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REWRITTEN BIBLE: A TERMINOLOGICAL REASSESSMENT¹

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INTRODUCTION

Géza Vermes and Rewritten Bible

Géza Vermes introduced the designation Rewritten Bible fifty years ago to denote a small number of Jewish texts composed between the second century B.C.E. and eleventh century C.E. that substantively rewrite existing biblical books: *Sefer ha-Yashar*, the Palestinian Targums, Josephus' *Ant.* 1-11, Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, *Jubilees*, and the *Genesis Apocryphon*.² Since then, both the term and the concept behind it have undoubtedly proved fruitful in elucidating one important way in which late Second Temple Jews interpreted authoritative scriptural texts which they believed they had inherited from divinely inspired prophetic figures of the antique past.³ Indeed, as will become clear, this study is indebted to Vermes

¹ I am grateful to József Zsengellér for the invitation to contribute to this volume and the preceding Budapest conference; indeed, it is an honour to be part of the Rewritten Bible debate originally sparked by my former Doktorvater, Géza Vermes. I would also like to thank Tony Gelston, Dan Harrington, and Dwight Swanson for feedback on earlier versions of this chapter.

² Vermes 1961, 67-126; the medieval *Sefer ha-Yashar* does not feature in subsequent discussion. Contrary to Alexander (1988, 99) and Petersen (2007, 291), Bernstein (2005, 173, note 4) rightly observes that Vermes 1986 does not add any works to his original list. However, Vermes 1989: 187 allows that what are now called 1QWords of Moses (1Q22), 4QApocryphon of Joshuaa-b (4Q378-9), 4QBirth of Noah-c (4Q534-6), and 4QVision of Samuel (4Q160) might also be included; among these, only 4QApocryphon of Joshuaa-b is sufficiently well preserved to make a judgement, as we shall see.

³ On older scholarship's lack of interest in late Second Temple exegesis, see Bernstein 2004, 216-21. On Scripture's purported antiquity, see Barton 1986, 59-62; it seems universally assumed in surviving evidence, though often passed over (e.g. Petersen 2007, 287) or deemed insignificant (Zahn 2011, 98, note 17) by scholars. More generally, speaking of authoritative works undifferentiatedly or as coterminous with Scripture is unhelpful, for other kinds of literary authority existed—whether non-scriptural books with broad appeal (e.g. *Ecclesiasticus* and *1 Maccabees*) or others containing partisan teachings (e.g. *Community Rule*, *Matthew*).

and other scholars who have contributed to the resultant Rewritten Bible debate during the past five decades.

Recent Discussion

Nevertheless, there has been considerable disagreement over the years about Rewritten Bible's nature and extent, with several longstanding and not-so-longstanding issues being prominent of late.⁴ First, the dominant view that Rewritten Bible is best regarded as a literary genre has been both affirmed and called into question. Second, insofar as the consensus concerning the Jewish canon that obtained when Vermes coined the appellation has since broken down, with many now maintaining that late Second Temple Jews had no *Bible* but rather *Scripture*,⁵ it has been argued that the label *Rewritten Scripture* should replace *Rewritten Bible*. Third, how much of a *Vorlage* has to be rewritten, and with what degree of intensity, for a work to count as Rewritten Bible or Rewritten Scripture is disputed. And fourth, the publication of previously unknown so-called Parabiblical Texts or New Pseudepigrapha from Qumran during the past two decades has problematized the precise delineation of Rewritten Bible's boundaries.⁶ The latter factor, in particular, led Emanuel Tov to state recently that "what constitutes a rewritten Bible text is actually less clear now than it was a few years ago."⁷

This Study

Hence, we shall here undertake a preliminary re-examination of Rewritten Bible by asking whether the name is best retained, amended, or abandoned in scholarly discourse.⁸ This is not merely terminological hair-splitting, for, the more accurate and nuanced our nomenclature, the more accurate and nuanced it is to be hoped that our grasp of the underlying literary and historical *realia* will be.⁹

⁴ Zahn 2010 provides a fuller overview.

⁵ Ulrich 2002 further justifies the terminological distinction between *Scripture* (purportedly ancient compositions not yet precisely delimited) and *Bible* or *canon* (such works once precisely delimited).

⁶ See relevant DJD volumes dubbed *Parabiblical Texts* by the editors, as well as VanderKam and Flint (2002, 203-4) for *New Pseudepigrapha*. See also note 8 below.

⁷ Tov 1998, 337. Although *rewritten Bible*, *Rewritten Bible*, *Rewritten Scripture*, and *rewritten Scripture* occur in scholarly literature, we adopt *Rewritten Bible* and *Rewritten Scripture* below for consistency's sake, except when citing others who do not.

⁸ Campbell 2005 and Zahn 2011 critique a wider range of scholarly nomenclature.

⁹ Thus, Zahn 2010, 324.

What is required, therefore, as Moshe Bernstein has noted, is an understanding of Rewritten Bible that can *both* make sense of the complex underlying data *and* function with sufficient precision to be heuristically valuable.¹⁰ With that goal in mind, this paper will, first, ask if the works to which the name is commonly applied constitute a genre.¹¹ Second, whether the amended Rewritten Scripture can usefully replace Rewritten Bible will be considered. Third, we shall examine the suggestion that Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture is best viewed as the designation for a textual process. Fourth, a comparison will be made with several works not normally brought into the debate. Insofar as they are relevant to all these matters, furthermore, various Qumran compositions, including some only fully published since 1991, will feature as appropriate. Fifth, on the basis of our discussion, several deductions will be made relating to these several key issues outlined immediately above. And finally, a brief conclusion will close our study.

REWRITTEN BIBLE: A GENERIC CLASSIFICATION?

Bible and Rewritten Bible

We shall consider here, then, whether Rewritten Bible is best viewed as a literary genre, for most scholarly usage has treated it so.¹² The assumption has been that late Second Temple Jews had a Bible and that, among non-biblical works, there existed a genre that can be called Rewritten Bible. Vermes himself sometimes speaks of a genre in that way:

[The *Genesis Apocryphon*] belongs...to the genre represented by Jubilees, Josephus' *Antiquities*, Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum*

¹⁰ Bernstein 2005, 195-6; this important observation recurs below.

¹¹ Brooke 2010 has recently argued that, before considering Rewritten Bible, the range of compositions of which it forms a part should be examined, and this makes sense as *one* way of approaching the subject. But it should not preclude the *complementary* approach that begins with Rewritten Bible and moves outwards to other materials, especially if Rewritten Bible dovetails with more than one larger literary body. Indeed, Zahn (2011,115) offers the picture of a Venn diagram in which a given Rewritten Bible text (e.g. *Jubilees*) can be located at "the intersection of all the different categories in which it participates" (narrative, "para-Genesis," apocalypse, pseudepigraph, and Scripture in *Jubilees'* case). This study will highlight in due course the intersection between so-called Rewritten Bible works and several items excluded from the larger body of material to which it is normally thought to belong.

¹² Thus, Docherty 2004, 28-31.

Biblicorum; i.e. writings in which scriptural narrative and midrashic developments are amalgamated to form a 'rewritten bible'.¹³

However, since it is Philip Alexander and Moshe Bernstein who have argued this approach most fully, their positions must be reviewed before evaluating Rewritten Bible's efficacy as a generic designation.¹⁴

A Rewritten Bible Genre

In his classic 1988 study, Alexander addressed confusion around Rewritten Bible at that time by isolating its chief characteristics as he saw them through consideration of four primary texts: *Jubilees*, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, Pseudo-Philo, and *Ant.* 1-11. By examining the relationship between several passages and their *Vorlagen* (*Jub.* 8:10-10:35/*Gen* 10:1-11:19; *Jub.* 33:1-20/*Gen* 35:22; 1*QapGen* 20:33-22:26/*Gen* 13:1-14:24; *LAB* 39:1-40:9/*Judg* 10:17-12:7; and *Ant.* 1.222-23/*Gen* 22:1-19), more particularly, Alexander produced a list of nine traits:¹⁵

- (a) Rewritten Bible texts are narratives, which follow a sequential, chronological order...
- (b) They are...free-standing compositions which replicate the forms of the biblical books ...
- (c) ...these texts are not intended to replace, or to supersede the Bible...
- (d) Rewritten Bible texts cover a substantial portion of the Bible...Rewritten Bible texts are centripetal: they come back to the Bible again and again...
- (e) Rewritten Bible texts follow the Bible serially...but they are highly selective in what they present...
- (f) The intention of the texts is to produce an interpretative reading of Scripture...

