹⁸⁵ Newman draws upon insights from neurocognitive studies to demonstrate that (apart from any *a priori* theological assumptions regarding spiritual formation) this kind of habitual private discipline enables the

¹⁸⁰ Gracia Grindal, “Writing Hymns and Singing Them,” *The Hymn* 70/1 (2019): 24–9.

¹⁸¹ Joel M. LeMon, “Symphonizing the Psalms: Igor Stravinsky’s Musical Exegesis,” *Interpretation* 71/1 (2017): 25–49.

¹⁸² Newman, “Shaping the Scribal Self through Prayer and Paideia: The Example of Sirach,” in *Before the Bible*, 23–51. See also: “Thanksgiving Hymns”; “Communal Formation,”; “Formation of the Scribal Self,” 227–38, 237–8.

¹⁸³ With Ben Sira as a test case, see: Newman, “Formation of the Scribal Self,” esp. 237–8. With the Qumran texts specifically in view, see: “Communal Formation,” 254, 260–6; “Thanksgiving Hymns,” 941, 944, 956–7; “Scribal Bodies as Liturgical Bodies”; and for her most comprehensive and recent work on these subjects, see her 2018 monograph *Before the Bible*, .

¹⁸⁴ Newman, “Formation of the Scribal Self,” 237–8. Norton’s observations on the problematic assumptions around whether authorship can be attributed to a scribe or an alternative authoritative exegete need to be taken into consideration. Norton, “Scribal Exegesis.”

¹⁸⁵ Newman, “Formation of the Scribal Self,” 237–8.

cognitive development of “self” in a way that makes cognitive agency (and thus learning, training and authorship) possible.¹⁸⁶

Newman also places these insights in the communal, cultural context appropriate to Ben Sira, producing a study that illuminates to great effect the social, cultural and psychological processes which lead to the production of texts.¹⁸⁷ It is within the exploration of these kinds of dynamic processes (as a model applied to the Dead Sea Scrolls) that my current research objectives are situated. Newman has illustrated the way that the social, religious and cognitive formation of scribes within the liturgical body contributes directly to the formation of the texts that constitute their scribal output. It is also suggestive to note that with reference to Ben Sira, she highlights private praise as an important aspect of personal formation.¹⁸⁸ She describes her monograph *Before the Bible* as a study that “expands the concept of liturgical to include a range of practices around the study of sacred texts in Jewish antiquity.”¹⁸⁹ I aim to explore thoroughly the phenomenon of singing, as evidenced in the texts found at or near Qumran, as a particular and significant aspect of this same liturgical complex and process of scribal formation that impacts the character and transmission of texts.

The overlapping and interrelationship of categories is another key shared feature of our approach. In Newman’s case, engagement with text, prayer, and revelatory discernment overlap and inter-relate within the complex of liturgical practices that scribes inhabit.¹⁹⁰ I aim to demonstrate in a similar way concerning song, meditation, instruction and prayer that they are not “separate and discrete phenomena.”¹⁹¹ Newman is interested particularly in the way that literary texts were “transformed” into “scriptures.”¹⁹² My focus is not so much upon the way these factors influence the process by which texts *become* “scriptures,” but upon the way they influence the variation of textual forms.

There are numerous further ways in which Newman’s theory frames and provides methodological direction for my own study, but these brief comments will suffice to

¹⁸⁶ Newman, “Formation of the Scribal Self,” 230–2.

¹⁸⁷ Newman, “Formation of the Scribal Self,” 232–3, 236–7.

¹⁸⁸ Newman, “Formation of the Scribal Self,” 227, 229, 230–1, 235–6, 238.

¹⁸⁹ Newman, *Before the Bible*, 1.

¹⁹⁰ Newman, *Before the Bible*, 1–2. She appears to accord with the views I have expressed above that “the understanding of “liturgical” needs refinement,” (*Before the Bible*, 7).

¹⁹¹ Newman, *Before the Bible*, 1.

¹⁹² Newman, *Before the Bible*, 2.

demonstrate the potential value of research based upon the same holistic approach to liturgical practices (such as prayer) and the impact that they have upon textual transmission, yet with singing as a distinct focus.

2.3.6 Singing and Textual Transmission in New Testament Studies

In the course of my research, I was delighted to discover that Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman have attempted to defend a very similar hypothesis in relation to Luke's Gospel and the Biblical Odes.¹⁹³ They explore precisely "the Impact of Liturgical Singing on the Transmission of the Gospel of Luke," analysing variations between the texts of the odes and those of the biblical books from which they are extracted.¹⁹⁴ Knust and Wasserman begin by demonstrating the "important role of singing in the lives of early Christian assemblies" from the "earliest period," and also highlight evidence for the prominent role of liturgical singing within pre-Christian Judaism.¹⁹⁵ This perception of prominence is based on "the sheer volume of surviving Psalters, psalm commentaries, allusions to psalms, and references to David and his songbook" which is reflected not only in Early Christianity, but in the Qumran literature, comments of Josephus, and the Jewish *piyyutim* of late antiquity.¹⁹⁶

Knust and Wasserman seek to secure recognition of the *Odes* as an important witness for New Testament textual criticism, and their conclusion concerning the influence of singing is that it can have "a double impact" on the text tradition.¹⁹⁷ On the one hand, it can cause liturgical adaptation, and on the other, "public performance could also set limits on how much these texts could change."¹⁹⁸ The odes have a particular value for text criticism, because they derive from a separate and earlier exemplar, and therefore testify to an alternative line of transmission from the biblical texts they reproduce, and one that was known to be used for the purpose of liturgical singing.¹⁹⁹ There may not be any direct analogies among the manuscripts found at or near Qumran with such obvious benefits for the study of singing and textual transmission, but some aspects of methodology in Knust and Wasserman's approach are nonetheless relevant to the current project.

¹⁹³ Knust and Wasserman, "Biblical Odes."

¹⁹⁴ Knust and Wasserman, "Biblical Odes," 352–6.

¹⁹⁵ Knust and Wasserman, "Biblical Odes," 342–7.

¹⁹⁶ Knust and Wasserman, "Biblical Odes," 344–5.

¹⁹⁷ Knust and Wasserman, "Biblical Odes," 341, 352–3, 365.

¹⁹⁸ Knust and Wasserman, "Biblical Odes," 341, 352–3, 365.

¹⁹⁹ Knust and Wasserman, "Biblical Odes," 349–52.

Their research suggests that the liturgical use of biblical material can result in adaptation, but can also result in remarkable fixity and stabilisation. For this reason, “no textual witness can be dismissed solely on the basis of its liturgical setting.”²⁰⁰ If the same can be said of liturgical texts found at or near Qumran, this insight could have considerable significance in the scholarly debate concerning the textual character and authoritative status of 11QPs^a, for instance. This is a debate which has continued for decades since James Sanders’ early assessments of the manuscript, and within which a proposed dichotomy between “scriptural” or “secondary liturgical” collection continues to dominate the discussion.²⁰¹ Texts could be adapted according to a mode of performance or a particular setting for liturgy, but once attached to a particular poetic and musical form, could remain remarkably stable on account of widespread familiarity with the way they should be sung.²⁰² Knust and Wasserman’s study underlines the complexities inherent in the interaction between orality and textuality, and in interpreting the role of liturgical use in discussions of text criticism.²⁰³ On both counts, their study is of great use for purposes of methodological comparison.

2.4 Chapter Two Conclusions

The preceding chapter has surveyed previous research relating to singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls, with the goal of identifying developments that might inform and shape an investigation into the role of singing within processes of textual transmission. A review of early studies revealed valuable initial forays into the subjects of music and singing in relation to the Scrolls, however these contributions are limited in their usefulness to the project in

²⁰⁰ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 341.

²⁰¹ James A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11 (11QPs^a)*, DJDJ IV (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965); “Variorum in the Psalms Scroll (11QPs^a),” *HTR* 59 (1966): 83–94; “Cave 11 Surprises And the Question of Canon,” *McCQ* 21 (1968) 1–15; “The Qumran Psalms Scroll (11QPs^a) Reviewed,” in *On Language, Culture, and Religion: In Honor of Eugene A. Nida*, ed. M. Black and W.A. Smalley (The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1974), 79–99; Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls*, 2–9, 198–200, 204–6, 226–7. For a recent text-critical assessment of 11QPs^a that is highly coloured by the identification of the manuscript as a secondary liturgical collection, see Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 354–95. For more scholarly views representative of this debate, see the references at page 15(n12) and section 6.3.4 below. Pajunen’s investigation of the role of societal factors in the shaping and authorisation of Psalms collections also needs to be incorporated into this discussion, and points in some important directions for further study: Mika S. Pajunen, “The Influence of Societal Changes in the Late Second Temple Period on the Functions and Composition of Psalms,” *SJOT* 33/2 (2019): 164–84.

²⁰² Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 341–6, 364–5. This phenomena could also be explained by other large scale socio-political developments, such as the homogenising effect of Roman Imperial influence upon the character of Christianity in the fourth century. On this note, see the comments at Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 356.

²⁰³ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 341, 364–5.

hand due to the enormous developments in Qumran research over the last seventy years which require a number of significant changes to methodological assumptions.

The contributions of Eileen Schuller relating to the liturgical practice of singing were highlighted as key to the scholarly discussion, in part because of her extraordinary depth of expertise concerning psalms and hymns found at Qumran, and in part because she is one of the few scholars to have directly addressed the question. Schuller's 2003 article pointed in two directions for further research: the comparative evidence of musical practice in Hellenistic associations, and the self-image of the Yaḥad movement as an angelic-priestly community.²⁰⁴ The second of these is taken up here in chapter five, however comparative Greek sources are used in a very different way in chapter six in order to inform the text-critical aspect of this thesis.²⁰⁵ Aspects of Schuller's approach drew critique from both Miller and Skelton, and I have added a number of additional arguments to their responses. The most important conclusion arising from this engagement is that literary and textual sources can indeed provide valuable evidence for the liturgical practice of singing in the late Second Temple Period, despite Schuller's caution, and neither the presence of musical metaphors nor the re-use of "biblical" terminology detract from this conclusion. Chapters four and five, in particular, aim to illustrate some of the ways that literary evidence can be mined for valuable insights concerning the function of singing.

Categorisation and the definition of terms has been seen to be an additionally problematic aspect of studies relating to prayer, liturgy and song. Building on the work of Chazon, Schuller, and Falk in particular, it is argued that there is need to acknowledge categories as complex and overlapping. Though space does not permit full engagement with the theoretical issues surrounding categorisation and definition, the bi-furcation of sources into "biblical" and "non-biblical" is critiqued and rejected as an organising framework for the purposes of the present thesis.²⁰⁶

Drawing primarily on the work of Falk and John Arthur Smith (with the additional support of Knust and Wasserman), Braun's research into musical instruments and Skelton's discussion of Hellenistic contexts, it is apparent that prior scholarship has furnished us with evidence of

²⁰⁴ Schuller, "Some Reflections," 188–9.

²⁰⁵ See section 6.2.2 below.

²⁰⁶ See Darby, "Beyond Definitions of Prayer" for more extensive engagement with these issues.

the widespread practice of singing in a variety of contexts within Second Temple Judaism, all of which are also reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls (pending argument in chapter four concerning communal meals as a setting for singing).²⁰⁷ For this reason, it is not deemed necessary to cover the ground again in the course of this thesis by re-presenting the evidence and describing these various settings for singing in full, due to the fact that the material is extensive and would require a large proportion of the thesis to do so. Rehearsing this material would prevent the distinctive elements of the current thesis from being fully explored and the proposed argument from being presented in full. Rather than re-visiting the breadth of evidence for singing in the Second Temple Period, chapters four and five carry the discussion into new areas and engage with specific selected case studies in greater depth.

Narrowing the focus of research towards the role of singing in textual processes, I have also surveyed previous scholarship and highlighted work from several fields of research relevant to a study of the role of singing in textual transmission as reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The preceding chapter therefore draws from three large and well-established fields of scholarship: prayer and liturgy in the Dead Sea Scrolls, orality and literacy theory, and textual criticism in light of the manuscripts found at or near Qumran. Some emerging and less-represented areas have also been considered, such as studies of liturgical singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls specifically and the interaction of musicology with orality studies. In the following chapter, this inter-disciplinary perspective will be investigated further, due the fact that an inquiry into the influence of singing upon text requires some theoretical reflection as to the relationship between music and text. This line of enquiry seeks better understanding of the way that these two aspects of performance and communication interact and influence one another. A natural resource for such theoretical reflection is the field of musicology, a discipline which can provide the means to further construct a theoretical framework capable of addressing questions concerning singing and textual variation.

I have drawn particular attention to two theories that I aim to build upon in the development of my own specific thesis: Jonathan Norton's concept of "Text Contours" and Judith Newman's concept of "scribal formation." These also provide vital theoretical foundations for the case studies of chapters four and five and the text-critical work of chapter six.

²⁰⁷ See section 2.2.3 below, and Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel*, 189–320. Concerning communal meals, see pages 106–9 and 122 below.

Norton's theory reveals the way that interpretative choices can be manifested and encoded in the minute details of textual changes, forcing us to acknowledge the interpretative dynamics at work at every stage of the textual process. Newman brings to our attention the way that broader aspects of a scribe's formative experience—including their personal engagement in prayer and their social functioning within a religious community—can impact the form of their scribal product, which is the inscribed text. In the following chapters, I go on to explore the hypothesis that singing plays an influential role in these formative processes which result in changes to the inscribed form of sacred texts.

CHAPTER THREE:
THE INTERACTION BETWEEN SUNG PERFORMANCE AND TEXT: A
MUSICOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

3.1 Introduction

In order to formulate a methodology that can satisfactorily address the way that singing as a mode of performance interacts with written text, it will be beneficial to garner some interdisciplinary insight from the field of musicology and the advances that have been made there in conceptualising the way that music, speech, language and text relate. From the point of view of biblical studies, some of the most promising results concerning the relationship between orality and text have been derived from an interdisciplinary conversation with Performance Criticism.¹ In terms, however, of a specific focus on musical aspects and the relationship between music and text, the field of musicology presents itself as a natural interdisciplinary conversation partner. Musicology is a field in which theories of this kind are well-developed, and such research offers distinctive insights into detailed aspects of the way that music and text relate. These interdisciplinary insights have not attracted the same attention within biblical studies in general or Dead Sea Scrolls research in particular, yet they are able to shed valuable light upon questions of musical performance and textuality relating to the Dead Sea Scrolls.²

In the following chapter, having acknowledged the breadth and depth of scholarly reflection concerning the relationship between music and language, I will draw chiefly from three musicological studies which interrogate firstly the interaction and mutual influence exercised between tune and text in the compositional process, and secondly the musicality of human

¹ For some examples of performance criticism applied within biblical studies in general, see: Peter S. Perry, *Insights from Performance Criticism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016); Terry Giles and William Doan, *Twice Used Songs: Performance Criticism of the Songs of Ancient Israel* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers), 2009. With relation to the Dead Sea Scrolls in particular, see Miller, "Role of Performance"; and *Dead Sea Media*.

² Though music in the Bible and Early Judaism is a well-researched field, it is mainly areas such as the archaeological analysis of musical instruments, and their symbolism and literary classifications according to form-criticism that have attracted attention. Theories of redaction, textual, and literary development of course play their part in these discussions, but they are not generally concerned with theoretical reflection at a more fundamental level concerning the way that music, language and text interact. Performance criticism has a significant contribution to make in these respects, though in service of the present focus on singing and text specifically, musicology is prioritised here as an interdisciplinary conversation partner. For significant recent overviews of music in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity, see: Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel*; Smith, *Music in Ancient Judaism*.

speech in general. The theories I will examine are based in the first instance upon musical analysis within a defined cultural milieu, and in the latter upon ground-breaking empirical studies of conversational speech patterns. Both contributions, however, despite being based upon the study of limited data sets far-removed culturally and chronologically from the world of Second Temple Judaism, expose characteristics of speech and musical composition that can be argued to be innate to the use of language.

Inter-disciplinary methods often require the application of methodologies and conclusions developed in unrelated fields to new and perhaps very different historical settings or literary corpora. My attempt to use these insights to shed light on performance and text in Second Temple Judaism carries with it, therefore, the risk of anachronism, but this risk can be modified and limited by ensuring a careful and responsible scholarly process. The interpreter must discern which elements of methodology and analysis can be reasonably re-applied to an unrelated context—that is, which insights are applicable beyond their own culturally contingent setting. I do not claim that certain elements or aspects of these research findings are not culturally contingent—no historical or musicological analysis can be divested of its social and cultural context. However, I will reference musicological studies drawn from three highly contrasting cultural and linguistic settings, thus supporting the conclusion that the shared features observed between these subject groups transcend to some extent their cultural boundaries. The consistent elements of the findings that I highlight among diverse data-sets therefore provides the key methodological control that allows some of the resultant observations to be brought to bear on the study of manuscripts found at or near Qumran. Though the provisos given above must always be borne in mind, my suggestion is that the insights yielded by an inter-disciplinary conversation between musicology and biblical studies concerning the sung performance of texts can shed valuable and necessary light on the study of liturgical texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

On the basis of these insights from the field of musicology, I will further attempt to formulate a working definition of “singing” that can be used throughout the course of my thesis as a tool for analysis. Establishing a working definition is therefore helpful to aid clarity in the discussion, though it must be acknowledged that rigid, universal definitions do not provide the best means of formulating categories for analysis.³ Finally, I will draw out some of the

³ For supporting argument, see Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer.”

implications of these musicological findings for the analysis of liturgical texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls specifically, taking into account some of the distinctive characteristics of the corpus. On this basis, I will outline emerging possibilities and limitations concerning the interpretation of textual variation among liturgical compositions found at Qumran, and the potential significance of identifying singing as a prominent factor affecting the performance of both oral and written traditions (if, indeed, the two can be meaningfully distinguished).⁴

3.2 Music, Language, and Speech

Within musicology as a discipline, a long history of research has been directed towards clarifying and expressing the nature of the relationship between music and language, including discussion as to whether music itself is a language.⁵ The scholarly discourse is complex, and incorporates aspects of the origins of music in the light of evolutionary theory, classical conceptualisations of music in terms of rhetoric and oratory, and the emergence of romanticism and music criticism in the nineteenth century, including engagement with key critical approaches such as semiotics and aesthetics.⁶ Though this is a wide-ranging and

⁴ By means of this aside, I aim to acknowledge a certain inadequacy in the terms “oral” and “orality” as identified by contemporary performance criticism of the Bible. “Orality” as descriptor falls short of accounting for the embodied character of human communication, or the overlap and inter-connectedness of oral and written forms of communication. Concerning “embodied communication events,” consider Perry’s comments:

It is not “oral” communication, as if the voice could be separated from the body (“face-to-face” communication is a preferable term). Writing and reading are also embodied activities. Describing a communication event must involve some kind of description of bodies. Was the writer seated and writing on papyrus on a knee or perched at a keyboard looking at a screen? Both are embodied communication events utilizing different media technologies so that an audience may experience particular effects.

Peter S. Perry, “Biblical Performance Criticism: Survey and Prospects,” *Religions* 10/2 (2019): 117–32, 124. For discussion of the inter-relatedness of written and oral communication and previous trends that used what has now been dubbed the a “great divide” theory, see: Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 287–98; Evans, ““Great Divide,”” 749–52.

⁵ See, for example: David Beard and Kenneth Gloag, “Language,” in *Musicology: The Key Concepts*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2016), 76–7; Francesca R. Sborgi Lawson, “Response to ‘Rethinking Music’s Status as Adaptation Versus Technology: A Niche Construction Perspective,’” *Ethnomusicology Forum* (2016): 234–6, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17411912.2016.1188714>; J. H. Kwabena Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics: Integrating the Phraseology of Text and Tune in the Creative Process,” *Black Music Research Journal* 22/2 (2002): 143–64, 143–45; Anirrudh D. Patel, *Music, Language, and the Brain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2007).

⁶ Beard and Gloag, “Language”; Andrew Bowie, “Music and the Rise of Aesthetics,” in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 29–54; Ben J. Curry, “Reading Conventions, Interpreting Habits: Peircian Semiotics in Music” (PhD diss., Cardiff University, 2011); Sborgi Lawson, “Response”; Patel, “Music,” 355–412; Downing A. Thomas, *Music and the Origins of Language: Theories from the French Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

highly-involved field, if we concentrate the discussion around two specific foci, some important insights concerning the inter-relation of singing and text emerge.

In the first instance, rather than approaching the issue with a question such as “to what extent can music be conceived as a language?” (a question to which it is extremely difficult to establish a straightforward or conclusive answer), if we approach instead from the other side of the equation and ask “to what extent is speech musical?”, some clearer conclusions present themselves.⁷ In responding to this question, I will consider first the inter-relatedness of melody and lyric in the compositional process, and then evidence for the inherent musicality of speech, and the implications thereof for the current study.

3.3 The Interaction of Music and Text in the Compositional Process

In exploring the musicality of speech in general, two studies in particular will serve as illustrations. The first—that of Ghanaian ethnomusicologist J. H. Kwabena Nketia—offers a perspective based on theoretical and musical analysis.⁸ The other—that of Francesca Sborgi Lawson—approaches from a more clinical, empirical standpoint.⁹ Nketia in 2002 highlighted two contrasting approaches to analysing the relationship between “text and tune”.¹⁰ The first, which he labels “paradigmatic,” is concerned with “the metaphor of music as a language” and analyses from the perspective of “grammar, syntax, and semiotics,” looking for correspondences of “tone, duration, and stress” between lyric and melody.¹¹ The other, which he calls “syntagmatic,” concerns interrelations between larger elements of musical and textual structure, as well as between those structures and their smaller individual constituent elements of syllable, tone, duration and stress.¹²

The syntagmatic approach allows an analysis to pay greater attention to the way that larger musical phrases are wedded to textual phrases and vice versa, observing the way that segments of text and music are adapted and intertwined in order to coalesce.¹³ However, the

⁷ For some of the problems involved in the identification of music as a language, see Beard and Gloag, “Language,” Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics”; Sborgi Lawson, “Response.”

⁸ Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics.”

⁹ Francesca R. Sborgi Lawson, “When Audiences Become Performers and Speech Becomes Music: New Tools to Analyze Speech, Song, and Participation in Chinese Crosstalk,” *Music and Science* 3 (2020): 1–18.

¹⁰ Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics,” 143–5.

¹¹ Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics,” 145.

¹² Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics,” 145–50.

¹³ Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics,” 147–58.

conception of text and tune as two opposite sides of an equation that need to be changed or adapted in order to fit together falls short of one of the most important insights of Nketia's study. His analysis offers a highly nuanced description of the process of composition and the various ways that melody and lyric can develop together within the creative process, as opposed to operating as separate elements which function independently.¹⁴

Text, whether inherited or newly composed, may precede melody in the compositional process, meaning that a melody must then be crafted and developed in order to fit with and complement the text. In this order of things, a lively interactive process may occur in which text is adapted as it is combined with the emerging melody. Alternatively, a fixed melody may already be established, to which text must then be adapted or re-worked in order to cohere. This can sometimes be achieved by elongating or shortening syllables, increasing or decreasing the number of syllables within an existing unit of duration, or displacing the beginning of a verbal phrase in order for it to correspond with a larger unit of time or certain rhythmic accents.¹⁵ Additional (and even spontaneous or improvised) vocalisations can also be interpolated in order to fill "gaps" in a musical phrase or measure where the given unit of text does not contain the required number of syllables.¹⁶ Again, the process of creative development and the adaptation of text and tune may occur simultaneously. Beyond these alternatives, the possibility that a song may be performed in "free" rhythm must also be acknowledged as an additional variable within the discussion.¹⁷

Nketia's analysis is based on the musical praxis of various African traditions, and it is therefore worth stressing again that I am not trying to argue for any kind of analogous comparison with Second Temple Jewish sources that would depend upon cultural or musical similarities. Rather, Nketia's study serves to illustrate the vast complexity of theoretical possibilities involved in the conceptualisation of the relationship between melody and lyric and of the process of composition and adaptation. These observations apply to music and language as phenomena in general terms, and the number of variables and potentialities increase according to our lack of information concerning details of musical performance in a

¹⁴ Nketia, "Musicology and Linguistics," 145–7.

¹⁵ Nketia, "Musicology and Linguistics," 152–3. At a simplistic level, it is evident that increasing or decreasing the number of syllables in a given phrase might result in what text-critics would label "addition" or "omission." In the course of the following discussion, however, it will become clear that I hope to move beyond the assumptions that lie behind the language and criteria used to make many such text-critical judgements.

¹⁶ Nketia, "Musicology and Linguistics," 152–3.

¹⁷ Nketia, "Musicology and Linguistics," 153–4.

given historical place and time period, such as Judea in the centuries around the turn of the Common Era. Studies of music in relation to the Bible or Early Judaism and Early Christianity provide a wealth of valuable information, but they all operate according to the constraint that we have no concrete evidence by which we can reconstruct the style or character of actual musical performance during the period in which our sources were written or copied.¹⁸ Comparative studies with Hellenistic and Roman sources are vital, and archaeological *realia* can yield some clues as to the sound of instruments, but any hope of re-imagining musical characteristics with any accuracy is practically nil.¹⁹ While the individual features described by Nketia might be evident to a greater or lesser extent among diverse musical cultures, unless there are clear grounds for *dis*-regarding them because of specific and concrete evidence that we have concerning the musical praxis reflected in our sources, then we must accept these observations as theoretical possibilities, given the degree to which they are inherent to the process of composing music and text in any time and place.

Concerning Second Temple Judaism specifically, there is no evidential reason to disregard any of the theoretical possibilities outlined by Nketia. We must therefore accept the picture that Nketia paints of the interplay between text and melody in the compositional process as indicative of the plethora of possibilities that may apply to processes of composing music and text reflected in the literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

This assertion is vital to the framing of goals for this thesis: I am not seeking to establish or argue a specific *Sitz im Leben* for texts, or even specific performance events, although on the basis of literary analysis and historical precedent I may argue that certain settings are likely and perhaps even distinctive or characteristic for some groups within Second Temple

¹⁸ The opening words of Braun's preface make this abundantly clear:

“Neither sound nor musical notation remains of the music of ancient Israel/Palestine. Apart from the sparse written records, the only information we have is that provided by the stone, bone, or metal unearthed by archaeologists.

Yet even musical periods documented much more richly than those of the ancient world can leave us in uncertainty. How were Beethoven's works actually performed? How were the harmony and melody of Corelli's *basso continuo* realized? What was the correct interpretation of neumatic symbols? What about the Jewish *ta'amei hamikra*? With even less information at our disposal, what can we possibly say about the music of the ancient world?”

Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, xi.

¹⁹ See Braun's overview of archaeological evidence for musical instruments in the regions surrounding Ancient Israel, and clues as to the sound of various instruments: Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel*, 8–35.

Judaism. In fact, my goal is almost the opposite: I am seeking to illustrate a *greater degree of possibility and potentiality* than has previously been acknowledged concerning aspects of textual performance and factors at play in the variation of written texts. I propose that such illustration can enlighten and enrich our reading and interpretation of ancient texts. An increase in complexity and potentiality does not merely serve to muddy the picture, but enables us to read the text in new ways as we imagine new possible settings for performance and new aspects of significance in the performance of texts. Our field of perception is broadened in order to appreciate more of the vitality of texts as we expand our analysis beyond linear and artificial conceptions of textual transmission that operate solely upon axes such as “earlier or later,” “original or corrupt,” “error or interpolation.”²⁰ Understanding to a greater degree the role that singing can play in the performance of a text (and I include in my definition of performance the act of inscribing a written text) can help us to imagine more fully the life and functions of a text in antiquity, and can reveal aspects of interpretation that might otherwise be obscured.²¹

Concerning the compositional process and performance of most Second Temple Literature, we can rarely identify specific time frames for the composition of a text, or restrict those possible time frames to narrow windows. Even where manuscripts can be dated with some confidence, dating usually provides ranges of possibility concerning the provenance of a text, and a sufficiently complex model for the literary development of texts over long historical time-frames warns against the attempt to specify a moment of origin for many of the compositions recorded in the Second Temple Period.²² Specifying singular moments of origin is not feasible, and does not take into account the complex journeys of development that texts and collections of literature evidently underwent before and during the period of literary production into which we have a material insight.

²⁰ I owe the phrase “vitality of texts” to Hindy Najman: Najman, “Vitality of Scripture.” For alternatives to a linear view of textual criticism, see Brooke, “Higher and Lower Criticism”; and Person, “Text Criticism as a Lens,” esp. 203–7.

²¹ For writing as a “performance event,” see Perry, “Biblical Performance Criticism,” 122–4; Person, “Scribe as Performer.”

²² See, for instance, Schuller’s discussion of the date and possible origins of “non-canonical” Psalms in 4Q380–381. She views 4Q380–381 as preserving psalms from the Persian-Hellenistic period: Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 1–14. In making this comment, I assume awareness of the general scholarly consensus that much biblical literature emerges as the result of long processes of transmission, development and editorial activity of some kind. A collection such as the biblical Isaiah offers an outstanding example, partly due to its sheer length and widely accepted scholarly theories of literary development, and partly due to its extensive attestation at Qumran. For indicative discussions, see Eugene Ulrich, *Origins of the Bible; The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Developmental Composition of the Bible*, VTSup 169 (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

Indeed, one of the great contributions of the finds at or near Qumran has been to underline and illuminate complex processes of development in Second Temple literature by means of a plethora of new data.²³ We cannot therefore claim to know with any degree of confidence precisely when, where, or how a text was composed, even if we can identify a window of time or range of dates. We can, however, illuminate the *possibilities* as to how processes of composition might have worked, and we have a great deal of data that can inform such research. Rather than trying to trace the history of a text back to a hypothetical static original form—or for that matter, a singular, specific setting of performance—we can illuminate the *process* by which texts underwent compositional development over long periods of time, with a great deal of relevant data, and we can closely investigate the breadth of possibilities as to how such processes may have operated.²⁴

What, then, are the specific benefits of these observations for the present study? Nketia's description of the interaction between music and text in the compositional process means that when we come to study a manuscript found at Qumran that is considered to have had a liturgical and potentially musical function, and we apply the question: "what might be learnt here about singing and textuality?" there are certain assumptions that we cannot make, and (on a positive slant) there are certain possibilities that we must acknowledge. If we are to hypothesise anything about the interaction of music and text, we cannot assume that it is something that happens only post-composition, or only in a particular performance setting. The dynamic inter-relationship between text and music may have been operative at any or all stages in the compositional process. We do not know whether at points of creative conception (and these may be multiple in the long view of the development of a literary work) text was conceived independently of music, or music independently of text.

In psalm texts from the Second Temple Period (and I refer to "psalm texts" in the hope that I am using as inclusive a term as possible), we need to ask not only "how may singing have influenced the interpretation of the text," but also "might singing as a medium have influenced the composition of this text?", and "how might singing have influenced the

²³ Ulrich, *Developmental Composition*.

²⁴ When I speak of relevant data in this context, I refer to multiple aspects of research and criticism that have the potential to illuminate the scribal and compositional process in some way: materiality, scribal practices, textual criticism, social scientific approaches, literary criticism and more traditional source-critical approaches are all capable of yielding valuable results to this end.

reception and transmission of the tradition embodied in this text?”, as well as “what role might singing have played in its performance?”. Equally importantly, we must ask the same questions but from the opposite perspective: how might *text* have influenced *singing* at any of these recurring stages in the life of a text?

At every stage in the process suggested by these various questions, interpretation occurs, and indeed, every stage is *part of the interpretative process*. Interpretation does not only occur at one point in the sequence of reception, performance or transmission—every one of these aspects influences and embodies interpretative reflection and choices. We are describing a dynamic process that cannot be reduced to a specific or singular moment in the ongoing history of a text. Even to conceive of such moments as *either* acts of composition *or* acts of performance, transmission or interpretation is to mis-represent the issue: a moment of performance is also a moment of transmission *and* interpretation, as are actions of collection or compilation (which may often take a form which is described as “editorial,” “redactive,” or “scribal”). A moment of transmission is in itself an act of interpretation, as any act of transmission involves at least some degree of interpretative choice or decision, even if that choice is to reproduce a particular text-form as fastidiously as possible, and to do so using certain conventions of inscription and material presentation.

3.4 The Musicality of Speech: An Empirical Perspective

Investigation of the compositional process therefore alerts us to additional complexities and possibilities concerning the relationship between music and text. Yet the way we conceptualise such a relationship needs to be refined further, and a series of recent studies in Speech and Music Science complement Nketia’s insights and enable us to do so. Francesca Sborgi Lawson’s 2020 study of the musical characteristics of speech builds upon the “ground-breaking” research emerging from the University of Cambridge over the last decade which analyses the conversation of same-sex friends.²⁵ These studies reveal that “speech can

²⁵ Sborgi Lawson, “Speech Becomes Music,” 2; Sarah Hawkins, Ian Cross and Richard Ogden, “Communicative interaction in spontaneous music and speech,” in *Language, Music and Interaction*, ed. Martin Orwin, Christine Howes, and Ruth Kempson, Communication, Mind and Language 3 (London: College Publications, 2013), 285-329; Hawkins, “Situational Influences on Rhythmicity in Speech, Music, and Their Interaction. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B: Biological Sciences* 369 (1658), (2014): 20130398, DOI: [10.1098/rstb.2013.0398](https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2013.0398); Richard Ogden and Sarah Hawkins, “Entrainment as a Basis for Coordinated Actions in Speech,” in *18th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences*, Glasgow 2015, <https://international.phoneticassociation.org/icphs-proceedings/ICPhS2015/proceedings.html>; Juan Pablo Robledo, S. Hawkins, I. Cross and R. Ogden, “Pitch-Interval Analysis of ‘Periodic’ and ‘Aperiodic’ Question

become temporarily aligned in spontaneous interaction when the two speakers are attitudinally aligned.”²⁶ The motivational factor of “attitudinal alignment” may well provide another avenue for the analysis of music and text, but of interest for the time being are the *means* by which individuals align their speech to one another at transitional points in a conversation. To be explicit, it is the *musical characteristics* of speech, such as pitch and rhythm, which enable this alignment.²⁷

Lawson identifies similar phenomena in the interactions between performers and audience in the Chinese performative art-form known as “crosstalk,” observing that as an audience becomes sympathetic to the performer’s point of view, their substantial interactions (which become effectively part of the performance) align in terms of pitch and rhythm.²⁸ Again, these observations suggest a number of possible avenues for reflection in relation to the Dead Sea Scrolls—relating, for instance, to the performance of liturgical texts, and to the interaction between an implied “performer” and “audience.”²⁹ Numerous discussions of the setting and performance of the Hodayot, for example, revolve around questions of corporate and individual performance dynamics, often imagined in terms of the distinct roles of the *Maskil* figure and a congregation.³⁰

Focusing on the concerns of the present chapter, however, it is the well-attested demonstration of innate musical characteristics of speech that is most relevant. These studies complement the insights of Nketia, reviewed above, who demonstrates that the elements of duration, stress, pitch and tone inherent to any language constitute a musical character that is always embedded in the spoken word.³¹ The Cambridge studies and that of Francesca Lawson cited above confirm the embeddedness of musical qualities in speech with a wealth of empirical research, further demonstrating the degree to which human subjects

and Answer Pairs,” in *Speech prosody*, ed. H. Barnes, A. Brugos, S. Shattuck-Hufnagel, & N. Veilleux (ISCA Conference Proceedings: Boston, 2016), 1071–75.

²⁶ Sborgi Lawson, “Speech Becomes Music,” 2.

²⁷ Sborgi Lawson, “Speech Becomes Music,” 2–3.

²⁸ Sborgi Lawson, “Speech Becomes Music,” 3.

²⁹ Discussion of the Hodayot, for example, often circulates around a bi-furcation of the so-called “Teacher” and “Community” hymns. For some recent perspectives on this discussion from the point of view of performance, and a critique of this dichotomising approach, see Miller, “Role of Performance,” 363–5.

³⁰ See Miller’s helpful recent discussion from the point of view of performance in Miller, “Role of Performance,” 361–8. See also Carol A. Newsom, “What Do Hodayot Do?,” Chapter 5 in *The Self as Symbolic Space: Constructing Identity and Community at Qumran* (STDJ 52; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 191–286.

