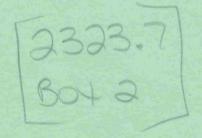
The Bulletin 2000/01

The Canadian Society of Biblical Studies La société canadienne des études bibliques

> Volume 60 John L. McLaughlin, Editor



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Creative Imitation in the Hebrew Bible

John Van Seters University of North Carolina

Introduction

One of the most common features in biblical literature that has given rise to many different explanations and competing methodologies is that of similarity between texts of different authors or literary units. Parallel stories and laws, for instance, form the basis for the discussion of sources and their relationship to each other in the Documentary Hypothesis of Pentateuchal criticism, or the Synoptic problem and the recovery of Q in New Testament studies. Formal and structural similarity has lead to form criticism with a common social context or *Sitz im Leben* as the basis for explaining common features in different literary works. In the 19th and 20th century quest for origins, social, cultural, and religious-tradition was the key to literary analysis, and when wedded to form criticism, tradition-history was thought to recover the primitive pre-literary traditions behind the shared heritage of parallel versions.

As a counterpart to the recovery of the earliest forms of tradition composition, biblical scholars also developed the method of redaction-criticism to account for the union of parallel sources. At times these shadowy redactors tolerated similarity and redundancy; at other times they eliminated it. They were originally thought to be the hidden presence that merely combined the sources to each other, but of late more and more literary material is being attributed to them so that in the Pentateuch and historical books they have become deuteronomistic or priestly redactors depending upon the similarity of their style and language to the main literary works of the Deuteronomist (Deuteronomy–2 Kings) or the Priestly Writer (in Genesis–Numbers). The result of all this literary analysis, based largely on the observed similarity of texts, is an exceedingly complex explanation of literary composition, some of which is contradictory and its various methods mutually exclusive.

As if largely in defiance or despair, a new method has arisen to take the place of these diachronic approaches to similarity between texts under the rubric of "intertextuality." This assumes the present canon of biblical texts and familiarity with its content by readers. The interconnections are those of the reader without serious consideration of authorial intention. This mode of interpretation, which rejects all explanation of composition, is only possible because the Hebrew Bible is largely an anthology of anonymous and undated works within a single codex. Thus, in the recent work, The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation, the Glossary defines intertextuality as "the mutual relationship among texts within a given corpus of literature" (Barton, 1998: xiv, cf. also p. 21). This definition only works when the "given corpus" is the biblical canon.1

The situation in the literary canon of classical studies is entirely otherwise because from the earliest period of literary composition, each work has been identified with a particular author living at a particular time in a particular place. They are not combined or confused so that undisputed diachronic comparison is entirely possible between such works. Within this huge corpus of classical works from Greece and Rome there is the same widespread phenomenon of similarity both in form and content between literary works. The ancients themselves recognized such interconnections and for the most part had no difficulty in identifying which element in a literary work was original and which was its imitation. In fact, there is much learned discussion in Greek and Roman authors about imitation (mimesis/imitatio) as a fundamental component in literary composition. It becomes an important subject for discussion in classical rhetoric and basic to literary criticism from antiquity to the present.2

When one turns back again to biblical literary criticism to consider the problems of similarity between texts one finds almost no discussion of the practice of literary imitation in the composition of biblical texts. It takes no more than a moment's reflection to realize that imitation plays a major role in the creation of literary works and objects of art everywhere and in all ages. The most creative geniuses imitate, and improve on, the works of predecessors. Why should this not be the case within biblical literature? And if it is the case, then why should we not begin with the most elementary

¹So also Carroll (1993:55-61) where canon becomes the basis for the application of intertextuality to biblical studies.

²See under "imitatio" in OCD: 749; also "imitatio" in Ueding, 1998:235-46. See also Kennedy, 1980:116-119; Conte, 1986:23-31. For convenient reference to classical sources on imitation see Quintilian and

discussion about imitation such as we find within the classical tradition of rhetoric? Literary imitation is intertextual but within the limited diachronic sense of one author's use of another. This is the primary understanding of intertextuality in classical studies (Hornblower, 1994:54-69). Thus, literary imitation is the first and most obvious way of addressing similarity between sources and documents. The problem in the Hebrew Bible lies in the anonymity of its authors as compared with Greek authors, which makes direction of dependence more difficult to decide, but that does not mean that literary dependence did not exist.

Literary imitation is form-critical in the sense that it is the means by which a genre is established, perpetuated, developed, diversified and transformed. Literary imitation is likewise the means by which tradition is shaped and transmitted in a literary form. In fact, all those aspects of literary criticism that have their basis in addressing similarity between texts are concerned with literary imitation. What is remarkable in biblical studies is that scholars can treat intertextuality, source criticism, form-criticism and tradition-history and completely avoid any discussion of the presence and significance of literary imitation in the text.

Let us, therefore, proceed with some basic observations about literary imitation. First of all, literary imitation arises out of a universal social context, that of education of the young. Imitation is the basis of all forms of training and education, including scribal education and instruction in schools. In Mesopotamia and Egypt, this involves the copying of schools texts, particularly the practical genre of letters, administrative texts and the like, so important to the scribal craft. But among school texts were literary works as well, representing the "classics" of an earlier age.3 It is in the Hellenistic period, however, that the notion of "the classics" (the Books, ta biblia) especially comes to the fore (Russell, 1979:3). These are the texts that a literate group in training are called upon to master, to imitate or emulate in form, style and quality.

The principles of imitation are developed by a number of classical authors and rhetoricians, and we will set these forth in summary fashion. While scribal training often involved copying of model texts, this form of strict imitation as merely producing copies was not enough. In the production

Longinus in Russell and Winterbottom, 1972: 400-404; 475-76.

³See the remarks on Egyptian scribal education by E. F. Wente in Sasson, 1995, vol. 4, 2215-17; and L. E. Pearce on Mesopotamia in ibid., 4, 2270-72.

of new literary compositions, the first task is to understand and absorb the original model and then to develop it creatively. The proper form and even the language had to be learned because literary language tends to be conservative of the classical form.

