

“Luke and Yoder: an intertextual reading of the third gospel in the name of Christian politics”

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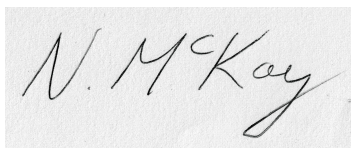
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December 2011

Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light grey background. The signature reads "N. McKay" in a cursive script. The "N" is large and stylized, followed by a period and "McKay". The "y" has a long, sweeping tail.

December 2011

Summary

Critical New Testament study has drawn on analytical techniques and interrogatory methods from a wide range of disciplines. In recent decades the dominance of historical and ecclesiologically-located approaches have been challenged by insights from literary, sociological, anthropological, cultural and ideological scholarship. These challenges have proved fruitful and opened biblical scholarship to new and generative interpretation. This plurality of interpretation has in turn challenged the reductionism of biblical scholarship, leading to the now common acknowledgement that a particular reading or reconstruction is but one of many. Unfortunately many new readings have been too tightly bound to a single method or insight. The broad interaction between these readings has been often overlooked. In contrast to this trend an epistemology of text emerging from the poststructural notion of intertextuality allows the construction of links between a range of interpretive methods. Intertextuality emerges from literary and cultural theory but spills over to make hermeneutical connections with historical, cultural and ideological theory. For the most part New Testament scholars who have appropriated the term have noted this but not thoroughly explored it. In this study an ideologically-declared overtly intertextual approach to the third canonical gospel demonstrates the interlinking hermeneutic allowed by intertextuality. John Howard Yoder's reading of the gospel of Luke underscores the development of a Christian social-ethic. This reading in turn forms the framework for the more overtly intertextual reading offered here. An intertextual reading of the New Testament Scriptures is both narratively generative and politically directive for many Christian communities.

Opsomming

Kritiese Nuwe Testamentiese studies het in die verlede gebruik gemaak van analitiese tegnieke en ondervraende metodes uit 'n wye verskeidenheid van dissiplines. Meer onlangs is die oorheersing van historiese en kerklik-gerigte benaderings uitgedaag deur insigte vanuit letterkundige, sosiologiese, antropologiese, kulturele en ideologiese dissiplines. Hierdie uitdagings het vrugbaar geblyk en het Bybelse vakkennis toeganklik gemaak vir nuwe en produktiewe interpretasies. Hierdie meervoudige interpretasies het op hul beurt weer die reduksionisme in Bybelse geleerdheid uitgedaag, wat aanleiding gegee het tot die nou algemene erkenning dat 'n bepaalde vertolking of rekonstruksie slegs een van vele is. Die breë wisselwerking tussen sulke vertolkings word dikwels misgekyk. In teenstelling met hierdie neiging, laat 'n epistemologie van die teks wat te voorskyn kom uit 'n poststrukturele begrip van intertekstualiteit toe dat verbande gekonstrueer word word tussen 'n verskeidenheid van vertolkingsmetodes. Intertekstualiteit spruit voort uit literêre en kulturele teorie, maar vorm ook hermeneutiese skakels met historiese, kulturele en ideologie kritiek. Die meeste Nuwe Testamentici wat gebruik gemaak het van hierdie term, het kennis geneem van sulke verbande, maar dit nie altyd volledig verreken nie. In hierdie studie demonstreer 'n ideologies-verklaarde, openlik intertekstuele benadering tot die derde kanonieke evangelie die gekoppelde hermeneutiek wat toegelaat word deur intertekstualiteit. John Howard Yoder se vertolking van die Evangelie van Lukas plaas klem op die ontwikkeling van 'n Christelike sosiale etiek. Hierdie interpretasie vorm op sy beurt weer die raamwerk vir die meer openlik intertekstuele vertolking wat hier aangebied word. 'n Intertekstuele interpretasie van die Nuwe Testamentiese geskrifte is beide verhalend produktief asook polities rigtinggewend vir talle Christelike gemeenskappe.

Table of Contents

Declaration

Summary

0 Introduction.....	1
0.1 Background.....	1
0.2 Theoretical Goals.....	2
0.3 Declaring my location.....	3
0.4 Towards a connotative reading.....	5
0.5 Definitions.....	5
0.6 Structure.....	7
1 Intertextuality in literature: Semiotics, structuralism, poststructuralism and meaning.....	10
1.1 Introduction.....	10
1.2 Intertextuality: a first look.....	11
1.3 Genette and structuralist intertextuality.....	22
1.4 Midrash in comparison.....	27
1.5 Roman Poetry in comparison.....	30
1.6 Boyarin and Edmunds in comparison.....	32
1.7 Towards a working intertextuality.....	32
2 Intertextuality in New Testament Studies.....	37
2.1 Introduction.....	37
2.2 Intertextuality and historical questions.....	39
2.3 Cultural intertexts, Warren Carter and John's gospel.....	39
2.4 Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul.....	42
2.5 Semeia 69/70: Intertextuality and the Bible.....	46
2.6 Towards a broad intertextual approach to the New Testament.....	52
3 Intertextuality, Yoder and Luke.....	56
3.1 Introduction.....	56
3.2 Reading Yoder, Reading Luke.....	58
3.3 In closing.....	93
4 Conclusions.....	95
4.1 Intertextuality 'as such'.....	95
4.2 Intertextuality as a meta-hermeneutic.....	96
4.3 Yoder, Luke and the colour of a Christian social-ethic.....	97
4.4 Further study.....	102
5 Bibliography.....	104

0 Introduction

Individuals do not become moral agents except in the relationships, the transactions, the habits and reinforcements, the special uses of language and gesture that together constitute life in community.¹

0.1 Background

The biblical hermeneutics underlying Christian moral discourse and practice are widely contested. There is little agreement on just how the texts of ancient Scripture should be regarded as authoritative and may applied to ethical questions in the 21st century. Since the Constantinian shift, dominant interpretive frameworks have been shown to be captive to the perspectives of dominant political powers. From the relativisation of Christological moral authority under a ‘temporal’, Christian emperor, to the captivity of biblical interpretation within the scientistic historicism of post-Enlightenment European intellectualism, to the more recent neo-fundamentalist hermeneutics of the American Christian Right, biblical interpretation has always functioned within a political and ideological space. Sadly, this space has too often been dominated by the concerns of the politically powerful within culture and society.

In the second half of the 20th century a theoretical discourse arose around the influence of culture and ideological location of textual interpretation. Within biblical scholarship, and New Testament study in particular, this discourse has been welcomed, ignored or rejected in equal measure. Many scholars have clung to the ‘scientific’ methodology of liberal biblical scholarship. Others have warmly embraced the a-historical approaches of literary theory, ideological criticism and (inter)cultural interpretation. Others still have continued on their scholarly way, integrating historical, literary and ideological insights without establishing a coherent hermeneutics in which to do so.

¹ Wayne A. Meeks, *The Origins of Christian Morality: The First Two Centuries* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), 8. The importance of forming moral communities is not solely for the sake of the Church. Though somewhat dated, Richard Bernstein’s conclusion, after surveying 20th century philosophical trends is illuminating. “But at a time when the threat of total annihilation no longer seems to be an abstract possibility but the most imminent and real potentiality, it becomes all the more imperative to try again and again to foster and nurture those forms of communal life in which dialogue, conversation *phronēsis*, practical discourse, and judgement are concretely embodied in our everyday practices.” In Richard J. Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 229. Attending to this task is critical both for the soul of the Church and (for part of) the salvation of the world.

0.2 Theoretical Goals

In the light of these trends the theoretical goals of this study are to:

- Explore the ‘meta-hermeneutic’ of *intertextuality* as a way to frame an interpretive conversation which brings together historical, literary and ideological voices. My use of ‘meta’ here is not intended to signal an overarching, umbrella term to categorise and compartmentalise all other approaches. Rather the exploration of intertextuality here offered is a means of linking different approaches and methods in a discourse of interpretation. The meta-hermeneutic, then, is a means of constructing connections, rather than an all-encompassing tool for categorisation.² In this study I demonstrate how intertextuality as an interpretive concept emerges out of literary approaches to the text. More important, however, is the exploration of the way in which the idea ‘spills over’ the boundaries of literary theory. This overflowing enables significant conversations about the context (including the historical context) of the text and the ideological factors influencing the reading of the text.
- Explore the various uses of intertextuality as an interpretive concept within New Testament scholarship.
- Describe the parameters of intertextuality as an ideologically declarative meta-hermeneutic in the study of biblical texts. These parameters emerge from a study of the use of intertextuality in poststructuralist discourse.

In keeping with the overall thesis that all interpretive efforts are ideologically (and, for Godly texts, theologically) located, the ‘application’ of intertextual hermeneutics will take the form of a reading of the third gospel in the light of a particular contemporary Christian politics. I will read sections of the gospel of Luke³ in the light of the Christian socio-ethic described in the work of John Howard Yoder. Yoder’s *The Politics of Jesus*⁴ is a seminal work in Christian pacifism and the use of the New Testament as a source for the Church’s understanding of political engagement. From my theological and ecclesial location I will argue that Yoder’s Anabaptist (Mennonite) perspective, underscored in

² Notwithstanding the negative connotations of the prefix ‘meta’ in post poststructural and post-modern theory, some thinkers have started to reclaim the prefix. See, for example, Graham Ward’s advocacy of metaphysics in Graham Ward, *The Politics of Jesus: Becoming Postmaterial Citizens* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009).

³ I use the terms ‘Luke’s gospel’ and ‘the third Gospel’ interchangeably. The intent of this is not to locate the authorship of the text in a particular historical character but rather to deal with the ‘final form’ of the canonical text. See discussion on Genette in chapter 1 below.

⁴ John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus (2nd edition)* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994).

his reading of Luke, continues to offer a challenging alternative to dominant Christian approaches to politics. This alternative politics is particularly relevant to the relationship between the various iterations of the Church and the dominant political powers of the current era, typically captured under the moniker of the 'State'.

0.3 Declaring my location

Like the majority of scholars of the New Testament I write this dissertation as a western, educated, white, male, protestant member of the clergy. This location affords me numerous privileges and demands certain responsibilities. I am firmly convinced that reading the New Testament from a position of social or political dominance immediately establishes a deep tension between myself as the reader and the text. Read as a source for theology, personal ethics, or communal politics, it is the subaltern, liberationist and radically-communitarian biblical traditions which speak most prophetically to my context.⁵ John Howard Yoder's rhetorical direction in *The Politics of Jesus* resonates with the following ecclesial traditions and ideological approaches which underlie my formation as interpreter and pastor.

- The radical ecclesiology of the (pacifist)⁶ Anabaptist tradition. The faith in the face of persecution of the groups that later became the Hutterites and Mennonites spoke of a radical allegiance to the sovereignty of God in all matters. My affinity with aspects of the Anabaptist tradition stems not so much from my cultural roots and upbringing – Methodist and reformed (Presbyterian) – but rather from the prophetic position that Anabaptists offered the wider 'mainstream' protestant church. In particular, the practical distancing of the Christian community from institutions of political power which marks Anabaptism challenges the compromised ecclesiology of Christendom. This distancing is seen in the refusal to take oaths in (secular) law-courts, the avoidance of bearing arms and the relativisation of the authority of 'worldly' governments.⁷

⁵ Though these traditions are, of course, polyvocal. See, for example, liberation hermeneutics in recent conversation in Alejandro F. Botta and Pablo R. Aniñach (eds), *The Bible and the Hermeneutics of Liberation* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009).

⁶ I acknowledge that I speak specifically of the peaceable elements of the radical reformation, and not of all Anabaptist belief and practice. The Münster rebellion is perhaps the most notorious example of the violent strands of this movement which are rejected thoroughly here.

⁷ I am less sympathetic to other characteristics of Anabaptist doctrine. In particular, I do not advocate the rejection of all infant baptism and neither do I suggest a reclamation of 'the ban' as a means of community discipline. My affinity to the witness of the Anabaptist tradition stems primarily from its suspicion of political authority.

- More recently in the Latin American struggles for justice, the advent of liberation theology has proved challenging to dominant Christian discourse. The work of Sobrino⁸ and Gutiérrez,⁹ for example, emerge from the exigencies of their theo-political struggle and I am convinced, with scholars like Ched Myers¹⁰ and Robert Macafee Brown,¹¹ that the subaltern readings of liberation theologians speak prophetically to the rather complacent churches in Europe, North America and Australia.
- The advent of the ‘radical discipleship’ movement over the past fifty years amongst young westerners has been a recent iteration of the ‘faithful remnant’ of Christians resisting dominant church theologies and politics. Cutting against the grain, radical discipleship resists the tendency to smooth the discontinuities between the Church and formal political authorities. This movement recognises some theological forebears in the Anabaptist tradition. Heroes and leaders in this movement have included Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the activist priests Daniel and Philip Berrigan, Dorothy Day, Ched Myers, and, in my home country Australia, Athol Gill.¹² Though largely made up of educated, protestant ‘whites’, the radical discipleship movement has seen allies in the Church arm of the civil rights movement in the United States, the liberation theology of Catholic Latin America, the Catholic worker movement and the ‘new monastic’ movements. Radical discipleship is not restricted to denominational boundaries and is thus difficult to clearly define. It is, nevertheless, the Christian tradition which has most clearly shaped my understanding of faith and practice.

Apart from my theo-political leanings, I believe that it is important here to declare my profound dissatisfaction with significant aspects of historical-critical approaches to the biblical text. I sympathise with conservatives who bemoan the ‘relativisation’ of Scripture within the universal-epistemology of modern historic method. I find biblical interpretation that is confined to either explaining ‘what the text meant’ or to ‘give an account for origin the text’ far too limited. The

⁸ For example Jon Sobrino, *Christology at the Crossroads: A Latin American Approach* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2002) and Jon Sobrino, *Spirituality of Liberation: Towards Political Holiness* (tr Robert R. Barr) (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1988).

⁹ For example, Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A theology of liberation: history, politics, and salvation* (London: SCM, 2001).

¹⁰ Most famously in Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1988). See also a more theological exploration in Ched Myers, *Who Will Roll Away the Stone? Discipleship Queries for First World Christians* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1994).

¹¹ Most clearly elucidated in Robert Macafee Brown, *Liberation Theology: An Introductory Guide* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox, 1993).

¹² *Life on the Road* remains a classic text for the movement. See Athol Gill, *Life on the Road: The Gospel Basis for a Messianic Lifestyle* (Waterloo, Canada: Herald Press, 1992).

questions and findings of historical criticism alone may not be generative enough for the challenges facing the life of the Church. I believe that other hermeneutical approaches are necessary to gain a fuller, more ‘life-giving’ appreciation of the biblical text. It is from this starting point, then, that this study emerges; firstly utilising the insights of literary theory and then seeking to engage broader questions of interpretive productivity. The interpretive task here explored is of central importance to the communities ‘under the Word’ which have shaped me.

0.4 Towards a connotative reading

In order to interpret the text of the New Testament in ways which may be generative for contemporary politics a *connotative* rather than *denotative* approach is required.¹³ To understand what the text ‘meant’ in its original context is insufficient for understanding what it might ‘mean’ for readers in later contexts. For a text to be authoritative in more than one location implies that multiple readings are possible. As all language elicits allusions, significations and connects with other language and ideas,¹⁴ it is through these connotations that new readings are most readily generated. This, of course, underscores the centrality of intertextuality as a framing hermeneutic in this study. As texts connote ideas that are found in other texts, new meanings are generated. In the intertextuality explored in chapters 1 and 2, the connections between texts reach forward and backwards through time, allowing new, politically-applicable readings to be developed.

0.5 Definitions

My exploration of intertextuality stems primarily from its emergence in literary theory. This emergence is explored in chapter 1 and in chapter 2 the use of intertextuality in New Testament scholarship is noted. As the notion of intertextuality interconnects with other non-literary fields of study, the terminology of culture, ideology, rhetoric, (social)-ethics and politics is used. All of these are contested terms and it is beyond the scope of this discussion to account for each of them at length. For the sake of clarity, however, I offer the following broad definitions, acknowledging that there is always some blurring of categorical boundaries.

¹³ Roland Barthes’ work here is especially helpful. See Roland Barthes (tr Annette Lavers), *Mythologies* (New York: Noonday Press, 1972).

¹⁴ Even mathematics, that most tightly defined language connotes richly. Each term in Euler’s identity ($e^{i\pi} + 1 = 0$), for example, signifies richly. The constants e and π both connote a richness of mathematical ideas and associations in the mathematical modelling of nature. 1 and 0, likewise, constitute the base parts of any numerical system. The mysterious i unlocks the branch of ‘imaginary’ mathematics (where $i^2 = -1$).

Culture: In this study *culture* generally refers to the broad sets of social, familial, ethnic, historical, legal or geographical norms which bind groups of people together. These norms constitute the background against which particular interpretations emerge. An exhaustive declaration of the culture lying behind a textual approach is, of course, impossible. In this study, then, I will tend to identify aspects of cultural location which undergird particular ideological perspectives on the text.¹⁵

Ideology: I prefer a definition of ideology as the framing discourse which illuminates cultural differences.¹⁶ Ideological language may be critically self-conscious or in ‘bad faith’, positive or negative,¹⁷ dominating or preferentially subaltern. In one sense, ideology is the language of inter-cultural relationships. For the purposes of this study ideology is declared explicitly when cultural assumptions and interpretive location find voice in the discourse in and around the New Testament.

Rhetoric(al): As ideological language shapes interpretation and seeks to persuade, it is named *rhetoric*.¹⁸ For clarity in categorisation, rhetoric is used in a more dynamic sense than ideology. The direction, thrust and movement of a rhetoric emanates from a particular ideological location.

(Social)-Ethics: In chapter 3 I read Luke’s gospel in a manner that is shaped by the cultural background, ideological position¹⁹ and rhetorical direction of John Howard Yoder’s reading of Luke’s gospel in *The Politics of Jesus*. As Yoder’s work is primarily concerned with developing a Christian social-ethic from the authoritative texts of the New Testament, I will mimic this language. In the light of Yoder’s work, *ethics* is the discourse around the actions which flow from a particular philosophy, theology or ideological position. The distinction between the terms ethics and morality is blurred,²⁰ however, in general, morality deals with the specific precepts which determine whether a particular action is good (moral) or not, whereas ethics is a second-order discourse concerning the

¹⁵ For a fuller exploration of ‘culture’ and social location in NT studies see the essays in Mary Ann Tolbert and Fernando F. (eds) Segovia, *Reading from this Place, Vol. 1: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995). The essays demonstrate how culturally-declared reading is conceptually plural, touching on geographical location, ethnic or national allegiance, membership of an oppressed class, being sympathetic to ‘feminist’ justice or any combination of the above.

¹⁶ In the spirit of Mannheim’s “sociological concept of thought”.

¹⁷ My use of ideology is not explicitly negative in contrast, for example, to Marx’s notion of the ‘superstructure’ of bourgeois ideology.

¹⁸ This is not a study of the formal rhetorical forms of ancient Hellenistic and Roman. For a similar use see Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and ethic: the politics of biblical studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999).

¹⁹ And, indeed, theological. For Christians, ideology and theology are typically interwoven. In this study I will generally talk about ideological location. I will use theological location to indicate those aspects of ideological discourse which claim or refute divine or Godly authority.

²⁰ Wayne Meeks prefers the term morality over ethics. See Meeks, *The Origins of Christian Morality: The First Two Centuries*, 3ff.

way in which moralities might be justifiably constructed. Yoder's particular use of the term 'ethics' is relatively similar to the understanding of 'morality' advocated by Meeks and others.

To focus on social-ethics, or the development of a Christian social-ethic, is to constrain the discussion mostly to the moral actions which directly affect other people (society). Christian social-ethics is therefore the discourse around Christian social and interpersonal action, and the sources that may be used to direct this action. The ensuing discussion touches upon the relative authority and interpretive methodology used to justify such action. For Yoder, the New Testament remains an authoritative source for the task. As such, the questions about interpretation arising from New Testament scholarship are immanently (and intertextually) relevant to the discussion.

Politics: Related to social-ethics, politics refers to those ethics which deal with collective institutions of power. These institutions may be formally organised in the manner of states and religious denominations or informally associated like family groupings and home churches. Importantly in this study I assume that the questions of ethics, that is a 'good or moral life', are answered only in the context of the *polis*, the social context in which ethical consequences take concrete form.²¹ The Aristotlean assertion, noted by Philip Wogaman, that human beings are "political animals", does not necessarily imply that "we are all simply extroverted power-grabbers".²² To talk of the *Politics of Jesus* (and the politics of Jesus' disciples) is to engage in questions about how social-ethics shape and continue to shape our interaction with powerful social institutions. Though Wogaman and Yoder differ radically in the manner of their engagement, the critical importance of a Christian politics is advocated by both.

0.6 Structure

Chapter 1 of this study will begin with a broad exploration of the literary concept of intertextuality. In this chapter I will outline the characteristics of intertextuality as an understanding of reading and

²¹ Wogaman citing Aristotle in J. Philip Wogaman, *Christian Perspectives on Politics (revised and expanded)* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox, 1988), 12ff. See also Wayne A. Meeks, *The Moral World of the First Christians* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 20-21. In many ways Wogaman's affinity with the apparatus of the state might be rejected by Yoder as not 'distant' enough. It is true, of course, that Yoder's thought changes over his life. His advocacy of dialogue between peace-Church and state-Church in John Howard Yoder (tr Timothy J. Geddert), *Discipleship as Political Responsibility* (Waterloo, Canada: Herald Press, 2003), marks an early iteration of his thought. The ethical manifesto in *The Politics of Jesus* is more radically suspicious of political authority. The essays collected in John Howard Yoder, *Christian Attitudes to War, Peace and Revolution* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009), mark a more interactive and constructive approach to Church-State relationships.

²² Wogaman, *Christian Perspectives on Politics (revised and expanded)*, 12.

textual relationships²³ that emerges from poststructuralist discourse (especially Kristeva, Derrida and Barthes). In particular I will seek to give an account of:

- The early use of intertextuality in the work of Julia Kristeva.
- The relationship between intertextuality and questions of the role of the author in literary theory. (This will be explored in the work of Roland Barthes.)
- The way in which intertextuality is related to the wider insights of poststructuralism. (This will be explored in relationship to the work of Jacques Derrida.)

In response to the epistemological framework underpinning these understandings of intertextuality I will proceed to examine a structuralist appropriation of intertextuality in the work of Gérard Genette. I will then offer two brief case studies on the application of intertextuality in reading Roman Poetry and in midrash studies. These are disciplines which, like New Testament studies, focus on ancient works. It is against the backdrop of poststructural and ancient literary patterns that I will examine the application of intertextuality in New Testament studies.

The exploration of intertextuality will continue in chapter 2 with a brief summary of the ways in which intertextuality has been explicitly applied in New Testament interpretation. The areas of particular interest will include:

- The use of intertextuality as a ‘token’ term for source criticism and other historical-critical approaches.
- The connection of intertextuality to wider sociological and cultural-anthropological approaches (using the work of Warren Carter as an example).
- The ‘in between’ use of intertextuality by Richard Hays in *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* as both a literary and historical hermeneutic.

²³ Ibid. 12ff.

- The more ‘radical’ use of intertextuality by Roland Boer and others in the 1995 edition of *Semeia* 69/70 dedicated to the topic.

Underlying this exploration is an interest in the different epistemological and ideological frameworks undergirding the application of intertextuality in New Testament study. I am not intending here to offer a comprehensive coverage of intertextuality in New Testament scholarship, but rather to highlight key characteristics of its use which are touched upon in the authors covered. I will conclude this chapter with the suggestion that intertextuality as *productivity* must take into account the cultural forces which contextualise the text and its readers.

In chapter 3 I will offer a reading of elements of Luke’s gospel in relationship to their use by John Howard Yoder in *The Politics of Jesus*. This reading will seek to identify the cultural and theological location of Yoder’s work in the western Christian pacifist tradition of the late 20th century. The intertextuality of the reading will be primarily quadrilateral in nature – between the gospel of Luke, the Septuagintal form of the ‘Scriptures’ of 1st century Judaism, the writings of Yoder and my particular location. The pattern of my reading will follow chapter 2 of *The Politics of Jesus*. Insights and conclusions will revolve around the interpretive ‘colour’ emerging from a broad intertextual reading of the gospel in light of the specific questions of Christian social-ethics.

1 Intertextuality in literature: Semiotics, structuralism, poststructuralism and meaning

INTERTEXTUALITY (*intertextualité*). This French word was originally introduced by Kristeva and met with immediate success; it has since been much used and abused on both sides of the Atlantic. The concept, however, has generally been misunderstood.¹

1.1 Introduction

The connotative interpretation of New Testament texts is dissimilar from denotative approaches in that it welcomes a plurality of readings. The idea that a text may allow multiple readings is a characteristic of many schools of literary criticism perhaps, most obviously, reader-response approaches to the text. When the particularities of a reader or a reading community are afforded influence, interpretation becomes a divergent rather than convergent exercise. This is not to say that the existence of different reading ‘sites’ necessarily leads to contradictory or radically incongruous interpretations – though this may occur at times. Rather, I contend that multiple readings which are complementary and coherent emerge as various readers read.

It is the contention of this methodological chapter that there is another ‘force’ in connotative interpretation which contributes to this plurality of meaning. In addition to the interaction between text and reader, the location of a text within a wider textual fabric elicits associations, echoes and other connotations. Reading, therefore, emerges at the intersection of the reader, the text, and its associated intertexts. In this chapter I will explore the concept of intertextuality in literary theory. Following this, in chapter 2, I will explore the use of intertextuality as an idea (or set of ideas) in New Testament study. In so doing I will show that the interpretive relationship between reader, text and intertexts is complex and dynamic; each ‘partner’ influencing the other two. In chapter 3 I will explore the consequences of this relationship within a particular reading of the third gospel.

¹ Leon S Roudiez, in the introduction to Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 15.

1.2 Intertextuality: a first look

Writing and reading are *productivities*.² The act of putting pen to paper, or fingertip to keyboard, creates, rather obviously, a new production. Similarly, but less obviously perhaps, the act of reading creates a new, though less physical, ‘thing’. This reading produces a meaning, an idea, an emotion. Even if we take the reductionist view that all that happens in the mind is simply the firing of a different pattern of neurons within the brain, nevertheless, reading is a productive act; reading makes something new. Neither reading nor writing arise *ex nihilo*, as if a transcendent torrent of language could flow directly out of the immanent corporeality of the text or its reader. Instead, readings and writings are assembled from other readings or writings, which in turn are assembled from still more productions; from other *texts*. The reader, of course, plays a critical role in guiding the use and abuse of these texts, and yet, whatever the influence of the reader, productions of texts and readings-as-texts are always a matter of intertextuality. Any new reading³ of a particular ‘work’,⁴ therefore, must be attentive to and find its location within a network of other texts.

The focus of my study is the interpretation of Christian Scripture⁵ with conscious regard to intertextuality. To begin, however, will require an engagement with the concept of intertextuality as it has arisen in literary theory; particularly the French literary theory of the 1960s on. To say that intertextuality is a contested notion in theory would be an understatement. Claimed by structuralists and poststructuralists, by historians and ideological critics,⁶ by those who would proclaim the “mort

² Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, 36. Lowell Edmunds, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Roman Poetry* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2001), 1.

³ Biblical scholarship often uses the term ‘interpretation’. I do not propose here to survey interpretation from Schleiermacher on. Thiselton’s work on the history of (biblical) interpretation is thorough in AC Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992). Relevant to this study, however I suggest that while ‘reading’ and ‘interpretation’ are hardly synonyms, and their use has varied widely, I will tend to prefer uses which imply more than ‘giving account of’. In contrast to Jonathan Culler in *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction*. (London: Routledge, 1981), 6ff, I contend that interpretation as ‘reading with a result’ is central to literary theory and biblical scholarship. While a broader literary framework (structuralism and poststructuralism are options) is necessary for reading and thus for interpretation, interpretation should not be reduced to ‘giving an account of’ the structural location of a text or set of intertextual relationships. To re-use Terry Eagleton’s example, reading *Popeye the Sailor* and *Paradise Lost* may entail uncovering related sign-structures, but the informed interpretation of these texts will necessarily differ, if for no other reason than that they are formed at the intersection of different intertexts. See Terry Eagleton, *After Theory* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 69.

⁴ A ‘work’ here is taken to mean a text in corporeal form; an (inscribed) artefact. This is a broad definition which includes visual, auditory and even digital forms. While different forms vary in substructure – many paintings lack the chronological depth of a novel – they nonetheless exhibit related ‘textual’ properties and may be ‘read’. See Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1997) on the differences between painting and the novel and Roland Barthes (tr Stephen Heath), *Image, Music, Text* (London: Fontana, 1977) on the similarities and differences between textual forms.

⁵ In this I regard scripture as a ‘work’, a finished or completed (set of) text(s), and not an idea or cultural norm. See below. In chapter 3 I appropriate Richard Hays’ term “Scripture” in an even more precise way.

⁶ For a broad survey see Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2000).

de l'auteur"⁷ and those for whom the author is alive and kicking, intertextuality has become a portmanteau⁸ for any comparative reading involving two or more texts. While much of this discussion has been insightful and fruitful, there are particular implications of intertextuality as described by theorists like Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes and utilised and commented upon by Jacques Derrida, Umberto Eco, Harold Bloom and Jonathan Culler which should not be discarded. To slightly misquote Leon S. Roudiez, the editor of the English translation of Kristeva's *Desire in Language*, "[Intertextuality is not primarily about] matters of influence by one writer upon another, or with sources of a literary work; it does, on the other hand, involve the components of a *textual system* such as a novel, for instance. It is defined in *La Révolution du langage poétique* as the transposition of one or more *systems* of signs into another, accompanied by a new articulation of the enuncitive and denotative position."⁹

In actuality Roudiez contends that intertextuality has *nothing* to do with matters of influence and sources, which is an accurate enough representation of Kristeva's use of the term. It seems to be generally agreed that Kristeva's intertextuality is not concerned with questions about the influences or sources of a text. Nevertheless the language of intertextuality, and in particular the term 'intertexts', has found its way into the scholarship of origins and influence. While the *telos* of this kind of scholarship is often at odds with that of continental literary theory, it would be churlish to deny that an interrogation of a text for whatever reason, necessarily involves relating it to other texts. This *petite-intertextualité* is intertextuality, if for no other reason that the word is now used in this way. Yet this 'historicising' use of intertextuality should not be allowed to determine the entire agenda. While a comprehensive intertextual engagement may encompass similar antecedent texts to those of the historian, to view intertextuality as simply another tool in the historian's toolbox is too limited a concept. The meta-theoretical implications of intertextuality are significant and have far wider implications for interpretation. These implications warrant exploration.

⁷ The title of Roland Barthes provocative 1967 essay. Barthes' title is perhaps more provocative than the content of the essay. While the centrality of the author in criticism is rejected the place of the author is not rejected outright. A more subtle view of the receding importance of the author for criticism is heard in Barthes' reference to Bertholt Brecht; "one could talk here with Brecht of a veritable 'distancing', the Author diminishing like a figurine at the far end of the literary stage". Roland Barthes (tr Stephen Heath), *Image, Music, Text*, 145.

⁸ I have borrowed Eagleton's term for the collection of thought that is (post)modernism. 'Portmanteau' is a favourite metaphoric classification for Eagleton also being used in reference to feminism and socialism. See Terry Eagleton, *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), viii, 102.

⁹ Leon S Roudiez, in the introduction to Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, 15.

