Hanna Tervanotko

Denying Her Voice: The Figure of Miriam in Ancient Jewish Literature

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Brussels, December 2015
Hanna Tervanotko
Style and Abbreviations


Primary Sources

- **Aet.** De aeternitate mundi
- **Agr.** De agricultura
- **ALD** Aramaic Levi Document
- **A.J.** Antiquitates judaicae
- **apocrPent. B** Apocryphon Pentateuch B
- **B. J.** Bellum judaicum
- **b.Meg.** Babylonian Talmud, Megillah
- **b.Sanh.** Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin
- **b.Šebu.** Babylonian Talmud, Shevu’ot
- **b.Šotah** Babylonian Talmud Sotah
- **b.Ta‘ān.** Babylonian Talmud, Tāanit
- **Cant** Canticles
- **CD** Cairo Genizah copy of the Damascus Document
- **Cher.** De cherubim
- **Congr.** De congressu eruditionis gratia
- **Contempl.** De vita contemplativa
- **C. Ap.** Contra Apionem
- **Chr** 1–2 Chronicles
- **D** Deuteronomist source
- **Dan** Daniel
- **Decal.** De decalogo
- **Deut** Deuteronomy
- **DSS** Dead Sea Scrolls
- **Esth** Esther
- **Exod** Exodus
- **Exod. Rab.** Exodus Rabbah
- **Ezek** Ezekiel
- **Flacc.** In Flaccum
- **Fug.** De fuga et inventione
- **Gen** Genesis
- **H** Hodayot
- **Hist.** Historiae
- **Hos** Hosea
- **Hypoth.** Hypothetica
Ios.  De Iosepho
Isa  Isaiah
J  Jahwist source
Jdt  Judith
Jer  Jeremiah
Josh  Joshua
Jub.  Jubilees
Kgs  1–2 Kings
KJV  King James Version
L.A.B.  Liber antiquitatum biblicarum
Lam  Lamentations
Leg.  Legum allegoriae 1–3
Legat.  Legatio ad Gaium
Let. Aris.  Letter of Aristeas
Lev  Leviticus
4QLev-Num\textsuperscript{a}  Leviticus-Numeri\textsuperscript{a} (4Q23)
LXX  Septuagint
M  Milhamah
Macc  1–4 Maccabees
Mal  Malachi
Mek. Exod.  Mekillta on Exodus
Mic  Micah
Migr.  De migratione Abraha mi
m.Ketub.  Mishnah Ketubbot
m.Naš.  Mishnah Nashim
m.Nidd.  Mishnah Niddah
MMT  Miqṣat Maâšê ha-Torah
Mos.  De vita Mosis 1–2
MT  Masoretic Text
Mut.  De mutatione nominum
Neh  Nehemiah
NRSV  New Revised Standard Version
Num  Numeri
4QNum\textsuperscript{b}  Numeri\textsuperscript{b} (4Q27)
Opif.  De opificio mundi
P  Priestly source
1QpHab  Pesher Habakkuk
Plant.  De plantatione
Post.  De posteritate Caini
Praep. ev.  Praeparatio evangelica
Praem.  De praemiis et poenis
Prob.  Quod omnis probus liber sit
Prov  Proverbs
Ps  Psalms
QE  Quaestiones et solutiones in Exodum 1–2
QG  Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesin 1–4
Qoh  Qohelet
### Style and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>Reworked Pentateuch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Serekh ha-Yahad (Manual of Discipline)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>1–2 Samuel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sobr.</td>
<td>De sobrietate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somn.</td>
<td>De somniis 1–2</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Samaritan Pentateuch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spec.</td>
<td>De specialibus legibus 1–4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strom.</td>
<td>Stromata</td>
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<td>Syr.</td>
<td>Syriac</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>Temple Scroll</td>
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<td>Tanh.</td>
<td>Tanhumah</td>
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<td>Tg. Neof. 1</td>
<td>Targum Neofiti 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tg. Ps.-J.</td>
<td>Targum Pseudo-Jonathan</td>
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<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>Visions of Amram</td>
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<td>Vg.</td>
<td>Vulgate</td>
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<td>Virt.</td>
<td>De virtutibus</td>
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<td>VL</td>
<td>Vetus Latina</td>
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<td>Wis</td>
<td>Wisdom of Salomon</td>
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<td>Zeph</td>
<td>Zephaniah</td>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>AB</td>
<td>Anchor Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABD</td>
<td>Anchor Bible Dictionary</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALGHJ</td>
<td>Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGJU</td>
<td>Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AnBib</td>
<td>Analecta biblica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANRW</td>
<td>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ArBib</td>
<td>The Aramaic Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARM</td>
<td>Archives royales de Mari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ArOr</td>
<td>Archiv Orientální</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATANT</td>
<td>Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATD</td>
<td>Das Alte Testament Deutsch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAR</td>
<td>Biblical Archaeology Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBB</td>
<td>Bonner biblische Beiträge</td>
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<tr>
<td>BETL</td>
<td>Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bib</td>
<td>Biblica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BibInt</td>
<td>Biblical Interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BKAT</td>
<td>Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>BN</td>
<td>Biblische Notizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRev</td>
<td>Bible Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>BZAW</td>
<td>Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBC</td>
<td>Cambridge Bible Commentary</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBQ</td>
<td>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBQMS</td>
<td>Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHANE</td>
<td>Culture and History of the Ancient Near East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHJ</td>
<td>Cambridge History of Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRINT</td>
<td>Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSCO</td>
<td>Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSCT</td>
<td>Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJD</td>
<td>Discoveries in the Judaean Desert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>Dead Sea Discoveries</td>
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<td>DSSSE</td>
<td>The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition</td>
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<td>DSSR</td>
<td>The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader</td>
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<tr>
<td>EHAT</td>
<td>Exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>EncJud</td>
<td>Encyclopaedia Judaica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EvT</td>
<td>Evangelische Theologie</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAT</td>
<td>Forschungen zum Alten Testament</td>
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<td>FOTL</td>
<td>Forms of the Old Testament Literature</td>
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<td>FRLANT</td>
<td>Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments</td>
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<tr>
<td>GCS</td>
<td>Die griechische christliche Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte</td>
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<td>Die Heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments</td>
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<td>HSM</td>
<td>Harvard Semitic Monographs</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTB</td>
<td>Histoire du texte biblique</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTR</td>
<td>Harvard Theological Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>HUCA</td>
<td>Hebrew Union College Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Critical Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDBSup</td>
<td>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: Supplementary Volume</td>
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<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
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<td>JAJ</td>
<td>The Journal of Ancient Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>JANESCU</td>
<td>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University</td>
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<td>JAOS</td>
<td>Journal of the American Oriental Society</td>
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<td>JBL</td>
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<td>JFSR</td>
<td>Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion</td>
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<td>JJS</td>
<td>Journal of Jewish Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joüon</td>
<td>Joüon, P. A. Grammar of Biblical Hebrew</td>
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<tr>
<td>JQR</td>
<td>Jewish Quarterly Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSJ</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSJSup</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods: Supplement Series</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSOT</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSOTSup</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSPP</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</td>
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<td>JSPPSup</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JTS</td>
<td>Journal of Theological Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KHC</td>
<td>Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>LCL</td>
<td>Loeb Classical Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LHB/OTS</td>
<td>Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCB</td>
<td>New Century Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEChtB</td>
<td>Neue Echter Bibel</td>
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<tr>
<td>NETS</td>
<td>New English Translation of the Septuagint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIB</td>
<td><em>The New Interpreter’s Bible</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>NICOT</td>
<td>New International Commentary on the Old Testament</td>
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<td>NIDB</td>
<td>New International Dictionary of the Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>OBT</td>
<td>Overtures to Biblical Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTL</td>
<td>Old Testament Library</td>
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<td>OTP</td>
<td>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</td>
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<td>OTS</td>
<td>Old Testament Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>PVTG</td>
<td>Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece</td>
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<tr>
<td>RB</td>
<td>Revue biblique</td>
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<tr>
<td>RevQ</td>
<td>Revue de Qumrân</td>
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<tr>
<td>RHPR</td>
<td>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAAS</td>
<td>State Archives of Assyria Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBLABS</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Archeology and Biblical Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBLAIL</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Ancient Israel and Its Literature</td>
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<td>SBLCP</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Centennial Publications</td>
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<td>SBLRBS</td>
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<td>Sem</td>
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<td>SJLA</td>
<td>Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity</td>
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<tr>
<td>SNTSMS</td>
<td>Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRB</td>
<td>Studies in Rewritten Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>STDJ</td>
<td>Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StPB</td>
<td>Studia post-biblica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVTP</td>
<td>Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigraphica</td>
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<tr>
<td>TDOT</td>
<td>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Textus</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>ThWAT</td>
<td><em>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSAJ</td>
<td>Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TS</td>
<td><em>Theological Studies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td><em>Vetus Testamentum</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>VTSup</td>
<td>Supplements to Vetus Testamentum/Vetus Testamentum Supplements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBC</td>
<td>Word Biblical Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMANT</td>
<td>Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WUNT</td>
<td>Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAW</td>
<td><em>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZBK AT</td>
<td>Zürcher Bibelkommentare Alten Testament</td>
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1. Introduction