The principles of creative imitation are: first, to chose an appropriate object or model to imitate and to avoid the slavish copying in content or style of an earlier author; second, to emulate the spirit rather than the letter; third, to acknowledge by allusion or reference the borrowing for any informed reader; fourth, to make the borrowing one's own by providing a new literary setting and meaning; and fifth, to aspire to compete with the model and even offer a rival version of the borrowed work.4

A topic invoking much discussion and debate of these principles is plagiarism (theft).5 How does one imitate or emulate another work without plagiarizing? (It is a lesson that students and even some scholars find hard to learn.) The fact of imitation has to be obvious and acknowledged. (Antiquity did not use footnotes.) Yet it is clear, for instance, that Virgil is imitating Homer and is therefore not accused of theft. Creative imitation also combines form and content from more than one source. (A plurality of sources is research.) The charge of plagiarism was quite common and even made against some famous authors so that care must be taken to avoid it.

An important feature of imitation that negates the charge of theft is allusion, i.e., an acknowledgement of source. This may be quite direct and obvious or it may be indirect and subtle. However, not every imitation of a prior author should be construed as an allusion or "echo." It may be just the borrowing of a motif or stylistic feature. To be an allusion the author must have the cooperation of the reader (listener) in recognizing the source to make the allusion effective. Allusion acknowledges the imitation of an earlier model but can also have a variety of literary functions.

For instance, a prominent use of imitative allusion in classical literature, particularly Greek literature, is parody.6 This certainly depends upon the recognition of the allusion to be effective. While its primary use, as in Comedy, may be to entertain, it also plays a major role in Plato's critique of the sophists and in other forms of literature, including historiography. Closely related are the uses of irony and satire which likewise often depend heavily upon allusion for their effectiveness. Here it is often the case that the model imitated is turned into its "mirror" image, the opposite to what is stated and expected. Such imitation also involves the principle of competition or rivalry with the model.

Literary imitation may appear to us more appropriate to some genres, such as poetry and fiction, and less so to other forms of literature, such as historiography. The recording of facts, after all, cannot be a matter of imitation. Indeed, the historian Polybius argued that one should only engage in the recording of recent history, lest he/she merely copy or plagiarize earlier historians, as he accused many of doing.7 Nevertheless, the fashioning of a narrative about past events left a lot of scope for imitation of form, style and even content of previous historians, and not merely as sources. Herodotus imitates Homer's epics, both by direct and indirect allusion, although the literary form is far different (Hornblower, 1994:65-67).

Imitation usually involves two or more authors in which the earlier serves as the model and the later one the imitator. Yet self imitation is also possible, even in historiography. There are instances in classical historiography in which historians may have a detailed account of one particular event and use it as a model to "flesh out" another analogous situation about which his information is minimal or non-existent (see Woodman, 1979:143-155). It is a way of presenting the past in an account "as seems to him likely," which in antiquity gave the historian a lot of latitude (Pearson, 1987: 42-44). Creative imitation often means that the item or feature imitated finds a place in an entirely new context and form. Of course the mastery of one form of literature usually means the emulation of previous excellent models, whether poetic, dramatic, historical, etc. But schooling in the "classics," which may cover a range of genres, can lead to the employment of poetic passages, prophetic oracles, political oration or pieces of wisdom within prose histories. If time permitted, this could be demonstrated with many classical examples, not the least of which is Herodotus who uses all of these forms and many more. The new literary context may or may not hint at the former Sitz im Leben of the older form. The point is that it may be an imitation and not an actual exemplar of a genre that existed independent of its place in literature. This is true of the many instances of poetry within prose narration in the Hebrew Bible.

Imitation in Chronicles

What does all this have to do with biblical literature? For the rest of this lecture I want to give a set of examples that illustrate the appropriateness of taking seriously the principles of creative imitation that I have suggested

⁴This list of principles is drawn from Russell (1979:16).

⁵See "plagiarism" in OCD, 1188.

⁶See "parody" in OCD, 1114-1115

above. I want to restrict myself primarily to works of historiography, which for me also includes the Pentateuch. The most obvious example of imitation. which includes large blocks of direct copying, is that of Chronicles' imitation of Samuel-Kings. The question that comes immediately to mind from the classical discussion is: Is this plagiarism? It may of course be assumed that most readers will be well aware of the alternate version of the history, but the important question is: How does the author of Chronicles wish us to understand this similarity? I think the answer to this question lies in the Chronicler's citation of sources. He uses a large number of different source references which are almost certainly fictitious, e.g., "the Chronicles of Samuel the seer," "the Chronicles of Nathan the prophet," "the Chronicles of Gad the seer" (1 Chron 29:29) for the history of David! Almost all his citations are in the same style and location in the narrative as those in Kings so it has nothing to do with accounting for the additional information that is not in Samuel-Kings.⁸ Rather, it is an effort to disguise the fact that his presentation differs from his only real source for the monarchy, Samuel-Kings, for clear ideological reasons, and to justify all the fictions that he has added to his account. The imitation, therefore, is plagiarism not only because the source is not clearly acknowledged, but there is also the attempt to hide the fact of borrowing by suggesting primary sources that did not exist.9

Chronicles' imitation of Samuel-Kings likewise illustrates the principle of rivalry that was a common feature among different versions of national histories in antiquity. The idealization of David and Solomon by the omission of anything negative about them, the omission of the entire history of the Northern Kingdom as a rebel state, the inclusion of the anachronism of the priestly code and its cultus, the morality stories on the individual kings, all of these set his view of the monarchy at odds with the Deuteronomistic History. It could never hope to replace the older "classic" version of the history, but by addition it could suggest an alternate, preferred view of events based upon direct "inspired" sources whose word could never be doubted.

Imitation in the Pentateuch

Creative imitation likewise explains the parallels between Deuteronomy and Exodus-Numbers. The style of Deuteronomy as a recapitulation of earlier

⁸Cf. the discussion of the Chronicler's sources by Japhet (1993:19–23) and Williamson (1982:17-19).