1.2.1 Beginning with Julia Kristeva

Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art is a collection of early essays and articles of the French literary critic, semiotician, occasional Marxist and psychoanalytic theorist Julia Kristeva. Roughly following the chronology of her career, *Desire in Language* sheds light on Kristeva's formation in the semiotics of Saussure, her disillusionment with the stark formalism that semiotics had become, her coining of a new approach 'semanalysis', and her movement into Lacanian psychoanalysis. Kristeva's work has continued since then largely in the form of explorations of culture in the light of literary and psychoanalytic theory.¹⁰ Her most significant contributions to literary theory, in particular her ideas of intertextuality, arise earlier in her career and are given focus in an essay entitled "Word, Dialogue, and Novel".¹¹

For Kristeva, the notion of intertextuality grows out of a (re)discovery of the work of the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin. At the time, the strict rules of semiotics (mirroring those of linguistics) were seen by Kristeva as part of a 'scientific' logic which was insufficient to 'elaborate meaning', particularly the 'poetic meaning' of many 'writings'. In "Word, Dialogue, and Novel" Kristeva takes as her 'model' the approach of Bakhtin; for "Bakhtin shuns the linguist's technical rigor, wielding an impulsive and at times even prophetic pen, while he takes on the fundamental problems presently confronting a structural analysis of narrative."¹² There is a different kind of (non-scientific) logic needed to read (poetic) language – one in which the structure of the language does not exist in an isolated and static form but rather "as an *intersection of textual surfaces*."¹³ In a subtle argument Kristeva contends that in the *dialogism* of Bakhtin, the *diachrony* of a text is reintroduced into a model of reading, only to be then collapsed into *synchrony* once again. In contrast to the structuralist model, where textual signification is pulled apart in the text's own time (synchronic), Bakhtin's intersection of surfaces necessarily introduces texts of different times (diachronic). "Bakhtin situates the text within history and society, which are then seen as texts read by the writer, and into which he inserts himself by rewriting them."¹⁴ In this way structuralism becomes diachronic. And yet this kind of diachrony is temporary and illusory for, as it is introduced, it is collapsed back into the text or, more accurately, into the "infrastructure of texts".¹⁵ For Kristeva

¹⁰ Her latest book, *The Incredible Need to Believe* continues this trend exploring Christianity and humanism in the light of psychoanalytic theory.

¹¹ Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, 64-91.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 65 italics original.

¹⁴ Ibid., 65. This idea is important as it signals 'cultural' intertexts and the importance of cultural and ideological location at the genesis of the term.

¹⁵ Ibid.

it appears that texts are constructed necessarily out of and in relation to other historical and societal 'texts'.¹⁶ This means, however, that history and society are also contained, insofar as they can be described in language, within this set of intertexts. Kristeva believes that this tendency is implied by Bakhtin's dialogism and names it 'ambivalence'.¹⁷ Whether the reader is convinced about the diachronic/synchronic collapse or not, the complex interplay between text, historical location and meaning cannot be ignored in the light of Kristeva's (and Bakhtin's) work.

Kristeva's characterisation of the science of semiotics and the theoretical justification for claiming a new, non-scientific logic for understanding the structure of text is contended. And yet her insight that texts exist primarily in intertextual relationships is a profound gift to theory. Kristeva, drawing on Bakhtin, plots a trajectory which begins in the diachronic study of origins and influences in history, moves through to diachrony's rejection in synchronic structuralist semiotics and ends at a reclaimed diachrony in intertextuality. The move from intersubjectivity to intertextuality has proved fruitful for those readers who are incredulous about 'traditional' diachronic questions of authorship, influence and (in many texts including those of the New Testament) the events lying behind the text *without* discarding those connections that a text makes beyond itself. This is in contrast to the inward-looking practices of formalism. Barthes' *S/Z*, and the inclusion of the 'voice of science'¹⁸ in his interpretive framework, Genette's various -textualities and their relationship to classical and modern genre and Carter's 'cultural intertexts'¹⁹ which provide such a compelling historico-textual context for the gospel of John, all grow from the insight that texts exist in relationship to other texts.²⁰

Intertextuality is not an especially dominant concept in Kristeva's early writings, though the assumption of textual networks underlies much of her thinking. She signals in a number of places that her literary insights may have a role in other artistic forms, notably in music.²¹ In this her thoughts are heavily coloured by psychoanalytic terminology, and yet "we must find a way to

¹⁶ It can be inferred that these texts are no longer restricted to works, or physical objects but also include ideas, ideologies, cultural norms, theologies and so on.

¹⁷ Ibid., 68ff.

¹⁸ Roland Barthes (tr Richard Miller), *S/Z: An Essay* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1974), 21.

¹⁹ Cultural intertexts include events and societal issues in Ephesus at the time of the writing of the gospel of John. See Warren Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations* (New York and London: T & T Clark, 2008), 10ff.

²⁰ I hold to a broadly inclusive definition of texts. Both texts as 'finished' works and texts as developing cultural norms or ideas impact intertextuality. See chapter 2 below.

²¹ This is particularly evident in "How does one Speak to Literature?" in Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, 115ff.

communicate this music by finding a *code*, while allowing what is said and what is not said to float haphazardly.”²² Though not explicit, a kind of ‘intermusicality’ is implied in Kristeva’s thought. Or, perhaps, music is but another text and intertextuality will suffice as an inclusive category. It is this inclusive notion of intertextuality that is used in this study.

1.2.2 Barthes and Derrida

In recent theory intertextuality is a concept often associated with (post)modernism.²³ Unfortunately due to the extraordinary range of uses of the term (post)modernism in contemporary discourse²⁴ this association is of limited use. To say that intertextuality is (post)modern is a vague descriptor at best. In this study I will tend to avoid the terms (post)modernism and (post)modernity, particularly with reference to theorists whose first love is literature.

Though often simply assumed to be an early form of (post)modernism, poststructuralism is a term that can be more easily located in the work of a set of theorists – including Kristeva, Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida.²⁵ The structuralism from which it grows, and against whose limits it rebels, is also a far more tightly bound field of study than (post)modernism. In order to understand intertextuality within a wider theoretical ‘school’ I will briefly locate Kristeva’s ideas in relationship to certain claims made by Barthes and Derrida. The possible connotative connections are boundless; I have chosen aspects of poststructural intertextuality which challenge dominant applications of the idea in New Testament studies.²⁶

²² Kristeva reflecting on Barthes. See also “The Novel as Polylogue”. Ibid., 120 and 159ff.

²³ See Daniel Chandler, “Semiotics for Beginners (Intertextuality)”, 2003, <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/sem09.html>.

²⁴ (Post)modernism means something different when used in literary theory as compared to its use in architecture. Again different is its use in sociology to describe simply another historical era/epoch, (Post)modernism is, as Eagleton contends, a portmanteau. In general, if (post)modernism can ever be general, I tend to agree with Jameson that (post)modernism is as much a continuation and fulfilment of a particular form of modernity as it is anything else. Whenever (post)modernism fails to engage critically with the dominance of capitalism it cannot be seen as a subversive notion. Thus I will use (post)modernism, the parentheses denoting that the addition of (post)- may be questionable.

²⁵ The connections between (post)modernism and poststructuralism are undisputed and many concepts normally associated with (post)modern thought often resonate with poststructural literary theory. An incredulity to grand narrative, an interest in pastiche and simulacra and a suspicion of Reason resonate with poststructuralist authors. Nevertheless poststructuralism and (post)modernism are not the same thing any more than a mother is the same thing as the music produced by her children. For the purposes of study (post)modernism as a *zeitgeist* is practically unusable – writers on (post)modernity spend much of their time defining just what they mean by it. Here I prefer the term poststructuralism and locate it in the particular writings of particular theorists.

²⁶ See chapter 2 below.

1.2.2.1 Roland Barthes, authorial intention and the science of signs

Roland Barthes is possibly most (in)famous for his announcement that the author is ‘dead’,²⁷ his affirmation of the idea of “intentional fallacy” in characteristically brazen language. In the context of the French literary milieu which he shared with Julia Kristeva, his work on the polyvocality of narrative²⁸ and signification in the second degree²⁹ marks the movement of a text away from being understood as a static (author-owned) product. Just before the publication of Kristeva’s essay came Barthes’ 1968 claim: “We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning (the ‘message’ of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture.”³⁰ The movement from a static, synchronic understanding of text ‘in and of itself’ to this more diachronic (but not traditionally historical) view allows Barthes to ‘hear’ a new class of voices in his reading. In *S/Z* Barthes’ semiotically (semiologically)³¹ inspired reading of the work *Sarrasine* is organised, in part, around the ‘voice of the semes’ and the ‘proairetic voice’. Both of these ‘voices’ can be regarded as emerging from structuralist semiotics. The ‘voice of the semes’ relates to signifying terms and the relationship (mediation, opposition, collapse) of these significations; the ‘proairetic’ voice with the foreshadowing of narrative events and revelations within a text.³² In contrast, the ‘voice of science’ is introduced as a means of connecting the text beyond itself. A remarkably broad category, the ‘voice of science’ connects the text to a wider network of texts and their corresponding ideas and significations. Other productions (works/texts), theoretical discourse, historical and ideological assertions about the text (and potentially its author, dead though he is) are brought to bear. In Barthes’ voice of science other texts enter into conversation with *Sarrasine*. This conversation is combined with Barthes’ staunch adherence to the doctrine of ‘intentional fallacy’. The notion of intertextuality that emerges, then, allows history into the conversation through the voice of science, but does not allow the conversation to be dominated by the usual historical questions of origins and ‘happenedness’. In *S/Z*’s intertextuality, history and science are at the service of the text and its reading.

²⁷ Recent scholarship may have resurrected the author in keeping with Samuel Clemens’ cable on the publication of his obituary. While locating interpretive authority in the authorial intention of a particular writer is problematic, studies on the ideological and rhetorical location of a text have opened the door to a different way of focusing on the context of production. This trend is covered in Seán Burke, *The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault, and Derrida (Second Edition)* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998). See also chapter 2 below.

²⁸ Most fully expounded in his reading of Balzac’s *Sarrasine*. See Barthes (tr Richard Miller), *S/Z*.

²⁹ Explicated at length in Barthes (tr Annette Lavers), *Mythologies*.

³⁰ Roland Barthes (tr Stephen Heath), *Image, Music, Text*, 146.

³¹ ‘Semiotics’ and ‘Semiology’ are largely interchangeable terms. There are slight distinctions in their use in theory, continental thinkers tending to prefer semiology and Anglo-Americans, semiotics. Nevertheless both terms stem from Saussure’s original semiology and are concerned with the science of signification.

³² Barthes (tr Richard Miller), *S/Z: An Essay*, 7ff.

More accessible than S/Z Barthes' *Mythologies* is a fascinating, semiologically-driven reading of French society and culture. From the significations surrounding the twisted reality of professional wrestling to the (tongue-in-cheek) glorification of the "new Citroën" as kind of modern cathedral; the "supreme creation of an era",³³ *Mythologies* is an unusual and powerful example of semiology applied beyond language and literature. Semiology as a 'science of signs' is intended to be an extension of linguistics beyond language, into art, politics, culture and all areas of human discourse. For the most part, however, semiologists have focused solely on significations as they appear in written texts. Barthes' essays, as collected in *Mythologies*, form a notable exception to this trend.

One of Barthes' goals³⁴ in *Mythologies* is to demonstrate that semiotic signification can occur on a number of levels, often at the service of ideology. His example, par excellence, is the image of a 'Negro saluting' embossed on a Parisian poster. At the level of mythological signification this image is representative of and supports the dominant ideology of the French colonial empire. It implies that the colonised have become loyal to the self-evident/ common sense reality³⁵ of French cultural and political supremacy. While Barthes concedes that second-order signification or *mything* is inescapable, it always also involves the 'robbery' of meaning.

"In other words, myth is always a language-robbery. I rob the Negro who is saluting, the white and brown chalet, the seasonal fall in fruit prices, not to make them into examples or symbols, but to naturalize through them the Empire, my taste for Basque things, the Government."³⁶

The relevance of second-order signification to this study is that it locates intertextuality, at least in part, in the ideological and rhetorical discourse of a society or a culture. All elements of intertextual production, from the particular choice of relevant intertexts to the types of signification declared, take place in a cultural and ideological (mythological) space. The intertextuality inherent in reading texts also takes place in this space and, as such, has necessarily political consequences.

³³ Barthes (tr Annette Lavers), *Mythologies*, 88.

³⁴ If it is possible for Barthes-as-author to have intentions.

³⁵ For a belief to become common sense is often the goal of ideological strategy and discourse. See Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction (New and Updated Edition)*, 58.

³⁶ Barthes (tr Annette Lavers), *Mythologies*, 131.

1.2.2.2 Jacques Derrida, incomplete interpretation and *bricolage*

At about the time Kristeva and Barthes were developing their critiques and extensions of semiology, the work of Jacques Derrida began to spark discussion in literary theory. Concerned firstly with theories of speech and writing, Derrida's *Of Grammatology* is a formidable reappraisal of the linguistic logic of Saussure. Derrida's 'deconstruction' emerges out of his reading of Heidegger, Hegel, Husserl, Freud and Foucault³⁷ with frequent responses to Rousseau. What deconstruction *is* or how it is practised is still a subject of contention and is beyond the scope of this study.³⁸ Yet it seems clear that deconstructive, 'playful' readings grow from (or are dependent on) the notion of "difference".³⁹ In this we see Derrida making his French pun in coining *différance*, arising from the French *diffère* which holds a sense of both deferral and difference. For Derrida, in response to Saussure, the way in which "sensory appearing [*apparaissant*]" and "lived appearing/mental imprint [*apparaître*]"⁴⁰ form a 'trace' in the reader/hearer involves a temporal component or consequence. The temporality of this trace is complex and cannot be reduced to a retention either of the past nor an anticipation of the future. In one sense Derrida suggests that the past and future yearnings/implications of the trace are always *diffèred* in the present.

The importance of *différance* as a means of capturing the incompleteness of interpretation in an intertextual space cannot be ignored. If a text, or even a set of intertexts, could be finally and firmly bound, the readings that emerged from it might be similarly bound. Yet this is an impossibility in practice. For when a rigid canon⁴¹ of literature is established, for whatever purpose, it finds itself being deconstructed by the next writing, the next intertext. Texts and their interrelationships resist finality, as do the traces which arise from encounters with these text(s). Derrida's *différance* is indispensable for understanding the unbounded potential of intertextuality; that readings are only

³⁷ For a comprehensive overview of the thinkers with whom Derrida engages see Gayatri Spivak's translator's notes in Jacques Derrida (tr Gayatri Spivak), *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1997), ixff.

³⁸ An example of this is the question of whether deconstruction is opposed to Christian faith and belief; a question which is hotly contested. John Caputo suggests that the action of Jesus calling the church to repentance and transformation is akin to Derrida's deconstruction which calls literature to a more relative, and therefore 'meta'-truthful place. See John D Caputo, *What would Jesus Deconstruct? The Good News of Postmodernism for the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007).

³⁹ *Différance* is transliterated with and without the accent - Spivak here without. Compare this to Bass' translation of *Writing and Difference* where *différance* is used. In this study I will here use *différance* except in direct quotation. See Jacques Derrida (tr Alan Bass), *Writing and Difference* (London: Routledge Classics, 2001) in contrast to Derrida (tr Gayatri Spivak), *Of Grammatology*, 66.

⁴⁰ An adequate translation from French seems particularly problematic. Ibid.

⁴¹ I do not see the canon of scripture as rigid in this sense. It is certainly normative and authoritative but foreshadows the continuing revelation of God and the experience of believers. Scripture is not 'closed' canon in that it foreshadows meaning in community and promises yet to be fulfilled. The rigid closure of the canon of the Bible seems to be more a product of enlightenment positivism.

readings-in-waiting and that the different and the differed draw us into new relationships with new texts.

Perhaps the most clear equivalence between Derrida's thinking and the understanding of intertextuality by Barthes and Kristeva revolves around his reflections on *bricolage*, an idea borrowed from the anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss:

"If one calls *bricolage* the necessity of borrowing one's concepts from the text of a heritage which is more or less coherent or ruined, it must be said that every discourse is *bricoleur*. The engineer, who Lévi-Strauss opposes to the *bricoleur*, should be the one to construct the totality of his language, syntax, and lexicon. In this sense the engineer is a myth... The notion of the engineer who supposedly breaks with all forms of *bricolage* is therefore a theological idea."⁴²

In this playful metaphor the engineer is the logical science that is able to design and construct out of nothing. The *bricoleur* is a 'jack-of-all-trades' who tinkers with the work of others. For Derrida, Lévi-Strauss' engineer cannot exist because all language is made from other language. This is, of course, in resonance with intertextuality, where readings and writings of texts are also regarded as a kind of *bricolage*.

1.2.3 Poststructural intertextuality: a family resemblance

Intertextuality is not a term Derrida explores directly, yet his battle⁴³ with the totalitarianism of 'science' and 'logic' in the field of linguistic critique resonates with the insights of Kristeva and Barthes. Despite clear differences, many subsequent scholars have recognised a family resemblance.⁴⁴ It is intertextuality as the child of *this* family which is of interest in this study.

Though it has been reshaped in subsequent use, the concept that I search for must bear resemblance to the literary work of Kristeva, Derrida and Barthes. In New Testament study in particular, where

⁴² Derrida on Lévi -Strauss, Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference* (London: Routledge Classics, 2001), 360. As is common with post-war French theory, "theological" is used pejoratively in the sense of "unreal" or at least "undiscussable".

⁴³ Jacques Derrida (tr Alan Bass), *Writing and Difference* (London: Routledge Classics, 2001), 6ff.

⁴⁴ See, for example, Allen, *Intertextuality*, Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1990), x. Daniel Chandler, "Semiotics for Beginners (Intertextuality)" and Jill Schostak, "[Ad]dressing Methodologies. Tracing the Self In Significant Slips: Shadow Dancing. Volume 2, Addendum." (Enquiry Learning Unit, 2005), <http://www.enquirylearning.net/ELU/Issues/Research/JRSaddendum.html>.

the term intertextuality has been (mis)used as fashionable shorthand for historical-critical methods; redaction criticism, source criticism and so on, I will seek to demonstrate that this is far too limited a use of the concept. Importantly, however, my application of intertextuality does not reject historical method outright. Rather, I advocate a conception of intertextuality which utilises historical insight as another set of texts within a connotative interpretive productivity. Historical conclusions may still retain ‘veto’ authority over patently anachronistically ‘dishonest’ readings. Yet interpretation, especially connotative interpretation, cannot be reduced to a simple equivalence with historiographical insight.

The poststructuralism emanating from Kristeva, Barthes and Derrida is not without criticism. A number of significant objections may be raised against their work.

- The first criticism is that French poststructuralist thought is overly preoccupied with psychoanalysis, particularly Lacanian psychoanalysis. While Freud stands with Marx and Nietzsche as one of the pillars of European modernity, Kristeva and Derrida’s fascination with psychoanalysis seems unjustifiably zealous. The contested notion that individual (and corporate) catharsis can be found through the ‘phallic’, the ‘ego’ and the ‘Oedipal complex’ tends to distract from their ground-breaking literary and philosophical insights. While later in his writing Derrida engages more explicitly with political thought⁴⁵ Kristeva is drawn towards psychoanalysis as time proceeds. Other than to state my view that psychoanalysis has at times been overemphasised in poststructural thought, I do not wish to analyse analysis, so to speak. Rather, I wish to suggest that poststructuralist engagement with psychoanalysis was claimed, in part, as a means of ‘getting outside’ the text. In reaction against the structuralists, for whom the text and its internality was ‘everything’, the poststructuralists saw clearly that the text existed in relationship to other texts and to a society/culture of human discourse. In my view it is disappointing that so many of these relationships were framed in terms of psychoanalysis, particularly by Kristeva.
- Poststructuralist thought emerged in a particular cultural and historical set of circumstances – namely, 1960s France – and in response to (reaction against) the logocentrism of

⁴⁵ That poststructuralism is thoroughly steeped in Marxism is often forgotten, Derrida and Kristeva growing out of a French Marxist sphere. Kristeva’s association with *Tel Quel* demonstrates a ongoing fascination and regular disappointment with Marxist iterations in history. The political location of poststructuralism and cultural theory in general are discussed at length in Eagleton, *After Theory*. See also Derrida’s lengthy engagement in Jacques Derrida (tr Peggy Kamuf), *Specters of Marx* (New York and London: Routledge Classics, 1994).

‘Reason’, so fundamental to the formation of the French nation. Derrida’s *Of Grammatology* could be described as, in part, a refutation of Rousseau. Indeed Derrida quotes Rousseau more often than any other thinker. Jill Schostak’s comment about intertextuality could apply to poststructuralism more generally, “Intertextuality is one way of thinking how to undermine the totalitarian grip of Reason.”⁴⁶

The undermining of Reason as the universal and dominating interpretative frame was (and is) necessary. It could be argued, however, that the poststructuralists overemphasise their rejection, primarily by failing to engage with more subtle appreciations of science. Certainly correct to reject a totalitarianism which holds that all study shall be at the service of and have its value measured by, scientistic historiography, the poststructuralists found it too easy to completely reject scientific thinking.⁴⁷

- A third, and complex criticism of poststructuralism is that it leads to a moral relativism and an a-politicism which is at best naive and at worst conspiratorial with oppressive political forces. Terry Eagleton, from a Marxist literary perspective, raises searing critiques of (post)modernism. For the most part these critiques are not directed at Derrida himself but at those who might claim to be disciples of deconstruction. Eagleton is scathingly dismissive of ‘radical postmodernists’ who write as if, “Jacques Derrida believes that anything can mean anything else, that nobody ever entertained an intention and that there is nothing in the world but writing.”⁴⁸ The critique here exemplified by Eagleton is complex because it is not a critique of poststructuralism as such, but rather the way in which poststructuralists have been (mis)read and depoliticised by later thinkers.⁴⁹ Speaking of those for whom (post)modernism has become an intellectual fashion, devoid of political consequence, Eagleton argues that: “The political illiteracy and historical oblivion fostered by much of postmodernism, with its cult of flashy theoretical fashion and instant intellectual consumption, must surely be a cause for rejoicing in the White House, assuming that the

⁴⁶ Jill Schostak, “[Ad]dressing Methodologies. Tracing the Self In Significant Slips: Shadow Dancing. Volume 2, Addendum.”

⁴⁷ The rejection of science of the structuralists was more subtle, holding onto reason and logic as privileged modes of analysis. Against traditional historicising study, structuralists focused logic and reason on the interplay of signs in the text itself, as opposed to the historical situation out of which the text arose.

⁴⁸ Terry Eagleton, *The Illusions of Postmodernism*, 46.

⁴⁹ Barthes is also treated with respect on page 131 and Kristeva’s political activity obliquely praised on page 23. Eagleton is more roundly critical of poststructuralism in his later work *After Theory* however this falls within a critique of the limits of theory more generally. That Terry Eagleton is an enemy of (post)modernism may be true, but his relationship to poststructuralist theory is far more nuanced. See Eagleton, *The Illusions of Postmodernism* and Eagleton, *After Theory*.

trend does not pass out of existence before it reaches their ears.”⁵⁰ The methodological framework of this study is constructed from an attempt to avoid misreading Kristeva, Barthes and Derrida, at least in terms of political and historical consequences. I contend that the plurality of intertextuality and *différance* *may* lead to relativism and a-politicism, but that to do so divorces poststructuralism from its thoroughly politically-engaged location. Kristeva in *The Incredible Need to Believe*, Barthes through the prophetic truth-telling of *Mythologies* and Derrida in his close reading of Marx in *Specters of Marx* all demonstrate this engagement. Because political thought is always socially and culturally situated, questions of location, political and otherwise, have significant bearing upon poststructuralism and, therefore, on intertextuality.

There are many other justifiable criticisms of poststructuralism as an epistemology or a *Weltanschauung*. Its discourse tends to be obscurantist, it relies overly on neologism and a narrow jargon⁵¹ and it is thoroughly Eurocentric.⁵² For the purposes of this study, however, I am less interested in accepting or rejecting poststructuralism as a comprehensive interpretive framework. Rather I am interested in the way in which poststructuralist thinkers recognised and named intertextuality in reading, writing and in the creation of meaning. For Kristeva, Barthes and Derrida intertextuality is both a way of understanding texts which currently exist (works) and a means of understanding the generation of new texts, both permanent (physical) and temporary (ideational). The poststructuralists remind us that texts emerge in conversation, they are productions-in-waiting and that a new and different arrangement is just around the corner. Finally, and most importantly, the poststructuralists affirm that reading as an intertextual productivity is a subtle, complex but inescapably political activity.

1.3 Genette and structuralist intertextuality

In response to the advent of intertextuality as a concept for understanding texts a number of thinkers

⁵⁰ Ibid., 23.

⁵¹ Genette's citing of “*Le Roland Barthes sans peine* {Roland Barthes made easy}”, a caricature of Barthes and his language. For the authors, Burnier and Rambaud, a “generative rule” of Roland Barthes is “a simple proposition must always be made complicated”. There is something to be said for this critique and at times it feels as if Barthes (and Derrida and Kristeva) neologise overly. And as Terry Eagleton demonstrates in *After Theory* each discipline requires its own technical language, its own jargon. “How much jargon is too much?” is a question unlikely to be answered soon. See Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, 95-98 and Terry Eagleton, *After Theory*, 74-88.

⁵² I suggest that many of Eagleton's criticisms of (post)modernity in general are not because it is apolitical but because it too often is collaborative with the dominant capitalist politics of the West. For a Marxist the only thing worse than the bourgeoisie is a member of the proletariat who collaborates with the bourgeoisie.

have borrowed and adapted the term for their own use.⁵³ A significant appropriation of intertextuality has been by the structuralist literary theorists Michael Riffaterre and Gérard Genette. Genette's *Palimpsests*⁵⁴ is the most comprehensive treatment of intertextuality within this school. In structuralist mode Genette seeks to divide the broad notion of intertextuality, which he confusingly renames *transtextuality*⁵⁵ into methodologically accessible pieces. In so doing the term intertextuality itself is more narrowly understood – *transtextuality* becomes the general 'container' term. Intertextuality then, is defined in relationship to a number of ideas about how texts interrelate. Neither Genette's *intertextuality* nor his *transtextuality* resemble Kristeva's intertextuality in any precise sense.⁵⁶ I would suggest, however, that all of Genette's notions of *-textuality* form a sub-branch of the broader poststructuralist idea, though they arise from very different epistemological roots. Genette's *-textualities*⁵⁷ are summarised here:

- *Intertextuality* is, according to Genette, that which relates to the "actual presence of one text within another".⁵⁸ Genette's definition is acknowledged as being narrower than Kristeva's⁵⁹ conception of intertextuality and refers to traditional literary characteristics such as quotation, plagiarism and allusion. For Genette *intertextuality* includes an awareness of a clear temporal relationship between the originating text and the text which uses it. This relationship is linear and, though authorial intentionality is not overtly stated, Genette's *intertextuality* implies that the author of the second text, or *hypertext*,⁶⁰ intended a direct quote of the first.⁶¹ Genette's understanding of *intertextuality* is reasonably rigid, allowing only a small range of interpretive flexibility in the recognition of allusion within texts. Generally, as *intertextual* relationships are reduced to direct quotations, determining these relationships is primarily a mechanical operation. Literary understanding is focussed on how *intertextuality* occurs rather than where it might generate meaning.
- Genette's second category is concerned with internal relations within a particular text. Making a distinction between the "text properly speaking"⁶² (which he implies includes only

⁵³ See chapter 2 for a discussion of intertextuality in New Testament study.

⁵⁴ Originally *Palimpsestes*, first published in 1982.

⁵⁵ Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, 1.

⁵⁶ The diverse range and problematic nature of the use of the term intertextuality in scholarship is central to the methodological background of this chapter. In order to grapple with the use of the term in New Testament scholarship, some understanding of the way the intertextuality has been used in textual scholarship more broadly is necessary.

⁵⁷ I will *italicise* Genette's terms below to differentiate them from intertextuality more generally

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁹ Genette's use is also narrower than and other structuralists, particularly Riffaterre. See *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶¹ It is not clear whether the purpose of the quotation in the mind of the author consigned to the realm of the intentional fallacy or not. It seems enough that the author of the *hypertext* consciously intended a quotation.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 3.

the narrative, prose or poetic elements of the text) and the text as a complete work, something Genette describes as a *paratext*. In practice then, this *paratextual* category is concerned with ‘titles, subtitles, prefaces, illustrations, blurbs, covers’⁶³ and so on; elements that structure the text from within. In the New Testament these kind of relationships are seen in the titles of Greek gospels such as KATA ΛΟΥΚΑΝ⁶⁴ and the narrative subtitles such as the “Dedication to Theophilus” found in some publications.⁶⁵ Again Genette sees these *paratextual* relationships in terms of the way the text is internally structured and situated within history.⁶⁶ Nevertheless Genette’s insights illuminate the intratextual elements of intertextuality. To understand a text intertextually will often involve drawing upon in the inter-relationships of different parts of the same work.⁶⁷ In contrast to Genette, however, these intratextual connections should not be restricted to the somewhat artificial categories he designates. Any part of a text can be used to generate an interpretation or meaning in relationship to any other part of the text.

- The third type of *transtextuality* Genette describes is labelled *metatextuality* and refers most properly to a close following or ‘commentary’ of one text by another. The boundary conditions for determining whether a text is a commentary or not are left vague by Genette and it is plausible to regard *metatextuality* not as a category of *transtextuality* but rather as a particular *transtextual* genre. Indeed, as noted in the foreword by Gerald Prince “Genette makes it clear that he prefers massively rather than modestly hypertextual works”⁶⁸, the vast bulk of *Palimpsests* is organised around genres in the context of Genette’s fourth category, *hypertextuality*. In chapter 3 below I use the *metatextuality* of John Howard Yoder’s reading of Luke’s gospel as a post-textual starting point.
- *Palimpsests* could properly be described as a systematic exploration of Genette’s concept of *hypertextuality*, this forming the most significant type of *transtextuality* for understanding

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ New Testament quotations are from: Aland, B et al. (eds), *The Greek New Testament*. D-Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1998.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 193.

⁶⁶ See discussion of *Ulysses* “prepublication in instalment form”. Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, 3. This kind of analysis of textual formation in history is very familiar to modern historical approaches to the New Testament.

⁶⁷ See chapter 3 below.

⁶⁸ Gerald Prince in Ibid., x.

literature. *Hypertextuality* is “any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the *hypertext*) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary.”⁶⁹ Genette’s *hypertextuality* has some resonance with Kristeva’s intertextuality as the textual relationships are not restricted to ‘direct’ quotation or allusion. In Genette’s understanding, however, the diachronic arrow is unidirectional. Genette’s clearest example of *hypertextuality* is in the relationship between Joyce’s *Ulysses* and Virgil’s *Aeneid* as *hypertexts* “of the same *hypotext*: the *Odyssey*.”⁷⁰ After defining this *hypertextuality* so broadly, however, Genette’s primary concern becomes the way in which the *hypertexts* transform their originating *hypotext*. Much of *Palimpsests* is a taxonomy of *hypertextual* transformations, particularly interested in generalising the ‘rules’ for transformation between genres. There is little room in Genette’s work for investigating how the two *hypertexts*, the *Aeneid* and *Ulysses* might, between them, generate something new. It is in his tendency towards comprehensive categorisation that Genette departs most evidently from the poststructural notions of intertextuality.

- Genette’s last category is called *architextuality*. This *architextuality* is the most interesting and vaguely defined element of his taxonomy. *Architextuality* “involves a relationship that is completely silent, articulated at most by a paratextual mention... When this relationship is unarticulated, it may be because of a refusal to underscore the obvious or, conversely, an intent to reject or elude any kind of classification.”⁷¹ After such an intriguing definition Genette fails to explore at any length the implications of this *architextuality* preferring, as noted above, to spend time on *hypertextual* transformations. And yet there is a hint here in Genette’s ‘open structuralism’ at an intertextuality which can emerge from the silences. Against the text, and possibly against Genette’s intentions, an intertextuality emerges as the reader brings her sense of the obvious to the silence in the text. For Kristeva and others, all texts are constructed from the obvious intertexts brought to bear by the reader/author, and in this sense there are no silences, for the silences are always filled by other intertexts. Nevertheless, in *architextuality* the walls around Genette’s narrow understanding of intertextuality are less than stable structures.

