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The Reception of Vulgate Ps 39:7–9 (Heb 40:7–9) among Latin Christian Hebraists

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ABSTRACT • Psalm 40:7–9 (= 40:7–9 in the Vulgate) is quoted in Hebrews 10:5–10, yet the New Testament citation diverges markedly from the Old Testament text. How did early modern scholars account for this discrepancy? This article examines the responses of three sixteenth–seventeenth-century Latin Christian scholars – Martin Bucer, Robert Bellarmine, and Solomon Glassius – each of whom possessed strong Hebrew competence and serious interest in textual criticism. None was prepared to question the authority of the New Testament wording, and none dismissed the integrity of the preserved Hebrew text. Their explanations of the differences among the textual witnesses reveal distinctive configurations of critical method and confessional commitment. Together, their treatments illustrate how early modern exegetes wrestled with the interplay of philology, theology, and emerging text-critical awareness.

KEYWORDS • Christian Hebraists, Robert Bellarmine, Martin Bucer, Solomon Glassius, Hebr 10:5–10 – Ps 40:7–9 (Vg 39:7–9)

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG • Psalm 40,7–9 (= 40,7–9 in der Vulgata) wird in Hebräer 10,5–10 zitiert, doch weicht das Zitat im Neuen Testament deutlich vom Text des Alten Testaments ab. Wie erklärten frühneuzeitliche Gelehrte diese Diskrepanz? Dieser Artikel untersucht die Antworten von drei lateinischen christlichen Gelehrten des 16. Jahrhunderts – Martin Bucer, Robert Bellarmin und Solomon Glassius –, die alle über fundierte Hebräischkenntnisse verfügten und sich intensiv mit Textkritik befassten. Keiner von ihnen war bereit, die Autorität des Wortlauts des Neuen Testaments in Frage zu stellen, und keiner lehnte die Integrität des erhaltenen hebräischen Textes ab. Ihre Erklärungen für die Unterschiede zwischen den Textzeugen offenbaren unterschiedliche Konfigurationen kritischer Methoden und konfessioneller Bindung. Ihr Ausführungen veranschaulichen, wie frühneuzeitliche Exegeten mit dem Zusammenspiel von Philologie, Theologie und einem aufkommenden textkritischen Bewusstsein rangen.

STICHWORTE • Christliche Hebraisten – Robert Bellarmin – Martin Bucer – Salomon Glassius – Hebr 10:5–10 – Ps 40:7–9 (Vg 39:7–9)

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Introduction

The Greco-Roman world knew of scholars who practiced elementary forms of textual criticism: comparing readings from different manuscripts, attempting to correct perceived errors through emendation, and generally trying to find what the text said originally.[1] As is well known, the writers of the New Testament had little interest in this kind of scholarship. Imprecise citations of Jewish scriptures appear regularly in the New Testament.[2] Over time, however, literary scholarship made its way into the Church, as evidenced in the work of Origen of Alexandria in Greek, and in figures such as Jerome and Augustine in Latin.[3]

Because imprecise citations in the New Testament are often recognized through comparison with the Hebrew text, most Christians for centuries were ill-equipped to explain them. This is because, until the 16th century, genuine Hebrew knowledge among Christian authors was rare. Some early Christian writings quoted Israel's scriptures in highly modified forms without any apparent awareness of the problem, as in the *Epistle of Barnabas*.[4] In other cases, when a Christian writer knew that his Greek text differed from the Hebrew that was in use among the Jews, he simply accused the Jews of corrupting the text, as with Justin Martyr.[5] Yet, these are not the only two approaches to this issue.

In the Latin Christian tradition, beginning with Jerome and expanding greatly in the Renaissance, there appeared a few writers who possessed enough Hebrew skill to recognize the gap between the preserved Hebrew text and the New Testament citation (where such a gap exists), and enough intellectual honesty to address the problematic citation with at least some measure of realism. The present essay illustrates this third approach, focusing on a sample passage as discussed by a few key Latin writers.

[1] One thinks of the Hellenistic scholars associated with the library of Alexandria, or references to old manuscripts and correcting copying errors in Latin writers such as Quintilian and Aulus Gellius (e.g., Quint. 1.7.23; 9.4.39; Aulus Gellius *Noct. att.* 2.3.5-6; 5.4.1-5; 9.4.39-40; 9.14.1; 18.5.11). See Franco Montanari (ed.), *History of Ancient Greek Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Byzantine Age*. Brill, Leiden 2020; and James E. G. Zetzel, *Critics, Compilers, and Commentators: An Introduction to Roman Philology, 200 BCE–800 CE*. Oxford, Oxford University Press 2018.

[2] As will be illustrated below, the relationship between New Testament citations and preserved copies of the Greek and Hebrew Bibles can be complex; see Wolfgang Kraus, "The Significance of Septuagint Quotations in the New Testament against the Background of Old Testament Textual History," in: *Introduction to the LXX*, ed. S. Kreuzer. Baylor University Press, Waco 2019, 627–640; and Gilles Dorival, *The Septuagint from Alexandria to Constantinople: Canon, New Testament, Church Fathers, Catenae*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2021, 51–68.

[3] On Origen's textual criticism, see Bernhard Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 2 vols. Friedrich Reinhardt, Basel 1987, 1: 85-138; and Peter W. Martens, *Origen and Scripture: The Contours of the Exegetical Life* (OECS), Oxford University Press, Oxford 2012, 421–449. On Jerome, see Martin Meiser, "Hieronymus als Textkritiker," in: *Die Septuaginta—Texte, Theologien, Einflüsse*, eds. W. Kraus and M. Karrer. Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2010, 256–271; and Michael Graves, "Jerome's Textual Criticism of the Bible," in: *The Oxford Handbook of Jerome*, eds. A. Cain and S. Rebenich. Oxford University Press, Oxford, forthcoming. On Augustine, see Henri-Irénée Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique. 4*th ed., E. de Boccard, Paris 1958, 430–444.

[4] For example, see the notes in Michael Graves (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church* (Ad Fontes: Early Christian Sources). Fortress Press, Minneapolis 2017, 3–16.

[5] See Oskar Skarsaune, *The Proof From Prophecy: A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile*. Brill, Leiden 1987, 25–46, 90–91.

Vulgate Psalm 39:7–9

The sample passage treated here is the Vulgate text of Psalm 39:7–9 (Hebrew Psalm 40:7–9), which is cited and explained in Hebrews 10:5–10, in a form that differs in several ways from the traditional Hebrew text. The first task is to explain the complicating issue in the citation.