There is neither a first nor last word and there are no limits to the dialogic context (it extends into the boundless past and the boundless future). Even past meanings, that is, those born in the dialogue of past centuries, can never be stable (finalized, ended once and for all)—they will always change (be renewed) in the process of subsequent, future development of the dialogue.

At any moment in the development of the dialogue there are immense, boundless masses of forgotten contextual meanings, but at certain moments of the dialogue’s subsequent development along the way they are recalled and reinvigorated in renewed form (in a new context).

Mikhail M. Bakhtin

The task of this study is twofold. On the one hand, I will analyze the treatment and development of the literary figure of Miriam as a literary character in ancient Jewish texts. I will do this by taking into account all the references to this figure preserved in ancient Jewish literature from the exilic period to the early second century C.E.: Exod 15:20–21; Deut 24:8–9; Num 12:1–15; Num 20:1; Num 26:59; Mic 6:4; 1 Chr 5:29; the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q365 6 II, 1–7; 4Q377 2 I, 9; 4Q543 1 I, 6 = 4Q545 1 I, 5; 4Q546 12 4; 4Q547 9 10; 4Q549 2 8); Jub. 47:4; the Septuagint; Demetrius Chronographer frag. 3; Exagoge 18; texts by Philo of Alexandria: Contempl. 87; Leg. 1.76; 2.66–67; 3.103; Agr. 80–81; L.A.B. 9:10; 20:8; and finally texts by Josephus: A.J. 2.221; 3.54; 3.105; 4.78.2 On the other hand, in the light of poststructuralist literary studies that treat texts as reflections of specific social situations, I will ask what the depiction of Miriam in ancient Jewish literature tells us about the reception of women in different eras and contexts.