Though Gérard Genette approaches intertextuality from a different perspective to Kristeva, Barthes

⁶⁹ Ibid., 5 *italics* original.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid., 4.

and Derrida his impressive appreciation of western literature from antiquity to the present necessarily uncovers ‘elements’ of intertextuality that might otherwise be overlooked. Of particular importance to the understanding of biblical scholarship is his exploration of “serious transformation”, a “hypertextual practice”⁷² where one text appropriates another with respect and not for the purposes of parody or caricature. From a historical-critical perspective this might be done for the sake of seeking authority, a strong practice in antiquity⁷³ or for the purpose of reinterpreting *hypotexts* in new ways. It is possible to conceive of Genette’s ‘serious transformation’ in a less traditional sense, namely, that the recognition of a ‘serious’ relationship between texts grows out of a particular ideology (or theology) and leads to the creation of a reading (or intertext) of a particular type. This does not break Genette’s category as such, but situates it in a broader understanding of text and reader; of deferred rather than determined meaning. On the edges of Genette’s work his open structuralism may intersect with poststructuralism.

Nevertheless, there is an epistemological divide between the work of Genette and that of the poststructuralists. Falling within a structuralist literary theory which seeks to “explain it all”,⁷⁴ Genette’s work may well be regarded as simply another exposition on the *grand récit* of Reason. The blind spots of Genette’s epistemology are seen in his treatment of Joyce’s *Ulysses* not as an intersection of a staggeringly wide range of texts, but rather as a single *hypertext* of the *Odyssey*. Even in a close structuralist reading of *Ulysses* the use of several texts other than the *Odyssey* may be seen on every page, as Genette cannot have failed to notice. And yet Genette’s insistence on rigid categorisation allows this complex intertextuality to be sidelined, searching instead for genre-specific transformations. The poststructuralists are opposed to this kind of thinking, but not absolutely so, for that would be but another totalitarianism. Despite the assertions of some of their disciples, Kristeva, Barthes and Derrida are not opposed to structural understandings of text, but rather, advocate reading which is both cognisant of the limits of structuralism and seeks to move beyond these limits. Genette’s open structuralism may not move as far as they do, yet, at times, *Palimpsests* travels in a similar direction.

The purpose of exploring Genette’s intertextuality here has largely been to compare a systematic appreciation of texts-in-relationship from a traditional source. The understanding of intertextuality

⁷² Ibid., 212ff.

⁷³ See, for example, Warren Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations*.

⁷⁴ See Eagleton’s critique in *The Illusions of Postmodernism*, 131ff.

towards which this study is moving is not directly opposed to systematic, unidirectional diachronic notions of intertextuality. Rather these are regarded as a part of intertextuality. I will continue the exploration of intertextuality as it has been conceived of in fields which have often had bearing on New Testament studies. Firstly I will look at intertextuality in midrashic studies, particularly as it has been explored by Daniel Boyarin. Then I will look at intertextuality in Classics scholarship, again locating it in the text of a particular scholar, this time, Lowell Edmunds. From there I will draw together these strands into a concluding discussion of the nature of intertextuality and its bearing on New Testament studies.

1.4 Midrash in comparison

Daniel Boyarin's *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* provides many helpful insights for biblical scholarship. Boyarin's reading is of relevance for a number of reasons. It has 'historical' connections as it deals with 'texts-of-religious-significance' (midrash) belonging firstly to the cultures of ancient peoples. Moreover, and more particularly to this study, Boyarin's understanding of intertextuality is apposite. His book functions as both a reading of midrash, but also as a reading of the reading of midrash. In theory and practice Boyarin's intertextuality is compelling.

The underlying "sovereign notion"⁷⁵ of *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* is a particular understanding of intertextuality. Firstly, Boyarin's intertextuality holds that "the text is always made up of a mosaic of conscious and unconscious citations of earlier discourse." Second, that "texts may be dialogical in nature",⁷⁶ affirming that certain texts enable a kind of intertextual conversation within themselves. The Bible is treated here as a unitary text⁷⁷ and the example par excellence of a dialogical production. Finally, Boyarin affirms that there are "cultural codes... which both constrain and allow the production (not creation) of new texts within the culture".⁷⁸ I think it is far more

⁷⁵ Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, 12.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ I think this is an interesting but disputable claim. While I agree with Boyarin that the Bible functions as a single text for certain groups it is nonetheless different in form to most modern single-author/single-context novels. If the Bible can be regarded as a text rather than a collection of texts then it must be recognised as a strongly compound or multi-vocal text. Also disputable is the implication of Boyarin's second claim about dialogical texts as ideal spaces for intertextual reading. A critical claim of intertextuality is that *all* texts are such spaces. 'Metafiction' and 'self-reflexive' literature from Tristram Shandy to Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman* are explicit in their appeals 'outside the text'. For a fuller discussion see Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 34-42. Also, Genettes' *Palimpsestes* deals almost exclusively with this 'type' of writing.

⁷⁸ Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, 12. This idea resonates with Barthes' *cultural code* or *voice of science* explored at length in *S/Z*. See also discussion of feminist, ideologically-located notions of intertextuality below.

helpful to think in terms of cultures and subcultures than ‘culture’,⁷⁹ yet Boyarin’s insight here is keen. Texts are produced (and read) within cultural parameters, citing other texts (written and unwritten) which belong within those cultural parameters. Whether the voices that come into dialogical conversation within the text can be reduced to these citations is doubtful. However the texts cited may often frame these conversations.

Boyarin’s work discusses several midrashic ‘interpretations’ or ‘tellings’ of Torah which demonstrate an intertextual reading which has, in Boyarin’s view, been overlooked in the history of Jewish literary history. Against Maimonides,⁸⁰ who is seen as analogous to “Aristotle in the discourse of European literature”,⁸¹ Boyarin offers a different, intertextual, way of interpretation. This he models on certain midrash, notably the Mekilta, the “earliest midrash on Exodus”.⁸² As midrash is opposed to ‘traditional’ Rabbinic interpretation, intertextuality is opposed to the “higher criticism”⁸³ of source-focussed and redactive methods. Boyarin argues against the tendency to ‘cut and paste’ the Torah in order to “smooth out the resulting infelicities”.⁸⁴ He rightly concludes that to do so “constitutes a loss for hermeneutics”.⁸⁵ Boyarin’s alternative approach is less precisely defined than many schools of higher criticism. It is, however, a significantly more integrated approach – one which has particular bearing on the connotative interpretation advocated in this study.

Perhaps Boyarin’s approach is best exemplified as he traces the reading of a particular midrash – in this case an explicit intertextual citation of Exod 16: 3-8 by the Mekilta.⁸⁶ The biblical narrative concerns the provision of bread to the Israelites in the wilderness. Characteristically repetitive, a play is made on the contrasting images of flesh and bread, evening and morning. While the

⁷⁹ The insights of cultural studies, social scientific modelling and anthropological explanations must be brought to bear on understanding the text as a production in a context. I would, however, want to remain guarded against the monolithic (totalitarian) explanations that often proceed from the generalising nature of their study. In New Testament studies see Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Atlanta: WJK, 1991) and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996). In critique see Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic*.

⁸⁰ Maimonides is often referred to by his Rabbinic title Ramban, the “acronym for Rabbi Moses ben Maimon”. See endnote 3 for Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, 1.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., viii.

⁸³ Ibid., 39ff.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 39.

⁸⁵ Ibid. Boyarin also argues against fundamentalist interpretation, but I feel that fundamentalists are not his primary opposition.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 49ff.

Israelites cry out for meat (flesh), God provides bread. Boyarin cites numerous interpretations or approaches to this passage. First is the “plain sense”⁸⁷ reading of Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra who makes a connection between the miracles of the evening and morning provisions of sustenance and the miracle of the Exodus. This is the meaning of “that the Lord took you out”. Second is an approach of ‘higher’ source criticism. George Coats⁸⁸ concludes that the repetition of the Exodus account can be accounted for as a redaction of two different accounts of the same story. For Boyarin, however, this approach sidesteps the question of the difficulties and the gaps in the text. For there is one ‘Author’⁸⁹ and a “strong reading” is required to interpret this text without explaining it away. Boyarin takes his cue from a third approach, that of the intertextual midrash.

The Mekilta midrash is an anonymous synchronic comment on the Exodus account.⁹⁰ In this midrash, the countenance of God is introduced: “The quail, which they asked for with full bellies, He gave them with a dark countenance, but the manna, which they asked for appropriately, He gave them with a bright countenance”.⁹¹ The key to understanding this midrash, and the Exodus account itself, is to recognise that the midrash forms an intertextual reading of Exodus in relationship to another account of this narrative given in Numbers 11. The Mekilta notes the tension between Exodus 16 and Numbers 11 and forms a reading of Exodus utilising the account in Numbers 11 to fill in the gaps. In Numbers, the Israelites are painted as petulant children crying out not from desperation or starvation but for ‘luxurious’ foods; meat, cucumbers, melons, onions and garlic. Moses, too, is a less than noble figure, confronting God and seeking to avoid the burdens of leadership. When the meat is given in the form of quails, it comes as a curse and not a blessing. First the people have only meat to eat for a whole month until “it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you” (v 20); second, “while the meat was still between their teeth... the LORD struck the people with a very great plague” (v 33).

Turning back to Exodus 16, the Mekilta, in deeply metaphoric language⁹² suggests that the bread of the morning is given freely by God to meet the needs of a people dependent on God, and the quail

⁸⁷ Ibid., 50.

⁸⁸ Cited in Ibid., 53ff.

⁸⁹ Boyarin is not referring to an author as a historical figure but rather an ‘Author’ implied by the text. Thus the distinctive capital ‘A’.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 49.

⁹¹ Boyarin here quotes Jacob Z Lauterbach, *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael: A Critical Edition on the Basis of the Manuscripts and Early Editions with an English Translation, Introduction, and Notes*.

⁹² Boyarin contends that ‘evening’ and ‘morning’ constitute a “complex figurative-symbolic signification”, a signification on signification. This is reminiscent of Barthes’ notion of myth as second-order signification.

of the evening is given begrudgingly to a people who want more than they need. The midrashic text signifies this through the brightness and darkness of God's face, turned upon the people.

Boyarin's 'meta'-interpretation, for it is an interpretation of interpretation, is a convincing example of intertextuality being brought to bear on ancient texts. It would be a mistake to regard Boyarin's work as simply a justification for a particular midrashic interpretation of Torah. While this is certainly part of his argument, Boyarin's willingness to bring 'modern' scholarship into conversation with ancient interpretation displays a broad understanding of and willingness to engage in intertextuality. In the example above, Coats' 'modern' source-critical approach is brought into conversation with the distinctly 'non-modern' midrash of the Mekilta. Interestingly, and in keeping with many who have been critical of 'progress' and the privileging of the 'new' in modernity, Boyarin sides with an 'old' reading. While the theory of intertextuality is a recent development in western thought, Boyarin shows that the practice of inter-relating-textual-connections is ancient. It would be anachronistic to transpose the full implications of a poststructuralist epistemology upon the Mekilta (or any other old text), nevertheless the insight that texts are formed out of other texts has applicability across the history of writing.

1.5 Roman Poetry in comparison

If Daniel Boyarin's work on intertextuality stands at the intersection of literary theory and 'religious' interpretation, Lowell Edmunds' summarising study on *Intertextuality and the Reading of Roman Poetry* stands closer to the meeting point between literary theory and the historical study of antiquity.⁹³ Significantly Edmunds sees his use of intertextuality in understanding Roman poetry as a way of engaging in the politics of interpretation,⁹⁴ and utilises recent significant 'essays' on the consequences of intertextuality on the field of Roman poetry to organise his work. Whereas Boyarin appears to work at the heart of the intertextual endeavour, thoroughly convinced (in practice at least) that the intertextuality of midrash and contemporary literary study is legitimate and necessary, Edmunds is far more interested in demarcating the boundaries of a relevant intertextual endeavour. He begins by locating his notion of intertextuality within the useful but limited approaches of

⁹³ Edmunds, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Roman Poetry*, xixff.

⁹⁴ Ibid., xvi. The reasons for exploring Edmunds' intertextuality are threefold. First, Edmunds work is a broad survey within the field of Ancient Studies interacting with a range of articles. Second, he is explicit about his interest in the politics of interpretation – also central to this study. Finally, he is interested in the reading (interpretation) of Roman poetry (as opposed to history and the like). It is the insights of ancient New Testament (inter)texts as narrative, poetry and rhetoric which is of first interest to this study. See chapter 3 below.

literary theory which is in turn regarded as a subset of a wider philosophical school, namely critical theory.⁹⁵ Edmunds is far more focused on discerning the nature of a text and draws on Derrida to suggest that a text is “in principle greater than the sum of its linguistic parts”.⁹⁶ Moving away from the claims of intentional fallacy, Edmunds concludes that the author (or, in this case “poet”) can be regarded as having intentions⁹⁷ and that the intertextuality is not to be understood in relationship to the poet as historical figure. Instead Edmunds resorts to the ‘persona’ of the poem, a literary construct itself, in order to talk about intertextuality.⁹⁸ Drawing up the idea of “interpretive communities” advocated by Stanley Fish,⁹⁹ Edmunds argues that ‘reading’ is constrained by these communities. Though not explicit it seems to follow that intertextuality too is likewise constrained.¹⁰⁰ Before offering a final model or way of understanding intertextuality, Edmunds examines what it meant to read Roman poetry in Rome. This is a largely historical-critical excursus in which Edmunds criticises the work of another classics scholar, Florence Dupont and her thesis that “there was no literary institution of reading in antiquity.”¹⁰¹ The point of this chapter is unclear, yet it serves to underscore the pervasiveness of interpretive communities (schools, institutions) across history. For Edmunds, intertextuality can only be understood within the reading traditions and ‘literary theories’ of historically-located interpretive communities.

Edmunds’ efforts to understand intertextuality in relationship to Roman poetry place it firmly within the historical contexts of readers and their communities. Though the text has been regarded as having a certain ‘power’ to influence the interpretation, the question of the definition of a text and its legitimate intertexts is left in the hands of an external authority. It is little wonder then that Edmunds’ intertextual practices are almost always ‘retroactive’,¹⁰² ubiquitously looking for precursor or antecedent texts in order to interpret or make meaning out of a particular Roman poem. This is the practice of the guild of classicists, seeking to understand the old by examining the older; indeed it tends to be the practice of New Testament scholars, who overwhelmingly look to the old.¹⁰³ That the historical and literary background and context of a text frames certain intertexts is

⁹⁵ Ibid., xviff.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 18.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 19.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 63ff. At this juncture Edmunds literary and historical frameworks intersect most evidently, at least by negation as Edmunds describes what he is against.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 61-62.

¹⁰⁰ As I will suggest below, intertextuality is a significant aspect of how readings and writings are produced. Yet the way this happens is shaped by an ideological or relational context.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 124..

¹⁰² Ibid., 159ff.

¹⁰³ Indeed, I do so myself in reading the third gospel. See chapter 3. I do, however, seek to engage with a more contemporary ‘reading community’ signalled in the work of Yoder.

not under question here. But, as will be suggested below, this purely linear notion of intertextual relationships is but one part of a broad intertextual reading. All readers of ancient texts necessarily engage with ‘post-texts’¹⁰⁴ though this is rarely acknowledged as intertextuality. For Edmunds, this kind of post-textual engagement is exemplified in his historical-critical engagement with contemporary scholarship, notably with Dupont. He is, in a sense, reading Roman poetry in a relationship with the texts of his guild. Some reflection on this kind of intertextuality is a necessary part of the politically-charged interpretation which he advocates.

1.6 Boyarin and Edmunds in comparison

The intertextual approaches of Boyarin and Edmunds serve to exemplify the range of understandings of intertextuality in text-related scholarship. In particular their work with ancient writings illustrates that the epistemological frameworks for understanding intertextuality are varied and sometimes contradictory. Yet both regard intertextuality as critical for interpretation within their related, but different, epistemologies. Boyarin’s insightful and challenging interpretive use of intertextuality in midrash is tempered by Edmunds’ concerns about the boundary conditions of actually applying intertextuality to the study of ancient texts. It is not so much that Boyarin is not aware of the potential arbitrariness of intertextual insights, but rather that he continues his reading regardless. In this study I will suggest that cultural and ideological perspectives (and guild-affiliations) provide a reader-of-readers some means of bounding intertextuality. These perspectives are not intended to ‘explain it all’, but rather to give some working framework in which to structure intertextually-focussed readings.

1.7 Towards a working intertextuality

And so I seek here to propose a working definition of intertextuality. To begin with I assume that the term ‘text’ refers to a broad category of productions.¹⁰⁵ While some of these productions are temporary and fleeting (a bible study discussion, a conversation after a movie), the texts with which I am concerned are those that have been recorded in some (semi)concrete form. Within this relationship I regard texts as including readings *and* writings but, for the sake of clarity, generally

¹⁰⁴ A term I borrow from Matthew Bates. See Matthew W. Bates, “Getting Some Fatherly Advice: Refining ‘Intertextuality’ in the Study of Paul’s Scriptural Interpretation,” *Paul and Scripture Seminar*, <http://paulandscripture.westmont.edu/wikindx/>.

¹⁰⁵ Challenging, but necessarily broad to remain faithful to the insight of Kristeva. See Nicholas Zurbrugg and Warren Burt, *Critical Vices: The Myths of Postmodern Theory* (Amsterdam: Overseas Publishers Association, 2000), 21.

restrict my use of texts to readings that have been concretised, that have been written down.¹⁰⁶ This is not intended to privilege writing over reading, or written-culture over oral-culture, but rather to acknowledge that within the bounds of the guilds of literary and biblical studies, the discourse is overwhelmingly framed in terms of ‘books’ and written product. Thus the focus on texts as readings that have been written down. Intertextuality as practised here, then, is concerned with certain relationships between these texts.¹⁰⁷ As an aside, however, when I use the language of ‘texts’ *using* or *referring to* other texts, or about the relationship between written texts, a stage of reading is implied between one text and another. This is not to reintroduce ‘intentionality’ into the discussion, but to give some context for textual production. When a text is produced it is produced in a context. Remembering the reader helps us to take this context into account.

Taking as a basis this idea of text, my use of intertextuality seeks to bear a ‘family resemblance’ to the poststructuralism of Kristeva, Barthes and Derrida¹⁰⁸. This is not to say that the epistemology underlying this study is strongly poststructuralist,¹⁰⁹ but rather that the intertextuality being described and applied grows from their insights. To recapitulate:

- With Derrida, intertextuality implies that all texts are *bricolage*, constructions with no grand design and pieced together out of existing texts. Textual productivity is no *creatio ex nihilo*.
- Also with Derrida, intertextuality as productivity implies that another text, differed in time, may be produced, and that this new text will be different from that which has gone before. These texts may often be trivial, yet the potentiality is there for a new construction of a text from a radically different set of intertexts.
- With Kristeva, intertextuality is regarded as a productivity rather than a production. The way in which texts are constructed from intertexts opens the door for a re-appropriation of context in understanding the text. Whenever we ask ‘how is a text formed?’ we must ask ‘by

¹⁰⁶ Or painted, or recorded on vinyl, or digitally in 0s and 1s.

¹⁰⁷ The ‘certain’ relationships are those that emerge from a particular rhetorical interest in the text. Namely, the development of a Christian social-ethic. See chapter 3 below.

¹⁰⁸ Nicholas Zurburg, *The Parameters of Postmodernism* (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1993).

¹⁰⁹ I have defended certain aspects and the anti-totalitarian notions of poststructuralism, and yet I agree with many of Eagleton’s criticisms in *After Theory* and *The Illusions of Postmodernism* - particularly about its failure to offer ‘political productivity’ alongside textual productivity. Perhaps this study resonates with those like Nicholas Zurburg who would want to relocate and re-politicise, or at least draw out the political implications of poststructuralism. See also Zurburg, *The Parameters of Postmodernism*.

whom is the text formed?’.

- With Barthes, an understanding of intertextuality gives us some insight into the mythologies or ‘second-order’ significations which structure our cultural, ideological and theological frames.

The debt to literary and cultural theory¹¹⁰ is acknowledged here, and yet the limits of this theory must also be acknowledged. While poststructuralism sought to ‘reach’ beyond the limits of theory through its constant focus on the margins, it has shown itself to be less able to deal with the centre, the normative, the powerful. So it is that literary (cultural) theory ought to find itself in conversation with specific ideological, cultural and political contexts. In my reading of Luke’s gospel I will seek to engage the literary theory of intertextuality and the specifically Christian political engagement elaborated by Yoder.

In terms of intertextuality the link to political and ideological contexts has been exemplified in the work of several feminist ‘gynocritics’. Graham Allen gives an account of Harold Bloom’s understanding of the way a text ‘draws’ upon earlier literary ‘canonical’ work. For Bloom, any text rests upon the shoulders of an earlier, significant work. Appealing to psychoanalytical language Bloom places the productivity of the text squarely in the (historical) author’s mind, often the unconscious mind. Authors write, he contends, out of an “anxiety of influence” seeking to deal with and transcend that which has gone before.¹¹¹ In this Bloom brings the locus of intertextual productivity back into the psychology of the individual writer. This is misguided as an account of individual psychology is a far too narrow (and modernist) means of analysing the contextual forces underlying intertextual production. Nevertheless Bloom’s method of analysis opened the door for a more fully ideological understanding of intertextuality.

¹¹⁰ In many ways literary and cultural theory meld into one another as the significations and implications of one have necessary implications for the other. This is clearly understood by Lowell Edmunds and expounded by Terry Eagleton. See Edmunds, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Roman Poetry* and Eagleton, *After Theory*.

¹¹¹ Allen, *Intertextuality*, 134, 137ff.

Gynocritics such as Gilbert and Gubar¹¹² argued that the canon of significant texts¹¹³ to which the anxiety-ridden author appealed was a firmly male canon. The forces of society, particularly patriarchalism, accounted for much of the external influence on intertextual production. To study influence in intertextuality was to engage in a study of a text's social context. To offer a new 'reading', drawing on a different set of texts, was an ideological and political task. In the case of Gilbert and Gubar, this was a task which drew upon the insights of feminism and read women's roles 'against the grain'. In this study I will attempt to read the New Testament from the ideological (theological) location not of feminism, but of a specific 20th century, western, Christian politics. The alternative textual canon will therefore include texts not typically used in biblical exegesis. Central to these will be John Howard Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus*, an important text for the radical discipleship movement and regularly cited by Christian pacifists and peacemakers.¹¹⁴

By way of justification for this approach I suggest that the insights of intertextuality as productivity within a cultural and ideological context do contribute towards meaningful interpretation. In this, ideology is understood in a broad sense, pertaining to the sets of beliefs, influences, norms and ambitions which find their particularity in a specific production, be it book, painting, musical composition, speech or interpretation. This production may be the result of an individual or a collection of individuals and the ideological influences may be vast and varied. Yet ideology as an object of study can only be talked about clearly in its particularity. We can only talk of ideological and cultural influences and locations when we are dealing with a particular text. In this sense ideology and cultural study is a kind of intertextuality, one in which the text(s) under examination are brought into relationship with the ideological and cultural texts recognised as relevant by a reader who is influenced by ideological, political and cultural concerns. It is beyond the scope of this study to engage in a comprehensive description of the difficulties inherent in defining ideology.¹¹⁵ However, in turning to biblical text(s) themselves, I will attempt to situate my reading within the rhetorical framework of western Christian social ethics (particularly the theology and rhetorics of John Howard Yoder).

¹¹² Ibid., 145ff.

¹¹³ Again I use the term 'canon' in a loose sense. The boundaries of the literary canon even more than the biblical canon are not set in stone. Nevertheless certain critical schools do return regularly to a relatively fixed corpus of texts. As Terry Eagleton hints in *After Theory* Jane Austen is more central to literary criticism than Jeffrey Archer.

¹¹⁴ Stanley Hauerwas is perhaps the most well-known publicist of Yoder's work. See "Why the Politics of Jesus is not a Classic" in Stanley Hauerwas, *A Better Hope: resources for a church confronting capitalism, democracy, and postmodernity*. (Ada, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2000).

¹¹⁵ For this, see a very helpful survey in Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction (New and Updated Edition)*.

For a Christian religious text like Luke's¹¹⁶ gospel, ideology will need to be expressed, in part, in the language of theology. My intertextual approach will attempt to be as clear as possible about the theological framework given by the religious, scholarly, and interpretive communities to which I belong. The choice of a text by John Howard Yoder as a theological guidepost for approaching Luke is no accident, and its influence upon the faith and scholarly communities from which I am formed is important. For western Christians grappling with pacifism and the call to peacemaking Yoder's work is of near canonical status.

This study will revolve around, have as its 'sovereign notion',¹¹⁷ an understanding of intertextuality as an ideological and culturally-located generation of texts out of other texts. I am interested in both the way New Testament texts are intertextual in their context, but also how they form part of an intertextuality for reading today. Interpretation, the construction of readings and therefore intertextuality, is like the work of Borges' 'librarian of Babel' who forms new books by searching for and gathering other books from the shelves.¹¹⁸ Knowing something about the library and the librarian is central then to understanding just how she chooses these books. This will not 'explain it all', however, as the books themselves link to other books beyond those initially identified by the reader. An intertextual approach to the text allows that meaning emerges in the construction of a reading; a reading which is located between the influenced reader and the intertextual text.

¹¹⁶ Throughout this text I use the terms 'Luke's gospel and the 'third gospel' interchangeably. 'Luke' is generally used in a titular rather than historical sense.

¹¹⁷ Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, 12.

¹¹⁸ I find the metaphor of the librarian more helpful than the idea of an intertextual space, or quilt of woven meaning in which one text is a fragment linked to all other texts. If a static representation of intertextual space is needed I imagine a multi-dimensional network of nodes. The production of new nodes are linked to other, existing nodes. However, intertextuality is most helpfully understood as an adverb, a way of action. Thus my affinity with Borge's librarian and her activity.

2 Intertextuality in New Testament Studies

We have lit our counter-fires. It is too late to avoid a Holocaust. But perhaps we can still “take sides with the mothers of the children”¹

2.1 Introduction

New Testament study has always been a textual affair. Whether the text(s) of the New Testament have been used to serve the needs of history, theology, politics or ethics, all New Testament scholarship revolves around a set of writings and the readings of these writings. The relative authority, historicity and interpretive applicability of particular texts may well be disputed, as indeed are the questions that are asked of and around these texts, but the questions are nevertheless asked of texts. It follows then, that if all texts are regarded as intertextual constructions, then this too is true for the texts of the New Testament. Insofar as New Testament scholarship is textual, as explained in chapter 1, it is also intertextual.

Since the relatively recent advent of the term, ‘intertextuality’ as an organising principle has been appropriated by many branches of New Testament study. These have included both the historically-directed critics, who see intertextuality as a theoretical justification for source, form and redaction criticism, and those hermeneuts who seek to understand how the New Testament texts-in-context interact with their readers-in-context. The breadth of use has meant that the word ‘intertextuality’ has become shorthand for any perceived connection between texts. In this chapter I will survey several significant uses of intertextuality as a methodological locus in New Testament study. I will then seek to give some account of the methodological and epistemological frameworks in which the term is understood. This survey is intentionally brief, highlighting primarily the broad contentions between the scholarly appropriations of ‘intertextuality’ in New Testament studies. The literary background of the term covered in chapter 1, particularly intertextuality’s function in poststructuralism, serves as epistemological background for this exploration.

One of the key methodological findings of this chapter is that the concept of intertextuality has been

¹ Timothy Beal and Tod Linafelt, “Sifting for Cinders: Strange Fires in Leviticus 10:1-5,” *Semeia* 69/70 (1995): 30.

largely missing in rhetorical,² intercultural and ideological criticism of the New Testament. With the feminist literary critics Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar,³ and the socio-rhetorical New Testament critic Vernon Robbins,⁴ I suggest that the study of intertextuality necessarily leads to an engagement with approaches that focus on readers and reading communities. The inverse of this is also true. I argue that these broader critical approaches are, in practice, thoroughly textual and deal with particular productions in order to make claims about the social and rhetorical function of writing. This being the case, rhetorical, cultural and ideological approaches rely on texts and, also then, on intertextual exploration. The benefits of a working relationship between intertextuality and ideological-rhetorical criticism⁵ are reciprocal. Ideological critique will be richer for examining the intertextual relationships that emerge from texts and their readings. Intertextual study will be richer for understanding itself not as some disembodied ‘library of ideas’ but as an ‘embodied’ production within an ideological and cultural space. New Testament study itself is constantly occupied with questions of text and context. An ongoing study of intertextuality and its relationship to ‘socio-rhetorical’ criticism⁶ is an attempt to resist the fragmentation and reductionism of a too narrowly-focused critical method. The resistance to this fragmentation demonstrated by Robbins is compelling, and in this study I seek to situate my work in concert with this resistance.⁷

² By ‘rhetorical’ I do not mean the study of ancient rhetorical form as such. While insights about the relationship of the New Testament to the formality of Hellenistic literary rhetorics can be illuminating, the rhetorics of a text are not limited to a set of structural rules. Rather, I suggest with Schüssler Fiorenza that the rhetorical function of a text involves all of its persuasive elements. Rhetorical study seeks to uncover as much of this as possible, entailing an close examination of the ideological location of the text and its reader. See Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic*.

³ Cited in Allen, *Intertextuality*, 145ff.

⁴ See Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, society and ideology* (London/New York: Routledge, 1996) and *Exploring the Texture of Texts* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1996).

⁵ Finding a clear term for the criticism which seeks to account for the location of the text and its reader is problematic. To call such a criticism ideological implies a pejorative mood against the subject of the criticism. To call it cultural or sociological each have their weaknesses, particularly missing a sense of the persuasive nature of discourse. Rhetorical criticism is most clear perhaps, but can be confused by formal rhetorical studies. I will tend to use the terms ideological or rhetorical criticism to describe an analysis of the persuasive function and location of a text and its reader. There are times, however, where cultural, political social criticism may be used when broader factors are to be highlighted. The inadequacy of these terms is noted by Vincent Wimbush and other contributors to the Institute for Signifying Scriptures. For example, in his introductory remarks uses the conglomerates “social-cultural-critical-interpretive”, “socio-religious-political”, and “academic-intellectual-political” as a means of naming the aspect of the roughly bounded milieu under investigation. I avoid these conglomerate terms when possible, but from time to time they are used to underscore the overlap between the often separated critical fields. See Vincent Wimbush (ed), *Theorizing Scriptures: New Critical Orientations to a Cultural Phenomenon* (New Brunswick/London: Rutgers, 2008), 1.

⁶ Here I appropriate Robbins’ umbrella term for a remarkably wide range of interpretive approaches.

⁷ This study relies heavily on Robbins’ work, particularly his insights about the way that intertextuality as originally coined by Kristeva necessarily led to a broader cultural and ideological criticism. Disappointingly, however, Robbins’ method puts his careful analysis plainly at the service of a historiographic concern with the ancient world. Robbins’ socio-rhetorical strategy, powerful though it is, is almost solely consumed with uncovering the ancient world of the text. See Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, society and ideology*, 142-143, for conclusions about intertextuality and socio-rhetorical criticism. Pages 240ff outline the role that Robbins’ work plays at the service of a 1st century historiography.

