Textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible has undergone many changes in this century. The present survey focuses on the second half of the century, not only because fifty years is an appropriate period for a survey, but also because in this case it is a natural point of division, the Qumran Scrolls being found exactly fifty years ago, in 1947. The following areas are singled out for discussion:

1. The age of specialization
2. Textual theories
3. Approach to the textual witnesses
4. The goals of textual criticism
5. New editions
6. The textual background of modern translations
7. New corpora of variants
8. Emendations
9. Textual and literary criticism
10. The decline of interest in the differences between the medieval masoretic manuscripts
11. Orthographic studies
12. Textual commentaries

1. The age of specialization

Textual criticism, when its remit is described theoretically, has always been conceived of as an auxiliary discipline. It has been described as lower criticism, that is, the one discipline which has to be practised first before one can tackle exegesis and subsequently issues in literary (higher) criticism. Many scholars do not accept this nomenclature, and in fact it is used less in recent scholarship. For one thing, it would not be correct to conceive of textual criticism as the only ancillary step leading up to exegesis, since linguistic analysis is equally preparatory to exegesis. However, it is possible that this discipline is not mentioned separately, as it may be conceived of as a part of exegesis itself. Be that as it may, all scholars conceive of textual criticism as an auxiliary discipline leading up to exegesis and literary analysis. This should be kept in mind, since
more and more, and certainly in the period under review, textual critics forget that the results of their analysis should be taken into consideration in other disciplines, mainly exegesis. Textual critics often stop at the imaginary border between textual criticism and exegesis. Growing specialization requires so many skills that one is often impeded from taking the next step.

The period under review has become, more than previous ones, the age of specialization. Presently there are few scholars who deal with all or most areas of textual criticism. For example, there are those who focus on the revisions of the LXX, as I did myself at an earlier stage. Indeed, a thorough investigation of these revisions improves our understanding of the nature of the Greek witnesses, and hence of their text-critical value for MT. However, specialization in these revisions should not be an aim in itself, even if future research has to base itself on such specialized studies. One should always try to integrate the results of these studies into the larger area of textual criticism or exegesis. The same pertains to all other sub-areas of LXX research, such as the study of the translation technique of the LXX. These studies should always have the next stage in mind, that of the reconstruction of the Vorlage of the LXX which, in turn, is a link in the chain of the praxis of textual criticism and exegesis. This applies also to the study of all the daughter versions of the LXX, to the Vulgate, the Peshitta, and the Syro-Hexapla. Some scholars, however, disagree with this point of view, as many scholars are interested only in ancient exegesis or in the development of the Greek or Aramaic language. Specialization is a necessary part of scholarship, but the interaction with other areas should always be maintained.

The specialization within textual criticism has been encouraged by the creation of international organizations, often under the patronage of the Society of Biblical Studies, such as the International Organisation for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS), the International Organisation for Targum Studies (IOTS), the International Organisation for Masoretic Studies (IOMS), and the International Organisation for Qumran Studies (IOQS). New Journals were created, such as an electronic journal for the study of textual criticism (TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism), Textus, Annual of the Hebrew University Bible Project, the Bulletin of the IOSCS (BIOCS), and its series of supplements, Dead Sea Discoveries (DSD), IOMS Monograph Series, etc. An advantage of