2 The oral traditions of some compositions that are known as the rabbinic texts were surely known in the early first century C.E. This is the case with the Tannaitic compositions such as the Mishnah. Other rabbinic texts can also mirror ideas that go back to the Second Temple era. Despite these views, the rabbinic literature is generally dated to the period post 70 C.E. E.g., Lawrence H. Schiffman, “Early Judaism and Rabbinic Judaism,” in The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism (ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2010), 279–290. Moreover, when the rabbinic literature is discussed, many of the texts are given a rather large time span. Recently, Paul V.M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton, The Targums: A Critical Introduction (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2011), 55, claim the Targums were written mostly between 70 and 600 C.E. Hence, the earliest forms and strata of the rabbinic
1.1 Background

The term “ancient Jewish literature” that appears in the title of this study requires some clarification. In this context this term is used to designate texts composed in a specific time period. Ancient Judaism is often described as a period from the Babylonian exile to the seventh century C.E. The latter date marks the time when the Babylonian Talmud was written. In this study the understanding is that ancient Judaism can be divided into two eras: antiquity and late antiquity. The period of antiquity comprises events from the Babylonian exile to the Bar Kokhba revolt (135 C.E.), whereas late antiquity is the time after the revolt until the seventh century C.E. My study concentrates on the period of antiquity, and the texts deriving from that era will be quoted as “ancient Jewish literature.”

The inspiration of ancient Judaism is notably reflected in the rich textual corpora. Most of the texts of this study were actually composed after the exile, but some of them may have even earlier origins. This applies particularly to the texts that belong to the Hebrew Bible. Some compositions could have been known in some form before the exile. Despite their earlier provenance, they went through an extensive editing that lasted for centuries. Therefore it can be assumed that none of them was actually finished before the exile.

Apart from denoting the time period when the compositions that this study examines were produced, the term “ancient Jewish literature” also points to the content of the material that this work deals with. The Jewish literature of this era has been transmitted to our time under different labels. Apart from the Hebrew Bible, which is a fixed collection, ancient Jewish literature has been divided into other different groups, categories or collections of texts such as “the Apocrypha,” “the Pseudepigrapha” or “the Dead Sea Scrolls.” It is now a scholarly commonplace to maintain that these categories are problematic in many ways. They are broad and they do not describe the content of the texts accurately. Furthermore, “Pseudepigrapha” reflect the status that later traditions have given these texts rather than their actual content, whereas the title “the Dead Sea Scrolls”

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3 I acknowledge that various Christian denominations recognize different canons. They include different texts (or books) in their Old Testament canons. This remark is not crucial for my study, because the status of the texts of the Hebrew Bible included in this research is not questioned. Moreover, while using the term “Hebrew Bible” instead of “Old Testament” my intention is to emphasize the Jewish origin of these texts.
History of Research

points mostly to the history of discovery of these texts. Hence the various titles attributed to the ancient Jewish texts contain difficulties.

First, by referring to the texts taken into consideration in this study as “ancient Jewish literature” my intention is to highlight that despite the later categories applied to them, they represent the rich literature of the given time period. The texts are examples of literature—produced during that time without further categories of significance. Second, the title “ancient Jewish literature” emphasizes that all the references to Miriam are given equal weight in the analysis. They serve as important witnesses to the interpretation of women in general and the figure of Miriam in particular.

1.2 History of Research

1.2.1 Biblical Female Figures

It has been recognized for a long time that ancient literature is not value neutral. It reflects the ideas of its own time and its voice belongs to the people of its time. The Hebrew Bible has been described as a “men’s book.” It was written by an “urban elite of male religious specialists.” Therefore, various texts of the Hebrew Bible reflect these selected men’s interests and manly language. Traditionally this


5 I use the term “Biblical” here as an anachronism. Some ancient female figures are known primarily because of their appearance in the Hebrew Bible. Yet I acknowledge that by the time that most of the different texts of Miriam studied in this research were written, there was no “Bible” as we understand it today.

