

Reevaluating the Category of Rewritten Scripture

Jubilees, the Testament of Job, and the Hierarchy of Authority

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Abstract

Ever since Geza Vermes first proposed the identification of certain kinds of ancient literature as “Rewritten Bible” nearly forty years ago, the topic has spawned continued debate and intrigue. Most recently though, the discussion has centered on how to qualify and categorize what *is* Rewritten Scripture. The criteria and categorization of these texts has remained deeply contested and undecided. This article proposes a way in which to understand the concept of Rewritten Scripture as a literary strategy. Instead of focusing on whether an ancient work has discernible external features or stylistic elements, the article seeks to understand it as a category that is intimately related to the authors’ goal to give their work authority. Four subcategories of the umbrella term “Rewritten Scripture” are proposed with accompanying examples: “rewrites” (e.g., Testament of Job), “primary supplements” (e.g., Jubilees), “secondary supplements” (e.g., Genesis Apocryphon), and “new editions” (e.g., LXX Esther).

Keywords

Pentateuch – Mosaic discourse – Joban discourse – Dead Sea Scrolls – Genesis Apocryphon – 4QReworked Pentateuch

1 Introduction¹

Ever since Geza Vermes first proposed the identification of certain kinds of ancient literature as “Rewritten Bible” nearly forty years ago,² the topic has spawned continued debate and intrigue. Recent discussions have shifted the terminology used, switching “Bible” with “Scripture” so as to be less anachronistic about the development of the canon.³ Most recently though, the discussion has centered on how to qualify and categorize what *is* Rewritten Scripture. Despite widespread agreement that such a phenomenon exists and that there are documents that clearly fall under this label (Jubilees for example has almost universal acceptance among scholars), the criteria and categorization of these texts has remained deeply contested and undecided.

Perhaps due to this contested discussion, some have begun debating whether Rewritten Scripture represents a textual strategy or genre. In short, does the term describe a genre that those who wrote the works consciously partook in and that those who read or heard them understood as a specific “type” of book? Or, alternatively, is the term Rewritten Scripture indicative of a way of classifying texts for scholars, much like the term “apocalyptic” does not describe defined criteria for texts but is a helpful way of classifying a diverse set of material that shares basic outlooks? The field appears to be leaning toward the former interpretation, thanks to the work of scholars like Michael Segal and Molly Zahn, but the issue has not been helped by the continued lack of a clear definition of what such a Rewritten Scripture genre would look like and function as.

Within this ongoing and perplexing scholarly conversation, this article proposes a new way in which to understand the concept of Rewritten Scripture as both a genre and a literary strategy. Instead of focusing on specific external features (for example, how much of the original text is reproduced) or stylistic elements (for example, the language it was written in), this article seeks to understand Rewritten Scripture as intimately related to the goal of an ancient author to give their work authority in a hierarchical and symbiotic relationship to an earlier production. As Segal notes, “The dependence upon biblical

1 I’m very grateful to Deena Aranoff of the Graduate Theological Union for allowing me the chance to explore this topic as a paper in her stimulating class. Likewise, special gratitude is due to James Nati of the Graduate Theological Union for his insightful and helpful critiques and suggestions which helped to immensely improve the paper. Similar thanks is given to the anonymous reviewer and the editor who helped to bring this final revision to its current state. All potential shortcomings in the final version of this article are, of course, solely my own.

2 Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition*, 67–126.

3 See Zahn, “Talking.”

compositions in the process of creating new works is a product of the author's desire to impute authority to his work." Furthermore, "by associating his composition with the holiest of texts, the new work is also granted the same stamp of authority."⁴

Segal draws attention to the crucial issue: the desire to "impute authority." In other words, the act of rewriting attests to the authority that the tradition holds, which is why it was chosen as a conduit for communicating new ideas (i.e., why the author of Jubilees engages with a Mosaic discourse rather than some other obscure figure). More specifically though, this article wants to draw attention to the implicit idea that such an author has few other choices but to rewrite the tradition because of the actual authority a text already carries in that author's community. In short, a scribe who wishes to engage in the discourse of a certain persona (such as Moses or Job), for the purpose of communicating their own ideas more authoritatively, rewrites a text usually when he cannot escape the authority of an existing text and the connection it holds within a community for that persona's tradition.⁵

It will be argued that a scribe would be more likely to choose to write a new apocryphal text from scratch featuring the biblical persona, with no acknowledged or alluded connection to an existing text, only when there was not an existing text within their community that had achieved an authority identical to the persona's tradition itself.⁶ It was precisely because Moses and the Torah had become ubiquitous as part of the tradition of Mosaic authority that the author of Jubilees could not write a new text that had no interest in the Torah, and it is perhaps because the biblical book of Job was not yet ubiquitous with

4 Segal, "Between Bible," 11.

5 My assumption is that a scribe who rewrites a biblical text seeks to use its authority for the purpose of communicating a message of their own more authoritatively. Given that desire, while they would always be free to *not* rewrite a text and simply create a new one, such alternative choices would likely impact the reach of their new work negatively (since less potential readers would care or engage), thus providing them with limited options in order to achieve their goal.

