Chapter 1: The Rewritten Bible

In his seminal work *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies,* Geza Vermes introduced the term "rewritten Bible" into the discussion of Second Temple Jewish literature as part of a larger project to trace the development of haggadic traditions from the late Second Temple period into the rabbinic period. Vermes used the term rewritten Bible to describe a number of texts which closely follow portions of the biblical narrative but also augment, elide, and emend the text in ways which produced new literary works in their own right. According to Vermes, through this exegetical process, "the midrashist inserts haggadic development into the biblical narrative" in order to "anticipate questions, and to solve problems in advance."[1] Vermes traced these interpretive traditions historically and attempted to demonstrate an interpretive continuity between the Second Temple period and nascent Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity. Although the formal characteristics of these narratives differed from later midrash, rewritten Bible texts displayed the same kinds of "midrashic" tendencies. In Vermes's conception, therefore, the authors of rewritten Bible texts *implicitly* made use of interpretive

1. Geza Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies,* StPB 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1961), 95; See also idem, "The Genesis of the Concept of 'Rewritten Bible'," in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes,* ed. József Zsengellér, JSJsup 166 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 3–9.

traditions that later works such as the Talmud and Mishnah expressed *explicitly*.

Since the publication of *Scripture and Tradition,* Vermes's concept of rewritten Bible has taken on a life of its own and developed into its own discreet area of study as scholars from various related disciplines have reused, reinterpreted, and redefined the term.[2] The discussion of Rewritten Bible has become especially fruitful within the field of Qumran studies where new texts from the Second Temple period continued to be published throughout the late 20th century and where new material discoveries continue to this day. However, the idea of biblical rewriting has also been fruitfully applied to texts that have long been known to scholars such as Jubilees, Deuteronomy, Chronicles, and even the Synoptic Gospels.[3]

Although the scope and nuance of of the term rewritten Bible has shifted in the

2. See especially the early discussions in Philip S. Alexander, "Retelling the Old Testament," in *It is Written—Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars, SSF,* ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 99–121), George W. E. Nickelsburg, "The Bible Rewritten and Expanded," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus,* ed. Michael E. Stone (Assen: Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 89–156, and Daniel J. Harrington, "Palestinian Adaptations of Biblical Narratives and Prophecies I: The Bible Rewritten (Narratives)," in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters,* ed. Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg, BMI 2 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 239–47.

3. On reading the Gospels as Rewritten Bible, see Mogens Müller, "Luke — The Fourth Gospel? The 'Rewritten Bible' Concept as a Way to Understand the Nature of the Later Gospels," in *Voces Clamantium in Deserto: Essays in Honor of Kari Syreeni,* ed. Sven-Olav Back

intervening years, the trajectory set by Vermes nearly sixty years ago has remained reasonably consistent. By focusing on the relationships that exist between Rewritten Bible texts and their scriptural *Vorlagen*, studies on Rewritten Bible texts have tended to discuss the topic primarily through the lens of biblical or scriptural interpretation by focusing on how the authors or editors of Rewritten Bible texts retained, emended, or excised material *from the biblical text*. While these treatments are often very good, this preoccupation with the "biblical" text (or a particular "scriptural" text, using the more common terminology) I think has impeded the study of these texts as participants in a broader cultural discourse that extends beyond "biblical interpretation."

In this chapter I will trace the emergence and evolution of the concept of rewritten Bible from Vermes's use in *Scripture and Tradition* to the present focusing on three key questions and ideas which have shaped the scholarly discourse around rewritten Bible studies: 1) the terminology surrounding rewritten Bible, 2) what works should fall under the rubric of rewritten Bible and 3) whether rewritten Bible constitutes a literary genre, a process, or some combination of the two. Taking these questions into account, I will then offer my own suggestions on how the Rewritten Bible conversation can be augmented by the treatment of Rewritten Bible texts as participants in a broader cultural discourse through the lens of cultural and social memory studies.

---

and Matti Kankaanniemi, STÅA (Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 2012), 231–42; Gert J. Malan, "Is Rewritten Bible/Scripture the Solution to the Synoptic Problem?" *HTS* 70.1 (2014): 1–10, and more recently Garrick V. Allen, "Rewriting and the Gospels," *JSNT* 41 (2018): 58–69

1.1 SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

The primary purpose of *Scripture and Tradition* was not to offer a clear definition of the term "rewritten Bible," but to lay the groundwork for the historical, diachronic, study of aggadic traditions, of which rewritten Bible makes only a small part.[4] As Vermes recounts, prior to the mid-twentieth century, the prevailing approach to the study of aggadic exegesis was to treat the aggadah as originating during the Tannaitic period. The aggadah were viewed as "the result of the adoption, and anonymous repetition, of popular interpretations by favourite preachers,"[5] the earliest of which were from the second century CE and were represented by Targums Onkelos and Jonathan. Furthermore, studies of ancient Jewish literature at this time focused on texts which modern Judaism considered authentic. As a result, a good number of earlier texts—for example, the apocrypha, pseudepigrapha, and sectarian texts—were often categorically excluded from discussions of the origins of aggadic exegesis.[6]

A series of publications and discoveries beginning in the 1930's, however, began to undermine the notion that these early exegetical traditions began in the second century CE. Vermes credits this broadening of aggadic studies to a series of major studies and discoveries such as Rappaport's *Agada und Exegese bei Flavius Josephus*,[7] Paul Kahle's Schweich Lectures at

4. Vermes, "Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years," 3.

5. Idem, *Scripture and Tradition,* 3.

6. Ibid., 2.

7. Salomo Rappaport, *Agada und Exegese bei Flavius Josephus,* Veröffentlichungen der Oberrabbiner Dr. H.P. Chajes-Preisstiftung an der Israelitisch-theologischen Lehranstalt in

the British Academy on the Cairo Geniza (given in 1941, published 1947),[8] Kisch's new text edition of Ps. Philo's Liber antiquitatum biblicarum (1949),[9] the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (1948) and Codex Neofiti (1956), as well as (and perhaps especially) Renée Bloch's work on midrash.[10] The overarching theme among these works was the evidence for continuity between biblical interpretive traditions prior to the second century, and later aggadah. For example, Vermes notes that Rappaport's work on Jewish Antiquities identified substantial overlaps between Josephus's text and Rabbinic aggadah and suggested, therefore, that Josephus had drawn from an already living tradition of interpretation. The implication of his suggestion is that the aggadah of the second century were not novel exegetical works, but were themselves products of earlier exegetical traditions.

Building on these recent advancements, the explicitly stated purpose of *Scripture and*

Wien 3 (Vienna: Alexander Kohnt Memorial Foundation, 1930).

8. Paul Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza,* The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy, 1941 (London: Oxford University Press, 1947).

9. Guido Kisch, *Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum,* PMS 10 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1949).

10. Renée Bloch, "Écriture et tradition dans le Judaïsme: Aperçus sur l'origine du Midrash," *CaS,* 1954, 9–34; idem, "Methodological Note for the Study of Rabbinic Literature," in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism: Theory and Practice,* ed. William Scott Green, trans. William Scott Green, with William J. Sullivan, BJS 1 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978), 51–75; trans. of "Note méthodologique pour l'etude de la littérature rabbinique," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 43.2 (1955): 194–225; Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition,* 3–7.

Tradition was to push the field beyond synchronic analysis of aggadah toward diachronic, historical analyses to trace the development of these exegetical traditions.[11] The book is eight chapters long and is divided into four parts.

The first section of *Scripture and Tradition,* entitled "The Symbolism of Words," is composed of three chapters which attempt to explain some of the processes by which localized symbolic interpretations were able to affect the interpretation of other, nominally related texts. In the first chapter, Vermes notes the divergent treatment of Gen 44:18–19 among ancient commentators and proceeds through a synoptic study of this passage in the Fragmentary Targum, Targum Neofiti, and the Tosefta of Targum Yerushalmi in order to argue for a relative chronology based on their use of shared interpretive traditions. He concludes that the Fragmentary Targum represents the most primitive work, whose interpretive strategy is essentially inner-biblical. He then argues that the Tosefta of Targum Yerushalmi depends on the Fragmentary Targum but offers a distinct interpretive stance and that the Targum Neofiti represents a later combination of these two traditions. In his second chapter, Vermes examines the symbolic use of the term "Lebanon" in the Hebrew Bible and other Jewish literature as a reference to Jerusalem and the Temple and how those symbolic meanings came to be. He identifies the Song of Songs as the intermediary text which helped to establish this tradition within post-exilic Judaism and that it occupies a unique position as the only biblical text which clearly uses the name Lebanon symbolically for the Temple. Importantly, Vermes shows that the symbolic use of Lebanon to represent Jerusalem and the Temple is rooted in *biblical*

11. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition,* 1; See also Bloch, "Methodological Note," 51–75.

exegesis. This is a key idea for Vermes because it establishes a continuity between the production of the biblical text and its later interpretation. In chapter three, Vermes builds on his earlier work on the term "Lebanon" and examines other words which take on symbolic meaning in later Jewish texts: "lion," "Damascus," "*Meḥoqeq*," and "Man" and attempts to show that a similar process took place among the Dead Sea Scrolls texts and the targumic and midrashic materials.

It is in the second part of *Scripture and Tradition*—entitled "The Rewritten Bible"—that the topic of Rewritten Bible is first addressed directly. The section is composed of two chapters (four and five), both of which focus on the figure Abraham and the aggadic traditions surrounding his life. The purpose of these two chapters is to demonstrate a continuity of interpretive traditions from the late Second Temple period through to the early rabbinic period and beyond.

Vermes uses these two chapters to approach the topic from both ends of the chronological spectrum in what he refers to as "retrogressive" and "progressive" historical studies. In chapter four, Vermes embarks on what he calls a "retrogressive historical study" by which he means beginning with later, more developed traditions and working back toward their origins. In this case, Vermes begins with the 11th century CE text *Sefer ha-Yashar* and works backward to identify sections of the text which exhibit earlier traditions, most notably those in the Targums, Josephus, Jubilees, and (Ps.) Philo. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that even late texts can contain valuable information about earlier methods of exegesis. As Vermes puts it, "[Sefer ha-Yashar] manifests a direct continuity with the

corresponding tradition of the time of the second Temple, but reflects also the influence of the haggadah of the Tannaim and Amoraim."[12] On the other hand, in chapter five, Vermes proceeds with a "progressive historical study," beginning with the oldest materials and working forward. Still focusing on the figure Abraham, Vermes treats in detail the relationship between Gen 12:8–15:4 and cols. 19–22 of the Genesis Apocryphon. Notably, Vermes treats Genesis Apocryphon as "the most ancient midrash of all"[13] and, rather dramatically declares it to be the "lost link between the biblical and the Rabbinic midrash."[14] For Vermes, the Genesis Apocryphon occupies a unique position just one step removed from inner-biblical exegesis. Accordingly, Vermes believed that the author of the Genesis Apocryphon was attempting "to make the biblical story more attractive, more real, more edifying, and above all more intelligible" and to "[reconcile] unexplained or apparently conflicting statements in the biblical text in order to allay doubt and worry."[15] According to Vermes, the Genesis Apocryphon's interpretation of Genesis was "organically bound" to the text of Genesis and the additions that *were* made sprung from the interpretation of the Bible itself and not whole-sale from the mind of the author. Where texts like Jubilees sought to systematically advance a theological vision, according to Vermes, the author of Genesis Apocryphon intended to simply "explain the biblical text," calling it illustrative of "the unbiased rewriting of the Bible."[16]

12. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition,* 95.

13. Ibid., 124.

14. Ibid., 124.

15. Ibid., 126.

16. ibid., 126. I think this statement is demonstrably false, as I will argue in chapter three.

The third part of *Scripture and Tradition* is titled "Bible and Tradition" and is composed of a single chapter engaging in a lengthy analysis of the traditions surrounding the seer Balaam from Numbers 22–24. Vermes observes that while the majority of post-biblical texts treat Balaam as a villain, in *LAB* he is treated as a sort of tragic hero.[17] The more traditional portrayal of Balaam as a wicked prophet began within the nexus of biblical tradition itself. The various documentary strata of the Balaam story cast the prophet in differing lights, and it is the final stratum, the P layer, which got the final say—within the biblical text—about him. Vermes points out, however, that ignoring the Priestly additions yields a story somewhat similar to that of *LAB*. Thus, Vermes concludes that the exegetical traditions found in the later Targums and rabbinic works are simply the continuation of the exegetical strategies employed within the Bible itself, which he calls "biblical midrash or haggadah."[18]

The last two chapters make up the final section of Vermes's study, titled "Theology and Exegesis," and push the discussion to include early Christianity. Chapter seven is entitled "Circumcision and Exodus 4:24–26" but offers a subtitle of "Prelude to the Theology of Baptism," which gives some hint at the ultimate, if tacit, goal of the chapter. Discussing the

---

The Genesis Apocryphon utilizes traditions tangential to Genesis which are not themselves contained within the biblical work. In fairness to Vermes, the early columns of Genesis Apocryphon were not available to him when he published *Scripture and Tradition* and it is in the earlier columns where this reliance on extra-biblical material is most easily seen.

17. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition,* 173.

18. Ibid., 176.

topic of circumcision in Ex 4:24–26 and its treatment among the early exegetes, Vermes's primary observation is simply that the theology of circumcision and the exegetical traditions which surrounded it, were affected by historical forces and theological ideologies. For instance, he claims that Jubilees omitted the rather odd statement that God was going to kill Moses—who was saved by the circumcision of his son by Zipporah—because "[i]t was impossible for its author to accept that God tried to kill Moses as it was for him to believe that Moses neglected to circumcise his son on the eighth day after his birth."[19] Similarly, he notes that after the Bar Kokhba rebellion, the practice of circumcision was outlawed and so, "it is not surprising, therefore, to find the spiritual authorities of Palestinian Judaism emphasizing the greatness and necessity of this essential rite, and explaining away … every possible biblical excuse for delaying the circumcision of their children."[20] He ends the chapter by suggesting that the early Christian association of baptism with circumcision (citing Rom 4:3–4 and Col 2:11–12) was enabled by the traditional Jewish association of circumcision with blood sacrifice ("the Blood of the Covenant").[21] That Paul (to whom he attributes both Romans and Colossians)

> associated baptism with circumcision therefore, was "not due, therefore, to his own insight, but springs directly from the contemporary Jewish doctrine of circumcision which he adopted and adapted."[22]

Vermes makes a similar move in chapter eight, entitled "Redemption and Genesis XXII:

19. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition,* 185.

20. Ibid., 189.

21. Ibid., 190.

22. Ibid., 191.

The Binding of Isaac and the Sacrifice of Jesus." In it, he compares a number of ancient works' treatment of the Akedah and demonstrates how the (near-)sacrifice of Isaac became a prototype for the entire sacrificial system in later Judaism. The sacrifice of animals in the Temple functioned as a "reminder" to God of the faithfulness of Abraham. Furthermore, he shows the ways the tradition grew to focus on the willingness of Isaac to be sacrificed and his function as a proto-martyr. Thus, he ends the chapter by addressing the New Testament's portrayal of Jesus as a willing sacrifice to God and its putative relationship to the Akedah. Vermes makes the case that the redemptive theology of the NT—typically attributed to Paul—was not original to him. He writes:

> For although [Paul] is undoubtedly the greatest theologian of the Redemption, he worked with inherited materials and among these was, by his own confession, the tradition that "Christ dies for us according to the Scriptures."[23]

He then proceeds to push the origin of this theology back further into the first century CE, and, in rather dramatic fashion, suggests that the introduction of the Akedah motif into Christian theology—by means of the Suffering Servant—may have been by Jesus himself.[24]

Vermes concludes the chapter by discussing the Akedah and the Eucharist. Just as the whole sacrificial system pointed back toward the binding of Isaac in targumic exegesis, the eucharistic rite likewise was intended—according to Vermes—to point back to Jesus's redemptive sacrifice. Thus he concludes:

---

23. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition,* 221.

24. Ibid., 223.

> Although it would be inexact to hold that the Eucharistic doctrine of the New Testament, together with the whole Christian doctrine of Redemption, is nothing but a Christian version of the Jewish Akedah theology, it is nevertheless true that in the formation of this doctrine the targumic representation of the Binding of Isaac has played an essential role.
>
> Indeed, without the help of Jewish exegesis it is impossible to perceive any Christian teaching in its true perspective.[25]

The arc of Vermes's study, therefore, is meant to establish a continuity between the earliest traditions of biblical interpretation with the later traditions of both Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity and to trace the evolution of those traditions historically. Rather than viewing the early rabbinic interpretations as *sui generis*, Vermes's larger purpose is to establish *continuity* between the earliest examples of biblical interpretation—even innerbiblical interpretation—and the exegetical work of the rabbis. Rewritten Bible texts, therefore represent an intermediary phase between innerbiblical interpretation and later explicit commentaries, all of which can be viewed on a single interpretive continuum.