6 Phyllis Bird, Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities: Women and Gender in Ancient Israel (OBT; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 53. Further, see Carol Meyers, Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 11–13. Here I refer to the Hebrew Bible because the rest of the literary corpus I deal with has not yet been addressed from a perspective that emphasizes women’s marginality in the texts. See Tal Ilan, Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine: An Inquiry into Image and Status (TSAJ 44; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 42; who writes concerning the Jewish texts of the Greco-Roman era: “The way the literary sources treat women as a group is reminiscent of the intellectual attitude adopted towards other groups categorized as ‘outsiders’. This can be explained by the obvious fact that all the sources of the period were propounded by and for educated Jewish men.”
was received without much criticism. It was accepted that women were given less importance in religious and historical texts and hence also in the Hebrew Bible. Significantly, since the 20th century, the attitudes towards the lack of women in the Hebrew Bible and related literature has changed. It has been recognized that the weakness of the historical-critical method, which has been the primary method of Biblical studies in past centuries, is that the method assumes it is possible, at least to a certain extent, to reconstruct ancient realities through the texts. Reaching the historical realities of those who are present in the texts is somewhat possible, but reaching the realities of groups that are under-represented in the texts remains problematic. Evidently women, who only seldom appear in ancient literature, belong to those that are under-represented in the texts. Moreover, it has been pointed out that the attitudes to women reflected in the texts cannot be taken as actual history concerning women, as they often do not present a truthful image of historical women.7

During the feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the so-called second wave of feminist interest, feminist biblical scholars proclaimed that the texts of the Hebrew Bible preserve only marginal references to women.8 After making this observation, however, second wave feminist researchers did not rest with this view. The minor role that female figures seemed to play in the Hebrew Bible led researchers to ask about women's place in ancient Jewish texts.

Since then, questioning women's role in the Hebrew Bible has been done on various levels. On the level of methodology, scholars have established an approach that seeks to challenge the previous status quo that women are just simply not present in the texts. This feminist or gender perspective discusses questions related to gender and sex and equality between men and women in ancient Jewish texts, arguing that even if women’s presence is marginalized, questions related to them are still present in the texts.9

7 Ilan, Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine, 41–42.
8 The first wave of the feminist movement belonged to the end of the nineteenth century. The best-known literary product of this era is Elizabeth Cady Stanton, The Woman's Bible (2 vols; New York: European Publishing Company, 1895 and 1898). Cf. the third wave of the feminist movement that is often argued to have started in the 1980s and to continue to the present, but whose exact boundaries are a subject of debate. For a variety of perspectives that are still applicable, see Carolyn Osiek, “The Feminist and the Bible: Hermeneutical Alternatives,” in Feminist Perspectives on Biblical Scholarship (ed. Adela Yarbro Collins; SBLCP 10; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 93–105; Alice Ogden Bellis, “Feminist Biblical Scholarship,” in Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books and in the New Testament (ed. Carol L. Meyers, Toni Craven and Ross S. Kraemer; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2001), 24–32.
Those women that are present in the texts (named or unnamed) have been studied from various perspectives. Several studies examine the role of women in their ancient Jewish context.10 Also, commentaries that highlight the presence of specific women in the Hebrew Bible and Apocrypha are now available.11 While women in the context of the Hebrew Bible have been carefully analyzed, much less work has been concentrated on the rest of ancient Jewish literature. The lack of research can be partly explained by the history of research. Almost all of the texts found at Qumran and in the nearby caves were not published until the middle of the 1990s. Therefore it is only recently that all the textual material regarding this collection has been made available. The DSS have profoundly challenged our ideas of canon and shed new light on texts that were important in the period following the exile.12 The texts questioned the earlier self-evident supremacy of the Hebrew Bible (and the Masoretic Text) and raised other texts next to it as equal witnesses to ancient Judaism, thus calling for new attention to a broader corpus of ancient Jewish literature. All in all, the DSS have contributed to a re-evaluation of the significance of all ancient Jewish texts in the field of Biblical Studies.

In the field of the DSS, it was Eileen Schuller who first called for the role of women, which was previously claimed to be non-existent, to be revised.13 Schuller’s claim, that the community of Khirbet Qumran was not a celibate community but that it consisted of both men and women, was soon followed by others.14 Schuller’s

10 E.g., Athalya Brenner, *The Israelite Woman: Social Role and Literary Type in Biblical Narrative* (The Biblical Seminar 2; Sheffield: JSOT, 1985); Meyers, *Discovering Eve*; Ilan, *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine*.


14 In particular and almost contemporarily with Schuller, Lawrence H. Schiffman, who already in 1992 discussed women and the DSS in "Laws Pertaining to Women in the Temple Scroll," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research* (ed. Devorah Dimant and Uriel...
studies led the way for other studies to follow up on how women are actually depicted in the DSS. These studies have challenged earlier ideas concerning the celibate community profoundly and called for a re-evaluation of the role of women in ancient Judaism.

Concerning the study of women in the DSS and the Pseudepigraphic texts, the titles of many of the above cited studies show that various studies usually make use of only one text. The studies concentrate on analyzing that one text’s portrayal of women. Meanwhile an analysis that would ask about the image and depiction of a particular female figure in multiple sources and would compare the results with each other is still missing.