6 We might think about the relationship of the many late Christian apocalypses (such as the Apocalypse of Paul), that all variously owe themselves to the earlier Apocalypse of Peter, but do not acknowledge nor allude to this first attempt at a tour of hell. The connection of Peter to the tradition was less strong than the idea of a tour of hell. This appears to be confirmed by the Gospel of Philip which mentions that "an apostolic man in a vision saw some people shut up in a house of fire" (Saying 57; NHC II 3, 66:30–34), suggesting that while the tradition of a tour of hell had apostolic authority, it did not yet have a specific apostolic discourse to which that tradition had to be connected (and judging from the ensuing centuries of variously pseudepigraphic apocalypses, it never did). Translation taken from Isenberg, "Gospel of Philip," 149.

the authority of the broader Joban discourse that the Testament of Job could create a largely new story and dismiss its predecessor, despite referencing it.

As Garrick Allen notes, “reworking a text is an acknowledgment or assertion of a base tradition’s authority.”⁷ And yet, this article parts ways when he argues that “the question of authority is tied into participation in these discourses [Torah-centric or Christocentric], but the quest to gain or confer authority is not the only driving force behind the act of rewriting.”⁸ In contradistinction to this claim, this article argues that the scribe writes in the name of an individual, precisely because that individual is authoritative for that community, and he rewrites the text by that person because it carries some authority which cannot be ignored, and in so doing he reveals what his own prerogatives are for his act of rewriting. As Hindy Najman notes about texts related to Moses: “Reading these Second Temple texts as participants in Mosaic Discourse will make available new perspectives on their attempts to authorize themselves through accounts of their own origination and through the incorporation of hallowed language.”⁹

This does not suggest that no other figures are *also* considered authoritative for that community, but it does mean that whatever figure is chosen for rewriting is one who is *already* considered authoritative among that scribe’s desired audience. If neither Moses nor the specific text of the Pentateuch was authoritative in a community, it would make little sense for a scribe to choose to rewrite the Pentateuchal stories as the authoritative vehicle for his teachings. Yet, this article also agrees with Allen on the fact that not all the texts we call Rewritten Scripture appear to be concerned with authorizing their authority, even if every single Rewritten Scripture text *does* reveal to us information about the authority a various discourse, text, or broader tradition carried. There is indeed a need to recognize this diversity and find a way to classify it.

Thus, in terms of the scholarly discourse currently surrounding this topic, it can be said that this article most closely mirrors the recent work of Zahn and Anders Petersen in agreeing that the genre of Rewritten Scripture must be defined by its function and that some of these texts function to various degrees as attempts to supersede the authority of the texts they are rewriting.¹⁰ As such, this article seeks to accomplish three things. First, inspired by Petersen’s own brief suggestion for a categorization of such works, this article proposes

7 Allen, “Rewriting and Gospels,” 61.

8 Allen, 68.

9 Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 18.

10 Petersen, “Textual Fidelity,” 26: “rewritten texts are borrowing authority and in some cases usurping it from the texts which they are rewriting.”

a list of four subcategories for Rewritten Scripture that will allow a complete and functional categorization of the surviving texts in this genre.¹¹ Second, it seeks to demonstrate how this categorization allows one to gain insight into the authoritative status of the original text being rewritten within the rewriter's historical community or ideal audience. Third, it seeks to show how this categorization additionally opens us to recognize the rewriter's self-estimation and intention.

2 A Brief Review of Previous Arguments and Criteria

A number of attempts have been made at discerning specific criteria that would identify the formal features of what a "genre" of Rewritten Scripture entails. Because this falls outside the purview of this article, one of the most recent attempts will be summarized. In 2005, Segal published an article detailing what he believed were criteria that defined Rewritten Scripture as a genre that was publicly recognized in antiquity. He divided these characteristics into two groups: external and internal (concerning the content). He argued, with regard to external characteristics that:

- a) a rewritten text would share the same language as its original,¹² and
- b) a text must be heavily dependent upon and reproduce the original source so closely that some parts of the original remain unchanged.

In addition to these external criteria, Segal proposed a number of internal characteristics:

- a) a rewritten text's scope of content will not match the original, while a variant textual edition of a text will match the scope, despite additional material;
- b) a rewritten text will provide a new frame or setting for the content to unfold, often with the intention of distinguishing itself from the source composition;
- c) a rewritten text will utilize the first person (either for God speaking or an angel speaking, for example), whereas the original source was in the third person;
- d) a rewritten text will both expand and abridge material, not sharing the same hesitation to remove content that variant textual editions demonstrate;

¹¹ Petersen, 44.