2.2 Intertextuality and historical questions

The first school of approaches to the New Testament in which the term intertextuality has been used is in historical-critical scholarship. In these approaches intertextuality is used to examine textual quotations and ancient cultural allusions in order to ask questions about the historical origins (formation) of the text and the historical and social-scientific context in which the text was produced. The onus of this work has been to construct historical images of the characters of the New Testament or sociological/anthropological constructs of the historical context in which the New Testament was written. The purpose of these approaches is often to give historical reasons to explain textual and narrative characteristics of the canonical writings. Intertextuality enters into this exploration as appeal is made beyond the text to other historical discoveries, usually other writings. Intertextual information is found in the quotations and allusions of the text itself, or in the ‘cultural intertexts’ which inform the text’s social and historical location.

The methodological use of intertextuality in these historical approaches is broadly similar. They revolve around the questions about which intertexts may be justifiably used to inform a historical (re)construction.⁸ It is worth noting here that this kind of intertextuality is opposed by Julia Kristeva. “Kristeva is adamant that intertextuality is distinct and does not elide/compete with influence or sources, not by imitation nor by quotation. In fact, so keen is she to avoid the reduction of intertextuality to the traditional notions of influence, source-study and simple ‘context’ that, for these very reasons, she introduced the term ‘transposition’”.⁹ Nevertheless, as has been argued in chapter 1, historical applications form a necessary part of a broad appropriation of intertextuality. This is particularly true of fields which deal with ancient historical texts. Warren Carter’s work on ‘cultural’ intertexts and the fourth gospel is a helpful example of bringing contextual ‘intertexts’ into conversation with biblical texts.

2.3 Cultural intertexts, Warren Carter and John’s gospel

Warren Carter’s *John and Empire: Initial Explorations* is a comprehensive, historically-analytic study which makes use of intertexts as a means of conceptualising the function of the fourth gospel

⁸ Or to give a historical ‘account’ of the text itself. A recent collection of essays reliant on this idea of intertextuality can be found in Cilliers Breytenbach, Johan C. Thom, and Jeremy Punt (eds), *The New Testament Interpreted: Essays in Honour of Bernard C. Latagan* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006), Part Three. These essays underscore the idea that, while the term intertextuality is relatively recent, the explicit practice of intertextual construction is ancient.

⁹ See Jill Schostak on Kristeva in Jill Schostak, “[Ad]dressing Methodologies. Tracing the Self In Significant Slips: Shadow Dancing. Volume 2, Addendum”.

in the historical context of a Roman-dominated Mediterranean city, presumably Ephesus.¹⁰ Carter's thesis is that John's gospel maintains a 'rhetoric of distance' against the Roman imperial rule, striving to describe the Jesus narrative over and against Roman myth and imperial symbolism. Suspicious of *adversus Judaeos* rhetorical accounts of John's gospel, Carter argues that on questions of authority, plot structure,¹¹ religious titles and the characteristics of religious leaders, the gospel is framed in superior reference to its Roman equivalents. This is not to say that the historical explanatory framework of *adversus Judaeos* should be replaced by *adversus Romanos*. Carter's analysis is notably subtle and he rather posits a guarded 'rhetoric of distance' against the Romans which he suggests is a framework for the gospel. Carter holds that the language and symbols of the gospel sit in contrast to the far stronger anti-Roman rhetoric of Revelation. John's gospel is suspicious of Roman-dominated society but has not yet reached the polemical status of Revelation. For Carter the term 'rhetoric of distance' attempts to capture his more nuanced position.

Carter's understanding of 'intertexts' is methodologically significant. Both 'text' and 'intertext' refer not only to written productions (narratives, inscriptions and so on) but also to 'cultural intertexts'.¹² These cultural intertexts are contextual constructions communicating social norms, historical events and mythological symbols. For example, in reference to the various 'images and titles' used for Jesus in the gospel, Carter suggests that the use of titles in antiquity evoke "traditions and intertexts", these titles being "ciphers for larger complexities of understanding".¹³ Titles carry a significance in John's gospel that can only be understood by tracking and tracing the intertexts that they evoke. When Jesus is described as "Son of Man", this draws the text into a relationship with Daniel 7 and 1 Enoch 37-71.¹⁴ If Daniel and 1 Enoch are regarded as having religious and rhetorical authority for the readers of John's gospel, then Jesus is linked to the authority given the "Son of Man" in these intertexts, in this case the authority to cast judgement. Here Carter makes reference to explicitly inscribed intertexts, yet cultural intertexts such as the Roman understanding of God (θεός)¹⁵ are also utilised. Carter's method does not rely on a single specific intertextual reference. Instead a network of references is made between the body of texts and the scholarship surrounding those texts. This network is crystallised into a particular image or symbolic representation of a

¹⁰ Warren Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations*, ix.

¹¹ The plot of John's gospel is compared to Aristotle. On the surface mention of 'plot' suggests a primarily literary analysis, however Carter is examining literature at the service of his historical project. See also Richard Hays, below and Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations*, 146, 170.

¹² A term first used introduced early in Carter's methodology. Ibid., 10.

¹³ Ibid., 176-177.

¹⁴ Ibid., 183-184.

¹⁵ Carter's emphasis on the Greek Ibid., 197.

historically-located social norm.

The boundaries of Carter's use of intertexts, particularly cultural intertexts, are blurry and Carter does not suggest that these intertextual connections are 'intended' by the author of the gospel or by Jesus,¹⁶ nor that they account for John's composition in a source-critical fashion. Intertextual use, however, is at the service of Carter's aim to account for the rhetorical construction of the gospel of John within its historically-constructed context. For Carter, intertextuality is a tool at the service of historical inquiry.

Carter's historical method is socio-political,¹⁷ but his hermeneutical method in this regard remains unclear. His central purpose appears to be to demonstrate that the ancient readers of the gospel of John (as followers of Jesus) were called to be guarded against and distance themselves from the Roman Empire. How this interpretation affects Carter's readers as 21st century followers of Jesus is not made explicit. Implicit, however, is the suggestion that if contemporary followers of Jesus wish to be faithful to him, or at least to the construction of Jesus in the gospel of John, then they too should be suspicious of myths and symbols which look similar to those of the Roman Empire. If this hermeneutic can be drawn from Carter's work, it is certainly justifiable. I would suggest, however, that part of the interpretive task of New Testament scholarship is to make certain implicit insights explicit. Carter, a male intellectual working in the midst of a North American university,¹⁸ will bear some of the marks of that context. Perhaps he sits in the midst of believers and scholars trying to make sense of what Christian faith looks like in the midst of imperial forces, giving rise to his interest in John's gospel in relation to Empire. This is not to suggest, of course, that there was no 'rhetoric of distancing' occurring in John's gospel; Carter argues persuasively on this point. Yet the question remains, 'Why the interest in John and Empire at all?'¹⁹

Naming some potential ideological and theological motivations in Carter's work is not intended to criticise it as such. Carter's method and conclusions are compelling. I seek here rather to highlight

¹⁶ Carter appropriates Hays' term 'echoes'. See for example Ibid., 184, 195-196.

¹⁷ See, for example, his analysis of Roman political power in Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Socio-Political and Religious Reading* (London/New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 19.

¹⁸ At the time of writing, Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University.

¹⁹ Interestingly, in other works of Carter's his ideological location is more explicitly acknowledged. See, for example Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Socio-Political and Religious Reading*, xvii-xix. The sister work to *John and Empire*, *Matthew and Empire* is also sparse in naming its ideological situation. This is a remarkable oversight in such a politically charged work, even if the apparent political concerns are ancient. See Warren Carter, *Matthew and Empire: Initial Explorations* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 2001).

that an awareness of interpretive location has a bearing upon interpretive method and conclusions. If John's gospel is to be brought into conversation with 'cultural intertexts' in order to understand the social *realia* surrounding its ancient production, the 'cultural intertexts' of the modern interpreter should be acknowledged, however briefly. For if writing is intertextual, so too is reading.

Warren Carter's historically-focussed work introduces ancient contextual concerns into an intertextually aware interpretative method. Intertextuality as such is not, however, explored by Carter at length. For Carter, intertextual reading is one historical tool among many. A more lengthy exploration of intertextuality in New Testament study is offered by Richard Hays. While, ultimately, Hays' application of intertextuality is rather conservative, he nevertheless explores the broader possibilities of the concept. In particular, Hays situates intertextuality within a more general conversation about the aims and possible conclusions of biblical interpretation. It is Hays' questions about intertextuality in the context of a 'meta-hermeneutical' conversation which are most relevant to this study.

2.4 Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul

Richard Hays' *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* is a seminal work²⁰ of New Testament scholarship making use of the rubric of intertextuality. Surveying the works of Kristeva, Barthes, Bloom and Hollander²¹ Hays' final interpretive implementation is, perhaps inevitably, a limited kind of intertextual reading. Hays acknowledges that the "discussion... of intertextuality among literary critics has not been confined to the study of how writers cite and allude to specifically identifiable textual precursors. Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes have been influential voices defining intertextuality as the study of the semiotic matrix within which a text's acts of signification occur."²² Nevertheless Hays continues, "without denying the value or intrinsic interest of such investigations, I propose instead to discuss the phenomenon of intertextuality in Paul's letters in a more limited

²⁰ Hays' work is regularly cited and used, most overtly in the parallel (but subsequent) study of Kenneth Litwak. Litwak's 'title mimicry' is an interesting example of Genette's paratextuality reaching outside a particular text. See chapter 1 above and Kenneth Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts: Telling the History of God's People Intertextually* (London/New York: T & T Clark, 2005).

²¹ Citing, allusion and echoes can be subversive and twist the original meaning (parody, for example) but can also be less of a struggle and more of an honouring of those who have gone before. Here Hays stands with Hollander against the neurotic 'Oedipal' approach of Bloom, and in contrast to so much of Genette's understanding of intertextuality (page 19ff).

²² Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 15.

sense, focusing on his actual citations and allusions to specific texts.”²³ Specifically Hays is firstly interested in “citations and allusions” of Paul’s Scripture in Paul’s writing. This Scripture is usually recognised as the Septuagintal form of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible.

As is typical with much New Testament scholarship, Hays is far more comfortable dealing with pretextual, precursor and antecedent influences on the New Testament than in accounting for how texts function in wider diachronic networks of signification. This has been a dominant practice of a guild focussed on ancient texts and their contexts.²⁴ By and large, New Testament theologians have left post-textual matters to systematic theologians, though this tendency is being challenged by ideological, cultural and rhetorical critics. While Hays does have a broad appreciation of the “hermeneutical event”,²⁵ the implication remains that Paul’s intentionality, if it can be determined, sits at the top of the hermeneutical hierarchy.²⁶ Hays rightly claims that understanding Paul’s theology necessarily involves understanding Paul’s hermeneutic; his understanding of interpretation.²⁷ What is more difficult (and more fundamental), however, is to question the extent in which the reader can access Paul’s theology at all. In what ways does the theology of the reader shadow and shape the theology of Paul? To reiterate my perspective on intentionality: I do not claim that Paul had no (theological) intention in writing, but rather that accessing this intentionality with any degree of certainty is irreducibly problematic. The ‘intention of Paul’ in New Testament study is a construction made intertextually out of the text, its ancient precursors and the post-textual history of application and interpretation. Hays expertly examines the first two of these categories but is fleeting in his treatment of the third.

Within the scope of Hays’ method the concept of textual “echoes” are a valuable insight. In response to scholarship which has primarily dealt with explicit citations or allusions that are

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ For a comprehensive overview see Stephen Neill and NT Wright, *The interpretation of the New Testament 1861-1986. (Second edition)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

²⁵ Richard. B Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 26-27.

²⁶ Hays’ analysis of the five possible locations of the “hermeneutical event” is cogent and concise. He rightly contends that all locations can (should?) contribute to the act of interpretation. Missing, however, is Hays’ particular weighting of each location. The criticism of George Aichele and Gary Phillips may, at times be levelled at Hays: “When biblical scholars attempt to explain phenomena like allusion, citation, and allegorical interpretation as forms of intertextuality, what they are really concerned with is agency and influence. Typically they have in mind historicist models of agency as a way to account for “influence.”” See George Aichele and Gary Phillips, “Introduction: Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis,” *Semeia* 69/70 (1995): 11-12.

²⁷ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 10ff.

signalled by explicit key phrases,²⁸ Hays rightly argues that to “identify allusions is only the beginning of an interpretive process”.²⁹ Where there is no explicit referencing mark, one text may yet connect intertextually to a precursor. Many of Hays’ examples are literal, unmarked phrases though these connections may also be thematic (for example, forty days in the wilderness compared to forty days on the mountain, Luke 4:2 and Exodus 24:18), or seen in terms of imagery (for example the bread in the wilderness (ἄρτος-ἄρτω) alluding to the Exodus experience, Luke 4:3-4 and Exodus 16:8ff). An intertextual echo functions as a “diachronic trope”,³⁰ a *metalepsis*³¹ around which interpretation is shaped. Phil 1:19 echoes Job 13:16³² and Hays goes to some length demonstrating how the theology of Phil 1 (and perhaps the whole epistle) should thus be understood in the light of the Job narrative. This particular intertextual connection is, for Hays, a “faint echo”³³ yet it contributes to Hays’ assumption/conclusion that “Paul’s citations of Scripture often function not as proofs but as tropes... [generating]... new meanings by linking the earlier text (Scripture) to the later (Paul’s discourse).”³⁴

For Hays, intertextuality is a way of understanding text and textual interrelationships that have consequences, particularly theological consequences. His general thesis is that the Pauline writings in the New Testament use Scripture in a way which is far more “ecclesiocentric” than the usual “christocentric” understandings.³⁵ While Paul, of course, has a highly developed Christology and his understanding and experience of Jesus may well be central to his theology, Paul’s use of Scripture in his writings is focused on the self-understanding and formation of the communities of faith to which he writes; particularly their formation as eschatological communities, sharing in the promises and election originally given to Israel.³⁶ Hays’ intertextual reading of Romans is an especially strong challenge to (mis)interpretations which have exaggerated the discontinuity between the role of Christians and Jews in God’s purposes.³⁷ Instead he contends (rightly) that the way Paul uses Scripture in the letter to the Romans highlights the continuity of God’s salvific promises to Israel and the fact that Gentiles can now share in it. Texts which are critical of Israel and Jewish ideas³⁸

²⁸ For example: ἀναπτύξας τὸ βιβλίον εὗρεν τὸν τόπον οὗ ἦν γεγραμμένον in Luke 4:17. Also, more typically, γέγραπται signalling in 4:4 and elsewhere.

²⁹ Ibid., 17.

³⁰ Ibid., 30ff.

³¹ Referencing Hollander Ibid., 20ff.

³² Ibid., 21.

³³ Ibid., 24.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid., 84ff.

³⁶ Ibid., 168.

³⁷ See summary of scholarship in Ibid., 7-8.

³⁸ For example, Romans 10:5-10 - see discussion in Ibid., 77-83.

function to “intensify the paradox of Israel’s unbelief”.³⁹ This, however, is not a denial of God’s promise to Israel and their continued, though modified, election.

It is at the point of Hays’ thesis concerning the relationship between Christians and Jews that his limited intertextuality is most obviously wanting. The historical calamity of the *Shoah* and the breadth of the 20th century (inter)texts that emerged from it are given little voice in Hays’ reading of Paul. The suffering of Jews in recent history overshadows all western Christian scholarship dealing with a theological understanding of Israel in God’s promises.⁴⁰ For a proper consideration of the holocaust to be largely missing from Hays’ work exhibits the limits of his intertextual approach.

A precursor-focused, pretextually-confined intertextuality is incapable of naming the shadows of history which loom large over the biblical texts. Nevertheless, even in Hays’ work, these historical post-texts of Paul nudge their way in to scholarship. Augustine, Luther and Barth all influence Hays’ work. Notably, in Hays’ concluding pages, reference is made to a student grappling with Bonhoeffer’s appropriation of 2 Tim 4:21. In this Bonhoeffer ‘hears’ God’s will in the biblical text and interprets it as partial warrant for his return to Germany in 1939.⁴¹ The intertextual connections here are rich and, despite Hays’ stated method, overtly post-textual. The explicit intertexts of Hays evidently include the Pauline corpus, the text of 2 Timothy, the Scripture of Paul, a letter to him from a student and Bonhoeffer’s meditations recorded in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Meditating on the Word*. As Kristeva claimed/prophesied, intertextuality reaches beyond sources, precursors and influences. This is more than amply evident in Hays’ work and, indeed, for New Testament scholarship more generally.

To sum up, in *Echoes of Scripture* Richard Hays pursues a very limited application of intertextuality. His explicit use of the term is restricted to Paul and [Hays’ reconstruction of] Paul’s

³⁹ Ibid., 83.

⁴⁰ Compared with Timothy Beal and Tod Linafelt who are clear about the role of the Holocaust in their reading of Leviticus. In truth the holocaust overshadows all western New Testament study of the past 70 years. The complex and tightly bound connections between the history of 20th century Jewish experience in Europe and the questions of New Testament scholarship are highlighted by George Aichele and Gary Phillips. “For example, in the case of an explicitly anti-Pharisaic text such as Matthew’s Gospel, intertextuality has important ramifications for contemporary readers of the gospel concerned about the ethics of reading a violent biblical text which portrays Jews as “hypocrites,” as “killers of children”—especially so in this the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of the child-death camps in Nazi Germany.” George Aichele and Gary Phillips, “Introduction: Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis,” 12-13. See also Timothy Beal and Tod Linafelt, “Sifting for Cinders: Strange Fires in Leviticus 10:1-5,” *Semeia* 69/70 (1995).

⁴¹ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 178-179.

Scripture. In his final chapter, however, he turns to a more contemporary conversation, entering into dialogue with a number of different interpretations and interpretive factors.⁴² These conversations are intertextual conversations, though Hays does not name them as such. Surveying Pauline and literary scholarship from Bultmann to Herbert Marks,⁴³ Hays engages texts which have been shaped by the echoes of Pauline discourse, which are in turn shaped by the echoes of Paul's scripture. In response to Hays, does not an intertextual reading of the New Testament, or a part thereof, require attendance to post-textual connections? Are not the echoes of Paul's scripture and Paul's discourse heard in the same cave as Hays' scripture and Hays' discourse? The application of intertextual insights to Luke's gospel in chapter 3 of this study is far more limited in scope than Hays. Nevertheless, it will seek to make some explicit connections between the third gospel and the post-texts of the Christian canon. Not all voices may be listened to at the same time as the volume of the echoes in the cave would be deafening. Yet it is possible to listen for particular voices and to do so explicitly is a declaredly rhetorical exercise. A number of rhetorical approaches which are explicit in their intertextuality are explored below.

2.5 *Semeia* 69/70: Intertextuality and the Bible.

A significant collection of intertextual study and biblical scholarship was brought together in the Society of Biblical Literature's *Semeia* 69/70 publication of 1995. The contributions vary in style, methodological content and textual focus yet, taken together, the articles represent a significant shift in the understanding of intertextuality in biblical scholarship. From literary-inclined scholars (like Robert Brawley) to the thoroughly poststructural readers (like Roland Boer), the contributors to *Semeia* 69/70 introduce intertextual conversations between biblical texts and a wide range of post-texts. These include the *Terminator* movies, *Star Trek (The Next Generation)* television series and the signifying events of the World War II Jewish holocaust. For those scholars interested in the New Testament specifically, pretextual concerns remain part of the conversation.⁴⁴ For some contributors these pretexts retain their methodological normativity. Nevertheless, the restriction of intertextuality to the searching for sources and intentional authorial quotation is resisted.⁴⁵ In these essays

⁴² Ibid., 154-192.

⁴³ Ibid., 158ff.

⁴⁴ See, for example Brawley's intertextual use of 'Scripture', particularly Psalms and Isaiah in his work on Luke in Robert Brawley, "Resistance to the Carnivalization of Jesus: Scripture in the Lukan Passion Narrative," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995).

⁴⁵ See introduction to this edition of *Semeia* for a list of New Testament scholars who have (mis)used intertextuality in George Aichele and Gary Phillips, "Introduction: Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis," 7.

interpretation is clearly located in and around a broad range of intertextual connections.⁴⁶

2.5.1 Which intertexts?

A number of salient aspects of the nature of intertextuality are highlighted in the collection of articles and essays from *Semeia* 69/70. The first of these is the problematic question of deciding precisely what qualifies as a ‘valid’ intertextual connection. Which texts may justifiably be brought into conversation with the texts of the New Testament? Roland Boer⁴⁷ and Susan Lochrie Graham⁴⁸ somewhat provocatively suggest connections between the thematic and theological/mythic elements of the Jesus narratives and popular media. Boer’s reading of the first two *Terminator* movies in which Arnold Schwarzenegger plays the central villain/hero shows the enormous potentiality for intertextual connections.⁴⁹ For western culture, steeped as it is in the narratives of scripture, biblical intertexts are everywhere (and nowhere). As an analysis of New Testament texts Boer’s article is somewhat sparse; the focus is largely on the cinematic post-texts which Boer suggests are just as significant for westerners trying to understand the New Testament. Implied in his article is the suggestion that post-*Terminator* Americans (and Australians) cannot understand Jesus without bringing to bear the mythic characteristics of redemption and (violent) salvation which are expressed in the *Terminator* movies. While this is no doubt the case, this does not necessarily preclude a tension between the myths of later hero/chosen-one intertexts (from *Superman* to Neo in *The Matrix* movie trilogy) and the mythic implications of the New Testament Jesus narratives. The most shuddering incongruity between these texts is the stark difference between salvation on a cross and salvation down the barrel of a gun. Boer fails to emphasise the importance of intertextual relationships which sit in opposition to each other; and can be recognised more clearly because of their opposition. Bringing the *Terminator* movies into conversation with the New Testament fits within a broad understanding of intertextuality. The intertextual conversation should, however, ‘talk’ as much about the incongruities between the texts as it does about the similarities.

⁴⁶ Intertextual awareness undermines the ground on which many New Testament scholars have stood. For example on matters of exegesis and eisegesis Aichele and Phillips contend that, “from an intertextual perspective, however, the traditional opposition between exegesis and eisegesis proves unstable; intertextuality displaces the reductive binary opposition of exegesis/eisegesis with “intergenesis,” the term that Gary Phillips proposes for reading that is the act of rewriting or inserting texts within some more or less established network. Meaning does not lie “inside” texts but rather in the space “between” texts.” Ibid., 14.

⁴⁷ Roland Boer, “Christological Slippage and Ideological Structures in Schwarzenegger’s Terminator,” *Semeia* 69/70 (1995).

⁴⁸ Susan Lochrie Graham, “Intertextual Trekking: Visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon ‘The Next Generation’,” *Semeia* 69/70 (1995).

⁴⁹ Boer, “Christological Slippage and Ideological Structures in Schwarzenegger’s Terminator,” 165ff.

Where Boer is most illuminating is in his assertion that Arnold Schwarzenegger as a historical and political construct cannot be divorced from the characters played by Arnold Schwarzenegger, the actor.⁵⁰ Schwarzenegger's political actions, like his support for George (H.W.) Bush and his eventual election to office rely, in part, on his 'fictive' image. This image is constructed largely around the often reluctant and personable, but brutal when necessary, characters of his movies.⁵¹ For Boer, social and political narratives are texts, and these texts may be brought into conversation with the more traditionally recognised texts of literature, art and cinema. It is true that 'finished texts' (books, movies, paintings)⁵² are at times more simply categorised than the always shifting texts of political image, yet understanding intertextuality without considering the wider texts of culture and society ignores rich signification. The idea that only works (finished texts) can be considered 'texts' binds analysis to particular ideological perspectives. Boer's prescient work on Schwarzenegger foreshadows the emergence of the term 'Governator', which has now entered the popular lexicon. Narrative characters, even 'fictional' ones, are always intertextually bound to cultural characters.⁵³

2.5.2 Ideological location

A second helpful tendency of the *Semeia* 69/70 contributors is their willingness to outline their ideological location. There is no guarantee that these declarations are truthful, but this criticism may just as easily be levelled at the analysis itself. The helpfulness of declaring ideological location is that it introduces rhetorical and political questions into the conversation. Well-framed statements of ideology invite an ideological conversation, an essential element of analysis. For Boer to state his anti-capitalist position⁵⁴ raises a fresh set of questions concerning the signification of the New Testament, Arnold Schwarzenegger and American popular culture and politics within a capitalist-Marxist discourse. If Derrida works within a 'certain spirit of Marxism'⁵⁵ what kind of 'anti-

⁵⁰ Ibid., 176-177.

⁵¹ In addition to the *Terminator* series the movies *Raw Deal*, *Commando* and *Total Recall* are specifically cited and held in contrast to the 'kinder, gentler' image in *Kindergarten Cop*. Ibid., 183.

⁵² See Barthes (tr Stephen Heath), *Image, Music, Text*. A more comprehensive description of 'finished texts' include physically definable works such as books, inscriptions writings, visual art works, digital representations and so on. 'Unfinished texts', in contrast include more malleable constructs such as the 'political image of the Governor' or the 'character of the radical discipleship community in Australia'.

⁵³ Also seen in Lochrie Graham's broader intertext of *Star Trek* and Gene Rodenberry's antithesis to religious belief. Interestingly the word 'Schwarzenegger' is included in the dictionary of the Open Office word processing software on which this was typed. See Lochrie Graham, "Intertextual Trekking: Visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon 'The Next Generation'."

⁵⁴ Boer, "Christological Slippage and Ideological Structures in Schwarzenegger's *Terminator*," 189-190.

⁵⁵ See Derrida's thoroughly intertextual exploration of Marx and Shakespeare in Derrida (tr Peggy Kamuf), *Specters of Marx*.

capitalist' is Boer? A statement of ideological location neither 'explains away' a writing ("He just wrote this because he is a Marxist!") nor is it divorceable from the text itself. Boer's ultimate intention is finally even beyond him and certainly beyond the capabilities of historical inquiry. Nevertheless a conversation about cultural and political location is fruitful. Boer's work forms part of an ongoing discussion between those who attribute value or authority to New Testament texts, those who watch Hollywood movies and are steeped in western-American capitalist ideology, and those who resist the ubiquity of global capitalism. That these different ideological positions are co-located within an individual or a group makes the conversation an internal one. Yet I suggest that this internality makes the conversation more significant and critically appropriate.

The interpretive efforts explored in *Semeia* 69/70 are illuminating and display a willingness to go beyond 'traditional' uses of intertextuality in New Testament study. Nevertheless I maintain a certain reservation about the homogeneity or 'flatness' of significance in the intertextual connections described. This homogeneity is seen both in the choice of intertextual conversation partners and the relative authority each is afforded. While a connection between the New Testament and the *Terminator* movies is possible, plausible and somewhat illuminating, the intertextual volume cannot be said to be very 'loud'.⁵⁶ In Boer's *Terminator*-Jesus exploration⁵⁷ there are marked differences between the 'chosen one' of the Christian testament and the 'chosen ones' of the cinematic work. The rhetorical direction of Boer's comparison is not clear. It may be that he seeks to demonstrate these differences over and against those who would suggest an affinity between *Terminator*-justice and Jesus-justice. It may be that Boer's plan is to engage in a broader discussion of the Jesus-narrative and the *Terminator* movies within the intertextuality of western texts dealing with the 'chosen, liberating one'. Either option would resonate then with his intertextual appropriation. Yet, in this article at least, the question of how Boer's resistance to capitalism relates to the New Testament remains ambiguous. This leads to an ideological 'flatness' in which the preferred politics is left undeclared. In stark contrast, Timothy Beal and Tod Linafelt are far more explicit that their exploration of Leviticus is situated in the wake of, and steadfastly against, the forces of the holocaust and the poetry of burning.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ The 'volume' of an intertextual echo is borrowed from Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 30. See also Brawley, "Resistance to the Carnivalization of Jesus: Scripture in the Lukan Passion Narrative." and Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, society and ideology*.

⁵⁷ I declare my interest in Roland Boer. Though I have never met him he lives in my home town, has lectured at the college at which I studied and has been a part of the church to which I belong. Specters indeed!

⁵⁸ Beal and Linafelt, "Sifting for Cinders: Strange Fires in Leviticus 10:1-5."

Ideological flatness can also be recognised in the relative authority afforded particular texts within an intertextual relationship. Specifically the biblical text itself is often not explicitly afforded interpretive authority. The flattening of textual authority is not common to all *Semeia* 69/70 contributors but occurs often enough to bear mentioning.⁵⁹ It is most clearly characterised in William Doty's discussion of Robert Funk's contribution to the debate:

“Jesus as precursor” to such figures *interprets* differently: no longer as a figure transcendently originary but now as a link in a chain of eminent fictions whose endless networks of signifying quickly situate meanings beyond the official religious pales. Already Funk saw the importance of moving biblical criticism beyond theology, declaring that otherwise “the immediate prospects” of the discipline “are grim indeed”...One appears to be left with the choice ... of retiring to the monastic ghetto and perpetuating, in cloistered precincts, the now archaic tongue of the Christianized age, or of abandoning the tradition altogether in favor of a secular surrogate.”⁶⁰

Here Doty's position conflates historical interest (“originary”, “archaic”) with ideological/theological motivation (“transcendently”, “Christianized”) and rejects both interlinked factors in interpretation. This then underscores a relativising of the biblical text as simply another “eminent fiction”⁶¹, a flattening which leads to homogeneity in textual significance. Doty-Funk's conclusions may be criticised for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is a (trivial) truism that all texts are afforded authority in particular ways, whether this is acknowledged or not. The search for an ‘ideal’ interpretive location is deeply problematic. Secondly, the conflation of historical method with Christian motivation allows a rejection of both based on the failures of one. In this study I advocate a relativising (not rejection) of historical questions as the dominant factor in biblical interpretation. This, however, does not lead to a void in interpretive authority. A theological interest in Luke's gospel is advocated, not because it is ideologically-free but because it is declaredly so. Moreover the attempts to flatten interpretive authority are themselves a product of an ideological vantage point, and subject to a particular rhetorical approach to interpretation. Here this position is not

⁵⁹ Including Boer and Lochrie Graham above. Perhaps the flattened intertextuality which holds the New Testament to be no more significant than the Terminator movies accounts, in part, for Boer's avoidance of the radical discontinuities between these two texts.

⁶⁰ Doty referencing Funk in William Doty, “Imaginations at the End of an Era: Letters as Fictions,” *Semeia* 69/70 (1995): 85.

⁶¹ Fiction is used here in manner that is both pejorative and praised. I find a more helpful approach to fiction in Robert Macafee Brown, *Persuade us to Rejoice: The Liberating Power of Fiction* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox, 1992).

acknowledged,⁶² though, of course, an undeclared hierarchy of texts persists.

2.5.3 Phenomenology and scripture

A more subtle and self aware (but no less problematic) approach to religious texts is found in the work of the ISS (Institute of Signifying Scriptures) under the oversight of Vincent Wimbush. In the ISS a range of scholars are brought together to examine the “phenomenology of Scriptures.”⁶³ ‘Scriptures’ here are defined as the normative texts of particular world religions and the ISS undertakes analysis of the way in which these texts function within their religious and cultural contexts. Many of the explorations of the function of a religious text in particular religious/faith situations offer thought-provoking intercultural⁶⁴ insights. Brought together under the rubric of ‘signifying scriptures’, however, the phenomenological method tends to homogenise the categories with which it deals. To call Confucian holy texts ‘scriptures’⁶⁵ in the same breath as Semitic ‘scriptures’ is culturally implausible. Moreover the methodology of the ISS brings together radically different historical religious traditions and analyses them under the methodological-ideology of ‘world religions’.⁶⁶ This ideology may be justifiable in western liberal-arts faculties, but when ‘applied’ to religious traditions that have their historical roots in radically different cultural locations, a potential for unhelpful colonialism ensues. In intellectual discussion we may not want to entertain a hierarchy of scriptures, with one (the Bible) sitting above the others. And yet relativising any one authoritative hegemony immediately sees it replaced by another. In the case of Doty-Funk, fictive historicism; in the case of the ISS, a western phenomenological agenda.