⁹Another instance of a completely fictitious source citation that imitates Kings is in Esther 10:2 which suggests that the historicity of the story of Esther is supported by the "book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and

events in the wilderness experience, leading up to Moses' final address in Moab before his death, allows the skillful historian and imitator (J) to reconstruct the "original" events. This he does in the case of the Sinai/Horeb theophany, the affair of the golden calf, the spying expedition from the south, and the conquest of the lands east of the Jordan. I have repeatedly argued for the last 30 years that Deuteronomy's versions of these accounts are the earlier ones and that J is making use of them (see Van Seters, 1994). Even so J does not follow the accounts in Deuteronomy exactly, but modifies them as rival versions. He also follows the principle of using multiple sources where available. This can be seen in the golden calf episode in Exodus 32, which combines elements from Deuteronomy 9-10 with Dtr's account of Jeroboam's construction of "golden calves" (Van Seters, 1994:290-318). It is especially evident as well in the account of the conquest of Sihon's kingdom in Num 21:21-31, which combines Deuteronomy's version (ch. 2) in which Israel goes through Edom and Moab with the version in Judg 11:14-26, in which Israel goes around Edom and Moab before encountering Sihon. In addition J adds a poem from Jer 48:45-47, because it mentions Heshbon, and adapts it to this new context (Van Seters, 1994:383-404).

These close verbal connections are not to be attributed to a number of redactors who would seem to gloss the text at will. The invention of such Dtr redactors to account for similarity of this kind in Genesis to Numbers has been one of the most serious detriments to literary analysis of the Pentateuch. This is especially the case when one encounters language and phraseology that is so characteristic of the Deuteronomic tradition. In the divine appearance to Abraham before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, God says in a soliloguy: "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed through him? No, for I have chosen him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of Yahweh by doing what is righteous and just, in order that Yahweh may bring about for Abraham what he has promised him" (Gen 18:17-19). This notion of the father teaching the children the way of Yahweh in order to assure divine blessing is directly paralleled in Deuteronomy (11:18-21), but in the latter the instruction is certainly to be in the laws of Deuteronomy. This cannot be what is intended in Genesis, so that while the motif of parental instruction in Deuteronomy is imitated, it is given an entirely different meaning and setting.

Persia."

In a similar fashion, God extends to Isaac his promises to Abraham: "because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (Gen 26:5). Most commentators would have us believe that a rather mindless Dtr redactor added these characteristic phrases without thinking about the fact that Abraham came before Moses and did not have the Deuteronomic law, to which these phrases always refer. If we reject that possibility as unlikely, then what is the alternative? The single act of obedience in Abraham's willingness to offer up his only son is equated by this author (J) as equivalent to obedience to the whole law. Furthermore, J also makes use of a leading motif from the Deuteronomistic History. Just as David's complete obedience to all God's laws, according to Dtr, meant that the promise of an eternal dynasty would extend to all his offspring, so Abraham's obedience means that the divine promises to him of numerous offspring and land will come to his descendants for his sake. This is creative imitation of a theme in the prior national history with important ideological and theological consequences.

Like some of the classical historians, J also engages in self-imitation. Within his sources are two parallel accounts of the threat to the ancestress (Gen 12:10-20 and ch. 20). J uses elements from both these accounts to create a version for the story of Isaac, about whom he has no traditions (Van Seters, 1975:167-191). The direct allusion to the two previous stories is obvious in the introduction: "Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines. And Yahweh appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt" So Isaac dwelt in Gerar." The references are clear. The subsequent episodes about digging wells likewise imitates the account in the Abraham story in Gen 21:22-34, with the same reference back to the "days of Abraham." This is an obvious case of literary imitation and there is no need to invent a redactor for these cross-references. Nor is it a case of independent parallel traditions that must be meticulously extracted from the later editorial modifications of the stories. The widespread practice of creative imitation in antiquity accounts for the similarities entirely.

Imitation in the Court History

There is another literary masterpiece in the Hebrew Bible that I would like to consider in terms of the principles of creative imitation, and that is the socalled Succession Narrative, or what I prefer to call the Court History of David (=CH), in 2 Samuel 2-4, 9-20, and 1 Kings 1-2. It is increasingly recognized today that there are many parallels between CH and the Deuteronomistic History, and it is generally assumed, without argument, that CH is the earlier of the two, with the result that the Dtr elements that show up in CH are merely "redactional." I have disputed the priority of CH in previous publications and cannot repeat all of my arguments here (Van Seters, 1983:277-91; 2000). What I want to do instead is to apply the principles of imitatio to a few examples of similarity out of many. 10

The most famous episode in CH is David's affair with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah in 2 Samuel 11-12. It contains both direct and indirect references to stories that it imitates. The writer, in his account of the death of Uriah, makes reference to the death of Abimelech, son of Jerubbaal in Judges and assumes this knowledge by the reader as well. In addition, within the speech of Nathan, there are direct allusions to David's anointing in 1 Samuel 16 and to the David's flight from Saul in the earlier story outside of the CH. To these we will return shortly.

Most of the allusions are indirect but nevertheless vital to the interpretation of the story as a whole. As in the case of the Yahwist, the best clue to such allusions to the DtrH is language and phraseology which some scholars try to remove by appeal to their ubiquitous redactor. But that explanatory strategy will not do. The fact is that Dtr consistently views David as the ideal ruler who always did what was pleasing in the eyes of Yahweh and this is completely contradicted by the Bathsheba/Uriah affair. In the Dtr History there are three kings who "do what is evil in the eyes of Yahweh" and thus are the opposite to David, viz, Saul, Jeroboam and Ahab. Since David's actions in CH are labeled in the same way: "What David did was evil in the eyes of Yahweh," we might compare this episode with those in DtrH having to do with these three kings.