1.1.1 Vermes's Use of Rewritten Bible

The fact that Vermes spent so little time explaining precisely what he meant by the term Rewritten Bible bears witness to the fact that Vermes thought the term was self-explanatory. Vermes makes this sentiment clear in his short retrospective on the origins of the term,

25. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition,* 227.

expressing shock over the debate that his term prompted and the scholarly confusion surrounding it.[26] He writes:

> The notion [of Rewritten Bible], which over fifty years ago I thought was quite clear, seemed to the majority of the more recent practitioners nebulous and confused, and lacked methodological precision.[27]

Only a few scholars, according to Vermes, managed to remain true to his original vision.[28] Instead, many subsequent studies, according to Vermes, "moved the goalposts" to better "suit the interest of their inquiry."[29]

Yet, one cannot help but push back against Vermes here as scholars' desire to narrow the scope of the term is, I think, a reasonable impulse. After all, Vermes's use of Rewritten Bible covers texts written in several languages, across centuries, in no particular geographical region,

26. The only other works that Vermes addresses the topic of Rewritten Bible (to my knowledge) is in Geza Vermes, "Bible Interpretation at Qumran," in "Yigael Yadin Memorial Volume," *ErIsr* 20 (1989): 184–91 and his contributions to Emil Schürer's multi-volume history, Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ: 175 BC – AD 135,* ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986).

27. Vermes, "Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years," 3.

28. He specifically references Alexander, "It is Written," 99–121 and Moshe J. Bernstein, "Rewritten Bible: A Generic Category Which Has Outlived its Usefulness?" *Text* 22 (2005): 169–96.

29. Vermes, "Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years," 4.

and, while all the texts are "narratives," the formal similarities between Genesis Apocryphon, Jewish Antiquities, Jubilees, and the Palestinian Targums stop there. Vermes specifically laments the narrowing of the term Rewritten Bible to focus primarily on the Dead Sea Scrolls texts. Of course, when *Scripture and Tradition* was first published in 1961 (Vermes notes that the manuscript, in fact, was submitted for publication in 1959), only a small portion of the scrolls were published or accessible to more than a few specific scholars. But the field's subsequent preoccupation with the Qumran material, he suggests, is misguided.[30]

This sentiment is—it seems to me—a bit over-blown. On the one hand, Genesis Apocryphon and the Temple Scroll receive a lot of scholarly attention, but Jubilees and Jewish Antiquities do as well. Even so, whatever narrowing of the discussion of Rewritten Bible has ocurred toward the Qumran scrolls is likely symptomatic of the "methodological [im]precision" attributed to *Scripture and Tradition* and the fact that Vermes did not clearly state what he

30. I am sympathetic to what Vermes perceived as "moving the goalposts"—I think the context and purpose of how he used the term Rewritten Bible is often ignored—but it is worth pointing out that the reason the term Rewritten Bible is so often applied to the Qumran texts likely has less to do with a conscious, scholarly effort, and more to do with the fragmentation of the various fields that deal with the texts in question. A scholar with a background primarily focused on the New Testament or Hebrew Bible may not be as familiar with the texts and traditions of rabbinic Judaism that Vermes discusses in *Scripture and Tradition.* Perhaps ironically, it was this sort of fragmentation that *Scripture and Tradition* was written—at least in part—to overcome.

meant when he used the term rewritten Bible. For example, Vermes's inclusion of the medieval Sefer ha-Yashar muddies the waters for those who wish to discuss Rewritten Bible as a process of scriptural interpretation which can be situated historically. On the other hand, his inclusion of the Palestinian Targums makes sense diachronically, but formally, the Targums are translations and not "new compositions" in the same sense that Jubilees or Genesis Apocryphon are. Within *Scripture and Tradition,* of course, Vermes treats these texts with due care and nuance—in the case of Sefer ha-Yashar, he endeavors to show that traditions preserved in the text can be traced back to the Second Temple period—but the fact that Vermes sought to situate haggadic developments diachronically while implementing a category that spanned such broad socio-religious (Qumran, Early Christian, Rabbinic, Medieval), chronological (1st – 12th centuries CE), and literary (translations, narrative, revelatory/apocalyptic, history?) horizons has given some scholars a reasonable challenge when attempting to use the term in their own work. Thus, simply because Vermes set the "goalposts" (to suit his *own* thesis, I might add), does not mean that others cannot or should not move them when appropriate, though hopefully along with a well-reasoned explanation for the change.

1.2 REWRITTEN BIBLE AND REWRITTEN SCRIPTURE

Since Vermes coined the term Rewritten Bible, a number of scholars have suggested that the term be modified to more accurately reflect the (now, well established) fact that there was no "Bible" in the late Second Temple period and that many of the works that would eventually make up the Hebrew Bible did not have stable textual witnesses that could be meaningfully

"rewritten." Because of these difficulties, scholars have, in recent years, suggested alternate designations for the phenomenon under investigation, the most widely used of which is "rewritten *scripture*." Vermes's original term Rewritten Bible was a product of its time. It took for granted the existence of a canonical "Bible" that more-or-less resembled the Bible used by the rabbis in the early centuries CE and term rewritten scripture was intended to correct what scholars perceived as an anachronistic reference to this canon of scripture during the late Second Temple period.[31]

Apart from the anachronistic reference to a "Bible," one of the primary objections to the use of the term Rewritten Bible is the implicit assertion that Rewritten Bible texts necessarily fall outside the Bible.[32] The notion that a rewritten biblical text by definition, could not be considered "Bible" itself runs contrary to, on the one hand, texts such as Chronicles and Deuteronomy which—for all intents and purposes—"rewrite" their biblical *Vorlagen* but are

31. Jonathan G. Campbell, "Rewritten Bible: A Terminological Reassessment," in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes,* ed. József Zsengellér, JSJsup 166 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 49–81. See also Eugene Ulrich, "The Notion and Definition of Canon," in *The Canon Debate,* ed. Lee M. McDonald and James A. Sanders (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 21–35 and idem, "Crossing the Borders from 'Pre-Scripture' to Scripture (Rewritten) to 'Rewritten Scripture'," in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes,* ed. József Zsengellér, JSJsup 166 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 83–104.

32. Campbell, "Rewritten Bible," 61.

themselves a part of "the Bible" and on the other hand texts such as Jubilees and the Temple Scroll which likely were considered "scripture" among certain groups in antiquity and, in the case of Jubilees, continues to be in use by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.[33]

Yet, I am not at all convinced that substituting the term "scripture" for "Bible" meaningfully affects the way that scholars have continued to discuss the topic at hand. While I agree that "the Bible" as we know it from the early centuries CE did not exist during the late Second Temple period, I likewise find the strict reading of "Bible" to mean "the Hebrew Bible (as we know it)" unnecessarily rigid. To say that Jubilees was a part of the Qumran

33. Although it is not quite accurate to refer to a "canon" of scripture in the same way that the Western Churches refer to it, the point stands that the books of Enoch and Jubilees were preserved by and remain in use for the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. See Leslie Baynes, "Enoch and Jubilees in the Canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church," in *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam,* vol. 2 of *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam,* ed. Eric F. Mason et al., 2 vols., STDJ 153 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 799–818, Bruk A. Asale, "Mapping the Reception, Transmission, and Translation of Scriptural Writings in the EOTC: How and Why Some "Pseudepigraphical" Works Receive 'Canonical' Status in the Ethiopian Bible," *JS* 22.2 (2013): 358–75 and Roger W. Cowley, "The Biblical Canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Today," *OS* 23.4 (1974): 318–23. On the topic of the relative closed-ness of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church's canon, See Bruk A. Asale, "The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Canon of the Scriptures: Neither Open nor Closed," *BT* 67.2 (2016): 202–22.

Community's "Bible" does not carry a vastly different nuance, it seems to me, than to say that the Qumran Community considered Jubilees to be "scripture." Insofar as a particular group—given a set of texts—can determine which it considers to be "scripture" it has, at least in common parlance, a "Bible." That said, I can appreciate the desire to fine-tune our terminology to reflect the scholarly discourse.

It could, however, be argued that the term "scripture" is no more ancient a term than "Bible." Scholars such as James VanderKam have done important work in trying to discern which texts may have been considered "authoritative scripture" at Qumran,[34] but the fact remains that such endeavors start with the assumption that the ancients utilized a notion at all similar to what we consider "textual authority." While there is good reason to believe that some texts were more important than others during the Second Temple period (e.g., the Pentateuch, Isaiah, et al.), the degree to which they considered them "scripture" is not at all clear. Thus, replacing the term Rewritten Bible with Rewritten Scripture, it seems to me, may very well shift the semantic burden from a well defined modern category of text to an ill-defined ancient category.

For the sake of simplicity, I will follow Vermes in this study and simply use the term "Rewritten Bible." In doing so, I realize that I am deviating from what has become the common scholarly terminology. Yet, I find some comfort in Vermes's own take on the matter, who writes, "Frankly, replacing 'Bible' by 'Scripture' strikes me as a mere quibble…I suggest

34. James C. VanderKam, "Authoritative Literature in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 5.3 (1998): 382–402.

therefore that we stick with the 'Rewritten *Bible*' and let the music of the argument begin."[35]

1.3 REWRITTEN BIBLE: A GENRE, PROCESS, OR SOMETHING ELSE?

One of the central issues with the term Rewritten Bible is whether it should be treated as a "genre" or as a "process" or "activity." Vermes, is not particularly helpful in clarifying the issue:

> The question has been raised whether the "Rewritten Bible" corresponds to a process or a genre? In my view, it verifies both. The person who combined the biblical text with its interpretation was engaged in a process, but when his activity was completed, it resulted in a literary genre.[36]

Within Vermes's schema of aggadic development, Rewritten Bible occupied a liminal space outside the genres of classical Jewish texts such as Targum and Midrash. Because these texts eluded categorization within established text categories, Vermes's treatment of Rewritten Bible as a discrete group was not unreasonable. A number of scholars have since upheld the categorical approach and argued for Rewritten Bible as a literary *genre*.

The parade example of this perspective is Philip Alexander's 1988 article "Retelling the Old Testament," which, although dated, remains the most widely cited exemplar of the "genre" perspective.[37] Alexander takes up four rewritten Bible texts (Jubilees, Genesis Apocryphon,

35. Vermes, "Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years," 3–9 (original emphasis).

36. Ibid., 8.

37. Alexander, "It is Written," 99–121; Vermes himself even put his stamp of approval on it, see Vermes, "Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years," 4.

Liber antiquitatum biblicarum, and Jewish Antiquities) to determine whether there exists a set of concrete criteria by which scholars can admit or exclude texts from the category. Although I ultimately disagree with his conclusion that Rewritten Bible should be treated as a literary genre, his list of nine "principle characteristics" make a number of useful observations about the nature of Rewritten Bible texts generally and are summarized as follows:

1. Rewritten Bible texts are *narratives* which follow the order of the biblical text.

2. Rewritten Bible texts are "free standing" literary works that take on the same form as the text they rewrite. They do not comment explicitly on their *Vorlagen*, but weave interpretation into their seamless retelling.

3. Rewritten Bible texts are not meant to replace the biblical work.

4. Rewritten Bible texts cover a large portion of the biblical narrative and exhibit a "centripetal" relationship to the biblical text.

5. Rewritten Bible texts follow the biblical text's narrative ordering, but may omit certain, non-essential elements.

6. Rewritten Bible texts offer an interpretive reading of scripture which offer, quoting Vermes, "a fuller, smoother and doctrinally more advanced form of the sacred narrative"[38] and implicitly comment on the biblical text.

38. Citing Vermes in Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People,* 305.

7. Rewritten Bible texts are limited by their literary form which only allows a single interpretation of the biblical text that they rewrite.

8. Rewritten Bible texts are limited by their literary form which does not allow them to explain their exegetical rationale.

9. Rewritten Bible texts incorporate traditions and material not derived from the biblical text.

Despite Alexander's emphatic conclusion affirming the genre of Rewritten Bible, I find a number of these criteria to be unconvincing.

First, his criterion that the text be a *narrative* strikes me as arbitrary. While Vermes focused on Rewritten Bible as a narrative phenomenon, he has since noted that the reason for this was that his focus was on *aggadic* material, that is, non-halakhic interpretation, which by definition is non-legal. Coupled with the first half of his second observation—that Rewritten Bible texts take on the same form as the text they rewrite—these observations seem self-fulfilling and suffering from a sort of selection bias.[39] Alexander states that the author was "limited" by the genre of narrative to a single interpretation and could not provide his exegetical rationale illustrates the major, overarching assumption about Alexander's (and

39. Although, all of the texts he surveyed are narratives, this fact illustrates one of the major shortcomings in Alexander's method, specifically, that his conclusions were based on four texts "normally included in the genre."(Alexander, "It is Written," 99) Therefore the selection of these four texts was the result of a deductive selection, in part, based on their narrative form.

Vermes's) approach to these texts—that the essential function of the texts and the purposes of their authors are the same as the later exegetes.

Second, several of his criteria are comments about the intention of the author or purpose of the work, for example that the Rewritten Bible text was not "meant" to replace its *Vorlage*. Although I believe this to be fundamental to the discussion, as formal characteristics of a genre, Alexander does not address how one is to determine such purposes and intentions. In particular when discussing texts—as Vermes does—such as the Palestinian Targums, or (now) the so-called Reworked Pentateuch (4QReworkedPent)[40] Similarly, claiming that Rewritten Bible texts "implicitly comment" on their *Vorlagen* speaks to the *intention* of the author, which in the edge cases is not clearly demonstrable. Such claims overstep the issue of genre and have entered into speculation about the text's social function. Thus while Alexander does offer some concrete formal characteristics for Rewritten Bible, a number of his criteria are actually issues of textual *function*.

Alexander insists that "Any text admitted to the genre must display *all* the characteristics."[41] This principle seems needlessly rigid to me. Although these characteristics were inductively identified, Alexander offers no formal rationale for selecting his sample. The texts that he selects represent the *core* of what is generally accepted to be Rewritten Bible, but texts on the periphery of a genre by definition will not display *every* characteristic of the core

40. In fairness, 4QReworkedPent was not available to Alexander or Vermes. Yet, one still may wonder why the LXX or Samaritan Pentateuch are not included.

41. Alexander, "It is Written," 99–121 (119 n. 11).

texts. Thus, Alexander's criteria, from my perspective, should not be treated as prerequisites for inclusion to the category of Rewritten Bible (if we are to treat it as such), instead, they should be used to describe a sort of literary *Idealtypus* for Rewritten Bible.

Moshe Bernstein, too, has upheld a Vermesian understanding of Rewritten Bible as a literary category and has argued that for the category to be useful to scholars, the boundaries must be clearly demarcated and reasonably narrow.[42] Notably, Bernstein never clearly articulates what it means for a category to be "useful." All the same, he writes that he set out to:

> examine the definition and descriptions of "rewritten Bible" proffered by Vermes and several subsequent scholars, in order to delineate the variety of ways in which the term is currently employed and to make some suggestions for how we might use it more clearly and definitively in the future.[43]

Bernstein begins by addressing the few small modifications that he makes to Vermes's list, namely that Bernstein does not understand the Targums to be examples of Rewritten Bible. He excludes Targums from his discussion "*ab initio*," as well as "biblical" books, (by which he seems to mean "Chronicles"), and includes legal texts such as the Temple Scroll. Despite this second exclusion, Bernstein acknowledges that "One group's rewritten Bible could very well be

42. Bernstein, "Rewritten Bible," 169–96.

43. Ibid., 171–72.

another's biblical text!"[44] Thus, Bernstein concedes that "matters of canon and audience may play a role," but does not address the topic further.

Bernstein critiques scholars such as Nicklesburg,[45] Harrington,[46] and Brooke[47] for excessively expanding the use of the term Rewritten Bible at its "upper bound" (my term) to the point that they have weakened the term and have "not aided in focusing scholarly attention on the unifying vs. divergent traits of some of these early interpretive works."[48] Likewise, Bernstein critiques Tov for including reworked texts (e.g., 4QReworkedPent) and therefore expanding the "lower bound" of the category. While Bernstein avers that "Rearrangement with the goal of interpretation is probably an earlier stage in the development of biblical 'commentary' than supplementation with the goal of interpretation,"[49] he nevertheless

44. Bernstein, "Rewritten Bible," 175. This seems particularly odd, since, an Ethiopian Christian may protest that Jubilees should be excluded as well.