The preserved Hebrew version of Psalm 40:7–9 (Masoretic Text)[6] is as follows:

(7) זֶבַח וּמִנְחָה לֹא־חָפַצְתָּ **אָזְנַיִם כָּרִיתָ לִי** עוֹלָה וַחַטָּאָה לֹא שָׁאָלְתָּ

(8) אָז אָמַרְתִּי הִנֵּה־בָאתִי בִּמְגִלַּת־סֵפֶר כָּתוּב עָלָי

(9) לַעֲשׂוֹת־רְצוֹנְךָ אֱלֹהַי חָפָצְתִּי וְתוֹרָתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ מֵעָי

(7) Sacrifice and meal-offering you did not delight in; **ears you dug/hollowed out for me**; burnt-offering and sin-offering you did not request.

(8) Then I said: Behold, I have come; in the scroll of a book which is written for/about me.

(9) To do your will, my God, I delight; your Torah is in the midst of my entrails/inner parts.

The key words for our purposes appear in verse 7: "Sacrifice and meal-offering you did not delight in; **ears you 'dug' (or 'hollowed out') for me** (אָזְנַיִם כָּרִיתָ לִי); burnt-offering and sin-offering you did not request." In place of these key words, Rahlfs' edition of the Septuagint gives the text as ὠτία δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι,[7] "ears you 'prepared' [or 'appointed'] for me". The first thing to note is κατηρτίσω, "prepared" or "appointed," in place of the Hebrew כָּרִיתָ, "dug" or "hollowed out." It has been suggested that the Greek translator understood the Hifil of כון, הֲכִינוֹתָ, which means "prepared" or "established," rather than כָּרִיתָ as in the Masoretic Text. Another explanation will be offered by Robert Bellarmine below, based on 2 Kings 6:23. The second thing to note is that, although Rahlfs' ὠτία ("ears") as the original Greek reading has the support of the Peshitta, the Old Latin,[8] and the Vulgate,[9] by contrast the major Greek codices (Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Alexandrinus) all have the word σῶμα, "body" instead; thus: "a body you prepared

6 K. Elliger and W. Rudolph (eds.), *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. 4th ed., Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart 1990, 1122–1123.

7 LXX according to Rahlfs (Ps 39:7): θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας, **ὠτία δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι**· ὁλοκαύτωμα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ᾔτησας ("Sacrifice and offering you did not want; but **ears you prepared/appointed for me**; whole-burnt-offering and (one) for sin you did not request"). See A. Rahlfs (ed.), *Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum, Vol. X: Psalmi cum Odis*. 3rd unaltered ed., Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1979, 142.

8 Thus, Codex Sangermanensis (6th cent.) and the Latin text of Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.17 have *aures* ("ears"); see P. Sabatier (ed.), *Bibliorum Sacrorum Latinae Versiones Antiquae, seu Vetus Italica*. 3 vols., Apud Franciscum Didot, Paris 1751, 2: 81. However, other witnesses (e.g., the Roman Psalter, the Mozarabic Psalter, and Augustine's *Enarrations on the Psalms*) have *corpus* ("body").

9 Vulgate (Ps 39:7): *sacrificium et oblationem noluisti* ***aures autem perfecisti mihi*** *holocaustum et pro peccato non postulasti* ("Sacrifice and offering you did not want; but **ears you perfected for me**; whole-burnt-offering and (one) for sin you did not require). See R. Weber and R. Gryson (eds.), *Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*. 5th ed., Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart 2007, 818.

for me."[10] This is also how the passage is quoted in Hebrews 10:5. How does one account for the form of the text in Hebrews?

It is possible that the writer of Hebrews used "body" because that is the text he found in his Greek copy of the Psalter, as reflected in the major Greek codices. However, if the Old Greek Psalter had "body," how did "ears" (matching the Hebrew) show up in both the Peshitta and the Old Latin? A more likely explanation is that the Old Greek had "ears" (as in Rahlfs), whereas the major Greek codices have been corrected to match the reading in the New Testament book of Hebrews,[11] which itself may have come, not from a biblical text, but from a very early Christian *florilegia* or *testimonia* list.[12]

In any case, the textual situation may be summed up as follows: the preserved Hebrew text has "ears you dug for me." Likewise having the word "ears" is the Old Latin and Vulgate, and also Jerome's Hebrew-based Psalter.[13] Otherwise, the Greek Psalter according to the three major codices has "body," which matches the quotation in Hebrews 10:5, "a body you prepared for me." This means that, for Christians reading the Greek Bible in the fourth century and later, the quotation in Hebrews matches the text of the Psalm. Consequently, interpreters in the Greek tradition were less likely to notice any problem.[14] But for much of the Latin tradition, the text as found in Psalm 39 differs from how the passage is quoted in the New Testament book of Hebrews.

Lack of Medieval Discussion

Unfortunately, we have no specific treatment of this problem from Jerome. The passage is quoted in the medieval *Breviarium in Psalmos*,[15] which used Jerome's homilies and *Commentarioli* on the Psalms as a source and was transmitted under Jerome's name. But no authentic work of Jerome takes up the issue.[16]

[10] LXX according to BSA (Ps 39:7): θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας, **σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι**· ὁλοκαύτωμα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ᾔτησας ("Sacrifice and offering you did not want; but **a body you prepared/appointed for me**; whole-burnt-offering and (one) for sin you did not request"). See Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*, 143.

[11] Cf. Pierre Grelot, "Le texte du Psaume 39,7 dans la Septante," *Revue Biblique* 108 (2001) 210–213.

[12] On *testimonia* literature in early Christianity, see *Pseudo-Gregory of Nyssa: Testimonies Against the Jews*, trans. Martin C. Albl. SBL Press, Atlanta 2004, xiii–xvii; and M. Kamptner, "Testimonies, Collections of," in: *Dictionary of Early Christian Literature*, eds. S. Döpp and W. Geerlings. Crossroad, New York 2000, 558–559.

[13] Iuxta Hebraeos Psalter (v. 7): *victima et oblatione non indiges* ***aures fodisti mihi*** *holocaustum et pro peccato non petisti* ("Of sacrificial-victim and offering you are not in need; **ears you dug/pricked for me**; whole-burnt-offering and (one) for sin you did not seek"). See Weber and Gryson (eds.), *Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, 819.

[14] As an example of a Greek writer who was aware of this issue, Theodore of Mopsuestia, commenting on Hebrews 10:5, recognized that the Psalmist said ὠτία ("ears") in place of the New Testament's σῶμα ("body"); see Karl Staab (ed.), *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche* (Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen 15). Aschendorff, Münster 1933, 209.

[15] [Pseudo]-Jerome, *Breviarium in Psalmos* (PL 26). Paris 1845, 944–945.

[16] As noted above, the Vulgate Psalter, that is, the "Gallican Psalter" – a revision based on Origen's edition of the Greek – simply follows the Old Latin: *aures autem perfecisti mihi*, with "ears" already in alignment with the Hebrew, and with the verb *perfecisti*, "you perfected" (or "restored") following the Greek κατηρτίσω. In his *iuxta Hebraicum* Psalter, Jerome naturally kept "ears," and he changed the verb to *fodisti*, "to dig" or "to prick," to better align with the Hebrew.