In 1 Kings 21 we have, within Dtr's story of Ahab, an episode that focuses upon a similar use of the king's abuse of royal power that leads to murder, in this case the murder of Naboth (Noth, 1981:71; McKenzie,1991: 67-69). Indeed, the similarity of this episode in DtrH with the Bathsheba affair is striking.11 In the Ahab story we have a king who desires to obtain some property in the vicinity of the palace, at first through legitimate, nonviolent means, and then when he is frustrated through the surreptitious means

¹⁰In a recent MA thesis "The Court History and the Yahwistic Genesis Texts: Interpreting their Relationship in Terms of a Model of Literary Imitation" (The University of North Carolina, 2000), Kristine Irish has argued that CH has made extensive use of J and imitated him in a number of episodes. I have chosen not to repeat them here, although they deserve serious consideration in this discussion of imitation.

¹¹See now White, 1997: 17-24. There is also a brief comment on the

of judicial murder. As soon as he lays claim to the property, God intervenes with his prophet who confronts him with his crime. He announces a judgment which includes a historical résumé of previous evil kings and in which the punishment will fall on Ahab's entire household and its execution will be made to fit the crime. When Ahab shows deep remorse, there is a mitigation of the sentence in his own lifetime. 12

Virtually every element of this story has its equivalent in the David-Bathsheba affair. 13 David too desires property in the vicinity of his palace, in this case another man's wife. (In Nathan's parable she is considered another man's property.) When he does secretly take her and make her pregnant, he tries by non-violent means to cover up his act. This fails and so he undertakes surreptitiously to murder the husband. After David takes possession of Uriah's wife, God intervenes by sending his prophet to confront him with his crime and, following a historical résumé of David's rise to power, passes sentence in which the punishment is made to fit the crime, a punishment that will include the whole household. When David admits his sin, God mitigates the punishment so that David himself does not die, but the rest of the sentence remains.

Furthermore, the similarity of the two stories goes beyond the matter of structure and plot and includes specific language. What David does is "evil in the eyes of Yahweh" (11:26), a judgment that is repeated by Nathan as well: "Why have you despised the word of Yahweh to do what is evil in his sight?" This statement of judgment is very similar to that uttered by Elijah: "Because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of Yahweh." 14

similarity in Garsiel, 1993: 261.

¹²For the purposes of the following comparison it makes no difference whether the whole of 1 Kings 21 is considered the work of Dtr or only the additions in vv. 20b-29. The similarities encompass the whole unit.

¹³See the recent works of Jones (1990) and Bailey (1990). Both ascribe a major role to Dtr in shaping older materials (not necessarily the Succession Narrative) to create the present narrative. Nevertheless, they do not compare it with parallel texts in DtrH. White (1997:17-24) simply adopts the position of Rost on the composition and dating of this unit and has no discussion on the dtr character of Nathan's prophecy in 2 Samuel 12. She also argues that 1 Kings 21 is dependent upon the Bathsheba-Nathan narrative of 2 Samuel 11-12. This would result in a situation in which Dtr modelled the behavior of Ahab, the king that he viewed as the worst of all the Northern kings, on that of David his royal ideal. That is simply not credible.

¹⁴White (1997:34), regards 1 Kings 21:20b as a Dtr addition to the

Such statements are reserved by Dtr for the worst kings and the basis for the demise of their dynasties and the downfall of the two kingdoms. Ahab is considered by the DtrH as the very worst of all, but how is he any different from David? They both receive the same kind of judgment. In David's case this refers both to events during his reign, but also to later acts of violence during the entire period of his dynasty (viz, to the end of the Judean monarchy): "The sword shall not depart from your house (dynasty) for ever." That judgment is no less severe than that passed upon Ahab.

The fact that the language is similar to that used by Dtr has led many to the erroneous view that this is a Dtr redactor (Bailey, 1990; Dietrich, 1987:36-41; Jones, 1990:93-117; Dietrich and Naumann, 1995:233-56). But we can say for a certainty that it is not Dtr. It is simply not possible to believe that at one point David can be accused of being a king who, like Ahab, does evil in the eyes of Yahweh and despises the word of Yahweh, which can only mean the Decalogue in this context, 15 and at another point be heaped with praise for doing only what was right in the eyes of Yahweh and for being completely obedient to all his laws.

Furthermore, Nathan's judgment speech makes a clear allusion to the prior story of Saul and David's rise in its Dtr version. The historical résumé. refers to David's anointing by Samuel (1 Sam 16:1-13), which is part of a larger unit in 1 Sam 15:1-16:13 that includes an account of Saul's rejection by God (Van Seters, 1983:260-64), alluded to by Nathan (in 2 Sam 12:8) and a favorite theme within the Court History. In this story of Saul's rejection, Saul is also accused of doing "what is evil in the eyes of Yahweh" (v. 19) and of rejecting the "word of Yahweh" (vv. 23, 26) which is very similar to Nathan's accusation of David. 16 Saul also admits his sin: "I have sinned." as

older narrative but says nothing about the parallel use of the same language in the Nathan prophecy.

¹⁵The use of the phrase, "word of Yahweh" (dbr yhwh) is quite remarkable here. It is consistently used in DtrH in this situation to mean a specific oracle from Yahweh given previously by the prophet. This is also its usual meaning in the prophetic literature. By extension it can also refer to a specific command given by God through Moses. But here it cannot have either of these meanings. It must refer in a more general way to the established written expression of the divine will as reflected in the Law and specifically in the Decalogue. This is the usage that is reflected in late texts of the Priestly corpus and Chronicles.

¹⁶But in 1 Sam 15:23, 26 the "word of Yahweh" refers specifically to the divine command given to Saul through Samuel.

David does, but then pleads for forgiveness, which David does not do. Yet Saul receives no forgiveness, only a judgment on his future dynasty. It should also be noted that Samuel precedes his statement of judgment by a historical résumé of Saul's rise to power similar to the one given by Nathan to David. These similarities all point to the Court History's imitation of the typical prophetic judgment scenes in DtrH.