¹² Because of this, Segal ignored the Genesis Apocryphon and Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*, both of which he denied were part of Rewritten Scripture.

- e) a rewritten text will differ from its source in “ideas and spirit”;
- f) a rewritten text will reference the previous original source to distinguish itself from it.¹³

The problem with Segal's list is the fact that it was too selective. As he noted in the article, “none of the characteristics to be listed below applies equally to all the compositions under question, and none of the compositions exhibits all of the above traits.”¹⁴ While I can agree that some aspects listed are “relevant” for the genre, the fact that this list does not provide scholars with a broad set of criteria that apply to a majority of texts makes it problematic. Furthermore, some of the criteria that were proposed by Segal seem questionable, such as his external characteristic of a shared language, which eliminates texts that are largely considered part of the phenomenon, such as the *Genesis Apocryphon* (written in Aramaic, despite *Genesis* being in Hebrew).

As Allen notes, “the myriad of formal differences between works classified as ‘rewritten scripture’ suggest that a generic category is more challenging to define than the process of rewriting.”¹⁵ For some, this has meant that the idea of a genre should be dropped entirely, replaced instead with a description of a literary strategy. For those that see both as being true, Allen notes that “the generic aspects of rewritten scripture are secondary to its identity as a flexible set of exegetical procedures practiced on a scriptural base tradition.”¹⁶ Or as Vermes argued: “The person who combined the biblical text with its interpretation was engaged in a process, but when his activity was completed, it resulted in a literary genre.”¹⁷

While I sympathize with these sentiments, this article proposes that the idea of viewing *Rewritten Scripture* through a literary strategy should be given priority. When the author's motivation is given focus, with regard to a hierarchy of authority and textual tradition, the category of *Rewritten Scripture* becomes better focused. As Jozef Tiño notes, while texts “may differ significantly with respect to both their function and target audience,” it is still true that “it is possible to distinguish and at least broadly define several categories” of *Rewritten Scripture*.¹⁸

13 Segal, “Between Bible,” 17–27.

14 Segal, 20.

15 Allen, “Rewriting and Gospels,” 65.

16 Allen, 58.

17 Vermes, “Genesis of Concept,” 8.

18 Tiño, “Classification,” 342.

3 Four Subcategories: A Revised Proposal and Criteria

In contrast to the aforementioned definitions of Rewritten Scripture, this article will propose that what defines the genre is not any external features of the documents, but their inherent *intentions* or *function*. As can be seen from the previous attempts reviewed, there appear to be no specific shared features of these texts that help to define a specific format for the genre. As Segal demonstrated, some texts have one aspect while others have another. The only common feature is that the text appears to be rewriting a previous text. Given this reality, one needs to find something else about these texts that helps to categorize them.

With this in mind, the question shifts from *what* makes a text look like something we would identify as Rewritten Scripture, to the more nuanced: *why* was a text rewritten in the first place? While at first glance the latter question may seem to be more speculative and allude to realities far outside the reach of historical scholarship—even reminding of a previous era when such subjective realities were proposed ad nauseam—it turns out that this is in fact an issue that the texts we have address in various ways themselves. These ancient writers appear to have understood the genre of Rewritten Scripture not as a style (as if one were describing how to write a detective story), but as a rhetorical technique intended to interact with an audience familiar with some aspect of the work's tradition being rewritten. As Zahn wisely notes,

When we think about genre with regard to Rewritten Scripture, therefore, we are not simply asking questions pertaining to classification. Rather, the genre question raises issues that go to the heart of what we seek to know about these works: Why were they produced? What did their authors hope to accomplish? How did the authors intend them to be read? If we decide, in other words, that Rewritten Scripture constitutes a distinct genre, we are suggesting that something was gained or something specific could be communicated—a specific goal could be accomplished—by the use of this genre as opposed to a different one ... we should be looking for evidence of another sort of shared feature if we are to regard Rewritten Scripture as a genre: Do these texts all *do* the same thing? Is there a degree to which the rewriting in these texts constitutes a meaningful *action* that accomplishes a certain goal? If we can find evidence that some or all of the compositions usually considered Rewritten Scripture “act” or function in a particular way, then we are probably justified in referring to a genre called Rewritten Scripture.¹⁹

19 Zahn, “Genre and Rewritten Scripture,” 280–281.

Acknowledging Zahn's emphasis on function, which this article takes up, it also continues the work of Petersen's recent article. He has argued that despite the fact that "it has become a truism that 'texts belonging to the category of rewritten Scripture do not attempt to replace their scriptural antecedents,'" in fact they may also "by virtue of being rewritings justifiably be viewed as engaged in the attempt to functionally replace their scriptural antecedents."²⁰ Yet, Petersen notes that not all Rewritten Scripture texts do this the same way, with some doing it more and others far less (or not at all). Likewise, he notes that by "replace" he means this in regard to the function of the previous text, not its actual physical replacement.