Prior to the Renaissance, at least some recognition of the difference between Psalm 39 (Heb 40) and Hebrews 10 is evident in Nicholas of Lyra (c. 1270–1349), who was the most capable Christian Hebraist of his era.[17] In his *Postilla* ("commentary") on Psalm 39,[18] Nicholas notes that "some words have been changed, for Christ and the apostles did not always relate the scripture of the Old Testament word for word."[19] Nicholas goes on to justify the citation in Hebrews 10 by saying: "In the Epistle to the Hebrews it says, 'But a body you prepared for me,' as was said. Still, it is the same sense as when it says, 'But you perfected for me ears,' that is, ears perfected for obedience, which was fulfilled in this: being obedient to God the Father to the point of death on a cross" (cf. Phil 2:9).[20] The logic seems to be as follows: Psalm 39 says that God perfected his ears, which means that he made him thoroughly obedient, and through this obedience Jesus allowed himself to die on the cross. It is understood – although this step in the logic is only implicit – that showing obedience to the point of dying on a cross involves one's whole body, so that "you prepared for me a body" (i.e., to die on the cross) gives the same sense as "you perfected for me ears" (i.e., in obedience to the Father's command to die on the cross). This explanation is not especially helpful, in that it leaves much unstated. Most importantly, and disappointingly, Nicholas fails to say anything about the Hebrew text. The reader has no sense of why the Epistle to the Hebrews expresses itself this way, and there is no account of the textual issues that underlie the different readings. We will need to consult later authors to find more advanced discussions of the text-critical issue.

The Renaissance Period

We now turn our attention to three Latin Christian writers who recognized the textual problem, knew Hebrew well, and had enough interest in textual criticism to offer informed explanations. These are Martin Bucer, Robert Bellarmine, and Solomon Glassius. None of these scholars were willing to condemn the text given in the New Testament, but neither were they willing to dismiss the preserved Hebrew text out of hand. What makes each one interesting is the combination of

[17] That Nicholas could genuinely read Hebrew (with occasional need to look up words) is demonstrated by numerous detailed and unique comments on the Hebrew text found in his commentaries; see G. Dahan, "Nicolas de Lyre: Herméneutique et méthodes d' exégèse," in: *Nicolas de Lyre Franciscain du XIV^e siècle: exegete et théologien*, ed. G. Dahan. Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, Paris 2011, 115. Nicholas often follows Rashi so closely that it clear that he used Rashi's commentary as a written source; see W. Bunte, *Rabbinische Traditionen bei Nikolaus von Lyra*. Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main 1994; and H. Hailperin, *Rashi and the Christian Scholars*. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh 1963, 137–246, 251–252.

[18] The intended meaning of *Postilla* is not clear. Perhaps it derives from the phrase *post illa verba*, "after these words," because the commentary was added after the citation of the biblical lemma in continuous format; see L. Smith, "Nicholas of Lyra and Old Testament Interpretation," in: *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation*. Vol. II: *From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, ed. M. Sæbø. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 2008, 50.

[19] *Aliqua vocabula sint mutata: quia Christus et apostoli non semper allegaverunt scripturam veteris testamenti de verbo ad verbum*; see *Biblia Sacra cum Glossa Interlineari, Ordinaria, et Nicolai Lyrani Postilla, atque Moralitatibus, Burgensis Additionibus, & Thoringi Replicis*. 6 vols., Venice 1638, 3:143.

[20] *Ad Hebra. dicitur: corpus autem aptasti mihi, ut dictum est: tamen eadem est sententia cum dicitur: aures autem perfecisti mihi, id est aures perfectas ad obediendum, quod fuit in hoc, quod fuit obediens: Deo patri usque ad mortem crucis*. *Biblia Sacra cum Glossa Interlineari, Ordinaria, et Nicolai Lyrani Postilla*, 3:143.

critical skills and ideological commitments that informs how he explains the differences between the various textual witnesses.

Martin Bucer

Our first writer is Martin Bucer (1491–1551), the early Protestant Reformer based in Strasbourg, who composed a commentary on the Hebrew text of the Psalms that was well-informed by medieval Jewish interpreters, above all David Kimhi. For Bucer, the return to the Hebrew text (including rabbinic commentary) was part of a larger program to restore the original form of biblical teaching and thereby reform Christian doctrine and practice. His approach to Psalm 39:7-9 (for Bucer, Psalm 40:7-9) reflects these ideals.[21]

Bucer begins his exegesis with a translation into Latin based directly on the Hebrew. He generally expounds the Psalm against the backdrop of the life of David. But he also says that what David sang about himself was fulfilled in Christ, and that David showed himself to be a type of Christ, who spoke by the Spirit of Christ. This explains why the Epistle to the Hebrews interprets these verses with reference to Jesus.

As for the precise words of the text, Bucer's first task is to explain why the quotation in Hebrews differs from what he understands to be the true sense of the Psalm according to the Hebrew. His argument follows along the same lines as Nicholas of Lyra, but he offers more detail and refers to both the Greek text and Hebrew commentators:

> The common edition of the Greeks has "a body you prepared for me" [in Greek], that is, "a body you prepared for me," and this is how the Epistle to the Hebrews cited the passage. But this is not out of tune with the sense of the Psalm, if this saying is understood rightly. For indeed, the sense among all the Hebrews, "ears you dug for me," is the same as: "ears you opened," and "you reshaped me to be obedient to you." When this happens, a man dedicates his whole self to God, and all the body, otherwise rebellious to the will of God, is formed and shaped for obedience to God. Therefore, this is not beyond the meaning of the Psalm, in this sense.[22]

Bucer notes that the New Testament quotation follows the "common edition" (*vulgata aeditio*) of the Greeks, which perhaps hints at the idea that the original Greek might have been different. Because the New Testament quotes the text in this popular Greek form, he must harmonize it with the Hebrew. As for his sources, Rashi paraphrases the sense of the verb כָּרִיתָ as "You made them [that is: the ears] hollow, so that they hear." David Kimhi explains אָזְנַיִם כָּרִיתָ לִי to mean: "You opened for me the ears, so that I might hearken to your voice." Ibn Ezra offers a similar explanation. Consequently, Bucer can say that all the Hebrews (that is, the Jewish commentators) take the phrase to mean that God opened David's ears, in that he made him obedient. Because

[21] On Bucer's exegesis of the Hebrew Bible, see R. Gerald Hobbs, "How Firm a Foundation: Martin Bucer's Historical Exegesis of the Psalms," *Church History* 53 (1984) 477-491; and Bernard Roussel, "Bucer Exeget," in: *Martin Bucer and Sixteenth Century Europe: Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg (28-31 août 1991)*. Vol. 1, eds. C. Krieger and M. Lienhard (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 52). Brill, Leiden 1993, 39–54.