¹³ Vermes 1986, 321; see also Vermes 1989, 187. Vermes 1979, 314-21 argues for a late Second Temple canon akin to the Rabbinic Bible.

¹⁴ Alexander 1988 and Bernstein 2005. Nickelsburg 1984 is often contrasted with this approach (e.g. Bernstein 2005, 178-9; Petersen 2007, 292) because he employs Rewritten Bible for several genres. However, though it goes unnamed, one of them—"running paraphrases of longer and shorter parts of the Bible, often with lengthy expansions (*Jubilees*, *Genesis Apocryphon*, *Biblical Antiquities*)" (1984, 89-90)—is virtually identical to that of Vermes, Alexander, and Bernstein, though they prefer to reserve the name Rewritten Bible for it exclusively (and Nickelsburg omits *Ant.* 1-11 presumably because it appears elsewhere in Stone's edited volume).

¹⁵ An abbreviated version of Alexander 1988, 116-8 follows.

- (g) The narrative form of the texts means...that they can impose only a single interpretation on the original...
- (h) ...the narrative form also preclude[s] making clear the exegetical reasoning...
- (i) Rewritten Bible texts make use of non-biblical tradition and draw on non-biblical sources...

These shared characteristics convinced Alexander that Rewritten Bible constitutes a genre, and his influential list still acts as a starting-point for discussion.¹⁶ It must be admitted, however, that these traits now seem at least partially problematic. In addition to narrative Rewritten Bible works (trait a), for example, legal compositions like the *Temple Scroll* arguably exhibit equivalent characteristics, as we shall see. While the *Vorlage*'s sequence of material remains dominant (a, e), there is always minor¹⁷ and sometimes major¹⁸ departure from it. Similarly, the derived work's form is not always that of its antecedent (b),¹⁹ and the question of replacement is more complex than Alexander allows (c).²⁰ Even the requirement that a substantial portion of a *Vorlage* be rewritten (d) leaves open what counts as substantial. And other traits (f, g, h, i) are not unique to Rewritten Bible.²¹

Nevertheless, Alexander's analysis leaves little doubt as to what a Rewritten Bible text is: an intense rewriting of a sizeable portion of biblical text to which the former remains closely attached in a "centripetal" relationship (trait d). *Jubilees*, for instance, though following its antecedent with varying degrees of expansion, addition, or omission, remains closely keyed to its *Vorlage* throughout. Since demonstrating this without quoting swathes of primary material—something impossible in a short study like this—is difficult, the following table must suffice:

<i>Genesis/Exodus</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Jubilees</i>
Gen 1-5	primeval history	2-4
6-11	Noah cycle	5-10

¹⁶ Thus, Docherty 2004, 29-31 and White Crawford 2008, 10.

¹⁷ See below page 67 for Gen 22:1-19 in *Ant.* 1. 222-237.

¹⁸ See Swanson 1995 on the *Temple Scroll*.

¹⁹ Although the rewritten entity normally provides narrative for narrative and law for law, its overall genre can be different to its predecessor's.

²⁰ As Zahn 2010, 331 notes, while the *Vorlage* was not normally physically replaced, the derived work nonetheless often replaced the antecedent's understanding of the subject matter.

²¹ The hidden nature of Rewritten Bible's exegesis (trait h), for instance, applies to the *Hodayot* (Hughes 2006) and portions of the *Damascus Document* (Campbell 1995).

12-25	Abraham cycle	11-23
26-50	Jacob and his descendents	24-45
Exod 1-16	figure of Moses	46-50

At the same time, *Jubilees* is not simply another edition of Gen 1:1-Exod 16:1 but a new literary entity in its own right. Through this and his other examples, therefore, Alexander maintains that there existed in late Second Temple times certain Rewritten Bible works distinct from other literature.

Like Alexander, but with post-1991 Qumran materials available, Bernstein has insisted more recently that Rewritten Bible constitutes a genre, noting with approval that the works originally identified by Vermes “share a certain scope and comprehensiveness”²² in their aggadic development of biblical material. The genre is best understood narrowly, in other words, as comprising works in which a significant portion of text is interpretatively rewritten but largely retains the antecedent’s sequence and structure. As with Alexander, Bernstein gives Rewritten Bible a clarity that distinguishes it from other exegesis, adding to narrative Rewritten Bible only 4QReworked Pentateuch²³ and 4QApocryphon of Joshua^{a-e} among recently published Qumran texts.²⁴ He does, though, as hinted earlier, make one major adaptation by allowing that the *Temple Scroll* is the legal equivalent of narrative Rewritten Bible: the latter’s “rearrangements, harmonizations, and interpretative additions” are paralleled by the former’s “juxtaposition of laws on similar topics, the clarification of missing details in the laws, and the resolution of implicit contradictions.”²⁵

²² Bernstein 2005, 174.

²³ Bernstein views 4QReworked Pentateuch^a as “substantially different generically” (2005: 181) from 4QReworked Pentateuch^{b-e} and consequently considers the former alone to be Rewritten Bible (2005, 181-2, 196-7). See further below note 93.

²⁴ Bernstein also describes 1-2 Chronicles as “certainly an example of rewritten Bible” (2005, 173, note 4) according to Vermes’ criteria. But Vermes (1979, 326), as well as Alexander (1988, 100), actually denotes 1-2 Chronicles as a mere “prototype” of Rewritten Bible, perhaps because it is unlikely that a Bible containing 1-2 Samuel/1-2 Kings yet existed when 1-2 Chronicles was composed (circa 300 BCE).

²⁵ Bernstein 2005, 195 and, similarly, Swanson 1995, 227 and Dimant 1999, 50; by including the Palestinian Targums and *Ant.* 1-11, of course, Vermes 1961 implicitly incorporated legal material too. Yet, Bernstein 2005, 174-5 excludes the Palestinian Targums on the grounds that no translation can belong to the Rewritten Bible genre, “for almost any translation that is not hyperliteral could merit such an appellation” (175); this sits uncomfortably with his inclusion of *Ant.* 1-11, however, at least part of which almost certainly depends on a Hebrew *Vorlage*. See further below page 69.

Bernstein laments that many have, in contrast, abandoned this precise understanding by moving in one of two unsatisfactory directions. The first widens Rewritten Bible's scope beyond works with a sustained attachment to their *Vorlagen*, seeing it instead as an "activity or process"²⁶ or "general umbrella term."²⁷ As an example, Bernstein points to Daniel Harrington who apparently includes *Life of Adam and Eve*, *1 Enoch*, *Testament of Moses*, and *Ascension of Isaiah* among others; he also points to a study by George Brooke who, though defining Rewritten Bible constructively,²⁸ proceeds to include recently published Qumran compositions—4QDiscourse on the Exodus/Conquest Tradition (4Q374), 4QPseudo-Ezekiel^{a-e} (4Q385, 385b-c, 386, 388, 391), 4QNon-canonical Psalms A-B (4Q380-1) among others—with a much looser relationship to their antecedents.²⁹ Turning Rewritten Bible "into an excessively vague all-encompassing term"³⁰ in this manner, Bernstein maintains, reduces our capacity to distinguish between different kinds of dependence on the Bible, of which Rewritten Bible, properly understood, is only one. Compositions which do not rewrite the Bible so much as take biblical events or characters as the springboard for new literary creations (e.g. *1 Enoch*, 4QPseudo-Ezekiel^{a-e} [4Q385-6, 385b, 388]), for instance, are better termed *parabiblical* works.³¹ The second departure from Vermes goes in the opposite direction, restricting Rewritten Bible to texts like the pre-Samaritan Pentateuch and *Reworked Pentateuch* manuscripts.³² Bernstein's objection here is that bringing together compositions with such "limited additions, omissions and slight changes"³³ achieves little, for these minor alterations merely produce fresh editions of existing works and are best referred to as *revised Bible*.³⁴ By offering these important distinctions, Bernstein believes he is able to employ Rewritten Bible as a generic appellation that is

²⁶ Bernstein 2005, 177-8, quoting Harrington 1986, 243.

²⁷ Bernstein 2005, 187, citing Brooke 2000, 780.

²⁸ Bernstein 2005, 186 quotes Brooke 2000, 778 as follows: "Rewritten Bible texts are those which follow closely their scriptural base text and which clearly display an editorial intention that is other than or supplementary to that of the text being altered."

²⁹ See Harrington 1986 and Brooke 2000.