### 1.2.2 The Figure of Miriam

Among the female figures of the Hebrew Bible, the figure of Miriam has also been analyzed previously. Two monographs focus on Miriam: Rita Burns, *Has the Lord Indeed Spoken only Through Moses? A Study of the Biblical Portrait of Miriam* (SBLDS 84, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987) and Ursula Rapp, *Mirjam: Eine feministisch-rhetorische Lektüre der Mirjamtexte in der hebräischen Bibel* (BZAW 317; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002). These studies acknowledge the fragmentary picture
of Miriam that is preserved in the Hebrew Bible and both suggest that once there was a larger tradition around this figure, but a significant portion has been lost forever. The methods of these two books to overcome the gaps in the narration of the Hebrew Bible concerning Miriam are different. Burns grounds her analysis in the traditional historical-critical methodology. This is particularly clear in her analysis concerning the Pentateuchal passages referring to Miriam. There Burns bases her study notably on Martin Noth’s earlier work. Apart from the historical-critical perspective, Burns also engages with the texts of the neighboring ancient Near Eastern (ANE) cultures, finding parallels between some ANE texts and the references to Miriam. Fundamentally, throughout her study Burns argues that whereas the title prophetess (Exod 15:20) should be understood anachronistically in Miriam’s case, the depiction of Miriam in the Hebrew Bible corresponds better to a figure that had a cultic function. Burns finally raises the possibility that Miriam was a priestess.

The methods and conclusions of Ursula Rapp’s study are different. First of all, Rapp thoroughly examines the passages of the Hebrew Bible from the perspective of literary criticism, using rhetorical analysis as her key method. This allows Rapp to pay particular attention to Miriam’s speeches and interaction with other characters and to give the figure a more pronounced voice in the Hebrew Bible. Through her literary analysis, Rapp reaches conclusions concerning the history of the Miriam texts. In her conclusions she divides the texts into those that deal with Miriam positively and those that display a more critical attitude towards her. She concludes that the former group, which understood Miriam as one of the early leaders next to Moses and Aaron, represents the voices of those people who remained in Judah during the Babylonian exile and who later advocated after the return for a more egalitarian and non-hierarchical religious leadership system.

Apart from these monographs several articles that analyze the figure from various perspectives are dedicated to the figure of Miriam. Generally, an interest in Miriam’s role as a prophetess characterizes several studies. As the Hebrew Bible does not give an explicit answer to the question concerning the nature of Miriam’s prophecy, scholars have tried to overcome the gaps in the narration by using different methods. Some studies seek to give Miriam a more pronounced voice by carefully reading all of the references to her preserved in the Hebrew Bible.19

18 The term ancient Near East applies to the ancient civilizations of the region that corresponds roughly to the area that is today known as the Middle East.
Meanwhile, others have argued in light of historical analysis\textsuperscript{20} or social science theories\textsuperscript{21} that it was possible for women to hold prominent positions in early Israelite history. Furthermore, several recent studies aim at separating the levels of literature and history. They argue (similarly to Rapp’s more extensive analysis) that Miriam represented a specific prophetic group in the Persian time vis-à-vis the groups represented by the figures of Moses and Aaron.\textsuperscript{22}

What characterizes these articles in general is that their writers appear to argue most of the time that Miriam was granted more space in the early narratives, whereas the later references to her narrow her function. This thesis finds remarkable parallels in the way that women in general are treated in the Hebrew Bible. It appears that they were granted more space in earlier texts and in non-organized context where they are primarily in charge of house cult and organization.


Meanwhile hierarchical systems marginalize them, and they are seldom granted a leadership position.²³

What is common to all these publications is that they almost exclusively deal with the depiction of Miriam preserved in the references of the Hebrew Bible.²⁴ They make little use of other ancient Jewish texts that mention the figure of Miriam. That gives an impression that the references of the Hebrew Bible are the sole witnesses to this figure.

The presence of this female figure in wider early Jewish literature has rarely been studied. So far only two studies authored by Sidnie White Crawford aim at drawing the various Miriam traditions together.²⁵ White Crawford's studies deal with some of the previously unknown material. She focuses most notably on the extended Song of Miriam preserved in the *Reworked Pentateuch*, as well as on a text known as the *Visions of Amram* that refers to the figure of Miriam several times. Both texts belonged to the Qumran corpus. When discussing them, White Crawford takes into consideration not only the Hebrew Bible but also other ancient Jewish texts.

Even though White Crawford does not include all the references to Miriam preserved in the Qumran library or the mentions in wider early Jewish literature in her studies, she demonstrates what the other studies focusing on the Hebrew Bible only suggest: that the tradition around this figure was evidently larger than what is depicted in the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew Bible preserves only a part of the Miriam tradition. Her studies also suggest that when all ancient Jewish literature concerning Miriam is taken into account, the results will be slightly different than when the analysis concentrates only on the Hebrew Bible. This conclusion suggests that in the next steps of Miriam studies one needs to ask how this figure is depicted in all those early references that have not been taken

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²³ Ackerman, “Why Is Miriam Also among the Prophets,” 47–50; Phyllis Bird, The Place of Women in the Israelite Cultus,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion* (ed. P. D. Miller et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 397–419; Tikva Frymer Kensky, *In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1992); 118–177; Meyers, *Discovering Eve*, 164, points out that women could be professionals but they were not supported from public funds. Their public role was narrower than that of their male colleagues. Meyers (*Discovering Eve*, 189–196) further argues that women's role became more limited when the household unit lost its importance. According to Meyers, this happened when the monarchy became stronger.

²⁴ Cf. Gafney, *Daughters of Miriam*, 76–85, which takes into consideration the different text forms attesting to Miriam and some rabbincic literature when analyzing this figure.