³¹ Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics,” 147–50.

unconsciously make use of the musicality of language even in casual conversation.³² It is worth highlighting again in the interests of methodological control, that the three studies I have discussed here are taken from three highly contrasting cultural and linguistic contexts, illustrating the pervasive character of the kinds of musical features observed across a variety of unrelated language systems. Nketia's analysis of the musicality of speech—demonstrated within the compositional process—along with evidence for the unconscious yet meaningful musicality of casual conversation and spontaneous audience participation in studies from England and China, together suggest that these phenomena are integral to the use of human language.

3.5 Defining “Singing” in View of the Musicality of Speech

When we conceptualise the relationship between text and music, therefore, the musicality of speech forces us to imagine something more like a continuum than a dualism. Any form of speech is to some degree musical, and any definition or categorisation of liturgical functions must acknowledge this—a simple distinction between spoken performance and sung performance is unlikely to be sufficient. Additional points on the continuum might therefore include chanting or canting, which may adapt or exaggerate pitch variation and rhythm, but without the same degree of melodic development as singing. We have reached a point, therefore, where it may be helpful to try and introduce a clearer definition of singing to the discussion.³³

Standard definitions do little to clarify a distinction between singing and “chanting” or “canting.” The Oxford Dictionary of Music describes singing as “Music-making with the human voice either solo or with others.”³⁴ Canting is “Chanting in free rhythm, in plainsong style,” and significantly, is “used most in connection with Jewish liturgical music.”³⁵ We are led then to a definition of chanting, which is provided under two entries: “Anglican Chant” and “Plainsong,” both of which are defined as forms of singing.³⁶ Anglican Chant is a:

³² See note 15 above.

³³ As indicated at several points in this thesis, I do not consider fixed or static definitions always to be necessary or even helpful as categorising tools, as unpacked in Darby, “Beyond Definitions of Prayer.” Nonetheless, walking through the steps of attempting to formulate a definition not only helps to clarify the theoretical issues at stake, but also serves to illustrate some of the difficulties inherent to the task of definition.

³⁴ “Singing,” in Michael Kennedy, Joyce Bourne Kennedy and Tim Rutherford-Johnson (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 6th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 417.

³⁵ “Cantillation,” *Dictionary of Music*, 76.

³⁶ “Anglican Chant,” “Cantillation,” and “Plainsong,” *Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 18, 86, 353.

Simple type of harmonized melody used in the Anglican Church (and nowadays often in other English-speaking Protestant churches) for singing unmetrical texts, principally the Psalms and the canticles (when these latter are not sung in a more elaborate setting).³⁷

Plainsong is “[T]he large body of traditional ritual melody of the Western Christian Church,” and is a translation of:

Cantus planus—in contra-distinction to *cantus-figuratus* (florid song implying a counterpoint added to the traditional melody) or *cantus mensuratus* (measured song, implying the regularity of rhythm association with harmonic music).³⁸

What is clear from a reading of these definitions together is that chanting (including “cantillation”) is not a musical form that is *distinct from* singing in some way—rather it is itself a distinct form of singing. This means that in establishing the bounds of our analysis of singing and text, we should not *exclude* chanting or cantillation from our investigation, but include them under an umbrella definition as legitimate forms of singing.

The boundary of distinction we are looking for when trying to define singing does not lie, therefore, between singing and forms of chanting, but perhaps between *speech* and chanting, or alternatively put, between *spoken word* and chanting. I have already argued that speech is inherently musical—how then can we define the difference between speech and chant? If we continue to follow the lead of the dictionary definitions quoted above, we must interrogate the phrase “music-making with the voice” as used to define the concept of singing.³⁹ If all speech is to some degree musical (or at least exhibits musical characteristics), and singing is “music-making,” then is the distinction to be found in the conscious or deliberate act of *making* something musical with the voice?

³⁷ “Anglican Chant,” *Dictionary of Music*, 18.

³⁸ “Plainsong,” *Dictionary of Music*, 353.

³⁹ *Dictionary of Music*, 417.

Music can be defined as “The art or science of combining vocal or instrumental sounds to produce beauty of form, harmony, melody, rhythm, expressive content, etc.”⁴⁰ There is an emphasis here upon the act of combining sounds in order to produce something musical, again drawing attention to the action of making or manipulating. This action could also be described as an active arrangement of sounds. As long as it is acknowledged that all speech exhibits musical characteristics and operates to a degree musically, we might therefore formulate a definition such as the following: singing is “the arrangement of speech as an act of music-making.” This is progress, but runs into a further major obstacle. We are thrown back to the lack of clarity in our definition of music: if all speech possesses musical characteristics, then what would exclude spoken poetry from such a definition, other than the conscious choice of the term “music”? Poetry can exhibit the deliberate arrangement of speech, consciously patterning its musical features (such as pitch, tone and rhythm), yet we instinctively know that there is a difference between *spoken* poetry and *sung* poetry. The difference may be indistinct at times, inhabiting the border-lands between what we perceive to be “spoken word” or “song,” yet we are conscious that there is a difference.⁴¹

My suggestion is that the defining element in this distinction is the formation of *melody*. Despite the fact that some languages are “tone-languages,” and the variation of tone as such is integral to their comprehensibility and the communication of meaning, even a poetic arrangement of words according to such tonal qualities does not necessarily constitute a consciously constructed *melody*.⁴² Melody involves the manipulation of pitch—even if there is no variation of pitch at all in a melody, and a single note is repeated ad infinitum, this constitutes a *manipulation* of pitch, because human speech otherwise in its means of expression contains a degree of pitch-variation. Without such variation, a human voice gives the impression of being artificial, unnatural, or robotic. Rhythm is also an innate characteristic of melody—it is impossible to create a melody without rhythmic content, however minimal, as even the most basic duration of created sound has a beginning and end

⁴⁰ “Music,” *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Accessed online via the University of Manchester portal: <https://www-oed-com.manchester.idm.oclc.org/view/Entry/124108?rskey=ut9gCK&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid>

⁴¹ Some performances exhibit what appears to be a grey area between “spoken word” and singing, and some examples from the world of popular music serve to illustrate this phenomenon. Leonard Cohen’s “You Want it Darker” serves as a good example, as do many rap performances. Rapping is distinguishable from spoken word poetry and also from singing, though rap performances often stray into this same grey area, particularly in records that include a chorus or “hook line.”

⁴² Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics,” 146–50, 148.

and thus generates a rhythmic value. Yet rhythm alone cannot be a defining characteristic of song, as spoken word can also be highly rhythmic yet distinct from singing.

The element of construction remains key in the formation of a melody—however short or long a melodic phrase is in duration, however abstract or conventional in its patterning, it must be shaped in terms of the relationship between pitch and rhythm in order to produce a musical phrase.⁴³ This shaping must adapt or manipulate pitch and rhythm (and potentially tone) beyond the natural musical characteristics of pronunciation in a given language. This shaping results in a tonality which is more clearly defined than that of speech. The elements I have identified could be combined to produce a definition such as the following:

Singing is the act of manipulating, arranging, or adapting vocalised sound by defining tonality in order to produce a melody.

The foregoing discussion illustrates that this is a definition of singing that includes forms such as cantillation and chanting, and draws a line of distinction between spoken-word and song, whilst accounting for the fact that all forms of speech exhibit musical features. It is this working definition of singing that I will assume in the course of my subsequent investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

3.6 Implications for the Study of Textual Variety Among the Dead Sea Scrolls

One final observation is worth making before moving on from arguments concerning the inter-relatedness of music and speech. Having developed a definition of singing that places it on a continuum of “musical speech,” and having explored the multitude of ways that the integral relationship between melody and text can express itself within the compositional process, it should by now be strikingly apparent—when dealing with ancient texts such as those discovered at or near Qumran—that any hope of being able to somehow reconstruct qualitative information about the character of music is misdirected. Even if we can discern poetic characteristics of psalms (such as metre, stress, parallelism, assonance, dissonance, alliteration or even rhyme), the multitudinous possibilities as to how these poetic features might combine, interact and operate musically render speculations virtually meaningless.

⁴³ For a description of phraseology, see Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics,” 147–8.

When we add into this equation the diachronic variables of diverse social settings, recognising that most of these texts have lived long lives of performance and travelled through countless minor or major variations of function through generations of liturgical usage, then the goal of trying to establish a singular, specific function or social setting for any of the poetic texts with which we are concerned also appears misguided. This is not to say that identifying *possible* appropriate settings—or even settings for which there exist compelling arguments and evidence—is not worthwhile. A global analysis such as Daniel Falk’s *Daily Sabbath and Festival Prayers* is of great value in this respect.⁴⁴ It is the *reduction* of our conception of a liturgical text’s function or setting that is problematic. The limitations of our reconstructions must always be acknowledged and borne in mind, and the sheer breadth and complexity of possibilities needs to be continually emphasised.

We are the beneficiaries of an astonishingly rich and extensive fund of material textual data for Second Temple Judaism, and the potential for expanding our understanding of liturgical texts and functions in this period is great. If we adjust our goal towards *illustrating* the breadth of complexity and possibilities, we immediately enable our results to become more fruitful and constructive. These possibilities point to potential avenues for research and reflection that can enrich and clarify our understanding of textuality and performance as reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The dynamics which connect performance and textual variety also draw attention to interpretative processes—each performance event, whether “oral,” “written,” or incorporating aspects of both (as might be the case, for instance, in dictation, instruction, memory-recall, singing or prayer) is a moment of interpretation, and choices are made to “re-present” a tradition in a given time and place, for particular reasons and in a particular way.⁴⁵ In this study I do not aim, therefore, to pinpoint the musical function or liturgical settings of specific texts, but to approach the evidence with research questions which as yet have received little or no attention, in order to garner fresh insights concerning processes of textuality.

⁴⁴ Falk, *Festival Prayers*.

⁴⁵ Perry, “Biblical Performance Criticism,” 122–4.

3.7 Chapter Three Conclusions

I have attempted firstly to conceptualise the interactive relationship that exists between music and text, which is highlighted particularly through an examination of the process of composition and the adaptation of lyric and melody within that process. The relationship is further illuminated by the findings of empirical studies which have observed the musical qualities that are innate to speech. The musicality of speech provokes us to imagine a continuum between spoken word and song, and poses thereby a challenge to the task of definition, in that identification of a precise border upon that continuum across which speech becomes song is highly problematic.

All speech possesses musical characteristics—what is it precisely that turns speech into song? The exaggeration of musical features is not a sufficient criterion, as an exaggeration of such features can be present within poetry that is not sung. An intentional manipulation and arrangement of features is shown to be key, yet alone it is not sufficient to demarcate singing. The roles of “melody,” “phraseology” and “defined tonality” emerge as additionally decisive features, and thus the following working definition is arrived at for the purposes of this study:

Singing is the act of manipulating, arranging or adapting speech by defining tonality in order to produce a melody.

A corollary yet important finding in the course of developing this definition is the observation that canting or chanting should be considered to be distinct types of singing, rather than distinguished from singing.

Beyond establishing a working definition of singing as a tool for research, the study of these musicological themes suggests a multiplicity of ways that singing and text can interact to produce changes and adaptation in text at various stages of composition and performance. I will explore in chapter six the kinds of textual variation that might result from the influence of musical and liturgical performance. At this stage, however, it is important to acknowledge that instead of narrowing options concerning explanatory causes for individual textual phenomena, the study of music and textuality *expands* our view as to a range of possible influences that are rarely considered as factors. In combination with the recognition that we can seldom speak with confidence or precision about specific settings for liturgical texts discovered at Qumran, this research forces us to acknowledge that a study of the sung

performance of texts illustrates to an even greater degree the extreme complexity and multiplicity of variables at play in the transmission of Second Temple Literature.

The extent of potential explanatory causes of textual variation is only increased by paying attention to musical factors, suggesting that the pluriformity of textual evidence among the manuscripts found at or near Qumran should not be viewed as a surprising or unusual feature requiring special pleading or explanation, but rather a natural and in-built characteristic of liturgical compositions such as psalms and hymns. The converse implication is that to observe a high degree of textual stability in psalm texts during this period should be seen as somewhat remarkable, and requiring some explanation. The possibility of evidence for increased textual standardisation towards the end of the first century C.E. therefore raises intriguing questions for further research about liturgical functions and developments during those decades.⁴⁶ In chapter six, however, I will present evidence that the overwhelming picture among psalms scrolls from Qumran is one of a greater degree of significant variation among these texts than among other types of literature, and that many such examples of textual variation among psalms scrolls involve changes to features commonly associated with liturgical usage.

⁴⁶ For arguments in favour of textual standardisation emerging towards the end of the First Century C.E., as well as multiple alternatives, see Lange, "They Confirmed the Reading."

CHAPTER FOUR:
THE FUNCTION OF SINGING IN PSALM 154 AND DAVID'S COMPOSITIONS

4.1 Introduction

Having established in chapters two and three the theoretical frameworks which act as the basis for my exegetical approach, I turn now to case studies of selected texts. In the following chapter I take two compositions from the 11QPs^a collection, and approach with the following research questions: is there evidence among these texts for the liturgical practice of singing, and if so, what role (if any) does singing play in connection with processes of textuality? Psalm 154/Syriac Psalm II and David's Compositions are selected for the following reasons. Both contain explicit references to singing within a literary context that contains a great deal of additional material relevant to the discussion. Both also occur within a manuscript that is widely acknowledged to be a liturgically motivated collection of Psalms. Furthermore, both compositions contain material that is highly suggestive of a connection between singing and processes of textual transmission. A close reading of Psalm 154 and David's Compositions, paying attention to these factors, therefore yields some key insights as to the role of singing within textual processes.

4.2 Psalm 154/Syriac Psalm II (11Q5 XVIII, 1-19)

Column eighteen of the great Psalms scroll from Qumran (11Q5/11QPs^a) contains a Psalm previously known only in Syriac, as part of a group of five non-masoretic Psalms preserved in the Nestorian tradition and attested in a number of manuscripts dating from the 12th to the 19th century C.E.¹ In order to demonstrate the significance of this Psalm in relation to the practice of communal singing, it is first necessary to consider its structure and themes. Sanders reconstructs the poetic structure of Psalm 154 by comparing the Hebrew of 11Q5 with the Syriac versions, which also supply missing lines at the beginning and end of the poem.² I present the Psalm on the pages immediately below as per Sanders' reconstruction, but with minor adaptations of my own which will be discussed presently.³

¹ Sanders, DJD IV, 53.

² Sanders, DJD IV, 64, 67-8.

³ Sanders, DJD IV, 64.

			Verse	Syriac Lines	Col. XVIII Lines
3/3	בקהל רבים השמיעו תפארתו ועם אמונים ספרו גדולתו	בקול גדול פארו אלוהים ברוב ישרים פארו שמו	(1) (2)	1–2 3–4	
(11QPs ^a Col. XVIII)					
3/3/3	ולתמימים לפאר עליון ואל תתעצלו להודיע עוזו	[חברו] לטובים נפשתכמה החבירו יחד להודיע ישעו ותפארתו לכול פותאים	(3) (4)	5–6 7–8	1 1–2
3/2	נתנה חוכמה	כי להודיע כבוד יהוה	(5)	9	3
3/2	נודעה לאדם	ולספר רוב מעשיו	(6)	10	3–4
3/3	להשכיל לחסרי לבב גדולתו	להודיע לפותאים עוזו	(7)	11–12	4–5
3/2	הנדחים ממבואיה	הרחוקים מפתחיה	(8)	13–14	5–6
3/3	ותפארתו על כול מעשיו	כי עליון הוא אדון יעקוב	(9)	15–16	6–7
3/3	ירצה כמגיש מנחה	ואדם מפאר עליון	(10)	17–18	7–8
		כמקריב עתודים ובני בקר כמדשן מזבח ברוב עולות	(11)	19–21	8 9
3/3/3	כקטורת [○○○] ניחוח מיד צדיקים				9–10
3/3	ומקהל חסידים זמרתה	מפתחי צדיקים נשמע קולה	(12)	22–3	10–11
3/3	ועל שתותמה בחבר יחדיו	על אוכלסה בשבע נאמרה	(13)	24–5	11–12
3/3	אמריהמה להודיע עוזו	שיחתם בתורת עליון	(14)	26–7	12
3/3	מכול זדים לדעתה	כמה רחקה מרשעים אמרה	(15)	28–9	13
3/3	על טובים תחמל	הנה עיני יהוה	(16)	30	13–14
3/3	מעט רעה יציל נפש[ם]	ועל מפאריו יגדל חסדו	(17)	31–2	14–15
3/3/3	ומצי[ל] [תמימים מיד רשעים]	[ברכו את] יהוה	(18)	33–5	15 15–16
3/3	ושופט [עמים מישראל]	גואל עני מיד זר[ים]	(19)	36–7	16
[3/3]	ויועד לנצח בירושלים]	מקים קרן מיע[קוֹב]	(20)	38–9	

- 1 *[With a loud voice glorify God,*
 In the assembly of the multitudes make his glory heard
- 2 *With the multitudes of the upright glorify his name,*
 And with the faithful recount his greatness.
- 3 *Join] your souls with those who are good*
 And those who are blameless, to glorify the Most High
- 4 *Join together to make known His salvation,*
 And do not hesitate to make known His might
 And His glory to all the untaught.
- 5 *For (in order) to make known His glory, Yahweh*
 Has given wisdom
- 6 *And to recount the multitude of His deeds,*
 It has been made known to humankind.
- 7 *To make known to the untaught His might,*
 To teach those who lack heart His greatness,
- 8 *Those who are far from His gates,*
 Those who are banished from His doorways.
- 9 *For the Most High, He is Lord of Jacob,*
 And His glory is over all His works.
- 10 *And the one who glorifies the Most High*
 Will be accepted as one who brings an offering,
- 11 *As one who brings male goats and sons of cattle,*
 As one who makes the altar fat with a multitude of burnt offerings
 As a soothing odour of incense from the hand of the righteous ones.
- 12 *From the gates of the righteous her voice is heard,*
 And from the congregation of the faithful her song.
- 13 *Over their eating in abundance, her speech*
 And over their drinking in community together
- 14 *Their meditation is in the Law of the Most High,*
 Their speech to make known His might.
- 15 *How far from the wicked is her speech,*
 From all the proud her knowledge.
- 16 *Behold the eyes of Yahweh*
 Upon the good will show mercy
- 17 *And upon those who glorify Him He will increase His lovingkindness,*
 From the evil time He will deliver their soul.
- 18 *[Bless] Yahweh:*
 Redeemer of the poor from the hand of strange[rs,
 And deliverer]r [of the blameless from the hand of the wicked]
- 19 *Who raises the horn of Ja]cob*
 And judges [the peoples from Israel]
- 20 *[He will spread His tent in Zion,*
 And endure forever in Jerusalem]⁴

⁴ Translation is my own.

The first minor alteration I have made to Sanders' structuring of the Psalm is to begin the penultimate (fifth) strophe with v15 (rather than v16 in Sanders' scheme) and the interjection כִּמָּה. This means that after an introductory section characterised by six second person plural imperatives in the space of the first four verses (which are an opening call to praise), three sections then follow in the main body of the Psalm which each introduce a new theme (the gift of wisdom for the purpose of instruction, verses 5-8; the value of praise, verses 9-14; contrast with the wicked, verses 15-17). Each of these three main sections begins with some form of the conjunction כִּי (prefixed as כִּמָּה in v15). The final strophe then begins with יהוה בֵּרַכְוּ אֶת יְהוָה in v18 (as opposed to v15 in Sanders' scheme), and thereby acts as the Psalm's closing blessing or postscript.

In this reconstruction, a clear and logical structure results: the Psalm opens with an introductory call to praise (vv1-4), closes with a blessing (vv18-20), and in the middle are three sections which each begin with some form of the particle כִּי. A corollary benefit of this scheme is that the three strophes in the body of the Psalm are now also more balanced in terms of metre, with strophes three, four and five all consisting of three lines of 3/3.⁵ The third strophe diverges from this only in verse eleven, which is lengthened to a metre of 3/3/3 for the following reason: the verse is being emphasised as central within the structure of the Psalm, and itself contains three clauses, each also beginning with the *kaph* prefix. In this way, verse eleven has a sub-structure of its own within the Psalm, which can be visualised with the help of the indentations employed in the layout above. It should be stressed at this point (in case this arrangement of the Psalm appears forced) that we are dealing here with linguistic markers that would stand out both in oral performance and aural reception, not only because of the fricative quality of the letter *kaph*, but also because in verses five, nine and fifteen the interjections have a rhetorical function introducing new subject matter.⁶

Of course, in 11Q5 itself the Psalm is not presented visually in this way at all, but as continuous prose. The format of the Psalm in the manuscript is at least partially due to

⁵ I am aware that the discernment and measurement of metrical patterns in Hebrew poetry is a somewhat contested issue, and involves a degree of subjectivity. Using Sanders' metrical analysis, however, the features observed here are nonetheless striking and offer some additional evidence that is worthy of note.

⁶ The *kaph* prefixes in the sub-structure of verse eleven function somewhat differently in that they introduce comparisons ("as/like..."), underscoring the comments below that this verse should be seen as an independent sub-unit within the third strophe, rather than the beginning of a new section.

material and technical constraints—line 6 contains a *vacat* and is then followed by two blank lines, yet these breaks in the text bear no relation to the poetic structure of the Psalm, cutting directly across sense units. They are attributed by Sanders to rough and unusable areas of the writing surface, a common problem with manuscripts prepared from animal hides and one that is observable on many of the scrolls found at or near Qumran.⁷ It is reasonable to assert, therefore, that Psalm 154 is composed according to a discernible poetic structure such as the one suggested above, despite the fact that it is not arranged stichometrically in 11Q5 itself. Tov acknowledges that 11QPs^a is liturgical despite a lack of stichometry, and records both that stichometry is used in texts that do not have a liturgical background, and that for almost every text presented stichometrically there exists a prose counterpart, indicating that there is no standardised practice.⁸

Looking more closely at the structure of the Psalm helps us to chart its thematic development and understand the role that communal singing plays within the composition. Taking verse eleven, we can see that immediately preceding the description of the voice of Wisdom heard through the song of the community in verses 12-14, Sanders identifies an interruption to the poetic and thematic flow of the Psalm (11Q5 XVIII, 8–10).⁹ In line 9 of the manuscript (midway through the final phrase of verse 11 of the Psalm) there is a *vacat* between *בְּקִטּוֹרֶת* (incense) and *נִיחֹחַ* (soothing), in which Sanders suggests the possibility that the word *רִיחַ* (odour) may have been deleted.¹⁰ He refers the reader to the Syriac version, which reads here “the smell of incense.”¹¹ If the word *רִיחַ* were to be inserted into this gap, the metric structure that Sanders perceives would be unbalanced, and he does not include the term in his translation and reconstruction of the Psalm as a whole.¹² For Sanders, the structure of verse 11 plays an important role in the Psalm, indicating a deliberate digression from the otherwise consistent pattern of the rest of the poem in order to emphasise that the “man who glorifies the Most High” is as acceptable to God as one who offers sacrifices.¹³ The question of how to

⁷ Ingo Kottsieper, “Physicality of Manuscripts and Material Culture,” in Brooke and Hempel, 167-177, 169-70; Sanders, DJD IV, 14, 66.

⁸ Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 166-7.

⁹ Sanders, DJD IV, 64-8.

¹⁰ Sanders, DJD IV, 66.

¹¹ My thanks to Professor John Healey for his comments on the Syriac translation of this verse.

¹² Sanders, DJD IV, 64-5.

¹³ Sanders, DJD IV, 67-8.

treat the *vacat* of line 9 thus carries some significance, particularly as the thematic flow of the Psalm from this point onwards was apparently not easily discerned in later Syriac copies.¹⁴

Upon inspection of the physical manuscript, there is no doubt that an area of surface leather has been scratched away at this point, indicating a scribal deletion. A high-quality infrared image provided by the Israel Antiquities Authority is yet more revealing, however, and makes remnant ink traces that are not easily discernible to the naked eye (or in the photographs available online in the Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Archive) clearly visible.¹⁵ This image confirms Sanders' impression that ריה has been deleted here, showing clearly that this is a deliberate scribal correction. This is an intriguing text critical datum that deserves further reflection, perhaps even along the same lines as the examples analysed in chapter six, which are presented as variants potentially related to liturgical performance. At this stage of argument, however, attention is drawn to this scribal correction only with the literary structure and themes of Psalm 154 in view. The deletion confirms that, at least in the mind of the corrector (be it the same scribe or a different one), the word ריה should not have been included here. The metrical structure that Sanders perceived in this section therefore remains intact.¹⁶

Apart from this structural question concerning the central verse of the Psalm, Sanders' reading of the sense-flow of the composition is still coherent: verse 11 (11Q5 18:8-10) is an expansion of verse 10, emphasising the acceptability of the *'adam* who glorifies God, before Wisdom as subject is explicitly picked up again in verse 12 (11Q5 18:10-11).¹⁷ Taking a step back to briefly take stock of our research question, we may ask at this point what purpose emphasising the acceptability of praise in the absence of material sacrifices might have, if acts of praise as described in this Psalm were not themselves a recognised practice? Contra those who express doubt regarding literary evidence in the Dead Sea Scrolls for the practice of liturgical singing, this emphasis on the acceptability of glorifying God in the place of

¹⁴ Sanders, DJD IV, 67.

¹⁵ I am sincerely grateful to Beatriz Riestra and the curators at the Israel Antiquities Authority for allowing me to spend time inspecting 11Q5 during my stay in Jerusalem, and for sharing with me the IAA's extraordinarily high-quality range of photographic images of the manuscript.

¹⁶ Sanders, DJD IV, 64.

¹⁷ Sanders, DJD IV, 67.

sacrificial offerings lends weight to our conclusion that Psalm 154 points to a recognised function of corporate song described throughout the Psalm and explored further below.¹⁸

The above analysis of the structure of Psalm 154 has an important bearing on our discussion in the following ways: firstly, as noted above, verse 11 is highlighted as central in the scheme of the whole Psalm. If verse 11 encapsulates the Psalm's primary message, we can summarise it as follows: praising God is as acceptable as bringing sacrificial offerings. Verse 11 is central not only in emphasis, however, but also because it acts as a turning point in the poem—it is a central fulcrum in terms of subject matter. It is by way of this expression of praise as acceptable sacrifice that vv9-14 move from the singular “person/man” (*adam*) as exemplar (or humankind in general) to the plural of the congregation (קהל) of the righteous (צדיקים) and faithful (חסידים) who gather together in community (יחדיו) to praise, meditate, eat and drink together (vv12-14). Verse 12, with its explicit reference to corporate singing, is the focus of this chapter, and follows immediately the transition of verse 11. If the acceptability of the ‘*adam* who glorifies God in verses 10 to 11 is the main thrust of the Psalm, verses 12-14 go on to describe for us this exemplary “man who glorifies” in the context of the praising congregation. We will return to focus on the description of the praising community once the Psalm's overarching theme has been explored a little further.

Psalm 154 is concerned throughout with the glorification of God through praise—the root פאר (to beautify, glorify, or adorn)¹⁹ is used no fewer than eight times (vv1-4, 9-10, 17) and characterises the Psalm as a whole.²⁰ The majority of MT uses of פאר do not imply verbalisation of any kind (such as Ex 8:5; Deut 24:20; Isa 44:23, 49:3; 55:5; 60:7, 9, 13, 21; 61:3; Ez 7:27; Ps 149:4; with Judges 7:2 and Isaiah 10:15 somewhat ambiguous in this regard in terms of their references to boasting). פאר in Psalm 154, however, is expressly used to denote verbalisation: it is undertaken with a loud voice and the congregation are instructed to make [his glory] *heard* (v1); it is in parallel with ‘recounting’ (ספר) in verse two; it is to be done together in the community of the faithful (vv2-4) in order to ‘*make known*’ several attributes of God (his salvation, v4; his glory, v5;²¹ his might, vv4, 7, 14) and to ‘recount’ his

¹⁸ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 180-88.

¹⁹ BDB, 802; and DCH, 6:645-6. The use and meaning of this verb will receive further attention, however at this point dictionary definitions will suffice.

²⁰ Hence Sanders' description of this verb as “so dominant” in the Psalm: Sanders, DJD IV, 69.

²¹ In verse 5 כבוד is used for glory as opposed to תפארת (v1). It might be that this distinction underlines the shifting of the usage from ‘glory’ towards ‘praise’ in this Psalm. ‘Glory’ and ‘praise’ in this sense are not far

greatness and his many deeds (vv2, 6). In verse 12, the praise of the gathered community is envisaged as the voice of Wisdom *being heard* outside the gates of the assembly through their song, and in verses 13 and 14 her speech is *heard* during their feasting. The emphasis on sound and hearing (זמרתה, קולה, נשמע) throughout indicates verbalised praise, as does the emphasis on voice and speech in verses 1 and 12-15 (אמרה, נאמרה, קול) and on “making known” in verse 4-5, 7 and 14. The infinitive construct of the hiphil form of ידע appears five times in these verses, and it is hard to imagine how those who glorify God might be expected to make wisdom known to the untaught (פוחאים, lines 2 and 4) without employing some kind of utterance or verbalisation. Although highlighting verbalisation in this way may seem to be labouring a point, it is necessary to emphasise this aspect in light of the uncertainty that has been expressed regarding evidence for the liturgical performance of singing, and the argument that the metaphorical use of musical terms does not indicate musical function.²² The acceptability to God of the one who glorifies him in these ways is reiterated in verse 17, underlining the continuity of the Psalm and the pervasiveness of the theme. פאר is envisioned as the *verbalised praise of God in the assembly*, in a clear and explicit sense that is etymologically possible in MT Hebrew but never used as overtly as in Psalm 154.

4.2.1 Terminology and Parallels with Isaiah 60

This distinct usage in comparison with all instances of פאר in MT is consonant with the theological contribution of Psalm 154, a point which is underlined when we compare the Psalm with Isaiah 60 in particular. Isaiah 60 contains numerous linguistic and thematic resonances: five of the fourteen MT uses of פאר occur in this one chapter, along with כבוד three times (cf. Ps 154:5). The acceptance of animal sacrifice on the altar is also linked with a double usage of פאר in Isaiah 60:7, just as in verses nine to eleven of Psalm 154 (MT):

כִּלְצֹאן קִדְרִי יִקְבְּצוּ לִי אֵילֵי נְבוֹזֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִעָלּוּ עַל־רִצּוֹן מִזְבְּחִי וּבֵית תַּפְאֲרָתִי אֶפְאֵר:

apart semantically, and even if we can perceive a shift or development in the usage of פאר we are dealing with degrees of emphasis and shades of meaning along a spectrum.

²² This issue will be addressed further section 4.2.3 “References to Singing in Psalm 154 and the Question of Metaphor.” See also section 2.2.4 and Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 176-83.

“All the flock of Qedar will be gathered to you, the rams of Nevioth will minister to you, they will go up with acceptance on my altar and I will glorify the house of my glory.”

Isaiah 60:7²³

Of the MT uses cited above, Ezra 7:27 and Isaiah 60:7 and 13 use פאר to refer specifically to beautifying the Temple. In Isaiah 60:7 it is the *house* of Yahweh that is the object of beautification, a theme that is altogether absent from Psalm 154, where God himself is the object (vv1-3, 10). Although sacrificial language is central to the Psalm (v11), it is present without mention of the Temple, unlike Isaiah 60:7, and it is present in order to emphasise that an alternative form of worship is equally acceptable in the place of sacrifice. Praise of God is indeed present in Isaiah 60 (in v6, and also using פאר in v21), but unlike Psalm 154 פאר refers not only to God and the House of God being glorified, but also to the people themselves as object—the people collectively are “glorified” or “beautified” by God (v9).

Another aspect of this glorification is present in both texts, but emphasised to a far greater degree in Psalm 154. We might describe this aspect as the “horizontal” dimension as opposed to the “vertical” dimension, in terms of the direction of the impact of praise. Here, the “glorifying” of God is directed (at least in part) toward the other members of the assembly, who are intended to hear the praise so that they may learn. Praise is thus enjoined as a *means* of the instruction of others, in particular those who are “simple” or “untaught” (vv2, 4-7, 12-14). This “horizontal” aspect itself implies verbalisation and corporate liturgical practice, as is made explicit elsewhere in the Psalm: praising God can only teach others if they are able to hear it. Isaiah 60 with its shared themes and terminology thus acts as a useful foil to highlight some of the particular emphases of Psalm 154 and its distinctive usage of the verb פאר. The verb is not applied to the temple itself, despite the presence of sacrificial language, which in fact serves a different purpose. There is, in turn, greater emphasis on the instructional, vocalised, and corporate characteristics of praise.

²³ English translations are my own unless otherwise specified.

4.2.2 Closer Consideration of Verse 12

Our discussion leads us to a closer consideration of verse 12, which expresses most clearly the practice of communal singing. In Sanders' reconstruction, verse twelve is of particular significance for further reasons which will be discussed below. In the parallel clauses of Sanders' reconstruction, the verse reads thus:

ומקהל חסידים זמרתה מפתחי צדיקים נשמע קולה
*"From the gates of the righteous her voice is heard,
 And from the assembly of the faithful, her song."*
 (11Q5:10-11/Psalm 154:12)

The first reason why this line is of particular significance is that it is textually the most problematic among the Syrian manuscripts.²⁴ According to Sanders' analysis, the Hebrew version of the Psalm from Qumran displays a clear balance of synonymous parallelism and metre that becomes confused in the Syriac transmission.²⁵ His conclusion is that the Syriac pointer failed to perceive that the Psalm had returned to the wisdom theme after the emphatic interruption of verse 11, which breaks the flow of the Psalm both thematically and in terms of its metre (11Q5:8-10).²⁶ These complications are important to acknowledge because it is the content of verse 12 that is of particular significance for the present study. Evidence of confusion in later Syriac transmission, however, need not impact our interpretation of the Hebrew text from Qumran, except to highlight the fact that this verse does indeed pick up and continue the wisdom theme from the earlier portion of the Psalm in verses 5-7. The giving of wisdom in verses 5-7 is for the purpose of instruction, and thus has a corporate dimension: "to make known the glory of Yahweh" (v5), "to recount the multitude of His deeds" (v6), and to teach the untaught about "His greatness and might" (v7). The gift of wisdom is given to *adam*, indicating that a gift to humankind in general is in view (v6). Wisdom has been given to humankind to teach the untaught about Yahweh and to recount his deeds. These are the activities that "glorify" or "beautify" Yahweh (פאר). Verses twelve to thirteen expand by describing what this teaching and glorifying looks like in practice: it is enacted through

²⁴ Sanders, DJD IV, 67.

²⁵ Sanders, DJD IV, 67.

²⁶ Sanders, DJD IV, 64, 66-67.

singing (v12), through speech (v13), and through meditation (v14), all of which activities are undertaken together in community.²⁷ Let us examine each of these three aspects in turn.

In the first place, verse twelve refers to the sound of corporate singing which can be heard from the entrance of the righteous assembly. There is no question that the “voice” and “song” belong to an assembled gathering: the adjectival nouns צדיקים and חסידים are both plural, as would be expected when referring to the קהל, which is habitually used in both MT and Qumran literature to refer to the gathered assembly of God’s people.²⁸ קהל stands here in synonymous parallelism with פתח, which can refer to the entrance of the Mosaic tabernacle (Ex 29:11, 32, 42; 33:9, 10; 38:8; 40:5, 28); the door of the tent of meeting (1 Chr 9:21); the entrance of the city gate (Jos 20:4; Jg 9:35, 44; 2 Sam 10:8; 1 Ki 22:10//2Chr 18:9; 2 Ki 7:3, 10:8; Jer 1:15, 19:2) or the temple gate (Jer 36:10; Ezk 10:19, 46:3).²⁹ The nature of the envisaged gathering needs to be pressed further, but at this stage it can at least be pointed out that the “voice” and “song” referred to is that of a group rather than an individual. To underline again the significance of this verse, we have here a description of the praise of God enacted as communal singing. This corporate song of praise has two principal functions according to Psalm 154: it acts on the one hand as an acceptable substitute for animal sacrifice (vv10-11), and on the other hand as a means of instruction (vv1-8, 12-14). The wisdom theme is commensurate with the second point: the gift of wisdom is given to enable instruction through praise (5-7), and thus the voice of personified Wisdom (indicated by the third person feminine singular suffixes of verse twelve) is heard through the song of the congregation.

