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Meaning and Context in the Thanksgiving Hymns

Van Bakkum, Wout

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opposed to allusions or echoes, are almost non-existent, so that there is a scale of probability involved here on which scholars may disagree. Some examples, however, seem so far along that scale as to be most improbable. The first intertext that Lee discusses is a good case in point (pp. 58–63). At Zech. 9:1 she detects a reference to Jer. 23:33–40. This is based on two isolated lexemes. One is *massa*, ‘an oracle’, which is standard in introductory rubrics, as in Zechariah, but which occurs as part of a narrative in Jeremiah. The other is one of the commonest words in the Hebrew Bible, but appears as a noun in Zechariah (*dabar*, ‘word’) and as a verb (*dibber*, ‘has spoken’) in Jeremiah. It is questionable whether readers in antiquity, unlike modern scholars, were aware of the relationships based on the ‘root’ of a word, and in this case the likelihood is lessened by the fact that they were pronounced quite differently. I cannot see any way to arrive on the basis of this evidence at an intertext that would have been recognized before the modern era.

A further question concerns how far we may press the ‘context’ of the host text to aid in the exegesis of Zechariah. Again, this is a question of judgment, but for that very reason some caution is necessary. On pp. 122–5 she claims that Gen. 37:24 is the host text for Zech. 9:11b. Let us accept that claim for the sake of argument. Genesis 37 is part of the long narrative about Joseph, one climax of which comes many chapters later in 50:20, anticipated to some extent, I agree, in 45:7–8. Is it reasonable to expect a reader in antiquity, however, to have had this modern narrative appreciation in mind when catching the echo of 37:24? Lee claims that ‘the rest of the Joseph story is also summoned as a backdrop which highlights the divine will of salvation’ (p. 124), but I very much doubt whether this good preaching point would have been appreciated at the time.

While other such issues could also be explored, enough has perhaps already been said. Lee is far from the only scholar pursuing such research, and nothing I have written should give the impression that she is not diligent or learned. There are more questions of method that intertextual study raises than are usually considered. Of course, there are sometimes ‘citations’, and of course there are sometimes undeniable allusions to other texts. At the same time consideration should be given as to how knowledge of texts may have reached people, such as the liturgy, and equally it is important not to confuse use of stereotyped phraseology with a literary citation from a particular source (see p. 94 for a possible example of this); the amount of ancient Hebrew literature available to us is so small that arguments from absence of evidence are always a danger. In purely literary terms, such questions are not, perhaps, so important, but they cannot be avoided when we try to determine directions of dependence or application to particular historical circumstances.

It is to be hoped that Lee will continue her careful research on an important topic, and that in doing so she will at the same time develop her self-critical awareness of the questions of method that bedevil this subject.

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H.G.M. WILLIAMSON
SOUTHWOLD, SUFFOLK

TRINE BJØRNING HASSELBALCH, *Meaning and Context in the Thanksgiving Hymns: Linguistic and Rhetorical Perspectives on a Collection of Prayers from Qumran* (Early Judaism and Its Literature 42). Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta 2015. Pp. xi + 313. Price: \$40.95 paperback. ISBN: 978-1-62837-054-6.

Since the publications of Sukenik and Licht much has been written about the literary form and textual tradition of the 1QHodayot^a hymns in the Thanksgiving Scroll

from Qumran. Modern scholarship has been dominated by questions about the composite nature of the hymns and prayers in relation to their authorship and contents. Widely diverging opinions have been expressed on the longstanding categorization of the Hodayot into Hymns of the Leader and Hymns of the Community which in the last few years has been challenged on various grounds. Similarly, the use of biblical vocabulary and the function of biblical interpretation in the Hodayot have been the subject of much debate with significantly different outcomes. The present volume covers some of these major issues on the basis of a number of fundamental assumptions: (1) 1QH^a should be differentiated in terms of inscribed and unscribed meanings that change from one context to another; (2) The status of Hodayot as prayer compositions has consequences for their function in a 'social situation', that is to say, the praying person in his address to God; (3) The Hodayot suggest an active role for the praying person in terms of self-representation with social and ideological implications.