Introduction

into account earlier. How does the portrayal change when these texts are read together? Does the Hebrew Bible preserve a partial depiction of Miriam, and if it does, what are the themes or characteristics of Miriam that are excluded from the Hebrew Bible? What influences the changing depiction?

Studying the ancient Jewish texts that were not included in the Hebrew Bible offers new insights for the development of concepts and ideas related to Judaism. This also applies to the reception of female figures such as Miriam within Judaism. It is necessary to take all references to Miriam in ancient Jewish texts into account in order to build a comprehensive view of how this figure was interpreted in early Jewish traditions. These preliminary observations set the agenda for this study.

1.3 Methods

On the one hand, the aim of this study is to ask how the figure of Miriam is depicted in the texts of the Second Temple era. On the other hand, the inquiry is equally concerned with what these portrayals tell us about the status of women in the Second Temple period. The latter perspective requires the analyses to be read through historical lenses. In what follows I will elaborate the combination of methodologies applied in this study in more depth.

1.3.1 Historical-Critical Approach

When the figure of Miriam is analyzed on the level of texts, I make use of historical-critical methods, such as text criticism and literary criticism. Moreover, I apply vocabulary analysis in order to distinguish intertextual dependencies between various passages referring to Miriam. Only after the texts have been thoroughly analyzed can questions regarding intertextuality and women's history be posed.

As noted earlier, the research history regarding the various texts is uneven. Some passages concerning Miriam have been analyzed thoroughly, while others have barely been considered. Furthermore, the texts that are analyzed in this study vary greatly. Some are better preserved, while others can be tracked only through quotations or are otherwise preserved in a fragmentary manner. Moreover, because of the varying nature of the texts, all methods cannot be applied to each text. For instance, the texts belonging to the DSS are fragmentary, and therefore the first step in analyzing a particular DSS passage is to reconstruct it. Some of the texts are preserved in only one copy. Therefore traditional text criticism cannot be applied to them.

26 See 1.2.2.
Given this slightly uneven starting point regarding the nature of the texts and their research history, I do not attempt to apply all methods to each text. Rather, depending on the nature of each passage, I use those particular methods that are the most suitable, i.e., that reveal the most regarding what kind of Miriam tradition is preserved in the passage.

While the intention is to avoid categories that retroject later categories into the ancient texts, the analyzed compositions cannot be introduced randomly either. The texts are studied in a rough historical timeline. The survey starts with those texts that are dated the earliest, and then this analysis gradually moves towards the first century C.E. and the latest texts. This chronology provides a diachronic view of the texts. Furthermore, this rough historical framework allows for a comparative perspective on the texts. It permits a discussion of how various Miriam traditions evolved, how later traditions depend on the earlier ones, creating a dialogue with them, and what the particular characteristics for each historical era were. This approach enables us to trace the various theological and historical motives and priorities prominent in the historical framework. Furthermore it allows us to identify some procedures that were used to downplay the figure.

Putting the texts into a chronological framework has its challenges. While the date of the texts is discussed to a certain extent in this study, dating the earlier texts remains particularly difficult. Many texts analyzed in this research have a complicated literary history, and in particular the history of the Pentateuch remains largely debated. Scholars disagree on how and when the sources were put together.

Despite the general disagreement, there is a significant consensus that amidst the difficulties concerning the Pentateuchal text, the only source that still stands is the so-called Priestly source. It is recognizable due to its characteristic vocabulary and themes. It often parallels the “non-P” text, and sometimes it even presupposes the rest of the text material. Some of the recent studies concerning the Pentateuch make use of the general agreement concerning this source by positioning various layers of the text in particular in relation to the Priestly source (P). While the P layer holds, the rest of the bulk can be referred to as

27 See 1.1.
28 For recent discussions on this topic, see e.g., Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid and Baruch J. Schwartz, eds., The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research (FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).
simply as “non-P.” I will make use of such a division in this study as well. By such a methodological approach I do not intend to claim that other sources do not exist. Rather, by focusing on the source that most of the scholars agree upon my aim is to highlight the difficulty in isolating the rest of the sources. Therefore, when discussing the Pentateuchal passages I will first distinguish P and then relate the rest of the passage to P. I am aware that some parts of the Pentateuchal texts that are taken into consideration in this study were already written earlier. I will address them as “non-P” and discuss them separately. Recent studies date P to the Persian era. This date serves as a marker for my study. While some of the Pentateuchal passages taken into consideration in this study certainly date to earlier eras, my starting point is that the Pentateuchal texts, as we know them, were

31 Erhard Blum, Die Komposition der Vätergeschiede Pentateuch (WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1984); idem, Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch (BZAW 189; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990) replaced the Documentary Hypothesis with his theory of two main compositions: D and P. While most scholars agree on P per se, the nature of this layer continues to be discussed. It is possible that P was a separate source. It could also have been a redactional layer (thus, e.g., Frank Moore Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973]). This discussion is not crucial for the present study, which does not focus on the nature of the Pentateuchal sources.

