**Theological Alterations in the Text of Samuel and the Making of a Critical Edition**

While in its classic definition, textual criticism is “the science of discovering error in texts and the art of removing it” (Housman), variations in biblical texts are not necessarily due to error. In the process of transmission of biblical texts scribes also (intentionally or unintentionally) rewrote, revised and changed the text they copied due to various theological, ideological and literary reasons. The HBCE edition may follow the classic definition of textual criticism in its aim to approximate the latest common ancestor of all the extant manuscripts, that is the “earliest inferable text.” However, this edition may serve also as an improved tool (in comparison to earlier diplomatic editions) for learning the different phases of the textual transmission. By using an ecletic text, extensive text-critical commentary, and in some cases a two-column format, this project can enable a better representation of the textual evidence in order to extract from it all possible data concerning history of the texts and their tenets. In this paper I would relate to these issues by analyzing several neglected theological alterations in the text of Samuel. After formulating guidelines concerning their representation in a text-critical edition, I will discuss the importance of these theological alterations for the understanding of the development of ancient Israelite religion.