If by replacement one can also understand the act of surpassing or exceeding one's scriptural predecessors with respect to claims to authority, it cannot be excluded that some rewritten texts did attempt to supersede their authoritative base texts. Such supersession does not imply the abrogation of the base text in a straight-forward manner, but it does move the understanding in the direction of acknowledging that some rewritten texts could render their scriptural antecedents superfluous and of less value in terms of authority.²¹

Speaking to the issue of how texts relate to the idea of replacement, he distinguishes between "irenical scriptural completion at the one end of the spectrum and scriptural cannibalism at the other end of the spectrum," or what he alternatively calls "the replacement thesis" versus the "irenical interpretation."²² One cannot "endorse" either position because the issue is not binary and "it is crucial that we acknowledge that the phenomenon comprises a continuum of different possibilities."²³ He notes that as such, there is a need for "differentiation" between rewritten texts with regard to their function in this regard,²⁴ and proposes that we distinguish "between texts that do not explicitly comment on their relationship with respect to the authoritative antecedents (rewritten Scripture proper) and texts that explicitly relate to their scriptural predecessors."²⁵ He says that "it is urgent" to differentiate the "different kinds of authority" these texts utilize. He proposes at least three categories represent-

²⁰ Petersen, "Textual Fidelity," 14.

²¹ Petersen, 33.

²² Petersen, "Riverrun," 476.

²³ Petersen, 476.

²⁴ Petersen, "Textual Fidelity," 17.

²⁵ Petersen, 43.

ing “different possibilities,” including: *loyal embracement* (the text attempts to usurp no authority), *textual cannibalism* (the text alters the source largely into something new, usurping authority), and *encroachment* (the text disagrees and actively resists against its antecedent tradition).²⁶

In this sense, Petersen is acknowledging the issue of intertextuality that is at the heart of these interrelationships, yet like Najman recognizes that “to say that a number of texts, written over a long period of time, are members of a single *Mosaic Discourse*, is not merely to say these texts exhibit what has been called intertextuality,” but it in part also means that “a new text claims for itself the authority that already attaches to those traditions.”²⁷ In an earlier article, Petersen argued more extensively that “Rewritten Scripture should be conceived of as an excessive form of intertextuality that signifies the relationship existing between scriptural predecessor and rewritten piece with respect to the question of authority.”²⁸

Agreeing with Petersen’s notation that “far more work needs to be done”²⁹ about classifying these texts using this paradigm, this article sees Rewritten Scripture as an “umbrella term”³⁰ that encompasses a host of more nuanced sub-genres or categories: “rewrites,” “primary supplements,” “secondary supplements,” and “new editions.” Within these four sub-categories, almost every ancient work that has been proposed to fall under the designation Rewritten Scripture can find a home based on its activity or function. In each case, the names for these categories I have listed refer to the intention that an author or scribe had for his (or her) work. This function is determined by the work itself and how it presents itself in relationship to the material it is editing.³¹

26 Petersen, 44. The elaborations of these categories in italics are my own, based on inferences from his work, since Petersen does not elaborate on these categories until the final paragraph of his article. Petersen’s full quote as he concluded his article, without my elaborations, reads: “At the level of content and function, I have over against prevalent strands of scholarship underlined a spectrum of options that stretches from loyal embracement (*LAB*, Antiquities, the Genesis Apocryphon) over textual cannibalism (Book of Jubilees and Matthew) to encroachment (Gospel of John).”

27 Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 16. See also her comment that “the fact that a text constantly invokes and recasts the language of earlier traditions cannot be the *sole* evidence for the thesis that the text is intended to replace those earlier traditions (47).”

28 Petersen, “Riverrun,” 475.

29 Petersen, “Textual Fidelity,” 44.

30 Petersen, 13.

31 It must be stated that a distinction is made between a text (whether “original” or rewritten) and the larger tradition or *discourse* those texts partake in, to use the terminology proposed by Najman. In some of the subcategories below, one will note the evolving relationship between texts and the discourse they partake in. Some examples of Rewritten

3.1 *Rewrites*

The first new subcategory sounds strangely identical to the name of the umbrella term itself. This is because not all Rewritten Scripture is actually a true *rewrite*. This article defines a rewrite only as a work that attempts to rewrite a previous work *without* acknowledgment of its source (either as extant or as authoritative). This might mean that text B is clearly based on or related to text A, but does not reference, acknowledge, or note the existence of the previous work. However, it could likewise refer to a situation where text B is clearly related to or based on text A while acknowledging the latter, but denies it an authoritative status (promoting the rewrite as more trustworthy). In other words, in either of these two scenarios, the new work is a true rewrite because it has attempted to *replace* the original with a new version.³²

Strong examples of this would be the Testament of Job, the Life of Adam and Eve (Vita), and in the New Testament perhaps the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. In each of these works, the writers have created a book that either rewrites what came before without attribution (Vita, Matthew), or they have acknowledged the original texts but have demoted them as secondary or irrelevant to the rewrite (Testament of Job, Luke 1:1–4). What makes these texts unique and classified together is how they intentionally position themselves in relationship to the original text(s).