The motif of the child of the king that dies because of the sin of the father suggests vet another comparison with DtrH. In this case it is the child of Jeroboam who becomes ill (1 Kings 14). When his wife consults the prophet Ahijah about her child, he declares to her the divine judgment in a manner very similar to that of Nathan, beginning with the historical résumé: "Because I raised you from among the people and made you leader over my people Israel, and tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you" (v. 8). However, Ahijah then continues with a comparison between Jeroboam and David: "And yet you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments, and followed me with all his heart, doing only what was right in my eyes, but you have done evil above all who were before you" (vv. 8-9). This speech is clearly not by the same hand as the Nathan reprimand. Ahijah continues with his judgment of Jeroboam in a manner similar to that of Ahab, which consists of punishment on the house of Jeroboam, including the sick child.

Some scholars would solve this problem by assigning the Bathsheba/Uuriah affair to a later post-Dtr redactor. However, the interconnections between it and other episodes, such as the revolt of Absalom and the final succession to the throne, are too strong to permit such an easy solution. Furthermore, the whole of the account of Absolom's revolt is filled with the same kind of imitation and allusion. I have dealt with a number of these in another place and will not repeat them here (Van Seters, 2000). Let me just add a few small details. In David's flight from Jerusalem before Absolom he seems to take a very long time to cover a very short distance. Just outside the city he stops to review the troops. Among them is a band of 600 Philistines (Cerethites, Pelethites, Gittites) under the command of Ittai of Gath. He is described as a foreigner and an exile who with his men have been residing in Jerusalem with their families. But why is he an exile from Gath? No explanation is given. There is also some question about whether he should accompany David but he persuades David of his loyalty and is permitted to go with them. This is remarkably similar to the situation in which David is in exile in Gath with 600 Israelites because he is in flight from Saul (1 Samuel 27) and in a military review before a battle between the Philistines and Israel a question is raised about David's loyalty. In his case he is not permitted to go with the king of Gath. It seems clear that the episode in CH has been constructed in imitation of the earlier David story.

After this lengthy review of the troops by David, the people and the king are crossing the brook Kidron, when who shows up a little late but the two priests Abiathar and Zadok with the Levites bearing the Ark of the Covenant of God. They set down the Ark "until all of the people pass over (Kidron?) from the city." Then they are told to return. Of course the mention of the Levites carrying the Ark looks Deuteronomistic and so is blamed on a redactor. But the whole scene is reminiscent of the crossing of the Jordan, and repeats almost verbatim the phrase "until/as soon as the entire people had passed over" (Josh 4:11; 2 Sam 15:24). In this case the assistance of the Ark to help the people cross the Kidron is imitation that borders on parody. 17

Conclusion

The Hebrew Bible is full of imitation of one author by another, some of it creative, some merely plagiarism. For the Chronicler, the "Primary History" (Genesis to 2 Kings) is already a "classical" corpus worthy of imitation, as Homer was for many later authors. That did not prevent the Chronicler from presenting a rival version under the guise of using other "sources" to account for his inventions. I have argued that the parallels among the Pentateuchal sources are all cases of imitation and should be treated as such, in ways similar to the discussion of mimesis/imitatio in classical studies. Such an understanding of intertextuality is entirely compatible with my own supplementary hypothesis of the Pentateuch (Van Seters, 1999:77-79). I have also tried to demonstrate the applicability of imitatio to DtrH and its relationship to the Court History. What is widely regarded as the finest and most complex piece of prose narrative in the Hebrew Bible does not arise at the beginning of this literary development, but through a process of creative imitation and as a rival to the claims of the DtrH concerning the "house of David."

I would also argue that imitation is the creative impulse throughout all forms of literature in the Hebrew Bible and also in the New Testament, in both the gospels, where Mark becomes the model of imitation, and in the epistles, where the genuine letters of Paul are models for the pastorals and others, as well as the non-Pauline letters and the post-canonical tradition. But

¹⁷An entirely different reading of these texts and their relationship with Joshua 3-4 is given by Polzin (1993: 203-216) because he regards the whole of Joshua to Samuel-Kings as the work of DtrH and makes no diachronic distinction.

Dietrich, W. and T. Naumann
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that is outside my field of competence. Within the Hebrew Bible at least, what often passes for form-criticism, tradition-history and redaction-criticism could better be dealt with by applying the principles of *imitatio*. The same goes for the current discussion of intertextuality. It should go without saying that authors and artists from time immemorial have always imitated the products of their predecessors, whether to emulate the best or to rival and dispute the older traditions. They may refer or allude to prior works, to extend or modify or even parody the objects they imitate. Or they may imitate by stealth, plagiarizing to claim credit for the labours of others. There seems to be tremendous resistance in biblical studies to admitting either invention or imitation in the production of biblical texts. Creative imitation involves both and it is high time that we engage in intensive discussion about its principles and possibilities in the literary study of the Hebrew Bible.

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LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DES ÉTUDES BIBLIOUES 23

Minutes of the 2000 CSBS **Annual General Meeting**

University of Alberta Edmonton, Alberta May 25, 15h15-16h25

Present: John Van Seters, Robert Culley, Lloyd Gaston, John Sandys-Wunsch, Diane Wudel, Ritva Williams, Steven Muir, F. V. Greifenhagen, James Linville, Roy Jeal, Michele Murray, David Bergen, Dietmar Neufeld, Anne Moore, Cecilia Wassen, Mary Louise Mitchell, Steve Wilson, John L. McLaughlin, Lissa Wray, Adrian Leske, James Linville, Ehud Ben Zvi, Andy Reimer, William Alexander, Mary Ann Beavis, Eileen Schuller, Colleen Shantz, Edith Humphrey, Tony Cummins, Nicola Denzey, John Marshall, Peter Richardson, Iain Provan, David Hawkin, John F. Horman, Jo-Ann Badley, Marion Taylor, Harold Remus, Margaret Macdonald, Tony Chartrand-Burke, Keir Hammer, David Jobling, Terry Donaldson, John Kloppenborg, Daniel Smith, Jim Knight, Tyler Williams, Bradley McLean, Richard Ascough, Fred Wisse, J. Richard Middleton, William Klassen, Wayne O. McCready, Dilys Patterson, Rebecca Idestrom, Daniel Fraikin, Michel Desjardins, William Morrow.