³⁰ Bernstein 2005, 187, referring to Brooke 2000.

³¹ Bernstein 2005, 188 (note 31), 196, following White Crawford 1999, 1.

³² Bernstein refers to Tov 1994 here, though Tov (2008, 387-8) now extends Rewritten Bible to the *Temple Scroll* and *Jubilees*. On 4QReworked Pentateuch^{a-e}, more generally, see again note 23.

³³ Bernstein 2005, 181.

³⁴ Bernstein 2005, 190-3, following what is now Segal 2005.

more sharply defined and of greater heuristic value than the non-generic alternatives he critiques.

Problems with a Generic Definition

Alexander and Bernstein have certainly contributed much to the Rewritten Bible debate, not least by insisting, like Vermes, that the works concerned must interpretatively rewrite their *Vorlagen* in a substantial and sustained manner. Their number is small, therefore, even after the full publication of Qumran manuscripts, for Rewritten Bible thus understood is distinct from other types of literature, including, not only what Bernstein calls revised Bible and parabiblical works, but also lemma-style commentary.³⁵ All of the latter entail rewriting the Bible in the broadest sense. But as Bernstein emphasizes, the academy is better served when our language makes sharper distinctions than that: "the more specific the implications of the term, the more valuable it is as a measuring device."³⁶ Yet, several factors arguably render it unsatisfactory to think of Rewritten Bible specifically in generic terms.

First, Alexander's nine traits set up a circular argument in which pre-selected works determine the genre's characteristics; a different selection yields different results.³⁷ That is borne out by Susan Docherty's recent study in which she maintains that, since *Joseph and Aseneth* reflects eight traits (a-c, e-i), the ninth (d) should be discarded to allow the work's inclusion within the genre.³⁸ It is further confirmed by Bernstein who, as seen, expands one trait (a) to include legal as well as narrative compositions. One response to this objection might be to point out that such circularity is inherent to all genres, as recent genre theory has shown vis-à-vis modern literature. Indeed, Brooke makes the following twofold point:³⁹

First, there is the idea that no single text will ever contain all the characteristics of a particular genre; thus no single text by itself can ever act as the defining work of a kind of literature. Second, once a particular composition is seen as belonging to a particular genre...so the genre inevitably changes, even if only in relatively minor ways.

³⁵ Thus, Alexander 1988, 116-8.

³⁶ Bernstein 2005, 195.

³⁷ Petersen 2007, 290 (note 12) makes a similar point.

³⁸ Docherty 2004.

³⁹ Brooke 2010, 341-2, drawing on Perloff 1989.

But it is doubtful that we possess the “literary competence”⁴⁰ to recognize late Second Temple genres with the sophistication necessary to render such an approach fruitful. Ancient Jewish authors, after all, unlike their Graeco-Roman counterparts, do not address such questions.⁴¹ And surviving literature is necessarily partial and, as far as Qumran manuscripts are concerned, frequently damaged at the crucial *incipit*. Even what can be gleaned of likely late Second Temple attitudes suggests a weak sense of genre, at least regarding Scripture.⁴²

Second, in contrast to *Jubilees* or *Ant.* 1-11, which can be seen as Rewritten Bible in their entirety, it is important to take account of compositions with only a portion of Rewritten Bible. For example, assuming that 4QReworked Pentateuch^{a-e} represent copies of either a single work or similar but not identical pieces, we find nonetheless that only 4QReworked Pentateuch^a reflects the rewritten phenomenon identified by Vermes, Alexander, and Bernstein, whereas 4QReworked Pentateuch^{b-e} merely exhibit minor revisions.⁴³ Similarly, 4QGenesis Commentary A 1 1:1-2:5a constitutes a rewritten version of Gen 6:3-8:18, though elsewhere this work contains other types of material, including explicit exegesis containing *peshet* and pronominal interpretation formulae.⁴⁴ Insofar as genre, strictly speaking, pertains to whole works, these Rewritten Bible units within compositions that overall do not qualify as Rewritten Bible undermine the existence of a specific Rewritten Bible genre.⁴⁵

Third comes the diversity of works normally included, even when Rewritten Bible is defined rigorously, for, as Daniel Harrington observed twenty-five years ago,⁴⁶ variations in form, subject matter, style, and theological emphases in *Jubilees*, the *Temple Scroll*, 4QApocryphon of Joshua, 4QReworked Pentateuch^a, Pseudo-Philo, and *Ant.* 1-11 preclude viewing them as generically unified. Even if, in contrast to older scholarship, we highlight function and status as crucial to the determination of genre,⁴⁷ *Jubilees*, purporting to be revealed antique Mosaic Scripture, is radically different to *Ant.*

⁴⁰ See further Barton 1996, 8-19.

⁴¹ Note, similarly, Petersen 2007, 302.

⁴² Thus, Barton 1998, 1-7.

⁴³ See again note 23.

⁴⁴ See further below page 68.

⁴⁵ For a similar dilemma vis-à-vis *peshet*, see Campbell 1995, 20-1 and Campbell 2013, 250-3.

⁴⁶ Harrington 1986.

⁴⁷ Thus, Brooke 2010, 334-5.

1-11, presenting itself as a non-scriptural retelling of the scriptural story contemporary with author and audience. In Harrington's words:⁴⁸

...it is tempting to place all these books...under the broad literary genre of 'Rewritten Bible,' but unfortunately the diversity and complexity of the materials will not allow it.

If the scope of the word genre is enlarged to accommodate such diversity, we end up with a generic catch-all of limited heuristic value.⁴⁹

A fourth factor concerns Bernstein's recent related argument that the best way to avoid a similarly over-loose understanding of Rewritten Bible itself is to view it precisely as a genre—not a textual process which is the main alternative and which, for Bernstein, as noted, inevitably entails an all-encompassing vagueness.⁵⁰ There is no doubt that some opting for that alternative employ an unhelpfully broad notion of Rewritten Bible. Thus, Brooke in one study, as noted earlier, includes compositions that loosely supplement their antecedents rather than rewrite them.⁵¹ But seeing Rewritten Bible as the name for a textual process does not *per se* require one to treat it in that manner. We shall look more closely below, therefore, at whether Rewritten Bible can be viewed as the name for a textual process.

Summary

We should welcome the precision and clarity injected by Alexander and Bernstein into the Rewritten Bible debate that originated with Vermes. But their use of the term specifically as a generic label remains problematic for the reasons given. Fortunately, a generic understanding may well be unnecessary for ensuring that Rewritten Bible is tightly defined and heuristically valuable. We shall turn, therefore, to the main alternative—that Rewritten Bible designates a textual process—in due course.

⁴⁸ Harrington 1986, 243.

⁴⁹ Zahn 2011, 115, like Brooke 2010, 341-2, recommends drawing on genre theory for a more nuanced approach to this diversity. But the Venn diagram she offers as a result, though helpful in other respects, moves beyond genre proper to a range of overlapping literary features; see above note 11.

⁵⁰ Petersen 2007, 297-8 shares this assumption.

⁵¹ See above page 55.

REWRITTEN BIBLE OR REWRITTEN SCRIPTURE?

Bible and Scripture

Beforehand, it makes sense to consider the suggestion that Rewritten Scripture is a better label than Rewritten Bible, for an additional problem with Rewritten Bible, regardless of whether it denotes a genre, is its inherent twofold assumption that late Second Temple Jews had a Bible and that no Rewritten Bible work was part of it. When Vermes introduced the designation, it was natural to distinguish between the Bible and non-canonical rewritings of biblical material because he assumed, like most at the time, that late Second Temple Jews possessed a canon akin to the Rabbinic Bible.⁵² Compositions like *Jubilees* and *Ant.* 1-11, in other words, were defined as much by the fact that they stand outside a canon as by the fact that they constitute rewritings thereof. The same clear-cut distinction between Bible and Rewritten Bible is taken for granted by Alexander⁵³ and has recently been asserted by Bernstein.⁵⁴ The appellation Rewritten Bible thus employed clearly “implies something...secondary in authority”⁵⁵ to the canonical books being rewritten.

Both aspects of the assumption, however, are difficult to maintain, for, as observed earlier, many since the 1980s have concluded that late Second Temple Jews had no Bible but rather Scripture.⁵⁶ Early proponents held that, while the Pentateuch was canonical, other writings comprised an open-ended body of purportedly antique prophetic works to which new compositions might occasionally be added; more recently, it has been proposed that the Mosaic corpus too was open-ended.⁵⁷ Such a reconstruction

⁵² This is implicit in Vermes 1961, 1-10, 67-126 and explicit in Vermes 1986, 321.