[22] *Vulgata Graecorum aeditio habet* σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω, *id est, corpus adaptasti mihi, & sic adduxit hunc locum Epistola ad Ebraeos. Nec ablusum est a sensu Psaltis, si recte hoc dictum accipiatur. Omnium namque Ebraeorum sententia est: Aures mihi perfodisti, idem esse, atque, aures apervisti, & ad auscultandum tibi adaptasti. Id cum fit, totum se homo deo addicit, & omne corpus alioqui voluntati Dei rebelle, ad obsequium eius formatur atque instituitur. Haud igitur praeter sententiam Psaltis in hunc sensum hic legitur*. Martin Bucer, *Sacrorum Psalmorum Libri Quinque ad Ebraicum Veritatem Genuina Versione in Latinum Traducti*. G. Ulricher, Strasbourg 1532, 155b.

obedience involves the whole body, it is not out of keeping with the original sense (that is, the Hebrew sense) for the New Testament to use "body" instead of "ears."

Next, Bucer turns to a more detailed analysis of the Hebrew. Given his commitment to the Hebrew text, he is especially concerned to demonstrate that his exegesis conforms to the Hebraic textual and exegetical traditions:

> A body "you prepared" for me: the Jews understand the word כרה here as "to open" and "to uncover." Kimhi cites as a similar passage Exod. 21:(33): When someone opens a well, or כרה "digs" it (as we translated, in accordance with Kimhi), he should close it. But however this may be, he who digs up something also opens it; therefore, the very nature of the word is not alien to the meaning "opening." Still, it is not impossible that it alluded to that precept which we read concerning the Hebrew slave who chose servitude instead of liberty in the year of release … (Exod. 21:6). Hence, it is entirely possible that a full dedication to servitude is signified by the perforation of the ears, and what the Psalm says, "you dug my ear," has this sense: You assigned me to yourself as a servant forever, as those who perforated their ears were assigned to their masters.[23]

Having already observed that the Jewish commentators explained the sense of the verb in this passage as "opened," Bucer must acknowledge that Kimhi defined the strict meaning of the Hebrew verb כָּרִיתָ by appealing to Exodus 21:33, "When a man digs a well." But he explains that to "dig" a well is essentially the same as to "open" it, which (in his view) vindicates his interpretation. Lastly, Bucer addresses an interpretation of the passage known in Christian circles (for example, it is cited and rejected by Calvin),[24] that the Psalm refers to the procedure in Exodus 21:6 whereby a slave devotes himself to his master by having his ear bored through to a doorpost. If this were the meaning, says Bucer, it would signify a "full dedication" of servitude. Presumably, this would still align with the New Testament's reference to the whole "body" and not just the "ears," because a person in servitude must serve with his whole body.

The textual starting point for Bucer was the medieval Hebrew Bible – specifically, the text as given in the first "Rabbinic Bible" of 1517, edited by Felix Praetensis and printed by Daniel Bomberg.[25] Lacking other resources for interpreting the Hebrew, Bucer naturally relied heavily on the Jewish commentaries available in this edition, especially Rashi and Kimhi. Bucer admitted that the Greek Old Testament has a different text, but he sees this as only the "common" edition. The book of Hebrews quotes the Psalm according to the common Greek edition; nevertheless, Bucer assures, its meaning can be harmonized with the Hebrew. So, the Hebrew is the gold standard for correctness, but the New Testament quotation is not wrong – even if, by implication, it is not as

[23] *Corpus adaptasti mihi,* כרה, *Iudaei hic pro aperire atque revelare accipiunt. Kimhi tanquam similem locum adducit illud Exod. 21. Cum quispiam puteum aperverit, aut,* כרה *(id nos, fodit, versum habemus, secundum Kimhi vertendum fuerat), recluserit. Sed utcunque hoc habeat, qui effodit quid, is & aperit, quare ipsa verbi natura, a significatu aperiendi aliena non est. Haud scio tamen, an non ad id alluserit, quod praeceptum legimus de servo Ebraeo, qui in anno remissionis servitutem libertati pretulisse. … (Exodi 21). Hinc possit non inepte aurium pertusione plena addictio in servitutem significari, & id quod Psaltes dixit: perfodisti mihi aurem, hunc sensum habere: addixisti me tibi servum in sempiternam, uti illi heris suis addicebantur, quibus aures pertundebant*. Bucer, *Sacrorum Psalmorum Libri Quinque*, 155b–156a.

[24] See John Calvin, *Commentarii in librum Psalmorum*. J. J. Schipper, Amsterdam 1557, 162. Augustine related the piercing of the ear in Exod 21:6 to obedience to Christ (*Quaest. Exod.* 77). By contrast, Jerome said that this piercing of the ear signifies choosing slavery to the world rather than freedom in Christ (*Jov.* 2.25; cf. Ambrose, *Epist.* 7.14).

[25] See Stephen G. Burnett, "The Strange Career of the *Biblia Rabbinica* among Christian Hebraists, 1517–1620," in: *Shaping the Bible in the Reformation: Books, Scholars and Their Readers in the Sixteenth Century*, eds. B. Gordon and M. McLean (Library of the Written Word 20). Brill, Leiden 2012, 67–68. Bucer owned a copy of the first "Rabbinic Bible," which was the only early printing of the rabbinic Bible that contained Kimhi (although edited to remove his anti–Christian polemics) on the Psalms.

strictly correct as it could be. This shows Bucer's remarkable commitment to the Hebrew textual and exegetical traditions.

Robert Bellarmine

The second writer we will consider is the well-known Catholic scholar and Cardinal, Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621). Among his many works are a commentary on the Psalms (based on the Vulgate), an apologetic treatise *Controversies of the Christian Faith*, and the preface to the 1592 Sixto-Clementine Vulgate.[26] In his *Controversies*, Bellarmine insists that Protestants place too much confidence in the fidelity of the preserved Hebrew text. Yet, he also rejects the idea that the Jews deliberately distorted the Hebrew, arguing instead that Jewish devotion to the scriptures, together with the protection given by divine Providence, kept the Hebrew text essentially intact, although not without occasional errors.[27] This line of thought allowed Bellarmine a certain degree of flexibility in addressing text-critical issues.