To examine this hypothesis, the Testament of Job will be used as a test case, since it represents one of the best illustrations of this phenomenon. The book, a rewrite of the canonical story of Job, like Kings and Chronicles, makes a number of references to other works. Among these references are some that refer to “the miscellanies” (T. Job 40:14), which is the same technical term employed in LXX Chronicles. This appears to be a catch-all term used to refer to anything

Scripture relate to the discourse generally, viewing the text they rewrite as merely another conversation partner. Other examples of Rewritten Scripture however view the discourse through the medium of the text they are rewriting (or, rather, are compelled to because of the authority that text has already exercised in their community in establishing the form of that discourse). See Najman, *Seconding Sinai*. Also, see her comments in Najman, Manoff, and Mroczek, “Pseudonymous Attribution,” 326.

- 32 This demonstrates the problem with Segal’s analysis (“Between Bible,” 11), when he notes that “Indeed, the rewritten composition was not composed with the purpose of *replacing* the biblical texts, for without the Bible itself the rewritten composition loses its legitimacy.” While it is true that *some* rewritten texts like Jubilees cannot do this, others like the Testament of Job do. The biblical texts themselves are merely pointers to the larger notoriety of the biblical *tradition* or *discourse* on a person or topic, and a rewritten composition is simply interacting with the overall discourse, even when rewriting a specific text. For the rewritten text to function, they only need the discourse to be active and well known, not necessarily the text.

related to Job outside of the Testament itself. On a specific occasion, however, the miscellanies discussed are specified as the one from Eliphaz, noting: “Then Elihu, inspired by Satan, spoke out against me insulting words, which are written down in ‘The Miscellanies of Eliphaz’” (T. Job 41:5–6; trans. Spittler).

The reference appears to be directed toward the canonical book of Job, chapters 32–37, which contains Elihu’s additional speeches aimed at condemning Job. Why has the author of the Testament referenced the book he is rewriting as coming from Eliphaz? The answer can be seen in two ways. First, one can note that Eliphaz in the canonical book of Job often misunderstands Job’s character and condemns him for being arrogant, and likewise, the Testament does not portray Job as doing or saying any of the negative things that the canonical book records (and none of the things that Eliphaz condemns him for there). Second, the *Testament* claims that its own account is written by the brother of Job (T. Job 51:1–4) and contains the authentic words of Job (T. Job 1:1). These elements, taken together, are indicative of a work that seeks to both acknowledge the existence of canonical Job while also denigrating it as less authoritative than its own version. While Rob Kugler claimed that “no one disputes that the *Testament of Job* ... considered it [the Book of Job] somehow to be ‘scripture’ and to have ‘authority’ as such,”³³ this article suggests that this view is more than likely incorrect.

The Testament of Job presents itself as the more authoritative and accurate version of Job’s story and does so by casting suspicion on the source of the older, canonical version. The fact that the Testament has to cast such suspicion tells us that canonical Job was beginning to gain influence and possibly authority among the author’s community. And yet, the fact that the Testament felt free to challenge and dismiss the eventual biblical work suggests equally that it had not yet solidified its authority at the time. While the story or legend of Job surely had notoriety in the rewriter’s community, the earlier book itself had not established itself as the authoritative conduit for that tradition, allowing the rewriter to create the Testament as a replacement (while still having to acknowledge the existence of the previous source which was known to others).³⁴ Through this

33 Kugler, “Writing Scripturally,” 251.

34 It is also possible that even if the biblical version of Job’s story was the conduit by which the Joban tradition was popularized, the Testament of Job’s rewrite bears witness to a tradition rebellion in which the tradition generated by a text led to an authoritative status being attributed to the generated tradition, rather than to the text that generated it. An example of this process can perhaps be seen in the second century CE, when the traditions recorded in the Protoevangelium of James became part of church tradition despite the text itself not receiving authoritative status, or similarly how the imagery of hellish punishment depicted in the Apocalypse of Peter (and its spinoff adaptations) came to gain

careful analysis, one learns both about the status of the book of Job at the time and the locale of the rewriter (limited to his community), but also about the intended goal of the Testament: to replace the earlier book with what he hoped would become the authoritative conduit for the Joban discourse.