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as circulated (Morrow/Remus).

2. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (June 2, 1999) were approved as circulated (Fraikin/McLaughlin).

3. President's Report

John Van Seters began by thanking those present for having come, and Executive members for their work. He stated that the society was in good health.

He announced the death of Harvey J. Kugelmass, noting that an obituary would appear in an upcoming issue of Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses. This announcement was followed by a minute of silence.

4. Executive Secretary's Report

Michel Desjardins announced the dates of the CSBS meeting at next year's Congress, set to take place at l'Université Laval: Thursday May 24 through

Saturday May 26 (Congress dates are May 23-30).

Terry Donaldson's book, Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Caesarea Maritima (ESCJ 8), emerging out of the Religious Rivalries Seminar. has just appeared and will be available the following day at the WLUP display. The Second Mailing was sent electronically (only) to members with email access, and book announcements and other news will continue to be sent to members electronically as they are received (keep that information coming!).

Concerning the Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada (HSSFC), which now represents more than 24,000 researchers in 68 learned societies (including ours) and 69 universities and colleges across Canada (http://www.hssfc.ca/), there are four recent points to report: SSHRCC travel grant funding is about to be reviewed, and society members are encouraged to write to the SSHRCC president, Marc Renaud, to make a case for how important these travel grants are to the health of our activities; template letters exist on the HSSFC website that can be modified and sent to government officials to advocate for humanists and social scientists; HSSFC dues are likely to rise after the November meeting; and one of the topics selected as a 2001 Congress interdisciplinary colloquium is "plagues and viruses"—anyone interested in working with others on this topic should contact Edith Humphrey as soon as possible. M. Desiardins will keep members informed of relevant Federation activities through email announcements, and welcomes input from CSBS members

Richard Ascough announced funding possibilities available through the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning (http://www.wabashcenter.wabash. edu).

5. Student Member-at-Large's Report

David Bergen reported on the special student session organized for the conference ("How to evaluate/assess student learning in biblical studies courses?"), and encouraged members to pass along to him or his successor suggestions for next year.

Student membership numbers have declined. The student Member-at-Large will be working to explore reasons and suggest ways to make the society better known to students and better able to meet student needs. Suggestions, again, are welcomed.

6. Nominations

On behalf of the rest of the Executive, John Kloppenborg Verbin announced that Bill Morrow would be stepping down at the end of this meeting, after his term as Treasurer/Membership Secretary. Then he turned to nominations of new Executive members, and submitted the following slate for Executive positions: Ehud Ben Zvi as Vice-President, Dietmar Neufeld as Treasurer/Membership Secretary, and David Bergen, ongoing as student Member-at-Large. With no other nominations coming from the floor, and following a motion (Richardson/McCready; approved) that nominations close, the three were acclaimed, then thanked for their willingness to serve the

7. Programme Coordinator's Report

society.

Edith Humphrey thanked members for the high quality of the paper proposals that reached her this year, and encouraged members to consider participating as zealously next year. She also thanked Francis Landy and Willi Braun for their on-site help in arranging rooms, dinner and the million and one other things that always need to be done behind the scenes to ensure the quality of a meeting.

- 8. Communications Officer's Report John McLaughlin reported on the following issues:
- * He encouraged members to consult the CSBS and the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion websites (http://www.ccsr.ca/csbs/; http://www.ccsr.ca), noting that he welcomed feedback on the society website that he manages.
- * He also urged members to continue to send him news to distribute to others via the society email list, and to ensure that he receive any changes in people's email addresses.
- * He noted the publication and distribution of this year's CSBS Bulletin, welcoming suggestions for changes in next year's.
- * He indicated his intention to engage the media more directly in the coming year.
- * He encouraged members to recommend outstanding books in Christian origins for consideration for the upcoming Frank W. Beare Book Award, with formal notification of the award to go out in the Fall in the First Mailing. (Planning is underway to introduce the parallel R. B. Y. Scott Book Award for the area of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament.)
- * He reminded members that this year he was the society's representative to the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, referred to the electronic report

he submitted to members earlier after the January Board meeting, and noted the usefulness of the Corporation to CSBS members.

- 9. Treasurer and Membership Secretary's Report William Morrow, acting as Membership Secretary and as Treasurer touched on the following points:
- * He reviewed the membership statistics (277 in 1998, 255 in 1999, 266 in 2000—including nominated members), noting the need in this regard for attention rather than worry. He then read this year's list of nominees for membership (Keith Bodner, Frank Clancy, Theodore de Bruyn, Karen Eliasen, Alyda Faber, Alain Gignac, Susan Haber, James Knight, James Linville, Daniel Miller, Andy Reimer, Marc Saunders, Andréa Schmidt, Jerry Shepherd, Daniel Smith, Wade White, B. Diane Wudel), and moved (Morrow/Richardson; approved) that they be accepted as members of the Society. New members were welcomed.
- * He reported that the SSHRCC travel grants were being reviewed, and encouraged members to lobby the SSHRCC president, Marc Renaud (http://www.sshrc.ca/english/index.html). Then he added that this year's travel funds, based on a SSHRCC grant (\$4,755) and money he withheld for this purpose from last year's grant (\$956), was distributed to CSBS Congress participants at a ration of 50% of the request from students and 40% for others.
- * He then distributed and reviewed his financial report. Thanks to prudent financial management by the Executive and wise investments by the Endowment Committee (chaired by Wayne McCready; including Peter Richardson, Harold Remus and William Klassen), the society remains debt-free and is able to fund its projects effectively, albeit frugally. HSSFC fees will likely rise this year. Restricted funds, especially those used to fund the Craigie, Founders and Jeremias prizes, need to increase their endowment base in order to continue to serve their purposes. One recommendation that came from the floor: that the Executive consider the possibility and legality of doing biannual rather than annual audits, and that the CCSR representative consult with the Corporation on possible joint-society cooperation in this regard.
- * He moved (Morrow/McCready; approved) that the firm of Secker, Ross and Ross be reappointed as the Society's auditors; then moved (Morrow/Fraikin; approved) that his report be received and approved.
- * He then submitted his resignation, expressing his pleasure at having served the society as Treasurer and Membership Secretary for the last three years. On

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behalf of all the members, John Kloppenborg thanked Bill Morrow for his dedication and care.