45. Nickelsburg, "The Bible Rewritten," 89–156.

46. Harrington, "The Bible Rewritten (Narratives)," 239–47.

47. George Brooke, "Rewritten Bible," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls,* ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 777–81.

48. Bernstein, "Rewritten Bible," 179.

49. ibid., 183. I make special note of the fact that Bernstein places the term "commentary" in quotes to indicate that he is not saying that Rewritten Bible is formally "commentary." Yet, the overarching principle remains that Rewritten Bible is implicitly "commenting" on the biblical text. See also Fraade's work in this area: Steven D. Fraade, "Rewritten Bible and Rabbinic

distinguishes the former from the category Rewritten Bible and declares that "the definitions of 'rewritten Bible' furnished by Tov and Vermes are [not] even remotely compatible, and we need to choose between them simply for the purposes of clarity."[50] Bernstein, ultimately, argues that Vermes's category is worth keeping around, and admonishes the reader to maintain a narrow definition of the category, because, in his own words, "the more specific the implications of the term, the more valuable it is as a measuring device,"[51] and conversely that "the looser the definition, the less precisely it classifies those items under its rubric."[52]

At the other end of the spectrum, a number of important scholars have treated Rewritten Bible as a "process" or "activity" rather than as a genre or category. These scholars also have tended to be more "expansive" when it comes to which texts should be discussed as "rewritten." Harrington, as noted above, is the parade example of those who wish to treat Rewritten Bible as a process. He states:

> Nevertheless, establishing that these books are not appropriately described as

---

Midrash as Commentary," in *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash,* ed. Carol Bakhos, JSJsup 106 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 59–78 and Steven D. Fraade, "Between Rewritten Bible and Allegorical Commentary: Philo's Interpretation of the Burning Bush," in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes,* ed. József Zsengellér, JSJsup 166 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 221–32.

50. Bernstein, "Rewritten Bible," 185.

51. Ibid., 195.

52. Ibid., 195.

> targums or midrashim is not the same as proving that they all represent a distinctive literary genre called "rewritten Bible." In fact, it seems better to view rewriting the Bible as a kind of activity or process than to see it as a distinctive literary genre of Palestinian Judaism"[53]

Instead, he observes that while texts such as Jubilees and *Assumption of Moses* both constitute a rewriting of the Bible, both "are formally revelations of apocalypses."[54] This is an important criticism of scholars who see Rewritten Bible as a distinct genre. Unlike, for example, the Gospels, which arguably have the same basic "form," the texts typically described as "rewritten" come in a variety of "forms" such as narratives (Genesis Apocryphon), apocalypses (Jubilees), and legal (Temple Scroll). In other words, a single *genre*—insofar as the word describes a literary *form*—is not sufficient to subsume the varied *forms* which all can be described as "rewritten."[55] More recently, Molly Zahn has attempted to move the conversation

53. Harrington, "The Bible Rewritten (Narratives)," 242–43.

54. Ibid., 243.

55. Anders Petersen has, more recently, attempted to bridge this genre/process gap by arguing that Rewritten Bible makes sense as a genre from an *etic*, scholarly, perspective, whether or not (he thinks not) such a genre existed in antiquity (i.e., as an *emic* category). Such distinctions, are useful, and I am in broad agreement insofar as Petersen accepts a classical definition of genre (see below). Anders Klostergaard Petersen, "Rewritten Bible as a Borderline Phenomenon: Genre, Textual Strategy, or Canonical Anachronism?" In *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino Garcia Martinez*, ed. Anthony Hilhorst,

forward by interacting with modern genre theory—which is conspicuously absent from most discussions of "genre" and Rewritten Bible.[56] Zahn discusses the difficulty that Harrington addresses by noting that works may participate in multiple genres simultaneously. While older conceptions of genre "pigeonhole" texts to specific genres, modern genre theorists—she cites Fowler—now prefer to talk about texts "participating" in a genre. Citing Fowler, Zahn notes that "genres are less like pigeonholes and more like pigeons" and further augments the metaphor to suggest that genres are "more like flocks of pigeons." She writes:

> Just as a flock of pigeons might change shape, lose and add members, be absorbed into larger flocks of break apart into several smaller flocks, genres and their boundaries are not static.[57]

Zahn's contribution is nuanced and deserves to be taken seriously. The implication for

---

Émile Puech, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, JSJsup 122 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 285–306. Contra Petersen, see the recent work of Jozef Tiňo, "The Classification of Rewritten Scripture: A Plea for Retaining the Emic Perspective," *JSJ* 49.3 (2018): 330–49.

56. Molly M. Zahn, "Genre and Rewritten Scripture: A Reassessment," *JBL* 131.2 (2012): 271–88; Daniel Machiela noted the absence of genre theory in his 2010 article, as well, see Daniel A. Machiela, "Once More, with Feeling: Rewritten Scripture in Ancient Judaism—A Review of Recent Developments," *JJS* 61.2 (2010): 308–20; Notable exceptions include George Brooke, "Genre Theory, Rewritten Bible and Pesher," in "Rethinking Genre: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins," *DSD* 17.3 (2010): 332–57.

57. Zahn, "Genre and Rewritten Scripture," 277.

Rewritten Bible is clear: although Jubilees is a revelatory text while the Temple Scroll is a legal text, they can both participate in their respective "formal" genres simultaneously with the supposed Rewritten Bible genre. Zahn also explores the "functional" aspects of genre. She notes that genres are "not simply systems of classifications developed and used by literary critics, but are fundamental to all human communication."[58] Thus, genres manifest as common patterns recognized by both the author and the reader which aid communication and in this way; genre functions as a sort of "literary body language."[59] By way of a modern example, it is quite common in modern films for such generically-mixed works exist. Mel Brooke's films, for example, are well-known for a particular genre of goofball comedy/farce set against the backdrop fo some other well-known genre. Here I have in mind films such as *Young Frankenstein* (1974), *Blazing Saddles* (1974), *Spaceballs* (1987), and others, each of which participates in both a specific comedic genre as well as "Star Wars-esque," "Western," or "Classic Horror" genres, respectively. Even in these examples, however, there are formal characteristics in *both* genres which the audience can point to. Although the social function of farce is distinct from classical horror movies, the distinction between classical horror films and farces is not only defined by its social function.

58. Zahn, "Genre and Rewritten Scripture," 280.

59. ibid., 276. See also Carol Newsom, "Rhetorical Criticism and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods,* ed. Maxine L. Grossman (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 198–214 and Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Mode,* revised (2002), 37–53.

Yet, it is not at all clear to me what we have gained by upholding Rewritten Bible as a genre by simply changing what we mean by "genre," however well rooted in theory.[60] If by Zahn's definition of "genre" we no longer are talking about formal characteristics to Rewritten Bible, what we are ultimately left with is a particular kind of relationship (rewriting) matched to a particular kind of biblical *Vorlage*. Although this more sophisticated approach to genre is certainly superior, it seems to me that the kinds of questions that remain to be answered regarding the *purpose* of Rewritten Bible fall at the outer limits of generic discourse and may require a different set of analytical and theoretical tools.

1.4 DEFINING THE BOUNDARIES OF REWRITTEN BIBLE

Early adopters of the Vermes's taxonomy experimented with applying the term Rewritten Bible to a wide range of Second Temple Jewish literature. The discussion about which texts should fall under the rubric of Rewritten Bible has continued into the present and remains a point of scholarly contention. Insofar as "rewritten" texts can be measured by how closely they resemble their *Vorlagen*, defining the boundaries of Rewritten Bible focuses on which texts are *too far* from their *Vorlagen* to meaningfully be considered "rewritten," forming what I will refer to as the "upper bound" and texts which are *too close* to their *Vorlagen* to be considered distinct literary works, forming the "lower bound." At the upper bound, for example, the *Book of the Watchers* and the *Book of Giants* clearly are rooted in the biblical tradition, yet most scholars do

60. Machiela critiques Zahn's approach for similar reasons. See Machiela, "Once More, with Feeling," 308–20.

not consider them sufficiently dependent on the text of Genesis to be considered "rewritten." Although they take Genesis 6:1–4 as a point of departure, their narratives do not explicitly return to the biblical text in a concrete way. Conversely, at the lower bound, the Samaritan Pentateuch and the 4QReworkedPent, although they certainly modify their *Vorlagen* (and in that sense are "rewritten") are more often considered examples of alternate textual *editions* rather than rewritten works. Likewise, the Targums and LXX, as translations, are frequently excluded from discussions of Rewritten Bible at the lower bound because they were, presumably, meant to be perceived as the same literary work as their *Vorlagen*.

1.4.1 The Upper Bound

Vermes's use of the term Rewritten Bible grew out of the concrete examples of texts that exhibited the sorts of exegetical practices relevant to later aggadic traditions. As others adopted the term, however, the question of how to abstract the concept to something meaningful that could be applied to other texts was explored by a number of scholars.[61] These early applications of the term Rewritten Bible, like Vermes's use, did not tend to carry a technical nuance and instead focused on the ways that numerous texts reappropriated biblical stories, figures and

61. See especially Nickelsburg, "The Bible Rewritten," 89–156, Harrington, "The Bible Rewritten (Narratives)," 239–47, and more recent contributions such as Sidnie White Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), Daniel K. Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts: Strategies for Extending the Scriptures among the Dead Sea Scrolls,* CQS 8; LSTS 63 (London: T & T Clark, 2007).

themes in their own works.

In his 1984 article "The Bible Rewritten and Expanded," George Nickelsburg discusses a number of texts which are "very closely related to the biblical texts, expanding and paraphrasing them and implicitly commenting on them."[62] We should note that, although the article does deal with Rewritten Bible, it includes a discussion of texts which even Nickelsburg does not consider "rewritten" (as the title indicates) discussing texts which introduce wholly new material into the traditions of the Bible.[63]

Nickelsburg does, however, provide a list of texts which he loosely describes as examples of biblical rewriting: 1 Enoch, *Book of Giants*, Jubilees, Genesis Apocryphon, Jewish Antiquities, the Books of Adam and Eve (*Apocalypse of Moses*, *Life of Adam and Eve*), and some Hellenistic Jewish Poets including Philo's *On Jerusalem*, Theodotus's *On the Jews*, and the *Exagoge* by one "Ezekiel the Poet of Tragedies." Compared to Vermes's list, Nickelsburg's represents a maximalist understanding of the Rewritten Bible phenomenon. The inclusion, especially, of 1 Enoch illustrates his tendency to include works that build off of the biblical text (in this case, Genesis 6:1–4), but do not track with the biblical narrative for long stretches.

One of the more interesting contributions that Nickelsburg makes to the conversation is his idea that biblical rewriting followed a trajectory from rewriting smaller units of the Bible—involving short stories that deal with particular events from the biblical text—to longer, more systematic, treatments which span multiple biblical books. His treatment of 1 Enoch

62. Nickelsburg, "The Bible Rewritten," 89.

63. Ibid., 89–90.

(which is, at least in part, the earliest text that he deals with) is illustrative of this approach. Rather than dealing with 1 Enoch as a whole, Nickelsburg addresses the various rewritings of the flood narrative throughout 1 Enoch as well as in the Book of Giants (which is not formally a part of 1 Enoch, but has a clear connection to the work). Setting aside for the moment that 1 Enoch is a composite work, we can appreciate that the flood story from Gen 6–9 is retold and to varying degrees reinterpreted throughout 1 Enoch.[64]

Although Nickelsburg generally accepts that the rewritten texts "comment" on the Bible, he notes that the posture toward the biblical text is also not uniform even among the agreed upon Rewritten Bible texts. For example, while the author of Jubilees's concerns are largely halakhic and the book makes explicit reference to the biblical text, the authority assumed by the author of Jubilees does not (at least rhetorically) originate in the exposition of the Torah, but in the "immutable heavenly tablets."[65] Nickelsburg thus states:

> This process of transmitting and revising the biblical text reflects a remarkable view of Scripture and tradition. The pseudepigraphic ascription of the book to an angel of the presence and the attribution of laws to the heavenly tablets invest the author's interpretation of Scripture with absolute divine authority."[66]

In contrast, Genesis Apocryphon seems to have very little interest in halakhic matters

64. By my count, there are six retellings of the flood in 1 Enoch: 6–11; 54:7; 64–69; 83–84; 86–89; and 106–107.

65. Nickelsburg, "The Bible Rewritten," 100–1.

66. Ibid., 101.

and instead seems to just elaborate on the story by giving detailed geographic information and providing the reader with more dramatic characters.[67] Finally, he observes that Liber antiquitatum biblicarum likewise differs with Jubilees in its omission of halakhic matters and its "highly selective reproduction of the text."[68] This selectivity also differs from the Genesis Apocryphon, which otherwise is "characterized by the addition of lengthy non-biblical incidence."[69]

Ultimately, Nickelsburg differs from Vermes mainly in the way he views the Bible during the late Second Temple period. Although Nickelsburg observes that the preoccupation with certain texts suggests that they were held in high regard, he does not have the same interest in tying the exegetical practices of, for example, Jubilees, with earlier inner-biblical or later haggadic traditions. Because Nickelsburg treats Rewritten Bible as a process, he is able to highlight the fact that, for example, 1 Enoch does indeed "rewrite" certain pericopae from Genesis despite the fact that the whole book (which, we should note, is a composite text to begin with) does not maintain a "centripetal" relationship with the biblical narrative.

Daniel Harrington's 1986 contribution entitled "Palestinian Adaptations of Biblical Narratives and Prophecies I: The Bible Rewritten (Narratives)," adopts the term Rewritten Bible to talk about texts produced around the turn of the era by Palestinian Judaism that "take as their literary framework the flow of the biblical text itself and apparently have as their major

67. Nickelsburg, "The Bible Rewritten," 106.

68. Ibid., 110.

69. Ibid., 110.

purpose the clarification and actualization of the biblical story."[70] In this regard, he follows Vermes closely in how he imagines Rewritten Bible to function. Yet, compared to Vermes, he operates with a slightly expanded list of rewritten texts. In addition to Jubilees, Genesis Apocryphon, Ps. Philo's Liber antiquitatum biblicarum and Josephus's Jewish Antiquities, he also includes the *Assumption of Moses* and the Temple Scroll. Furthermore, he makes a point to suggest that a number of other texts may be able to be included in the list, including *Paralipomena of Jeremiah*, *Life of Adam and Eve/Apocalypse of Moses*, and *Ascension of Isaiah*. Harrington's major contribution is his explicit rejection of Rewritten Bible as a category or literary genre (more on this, below) in favor of a process-oriented approach. Because of this fact, Harrington takes a broad view of rewriting and allows, to some degree, that this process be understood similar to a reception history (although, this is my term, and not his). Harrington's inclusion of the Temple Scroll marked a significant deviation from Vermes's use of the term by including non-narrative material under the rubric of Rewritten Bible. While several of Harrington's other suggested text are not considered Rewritten Bible by many scholars, the inclusion of other non-narrative texts, in particular the Temple Scroll, has gained wide acceptance.[71] Building on the notion that Rewritten Bible could also include non-narrative material, George Brooke, in a more recent treatment of the topic, defines Rewritten Bible as

70. Harrington, "The Bible Rewritten (Narratives)," 239.

71. At the time that *Scripture and Tradition* was published, the Temple Scroll had not yet been published, so it is hardly fair to expect Vermes to include it in his discussion. That said, my understanding of Vermes's conception of Rewritten Bible—even taking into account the existence of works such as the Temple Scroll—would preclude the inclusion of the Temple Scroll from the

"any representation of an authoritative scriptural text that implicitly incorporates interpretive elements, large or small, in the retelling itself."[72] Adopting a "loose" definition of the term, Brooke includes in his discussion biblical texts that rewrite other biblical texts such as Deuteronomy and Chronicles in addition to examples of texts which "rewrite" portions of each of the major divisions of the Hebrew Bible, most of which were found at Qumran.[73]

The purposes of rewriting, according to Brooke, are manifold, but in each case the (re)writer augmented or repurposed an authoritative base text for some new context. He writes:

> The rewriting seems to have a variety of purposes, among which are the following: to improve an unintelligible base text, making it more comprehensible (11Q19); to

category of Rewritten Bible. This is a point at which even those who broadly agree with Vermes, such as Moshe Bernstein, take issue with Vermes's definition. See Bernstein, "Rewritten Bible," 183–84.