3.2 *Primary Supplements*

The second new subcategory differentiates itself from the first by noting as characteristic those works which *do* acknowledge their predecessors' text and seek not to replace it, but to *affect* it. Rather than editing the earlier source itself directly (like a scribal variant), the author wishes to create a second authoritative text to *accompany* the first. Furthermore, these texts which supplement an earlier one seek to function as of *greater* importance than the earlier. This creates a hierarchy in which both the earlier and the rewritten text are affirmed as authoritative, but the newer text becomes the prism through which the earlier text must be understood (rather than the reverse).³⁵ Or as Segal notes, "The rewritten texts ask the reader to accept the authority of their sources, but to understand those sources according to the rewritten text's interpretation."³⁶ Strong examples of this category can be seen in Jubilees and later in the Sethian Gnostic *Reality of the Rulers*.

Jubilees best represents this type of Rewritten Scripture since it not only acknowledges that the Torah of Moses exists (the first law), but affirms its continued and binding authority (for example, Jubilees Prologue and 6:7).³⁷ The rewritten text positions itself adjacent to the earlier one, and yet, also a bit

authoritative status even if the texts that provided the imagery did not. This underscores the fact that ancient texts, even if the primary means for popularizing a tradition, may themselves either be replaced, ignored, or rejected as texts, despite their traditions and ideas becoming accepted. Another example of this might be the case of 1 Enoch (specifically, the Book of Watchers) which appears to have popularized a specific interpretation of Gen 6 that came to be widespread and accepted by many Second Temple Jews, even when those Jewish readers did not accept 1 Enoch as authoritative.

35 Some scholars, such as D. Andrew Teeter disagree with this. Teeter, "Composition," 256: "I am persuaded, with O.H. Steck, that what *Jubilees* seeks to accomplish as an independent composition is not, as often assumed, to supplant or supersede these authoritative traditions. Rather ... the book of *Jubilees* undertakes to *actualize* these traditions: it attempts to provide a guiding orientation to a sprawling and complex traditional corpus, focused on the issues of greatest concern to the author and his time."

36 Segal, "Between Bible," 12.

37 This distinguishes Jubilees from Testament of Job. As Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 50 notes, "A text genuinely intended to replace Genesis would have had no need for the exegetical creativity exhibited here, and indeed in almost every section of *Jubilees*. It would simply have given its own 'correct' and unproblematic versions of biblical narratives."

higher.³⁸ Jubilees presents its revelation as something that the angels reveal and narrate (1:27, 29; 2:1), whereas the first Torah is something Moses himself writes down (presumably in his own voice?). The result of this is that Jubilees as a book clears up or corrects misunderstandings in the Torah. The consequence of these corrections, increased ease of understanding, and attribution to angelic narration is that Jubilees becomes the book that readers seek first before interpreting the Torah. One reads the Torah through Jubilees, not the other way around. And yet, what distinguishes Jubilees from the Testament of Job is that the former expects you to read the earlier work, while the latter does not (and maybe shouldn't). This invites us to ask why the author of Jubilees did this. James VanderKam puts it best when he says:

A central part of the problem was that the Torah already existed in written form ... and held a prominent, apparently authoritative position at the time So it was impossible to pretend that the Pentateuch did not exist when everyone knew it did and copies were available. Our writer could not get away with claiming that *Jubilees* was the only recorded version of the Sinaitic revelations. He could not even tell others that the Pentateuch just would not do, whereas *Jubilees* was the authoritative record of the revelation. And, as it turns out, that is not what he has in mind. He neither ignored the Pentateuch nor tried to replace it. Rather, he worked with it and with the other traditional literature to convey the truth about them as he understood it ... He makes it clear that he does acknowledge the existence of what he calls *the law* and recognizes that it was revealed. He certainly does not denigrate it.³⁹

John Endres argued that “for the audience of Jubilees the authorizing factor is the theophany at Sinai to Moses ... The Torah ... as a written document, is not the authorizing factor for the author of Jubilees.”⁴⁰ Contrary to this assertion, this article argues that by noting the difference between rewrites and primary supplements as subcategories, one can see how Endres’ comment makes more sense with how the Testament of Job interacts with the Joban traditions or discourse. His comments, however, would not apply as well to Jubilees, which does appear to anchor itself in the actual text of the Pentateuch and cannot help but do so because of the authority that text has already accrued (in contrast to the

38 Petersen, “Textual Fidelity,” 34.

39 VanderKam, “Moses Trumping,” 27–28.

40 Endres, “Scriptural Authority,” 203.

book of Job, which had not accrued such authority as a *text* and was thus subject to a rewrite). As Najman argued, “*Jubilees* is not intended to replace the authoritative Torah, but rather to accompany it as its authoritative interpretation and supplement.”⁴¹