2.5.3.1 Interculturality

In a similar vein, a short note about the term ‘interculturality’ is in order. This study will, in general, steer away from the term interculturality, preferring to talk about (inter)cultural location and cultural (political/social/ideological/theological) textuality. The resistance to this term is in response to its

⁶² This ideology becomes more clear in Funk’s later historical Jesus “Jesus seminar” work.

⁶³ See for example, Catherine Bell’s use in chapter 1. Interestingly both Bell and Wimbush himself use “scriptures” (quotation marks theirs) in a guarded way. See Catherine Bell, “Scriptures - Text and Then Some” and Vincent Wimbush, “Introduction, Textures Gestures, Power: Orientation in Radical Excavation” in Vincent Wimbush (ed) *Theorizing Scriptures* (New Brunswick/London: Rutgers, 2008), 3,15, 23.

⁶⁴ The term intercultural is at once helpful and problematic, see discussion below.

⁶⁵ Yan Shoucheng, “Signifying Scriptures in Confucianism,” in *Theorizing Scriptures*, 73ff.

⁶⁶ See Charles Long’s Foreword in *Theorizing Scriptures*, ixff. The universalising use of the terms ‘scripture’ and ‘religion’ is resisted strongly in many of the contributing articles. The methodological umbrella of ‘phenomenology’ is less often resisted. Catherine Bell, however, names the ambiguity inherent in using the term in a ‘re-orienting work’. See Bell’s preference for “textuality and comparison” in Bell, “Scriptures - Text and Then Some,” 23ff.

common usage. From Tolbert and Segovia⁶⁷ to Blount⁶⁸ the fascinating insights of global, usually subaltern and revolutionary interpretation too often become subsumed within a summarising epistemology that, in some way, relativises them. In Blount's interpretive scheme this is recognised as he surveys the subaltern readings of the New Testament from 'Solentiname', 'Negro Spiritual', and 'Black Church' perspectives. These perspectives, however, are placed then 'at the service' of renewing and challenging the dominant interpretive traditions.⁶⁹ Why, it must be asked, must these interpretive traditions be challenged and reshaped? Could they not be rejected and replaced? Segovia goes on to survey and reject the view of his Hispanic-American colleagues that (Judeo-Christian) scripture is a source of direction and strength for liberative projects. The grounds for his rejection are not clear. When intercultural study brings together insights about particular cultural norms and practices it is invaluable for biblical interpretation. When, however, its overarching methodology demands that each cultural conversant suppress the particularities, even the hierarchical particularities of their cultural location at the service of a 'taxonomy' of cultures, it is likely to be unproductive.⁷⁰ Galling as it may be for the scholarly class, forming a comprehensive model for understanding cultural location is to be resisted. Instead, a deeper understanding of the particularities of culturally and ideologically located interpretation is advocated.⁷¹ The literary concept of intertextuality, where new texts are constructed at the intersection of,⁷² or better still, *between* extant texts may be illuminating for intercultural study.

2.6 Towards a broad intertextual approach to the New Testament

Intertextuality is not some neutral literary mechanism but is rather at root a means of ideological and cultural expression and of social transformation.⁷³

⁶⁷ Mary Ann Tolbert and Fernando F. (eds) Segovia, *Reading from this Place, Vol. 1: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States*. See, especially, Segovia's summarising chapter.

⁶⁸ Brian Blount, *Cultural Interpretation: Reorientating New Testament Criticism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

⁶⁹ See discussion on Enrique Dussel and accompanying epistemological schema, *Ibid.*, 16ff.

⁷⁰ A different approach is being attempted in Britain and elsewhere under the banner 'Scriptural Reasoning' where Jewish, Christian and Muslim people come together to discuss their respective 'Scriptures' on their own terms. See Luke Bretherton, "A Postsecular Politics? Inter-faith Relations as a Civic Practice," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 79, no. 2 (2011): 363.

⁷¹ Here again I do not advocate an approach which leads to a bland equivalence of value in texts and cultures. Rather, I suggest that, if appreciating/understanding another culture is to be attempted, it must be done in order to best preserve its 'otherness'.

⁷² Kristeva's concerns about the metaphor of 'intersection' signifying static and fixed meaning are noted. I use intersection here in a temporary sense. An intersection, for the moment. If one prefers, Kristeva's 'surfaces' might be used, however the n-dimensionality of a metaphor is not of primary importance here. See Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*.

⁷³ George Aichele and Gary Phillips, "Introduction: Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis," 9.

The preceding examples of intertextuality in New Testament scholarship serve to underscore a number of important characteristics that are relevant to this study. These, combined with the insights from literary theory in chapter 1, delineate a particular framing of intertextuality, and have particular consequences for the application of intertextual insights to reading biblical texts. The significant characteristics include:

- Intertextuality as productivity: An intertextual reading goes beyond the static epistemological assertion that all texts exist in an intertextual fabric or tissue. Rather, it is the dynamic construction as it emerges in reading and writing that is of significance to this study.
- *Differed* meaning: Intertextual interpretations contribute to the growing connotative significance of the text. Each new intertextual production emerges out of, but is different from, the others.
- Resistant to the ‘totalitarianism’ of Reason: A poststructuralist appropriation of intertextuality inherits the movement’s incredulity to universal schemas and reductionist taxonomies. As such, echoes, allusions and resonances may be included in intertextual reading alongside literal quotation and historically-demonstrable interrelationships between texts. In New Testament study it is the work of Richard Hays which seminally opens the door to this broader intertextuality.
- Relativises the role of historical inquiry: As part of its resistance to the ‘totalitarianism’ of Reason, a poststructural intertextuality displaces historical method from the top of the hermeneutical hierarchy. Importantly, however, historical inquiry is not rejected in its entirety. It retains its role as an important source of intertextual texture.
- Authorial intentionality: In a similar way the proposed intertextuality rejects the pre-eminence of authorial intention in guiding interpretation. Again, it is not that authorial intention does not exist but rather that accessing this intention, especially for ancient texts, is

methodologically problematic.

- Social and cultural intertexts: The relativisation of historical method and authorial intention jeopardise traditional hermeneutical appeals to context as an aid in interpretation. In an intertextually-organised interpretation another way of accessing context can be found in social and cultural ‘intertexts’. In New Testament study these are most elegantly exemplified in Carter’s work on the gospels and Empire.
- Coeval and post-textual influence: A broad intertextual interpretation involves dealing with intertexts which arise at the same time, or after, the core text. For the text of the New Testament this post-textuality is vast and a critical aspect of interpretation is the choice of which post-texts are brought into conversation with the core text. I contend that this choice arises out of the ideological location of the reader and the rhetorical questions that motivate the reading.
- Resistance to the rejection of relative textual authority: The rejection of the (supreme) interpretive authority of texts for historical reasons does not necessarily lead to a rejection of all textual authority. Some texts and some readings are afforded more interpretive weight than others. This study advocates a declaration of ideological position rather than the pretence of interpretive neutrality. In this I depart in some degree from a poststructuralist understanding of intertextuality.

An ideologically-located reading of scripture shapes both the questions asked of the text and the way in which these questions are asked. In chapter 3 I explore John Howard Yoder’s reading of the third gospel in the light of Christian politics. The questions asked emerge directly from my interpretive location as a western Christian shaped by pacifist and radical-discipleship movements. The methodological bases for answering these questions are also ideologically framed. They include:

- Understanding intertextuality as a way of accessing ‘what the text means’ today by

exploring ‘what it meant’⁷⁴ to the implied audience of Luke’s gospel.⁷⁵ This is a divergent, connotative process which is given focus by attending to the relative ‘volume’ of intertextual voices that ‘speak to’ the text.⁷⁶ This interest explicitly concerns ‘what the text of the New Testament means’ for a western Christian who finds himself in a newly (re)discovered Christian pacifist (non)engagement with overt political authority.

- Exploring a particular post-textual intertextuality: This study falls most closely in line with the intertextual approaches exemplified in the 1995 *Semeia* 69/70 collection. These approaches tend to bring the text of the New Testament into conversation with a culturally or politically framed post-text. In chapter 3 I focus on the parts of Luke’s gospel discussed by John Howard Yoder in *The Politics of Jesus*.⁷⁷ This is of methodological concern for several reasons. First, Yoder’s structure helps to give shape to a new intertextual production (this study). Second, Yoder’s theological interest in Christian pacifism and the way in which the Church should relate to formal political institutions, particularly the State, is one that I share. Yoder’s ideological location on these matters is near my own. Third, I seek a reading which is politically and theologically generative for the concerns of western Christians grappling with the issues of Christian politics marked by Yoder. Conclusions about the inner workings of the Lukan text, the way in which Jewish and Hellenistic pretexts echo through Luke, and the manner in which the gospel functioned in the world of the ancient Mediterranean are all important for the task. Yet these technical concerns are only one aspect of the interpretive task I seek to explore here.⁷⁸ The rhetorical direction of this study is clearly at the service of those parts of the Church⁷⁹ which engage in social and political action to produce good and resist evil. In this I assume that the text of the New Testament, especially those parts of the third gospel cited by Yoder, can sustain the Church in this task.

⁷⁴ My reading approach is shaped by two of the five ‘hermeneutical events’ described by Hays in *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 26-27.

⁷⁵ The notion of implied audience is broader than simply ‘the audience that is implied by the isolated text’. Rather implied audience of any text is actually constructed intertextually from the text, the reader and the intertexts that are brought into conversation with the text. This understanding builds on the literary conventions of ‘implied audience’ which deal mainly with the implied audience as construction of the text in isolation. In this study I will explore what aspects of Luke’s gospel might have signified for an intertextually implied audience.

⁷⁶ I borrow this from Hays.

⁷⁷ John Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition).

⁷⁸ The intertextuality exemplified by Beal and Linafelt and their work on the holocaust-Leviticus relationship most closely prefigures the work I wish to undertake here. My approach differs, however, in that I am searching for a more textured theological politics than Beal and Linafelt. Their work to guard against another Holocaust burning is an important undertaking. In the name of liberative (Christian) politics, more than guarding is necessary.

⁷⁹ ‘Church’, here is used theologically. The phenomenology of the Church is as fragmented as the phenomenology of Scripture. See discussions on the Institute for Signifying Scriptures above.

3 Intertextuality, Yoder and Luke

At this one point there is no difference between the Jesus of *Historie* and the Christ of *Geschichte*, or between Christ as God and Jesus as Man, or between the religion of Jesus and the religion about Jesus (or between the Jesus of the canon and the Jesus of history). No such slicing can avoid his call to an ethic marked by the cross, a cross identified as the punishment of a man who threatens society by creating a new kind of community leading a radically new kind of life.¹

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will explore some of the implications of a broad understanding of intertextuality on John Howard Yoder's reading of Luke's gospel in *The Politics of Jesus*.² The exploration will be shaped by the structure of Yoder's reading of Luke and his central argument that the narrative of Jesus in the third gospel produces a demanding politics, or 'social ethic', for professing Christians.³ Yoder's reading clearly arises from his theological and ideological frame and my interpretive situation resonates strongly with it. In intertextual terms, Yoder's text becomes the primary post-text for my reading of Luke. The following discussion is directed by Yoder's, both in terms of specific textual and intertextual references, and in terms of the rhetorical purposes of the exercise. In line with New Testament scholarship more generally, the majority of pre-texts arise from the scripture⁴ of the Jewish people in the 1st century. At times coeval texts and post-texts are brought into the conversation. When this occurs it is usually signalled by Yoder explicitly, or has a strong resonance with Yoder's rhetorical project. For the most part my exploration does not posit a radically original

¹ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 53.

² Itself part of a wider intertextuality. Both with Yoder 'talking to himself' in the 2nd edition comments and also in conversation with Hays. See Ibid., 53-59. Indeed Yoder's fascinating response to Richard Hays' "reading" of his ethical work can be found in John Howard Yoder, "Epilogue: On Being Read by Richard Hays," in *To Hear the Word* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 207-216. Here Yoder circuitously distances himself from Hays' position by criticising Hays' reading of Hauerwas. Though the term may be unasked for, Yoder's rhetorical method, appealing to external discourse with ease, is thoroughly intertextual.

³ While Burrige's claim that it "is a genre mistake to look to Luke for a systematic treatment of Christian ethics while waiting for the Parousia" is probably justifiable, I agree with Yoder that a construction of a (social) ethic from the third Gospel is possible; particularly when read intertextually. Burrige does acknowledge that Luke contains "substantial amounts of ethical material, particularly about wealth and the poor, women and the marginalized, marriage and the family, peace and violence and how one is to relate to the state." Richard A. Burrige, *Imitating Jesus: An Inclusive Approach to New Testament Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 283. It is Yoder, however, who brings aspects of this material into a coherent ethic stemming from the New Testament witnesses to Jesus.

⁴ 'Scripture' is a term I borrow from Richard Hays. In general in this study I will use the Septuagint (LXX) as literal resonances are clearer. See Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*.

interpretation of the gospel. Rather, I seek to cast a slightly wider net of intertextual connections, allusions and echoes in order to enrich the ‘colour’ of a politically-focussed Christian interpretation.

3.1.1 Volume of intertextual ‘voices’: an adaptation of Hays’ intertextual criteria

In order to discern and arrange intertextual connections in a practical way the formation of a set of guiding criteria will be required. In this exploration I have chosen *The Politics of Jesus* as the primary post-text for particular ecclesiological and political reasons. This post-text will set the parameters and rhetorical direction of the study. To evaluate and arrange coeval texts and pre-texts of the third gospel I will borrow and adapt the set of intertextual criteria offered by Richard Hays. Hays’ original seven categories include: 1) the historical questions of textual availability, 2) the literal or syntactic similarities between the texts, 3) the recurrence of quotation or echo within the (Pauline) text, 4) coherence of the intertext within the ‘theme’ or argument of Paul, 5) the historical plausibility of Paul’s intent, 6) the recognition (or otherwise) of the intertextual connection in wider scholarship, and 7) the ‘satisfaction’ of the intertextual connection to Hays himself.⁵

Hays’ criteria clearly evidence his particular epistemological hierarchy (see chap 2 above). Nevertheless criteria 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7⁶ may be re-worked into a broader, poststructural application of intertextuality to the reading of the New Testament. In the study below I will draw upon these criteria, reshaped in the following way:

- Volume: The *volume* of an intertextual connection (or echo) becomes the overarching discerning criteria. I extend *volume* to include not only literal repetition and syntactical patterns, but also the thematic and narrative correlations between the texts and the demands of the ongoing rhetorical process.
- Recurrence: The *recurrence* of pre-texts in Luke (or by Yoder interpreting Luke) contribute to the overall volume of the intertextual voice.

⁵ Ibid., 29-31. See also Vernon K Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, society and ideology*, 102ff.

⁶ I avoid Hays’ criteria 1 and 5 not because of a rejection of historiography or historical method but rather the wedding of historiography to intentionality and thus interpretive value. I argue that historical method is too often placed at the service of authorial intent which, especially for ancient documents, is deeply problematic. The use of historical material to open rich intertext options is welcomed and evident in my use of the Septuagint LXX (including the Christian-protestant) apocrypha as a source. See Alfred Rahlfs (ed), *Septuaginta*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935). While my final questions are not historical in nature the study rests, in part, on historical insights.

- Themes: The *thematic* coherence between the narrative or poetry of Luke and its intertexts contribute similarly to the volume.
- Likewise the *voices of wider scholarship* give weight to the discernment of intertextual connections.⁷
- Hays' last 'catch all' criterion of *satisfaction* is both helpfully honest and, at the same time, unsatisfyingly vague. As I have already argued, the perceived *satisfaction* or otherwise of an intertextual connection is related to the ideological location and rhetorical project of the reader. I redefine *satisfaction* in these terms. While it is impossible to give a complete, 'objective'⁸ account of interpretive location, in this exercise I have named my preference for Yoder's theological starting point and a personal (communal) sympathy for his rhetorical project. In general it is this rhetorical project which undergirds perceived satisfaction. This in turn frames the more technical intertextual criteria noted above.

3.2 Reading Yoder, Reading Luke

3.2.1 Annunciations: Luke 1:51-53, 71, 73 and 3:9, 17

The first set of Lukan fragments appropriated by Yoder are sections of the announcements and prophecies which frame the roles of Jesus and John the Baptist in the first chapters of the gospel. Yoder's explicit quotations of Luke introduce an intratextual⁹ comparison between different elements of the narrative. These are followed here for the express purpose of underscoring Yoder's central thesis about the necessary socio-ethical implications of Luke's telling about Jesus. An intratextual, descriptive relationship is drawn between the middle section of the *Magnificat* (1:51-53), Zechariah's prophecy (1: 71 and 73, skipping the promise of God to the ancestors and the Abrahamic oath) and the later explanation of God's action by John (3:9, 17).¹⁰ Yoder's explanatory

⁷ Particularly the work of François Bovon, Luke T. Johnson and Joseph Fitzmyer.

⁸ To use the term 'objective' need not imply absolute objectivity. In general, however, I steer clear of its use to avoid confusion with more universalising senses. For a fuller discussion of objectivity and truth see Terry Eagleton, *After Theory*, 103ff.

⁹ I make the potentially counter-intuitive claim that conversations of an intertextual nature exist within a unified narrative. As readers deal with fragments or 'traces' of text the range of intertextual possibilities include other parts of the 'finished' work. Thus intratextuality is an aspect of intertextuality.

¹⁰ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 21-22.

intratextual arrangement highlights the ‘real’ social location of God’s action in the gospel of Luke. “The rich” (1:53) are linked intratextually with “our enemies” (1:74) who are then associated with the “tree that does not bear good fruit” (3:9). Awaiting these trees, and therefore by implication, awaiting the rich, is the “axe” (3:9) and the “unquenchable fire” (3:17).¹¹ Because the social implications of God’s action in Luke’s gospel have direct consequences for the rich, who presumably have greater social and economic power,¹² this social action may be described as having political consequences. In Yoder’s introductory ‘exegesis’¹³ the action of God is announced, prophesied, and brought into clarity by John the Baptist himself. It has clear implications for the everyday experience of ‘the people’ of the narrative and the institutions of their society.

Yoder’s interpretive strategy here is subtly intertextual, furthering his rhetorical project through wry rhetorical questions such as: “of course, John was wrong in what he was expecting, was he not?”¹⁴ Moreover, only a “scanty summary” of the “tributaries” of the text which support the “mainstream of the story”¹⁵ is offered. The inadequacy of “spiritual” interpretations of the text is also criticised. In the introduction to chapter 2 of *The Politics of Jesus* Yoder’s technical analysis is sparse. Nevertheless, by quoting, alluding to, and drawing connections between different aspects of the Lukan text, a powerful rhetoric emerges. There is little need for Yoder to explicate his interpretive argument in full if he is able to achieve a more powerful affect by simply alluding to the text in question. A significant example of this rhetorical strategy is demonstrated when Yoder suggests that for “the sake of brevity we shall skip over the birth narrative, with the prominence there given to Caesar’s census, with all its meaning for a subject people: registration, taxation, policing identities”.¹⁶ The reference to brevity implies that the argument is relatively obvious and need not be fully explicated. More significantly, though, is the reframing of the references to Roman political authority (Luke 2:1-2) into a statement about the unjust dominance of the Roman empire over the Jewish people. Without referring to those interpreters who would cite Luke’s uncritical naming of Emperor Augustus (Καίσαρος Αὐγούστου) and Quirinius as governor of Syria (ἡγεμονεύοντος

¹¹ In these references to Yoder I have directly quoted (including the American spelling) from the English translation offered by Yoder. I have added chapter and verse numbers (often missing in Yoder) to highlight the way different aspects of the Lukan text are brought into conversation.

¹² I find it interesting that Luke mentions slavery (Luke 7 and 12, for example) but does not explicitly condemn the system of slave labour which formed the bedrock of the Roman economy, and a direct result of conquest. See Justo L. González, *Faith and Wealth: A History of Early Christian Ideas on the Origin, Significance, and Use of Money* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990), 29ff. Perhaps the “servant leader” structure of a Christian base political community resisted this unjust aspect of Roman authority by implication. See discussion below.

¹³ Probably more accurately described as an *intergenesis*. See George Aichele and Gary Phillips, “Introduction: Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis,” 11-12.

¹⁴ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 22. Here Yoder stands against the ‘spiritualisation’ of John’s words by some interpreters.

¹⁵ Ibid., 24.

¹⁶ Ibid., 23.

τῆς Συρίας Κυρηνίου) as tacit acceptance of Empire, Yoder subtly but powerfully dismisses their arguments. This thematic intertextuality is seen repeatedly here with reference to Bethlehem as the city of David, the angels' pacifist proclamation, the expectations of Simeon and Anna, the massacre of infants by Herod in Matthew's gospel (thoroughly intertextual), and John's judgement of Herod – with brief intertextual support from a single line in *Antiquities*.¹⁷ In barely three pages Yoder's careful quotation and allusion constructs a powerful scaffold of God's clear and immanent social and political action through the lives of Jesus and John. Moreover, implicit in his argument is the suggestion that, for those who regard the gospel of Luke as authoritative, spiritualised understandings of the text are inadequate. Instead, 'valid' readings must grow out of the 'real' political demands of the text.

Identifying Yoder's intertextual rhetorical approach here is not to dismiss it as a distortion of the text. Rather, I have explored it briefly in order to demonstrate the power of drawing intertextual connections in rhetoric and interpretation. Carefully¹⁸ chosen intertexts may serve a persuasive function that positivist assertions, or inductive or reductive reasoning, are incapable of. The density of Yoder's intertextual references belie the richness of imagery and implied understandings which bring remarkable weight to his argument. In this, perhaps, Yoder is seeking to mirror something of the intertextuality of Luke's gospel itself.

3.2.1.1 Magnificat

Yoder's first quotation from 1:51-53 comes from Mary's song of praise, the *Magnificat* in Luke 1:46-56. This text is replete with thematic and structural allusions from the Hebrew bible. These include the thematic intertexts around the "(high) arm of God" (βραχίονί (τῷ ὑψηλῷ)),¹⁹ God's action against the proud,²⁰ God's exultation of the humble and the filling of the hungry.²¹ More 'structural'²² intertexts are recognised in the hymns and prayers of the Jewish people, most notably

¹⁷ Ibid., 23-24.

¹⁸ Ibid., 22.

¹⁹ Often dative. See LXX usage: Exod 6:6, Deut 7:19, 9:29, 11:2, 26:8, Job 26:2 35:9, Psa 77:15 [LXX 76:16], Psa 89:21 [LXX 88:22] (see section 3.2.1.3 below for wider usage in the Psalms), Isa (Esaías) 40:10, Wis Sol 5:16, in contrast to the "arms of flesh" (βραχίονες σάρκρινοι) in 2 Chr: 32:8.

²⁰ For example, against King Uzziah (Ozias) in 2 Chr 26:19-21. See also 2 Sam [LXX 2 Kings] 22:28, Job 40:10-19, Psa 18:27 [LXX 17:28], Psa 94 [LXX 93]:2, Prov 15:25, Isa 2:12, against the "prince of Tyre" in Ezek (Jezekeiel) 28:1-7, Dan 5:20, Eccles [Wisdom of the Son of Sirach] 21:4.

²¹ For example, 2 Sam [LXX 2 Kings] 22:28, 2 Chr 7:14, Job 22:29-30, Psa 18:27 [LXX 17:28], Psa 149:4, Isa 57:15, 1 Macc 14:14. Interestingly Saul is from the "least family of the least tribe" (1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 9:21) but, after being raised to kingship, is later brought down.

²² I have used the terms 'structural', 'literal', and 'thematic' to delineate different aspects of intertextuality that emerge in this reading. These categories are only 'categories-in-waiting', however, and the boundaries between them blur. To notice a literal or structural relationship between texts often emerges from thematic (rhetorical) interests. See, for

in the Psalms,²³ and the revolutionary form of the Maccabean war hymn.²⁴ The loudest narrative echo arises in connection with the Song of Hannah (1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 2),²⁵ a bitter-sweet song of praise to God after being blessed with a son, Samuel, whose life is then offered for temple service. A second thematic intertext is brought into conversation with Yoder's reading here. Ezekiel 17 is an extended allegory²⁶ concerning the exile of the elite of Israel into Babylon. Significantly, the common metaphor of a tree (cedar from Lebanon) is used to signify Israel.²⁷ The intertextual echo arises with greatest volume in verse 9 when the ultimate power of the "strong arm" (βραχίονι μεγάλῳ) of the King of Babylon is questioned with reference to the metaphor of the tree. Exploring the positive intertext of Hannah's Song and the negative (incongruous) intertext of the strong arm of the King of Babylon may illustrate and highlight different elements of the intertextual network in which the *Magnificat* functions.

3.2.1.2 Hannah and Mary

The Song of Hannah in 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 2 is an intertext signalled early in the *Magnificat*.²⁸ The detailed intertextual connections explored here between the *Magnificat* are not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, this exploration: i) explores a strong 'quotation-introduced' thematic intertext identified by contemporary Lukan scholarship, ii) illuminates certain contours of intertextual relationships, and iii) resonates with a relatively high amplitude with the questions of social and political consequence under exploration here. The explicit quotation ἐπέβλεψεν ἐπὶ τὴν ταπείνωθιν τῆς δούλης, "he has looked (with kindness/favour) on the lowly condition of (his/your) servant", drives the reader to the Samuel/Kings narrative before Hannah begins her song (1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 1:11, Luke 1:48).²⁹ The intertextual connotation here is that the story of Hannah and the unborn Samuel prefigures the story of Jesus and the as yet unborn Jesus. Thematic and linguistic connections strengthen the volume of this intertext. Themes such as Hannah's spoken silence, φωνὴ αὐτῆς οὐκ ἤκούετο (1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 1:13),³⁰ and the revolutionary changes to

example, discussion on τὸ πνεῦμά(τος) below.

²³ For example François Bovon, *Luke 1*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002), 60.

²⁴ Yoder citing Winter in Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 21.

²⁵ See Ibid., Bovon, *Luke 1*, 60ff., Luke T. Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 41ff., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I-IX*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1981), 359ff.

²⁶ Explicitly so: "tell a tale, speak a parable" (διήγησαι διήγημα καὶ εἰπὼν παραβολὴν) Ezek 17:1

²⁷ In contrast to the mustard bush (weed). See Luke 13: 18-19, 17:6.

²⁸ As is usually the case there are other intertextual options. Paul Winter, for example, draws strong intertextual parallels between the *Magnificat* and the "psalm in 1 Chronicles xvi. 8-36". See Paul Winter, "Magnificat and Benedictus - Maccabean Psalms?," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 37 (1955 1954): 333ff.

²⁹ See Bovon, *Luke 1*, 61.

³⁰ See also Zechariah's dumbness Luke 1:20-22.

the social order in Hannah's prayer – “the full of bread are brought low” (Πλήρεις ἄρτων ἡλαττώθησαν) (2:5), “the Lord makes poor and rich” (Κύριος πτωχίζει καὶ πλουτίζει, ταπεινοῖ καὶ ἄνυσοῖ) (2:7), “the bow of the mighty is broken” (Τόξον δυνατῶν ἡσθένησε)(2:4 compare Luke 1:49), and God “raises up the poor from the dust” (Ἀνιστᾷ ἀπὸ γῆς πένητα) to “inherit a seat of honour” (θρόνον δόξης κατακληρονομῶν) (2:8 compare Luke 1:52). The triple reversals of mighty/feeble (2:4) rich/poor (2:7-9) and hungry/full (2:5) in Hannah's song are mirrored, with some contraction, in the *Magnificat*. The proud, who are “arrogant in (the) thoughts of their hearts” (ὑπερηφάνους διανοίᾳ καρδίας αὐτῶν) (Luke 1:51),³¹ and the mighty are held in opposition to the lowly (Luke 1:51-52), and the rich are held in opposition to the hungry. The linguistic connections are of a somewhat lower volume. Except for the direct quotation of 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 1:11 in Luke 1:48 it is difficult to argue for another exact citation of more than a couple of words. On the other hand, the *Magnificat* and Hannah's Song share some distinctive vocabulary. For example “Lord” (κύριος) and “God” (θεός) are used in both 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 2:1 and Luke 1:46-47. “Holy” is used in 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 2:2 to affirm that “there is none holy (but God)” (οὐκ ἔστιν ἅγιος) and in Luke 1:49 to refer to the “holy name (of God)” (ἅγιον τὸ ὄνομα). However, these correspondences are not strong and, as in the case of ἅγιον, often used with reference to opposing forces.³²

There is one other possible quotation in which several words, in different forms, are brought together in Luke. Taken together πλουτίζει, ταπεινοῖ (1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 2:7) and πλείρεις ἄρτων ἡλαττώθησαν, καὶ οἱ πεινῶντες (1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 2:5) may be regarded as forming the loose quotation πεινῶντας ἐνέπλησεν ἀγαθῶν καὶ πλουτοῦντας (Luke 1:53). I would argue the correspondences here are better understood as thematic and at the service of narrative clarity than as a quotation, as such. The distinction here is, of course, problematic and I steer away again from recourse to the intention of the author. Whether the historical ‘Luke’ intended a direct quotation or more distant echo is simply unattainable. Rather I suggest that, at the level of this reading, the rhetorical or theological factors underlying the discernment of quotation should balance the literary. In this case there is no strong thematic pattern which would be enhanced by further quotation. The original signalling quotation in verse 48 is sufficient to mark the intertext. By way of comparison, this is in contrast to the short “I am” (Ἐγώ εἰμι) quotations in John's gospel (for example in 4:6, 6:35-51, 8:12ff) and the intertextual connection of Jesus with God's repeated self-

³¹ See Bovon, *Luke 1*, 62.

³² See also δυνατῶν in 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 2:4 against δυνατός in Luke 1:49 but with δυνάστας in Luke 1:52.

identification as “I am” in the Exodus account; particularly “I am the God of your fathers” (Exod 3:6). This rhetorical connection is strengthened through the central symbolic appropriation of the bread(s) (ἄρτος) in Exodus 16:8ff and John 6:35ff. In this Johannine text the relative weight of the two words as a ‘quotation’ is underscored by the theo-rhetorical weight of the text. In the fourth gospel, the repeated “I am” can be regarded as ‘quotation’ as it underscores the thematic correlation between the gospel and Exodus. Returning to the correspondence between the vocabulary of Luke 1:53 and 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 2:5 and 7 there is no overarching rhetorical reason to regard these similarities as ‘quotation’. The initial quotation from 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 1:11 in verse 48 is sufficient to signal the subsequent thematic intertextuality.

3.2.1.3 ‘Structural’ intertexts: Psalms and Maccabean battle hymns

Alongside thematic connections and ‘quotations’, intertextual relationships may be explored on the basis of genre, structure or ‘form’. Traditional textual scholarship has sought to construct quite rigid taxonomic boundaries between the various forms of text proposed.³³ The requirement for rigid classification of ‘types’ is a key characteristic of enlightenment-modern epistemologies. It is, in a sense, a sign of the totalitarianism of Reason. ‘Everything in its place and a place for everything’ underlies a rationalism which must ‘explain it all’. The recent forays of people like Richard Dawkins³⁴ into simplistic meta-physical rejection of ‘religion’ demonstrates this most acutely. That evolutionary theory and the ‘scientific method’ offers a powerful and useful epistemology for understanding the world is not here denied. That such a method can ‘explain it all’ is rejected, however. Underlying rigorous scientific method is the assumption that all categories are ‘working categories’, open to hypothetical challenge and contrary experimental data. The arguments of those seeking to create immutable categories arise more from ideological persuasion and political rhetoric.³⁵ If this is true for the strict methodology of (pure) science it is far more so for the more nuanced study of all human textual productions. To compare the *Magnificat* to the literary patterns of the Psalms and the hymns of Israel is not to make the mistake of claiming an absolute typology. It does, however, open intertextual doors, both in the understanding of the ancient text in

³³ See, for example the discussion in Bovon on the range of Jewish and Hellenistic influences on the style and structure of Luke. Bovon, *Luke 1*, 3.