As for Bellarmine's discussion of Psalm 39:7 in his *Explanatio in Psalmos*, he begins by setting forth the various readings and assessing their status based on whether they are cited by credible authorities. The diversity of the textual transmission generates more than one authoritative text:

> It should be noted that the Latin Vulgate edition, which has "ears you perfected for me," accords neither with the Hebrew text nor with the Greek; for in Hebrew it has "ears you dug for me"; but in Greek: "a body you perfected for me." But this reading, which has "a body you perfected for me," can in no way be rejected, because not only is it found in the Greek text and received by Latin and Greek Fathers, such as Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom and Theodoret, but also it is approved by the apostle in the [Epistle] to the Hebrews 10:5; and perhaps, in the ancient Hebrew text that the Seventy Translators had, there was some expression that meant "body."
>
> Likewise the reading of the Latin edition, "ears you perfected for me," cannot be rejected, both because this reading is also very ancient, as is clear from John Chrysostom in his second exposition of this Psalm and Jerome in his commentary on this Psalm, and also because the Latin Vulgate edition was approved at the Council of Trent and can easily be harmonized with the Greek and Hebrew readings. For the Hebrew word כָּרָה *carah* means not only "to dig" but also "to prepare" or "to set forth," as is understood from 4 Kingdoms chap. 6, v. 22(23), where "to prepare a table" and "the setting forth of food" is indicated by this same word *carah*.[28]

[26] On Bellarmine's Hebrew scholarship, see Jared Wicks, "Catholic Old Testament Interpretation in the Reformation and Early Confessional Eras," in: *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Interpretation*, ed. M. Sæbø. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 2008, 2*:* 646–648; and Piet van Boxel, "Robert Bellarmine, Christian Hebraist and Censor," in: *History of Scholarship: A Selection of Papers from the Seminar on the History of Scholarship Held Annually at the Warburg Institute*, eds. C. R. Ligota and J.-L. Quantin. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2006, 251–275. Bellarmine used the Gallican Psalter for his Psalms commentary, but he frequently dealt with the Hebrew; see M. Igriczi-Nagy, *The Commentary of Saint Robert Bellarmine on Psalm 118 in the* Explanatio in Psalmos (PhD Diss.). Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 2007, 106–132.

[27] R. Bellarmine, *Disputationes de controversiis Christianae Fidei*. 3 vols., D. Sartorius, Ingolstadt 1586–1593, vol. 1, bk. 2, ch. 2, pp. 86–93.

[28] *Notandum Vulgatam latinam editionem quae habet, aures autem perfecisti mihi, non convenire cum hebraico textu neque cum graeco: nam in hebraeo habetur, aures autem fodisti mihi; in graeco vero, corpus autem perfecisti mihi. Sed lectio ill aquae habet: corpus autem perfecisti mihi, nullo modo reici potest; quia non solum habetur in textu graeco et recipitur a Patribus latinis et graecis, ut Ambrosio et Augustino, Chrysostomo et Theodoreto sed etiam approbator ab Apostolo ad Hebr. 10, 5; et fortasse in textu hebraico antique quem habuerunt Septuaginta Interpretes, erat vox aliqua quae corpus significaret. Lectio quoque latinae editionis, aures autem perfecisti mihi, reici non potest; tum quia lectio illa est etiam antiquissima, ut perspicuum est ex Chrysostomo in secunda expositione huius Psalmi, et ex Hieronymo in Commentario huius Psalmi; tum quia Latina Vulgata editio approbata est in Concilio Tridentino et potest facile concordari cum lectione graeca et hebraica. Nam verbum hebraicum* כָּרָה *carah, non solum significat fodere; sed etiam*

Bellarmine first observes that the Vulgate text (*aures autem perfecisti mihi,* "ears you perfected for me") matches neither the Hebrew nor the Greek. He is aware of the Greek, "a body you perfected (or "prepared") for me," the Vulgate, "ears you perfected for me," and the Hebrew, "ears you dug for me." He says that the Greek text cannot be rejected, since it is supported by several Church Fathers and the New Testament book of Hebrews.[29] Although he values the preserved Hebrew text, he is unwilling to accept it as the original reading in every case. Consequently, in view of the weighty testimony in favor of σῶμα, he suggests that the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the received Greek version might have had a Hebrew word that meant "body."

At the same time, Bellarmine cannot reject the Vulgate, because it is supported by certain ancient Fathers, and it received official approval from the Council of Trent.[30] One ancient Father he cites is Jerome, but this is actually the *Breviarium in Psalmos* of [Pseudo]-Jerome.[31] A point in favor of the Vulgate's *aures autem perfecisti mihi* ("ears you perfected for me") is that it can be reconciled to the Greek and Hebrew readings. Reconciliation with the Greek seems necessary due to the patristic and New Testament evidence, but his concern to harmonize the Vulgate with the preserved Hebrew text shows his respect for the latter. The issue here is the verb (either "perfected" or "prepared" as in the Latin/Greek, or "dug" as in the Hebrew), and here Bellarmine accepts the Masoretic Text as it stands, questioning only the meaning of the root כרה. He proposes the meaning "set forth" or "prepare" (instead of "dig") for כרה by citing 2 Kings 6:23, where וַיִּכְרֶה לָהֶם כְּרָה גְּדוֹלָה seems to mean: "He prepared for them a great feast." From today's perspective, the use of the cognate accusative noun כְּרָה ("feast") along with the verb suggests that the verb here means "to prepare a feast" rather than broadly "to prepare,"[32] but Bellarmine's interpretation is not absurd. In fact, it may explain the origin of the Greek reading (in the sense of "prepare"), and כרה in 2 Kings certainly does not mean "to dig."

Next, Bellarmine attempts to show the basic agreement between the Greek and Vulgate texts:

> Moreover, "You appointed an ear for me" and "you perfected an ear for me" are the same. Nor are "a body you perfected for me" and "ears you perfected for me" different, except that the former expression is based on the proper sense, the latter is figurative. For he who says "You perfected ears for me" signifies the whole from the part. And not without reason does it indicate the whole body in this passage through the "ears" rather than

praeparare sive apponere, ut notum est ex lib. 4 Reg. cap. 6 v. 22, ubi parare mensam et appositio ciborum significatur per hoc idem verbum carah; R. Bellarmine, *Explanatio in Psalmos*, ed. R. Galdos. Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, Rome 1931 (originally: Lyon 1611), 210.

[29] For the Church Fathers, see Ambrose, *Enarrat. Ps.* 39.10 (PL 14, 1061); Augustine, *Enarrat. Ps.* 39.13 (PL 36, 442); Chrysostom, *Jud. gent.* 8.4-5; *Adv. Jud.* 7.2.6; 7.4.1-2; and Theodoret, *Interp. Ps.* 39:7-8 (PG 80, 1156): σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι.

[30] In 1546, the Council of Trent decreed that that "this ancient and common (*vulgata*) translation" should be regarded as authentic (*pro authentica habeatur*) for public lectures, disputations, sermons and expository discourses, such that no one should reject it for any reason. See E. F. Sutcliffe, "The Council of Trent on the *Authentia* of the Vulgate," *Journal of Theological Studies* 49 (1948) 36–37.