In verses thirteen to fourteen we are introduced to the communal meal or feast as setting, and the question arises as to whether the same occasion as verse twelve is being described, or whether an alternative setting is in view. Both are conceptually possible: on the one hand, a communal meal could be attended by singing before or after eating, a known practice from other contexts within Second Temple Judaism.³⁰ A distinction between the two settings (as

²⁷ Alternatives to “meditation” as a translation for שיחה will be discussed below.

²⁸ DCH, 7:205-8.

²⁹ DCH, 6:806-9.

³⁰ See for instance Matt 26:30//Lk 14:20 and the widely acknowledged practice of singing “The Great Hallel” (Pss 113-118) at the three annual feasts, as well as its designation as a “Passover Hymn”: Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC 21; Waco: Word Books, 1983), ix; Erich Zenger, “The Composition and Theology of

far as this particular text is concerned) is also conceivable: strictly speaking and depending on translation choices (to be discussed below), verses thirteen to fourteen mention only speech (אמריהמה) and meditation (שיחתם), as opposed to singing explicitly. A full exploration of this issue would require a much wider discussion of spaces at Qumran (both physical and symbolic), communal eating practices and the nature of the dispersed communities associated with Qumran and the Yahad.³¹ While these might all be worthwhile directions for further inquiry, we can at this juncture already make a number of important observations, such as the following: the central message of Psalm 154 is the acceptability of vocalised praise in the place of animal sacrifice. As well as glorifying Yahweh, praise is presented as an activity that is both communal and didactic. The communal aspect of such praise in the envisaged congregation is described using terminology associated in MT with the Temple (פאת; פתח); and is closely associated with communal meals and meditation on Torah (vv13-14). It is possible that sung praise may even be *equated* with meditation on Torah, a possibility that we will now explore by considering the semantic range of the root שיח and the connection between verses twelve to fourteen.

שיחתם in line twelve of column eighteen has been translated in major editions both as “conversation” (Wise, Abegg and Cook) and “meditation” (Vermes, Sanders).³² According to Clines’ Dictionary of Classical Hebrew, the meaning of the root verb שיח is better defined as “to tell, rather than meditate” and “is essentially a verbal, not a mental, activity, in reference especially to loud, enthusiastic and emotion-laden speech.”³³ The emotive element within the verb’s semantic field can be expressed as speech with negative connotations such as complaint and lament (1 Sam 1:16; Jb 7:11, 13, 9:27, 10:1, 21:4, 23:2; Ps 55:18, 64:2; 77:4; 102:1, 142:3; Prov 23:29; 4Q525 [4QBeat] 14 II, 23), or by translating שיח

the Fifth Book of Psalms, Psalms 107-145,” *JSOT* 80 (1998): 77-102; 91-92. See also Falk, “Contribution,” 887-9; Smith, *Music in Ancient Judaism*, 89-90, 117-21, 123-7.

³¹ Cf. such works as Claudia D. Bergmann, “Meals at Qumran: Literary Fiction, Liturgical Anticipation, or Performed Ritual?” in *T & T Clark Handbook to Early Christian Meals in the Greco-Roman World* ed. Soham Al-Suadi and Peter Ben Smit (London/New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2019); Collins, “Social Organisation;” Hempel, *Rule Texts in Context*; Sarianna Metso, *The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule* (STDJ 21; Leiden: Brill, 1997); “Yahad;” Carol A. Newsom, *The Self as Symbolic Space*; Alison Schofield, “An Altar in the Desert? A Response to Jodi Magness, “Were Sacrifices Offered at Qumran?” *JAJ* 7 no.1 (2016): 123-35; “Reading Sectarian Spaces: Critical Spatial Theory and the Case of the Yahad,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Study of the Humanities: Method, Theory, Meaning: Proceedings of the Eighth Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies (Munich, 4-7 August, 2014)*, ed. Pieter B. Harzog, Alison Schofield and Samuel I. Thomas (STDJ 125; Leiden: Brill, 2018), 176-94.

³² Wise, Abegg and Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 449; Sanders, *DJD* IV, 65; Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (Rev. Ed.; London: Penguin, 2004), 309.

³³ In this quotation I have written abbreviated terms in full. DCH, 7:124.

straightforwardly as *singing*. There are at least eleven places in the Hebrew Bible and texts from Qumran where שִׁיחַ could arguably be translated as “singing” or “song,” and we might reasonably include Psalm 154:14 as an eighth. These include: Judges 5:10; Psalm 105:2/1 Chronicles 16:9; Psalm 104:34; 1QS X, 16/4Q260 4, 2; 1QH^a XIX, 8; 1Q14 (1QpMic) 17, 1; 4Q418 (4QInstruction^a) 126 II, 10; 4Q372 (4QapJoseph^b) 3, 4; 4Q437 2 I, 16 and PAM 43.665 5,1.³⁴ 1QpMic 17, 1 is textually problematic, and the issues surrounding reconstruction and translation would require much more discussion than space allows here.³⁵ The suggestion of DCH is nonetheless to translate שִׁיחַ at this point as “sing.”³⁶ In PAM 43.665 5,1 (Unidentified Fragments), יְשִׁיחוּ occurs as a single isolated word and therefore has no immediate context which can inform translation. It may be, however, the second person plural imperative form that leads DCH to raise “sing” as a possible translation at this point also.³⁷ In 4Q372 (4QapJoseph^b) 3, 4 שִׁיחַ appears in a context which, like Psalm 154, is concerned with instruction, speech and praise as “pleasing to the Lord”, containing a number of linguistic and thematic parallels that would repay further investigation (4QapJoseph^b 34-8). For now, it will suffice to observe that “sing” is a most fitting translation for שִׁיחַ in this context. 1QS X, 16 occurs in the context of the 1QS hymn, which contains several references to singing and music (lines 9, 14). In 1QH^a XIX, 8 שִׁיחַ proceeds from a string of terms expressing aspects of song, following תהלה, רנה, and זמר. In 4Q418 (4QInstruction^a) 126 II, 10 ישיחו כול היום (“they will speak/meditate/sing all the day”) occurs in parallel with תמיד יהללו שמו (“they will praise his name continually”). 4Q372 (4QapJoseph^b) 3, 4 connects שִׁיחַ and הלל in a similar manner, in a phrase which is reconstructed by Schuller and Bernstein as יְשִׁיחוּ עָלָיו שִׁיחִי (“I will praise Yahweh, [may] my meditation/speech/song be pleasing to him”).³⁸ 4Q437 2 I, 16 employs שִׁיחַ in the middle of a quotation from Psalm 63:8 and 6, a context which is argued in chapter five to be connected to a form of liturgical practice which can be described as “meditation through song.”³⁹

³⁴ The fragment referred to by DCH as 4QFrgs 6 is published in the DJD series as PAM 43.665 5 (Unidentified Fragments). Dana M. Pike and Andrew C. Skinner, eds., *Qumran Cave 4. XXXIII: Unidentified Fragments*. DJD 33 (Oxford: Clarendon, 2001), 29.

³⁵ Abegg reconstructs the word in question as וְשִׁיחַ, translating as “meditate”: Wise, Abegg and Cook, *Qumran Non-biblical*. Martínez and Tigchelaar give the transliteration וְשִׁיחַ. DCH also reads it as an instance of שִׁיחַ and offers the translation “sing” (DCH, 8:125).

³⁶ DCH, 8:125.

³⁷ DCH, 7:125.

³⁸ Eileen M. Schuller et al., *Qumran Cave 4. XXVIII: Miscellanea, Part 2*, DJD 28 (Oxford: Clarendon, 2001), 181.

³⁹ See pages 143–49 below.

The context of Judges 5:10 is the song of Deborah and Barak, and the imperative of שִׁחַ occurs in parallel with the exhortation to “Bless the LORD” in celebration of victory. This is reflected in the choice of at least one English version (NASB) to translate the command as “sing.” Again, in Psalm 105:2 and 1 Chronicles 16:9, the imperative speaks in parallel with the call to “Sing to Him, sing praise to Him”, and could conceivably be translated as both speak/tell or sing. As there is not an English alternative to ‘sing’ that could function as a synonymous parallel, it is natural for English translations to select a verb such as speak, tell or talk (hence NASB, NRSV, KJV, NIV, JUB) in this context, but we must acknowledge that just as in Psalm 154:12-14, שִׁחַ stands in close parallel relationship with corporate singing. In fact, in these instances it is thoroughly embedded within a literary context of communal song.

To highlight another aspect of the polyvalent meaning of this Hebrew root, it is clear that the verb and derivative noun also appear in plenty of instances in a context which appears to denote meditation of some kind. While BDB is content to offer numerous examples in which שִׁחַ should be translated as “meditation” or “musing” (1 Ki 18:27; Ps 77:7, 13, 104:34, 119:15, 23, 48, 78, 97, 99, 143:5; Gen 24:63), even Clines’ Dictionary of Classical Hebrew (which is at pains to communicate that שִׁחַ means to “tell” or “speak” *rather than* to meditate) offers one occasion where the meaning should be interpreted just so (Psalm 77:13).⁴⁰ What should we make of all this in relation to Psalm 154 and communal singing?

First of all, as with many verbs in Classical Hebrew, the root שִׁחַ is polyvalent in meaning and covers a considerable semantic range from the perspective of the modern reader. Our aim is to learn more about the semantic range of this root and to understand its field of meaning more precisely. A survey of its uses in other literary contexts can help us to do this and can thus inform the interpretation of Psalm 154:14. Similarly, its use in Psalm 154:14 can contribute to our wider understanding of the meaning and function of the word. Our brief survey of literature and the interpretation of standard lexicons makes it clear that the semantic range of שִׁחַ incorporates speech, emotionally-laden speech, meditation, and possibly song.

⁴⁰ BDB, 966-7; DCH, 6:124-6.

There is a strong case for translating שִׁיחַ in terms of singing in a number of instances, but even if such choices were rejected in favour of “tell” or “speak,” it cannot be denied that שִׁיחַ occurs frequently in the *context* of singing, and in close parallel construction with exhortations to sing. When we apply this insight to our interpretation of Psalm 154:14, a number of implications become apparent: on the one hand, there is now a strong case for suggesting that verse 14 (which mentions communal drinking as a setting) could be read as a close (almost synonymous) parallel unit with verses 13 and 14. This recognition encourages us to consider further whether the assembly (קהל, v12), feasting (אובלסה, v13) and drinking in community (שתותמה בחבר יחדיו, vv13-14) might in fact refer to a single social setting, that is to say a communal gathering that incorporated both singing praises (which also functioned as instruction) and feasting together. In support of this reading, it would be strange to interpret the eating of verse thirteen and the drinking of verse fourteen as themselves referring to distinct settings—they belong together as a reference to communal feasting.

Secondly, we observe that the semantic range of the Hebrew verb שִׁיחַ corresponds almost precisely to the major theme that we have begun to extract from the Psalm as a whole: the function of communal sung praise as a means of instructing (telling, speaking—cf גאמרה, v13) and meditating upon Torah. In light of the content and terminology of Psalm 154, we must therefore begin to form a newly enriched description of the character of liturgical practice and the study and instruction of Torah, in which these themes and functions are enmeshed and intertwined within concrete liturgical practices such as frequent (even *daily*) communal singing, which are considered to be as important and as acceptable as the giving of sacrificial offerings. We can surmise, therefore, that the practice of singing described here was envisaged as a prominent part of the regular liturgical rhythm and habitual practice of the implied community because of its close connection with the practice of regular sacrifices as well as communal eating and drinking and study of Torah. These are all activities that are understood to play a part in the daily liturgical rhythm of communal life, and this Psalm places singing as a prominent aspect of each.

This aspect of repetitive liturgical rhythm will be underlined in the discussion of David’s Compositions below, but even at this stage we have extracted enough evidence to assert that if these things are so, then our research into the nature and processes of studying, interpreting and transmitting scripture in the Second Temple Period must also reckon with singing as a

potentially prominent and influential medium at every stage in the process. Scribes, as much as any other members of a sacred community, would have been immersed in these liturgical rhythms, and the kinds of exhortations that are contained in Psalm 154 to “teach the untaught” through song must have been particularly apposite for those trained in letters and the interpretation of scripture. If this kind of communal singing was indeed a regular and prominent liturgical practice, it must have played an influential role in the interpretation and transmission of sacred texts.

4.2.3 References to Singing in Psalm 154 and the Question of Metaphor

Despite the compelling internal evidence of Psalm 154, because of the ambivalence of some scholars concerning evidence for singing among the Dead Sea Scrolls it is necessary to briefly revisit the question of musical references and metaphor addressed in chapter two.⁴¹ In the context of our discussion, the question to be addressed is whether the scene referred to might reflect contemporary liturgical practice, or whether it can be otherwise explained as a metaphorical device employed merely for poetic illustration, or reflecting the memory of an older practice. Eileen Schuller, despite presenting some additional literary evidence from among the Scrolls, considers the texts alone to be inconclusive.⁴² Two key lines of argument underpin her conclusion: first of all, the contention that many references to singing are merely a literary imitation of “biblical” style.⁴³ Secondly, the assertion that many references to singing are metaphorical in character is understood to constitute further grounds for discounting them as evidence of actual liturgical practice.⁴⁴ Both of these arguments have been addressed in chapter two above, where I argue that neither the re-use of “biblical” language, nor the use of metaphor discount such references as indicators of contemporary liturgical function.⁴⁵ In addition to these points, we may at this juncture make a some observations about the function of the explicit reference to singing in the literary context of Psalm 154.

⁴¹ See sections 1.2.3, 2.2.4, and Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 176-83.

⁴² Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 173-89.

⁴³ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 176.

⁴⁴ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 180-1.

⁴⁵ See sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.4.

First of all, and in addition to the arguments set forth in chapter two, the question must be asked: if the reference to singing in verse twelve of Psalm 154 is purely figurative, and not related to an actual liturgical practice, what does it metaphorically signify? By analogy to 1QS X, 9 it might be argued that singing in this context refers to some form of teaching, of disseminating knowledge. However, it has already been demonstrated at length that the primary theme of Psalm 154 as a whole concerns vocalised praise *as a means* of instruction. It makes no sense at verse twelve to presume that singing now represents something else altogether, namely the dissemination of knowledge by some other means. Rather, as argued above, verse twelve develops and expands upon the consistent theme and coherent message of the composition overall. Furthermore, it should not be assumed without additional argumentation that 1 QS X, 9 is using singing only as a figurative metaphor, and does not itself refer to a known liturgical practice. Neither should it be assumed that 1QS X, 9 exercises some kind of decisive interpretative influence over Psalm 154.

Hempel, in her recent commentary, has no objection to reading 1QS X, 9 as suggestive of instrumental music used as part of the liturgical practice envisioned.⁴⁶ In 1958, Scorza certainly read it as such, and others have followed suit, though Schuller is right to challenge his position to the degree that it is assumed without argument or justification.⁴⁷ She points out that “the majority of interpreters have seen in such language primarily a reuse of standard biblical phraseology, now interpreted metaphorically, rather than a reflection of actual musical practice.”⁴⁸ On the basis of the survey of previous literature and the arguments set forth in chapter two and above, it should by now be evident that neither the re-use of biblical phraseology, nor the use of metaphor should be ruled out as indicators of contemporary liturgical practice. Evidence of the widespread practice of singing and instrumental music in a wide variety of Second Temple Jewish settings, supported by comparative evidence from Hellenistic culture, in fact weigh probability significantly towards the opposite conclusion, suggesting that these musical references are likely reflect recognisable contemporary practices.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Hempel, *Community Rules*, 297.

⁴⁷ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 180–1; Scorza, “Praise and Music,” 32–6.

⁴⁸ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 180–1.

⁴⁹ See section 2.2.3. Falk, “Contribution,” 887–9; Skelton, “Piping Hot Lyres.”

4.3 Material Features of 11QPs^a and Liturgical Function

In addressing questions of liturgical practice, some comment on materiality and the physical qualities of 11Q5 as a manuscript may also offer hints as to its possible function and use. Emanuel Tov includes 11QPs^a in his discussion of what he calls “De Luxe” editions of scrolls, identifying it as one of a group of manuscripts that are “of better quality than others with regard to their replication (precision in copying) and external shape (regularity of ruling, quality of leather, aesthetics of layout, and adherence to a neat column structure).”⁵⁰ 11QPs^a possesses two further features identified by Tov as markers of a “De Luxe” edition, in that it was produced using a large writing block and exhibits “fine calligraphy”.⁵¹ It is one of the largest scrolls discovered at Qumran, measuring 4.11 metres in total length (5m reconstructed) and using sheets between 72 and 87cm long.⁵²

There is no evidence for an initial or final protective handle sheet for 11QPs^a, although the end of the scroll is preserved with a large unscripted area following the final column.⁵³ Whilst precautions such as outer handle sheets might indicate extra care and preparation for a scroll that was intended to be frequently used, the presence or absence of these features do not give any conclusive indication as to function.⁵⁴ Unscripted areas following the conclusion of text could indicate merely the difficulty of judging how much writing area would be required when the parchment was prepared.⁵⁵ Although these physical characteristics do not lead us to any confident claims about the function of 11QPs^a, we can at least say that this manuscript would have been suitable for liturgical use—it’s so called “De Luxe” characteristics, clear script and large dimensions not only result in greater “readability”, but also indicate careful preparation and production.⁵⁶ Tov’s observation that it was mainly “biblical” scrolls (to use his terminology) that were produced to these special standards indicates that 11QPs^a was produced (and presumably used) as a revered and valuable manuscript.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 125-6.

⁵¹ Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 87, 125-6.

⁵² Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 76, 80.

⁵³ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 41; Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 116-17.

⁵⁴ Kottsieper, “Physicality,” 170; Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 108-9, 114-16.

⁵⁵ Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 115.

⁵⁶ For the importance of the concept of readability in the material analysis of psalm manuscripts, see Mika S. Pajunen, “Reading Psalm and Prayer Manuscripts from Qumran,” in *Material Aspects of Reading in Ancient and Medieval Cultures: Materiality, Presence and Performance*, ed. Anna Krauß, Jonas Leipziger and Friederike Schücking-Jungblut, *Materiale Textkulturen* 26 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 55–70.

⁵⁷ Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 125-6.

In addition to these physical features, the content and structure of the 11QPs^a collection give indications that we are dealing with a manuscript intended for liturgical use. Flint's 1997 survey of the various hypotheses that have been proposed regarding the structure and provenance of 11Q5 is enough to illustrate the range of possibilities that have been suggested.⁵⁸ One characteristic, however, is acknowledged by all of these theories, including Flint's own proposal: that 11QPs^a is a *liturgical* collection.⁵⁹ However the order and selection of compositions included is to be interpreted precisely, they were collected for a liturgical purpose.⁶⁰

In conjunction with the special physical characteristics of the scroll that have been noted, and in the absence of evidence to the contrary, no further argument is required at present to support the assertion that 11Q5 was likely to have been used to facilitate liturgical performance. If the commonly recognised means of palaeographical dating can be accepted, we might be able to narrow the time-frame of this assertion to say that the text was being used in such a way during the early to middle part of the first century C.E. (following Sanders' dating).⁶¹ In order to put forward a bolder thesis concerning its use at the Qumran site or within the Yahad movement specifically, this discussion would need to be widened in order to grapple with the full range of proposed reconstructions of the growth, development and dispersion of the communities associated with Qumran.⁶² The question of the provenance of the scrolls found at or near Qumran in general and their specific relation to the archaeological site and community that lived there is also, of course, wide-ranging and complex. For the purposes of the present discussion, what is important is to establish is that the texts we are dealing with *were in fact used* liturgically by Jewish groups within the Second Temple Period, wherever we may or may not be able to locate those groups precisely. If we were to embrace Flint's theory of the provenance of 11QPs^a itself, for instance, then the

⁵⁸ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 175-89.

⁵⁹ Flint's survey of views: Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 175-89, and for his own proposal: 189-201.

⁶⁰ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 175-200.

⁶¹ It must be acknowledged, however, that at present palaeographical dating can only be accepted with significant qualifications. See Drew Longacre and Eibert Tigchelaar, "4.1.3.2. Hebrew and Aramaic Palaeography (Ancient)," in *Textual History of the Bible*, ed. Armin Lange (Brill online, 2017) accessed online via https://www.academia.edu/37281079/4.1.3.2.1_Hebrew_and_Aramaic_Palaeography. For Sanders' dating to the first half of the first century CE on the basis of Frank Moore-Cross's widely accepted scheme, see Sanders, DJD IV, 6-9.

⁶² Collins, "Social Organisation," 351-69; Hempel, *Rule Texts in Context*; Metso, *Textual Development*; "Yahad," 63-84.

collection should be viewed as having been “compiled prior to the Qumran period,” even if the *manuscript itself* were copied at Qumran.⁶³ This raises the possibility that the collection may have enjoyed wider usage among other Jewish groups that were also advocates of the Solar Calendar.⁶⁴

Related to these questions of provenance and function, in particular with regard to calendrical concerns, we turn now to David’s Compositions in order to explore further evidence for communal song as a habitual feature of the liturgical practice reflected in 11QPs^a.

4.4 David’s Compositions (11Q5 XXVII, 2-11)

In the following section I argue that the text of 11Q5 27:2-11, known as “David’s Compositions,” reveals the concern of the author or redactor to attribute a Davidic Psalm to every ritual worship event in the liturgical cycle of the solar calendar, and thus points to the regular (daily, weekly, monthly and annual) use of Psalms in the liturgy of groups that used this document. As in Psalm 154 above, we find the liturgical act of singing connected to regular sacrificial offerings and to feasting. These connections indicate the prominence and frequency of song as a liturgical practice, and building on the evidence of Psalm 154 that song practised in these ways is used for the purpose of Torah-instruction, we can surmise that regular, communal, liturgical singing should be reckoned as a significant influence upon the reception and transmission of texts. The description of David as “scribe” lends additional support to the view that songs and singing are closely associated with textual transmission in the mind of the author. Let us explore these themes by giving closer attention to the text of David’s Compositions, a prose piece found in column XXVII of 11QPs^a.

In David’s Compositions, the memorialised King David is praised in glowing terms, a number of which correspond to biographical notes in 1 and 2 Samuel and Chronicles.⁶⁵ Not only is David hailed as a prolific composer of Psalms and songs (lines 4-11), he is wise and discerning (חכם, line 2; 2 Sam 14:20; נבוך, 1 Sam 16:18), blameless (תמים, line 3; Ps 18/2

⁶³ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 201.

⁶⁴ For connections between the arrangement of 11Q5 and the Solar Calendar, see Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls*, 182–94; and following discussion of David’s Compositions.

⁶⁵ Sanders, DJD IV, 91–2.

Sam 22:24, 26, 33), radiant like the sun (ואור כאור שמש, line 2; ורוח נבונה ואורה, line 4; 2 Sam 23:4), and both a prophet and a scribe (כול אלה דבר בנבואה, line 11; וסופר, line 2).⁶⁶

The attribution of the term “scribe” to David may be of particular interest as we proceed to consider the role that song plays in the transmission of text. Indeed, the mere fact that David can be designated a scribe (סופר) with specific reference to his composition of Psalms and songs which he *spoke* (דבר, lines 9 and 11) within a written collection at Qumran indicates the inseparable relationship between written and oral modes of transmission, and underlines the fact that singing is a vital aspect of what has been called the “oral-written” matrix of the ancient scribe.⁶⁷ Judging by the high view of scriptural Psalms as vehicles of prophecy in the Qumran pesharim, David’s mere association with a collection of Psalms might be enough to earn him a memorialised prophetic identity. Nevertheless, there is here a combination of terms (“psalms” and “songs”, “scribe” and “speech”) that indicate the close relationship between song and textuality in the conceptual matrix of this work. The use of שיר in line 5 is further indication that the practice of singing is in view, as opposed to recitation of prayer without a musical element. Though I have already observed in the introductory chapters that adequate definitions distinguishing “prayer” from “song” are lacking, an alternative term could easily have been chosen if the performance of the Psalms or liturgy here were envisaged as being enacted through spoken word rather than song.⁶⁸

According to our text, alongside 3600 Psalms (תהלים), David composed 364 songs (שיר) to be sung (לשורר) over the continual burnt offering day by day for each day of the year:

ויכתוב תהלים שלושת אלפים ושש מאות ושיר לשורר לפני המזבח על עולת התמיד לכול יום ויום לכול ימי השנה ארבעה וששים ושלוש⁷ מאות

⁶⁶ Sanders, DJD IV, 93.

⁶⁷ See Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 287-91.

⁶⁸ Although speaking and singing may represent points along a spectrum of the use of intonation and rhythm that is innate to all speech, as a simple dichotomy these terms serve the purpose at present of emphasising the musical aspect of liturgical practice that has been somewhat neglected in scholarly literature. Although musically speaking it might be necessary to try and identify at what point speaking or reading becomes canting or chanting, and chanting becomes singing, at this point in the discussion it will suffice to acknowledge that the texts we are dealing with refer explicitly to singing. See sections 1.2.4, 2.2.2 and 3.5.

And he wrote 3600 Psalms, and 364 songs to be sung before the altar over the continual burnt offering, day by day for each day of the year
(11Q5 27:4-7)

Whatever other conclusions might be reached as to the provenance and function of this composition, we can make some clear statements concerning authorial intent which are apparent from internal evidence. The text reflects the author's concern that a Davidic Psalm be allocated to each of the cultic events (mentioned in lines 4-7) of the solar calendar that was used by the so-called Yaḥad movement and other Jewish groups.⁶⁹ This concern therefore suggests the actual (sung) liturgical use of Psalms as part of the regular (indeed, daily) devotional life of the community. In order to support these statements, we must deal in turn with a number of potential counter-arguments.

Both Flint and Chyutin, though proposing different organisational schemes, clearly assert the calendrical structure of the collection of Psalms in 11QPs^a.⁷⁰ While such a hypothesis can only support our current line of argument (by underscoring the calendrical pre-occupation of both author and liturgical community), it is not in fact necessary in order to prove or uphold the present thesis. Whether or not the underlying structure of 11QPs^a itself reflects a calendrical scheme such as the one discussed in David's Compositions, it is nonetheless evident that the author of David's Compositions was concerned that such a calendrical system of Psalms was both possible and desirable. This is not a tangential or passing concern within the text, but the theme that characterises the whole of this short literary piece. The calendrical concern appears to constitute something of the composition's "raison d'être." The fact that Fewster and Mroczek criticise Chyutin and Flint's readings of the editorial intentions behind 11QPs^a as a whole does not detract from the evident calendrical preoccupation of the text.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 192-3, 200-1.

⁷⁰ Michael Chyutin, "The Redaction of the Qumranic and the Traditional Book of Psalms as a Calendar," *RevQ* 16 no.3 (1994): 367-95; in Flint's scheme, the fifty-four Psalms are organised as fifty-two (one for each week of the year) plus two (which constitute a post-epilogue appendix): Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 192.

⁷¹ Gregory P. Fewster, "Manuscript, Voice, and the Construction of Pseudepigraphal Identities: Composing a Mutable David in Some Qumran Psalms Scrolls," *JBL* 137/4 (2018): 893-914, 909 n52; Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*, 72-75.

David's Compositions is treated by Flint and others as an epilogue to 11Q5, an attribution that Fewster and Mroczek have disputed.⁷² Mroczek's critique is compelling, as she draws attention to the unit's embedded place in the materiality and presentation of the scroll, and the artificiality of the choice in critical editions to present David's Compositions as prose in contrast to the surrounding Psalms—a distinction that is not reflected in the manuscript itself.⁷³ Fewster adds to this critique the observation that scholars vary as to where they perceive the functional end of the document to occur, indicating the subjectivity inherent in such judgements which seek to discern literary divisions that do not exist in the presentation of 11Q5.⁷⁴ Mroczek's alternative proposal is that David's Compositions should be treated as literature in its own right and as a *part of* the collection of compositions that make up 11QPs^a, rather than as paratextual information *about* the document.⁷⁵ Indeed, the text does not in fact appear to make reference to the collection of 11QPs^a itself, but to the concept of a much larger anthology of Davidic Psalms and songs.⁷⁶

Fewster seeks justifiably to draw emphasis away from the concentration on David as singer, composer, and sage in column twenty-seven in order to highlight the fact that in the preceding Psalms we find incipits accentuating David's identity as "Warrior-King."⁷⁷ In the course of making his argument, Fewster reflects negatively on the strong associations made by Flint and Chyutin between David's Compositions and the calendrical concerns of the Yahad, perceiving in their interpretations an over-emphasis on editorial intentions as a result of the mis-identification of the text within 11QPs^a as an epilogue, or colophon.⁷⁸

Whilst Fewster's re-emphasis is welcome on both points, drawing attention back to a literary consideration of David's Compositions in its own right, the significance of the calendrical concerns in the text itself are not nullified. In fact, whatever relationship David's Compositions is judged to have to the rest of 11QPs^a, we can be left in no doubt that the author of this textual unit is expressly occupied with calendrical matters, at least as far as ritual worship and regular assemblies are concerned.

⁷² Fewster, "Manuscript," 909 n52; Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 207-8; Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*, 72-75.

⁷³ Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*, 73.

⁷⁴ Fewster, "Manuscript," 909 n52.

⁷⁵ Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*, 73-4.

⁷⁶ Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*, 74.

⁷⁷ Fewster, "Manuscript," 912-3.

⁷⁸ Chyutin, "Redaction," 367-95; Fewster, "Manuscript," 912-3; Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 192-5.

This is an important point to hold on to, because however we interpret pseudepigraphic and authorial intentions here, the explicit themes of the text are still clear from internal evidence. We can summarise these themes under two points: praise of David, and the assignation of a Davidic Psalm to every cultic occasion in the calendar. The second point is highly relevant to the thesis in hand for the following reasons: firstly, as in Psalm 154, an attachment of a Psalm or song to the concept of sacrifice—in this case, daily sacrifice, weekly sabbath, monthly new moon, and annual feasts—denotes regularity, frequency and prominence in religious life. The fact that calendrical concerns are prominent in many manuscripts found at or near Qumran in general suggests that a degree of regularity and routinisation in liturgical practices is likely. This sense of repetitive liturgical rhythm is described by Brooke as “attention to sacred time,” marked chiefly by the Sabbath, but also through the celebration of festivals measured by patterns of weeks, as well as daily prayers and meal practices that involve orders of blessings.⁷⁹ This consciousness of “regular cyclical time” in the religious life of the community is a means of regulating life in such a way that is perceived to be in harmony with God’s created order.⁸⁰ Due to the importance of the connection between song and sacrifice in both the texts under consideration, some further consideration of regular times of sacrificial offering as potential settings for singing is warranted.

4.4.1 Sacrifice at Qumran?

Though the connection between song and sabbath sacrifice is widespread, the availability of archaeological evidence for communal life at Qumran begs the question as to whether animal sacrifice may have been performed at this site. If this were the case, it would suggest one potential context for the performance of song at the Qumran site itself. The debate appears to still be open as to whether an altar existed at Qumran and sacrifices were enacted, or whether, in line with the more prominent view, expressions of prayer and spirituality served as an effectual replacement of temple sacrifice for members of the Yahad.⁸¹ A few brief comments

⁷⁹ Brooke, “Theological Significance,” 42.

⁸⁰ Brooke, “Theological Significance,” 42.

⁸¹ A third possibility is that some members of the Yahad continued to participate in the central sacrificial system at the temple in Jerusalem. Kenneth Atkinson lists numerous advocates of the “spiritualisation” view, and also presents his own argument for the practise of sacrifice and the presence of an altar at Qumran: Kenneth Atkinson, “Sacrifice at Khirbet Qumran and in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *QC* 24/2-3 (2016): 127-45; 144-45 n51. Also arguing for the presence of a sacrificial altar is Jodi Magness, “Were Sacrifices Offered at Qumran? The Animal Bone Deposits Reconsidered,” *JAJ* 7/1 (2016): 5-34. Alison Schofield offers a spatial analysis of the site at Qumran which supports the plausibility of Magness’ thesis in Schofield, “Altar in the Desert?” See also Russell C. D. Arnold, “Qumran Prayer as an Act of Righteousness,” *JQR* 95/3 (2005): 509-529.

are offered here in order to illustrate implications of this debate for the proposal that David's Compositions indicates the use of song at regular times of cultic sacrifice in the Yaḥad.

Kenneth Atkinson calls attention back to the opinion expressed in early Qumran scholarship that a sacrificial altar may have been operational at Qumran.⁸² This early view was superseded by an emerging consensus that inhabitants at Qumran, having separated themselves from the sacrificial system of the Jerusalem temple, now considered their righteous prayer to be acceptable and efficacious before God in the absence of sacrifice.⁸³ Atkinson cites Roland de Vaux and Frank Moore Cross as advocates of the earlier view, prior to De Vaux's later rejection of the possibility of sacrifice at Qumran because of a lack of archaeological evidence.⁸⁴ Atkinson and Jodi Magness now propose that this prior thesis was correct, on the basis of new readings of the site, and for Atkinson because of the emergence of new archaeological evidence for the existence of an altar.⁸⁵ As Schofield observes, a robust testing of these proposals would require a large scale study of the archaeological evidence.⁸⁶ She does, however, offer a spatial analysis of the site indicating that from one alternative methodological point of view, Magness' theory is plausible.⁸⁷

The confirmation of the hypothesis that a sacrificial altar existed at Qumran might appear to support the thesis that songs were sung to accompany the daily burnt offering, as well as on sabbaths and at annual festivals, and that this practice may have occurred at the Qumran site. This line of argument, however, is still problematic: even according to Atkinson, the altar would only have been used for the purpose of "profane slaughter" or "desired meat" (with reference to Deut 12:15-16 and Lev 19:26), as opposed to sacrificial offerings, which he believes the community would have considered unnecessary in light of their reading of Torah and the example of the wilderness camps under Moses.⁸⁸ Nonetheless, at the conclusion of his argument, Atkinson feels able to state categorically that:

⁸² Atkinson, "Sacrifice."

⁸³ Atkinson, "Sacrifice," 135-6.

⁸⁴ Atkinson, "Sacrifice," 135-6.

⁸⁵ Atkinson, "Sacrifice," 144-5; Magness, "Sacrifices," 123-35.

⁸⁶ Schofield, "Altar in the Desert," 123.

⁸⁷ Schofield, "Altar in the Desert," 140-1.

⁸⁸ Atkinson, "Sacrifice," 138-9.

“The Dead Sea Scrolls prayer texts were undoubtedly used in conjunction with sacrifices at Qumran, just like mainstream Jews used similar prayers, especially the biblical Psalter, in the Jerusalem temple liturgy to sacrifice animals.”⁸⁹

The fact that he advocates the use of prayer texts alongside regular sacrifice and compares this practice to use of the Psalter in the temple lends credence to my own proposal about the liturgical use of Psalms, even though he does not speak explicitly of singing. However, despite these corroborative theories, once again the present argument does not rest on the veracity of a hypothesis about sacrifice at Qumran. Even if these theories regarding a Qumran altar are rejected, and the idea that sacrifice was “spiritualised” and “replaced” with prayer practices is embraced, the likelihood of the use of song at cultic occasions (as suggested by David’s Compositions and a variety of other texts) is not undermined, in light of the following observations.⁹⁰

Already in 11QPs^a we have encountered Psalm 154/Syriac Psalm II, as discussed above. Let us consider for a moment some aspects of Psalm 154 as literary context for David’s Compositions, occurring as it does some nine columns earlier in the collection. Lines 7-10 were quoted above for the purpose of discussing the structure of Psalm 154. We will now revisit them in order to pay closer attention to the content of these verses. Rather than the poetic structure suggested in the analysis above, I present them here in continuous form (as they appear in the scroll):

ואדם מפאר עליון ירצה כמגיש מנחה כמקריב עתודים ובני בקר כמדשן מזבח ברוב עולות כקטורת
 ניחוח מיד צדיקים *blank*

And the man who glorifies the Most High will be accepted as one who brings an offering, as one who offers male goats and sons of cattle, as one who makes the altar fat with a multitude of burnt offerings, as a soothing odour of incense from the hand of the righteous.

(11Q5 18:7-10)

We have already explored the fact that the “glorifying” referred to in these verses appears in the immediate context of a *voice* (קול) and a *song* (זמרה) from the congregation being *heard*

⁸⁹ Atkinson, “Sacrifice,” 145.

⁹⁰ For various settings for song, including cultic occasions, see Falk, “Contribution,” 887–9; and Smith, *Music in Ancient Judaism*.