⁵³ Alexander 1988, 103, 112.

⁵⁴ Nevertheless, Bernstein’s position could be clearer: he states that his “working assumption is that any composition that appears to be based on what we now call the Bible and meets the criteria set out in this essay can be said to belong to the category ‘Rewritten Bible’” (2005, 172, note 3); yet he insists elsewhere *both* that if any work “is [or was intended to be] a biblical text, then it is not rewritten Bible” (2005, 175) and that “[o]ne group’s rewritten Bible could very well be another’s biblical text” (2005, 175), as though *Jubilees*, for instance, might simultaneously be Bible (and therefore not Rewritten Bible) for one community and Rewritten Bible (and hence not Bible) for another.

⁵⁵ Brooke 2002, 31.

⁵⁶ See again note 5 for the distinction.

⁵⁷ Barton (1986, 1-94 and 2013), for example, reflects such a development; see also Campbell 2000 and 2012; and Ulrich 2003a and 2010.

explains well various facets of late Second Temple evidence, including the publication of Enochic material, *Jubilees*, 4QApocryphon of Joshua^{a-b}, Daniel, and other texts with supposed links to ancient scriptural heroes, as well as the acceptance of such materials as Scripture in exegetical literature from the period. More generally, it means, not only that some Scriptures were themselves rewritings of older scriptural sources, but also that precisely which books counted as the Torah and Prophets changed over time within and between communities.⁵⁸ In any case, the lack of a late Second Temple canon is now widely asserted, as is the suggestion that the terms *Bible* and *canon* should give way to *Scripture* or *Scriptures*.⁵⁹

Scripture and Rewritten Scripture

It would seem to follow that *Rewritten Scripture* is a more accurate label for late Second Temple works hitherto called *Rewritten Bible*, and this proposal has been made frequently of late.⁶⁰ Indeed, Anders Petersen highlights several advantages afforded by such a change:⁶¹ (i) *Rewritten Scripture* allows for a more reciprocal relationship between “authoritative texts and the writings they occasion;”⁶² (ii) it makes it easier to acknowledge that rewritten entities like the *Temple Scroll* and *Jubilees* possessed scriptural authority for some late Second Temple Jews; and (iii) the new term renders redundant the old distinction between inner-biblical and extra-biblical exegesis insofar as the interpretative phenomenon in 1-2 Chronicles vis-à-vis its antecedents, for instance, is essentially the same as that in *Jubilees* vis-à-vis its *Vorlagen*.⁶³ We might add that the amended appellation allows for the possibility that rewritings of texts outside the later

⁵⁸ Thus, White Crawford 2008, 9 holds that Esther was rejected at Qumran. *Jubilees*, in contrast, almost certainly functioned as Scripture for the community, although Ulrich 2003b, 22 suggests that others rejected it as “obviously wrong” because of its promulgation of a distinct liturgical calendar.

⁵⁹ For instance, Collins 2002, 55; and Trebelle 2006, 549.

⁶⁰ Thus, Brooke 2002, 31-2; Petersen 2007, 286-8; VanderKam 2002a, 43; White Crawford 2008, 6-7.

⁶¹ Petersen 2007, 287-8; among these, Petersen (288) suggests somewhat anachronistically that we might “think of Matthew’s rewriting of Mark in terms of...rewriting Scripture.” See below note 113.

⁶² Petersen 2007, 287.

⁶³ For so-called inner-biblical exegesis, see the survey in Levinson 2008, 95-181. As Levinson (2008, 177, note 37) notes, Auld 1994’s proposal that a lost common source lies behind 1-2 Samuel/1-2 Kings and 1-2 Chronicles has not been widely followed; on 1-2 Chronicles, see again note 24.

Rabbinic canon might qualify as Rewritten Scripture too.⁶⁴ Given such factors, recent discussion has increasingly accepted that Scripture and Rewritten Scripture in late Second Temple Judaism were intertwined and, more particularly, that various Rewritten Scriptures—including *Jubilees*, the *Temple Scroll*, 4QApocryphon of Joshua^{a-b}, and 1 Esdras—were themselves scriptural.⁶⁵

This apparently close relationship between Scripture and Rewritten Scripture, coupled with recent publication of Qumran manuscripts evincing a relatively mild reworking of their antecedents, has led to the inclusion of a wider range of materials within Rewritten Scripture than was generally the case for Rewritten Bible. Thus, Brooke proposes that there is a “sliding scale of affinity and dependence” between Scripture and Rewritten Scripture.⁶⁶ Building on that suggestion in an analysis of rewritten pentateuchal Qumran traditions, White Crawford envisages a broad spectrum of Rewritten Scriptures: at one end come works with minimal rearrangement of a base composition (e.g. pre-Samaritan Pentateuch), in the middle are those with such rearrangements plus modest additions (e.g. *Reworked Pentateuch* manuscripts⁶⁷), and at the other end lie materials that embody rewriting so substantial that new compositions are effectively created (e.g. *Temple Scroll*). The first two types, by constituting new editions of existing scriptural works, presumably shared their antecedents’ scriptural status; compositions in the third tend to make claims to scriptural authority as strong as their *Vorlagen*, White Crawford observes, and at least some such claims were accepted at Qumran and/or elsewhere.⁶⁸

The Shortcomings of the Rewritten Scripture Label

Now, viewing the boundary between Scripture and Rewritten Scripture as porous makes sense given the likely lack of a late Second Temple canon, not least since it encourages us to take seriously the scriptural status of, say, *Jubilees*. Similarly, envisaging a broad

⁶⁴ Thus, Zahn 2011, 109-10 states: “a reworked version of Genesis or Exodus could be labelled ‘Rewritten Scripture,’ but so too could a reworked version of 1 Enoch or Jubilees, works that were equally considered ‘scriptural’ at the time.”

⁶⁵ See, for instance, VanderKam 2002a and 2002b; for 1 Esdras, see Williamson 2011.

⁶⁶ Brooke 2002, 36.

⁶⁷ See note 23 above.

⁶⁸ White Crawford 2008, 12-3.

spectrum of Rewritten Scriptures is initially attractive: it places long-known examples (e.g. *Jubilees*) within the wider context of late Second Temple scribal activity by taking into account the full range of Qumran evidence now available, especially the pre-Samaritan and *Reworked Pentateuch* manuscripts so central to recent debate. Yet, the amended Rewritten Scripture as currently employed may not be an unalloyed improvement in terminology for several reasons.

First comes the difference between the modest revision found in the likes of the pre-Samaritan Pentateuch and 4QReworked Pentateuch^{b-e}, on the one hand, and the fully-fledged rewriting evidenced in *Jubilees* and the *Temple Scroll* on the other. If that difference were solely a quantitative one pertaining to the amount of rewriting involved, there would be good reason to see both as more or less intense manifestations of the same thing. However, the difference is also arguably qualitative, for the fully-fledged rewriting found in *Jubilees* and the *Temple Scroll* produces, not revisions of existing works, but new compositions with significant changes to their *Vorlagen's* scope and voice.⁶⁹ White Crawford's spectrum of rewriting is perhaps better viewed as a continuum of different sorts of scribal activity, therefore, ranging from precise copying at one end, through revised editions of existing pieces and Vermes-like fully-fledged rewriting, to the creation of documents penned *de novo*.⁷⁰ Of course, scholars are free to bring together examples from some or all these activities under one label, if they choose. But each does something distinctive and arguably merits its own appellation for the sake of accuracy in academic discourse.

Second, whereas Rewritten Bible generally implied, however anachronistically, non-biblical status, Rewritten Scripture always requires clarification as to the rewritten entity's *scriptural* status. If it includes both *Jubilees* and *Ant.* 1-11, in other words, the term necessitates an additional inner-scriptural/extra-scriptural exegetical distinction analogous to the old inner-biblical/extra-biblical one that it simultaneously renders redundant: *Jubilees* is a manifestation of Rewritten Scripture that itself claims scriptural status but *Ant.* 1-11 is an instance where that is clearly not so.⁷¹ To be sure, Rewritten Scripture's ambiguity in this regard would be merely annoying if the Scripture element clearly always pertained only to the antecedent

⁶⁹ On scope and voice, see Segal 2005, 20-7 and Zahn 2008, 328-33.

⁷⁰ See further van der Toorn 2007, 109-41.