[31] See n. 15. As for Chrysostom's "second exposition" of this Psalm, I have not been able to identify the text to which he is referring. It is probably one of the many anonymous Greek homilies transmitted under Chrysostom's name.

[32] Cf. III כרה in L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner (eds.), *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Trans. and ed. M. E. J. Richardson. Brill, Leiden 1995, 2:497.

> through any other member, since the ears are the instruments through which the precepts of of the Most High, to which we owe obedience, are received.[33]

The Greek κατηρτίσω (rendered here as "appointed") and the Latin *perfecisti* ("perfected") are said to be essentially the same in meaning. Then, the Greek σῶμα ("body") and the Latin *aures* ("ears") are interpreted as communicating the same idea, with the latter being a figurative expression of the former as "the whole from the part" (i.e., synecdoche): the ear is the "part" that represents the "whole" body. What is more, the ear is the perfect "part" to represent the body, because the ears are what we use to hear and obey God's precepts. Thus, the two authorized versions – Psalm 39:7 in the Vulgate and the citation in Hebrews 10:5 – are approved and reconciled.

After some further discussion, Bellarmine finally addresses the third version, the Hebrew, and specifically the interpretation of the Hebrew that construes the verb כרה as "to dig":

> The only reading left remaining is "ears you dug for me," which does not seem to be well received; nor is the explanation of those who want the words "ears you perfected for me" to mean "ears you cleansed" or "ears you opened," so that it is the same as "you dug," that is, "you opened." For this reading is not contained in the commentary of any ancient Father that I know, and it seems contrary to the truth of the mystery; for he who says "ears you dug or cleansed for me" indicates that he formerly had his ears closed or filthy.[34]

This understanding of the sense of the Hebrew, together with the explanation that here it means "to open," are soundly rejected. This is likely a response to the interpretation found in Bucer. Two specific charges are levelled against accepting this Hebrew-based reading: first, it lacks support from any authoritative Christian commentaries; and second, it implies that Christ was formerly not open to receiving God's commandments, in that at some point he needed to have his ears "opened" or "cleansed."

Noteworthy in Bellarmine's analysis are his awareness of the different versions, his ability to locate a relevant parallel in the Hebrew, and his appeal to a figure of speech to harmonize "ears" and "body." He does not charge the Hebrew text with corruption lightly, but his willingness to entertain an alternative Hebrew reading adds an important dimension to his textual criticism. By way of contrast, his deference to authoritative commentaries and the Council of Trent run counter to his critical spirit. Like Bucer, he operated critically within a specific ideological framework.

Solomon Glassius

The final scholar whose comments on Vg Psalm 39:7-9 we will discuss is the Lutheran Hebraist Solomon Glassius (1593-1656). Born in Sondershausen, Glassius studied philosophy at Jena, spent a year at Wittenberg, and then continued his education at Jena learning Hebrew, Aramaic,

[33] *Idem autem est aurem apposuisti mihi et aurem perfecisti mihi: neque diversa sunt corpus perfecisti mihi et aures perfecisti mihi, nisi quod prior locutio est propria, posterior est figurata; qui enim dicit aures perfecisti mihi, ex parte significat totum; et non sine causa per aures potius quam per aliud membrum significatur hoc loco totum corpus; quoniam aures sunt instrumenta per quae accipiuntur praecepta Superiorum quibus debetur oboedientia*. Bellarmine, *Explanatio in Psalmos*, 210.

[34] *Sola restat illa lectio, aures autem fodisti mihi, quae non videtur recipienda, ut neque expositio illorum qui verba illa, aures autem perfecisti mihi, significare volunt: aures purgasti sive aperuisti, ut idem sit quod fodisti, id est, aperuisti. Haec enim lectio non habetur in Commentariis ullius veteris Patris, quod ego sciam, et videtur repugnare veritati mysterii; qui enim dicit: Aures fodisti vel purgasti mihi, significat se habuisse aliquando aures clausas vel immundas*. Bellarmine, *Explanatio in Psalmos*, 210.

and Syriac, as well as theology under Johann Gerhard. Between 1621 and 1625 he served in Jena as professor of biblical languages. In 1638 he succeeded Gerhard as lecturer in theology, but he left after only two years to serve as General Superintendent of Gotha (1640-1656). In defense of the Hebrew Bible and its role in the Protestant doctrine of *sola scriptura*, Glassius affirmed the essential fidelity of the preserved Hebrew text with its vocalization, the basic value of rabbinic commentaries, and the Aramaic and Syriac versions. At the same time, as an Orthodox Lutheran, he was not prepared to set aside the text of the New Testament where it appears to differ from the Hebrew.[35]

Glassius' major work was an encyclopedic manual of biblical interpretation in five books called *Philologia Sacra* (Jena 1623-1636). It integrates linguistic analysis with hermeneutical and theological discussions illustrated by numerous biblical examples. Glassius' background in traditional grammar and rhetoric is evident throughout. The first two books (*Philologia Sacra*) were published in 1623; books three and four (*Grammatica Sacra*) appeared in 1634; and the fifth book (*Rhetorica Sacra*) came out in 1636. The work reflects wide reading and sound linguistic competence, while presenting Lutheran positions on biblical and theological topics.[36] Psalm 39:7 (Heb 40:7) receives substantial commentary at two points in book five on sacred rhetoric.

In the first tractate ("On Tropes") of book five, in a chapter devoted to anthropomorphism, Glassius comments on Ps 40:7 (Heb) in connection with biblical texts that ascribe ears to God. Glassius quotes the text in Latin according to Jerome's Iuxta Hebraeos version:

> "Ears you dug for me," that is, you took me to yourself as a faithful servant: it signifies the most perfect servitude and obedience given to the Father by the incarnate Son. The metaphor is taken from the outward practice among the Jewish people, where the servant's ear was perforated if he did not want to be set free in the seventh year: Exod 21:7; Deut 15:17. The Messiah, however, speaking to God in duality, speaks concerning his own ears, to indicate the excellence of his spiritual servitude and obedience: cf. Isa 50:4-5. Moreover, by mentioning his "ears," it alludes to his assuming a human body. This is why the Davidic phrase is expounded in Hebrews 10:5 as "a body you prepared for me." The Syriac has: "You clothed me with a body."[37]

Later in book five, in the second tractate ("On Figures"), in a chapter called *De aliis sententiarum & amplificationum schematibus* ("On Other Figures of Thought and Amplification") that addresses Old Testament references in the New Testament, Psalm 40:7 is given as an example. Here the differences between the versions come clearly into view:

> Another example is Psalm 40:7: אָזְנַיִם כָּרִיתָ לִי, "ears you dug for me" ... But the LXX has: σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι, "a body you fitted or prepared for me." In place of אוזְנַיִם they read עָצָם, which in some cases signifies

[35] On Glassius, see Stephen G. Burnett, "Lutheran Christian Hebraism in the Time of Solomon Glassius (1593-1656)," in *Hebraistik – Hermeneutik – Homiletik: Die "Philologia Sacra" im frühneuzeitlichen Bibelstudium*, eds. C. Bultmann and L. Danneberg, Historia Hermeneutica Series Studia 10, De Gruyter, Berlin 2011, 441-467; and Armin Wenz, *Philologia Sacra und Auslegung der Heiligen Schrift: Studien zum Werk des lutherischen Barocktheologen Salomon Glassius (1593–1656)*, Historia Hermeneutica Series Studia 20, De Gruyter, Berlin 2020, 1-44.