It must be said that in recent years, this traditional understanding of *Jubilees* has been challenged. David Lambert has argued that *Jubilees* does *not* make reference to the Pentateuch, but rather situates its own revelation prior to the Torah’s composition.⁴² Lambert describes *Jubilees* as a “prewritten” text, rather than “rewritten” given this. As Eva Mroczek notes, agreeing in part with Lambert: “Unlike Deuteronomy, *Jubilees* does not claim to be *based on or derived from* the memory of earlier revelation.”⁴³ Regardless of whether this new perspective on *Jubilees* is better than the older consensus, it would not alter the observations made earlier, nor the classification chosen for this article. Even as a “prewritten” text, it would serve as a primary supplement since it authenticates the Torah, even as it derives its own legitimacy from the established Mosaic text. Even if the Torah of Moses is not in a hierarchy with *Jubilees*, the latter becomes the medium by which the former is understood, thus functionally creating a hierarchy, when intended or not. It needs the Torah to exist, even if it does not mention it.

As Petersen notes, “the book [of *Jubilees*] virtually replaces the first Law by adding a new interpretative lens through which it claims the first Law should be grasped.”⁴⁴ Because of this, “the book is representative of the broader phenomenon of scriptural *deuterōsis*, whereby secondary texts claim to constitute the right interpretation of the authoritative, primary texts.”⁴⁵ In this way, *Jubilees* “changes the order of the authoritative relationship between base text and subsequent rewriting.”⁴⁶ In short, “the book epitomizes a text which by virtue of rewriting an authoritative predecessor strives to supersede it in terms of authority both with regard to content and to pragmatic function.”⁴⁷

3.3 *Secondary Supplements*

In distinction to primary supplements, a *secondary* supplement is a document that may or may not seek to set itself in a functional hierarchy to the origi-

41 Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 48.

42 Lambert, “Torah of Moses.”

43 Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*, 141.

44 Petersen, “Riverrun,” 492.

45 Petersen, 492.

46 Petersen, 493.

47 Petersen, 493.

nal, but definitely does not seek to rewrite the previous book in an alternate account. A secondary supplement is recognizable as an *expansion* of a particular story or a particular issue, but does not claim for itself any special authority.⁴⁸ It does not usually rewrite the entire previous document, so much as it delves deeper into a specific topic or theme. A strong example of this can be seen in the Genesis Apocryphon.

The Genesis Apocryphon rehearses the story of the prediluvian world and expands on the time period, giving extended narratives and dialogues involving Noah and other characters.⁴⁹ As Daniel A. Machiela notes, it can even be called an apocalyptic text, given its reports of divine conversations and visions.⁵⁰ Yet at no point does the work present itself as the result of a special revelation,⁵¹ nor does it connect itself to the specific *discourse* of some famous individual (like Jubilees does when grounding itself in what Najman calls a “Mosaic discourse”). Instead, the Genesis Apocryphon tells its story and nothing else, revisiting earlier written materials and legends but not attempting to displace or replace them. This is also true for Joseph and Aseneth, which expands the reference to Joseph’s marriage to Aseneth in Gen 41:50, but does not attempt to present itself in any authoritative fashion. These two documents distinguish themselves from other examples of Rewritten Scripture by virtue of their attempt to *merely* supplement existing authoritative traditions.

The fact that works like these do not seek to position themselves above the earlier works they utilize or to make special claims suggests that they understand their works to stand lower in a hierarchy. It tells us both that the stories they are writing about have achieved enough notoriety as legends or books that the author does not seek to or cannot imagine displacing them. Why write these secondary supplements then? It may be that these stories represent “popular”⁵² interpretations or legends of the author’s time that had not been written down, so the composition of something like the Genesis Apocryphon functions as an archival tool to help bridge contemporary stories with those known from previous sources. In other words, these works likely began as local documents serving local interests. That description may fall short however, for it could also be that these anonymous works *did* desire to correct errors in the more estab-

48 Tiño, “Classification,” 340.

49 Machiela, “Genesis Apocryphon,” 310–313.

50 Machiela, “Genesis Revealed.”

51 Although we lack the beginning of the work and cannot know how it introduced itself, nothing in the surviving fragments suggests a revelatory source.

52 Tiño, “Classification,” 339.

lished texts and traditions they commented on, but failed to effectively position their works in an authoritative discourse that would have allowed their text to flourish.

3.4 *New Editions*

Finally, this brings us to the fourth subcategory, of works which rewrite a text so as to *update* it, but whose updates effectively alter the previous work to such a degree that the result appears to be an alternative version rather than the exact same story.⁵³ These new editions of a text seek to replace the previous version, but not by creating a completely new text. While changes are made to the text, they are not so many that the earlier story becomes unrecognizable. Strong examples of this can be seen with the LXX Book of Esther and 4QReworked Pentateuch.