72. Brooke, "Rewritten Bible," 777.

73. Brooke categorizes the texts as follows: Reworked Pentateuchs, Rewritten Pentateuchal narratives, Rewritten Pentateuchal laws, Rewritten Former Prophets, Rewritten Latter Prophets, and Rewritten Writings. ibid., 778–80. See also idem, "The Rewritten Law, Prophets, and Psalms: Issues for Understanding the Text of the Bible," in *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries,* ed. Edward D. Herbert and Emanuel Tov (London: British Library; New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2002), 31–40 and the important work of Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts.*

> improve a text by removing inconsistencies—often through internal harmonization (4QpaleoExod^{m}); to justify some particular content by providing explanations for certain features in the base text (1QapGen); to make an authoritative text serve a particular function, perhaps in a liturgical setting (4Q41); to encourage the practice of particular legal rulings (Jubilees); and to make an old text have contemporary appeal (Temple Scroll).[74]

While I am sympathetic to the more maximalist approaches of Nickelsburg, Harrington, and Brooke, none of these treatments offer any concrete criteria for delineating between Rewritten Bible and texts that merely allude to biblical stories. Philip Alexander has suggested that certain works which are primarily "expansive" (the Book of Giants, the Book of Noah) should not be considered Rewritten Bible because their relationship to the biblical text is "centrifugal"—that is, they take the biblical text as a point of departure while formally Rewritten Bible texts show a "centripetal" relationship to the biblical text—that is, they expand beyond the biblical text, but remain tightly coupled to the text *as it exists in the Bible.* Alexander writes:

> Rewritten Bible texts are centripetal: they come back to the Bible again and again. The rewritten Bible texts make use of the legendary material, but by placing that material within an extended biblical narrative (in association with passages of more or less literal retelling of the Bible), they clamp the legends firmly to the

74. Brooke, "Rewritten Bible," 778.

biblical framework, and reintegrate them into the biblical history.[75]

This "centripetal" relationship to the biblical text, I believe, should form the upper bound of what is called Rewritten Bible. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, works such as 1 Enoch, will not be treated because they do not exhibit this close centripetal relationship. On the other hand, I adopt a more expansive understanding of Rewritten Bible than that of Vermes and include works within the Hebrew Bible itself (Deuteronomy and Chronicles), as well as non-narrative works such as the Temple Scroll which, I believe, do exhibit a centripetal relationship to the biblical text.

1.4.2 The Lower Bound: Between Bible and Rewritten Bible

Another recent avenue of investigation has been to explore the boundaries between the biblical text, editions, translations, and rewritten biblical texts. Vermes, of course, utilized the targums liberally in *Scripture and Tradition*, but his goal was to blur the line between post-biblical texts. Most scholars treating RwB, however, are not inclined to include the targums among RwB. But the targums—and for that matter the LXX and Samaritan Pentateuch—do uniquely represent interpretive traditions. Furthermore, the instability of the biblical text during the late Second Temple period, as exhibited by the varied editions of Jeremiah found at Qumran and other liminal texts, such as 4QReworkedPent, has problematized the question of what may have constituted "Bible" (or, more properly, "scripture") at the time.

75. Alexander, "It is Written," 117.

Unsurprisingly, Emanuel Tov has been at the forefront of this investigation. In his 1998 article, "Rewritten Bible Compositions and Biblical Manuscripts, with Special Attention to the Samaritan Pentateuch," Tov's purpose is to specify the "fine line between biblical manuscripts and rewritten Bible texts."[76] By this, Tov means that he is concerned with what I have termed the "lower bound" of the definition of RwB, specifically, the distinction between a text *edition* and a distinct composition, which Tov considers "rewritten." The primary difference between these two categories of texts, according to Tov, is not how dramatically the daughter text diverges from its parent, but the *purpose* of the daughter text.[77] According to Tov, this purpose is mirrored in the putatively authoritative status of the "biblical" text vis-à-vis the rewritten text which, he says, is not authoritative (although, he seems to suggest that this is up for debate[78]). For example, he notes that the extant texts of Jeremiah, while widely divergent in length and order, still represent "biblical Jeremiah" which carries some authoritative weight. Tov is, however, careful to point out that the nature of this authority is not clear and "the boundary between the biblical and non-biblical texts was probably not as fixed as we would have liked for the purpose of our scholarly analysis."[79]

Carrying a similar trajectory, Michael Segal's 2005 article "Between Bible and Rewritten Bible," in the tradition of Alexander, attempts to enumerate a series of criteria by which

76. Emanuel Tov, "Rewritten Bible Compositions and Biblical Manuscripts, with Special Attention to the Samaritan Pentateuch," *DSD* 5.3 (1998): 334–54.

77. Ibid., 334.

78. Ibid., 337.

79. Ibid., 335.

scholars can define the lower bound and distinguish between "editions" of biblical texts and "rewritten" texts.

Segal's understanding of the role of RwB is rooted in the conviction that a rewritten text is a "new" work that derives its own authority by means of its association with a biblical text. The new composition carries with it the purpose and any theological or ideological *Tendenzen* of the new author, builds off of the authoritative status of the underlying text.[80] Segal writes:

> Even though these rewritten compositions sometimes contain material contradictory to their biblical sources, their inclusion within the existing framework of the biblical text bestows upon them legitimacy in the eyes of the intended audience … the inclusion of this material within the framework of the biblical passages under interpretation transforms the ideas of the later writer into authoritative and accepted beliefs.[81]

And further:

> The nature of the relationship between rewritten biblical compositions and their sources constitutes a paradox. On the one hand, the rewritten composition relies upon biblical texts for authority and legitimacy. The author claims that any new information included in the later work already appears in earlier sources. But

80. Michael Segal, "Between Bible and Rewritten Bible," in *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran,* ed. Matthias Henze, SDSS (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 10–28.

81. Ibid., 11.

> simultaneously, the insertion of new ideas into the biblical text, ideas that may even contradict the beliefs and concepts of the original biblical authors, undermines the very authority that the rewriter hopes to utilize"[82]

While I find Segal's characterization of RwB texts problematic,his main contribution to the discussion are his criteria for distinguishing between "biblical" and RwB texts. He distinguishes between "external" and "internal" characteristics.

External Characteristics

Segal also identifies two external characteristics of RwB texts: "language" and "relationship between the source and its revision."

1. Language: While he offers little rationale for this criterion, Segal categorically dismisses the possibility that any RwB text could have been written in a language other than its *Vorlage*.

2. The Textual Relationship between the Source and Its Revision: The underlying text must be "visible" in the RwB text. He uses the book of Chronicles as the parade example of this relationship and notes the caveats necessary in dealing with *Vorlagen* from this period (i.e., it is difficult to say what is "rewritten" versus what is just another variant in the *Vorlage*).

82. Segal, "Biblical Interpretation at Qumran," 11–12.

Segal notes that both of these criteria, in fact, apply to textual editions, as well as to RwB texts.[83] In other words, these are not "distinguishing" criteria, so much as the baseline for consideration. One may demur, however, that if a single criterion, such as language, categorically excludes several texts which meet all the other criteria (below; by this definition he excludes Genesis Apocryphon, Josephus's Jewish Antiquities, and Ps. Philo's *LAB*), perhaps the problem is with the criterion.

Literary Criteria for Rewritten Bible

It is the "Literary Criteria" which Segal, ultimately, believes provide the *definition* of RwB texts.[84] Segal provides six internal criteria:

1. Scope of the Composition: "Editions" of texts cover the same material as their source. In other words, one expects an edition of Genesis to cover the same material as the book of Genesis; pluses and minuses do not stray into other works. On the other hand, rewritten texts "do not generally correspond to the scope of their sources."[85] For example, he observes that Jubilees covers Genesis and part of Exodus, and Chronicles covers parts of Samuel and Kings. Oddly, he also notes that Ps. Philo—which is not written in Hebrew—runs from Genesis into 1 Samuel. He writes: "In all these examples the change

83. Segal, "Biblical Interpretation at Qumran," 20.

84. Ibid., 20.

85. Ibid., 20.

in the scope of the composition created a new literary unit."[86]

2. New Narrative Frame: Several of the RwB texts include a framing narrative. His examples include the Temple Scroll and Jubilees, both of which re-frame the "biblical" material. In the case of both works, the Torah is assumed and the new work presumed to be a reflection of a second, direct revelation of the law to Moses, albeit by different means (and fragmentary, in the case of the Temple Scroll). In Jubilees, the angel of the Presence revealed this "second Torah" during Moses's second ascent (Exod 24). On the other hand, the Temple scroll seems to begin in Exod 34.[87]

3. Voice: While biblical narratives are generally written in a "detached" third person style, Segal observes that both Jubilees and the Temple Scroll "change the voice of the narrator throughout."[88] As far as I can tell, what Segal means is that in these RwB texts, certain events which are narrated in the third person in the biblical text are re-framed as, for instance, direct discourse in the first person by an angel, or even by God.[89]

4. Expansion versus Abridgment: By-and-large, text editions are *additive*. That is to say,

86. Segal, "Biblical Interpretation at Qumran," 20–21.

87. Ibid., 22.

88. Ibid., 22.

89. This may seem like a minor quibble, but the "narrator" has a distinct and technical meaning in narrative criticism which should be maintained. I would note, however, that this sort of reframing is not unique to RwB, since, e.g., Deuteronomy does something similar (perhaps Segal considered Deuteronomy to be RwB?).

when there is a discrepancy between the amount of content (as opposed to the order), typically the shorter text is considered older. Segal is here concerned with editorial changes, and not with scribal errors, which, of course could go in both directions (through parablepsis et al.). This property, he contends, is rooted in the conviction of the scribes that in order to reproduce a text, one must reproduce the *entire* text.[90] Rewritten Bible texts, however, felt free to add *or remove* material because their authors understood themselves to be composing entirely new works.[91]

5. Tendentious Editorial Layer: "Editions" do not change fundamental ideology of the work. For example, differing editions of Jeremiah may differ but those differences do not change the fundamental ideology of the work. Likewise, expansion and addition to the work (e.g. additions to Daniel) are in line with the theological *Tendenz* of the shorter book. On the other hand, RwB texts freely alter the ideologies of the text, for example, Jubilees.[92]

6. Explicit References to the Source Composition: "Editions" cannot (in a meta-discursive sense) reference its base text while RwB texts can (e.g., Jubilees reference to the Torah).

Although I disagree fundamentally with Segal's conclusions, he makes a number of useful observations about several literary features which are common to Rewritten Bible texts. If one ignores his linguistic criterion, his literary criteria form a solid formal baseline for discussing Rewritten Bible texts. Thus, while Segal would categorically dismiss Genesis

90. Segal, "Biblical Interpretation at Qumran," 24.

91. Ibid., 24.

92. Ibid., 25.

Apocryphon, Jewish Antiquities, Liber antiquitatum biblicarum, et al. for not being composed in Hebrew, in fact, his literary criteria fit these works very well.

More recently, Tov has returned to the topic of text editions and their relationship to the phenomenon of RwB.[93] Tov addresses three "strange" texts from the LXX which, for one reason or another, differ significantly from the preserved MT (3 Kingdoms, Esther, and Daniel). Evoking a number of Segal's criteria[94] for inclusion in the category of Rewritten Bible (which he acknowledges to be well accepted, if not terribly well defined), Tov suggests that these LXX texts likewise may exhibit 1) a new narrative frame, 2) expansion and abridgment, and 3) a tendentious editorial layer and therefore may be candidates for RwB.

It is important to think about what Tov and Segal are trying to accomplish in these articles: They are trying to connect scribal practices which allowed for exegetical additions and emendations to "authoritative texts"—dramatic examples of which are provided by Samaritan Pentateuch and LXX—to the practices which produced the *new compositions* which scholars

93. Emanuel Tov, "Three Strange Books of the LXX: 1 Kings, Esther, and Daniel Compared with Similar Rewritten Compositions from Qumran and Elsewhere," in *Die Septuaginta – Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 20.–23. Juli 2006,* ed. Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus, WUNT 219 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 369–93.

94. Segal, "Biblical Interpretation at Qumran," 10–28.

refer to as RwB texts.[95]

What Tov's articles in particular demonstrate, however, is that the issue of authorial *intent* and *purpose* may be at the heart of the distinction between text edition and RwB. Of course, such intents are not things that can be objectively proven, but I can not help but feel that such considerations ought to factor into reconstructions of ancient practices, even if we must settle for speculation. Thus it may be that certain especially troublesome texts, such as 4QReworkedPent, cannot be meaningfully categorized as "edition" or "rewritten" based on formal characteristics at all. Instead, it may be that such distinctions, ultimately, must be addressed by how we reconstruct a text's function within its social context with due consideration to the fact that such contexts are not monoliths and differ across time and space. For example, I imagine that the author of Genesis Apocryphon did not consider himself to be creating a new edition of Genesis, nor do I imagine that the author's contemporaries understood it to be such. The same goes for Jubilees and Chronicles (for Samuel–Kings). On the other hand, the editors and translators of the Samaritan Pentateuch, Targums, and LXX presumably *were* producing texts whose social functions aligned with (albeit, not perfectly) the biblical text.[96] Therefore, what matters for our purposes is not, necessarily, what formal characteristics distinguish Rewritten Bible texts, but rather what social *function* such texts may

95. Although, one wonders why the Targums are not included here. Perhaps it is because Tov is arguing for Hebrew *Vorlagen* of these texts, while the Targums represent a translation.

96. I am not claiming that the social function of the LXX and (esp.) the Targums would have been identical or indistinguishable from their *Vorlagen*, however, the fact that both the LXX and Targums were at times used liturgically—in any capacity—speaks to a unique social function

have held in antiquity vis-à-vis the biblical text.

1.5 CONCLUSION

While each of these discussions has worked to expand and refine the study of Rewritten Bible, the basic trajectory set by Vermes—the conviction that Rewritten Bible reflects an effort by the writer to implicitly comment on the biblical (or some "scriptural") text—has remained surprisingly consistent.[97] This tendency to focus first and foremost on the exegetical qualities of Rewritten Bible reflects Vermes's original purpose for the term quite well, but given the current state of the discussion, I think it is worth reconsidering this central tenet. This is not to say, of course, that there is *no* exegetical purpose to *any* Rewritten Bible text, rather that given a broader view of Rewritten Bible, it is worth considering that the phenomenon of rewriting, as

---

by comparison to Rewritten Bible texts. That Chronicles is used liturgically is only a function of the fact that it became a part of the Hebrew Bible on its own merits. Canonically speaking Chronicles' does not derive its authority based on its relationship to Samuel–Kings.

97. Most general introductions to the topic treat it in this way. See Sidnie White Crawford, "The Rewritten Bible at Qumran," in *The Hebrew Bible and Qumran,* vol. 1 of *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls,* ed. James H. Charlesworth, 3 vols. (North Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL, 2000), 173–95; Brooke, "Rewritten Bible," 777–81; Molly M. Zahn, "Rewritten Scripture," in *Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls,* ed. Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 323–36, idem, *Rethinking Rewritten Scripture: Composition and Exegesis in the 4QReworked Pentateuch Manuscripts,* STDJ 95 (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

a literary process, was not primarily concerned with nor necessarily tied to the *explication* of a scriptural *Vorlage*.[98] Campbell, for example, has recently suggested that the practice of rewriting may have extended beyond works with scriptural *Vorlagen* and may better be understood as a more general literary phenomenon of the late Second Temple period.[99] In his article, Campbell observes that the rewriting of non-scriptural texts has by-and-large been ignored by scholars or Rewritten Bible and offers a number compelling examples of Second Temple texts which rewrite non-scriptural material following the same basic process as Rewritten Bible. In particular, Campbell notes that while Jewish Antiquities 1–11 focuses on biblical material, Jewish Antiquities 12–13 offers a rewriting of the *Letter of Aristeas* and portions of 1 Macc. These rewritings maintain the "structure and flow" of their base texts, just like Rewritten Bible, but it is generally agreed that neither 1 Macc nor the *Letter of Aristeas* were viewed as scripture by Josephus, who, notably, provides us with one of the earliest lists of

98. See the work of Koskenniemi and Linqvist who similarly conclude that Rewritten Bible should be treated as rewritten *story*. They ask several of the same questions that I hope to address in this dissertation. See Erkki Koskenniemi and Pekka Lindqvist, "Rewritten Bible, Rewritten Stories: Methodological Aspects," in *Rewritten Bible Reconsidered: Proceedings of the Conference in Karkku, Finland, August 24–26 2006,* ed. Antti Laato and J. van Ruiten, SRB (Turku, Finland: Åbo Akademi University; Winona Lake, IN.: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 11–39.