[36] I will cite the following edition: Solomon Glassius, *Philologia Sacra* (5 bks.) with *Logica Sacra*, eds. J. G. Olearius and J. F. Buddeus, J. F. Gleditschius, Leipzig 1743 (originally: Jena 1623-1636).

[37] *Aures fodisti mihi, hoc est, in servum fidelem me tibi ascivisti: Significatur perfectissima servitus ac obedientia, Patri a Filio incarnato praestita: desumta metaphora a ritu externo in Judaeorum populo, ubi servo auris perforabatur, si nolebat is liber fieri anno septimo, Exod. XXI, 7. Deut. XV, 17. Messias autem d. l. in duali, de auribus suis loquitur, ad eminentiam spiritualis suae servitutis & obedientiae notandam. Confer Esa. L, 4.5. Simul tamen ad assumendum humanum corpus, facta aurium mentione, alluditur. Unde Hebr. X, 5. phrasis Davidica ita exponitur: corpus aptasti mihi. Syr. Corpus induisti mihi*. Glassius, *Philologia Sacra* 5.1.7, 1539–1540.

> the body (or, as others suggest, through the "ears" the body is understood by synecdoche), and it is likely that the word כָּרָה took on an alternative meaning, by which it indicates "preparing." This is the precise version cited by the Apostle in Hebrews 10:5. This reading can be interpreted in two ways: First, it could refer to the human body of Christ, as the Syriac elegantly translates: פגרא דין אלבשתני, "And you clothed me with a body." This version best agrees with the Hebrew source: "Because you prepared a body for me, therefore you also made me an obedient servant (which is symbolically represented by the digging of the ears), so that I may offer to you this same body as a sacrifice for the sins of the human race." Second, one could interpret the word "body" in contrast to "types" and "shadows." [Col 2:9, 17 are cited].[38]

In the first passage (*Philologia Sacra* 5.1.7), Glassius is focused on the metaphorical use of the "ear," so he does not elaborate on the different versions. Because the speaker is understood to be Jesus, who is considered divine, the speaker's reference to his own ear falls within the sphere of anthropomorphic depictions of God. The explanations offered are mostly familiar. Language derived from the Hebrew text ("digging" and "ear") is taken to signify perfect obedience, which originates from the slave's commitment to his master in Exodus 21:7 (cf. Deut 15:17) but is also appropriate for the relationship of the divine Son to God the Father. Isaiah 50:4-5 is cited to show the opening and awakening of the ears to obedience in the life of God's Servant (i.e., Jesus). The mere fact that this figure – understood to be divine – possesses an ear shows that he must have a human body. This, in turn, justifies the use of the word "body" in Hebrews 10:5, the sense of which is clarified by the Syriac version.[39] Glassius' appeal to the Syriac represents the broadening scholarly engagement with Semitic languages of the seventeenth century.

Because the second passage (*Philologia Sacra* 5.2.7) deals with the rhetorical function of the Psalm's quotation in the book of Hebrews, the specific wording as it appears in the various versions comes to the fore. Glassius begins by quoting the Hebrew text, and he follows this with the Septuagint according to the major Greek codices (with σῶμα, "body" instead of ὠτία, "ears"). Here he offers two explanations for the word "body" in the Septuagint. First, he proposes that the Seventy translators read the word עֶצֶם ("bone") instead of אוזנים ("ears"), presumably because he believes the words are close enough in sound and possibly appearance that they could easily be confused, and because עֶצֶם can sometimes refer to the human body – although typically as a corpse (e.g., Ezek 6:5).[40] Bellarmine had suggested that the ancient Hebrew text translated by the Seventy had some expression that meant "body," but he did not propose a specific word. Glassius does just that. His second explanation for the Septuagint's "body" was also found in Bellarmine, namely, that the "body" is figuratively indicated by the "ears" as the whole can be signified by the part. Glassius reports this suggestion and supplies the proper rhetorical term, *synecdoche*. Regarding the Hebrew כָּרָה ("dig, hollow out"), Glassius construes the word as

[38] *Aliud exemplum est Psalm XL, 7.* אָזְנַיִם כָּרִיתָ לִי *aures fodisti mihi … At LXX habent:* σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι, *corpus autem compegisti vel aptasti mihi. Pro* אָזְנַיִם *legisse eos* עֶצֶם *quae corpus quandoque significat (vel etiam, ut alii conjiciunt, per aures synecdochice corpus intellexisse), & verbum* כָּרָה *alia significatione, qua parare notat, sumsisse, probabile est. Hanc versionem, exacte tenet Apostolus Hebr. X, 5. Duobus autem modis & haec lectio explicari potest. Uno, ut corpus Christi humanum intelligatur, unde Syrus eleganter vertit:* פגרא דין אלבשתני *corpore vero induisti me: atque ita optime convenit versio cum Hebraeo fonte: Quia corpus mihi aptasti, ideo etiam obsequentem servum me fecisti (quod aurium fossione symbolice notatur) ut idem illud corpus pro peccatis humani generis in sacrificium tibi offerrem. Altero, ut corpus, figurae & umbris oppositum, intelligatur*. Glassius, *Philologia Sacra* 5.2.7, 2067–2068.

[39] The Syriac version of Hebrews 10:5: *pgr' dyn 'lbštny*, which Glassius gives in Hebrew characters.

[40] See Koehler and Baumgartner (eds.), *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 2:869. Cf. Ps 42:11 (Heb).

flexible enough in meaning to account for the translation into Greek. In this case, however, he does not go into detail.

Having justified to his own satisfaction the validity of the quotation in Hebrews 10:5, he offers two explanations for the intended meaning in its New Testament context. First, the "body" could refer to the human body of the incarnate Christ, as expressed "elegantly" in the Syriac version, and as illuminated by the law of the obedient servant described in Exodus 21:7. This is the same explanation given earlier in book five (*Philologia Sacra* 5.1.7). Otherwise, the "body" (in the sense of "reality") of Christ could stand in opposition to Old Testament "shadows" or "types." In support of this view, Glassius quotes Colossians 2:9, 17, which mentions the fullness of deity dwelling "bodily" in Christ, and which contrasts the "body" of Christ with the "shadows" (e.g., food regulations, festival days, sabbaths) of things to come (cf. Heb 10:1). Respectful of each textual tradition, but not committed to any one in particular, Glassius has accomplished his goal when he has explained both the Psalm text and the Hebrews quotation so that each one makes sense on its own, but they also agree in essence with one another.