⁷¹ We could, on analogy with Rewritten Bible, restrict Rewritten Scripture to works without scriptural authority, but a new name for Rewritten Scriptures that do possess such authority would then be needed.

work's status, as Molly Zahn has recently argued is—or at least should be—the case.⁷²

Third, however, much recent Rewritten Scripture discussion in practice combines the *Rewritten* and *Scripture* elements of the pre-Samaritan Pentateuch, 4QReworked Pentateuch^{a-e}, the *Temple Scroll*, and *Jubilees*, with appeal to the notion of a continuum, as already noted, on which both Scriptures and Rewritten Scriptures appear side by side. Indeed, Petersen, as seen, welcomes this reciprocity, while Brooke has even recommended abandoning a clear distinction between Scripture and Rewritten Scripture altogether.⁷³ But while it is tempting to follow such suggestions when it comes to the revisions embodied in the pre-Samaritan Pentateuch and most *Rewritten Pentateuch* manuscripts, as well as to fully-fledged rewritings like the *Temple Scroll* and *Jubilees* making new scriptural claims, it is difficult to see how such suggestions relate to rewritten works like Pseudo-Philo and *Ant.* 1-11. In those cases, after all, the relationship to Scripture is not particularly reciprocal and, in any case, the secondary works concerned are non-scriptural.⁷⁴ As though aware of this difficulty, White Crawford's recent analysis is effectively restricted to pentateuchal Qumran compositions with a direct or indirect scriptural claim, rendering problematic the relationship to her spectrum of the *Genesis Apocryphon*, for instance. While that work obviously belongs with *Jubilees* and the *Temple Scroll* at the most intense end of her continuum, White Crawford nonetheless states that it falls "only peripherally within the bounds of our definition" of Rewritten Scripture inasmuch as it does not "claim the authority of the base text."⁷⁵ We see here, then, the conflation of separate, if overlapping, phenomena that cannot easily be placed on the same spectrum: *rewrittenness* and *scripturality*. Molly Zahn, though expressing herself differently, has recently made a similar

⁷² Zahn 2010, 329-30 and 2011, 109. In an aside, nevertheless, Zahn acknowledges that Rewritten Scripture implies a unique bond between scriptural text and rewritten entity (2011: 110, note 58):

If in the future we develop a clear way of distinguishing between scriptural and authoritative-but-not-scriptural works, and we have evidence that texts in the latter group were rewritten with the same methods and purposes as scriptural texts, then the suitability of the term "Rewritten Scripture" may have to be revisited.

We shall return to the latter possibility presently.

⁷³ Brooke 2009, 25-7.

⁷⁴ As Mason 2002, 119 notes, for example, Josephus did not view, nor expected others to view, *Ant.* 1-11 as Scripture.

⁷⁵ White Crawford 2008, 14.

observation by warning against eliding the issue of literary dependency (rewrittenness) with that of authority (scripturality).⁷⁶

Summary

In the context of late Second Temple Judaism, it probably makes sense to speak of Scripture rather than canon, and it certainly makes sense to note that various works—only some of which were themselves scriptural—were rewritings of scriptural compositions in a narrowly defined sense. The question of a given text's rewritten nature is of a different order to whether it also functioned as Scripture, therefore, and, more importantly, we shall see below that it is also distinct from whether its *Vorlage* had scriptural status. In other words, while recent discussion of Rewritten Scripture tends to view *rewrittenness* and *scripturality* as two sides of the same coin, they are in fact distinguishable, if overlapping, phenomena. Since eliding them in the label Rewritten Scripture is such a mixed blessing, as we have seen, we will consider in due course where decoupling them might lead us. Meanwhile, it is reasonable to say that Rewritten Scripture, though a superficial improvement on Rewritten Bible, fails to provide sufficiently nuanced terminology with which to represent accurately the complexity of the primary sources concerned, especially if it is employed simultaneously to denote revised editions (e.g. pre-Samaritan Pentateuch), substantial rewritings constituting new works (Pseudo-Philo), compositions claiming scriptural status (*Jubilees*), and others that clearly do not (*Ant.* 1-11).

REWRITTEN BIBLE AND REWRITTEN SCRIPTURE: NAMES FOR A TEXTUAL PROCESS?

The Main Alternative

Be that as it may, let us now turn to the notion that, behind the compositions known variously—and unsatisfactorily—as Rewritten Bible or Rewritten Scripture, there lies what has been called an

⁷⁶ Zahn 2011, 102 states: “the question of a given work’s *literary* connection with a book of the Bible must be asked, and answered, independently of questions about that work’s *authoritative status* or lack thereof.”

“exegetical process,”⁷⁷ “kind of activity or process,”⁷⁸ or “textual strategy.”⁷⁹ Apart from seeing the phenomenon as a rather indistinct “category or group”⁸⁰ or “general umbrella term,”⁸¹ this, as already noted, is the main alternative to viewing it generically. In his original study, in fact, Vermes described Rewritten Bible as an “exegetical process.”⁸²

But it is Daniel Harrington’s 1986 discussion that is the classic statement of this approach. Like Alexander, he wrote before the widespread questioning of the existence of a late Second Temple canon and, unsurprisingly, does not adopt Rewritten Scripture as a replacement. However, he does offer a clear and concise non-generic understanding of the works called Rewritten Bible as he sees them. For Harrington, more precisely, Rewritten Bible comprises a relatively small number of compositions which “take as their literary framework the flow of the biblical text itself and apparently have as their major purpose the clarification and actualization of the biblical story.”⁸³ They include *Jubilees*, the *Assumption of Moses*, the *Temple Scroll*, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, *Pseudo-Philo*, and *Ant. 1-11*.⁸⁴ Taken together, these works are too diverse to comprise a single genre in his estimation, as remarked earlier. After all, “*Jubilees* and *Assumption of Moses* are formally apocalypses,” for instance, while *Ant. 1-11* purports to be Josephus’ own “precise version of the Bible.”⁸⁵ Rewritten Bible as a consequence is better considered to reflect a “kind of activity or process”⁸⁶ in which the underlying biblical book is handled in a particular way, with the secondary rewritten compositions derived from it crucially taking “the flow of the biblical text itself” as “their literary framework.”⁸⁷

Despite the mismatch between Harrington’s appeal to narrative flow here and his inclusion of the non-narrative *Temple Scroll*, it is

⁷⁷ Vermes 1961, 95.

⁷⁸ Harrington 1986, 293.

⁷⁹ Petersen 2007, 285, 292.

⁸⁰ White Crawford 2008, 12.

⁸¹ Brooke 2000, 780.

⁸² Again, Vermes 1961, 95. As Petersen 2007, 289-91 notes, Vermes oscillates between Rewritten Bible as an exegetical process and a generic classification.

⁸³ Harrington 1986, 239.

⁸⁴ In a postscript to his study, Harrington explains that he is tempted to add the *Paralipomena of Jeremiah*, *Life of Adam and Eve*, and *Ascension of Isaiah* to the list. But in admitting that these works are “less obviously keyed to the structure and flow of the biblical narrative” (1986, 246), he tends towards not doing so.

⁸⁵ Harrington 1986, 243.

⁸⁶ Harrington 1986, 296.

⁸⁷ Harrington 1986, 239.

clear that his description echoes much of what those arguing for Rewritten Bible as a genre have asserted regarding its core characteristics. More to the point, *pace* both Bernstein as described above and others,⁸⁸ Harrington appears *not* to include *1 Enoch*, various unspecified Qumran writings, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and Philo within Rewritten Bible. While he does admittedly state at the outset of his essay that distinguishing the latter compositions from Rewritten Bible works is somewhat artificial, he nonetheless goes on to exclude them from the remainder of the discussion, presumably because in those cases the underlying biblical narrative does not form the basis for the derived work's structure and flow in the manner required.⁸⁹ Contrary to common perception, therefore, Harrington does not adopt a loose definition of Rewritten Bible but rather treats it as a circumscribed textual process. The case he makes, furthermore, demonstrates that describing Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture as such a process does not *per se* rule out a narrow understanding of what is involved.

A Surprising Commonality

Indeed, the phenomenon that Harrington sees at the core of what he calls the textual "activity or process" of Rewritten Bible is in essence not that different to what Alexander and Bernstein say lies at the heart of what they deem to be the Rewritten Bible genre. To merit the label Rewritten Bible, that is, a work must first and foremost be a rewriting of a *Vorlage*, the close detailed influence of which remains determinative for the rewritten entity, notwithstanding the assorted omissions, rearrangements, expansions, and additions to be found in the latter, and despite the fact that the derived work exists as a discrete text in its own right. Some compositions can be deemed to be the result of such a textual process, while others cannot.