³⁴ Most polemically in *The God Delusion*. See Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (New York: First Mariner, 2008).

³⁵ Exploring this idea more fully is not the intent of this study. See the (Collicutt) McGraths’ *The Dawkins Delusion: Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine* and Eagleton’s review “Lunging, Flailing, Mispunching” in the October 2006 London Review of Books. These provide accessible refutations of Dawkins on the grounds of a limited epistemology. Suffice it to say, however, that the totalitarian tendencies of certain ‘scientists’ stem more from ideological than purely scientific bases.

relationship to its precursors and also as a continuing ‘Hymn of praise’ for contemporary Christians.³⁶

Bovon, Johnson, Fitzmyer and Winter all regard the form of the *Magnificat* and the *Benedictus* as resonating with the form of the hymns of scripture. The lyrical connotations of this idea imply that these texts open up a different set of intertextual connections than narrative prose allows. For the (implied) audience³⁷ of Luke, the book of Psalms springs to mind, an echo with a very high cultural volume³⁸. The Maccabean ‘battle’ hymns explored by Winter³⁹ are a more specific, and perhaps more illuminating, example of hymns functioning within a set of narrative movements.⁴⁰ Here the intertextual connection between the *Magnificat* and the *Benedictus* of Zechariah laid out by Yoder is strengthened by their generic similarities as hymns.⁴¹

Much has been written on the poetic and thematic similarities between the Hebrew psalms/songs and the songs of Luke 1.⁴² In keeping with the rhetorical purposes of this study, only those clearly pertaining to the framework of Yoder’s interpretation are noted here.⁴³ Significant connections between the genre/rhetorical structure of the Psalms and the *Magnificat/Benedictus* include:

- The frequent language of ‘soul/spirit/heart’ as the agency giving praise to God, or retelling God’s provident action. As noted by Bovon⁴⁴ and Johnson⁴⁵ the use of “my soul” (ἡ ψυχή μου)⁴⁶ is more common than “my spirit” (τὸ πνεῦμά(τος) μου) in the Psalms. I would group the thematic intertextual similarity “my heart” (ἡ καρδία μου in 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 2:1)⁴⁷ together with soul and spirit here. It is beyond the scope of the study to explore in full the theological significance and connotative depth of soul/spirit/heart emerging from

³⁶ The hymn, *Tell Out My Soul*, a rewording of the *Magnificat* by Timothy Dudley-Smith.

³⁷ Importantly, an intertextual construction itself. See chapter 2.

³⁸ Cultural and political intertexts act as background. The text of Roman imperial dominance. The texts of the various Jewish responses to this power. acquiescence, collaboration, (violent) resistance. The text of religious versus political power in 1st century Judea and the wider Mediterranean

³⁹ Winter, “Magnificat and Benedictus - Maccabean Psalms?”.

⁴⁰ The book of Psalms is largely disconnected from the narrative (and thus parts of the political) context. On the other hand the Maccabean reference ties the song in the context in which they were sung.

⁴¹ Interestingly later Latin manuscripts which place the *Magnificat* in the mouth of Elizabeth - possibly because of an ancient festival celebrating Zechariah and Elizabeth as the mother of John. This leads to interesting intertextual possibilities in the realm of religious observance. See Bovon, *Luke 1*, 60.

⁴² See, for example, Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, 41.

⁴³ I will not, for example, spend a great deal of time on ‘rhyming’ in the psalms even though 1:52-53 form a dual-rhyming ‘couplet’.

⁴⁴ Bovon, *Luke 1*, 60.

⁴⁵ Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, 41.

⁴⁶ See discussion on soul/life/heart/self below.

⁴⁷ For LXX Psalmic usage see Ps 4:7 [LXX 4:8], 9:1 [LXX 9:2], 13 [LXX 12], 16:9 [LXX 15:10], 19:14 [LXX 18:15], 22:14 [LXX 21:15] and so on.

Mary's declaration. It is important to note, however, that a 'central' part of a character's 'being' may be able to recognise God's providence irrespective of the broader circumstances of the character's life. For Mary, already "perplexed/fearful" (διεταράχθη) (1:29)⁴⁸, and certainly vulnerable as an engaged "maiden/virgin" (παρθένος) (1:27, 34), for her soul/spirit to 'praise' in these circumstances is significant. In the broader context of the Jewish people, "his servant /child Israel", (Ἰσραὴλ παιδὸς αὐτοῦ) (1:55), once again occupied and subjugated (see below), Mary's soul-singing represents a deep, liberating voice so central to their identity. The rich Psalmic intertextuality here is loud. The focus on Mary's soul and spirit serve not to 'spiritualise' her dangerous words⁴⁹ but rather to emphasise that aspect of her identity (and the identity of the Jewish people) which is able to recognise and rejoice in the liberative qualities of God's action.

- In a similar way, the *Magnificat* links to the Hebrew poetic pattern of repetition. As noted by Bovon, a Psalmic repetition occurs in verses 46 and 47.⁵⁰ Here the soul's "Magnification" (Μεγαλύνει) is modified, repeated and expanded to include the title for God, "saviour" (σωτήρι) (1:47). In keeping with the tradition of the Psalms, praise is offered to God interspersed with, and highlighting, the identity and action of God. In this no stark distinction is made between prayers of adoration and thanksgiving. God's action is co-existent with God's nature and vice-versa. In terms of the use of the title "saviour"⁵¹ the intertextual Psalmic expectation thus arises, 'from what has God saved us and from what do we need to be saved?' As the *Magnificat* continues the poetic repetition is given colour as the blessing of Mary is named, and God's prior political action is described. The post-textual Yoder resonates with the repeated telling about the nature of God, foreshadowed in the Psalms, testified to by Mary, and continuing through the ages.
- A third aspect of the Hebrew Psalms evident in the *Magnificat* is the transition of the song of praise from identifying the singer as benefiting from God's action (first person, μου 1:46-

⁴⁸ Interestingly Marshall suggests that fear and holiness should be regarded as parallels in I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), 83. Whether this is for literary or historical reasons is not clear.

⁴⁹ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus (2nd edition)*, 22-23.

⁵⁰ Bovon, *Luke 1*, 60. Robert C. Tannehill, "The Magnificat as Poem," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 93, no. 2 (1974): 263-275. and his masterful Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986). both offer remarkable literary insights into the third gospel's narrative and poetic form. The lack of intertextual context in Tannehill's work, especially in the "*Magnificat*", underlies the limits of the New Criticism and other more strict literary methods.

⁵¹ σωτήρ is a common term in Hellenism. See, for example, Warren Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations*, 188ff.

49) to a wider, third person inclusion (plural dative τοῖς φοβουμένοις in 1:50 and so on). Characteristically, while God's actions are almost always 'positive' in the life of the individual (it is a song of praise), God's action upon others differs depending on status and attitude. In the *Magnificat*, those who fear God,⁵² those in a lowly situation/the "humble" (ταπεινούς) (Luke 1:52),⁵³ the "hungry" (πεινῶντας) (1:53),⁵⁴ and his servant Israel (1:54)⁵⁵ are all blessed by God's action. On the other hand the arrogant (in the thoughts of their hearts) (ὑπερηφάνους (διανοία καρδίας αὐτῶν)) (Luke 1:51),⁵⁶ and the rich/filled ones (πλουτοῦντας) (1:53)⁵⁷ find the opposite. On them the humbling effect of God's action is realised. Bovon rightly notes that the transition from first person singular to third person plural is "not uncommon in the Psalms"⁵⁸ and, as such, an important aspect of the intertextual connection between the *Magnificat* and Hebrew poetry. I suggest, however, that it is the broad change in person, rather than the specific change from first person singular to third person plural that is significant.⁵⁹

The possible implications of the change in person in Luke 1 are varied. Bovon, for example, suggests that the particular change in person in the *Magnificat*, in keeping with Hebrew Psalms, "makes it possible to juxtapose the salvation offered to the supplicant and the punishment of the unbelievers."⁶⁰ This is in contrast with, but not in contradiction to, Yoder who begins his quotation just after the first instance of God's action to a group.⁶¹ In so doing he re-affirms the central thesis that God's actions have consequences for communities and societies. Here Yoder's emphasis is nuanced by Bovon's insight. The corporate implications of God's actions are not confined to the liberation and 'raising up' of the lowly, but include, necessarily, the 'bringing down' of the mighty. I suspect that Bovon may overstate the nature

⁵² LXX Psalmic examples include: Psa 2:11, 15 [LXX 14]:4, 22:23-25 [LXX 21:24-26], 25 [LXX 24]:12-14, 33 [LXX 32]:8-18, 34:7 [LXX 33:8], 66 [LXX 65]:16, 89:17 [LXX 88:8], 103 [LXX 102]:13ff, 111 [LXX 110]:5ff, 112 [LXX 111]:1, 115:11 [LXX 113:19], 118 [LXX 117]:4ff, 119 [LXX 118]:38ff, 128 [LXX 127]:1ff, 135 [LXX 134]:20, 145 [LXX 144]:19, 147 [LXX 146]:11), contrasted with Psa 55:19 [LXX 54:20].

⁵³ LXX Psalmic examples include: Psa 18:27 [LXX 17:28], 22:21 [LXX 21:22], 34:18 [LXX 33:19], 90 [LXX 89]:3ff, as part of the ethical commands in Psa 82 [LXX 81], and contrasted against Psa 44:19 [LXX 43:20] and 72 [LXX 71]:4.

⁵⁴ LXX Psalmic examples include: Psa 107 [LXX 106]:5-6, 146 [LXX 145]:7 and so on.

⁵⁵ LXX Psalmic examples include: Psa 14 [LXX 13]:7, 22:3ff [LXX 21:4ff], 25 [LXX 24]:22 and so on.

⁵⁶ LXX Psalmic examples include: Psa: 89:10 [LXX 88:11], 94 [LXX 93]:2, 101 [LXX 100]:5ff, 119 [LXX 118]:21, 51, 69 and so on. Arrogance as a concept in the LXX is, of course, not limited to the Psalms.

⁵⁷ LXX Psalmic examples include: Psa 34:10 [LXX 33:11]:10 and 49:16-17 [LXX 48 17-18] and so on.

⁵⁸ Bovon, *Luke 1*, 62.

⁵⁹ In the closely following *Benedictus* there exists a similar change in person, from third plural (1:68-75) to second person singular (1: 76). The use of second person for God is a dominant characteristic of the book of Psalms the use of 'you' for anyone else is typically restricted to explicit quotations. In the *Benedictus* the Psalmic tradition is expanded and linked with prophetic texts - recursively here a prophecy about a prophet.

⁶⁰ Bovon citing Psa Sol 2:31. Bovon, *Luke 1*, 62.

⁶¹ That is, at 1:51 just after mention of "god's mercy to those who fear him" τοῖς φοβουμένοις.

of the ‘bringing down’ in the *Magnificat*. Here the lowering of the mighty is not necessarily about punishment as such. Rather it is a more consequential characteristic of the just re-ordering of God’s actions. Even though there is reference to “our enemies” and “all who hate us”,⁶² that ‘punishment’ necessarily follows is not as clear.⁶³ Nevertheless the general intertextual point is strong; if God lifts up, God must bring down.⁶⁴

- A fourth aspect of Psalmic intertextuality particularly relevant to this study is the strongly dynamic language used in the *Magnificat*, especially in verses 51-52, characteristic of Hebrew hymns.⁶⁵ The use of “arm” (βραχίονι) (Luke 1:51),⁶⁶ “action” (ἔποίησεν) (Luke 1:51),⁶⁷ and the repeated use of “power/powerful” (δυνατός / δυνάστας) (Luke 1:49, 52)⁶⁸ contribute to a loud intertextuality with certain Psalms. In particular the use of “power in his (right) arm” (κράτος ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ) is a common “dramatic anthropomorphism”⁶⁹ in the Psalms. The poetic underscoring of the power of God’s action maintains a pattern of textual justification with the Psalms. For the exiled and downtrodden, not only must God’s intent to re-order the world be true, God’s power to fulfil this intent must also be attested.
- A final connection between the *Magnificat/Benedictus* and the hymnody of the Hebrew people is the particular argument that these hymns bear strong intertextual resemblance to Maccabean battle hymns. Originally posited by Paul Winter,⁷⁰ this intertext has been acknowledged by later commentators.⁷¹ In 1 Macc 4:28-34 Winter identifies a ‘narrative interruption’ as a hymn is sung before the battle at Beth Sur led by Judas Maccabeus.⁷² The volume of this intertext is regarded by Winter as being high. On the one hand the sense of foreshadowing a momentous narrative event increases the volume. On the other hand, the distinction between the nature of this narrative event (a major battle contrasted with the birth of a child) may, however, lessen the volume of this specific narrative intertext. I argue that

⁶² These are conventional Psalmic terms. See Bovon, *Luke 1*, 73.

⁶³ See also chapter 2. The burning in the fire may be a just reordering, rather than a moral punishment.

⁶⁴ Yoder, later in this work but also in other theological explorations deals extensively with what Christians are to do as God re-orders the world. His strong conviction is that Christians meet power with ‘non-resistance’. See below for a fuller exploration of ‘non-resistance’ and alternative ways of describing Yoder’s approach.

⁶⁵ Bovon, *Luke 1*, 62.

⁶⁶ LXX Psalmic examples include: Psalms 44:3 [LXX 43:4], 71 [LXX 70]:18 77:15 [LXX 76:16], 89:10ff [LXX 88:11ff], 136 [LXX 135]:12.

⁶⁷ LXX references are far too broad to list in full. For a longer discussion see Herbert Braun “ποιέω κτλ,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 6, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 259ff.

⁶⁸ LXX Psalmic examples (including verb forms) include: Psalms 33 [LXX 32]:17, 145 [LXX 144]:4ff, 150:1.

⁶⁹ Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, 42.

⁷⁰ Winter, “Magnificat and Benedictus - Maccabean Psalms?”.

⁷¹ Johnson and Bovon in particular.

⁷² Winter, “Magnificat and Benedictus - Maccabean Psalms?,” 342ff.

the Maccabean battle hymn in 1 Macc 4 is indeed a “loud” intertext for the *Magnificat* and the *Benedictus*, but that the distinction between the narrative events uncovers a particular type of intertextual relationship. The intertextual relationship here is one of incongruity. Intertextual relationships seen as part of wider rhetorical and ideological currents often lead to ‘distinction-through-similarity’.⁷³ The Maccabean war hymns and the *Magnificat/Benedictus* speak of the power of God to defeat enemies and raise up the (feminine) “slaves” (δούλης) (Luke 1:48).⁷⁴ The narrative differences establish a dissonance between the forms that God’s action will take.⁷⁵ The paths of Judas Maccabeus and Jesus of Nazareth are widely divergent.

3.2.1.4 Ezekiel 17:8-9

Another significant intertext from the scripture of Luke’s implied audience arises as the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus* and John’s preaching in Luke 3 are brought into conversation. Ezekiel 17:18-9 may be overlooked as an intertext for the *Magnificat* or for John’s sermon taken separately. Each piece of text offers only a few similar words and themes with a relatively low intertextual volume. When taken together, however, as Yoder suggests, a constructive interference ensues and the volume of the intertext increases significantly. The linguistic and thematic connections include:

- A reference to the strength of the Lord’s arm (βραχίονι μεγάλῳ) (17:9). In the broader context of Ezek 17, *μεγάλῳ* has the sense of vigorousness and good health.
- Regular references to fruit (καρπὸν) (for example 17:8, 9). This brings to mind Luke 3:8, 6:43-44, 8:14-15, 13:6-9 and connects, intertextually, the strength of God’s action with the metaphoric fruit, presumably the actions of Jesus’ listeners.

⁷³ See discussion in chapter 2 above about messianic imagery in the *Terminator* and *Matrix* series and other Hollywood films.

⁷⁴ Winter in reference to 1 Macc 2:9 in Winter, “Magnificat and Benedictus - Maccabean Psalms?,” 328, 348.

⁷⁵ In one sense Litwak’s notion of “framing” is helpful here. The structure of the narrative in which a quotation or thematic reference occurs does indeed shape the way in which the relevant intertext is to be viewed. Certainly an intertextual appeal to either authority or to highlight discontinuity (incongruity) between the text and its intertexts is framed, in part, by the concerns of the narrative. On the other hand Litwak’s thesis rests on the assumption that it is the intentionality of the supposed author that constructs the intertextual framework. ‘Correct’ intertextual interpretation is wrongly subsumed into authorial intent. In Litwak’s language “Luke uses” certain intertexts and language to “frame his discourse”. See for example Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts: Telling the History of God’s People Intertextually*, 4, 9, 11, 14, 20, 25, 97 and so on.

- In Ezekiel 17:10 the poetic question is posed as to whether the noble vine will be pulled up by its roots (ῥιξῶν αὐτῆς). This alludes to Luke 3:9 where the axe is laid to the root of the trees that do not bear good fruit (ἡ ἀξίνη πρὸς τὴν ῥιξάν).

Reading Yoder's Luke in the light of the allegorical, possibly messianic, account in Ezekiel 17:1-24 provides a rich intertextual colouring to the Lukan text. In the Scriptural text, an overt allegory or extended metaphor is explored in order to give an account of the exile of the elite of Israel at the hand of the king of Babylon, and then, to offer a word of hope and promise from God. This word of hope is in contrast with the judgement of the king (Ezek 17:16), presumably of Israel, who broke the covenant with God and now is caught in the snare of God. This snare is indistinguishable from the power of the king of Babylon (17:20). The arch-enemies of the Israelite history, the king of Babylon (17:12) and Pharaoh (17:17)⁷⁶ are regarded as fickle allies of the unfaithful rulers of Israel who, in reality and despite themselves, end up fulfilling the goals of God. There is much more to this rich allegory, as it is brought intertextually into relationship with the Lukan text. Of particular relevance to this study, however, is the power of God to work through the enemies of the Israelites, especially when the Israelite ruling class are seen to have breached the covenant with God and sought protection and patronage from their enemies (see verse 17).

3.2.1.5 Implications – world of the text

For Luke's implied audience the relationship between the overarching enemy of Israel, the Roman Empire, and the religious and political leadership's collusion with this Empire are thus implied.⁷⁷ In bringing Jesus (the main subject of the narrative) so closely into relationship with John the Baptist,⁷⁸ the struggle of the text against Herod and the colluding Jewish elite is highlighted. The Ezekiel intertext underscores a subtle point that, in the face of an overwhelming and generally recognised enemy,⁷⁹ those elements within the Israelite/Jewish people who would collude with these enemies have broken the covenant and will be judged accordingly. In Yoder's *intertextual conflation*, the liberative re-ordering of the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus* and John's sermon will bring down not just

⁷⁶ It is not clear whether this is a contemporary Pharaoh, but more likely a throwback to the Pharaoh against whom Moses stood. This and the other references to Egypt and her army (17:15) draw in a third intertext - that of the Exodus experience of Israel.

⁷⁷ In the preceding detailed intertextual exploration I have attempted, where possible, to separate the socio-ethical and political implications of the reading from the exploration itself. This is a somewhat artificial distinction, but necessary for some sort of organisation. The implications below should thus not be read in isolation with the particular intertextual readings but linked closely with them.

⁷⁸ The narrative parallels between John the Baptist and Jesus are extensive in the first three chapters of Luke.

⁷⁹ The king of Babylon/Pharaoh/Tiberius Caesar. John is subtly contrasted with the list of dignitaries in 3:1 from Tiberius down.

the ‘obvious’ enemies of the Jewish people, but also those who collude with them – Herod the fox (Luke 13:32) and the temple elite (for example, 19:47). The enemy is thus described intertextually as both outside and within the Jewish people. For Luke’s implied audience the overarching political force remains the same; the Romans have lost none of their power and, assuming a post-70 CE post-second temple composition, are regarded as even more vindictive and merciless than before. Remnants of the ‘internal’ enemy may remain as synagogue leadership in the Diaspora make life difficult for the newly named ‘Christians’ (Acts 11:26). Of more concern, however, are the internal communal voices and practices which may advocate acquiescence or even a kind of passive collusion with Empire. Yoder’s reading of Luke suggests that acquiescence is loudly resisted, drawing on the intertextual weight of scripture to give depth and volume to this resistance.

Importantly, of course, for a resistance against the enemy and those who would collude with it, is the sense that God also resists the enemy. Yoder’s *temporal* intratextual arrangement⁸⁰ of the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus* and John’s preaching emphasises the continuity of God’s just resistance to ‘our enemies’ over time. In the past God showed the strength of his arm and did mighty deeds (1:51ff) so that in the future, and in keeping with the promise to Abraham, we might be saved from our enemies (1:73). The question arises for any people seeking liberation, ‘when will this occur?’ To answer this, Yoder’s reading turns to John’s fiery preaching (3:9). Even now the axe is at the root of the trees, presumably trees which resemble the ignoble trees of Ezekiel 17. Even now God’s action to defeat enemies is occurring and that which God has already done is being done again.⁸¹

The corporate nature of the way God acts resonates with the Psalmic intertexts discussed above. The *Magnificat* hinges, for example, on the shift from first singular to third person plural in 1:50 and this transition underscores the interpretive direction employed by Yoder and this study. This rhetorical turning point is not the only potential interpretive focus in the *Magnificat*. Bovon, for example, suggests a concluding linguistic shift in verses 54-55 where the “series of aorists” is terminated with an infinitive construction.⁸² If the reader, however, is interested with Yoder in the application of the third gospel to the formation of a Christian politics, the shift from God’s action in the life of one person to a wider context is critical. The *rhetorically external* intertextuality of Yoder frames the significance of the unearthed connections. An *intertextual incongruity* with the Maccabean battle hymns analysed by Winter underscores this point. While in the early pattern of

⁸⁰ By this I mean narratively temporal and interpretively ordered.

⁸¹ Enriched again by a minor allusion around the words “but not now” (καὶ οὐχὶ νῦν) and Num 24:17. See Bovon, *Luke 1*, 61.

⁸² Ibid., 63.

Maccabean war hymns the (third) singular may have referred poetically to Israel as a whole,⁸³ in the narrative frame of the *Magnificat* the first person is clearly Mary. Yet the *intertextual surfeit* of meaning⁸⁴ flows into all those marked as ‘them’ or ‘those’. If God has done great and liberative acts ‘in me’ surely God will continue great and liberative acts in the life of Israel?

A more far-reaching intertextual incongruity is recognised in the framing of Maccabean battle hymns and the hymns of Luke’s gospel. As Winter shows,⁸⁵ the linguistic and thematic forms here are closely related. The context of the Maccabean revolution is highly theo-politically charged. The identity and survival of a people are linked inextricably with their understanding of the nature of the covenant of God. Luke’s gospel is similarly theo-politically charged as newer groups of believers seek to form identities in the context of Jewish theology and law against the political backdrop of Empire. The incongruity arises in what happens next. Both Maccabean and Lukan hymns signal that a battle is about to take place, but only in the story of Judas Maccabeus does a physical battle actually take place. In the third gospel the foreshadowed battle occurs in and around the life of Jesus, whose birth is of central focus here. In this battle Jesus’ non-violence is met with the plotting of those who would collude with Empire and the final violence of the crucifixion comes at the hands of the Romans (Luke 23:24, 33). The intertextual similarities between the hymnic interruptions serve to underscore the difference between the narratives. That Jesus does not vanquish the enemy in any military sense opens the audience to a radically different notion of what a theo-political ‘battle’ with oppressors might look like. It is the nature of this battle, thoroughly different from the Maccabean revolution, which drives much of Yoder’s reading.

The central thrust of Yoder’s reading of the words of Mary, Elizabeth and John the Baptist is to illustrate that the politically-relevant covenantal action of God will soon be seen once again in the narrative of Jesus and his struggle. This is given hermeneutical colour⁸⁶ through its intertextual appropriation of scripture and an awareness of the dominant contextual political forces at play in the 1st century Mediterranean region. Several other intertextual insights colour Yoder’s central reading. They include:

⁸³ Israel typically referred to in the feminine singular., see Winter on 1 Macc 2:9 in Winter, “Magnificat and Benedictus - Maccabean Psalms?,” 328ff.

⁸⁴ Resisting, it is hoped, an overwhelming ‘surfeit of information’.

⁸⁵ Yoder, Bovon and Johnson agree.

⁸⁶ I prefer the idea of hermeneutical colour over hermeneutical key. While a key is sometimes necessary – for example, understanding the prohibition of graven images in Exodus 20:4 (re-emphasised in Acts 17:29) is critical for interpreting Mark 12:13-17 – usually I am focussed on the ‘colouration’; the hues and shadows of the text. I also avoid hermeneutical ‘depth’ as it is often used to privilege the ‘behind’ or the ‘underneath’ as the ‘real’ meaning of the text against the sense of meaning in the ‘intersecting surfaces’.

- The slight difference in the groups in whom God's positive action is known in the *Magnificat* and Hannah's Song. Most significantly poverty, mentioned in 1 Sam 2[LXX 1 Kings] 7 (πτωχίζει as part of God's inverting action), is missing in Mary's song – though the rich (πλουτοῦντας) are mentioned in verse 53. These missing terms serve not to distinguish the poor from the hungry or the lowly, but rather to group them together. A connotative conflation leads to a less exact but more inclusive grouping of rich/mighty/proud against the poor/empty/lowly/feeble.
- Thematic connections often give a richer colour and are thus typically more significant than direct quotations. For example Hannah's song is briefly signalled in the *Magnificat* by a direct quotation but the framing and subsequent thematic interplays between the texts give richer connotative connections. In one sense a clear quotation or allusion is necessary to begin an intertextual conversation, yet the broader significance of the surrounding text often provides greater interpretive significance.⁸⁷

3.2.1.6 Implications – world of the reader

The rhetorical approach of Yoder to Luke emphasises a number of potential political implications for 21st century readers of the text. For these implications to be realised assumes that the contemporary audience is connected in some way to the implied audience of the text. The possibilities for connection are extraordinarily wide. A contemporary audience may 'see itself' as an oppressed people akin to the early Christians/1st century Jews. It may recognise itself as resistant to imperial or totalising political power in the 21st century. It may seek intertextual 'sources' to provide direction, wisdom and nourishment. More obviously, Christian communities often consider themselves linked to the witness of the earliest Christian communities because they share the name, 'Christian'. The narratives of these early communities formalised in the canon of Christian scripture are 'our narratives'.⁸⁸ An exploration of the contours of the complex relationships between ancient and modern audiences is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, with Yoder, this study assumes that the political implications for Luke's implied audience have some bearing on the politics of contemporary, western, educated Christians (the implied contemporary audience of

⁸⁷ See Hays' discussion of the poetry of TS Eliot in Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 16-17. I also make use of Yoder's quotations as a signal that an intertextual conversation is necessary. The conversation, however reaches beyond the quotation into themes of the wider narrative and the theo-ethics of Yoder.

⁸⁸ A most extreme version of this is the doctrine of *sola scriptura* or the bibliolatry of 20th-21st century western fundamentalism.

Yoder). In the light of this assumption then the following three political implications bear mentioning:

1. The close coupling of the stories of John and Jesus in the introductory chapters of Luke frame Christian self-understanding in a way which is resistant and often antagonistic towards dominant political power. This coupling is emphasised by Yoder's intertextual linking of the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus* and John's sermon,⁸⁹ the song which outlines God's action around Jesus' birth is given structure in John's life. While Jesus may supersede John in the narrative of Luke, there is no discontinuity between the way in which their narratives describe God.⁹⁰ The theology that may be drawn from the witness of John and Jesus, especially with respect to God's action in the world, is strongly coherent. For Yoder then, the action of God in Luke's gospel is intertextually continuous with the action of God in the life of Israel, stands against the powers of Empire, and speaks of the continuing coherent action of God today. The pretextual and post-textual connections explored here serve to colour the narrative in such a way that this core argument is highlighted.⁹¹
2. Yoder's reading, underscored by Hannah's Song, the hymns of the Hebrew people, and the allegory of Ezekiel, concludes that the political, military and economic realms are inextricably intertwined, fall under God's authority, and are affected by God's action. The feeding of the hungry, the raising of the lowly and the poor and the bringing down of the mighty are not separate particular actions of God but rather consequences of God's general action in history. That the *Wirtschaftswunder* (economic miracle)⁹² has practical, economic and liberative qualities does not negate its status as a theological act. For Yoder, the introductory sections of the Lukan narrative, which outline the direction of God's action, are not negated by the manner in which Jesus and the apostles in Acts fulfil this action. Though Jesus did not lead a Maccabean military revolution against Herod and the Romans, a political reordering far more radical was begun in him. Though poverty and hunger were not eliminated forever by Jesus, God's actions to feed the hungry and bring relief to the poor are nevertheless real. As a beacon to 21st century Christians, Yoder's reading clearly illuminates the aspects breadth and political reality of God's involvement in creation.

⁸⁹ See also Yoder's broader exegesis on this theme – 23-24) Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 23-24.

⁹⁰ Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 16-17.

⁹¹ Again this is not the only emphasis that can be highlighted. Bovon, for example, casts the central organising movement of Luke-Acts in a different way. For Bovon, the theology of Luke-Acts is centred around an attempt to recast the identity of the early Christian communities in a manner not dependent on the immediate eschatological expectation of the first decades. See Bovon, *Luke I*, 11.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 63.

3. Yoder's reading of Luke is self-consciously at the service of his rhetorical resistance to 'spiritual' or 'pietistic' readings of the text.⁹³ Interestingly here the resistance is not against theological or religious readings per se, but rather against a kind of theology-in-practice which is restricted to the personal or private piety of the individual. The undeclared cultural intertext is the tendency in western Christianity to bifurcate corporate responsibility. In the post-Constantinian Roman Empire this division was characterised by the distinction between the Emperor as temporal king and Christ as eternal lord.⁹⁴ More recently the US doctrine of the division of Church and State has been extended to reject any Christian political action by mainstream/liberal Christians.⁹⁵ Yoder's Anabaptist heritage would suggest a continuing rejection of the State by the Church, however his intertextual reading of the third gospel emphasises the political reality of God's action of the world. Having established the theological parameters in which Luke operates, Yoder turns to the question of what this means for people who seek to be obedient to God.

⁹³ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 22.

⁹⁴ See for example Eusebius' closing to the *Ecclesiastical History* translated and re-presented in *A New Eusebius*. Eusebius was not uncritical of the Constantine (and his sons) but his language exhibits the disturbing theo-political consequences of the new 'Christian' Empire. The Emperor's ecclesial authority is underscored in Arius' fawning confession of faith c. 327 C.E. See J. Stevenson and W.H.C. Freud, *A New Eusebius: Documents illustrating the history of the Church to AD 337* (New Edition) (London: SPCK, 1987), 317,353.

⁹⁵ Fundamentalist/conservative Christians have generally avoided this distinction.