10. Adjournment

John Van Seters thanked everyone for their participation, then moved (Morrow/Fraikin) that the meeting be adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Michel Desjardins

Financial Statements

Fiscal year 1 Sept. 1999—31 Aug. 2000

The following amounts have been audited. The full audited report is available to any member of the CSBS/SCÉB upon request to the treasurer.

Operating Income:

Dues Received:	11,593
Congress Income:	
SSHRC Travel Grant	4,755
CSBS Dinner	2,198
1998 Registration	772
Interest/Investment Income:	432
TOTAL	19,750

Operating Expenses:

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General expenses (booth worker, etc.)	182
CSBS Dinner	2,570
Member Travel	5,711
Subscriptions (SR):	5,542
Dues:	
HSSFC	2,854
CSSR	36
Administration:	
Auditor	856
Executive	2,423
Secretarial	250
Office and Postage:	521
TOTAL	20,945

Restricted Funds: Capital Interest Craigie Fund: Opening Balance 1 Sept. 99 14,747 68 Donations 100 Interest 1001 TOTALS 14,847 1069 Founders Prize: Opening Balance 1 Sept. 99 5,968 273 Donations 200 Interest 412 Disbursement (550)TOTALS 6,168 135 Jeremias Prize: Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98 6,631 50 Interest 452 Disbursement (426)TOTALS 6,631 76 Endowment Funds: Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98 37,736 492

6,086

(10,667)

33,155

2,189

(2026)

655

Donations

TOTALS

Disbursements

Interest

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General Fund:	Capital	Interest
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	5,928	
Donations	1,150	
Interest	1,100	416
To Current Account		(416)
Student Research:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	1,283	57
Interest		82
RBY Scott Award:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	973	46
Donation	200	
Interest		62
Norman Wagner Award:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	10,243	74
Interest		701
Prize Disbursement		(500)
To CSBS Dinner		(70)
Beare Award:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	11.070	247
Interest	11,972	247
Prize Disbursement		825
To CSBS Dinner		(800)
To Cobo Diffici		(70)
Publication Fund:		
Opening Balance 1 Sept. 98	7,337	68
Donations	4,736	00
Interest	1,750	103
To ESCJ	(8,103)	103
Expenses	(2,564)	(170)
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TOTALS	33,155	655

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Harold	Remus. "Apuleius to Symmachus (and Stops in Between): Pietas, Realia, and the Empire." In Text and Artifact in the Religions of Mediterranean Antiquity: Essays in Honour of Peter Richardson, ed. Stephen G. Wilson and Michel Desjardins. ESCJ 9, 527–50. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2000.

François Rousseau. "L'Évangile de Marc. Sa structure selon la poétique

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Appointments, Promotions, Awards, Honors:

William E. Arnal, "Golden Dozen" Teaching Award, New York University. _, Vice-President, North American Association for the Study of Religion.

Alicia Batten, Assistant Professor, Pacific Lutheran University.

Ehud Ben Zvi, Norman E. Wagner Technology Award 1999/2000.

Fiona C. Black, Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Postdoctoral Fellowship, University of Alberta (Jan. 2000-Dec. 2001).

Wendy Cotter, A paid semester research leave for January-May 2002, by Loyola University, Chicago.

Zeba Crook, Doctoral Fellowship, The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

, Catholic Biblical Association Memorial Stipend.

Mary D'Angelo, Henry Luce III Fellowship during 2000.

Robert A. Derrenbacker, Jr., Associate Dean and Professor of New Testament, Tyndale Seminary, Toronto, August 2000.

Terence Donaldson, Lord and Lady Coggan Chair in New Testament Studies Inaugural Lecture: "What I Learned Teaching NT 101."

Pat Dutcher-Walls, Tenure received, promotion to Associate Professor, July 1, 2000.

Alain Gignac, Funds from CRSH and Fonds FCAR for young scholars.

Rebecca G. S. Idestrom, Professor of Old Testament at Tyndale Seminary, Toronto, beginning July 1, 2001.

John S. Kloppenborg Verbin, promoted to Full Professor.

_____, Professor of Religion, Institute of Antiquity and Christianity, Claremont Graduate University, beginning July 2001.

Michael Knowles, Acting Associate Dean and Director of Basic Degree Programmes, McMaster Divinity College, beginning January 1, 2001.

Margaret Y. MacDonald, President, Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, appointed May 2000 for a three year term.

John L. McLaughlin, Director, Master of Arts in Applied Theology Program, Wheeling Jesuit University, effective July, 2000.

, Wheeling Jesuit University Summer Research Grant, May-August, 2000.

Steven Muir, Sessional Instructor at Mount Allison.

Michele Murray, Assistant Professor, Bishop's University.

Adele Reinhartz, Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2000-2001).

Erin Runions, Bourse de recherche postdoctorale, Fonds FCAR, Québec.

_, Research Associate, Center for Research on Women, Barnard College, Columbia University.

Jane Webster, Appointed Assistant Professor of Religion and Philosophy, Barton College, North Carolina.

Dissertations Completed:

Alicia Batten, "Unworldly Friendship: 'The Epistle of Straw' Reconsidered." Ph.D., Faculty of Theology, University of St. Michael's College, 2000.

Fiona C. Black, "The Grotesque Body in the Song of Songs." Ph.D., University of Sheffield, 1999.