Hasselbalch intends to modify the plurality of scholarly approaches in favour of lifting the literary dichotomy of 1QH^a: the traditional conception of the collection of hymns as belonging to rank and file members of a congregation on the one hand, and leadership on the other, is therefore seriously questioned. The author defines her approach to the meaning of 1QH^a as 'holistic', because 'there is no analytical method that on its own can explain the range and impact of unscribed and indexical meaning in a text' (p. 36). This statement is used as a kind of legitimization for the application of a number of methodologies of language, text and genre analysis. The result is that in the ensuing chapters consistency between the various approaches is lacking. The author shows a strong preference for the use of Systemic Functional Linguistics for the purpose of analysing different kinds of meaning in discourse. Two tools in particular, transitivity analysis and lexical strings, are applied to the text of 1QH^a X 22–33, but in the case of 1QH^a VI 19–33 she takes the research of Carol Newsom (*The Self as Symbolic Space: Constructing Identity and Community at Qumran* [Leiden 2004]) as a starting point. Along the lines of textual criticism, linguistic and cognitive modalities, ritual and performance theories, and parallels with biblical psalms and prayers from the Second Temple period, the author wishes to arrive at conclusions that support her idea of unity in the Hodayot. In the chapter on two compositions for a *maskil* or spoken by a *maskil* (1QH^a XX 7 – XXII 39 and 1QS IX 12 – XI 22) diverse emphases are placed in the discussion of textual cohesion and agency hierarchies. In general, this chapter can be read as a detailed overview of the aspects related to the concept and status of the *maskil* in both Hodayot and 4QInstruction. The author's decision to include examples of what has been defined by Sarah Tanzer as 'classical hybrid' (1QH^a XII 6 – XIII 6) complicates her subsequent reasoning. The treatment of the Self-Glorification Hymn and the Hymn of the Righteous offers a nice resumé of the state of affairs with regard to these heterogeneous compositions in present-day Qumran scholarship, but the reader is confronted with the puzzling conclusion that very complex processes of transmission and identification leave the quest for the collective and communal focus rather unfounded. One wonders if her specific selection of hymns in chapters 3–6 is detrimental to the probability of drawing conclusive observations about the larger corpus. In other words, to what extent do the examples represent Qumran hymnology as a whole and what do they convey about communal intentions? The author subscribes to the corporate identity of most Hodayot, but enters into a tour-de-force — I'm not sure what this means? Is her interpretation thought by her to be an impressive tour-de-force? — in explaining how a collective of worshippers

could have conceived the seemingly individualistic speaker of the Self-Glorification Hymn(s). The hybrid character of the Hodayot is acknowledged, but a division of texts into categories of members and leaders is denied. The *personae loquentes* in the Hodayot are vested with multiple functions: alternately they are agents, mediators, praying persons, teachers or leaders.

The final result is a rather contradictory and circular argument in defence of a unified corpus in 1QH^a: 'Rather than giving too much weight to the differences, therefore, we choose to focus on those elements that unify the compositions of 1QH^a' (p. 249). The author eventually turns to observations of an editorial nature: these hymns of different origin are meticulously grouped together, and therefore new readings informed by linguistic perspectives are supposed to offer the possibility of understanding their meaning as a collection. The whole compilation of texts is perceived as 'products of writers' mental conceptions of their contexts, and these mental conceptions include the pragmatic aspects of the communication', ultimately leading to the rather self-evident conclusion that 1QH^a is 'a document that shows more general aspects of the community's identity at large.' (p. 274) Hasselbalch's exploration of textual interpretation therefore fits perfectly into a recent trend to reconsider the categories of the Hodayot and their possible functions within the Qumran community. However, the results are both unsurprising and methodologically questionable — in a broader context the Hodayot share common grounds in a tradition that represents both Qumran sectarian identity and nonsectarian Judaism.

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WOUT VAN BEKKUM
GRONINGEN UNIVERSITY

MICHAEL AVIOZ, *Josephus' Interpretation of the Books of Samuel* (Library of Second Temple Studies 86). Bloomsbury T & T Clark, London 2015. Pp. xvii + 254. Price: £70.00 hardback. ISBN: 978-0-567-60880-2.

Scholarship on Josephus's recasting of biblical history takes its lead substantially from the pioneering studies of L.H. Feldman that appeared in the 1980s and 1990s. These were followed by the work of C.T. Begg, and others. More recently, the ongoing Brill Josephus Project edited by Steve Mason has produced detailed commentaries covering the biblical material (*Jewish Antiquities* 1–11) expected soon. More broadly, this scholarship is part of a flourishing interest in Jewish biblical interpretation in ancient times, and in the phenomenon of what is often referred to as 'rewritten' Bibles, such as the *Genesis Apocryphon*, *Jubilees*, and Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*.

Michael Avioz, who has already contributed a number of significant studies to this field (some of which are reprised in altered form here), takes a step forward with the volume under review by offering an analysis of how Josephus adopted and adapted not just a biblical figure, event, or pericope, but a whole biblical book. The work thus stands in the tradition of Franxman's detailed analysis of Josephus's treatment of Genesis that appeared in 1979, and Christopher Begg's two monographs on the divided monarchy (1993 and 2000). Like those authors, Avioz regards Josephus as a genuine biblical interpreter or exegete, and argues that Josephus should be seen first in this light rather than as an 'apologist' whose interest lay primarily in defending the Jews from certain detractors and calumnies.

After dealing with 'preliminary matters' in two introductory chapters, Avioz divides the work into three main sections. The first is a detailed analysis of