3.2.2 Baptism and Mission: Descending spirits and Jesus' mission in Luke 3:22b and 4:18-19

The rhetorical 'mainstream' of God's politically-located action is established by Yoder in his reading of the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus* and John's sermon. The subsequent discussion is designed to explore some of the 'tributaries'⁹⁶ that contribute to this main flow. Yoder's analysis is overtly intertextual as he quotes and explores Lukan fragments which have clear Scriptural precursors. The first two fragments explicitly quoted are the epiphanic "voice from heaven" (φωνήν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ) in 3:22b and the conflation of prophecy from the book of Isaiah in 4:18-19 (quoting Isa 61:1, 58:6 and 61:2).⁹⁷ From the ideologically interested perspective of this study I will briefly examine the Scriptural quotations recognised by Yoder in *The Politics of Jesus*. I will also suggest some thematic connections which add intertextual colour and depth to Yoder's conversation. These thematic connections include the role of the 'Spirit' as agent of God's corporeal and political action in scripture and Jesus' disconcertingly inclusive exposition in 4:25-27. With Yoder, I contend that the action of God in the (hi)story of Israel is appropriated and re-applied to the literary situation of Luke 1-3. What follows is a further exploration of the contours or colour of this action, focussing primarily on the relationship between the Spirit and Jesus' mission to be an instrument of God's action.⁹⁸

3.2.2.1 Beloved Son of God: Psalm 2:7 and Isa 42:1b

Yoder's discussion of the Baptism of Jesus focuses on the voice from heaven in 3:22b and brings it into intertextual conversation with Psalm 2:7 and Isa 42:1.⁹⁹ In terms of literal quotation the Psalmic connection is not strong relying mostly upon the word "son" (υἱός) and repeated references to "me/my" (ἐγώ-μου) and "you" (σε-σου). The literal quotations in Isaiah 42:1 are, if anything, even less strong – most notably a reference to the spirit (τὸ πνεῦμά).¹⁰⁰ As will be suggested below, however, the allusions to the Psalms and Isaiah noted by Yoder and others are representative of wider Scriptural ideas which are brought to the surface in Luke 3. The power of the Spirit coming upon characters in the narratives of scripture and the significance of 'Son of heaven' motifs are noted in these examples. They add weight to the rhetorical framework under construction.

Importantly Yoder contends that, irrespective of the intentionality of citation, the "themes of

⁹⁶ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 24.

⁹⁷ Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, 79.

⁹⁸ Paul's identify as an 'instrument' is divinely affirmed in Acts 9:15.

⁹⁹ See Bovon, *Luke 1*, 129. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I-IX*, 485. Alfred Plummer notes the Psalmic allusion but overlooks the connection to Isaiah 42. See Alfred Plummer, *St. Luke*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1981), 100.

¹⁰⁰ The soul (ψυχή) is mentioned, possibly reminiscent of Luke 1:46.

enthronement (Ps. 2) and suffering servanthood (Isa. 42)” constitute a “summons to a task”.¹⁰¹ By bringing together these disparate Scriptural themes Yoder highlights both the ‘kingship’ of Jesus over other political authorities and the paradoxical servant nature of this kingship. These are recurrent themes in Luke-Acts¹⁰² and are highlighted here.

The Psalm 2 intertextual connotations of particular rhetorical relevance include:

- The thematic connections between the “son” of “who lives in (the) heavens” (ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν οὐρανοῖς) (Psa 2:4) and the “son” named by the “voice from heaven” (φωνὴν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ) (Luke 3:22). These act as a kind of thematic quotation of low volume, the intertextual applicability justified primarily through the rhetorical weight given.
- The role of the “Messiah” (Χριστοῦ) (Psa 2:2) as “king” (βασιλεὺς) (2:6) over all “gentile” (ἔθνη) (2:1) kings. Here the Messiah of Psalm 2 is linked to Luke’s Jesus by virtue of sonship (2:7). This new king is necessarily a political one as the sovereigns of the earth band together against God and God’s chosen messiah. Not only will God’s action, intertextually foreshadowed by the Psalmist on Luke, have profound effects on those with power, those with power will openly resist God.
- The resistance of earthly rulers is however, a futile act of “empty vanity” (κενὰ) (2:1) which is doomed to failure. In the face of slavery, exile and occupation this notion is a radically illogical position for Israelites (and Jews) to hold on to. And indeed, the list of apparent political, religious and military authority (Luke 3:1-2) evidences the fact that many Jews had ceased to believe in God’s power to resist earthly rulers.

The intertextual connotations from Isaiah 42 of relevance include:

- The thematic connections between the “(Holy) Spirit coming down” (ἔδωκα τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπ’ αὐτόν) (Isa 42:1), (καταβῆναι τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἁγίου) (Luke 3:22) upon the servant and Jesus. As with the sonship connections above, the volume of this intertextual relationship is mostly reliant on the rhetorical weight afforded it by Yoder’s socio-ethical program. This connection contributes to the wider Spirit-descent motifs found in scripture, see below.

¹⁰¹ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 24.

¹⁰² See, for example, Luke 1:2,38,48, 54, 69, 2:29, Acts 3:13, 26, 4:25,27.

- The connection established by the Spirit gives rhetorical authority to the servant nature of the anointed one. For Luke, Jesus' kingship over other kings is marked by his personal fulfilment of the servant songs of Isaiah. Notably, Isaiah's depiction of the role of the suffering servant is not military nor political in any dominating way, suffering at the hands of the enemy, (see especially Isa 53:12ff).
- Moreover the action of the suffering servant not is limited to the redemption or liberation of Israel. Unusually for much of scripture, the implications of the servant's duty serve are, in part, for the sake of those outside Israel. The "Gentiles trust" (ἐθνὴ ἐλπιοῦσιν) (Isa 42: 4) in the servant. He is a "light to the Gentiles" (εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν) (49:6) and "bruised because of our iniquities/lawlessness" (μεμαλάκισται διὰ τὰς ἀνομίας ἡμῶν) (53:5). The Lukan intertextual affirmation is that the role of the suffering servant Israel, is now fulfilled in Jesus. It is a hope which is not confined to the people of Israel but also affects and is for the sake of Gentiles, in effect, everyone else.¹⁰³

3.2.2.2 Broader intertextual concerns: Luke, Psalms and Isaiah in conversation

For Yoder, the conversation between Luke 3, Psalm 2 and Isaiah 42 paints a picture of God's action made manifest in a very specific fashion. Having established God's continuing liberating intervention in personal and corporate ways in Luke 1-3, Yoder seeks to emphasise the king-as-servant character of Jesus. By bringing the traditional Christological motifs of sonship and servanthood into intertextual relationship, Yoder's rhetorical logic links the ultimate power of God with the authority of Jesus and his paradoxical king-as-servant character. The difference between Jesus' sovereignty and the rulership of earthly kings is a central theme of Luke's gospel, certain aspects of which are highlighted by Yoder and discussed below.

Yoder's intertextual arrangement brings together an interesting thematic relationship between the Scriptural notions of being a 'son of God'¹⁰⁴ having the 'spirit descending upon' a character within the narrative. The term "son(s) of God" (υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) is not a particularly common OT idea, often referring generally to human lineage.¹⁰⁵ However proximity of a Son (of the line of Israel) to a

¹⁰³ Interestingly the inclusion of the Gentiles is not a dominant aspect of Yoder's reading.

¹⁰⁴ The literal "son of God" (υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) language is not used in Psalm 2, but it seems clear that the voice that claims "You are my son" (υἱός μου εἶ σὺ) (2:7) is from the heavens and synonymous with God.

¹⁰⁵ Through Adam, see Luke 3:38. Also Peter Wülfing von Martitz and Eduard Schweizer "υἱὸς κτλ," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 8, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 341ff, 354-355, for son(s) of God in LXX. This usage is possibly borrowed from Hellenistic and Roman ideas see Ibid. 336-340.

blessing of heaven does occur from time to time.¹⁰⁶ In Psalm 2, the language of the beloved, messianic ‘son’ allows the intertextual unlocking of a richness of messianic intertexts. From now on the use of the term ‘son’ in reference to Jesus brings with it rich messianic associations.

In conversation with this messianic sonship is the Scriptural motif of the Spirit foreshadowed intertextually in Isaiah 42. The Spirit of God (πνεῦμα-πνεύματος), the Holy one of Israel, is elementally involved in creation and life,¹⁰⁷ guides the people and sustains them,¹⁰⁸ provides abundantly¹⁰⁹ and gives dreams and visions to the people,¹¹⁰ carries Obadiah (Ὁ Αβδίου) away (presumably for safe keeping),¹¹¹ empowers prophecy in Azariah (Ὁ Αζαρίας)¹¹² and craftsmanship,¹¹³ commissions Othniel (Ὁ Οθωνιήλ) for judgement and military victory,¹¹⁴ commissions the ‘shoot of Jesse’,¹¹⁵ gives strength¹¹⁶ and is the source of Wisdom¹¹⁷ and leadership.¹¹⁸ Almost all these motifs (except perhaps the allusions to military power) underscore Luke’s image of Jesus as the Spirit-empowered agent of God’s creating, sustaining and liberating action in the world. In creative superposition with the sonship motifs of the Psalmic intertext, Jesus carries both the power of the descended Spirit and the messianic hopes for the people of Israel.¹¹⁹

Other than to highlight the Spirit-sonship motif and the radical otherness of Jesus’ kingship in the early chapters of Luke, perhaps the most significant consequence of Yoder’s Luke-Psalms-Isaiah intertextuality is that the messiah will have a role that stretches beyond the bounds of Israel. The servant-messiah does not simply fulfil the hopes of the occupied Jews, but rather the hopes of all people. In a startling reinterpretation of Scriptural theology, Luke’s Jesus is the one through whom

¹⁰⁶ See, for example, Solomon as David’s son contrasting his temple with the glories of heaven in 2 Chr 2:6, 6:12-35, 7:1 and so on.

¹⁰⁷ See, for example: Gen 1:2, Job 27:3, 33:4, Judith 16:14.

¹⁰⁸ See, for example: Nehemiah 9:20, Psalm 51:12 [LXX 50:13].

¹⁰⁹ See, for example: Isa 32:15ff, Haggai 2:5ff.

¹¹⁰ See Joel 2:28. Also Acts 2:17.

¹¹¹ 1 Kings [LXX 3 Kings] 18:12.

¹¹² 2Chr 15:1. See also Num 11:17, 2 Sam [LXX 2 Kings] 23:2.

¹¹³ Exod 31:3.

¹¹⁴ Judges 3:10.

¹¹⁵ Isaiah 11:2. In contrast to Luke 3:8-9.

¹¹⁶ See, for example: Judges 14:6ff.

¹¹⁷ See, for example: Wis Sol 1:7.

¹¹⁸ See, for example: 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 10:6ff, 11:6, 16:13 and so on. There is an even richer set of texts around the God’s action on/through the human (as opposed to God’s) spirit. A survey of these is well beyond the boundaries of this study. The action of God to share the spirit of Moses on the 70 elders in Numbers 11:24ff bears mentioning however as it foreshadows the sharing of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2). See also 2 Kings [LXX 4 Kings] 2:9. Also noteworthy is the fact that God may withdraw the spirit, or imbue an evil or false spirit in its place. See 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 16:15ff and 1 Kings [LXX 3 Kings] 22:23.

¹¹⁹ Fuller discussions of the narrative significance of the (Holy) Spirit in Luke-Acts can be found in William Shepherd, *The Narrative Function of the Holy Spirit as Character in Luke-Acts* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1994). Ju Hur, *A Dynamic Reading of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

the promise to Abram to be a blessing (to other nations) (Gen 12:2) can be fulfilled. Jesus and his followers, including elements of Luke's implied audience, are inheritors of the politically liberative promises of God. Though not explicitly stated, it seems that the apparent leaders of Israel no longer bear the covenant of God. It is the followers of Jesus, both Gentile and Jews, who now inherit the rights and responsibilities of this promise.

3.2.2.3 Luke 4:18-19

Yoder's next Lukan quotation is part of the 'mission statement' of Jesus in Luke 4:18ff. This mission statement is itself marked as a quotation from Isaiah explicitly by τοῦ προφήτου Ησαΐου... τὸν τόπον οὗ ἦν γεγραμμένον" in verse 4:17. Interestingly, though the quotation is mostly from Isaiah 61:1-2, certain terms, "day of vengeance/recompense" (ἡμέραν ἀνταποδόσεως), "heal those who are downcast in their hearts" (ἰασασθαι τοὺς συντετριμμένους τὴν καρδίαν) are missing and "to let the oppressed go free" (ἀποστεῖλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει (Luke 4:18 see Isa 58:6) is included.¹²⁰ The modern ideological emphasis on 'precise' quotation and referencing is largely missing from the New Testament. A detailed exploration of the connections between Isaiah 61 and Luke 4 can be found in James A. Sanders "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4"¹²¹ and, as such, I will focus my reading on the intertextual insights introduced by Yoder's discussion.

The significance of the theme of the Jubilee as a time of physical and economic re-orientation is introduced in Isa 61:2 allusion of 4:19, "a welcome/ acceptable year of the Lord" (ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν). This direct quotation, coupled by the conflation of Isa 58:6 unlock the thematic elements of Jubilee explored in Isa 58 and further afield (especially Lev 25). Again the textual authority of the servant songs of Isaiah are brought to bear on Luke as the commands to release the "bonds of injustice" (σύνδεσμον ἀδικίας) and "forceful bargains" (βιαίων συναλλαγμάτων), to cancel 'every unjust account/dispersion' (ἄδικον διάσπα) (58:6), to give "(your) bread to the hungry" (πεινῶντι τὸν ἄρτον σου) (58:7) and so on. Pragmatic, physically-measurable Jubilee

¹²⁰ Bovon, *Luke 1*, 153.

¹²¹ James A. Sanders, "From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4," *Christianity, Judaism, and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Festschrift Morton Smith* 1, no. 12, *Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity* (1975): 75-106. Sanders' method of "Comparative Midrash" is an example of weaving other critical methods together into a kind of meta-hermeneutic. This, perhaps, forms a basis for Sanders' advocacy of "Canonical Criticism" as a means of analysing the canonical text. Interestingly, though Sanders makes historical claims about the different "axioms" of Jesus interpretation of Isa 61 in Luke 4 and the interpretations of the same text in Qumran, his analysis deals almost exclusively with the finished texts (works) of the various communities. Sanders' reading of Isa 61 under "comparative midrash" is highly intertextual, marking authority and discontinuities between texts and setting his argument within the ideological discourse of the various 1st century Jewish communities.

practices are central to Luke's presentation of Jesus and highlighted by Yoder's reading.¹²² As Jesus begins his ministry the sharp discontinuity can be seen between Israel 'as it should have been' and the realities of 1st century Judean life.

A second important intertextual theme arises in the subsequent conflict between Jesus and the residents of Nazareth (4:23-30)¹²³. Having captured the attention of the listeners by quoting the liberating scripture of Isaiah and alluding to the Jubilee, the narrative takes a sharp turn as the manner in which this reading will be fulfilled is expounded by Jesus. Alluding to the accounts of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath (Luke 4:26, 1Kings [LXX 3 Kings] 17:1-16) and Elisha and Naaman (4:27, 2 Kings [LXX 4 Kings] 5:1-14, see also Gentile healing in Capernaum, Luke 7:1-16), Jesus' shocking conclusion is that the action of God, marked by Spirit and scripture, will be realised firstly for the Gentiles. Whether the crowd is angered by the inclusion of the Gentiles,¹²⁴ or the possible rejection of the Israelites (Jews) in the proclamation of God's action is left ambiguous. The repeated phrase "none of them" (οὐδεμίαν αὐτῶν and οὐδεῖς αὐτῶν) (4:26, 27) suggests a complete rejection but in the wider context of a narrative which revolves around mainly Jewish characters this should be regarded as polemical.¹²⁵ Whatever the case, the consequence of Jesus' sermon in Nazareth is a conflict between the 'internal' Jewish cultural and political forces as well as the dominant forces of Empire.

A final comment must be made about Yoder's longer discussion of the temptation of Jesus as part of Luke's definition of the messianic kingship about to be realised.¹²⁶ If Yoder's quotations of Luke 3:22b and 4:18-19 are regarded as Spirit-marked bookends, the temptation of Jesus (4:1-13) forms part of a central struggle for identity (with the genealogy – 3:23-38) over and against the demonic. The thematic intertexts in scripture involving testing, temptation and conflict with the devil (τοῦ διαβόλου) (4:2)¹²⁷ are broad¹²⁸ however Yoder turns primarily to an extra-biblical discussion of the role of the tower of the temple to explore the significance of Jesus' temptation. An assumed background knowledge of punishment for blasphemy in the mishnah¹²⁹ involving being "thrown down from a tower in the temple wall"¹³⁰ forms a roughly coeval intertext for Luke's gospel. Yoder

¹²² See Yoder on Trocmé in Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 30-31.

¹²³ Noted briefly by Yoder. Ibid., 32-33.

¹²⁴ Gentile inclusion is a central theme in Luke-Acts which is not adequately incorporated into Yoder's Jesus-centred social-ethic. See, for example, Paul in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13).

¹²⁵ For 21st century Christian readers the Jewish/Gentile question is particularly poignant.

¹²⁶ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 25-27.

¹²⁷ For a fuller discussion about the use of ὁ Σατανᾶς and διαβόλος in Luke-Acts. See Bovon, *Luke 1*, 111.

¹²⁸ See, for example: Exod 24:18, 34:28, Deut 8:2, Deut 6:16, Job 1:6ff and so on.

¹²⁹ See discussion on Hyldahl's thesis. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 26-27.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 27.

suggests that Jesus' tacit acceptance of the messianic and theological titles "Son of God" (υἱὸς εἰ τοῦ θεοῦ) (4:9) and "Lord your God" (κύριον τὸν θεόν σου) (4:12) would constitute blasphemy and require punishment were they not true. For Jesus to remain safely on the tower underscores the truth of the claims of the previous chapters. Jesus has been identified as the fulfilment of messianic hope, the beloved Son of God, the anointed one of the Spirit and the vehicle of God's transformative action. In Luke 4:1-13 these claims are tested and symbolically affirmed.

3.2.2.4 Implications – World of the Text

The occupation of the lands of Judea and Galilee during the time of the second temple confronted the Jewish people with deep theological questions. The seeming absence of the liberating and sustaining Spirit of God in the face of the overwhelming might of the Roman Empire resonated with the experience of the Israelites in Exile and Egyptian slavery. It was thoroughly coherent with Israelite/Jewish narrative that the Spirit should inaugurate a messianic reign which involved physical, economic and political transformation. For Luke's implied audience, presumably situated in the Diaspora after the destruction of Herod's temple, the reminder about the connection between the Spirit and the liberative reign of God is similarly strong. As a community of Jesus believers struggled to construct their identity, the form of the Lukan narrative sought to shape them to be people where the theological and the political were never divorced. The Spirit of God in the Luke-Acts account is afforded a continuity which draws the Lukan community into the story of God's liberation across history. The Spirit can no longer be regarded as absent, despite the power of the Empire and the destruction of the temple. The Spirit has rested on Jesus and his messianic reign has been inaugurated. The promises and prophecies of the messiah have been tested and found true and the discipleship community is called to respond to this new kingdom-ethic, empowered by the Spirit that was poured out on Jesus and shared with them at Pentecost.

These messianic consequences can also be thought of in terms of allegiance to a sovereign power. Allegiance to Jesus is a recognition that Jesus is a king and thus implies citizenship in a new and different kind of kingdom.¹³¹ An intertextual reading shaped by the interests of a politically-located Christian faith offers a depiction of Jesus as not simply another king, but rather as a sovereign above and against all earthly kings, even favourite kings like David. For Luke's audience, as with Jesus, the consequences are often that the political powers (kings) will resist this new kind of sovereignty, sometimes with extreme violence. The witness of the Lukan narrative, however, is that

¹³¹ In contrast to Paul's Roman citizenship (Acts 16:37-38)

this resistance is futile. For Jesus is named as the messiah as he is baptised in the river and plots a radical, restorative Jubilee in his hometown. Blessed by the Spirit, this fulfilment of prophecy and promise, rooted in scripture, is a key part of God's action in the world. The people of the third Gospel are enjoined to find themselves a part of this story, allied to this king.

In practical terms the implied audience of Luke is now bound by the ethical strictures of Jubilee. Forgiveness of debt, care and healing of the sick and blind, and feeding the hungry form the basis of a socio-ethic that directs this community. That there is a discontinuity between what should be (Jubilee/Sabbath economics) and what is (the host of social and economic evils of the Roman Empire), is still problematic.¹³² The path forward for the foundling Christian community, however, is not the path of collaboration (Herod and temple elite), ascetic retreat (Essenes) or violent uprising (Zealots). Rather it is allegiance to the Spirit-ordained politically-radical Gentile-including servant king.

3.2.2.5 Implications – World of the reader

In times of perceived suffering or injustice a regular question for Christians is whether the Spirit is absent. Interestingly this question, while real for disenfranchised or subaltern communities themselves, is often more pronounced for the privileged (western) Christians who have heard the radical call of the gospel and struggle with what it means to commit 'class betrayal'¹³³ in the name of Jesus. The sense of injustice in the experience of African American slavery, the South American Solentiname communities,¹³⁴ the black Christian resistance movements of apartheid South Africa¹³⁵ and the indigenous Australian Christians¹³⁶ form a clear context against which music, prophecy and preaching sits. Seldom is the power of the Spirit regarded as absent from the worship language of these groups. For the African American spirituals the liberating power of God is strong.¹³⁷ In the hope of victory-already-won in Desmond Tutu's preaching despite the obvious power of the

¹³² This is recognised by most of the "philosophical sects" of the day, namely the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes in "The Wars of the Jews", book 2, 8:2 and the Zealots in book 2, 22:1. book 4, 3.1ff and so on in Josephus (tr William Whiston), *The Works of Josephus: New Updated Edition* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1987).

¹³³ To borrow a term from Johann Baptist Metz.

¹³⁴ Brian K Blount, *Cultural Interpretation: Reorientating New Testament Criticism*, 41ff.

¹³⁵ An introduction to the conflicting theologies and practices of the church in South Africa are described in John De Gruchy and Steve De Gruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa (25th anniversary edition)* (London: SCM, 2004). and Albert Nolan, *God in South Africa: The challenge of the gospel* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1988).

¹³⁶ For a discussion of the theological implications for 'second peoples' in an invaded space see Chris Budden, *Following Jesus in Invaded Space: Doing Theology on Aboriginal Land* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2009).

¹³⁷ Especially in the Exodus. See the song titles "Go down Moses", "Didn't Old Pharaoh Get Lost" and "Come Down" in John W. Work, *American Negro Songs: 230 Folk Songs and Spirituals, Religious and Secular* (Mineola, New York: Courier Dover Publications, 1998).

Nationalist government. In the ease of identification with Jesus by the poor of Solentiname. In the strongly spiritual language of the dreaming in Australian indigenous narratives and its coherence with Judeo-Christian ideas in many communities. There is also a profound disquiet for many Christians when the overtly spirit-filled language of Pentecostalism is closely bound to the prosperity gospel which is diametrical opposed to the radical framing of theology and practice found in the synoptic gospels. Into this context Yoder's reading of Luke, enriched by the intertextuality of scripture and ancient cultural texts, provides a hope-filled response. The Spirit of God is alive and at work in the ongoing creation, sustaining and liberation of God's world. The paradoxical actions of Jesus give example and direction to the paradoxical practice of Christian discipleship in the face of overwhelming power.

Citizenship in the kingdom of God, if it means anything today, involves allegiance to a 'nation' of servanthood. For Yoder (and me) this also necessarily involves a commitment to pacifism (peacemaking), as the path of Jesus is never a path of violence.¹³⁸ In terms of the relationship to the 'powers and principalities of the earth', an allegiance to Jesus as King entails a 'rhetoric of distancing'¹³⁹ to Empire and other hegemonies, political or economic. In Walter Wink's contextually steeped words, "the churches are not handmaidens of government, operating to provide ideological consent to create an atmosphere of compliance."¹⁴⁰ A rhetoric of distancing is not, however, a rhetoric of (violent) revolution – at least a revolution at the hands of human agency. The messianic revolution is a consequence of God's agency. In forming a Christian social-ethic or guideline for Christian politics, both extremes must be avoided. 'Leaving it all to God' is no more (and no less) problematic than 'doing it all ourselves'.

An important note is needed here on post-holocaust interpretations of any New Testament texts where a rhetoric against 'Jews' can be constructed. It is irresponsible¹⁴¹ to explore an internal (or partly internal) theological and rhetorical struggle within the 1st century Jewish communities and

¹³⁸ This is a contested position not the least because of the New Testament witness does to the wrath and judgement of God. See for example Luke 3:7 and 21:20-28. In this I take a consequentialist position, that is, that the suffering laid at the feet of God is often a consequence of evil and 'sin' rather than a product of God's direct action. There is, of course, no totally satisfying answer to questions of theodicy and the responsibility of God in suffering. I would affirm, however, that irrespective of God's role in pain and suffering, violence is never an option for followers of Jesus.

¹³⁹ See Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations*.

¹⁴⁰ Walter Wink, *When the Powers Fall: Reconciliation in the Healing of Nations* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1998), 66.

¹⁴¹ And presumably unethical. The importance of ethics in New Testament study are advocated by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. Just how an ethics of interpretation should be constructed is still outstanding. See Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and ethic*.

their Gentile associates *without* acknowledging this context. The polemical shape of Luke 4¹⁴² is nuanced by the (intertextual) awareness that this is an internal Jewish discussion. As such it cannot be regarded as an outright rejection of the Jews by God in Jesus, but rather as a warning or sombre ironic acknowledgement of the difficult relationship between those Jews who recognise Jesus' messiahship, and those who do not. In this note I have stepped outside the bounds of a purely literary analysis of the text in order to bring insights from historiographical reconstructions to bear on the questions.¹⁴³ This however, is coherent with an understanding of historical intertextuality at the service of rhetorical and political (here overtly ethical) concerns. To put it simply, the context of the internal 1st century Jewish events and narratives precludes any universal or totalising rejection of Jews or Judaism in the plan of God.¹⁴⁴

Finally the narrative of Luke 1-4 and its interruptions lead to the firm conclusion that the mission of Jesus will entail conflict, both with the dominant political powers of the world and within the internal communities and cultures in which this mission is lived out. The nature of and extent to which this conflict is played out in subsequent generations, from the 1st century to the 21st, is a central aspect of Yoder's reading of the New Testament.

3.2.3 Exploration of tributaries: Significant textual fragments in Yoder's reading of Luke

Yoder's detailed reading of Luke 1-4 is followed by illustrative examples from the remainder of the narrative to underscore his central argument. By and large the intertextual connections in this part of Yoder's exploration can be regarded as 'thematic', enriching and bringing to fruition the central thrust of Yoder's reading of Luke.¹⁴⁵ In this study I will continue to follow Yoder's reading of Luke suggesting mostly thematic possibilities which may colour or bring contrast to his reading.

¹⁴² The language here is by no means the strongest anti-Jewish language of the New Testament, or even Luke-Acts – see for example John 5:18, 6:41, 18:36, 19:7, 19:38, and Acts 9:23, 12:3, 13:45, 14:19.

¹⁴³ I am indebted particularly to the work of James Dunn on this front. See especially James D. G. Dunn, *The partings of the ways: between Christianity and Judaism and their significance for the character of Christianity (Second Edition)* (London: SCM, 2006). Dunn's historical work is in contrast to some other (historical) New Testament scholars of his generation, for example, I. Howard Marshall. Marshall's summary includes the following polemically irresponsible statement about the Judaism of Jesus' day. "But already before this Jesus had uttered his condemnation of the hypocritical religious found among many of the Pharisees and of the worship at the temple. So in the end he was condemned by the Jews, but God raise him from the dead to be a Prince and a Saviour." Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 36. The lack of reference to Roman participation is startling.

¹⁴⁴ I tend to prefer the more narratively dynamic 'action' of God in this study, however in this instance I use plan in deference to the work of John Squires who taught me much about interpreting the New Testament in the light of Jewish-Christian relationships. See in particular John Squires, *The Plan of God in Luke-Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

¹⁴⁵ Interestingly, and in contrast to much contemporary scholarship, Yoder does not continue his exploration into Acts.

3.2.3.1 Luke 6:12-26: Public ministry, blessings and woes

The first part of the narrative referred to by Yoder in this section of his Lukan exploration combines the choosing of the twelve in Luke 6:12-16 and the sermon on the plain of 6:17-26. The choice of twelve disciples is cited as key part of the publicising of Jesus' ministry,¹⁴⁶ which is then announced through the blessings and the woes. The naming of these disciples, preceded by prayer,¹⁴⁷ continues the process of incorporating followers into the already established action of God. This action is once again expounded in the reversal poetic structure of the inversions of fortune in 6:17-26.

There are a number of intertextual possibilities that may be explored with respect to this text. They include:

- Literal connections such as the use of the terms blessing (μακάριοι)¹⁴⁸ and the relationship between sending (forms of ἀποστέλλω) and apostle as a noun (ἀποστόλους) in 6:13.¹⁴⁹ In Luke ἀποστέλλω takes on a new embodiment in Jesus' 'sent ones'.
- Narrative resonances in the form of structural forms or poetic arrangements. The clearest examples of these include the intratextual resonance between inverted social order of the sermon on the plain and the *Magnificat*.¹⁵⁰ The relatively strong narrative patterns here 'unlock' the rich Psalmic intertextuality linked by Mary's song (discussed above). A second narrative resonance emerges in the parallels between the movement of Jesus from the mountain (6:12) to the plain (6:17) with that of Moses bringing the law.¹⁵¹ This is strengthened with the verbal coherence of the terms ὄρος and πεδινού as "adjectives describing the promised land".¹⁵²
- Thematic allusions to the story and experience of Hebrew identity. These include those literal and narrative resonances listed above but can be extended to include also: the appeal to prophetic authority in 6:23, the numeric significance of the twelve (δώδεκα) (6:13) and

¹⁴⁶ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 33.

¹⁴⁷ Bovon here cites Philo. Prayer was an important aspect of the selection. Bovon, *Luke 1*, 208.

¹⁴⁸ See, for example: Psalms 1:1, Prov 8:34 and so on.

¹⁴⁹ See, for example: ἀπέστειλεν and ἐξαπέστειλε(v) in 2 Kings [LXX 4 Kings] 5:10, and 2 Sam [LXX 2 Kings] 2:5, 3:14 and so on. Often used in concert with heavenly or kingly messengers (ἀγγέλους). See Haggai 1:12-13, 1Kings [LXX 3 Kings] 21:5, Gen 32:5-6 and especially the conflation in Ezek 17:15: Καὶ ἀποστήσεται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἐξαποστέλλειν ἀγγέλους ἑαυτοῦ.

¹⁵⁰ Yoder ignores this link preferring connections between the sermon on the plain and the synagogue mission in Luke 4. See Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 32-34.

¹⁵¹ Bovon calls this a "Sinai typology". Bovon, *Luke 1*, 212. See Exod 32:30; 34:2 for examples.

¹⁵² Relatively common in LXX. Ibid.

its relationship to the institution of a political entity (nation) around the tribes of Israel.¹⁵³ Bovon here suggests that the conflation of themes in 6:18 and 6:21 allude strongly to the ‘ideal state’ after Sinai, which was established with no poverty or sickness.¹⁵⁴ The economic correspondence is clear as Deut 15 speaks of “there being no poor in your midst”¹⁵⁵ however the therapeutic allusions are not as strong. Indeed, if this particular intertextual connection were to be regarded as ‘loud’, a connection with other healing events in Luke (for example 6:10) would be required. Alternatively a thematic reversal in the light of the Sinai illusions (mountain/plain/twelve) may be discerned. Namely, that under the ideal Sinai state, poverty was eliminated and the end of illness (provisionally promised in Deut 7:15) was to occur. In the Lukan narrative Jesus’ action to heal the sick, coupled with the Sinaitic allusions above, may inversely signal a divine promise to end poverty.

The pretextual possibilities for connections between Luke 6 and scripture are vast and extend beyond those heretofore offered. In addition to these there are two coeval/ post-texts which bear noting. The first (and most obvious) is the parallel between the beatitudes in Matthew’s sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5ff and Luke’s sermon on the plain. For readers reading after the formation(s) of the canon of Christian scripture, the similarities and differences between the accounts highlight interpretive possibilities.¹⁵⁶ The most relevant for this study is the Lukan focus on personal and economic blessings (and woes) at the expense of the sexual mores of Matthew’s account.¹⁵⁷ The interpretive implications of this are not that sexual ethics are unimportant, but rather that the societal reordering is the context in which all change must be viewed. The second intertext of note is the coeval or post-textual¹⁵⁸ Didache (particularly 1:5) which enriches the pattern of blessings against woes (μακάριοι οἱ against οὐαὶ, οἱ) for early Christians. The appeal to the first Gospel and the Didache as coeval or post-texts enriches the sense of Luke’s particular rhetorical emphasis and the presence of elements of the Lukan ‘socio-ethic’ in broader Christian narratives.