Robert A. Derrenbacker, Jr., "Ancient Compositional Practices and the

- Synoptic Problem." Ph.D., Faculty of Theology, University of St. Michael's College, 2001.
- Alain Gignac, "La théologie paulinienne de l'Élection en Rm 9-11 et son apport au dialogue entre Juifs et chrétiens-analyse structurelle et intertextuelle." Ph.D., Université de Montréal, 1996.
- Michele Murray, "'Playing a Jewish Game': Gentile Christian Judaizing in the First and Second Centuries CE." Ph.D., University of Toronto, 2000.
- Jean-Francois Racine, "The Text of Matthew's Gospel in the Writings of Basil of Caesarea." Ph.D., Faculty of Theology, University of St. Michael's College, 2000.
- Erin Runions, "Reading Gender, Nation and Future Vision in Micah: Reconfiguring the Reader as Subject." Ph.D., McGill University, 2000.

Research in Progress:

William E. Arnal, The Parable of the Tenants, with John S. Kloppenborg
Verbin.
, Monograph on the narrative traditions about Jesus in the gospels.
Richard Ascough, Voluntary Associations.
, Leadership in Paul.
, 1 and 2 Thessalonians.
Alicia Batten, Letter of James.
, Voluntary Associations in Antiquity.
Fiona C. Black, ed., The Recycled Bible: Autobiographical Criticism, Cultural
Coisinian and the Course Both and Comming (forth against

ultural Criticism and the Space Between. Semeia (forthcoming).

, Monograph on biblical sexuality and the erotic.

Nancy Calvert-Koyzis, Paul, Power, and the People of God. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, in process.

, Abraham Traditions in Early Jewish Literature (in process).

Wendy Cotter, The Christ of the Miracles: Portrait Through Encounter, book for Hendrickson Press.

_____, "The Jesus of the Twelfth-Year Miracles (Mk 5:21-42)." In Jesus and Women in the Gospel of Mark, ed. A. J. Levine. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity International Press (forthcoming).

Zeba Crook, Dissertation: "The Use of Patronage and Clientage Language in the Pauline Conversion Passages."

Robert C. Culley, Monograph on the Complaint Psalms.

Alexander Damm, Dissertation: "Classical Rhetoric and the Synoptic Problem."

Mary D'Angelo, Fellowship Project: "Early Christian Sexual Politics and Roman Imperial Family Values: Rereading Christ and Culture."

Michel Desjardins, A Commentary on "The Concept of our Great Power,"

(NHL VI,4) for the Laval series, Bibliothéque copte de Nag Hammadi. Jean Duhaime, "Melchizedek and the Jubilee," (11Qmelk), article. , The War Texts in the series Companion to the Qumran Scrolls. , co-director, A Handbook of Social Sciences and Early Christianity. , French translation of L.H. Schiffman, Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls. Pat Dutcher-Walls, Ideology of Kingship in the Deuteronomistic History.
Alain Gignac, Read Romans today, in a (post?)modern perspective. Construction of the reader's identity. New rhetoric, "structurelle" and intertextual analysis.
, Scientific commentary of Romans, for the French publisher Le Cerf, (in collaboration with Marie Depussé), French translation of Romans and Galatians for the Bible 21 Project by Bayard Editions (France) and Médiaspaul (Québec).
Keir E. Hammer and Michele D. Murray, "Acquaintances, Supporters and Competitors: Evidence of Interconnectedness and Rivalry Among the Religious Groups in Sardis." In <i>Religious Rivalries and Struggle for Success in Sardis and Smyrna</i> (working title), ed. Richard Ascough. ESCJ. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press (yet to be submitted for publication).
Edith M. Humphrey, "The Enigma of the Yoke: Declining in Parables." In <i>The Lost Coin: Parables of Women, Work and Wisdom</i> , ed. Mary Ann Beavis, forthcoming. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001. ——————————————————————————————————
 , "Ambivalent Apocalypse: Apocalyptic Rhetoric and Intertextuality in 2 Corinthians." In SBL Symposium on Apocalyptic Rhetoric, ed. Duane Watson, SBL Press, forthcoming. , Research on rhetoric and vision-report. , Popular volume on Intimacy and Ecstasy.
Rebecca G.S. Idestrom, Women in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible.
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, James: A Commentary. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press (under contract).
, The Parable of the Tenants, with W. E. Arnal.
Michael Knowles, "Wide is the Gate and Spacious the Road That Leads to Destruction': Matthew 7:13-14 in Light of Archaeological Evidence" for "Archaeological Excavations and Discoveries: Illuminating the Biblical World" Session, SBL Annual Meeting, Nashville, TN, Nov. 20,

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- Margaret Y. MacDonald, "The Role of Women in the Christianization of the Roman Empire" (SSHRC Grant). John L. McLaughlin, The marzēah in the Prophetic Literature: References and Allusions in Light of the Extra-Biblical Evidence. VTSup 88. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001 (in process). , Survey of Ancient Israelite Religion. , Patron Deities of the marzeah. J. Richard Middleton, A commentary on 1 and 2 Samuel for the Abingdon Old Testament Commentary Series.
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Michele D. Murray, with Keir E. Hammer, "Acquaintances, Supporters and Competitors: Evidence of Interconnectedness and Rivalry Among the Religious Groups in Sardis." In Religious Rivalries and Struggle for Success in Sardis and Smyrna (working title), ed. Richard Ascough. ESCJ. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press (yet to be submitted for publication).

Adele Reinhartz, Befriending the Beloved Disciple: A Jewish Reading of the Gospel of John. New York: Continuum, 2001 (in press).

Jesus of Hollywood, book under contract for Oxford University Press.

François Rousseau, Sur son site Web (http://pages.infinit.net/exegete/) l'auteur continue de mettre à jour quantité de textes structurés autrefois par des étudiants. Il y entreprend la structuration du texte de l'Apocalypse selon la poétique fondamentale du texte biblique.

Erin Runions, "Violence and the economy of desire in Ezekiel 16.1-45." In A Feminist Companion to Daniel and the Prophets, ed. Athalya Brenner. Feminist Companion to the Bible, Second Series. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press (forthcoming).

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, Liminal Identifications: Prospects for Reading Gender, Nation and Future Vision in Micah. Playing the Texts. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press (forthcoming).

Eileen Schuller, Hymns, Psalms and Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Routledge Press.

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