99. Campbell, "Rewritten Bible," 49–81.

sacred writings from the period.[100] According to Campbell, "Josephus handles these compositions in the same way that he treats scriptural material in *Ant.* 1–11."[101] Furthermore, 4 Macc 5–17 retells the story of the martyrdom of seven brothers along with their mother found in 2 Macc 3–7. As with Jewish Antiquities 12–13, 4 Maccabees follows the structure and ordering of the account in 2 Maccabees while augmenting the story and using it to advance the author's thesis as part of a philosophical treatise.

What these examples lack, as compared with Vermes's understanding of rewriting, is a tradition of *interpretation* (*aggadah* for Vermes) which can account for the changes between the *Vorlage* and the rewritten work. None of these examples is primarily concerned with clarifying their *Vorlage*. At best, we might speculate that the authors refined the stories to better suit their needs (making corrections, emendations, etc.), but we do not imagine that there was any expectation that these "interpretations" carry any kind of normative force in later understandings of the original account. In other words, there is no reason for us to assume that the author of 4 Maccabees intended his reworking of the story of seven brothers to affect the

100. Steve Mason, "Josephus and His Twenty-two Book Canon," in *The Canon Debate,* ed. Lee M. McDonald and James A. Sanders (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 110–27.

101. Campbell, "Rewritten Bible," 70; See also Mason, "Josephus and His Twenty-two Book Canon," 126.

way that readers would understand 2 Maccabees.[102] On the other hand, this is precisely what Vermes was arguing for in *Scripture and Tradition:* that the activity of rewriting was meant not only to be descriptive of *how* the authors understood the biblical *Vorlagen*, but that the *purpose* of these rewritten texts in some way functioned *prescriptively* within the tradition of biblical interpretation, that is, according to Vermes, Rewritten Bible texts were, by definition, *about* the texts that they rewrote.

Although modern genre theory, as presented by Molly Zahn, has offered some avenue for discussing the classification of these texts based on *function*, it provides no means for analyzing the *function itself*. In other words, Zahn's work has opened the possibility that the function of a text may affect its generic profile and that at least one such function could be common to texts that we call Rewritten Bible. However, *what* that function was and how it operated within its social context falls outside the field of genre studies. Similar limitations cropped up in discussions of the boundaries between text editions and Rewritten Bible as framed by Tov. Thus the social role of Rewritten Bible as a literary phenomenon within Second Temple Judaism remains a central and relatively understudied area.

As away to address this topic, this dissertation will approach the phenomenon of Rewritten Bible through the lens of Social and Cultural Memory studies. Although concrete data for the function of Rewritten Bible is still lacking, Memory studies offers a set of

102. I hasten to point out that the later account certainly *would have* affected readers' understanding of the story in 2 Maccabees, but here I am arguing that we do not imagine the *intent* of the author of 4 Maccabees to be affecting that change.

theoretical tools and models for thinking about the transmission, adaptation, and generation of cultural "memory" based on observed anthropological behavior and social theory. This dissertation, therefore, is meant to be an attempt to pivot away from reading Rewritten Bible texts as primarily functioning "exegetically,"—by which I mean focused on the explanation, even if implicitly, of a particular text—toward reading rewritten texts as products of cultural transmission and adaptation through the lens of cultural and social memory theory. To be sure, biblical interpretation played a part in the production of these texts, but other social, cultural, and literary forces were at work behind these texts as well which have largely been ignored in favor of exegetical and interpretive discourses. In the next chapter, I will provide an overview of Memory theory and how it can inform the discussion surrounding Rewritten Bible.

Bibliography

Alexander, Philip S. "Retelling the Old Testament." Pages 99–121 in *It is Written—Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars, SSF.* Edited by D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Allen, Garrick V. "Rewriting and the Gospels." *JSNT* 41 (2018): 58–69.

Asale, Bruk A. "Mapping the Reception, Transmission, and Translation of Scriptural Writings in the EOTC: How and Why Some "Pseudepigraphical" Works Receive 'Canonical' Status in the Ethiopian Bible." *JS* 22.2 (2013): 358–75.

———. "The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Canon of the Scriptures: Neither Open nor Closed." *BT* 67.2 (2016): 202–22.

Baynes, Leslie. "Enoch and Jubilees in the Canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church." Pages 799–818 in *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam.* Vol. 2 of *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam.* Edited by Eric F. Mason, Kelley Coblentz Bautch, Angela Kim Harkins, and Daniel K. Machiela. 2 vols. STDJ 153. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

Bernstein, Moshe J. "Rewritten Bible: A Generic Category Which Has Outlived its Usefulness?" *Text* 22 (2005): 169–96.

Bloch, Renée. "Écriture et tradition dans le Judaïsme: Aperçus sur l'origine du Midrash." *CaS,* 1954, 9–34.

———. "Methodological Note for the Study of Rabbinic Literature." Pages 51–75 in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism: Theory and Practice.* Edited by William Scott Green. Translated by William Scott Green, with William J. Sullivan. BJS 1. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978. Translation of "Note méthodologique pour l'etude de la littérature rabbinique." *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 43.2 (1955): 194–225.

Brooke, George. "Genre Theory, Rewritten Bible and Pesher." In "Rethinking Genre: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins." *DSD* 17.3 (2010): 332–57.

———. "Rewritten Bible." Pages 777–81 in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls.* Edited by Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam. Vol. 2. 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

———. "The Rewritten Law, Prophets, and Psalms: Issues for Understanding the Text of the Bible." Pages 31–40 in *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries.* Edited by Edward D. Herbert and Emanuel Tov. London: British Library; New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2002.

Campbell, Jonathan G. "Rewritten Bible: A Terminological Reassessment." Pages 49–81 in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes.* Edited by József Zsengellér. JSJsup 166. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Cowley, Roger W. "The Biblical Canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Today." *OS* 23.4 (1974): 318–23.

Crawford, Sidnie White. *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.

———. "The Rewritten Bible at Qumran." Pages 173–95 in *The Hebrew Bible and Qumran.* Vol. 1 of *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls.* Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 3 vols. North Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL, 2000.

Falk, Daniel K. *The Parabiblical Texts: Strategies for Extending the Scriptures among the Dead Sea Scrolls.* CQS 8; LSTS 63. London: T & T Clark, 2007.

Fowler, Alastair. *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Mode.* Revised. 2002.

Fraade, Steven D. "Between Rewritten Bible and Allegorical Commentary: Philo's Interpretation of the Burning Bush." Pages 221–32 in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes.* Edited by József Zsengellér. JSJsup 166. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

———. "Rewritten Bible and Rabbinic Midrash as Commentary." Pages 59–78 in *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash.* Edited by Carol Bakhos. JSJsup 106. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Harrington, Daniel J. "Palestinian Adaptations of Biblical Narratives and Prophecies I: The Bible Rewritten (Narratives)." Pages 239–47 in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters.* Edited by Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg. BMI 2. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986.

Kahle, Paul. *The Cairo Geniza.* The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy, 1941. London: Oxford University Press, 1947.

Kisch, Guido. *Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum.* PMS 10. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1949.

Koskenniemi, Erkki, and Pekka Lindqvist. "Rewritten Bible, Rewritten Stories: Methodological Aspects." Pages 11–39 in *Rewritten Bible Reconsidered: Proceedings of the Conference in Karkku, Finland, August 24–26 2006.* Edited by Antti Laato and J. van Ruiten. SRB. Turku, Finland: Åbo Akademi University; Winona Lake, IN.: Eisenbrauns, 2008.

Machiela, Daniel A. "Once More, with Feeling: Rewritten Scripture in Ancient Judaism—A Review of Recent Developments." *JJS* 61.2 (2010): 308–20.

Malan, Gert J. "Is Rewritten Bible/Scripture the Solution to the Synoptic Problem?" *HTS* 70.1 (2014): 1–10.

Mason, Steve. "Josephus and His Twenty-two Book Canon." Pages 110–27 in *The Canon Debate.* Edited by Lee M. McDonald and James A. Sanders. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002.

Müller, Mogens. "Luke — The Fourth Gospel? The 'Rewritten Bible' Concept as a Way to Understand the Nature of the Later Gospels." Pages 231–42 in *Voces Clamantium in Deserto: Essays in Honor of Kari Syreeni.* Edited by Sven-Olav Back and Matti Kankaanniemi. STÅA. Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 2012.

Newsom, Carol. "Rhetorical Criticism and the Dead Sea Scrolls." Pages 198–214 in *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods.* Edited by Maxine L. Grossman. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010.

Nickelsburg, George W. E. "The Bible Rewritten and Expanded." Pages 89–156 in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus.* Edited by Michael E. Stone. Assen: Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.

Petersen, Anders Klostergaard. "Rewritten Bible as a Borderline Phenomenon: Genre, Textual Strategy, or Canonical Anachronism?" Pages 285–306 in *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino Garcia Martinez.* Edited by Anthony Hilhorst, Émile Puech, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar. JSJsup 122. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

Rappaport, Salomo. *Agada und Exegese bei Flavius Josephus.* Veröffentlichungen der Oberrabbiner Dr. H.P. Chajes-Preisstiftung an der Israelitisch-theologischen Lehranstalt in Wien 3. Vienna: Alexander Kohnt Memorial Foundation, 1930.

Schürer, Emil. *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ: 175 BC – AD 135.* Edited by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black. 3 vols. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986.

Segal, Michael. "Between Bible and Rewritten Bible." Pages 10–28 in *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran.* Edited by Matthias Henze. SDSS. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005.

Tiňo, Jozef. "The Classification of Rewritten Scripture: A Plea for Retaining the Emic Perspective." *JSJ* 49.3 (2018): 330–49.

Tov, Emanuel. "Rewritten Bible Compositions and Biblical Manuscripts, with Special Attention to the Samaritan Pentateuch." *DSD* 5.3 (1998): 334–54.

———. "Three Strange Books of the LXX: 1 Kings, Esther, and Daniel Compared with Similar Rewritten Compositions from Qumran and Elsewhere." Pages 369–93 in *Die Septuaginta – Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 20.–23. Juli 2006.* Edited by Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus. WUNT 219. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998.

Ulrich, Eugene. "Crossing the Borders from 'Pre-Scripture' to Scripture (Rewritten) to 'Rewritten Scripture'." Pages 83–104 in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes.* Edited by József Zsengellér. JSJsup 166. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

———. "The Notion and Definition of Canon." Pages 21–35 in *The Canon Debate.* Edited by Lee M. McDonald and James A. Sanders. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002.

VanderKam, James C. "Authoritative Literature in the Dead Sea Scrolls." *DSD* 5.3 (1998): 382–402.

Vermes, Geza. "Bible Interpretation at Qumran." In "Yigael Yadin Memorial Volume." *ErIsr* 20 (1989): 184–91.

———. *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies.* StPB 4. Leiden: Brill, 1961.

———. "The Genesis of the Concept of 'Rewritten Bible'." Pages 3–9 in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes.* Edited by József Zsengellér. JSJsup 166. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Zahn, Molly M. "Genre and Rewritten Scripture: A Reassessment." *JBL* 131.2 (2012): 271–88.

———. *Rethinking Rewritten Scripture: Composition and Exegesis in the 4QReworked Pentateuch Manuscripts.* STDJ 95. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

———. "Rewritten Scripture." Pages 323–36 in *Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls.* Edited by Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Chapter 2: Memory Studies and the Rewritten Bible

Over the past several decades, a dramatic increase in scholarly interest toward the topic of "memory" has swept throughout the social sciences and humanities. The precipitous rise in scholarly literature dealing with topics of memory coupled with its proliferation in popular media discourses has prompted some in the field to refer to a "memory industry" and to describe the ubiquity of memory discourses as a "boom" fast-approaching a bust.[1] Yet, as Olick et al. make clear in their Introduction to *The Collective Memory Reader*, there remain a significant number of scholars throughout the social sciences and humanities who continue to find memory to be a useful heuristic and a compelling theoretical basis for their various and sundry analytical applications.[2]

1. Graviel D. Rosenfeld, "A Looming Crash or a Soft Landing? Forcasting the Future of the Memory 'Industry'," *JMH* 81.1 (2009): 122–58; Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War between Memory and History in the 20th Century* (New Haven: Yale Univerisity Press, 2006); David Berliner, "The Abuses of Memory: Reflections on the Memory Boom in Anthropology," *AQ* 78.1 (2005): 197–211; Alon Confino, "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method," *AHR* 102.5 (1997): 1386–403.

2. Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy, "Introduction," in *The Collective Memory Reader,* ed. Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy (Oxford: Oxford

Although the topic of memory has been of interest to philosophers and thinkers since the antiquity,[3] as Olick and Robbins note, modern social-scientific approaches (which concern this study) almost exclusively trace their genealogy to the early 20th century work of sociologist Maurice Halbwachs.[4] Although Halbwachs's scholarly contributions were not limited to the topic of social memory (he also made contributions to statistics and probability theory, as well as sociological work on the topic of suicide and social morphology), the influence of his work in this area not only made a more lasting impact on the field of sociology than his other contributions, but it has also made a profound impact in a number of other fields such as history, anthropology, and (important for our purposes) biblical studies.[5]

University Press, 2011), 3–62.

3. Mary Carruthers, "How to Make a Composition: Memory-Craft in Antiquity and in the Middle Ages," in *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates,* ed. Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 15–29.

4. Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices," *ARS* 24 (1998): 105–40. It should be noted, however, that Halbwachs was not the first or only person to do work on memory or the impact of social structures on memory. See Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy, "Introduction," 8–36.

5. Lewis A. Coser, Introduction to *On Collective Memory,* by Maurice Halbwachs, trans. Lewis A. Coser, HS (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 1–34.

2.1 THE WORK OF MAURICE HALBWACHS: A VERY BRIEF OVERVIEW

Halbwachs published three primary works on the topic of memory, the first of which appeared in 1925 under the title *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire.*[6] This monograph, along with the concluding chapter of his second monograph—dealing with the remembered geography of the Holy Land—was excerpted and translated by Lewis Coser in a single volume under the title *On Collective Memory* in 1992.[7] His third and final contribution, entitled *The Collective Memory,* was published posthumously in 1950 and was translated into English in 1980 with an editorial introduction by Mary Douglas.[8] This work simultaneously represents some of Halbwachs's most developed ideas (responding to critics such as Charles Blondel) while evincing an incompleteness which posthumous publications often suffer.[9]

6. Maurice Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (F. Alcan, 1925).

7. Several of the most important chapters of *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* were included in full. Likewise, the entirety of the conclusion of *La Topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte* was included. idem, *On Collective Memory,* trans. Lewis A. Coser, HS (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); idem, *La Topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte: étude de mémoire collective* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1941).

8. Idem, *The Collective Memory,* trans. Francis J. Ditter Jr. and Vida Yazdi Ditter, with an intro. by Mary Douglass (New York: Harper & Row, 1980); trans. of *La mémoire collective,* Bibliothèque de sociologie contemporaine (Paris: University of Paris Press, 1950).

9. ibid. As Coser observes, "One may doubt that the author himself would have been willing to publish it in what seems to be an unfinished state. The book nevertheless contains many

The central contribution of Halbwachs's work was the notion that human memory is intrinsically and inextricably tied to social frameworks.Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 37–38 Humans are social beings and as such human activities, such as memory, are only useable within the context of a society. This focus on the *social* dimensions of memory betrays the deep influence that Émile Durkheim's work had on Halbwachs.Coser, Introduction, 8–9 Unlike Durkheim, however, Halbwachs's approach was tempered by his desire to identify the physical location of memory within to be within the *individual.*[10] Although the term "collective memory" evokes an ethereal or metaphysical idea, Halbwachs's use of the term was intended to ensure that any discussion of memory remained in the concrete. Collective memory is the sum total of those memories kept by *individuals* withing a society. An individual's ability to retrieve and utilize a particular memory, however, is inextricably entangled with the individual's social context. According to Halbwachs memories require social frameworks to function.[11]

To illustrate this point, Halbwachs begins *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* by attempting to prove the negative. *Without* a social framework, he argues, memories are always

---

further developments of Halbwachs's thought in regard to such matters as the relation of space and time to collective memory as well as fruitful definitions and applications of the differences between individual, collective, and historical memory." Coser, Introduction, 2.