32 Julius Wellhausen dated “J-source” roughly to the Assyrian period (ca. 850–750 B.C.E.) arguing that it was difficult to give precise information concerning the time before. See, Thomas Römer, “The Elusive Yahwist: A Short History of Research,” in A Farewell to the Yahwist? The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman and Konrad Schmid; SBLSymS 34; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2006), 9–28, 13. In the next century Gerhard von Rad’s theory (Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament [ed. Rudolf Smend; 4th ed.; Theologische Bücherei 8; Munich: Kaiser, 1971]) that the J-source was composed during the time of Solomon became influential. Von Rad’s theory was developed further by later scholars. See e.g., Noth, History of Pentateuchal Traditions and Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic. Scholars such as Martin Rose, Deuteronomist und Jahwist: Untersuchungen zu den Berührungspunkten beider Literaturwerke (ATANT 67; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1981); John Van Seters, Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1992); idem, The Life of Moses: The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus-Numbers (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1994); and Christoph Levin, Der Yahwist (FRLANT 157; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993) locate J in the exilic era. Carr, Formation of the Hebrew Bible, 339–350, advocates that most of the Pentateuchal narrative was composed during the exile and immediately after it.

33 P was traditionally received as the latest stratum of the Pentateuch. Already Wellhausen dated P to the exilic or post-exilic era. Albert de Pury, “The Jacob Story and the Beginning of the Pentateuch,” in A Farewell to the Yahwist? The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation, 50–72, 70–72; Gerstenberger, Israel in the Persian Period, 8, 165. Cf. Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic, 293–325; idem, From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), argues that the Priestly layer was completed in the course of the exile. More recently, Carr, Formation of the Hebrew Bible, 297–303, dates P to the late exilic era or the early Persian era, stating that it continued to be modified in the Persian era.
not completed before the Persian era. Hence, in the chapter that discusses these earlier texts that refer to Miriam, they are referred to as “texts of the Persian era.”

The overall purpose of this study is not to be a source- or redaction-critical analysis of the given texts or to discuss the prehistory of the Pentateuch; its objects lie elsewhere. Therefore I limit the space allocated for this theme in the overall discussion. Moreover, when it needs to be addressed, I largely depend on the work of other scholars. Where literary-critical problems that influence the portrayal of Miriam occur, they are discussed separately.

1.3.2 Literary-Theoretical Approach

1.3.2.1 Intertextuality

It is characteristic of the texts included in this study that there is clearly some kind of connection between the Miriam traditions preserved in the earlier and the later texts. For example, the same themes and narratives that are present in the Pentateuch appear in the later texts. Nonetheless, when discussing the earlier passages, namely those that belong to the Pentateuch, I do not intend to suggest that those passages were the “original” Miriam traditions and the later ones are automatically their rewritings. It is difficult to pinpoint a division between “original” tradition and later interpretation. Rather all traditions (i.e., texts), even those present in the Hebrew Bible, were changeable. Moreover, authors do not create texts from their own minds; they compile them from already existing traditions. Such dependency between literary works creates a literary phenomenon called intertextuality.

This concept is not new within Biblical scholarship. Intertextuality within the Hebrew Bible, where later texts use earlier ones, such as 1–2 Chr using 1 Sam–2 Kgs extensively, has been recognized since the 19th century, and that position has

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34 As a matter of fact, a number of scholars who maintain that the Pentateuch consists of several redactional layers argue that the text was not completed until the Hellenistic era. It is possible that some passages continued to be edited. Yet, as I deal with the Hellenistic texts—those that certainly date to the Hellenistic era—in a separate chapter, it makes sense to date the compositions of the Hebrew Bible before those texts.

35 It should be emphasized that the two monographs dedicated to the Hebrew Bible references to Miriam (Burns, Has the Lord Indeed Spoken only Through Moses and Rapp, Mirjam) discuss the literary history exhaustively.

36 Lat. texere, “weave,” “plait,” “construct with elaborate care,” already contains the notion of change.

37 The term “intertextuality” was launched by Julia Kristeva in the 1960s when she discussed the work of the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975). For Bakhtin, see 1.3.2.2. For the diachronic or historical nature of intertextuality, see Ellen van Wolde, “Texts in Dialogue with Texts: Intertextuality in the Ruth and Tamar Narratives,” Biblnt 5 (1997): 1–28, 1–3.
remained unanimously accepted in the field of Biblical Studies. While the term intertextuality has been applied to different approaches, given the scope of this study and the nature of the texts, of which many are so-called rewritings, I will limit myself to that aspect of intertextuality.

Notably, various terms have been developed to describe as accurately as possible this phenomenon where texts within the Hebrew Bible and related literature display dependency on other texts. One of the terms in question is “Rewritten Bible.” This term was coined by Géza Vermes, who describes the process as follows: “In order to anticipate questions, and to solve problems in advance, the midrashist inserts haggadic development into the biblical narrative—an exegetical process which is probably as ancient as scriptural interpretation itself.” Later the term was refined by Philip S. Alexander, Emanuel Tov, and Moshe J. Bernstein. While the term “Rewritten Bible” has now been in use for a long time, the discussion concerning its accurate use goes on. It has become increasingly evident that its use is not


40 Géza Vermes, Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies (StPB 4; Leiden: Brill, 1964), 95.

41 Philip S. Alexander, “Retelling the Old Testament,” in It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture (ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 99–121, understands Rewritten Bible texts as narratives that can be described as histories. Their styles are rather free, and they replicate the biblical books. They weave the material they draw from the biblical compositions into their retelling of the events.