If so, nothing substantive would appear to be lost in holding a textual process, not a genre, to be constitutive of the works known as Rewritten Bible—or, more recently, Rewritten Scripture—as long as that process is carefully defined. Where it is, then, despite the fears of Bernstein noted earlier, compositions merely taking a scriptural

⁸⁸ See above pages 54-5, as well as Docherty 2004, 48 and Petersen 2007, 293.

⁸⁹ Harrington 1986, 239. Though it is possible to read Harrington's words here differently, his cautious attitude towards the *Paralipomena of Jeremiah*, *Life of Adam and Eve*, and *Ascension of Isaiah*—all documents arguably less difficult to assimilate to his understanding of Rewritten Bible than *1 Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, or Philo—suggests otherwise; see again note 84.

figure or event as the springboard for a new work (e.g. *1 Enoch*, *Tobit*) do not constitute Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture. Neither, we might add, do materials that simply summarize selectively the broad sweep of all or part of the scriptural story, creating a pastiche of scriptural language and ideas in the process (e.g. CD 2-3, Acts 7).⁹⁰ Likewise, from this perspective, the reworkings created through relatively minor rearrangements and additions of the sort found in the pre-Samaritan Pentateuch and most *Reworked Pentateuch* manuscripts do not count as Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture, for the new editions of existing works that result are qualitatively, not just quantitatively, different from what is found in the likes of *Jubilees* or *Ant.* 1-11. Similarly, the textual process underlying Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture understood in this way is quite distinct from the lemma-style commentary familiar from the so-called Pesharim, Philo, and Rabbinic midrash.

To get the most out of the concept behind the term Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture, an intense form of rewriting is required, one which produces a work or part-work with a separate identity to that of its predecessor, despite requiring the derived piece to remain closely keyed to the antecedent item. Taking another of Alexander's examples, we can see this textual process at work in *Ant.* 1.222-237, where Josephus rewrites Gen 22:1-19, omitting details here, eliding others there, filling in lacunae, and solving problems, all the while retaining his *Vorlage's* basic structure and flow.⁹¹ The closeness of that relationship is even more evident when a larger portion of material—Gen 22:1-25:11 in *Ant.* 1.222-256—is held in view:⁹²

<i>Genesis</i>	<i>Content</i>	Antiquities
22.1-19	near-sacrifice of Isaac	1.222-236
22.20-4	descendents of Nahor	1.153
23.1-20	Sarah's death and burial	1.237
24.1-67	marriage of Isaac & Rebecca	1.242-55
25.1-6	Abraham, Keturah and their offspring	1.238-41
25.7-11	death & burial of Abraham	1.256

It is equally clear that *Ant.* 1.222-256 is no mere new edition of Gen 22:1-25:11 but, as we saw with *Jubilees* in an earlier section, a new literary entity in its own right.

⁹⁰ Cf. Campbell 2005, 48.

⁹¹ See Alexander 1988, 111-6.

⁹² For *Ant.* 1.222-56, see further Christopher Begg's chapter in this volume.

Questions Remaining

The above state of affairs, if an accurate description of the matter, may allow us to provide additional clarity on several contentious issues. The first concerns portions of Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture in compositions that are predominantly something else, for giving up a generic approach means that it can be more straightforwardly acknowledged that part of a work can reflect the textual process concerned just as much as a whole composition. We saw this above, for instance, vis-à-vis 4QGenesis Commentary A 1 1:1-2:5a and its rewriting of Gen 6:3-8:18. Similarly, the content of 4QReworked Pentateuch^a appears to be another example of the Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture textual process, unlike 4QReworked Pentateuch^{b-e} with which that manuscript is normally associated. But this does not in itself constitute grounds for deeming the former a separate composition unconnected to the latter, as Bernstein and Segal have unconvincingly argued.⁹³

A second issue pertains to how much of a *Vorlage* must be rewritten for the end result to count as Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture inasmuch as those adopting a generic approach are reluctant to accept that the rewriting of a small work or short section of a longer one constitutes Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture.⁹⁴ Yet, where a textual process is to the fore, a composition like *Joseph and Aseneth* can be seen as an example of Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture. This is not because it reflects the required number of generic traits, as Docherty proposes, but because it forms an intense rewriting of Gen 41-49 that remains more closely keyed to that *Vorlage* than has generally been recognised, as Docherty also maintains.⁹⁵ We can see in the *Testament of Moses*, similarly, a relatively small block of material (Deut 31-34) that has been rewritten through the textual process described earlier:⁹⁶

The basic outline of the Testament of Moses follows the pattern of those chapters [Deut 31-34] to such an extent that the Testament of Moses may be considered a virtual rewriting of them.

Hence, as long as there is sufficient material in the secondary work to be able to deduce that the textual process of Rewritten

⁹³ Bernstein 2005, 181-2, 195-6 and Segal 2005; cf. Petersen 2007, 296 (note 29) and Zahn 2008, 327 (note 41). See also above note 23.

⁹⁴ Thus, Alexander 1988, 117 and Bernstein 2005, 177.

⁹⁵ See again Docherty 2004.

⁹⁶ Priest 1983, 923.

Bible/Rewritten Scripture has taken place, there is no reason to withhold the label from it.

Third, we noted above a tendency in much discussion of the Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture phenomenon to dismiss translations as possible examples. This position is almost impossible to maintain without serious methodological contradiction, however, for, while many since Vermes have omitted the Palestinian Targums from the debate, they have usually included 1QGenesis Apocryphon and *Ant.* 1-11. The most sensible approach would seem to be to allow that, as long as the markers of the relevant textual process are present, the additional factor of translation from one language into another presents no barrier to the inclusion of a work, or part-work, under the rubric of the rewriting phenomenon.

Summary

The least unsatisfactory way of employing the problematic language of Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture is to reserve it for those compositions and part-compositions among the array of late Second Temple literature dependent on Scripture that have the distinct relationship to their scriptural *Vorlagen* described above. Indeed, if a common thread emerges from key studies over the years, from Vermes' original analysis of Rewritten Bible to more recent discussion of Rewritten Scripture, it is arguably the recognition that a relatively small number of sources exhibit a particular kind of circumscribed textual process. In that process, the *Vorlage* remains dominant for the secondary piece's structure and flow, while the derived work is no mere revised edition of its predecessor but a new distinct composition. The temptation to include minor revisions producing new editions of existing texts, though understandable given the scholarly focus on the wealth of Qumran data published since 1991, should be resisted. And the opposite tendency to subsume within Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture what Bernstein and others call parabiblical texts, compositions that do not exhibit rewriting proper but take a scriptural event or personage as the inspiration for a work produced *de novo*, should likewise be resisted.

REWRITING: A WIDESPREAD LATE SECOND TEMPLE PHENOMENON?

Distinguishing Rewriting from Scripturality

Nonetheless, despite the summary above, we are still left with nomenclature to denote the textual process of Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture that is unsatisfactory for the reasons already given. If, as observed on several occasions, our terminology should as far as possible accurately reflect the underlying historical and literary *realia*, that ought not to be the end of the matter. Consequently, we shall now return to the proposal to separate two issues—scripturality and rewrittenness—that have been largely intertwined in the Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture debate hitherto. The hope is that, by focusing on rewriting and thus casting our net more widely, we may throw additional light on the rewriting phenomenon, for the textual process described in the last section is evident in other late Second Temple writings that generally feature only on the periphery of scholarly discussion, if at all.⁹⁷

Revised Editions of non-Scriptural Works

Before considering several examples, however, it is worth pausing first to note that it is not hard to find non-scriptural parallels to those works recently—but, if our earlier argument was valid, unhelpfully—placed by some scholars at the less intense end of a spectrum of Rewritten Scripture. Thus, the publication of previously unavailable Cave 4 material in recent decades has demonstrated that several Qumran sectarian compositions underwent a process of revision, including the *Damascus Document* (CD, 4QD^{a-h}, 5QD, 6QD), *War Scroll* (1QM, 4QM^{a-g}), and *Community Rule* (1QS, 4QS^{a-j}, 5QS).⁹⁸ Although the incomplete nature of the evidence precludes certainty, variations between Cave 1 and Cave 4 versions of the *Community Rule* have led Sariana Metso, for instance, to prioritize 4QS^{b,d} over 1QS when it comes to determining earlier and subsequent editions.⁹⁹ Similarly, Greek Ecclesiasticus can be viewed as a revised edition of its antecedent, Hebrew Ben Sira, albeit via a process of translation.¹⁰⁰ Clearly, therefore, the phenomenon dubbed *revised Bible* by Segal

⁹⁷ See again note 11 above.