10. To clarify, Halbwachs was not at all interested in the biological processes or locating within the brain where memory is stored, only that "collective memory" *is* stored biologically but, more importantly, is socially conditioned.

11. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 38.

incomplete. Because humans—for all intents and purposes—always exist within a society, it is the dream state that most closely approximates the complete isolation of memory from society.[12] Therefore, the way that the human brain deals with memories while dreaming can illustrate the (dis)function of memories lacking a social framework. Thus, he observes that "dreams are composed of fragments of memory too mutilated and mixed up with others to allow us to recognize them."[13] Because the mind lacks the ability to "check" itself against anything external while in a dream state, dreams do not contain "true memories."[14] This assertion is set against the "purely individual psychology" of Bergson and Freud which viewed *memory* as a location of social isolation.[15] Regarding the incompleteness of the dream state, he writes:

> Almost completely detached from the system of social representations, [the dream state's] images are nothing more than raw materials, capable of entering into all sorts of combinations. They establish only random relations among each

12. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 41–42.

13. Ibid., 41.

14. Ibid., 41.

15. See Keith Ansell-Pearson, "Bergson on Memory," in *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates,* ed. Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 61–76 and Richard Terdiman, "Memory in Freud," in *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates,* ed. Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 93–108.

other—relations based on the disordered play of corporal modification.[16]

The "system of social representations" that Halbwachs refers to is not limited, however, to macro structures such as familial, religious, or class groups. Although these structures certainly *do* make up an important stratum of social frameworks, Halbwachs envisions something much more fundamental which betrays his broadly structuralist perspective. Halbwachs uses the phrase "social representations" to refer to a system of shared "signs" that encompassed not only these macro structures, but every aspect of a group's social framework—a sort of "cultural *langue*." Although, Halbwachs does not use the language of semiotics, the analogy is helpful. Just as Saussurian linguistics argues that the concrete arbitrary sign is given meaning only by participating in the broader, shared *langue*, so too memories (read: "signs") require a framework to convey meaning, as do the concrete, individual expressions of remembrance (read: *parole*).[17] Halbwachs writes:

> It is in this sense that there exists a collective memory and social frameworks for memory; it is to the degree that our individual thought places itself in these

16. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 42.

17. This is my terminology with reference to Halbwachs, however, it is borrowed, of course, from Saussure's Ferdinand De Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale: Édition critique,* ed. Rudolf Engler (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1989). For a brief overview of these terms see Philip Smith and Alexander Riley, *Cultural Theory: An Introduction,* 2nd ed. (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2009), 93–94.

frameworks and participates in this memory that it is capable of the act of recollection.[18]

Memories, therefore, cannot be understood in isolation from their social frameworks and therefore should not be analyzed without consideration to the social context of the rememberer.

Of course, people participate in a plurality of social contexts, often simultaneously, and the experiences that are later to be recalled, too, must be situated within these frameworks. In order to bring these autobiographical memories to mind, according to Halbwachs, an individual attempts to mentally situate herself within those same frameworks.[19] For instance, I find it much easier to recall whether a particular university course I have taken occurred in the Fall or Spring semester, rather than which month or even year it occurred. The social framework that is the "academic year" remains a potent framework for my own memories; I imagine the "year" beginning in the Fall, and often refer to "next semester." On the other hand, my wife—who had the good sense to stop her formal education after one degree—no longer thinks in terms of semesters. Yet, when remembering events during her time at university, the semester once again becomes a useful framework for memory. It is for this reason that recent memories are more easy to call to mind: because the social frameworks that produced the memory (the people, places, customs, etc.) remain in close proximity for the rememberer and the effort

18. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 38.

19. Ibid., 38.

required to situate the memory within the social frameworks that produced it is minimal.[20] This notion is a central part of Halbwachs's thesis and provides a point of departure for his more in-depth studies of collective memory in the family, religion, and social classes.

2.1.1 A Note on Halbwachs's Terminology

There is a grand tradition of imprecise and overlapping terminologies within memory studies going back to Halbwachs himself. For example, on page 40 of *On Collective Memory*, Halbwachs uses each of the terms "collective memory," "social memory," "social frameworks of memory," and "collective frameworks of memory" and it is not entirely clear how Halbwachs is distinguishing between them. The way that he is able to use the terms almost interchangeably has led some in the current discussion to treat them as synonyms. As Anthony Le Donne observes, "In fact, ['social' and 'collective' memory] are currently used synonymously with such frequency that their nuances vary from author to author."[21] Yet, Le Donne points out, Halbwachs actually uses these terms with slightly different nuances. On the one hand, Halbwachs uses the term "social" memory when he is describing the way social structures affect memory, while on the other hand "collective" memory tends to refer to the content of memories which are transmitted between individuals and common to those of a particular group.

In other words, when Halbwachs uses the term "social" memory, he is referring to the

20. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 52.

21. Anthony Le Donne, *The Historiographical Jesus: Memory, Typology, and the Son of David* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009), 42 n.8.

social frameworks in which individual memory participates, i.e. how society provides the framework that makes individual memory possible.[22] On the other hand, when he uses the term "collective" memory, he tends to refer to shared memory, "the shared cultural past to which individuals contribute and upon which they call; but ultimately a past that transcends individual memory."Chris Keith, "Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research: The First Decade (Part One)," *EC* 6.3 (2015): 354–76; See also Hübenthal, "Social and Cultural Memory," 180 The two ideas work together and mutually influence one another. As Hübenthal puts it, "The difference [between social and collective memory] lies in the perspective: *social memory* is using the framework, *collective memory* is establishing it."[23] Hübenthal's use of the active verb "establish" is intentional: for Halbwachs, collective memory is not a passive social accretion, but an actively constructed part of the group's common identity which *speaks to the concerns and needs of the community in the present.* Social frameworks shape the way that people remember. The retrieval of memories is shaped by those same frameworks, and as those frameworks shift, so too do the memories that are recalled in those societies.[24]

22. Sandra Hübenthal, "Social and Cultural Memory in Biblical Exegesis: The Quest for an Adequate Application," in *Cultural Memory in Biblical Exegesis,* ed. Pernille Carstens, Trine Hasselbalch, and Niels Peter Lemche, PHSC 17 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2012), 175–99.

23. Ibid., 180.

24. For a modern assessments on the malleability of human memory and the effects of social networks on the formation of collective memory, see Alin Coman et al., "Mnemonic Convergence in Social Networks: The Emergent Properties of Cognition at a Collective Level," *PNAS* 113.29 (2016): 8171–76; Jeremy K. Yamashiro and William Hirst, "Mnemonic Convergence in a

In his later work, Halbwachs distinguishes between two kinds of memory which can be identified by the experiential-relation of the rememberer to the object of memory: autobiographical and historical memory.[25] Autobiographical memory refers to the sort of memories which are the result of individual, subjective experience, while historical memory refers to those which fall outside the experience of the individual. Elsewhere Halbwachs refers to these as "internal" and "external" memory. Autobiographical memory is rooted in the individual, sensory experiences which provide a full, "thick" memory—to borrow from Geertz[26]— while historical memory offers only a thin, schematic overview and by definition is never "experienced" by the rememberer.

Although Halbwachs distinguished between these two forms of memory, he nevertheless emphasized their interrelatedness. In particular, Halbwachs notes that autobiographical memory necessarily is dependent upon historical memory, insofar as our lives participate in "general history."[27] For example, memories of a more indirect nature are able to shape autobiographical memory by shaping the social frameworks which produced them and

Social Network: Collective Memory and Extended Influence," *JARMC* 3.4 (2014): 272–79; Alin Coman et al., "Mnemonic Convergence: From Empirical Data to Large-Scale Dynamics," in *Social Computing, Behavioral–Cultural Modeling and Prediction,* ed. Shanchieh Jay Yang, Ariel M. Greenberg, and Mica Endsley (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, 2012), 256–65.

25. Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory,* 52.

26. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic, 1973), 3–30. See also Smith and Riley, *Cultural Theory,* 189–92.

27. Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory,* 52.

the frameworks into which they are recalled. The quintessential example for Americans of my age would be the events of September 11, 2001. Although comparatively few people directly witnessed the events (I was asleep on the West Coast when the first plane crashed), the impact that those events had (and continue to have) on the orientation of American national memory is unquestionably a part of many people's lived experience, including my own and would therefore constitute a part of America's current "collective memory." Although the incoming undergraduate class at the University of Texas at Austin, many of whom will have been born after 2001, have *no* autobiographical memory of these events, it is, nonetheless, a part of the collective memory of their society at large. On the other hand the War of 1812 is not a part of any living person's autobiographical memory and its impact on the collective memory of most Americans is likely restricted to a few popular media references, or localized to specific geographical regions with a close connection to major events in the conflict (e.g., New Orleans).[28]

The memories of historical events, likewise, are shaped by the social frameworks of the rememberer. The events of September 11, 2001 in the memory of most Americans are now further shaped by the socio-political discourses surrounding the United States' continued military presence in the Middle East and its controversial pretexts for engagement in the

28. Such as Jimmy Driftwood's *The Battle of New Orleans*, best known as performed by Johnny Horton which topped *Billboard* charts in the US, Canada, and Australia in 1959 and was recently acknowledged to be one of the Top 100 Western songs of all time. See, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Battle_of_New_Orleans.

region, especially with the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Likewise, although no living person has an autobiographical memory of the American Civil War, the construction of certain confederate monuments on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin during the Jim Crow era, and their subsequent removal in August of 2017, illustrates how historical memory can be (consciously, in this case) reshaped and restructured as the remembering society changes.

It is the way that these remembered events change over time that makes social memory studies so interesting for the historian. Halbwachs's own work in the area of history is best seen in *The Legendary Topography of the Holy Land*, where he focuses on the ways that memories relate to particular geographic sites. Notably, Halbwachs is not interested in "doing" history. Rather, Halbwachs's study focuses on the way that the geographical sites in and around the Galilee and Jerusalem were imbued with significance based on their putative connection with significant events related to Jesus, the Apostles, and early Christian communities.

Halbwachs makes a number of observations about the way that memories are formed and the ways that they interact. His first observation comes in contrasting the portrayal of Jesus within the Gospels with what must have been the lived experience of the Apostles.[29] The involvement of the apostles in the day-to-day life of Jesus in some sense would have prohibited them from achieving the kind of "necessary detachment" to write something like the the Gospels. In other words (and to use Halbwachs's later terminology), the memory of Jesus as portrayed in the Gospels is almost necessarily informed by *historical* rather than

29. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 193–98.

autobiographical memory.[30] Indeed, Halbwachs rightly observes that the Gospels present Jesus and his ministry "as if Jesus's whole life was but a preparation for his death, as if this was what he had announced in advance."[31] Although the religious significance of Jesus's death continues to be remembered as a central component of Christianity, surely Jesus's mother remembered the death of her son differently than the way the Church later commemorated it.Regardless of whether Halbwachs's conception of Early Christianity would be considered sound today, the idea that the Gospels represent several collective remembrances of Jesus's life, ministry and death each bearing marks from their own *Sitz im Leben* (to borrow from the form critics) seems relatively uncontroversial. A number of studies on the Jesus and early Christian memory have come about in the past several years. See Le Donne, *The Historiographical Jesus;* Rafael Rodríguez, *Structuring Early Christian Memory: Jesus in Tradition, Performance, and Text,* LNTS (London: T & T Clark, 2010); For an overview of the modern impact of Halbwachs (and memory studies more generally) on the field of Historical Jesus studies, see Keith, "Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research," 354–76; and idem, "Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research: The First Decade (Part Two)," *EC* 6.4 (2015): 517–42

Halbwachs, drawing on the Pauline epistles, observes that the earliest recollections of Jesus make no mention of the location of his death (Jerusalem) nor of his ministry (Galilee). He writes:

> In the authentic epistles of Paul, we are told only that the son of God has come to

30. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 194.

31. Ibid., 198.

> earth, that he died for our sins, and that he was brought back to life again. There is no allusion to the circumstances of his life, except for the Lord's Supper, which, Paul says, appeared to him in a vision (and not through witnesses). There is no indication of locality, no question of Galilee, or of the preachings of Jesus on the shores of the lake of Gennesaret.[32,33]

Halbwachs's point is that within the narrative of the Gospels, the location of Jesus's death—by virtue of the social and political reality of the day—*had* to occur in Jerusalem.[34] Whether or not it actually did, or whether or not that information was explicitly handed down to the authors of the Gospels is irrelevant for the purposes of collective memory. Sacred places become sacred through the process of memory *construction*, not simply through the transmission of autobiographical experience. They are spaces where significant ideas within the collective memory of a group can take concrete form. He writes, "Sacred places thus commemorate not facts certified by contemporary witnesses but rather beliefs born perhaps not far from these places and strengthened by taking root in this environment."[35] Localizing

32. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 209.

33. Notably, the only Jesus scholar with whom Halbwachs interacts is Ernest Renan, a figure whose work has survived mostly as a punching-bag for later scholars and as an example of overt anti-Semitism in biblical scholarship. See Susannah Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 39

34. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 211.

35. Ibid., 199.

historical memory, therefore, functions as a way to move abstract ideas into the real world and reinforce fundamental components of the group's collective memory.

Perhaps more interesting is Halbwachs's treatment of the ability for memories to coalesce and split over time. Halbwachs makes the observation that, according to tradition (i.e., the collective memory of the Church), certain places in the Holy Land mark the location of *several* significant events. From an historical perspective Halbwachs, obviously, doubts that these assertions are accurate—even assuming the events indeed occurred at all—but finds the clustering of these events to be more than just coincidence. For example, he writes:

> One is surprised to find on the shores of the lake Gennesaret, near the Seven Fountains, the place where apostles were chosen, the Sermon on the Mount, the appearance of Jesus on the waters after the Resurrection—all in the same place.[36]

Halbwachs's assumption is that there was something about the location *itself*, some "earlier consecration,"[37] which attracted these memories to particular locales. Extending this rationale further, we can appreciate the fact that for Christianity, the significance of Jerusalem is not limited to the significance of the city as the location of Jesus's death, but rather by the prior significance of the city for Judaism.[38] Within the collective memory of Christian tradition, one might say that Jerusalem is not significant because it is the location of the Passion and

36. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 220.

37. Ibid., 220.

38. In addition, Jerusalem was the location of the leadership for the earliest Christian Church according to Gal 1:18 (and attested throughout Acts).

resurrection of Jesus, but that the Passion and resurrection of Jesus happened in Jerusalem *because Jerusalem was significant.* Halbwachs writes:

> The Christian collective memory could annex a part of Jewish collective memory only by appropriating part of the latter's local remembrance while at the same time transforming its entire perspective of historical space.[39,40]

One might object to this suggestion by noting that, supposing Jesus *actually was* crucified in Jerusalem, one hardly needs to re-appropriate Jewish tradition or attribute this remembrance to some special process. Yet, it is worth pointing out in cases where the historical data are lacking (or, perhaps, where eyewitness accounts certainly did not exist), this same basic phenomenon occurred. For example, Halbwachs points to the birth narratives of the Gospels, in particular that of Matthew, where Jesus is described as being born as a descendant of David in the town of Bethlehem (Matt 1:20; 2:1). Although there is no reason to think that Jesus was *actually* born in Bethlehem, Halbwachs rightly observes, "the authors of the gospels seem entirely to have invented this poetic history which has occupied a considerable place in

39. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 215.

40. Because the earliest Christians were Jewish, it stands to reason that the collective memory of *earliest* Christianity was rooted in broader Jewish memory. In later periods—especially during and after the so-called parting of the ways (however problematic this term has become)—Halbwachs is certainly correct. Regarding the current discussion on the Jewish–Christian schism see Joshua Ezra Burns, *The Christian Schism in Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 19–60.

Christian History."[41] In fact, Jesus's entire portrayal in the Gospel of Matthew is an exercise in collective remembrance which is structured on the foundational narratives of the Hebrew Bible: the slaughter of innocents (Matt 2:16–17), and Jesus's portrayal as a lawgiver "on the mount"(Matt 5:1–7:29), and framed as the fulfillment of Jewish prophecy (Matt 1:23; 2:6, 18 *et passim*).