(נשמע)11Q5 18:10-11). In terms of logical development, it is natural to read lines 10-11 as expanding on, even expounding the act of “glorifying” that is accepted from the righteous man:

מפתחי צדיקים נשמע קולה ומקהל חסידים זמרתה

From the gates of the righteous her voice is heard, and from the assembly of the faithful, her song.

(11Q5 18:10-11)

So, we find in the contents of 11QPs^a explicit reference to the fact that the man who glorifies (as part of the congregation through song) is as acceptable as one who offers animal sacrifices, a multitude of burnt offerings, or incense offerings. We then read nine columns later in the collection the overriding concern of David’s Compositions to assert that a Psalm was used for every occasion of daily sacrifice, burnt offering and annual festival. This contextual reading of the two compositions together, collated as they are on the same scroll, strongly suggests the following conclusions: firstly, whether or not a sacrificial altar existed at Qumran, it is clearly an express aspect of religious thought lying behind this collection that the glorification of God through communal songs of praise is as acceptable as multiple burnt offerings. Secondly, it was a prominent concern for the author of David’s Compositions and presumably the collector of these Psalms that a Davidic Psalm was used for every occasion of regular sacrifice in the religious calendar of the community. These observations point clearly towards a third conclusion: the singing of Psalms as part of daily, weekly, monthly and annual liturgical rituals is a plausible setting whether or not a functional altar existed at Qumran. 11QPs^a assumes such a practice to be a reality in the liturgical observance of a community of faith, and on the basis of the evidence explored in this chapter, it is reasonable to conclude that this was a recognised practice within communities that produced or used this particular collection of Psalms.

As well as testifying to the prominence of singing in daily life and liturgical practice, these texts also present singing as a primary performative means of textual reception and transmission. Studies of orality and textuality therefore need to recognise singing as a potentially vital aspect of processes of transmission among the groups associated with the texts found at or near Qumran.

4.5 Chapter Four Conclusions

In the course of this chapter, I have taken two texts from the 11QPs^a collection as a starting point to address the following question: is there evidence among the texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the liturgical practice of singing, and if so, what role do they reflect singing as playing in processes of textual transmission? While taking stock of the ambivalence of some previous scholarship concerning evidence for singing among the manuscripts found at or near Qumran, an analysis of Psalm 154/Syriac Psalm II and David's Compositions has provided a number of positive and constructive conclusions which are reviewed here.

The theme of the communal song of praise characterises Psalm 154 as a whole, and we learn a number of things about the function of communal singing from it. Firstly, corporate sung praise is a means of devotion which is considered as acceptable to God as sacrifices of animals and incense. In terms of form and structure, this is the central message of the Psalm. For a priestly community, this would place singing as a very high-ranking liturgical practice in terms of its importance within the group. Secondly, the communal song of praise is a means of instructing the uneducated. This instruction may happen by making them aware of the greatness of God and his mighty acts, or by meditation upon and discussion of Torah.⁹¹ Relating to and perhaps also indistinguishable from the function of instruction is the observation that communal singing is a means of hearing the voice of personified Wisdom. The role of wisdom in this poem and the identity of the hearer or hearers outside the gates are aspects that would merit further investigation, though they are not central to the argument of this chapter.

Thirdly, communal song is presented as an accompaniment to communal feasting. Although the practice of singing hymns at the celebration of ritual meals and the gatherings of associations is known from other Jewish and Hellenistic contexts in the Second Temple period, a careful reading of the internal evidence of Psalm 154 itself indicates that the practice of singing is closely associated with the eating and drinking of a faithful community. This association of communal singing with sacrifice and eating and drinking together points to one final and significant conclusion to be drawn from our reading of Psalm 154: that

⁹¹ If, indeed, any significant distinction should be drawn between meditation and discussion in this context.

communal singing was not only a recognised liturgical practice, but that it was considered a prominent and vital aspect of the regular (that is, frequently repeated) liturgical devotion of a sacred community.

Which community or communities are in view specifically is a question that belongs to the wider field of research concerning the character and development of the communities associated with the Qumran site and the manuscripts found nearby. That scholarly discussion is too involved and complex to incorporate adequately into the present argument, though for the purposes of illustration only, we can speculate that the liturgical practice of singing described above may have been practised by a community based at the Qumran site, as well as other communities connected to the so-called *Yahad* movement. The possibility that other groups in Second Temple Judaism beyond these sectarian circles may also have used singing in similar ways must also continue to be considered. Any community that produced or made use of these compositions or the whole collection of 11QPs^a is a candidate for the kind of practice envisaged in these texts. For the purpose of our current thesis, what is important is that the song of praise described by Psalm 154 was indeed likely to have been practised by a community within Second Temple Judaism. This is a conservative and (perhaps unnecessarily) cautious conclusion, though with further evidence a much bolder hypothesis concerning the extent of this kind of liturgical practice within Second Temple Judaism might be possible.

Consideration of the connection between song and sacrifice in Psalm 154 and the regularity and prominence it suggests led us to the evidence of David's Compositions, which evinces the author's pre-occupation with the availability of a Davidic Psalm to be used for each and every occasion of the ritual solar calendar. Occurring nine columns later than Psalm 154 in the same manuscript, this evidence from David's Compositions underlines our prior conclusions that there are close connections between singing and the concept of sacrifice, and between singing and feasts. In addition, the description of David as "scribe" is suggestive of the inextricably close connection between conceptions of text and orality in the promulgation and transmission of sacred traditions in this period.⁹² Here we can begin to imagine what the implications of the evidence reviewed from Psalm 154 and David's Compositions might be

⁹² The assertion in line eleven that David composed all these songs prophetically suggests that the prophetic function also needs to be considered in connection with these dynamics of textuality and song.

for understanding textual transmission within Second Temple Judaism. It is enough to say at this point in the overall thesis, that if we have demonstrated communal singing to be regular, prominent and highly regarded aspect of liturgical practice, then it must be reckoned as a significant influence upon the interpretation and transmission of sacred traditions and indeed texts. The impact of singing in these terms has barely been acknowledged within Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship and is deserving of far greater attention.

If singing praise corporately is both a means of instruction and of meditation upon Torah, it must necessarily have a role in shaping the conceptual and interpretative framework of members of a sacred community, and this would include any trained or training scribes who are also part of the liturgical community and partakers in ritual practices. Singing is therefore an influential factor in scribal formation.⁹³ In this way, music necessarily impacts the interpretation of texts, and building on the theories of Norton and Newman, we can see that this formation and interpretation may shape the final form of an inscribed textual product.⁹⁴ This potential impact upon observable phenomena of textual variation will be explored in chapter six.

⁹³ See Newman, "Shaping the Scribal Self," for an exemplar of this kind of approach to studying scribal formation.

⁹⁴ Norton, *Contours*, 82–103; Newman, "Formation of the Scribal Self," 237–8; "Communal Formation," 249–66; "Scribal Bodies." See pages 62–73 above. On the impact of music upon interpretation see section 6.2.3 below.

CHAPTER FIVE:
FUNCTIONS OF SINGING IN THE SECOND AND SEVENTH SONGS OF THE
SABBATH SACRIFICE

5.1 Introduction

In the following chapter I will discuss two selected portions of text from the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q400–4Q407) in order to explore further questions relating to the liturgical practice of singing as reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the potential impact of singing (as a mode of performance) upon the transmission and interpretation of texts.¹ The two portions of text I have selected are 4Q400 2, which contains part of the Second Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice, and 4Q403 1 I, 36–37, a section of a hymn referred to as the “Cycle of Summons” within the Seventh Song.² These short segments have been chosen because they raise issues of relevance to my specific research questions, though some of the features reviewed are characteristic of the collection as a whole. While an exhaustive study of singing as reflected in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice would no doubt be beneficial, I have been guided by the focus of my wider research to highlight only these small samples of text, for the following reasons.

The first portion of text selected for analysis draws a direct comparison between the liturgical activity of the angels in heaven and the activity of the implied human community on earth. It presents important evidence concerning a religious community’s self-understanding with regard to their common identity, and the theological framework and worldview through which they interpret texts.³ This evidence is likely to reflect the religious thought of multiple groups in both synchronic and diachronic perspective, as opposed to a single discrete

¹ This research adds to the insights of scholars such as Judith Newman and Arjen Bakker, who have argued for the overlapping and combination of concepts such as study, scribal activity, prayer, meditation, wisdom and spiritual formation, in contrast to tendencies in previous scholarship to create a conceptual separation between functions such as “instruction” and “liturgy.” See, for instance: Arjen Bakker, “Sages and Saints: Continuous Study and Transformation in Musar le-Mevin and Serekh ha-Yahad,” in *Tracing Sapiential Traditions in Ancient Judaism*, ed. Hindy Najman, Jean-Sébastien Rey and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, JSJSup 174 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 106–18, 107–8, 118; Newman, *Before the Bible*, 7–8, 107–17, 132–40. Bakker’s reflections on 4QInstruction also connect these concepts to the continuous activity of the angels: Bakker, *Sages and Saints*, 111–13.

² See Noam Mizrahi, “The Cycle of Summons: A Hymn from the Seventh Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q403 1i 31–40),” *DSD* 22 no. 1 (2015): 43–67.

³ This approach was suggested by Schuller as a potentially fruitful line of further research in Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 188–189. Schuller based her observations in part on Dimant, “Men as Angels,” 93–103, 95; and Shem Miller has already begun to apply this approach to his study of the Hodayot in Miller, “Role of Performance,” 366.

community.⁴ It is due to this acknowledgement of synchronic and diachronic diversity that this analysis does not have as its goal the reconstruction of a singular, specific liturgical setting or function for the *Shirot*, acknowledging instead that these texts may have been used in different ways by groups (or individuals) in different times and places. The goal is rather to reveal concepts that lie behind the use of language in this particular text. A selection from the Seventh Song (as preserved in 4Q403 1) will then be addressed: lines 36–37 include the combined use of two Hebrew roots, *הגה* and *רנן*, in such a way that calls into question standard lexicographical definitions of these terms and suggests some new possibilities concerning contemporary liturgical practices. These findings contribute additional literary evidence for the practice of liturgical singing reflected in the texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

5.2 The Second Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice: Human Praise as a Counterpart to Angelic Praise (4Q400, 2)

The first text I have selected for discussion reflects the theological perspective of a community of worshippers who understand themselves to be earthly counterparts to an angelic priesthood which serves in the heavenly tabernacle. They see themselves, therefore, as a priestly community of sorts, which reflects the character of the angelic priesthood and participates in their priestly service. As we shall see, however, this reflection is understood to be profoundly humble and somewhat impoverished in comparison with the glory of the angelic priests. As an introduction to the discussion, I offer here a transcription and translation of the text preserved in fragment 2 of 4Q400:

⁴ See the comments at pages 13(n3), 41, 49 and 180(n127) concerning the historical reconstruction of communities associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls and Qumran.

להלל כבודכה פלא באלי דעת ותשבוחות מלכותכה בקדושי ק ^ו]דושים	1
המה נכבדים בכול מחני אלוהים ונוראים למוסדי אנשים פ ^ו]לא	2
מאלוהים ^ו ואנשים יספרו הוד מלכותו כדעתם ורוממו ^ו]	3
שמי מלכותו ובכול מרומי רום תהלי פלא לפי כול]	4
כבוד מלך אלוהים יספרו במעוני עומדם vacat ו ^ו]	5
מה נתחשב [ב]ם וכוהנתנו מה במעוניהם וק]ודשנו	6
קודש ^ו]י]הם [מה] תרומת לשון עפרנו בדעת אל ^ו]ים	7
[ל ^ו]ר]נתנו נרוממה לאלוהי דעת]	8
ק]ודש ובינתו מכול ידע ^ו]י --]	9
ה ^ו] קודש קודש ראיש]ון	10
[רו לש ^ו]וני] דע ^ו ת ע ^ו ם חוק]	11
[ת כבו]ד]	12
[תם ^ו] [ל ^ו] --]	13
[תם ^ו]	14

⁵ Transcription of missing and reconstruction of text follows Newsom in Esther Eshel et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4.VI: Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 1*, DJD XI (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 187. English translation is my own.

Translation:

¹...to praise your wonderful glory among the gods of knowledge and the praises of your kingdom among the holiest of holy ones. ²They are glorified among all the camps of god and they are feared before the councils of men. More w[onderful] ³than gods and men, they recount the splendour of his kingdom according to their knowledge, and they exalt [] ⁴the heavens of his kingdom, and in all the highest heights wonderful psalms are in the mouth of all [] ⁵...glory of the king of the gods they will recount in the dwellings of their station [] ⁶[] ...how will it be reckoned among them? And what is our priesthood among their dwellings? And [our] h[oliness among] ⁷their holiness?[What] is the offering of our tongue of dust among the knowledge of the god[s]? ⁸[] for our [s]ong of joy let us exalt (to) the God of Knowledge [] [⁹h]oliness. And his discernment (is) beyond all tho[who know] ¹⁰[] holiness of holiness of the firs[t] [¹¹] to[ngues of] knowledge with the statute [¹²] glor[y ¹³⁻¹⁴ [lines 13–14 too fragmentary for translation]

(4Q400 2, 1–14)

The text preserved in this fragment eulogises an angelic order of priests, highlighting a particular aspect of their function: the singing of praises (lines 1, 4–5). An explicit comparison is then made between the priestly function of the earthly community—expressed in the first person—and that of the angels (lines 6–7). The function of the earthly priesthood is humble in comparison, but one specific function is again highlighted: that of singing praise (lines 7–8). This praise—equivalent to the תהלים of the angels—is an offering of “tongues of dust” and of רנות which “exalt the God of Knowledge” (lines 7–8). Though רנה can denote a shout of victory or a joyful song of praise, in the context of line eight it is clearly directed towards God as an expression of praise.⁶ These straightforward observations concerning the literary and theological content of 4Q400 fragment 2 have important implications for understanding the function of singing as reflected in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. First of all, we can see that singing is a prominent and characteristic aspect of the function of the angelic priesthood in the heavenly tabernacle. This point is borne out by the overall literary structure of the collection—patterned according to repeated and climactic “cycles of praises”—and also (consistently) by means of explicit references to singing throughout the thirteen compositions.⁷ The most significant insight in relation to the present thesis is perhaps

⁶ See section 5.3.3 below for lexicographical discussion of this term.

⁷ See pages 133 and 145 below, and James H. Charlesworth and Carol A. Newsom, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations. Vol. 4B, Angelic Liturgy: Songs of the Sabbath*

the aspect of comparison between the angelic and human priesthoods. The human community whose voice is expressed in the first person explicitly compares not only their own priestly function in general, but specifically their offering of song, to that of the angels. The human priesthood is understood to be a humble yet counterpart priesthood, and in like terms, the song of the earthly community—though humble—is counterpart to the angelic song of the heavenly tabernacle. Literary evidence, in this particular instance, grants a striking insight into the important liturgical function that singing was understood to play in the religious thought of those who produced and preserved the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice.

This fragment of text therefore explicitly connects the liturgical practice of singing with a communal shared identity as an angelic, priestly people. Some scholars have viewed this sense of identity as an “angelic priestly community” as central to the system of thought reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls.⁸ In her discussion of singing, Schuller drew attention to Devorah Dimant’s search for an “essential, basic idea which held together the entire system” that “produced the Scrolls.”⁹ Schuller saw Dimant’s suggestion that “one such clue may be found in the Qumranic self-image as an angel-like priestly community” as offering a potentially fruitful avenue for exploring the role of singing in liturgical performance, due to the widely attested association of angels with singing praises. The present discussion follows that suggested line of research, yet with some substantial caveats. Firstly, it is questionable whether a coherent system of thought characterising the Dead Sea Scrolls as a whole is an appropriate concept. The Dead Sea Scrolls as a general term embraces a broad scope of manuscript discoveries which extends beyond those discovered at or near Qumran and beyond the time period during which the site at Qumran was inhabited. Furthermore, it is clear that the manuscripts found in the eleven caves at or near Qumran did not all originate at Qumran, many being brought to the site from elsewhere, and some being penned before the site was inhabited. Many works were composed long before habitation at Qumran—a point which is somewhat self-evident concerning many of the scriptural Scrolls, yet also pertains to works not ultimately included in the Jewish canon and considered by many to be “sectarian.”¹⁰ The “sectarian” nature of some works is in fact the primary issue at hand: those

Sacrifice, The Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project 4B (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 3.

⁸ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 188–9.

⁹ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 188–9.

¹⁰ Hempel explains why the Community Rules much be acknowledged as pre-dating habitation at Qumran. Hempel, *Community Rules*, 8–9.

who would seek a unifying theology or coherent system of thought are really looking for shared concepts among a sub-group of texts defined as “sectarian” in a particular sense. The sectarian identification, however, is problematic and a point of some controversy in recent scholarship.¹¹ It is necessary to acknowledge that habitation at Qumran represented only a partial expression of a larger sectarian movement with a somewhat complex pre-history, which also expressed itself through dispersed communities with notable diversity in thought and practice. Both in terms of the preserved manuscripts and sectarian life, therefore, diversity of thought and practice must be borne in mind, and an easily identifiable unifying “system” cannot necessarily be assumed.¹²

Nonetheless, having made those important caveats, certain distinctive theological features are strikingly shared among many of the works found in the caves at or near Qumran, notably among those commonly identified as sectarian in character. Among these features, the idea of a communal self-image as an “angel-like priestly community” is indeed prominent.¹³ Miller takes up this approach in his investigation of liturgical performance and the Hodayot, describing an angelic liturgy in which “members joined angels in one choir of praise.”¹⁴ This highlighting of singing as an aspect of the communion between humans and angels also builds on the work of Esther Chazon with regard to human and angelic prayer in the Dead Sea Scrolls.¹⁵

Some important implications for our investigation of singing follow. Firstly, the recognition that a communal self-image as an “angel-like priestly community” belongs to the core of the worldview reflected in many of the Dead Sea Scrolls means that activities which are seen as a direct outworking of this concept are likely to be important aspects of liturgical practice, and not merely peripheral. This principle applies to the act of singing, therefore, which is widely conceived within Second Temple Jewish Literature as a prominent aspect of angelic activity.¹⁶ The evidence of this particular portion of text in 4Q400 fragment 2 supports these

¹¹ For representative scholarly discussion, see the references at pages 13(n3), 41(n13) and 49(nn57–8), and Alison Schofield, “Forms of Community,” in Brooke and Hempel, 533–46.

¹² An overview of some of these complexities is presented in Schofield, “Forms of Community,” 533–46.

¹³ Esther G. Chazon, “Human and Angelic Prayer in Light of the Scrolls,” in Chazon, *Liturgical Perspectives*, 35–47; Miller, “Role of Performance,” 366; Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 188–9.

¹⁴ Miller, “Role of Performance,” 366.

¹⁵ Chazon, “Human and Angelic Prayer.”

¹⁶ Cf. Job 38:7; Ps 103:20-22; 148:1-3; Jub 2:3; 1QM 12:1; see also Lk 2:13-14; Rev 5:11-12. The Hebrew sources listed here are cited in Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 189; I have added references from the New Testament. It should also be noted that Schuller quotes references which refer to “blessing” (ברך, Psalm 103;

observations in its reference both to the singing of angels and to human singing as a direct counterpart activity. Furthermore, and perhaps more significantly, the observation that this text treats the human and angelic activities mentioned as direct counterparts opens up the possibility that wherever the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice elsewhere discuss the function of angels in terms of priestly activity and praise, we can infer that these descriptions are suggestive of counterpart human activities. A great deal of valuable evidence is therefore available among these texts concerning liturgical performance in general and singing in particular.

To emphasise the value of this evidence, we may observe that the total number of extant manuscripts of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice preserved at or near Qumran (and also at Masada) suggests that they reflect a prominent aspect of the thought and practice of groups associated with this sectarian movement. As Mizrahi observes concerning the collection as a whole, “the sheer number of its copies indicates that the Songs held a central place in the cultic practice and hence, presumably also in the religious worldview of the community or communities whose writings were unearthed in the Judean Desert.”¹⁷ Whatever information these texts contribute on the subject of singing, therefore, should not be regarded as an obscure or minority view as represented within the Scrolls. If singing is reflected as an important aspect of liturgical practice in this text, we should work on the basis that it represents a prominent feature of liturgical practice for groups associated with the documents found at or near Qumran.

The existence of a large body of manuscript evidence found at or near the Qumran site so explicitly concerned with singing as a liturgical practice only underscores the significance of the relationship between singing and text as it existed conceptually in the religious contexts

Jub 2:3) and praising (ללה, Ps 148; 1QM 12:1) as referring straightforwardly to the activity of singing, which is precisely what she is theoretically *not* willing to do with such language as it is generally found in the DSS (Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 180–8). I think this inconsistency illustrates the unnecessary degree of caution she applies when explaining away the copious evidence for singing in the Scrolls. She is right when referring to these additional sources to take seriously language of “blessing” as also potentially referring to singing, and application of this same approach to the Dead Sea Scrolls would offer an additional avenue of constructive research. For discussion of the meaning of “blessing,” see James K. Aitken, *The Semantics of Blessing and Cursing in Ancient Hebrew*, ANESSup 23 (Louvain: Peeters, 2007); Brooke, “Reading, Searching and Blessing”; and Falk, *Festival Prayers*.

¹⁷ Noam Mizrahi, “God, Gods and Godhead in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice,” in *The Religious Worldviews Reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Fourteenth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 28–30 May, 2013*, ed. Ruth A. Clements, Menahem Kister and Michael Segal, STDJ 127 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 161–92, 161–2.

that produced, reproduced, and used the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. The dynamics of this relationship have not been explored within Dead Sea Scholarship, hence the aims of the present thesis and the need to emphasise both the prominence of singing and its relationship with text as reflected in the Scrolls. Having highlighted the significance of identity as an angelic-priestly community, we turn now to consider a portion of text from the Seventh Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice, as attested in 4Q403 fragment 2.

5.3 The Seventh Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice: Singing and Meditation in “The Cycle of Summons” (4Q403 1 I, 36–37)

The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice offer much material for reflection concerning the function of singing from a variety of angles, and as a further example we move now to consider a small hymnic portion of the Seventh Song. The passage of text selected for analysis exhibits a linguistic phenomenon which yields important insights concerning the function of singing and the connection between singing and interpretative processes. The following discussion is a reconsideration of the semantic range of the Hebrew verbs *הגה* and *רנן* in light of their combined use in lines 36–37 of 4Q403 (4QShirShab^d). Analysis of the interaction between these terms and their semantic overlap in this context requires a re-examination of standard lexical definitions, and provokes reflection concerning the function of singing, particularly in relation to meditation. When using the term “meditation,” I refer to a function that is frequently implied in English translations of the verb *הגה* as it occurs in the Hebrew Bible, and to which I gave some further definition for the purposes of this thesis in my introduction.¹⁸ I indicated there that by using the term “meditation” I refer to a contemplative practice which consists of reflecting upon sacred texts and traditions or upon the character of the divine. The reasons for formulating the definition in these particular terms will become apparent in the course of the following analysis. The definition is nonetheless intended to be somewhat broad and open to further discussion and interpretation. The analysis of the interweaving of the verbs *הגה* and *רנן* leads to a new proposal concerning the liturgical function of singing as reflected in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, which in turn suggests that the same phenomenon may be evident across a broader range of Classical Hebrew literature, including works that were ultimately canonised as part of the Hebrew Bible.

¹⁸ See section 1.2.5 above.

5.3.1 Literary Context: 4Q403 and the Cycle of Summons

4Q403 preserves the Seventh Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice, one of a collection of thirteen such songs attested in manuscripts found in the Judean Desert. These songs contain what can be described as an “angelic liturgy,” being primarily concerned with the praise and liturgical service of the angelic priesthood in the heavenly tabernacle. Each of the thirteen works in the collection is assigned explicitly to a sabbath day during the first quarter of the year, and in the numerological structure of the collection, the Seventh Song occurs at a climactic central point.¹⁹

The portion of text which is the particular focus here forms part of a literary unit that has been dubbed “The Cycle of Summons,” a composition which can be clearly identified in form-critical terms as a hymn exhibiting its own internal seven-fold structure.²⁰ This structure is formed around a series of second-person plural imperative “calls to praise” which are addressed to the angelic-priestly worshippers, and it has been suggested that the seven-fold structure of these calls corresponds to seven councils of angels, alluded to elsewhere in the collection.²¹ Each stanza of the hymn is characterised by a consciously repeated key-word (or words), and it is the fifth stanza which is the subject of analysis below.²² Immediately following the Cycle of Summons, the Seventh Song turns to focus on the details of the architecture and adornments of the heavenly tabernacle itself, which are all caught up into the act of praise. This theme is then followed through the remaining six songs to the end of the collection as a whole. The first half of the collection is primarily focused on the establishment of the angelic priestly order and their praises, and the Seventh Song thus expresses the climax of angelic praise.

Though there is some discussion concerning precisely how the internal structure of the Cycle of Summons is to be demarcated, this analysis focuses on a specific linguistic phenomenon which occurs in the fifth stanza of the hymn, and is unaffected by structural amendments that have been proposed.²³ The linguistic feature under examination has been aptly described as

¹⁹ Newsom, *Angelic Liturgy*, 3.

²⁰ Mizrahi, “Cycle of Summons,” 56–7.

²¹ Alexander, *Mystical Texts*, 29–30; Newsom, *Angelic Liturgy*, 3.

²² Mizrahi, “Cycle of Summons,” 55.

²³ For differing perspectives on demarcation of the hymn, see Alexander, *Mystical Texts*, 28–30; Mizrahi, “Cycle of Summons,” 54–7; Newsom, DJD XI, 270.

an “interweaving” of two Hebrew verbs—*הגה* and *רנן*—in lines 36 to 37 of 4Q403.²⁴ For both verbs, their use in this context suggests a semantic range which cannot be adequately represented by an individual English term, nor by any one of the interpretations typically proposed in standard lexical works. Furthermore, the particular character of the combined usage of these terms raises questions concerning the role and function of singing as a medium of liturgical performance in the Late Second Temple Period.

Returning, then, to the text which is the focus of this section, I hope to demonstrate that by giving close attention to a specific linguistic phenomenon in its literary and material context, important insights can be gleaned as to aspects of liturgical performance in the Late Second Temple Period, and more specifically as to the function of singing as a performative medium.

5.3.2 Material Aspects of 4Q403 and Related Manuscripts

Before focusing on lines 36 to 37, which comprise the fifth stanza of the Cycle of Summons as discussed above, I will briefly introduce the manuscript 4Q403 and some notable aspects of its material presentation. Though the work in question is also attested in manuscripts 4Q404 and 4Q405, the text in these cases is highly fragmentary and consists of only a few shared words in this instance. Material comparison between the manuscripts serves primarily to highlight the more general observations offered below, and for this reason, due to limitations of space, I will focus my comments on 4Q403 itself.

One of the most notable features of the material presentation of 4Q403 is the large number of lines relative to the size of the manuscript, achieved by the use of extremely small handwriting.²⁵ The average letter-size is unusually small in comparison with other manuscripts of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, and also in the context of the Dead Sea Scrolls corpus as a whole. The scribe of 4Q403 wrote two lines of script per horizontal ruled line.²⁶ 4Q403 column I contains 50 lines in total, and in his 2004 compendium of scribal practices, Emanuel Tov mentions only six other scrolls that preserve or are reconstructed to have contained fifty lines or more per column.²⁷ Of these six scrolls, the recorded

²⁴ Mizrahi, “Cycle of Summons,” 57–8.

²⁵ Newsom, DJD XI, 253; Friederike Schücking-Jungblut, “Reading the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice,” in Krauß, Leipziger and Schücking-Jungblut, 71–88, 74–6.

²⁶ I owe this observation to Drew Longacre.

²⁷ Schücking-Jungblut, “Reading the Songs,” 75; Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 89.

measurements for the height of the leather range from 30cm to 46.5cm, a range of sizes strikingly large in comparison to 4Q403's mere 18cm.²⁸ Admittedly, 4QExod-Lev^f and 4QPs^r fit 60 and 60-plus lines into their 30 and 33-plus centimetres respectively, but even if we take an average based on these figures the contrast is clear: 4QPs^r exhibits an average of approximately 1.8 lines per cm of leather-height, 4QExod-Lev^f approximately 2 lines per cm, and 4Q403 2.8 lines per cm. In the whole extant corpus of Dead Sea Scrolls, not to mention the *Shirot* manuscripts (including 4Q405, which uses a considerably larger writing block and an average script size), 4Q403 stands out in terms of its combination of tiny letters and high number of lines relative to the size of the leather.²⁹

Why then were such small letters used in order to cram so many lines onto the available parchment? Previous studies suggest a number of possible answers. Falk and Schücking-Jungblut both note the skill required to execute such small handwriting and retain legibility.³⁰ As a product, however, 4Q403 “shows more scribal interventions than all the other witnesses” of the *Shirot*, containing “a large number of corrections with deletion dots and interlinear writing.”³¹ This leads them both to the conclusion that it was “a scholar’s personal copy for study.”³²

Pajunen has given particular attention to the impact of material presentation on “readability,” and the possible implications thereof for the liturgical function of psalm and prayer manuscripts.³³ With readability in mind, Pajunen suggests that the manuscripts with significantly larger than normal script size and spacing may have been deliberately formatted for ease of reading in public, and hence for ritual use.³⁴ Manuscripts with generous spaces and clear but small handwriting may alternatively have been more appropriate for “private piety,” and manuscripts which clearly prioritise economy of space over legibility appear unsuitable for ritual use and unlikely to have been intended for such a purpose.³⁵ It is important to note, however, that even if a particular physical manuscript is unsuitable for ritual use, that does not necessarily mean that the text it contains was not used ritually. That

²⁸ Schücking-Jungblut, “Reading the Songs,” 75; Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 89.

²⁹ I have not included *tefillin* and *mezuzot* in this discussion, as 4Q403 does not bear the characteristics of either category, and they do not, therefore, provide a useful comparison for the purposes of the present discussion.

³⁰ Falk, “Material Aspects,” 69–70; Schücking-Jungblut, “Reading the Songs,” 75.

³¹ Falk, “Material Aspects,” 70.

³² Falk, “Material Aspects,” 70; Schücking-Jungblut, “Reading the Songs,” 75.

³³ Pajunen, “Reading,” 68–9.

³⁴ Pajunen, “Reading,” 62–4, 68.

³⁵ Pajunen, “Reading,” 64–8.

would require the assumption that the text preserved was only ever inscribed on a manuscript with these same characteristics, which is effectively an argument from silence on the basis of limited evidence. It also assumes that the text preserved could not have functioned *without* the use a manuscript, as an oral performance from memory.

Pajunen is clear that he is working only on the basis of probabilities, nonetheless his analysis offers some helpful hints and suggestions as to the impact of readability on ritual function. If we consider 4Q403 with these same markers of readability in mind, the tiny script size would suggest that we are dealing with a manuscript for which ease of reading in a public setting was not a priority in terms of its production. The clarity of script, however, means that a function for means of private piety may still be plausible, an assessment which coheres with Shücking-Jungblut and Falk's suggestion that it might be a scholar's document for personal study.³⁶ These material observations in their own right do not constitute a sufficient basis for a specific or precise theory concerning the function and liturgical performance of 4Q403. They do, however, provide an important basis for further reflection in a number of directions, though space permits only one aspect to be highlighted here. In the course of the current argument, the suggestion that this manuscript may have been particularly suitable for private and personal use will emerge as a useful piece of corroborative evidence. In conjunction with the linguistic and literary evidence surveyed below, it will become apparent that the two poles of public, corporate expression and private, individual expression of religious devotion must both be considered as important aspects for reflection concerning singing and liturgical practice in the Late Second Temple Period.

5.3.3 Semantic Range of Key Terms: רָנַן

Turning to the text itself, I will try to illustrate the semantic issues involved by approaching the task of translating lines 36–37 of 4Q403 step by step and observing the issues that arise. As a preliminary, however, it is necessary to provide a brief lexical overview of the key vocabulary in question based on Classical Hebrew usage in general. The initial clause of what can be identified as the fifth stanza of the Cycle of Summons hymn, beginning on line 36 of 4Q403, reads as follows:

רָנַנּוּ מִרְנֵי [דַּעַת] רִוְנָן בְּאֵלֹהֵי פְּלֵא

³⁶ Falk, "Material Aspects," 70; Schücking-Jungblut, "Reading the Songs," 75.

At this stage there is no barrier to translating this phrase using standard lexical definitions of the verb רָנַן. In the vast majority of cases in Classical Hebrew, the root ר-נ-ן denotes singing or shouting for joy.³⁷ The references provided in the footnotes which illustrate this sense of the verb include fifty-eight occurrences in the canonical books of the Hebrew Bible, and a further twelve from other literature found at or near Qumran. Rejoicing in relation to victory or deliverance is also a recurrent theme.³⁸

In a significant minority of cases, the feminine noun רִנָּה refers to crying out in prayer and supplication, though there appear to be no examples of verbal forms functioning in this way.³⁹ Beyond the expression of joyful celebration, רָנַן is above all employed in the context of praise and thanksgiving.⁴⁰ Three notable and conspicuous examples in the Hebrew Bible occur, however, as references to a shout or cry with negative connotations.⁴¹ Of these, Lamentations 2:19 stands out as an instance of רָנַן which clearly refers to a cry of lament. The contrast with typical usage is striking, particularly in light of other texts that place רָנַן in direct opposition to mourning and lamentation for rhetorical impact (Isa 16:10; Job 3:4; 20:5; 29:13; 1QHa 19:29). For this reason, and in the literary context of Lamentations 2, there may be justification in reading this instance as a consciously ironic use of רָנַן, a deliberate inversion of its normal sense in order to create a vivid and shocking impression of mourning and suffering: even the song or shout of joy has become a cry of lament. In this way, Lamentations 2:19 may constitute a kind of “exception that proves the rule,” in that it is precisely the normal association of רָנַן with joy that creates the inverted rhetorical impact in this case. The emerging general picture of רָנַן as an expression of joy is re-enforced by the

³⁷ The following is an illustrative but not exhaustive list of some of the clearest examples. Verb רָנַן: Isa 16:10; 35:2, 6; 42:11; 44:23; 49:13; 51:11; 54:1; 55:12; Zeph 3:17; Ps 5:11; 32:11; 33:1; 35:27; 51:14; 65:13; 67:5; 71:23; 81:2; 84:3; 89:13; 90:14; 92:5; 95:1; 96:11; 98:4, 8; 132:9, 16; 149:5; 29:13; Prov 29:6; 1 Chr 16:33; 4Q256 XX, 2; 4Q381 33ab + 35, 5; 4Q428 20, 1; 4Q491 11 I, 9; 4Q510 1, 8; 4Q511 63 III, 1; 11Q5 XXVI, 12. Feminine noun רִנָּה: Isa 14:7; 35:10; 44:23; 48:20; 49:13; 51:11; 54:1; 55:12; Zeph 3:17; Ps 30:6; 42:4; 105:43; 118:15; 126:2, 5–6; 1QM IV, 4; 1QHa XIX, 29; 4Q405 8 I, 13; 4Q491 XI 1, 21; 4Q511 28_29, 2. Feminine noun רִנְנָה: Psa. 63:6; 100:2; Job 3:7; 20:5.

³⁸ Jer 51:48; Psa 20:4; 32:7; 35:27; 47:2; 98:4, 8; 118:15; 1QM IV, 4; XII, 15.

³⁹ 1 Ki 8:28; 22:36; Jer 7:16; 11:14; 14:12; Psa 17:1; 61:2; 88:3; 106:44; 119:169; 142:7; 2 Chr 6:19.

⁴⁰ Isa 12:6; Jer 31:7; Psa 30:6; 42:4; 47:2; 63:6, 8; 71:23; 84:3; 89:13; 92:5; 95:1; 96:11; 100:2; 145:7; 149:5; 1 Chr 16:33; 2 Chr 20:22; 1QHa VII, 21; XI, 24; XIX, 29; 4Q379 16, 2; 4Q403 1 I, 5; 4Q427 7 I, 14; 8 I, 9; 4Q428 20, 1; 4Q504 1_2 RVII, 11; 4Q510 1, 8; 4Q511 63 III, 1; 6Q18 13, 3; 11Q5 XIX, 8; 11Q6 4_5, 10.