⁹⁸ See further Duhaime 2004; Hempel 2000; and Metso 2007.

⁹⁹ Metso 2007, 15-9.

¹⁰⁰ Wright 1989 provides further detail.

and Bernstein vis-à-vis 4QReworked Pentateuch^{b-e} and similar materials can be paralleled in Ecclesiasticus and Qumran sectarian works—even though, however authoritative they were in other ways, neither the latter nor their antecedents constituted Scripture in late Second Temple times.¹⁰¹ This is all largely stating the obvious, of course. But by way of analogy to what follows, it is worth highlighting that the scribal activity that produced revised editions of *scriptural* books was commonly practiced in relation to *non-scriptural* compositions as well.¹⁰²

Non-Scriptural Works Rewritten

In view of the above, indeed, it will be no surprise to find that the fully-fledged textual process of rewriting is likewise evidenced widely. However, because this factor has been neglected in the Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture debate hitherto, as mentioned, we shall look at several examples.

We may turn first to the rewriting of the *Letter of Aristeas* and 1 Maccabees in *Ant.* 12-13, for Josephus handles these compositions in the same way that he treats scriptural material in *Ant.* 1-11. Notwithstanding omissions, adjustments, expansions, and additions enabling Josephus to make the end-result comport with his own outlook and purpose, these base texts are interpretatively rewritten in *Ant.* 12-13 with their structure and flow remaining dominant. The *Letter of Aristeas* is paraphrased in *Ant.* 12.1-118, for instance, with assorted minor and major changes.¹⁰³ And Josephus depends primarily on 1 Mac 1:14-13:42 for his account of the middle decades of the second century BCE in *Ant.* 12.241-13.214, omitting some material, expanding other parts, rearranging, and inserting extraneous traditions as needed.¹⁰⁴ Although it is difficult to demonstrate this adequately without citing swathes of primary material, a comparison of the appearance of five letters in 1 Macc 10:18-12:23 in *Ant.* 12.226-13.170 is usefully illustrative:

<i>1 Maccabees</i>	Antiquities
10: 18-20	13.45
10: 25-45	13.48-57

¹⁰¹ See again note 3.

¹⁰² Tov 2006 highlights evidence for both in Qumran scriptural and non-scriptural manuscripts.

¹⁰³ Thus, Downing 1980a, 162-5, drawing on Pelletier 1962.

¹⁰⁴ See Francis 1984 and Feldman 1994.

11:30-37	13.126-128
12: 6-18	13.166-170
12:20-23	12.226-227

Here and elsewhere in *Ant.* 12-22, the sources employed are not Scripture, for “books like 1 and 2 Maccabees are later and separate”¹⁰⁵ non-scriptural entities for Josephus. Nonetheless, his handling of the *Letter of Aristeas* and 1 Maccabees is no different to his treatment of scriptural sources in *Ant.* 1-11: Josephus “continues his narrative to the present [in *Ant.* 12-22] treating books such as Pseudo-Aristeas and 1 Maccabees the same way that he treats biblical material.”¹⁰⁶

Another example is *4 Maccabees* 5-17, where the gruesomely detailed account of the martyrdom of seven brothers and their mother, probably penned in the late first century BCE or early first century CE, constitutes a thorough reworking of the briefer and older story in 2 Maccabees 3-7.¹⁰⁷ Although many of the latter’s details have been altered in the former, and notwithstanding *4 Maccabees’* distinct philosophical style, it is clear that *4 Maccabees* follows the sequence and structure of 2 Maccabees, as the following arrangement shows:¹⁰⁸

<i>2 Maccabees</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>4 Maccabees</i>
3.1-3	Conditions under Seleucus IV	3.20-1
3.4-40	Temple treasury attacked	4.1-14
4.7-10	Hellenizing reforms	4.15-20
5.1-26	Occupation of Jerusalem	4.21-3
6.1-11	Judaism suppressed	4.24-6
6.18-31	Eleazar’s martyrdom	5.1-6.30
7.1-40	Seven brothers’ martyrdom	8.1-14.10
7.41	Mother’s martyrdom	14.11-17.1

Further examination demonstrates at the same time that the writer of *4 Maccabees*:¹⁰⁹

conflates characters and developments in order to state more concisely episodes that are of secondary importance to his oration (thus he can be seen to abridge 2 Macc 3:1-6:17), while amplifying

¹⁰⁵ Mason 2002, 125.

¹⁰⁶ Mason 2002, 126.

¹⁰⁷ On dating 2 Maccabees and *4 Maccabees*, see Nickelsburg 2005, 106-10, 256-9.

¹⁰⁸ DeSilva 2006, xxx.

¹⁰⁹ DeSilva 2006, xxxi provides a comparable schematization.

and embellishing that part of the story that is most germane to his topic (thus he expands on 2 Macc 6:18-7:42).

While there is a close relationship between 2 Maccabees and 4 Maccabees throughout most of the latter, in other words, 4 Maccabees' author abbreviates, expands, and supplements his main source according to his own outlook and purpose.¹¹⁰

Lastly, it is worth looking briefly at two New Testament books, Matthew and Luke, both of which, it is widely believed, independently used Mark so that the latter's content and structure remain visible.¹¹¹ Matthew reproduces nearly all of Mark, for example, variously rearranging, omitting, abbreviating its traditions, while also adding material of its own that, in part, almost certainly came from a source (the so-called Q) shared with the author of Luke. Matthew thus adds infancy narratives (Mat 1-2), five sections of distinctive teaching (Mat 5-7, 10, 13, 18, 24-5), and resurrection appearances (Mat 28). As with Mark, nonetheless, Jesus' Galilean ministry comes to an end with Peter's confession (Mat 16:16-19//Mk 8:29-30), and the whole story then climaxes in Jesus' final week in Jerusalem (Mat 21-27//Mk 11-15). In a similar way, though drawing on a smaller proportion of Mark, Luke follows the latter, adding birth narratives (Lk 1-2) and resurrection appearances (Lk 24), though most of the supplementary teaching appears in one block (Lk 9:51-18:14), placed between the equivalent of Mark 9 and 10, rather than scattered throughout.¹¹²

In all these cases, we see a rewriting in which a *Vorlage* remains constitutive for the rewritten entity, though the derived work constitutes a new composition, not a revised edition of its predecessor, and though we can be confident that neither *Vorlage* nor secondary work were scriptural for author or original audience.¹¹³ Apart from the latter factor, more particularly, we can also see that *Ant.* 12-13, 4 Maccabees, Matthew, and Luke seem indistinguishable in terms of the intense rewriting they exhibit when compared to *Jubilees*, 1QGenesis Apocryphon, Pseudo-Philo, and *Ant.* 1-11, the

¹¹⁰ As Docherty 2004, 28-9, 35, 37 notes, by abbreviating here and expanding there, the authors of *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* and *Joseph and Aseneth* acted similarly.

¹¹¹ Powery 2009 provides an overview of the so-called Synoptic Problem.

¹¹² For a tabular representation of these relationships, too extensive to be included here, see Coogan 2010, 2266.

¹¹³ The Synoptic Gospels, though later assuming scriptural and eventually canonical status for Christians, are best viewed as authoritative in a different way—comparable to Qumran sectarian works—at the time of their composition. See notes 3 and 61.

four exemplar texts analysed in Alexander's classic study mentioned earlier.

Rewriting and Redaction

Now, it is fair to say that most discussion of the above examples has been conducted in the language of sources and redaction in contrast to Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture works, where analysis is predominantly expressed precisely in terms of rewriting. There are exceptions, of course. In one study of Mark in Matthew and Luke, for example, Gerald Downing speaks of sources and redaction, *not just* for the relationship between the Synoptic Gospels and, by way of comparison, for the *Letter of Aristeas* in *Ant.* 12, *but also* when appealing to Joshua/Judges in *Ant.* 5 as a further comparison.¹¹⁴ Upon reflection, indeed, rewriting of the narrowly defined sort described immediately above and in the preceding section *is* a type of redactional activity in which a dominant source remains determinative in a particular way for the secondary entity. It seems that such rewriting—a *textual process* in which rewritten Composition B remains closely keyed to antecedent Composition A—was a wider late Second Temple phenomenon than is normally acknowledged. Furthermore, since the range of literature evincing such a textual process extends beyond works with a scriptural *Vorlage*, as so much of the Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture debate hitherto fails to acknowledge, the suitability of the amended label Rewritten Scripture is arguably as doubtful as that of the more obviously anachronistic Rewritten Bible.¹¹⁵

Summary

One important procedure by which late Second Temple scribes regularly expanded the “long-duration texts”¹¹⁶ they received and passed on was through a circumscribed textual process of rewriting. That process can be seen in a range of compositions that has come down to us, *irrespective* of the status, scriptural or otherwise, of either

¹¹⁴ Downing 1980a and 1980b. Though Petersen 2007, 288 draws a similar parallel with the Gospels, see above note 61.