The inverse of this phenomenon is also observable. According to Halbwachs while some events converge to particular locations, other events diverge among several sites. One expression of this process is the way that significant events are themselves divided providing the opportunity for each portion of the event to be separately localized. For example, Halbwachs notes how the memory of specific important events, such as the Passion, may be split and localized at a very fine level of detail:

> Around Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre, for example, we find the rock of anointing, the rock of the angel, the rock of the gardener, the place where Jesus was stripped, etc.[42]

The proliferation of these micro-sites of memory, according to Halbwachs, aide and reinforce the collective memory through repetition. Furthermore, the added detail serves in "renewing and rejuvenating an ancient image."[43]

41. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 214.

42. Ibid., 220.

43. Ibid., 220.

The same event may also be localized in multiple places. Halbwachs describes several traditional locations of the Cenacle (the "Upper Room" from the Gospels), including the Mount of Olives, Gethsemane, and the Grotto of Jesus's teaching. These traditions coexisted into the fourth century, yet, later, the site was moved to the Christian hill of Zion. Likewise, Halbwachs notes that there were two locations for Emmaus and two different mountains on which Jesus is said to have appeared in Galilee after his resurrection. While it runs counter to conventional modern conceptions of the past, that seemingly contradictory traditions are able to coexist within a society—or even within th memory of a single individual—is well documented.Halbwachs points out that autobiographical memory, however, does not allow for this kind of fragmentation.We all realize that the same event from our own past can not have happened in two locations simultaneously. Yet, Halbwachs points out that should that same person belong to two groups who disagree on a particular remembered event from history (one that the individual did not personally witness), individuals are generally able to hold such memories together (if in tension) without the need assert one or the other. The same is true of complex social entities such as religious groups who are themselves composed of smaller sects which may possess their own unique collective memory. Halbwachs writes:

> A community must often accommodate itself to contradictions introduced by diverse groups so long as none of these groups prevails, or so long as the community itself does not find a new reason for decisively settling the issue. This is especially true when the community faces a controversy about its rites, which are

an anchor for its component groups.[44]

2.2 THE MEMORY BOOM

Halbwachs's work, while not ignored, would not make its most significant impact until well after his death. It is frequently argued that the so-called "memory boom," which began in the 1980's in the wake of the "theory boom," picked up Halbwachs's terminology and central ideas in an attempt to deal with the perceived insufficiency of traditional historiography to deal with the sorts of major, traumatic events which characterized the mid 20th Century.[45] Works such as Yosef Yerushalmi's *Zakhor* and Pierre Nora's *Les Lieux de mémoire* are typically cited as the foundational works of the modern memory boom.[46]

In *Zakhor,* Yerushalmi is quick to identify the tension between what traditional cultures

44. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 224.

45. Karl Galinsky, "Introduction: Memory and Memory Studies," in *Memory in Ancient Rome and Early Christianity,* ed. Karl Galinsky (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 1–39. See also Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy, "Introduction," 29–36. One cannot help but speculate that—at least in the English-speaking world—the translation of *The Collective Memory* in 1980 contributed to the popularity of Halbwachs's terminology.

46. Kerwin Lee Klein, *From History to Theory* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), 112–13; Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory,* SASLJS (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982; repr., New York: Schocken, 1989); Nora's massive project has been abridged and translated into English as Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past,* ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, 3 vols., Eu-

and societies remember about their past and how the discipline of history treats the past. For remembering groups, what is preserved in the collective memory is what is useful for the edification of that group—whether through religious ritual, family stories, or some other combination of received traditions. Of course, prior to the enlightenment, this was the default mode of understanding the past for most people, and remains so for many social groups, including those within modern, Western societies. In particular, Yerushalmi addresses this tension for the Jewish historian—a vocation which, he notes, is a recent phenomenon.Yerushalmi, *Zakhor,* 81–103 Although, ancient Israel and Judah, clearly, were concerned with matters of the perceived past—much of the Hebrew Bible is preoccupied with narrating events from the perceived past—these codified traditions are preserved in a plurality of socio-religious groups for a complex set of purposes spanning cultural, social, and theological modes of discourse which are fundamentally at odds with the discipline of history.[47] Thus, the biblical command to "remember," is not a command to keep tedious notes of

---

ropean Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press); trans. of idem, ed., *Les Lieux de mémoire,* 7 vols. (Paris: Gallimard).

47. I am aware of the problematic nature of this statement. Contemporary approaches to historiography are emphatically *not* attempting to write "objective history." Yet, referring only to "Modernist" historiography does not give due consideration to the fact that common discourse around the idea of "history" is largely influenced by Modernism. Even taking into account that contemporary historiography has moved beyond discussions of "objectivity" the methodological underpinning of historical discourse remains fundamentally different, if only by the existence of its own meta-discourse. As Daniel Pioske puts it, "What separates the act

historically accurate events, but a cultural and theological imperative to maintain the foundational narratives of the community. Yerushalmi writes:

> There the fact that history has meaning does not mean that everything that happened in history is meaningful or worthy of recollection. Of Manasseh of Judah, a powerful king, who reigned for fifty-five years in Jerusalem, we hear only that "he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord" (II Kings 21:2).[48]

In other words, what was remembered about Manasseh by the biblical tradants were those details which were useful for their socio-religious projects. The rules and methods of this process—remembering what is important and forgetting what is not—are generally not explicit or transparent.

The discipline of history, on the other hand, generally attempts to uphold a certain set of explicit methodological and theoretical criteria which—while not exempt from distortion by the subjectivity of the historian—can be corroborated or contradicted by evidence and argumentation.[49] While the historian participates in the collective memory of her own society,

---

of historiography from the recounting of a culture's sanctioned memories is consequently the historians' determination to isolate and compare disparate testimonies about the past with other past traces that may corroborate or discredit their claims."Daniel Pioske, "Retracing a Remembered Past: Methodological Remarks on Memory, History, and the Hebrew Bible," *BibInt* 23.3 (2015): 291–315

48. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor,* 10.

49. Pioske, "Retracing a Remembered Past," 302–3.

her reconstruction of the past attempts to approach the topic from the outside. The historian, too, (re)constructs the past, but the goals of the historian are, as Yerushalmi puts it, to recreate "an ever more detailed past whose shapes and textures memory does not recognize."[50] Even the most theory-conscious historian cannot help but struggle in avoiding older discourses about "what really happened," particularly when stated over and against memory in the form of received tradition. All of this is not to say that modern history writing is in any meaningful sense "objective," nor that the historian is able to remove herself from her own socio-political context. So, although memory and history both offer reconstructions of the past, it is important to affirm that their modes of doing so are radically different.[51]

Thus the memory "boom" has, in some circles, been viewed as anti-historical and an attempt at "resacrilization of the past" to counter the disenchantment brought about by modern historical consciousness.[52] Kerwin Klein, for example, traces the origins of scholarly interest surrounding memory and lists five narratives that others have offered as explanations for the origins of memory discourse in society generally:

50. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor,* 94; See also Peter J. Verovšek, "Collective Memory, Politics, and the Influence of the Past: The Politics of Memory as a Research Paradigm," *PGI* 4.3 (2016): 529–43.

51. Pioske observes, "The epistemological tension observed by Ricoeur between memory and history is thus understood as the outcome of two processes that, though having the similar intent of re-presenting former phenomena, nevertheless pursue and mediate the past through quite disparate means."Pioske, "Retracing a Remembered Past," 302.

52. Winter, *Remembering War,* 282.

> We have, then, several alternative narratives of the origins of our new memory discourse. The first, following Pierre Nora, holds that we are obsessed with memory because we have destroyed it with historical consciousness. A second holds that memory is a new category of experience that grew out of the modernist crisis of the self in the nineteenth century and then gradually evolved into our current usage. A third sketches a tale in which Hegelian historicism took up pre-modern forms of memory that we have since modified through structural vocabularies. A fourth implies that memory is a mode of discourse natural to people without history, and so its emergence is a salutary feature of decolonization. And a fifth claims that memory talk is a belated response to the wounds of modernity.[53]

Although Klein finds none of these "fully satisfying," it is noteworthy that the general trend among these narratives corroborates the thesis that memory represents a "reaction" against history in some form.

Whatever combination of these causes may have ultimately brought about the memory boom, the problem remains, according to Klein, that memory has come to dominate historical discourse as a "therapeutic alternative" to history in place of a rigorous scientific

53. Kerwin Lee Klein, "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse," in *From History to Theory* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), 112–37; repr. of "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse," *Representations* 69 (2000): 127–50.

methodology.[54] As Winter puts it, "It is a fix for those who cannot stand the harshness of critical thinking or historical analysis."[55] Although I think Klein under-appreciates the value of the memory discourse as a meaningful mode of inquiry, I am in fact, quite sympathetic to his critique overall. As methodologies for querying the past, memory and history operate on different sets of hermeneutical and epistemological foundations, which is, I think, one of Yerushalmi's main points. However, what Klein does not address is the way that, for modern Westerners, history *is* our collective memory (or at least, heavily influences our collective memory). This is what Nora means when he says that "We speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left."[56] And for Klein, this is a good thing—historical consciousness is uniquely valuable as a scientific endeavor and jettisoning this critical posture toward the past is tantamount to abandoning the enlightenment.

For modern historians studying the cultural memory of other modern people, it is easy to conflate the historical consciousness of the historian subject and that of the object. Such historical work relies on court documents, news articles, eyewitness accounts, and other documentary evidence that operates within an historical consciousness that closely resembles that of the historian. As a result, the historian can utilize her own historical intuitions when interacting with her sources. In Halbwachs's terms, the social frameworks (in this case the

54. Klein, *From History to Theory,* 137.

55. Winter, *Remembering War*, 283 (summarizing Klein).

56. Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," in "Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory," *Representations* 26, 1989, 7–24.

understanding of the way "history" is done) of the historian and their object of study are quite similar. For example, reading news reports from the mid-twentieth century does not require the historian to dramatically reorient her understanding of what "news" is. On the other hand, when studying ancient history, the intellectual distance between the source and the historian is, often, much more pronounced. Reading "historical" texts from antiquity often requires a kind of hermeneutical suspicion that is different from that used by scholars reading texts from the recent past.[57]

In fact, biblical scholars in particular have been dealing with this problem since the enlightenment. The tension between memory and history is played out clearly in both modern Jewish and Christian circles vis-à-vis historical-critical study of the Bible. Insofar as the Bible forms a major portion of both Jewish and Christian collective memory, historical-critical approaches to the biblical text continue to be met with fervent opposition in more conservative traditions. Parallels to what Klein describes within the discipline of history can be seen within biblical studies as well. Consider, for example, the way that Brevard Childs's canonical approach attempted to "overcome the long-established tension between the canon and criticism."[58] For Childs, writing an introduction to the Old Testament in the traditional manner

57. For example competent readers of modern newspapers know to bring a different set of suspicions to "news" articles versus editorials. Similarly, historians can read personal correspondence with a different kind of suspicion than monumental inscriptions.

58. Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 45.

(i.e., as an historical-critical introduction) was insufficient for use in churches or synagogues because it bypassed a fundamental aspect of the biblical text, the canon. Although he does not use the language of memory in his discussion of canon (though, it should be noted he made an important early contribution to the idea of memory in the biblical tradition which, I imagine, is not a coincidence[59]), here we can see that the various canons of scripture in use by Christians and Jews throughout the world nevertheless function as a form of collective memory by constructing and filtering what should and should not be remembered by the community.

The tension between history and memory is most problematic—as evidenced by Childs—when the historian participates within the collective memory of the community under investigation. This is why both Childs and Yerushalmi express their discomfort and dissatisfaction while attempting to operate with one foot in each world. This is the central critique of Klein: historians operate from the outside looking in (an etic approach), while practitioners of memory operate from within (an emic approach). Yet, this etic/emic distinction only makes sense when memory is placed on equal footing with history as a means of interrogating the past. From this perspective, I wholeheartedly agree with Klein that such an approach undercuts the epistemological foundations of modern historical inquiry. However, Klein does not address memory as the *object* of historical study. This, I think, is what makes Yerushalmi's approach so intriguing. Although he acknowledges his precarious position as a Jewish historian, Yerushalmi discusses memory *as an historian* and it is this approach which I think is the most fruitful avenue of memory research. Thus, this dissertation will treat memory

59. Brevard S. Childs, *Memory and Tradition in Israel,* SBT 37 (London: SCM Press, 1962).

as a phenomenon which can be studied historically rather than as a source of information about the past.

2.3 MEMORY, HISTORY, AND THE "ACTUAL PAST"

Halbwachs's did not see any reason to assume that the remembered past had any meaningful connection to the "actual past." Because memory is always constructed in the present for use in the present, the "actual past" does not carry any meaningful influence on this (re)construction. It was in his *La Topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte* that Halbwachs makes this case most forcefully, and I think he does so quite convincingly. Halbwachs's understanding of memory as a phenomenon of the present has thus earned him the label of "presentist" or "constructivist" over and against a number of more recent theorists who wish to attribute some normative force to the past.[60]

2.3.1 The Presentist Perspective

This presentist mantle has been donned by a number of more recent scholars, perhaps most notably by the German scholars Jan and Aleida Assmann.[61] Where Halbwachs distinguished

60. Coser, Introduction, 27–30.

61. See esp. Jan Assmann, "Memory and Culture," in *Memory: A History,* ed. Dmitri Nikulin, OPC (New York: Oxford University Press), 325–49; idem, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); and Aleida Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization: Functions, Media, Archives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

between autobiographical and historical memory, Jan Assmann describes what he calls communicative and cultural memory (German: *kommunikatives* and *kulturelles Gedächtnis*, respectively).[62] Rather than focus on the relationship of the rememberer to the experience (viz. whether the memory is "autobiographical"), this terminology essentially distinguishes between synchronic and diachronic processes of memory. On the one hand, communicative memory represents a synchronic, or "horizontal" memory shared by a society at a particular chronological horizon based on direct communication between individuals. According to Assmann, this memory has a temporal horizon of 80–100 years—limited by spatial (where people are) and chronological (how long people live) factors. He writes:

> A typical instance would be generational memory that accrues within the group, originating and disappearing with time or, to be more precise, with its carriers. Once those who embodied it have died, it gives way to a new memory.[63]

On the other hand, at the end of this crucial period, as particular memories begin to drop from current discourse and lose relevance; as those individuals with direct connections to the events, people, and places which the memories involve die off, the remembering community will either forget or transform the memory for long-term transmission in the form of *cultural memory.* The canonization of memory at points during this period is a conscious,

62. Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization,* 36; For a concise terminological crash-course, see Hübenthal, "Social and Cultural Memory," 182–83.

63. Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization,* 36.

constructive activity by a remembering group.[64]

Where Halbwachs's terminology took as its point of departure the psychological perspectives of Freud[65] and Bergson,[66] Assmann's taxonomy is rooted in ethnological research on oral traditions, specifically that of Jan Vansina and his notion of a "floating gap" between the present and the distant past.[67] Vansina observes that in oral cultures often there is an abundance of common knowledge about current goings-on and a similar abundance of shared knowledge about the distant past (esp. with regard to origin stories and the like), but there often exists a gap for the not-so-distant past. The proportion of collective knowledge, therefore, is unevenly distributed between two chronological poles of memory, although members of the society in question may not perceive it as such in their own reconstructions of the past.[68] In other words, from the perspective of the remembering society, often there exists a continuity between the distant past (often legendary or mythic) and the near-past (a few generations, at most) where in reality a good deal of the not-so-recent past has fallen from memory. Memory of the near-past—those things which, while not necessarily "autobiographical" to every rememberer, nevertheless are reinforced by those with autobiographical memory—is categorized as "communicative" because it is memory that it generated and spread in the

64. Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization,* 45.

65. Terdiman, "Memory in Freud," 93–108.

66. Ansell-Pearson, "Bergson on Memory," 61–76.

67. Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

68. Ibid., 23–24; As Assmann, observes, "In the cultural memory of a group, both levels of the past merge seamlessly into one another." Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization,* 35.

present by those with direct access to the events in question. Those memories which are deemed significant enough to not be forgotten—those which will make up cultural memory—undergo a process by which they are transformed from "factual into remembered history," and may take the form of myth or legend.[69] Thus, according to Assmann, myth and legend cannot be distinguished from "history" as a part of cultural memory. The significance of an event is not tied to whether or not it is "factual," but by its "truth" seen through its continued relevance to the remembering community in the present.[70] Assmann writes:

> Myth is foundational history that is narrated in order to illuminate the present from the standpoint of its origins. The Exodus, for instance, regardless of any historical accuracy, is the myth behind the foundation of Israel; thus it is celebrated at Pesach and thus it is part of the cultural memory of the Israelites. Through memory, history becomes myth. This does not make it unreal—on the contrary, this

69. Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization,* 37–38.