Conclusion

Given that neither Jerome nor Nicholas of Lyra has much to say about Psalm 39:7-9 (Heb 4:7-9) with reference to its citation in Hebrews 10:5-7, significant treatments of this issue do not appear until the Renaissance. Bucer belonged to the first wave of Protestant Hebraists, Bellarmine was a leading Catholic scholar of the following generation, and Glassius was an Orthodox Lutheran Hebraist of the generation after this. To some extent, each figure built on what came before, so direct comparison at the philological level is not fair. But each one brought a distinctive ideological lens to his practice of textual criticism, and significant observations can be made about the practice of each.

Martin Bucer, with his Protestant "back to the sources" mentality, placed primary emphasis on the preserved Hebrew text – which he took to be equivalent to the original text of the Psalm. His critical inclination is shown in his willingness to prioritize the Hebrew over all Greek and Latin versions. He is unwilling to reject the reading found in the book of Hebrews, but he is content to show merely that it is not wrong. It must be justified, however, on the basis of the right text, namely, the Hebrew. A weakness in his critical acumen is his absolute confidence that the medieval Hebrew text in every case represents the original. Of course, the Masoretic Text is an excellent witness to the earliest recoverable version of the Psalm, and the commentaries of Rashi and Kimhi provide much well–informed information about the text's meaning. But Bucer's strict adherence to this tradition is too simplistic. He did not even consider the possibility that the Vulgate – following the Old Latin which followed the Old Greek – might preserve an early Hebrew variant.

Robert Bellarmine, for his part, begins by making clear his commitments to the various textual witnesses based on the authorities that stand behind them. As a leading Catholic apologist, he strongly affirms the authenticity of the Vulgate. This encourages his belief in the overall fidelity of the preserved (Masoretic) Hebrew text, which the Vulgate often transmits. But the Vulgate also sometimes reflects the Greek, and this fact, together with the support of the Greek Fathers, means that he is reticent to reject well-attested Greek readings. Moreover, he is fully convinced

of the correctness of the New Testament quotation of the Psalm. These commitments function as parameters within which his critical faculties must operate, and in this sense they restrict what conclusions he can reach. Still, the fact that he is beholden to so many authorities forces him to take each of the texts seriously and creates space for him to make certain critical judgments, provided that he can explain through paraphrase, rhetoric, or lexicography how all the witnesses relate to one another in accordance with their relative statuses. As a result, as any reading of his *Explanatio in Psalmos* will show, his commentary includes many examples of critical insight, in that he offers informed assessments of which textual form has priority at the literal (rather than figurative or exegetical) level and how one reading might have arisen from another. All of this, of course, operates within the boundaries of his ideological commitments.

The Hebrew scholarship of Solomon Glassius draws on his predecessors but adapts and expands on their insights for his particular environment. Unlike Bucer, Glassius takes a Latin text, not the Hebrew text, as his starting point. But unlike Bellarmine, he starts from Jerome's Hebrew-based (iuxta Hebraeos = IH) Psalter, not the Vulgate. Whereas Bellarmine rejected the meaning "you dug" (the IH rendering) as the sense of the verb, Glassius accepts it, interpreting it through the lens of the perforation of the servant's ear (Exod 21:7), which was simply reported by Bucer and was rejected by Calvin. This shows Glassius charting his own path exegetically. In terms of added insights, he gives the name of the rhetorical figure (synecdoche) to which Bellarmine referred, and he supplies a Hebrew word (עָצָם) that might have been the basis for the reading "body," whereas Bellarmine had merely suggested the possibility. Significantly, Glassius places particular weight on the testimony of the New Testament. Thus, he follows Bellarmine in saying that כרה can mean "prepare," but he does not feel the need to justify this with a parallel (as Bellarmine did with 2 Kgs 6:23); the fact that this meaning agrees with the citation in Hebrews 10:5 seems to be enough. In contrast to Bucer, there are no references to rabbinic commentaries; for Glassius, the preferred "Semitic" tool for interpreting the text is the Christian Syriac version (specifically the Syriac rendering of Hebrews 10:5). In addition, the theological meanings proposed by Glassius, namely, the incarnation (assuming a human "body") and the "body" of Christ as opposed to Old Testament "shadows" (Col 2:17) arise out of the New Testament. To the extent that there was a Lutheran tradition of Christian Hebraism that leaned in the direction of the New Testament and away from rabbinic commentaries, Glassius appears to represent that tradition.[41]

Vulgate Psalm 39:7-9 (Heb 40:7-9) gave each of these scholars, Bucer, Bellarmine, and Glassius ample opportunity to exercise their critical faculties in untangling the web of textual witnesses involved. Although it took many centuries before the various texts were available to scholars with competence to read them, both the Hebrew and Greek textual traditions were kept in view, even if remotely, by the Latin Bible – through the Vulgate, the IH Psalter, and the quotation in Hebrews 10:5. By the time humanistic scholarship and the printing press provided broader access to more sources, such as the Greek Bible, patristic quotations, the Masoretic Text, and rabbinic commentaries, scholars in the Latin world were ready to engage the issues. Each of the figures

[41] Cf. the contrast between Sebastian Münster as part of the "Upper Rhineland" approach to Christian Hebraism and the approach of Wittenberg scholar Johannes Forster, as argued by Jerome Friedman, *The Most Ancient Testimony: Sixteenth-Century Christian-Hebraica in the Age of Renaissance Nostalgia*. Ohio University Press, Athens, OH 1983, 165–176.

discussed in this paper brought special skills to their work and made important contributions to the text-critical study of the Bible. If one quality is lacking in all of them, of course, it is the ideal measure of even-handedness. A. E Housman identified a number of barriers that can prevent a would-be critic from discovering the truth. These include stupidity, vanity, and sectarianism.[42] It would be inaccurate to call any of these men stupid, and their respective levels of vanity are impossible to know, but each one clearly suffers from a theological sectarianism that is contextually understandable but critically unhelpful. Among them as a group, most of the tools of text-critical analysis are on display, but their final conclusions lack soundness because they make historical judgments about the transmission of the sacred text based on theological commitments. Consequently, the period from Bucer to Glassius represents an important era in the development of biblical textual criticism, but not its full maturity.

[42] See A. E. Housman, "The Application of Thought to Textual Criticism," *Proceedings of the Classical Association* 18 (1921) 71.