For the purposes of this article, attention will be given to LXX Esther and 4QReworked Pentateuch. LXX Esther differs from its Hebrew *Vorlage* primarily with regard to its extensive additional references to God (the Hebrew lacking any), as well as in some additional prayers that have been added for both Esther and Mordechai in order to give the work a new spiritual flavor. These changes effectively transform the work from a more secular text to one that has transplanted God explicitly into it. 4QReworkedPentateuch, a text first discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls, is more complex since we only have fragments. It appears to rewrite the Pentateuch, removing legal material that intruded on the narrative sections. We do not know if this legal material was ever found elsewhere in the original work, but if not, it means the text, like Jubilees, took great liberties in changing its original source. It also appears to have added—despite removing some—other legal material. As Moshe Bernstein noted,

To my mind, this fundamental characteristic of 4QRP makes it very unlikely that some, if not all, of these manuscripts are to be considered an edition of the Pentateuch, *unless we allow for the possibility of an editorial or redactional process which goes far beyond anything else with which we are familiar*.⁵⁴

53 I depart from many recent scholars who have tried to distinguish rewritten texts from *reworked* editions. I do not see the two categories as distinct. I am more concerned about distinguishing “rewritten” (or “new”) editions from mere textual variant versions of a document generated by copyists.

54 Bernstein, “Treatment,” 33.

This echoes Segal's contention that "the SP [Samaritan Pentateuch], accepted as an authoritative edition of the Torah, thus represents their boundary of acceptable scribal intervention, past which compositions should be described as 'Reworked Pentateuch' and not the Pentateuch itself."⁵⁵ While we should recognize that the text is indeed a rewritten version of a previous version of the Pentateuch, this does not actually make 4QReworked Pentateuch distinct, but rather demonstrates that it appears to be establishing a new version of the Pentateuch. Like the Samaritan Pentateuch and LXX Esther, it seeks to replace the other versions that exist as authoritative.

In both cases, this demonstrates that the choice to undertake a new edition of a work, rather than any of the other three under discussion, was likely rooted in a belief that the book being rewritten, while authoritative, had not yet achieved a level of sanctity that made its current textual form unalterable. Unlike Jubilees, which felt pressured to supplement the Torah, the writer(s) of 4QReworked Pentateuch felt no such restraint and actively edited the text of the Torah. This informs us that Rewritten Scripture fundamentally relates to the authority the previous texts had within a community. It also demonstrates that whereas one author felt they needed to supplement the Torah, another felt that they could directly alter it, suggesting that there was indeed great diversity in Second Temple Judaism as to the status of the Pentateuch.

By utilizing these four subcategories as ways to specify exactly what scholars mean when they speak of the phenomenon of Rewritten Scripture, it is possible to both specify what defines rewritten works and the criteria for each form they take, but also to note accurately what distinguishes Rewritten Scripture from textual variants created by copyists of manuscripts. A variant introduced into a manuscript, while it does technically rewrite the text, does so *conservatively*. The most conservative example of this is perhaps the approach of the Samaritan Pentateuch, all of whose variants derive from other parts of the Pentateuch itself.⁵⁶

Variants seek to update a text, but not transform it. They address a specific issue, not the overall perceived metanarrative of the text in question. Adding the *Pericope adulterae* to John's Gospel represents a variant, while LXX Esther's additional material represents a new edition. The difference between the two lay in regard to how fundamentally the additional material altered the scope and focus of the text. With John, the story of the woman caught in adultery does nothing to affect the overall book's meaning, whereas Esther's additional

55 Segal, "Between Bible," 15.

56 Segal, 14.

material alters the perception of God and the tone of the entire text. According to Tiño, Rewritten Scripture operates in a pre-scriptural state of composition which includes “a new scope, a new speaker, and new theological agenda.”⁵⁷ LXX Esther represents a new theological agenda from the earlier work and 4QReworkedPentateuch represents a new scope. None of these works fit neatly into a post-scriptural milieu and represent pre-scriptural modes of editing.

4 Conclusion

Utilizing these four subcategories for the umbrella term Rewritten Scripture, it becomes possible to identify and catalogue potentially all forms of what has been variously called rewritten texts. If some text does not fit neatly into one of these categories, or seems to fit into more than one, it likely suggests that such a text (for example, Josephus’ *Jewish Antiquities*) is an outlier, rather than an archetype and should, as such, be approached differently, probing how and why that work breaks the expectations.

In summary, this article has presented a new system of categorization for the concept of Rewritten Scripture. By recognizing that it is an umbrella term and identifying four subcategories within its scope, it becomes possible to recognize how Rewritten Scripture functions as a literary strategy related to and shedding light on the issue of a tradition’s or text’s authority. The results of this classification also re-affirm Najman’s wise note that rewritten texts are not “fraudulent” but in some sense are “a pious effort to convey what is taken to be the essence of earlier traditions, an essence that the rewriters think is in danger of being missed.”⁵⁸ This appears true even when they seek to replace another text within the larger discourse they participate in.

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57 Tiño, “Classification,” 336.

58 Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 46.

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