⁴¹ At 1 Kings 22:36 the noun רִנָּה represents a cry of alarm throughout the military camp calling the army to retreat. Similarly, Leviticus 9:24 appears to be an expression of fear. Though both of these instances apparently associate רָנַן with fear as opposed to the far more common connotation of joy, they retain the verb's sense of a loud and emotionally laden cry. Lamentation 2:19 is the third.

consistent choice in the LXX to render it using either εὐφραίνω or ἀγαλλιάομαι, both of which have the primary sense of “to rejoice”.⁴² It is also notable that in Proverbs the LXX uses ὑμνέω (to sing) as equivalent to רָנַן and to express the voice of Lady Wisdom crying out in the city gate (Prov 1:20; 8:3). There are a number of further instances of רָנַן which deserve attention due to their notable thematic correspondences with the Cycle of Summons in 4Q403, but these will be discussed at a later stage in the argument when a picture of the interpretative contours of lines 36 to 37 has begun to emerge.

5.3.4 Reconstruction and Translation of Line 36

Having sketched a broad and brief overview of the semantic range of רָנַן in Classical Hebrew generally, and returning to the matter of translating the first clause of line 36, there is enough precedent to begin with the working assumption that רָנַן מְרַנְנִי and רָנַן רוֹנֵן should be interpreted in terms of singing or shouting for joy. That the context here is one of praise directed towards God is evident enough from a cursory reading of the Cycle of Summons as whole, and from its place at the climax of the numerological structure of the entire collection.⁴³ As has already been observed concerning the literary structure of the Cycle of Summons, the theme of praise is written throughout the architecture of the hymn, and may be seen as a primary and unifying theme.

רָנַן can be straightforwardly read as a piel imperative, and Newsom has established the reconstruction of a *mem* at the edge of the lacuna in line 36, leading to the reading of מְרַנְנִי as a piel plural participle in the vocative. Before offering a translation, however, the issue of reconstructing the text in the lacuna must be addressed. The missing leather leaves a substantial hole which stretches diagonally across lines 32 to 37 and intrudes into line 38, and a twisting in the parchment has distorted the horizontal lines of the script.⁴⁴ Measurement is

⁴² Deut 32:43; Isa 12:6; 16:10; 24:14; 26:19; 35:2; 35:6; 42:11; 44:23; 49:13; 52:8; 54:1; 61:7; 65:14; Jer 31:7, 12; Psa 5:12; 20:6 [19:6]; 32:11 [31:11]; 33:1 [32:1]; 35:27 [34:27]; 51:16 [50:16]; 59:17 [58:17]; 63:8 [62:8]; 67:5 [66:5]; 71:23 [70:23]; 81:2 [80:2]; 84:3 [83:3]; 89:13 [88:13]; 90:14 [89:14]; 92:5 [91:5]; 95:1 [94:1]; 96:12 [95:12]; 98:4, 8 [97:4, 8]; 132:9 [131:9]; 132:16 [131:16]; 145:7 [144:7]; 149:5; Prov 29:6; Lam 2:19; 1 Chr 16:33.

⁴³ For this numerological structure and the Seventh Song as its climax, see Newsom, *Angelic Liturgy*, 3.

⁴⁴ Newsom, DJD XI, 274 and Plate XX; Israel Antiquities Authority, “The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library,” <https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/explore-the-archive/image/B-499635>. I am also grateful to Beatriz Riestra and the curators at the Israel Antiquities Authority Dead Sea Scrolls archive for giving me the opportunity to view the manuscript first hand and for their assistance with measuring.

therefore difficult, but Newsom records a width of approximately 9–11 mm.⁴⁵ In her transcription, she reconstructs the text in this space as a single Hebrew letter: the preposition ב.⁴⁶ This results in the translation “Sing with joy, you who rejoice *with* rejoicing among the wondrous god-like beings.”⁴⁷ Despite the distortion in the leather, however, the lacuna appears too large to accept a single Hebrew letter as sufficient text to have occupied this much space.

Newsom herself suggests a preferable alternative in her comments on line 36: the reconstruction of Hebrew דעת, “knowledge.”⁴⁸ This is the option preferred by Mizrahi, and it depends upon a logical explanation in conjunction with the scribal error evident in line 37, where the word דעת has been deleted (using cancellation dots above and below the line), and replaced with עד, “forever.”⁴⁹ In the hypothesised chain of events, the scribe, when writing מרנני for the second time on a subsequent line would have been prompted by the graphically similar דעת (in the lacuna following מרנני on line 36) to write the same word again.⁵⁰

Qimron, alternatively, reconstructs [ב עד], which would alter Newsom’s translation along the lines of “Sing with joy, you who rejoice *forever with* songs of rejoicing.”⁵¹ This alternative might be argued on the basis that מרנני עד, as the correct reading in line 37, was also to be found in line 36, and in the second instance, through some kind of memory or phonic error, the scribe inverted the ע and ד and was prompted to write דעת, a word that had occurred twice already in the Cycle of Summons and is popular in the *Shirot* in general (occurring at least 52 times across the manuscript witnesses). This explanation, however, appears somewhat more forced and posits a less convincing chain of events compared with Newsom and Mizrahi’s alternative.⁵² Davila’s translation (“*Chant, O Chanters of [knowledge, with] chanting*”)⁵³ assumes another alternative reconstruction, reading both דעת and ב in the lacuna.⁵⁴ Though the existing gap in leather is large enough to accommodate all these letter

⁴⁵ Newsom, DJD XI, 274.

⁴⁶ Newsom, DJD XI, 269, 274.

⁴⁷ Emphasis mine. Newsom, DJD XI, 271.

⁴⁸ Newsom, DJD XI, 274.

⁴⁹ Mizrahi, “Cycle of Summons,” 47; Newsom, DJD XI, 271, 274.

⁵⁰ Mizrahi, “Cycle of Summons,” 47; Newsom, DJD XI, 271, 274.

⁵¹ Elisha Qimron, החיבורים העבריים: מגילות מדבר יהודה: [Dead Sea Scrolls: The Hebrew Writings], 3 vols. (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 2010–2014), 2:269.

⁵² Mizrahi, “Cycle of Summons,” 47; Newsom, DJD XI, 271, 274.

⁵³ Emphasis Davila’s, according to his graphic presentation of readings: Davila, *Liturgical Works*, 123.

⁵⁴ Qimron, *Hebrew Writings*, 2:269; Mizrahi, “Cycle of Summons,” 47.

spaces (as can be established by comparison with the same phrase, *מרנני דעת*, on line 37), based on current observation it is not possible to determine how large the lacuna would have been before the leather was distorted. On textual grounds, and without further evidence, the alternative suggested by Newsom and Mizrahi is therefore most persuasive.

Following the lacuna, the tip of the *resh* of *רוּן* is visible. Though *רוּן* as a masculine noun is not attested anywhere else in Classical Hebrew (though cf. reconstructions at 4Q403 4, 3; and 4Q405 4–5, 4), it is the most compelling interpretation of this lexeme, as a masculine singular participle would be too grammatically incongruent here, even allowing for the unusual syntax of the *Shirot*.⁵⁵ At this stage, then, though there is uncertainty around the reconstruction of text in the lacuna, this has little or no bearing on the semantics of *רוּן*. In the context of angelic praise, it is reasonable at this point to assume the most common meaning for *רוּן*, namely to sing or shout for joy. It is evident that *רוּן ... מרנני* possesses a poetic quality in its assonance which is impossible to replicate in English. In an attempt to try and convey the conscious repetition of the Hebrew, though unnatural in English, I offer an over-literal translation as follows:

“Joyfully sing, those who joyfully sing [knowledge], a joyful song among the gods of wonder.”

It is as we turn our attention to the subsequent clauses and the introduction of the verb *הגה* that a more challenging set of questions emerges concerning the semantics of these two verbs and their inter-relationship.

5.3.5 The Semantic Range of *הגה*

Let us begin with another brief overview of the semantic range of the root *ה-ג-ה* in Classical Hebrew more generally. It is to be noted that though the verb *הגה* is frequently interpreted and translated in terms of meditation, suggesting an internal or cognitive dimension, its usage is consistently (if not exclusively) tied to vocalisation of some kind. Any concept of a purely internalised, or cognitive process does not therefore satisfactorily capture the breadth of the

⁵⁵ Newsom, DJD, 274.

root's semantic range. Are, therefore, two distinct meanings in view, leading to the conclusion that in some contexts a mental activity is indicated, and in others vocalisation? Rather, it is frequently the case that the contexts in which this root appears entail an activity within which both vocalisation *and* contemplation are connected (Josh. 1:8; Isa. 59:13; Psa. 37:30–1; 63:7–8; Prov. 24:2; 4Q525 2, II + 3, 6; 14 II, 19–20).⁵⁶ This is even true of some of the examples that are interpreted in lexicons as denoting sound-making alone, such as the lion “growling” over its prey (Isa. 31:4) or the dove moaning for the heights (Isa. 38:14). In Isaiah 59:11, the growling of bears and moaning of doves (using *הגה*, emphasised in this instance by means of the infinitive absolute) is used as an analogy for a human longing for justice which does not arrive. In each of these examples, the function of *הגה* seems to incorporate an aspect of *desire* which is not explicitly acknowledged in standard lexical definitions.⁵⁷ The lion growls with desire over his prey, and the moaning of the dove symbolises human longing for justice, or King Hezekiah's longing for life (Isa. 38:14). In Psalm 63, *הגה* occurs in the context of human thirst, seeking, and longing for God, in a dry and weary land (verse 7). In Isaiah 33:18, it expresses a longing for the terror of God's judgement to fall upon the rebellious nation. This overlooked semantic element of desire illustrates that even in the animal examples, some kind of internalised process accompanies the act of vocalised sound-making.

Frequently, however, aspects of vocalisation and meditation are more explicit. The remembrance and meditation upon Torah to which Joshua is famously exhorted consists in “not letting these words depart from your mouth [מפיך]” (Josh 1:8). In Psalm 35:28 *הגה* is enacted by the tongue, as opposed to some apparently inward mechanism, as also in Psalm 71:24 and Isaiah 59:3, and the mouth is again the vehicle in Psalm 37:30 and Proverbs 8:7. In Psalm 115:7 the mute idols are mocked because they are unable to “יהגו/הגה” with their throat (גרזן). Furthermore, *הגה* at times occurs in the context of singing and music-making (Ps 71:22–24; 1QH XIX, 24; 4Q427 1, 4; 7, 17. Noun *הגיון*: Ps 9:16; 92:3). Two examples in Isaiah parallel *הגה* with strikingly onomatopoeic terms, perhaps hinting that *הגה* itself may have possessed an onomatopoeic quality (Isa. 8:19; 38:14). This onomatopoeic quality may also be evident in the related masculine noun *הגיג* found at Psalm 5:2 and 39:4.

⁵⁶ It should be noted that Nb 4Q525 2 II + 3, 6 is included here because it because of the combined use of *הגה* and *שיח*. See 4.2.2 for translation of *שיח* in terms of vocalisation.

⁵⁷ For instance: BDB, 211–12; HALOT, 237; DCH, 2:487–8.

The vocalised element is clear, but so, in many places, is the aspect of contemplation or meditation. The famous “happy” or “blessed” individual of Psalm 1 is the one who delights and meditates in Torah day and night (Ps 1:2). In Proverbs 15:28 it is the heart of the righteous that contemplates (הגה) how to answer, yet in Proverbs 8 it is the voice of Lady Wisdom shouting in the street which “utters” (הגה) truth, as opposed to allowing wickedness upon her lips (Prov 8:7). Indeed, this connection with wisdom and instruction is more widespread, and can also be observed, for instance, in 4Q412 and 4Q525 (4Q412 1, 6; 4Q525 2 II + 3, 6; 14 II, 19; 23, 7). The frequent reference in Qumran Rule Texts to “men learned in the book of הגי/הגו” may refer to a “book of meditation,” and if so, points again to the cognitive or contemplative aspect of the verb הגה, though not necessarily excluding vocalisation.

The apparent combination of vocalisation and inward contemplation evident in many of these examples commonly leads interpreters to imagine a kind of meditative muttering or murmuring to be indicated by הגה. This kind of formulation is consistent with the “moaning” of a dove or the “growling” of a lion in Isaiah (31:4 and 38:14). At times, however, it appears that הגה may denote louder, more enthusiastic, or joyful vocalisation—indeed singing—in the context of praise (Ps 35:28; 71:24; [92:3, noun הגיין]; 1QHa XXVI, 13/4Q427 7 I, 17; 4Q491 11 I, 21). The emotive element may also express mourning and lament (1QH XIX, 24/4Q427 1, 4; possibly Ezek. 2:10). Strikingly, in light of the present discussion of 4Q403, this connotation of singing is suggested in some places by the combination of הגה with the verb רגן (Ps 63:7; 77:24; Prov. 8:7; 4Q427 7 I, 17; 4Q491 11 I, 21). Further comment will be given below to specific examples that are in this respect analogous to the Cycle of Summons, though it is worth mentioning at this stage that the meditative element seems often to be emphasised by means of the *bet* preposition, expressing meditation *in* something, whether that object of meditation is specified as Torah or as God himself (Josh 1:8; Ps 1:2; Ps 63:7; 4Q525 2 II + 3, 6). Septuagint usage largely underlines the meditative aspect, using μελετάω (to think about, meditate, attend to, or study) in the vast majority of cases.⁵⁸ With respect, however, to the lion of Isaiah 31:4 or the lament of Jeremiah 48:31, it in fact chooses βοάω (to shout, or cry aloud), again cautioning against the assumption that הגה only denotes a low-

⁵⁸ Josh 1:8; Isa 16:7; 33:18; 38:14; 59:3; 59:13; Psa 1:2; 2:1; 35:28 [34:28]; 37:30 [36:30]; 38:13 [37:13]; 63:7 [62:7]; 71:24 [70:24]; 77:13 [77:12]; 90:9 [89:9]; 143:5 [142:5]; Job 27:4; 37:2; Prov 8:7; 15:28; 24:2.

key murmuring or muttering. The semantic range evident in Hebrew usage is also witnessed when φωνέω is employed in Isaiah 8:19 and Psalm 115:7. It is worth noting that μέλος at Ezekiel 2:10, referring to lamentation, also carries musical connotations.

The contemplative dimension of הגה is expressed at times in the negative sense as “plotting” or “devising” wickedness (Ps 2:1; 38:13; Job 27:4). For the sake of completeness, it should also be acknowledged that twice the root הגה appears with an alternative and distinct meaning of “to remove” or “banish” (Isa. 27:8; Prov. 25:4), though at Isa. 27:8 the LXX again interprets using μελετάω.

5.3.6 Semantic Overlap Between רנן and הגה in Lines 36–37

Lines 36 and 37 continue as follows:

וְהִגּוּ כְבוֹדוֹ בְּלִשׁוֹן כּוֹל הוֹגֵי דַעַת רְנוֹת פְּלֹאוֹ בְּפִי כּוֹל הוֹגֵי [בו]

At this point, Newsom chooses to render the verb הגה into English as “chant,” a translation-choice which does potentially hold together some of the various semantic contours outlined above.⁵⁹ Though I will argue that “chant,” along with various other English options, cannot adequately account for the semantic range of הגה required by this context, it will suffice for now as an interim translation in order to illustrate the problem. The first הגה clause can in this way be translated straightforwardly and without any special pleading:

“And chant his glory with the tongue of all who chant knowledge.”

At this point, however, the term רנות is introduced to expand upon the nature of that “chanting,” and to express its content. The exhortation is to chant רנות פלאו—“joyful songs of his wonder.” A degree of semantic overlap now becomes evident: in the context of the Cycle of Summons here in 4Q403, it is possible to express רנות—usually songs, or shouts of joy—with the verb הגה, which is itself usually interpreted as murmuring, or meditating. The semantic interweaving of these verbs is then re-emphasised by the addition: בפי כול הוגי [בו], “with the mouth of all who [chant] in Him.” Here we have not only an underlining of the fact

⁵⁹ Newsom, DJD XI, 271.

that the verb *הגה* is used explicitly as a means of expressing *רנות*, but the added dimension of the reconstructed *בו*, “in Him.” This reconstruction is uncontroversial and agreed upon by Newsom, Davila, Mizrahi and Qimron.⁶⁰ In our survey of uses of *הגה* outlined above, it was observed that when the *bet* preposition is employed, the meditative or contemplative aspect of *הגה* is being emphasised. So we have here not only an intriguing semantic overlap between *הגה* and *רנה* (from the root *רנן*), but also an example of the full breadth of the semantic range of *הגה*—that is, a clear reference to vocalisation, and perhaps even joyful singing or shouting—in combination with a meditative, or contemplative aspect. Finally, it is worth noting that the thorough interweaving of these two terms is demonstrated again when God is described as the one who “belongs to all those who sing joyfully forever” (לכול מרנני עד).

At this stage in the argument, certain additional points of relevance should be acknowledged. Firstly, though major editions consistently agree on the reconstruction of *בו* at the beginning of the lacuna in line 37, it is best not to make this reconstructed portion of text a major weight-bearing aspect of any argument. Nonetheless, even apart from this reconstruction, the emphasis on knowledge, *דעת*, is evident throughout the stanza, and it is a repeated theme in the hymn. If Mizrahi’s reconstruction of the lacuna in line 36 is correct, the term occurs twice in these two lines (not to mention the deleted occurrence in line 37), and the stanza also closes with a reference to the *רוחי בין*, or “spirits of discernment.” In the Cycle of Summons, including this instance at line 36, the word *דעת* occurs five times (lines 31, 35, 36, 38, 39), and in the Seventh Song as a whole, a further three times (lines 42, 45 [partially reconstructed], and fragment 2, line 2). It is not unreasonable to conclude, therefore, that the meditative, contemplative aspect of *הגה*—concerned at least in part with “knowledge”—is indeed in view in lines 36 to 37.

Secondly, it should also be observed that the root *רנן* seems to develop in Aramaic in certain directions in such a way as to embrace the idea of “murmuring” or “muttering,” alongside “praising” or “singing for joy.”⁶¹ Indeed, in the Targum of Psalm 49:4, it is actually used as a translation for *הגות*, from the root *הגה*, familiar in English translations of the verse as “the

⁶⁰ Qimron, *Hebrew Writings*, 2:269; Mizrahi, “Cycle of Summons,” 46; Newsom, DJD XI, 269.

⁶¹ Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, *The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon*, “R N N”; “r n n”; “r n n h”; “r n n w,” <https://cal.huc.edu/>.

meditation of my heart.” It is not out of the question, then, that the semantic overlap between these two Hebrew roots that can be observed in 4Q403 represents a stage in the development of the terms, at which point רגן is developing in the direction of הגה to embrace the aspect of murmuring or muttering in addition to singing and shouting. It is also possible that הגה might be moving semantically in the other direction. This diachronic perspective is somewhat more speculative, and requires further research, therefore discussion in this paper is restricted to what can be seen clearly in the context of 4Q403 and Classical Hebrew parallels.

The evidence of semantic overlap raises (at least) two specific issues: firstly, whether loud, exuberant speech is envisaged, or quieter undertones of muttering and murmuring. Secondly, the question as to how this form of speech relates to the function of meditation and contemplation. A response to the first issue might proceed in one of two directions. It might be proposed that הגה can represent not only murmuring and muttering, but that it at times denotes loud and exuberant exclamation, that is, joyful singing or shouting. In the other direction, it might be proposed that רגן can mean—or is diachronically in the process of developing to mean—muttering or murmuring. A third option would be to recognise that even in our survey of the usage of these two verbs in Classical Hebrew more widely, there already exists a degree of semantic overlap, and this is particularly evident when singing is in view. The lexical summaries given above have already illustrated that הגה can denote singing in praise and with musical accompaniment, and that רגן also operates in this way. With this in mind, the usage in 4Q403 could be framed as a clear and focused example of a semantic overlap that is already evident to some extent in Hebrew usage more broadly.

Let us consider these three options in light of the wider literary context of the Cycle of Summons. The whole composition is structured around calls to praise, which are addressed to the angelic priesthood. This structure is achieved by use (and often repetition) of a sequence of key-words, each formulated initially as an imperative call to praise, and each expressing an aspect of angelic praise with an alternative Hebrew term: הללו (praise, line 30); יגדילו (magnify, inferred from יקדילו, line 31); שבחו (praise, line 32); רוממו (exalt, line 33); הודו (praise/thank/confess, line 38); and זמרו (sing, line 39). Reflecting on the three options above, and in light of the fact that this entire composition is an exhortation to angelic praise, and indeed placed as the climax of angelic praise within the collection as a whole, the immediate and wider literary contexts favour interpreting lines 36 to 37 as referring to angelic song, and

thus favour the interpretation of *הגה* and *רנן* as expressing complimentary and overlapping dimensions of singing. This reading is supported by comparison with a selection of texts from the Hebrew Bible and related literature which provide analogies to this linguistic phenomenon and striking parallels of theme and content.

5.3.7 Parallels in the Hebrew Bible and Related Literature

Some notable analogous examples from the Hebrew Bible illustrate that the Cycle of Summons exhibits continuity with other Hebrew traditions and that the linguistic phenomenon examined above may also be evident to some degree in other literature. Psalm 63:6–7, for example, combines the use of *הגה* and *רנן* in parallel relationship, and however that parallelism is to be interpreted precisely, the context suggests dimensions of both contemplation and joyful singing. While on his bed, the Psalmist “remembers” God, meditating (*הגה*) in the night-watches, and then “sings for joy” (*רנן*) beneath the shadow of God’s wings. A similar conversation about the semantic relationship between *הגה* and *רנן* could therefore be had on the basis of Psalm 63 in its own right. It is also noteworthy that Psalm 63 combines both public and private dimensions of singing as an expression of religious devotion. A series of exclamations of praise, culminating with “lips of joyful songs” (*שפתי רננת*) follow the Psalmist’s statement that he has seen God “in the sanctuary” (*שקדש*, vv.2–5). The focus then moves to private meditation (through song?) on the Psalmist’s bed in the night-watches.⁶² This is suggestive of the fact that the forms of singing being explored in this study may have functioned as aspects of both public (corporate) and private (individual) devotion.

Two Psalms exhibit similar thematic and conceptual features through use of another Hebrew verb which is virtually synonymous with *הגה*: the term *שיח*. I have argued in chapter four that in Psalm 154 (found in column eighteen of 11Q5), this verb—though usually translated as speak, tell, or meditate—is likewise used to describe the activity of singing.⁶³ In that context, singing is performed corporately by the envisaged congregation, and functions as a means of teaching and meditating upon Torah. Of further interest is that it appears to occur in the

⁶² It is worth noting at this point that there are in fact several references to “songs in the night” in the Hebrew Bible: Job 35:10, Pss 42:8, 77:6, 88:1, Isa 30:29; and cf. also Ps 134:1–3.

⁶³ See pages 105–9 above.

setting of communal eating and drinking. In addition to Psalm 154, the survey of occurrences of שׁיח presented in chapter four revealed a further eleven cases where it could arguably be translated as “sing” (Judges 5:10; Psalm 105:2/1 Chronicles 16:9; Psalm 104:34; 1QS X, 16/4Q260 4, 2; 1QH^a XIX, 8; 1Q14 [1QpMic] 17, 1; 4Q418 [4QInstruction^a]126 II, 10; 4Q372 [4QapJoseph^b] 3, 4; 4Q437 2 I, 16 and PAM 43.665 5,1).⁶⁴ These examples received further comment in chapter four, and represent additional evidence of a connection between singing and meditation reflected in a range of sources.⁶⁵

In Psalm 145, שׁיח occurs again and this time in conjunction with רנן, in addition to a string of shared vocabulary which is characteristic of the Cycle of Summons, such as כבוד, הוד, פלא, גבורה, מלכות. Finally, 1 Chronicles 16 (including also the poetic material shared with Psalm 105), gives an account of priestly service construed in terms of singing praises with musical accompaniment, and uses a similar “piling up” of terms shared with the Cycle of Summons (such as הוד, הדר, כבוד, רנן, שפט). In this context, the function of רנן is akin to a load roaring, perhaps corroborating the idea that it should not be taken in 4Q403 to be denoting a quiet murmur. While the correspondences between these various works and the Cycle of Summons cannot be fully explored here, the brief observations offered above are enough to illustrate that there are some significant points of continuity between the Cycle of Summons and Second Temple Psalmody in general, including the specific linguistic phenomenon highlighted in this study and its attendant liturgical implications.

5.3.8 Singing and Meditation: Conclusions

The combined use of הגה and רנן in the context of 4Q403 illustrates and highlights the fact (already apparent to some degree in other Hebrew literature) that singing was conceptualised in the late Second Temple Period as a *means* of meditation or contemplation. In some texts, the object of that meditation is specified as Torah, in others it is specified as God himself. This phenomenon comes into sharp focus in the fifth stanza of the Cycle of Summons, where the repetition and sustained interweaving of these two Hebrew roots cannot be adequately explained without recourse to the concept of a joyful, praise-orientated expression of singing

⁶⁴ Pages 105–9 above.

⁶⁵ Pages 105–9. There are undoubtedly examples in this list which would repay further investigation along these same lines of questioning.

that also functions as a means of contemplation and cultivation of divine knowledge. This “divine knowledge,” however, is perhaps better expressed as “knowledge of God,” in that it does not represent a merely intellectual engagement with an external body of information, but rather an embodied liturgical practice rooted in experience of the divine. It is sung meditation “*in Him*” (4Q403 1 I, 37). In 4Q403, this joyful yet contemplative expression of song is imagined as a corporate act undertaken by a council of angels, and echoes the exuberant worship of the priesthood accompanying sacrificial offerings in 1 Chronicles 16.

Material analysis of 4Q403 suggests that it was not produced with the aim of being used in public ritual performance, though this does not mean that the text itself was not performed ritually. Neither does it exclude the possibility that the manuscript could have facilitated ritual performance indirectly by aiding study, memorisation, or dissemination of the hymn it carried. The private, personal dimension of function suggested by the manuscript’s material characteristics chimes with the potential dual function of meditative singing—it may be performed corporately and in public, or individually and in private. This dual-aspect is also attested in Psalm 63, which offers an analogous example of the same linguistic and performative phenomenon. Primarily, this analysis of 4Q403 lines 36–37 underlines one point clearly: singing was conceptualised in Late Second Temple Jewish Literature not only as a means of expressing praise, but also as a means of engaging with the knowledge of God through meditation and reflection in an embodied and experiential way.

5.4 Chapter Five Conclusions

Analysis of two selected portions of text from the Songs of the Sacrifice has been used to illustrate some important characteristics of these compositions relating to the wider discussion of the impact of singing upon text. For the purposes of my argument, 4Q400 fragment 2 demonstrated primarily the conception of human sung praise and priestly activity as direct counterparts to the activity of the angels in the heavenly tabernacle. This observation leads to numerous further possibilities for the study of singing within the Songs of Sabbath Sacrifice, and prompts us as interpreters to read descriptions of angelic praise with the expectation that they also reflect counterpart human activity. The recognition that a shared sense of identity as an angelic-priestly community is central to the worldview that lies behind many of the texts found at or near Qumran, along with the observation that singing was a key feature of angelic vocation according to Second Temple literature more widely, led to the

conclusion that singing is not likely to have been a peripheral aspect of liturgical practice, but rather an aspect of performance that was central and prominent. This hypothesis is supported by the sheer number of manuscripts of The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice discovered at Qumran, suggesting that these are important texts that reflect significant aspects of the theological perspective of groups associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls.

In summary, our study of two portions of text from the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice has drawn attention to the way that singing as a medium influences the interpretation of sacred texts in the following ways: by re-enforcing a communal sense of identity as an angelic-priestly community, which operates within a theological worldview that is shaped by: (a) a cosmological view of the heavenly activity of angels, whose primary functions include singing; (b) the recognition that human liturgical activity is a direct counterpart to that of the angels in heaven; and (c) the use of song as a means of meditation upon the character and deeds of God.

These texts therefore reflect song as a prominent liturgical practice, central to the life of the implied community and not peripheral. In terms of the function that singing is understood to fulfil in the conceptual world of these texts, we can see that it played a significant role in processes which shape the theological worldview of liturgical participants, and therefore the lens through which they interpret sacred texts. Sung meditation is concerned with knowledge of God, and in the complex processes of textual transmission described in the course of this thesis, it is therefore an activity which is intimately intertwined with textual aspects of transmitting knowledge. In addition, a newly conceived practice of “sung meditation” may need to be added to our conception of liturgical functions reflected in the texts found at or near Qumran.

CHAPTER SIX:
ANALYSING TEXTUAL VARIANTS IN PSALM MANUSCRIPTS

6.1 Introduction

The following chapter explores several theories as to how liturgical singing might relate to observable changes in written texts, and goes on to survey a selection of examples of textual variation among psalms manuscripts found in the Judean desert in order to assess the potential influence of musical setting in each case. These examples are primarily illustrative: I am presenting first a hypothesis as to what textual variation as a result of singing might look like, and then seeking to answer the question “are there any examples from among the Dead Sea Scrolls that would fit such a profile?” The text-critical data is not required to prove the thesis, which is carried by the arguments and evidence of previous chapters. It illustrates, however, the kinds of data that are likely to result from the textual processes described in previous chapters, and that such data is in plentiful supply. I will argue (partly on the basis of musicological observations set forth in this chapter and in chapter three) that musical adaptation is likely to result in changes that range on a spectrum from “micro-variations” to “macro-variations,” and that examples of the variation of specifically liturgical features of texts are observable among multiple psalms manuscripts at various points along this spectrum. I will also address the notable phenomenon that a greater degree of significant variation is evident among psalms manuscripts in comparison with other types of literature among the Dead Sea Scrolls.¹

The latter point may at first glance appear to be at odds with the findings of a similarly conceived research project carried out by Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman concerning a very different corpus: the Greek textual tradition attested in the fourth century C.E. Codex Alexandrinus.² They discover that singing can in some circumstances contribute to the stabilisation of textual forms.³ In their text-critical reconstruction, however, this stabilisation occurs only after several centuries during which liturgical variation occurred, and the change

¹ The goal is not, therefore, primarily to explain textual variants, but to illustrate that plentiful data exists which would fit the hypothesis concerning the influence of singing in textual processes. Improving our understanding of those processes remains the focus.

² Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes.”

³ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes.”

in process was likely influenced by major socio-political developments.⁴ Nevertheless, Knust and Wasserman's study provides valuable methodological insights and provokes important questions as to how variation of liturgical elements among the Dead Sea Scrolls might be interpreted, and their conclusions will be brought into conversation with the Qumran evidence in the course of this chapter.

To re-iterate a key observation from the preceding chapter upon which the following discussion builds: we can know very little with certainty about specific settings for psalms in the Second Temple Period. The content of some texts explicitly refers to liturgical occasions of performance, such as prayers (blessings) for specific days (4Q503); prayers for festivals (4Q509 + 4Q505); apotropaic songs (4Q511 8); or prayers for purificatory washing (4Q512). The content of some texts seems to clearly indicate a particular liturgical occasion, such as a marriage ritual (4Q502), and 11Q5 XVII (David's Compositions) enumerates songs to accompany daily and sabbath offerings, festivals, new moons, and the Day of Atonement. Though I have presented evidence that explicit literary references such as these are more significant for reconstruction of the practice of singing than has previously been acknowledged, they do not enable us to pinpoint reconstructions of performance settings to specific and exclusive times and places.⁵ Similarly, they do not allow us to be prescriptive about ways that these texts may have been performed and may or may not have accompanied other ritual practices such as animal sacrifice. The large number of variables at play is in part due to the potential for multiple different settings of liturgical performance both in synchronic and in diachronic perspective.⁶ Acknowledging such diversity is in line with the goals of this thesis to illuminate textual processes, rather than reconstruct singular, specific occasions of liturgical performance.

We must therefore proceed with extreme caution when it comes to making any kind of generalised assumptions about what the character of musical and/or textual performances might have been. Although I operate with a greater degree of optimism than Eileen Schuller

⁴ Knust and Wasserman, "Biblical Odes," 356.

⁵ See the discussions above concerning musical metaphors, the re-use of "biblical" terminology, and the potential value of textual and literary evidence for singing in sections 1.2.3, 2.2.1 and 2.2.4.

⁶ As explored in the literature review above (see section 2.2), some studies have too easily assumed diachronic simplicity and continuity when reconstructing the development of liturgical practices. Representative examples include Elgvin, "Rosh Hashanah," 49–67; Weinfeld, "Morning Prayers"; Smith, *Music in Ancient Judaism*, 123–134; Van Bekkum, "Qumran Poetry and Piyyut," 29. Falk counters this approach in Falk, *Festival Prayers*, 17.

concerning what may be inferred about singing on the basis of texts alone, and although I criticise aspects of her methodology in the course of this study, her preliminary discussion of singing in the Scrolls is a fine example of scholarly restraint on these issues.⁷ She is determined not to go beyond what we can conclusively say about singing on the basis of evidence from the Qumran manuscripts themselves.⁸ Nevertheless, she applies criteria of suspicion which are far more rigorous concerning the phenomenon of singing than concerning other aspects of liturgical performance. Forms of prayer (presumably spoken) are frequently and generally assumed by Schuller and other scholars to be a commonplace aspect of actual liturgical practice, while the possibility of liturgical singing is treated with excessive caution, despite a plethora of explicit references in our literature.⁹ This represents a methodological inconsistency to which the foregoing discussion of singing in the Dead Sea Scrolls is intended to offer some balance. At this stage, however, having re-iterated the complexity and multiplicity of variables involved in postulating performance settings for liturgical texts, I will consider some of the types of textual variation and adaptation that suggest association with liturgical usage.

I also avoid any claims that a specific unit of textual variation or type of variation is conclusively or solely caused by singing. The aim of these illustrative examples is instead two-fold: in the first place, they demonstrate that the kinds of variations that singing is likely to cause are common-place among Dead Sea psalms scrolls. Secondly, they demonstrate that there exist a far greater number of potential explanatory causes for textual variation than are usually acknowledged in the application of traditional text-critical methods. Traditional methods tend not to focus on aspects of performance, and frequently operate with a linear model of transmission which identifies “variants” diverging from a putative textual norm, seeking to categorise all differences in terms of “earlier” or “later,” “original” or “corrupt.”¹⁰ I contend that this linear approach does not do justice to the plurality and complexity of the

⁷ Schuller, “Some Reflections.”

⁸ Schuller, “Some Reflections.”

⁹ Schuller, “Some Reflections.” Scholarly literature on prayer in the Dead Sea Scrolls is extensive, and rarely (if ever) questions whether spoken prayer actually occurred within communities directly associated with the collection of the Scrolls or Second Temple Jewish communities outside of the Temple precincts in general. The literature assumes and refers to singing as a liturgical activity extensively (see section 2.2.3 above), and there is no clear reason why the widespread practice of liturgical singing should be viewed as any less likely during this period than other forms of prayer.

¹⁰ Brooke, “Higher and Lower Criticism”; is a clarion call to re-assess (in light of the Dead Sea Scrolls) previously accepted norms of Text-Critical methodology which operate within a narrow, linear approach. A push-back from Hendel on this issue towards Brooke and other critics can be found in Hendel, *Steps*, 41–64.

manuscript evidence discovered at or near Qumran, which indicates a vibrancy and vitality in the function of texts that cannot be satisfactorily explained by means of a linear model of textual transmission.¹¹

6.2 Theorising Types of Textual Adaptation Due to Singing

Having cleared the ground in terms of clarifying some key aspects of definition in chapter three, and having also established there a conceptual basis for analysing the relationship between singing and text, it is possible on those grounds to theorise the kinds of textual phenomena that are likely to be related to the influence of singing, and to consider whether any such phenomena are in evidence among liturgical texts found at Qumran.

6.2.1 “Micro” and “Macro” Adaptations

The process of adapting speech in order to form a melodic phrase can include selective textual choices or adaptations on varying degrees of scale. These adaptations can be conceptualised as operating on a spectrum ranging from “micro-adaptation” to “macro-adaptation.” On the smallest scale, as melody is wedded to text (whether it is composed before, after, or simultaneously in relation to that text), units of text such as syllables, single words, or small groups of words can be adapted or omitted in order to facilitate the aesthetically motivated combination of tune and lyric.¹² This adaptation can occur in a variety of ways within the compositional process, as explored in chapter three above. This kind of adaptation can also occur when texts are given new musical settings or performed in changed liturgical circumstances. Selection or adaptation can also involve slightly larger units of text, as in the case, for instance, of the inclusion or omission of a repeated liturgical refrain which constitutes an entire line or bi-colon.¹³ On a larger scale again, the inclusion or omission of some units of text which consist of several lines or more can also be interpreted in liturgical terms, as can content choices in the omission or inclusion of entire compositions, when comparing, for instance, collections such as the MT-Psalter and 11QPs^a.¹⁴ Musically

¹¹ I owe this terminology to Hindy Najman’s concept of “the vitality of scripture”: Najman, “Vitality of Scripture.”