70. Paul Veyne offers a particularly stimulating discussion of the perception of the past and its relationship to myth. He concludes his book with the insightful quote, "The theme of this book was very simple. Merely by reading the title, anyone with the slightest historical background would immediately have answered, 'but of course they believed in their myths!' We have simply wanted also to make clear that what is true of 'them' is also true of ourselves and to bring out the implications of this primary truth." Paul Veyne, *Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths? An Essay on the Constitutive Imagination,* trans. Paula Wissing (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 128–29.

is what makes it real, in the sense that it becomes a lasting, normative, and formative power.[71]

Assmann's understanding of the relationship of the actual past to a society's cultural memory, therefore is not concerned with the discussion of the historicity of cultural memory. Although Assmann does not dismiss cultural memory as a source for historical inquiry, like Halbwachs, his primary interest is in exploring the constructive, presentist aspects of memory.

2.3.2 The Continuity Perspective

Critics of Halbwachs's presentist posture (and the similar approaches of Jan and Aleida Assmann) agree that memory is malleable but argue that there are constraints placed upon memory which mitigate unbounded fictionalization of the remembered past. This so-called "continuity" (or "essentialist") perspective—primarily associated with the American sociologist Barry Schwartz—insists that the "actual" past carries some normative force in the shaping of collective memory in addition to the "received" past.[72] Critiquing Halbwachs, Schwartz writes:

71. Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization,* 38.

72. Schwartz has made numerous contributions to the field of memory studies. See esp. Barry Schwartz, "The Social Context of Commemoration: A Study in Collective Memory," *SF* 61.2 (1982): 374–402; idem, "Social Change and Collective Memory: The Democratization of George Washington," *ASR* 56.2 (1991): 221–36; and idem, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory* (2000); Note also the SBL volume specifically interacting with his work: Tom Thatcher, ed., *Memory and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity: A Conversation*

> Unfortunately, this [Halbwachs's presentist] perspective has problems of its own. It promotes the idea that our conception of the past is entirely at the mercy of current conditions, that there is no objectivity in events, nothing in history which transcends the peculiarities of the present.[73]

At the heart of the so-called "continuity" approach is the conviction that while memories are always conditioned by the present, there is a limit to the amount of distortion acceptable to the remembering community. As Michael Schudson puts it, "The past is in some respects and under some conditions, highly resistant to efforts to make it over."[74]

In fact, I think the conceptual distance between the presentist and continuity perspectives is not as great as it may initially appear. Neither Halbwachs nor Assmann assert that there *cannot* be any historical value to cultural/collective memory, nor that such memory cannot be used for historiographical purposes. For example, in *La Topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte,* Halbwachs takes seriously that the figure of Jesus *did* exist as an historical person while making it clear that he does not accept the Gospels at face value as historically accurate (he explicitly compares his basic approach toward the historicity of the Gospels as similar to that of Ernst Renan, which is problematic, as noted above).Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 205–6 Throughout the work, Halbwachs does talk about the "actual" past

---

with Barry Schwartz, SemSt 78 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014).

73. Schwartz, "The Social Context of Commemoration," 376.

74. Michael Schudson, "The Present in the Past versus the Past in the Present," *Communication* 11.2 (1989): 105–13.

and allows for the possibility that the Gospels do refer, at least partially, to real events. In other words, he does not make the argument that the Gospels were fabricated of whole-cloth and instead takes the position that the "actual past" is irretrievable and unknowable and that historical memory has no obligation to align with the actual past as such. On the other hand, Schwartz and the continuity perspective never argue that memory is *accurate*, but instead that memory ought not be treated as *entirely* arbitrary. In other words, the two perspectives both agree on the central premise that memory is shaped by society in the present, but they each approach the question of memory's connection to the actual past from opposite ends of the epistemological spectrum.

This difference in perspective, I think, is attributable to the respective fields that Assmann and Schwartz deal with in their own research. As an Egyptologist dealing with literatures from the ancient Near East, Assmann necessarily is reliant on scant documentary evidence that may or may not have any supporting evidence whatsoever. The same can be said of other ancient fields such as biblical studies, Assyriology and Classics. Under these circumstances, the historian *must* approach her sources with an appreciation for the intellectual gap that exists between the historian her source, particularly when not corroborated by an independent alternate source. On the other hand, Schwartz, as an Americanist, is able to marshal a plethora of contemporary sources for reconstructing the collective memory of the antebellum United States. What each scholar is able to assume about his sources speaks to their instincts toward the reliability of those sources. Furthermore, Schwartz deals with a comparatively disenchanted society whose historical consciousness more

closely resembles our own, while Assmann deals with societies for whom myth and legend are not distinguished from history. Their historical methodologies may be the same, but the *kinds* of sources that each field deals with creates a different set of scholarly instincts for dealing with the idea of memory and its relation to the actual past.

Because this dissertation deals with the way that early Judaism interacted with its own received collective memory (rather than how it created those memories to begin with), I will tend to interact with the topic of collective memory from the perspective of Halbwachs and Assmann. This is not to say that I am entirely unsympathetic to Schwartz's critique of a purely presentist approach, only that the particulars of this project preclude the need to discuss the relationship between memory and the "actual" past.

2.4 MEMORY AND REWRITTEN BIBLE

Having laid the theoretical foundation of modern memory studies, we may now turn our attention to the particulars of this study, namely, addressing the way that social memory studies can meaningfully augment the scholarly discussion surrounding Rewritten Bible.[75]

At this point it should be fairly obvious how the Hebrew Bible may be convincingly framed as both the product and progenitor of collective and cultural memory during the late Persian and Early Hellenistic periods. In Halbwachs's terms, the biblical text represents the

75. See also George J. Brooke, "Memory, Cultural Memory and Rewriting Scripture," in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes,* ed. József Zsengellér, JSJsup 166 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 119–36.

common, collective memory of Second Temple Judaism which formed the basis for Jewish collective identity as a people of the land which Yahwehpromised to Abraham and into which Yahwehlead the people of Israel, "with a might hand and an outstretched arm" after their miraculous escape from the land of Egypt and subsequent desert wanderings. Bracketing any discussions of the historicity of these biblical narratives, by the late Second Temple period they would have been perceived as the true and central foundation narratives to any number of Jewish groups both in and out of Persian Yehud and Roman Palestine. In Assmann's terms, the biblical texts—and in particular the stories of the patriarchs, Exodus, and Conquest narratives—carried "a lasting, normative, and formative power,"[76] which can be observed concretely by their preservation both in antiquity (e.g., at Qumran as well in translation) and into the modern era.

The process of textual interpretation, therefore, is itself a mnemonic process. Just as memories are recalled into and shaped by a set of social frameworks which may be alien to their original context, so too the interpretation of texts and traditions is shaped by the social frameworks of the interpreter. Because any single text or narrative represents only a sliver of the thick nexus of ideas that is collective memory, not only is a text always read into new social circumstances, but it is always read into a new literary context and discursive arena. No two readings of a given text will every be the same. Each reading is affected by the collective memory of the reader(s) which is constantly adapting and in flux as new memories are added and others are forgotten.

---

76. Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization,* 38.

Rewritten Bible, therefore, can be understood as a set of snapshots revealing the ways that the collective memory of Second Temple Judaism was being used within Jewish communities (or, at the very least within some scribal circles) to shape remembering communities' identities. This shaping, however, was not a passive process, but elicited creative, constructive participation to not only "read" the past, but to rewrite it as well. These texts themselves would have contributed to the collective memories of their respective groups. The disparate ways that Rewritten Bible texts were passed on or jettisoned from various religious groups in antiquity illustrate the ways that new memories can be added to a group's cultural memory and be adopted as a part of its historical self-understanding. The three texts which I will treat in this dissertation each meet a different outcome. Chronicles—which I have framed (loosely) as a rewriting of Samuel–Kings—was adopted by both Jews and Christians in antiquity as a part of their cultural memory and became a part of both traditions' canon of scripture. The Genesis Apocryphon, on the other hand, seems to have not survived within Judaism beyond the first century CE (although, it may have impacted some later traditions). Finally, Jubilees was not retained in Jewish circles, but *was* passed on within certain segments of early Christianity and remains in liturgical use by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.[77]

77. Leslie Baynes, "Enoch and Jubilees in the Canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church," in *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam,* vol. 2 of *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam,* ed. Eric F. Mason et al., 2 vols., STDJ 153 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 799–818; Bruk A. Asale, "The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Canon of the Scriptures: Neither Open nor Closed," *BT* 67.2 (2016): 202–22.

Simply labeling these Rewritten Bible texts as examples of social or cultural memory, however, is rather uncontroversial. Such an assertion hardly requires a dissertation-length study and the task has already been sufficiently accomplished, to my mind, by Brooke.[78] Thus, this dissertation will attempt to go beyond simply labeling Rewritten Bible texts as exemplars of memory and instead attempt to offer a description of the processes by which Rewritten Bible texts functioned within the collective memory of Second Temple Judaism(s). Many of these processes already exist within the scholarly discourse surrounding Rewritten Bible. For example, from the perspective of textual production, the topics of biblical interpretation, inner-biblical exegesis, and scribal culture are not new to the topic of biblical or Qumran studies. But each can provide valuable insights into the ways that groups of individuals understood and recalled their cultural memory and what in particular they found most valuable about their cultural memories. Approaching Rewritten Bible through the lens of social memory studies attempts to take a step back and address their *function* as the means by which Second Temple Judaism experienced its past in its present. Social memory studies, therefore, is not an alternative to more traditional modes of analysis, but a complement.

Memory studies, therefore, provide a rich toolbox for thinking about and addressing the kinds of *functional* questions which we raised in the first chapter. Discussing the "purpose" or "function" of a text is tantamount to discussing how a text can be both the product of and and participant in collective memory of its society. In other words, framing Rewritten Bible texts within the discourse of social and cultural memory means treating Rewritten Bible texts as

78. Brooke, "Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years," 119–36.

more than creative “exegetical” works but also as cultural products which participate in cultural structures and discourses with concerns other than the explication of sacred texts.

Bibliography

Ansell-Pearson, Keith. "Bergson on Memory." Pages 61–76 in *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates.* Edited by Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz. New York: Fordham University Press, 2011.

Asale, Bruk A. "The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Canon of the Scriptures: Neither Open nor Closed." *BT* 67.2 (2016): 202–22.

Assmann, Aleida. *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization: Functions, Media, Archives.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Assmann, Jan. *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

———. "Memory and Culture." Pages 325–49 in *Memory: A History.* Edited by Dmitri Nikulin. OPC. New York: Oxford University Press.

Baynes, Leslie. "Enoch and Jubilees in the Canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church." Pages 799–818 in *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam.* Vol. 2 of *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam.* Edited by Eric F. Mason, Kelley Coblentz Bautch, Angela Kim Harkins, and Daniel K. Machiela. 2 vols. STDJ 153. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

Berliner, David. "The Abuses of Memory: Reflections on the Memory Boom in Anthropology." *AQ* 78.1 (2005): 197–211.

Brooke, George J. "Memory, Cultural Memory and Rewriting Scripture." Pages 119–36 in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes.* Edited by József Zsengellér. JSJsup 166. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Burns, Joshua Ezra. *The Christian Schism in Jewish History and Jewish Memory.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Carruthers, Mary. "How to Make a Composition: Memory-Craft in Antiquity and in the Middle Ages." Pages 15–29 in *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates.* Edited by Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz. New York: Fordham University Press, 2011.

Childs, Brevard S. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979.

———. *Memory and Tradition in Israel.* SBT 37. London: SCM Press, 1962.

Coman, Alin, Andreas Kolling, Michael Lewis, and William Hirst. "Mnemonic Convergence: From Empirical Data to Large-Scale Dynamics." Pages 256–65 in *Social Computing, Behavioral–Cultural Modeling and Prediction.* Edited by Shanchieh Jay Yang, Ariel M. Greenberg, and Mica Endsley. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, 2012.

Coman, Alin, Ida Momennejad, Rae D. Drach, and Andra Geana. "Mnemonic Convergence in Social Networks: The Emergent Properties of Cognition at a Collective Level." *PNAS* 113.29 (2016): 8171–76.

Confino, Alon. "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method." *AHR* 102.5 (1997): 1386–403.

Coser, Lewis A. Introduction to *On Collective Memory,* by Maurice Halbwachs. Translated by Lewis A. Coser. Pages 1–34. HS. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

De Saussure, Ferdinand. *Cours de linguistique générale: Édition critique.* Edited by Rudolf Engler. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1989.

Galinsky, Karl. "Introduction: Memory and Memory Studies." Pages 1–39 in *Memory in Ancient Rome and Early Christianity.* Edited by Karl Galinsky. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures.* New York: Basic, 1973.

Halbwachs, Maurice. *La Topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte: étude de mémoire collective.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1941.

———. *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire.* F. Alcan, 1925.

———. *On Collective Memory.* Translated by Lewis A. Coser. HS. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

———. *The Collective Memory.* Translated by Francis J. Ditter Jr. and Vida Yazdi Ditter, with an introduction by Mary Douglass. New York: Harper & Row, 1980. Translation of *La mémoire collective.* Bibliothèque de sociologie contemporaine. Paris: University of Paris Press, 1950.

Heschel, Susannah. *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.

Hübenthal, Sandra. "Social and Cultural Memory in Biblical Exegesis: The Quest for an Adequate Application." Pages 175–99 in *Cultural Memory in Biblical Exegesis.* Edited by Pernille Carstens, Trine Hasselbalch, and Niels Peter Lemche. PHSC 17. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2012.

Keith, Chris. "Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research: The First Decade (Part One)." *EC* 6.3 (2015): 354–76.

———. "Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research: The First Decade (Part Two)." *EC* 6.4 (2015): 517–42.

Klein, Kerwin Lee. "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse." Pages 112–37 in *From History to Theory.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011. Reprint of "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse." *Representations* 69 (2000): 127–50.

Le Donne, Anthony. *The Historiographical Jesus: Memory, Typology, and the Son of David.* Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009.

Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." In "Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory." *Representations* 26, 1989, 7–24.

———. *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past.* Edited by Lawrence D. Kritzman. Translated by Arthur Goldhammer. 3 vols. European Perspectives. New York: Columbia University Press. Translation of Pierre Nora, ed. *Les Lieux de mémoire.* 7 vols. Paris: Gallimard.

Olick, Jeffrey K., and Joyce Robbins. "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices." *ARS* 24 (1998): 105–40.

Olick, Jeffrey K., Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy. "Introduction." Pages 3–62 in *The Collective Memory Reader.* Edited by Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Pioske, Daniel. "Retracing a Remembered Past: Methodological Remarks on Memory, History, and the Hebrew Bible." *BibInt* 23.3 (2015): 291–315.

Rodríguez, Rafael. *Structuring Early Christian Memory: Jesus in Tradition, Performance, and Text.* LNTS. London: T & T Clark, 2010.

Rosenfeld, Graviel D. "A Looming Crash or a Soft Landing? Forcasting the Future of the Memory 'Industry'." *JMH* 81.1 (2009): 122–58.

Schudson, Michael. "The Present in the Past versus the Past in the Present." *Communication* 11.2 (1989): 105–13.

Schwartz, Barry. *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory.* 2000.

———. "Social Change and Collective Memory: The Democratization of George Washington." *ASR* 56.2 (1991): 221–36.

———. "The Social Context of Commemoration: A Study in Collective Memory." *SF* 61.2 (1982): 374–402.

Smith, Philip, and Alexander Riley. *Cultural Theory: An Introduction.* 2nd ed. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2009.

Terdiman, Richard. "Memory in Freud." Pages 93–108 in *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates.* Edited by Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz. New York: Fordham University Press, 2011.

Vansina, Jan. *Oral Tradition as History.* Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.

Verovšek, Peter J. "Collective Memory, Politics, and the Influence of the Past: The Politics of Memory as a Research Paradigm." *PGI* 4.3 (2016): 529–43.

Veyne, Paul. *Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths? An Essay on the Constitutive Imagination.* Translated by Paula Wissing. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Winter, Jay. *Remembering War: The Great War between Memory and History in the 20th Century.* New Haven: Yale Univerisity Press, 2006.

Yamashiro, Jeremy K., and William Hirst. "Mnemonic Convergence in a Social Network: Collective Memory and Extended Influence." *JARMC* 3.4 (2014): 272–79.

Yerushalmi, Yosef Hayim. *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory.* SASLJS. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982. Repr., New York: Schocken, 1989.