42 Emanuel Tov, “Rewritten Bible Compositions and Biblical Manuscripts, with Special Attention to the Samaritan Pentateuch,” DSD 5 (1998): 334–354. Tov’s view is that the difference between the biblical and the rewritten text lies in the authority of the text. Whereas the biblical text has authority, the rewritten text that integrates new elements probably lacks it. Cf. Hindy Najman, Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism (JSJSup 77; Leiden: Brill, 2003), who claims that reworking the text means updating and developing its content in a way that is claimed to be an authentic expression of the already authoritative text.


44 E.g., Anders Klostergaard Petersen, “Rewritten Bible as a Borderline Phenomenon—Genre, Textual Strategy, or Canonical Anachronism?” In Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honor of Florentino García Martínez (ed. Anthony Hillhorst, Émile
without problems. The major issue concerns the term “Bible” and its implication for the concept of a canon that did not exist when the texts were written. A term that implies a later understanding of the texts does not describe them accurately.45

Other terms have been offered to describe the texts that rewrite earlier traditions in order to avoid the problem of language and, in particular, the terms that imply any canon. George J. Brooke46 and Sidnie White Crawford47 have used a term “Rewritten Scripture.” Whereas this term does not explicitly point to a defined collection of authoritative texts, it recognizes that the texts had some status and importance in their own time.

Biblical scholars have also employed other terms to describe the intertextual relationship between earlier and later Jewish texts. Harold L. Ginsberg introduced the term “parabiblical,” which he understood to be close to midrashim. The difference between midrashim and parabiblical texts, according to Ginsberg, was that the latter do not quote the earlier text directly or comment on it.48 This term has been refined by Emanuel Tov, who calls it literature “closely related to the texts and themes of the Hebrew Bible.”49 Finally, Robert A. Kraft introduced the term “parascriptural,” observing that the same phenomenon also occurs in texts that are not included in the later canons (i.e., Bibles).50 This


varying discussion concerning the terminology demonstrates the difficulty of finding vocabulary that precisely defines the intertextuality in question. All the previously discussed vocabulary can be criticized for being anachronistic and for creating misunderstandings concerning the formation of a canon.\(^{51}\)

Most recently, the scholars of ancient Jewish texts have turned to literary theories, and, with the help of Gerard Genette's theory of paratextuality, this term has been employed in biblical studies.\(^{52}\) Armin Lange writes in *In the Second Degree: On the basis of authoritative texts or themes, the authors of paratextual literature employed exegetical techniques to provide answers to questions of their own time, phrased, for example, as answers by God through Moses or the prophets. The result of their exegetical effort is communicated in the form of a new work.*\(^{53}\) Hence the term paratextual, which is more neutral than the vocabulary that points directly or indirectly to canon, is helpful when the relationship between earlier and later texts is discussed.

### 1.3.2.2 Bakhtin's Concept of Dialogism

It was earlier stated that ancient Jewish texts developed in a historical context ("the authors of paratextual literature … provide answers to questions of their own time"\(^{54}\)). This statement implies that the texts did not develop in a vacuum, but that they evolved in historical contexts and in dialogue with their own time. While Gerard Genette's literary theory regarding paratextuality has been successfully employed previously into the study of ancient Jewish texts, its weakness is that the theory does not have a horizon that would grasp the socio-economic background.\(^{55}\)

In order to combine the concept of intertextuality with a socio-historical context where the respective texts were composed and that is reflected in the texts,

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52 See n. 45. In this book some of the writers prefer the term hypertextuality, whereas others chose the term paratextuality when describing the phenomenon of intertextuality. See esp. Lange, "In the Second Degree: Ancient Jewish Paratextual Literature in the Context of Graeco-Roman and Ancient Near Eastern Literature," 19–20; idem, Handbuch der Textfunde vom Toten Meer. Vol 1: Die Handschriften biblischer Bücher von Qumran und den anderen Fundorten (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 164–168, employs the term paratextual when discussing texts such as Jub. and T.


54 Ibid.

I turn to the poststructuralist approach that became prominent in the second half of the 20th century. Unlike their predecessors, structuralists, poststructuralists did not deal with literature merely from the point of view of linguistic structures or sign-symbols. Several theorists instead believed that the texts also reflect wider concerns. More concretely, I will use the approaches of the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin. Despite writing in the first half of the 20th century (in contrast to the other representatives of poststructuralism), he is considered a representative of the movement. His ideas became known in Western Europe especially through Julia Kristeva’s works in the 1960s and 1970s.

This study links with Bakhtin’s ideas in two ways that are profoundly intertwined. A key term for Bakhtin’s literary theory is dialogism, a theme which is prominent in several of his texts. First, Bakhtin insists that each thought (which he calls an utterance) requires an answer. For Bakhtin, the term utterance captures the human-centered and socially specific aspect of language lacking in formalism (contra the structuralists). Concerning the dialogic nature of utterances Bakhtin writes: “The word lives, as it were, on the boundary between its own context and another, alien context.” Elsewhere Bakhtin explains: “A word is a bridge thrown between myself and another. If one end of the bridge depends on me, then the other depends on my addressee. A word is territory shared by both addressee and addressee, by the speaker and his interlocutor.”

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