¹² The process that I call “micro-selection” here is partially explored and analysed by Nketia in “Musicology and Linguistics,” 150–8.

¹³ I will discuss possible examples of this phenomenon presently. See for instance, the Psalm 145’s repeated refrain in 11Q5, discussed briefly in Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 209. See also Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 34–6.

¹⁴ Examples consisting of up to five verses are discussed in Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 34–6. The alternative ordering of compositions when comparing 11Q5 and MT may also be considered in this category.

influenced adaptations can therefore result in the addition or omission of single syllables, entire words, partial or entire phrases, longer units of texts, or entire compositions (in the context of a liturgical collection). Examples of some of these kinds of changes in psalms manuscripts among the Dead Sea Scrolls will be considered in a little more detail below.

Although explanations and interpretations of specific text-critical phenomena are always hypothetical and subjective at least to a degree, it will become apparent that some of the examples surveyed below strongly suggest liturgical performance as a factor in the adaptation of texts, including examples across the spectrum from micro to macro variations. Again, some of the differences that exist between psalm manuscripts involve the presence or absence of a micro-textual unit (letter, syllable, or word), a larger unit of several words or entire colon, a unit consisting of several verses or lines of text, or content differences between collections. These various differences may be symptomatic of adaptive and/or selective choices at various points in the development of a textual tradition.¹⁵

6.2.2 Establishing Criteria and the Possible Impact of Singing: Comparative Evidence from Codex Alexandrinus

Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman have applied strikingly similar research questions concerning the impact of singing upon the transmission of a very different textual corpus, that of the Greek manuscript tradition which eventually produced one of the earliest Christian bibles.¹⁶ While it cannot be assumed that their findings will be applicable to the Dead Sea Scrolls, their work offers some vital methodological analogies, and their results add to the range of possibilities that should be borne in mind as potential ways in which liturgical singing can influence textual transmission. Their study helps to establish, on the one hand, what kinds of micro-textual variants can be identified as resulting from sung performance, and on the other hand, what the long-term impact of such performance might be upon the

¹⁵ If a textual critic of the Hebrew Bible subscribes to the theory of “multiple pristine texts,” it is conceivable that such differences were not caused by selection, but co-existed somehow in “original” form as distinct exemplars. However, even accepting this premise, through my research I am exploring the possibility that whatever the putative origins of a textual tradition, at some point in the process of transmission, choices of selection or adaptation were made for liturgical reasons. I am therefore raising selective adaptation as a possibility, and will investigate whether or not this possibility is an adequate or likely explanation for certain textual phenomena. For the concept of “pristine originals,” see: Shemaryahu Talmon, “Textual Criticism: The Ancient Versions,” in *Text and Canon of the Hebrew Bible: Collected Studies* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 392–97. Hendel critiques Talmon’s theory in Hendel, *Steps*, 41–64.

¹⁶ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes.”

stability of a textual tradition. They present the selection of excerpted biblical Odes that appear in the 5th century Codex Alexandrinus as a valuable and overlooked resource for textual criticism.¹⁷

Their analysis begins with a brief survey of evidence both internal and external to the NT that presents singing as “clearly an important feature of earliest Christian worship.”¹⁸ The Odes that are appended to Codex Alexandrinus are “a collection of nine to fourteen songs drawn from biblical and apocryphal books” which “appear to have been sung as supplements to the Psalter early on, perhaps from the late second or early third century.”¹⁹ Knust and Wasserman share the conviction I have expressed that singing is a potentially influential factor within processes of textual transmission, and they address the following research question:

“How did the performance of these biblical texts as songs impact their transmission, not only within books of Odes but also within biblical manuscripts?”²⁰

They proceed to identify a number of textual differences that are apparent between the extracted Odes as they occur in Codex Alexandrinus, and the same compositions as they are found in their biblical context elsewhere in the manuscript.²¹ It has previously been argued that the character of these textual witnesses suggests that they must derive from an alternative exemplar, in contrast with the texts as they appear in the same manuscript in the context of the biblical books they are excerpted from.²² James Miller has highlighted thirteen “compelling” examples of variants that cannot be reasonably explained otherwise, some of which are penned in the same scribal hand as their contextualised equivalent.²³ The same texts therefore occur in the same collection (codex) in the context of a biblical book, and then elsewhere as an excerpted “ode,” written by the same hand yet exhibiting textual variations.

A close analysis of the Lukan Odes follows, comparing the Alexandrinus Odes with the reconstructed Greek text of NA28 and the fourteen units of textual variation that are identified in its apparatus.²⁴ Knust and Wasserman observe eleven variations in the

¹⁷ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 341.

¹⁸ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 343.

¹⁹ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 344.

²⁰ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 346.

²¹ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 349.

²² Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 349.

²³ James A. Miller, “Let Us Sing to the Lord: The Biblical Odes in Codex Alexandrinus” (Ph.D. diss., Marquette University, 2006; Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 349–50).

²⁴ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 354.

Alexandrinus text, three of which they suggest are “arguably related to the liturgical *Sitz im Leben* of the text making the text more inclusive (1:77; 2:14) and/or easier to sing (1:78; 2:14).”²⁵ The claim that these particular variations may be directly related to the influence of singing is significant, and worthy of closer attention.

The following examples are all extracted from Knust and Wassermans’ study and presented here with additional comments of my own.²⁶ The first variant which Knust and Wasserman suggest might be related to a “liturgical *sitz im leben*” is the substitution of a personal pronoun in comparison with Luke 1:77:

6.2.2.1 Example One: Luke 1:77/Odes 9:77²⁷

Luke 1:77

τοῦ δοῦναι γινῶσιν σωτηρίας τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀφέσει ἁμαρτιῶν **αὐτῶν**
*To give the knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of **their** sins*

Odes 9:77

τοῦ δοῦναι γινῶσιν σωτηρίας τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀφέσει ἁμαρτιῶν **ἡμῶν**
*To give the knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of **our** sins*

The suggestion is that in this sung text, the third-person plural pronoun has been changed to a first-person plural pronoun in order to make the text more appropriate for liturgical use.

While there is no way to prove the reason for such a change, in this particular context liturgical appropriation provides a compelling explanation.²⁸ The presence of first-person plural imperatives has long been considered a marker of liturgical usage in Dead Sea Scrolls

²⁵ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 354.

²⁶ The graphic presentation of these examples is also my own.

²⁷ *Codex Alexandrinus*, London, British Library Royal MS 1.D.V111. I have presented the uncial, continuous text of Alexandrinus here in lower-case with word separation and diacritical marks in the same way as popular editions of LXX, in an attempt to make the adaptations highlighted by Olsson, Knust and Wasserman easier to observe. Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 354–6; and Birger Olsson, “The Canticle of the Heavenly Host (Luke 2:14) in History and Culture,” *NTS* 50 (2004): 147–66, 154, 158; cross-referenced against Rahlfs LXX and Swete’s LXX and critical apparatus, accessed using Accordance Bible Software modules “LXX Rahlfs” and “LXX Swete.” I have accessed the uncial text via facsimiles of Alexandrinus which are available at: <https://archive.org/details/TheCodexAlexandrinusV.4/page/n257/mode/2up>; albeit with fairly poor graphic quality which often makes reading difficult.

²⁸ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 354.

research.²⁹ A specific example of clear adaptation towards a first-person plural imperative within a liturgical text would on that basis be a strong indication of a textual change driven by liturgical adaptation.

6.2.2.2 Example Two: Luke 2:14/Odes 14:1–3

Luke 2:14

δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῷ

καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας

Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace among men of his good pleasure

Odes 14:1–3

¹δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῷ

²καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη

³ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία

¹*Glory to God in the highest,*

²*and on earth peace,*

³*good will among men*

Knust and Wasserman suggest that the omission of the *sigma* at the very end of this phrase may constitute an adaptation to make the text easier to sing, and/or more inclusive.³⁰ There are no means at present for proving the former suggestion, and though it is a credible explanation due to the liturgical context and possible evidence of other liturgical adaptations, it remains somewhat speculative. As indicated in the first example above, a change towards more inclusive language can provide compelling evidence of liturgical adaptation. The variation from the Lucan genitive εὐδοκίας to the nominative εὐδοκία in the Odes is a

²⁹ Falk, “Liturgical Texts,” 423–34; Miller, “Role of Performance,” 360–1; Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 174.

³⁰ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 354.

reading shared by a number of other Greek witnesses, including the second correctors of Sinaiticus and Vaticanus (ca. 6th–7th centuries) and the majority of koine manuscripts. NA28, however, prefers εὐδοκίας, which is supported by a number of witnesses from the fourth and fifth centuries (Alexandrinus, Bezae, Washingtonianus and the original scribes of Sinaiticus and Vaticanus). It may be that this is also viewed as the *lectio difficilior*, and this is certainly the opinion of Olsson, expressed in his detailed study of the history and transmission of this brief hymn.³¹ He reviews evidence that interpreters as early as Origen struggled with the meaning of εὐδοκία, which he sees as distinctively shaped by LXX and Christian usage, as opposed to Graeco-Roman linguistic contexts.³²

Olsson argues that the liturgical adaptation of this canticle occurred very early, even in the second century C.E., and that the conversion of the hymn to a three-line format with a central keyword in each line (δόξα, εἰρήνη, εὐδοκία) in the Syriac tradition is one of the earliest indications of this change.³³ For Olsson, it is the shift from genitive εὐδοκίας to nominative εὐδοκία that facilitates this change, and leads to five further effects of liturgical and interpretative significance, all precipitated by the omission of single *sigma*.³⁴ Although the genitive construction is already open to a variety of translational and interpretative possibilities, it is the change from genitive to nominative that confirms the key issue: on the one side, variations on the theme of “among men of good will” communicate the genitive aspect by reducing and defining a subset of people “among men” (or “to men”, depending on how ἐν is translated)—on the other hand, the nominative communicates “good will/pleasure towards/among men.” The “nominative sense,” as I have expressed it here, is actually possible on the basis of the Lucan text (despite the genitive εὐδοκίας) in the sense that “men of good pleasure” can be interpreted as “men who are the recipients/beneficiaries of [God’s] good pleasure,” a sense which can also be implied in English with a translation such as “towards/among men of good pleasure.” This option is taken (with stylistic variations) by a number of English versions at Luke 2:14 (such as ESV, NASB, NIV, NRSV), and has claimed support from a distinctive usage among texts found at Qumran (1QH IV, 32–3; XI, 9; 4QInstruction (4Q416) 81, 12).³⁵ Furthermore, Olsson’s analysis is based on identification of the distinctively Semitic character of the hymn, illustrated with a Hebrew reconstruction of

³¹ Olsson, “Canticle,” 154–9.

³² Olsson, “Canticle,” 154–156, 156 n.39.

³³ Olsson, “Canticle,” 158.

³⁴ Olsson, “Canticle,” 158.

³⁵ Olsson, “Canticle,” 152–4.

the text.³⁶ The character of this reconstruction is typified by the brevity of the Hebrew poetic form, containing no articles or verbs.³⁷ It is precisely this brevity which leads to a wide range of interpretative possibilities in both Greek and English transmission.³⁸

For Olsson, the dropping of the *sigma* has a series of implications beyond deciding the nominative/genitive question in Greek. Syntactically, it transforms a clumsy two-line structure in Greek into a poetic and balanced tri-cola. I have indicated this is in the way I have formatted my translations at the beginning of this example, and I reproduce the Greek text here:

Luke 2:14

δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῶ
καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας

Odes 14:1–3

¹δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῶ
²καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη
³ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία

I have emphasised the resultant balance of key-word in each line that Olsson points out.³⁹ The nominative reading allows what Olsson calls “a new openness for reading the lines as a desire, a prayer, or an exhortation”, rather than in a descriptive, declarative or attributive sense, as for instance: “Glory be to God,” or “[let there be] peace among men,” instead of “Glory belongs to God,” or “his peace is towards men of good will.”⁴⁰ Both this added dimension and the resulting poetic balance are amenable to liturgical usage. The change also expands the scope of the hymn from a restricted group (“people of good will”) to a universal purview (people in general), and defines the meaning of the text more clearly for non-Semitic contexts.⁴¹ In short, Olsson sees all these benefits as liturgical in orientation, and identifies the micro-omission of a single Greek letter as the textual change which facilitates the

³⁶ Olsson, “Canticle,” 148–54.

³⁷ Olsson, “Canticle,” 149.

³⁸ Olsson, “Canticle,” 147–8, 154–9,

³⁹ Olsson, “Canticle,” 158.

⁴⁰ Olsson, “Canticle,” 158. See his account of the strong case for reading an attributive sense for the longer Lucan form on the basis of Semitic background: 148–50, and 155 n.35.

⁴¹ Olsson, “Canticle,” 158.

detachment of the hymn from its Lucan context and enables it to become a prelude to later liturgical expansions.⁴²

When we encounter a micro textual change such as the simple omission of a *sigma*, a default, traditional text-critical approach would be more likely to emphasise grammatical and semantic aspects of change, rather than to explore possibilities such as the potential influence of liturgical function, which may at times in the past have been assigned to the task of “higher” critical approaches rather than the “lower” analysis of manuscript and text.⁴³ With such a focus, the interpretative dimension is elevated: the shorter reading appears to be a clarification of an apparently ambivalent text, and is therefore the *lectio facillior*. According to Olsson’s analysis, this is the right conclusion to come to—in terms, at least, of purely chronological priority.⁴⁴ But the value of a case such as the Odes in Codex Alexandrinus is that we have significant paratextual information and external evidence available to show us that this is a distinctly liturgical text, and we are therefore prompted to consider the relevance of liturgical function to the text-critical question.⁴⁵ It is this paratextual and external evidence, therefore, that ultimately allows Olsson to advance a confident hypothesis that the contracted version of the Odes constitutes the “traditional, liturgical version in Greek.”⁴⁶

It remains to be argued whether any such contextual information can establish the liturgical function of specific texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and it remains to be seen whether any specific textual variants can be reasonably attributed to liturgical adaptation. However, the goal of the current discussion is not to *establish* any such specific examples, but to illustrate the kind of textual change that is *possible* and even *likely* as a result of liturgical singing, and to ask whether any such phenomena exist among the texts found at or near Qumran, whether or not they can be tied to a specific cause on a case-by-case basis. It is usually the explicit

⁴² Olsson, “Canticle,” 158.

⁴³ For interrogation of this traditional dichotomy in light of Dead Sea Scrolls research, see: Brooke, “Higher and Lower Criticism.”

⁴⁴ Olsson, “Canticle,” 148–9.

⁴⁵ It is, of course, not unknown for text critics of the New Testament to consider the impact of liturgical function, and Knust and Wasserman list examples in which Metzger highlights the issue: Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 356; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies’ Greek New Testament, (4th rev. ed.)* (2nd ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994). The references cited are Matt 6:13,15; 20:31; 28:20; Lk 11:2; 24:42; Jn 9:38-39; Rom 6:11; 7:25; 15:33; 16:20,24; Heb 13:21; 1 Pet 5:14. Closer analysis of these texts as a grouping could present a fruitful avenue for further research. The overlooked value of the Biblical Odes for text criticism is the major thesis of Knust and Wasserman’s paper: “Biblical Odes,” 341, 364–5.

⁴⁶ Olsson, “Canticle,” 157.

concern of textual criticism to painstakingly examine every individual case, and to postulate explanations for the variations that are encountered—this, despite the fact that the endeavour often involves a great deal more speculation and subjectivity than is acknowledged.⁴⁷ As George Brooke has argued, even the “lowest” and most empirically rigorous text-critical analyses cannot operate satisfactorily or make evaluative decisions without some recourse to questions of a “higher” critical nature, concerning (for instance) the social, cultural and literary aspects of a text, as well as paratextual features and materiality.⁴⁸ Similarly, any higher critical endeavour must depend to some extent upon texts, manuscripts, and material artefacts, and therefore contend with the variations, complexities and foibles of such historical realia. Higher criticism cannot therefore exist without some reliance upon the contribution of text criticism. Textual transmission and variation are in themselves interpretative processes, and a holistic approach to interpretation must embrace both “higher” and “lower” aspects as connected and inter-related.⁴⁹

Olsson’s study illustrates that if we affirm the need for a more holistic approach to textual criticism, the investigation of specific variants on a case-by-case basis can yield surprising and significant results.⁵⁰ Without his thoroughgoing diachronic reconstruction of the lifecycle of the Luke 2:14 hymn, the loss of a *sigma* would appear to be a minor scribal adjustment to clarify or ease the interpretation of an ambiguous text. His argument and analysis of its Semitic origins, however, coupled with close attention to its reception history, yields considerably more information about the impact of liturgical function—and singing in particular—upon the transmission and variation of a scriptural text. On an analogous basis, analysis of some micro-variations in liturgical texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls might offer valuable findings by considering the influence of liturgical usage.

6.2.2.3 Example Three: Luke 1:78/Odes 9:18

Luke 1:78

διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους θεοῦ ἡμῶν,

⁴⁷ See, for instance, Emanuel Tov’s comments on the subjectivity involved in text critical assessments in response to Ronald Hendel’s HBCE project: Tov, review of *Steps* (by Ronald Hendel).

⁴⁸ Brooke, “Higher and Lower Criticism.”

⁴⁹ Brooke, “Higher and Lower Criticism.” For interpretative dynamics embedded in the technical processes of textual transmission, see also the discussion of Jonathan Norton’s work in in chapter two above (section 2.3.2).

⁵⁰ Olsson, “Canticle.”

ἐν οἷς ἐπισκέπεται ἡμᾶς ἀνατολή ἐξ ὕψους

Because of the heart of mercy of our God,

*With which the sunrise from on high **will visit us***

Odes 9:78

διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους θεοῦ ἡμῶν,

ἐν οἷς ἐπεσκέψατο ἡμᾶς ἀνατολή ἐξ ὕψους

Because of the heart of mercy of our God,

*With which the sunrise on high **has visited us***

It appears to be the opinion of Knust and Wasserman that a change from the future ἐπισκέπεται to aorist ἐπεσκέψατο makes the text easier to sing.⁵¹ If they mean that it becomes easier to sing in a performative sense, it is not clear to me why that would be the case. If, however, their meaning is that the text is more appropriate to sing in a liturgical setting because it refers to the visitation of the “sunrise on high” in the past, as opposed to its narrative framing in the song of Zachariah which speaks of it as a future event, then the argument carries some weight. I assume, therefore, that this is their meaning, and agree that a shift to the aorist aspect in the sung text of the Odes makes sense as a liturgical adaptation.

On the basis of these three examples and the sophisticated diachronic analysis of Luke 2:14 by Olsson, it is clear that certain micro-variations in texts that have an established liturgical function can reasonably be attributed to the influence of liturgical use, and specifically, in this case (on the basis of Knust and Wasserman’s overview of the prevalence of singing in Early Christian worship and its social contexts), to the influence of singing.⁵² This alone is a valuable conclusion that can lend some methodological clarity to the study of the relationship between singing and text in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Knust and Wasserman’s study, however, goes yet further in its findings and consequently its usefulness to the current project. Their survey of scholarship and their text-critical assessment

⁵¹ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 354.

⁵² Olsson, “Canticle”; Knust and Wasserman, 342–7.

of the Odes in Codex Alexandrinus—compared particularly with the Lucan texts in their literary context within the same manuscript—reveal conclusively that the Odes were copied from a different exemplar to the Lucan text.⁵³ The Odes had begun to circulate independently as a liturgical collection, and although numerous paratextual features varied, the texts of the individual Odes remained remarkably stable and consistent.⁵⁴ Titles in superscriptions vary at times (between, for instance, ᾠδή, προσευχή, and ὕμνος), the number and order of Odes varied from collection to collection, but the text and poetic structure of the hymns remained remarkably fixed.⁵⁵ Knust and Wasserman trace a diachronic development of the text which complements Olsson’s historical reconstruction, and the consistency of the textual character of the Odes with a Byzantine form of the Lucan text suggests that the liturgical adaptations in question manifest themselves in Greek witnesses during the fourth century (a phenomenon that may correspond with the widespread ecclesial and liturgical changes of the fourth century, according to the authors).⁵⁶ From the fourth century onwards, the texts then remain remarkably stable throughout a variety of subsequent contexts.⁵⁷

Knust and Wasserman’s study therefore points to a dual-effect of liturgical usage upon textual transmission.⁵⁸ On the one hand, liturgical use can instigate adaptation in order to make the text more appropriate or amenable to its performative function. Its sense becomes more relevant to a contemporary liturgical setting—personal pronouns are adapted to suit congregational usage, and words are adjusted in order to create balanced poetic structures. On the other hand, once these changes have taken place, if the compositions are subjected to widespread circulation and usage, their textual form can become remarkably fixed and stable, even across a large variety of settings, and despite paratextual variations. For Knust and Wasserman, this is explicable either due to performers’ familiarity with the form of the songs, or due to a concern for songs to be sung at the right time, in the right place, and in the right way.⁵⁹

⁵³ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 355–6.

⁵⁴ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 341–2, 349, 356–7.

⁵⁵ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 357.

⁵⁶ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 356.

⁵⁷ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 356–61.

⁵⁸ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 341, 364.

⁵⁹ Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 342, 346. The phenomenon that has been observed by a number of authoritative text critics with relation to the Qumran Scrolls and the Masada Scrolls that stability and fixity emerges towards the end of the First Century from a long earlier period of fluidity and variation may well be worth discussing in light of these diachronic possibilities, particularly as it is psalms manuscripts that provide some of the clearest evidence of this late stabilisation. See Lange, “They Confirmed the Reading,” 52–64, 78–80. This hypothesis of increased stabilisation, is however, directly countered in Tov, “Stabilization.”

How can these insights from the world of New Testament textual criticism benefit the study of singing and text among the Dead Sea Scrolls? In a number of ways. A key benefit for the present study is in terms of methodological approach, by garnering insights from the application of identical research questions to a different corpus of literature. From this analogous study, it is evident that micro-adaptations of text, if weighed in the light of a holistic analysis incorporating literary, material and diachronic evidence, can prove enlightening and in certain cases can present a compelling argument for the direct influence of liturgical function upon the variation of text. Secondly, a diachronic analysis of textual characteristics can augment such theories by observing whether or not there is evidence for a particular liturgical variant having remained stable and present in some traditions after it has been introduced. This approach acknowledges that we are illuminating textual processes, and the variations which occur as a natural and inherent feature of those processes. Thirdly, certain specific kinds of textual adaptation—such as the changing of a verb or pronoun to the first-person plural form in a recognised liturgical text—are a strong indication of a change influenced by liturgical usage.

This latter point can be expanded to embrace other formal features that have been identified and widely accepted within Qumran scholarship as indicators of liturgical function, namely:

1. The introduction or variation of set liturgical formulae, particularly at the beginning or end of a composition.
2. The introduction or variation of titles or superscriptions indicating when and how a text should be recited, or by whom.
3. The introduction or variation of a “dialogical element implying two or more voices”.⁶⁰
4. Adaptation towards communal or inclusive language.

⁶⁰ Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 174.

5. Introduction of or adaptation towards plural imperatives which function as a call to praise or worship.⁶¹

If these characteristics can be treated as “signposts of liturgical usage”—a matter which, though not without its complications, is subject to significant scholarly consensus—then textual adaptations *towards* these features, or the *introduction* of these features, ought to be treated as likely related to liturgical performance.⁶² Along these methodological guidelines, we are ready to ask the question: do any such potentially liturgical adaptations of text exist among the Dead Sea Scrolls?

6.2.3 Larger Scale Adaptations (“Macro-Variation”) and Musical Interpretation

When considering liturgical adaptations involving larger units of text, the use of selection as an interpretative and compositional device comes to the fore—that is, the conscious inclusion or omission of units of text within a composition, or of compositions within a collection. Musicological theory can again provide illumination at this point. In chapter three, musicological studies were used to illustrate the ways in which music and text interact in the process of composition and performance, frequently resulting in the adaptation of text at a micro-level. When setting words to music, larger-scale selective decisions concerning which aspects of text are to be included or excluded may also be influenced by musical factors. Such decisions are also interpretative choices, and are part of a process which Joel LeMon describes as “Musical Exegesis.”⁶³ LeMon’s study of Stravinsky’s “symphonization” of Psalms demonstrates with clarity the means by which any musical setting interprets the text it communicates both through musical modes of expression (involving aspects of mood, tone, timbre, instrumentation, harmony, rhythm, melody, arrangement), and through selective textual choices.⁶⁴ LeMon explains the way in which Stravinsky “shapes our apprehension of the entire Psalter by distilling its message into three discrete passages from the Vulgate.”⁶⁵ It becomes increasingly evident as his analysis progresses that both these aspects—choice of

⁶¹ These features are drawn and adapted from Miller, “Role of Performance,” 361–2, 365–8; and Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 174.

⁶² Miller, “Role of Performance,” 362. Again, the caution in my tone is simply due to a recognition of the inevitable subjectivity inherent in text critical judgements pertaining to the Hebrew Bible. See Tov, review of *Steps* (by Ronald Hendel).

⁶³ LeMon, “Symphonizing the Psalms.”

⁶⁴ LeMon, “Symphonizing the Psalms,” 25–49.

⁶⁵ LeMon, “Symphonizing the Psalms,” 26.

textual version and selection of passages—have a profound bearing upon interpretation. For LeMon, this is “an exercise in reception history,” yet because he is analysing the interpretative and adaptive power of setting psalm texts to music, his work yields a number of significant insights for the present study.⁶⁶ He discovers that “musical interpretation of Scripture shapes the meaning of those texts for the audience,” and that the choice of a “particular constellation of texts and tones constructs a listener’s sense of the Psalter as a whole.”⁶⁷

As an initial brief comment on the relation of these observations to psalm-texts found at Qumran, we might consider the significance of text selection in a collection such as 11Q5. The order and arrangement of psalms is a process of selection and adaptation on a broader scale, and such decisions are not void of interpretative significance. 11Q5 contains 49–50 compositions (depending on the categorisation of certain texts, such as the Catena in column XVI).⁶⁸ Thirty-nine of these are also found in books IV and V of MT-Psalms, though in a different order.⁶⁹ Ten to eleven additional compositions which are not part of the MT-Psalter are also included in 11Q5.⁷⁰ According to Peter Flint’s analysis, 11Q5 differs from MT in the sequence of adjoining psalms in no fewer than 36 places.⁷¹ He counts 9 instances (all occurring in psalms relating to books IV and V of the MT-psalter) of differences not only in order but of content, by which he refers to the inclusion of compositions that are not part of the Masoretic Psalter.⁷² Flint refers to these differences of arrangement and content as “macro-variants.”⁷³ 11Q5 also includes “David’s Last Words” (2 Sam 23:7) at the end of column XXVI before the non-masoretic “David’s Compositions.” At the close of the 11Q5 psalter are two short Hebrew psalms (151a and 151b) which are added in LXX as a single composition, Ps 151.⁷⁴

When comparing the collections of 11Q5, MT, and LXX therefore, it becomes apparent that in the gathering of these psalters numerous selective decisions concerning the order, arrangement, inclusion and exclusion of psalms (and portions of psalms) were involved.

⁶⁶ LeMon, “Symphonizing the Psalms,” 26.

⁶⁷ LeMon, “Symphonizing the Psalms,” 28.

⁶⁸ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 40.

⁶⁹ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 40.

⁷⁰ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 40.

⁷¹ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 139–41.

⁷² Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 143, 153–5.

⁷³ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 153–5.

⁷⁴ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 80.

11Q5 is by nature a liturgical collection, though by using this designation I do not concur with those who have interpreted it as a secondary (and therefore “non-scriptural”) collection which is dependent upon an earlier fixed Masoretic Psalter.⁷⁵ As Flint rightly argues, both 11Q5 and the Masoretic-150 are liturgical collections, and there is nothing about their liturgical character *per se* that requires one collection to be later and dependent upon the other.⁷⁶ If an affirmation of the liturgical character of 11Q5 as a collection of psalms required any further argument, those who have characterised it as a secondary liturgical collection have furnished it by highlighting particular liturgical indicators, such as the continuous repetition of the refrain “Blessed be the LORD and blessed be his name forever and ever” in Ps 145, in contrast to other textual witnesses, and the grouping of Psalms 146–148 with other psalms of praise early on in the collection.⁷⁷ The point is this: whichever collections may or may not be judged as “primary” or “dependant,” editorial and authorial decisions concerning the selection and ordering of material are being made with liturgical considerations to the fore.⁷⁸ Once we acknowledge the influence of liturgical concerns in these selective editorial decisions (which constitute “macro-variants” between psalms scrolls), then liturgical performance becomes an important factor for consideration, and a study of the liturgical performance of psalms must take singing and musical setting into account as potentially influential factors. LeMon’s study elucidates the means by which musical setting and textual selection co-operate in service of interpretative and aesthetic impact, in ways that I will briefly survey following one further illustrative example from among the Dead Sea Scrolls.⁷⁹

4Q380 and 4Q381 offer further examples of the phenomenon that I have termed “macro-variation,” yet on a smaller scale than the selection and ordering of entire compositions reviewed above. Schuller observes that some of the psalms preserved in 4Q380 and 4Q381 quote large sections of biblical psalms—more than a bi-cola, and up to as much as five verses.⁸⁰ This practice of re-using large excerpts of pre-existing psalms is evidence of

⁷⁵ See the discussion in Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 209–27. See also Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 367–75; and the discussion under section 6.3.4. See also the references listed on page 15(n12).

⁷⁶ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 209.

⁷⁷ These arguments are advanced by Goshen-Gottstein and Skehan, and summarised by Flint: Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 209; Goshen-Gottstein, “The Psalms Scroll,” 29–31; Patrick W. Skehan, “Qumran and Old Testament Criticism,” in *Qumran. Sa piété, sa théologie, et son milieu*, ed. Mathias Delcor (BETL 46; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1978), 163–82, 169.

⁷⁸ Similarly liturgical concerns can be highlighted in the arrangement of the Masoretic Psalter, such as the “Psalms of Ascent” (Pss. 120–134) and the “Hallelujah” Psalms at the end of the collection (Pss. 146–150).

⁷⁹ LeMon, “Symphonizing the Psalms,” 26, 28, 32–41.

⁸⁰ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 34.

selective choices (consciously including or omitting units of text such as lines, phrases, or strophes within a composition) which carry interpretative significance. To interrogate the significance of this technique, it is necessary to ask questions such as: why does the author excerpt these verses and not others? What literary or didactic effects are produced by this particular selection, and to what end does the author use it in the context of the new composition?

Schuller explores some of these possibilities in her commentary, but the salient point with regard to the current thesis concerns the possible connection between these kinds of textual phenomena and the influence of musical setting upon the adaptation of text.⁸¹ This is the theoretical connection that is made by LeMon's study of Stravinsky's "musical exegesis."⁸² LeMon demonstrates that choices concerning which selections of text are to be set to music not only carry interpretative significance, but operate hand in hand with the interpretative medium of the musical setting itself. Furthermore, these selective decisions concerning which portions of text are set to music also has a bearing on the interpretation and transmission of micro-units of text, potentially causing variation within the textual tradition.

LeMon demonstrates the way in which "Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* provides a compelling example of how music can organize our hearing of the biblical text."⁸³ Important here are the roles both of selection and textual form in shaping the way that the Psalter is received when set to music—both the choice of excerpted texts and translation influence the way that the text is received. Furthermore, the "instrumentation, tonal painting, and harmonic structure" of the musical setting dictate the terms in which God is portrayed.⁸⁴ It is important to recognise that if the psalms were performed musically by any community during the Second Temple Period—whether accompanied by instrumentation, or through unaccompanied singing or chanting—all of the interpretative devices LeMon refers to are in operation. Whenever text is sung or chanted, a selective choice has to be made as to what is to be sung and what is not. A translation or textual form must be chosen—whether by necessity or choice, whether accessed via memory or script. And whether or not musical instruments are involved, unaccompanied human voices are capable of employing techniques

⁸¹ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 34–6, 96–102, 119–22, 253–5.

⁸² LeMon, "Symphonizing the Psalms."

⁸³ LeMon, "Symphonizing the Psalms," 26.

⁸⁴ LeMon, "Symphonizing the Psalms," 26.

of tonal painting and harmonic expression. The addition of instruments simply widens the palette from which composer and/or performer are able to draw.

The importance of this observation is as follows: for texts that were composed to be sung, or performed musically at any stage in their history—and this is particularly apposite in the case of psalms, for which liturgical performance was likely to have been a significant aspect of their function at *every* stage in their history—the interpretation of the meaning of text, the variation of text, and the function and reception of texts cannot be fully apprehended apart from the musical character of those compositions and their performance. It is true that as interpreters we are largely deprived of evidence concerning the actual character of musical performance in Second Temple Judaism. This does not prevent us, however, from acknowledging its *significance* in terms of the life-setting, interpretation and transmission of the texts and manuscripts which we are handling. When considering phenomena of textual variation, therefore, consideration of musical aspects as potentially influential factors should not be a last resort when all other possible explanations are absent. Rather, it would be logical to *assume* that in the case of texts such as psalms—which we know to have been composed, performed and adapted as part of musical and liturgical collections—musical setting is *always* an influential factor upon the character and curation of the text, whether we are ignorant of the specific character of that influence or not. This may not enable us to offer cast iron explanations for individual textual phenomena—though as I have argued above, textual criticism is rarely able to make objective claims with such confidence.⁸⁵ In some cases, nonetheless, as in some of the examples offered below, musical factors in the adaptation of text may be posited with a greater degree of likelihood.

6.3 Variation Related to Liturgical Function Among the Dead Sea Scrolls

The following are examples from among the Dead Sea Scrolls which illustrate the kinds of selective changes that might occur on the micro scale. Though “macro” adaptations—such as those discussed in the previous section—are certainly worthy of further analysis, space does not permit an investigation on that scale within the boundaries of this thesis. The examples given below are evidence of textual phenomena that could be explained in a number of ways, and I aim to demonstrate only that singing is *one possibility among many* potentially

⁸⁵ See pages 18 and 160, and Tov, review of *Steps*.

influential variables that might affect such changes in a given composition or text-form. These examples are therefore illustrative of the fact that—if my theories concerning the interaction of text and music in the interpretative process are correct—then there are indeed textual variations among the Dead Sea Scrolls that would fit the hypothesis of textual change influenced by singing, though a direct connection cannot be proved conclusively in any specific case.⁸⁶

The following examples are selected according to a number of criteria, which are applied to two types of textual comparison, as follows:

1. Examples where a newly composed psalm re-uses material from a pre-existing psalm or scriptural text almost verbatim, yet exhibits a minor textual variation which affects the syllable count in comparison with other versions of the source text. These examples consist of comparisons between so-called “non-canonical” psalms found in cave 4 at Qumran, and the Masoretic version of the source text which they re-use.
2. Examples where versions of the same canonical Psalm exhibit variations of textual elements commonly accepted as indicators of liturgical performance, as detailed in section 7.2.2 above.⁸⁷

Taking into account these two categories of comparison, and the list of widely accepted markers of liturgical performance collated above, the criteria employed here for the selection of examples of textual variation related to liturgical function can be summarised as follows:

1. Variation in the ordering or combination of psalms when comparing Dead Sea psalm manuscripts with MT (a “macro-variation” between liturgical collections).
2. Variation of psalm superscriptions when comparing Dead Sea psalm manuscripts, MT and LXX.

⁸⁶ It should be apparent from my comments above that I do not consider any explanation of a specific instance of text-critical variation to be entirely conclusive, even if it is highly compelling.

⁸⁷ See the list of commonly accepted indicators of liturgical performance on page 164 above.

3. Significant and otherwise unexplained textual variations in elements of psalms which are commonly accepted as markers of liturgical performance, when comparing Dead Sea psalm manuscripts, MT and LXX.