¹¹⁵ See note 72 for Zahn's adumbration of this point merely as a theoretical possibility.

¹¹⁶ Carr 2005, 10 employs this useful phrase to denote all literature thought worthy of preservation and adaptation by a given community or culture.

Vorlage or derived work. Such texts include, not just those that have featured prominently in the Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture debate over the past fifty years (e.g. *Jubilees*, the *Temple Scroll*, and *Ant.*1-11), but also others that have not done so (e.g. *4 Maccabees*, *Ant.* 12-13, and Matthew).

FOUR INTERRELATED DEDUCTIONS

This Analysis

Thus far, we have considered a wide range of both primary sources and secondary viewpoints. It seems reasonable at this juncture, therefore, to make several interrelated deductions on the basis of our analysis, bearing in mind the guiding principle, emphasized several times already, that our terminology should as far as possible reflect the underlying data's complexity in order to be heuristically valuable. The comments below are not designed to be prescriptive, however, but rather to offer pointers to further and fuller discussion.

Rewritten Bible

Rewritten Bible is unsatisfactory as a generic designation, for the diversity of works usually included, even on a narrow definition, is too wide to constitute a meaningful genre given our current limited grasp of the literary culture of late Second Temple Jews. While it might nonetheless be thought an option to retain the term to designate the narrowly defined textual process that is the main non-generic alternative approach, this too is problematic given the probability that late Second Temple Judaism had no Bible but rather Scripture. Indeed, the likely lack of canonical boundaries means that some so-called Rewritten Bible works themselves enjoyed scriptural status, contrary to the assumptions underlying much past and some recent discussion.

Rewritten Scripture

That factor has led to the adoption of the alternative Rewritten Scripture, either as a broad umbrella term or to denote a specific textual process. In the former case, it covers a much wider range of material than Rewritten Bible—from minor revisions to fully-fledged

rewritings and even so-called parabiblical texts—but thereby becomes an overly loose label of little heuristic value. To be sure, the narrower definition of Rewritten Scripture as a textual process, by including rewritings of scriptural works outside the later Rabbinic Bible and by encouraging the acknowledgement that some Scriptures are themselves Rewritten Scripture, is broad in scope compared to the standard remit of Rewritten Bible. But it has the advantage of allowing us to dispense with a certain anachronistic inner-biblical/extra-biblical exegetical distinction. Nevertheless, even as the name for a carefully defined textual process, Rewritten Scripture unhelpfully forces us to make an additional inner/extra-scriptural exegetical distinction because some so-called Rewritten Scriptures neither claimed nor were granted their *Vorlagen's* scriptural status. Since the academic enterprise is best served by terminology that highlights such important distinctions within the primary sources, rather than subsuming them in a pool of more or less undifferentiated data, Rewritten Scripture turns out to be not much of an improvement on Rewritten Bible.

A Textual Process

Still, it seems safe to conclude that the compositions variously known as Rewritten Bible or Rewritten Scripture are best viewed as resulting from a particular sort of textual process or exegetical strategy in which rewritten Composition B remains closely keyed to antecedent Composition A. Although the works concerned do not constitute a genre, as noted, they do appear to be manifestations of a type of scribal activity in which the derived work, though retaining a centripetal relationship to its *Vorlage*, nonetheless constitutes a distinct composition in its own right. This observation reflects a crucial common denominator arguably lying at the heart of studies by Vermes, Harrington, Alexander, Bernstein, and others. It is advisable, as a result, to avoid Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture terminology for minor revisions found in the likes of the pre-Samaritan Pentateuch and most *Reworked Pentateuch* manuscripts from Qumran, for, in these cases, as with the divergent editions of Ben Sira/Ecclesiasticus or sectarian Qumran compositions, we see a different kind of scribal activity that merely produces new versions of existing works.

The Rewriting of Long-Duration Texts

There is a tendency in both older and more recent scholarship to see the Rewritten and Bible/Scripture elements in the Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture appellation as mutually dependent—as though it were the canonicity/scripturality of the former *per se* that uniquely inspired the rewriting evident in the latter and as though the latter's rewritten nature were inseparable from the former's canonical/scriptural authority. But this is difficult to maintain when we broaden our horizon beyond the limits of those works normally included in the debate. Indeed, the chief characteristic of the compositions normally called Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture appears to dovetail with the broader phenomenon of the rewriting of a diversity of "long-duration texts,"¹¹⁷ including both widely circulating non-scriptural materials (e.g. 1 Maccabees and the *Letter of Aristeas* in *Ant.* 12-13) and more partisan pieces (e.g. Mark in Matthew and Luke).¹¹⁸ Since, in contrast, even recent discussion of Rewritten Scripture views the relationship between the *Vorlage* and rewritten entity as something intertwined with *both* the scriptural status of the former *and* the latter's dependence on that status, the term *Rewritten Scripture* would again seem to be as problematic as Vermes' original label that it is supposed to replace.

Future Research

If so, we need to take greater account of the fact that the kind of rewriting evident in so-called Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture works fits into a broader scenario in which a wide range of long-duration texts were subjected to the same kind of textual process. An important question for future research, therefore, is what core features or key functions, if any, all such texts have in common. More particularly, if essentially the same exegetical strategy long recognized vis-à-vis *Jubilees* and *Ant.* 1-11, for instance, is also at work in *4 Maccabees* and Matthew, then observations about the interdependency of *Vorlage* and derived work expressed specifically in terms of the former's scriptural status require rethinking.¹¹⁹ In pursuing these questions, of course, what remains distinctive about specific types of rewriting—whether of sectarian works, popular non-

¹¹⁷ See note 116 again.

¹¹⁸ See above note 11.

¹¹⁹ See again note 115.

scriptural literature, or scriptural compositions—may become clearer. But what each of these might be called is a matter best left for another discussion, although it may in a limited sense be reasonable to speak of *Rewritten Scripture* for some texts in the same way that others might simultaneously be described as *Rewritten Sectarian Work* or *Rewritten Popular Narrative*.

CONCLUSION

By engaging with recent issues in the debate, this chapter has sought to comment on the accuracy and efficacy of the terminology employed for the works routinely known as *Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture*. We have found that the main participants in that debate, past and present, have all contributed something positive. Bernstein's proposition that *Rewritten Bible* should be defined as tightly as possible to maximize its heuristic value is crucial, for example, as is Harrington's argument that in essence a textual process lies at the heart of the rewriting phenomenon. The more recent observation of Brooke, Petersen, VanderKam, White Crawford, and others that the original appellation *Rewritten Bible* is anachronistic, given the likelihood that late Second Temple Jews had *Scripture*, not *canon*, is similarly persuasive. At the same time, attempts to portray *Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture* as a genre remain unconvincing, while *Rewritten Scripture* as a replacement for *Rewritten Bible* arguably obfuscates as much as it illuminates. Most significantly, we have seen that the circumscribed textual process found in so-called *Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture* works is also evident within a wider range of late Second Temple literature than is normally acknowledged. This important factor has received little attention hitherto, presumably because of the overriding interest of scholars in *Scripture* and its interpretation in general and because of the focus on recently published scriptural and *Scripture*-related Qumran manuscripts in particular. To counter these tendencies, and to encourage a fuller grasp of the rewriting phenomenon in late Second Temple Judaism, it is helpful to separate the *Rewritten* and *Bible/Scripture* elements and even, at least temporarily, to put on hold *Rewritten Bible/Rewritten Scripture* language altogether. However, this should most emphatically *not* be taken to show that Vermes' original idea introduced fifty years ago has somehow been unproductive, for, on the contrary, our analysis demonstrates that its introduction has been a great success. But as is often the case with

good ideas, it has led us in a direction that could not have been predicted at the outset.

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