4. Variations involving a change between third-person and first-person plural formulations of liturgical expressions, when comparing Dead Sea psalm manuscripts, MT and LXX. This type of change is especially notable when occurring in Psalms which carry multiple additional commonly accepted markers of liturgical performance.

6.3.1 Example One: Psalm 86 MT, Psalm 85 LXX and 4Q381⁸⁸

Ps 86:17c (MT)

כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה עֲזַרְתָּנִי וְנִחַמְתָּנִי

For You, O Lord, have helped me and comforted me

4Q381 15, 3

כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי עֲזַרְתָּ לִּי

For You, my God, have helped [to/for] me

Ps 85:17c (LXX)

ὅτι σύ, κύριε, ἐβοήθησάς μοι καὶ

παρεκάλεσάς με

For you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me

The manuscripts 4Q380–1 contain a number of psalms which probably originate from the Persian/Hellenistic period, and have been labelled as “non-canonical psalms.”⁸⁹ Fragment 15 of 4Q381 preserves a single psalm which is based upon a systematic re-use of material found in Psalms 86 and 89. Portions of these Psalms are substantially quoted as part of a new composition, with evidence of textual variation in comparison with MT and some re-arrangement of verse order.⁹⁰ Lines 2 and 3 re-use material from verses 16 and 17 of Psalm 86, and lines 4 to 7 re-use material from verses 7, 8, 10–12, 14 and possibly verse 18 of Psalm 89.⁹¹

⁸⁸ The following example is drawn from Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 35.

⁸⁹ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 5–14.

⁹⁰ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 35, 97–104.

⁹¹ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 35, 97–104.

Although this example also contains a variation between יהוה and אלהי, it is the differences at the end of the quoted phrase that are of particular interest. The variation here in line three in comparison with MT is particularly noticeable due to the word for word correspondence at the end of the previous line between והושע לבן אמתך עשה עמי and verse sixteen of MT. In comparison with MT, the correspondences in line three are also striking: the divine epithet is followed by the verb עזר and first-person singular suffixes. In light of these correspondences, the minor variations are all the more intriguing. Of course, there are many ways that these variations could be explained, and it is possible that 4Q381 might derive its reading from an alternative Hebrew Vorlage. Such theories must, however, be speculative by necessity. Though sophisticated explanations of comparable phenomena abound in the application of text-criticism, we simply cannot know with any certainty precisely what has led to the appearance of a specific case of variation such as this.

In this example, it can be asserted that there is a good deal in the larger context of 4Q380–381 which strongly suggests that 4Q381 adapts an earlier tradition. Schuller’s analysis of the psalms in this collection makes it clear that one of their principal characteristics is the literary re-working of (what came to be accepted as) biblical psalms, employing the conscious re-use of language from specific source texts.⁹² Sometimes this is in the form of isolated, individual terms, and sometimes longer sections of texts are re-used.⁹³ The striking feature of this re-working is that several psalms from 4Q380–381 take a single Psalm as a source text and draw upon it throughout the new composition—that is to say, they are not mosaics of quotations and allusions from a variety of psalms, but a single “biblical” Psalm is selected and re-worked in order to produce a new composition.⁹⁴ Again, it cannot be proven that 4Q381 15, 2–3 does not quote a variant text-form of Psalm 86:17 verbatim, but the weight of evidence suggests that we have here an example of a deliberate adaptation of a previously existing scriptural text on a micro scale, occurring in the compositional process of the production of a new psalm. The nine-syllable word-pair עזרתני ונתמתני has therefore been compressed to become a three-syllable word-pair, subtly re-shaping a near quotation from an existing psalm in the course of producing the new composition. This is precisely the kind of adaptation that we would expect to observe on the basis of Nketia’s description of the interaction between

⁹² Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 32–46.

⁹³ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 34–8.

⁹⁴ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 32–38.

tune and text in the course of the compositional process, as discussed in chapter three.⁹⁵ This example, then, functions as an ideal illustrative example of the kind of adaptation we would expect to see as a result of the interactive influence between music and text.

It is also important to point out that with this example—as with others that follow below—the composition resulting from 4Q381’s adaptation of Psalms 86 and 89 testifies to a range of interpretative dynamics at a literary and theological level. Through a comparison of 4Q381 and Psalms 86 and 89, reading 4Q381 as an interpretation of those pre-existing psalms would be a fascinating and no doubt fruitful endeavour. A study of the new psalm as a whole might give some clues as the interpretative concerns of the author, which may shed further light on the process leading to specific adaptations of text. However, the examples given here are collected in order to illustrate the fact that the kinds of variations that we might expect to see as a result of musical influence do in fact occur somewhat frequently among the manuscripts found at or near Qumran. With restrictions of space in mind, therefore, our priority at this stage is to move on to further examples of variation matching the profiles outlined above, rather than delve deeper into discussions of interpretative dynamics.

6.3.2 Example Two: Jeremiah 20 MT and Barkhi Nafshi (4Q434)

Jeremiah 20:13 (MT)

כִּי הִצִּיל אֶת־נַפְשׁ אֲבִיוֹן

For he has delivered the soul of the needy

Barkhi Nafshi^a (4Q434^a) 1 I, 1

כִּי הִצִּיל נַפְשׁ אֲבִיוֹן

For he has delivered the soul of the needy

Barkhi Nafshi^a is another example of a hymnic text which here quotes a scriptural phrase yet exhibits a minor difference—the absence of the direct object marker אֶת, equivalent to a single syllable of speech. There is no way of establishing whether this is an unintentional omission, an intentional omission, or a reproduction of an alternative Hebrew vorlage. The possibility that this variation could be explained in terms of historical linguistics as a diachronic development should also be acknowledged. Nonetheless, this is an example which illustrates the phenomenon of micro-textual variation in the composition of a psalm which results in a difference in the syllabic count of a quoted scriptural phrase when compared with

⁹⁵ See the discussion of Nketia, “Musicology and Linguistics,” in section 3.3 above.

another instantiation of that phrase. Awareness of textual micro-adaptation for the purpose of singing introduces an additional variable that may account for changes such as this.

6.3.3 Example Three: Psalm 106 MT and 4Q380⁹⁶

Psalm 106:2 (MT)

מִי יִמְלֵל גְּבוּרֹת יְהוָה יִשְׁמַע כָּל־תְּהִלָּתוֹ:

4Q380 1 I, 7–8

מי ימלל את שם יהוה וישמעו כל תהלת[ו]

*Who can tell the mighty deeds of the LORD,
(or) declare all his praise?*

*Who can speak the name of the LORD, or
declare all his praise?*

Example three shows another unit of textual variation for which musical adaptation is a potential factor in the notable absence of other explanations. Psalm 106 bears clear markers of performance—it is bookended by exhortations to praise which fall outside the main structure of the Psalm, and each of which function, therefore, in Allen’s words: “as a liturgical phrase or as liturgical direction.”⁹⁷ Allen, along with most English versions, translates *יהוה גבורות יהוה מי ימלל* as “Who can tell of Yahweh’s great deeds,” interpreting these words as a rhetorical expression of the ineffable greatness of the deeds of God.⁹⁸ It is possible, though, that this call to praise acts as a direct invitation to worship: “Who will tell of the great deeds of the Lord?”, which is then explicitly answered by a lengthy re-telling of Yahweh’s historic dealings with Israel in vv7–48, comprising the majority of the psalm.

4Q380, however, perhaps alludes to the inexpressibility of the divine name by replacing MT’s “great deeds” with “the name of the LORD.” If there are theological or contextual reasons for this change in 4Q380 (which perhaps echoes שם from line 5), they are not evident, and it is striking that Schuller considers there to be “no reason immediately apparent for the change,” despite the fact that when assessing other comparable examples of literary re-use in 4Q380 and 381 she considers that “it is quite easy to see why the tense, suffix, or

⁹⁶ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 36.

⁹⁷ Allen, *Psalms 101–150*, 28 (n35a). This is Allen’s comment on Ps 104:35 which he later refers to in order to explain the role of Ps 106:2: Allen, *Psalms 101–150*, 47.

⁹⁸ Allen, *Psalms 101–150*, 44, 53.

syntax has been adjusted to fit what is required by the grammar or context of the new psalm.”⁹⁹ Schuller elsewhere comments that the author “clearly considers his question ‘who can utter the name of Yahweh?’ to be rhetorical rather than polemical, since he himself uses the Tetragrammaton freely throughout this poem.”¹⁰⁰ She also sees the addition of the direct object marker as unusually “prosaic,” and possibly “provoked by metrical considerations.”¹⁰¹ We have, then, in an otherwise verbatim quote from Ps 106:2, the three syllables of גְּבוּרוֹת reduced to the prosaic and two-syllable construction אֵת שֵׁם, possibly due to metrical considerations and without any other clear contextual or theological explanation. In this situation, the possibility of adaptation influenced by musical setting increases in likelihood, and from a text-critical point of view, this factor should be considered as a potentially influential variable.

There is one further variation in this portion of text which may reflect a liturgical adaptation. MT’s שְׁמִיעַ reads as יִשְׁמְעוּ, which at face value appears to indicate a *qal* form as opposed to the *hiphil* of MT. This difference is convincingly explained away by Schuller, however, who observes יִשְׁמְעוּ is orthographically consistent with other *hiphil* imperfects in the manuscript.¹⁰² A grammatical difference in number nonetheless remains, between the third person singular of MT and the third person plural of 4Q380. In light of the criteria set out above, this change in number may in fact be significant as an indicator of liturgical usage, and may well reflect adaptation to a corporate liturgical setting.

6.3.4 Increased Variation Among Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls in General

Many such small-scale variations exist between the 11QPs^a collection, the Masoretic Psalter, and/or one of the other thirty-eight Psalms scrolls discovered in the Judean desert. These variants were collected and listed by Peter Flint and published in 1997.¹⁰³ Flint lists in total over eight-hundred such variants, and despite acknowledging the potential text-critical significance of further variations attested in the Versions (Septuagint, Peshitta, Targums and Vulgate), his study is restricted to the Hebrew sources.¹⁰⁴ On this basis, 11QPs^a (11Q5) alone

⁹⁹ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 33.

¹⁰⁰ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 255.

¹⁰¹ Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 254–5.

¹⁰² Schuller, *Non-Canonical*, 242, 254.

¹⁰³ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 86–116.

¹⁰⁴ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 50–134, 51.

contains more than three-hundred and eighty variants.¹⁰⁵ The data that Flint has collected offers great scope for further analysis, but there is no advantage at this stage of the discussion in listing additional examples from the Psalms scrolls of the kind of “micro-variation” illustrated above. It is, however, worth acknowledging that there appears to be a *greater* degree of certain types of variation among these Psalm-texts than among other kinds of literature. This is an observation that is underlined in a recent (as yet unpublished) PhD dissertation from Anthony Ferguson, and in order to appreciate the significance of the data and its context, some engagement with the wider study in which it appears is necessary.¹⁰⁶ If Ferguson’s conclusion that Psalms manuscripts found at or near Qumran exhibit a greater degree of textual variation than other types of literature is correct, this constitutes evidence of considerable weight and importance for the present study. If such a statement can be justified, it significantly strengthens the hypothesis that liturgical performance—and more specifically, singing—played an influential role in processes that resulted in textual variation. It is vital, therefore, to explore further the veracity of this claim. Major aspects of Ferguson’s methodology and conclusions, however, are somewhat at odds with the working methodological assumptions of the present thesis, meaning that further engagement is necessary here in order to justify the affirmation of a very important piece of reliable data, while also rejecting other aspects of his methodology and conclusions.

Ferguson’s 2018 thesis analyses the group of texts identified by Emanuel Tov as “non-aligned”—that is, texts that exhibit: “the greatest amount of diversity because they are inconsistent in their agreement with the MT, LXX, and Samaritan Pentateuch while preserving unique readings.”¹⁰⁷ Ferguson compares these readings to the Masoretic Text, testing his thesis that “once the few ambiguous texts are excluded from the category, the remaining texts can reasonably be explained as belonging to the Masoretic tradition.”¹⁰⁸ He adopts an approach based on “weighing” rather than “counting” variants, organising his data according to three categories: firstly, “variants that do not necessitate any change in meaning”; secondly, “variants that can be reasonably explained as deriving from the MT although the readings are not synonymous with it”; and thirdly “variants that imply a meaning irreconcilable to the MT.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 65–80.

¹⁰⁶ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts.”

¹⁰⁷ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 1; Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 111–12; *Scribal Practices*, 332–5.

¹⁰⁸ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 3.

¹⁰⁹ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 5–6.

The key to Ferguson's methodology and to his conclusions lies in the formulation of these categories. His approach is based on an initial prioritisation of the Masoretic Text. In order to justify this prioritisation, Ferguson depends upon the acceptance of certain presuppositions, as he candidly acknowledges.¹¹⁰ The first of these he describes as "foundational" to his dissertation, and it is expressed by means of a quotation from John Wevers, as follows:

It seems only fair to begin with the consonantal text of the MT, and to accept change only after all other avenues of understanding have been explored.¹¹¹

This principle is indeed foundational to Ferguson's whole project, and emerges significantly during his discussion of the nature and character of 11QPs^a (11Q5).¹¹² It is not surprising that this is where the bulk of his argument lies, as scholarly discussion of 11Q5 was a major driver towards reconsideration of the idea that a prototypical form of the Masoretic Text was prioritised long before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE.¹¹³ Ferguson offers more argument in support of his choice to prioritise MT in his section on analysis of 11Q5 than he does when presenting it as a foundational assumption in his introductory discussion of methodology.¹¹⁴ Ferguson's argument throughout that analysis invites critical engagement on a number of fronts, and deserves greater attention than space allows here. A number of observations, however, are directly relevant to the present study. Ferguson succeeds in illustrating that the question as to how 11Q5 should be categorised remains a live issue in scholarly debate.¹¹⁵ His own arguments in support of interpreting 11Q5 as a later, excerpted, "liturgical" collection of Psalms—which depends upon and presumes the primacy of the Masoretic Psalter—are based on largely circumstantial evidence.¹¹⁶ That evidence raises problems at every stage of the argument and needs to be probed.

Ferguson relies several times on the testimony of Rabbinic sources, which are too late and far-removed to be in any way conclusive for the interpretation of 11Q5. To establish direct continuity with Rabbinic sources would require a robust argument for which supporting

¹¹⁰ Ferguson, "Non-Aligned Qumran Texts," 11–12.

¹¹¹ John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), xv; quoted in Ferguson, "Non-Aligned Qumran Texts," 12.

¹¹² Ferguson, "Non-Aligned Qumran Texts," 358–67.

¹¹³ Ferguson, "Non-Aligned Qumran Texts," 358–67; Sanders, DJD IV; "Variorum"; "Cave 11 Surprises"; "The Qumran Psalms Scroll"; Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 2–9, 198–200, 204–6, 226–7.

¹¹⁴ Ferguson, "Non-Aligned Qumran Texts," 3–12; 358–75.

¹¹⁵ Ferguson, "Non-Aligned Qumran Texts," 358–67.

¹¹⁶ Ferguson, "Non-Aligned Qumran Texts," 367–75.

evidence is both scant and inconclusive.¹¹⁷ A similar criticism stands against his appeal to the New Testament for corroboration—Ferguson asserts that the New Testament assumes a Psalter “that resembles the MT/LXX Psalter and not that of 11Q5.”¹¹⁸ Even if the argument could be carried that the New Testament assumes a fixed Masoretic Psalter, this would represent only one particular viewpoint within Second Temple Judaism (or more accurately, a collection of a various viewpoints), within a climate of extraordinary diversity of religious thought and practice. Ferguson also appeals to the Septuagint as evidence of a fixed and prioritised Masoretic Psalter due to its demarcation of Psalm 151, but this interpretation fails to take into account such issues as the complexities involved in the development of LXX as a collection, the evidence of LXX readings which appear to derive from an earlier Hebrew vorlage than MT, and the fact that despite these issues, the Septuagint’s inclusion of Ps 151 as “outside the number” provides no direct evidence as to how 11Q5 may have been viewed by some Jewish groups. Such evidence is circumstantial at best. Similarly, the fact that the Masada Psalms scroll (MasPs^a) is extremely close to MT (in general contrast to scrolls from Qumran) does not indicate a “widespread fixed Masoretic Psalter” in earlier periods (the Masada scroll derives from late in the first century CE). Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov have de-lined a variety of reconstructions that take the mass of textual data from this period (including manuscript finds at Masada) into account, and they each present a range of scholarly positions regarding the status and/or stabilisation of the Hebrew text during this time.¹¹⁹

Ferguson’s presentation of the history of scholarship concerning the characterisation of 11Q5 sets up a dichotomy between 11Q5 as a secondary, liturgical compilation which is *dependent* upon the Masoretic Psalter, and as “a genuine and independent Psalter.”¹²⁰ The language he uses throughout indicates a judgement between these categories on the basis of authenticity—the collection is either, on the one hand: “genuine,” “true,” and “canonical,” or it is

¹¹⁷ Although some scholars are optimistic about the possibility of reconstructing direct lines of continuity between liturgical traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls and later Jewish contexts, their views have proved susceptible to criticism. Falk argues that for a number of reasons: “even quite impressive parallels between texts from Qumran and the rabbinic liturgy do not necessarily indicate direct relationship.” Falk, *Festival Prayers*, 17. For studies that perceive continuity, see Torleif Elgvin, “Qumran and the Roots of the Rosh Hashanah Liturgy,” in Chazon, *Liturgical Perspectives*, 49–67; Weinfeld, “Morning Prayers”; Van Bekkum, “Qumran Poetry and Piyut,” 29. For further critique and a thorough treatment of the relevant scholarship concerning the place of the Dead Sea Scrolls in reconstructions of the development of Jewish liturgy, see: Falk, “Contribution,” 642–3, 645–51.

¹¹⁸ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 373.

¹¹⁹ Lange, “They Confirmed the Reading”; Emanuel Tov, “Stabilization”; “Proto-Masoretic.”

¹²⁰ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 358.

“liturgical,” “excerpted,” “dependent,” “derivative” and “non-canonical.”¹²¹ Even if 11Q5 is judged to be what Ferguson calls a “genuine Psalter,” it is nonetheless “alternative,” that is: he describes it with language that may give an impression of neutrality, but which presumes the fixity and/or primacy of a Masoretic Psalter at the time of the composition of 11Q5.¹²² However faithfully Ferguson presents the terms of the academic discussion, his fundamental pre-suppositions are evident, though not clearly defined. What is it that makes a collection of Psalms a “genuine Psalter”? In what sense is 11Q5 not so? Presumably, on Ferguson’s terms, because it is not “canonical.”¹²³ He does not discuss what “canonical” may or may not mean during the Second Temple Period, and his argument for the existence of a fixed Masoretic Psalter at the time of the composition of 11Q5 rests squarely and explicitly on evidence from the latter period of the first century CE and beyond. He writes:

The data from the Mishnah lines up with the evidence from the LXX, MaPs^a, and the NT. Thus, the conclusion that the Masoretic Psalter is both stable and widespread prior to the composition of 11Q5 is compelling.¹²⁴

As I have indicated above, the development and status of LXX is a far more involved issue than is acknowledged in Ferguson’s discussion. The existence of a fixed canon of the Hebrew Bible cannot be inferred on the basis of the Septuagint without engaging more deeply with scholarly discussion concerning its textual history and its significance for textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible in general.¹²⁵ As I have also observed above, the later evidence of MasPs^a, the NT and the Mishnah is insufficient for the task of trying to prove a fixed text or Masoretic Psalter at the time of the composition of 11Q5, unless new evidence or argument can be produced which establishes a direct line of continuity of unaltered and unvaried tradition and practice between the 1st century BCE and the various contexts of these later sources. My position in this case contradicts the presuppositions upon which Ferguson’s methodology and conclusions are based. He sums up his working assumptions by means of a quotation from Gentry and Meade:

¹²¹ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 359–75.

¹²² Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 359.

¹²³ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 359–75.

¹²⁴ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 375.

¹²⁵ A standard treatment of the subject is Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 134–54. The earlier section entitled “In Many Details **ⲙ** Does Not Reflect the “Original Text” of the Biblical Books” is similarly significant for the current discussion (Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 11–12).

It makes sense to see whether or not the data line up with later tradition rather than follow a skeptical approach that may end in agnosticism.¹²⁶

It is unclear from this quote what is meant by agnosticism (on what issue?), or why a skeptical approach should not be adopted in the service of genuine critical enquiry. It is, on the other hand, distinctly problematic to *assume* that direct continuity of tradition and practice must exist throughout a time period for which our extant sources testify to an extensive and complex variegation and diversity of beliefs and practices within the bounds of what is popularly referred to as Judaism. After seventy years of Dead Sea Scrolls research, assuming large-scale diachronic homogeneity is one thing that our sources do not permit us to do.¹²⁷

A key issue which inhibits clarity in this discussion is the characterisation of a “liturgical” text as something that is by definition derivative, inauthentic and non-canonical—by implication inferior and secondary in terms of authority and importance. Ferguson appears to consider his conclusion that 11Q5 “represents a liturgical text” to seal its fate as inauthentic.¹²⁸ The issue is not in fact that the collection is liturgical, but that he believes it to be “derivative” and “dependant” upon a presumed fixed Masoretic Psalter.¹²⁹ The liturgical character of a text does not by definition exclude it from canonical status, otherwise the canonical status of the Masoretic book of Psalms would also be in jeopardy. It is the status of 11QPs^a *in relation* to the Masoretic Psalter that is really at issue for Ferguson, as both

¹²⁶ Ferguson quotes an unpublished work here as follows: Peter J. Gentry and John J. Meade, “The Masada Psalms Fragments and the Rewritten Psalters at Qumran,” *Unpublished*, n.d., 29. Quoted in Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 375.

¹²⁷ These are generalised statements about Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship and the variety of expressions of Judaism in the Second Temple Period that do not depend upon specific individual primary or secondary sources, but for a representative discussion concerning diversity and the complications around speaking of a homogenous ancient “Judaism,” see: Daniel Boyarin, “Beyond Judaisms: Metatron and the Divine Polymorphy of Ancient Judaism,” *JSJ* 41 (2010): 323–65, 359–60. Boyarin perceives a “polymorphous Judaism,” consisting of “multiple and overlapping conversations taking place across the broad spectrum of Jewish religious imagination”: “Beyond Judaisms,” 359. Contemporary Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship complicates earlier theories of a single, separatist sect removed into the desert, meaning that texts found at or near Qumran may in many cases give us further information about variegated practices and beliefs in Second Temple Judaism, indicating an even greater degree of variety among expressions of Judaism than was previously apparent from study and comparison of the New Testament, Philo, Josephus and Rabbinic literature. For discussion concerning the development and character of the communities associated with the manuscripts found at or near Qumran, see: Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*; “Social Organization;” Hempel, *Rule Texts in Context*; *Community Rules*; Metso, “Yahad”; Newsom, “Sectually Explicit”; Schofield, *From Qumran to the Yahad*. Concerning liturgical materials specifically, Chazon makes clear that they may share a common heritage with Judaism in general: Chazon, “Sabbath Prayer”; but note again Falk’s verdict as to the tenuous nature of assumed diachronic lines of continuity in Falk, *Festival Prayers*, 17.

¹²⁸ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 375.

¹²⁹ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 359–75, 362–3.

collections are clearly in some sense “liturgical.” For this reason, it is not so much Ferguson’s analysis of 11Q5 that becomes the decisive issue—it is rather his foundational assumptions concerning the status of the Masoretic Psalter before the turn of the millennium that dictates the terms of his discussion, his methodology, the organisation of his data, and consequently the conclusions at which he arrives.

In sum, it will be clear from the foregoing assessment that I do not consider the assumptions that are fundamental to Ferguson’s study to provide a sound basis for the methodology which he develops. I consequently find his methodology to be problematic on several levels, and am unconvinced by his conclusions. I have engaged with Ferguson’s work at this stage for a number of reasons: in the first instance, I want to explore the possibility that singing may play an influential role in processes of oral performance and scribal activity that result in changes to texts. Ferguson’s thesis is concerned particularly with the phenomenon of textual variation, and he offers a substantial discussion of 11QPs^a as a liturgical collection and its significance for interpreting developments and changes in the textual history of the Hebrew Bible.¹³⁰ Secondly, Ferguson’s analysis of 11Q5 concerns particularly the question of the *fixity* or *fluidity* of the text of psalms during the late Second Temple period. I would like to address specifically questions as to whether the practice of singing texts might result in increased variation of textual forms, increased fixity, or both.

Finally, it has been necessary to offer some response to Ferguson’s thesis, because I would like to highlight some of the results of his research as extremely significant whilst acknowledging that I do not share his convictions or embrace his methodology and overall conclusions. For this reason, it has been necessary to offer some engagement with his work, in order not only to appreciate and critique, but also to give some context to the way in which I am drawing attention to his findings. The result emerging from Ferguson’s study that is of particular interest is that “the texts preserving psalms are some of the texts most divergent from the MT.”¹³¹ This observation is made despite Ferguson’s determination to counteract the prevailing impression among scholars that this period was characterised by textual fluidity.¹³² He writes:

Those texts preserving psalms, however, do not validate the theory of textual

¹³⁰ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 354–95.

¹³¹ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 463.

¹³² Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 463.

fluidity since these texts are better identified as excerpted compositions (i.e., non-biblical).¹³³

This is a fascinating conclusion to draw, because Ferguson's comments do not concern only 11Q5 (as discussed above), but a total of fourteen Psalms manuscripts from Qumran (4Q83, 4Q84, 4Q86, 4Q87, 4Q88, 4Q92, 4Q93, 4Q95, 4Q98, 4Q98a, 11Q5, 11Q6, 11Q7 and 11Q8) containing between them portions of a total of 102 Masoretic Psalms (2, 5–6, 9, 12–14, 17–19, 22, 25–27, 30–31, 33–40, 43, 45, 47, 53–54, 56, 59, 62–69, 71, 76, 77–78, 81, 86, 88–89, 91–94, 96, 98–107, 109, 112–150).¹³⁴ This is an astonishing collective witness to the history of the Psalter, witnessing to no less than 68% of the number of compositions in the Masoretic corpus, represented in a variety of manuscripts dating between approximately nine and twelve-hundred years before the Leningrad Codex. To discover that the texts are some of the “most divergent from the MT” is no insignificant conclusion.¹³⁵ The slant in Ferguson's methodology *underplays* the degree to which the texts in his study vary from MT, an assessment which—if correct—further underlines the significance of the increased textual variation among psalms scrolls.

By Tov's reckoning, all the “non-aligned” texts which are assessed in Ferguson's study constitute those that exhibit the greatest variation among “biblical” texts found at Qumran.¹³⁶ By means of a system of categorisation based on the methodology I have critiqued above, Ferguson downplays a large proportion of these variants as insignificant indicators of textual fluidity because they are either “synonymous” with MT or they “can be reasonably explained as deriving from the MT although the readings are not synonymous with it.”¹³⁷ It is not clear why synonymous variant readings cannot signify textual fluidity, or why it should be assumed *carte blanche* that these readings that occur in the earliest extant psalms manuscripts must be *derived from* MT rather than vice versa. Yet despite these provisos, Ferguson's

¹³³ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 463.

¹³⁴ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” v–vi, 463. To enumerate the contents of these manuscripts I have drawn from Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 257–63. I have excluded questionable identifications (according to Flint) and identifications based entirely on reconstructions, so as to remain within the parameters of Ferguson's own study. For the same reasons I have only included psalms from the Masoretic-150. For his methodology, see Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 3–7.

¹³⁵ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 463. I take the dating of the psalms scrolls listed above to be between the mid-second century BCE and mid-first century CE on the basis of Flint's analysis: Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 31–43.

¹³⁶ See page 60(n114) above.

¹³⁷ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 5–6.

research still reveals that the Psalms-scrolls in particular are some of the “most divergent from MT.”¹³⁸

For Ferguson, this extensive variation among the Psalms does not “validate the theory of textual fluidity” because “these texts are better identified as excerpted compositions.”¹³⁹

While his conclusion in this respect is based on the nature of his pre-judgements concerning the priority of the Masoretic Psalter and his undefined theory of canonicity during the late Second Temple period (rather than his findings *per se*), his judgement that these are “excerpted compositions” raises another issue relevant to the discussion of singing and textual variation.¹⁴⁰ Whether or not Ferguson is right in his assessment, we have at base the evidence that among psalms manuscripts in particular, a greater degree of textual variation exists than among other kinds of literature. If it can be agreed that psalms in general are liturgical in character and/or likely to have a liturgical function, then this data testifies to a correlation between liturgical use and increased textual variation.¹⁴¹ It is worth acknowledging here that on both sides of the debate concerning the status of 11Q5, scholars consider the collection to exhibit liturgical characteristics.¹⁴² I consider Ferguson’s evaluation to be questionable, but *even if he is correct* that these texts are all “excerpted compositions,” that would only strengthen the possibility that liturgical use is a causal factor leading to increased textual variation among psalms manuscripts found at Qumran. The foregoing engagement with Ferguson’s work, therefore, enables a vital conclusion to be drawn out and emphasised from a thorough, detailed, and therefore valuable analysis of the data, without assenting to the overall terms and conclusions of that study. The resulting observation is of considerable importance for the present thesis: Psalms manuscripts found at or near Qumran exhibit a higher degree of textual variation than other types of literature. Having justified this important global statement, we now turn to analysis of further examples of textual variation within psalms manuscripts in order to weigh the extent to which specific text-critical phenomena can be associated with liturgical performance.

¹³⁸ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 463.

¹³⁹ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 463.

¹⁴⁰ Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 463.

¹⁴¹ On the liturgical character of the Book of Psalms, see Flint’s comment on the liturgical arrangement of Pss. 146–150: Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 209 (n48).

¹⁴² Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 209, 217–18, 226–7.

6.4 Textual Variation in Psalm 33¹⁴³

In *figure 1* below I have tabulated five units of textual variation that occur in Psalm 33, in order to illustrate something of the spectrum of variations that can occur in a single liturgical text and to evaluate their varying degrees of relevance regarding the potential influence of musical performance. Psalm 33 clearly exhibits some of the features discussed above that are considered indicative of liturgical use. It opens with several plural imperatives which function as explicit calls to praise and worship: “Sing (רננו) for joy in the Lord” (v1); “Give thanks (הודו) to the Lord” (v2); “Sing praises to Him (זמרו לו) (v2); and “Sing to Him (שירו לו)” (v3). These opening verses also refer explicitly to accompaniment with musical instruments: “with the Lyre (בכנור)” (v2); “with the harp of ten strings (בנבל עשור)” (v2); and “play skilfully (היטיבו נגן)” (v3). Introductory calls to praise such as these could also be classified as “introductory formulae,” and are found in many Psalms (such as Pss. 9, 30, 47, 66, 68, 81, 96, 98, 105, 106, 107, 117, 118, 135, 136, 147, 149). Although in MT Psalm 33 contains no superscription, in the variations listed below we can see that both LXX and 4Q98 include a superscription. If Psalm 33, therefore, is subjected to the criteria that Qumran scholars use to identify liturgical texts, it clearly exhibits features of liturgical usage.¹⁴⁴

	4Q83	4Q98	MT	LXX
Variation Unit 1	[Preceded by Ps 31]	[Preceded by Ps 31]	[Preceded by Ps 32; pss. 32–33 joined in some mss]	[Preceded by Ps 32 (31), joined in some mss]
	<p>רננו צדיקים ביהוה לישרים נאווה תהלה</p>	<p>לדויד שיר מזמור רננו צדיקים ביהוה לישרים נאווה תהלה []</p>	<p>רננו צדיקים ביהוה לישרים נאווה תהלה</p>	<p>Τῷ Δαυιδ. Ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, δίκαιοι, ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ· τοῖς εὐθέσι πρέπει αἴνεσις</p>
	<p><i>Sing for joy, you righteous, in the Lord;</i></p>	<p><i>Of David: a psalm, a song.</i></p>	<p><i>Sing for joy, you righteous, in the Lord;</i></p>	<p><i>Of David.</i></p>

¹⁴³ Nb I have chosen not to include in my analysis here the possible variation between וְהִיא in 4Q83 4 I, 11 and the tetragrammaton in Ps 33:12 (MT). Though it is listed by Flint as a variant, the uncertainty that exists in the reconstruction of *yod* or *waw* in this instance renders it too tentative to be assessed. Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 63.

¹⁴⁴ Miller, “Role of Performance,” 361–2, 365–8; Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 174.

	<i>Praise is becoming to the upright.</i> (4 I, 6)	<i>Sing for joy, you righteous, in the Lord; Praise is becoming to the upright.</i> (I, 2)	<i>Praise is becoming to the upright.</i> (Ps 33:1)	<i>Rejoice, you righteous, in the Lord; Praise is fitting for the upright</i> (Ps 33:1 [32:1])
Variation Unit 2	[כונס כנד מי הים נותן באוצרות תהומות שם המים נצבו כמו נד <i>He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap, He puts the deeps in storehouses; there the waters stood like a heap.</i> (4 I, 9)	כונס כנד מי] הים נותן באוצרות תהומות [שם הַמִּים] נצבו כמו [נִד <i>He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap, He puts the deeps in storehouses; there the waters stood like a heap.</i> (I, 5–6)	כנס כנד מי הים נתן באצרות תהומות <i>He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap, He puts the deeps in storehouses.</i> (Ps 33:7)	συνάγων ὡς ἄσκον ὕδατα θαλάσσης, τιθεῖς ἐν θησαυροῖς ἀβύσσους <i>He gathers the waters of the sea as a wineskin, He puts the depths in storehouses.</i> (Ps 33:7 [32:7])
Variation Unit 3	[יירא] וְ מִיְהוָה כֹּל [הארץ ממנו יגורו כל ישבי תבל <i>Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world fear Him.</i> (4 I, 9–10)	יראו מיהוה כול הארץ ממנו יגורו [כול ישבי תבל <i>Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world fear Him.</i> (I, 6–7)	ייראו מיהוה כל הארץ ממנו יגורו כל ישבי תבל <i>Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world fear Him.</i> (Ps 33:8)	φοβηθήτω τὸν κύριον πᾶσα ἡ γῆ, ἀπ' αὐτοῦ δὲ σαλευθήτωσαν πάντες οἱ κατοικοῦντες τὴν οἰκουμένην· <i>Let all the earth fear Him, and let all the inhabitants of the world quake before Him.</i> (Ps 33:8 [32:8])

Variation Unit 4	כי הוא אמר ויהי הוא צוה ויעמד	כי הוא אמר] והיה ה[וא צוה ויעמ]ד	כי הוא אמר ויהי הוא צוה ויעמד	ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν, καὶ ἐγενήθησαν, αὐτὸς ἐνετείλατο, καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν
	<i>For He spoke, and it came about, He commanded, and it stood.</i>	<i>For He spoke, and it happened, He commanded, and it stood.</i>	<i>For He spoke, and it came about, He commanded, and it stood.</i>	<i>For He spoke, and they came to be, He commanded, and they were created.</i>
	(4 I, 10)	(I, 7)	(Ps 33:9)	(Ps 33:9 [32:9])
Variation Unit 5	—	ממכון שבתו השגיה אל כֹּל] ישבי תב[ל	ממכון שבתו השגיה אל כל ישבי הארץ	ἐξ ἐτοίμου κατοικητηρίου αὐτοῦ ἐπέβλεψεν ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν γῆν
		<i>From His dwelling-place He gazes upon all the inhabitants of the world</i>	<i>From His dwelling-place He gazes upon all the inhabitants of the earth</i>	<i>From His prepared dwelling-place He looked upon all the inhabitants of the earth</i>
		(I, 10)	(Ps 33:14)	(Ps 33:14 [32:14])

Figure 1: Textual Variations in Psalm 33 Between Qumran Psalms Scrolls and MT

Comparing the variants listed in figure 1, we can see that each of the five units of text exhibit variation of different kinds. The first concerns paratextual information, namely the presence or absence of superscriptions. LXX includes simply *tw dauid*, an ascription which may not have any liturgical significance. 4Q98 has “For/of David, a song, a psalm,” and 4Q83 and MT have no superscription. According to the methodological complexities associated with textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible (discussed above), we cannot assume in a situation such as this that the Masoretic Text has priority or represents an earlier reading from which the

other variants diverge.¹⁴⁵ The point of interest, therefore, is not necessarily that the Qumran sources or LXX have changed an MT-like consonantal base text, but simply that variety exists between the witnesses. The absence or presence of a superscription such as לְדוֹד שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר can be described as a liturgical variation, in that it concerns the ascription or omission of paratextual information concerning liturgical performance. In whichever directions of travel the variation occurred with regard to the particular examples we have, variation of a paratextual liturgical element clearly exists in the manuscript record.

In the second unit of variation listed above, a portion of text is fragmentarily attested in 4Q98 which is absent from both MT and LXX. The text of MT is approximately twenty letters too short to fill the available gap in 4Q83, and an interval is considered unlikely by the editors of DJD XVI due to the fact that such gaps in 4Q83 “normally occur only at junctures between successive Psalms.”¹⁴⁶ For this reason, it is suggested that the same text as 4Q98 be reconstructed in this space.¹⁴⁷ Whether or not this reconstruction is correct, the additional text in of 4Q98 constitutes a larger point of difference than the “micro-variations” that have been discussed up until now. Here is an entire Hebrew phrase, rather than a change in a single word or syllable, that is either present or absent in the extant witnesses. Although reconstruction is involved for both 4Q83 and 4Q98, it appears that the phrase included by both manuscripts is a partial quotation of Exodus 15:8 from the Song of Moses:

מִים נִצְבּוּ כְמוֹ נֶדַע, “waters stood up like a heap”.¹⁴⁸ The wording is also closely echoed in Psalm 78:13: וַיִּצַב מִים כְּמוֹ נֶדַע.¹⁴⁹ The phrase from Exodus 15:8—a self-proclaimed “song”—is thus drawn upon by two independent liturgical compositions (Psalms 33 and 78). The exclusion or inclusion in a liturgical composition (Psalm 33) of an entire Hebrew phrase quoted from another liturgical composition (The Song of Moses) and also shared with Psalm 78, suggests a significant unit of textual variation that is liturgical in character. Both Ex 15:1–18 and Psalm 33 are defined in their own terms as “songs,” and Psalm 33 contains several internal references to musical performance which have been highlighted above. While these self-referential data cannot *prove* singing as an aspect of performance in a given place or time-period—further argument is necessary—the preservation and quotation of this material in

¹⁴⁵ See pages 59–64 and section 6.3.4 above. See also: Person, “Text Criticism as a Lens,” 203–7.

¹⁴⁶ Patrick W. Skehan, Eugene C. Ulrich, and Peter W. Flint, eds., “Psalms,” in *Qumran Cave 4.XI: Psalms to Chronicles*, edited by Eugene C. Ulrich et al., Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XVI (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 7–170, 12.

¹⁴⁷ Skehan, Ulrich and Flint, DJD XVI, 12.

¹⁴⁸ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 63.

¹⁴⁹ Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 63.

liturgical collections along with internal evidence suggest singing as a likely factor in the variation evident between 4Q83, 4Q98, MT and LXX.

The final three units of variation listed in figure 1 are somewhat different in character. The LXX of 33:8[32:8] reads the singular jussive φοβηθήτω as opposed to the plural of 4Q83, 4Q98 and MT (although 4Q83 is less certain in its reconstruction), and the only difference between the Hebrew sources here appears to be one of orthography. It is not inconceivable that the variation between singular (referring to “the earth”) and plural (perhaps suggesting all the peoples of the earth) might be liturgically motivated, however it would require LXX to rely on a Hebrew vorlage more ancient than 4Q83 and 4Q98, for which there is no apparent evidence. Variant four concerns a change of aspect to the verb היה, which offers no obvious indication that it could be connected to liturgical usage. Based on the reconstruction of תבל at the end of v14 in 4Q98, there appears to be a difference in vocabulary in comparison with MT הארץ. Again, though this is a significant variation, there is not enough reason to suggest that it is specifically related to liturgical usage.

What we find, then, in a Psalm that displays several hallmarks of liturgical function, are five units of textual variation between the manuscripts found at Qumran and MT, two of which could reasonably be explained as variants caused by adaptation related to liturgical performance. I have listed all five variants here in order to give an illustrative picture of the kinds of variants that can occur in an explicitly liturgical composition, and of the possibilities and limitations involved in any attempt to try and categorise these variations and/or judge whether they may be related to liturgical usage. Because of the complications and general limitations involved in text-critical judgements relating to specific variants in Hebrew manuscripts, and because of the long lifecycle of scriptural texts across multiple “*Sitzen im Leben*,” it is unlikely that the influence of singing can ever be proved beyond doubt by these means. This is, however, the case with many, if not most, text-critical judgements—they can at best provide compelling possible explanations for specific units of variation, but can rarely (if ever) be proved beyond reasonable doubt. If enough additional contextual information is available, in some cases the likelihood of the influence of liturgical usage increases and is indeed compelling.

6.5 Further Examples of Variation Related to Liturgical Function

Returning to the “signposts of liturgical function” reviewed above, we can find further examples among the Psalms scrolls found at Qumran which illustrate the kind of textual variation that fits the profile we would expect for variants related to musical liturgical performance.¹⁵⁰

6.5.1 Psalm 67:7–8 MT, Psalm 66:7–8 LXX and 4Q83

4Q83	MT	LXX
<p>ארץ נתנה יבולה יברכנו אלהים יברכוכה אלהים] אלהי]נו וייראו אתו כל אפסי ארץ]</p> <p><i>The earth has given its produce, God blesses us. May they bless you, O God, our God, and let all the ends of the earth fear you.</i></p> <p>(14 II, 35)</p>	<p>ארץ נתנה יבולה יברכנו אלהים אלהינו⁸ יברכנו אלהים וייראו אתו כל אפסי ארץ</p> <p><i>The earth has given its produce—God, our God, blesses us. May God bless us, and let all the ends of the earth fear Him.</i></p> <p>(Ps 67:7–8)</p>	<p>γῆ ἔδωκεν τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς· εὐλογῆσαι ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν. εὐλογῆσαι ἡμᾶς ὁ θεός, καὶ φοβηθῆτωσαν αὐτὸν πάντα τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς</p> <p><i>The earth has given its fruit—God, our God, has blessed us. May God bless us, and let all the ends of the earth fear Him.</i></p> <p>(Ps 66:7–8 [MT 67:7–8])</p>

Figure 2: Comparison of Psalm 67:7–8 MT, Psalm 66:7–8 LXX and 4Q83

The precise meaning of Psalm 67:8 is unclear because of the number of ways it could be translated, particularly in view of the variants listed here.¹⁵¹ The imperfect of בָּרַךְ at the beginning of verse 8 could be interpreted in a present, continuous sense (“They bless you”/“God blesses us”), as a future indicative (“They will bless you”/“God will bless us”) or as a jussive (“May they bless you”/“May God bless us”). The jussive or future sense are a better fit in the context of 4Q83, and the jussive or present sense are preferable translations of MT. The initial position of the imperfect in the clause is often suggestive of the jussive, although not conclusive, and though I have chosen to translate both Hebrew sources in this

¹⁵⁰ See page 164 above, and: Miller, “Role of Performance,” 361–2, 365–8; Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 174.

¹⁵¹ The Psalm as a whole presents difficulties concerning the translation of verb mood and tense. Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, WBC 20 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 154–6.

way, this requires treating it differently to the similar construction in verse 7.¹⁵² This turns verse 8 in MT into a closing prayer, making verse 8 a fitting end to the Psalm and 8a a fitting pre-cursor to 8b. This reading maintains the same sense as the optative of LXX εὐλογῆσαι, meaning that the only variation across the three texts concerns the subject and object of blessing in v8a—4Q83 contrasts with MT and LXX by reading “May they bless you” rather than “May God bless us.”

It is worth emphasising again at this point, that Psalm 67 bears several hallmarks of liturgical function. It possesses an explicitly musical superscription in all three versions—with some reconstruction, 4Q83 probably shares MT’s לְמִנְצַח בְּגִיטָה מְזֻמָּר שִׁיר, and LXX differs with εἰς τὸ τέλος ἐν ὕμνοις ψαλμὸς ᾠδῆς.¹⁵³ The superscription in itself constitutes a paratextual variant of a liturgical nature, as observed above with Psalm 33. Psalm 67 also contains petitionary elements phrased in the first-person plural (v2). It contains repeated language of song, praise, and rejoicing, framed as a prayer that the nations would worship God (רַנְּן, יְדָה, שָׂמֵחַ, vv4–6, 8). Both the readings of MT and LXX and that of 4Q83 fit this context well—the thrust of Psalm 67 throughout is that the implied speakers (or singers) might receive a blessing in order that the knowledge of God’s way (v3a), His salvation (v3b) and a manifestation of joyful praise (vv4–6) might be extended throughout the nations of the earth (vv2–8). The prayer of 4Q83, therefore—“May they bless you” (II, 35)—fits appropriately with the wider literary context of the Psalm, and the immediate context of verse 8b, providing a balanced parallelism. The reading of MT and LXX is similarly contextually appropriate, and echoes the movement and principal theme of the Psalm as a whole—a prayer for blessing in order that the nations might be encompassed and likewise blessed as a result.¹⁵⁴

How then might we interpret this unit of textual variation? If 4Q83 were an adaptation of the Hebrew version lying behind MT and LXX, this change towards petition could be interpreted

¹⁵² Niccacci believes that “the principle of initial position in the sentence is to be invoked as a more basic criterion” of the jussive than morphology, which is only varies from the imperfect indicative in certain cases, and is not consistently applied. See Alviero Niccacci, “The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System in Poetry,” in *Biblical Hebrew in its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Steven E. Fassberg and Avi Hurvitz (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2006), 247–68, 252, 261; and Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Biblico, 2006), § 114. Niccacci acknowledges that “second-place jussive *x-yiqtol* are also clearly attested,” (“Verbal System,” 252), though elsewhere states concerning prose that “indicative YIQTOL never comes first in the sentence.” Alviero Niccacci, *Syntax of the Verb in Classical Hebrew Prose* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 77.

¹⁵³ Skehan, Ulrich and Flint, DJD XVI, 19.

¹⁵⁴ For the meaning and liturgical function of “blessing,” see: Aitken, *Blessing and Cursing*; Brooke, “Reading, Searching and Blessing”; and Falk, *Festival Prayers*.

as a liturgical change, in much the same way that the examples set forth by Knust and Wasserman, discussed above, also included a small textual adaptation that facilitated a new petitionary reading.¹⁵⁵ Equally, if an adaptation were imagined in reverse, MT and LXX could be introducing a new liturgical element into verse 8 by turning the focus onto the liturgical performers themselves, expressed by means of the first person plural (a key “signpost” of liturgical function), and emphasising the prayer’s relevance for a contemporary group.¹⁵⁶ Either way, the variant readings can be ascribed to differing liturgical traditions. Due to the close parallelism of 8a and 8b in 4Q83 (not to mention its antique provenance, dating from the mid-second century BCE), I consider the most likely explanation to be that MT and LXX’s use of the first-person plural in v8a represents a liturgical adaptation of an earlier Hebrew textual tradition reflected in 4Q83.

6.5.2 Psalm 92:5 MT, Psalm 91:5 LXX and 4Q84

4Q84	MT	LXX
<p>כי שמחתני יהוה [בפעלך] [ומ]עשה ידיך ירגן¹⁵⁷</p> <p>For you have made me rejoice, O Lord, with your creation, and the work of your hands will shout for joy.</p> <p>(III, 10–11)</p>	<p>כי שמחתני יהוה בפעלך במעשי ידיך ארגן</p> <p>For you have made me rejoice, O Lord, at your deeds, at the works of your hands I will shout for joy.</p> <p>(Ps 92:5)</p>	<p>ὅτι εὐφρανάς με, κύριε, ἐν τῷ ποιήματί σου, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις τῶν χειρῶν σου ἀγαλλιάσομαι</p> <p>Because you have made me rejoice, O Lord, by your deeds, and in the works of your hands I will exult.</p> <p>(Ps 91:5 [MT 92:5])</p>

Figure 3: Comparison of Psalm 92:5 MT, Psalm 91:5 LXX and 4Q84

Two significant variations occur when Psalm 92:5 [91:5] is compared between 4Q84, MT and LXX. MT and LXX read “works of your hands” plural as opposed to “work of your

¹⁵⁵ See the discussion under section 6.2.2.2.

¹⁵⁶ Miller, “Role of Performance,” 361–2, 365–8; Schuller, “Some Reflections,” 174.

¹⁵⁷ I have suggested reconstructing עשה [ומ] here instead of עשה [במ] along with Abegg and the official edition of Skehan, Ulrich and Flint. The missing portion at the beginning of line 11 would equally allow this reading, and the reading נמעשה is attested 10 times in BH, as discussed below. This reconstruction is an attempt to make better sense of the reading in 4Q84. Abegg, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 4Q84 III, 11; Ulrich, Skehan and Flint, DJD XVI, 28.

hands” singular in 4Q84, and the imperfect of רנן occurs in the third-person singular in 4Q84 as opposed to the first-person singular in MT and LXX. If the missing letters at the beginning of line 11 are reconstructed as במ, following Abegg and the editors of DJD XVI, it is hard to make adequate sense of the meaning of the Hebrew or identify the subject of ירנן.¹⁵⁸ Though reconstructing [במ]עשה follows MT במעשי, we are already dealing with two other significant differences from MT in this single clause, and it is not necessary to assume that the preposition should be identical to MT. ומעשה is attested ten times in Biblical Hebrew, and enables a more coherent translation which treats מעשה ידיך as the subject of רנן. This translation interprets מעשה as a reference to God’s creation, and the concept of the created works of God shouting/singing for joy, expressed by the verb רנן, occurs at least nine times in the Hebrew Bible, and is a repeated theme in the Psalms (Is 35:1–2, 44:23, 49:13; Jer 51:48, Ps 65:8, 89:12, 96:12, 98:8; 1 Chr 16:33).

These variations are difficult to quantify, and a number of explanations are possible. 4Q84’s ירנן could be attributed to scribal error, perhaps as a phonic corruption of ארנן. If the beginning of the line is reconstructed as [במ]עשה, this explanation looks somewhat more likely, as the resulting Hebrew is awkward. מעשה could also be conceived as a phonic error transmitting מעשי. However, by this same token, ירנן could be interpreted as the *lectio difficilior*, and the first-person singular of MT and LXX a harmonisation in light of verse 5a. This change could also be interpreted as a *liturgical* change, facilitating a contemporary expression of praise in the first-person. Once again, the wider context of the Psalm refers explicitly to musical performance and liturgical setting—from the superscription “A psalm, a song for the sabbath day,” to the introductory terms of singing praises (ידה, זמר, v2) and reference to musical accompaniment in verses four to five:

*With a ten-stringed harp,
With voice and lyre together.*
(Psalm 92:4, JPS)

If my alternative reconstruction of the beginning of 4Q84 III, 11 is accepted—and I suggest that it is preferable on account of its coherence—then MT and LXX are more likely to be emendations of an earlier reading represented by 4Q84, adapted either to harmonise with

¹⁵⁸ Abegg, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 4Q84 III, 11; Ulrich, Skehan and Flint, DJD XVI, 28.

verse 5a, or to make the expression more amenable to liturgical performance. Both factors could have played a role in the history of transmission.

6.6 Chapter Six Conclusions

The aim of the preceding discussion has been in the first instance to theorise the kinds of observable textual changes that might result—in part or in whole—due to the influence of singing and musical adaptation. I have suggested the existence of a spectrum, or continuum, of possible textual variations ranging in scale from those that affect units of text on a “micro” scale to those on a “macro” scale. To illustrate and test this hypothesis, I have surveyed a range of units of textual variation found in psalms manuscripts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, highlighting a number of examples in particular: 4Q380 and 4Q381 (labelled “Non-Canonical Psalms”), 4Q434^a (Barkhi Nafshi^a), Psalm 33 (as witnessed in 4Q83 and 4Q98), 4Q84, and a number of examples and notable trends from the 11QPs^a collection (11Q5). At the outset of this chapter, the following question was posed: “are there examples of textual variation among the manuscripts found at or near Qumran that would fit the profile we would expect to see as a result of adaptations caused by singing?” The results of the foregoing analysis certainly indicate that such examples do exist, and they are by no means in short supply.

The purpose of using these examples has not been to attempt to prove a specific, singular or direct cause in the case of any individual variant. Rather, I have aimed to illustrate to a greater degree the complexity and variety of possible explanatory factors that may have played a role in the emergence and propagation of a pluriform textual tradition. The data is presented in support of the thesis that singing plays an influential role in textual processes, which cannot be reduced to a study of variants alone. The text-critical data is not required to prove the thesis, which is carried by the argument of previous chapters—it merely illustrates the kind of data that might result from the textual processes which remain the focus of interest. I have acknowledged the irradicable degree of subjectivity and speculation that is present in text-critical explanations for individual phenomena, and emphasised within that picture of complexity a previously under-explored variable, which is the role and influence of singing and musical adaptation. In doing so, I have sought to present examples for which a compelling case can be made for the influence of liturgical factors, suggesting liturgical adaptation as one possible explanatory factor leading to textual variation in psalm manuscripts. It is hoped that by increasing awareness of the complexity and fluidity of textual

traditions, and by drawing greater attention to an important variable, new avenues of research and reflection can be suggested which are able to enrich our understanding of the lively liturgical processes which result in the production, propagation and variation of texts. Elucidation of these processes offers insight into the function and interpretation of texts during the Second Temple Period.

When theorising and illustrating types of textual variation that may be related to liturgical function and musical adaptation, it has proved useful to consider a strikingly similar research project applied to a different literary corpus: the Christian Bible represented in Codex Alexandrinus in the fourth century C.E. Knust and Wasserman's study of the biblical Odes in Codex Alexandrinus offers some useful methodological models for the present study, and also arrives at some important conclusions.¹⁵⁹ They discover that liturgical singing of texts can at times result in a remarkable fixity and stabilisation, due to the enduring influence of well-known liturgical and musical forms.¹⁶⁰

Musicological theory has again yielded beneficial inter-disciplinary insights when applied to phenomena that I have labelled "macro-variations." These larger scale units of textual variations are widely evident among psalms manuscripts found at Qumran, and I have claimed that there is also a compelling case for liturgical performance as a potentially influential factor among the many variables that may lead to larger scale variations of text, ranging from excerpted sections of up to five verses (4Q380 and 4Q381) to differences in order and arrangement, as well as selective choices of inclusion and exclusion within collections of psalms (such as 11Q5). The musicological analysis of Stravinsky's symphonisation of the Psalms also illustrated the way that musical setting shapes and informs interpretation—a process which LeMon appropriately dubs "musical exegesis."¹⁶¹

Combining these insights leads to a number of possible conclusions concerning the influence of singing upon textual variation. On the one hand, contributions from the field of musicology (reviewed in this chapter and in chapter three) concerning the relationship between music and text indicate that musical setting is likely to result in various types of textual variation ranging from "micro-" to "macro-" adaptations, and potentially occurring at

¹⁵⁹ Knust and Wasserman, "Biblical Odes."

¹⁶⁰ Knust and Wasserman, "Biblical Odes," 341–2, 364–5.

¹⁶¹ LeMon, "Symphonization of the Psalms,"

any point in the life of the text from composition and throughout various functions and processes of transmission. A survey of instances of textual variation relating to liturgical features among psalms manuscripts found at or near Qumran indicates that a plethora of examples exist across the spectrum which fit the proposed profile of variation due to liturgical function and, more precisely, musical setting. On the other hand, an analogous study relating to Codex Alexandrinus and the Greek transmission of LXX and the New Testament indicates that liturgical singing can conversely result in a remarkable degree of textual fixity.

We may interpret these contrasting perspectives in a number of ways. Firstly, it may be claimed that results from study of the transmission of early Christian collections of scripture (in Greek) cannot be transferred by analogy to interpret variety among Hebrew manuscripts from the late Second Temple Period. In this case, two contrasting perceptions of textuality might be inferred: pluriformity among Hebrew texts in the earlier period, and stability among the Greek texts transmitted as Christian scriptures after the fourth century C.E. If liturgical singing has an influence upon textuality—which Knust and Wasserman demonstrate to be the case in Early Christianity, and which I claim to be the case in Second Temple Judaism as reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls—then perhaps these two corpora witness to contrasting textual and liturgical cultures. This is likely to be, however, an over-simplified reading of the evidence. The contrast between the Greek Odes in their scriptural setting and in their liturgical setting within the same codex suggests that even in this later and very different literary setting, liturgical singing indeed exerted an influence which resulted in the adaptation of text, even if the adapted text-form then became fixed for a significant length of time across various contexts. The stabilisation which Knust and Wasserman observe also occurs after the fourth century C.E. (as opposed to the earlier centuries of the transmission of these Greek scriptures wherein variation occurs), and the effect of stabilisation is precipitated by major socio-political developments in that period.¹⁶²

There is at this stage no way of knowing whether liturgical singing caused a comparable stability among Hebrew manuscripts during the Second Temple Period. I have not found or presented any evidence to this effect—rather, the evidence I have presented suggests the opposite conclusion, in that psalms manuscripts display a demonstrably greater degree of

¹⁶² See section 6.2.2 above and Knust and Wasserman, “Biblical Odes,” 356–63.

significant variation than other types of literature. However, in the course of the discussion I have also raised the question as to whether a possible increase in textual stability towards the end of the first century C.E. might be due to the influence of changing liturgical practices or standardisation of liturgical practices. This is a highly speculative possibility, however, and is contingent, for instance, upon acceptance of the debatable proposition that the text of the Hebrew Bible did in fact become increasingly fixed towards the end of the first century C.E.¹⁶³

This leads to the acknowledgement of another possible hypothesis: that the increased textual variety among Dead Sea Scrolls psalms manuscripts may in part reflect a diversity of traditions of liturgical practice within Second Temple Judaism. This would explain both the increased variation among psalms manuscripts and also variation of specifically liturgical features among psalms manuscripts. It would also fit well with current theories concerning the literature found at or near Qumran and the communities associated with the Scrolls—namely, that many of the Scrolls originated elsewhere and likely reflect use and practice among Jewish groups more widely, and that the communities reflected in documents such as the Serekh manuscripts were part of a movement with a long and complex history that cannot be reduced to a hypothetical small and separatist group of inhabitants in a self-contained and idiosyncratic community at Qumran.¹⁶⁴ One further possible explanation of the evidence is that if assessments of the textual history of the Hebrew Bible that perceive increased evidence of a standardised or stable text towards the end of the first century C.E. are correct, then there might be a connection between this period of relative textual stability and diachronically changing liturgical practices. Further exploration of these possibilities in light of global studies of textual variety may offer some fruitful avenues for further research.¹⁶⁵

The overall picture that emerges from the evidence surveyed in this chapter, however, adds to the impression that the period during which the Dead Sea Scrolls were composed, copied and collected was one of lively textual creativity and variety, variously contributing to and being shaped by complex interactive processes of oral and written performance and shared liturgical practices. Although these various aspects of textuality and performance can be to

¹⁶³ Lange, “They Confirmed the Reading”; Emanuel Tov, “Stabilization”; “Proto-Masoretic.”

¹⁶⁴ Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*; Hempel, *Community Rules*, 1–15; Schofield, “Forms of Community,” 533–46.

¹⁶⁵ Lange, “They Confirmed the Reading,” 52–64, 78–80.

some extent analysed and interpreted through the manuscript record, they cannot be entirely separated as distinct phenomena. Liturgical practices leave their mark on the manuscript record, such that oral performance, writing, and liturgical function are categories that are mutually influential and overlapping. The complex array of potentially influential factors leading to variety among textual witnesses is further underlined when attention is given to the role of singing and musical setting within these processes. This in turn presents a challenge to some aspects of received text-critical theory, which must move away from a strictly linear approach concerned with the categorisation of variants according to their divergence from an assumed normative archetype, towards embracing alternative conclusions that are strongly suggested by the thoroughgoing variety and complexity of the textual record as evidenced in the manuscripts found at or near Qumran.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THESIS CONCLUSIONS

Following the issues identified on the basis of a review of past scholarship in chapter two, the foregoing argument has advanced in a series of stages which can now be synchronised to present an account of the role that singing plays in processes which result in textual variation. These conclusions can be most clearly expressed in terms of the three aspects of the textual process reflected in the title and thesis statement: transmission, interpretation, and variation. For the thesis to be carried, it must be clearly demonstrated that singing is an influential factor in connection with each of these aspects. The three aspects do not correspond directly to the structure of the thesis, due to the fact that they each emerge as points of discussion throughout the thesis in every major section.

7.1 Singing as a Means of Textual Engagement and Transmission

The review of scholarship presented in chapter two revealed that the occurrence of language and terminology related to singing—and even the presence of technical musical terminology and performance notes—have been dismissed in previous discourse as unreliable indicators of liturgical performance in the late Second Temple Period. This approach, while raising valuable issues for discussion and providing salutary caution, is argued to rest on problematic methodological assumptions and to proceed with exaggerated critical suspicion. Such a methodology as a result discounts a wealth of valuable evidence that could be investigated from a variety of angles. The critical suspicion applied to the practice of singing is also inconsistent with other frequently operative methodological assumptions, such as an implicit acceptance of the pervasiveness of spoken prayer without any of the weight of evidence demanded of singing. Spoken prayer, furthermore, is frequently assumed as a mode of performance even for texts which explicitly refer to themselves as songs or to the practice of singing at regular times.

The case studies in chapters four and five have approached selected texts from a fresh angle and yielded multiple insights concerning singing in the late Second Temple Period. The literary, material, textual and philological analyses presented in these readings highlight substantial evidence concerning the role of singing in the thought of late Second Temple literature. According to the specific goals of this thesis, concrete and specific historical

reconstructions are considered an impossible and to some extent undesirable aim. This is due to the multiplicity and diversity of variables concerning settings for singing in any single time-frame, as well as in diachronic perspective. It is for this reason that the present thesis has aimed to illuminate textual processes and the variations that occur as a natural and inherent feature of those processes over time. Drawing attention to singing as an unconsidered factor aims to highlight this variability. Our texts therefore provide fuel for the imagination of multiple performative possibilities, based on modes of thought revealed in the language and literature of the period. This literature reveals the idealised poetic imagination of tradents, who as teachers and scribes represent to us the communities in which they operate. Such works demonstrate the ongoing vibrancy, composition and re-use of sacred literature, which in turn testifies to its ongoing relevance as a presentation of liturgical ideals.

The analyses of Psalm 154, David's Compositions, and the Second and Seventh Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice reveal that singing was conceived as a prominent aspect of the regular liturgical rhythms of a faithful community. To argue this way, the discussion in part three has demonstrated close connections between singing and regular sacrifice, as well as its place in the daily, weekly, monthly and annual celebrations, in the priestly service, and in the study of Torah. Singing was imagined to play an important role in communal liturgical performance and instruction, as well as in private observance and meditation. The practice was conceived as a vital means of instruction and the dissemination of wisdom and knowledge. Instruction and meditation through song could be explicitly focused upon (or consisting of) Torah or the deeds and character of God, though these two concepts should not necessarily be treated as distinct. Singing, therefore, was seen as an important means of textual engagement—a way of teaching, learning, studying, meditating upon, and transmitting sacred texts and traditions.¹

Furthermore, in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, the knowledge of God mediated through singing was not simply a matter of cognitive content, but was portrayed as an embodied engagement with the divine, a partaking in spiritual activity, and the intermingling of earthly and angelic priesthoods. The practice of studying and producing texts should not be seen as somehow detached from these spiritual, experiential aspects in the thought of late Second Temple Jewish literature. Regular liturgical practice can be a nexus for spiritual formation,

¹ The phrase "sacred traditions" is meant to leave room for the idea that sacred traditions both encompass and transcend those aspects of tradition which become inscribed in texts and manuscripts, and which may or may not have survived for historical consideration.

education, and interpretation.² These compositions describe contexts in which scribal activity would have found its expression through participation in the liturgical and devotional rhythms of a worshipping community. It is in just such a milieu that the idealist conception of King David as wise-man, songwriter, prophet and scribe—according to his portrayal in David's Compositions—makes coherent sense.

On the basis of these arguments, therefore, the case studies offered above provide substantial evidence for the conception of singing as a prominent means of textual engagement, performance, and instruction in the late Second Temple Period.

7.2 Singing and Interpretation

The types of textual engagement revealed through the case studies and described above indicate not only processes of transmission, but processes of interpretation. Indeed, it is questionable whether textual transmission can ever occur without interpretation, as even the most reductive form of rote reproduction involves significant interpretative pre-suppositions and choices. Jonathan Norton's work, acknowledged in chapter two, is an example of research which demonstrates that significant interpretative choices can be encoded in apparently minute features of textual variation. Nevertheless, our case studies are more explicit: Psalm 154 portrays singing as a means of instruction, dissemination of wisdom, and meditation upon Torah. These are three activities which cannot conceivably occur in a Second Temple Jewish context without active dynamics of interpretation. The teacher interprets the tradition to educate the student (or community); the sage interprets inherited wisdom as he instructs; the one who meditates interprets the texts and traditions upon which he ruminates. These activities describe processes of textuality and interpretation: each depend upon texts for the traditions they receive, and texts are in turn influenced, composed and shaped as a result of vibrant oral registers of interpretation.

In addition to the evidence of the case studies, the contributions of musicology presented in chapters three and six confirm that musical performance of text cannot occur without some impact upon interpretation and adaptation. This dynamic is already active in the process of composition, meaning that any text that has been set to music at any point in its pre-history

² As has already been ably illustrated through the work of Judith Newman. See page 36(n90) and section 2.3.5.

has been subject to the adaptive influence of music. Direct adaptation of text and tune necessarily occurs in the compositional process, and can be uni-directional or mutually influential, depending as to whether text precedes tune, tune precedes text, or both emerge together in the creative process. Similarly, direct adaptation of text can occur if a text is set to a tune for the first time, is set to a new tune, or if natural variations and diversity of performance occur across geographical, social, or chronological contexts. Furthermore, music communicates and influences emotion, meaning that a musical setting cannot help but influence the perception of text for performer or hearer. Furthermore, musical emphasis upon certain units of text, and choices of the selection or omission of other textual units (however small or large) play a significant role in perception and interpretation. These dynamics were further explored in chapter six. This impact on perception can be seen as an indirect influence upon interpretation, which by affecting the perception and understanding of those who interpret, may ultimately be reflected in observable textual differences. This influence is analogous to Judith Newman's description of the "spiritual formation" of a scribe, which ultimately impacts the shape of his scribal product: the text.³ Musical influence can result, therefore, in direct and (as it were) immediate adaptations of text, and can also exercise indirect influence leading to textual changes through its shaping impact upon the perception and interpretation of texts.

The cumulative effect of these insights is the conclusion that for any text that has been set to music at any point in its history of composition and transmission, the perception and interpretation of that text has been influenced by its musical setting. It is also worth making the observation that this dynamic might function in reverse—the perception and interpretation of a text may influence the character of new musical settings. If a text has been set to music in multiple ways and in multiple places, the interpretative effect is, at least to some degree, multiplied. Textual change can be direct, due to musical adaptation, or indirect, due to musical influence on the perception of a text's meaning. The connection that remains to be made explicit is the connection between the interpretative dynamics of singing and observable changes in inscribed texts—that is, text-critical data.

³ See page 36(n90) and section 2.3.5 above.

7.3 Textual Variation Resulting from Singing

It is apparent on the basis of the foregoing argument and conclusions that the influence of singing upon the perception and interpretation of texts is inevitable. As indicated above, singing was considered an important means of textual engagement in the late Second Temple Period, and as a mode of performance had, therefore, an inevitable impact upon interpretation. Is there any text-critical evidence that can support or illustrate the theory that this impact leads to observable variations in inscribed texts? The musicological discussion of chapter three indicates that there are multiple ways in which musical setting can result directly in textual adaptations, whether small or large. Furthermore, the discussion of theories of textual variation in chapter two also indicates that textual variants also reflect differences of interpretation, and that interpretative choices demonstrably lead to changes in the inscribed form of texts. The text-critical evidence is not required to prove the thesis, which is carried by the argument of previous chapters, yet it helps to illustrate the kinds of data that are likely to result from the textual processes described. If singing plays a prominent and influential role in processes of textual engagement and interpretation, it is therefore playing an influential role in processes which lead ultimately to textual variations. Whether a specific variant can be tied to singing as a singular and direct cause is unlikely, and would be practically impossible to prove. It is similarly impossible, however, to prove a singular and direct cause of any kind for many textual variants. The processes of transmission that have led to observable textual variations in surviving manuscripts are long and complex—they are processes which involve multiple variables and influential factors, concerning which we are largely ignorant, at least with regard to specifics. Drawing attention to the potential influence of singing as a one important factor within these processes achieves a number of results: it highlights the complexity of textual processes and the multiplicity of influential variables involved. This serves the additional purpose of undermining overly reductive and confident explanations for individual text-critical phenomena. It also explores the role of one major influential factor that is rarely even considered in analyses of text-critical data.

Despite this appeal to complexity in the textual process, and caution concerning the identification of specific causal factors, the case made for the influence of singing within such processes is strengthened by evidence of the kind of text-critical data that would be expected to result from such influence. This is precisely the kind of illustrative evidence that chapter six has begun to explore. Though textual variations can rarely be conclusively tied to a single causal factor, there is a compelling case for musical performance as an influential

factor in most of the examples presented. This data offers only a beginning along a path of research which affords multiple avenues for further study, though it is enough to demonstrate that the kinds of textual variation one would expect to result from the influence of singing do indeed exist among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and are not in short supply. A number of the examples presented could coherently be explained as the direct result of musical adaptation, though this cannot be proved. These include “micro” adaptations to the syllable count of verses which do not have any other obvious or persuasive explanation, and whose liturgical character is suggested by additional corroborative evidence. These also include larger scale choices of omission and deletion in individual psalms and collections. The unavoidable interpretative impact of such choices was illustrated by a musicological analysis of Stravinsky’s symphonisation of Psalms. Perhaps the clearest examples are the variations of textual elements typically associated with liturgical performance, such as: superscriptions, musical descriptions, first-person plural verbs (particularly those related to singing), second-person imperative “calls to praise,” technical musical terms, and antiphonal refrains. Variation of Psalm quotations in new hymnic compositions also provides important evidence for consideration.

The data and analyses presented in chapter six do not go much further than testing the water, though it is telling that analyses of textual variation among Psalm manuscripts reveal that they not only contain extensive variation, but possibly significantly more so than other types or genres of literature found at or near Qumran.⁴ Causal chains are complex, and specific factors cannot be proved to be decisive for most instances of textual variation. Nonetheless, it is clear that there is evidence among the Dead Sea Scrolls for the kinds of variation that would be expected to result from the complex processes of musical and textual interaction outlined in this thesis.

7.4 Concluding Statement

This thesis has argued that singing is envisaged in late Second Temple Jewish literature as a prominent and important means of textual engagement, interpretation, and transmission. As a performative medium, singing necessarily exerts influence upon the perception and

⁴ See section 6.3.4 above, and Ferguson, “Non-Aligned Qumran Texts,” 463. Flint’s comprehensive study gathers all the data in one place: Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms*, 86–149.

interpretation of texts. It influences, therefore, whether indirectly or through direct adaptation, textual processes which result in variations of the inscribed forms of texts, such as many of those visible in manuscripts found at or near Qumran.

7.5 Avenues for Future Research

A number of important avenues for further research suggest themselves in response to this thesis. The ongoing collection and analysis of textual variants in psalms manuscripts is required, and in light of the research presented here, there is a need for further studies which give particular attention to variants that have a significant exegetical or interpretative element, in particular those which involve literary and formal features commonly seen as indicators of liturgical performance. An exhaustive survey of terminology relating to singing would be of great value, particularly in light of recent advances in Dead Sea Scrolls Studies and the methodological and theoretical arguments set out above. Many other texts and manuscripts among the Dead Sea Scrolls are deserving of the same close attention that the case studies here have received, and through the lens of related research questions would doubtless yield rich results. The inter-disciplinary intersection between musicology and Dead Sea Scrolls studies could be pursued in a number of directions, and would offer a valuable perspective to the interpretation of Psalms in Hebrew Bible scholarship in general as well as to the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls specifically. The theories and research questions applied here could also be extended to other literary corpora, and I have a particular interest in exploring these same theories in conversation with New Testament Studies, considering possible implications for textual criticism of the Greek New Testament. Comparative studies of the roles of music and singing in Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman associations would also provide valuable context for the discussion, as would musicological studies of developments in musical theory and performance during the Hellenistic period.

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