In discussing Luke 6:12ff Yoder continues the process of solidifying and enriching the politically located themes of Luke 1-4. His particular emphasis that this is a continuation of the jubilee themes

¹⁵³ See especially Exod 3:12, 24:1,9. Also significance of twelve in Exod 15:27, 24:4 and so on.

¹⁵⁴ See Deut 15:4 referenced in Bovon, *Luke 1*, 212.

¹⁵⁵ “Ὅτι οὐκ ἔστα ἐν σοὶ ἐνδεής - not πτωχοί here against 6:20.

¹⁵⁶ Appeals to the Q source hypothesis and so on may be illuminating but begin with a different set of persuasive intentions, namely to give an account of textual origins. An intertextual study need not seek recourse to these questions in forming an interpretation. Rather the two texts (chosen from an ideological context) are compared with the conscious avoidance of positing historical claims about their historical formation.

¹⁵⁷ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus (2nd edition)*, 34.

¹⁵⁸ The exact date of relationship between Luke’s composition and the Didache is not critical. For the purposes of this study it is simply enough to contrast it intertextually with the authority afforded to pre-textual Scripture.

of chapter 4 should be contrasted with the more eschatological emphasis in 6:23.¹⁵⁹ While the establishment of re-ordered society is still at the core of the narrative, the publicising nature of the naming of the twelve, the sermon on the plain and the ironic “in that day”¹⁶⁰ underscore the immediacy and presence of the revolution. This is not simply an exposition of the new society. My difference with Yoder on this point is not so much one of disagreement but of emphasis. More critical to this study, however, is the inauguration of a new “base” community in chapter 6, to be shaped further in chapters 9 and 12-14 (see below). As collective action is critical to political change, the involvement of some corporate vehicle to enact (or witness to) God’s action must be established. The naming of the disciples and the ceremonial declaration on the plain, accompanied by prayer and healing, brings the action of God in particular blessed characters (Mary, Zechariah, John and Jesus) to a diverse group representing many aspects of society. A kind of newly interpreted Israel, twelve disciples rather than twelve tribes, is installed with the implication that this new Israel will be able to fulfil key components of the old covenant so far unrealised. Exactly how this will happen is once again laid out in the radical reversal of personal and economic structures affecting the rich and the poor, the hungry and the full, the reviled and the joyous.

3.2.3.2 Luke 9:1-22

There are wide range intertextual possibilities that may be explored with respect to this text. They include:

- The rich literal signals in scripture such as the language of “Kingdom”, “bread” and “prophet/prophecy”, especially Elijah, in 9:1-22. Notably, however, is the rarity of the specific term “Kingdom of God” (Βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ) (9:11) in scripture.¹⁶¹ Within the synoptic Gospels the thematic centrality of “kingdom of God” unlocks the Scriptural connotations of “kingdom”, yet offers interpretive colour by contrasting the divine kingdom with the earthly kingdoms of scripture.¹⁶² Similarly the “five loaves and two fish” unlock numerous allusions to feeding (for example, Exod 16), bread (ἄρτους) (6:16)¹⁶³ and fish (ἰχθύες) (6:13) in scripture.¹⁶⁴ The Exodus intertext is underscored again with reference to

¹⁵⁹ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 34.

¹⁶⁰ Ironic because ‘the day’ is today.

¹⁶¹ Perhaps Wis. Sol 10:10 and oblique references in Wisdom 6:4. See Karl Ludwig Schmidt “βασιλεύς,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 1, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 574ff.

¹⁶² And contextual political reality – “tetrach” (ὁ τετραράχης) (9:7) is used in place of King. Bovon suggests that this is because King is too politically charged a term. I suggest that it may also foreshadow the collapse of Herod’s power about to come as Jesus turns to Jerusalem. Bovon, *Luke 1*, 348.

¹⁶³ The unleavened bread in Exod 12 is particularly interesting as it becomes part of sign of the pre-Exodus protective agreement between God and the people of Israel. Jesus’ blessing of the loaves makes another kind of ‘Holy’ bread.

the twelve disciples commissioned (and twelve baskets left over) which alludes to the “one (man) from each tribe” (ἓν ἀνδρα ἕνα κατὰ φυλὴν) (Num 13:3).

- These linguistic signals contribute to wider narrative and thematic intertextual connotations. The references to Elijah (9:8, 19, also 9:30-33) in the context of Jesus’ identity opens a discussion about precisely which (prophetic) expectations are placed on Jesus, the secret Christ (9:20-21). The messianic associations around the returning Elijah are especially strong.¹⁶⁵ In the context of Yoder’s reading, the identity of Jesus is again held in continuity with the prophecies of scripture, even if Jesus is not the new Elijah. This messianic identity illicitly confusion in both the enemy (Herod, 9:7-9) and the disciples (9:18-20).

These confusing messianic themes are conflated with the Exodus references above to prepare the way for a central consequence of Jesus’ ministry, namely, the turning towards Jerusalem (9:22)¹⁶⁶ and the cross. As Yoder contends, “The cross is beginning to loom not as a ritually prescribed instrument of propitiation but as the political alternative to both insurrection and quietism”.¹⁶⁷ The Exodus experience, so strongly alluded to here, is symbolic of the kind of political alternative that Jesus embodies. In slavery the Israelites did not remain docile, nor did they plot violent overthrow. Rather, reliant on God for direction and succour, they followed Moses and walked into certain death in the wilderness. This action was as confusing to the ancient Israelites as it is to the Jesus’ followers. However it is far more confusing (διηπόρει) (9:7) to Herod. There is no way in which the politically powerful can understand this third alternative. That this path can result, ultimately, in new life (9:22) is beyond comprehension.¹⁶⁸

3.2.3.3 The consequences of discipleship in Luke 14:26 and 22:25-27.

As part of a longer discussion on the nature of the call (Luke 12:49-13:9; 14:25:36) to discipleship Yoder quotes two key phrases, Luke 14:26 and parts of 22:25-27. Here Yoder sees Luke’s gospel as giving shape to the ‘base’ group for political change established earlier. This group is marked by

¹⁶⁴ The death of fish is often a curse in Scripture. See for example Ezek 29:4ff, Isaiah 50:2. For Christian interpretations of the importance of ΙΧΘΥΣ see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke X-XXIV*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 767. The numerology of ‘five’ and ‘two’ seems less important. Bovon finds “no symbolic meaning” in the numbers. See Bovon, *Luke 1*, 356.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 350.

¹⁶⁶ Jerusalem as a theme is also richly connotative.

¹⁶⁷ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus (2nd edition)*, 36.

¹⁶⁸ Interestingly, to emphasise his point Yoder brings the Lukan text into conversation with the account in John 6. The a-synoptic, a-historically interested nature of this intertextuality is characteristic of post-structuralist understandings of writing. Ibid.

‘voluntary commitment’ in a culture of rigid vocational expectations, causing radical divisions in the dominant social and familial structures.¹⁶⁹ For Yoder this new group is shaped by certain socio-ethics which further set it apart from the political norms of the day.¹⁷⁰

The intertextual connections for the key phrases in 14:26 and 22:25-27 include:

- A radical challenge to the honouring edicts of Torah law (see especially Exod 20:12) and the familial hierarchy structure underpinning 1st century culture. For Jesus to claim a route to liberation which involved a breaking of the assumed place of the family introduces an intertextual incongruity; a kind of textual shudder as the text conflicts radically with its intertexts. The usual tendency of pretextual connections to afford authority is twisted here.¹⁷¹ For the honour (τίμα) of parents (Exod:20:12) to be compromised by Jesus’ words in 14:26 is significant.
- The place of the soul/life (ψυχήν)¹⁷² in the language and descriptive imagery of scripture is also important. The language of ψυχή in the LXX can often be understood as incorporating the physical aspects of a personhood (see its use, for example in Lev 2:1). The deliverance of the ψυχή¹⁷³ thus involves liberation and relief in tangible ways. Discipleship to Jesus involves a rejection of the love of life in all its physicality. This rejection, however, is not a kind of nihilism but rather a new action of allegiance and commitment to this different base community and its social ethic. This is in direct contrast to the evident examples of “those who exercise authority(lord over)” (κυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν) (22:25),¹⁷⁴ from the corrupt kings of Israel through to Herod and his Roman masters.¹⁷⁵ Implied in Yoder’s reading is that continued ‘love of self’ is inextricable from allegiance to the earthly kingdoms which God will bring low.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 37.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 38. This aspect of Yoder’s interpretation most closely resonates with my interest in this study. The core of Christian life involves an exploration of implications of a costly discipleship in all matters. Notably problematic for (post)-Christendom Christians is their relationship to formal political power.

¹⁷¹ With a similar effect to Jesus’ dangerous exposition of his ministry in Luke 4.

¹⁷² Most commentators translate as ‘life’. It can be thought of as ‘self’, see Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I-IX*, 6.

¹⁷³ For example, Psa 3:2.

¹⁷⁴ See also Neh 5:15, 9:37.

¹⁷⁵ The intertextual inclusion of the Roman masters is heightened with the Hellenistic allusion of εὐεργέται - designated benefactors – from the Greek world. Josephus calls Vespasian “benefactor”. See Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, 344.

- The reversal of first and last (13:30) marks a pattern not dissimilar to the reversal of elder and younger siblings in scripture, especially the Patriarchal period.¹⁷⁶ It is possible that this allusion could support a supersessionist understanding of Christians (or Jesus-believing Jews) over Jews. I would argue, however, that here the emphasis should be placed on unexpected blessing rather than the eventual struggle for power.

The politics of God binds Jesus-followers to God's action within a community which is shaped by certain norms. To belong to this community demands a denial of soul-shaping social structures. These social structures are linked by Yoder with an awareness of the political kingdoms lying behind them. God's liberating action in the world demands discipleship and forms a base community, one which grows out of a sense of *imitatio Christi* and moves inevitably towards the cross. Yoder's claim that Jesus can be used as a model for a Christian social ethic becomes even stronger. Discipleship to Jesus demands the formation of a politically active group, drawn from the 'last' and challenging the 'first'.

3.2.3.4 Luke 19:36-46 and Luke 22:24-53: Non-violent rage.

Yoder's developing socio-ethic grows from the example and commands of Jesus. It is important, therefore, for Yoder to grapple with his own advocacy of non-violence and the gospel instances where Jesus appears to act with violence. The time of fulfilment has come, (see 19:28, 38, 40 and 42-26), and the end-point of his journey to Jerusalem, signalled in 9:51, results in his entry to Jerusalem and a final confrontation with the powers. The nature of this ultimate confrontation is of key interest to developing a socio-ethic based on Jesus. Suggestions of violence on Jesus' part must be addressed. Yoder deals with the cleansing of the temple and the ambiguous instructions of Jesus regarding the swords on the Mount of Olives (22:36-38 and 49-52) in relational series.¹⁷⁷

Intertextual colour may be discerned in the following Scriptural relationships:

- The tension of Jesus' authority against the political forces continues. Jesus' monarchical identity is underscored by the associations in 19:36 with 2 Kings 9:14 [LXX 4 Kings 9:13] as garments (ἱμάτια) are laid down under the king as a sign of recognition. As Jesus enters this final confrontation he retains his kingly authority. The language of battle continues in 19:43 as the ramparts/barricades (χόρακιά) indicate a siege. Alluding to the strong theme of

¹⁷⁶ The narratives of Jacob and Esau Gen 27, and Joseph and his brothers in Gen 37:3 and later in chapter 42 are the most obvious examples.

¹⁷⁷ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 41-47.

despair at the various calamities that Jerusalem has faced Jesus “weeps over the city” (τὴν πόλιν ἔκλαυσεν ἐπ’ αὐτήν) (19:41).¹⁷⁸ This sorrow and anger comes to a head in the temple which has failed to remain a “house of prayer (for all nations)” (οἶκος προσευχῆς ... πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) (19:46 – quoting Isa 56:7). Instead it has become a “robber’s cave” (σπήλαιον ληστῶν) (Jer 7:11), and requires that the “sons of Levi” (τοὺς υἱοὺς Λευὶ) (Mal 3:3) will be purified.¹⁷⁹ The density of Scriptural allusion here stands in continuity with the theme of Jesus’ role as the true kingly messiah of Israel and the confrontation that will result as this realisation confronts the present religious-political authority structure.

- Yoder argues strongly that the term for Jesus’ action in the temple, “cast out” (ἐκβάλλω) is a forceful but not necessarily violent action.¹⁸⁰ Yoder’s characterisation of ἐκβάλλω as simply to ‘send away’ is a little weak, overlooking the ‘ballistic’ qualities of the term. An action may be irresistible without being violent (for example Mark:1:12). Jesus’ action in the temple is backed by the crowds who recognise, for now at least, that his authority stands against the power of temple and Roman collaboration.
- A different kind of kingly authority¹⁸¹ is expounded as the passion narrative continues and the crowds “switch allegiances” (23:22). Jesus’ command to buy a sword (22:36) followed by the dismissal of violence after its first use, “enough of that” (Ἔατε ἕως τούτου) (Luke 22:51) is reminiscent of the ‘eleventh hour’ change of instructions to Abraham as he was about to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22). At this stage of the narrative a Zealot-like revolution under Jesus’ authority remains a possibility. Nevertheless another option is preferred. In fulfilment of both Scripture and the earlier narrative,¹⁸² Jesus’ political revolution is shaped like a cross and not a sword. That he is “reckoned with the lawless” (Καὶ μετὰ ἀνόμων ἐλογίσθη) (22:37 alluding to Isa 53:12), though inevitable, in no way allows his followers to act like Zealots.

These intertextual connotations serve to paint a rich picture of religious-political tension near explosion. That Jesus is a competing political force with divine authority is clear as he enters Jerusalem. The way in which he will enact this authority is still contested. Johnson rightly discerns

¹⁷⁸ See Neh 1:4, Psa 137 [LXX136]:1 Lam 1:1 and so on. Noted by Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, 298.

¹⁷⁹ Often used to describe the action of God – see Mark 5:40, Matt 9:38. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd edition), 40.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 43.

¹⁸¹ See discussion of 22:25-27 above.

¹⁸² See aspects of the servant songs (Isa 61:1, 58:6 and so on) fulfilled in Luke 4.

the irony of the conversations about the sword(s) in Luke 22.¹⁸³ Violent response to violence is an ever present temptation in the world of Luke's narrative, but Jesus' journey to the cross says, for his followers at least, 'enough of that'.

3.2.3.5 Implications for the world of the text

The end of the gospel of Luke¹⁸⁴ completes the trajectory of conflict between Jesus and the political authorities in Jerusalem. In the face of overwhelming military and 'legal' might Jesus is hung on the cross.¹⁸⁵ The interpretive weight given to the cross over and against the resurrection by Yoder is heavy.¹⁸⁶ It is only through the cross that the action of God, realised in the conflict between Jesus and the religious and political powers, can be finally resolved in coherence with the socio-ethic of Jesus' life. If God's method of action to raise the lowly and to bring down the mighty relied on Zealot-like revolution or practical acquiesce to Roman might, the conclusion to the narrative trajectory could not have been the cross. A 'rhetoric of distancing' from these options dominates Luke and Yoder's reading of Luke. Enriched intertextually by the language, themes and prophecy of Scripture, a third way to understand God's political action in Jesus is demonstrated. The Jubilee traditions most closely describe the new order that God will inaugurate through his messiah. The kingly and prophetic authority of God rests firmly with Jesus, his suffering servant, over and against the powers that appear to be in control. The faithfulness and providence of God to the Israelites during the Exodus underscores a model of reliance and trust which should shape the new 'base' political group. This political movement finds its identity and its action exemplified by the life of Jesus, and the path towards the cross.

3.2.3.6 Implications for the world of the reader

Yoder's reading of Luke¹⁸⁷ concludes at the cross. Acknowledging once again that his reading is for the specific purpose of discerning an ethic from the life of Jesus, Yoder is critical of historicizing 'reconstructions' which are often marked by a "sweeping overconfidence in [the] ability to second-guess the sources".¹⁸⁸ Instead Yoder seems to advocate the reading of the canonical text as the

¹⁸³ Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, 347.

¹⁸⁴ Yoder doesn't go into a detailed reading here – broadly touching on the content of Luke 23-24. See Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus (2nd edition)*, 48-53.

¹⁸⁵ Yoder contends regularly that Jesus never broke the law – however legal might can be understood in terms of those who have the power to enforce and interpret the law – rather than some 'objective' test against uninterpreted rules.

¹⁸⁶ See only a brief mention of resurrection witness on the road to Emmaus in Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus (2nd edition)*, 51.

¹⁸⁷ In the first edition section at least.

¹⁸⁸ Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus (2nd edition)*, 50.

authoritative source for understanding Jesus and early discipleship. Here, once again, Yoder's hermeneutic is not defined with precision, drawing on historical, literary and ecclesiological 'evidence' in constructing his interpretation. Moreover his hermeneutical interest is self-consciously interested. "I have not investigated the special complex of probably politically orientated narratives in chapter 13" including "Pilate's massacre of the Galileans, the tower of Siloam, the unfruitful fig tree" and so on.¹⁸⁹ These characteristics, combined with his ambivalent attitude to the pre-eminence of historical method in interpretation,¹⁹⁰ lend justification to the description of Yoder's reading as strongly intertextual. Though he does not use the term explicitly, it is through the connotative richness of intertextual associations that Yoder produces a rhetorically-shaped reading.

Within this reading it is critical that the parameters of a Jesus-based socio-ethic are developed. In particular the distinction between violence and conflict in the life of Jesus and his followers becomes important. On this point I suggest that Yoder's use of the term 'nonviolent resistance'¹⁹¹ must be qualified as a thoroughly active undertaking. Jesus' confrontation in the temple can only be described as active resistance. An *imitatio Christi* ethic, then, is best described as involving active, non-violent resistance. Regularly this activity will lead to confrontation, and at times it may well 'insult' the closely held ideals of others. What is forbidden in Christian ethics, however, is anything that is physically forceful or damaging to another person or their long-term welfare.¹⁹² Yoder's recurrent focus on the difficult aspects of Jesus' ministry suggests a struggle with similar questions. What are the precise parameters of violence/non-violence for Jesus, and thus, by call, for disciples of Jesus?

3.3 In closing

The implications for interpretation of the third gospel for contemporary readers are shaped by the political location of the reader. As a western educated man I resonate with Bovon's assertion. "How can I, a well-off exegete, dare to interpret the Beatitudes in a world of poverty? In no wise could I style myself an intermediary. My only possible orientation is not on the side of Jesus, but rather on that of the listeners."¹⁹³ To extend this from poverty to the broader questions of political power and

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 51-52.

¹⁹⁰ See, for example his profound and paradoxical hermeneutic conclusion: "At this one point there is no difference between the Jesus of *Historie* and the Christ of *Geschichte*, or between Christ as God and Jesus as Man, or between the religious of Jesus and the religion about Jesus (or between the Jesus of the canon and the Jesus of history). Ibid., 53.

¹⁹¹ See especially discussion in Ibid., 89-92.

¹⁹² Of course, the non-violence here is a limiting quality of the ethic. Insult and conflict will often be avoided because of fidelity to the 'love', 'grace' or 'forgiveness' embodied by Jesus.

¹⁹³ Bovon, *Luke 1*, 223.

authority the question becomes then one of allegiance. Culturally predetermined to side with the earthly authorities on matters of law, debt and military power, the opposing kingship of Jesus can only invoke ethical dissonance. Am I (and is my community) able to bear allegiance to Christ over and against the political demands of nation and cultural hegemony? How might the community to which I belong look to Jesus to form a social-ethic? How might we view ourselves as a political base community with the explicit purpose of working (non-violently) for political transformation? All these questions judder against the phenomenological reality of western (post)-Christendom experience; of economically middle-class, socially conservative, Sunday-morning Christians. For us, the 'class betrayal' demanded by the gospel is both an alarming challenge and a theo-political necessity.

4 Conclusions

The conclusions that arise from this study of intertextuality, the third Gospel and the social-ethics of John Howard Yoder fall broadly into two categories. The first set of conclusions includes those dealing with the nature of intertextuality as it arises from poststructural thought. The second set of conclusions pertain more specifically to the insights gleaned from reading the gospel of Luke through an ideologically-declared intertextuality. The implications of this approach contribute to the broader question of developing a meta-hermeneutic which creates links between a range of interpretive methods.

4.1 Intertextuality ‘as such’

The concept of intertextuality that arises out of the poststructuralist literary and cultural theory of Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida is characterised in the following ways.

- Firstly, intertextuality implies that all texts are *bricolage*; that is, constructions of other texts with no distillable overarching design or intentionality to summarise the text or direct its reading. Intertextual readings, therefore, are interested in the ongoing productivity of meaning that emerges out of engagement with the textual space. This productivity emerges not from a single authorial plan, but out of a creative intersection with the ever-growing intertextual space.
- A poststructural intertextuality also implies that each new text, itself an intertext, is different from that which has come before *and* from what will subsequently emerge. Ultimate “theological”¹ meaning is always differed.
- If intertextuality is to be regarded as productivity, intertextual study requires some appreciation of the context of production. For the reasons covered in chapters 1 and 2 the context of production should not be regarded as accounting simply for authorial intention nor a study of psychological forces. Rather the broader cultural, ideological and political forces are regarded as important intertextual factors. In the discourse of intertextuality, this

¹ In the Barthesian sense of “universal”.

awareness is signalled by Kristeva, and has been helpfully developed in New Testament studies by Vernon K. Robbins.

- Correspondingly, intertextual study leads to insights about the mythologies or ‘second-order’ significations which structure our cultural, ideological and theological frames. A poststructural intertextuality initiates a conversation between the text, a broader intertextual milieu, and the epistemological forces from which it emerges.

4.2 Intertextuality as a meta-hermeneutic

The aforementioned conclusions about poststructuralist intertextuality support the claim that intertextuality may be used as a helpful meta-hermeneutic. This meta-hermeneutic engages various strands of interpretive enquiry in generative conversation. The following insights on intertextuality in biblical scholarship develop the possibilities of its meta-interpretive function.

The connections of poststructuralist intertextuality to New Testament scholarship highlighted in chapter 2 include:

- The introduction of social and cultural intertexts into the intertextual conversation. While it is often more convenient to deal with only texts as ‘inscribed artefacts’, less well defined images, ideas and norms impact intertextual productivity. The historical work of Warren Carter and the more radical interpretation of Roland Boer both provide examples of an intertextuality which includes ‘unfinished’ texts.
- The meta-hermeneutic push in Richard Hays’ seminal work *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* arises as his appropriation of intertextuality ‘spills over’ from its initial historical focus into dealing with questions of literary-function and ideological interpretation. The ideological factors which emerge from Hays’ work are not dealt with by him at length, but a hermeneutical overflow comes directly from his interest in intertextuality. This overflow is also recognised in the parallel field of Roman poetical study as Lowell Edmunds’ historical search is expanded by the implications of intertextual discourse.

- The inclusion of post-texts in intertextual study. In New Testament study the regular use of chronologically subsequent intertexts as a means of framing interpretation is seldom acknowledged. In the *Semeia* 69/70 collection and the work of Matthew Bates an alternative is exemplified as key post-texts, both ancient and contemporary, self-consciously shape the interpretation of the New Testament texts. Daniel Boyarin's interpretation of the Hebrew Bible through the intertextuality of midrash provides a parallel example of post-textuality in the scholarship of ancient, religious works.

Chapters 1 and 2 both underscore the importance of ideological location in intertextual readings of ancient texts. The assertions of poststructural literary theory, combined with the particular interest in intertextuality and the New Testament, underscore its potential function as a meta-hermeneutical tool. Rejecting the narrowing of intertextuality to either simply a code word for historicist source-criticism or literary structuralist analysis, a broad intertextuality begins a new conversation between historical, literary and reader-contextual study of the New Testament.

Notably, the intertextuality presented here resists the flattening of interpretive authority characteristic to many (post)modern approaches to the biblical texts. A Christian identity may continue to be shaped around the canonicity of Scripture. If a broad intertextuality is helpful in connecting this Christian identity to the changing circumstances of context by nurturing a rich, coloured imagining (borrowing Brueggemann's term) of social, political, and theological life, it is a worthwhile approach. Chapter 3 of this study examples this through a particularly intertextual and generative reading of the gospel of Luke in search of a Christian social-ethic.

4.3 Yoder, Luke and the colour of a Christian social-ethic

In chapter 3 I engaged in an ideologically-framed reading of the third Gospel structured around the socio-ethical project of John Howard Yoder.² I entered the reading from a perspective which is largely in agreement with the direction of Yoder's rhetorical project. I concur with Yoder that Luke's gospel is steeped in theo-political language. It alludes to significant Scriptural pretexts which are suspicious of centralised political power and nurtures post-New Testament struggles for

² For the sake of clarity I have split the political from the ideological (as Yoder often does). It is important to remember that they are ultimately inseparable. When we read for a particular purpose, whether it is political, ethical or liturgical, we bring up other facts. Correspondingly, when we read theologically, the intertextual hooks drag with them ethical, liturgical and political consequences. While texts may be unfinished they are always 'embodied', whether in an inscribed artefact or in the words and actions of particular people in particular places.

justice. More significantly, the witness of the Lukan narrative paints a picture of Jesus as a radically dissonant 'king' who is held up in contrasting relief against Caesar and Herod and, intertextually, the oppressive rulers of the Israelite story. The text's 'rhetoric of distancing' against the abuses of institutional political power forms the basis for a collective Christian social-ethic. An intertextual tracking of Yoder's core Lukan texts serves to build upon this basis, filling in the gaps and, it is to be hoped, providing an intertextual background against which the discourse and actions of contemporary Christian experience can be compared.

The broad, rhetorically-aware, intertextuality guiding the study serves as an organising principle for determining which intertexts may be brought helpfully into conversation with the Lukan text, the relative weight that the intertextual connections should be afforded, and the implications of such a conversation for the rhetorical project at hand. The 'coloured' conclusions arising from the study include:

- The core driving force for political change in Luke's narrative is God. God's action in the lives of the characters of the gospel is intertextually linked to God's action in the narrative and poetry of the Jewish Scriptures. A continuity between the power invested in the oppressed and lowly in Scripture gives cause for the lowly and oppressed in the gospel to take heart in the hope of liberation, to sing hymns of praise, to preach politically perilous sermons, and to regard themselves as 'blessed'. Reaching forward through the ages, the more recent victims of oppression in Latin America, the Philippines, indigenous Australia, South Africa³ and elsewhere are also given narrative justification to take heart in the midst of their struggle. For the politically and economically powerful, however, the witness of the gospel is disturbing. Like the rich ruler (Luke 18:18-23) living in coherence with the action of God made known in the politics of Jesus requires some difficult choices.
- The 'rhetoric of distancing' in the third Gospel is not restricted to one particular politically powerful institution. A strong resistance is established against the overarching political power of the Roman Empire but also against the political sycophancy of Herod and the acquiescent expediency of the Jewish temple authorities. Intertextually alluding to the resistance of the Israelites against Pharaoh and the frailties of corrupt Israelite kings, the 'true' path of God's covenant people is regularly marked by discontinuity with political power. It is little wonder then that Jesus continues this tradition.

³ Wink's analysis of the violence and political tensions in Namibia, Haiti, Uruguay, Guatemala, El Salvador, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, South Africa and elsewhere up until the 1990s provides a helpful introductory survey. See Wink, *When the Powers Fall: Reconciliation in the Healing of Nations*, 33-59.

Within this overall framing context a number of specific insights are worth highlighting:

- The quotation in Luke 1:48 of 1 Sam [LXX 1 Kings] 1:11 signals an intertextual connection between the narratives of Mary and Hannah. Interestingly though, it is not the quotation itself (“he has looked (with kindness/favour) on the lowly condition of (his/your) servant”) that provides the intertextual richness. Rather the subsequent thematic parallels between the theo-political implications of the song of Hannah are brought to bear on the song of Mary. That there will be a wholesale reversal of political, economic and familial (inheritance) status enriches the epiphanic marking of Jesus’ gestation. The textual quotation here signals the intertextual connection, but does not contribute much by way of interpretive depth. Thematic associations are often more significant to intertextual reading than simple quotation. The application of intertextual insights should not be reduced to literal word-matching.
- Following on from these connections, the thematic coherences between the *Magnificat* and Hannah’s song underscore the assertion that the action of God in the life of one person has corporate consequences. For Yoder’s rhetorical project, the concentration on the first chapters of Luke’s gospel is thus explainable. It is in these first three (and a bit) chapters that the action of God in Zechariah, Mary, Elizabeth, Simeon, Anna,⁴ John the Baptist, and Jesus is clearly demonstrated as having broad social and political consequences.
- The notion of intertextual incongruity is underscored by the comparison of the *Magnificat* and the *Benedictus* and the Maccabean war hymns explored by Paul Winter. While the linguistic and poetic echoes between the liberationist songs are strong they serve not to enforce narrative similarity but to distinguish one response over another. That both Maccabean Battle hymns and Lukan songs signal that there is a ‘battle’ looming with oppressive and occupying forces is not disputed. The type of warfare envisioned is, however, rather dissimilar. The life of Judas Maccabeus is radically different from the life of Jesus.⁵

⁴ Simeon and Anna are not covered at length by Yoder but their stories resonate nonetheless. See Luke 2:29-32, 36-38.

⁵ I argue then, not for a supersessionist view of the New Testament in relationship to the Old, but certainly that the New Testament maintains for Christians a higher interpretive authority. If there is an intertextual discontinuity between Old and New I tend to prefer the new.

- In *The Politics of Jesus* Yoder brings together the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus* and John's preaching in chapter 3 to 'unlock' the Scriptural intertext of Ezekiel 17. Each Lukan fragment could only be described as having a relatively low intertextual volume with the text from Ezekiel however, taken together, the imagery of Ezekiel 17 (God's "strong arm", the importance of the "fruit" and the "roots" of the vine) increase the volume. Intertextual explorations of the New Testament study usually claim to match a single textual fragment from the New Testament with one or more texts in Scripture or some other pre-text. Here, however, several Lukan fragments are brought together to allude to the text of Ezekiel. The intratextuality of reading the third Gospel, in the light of itself, unlocks the cautionary allusion of Ezekiel 17. Both the king of Babylon (Ezek 17:12) and Pharaoh (17:17) are fickle allies of the ruling elite of Israel suggesting, perhaps, a similar problematic relationship between the Jewish elite and Rome. For the 21st century church, the allegorical warning remains consistent. While God may well work for good in and even possibly through the dominating powers of this world Christians, as inheritors of the covenant promises of God, should resist close allegiances with these political powers.
- The messianic associations in Scripture triggered by Luke 3:22 demonstrate the potential cascading of intertextual connections. In chapter 3 the specific intertexts of Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1 are explored with reference to the "voice of heaven" and the "beloved son" of Luke 3:22.⁶ These Scriptural intertexts underscore the promised kingly authority of Jesus as Messiah, but also the associations 'cascade' further afield unlocking the richness of messianic imagery found in Scripture.⁷ This cascading of messianic allusion again emphasises the continuity of God's action and faithfulness from past to narrative present. For contemporary believers struggling with the seeming impossibility of liberation, the narrative weight here seems both counter-intuitive and strangely convincing. Liberation is coming, just like it did in Jesus. It may not look like the liberation we expect, but it comes all the same. A trust in this Jesus-shaped revolutionary action distinguishes Christian liberation movements.⁸

⁶ Again enriched by the associations in Luke 4:18ff.

⁷ This is seen in other highly connotative terms and themes explored in chapter 3. Hays prefers the term 'echoes' which implies a gradually decreasing repetition of an idea or theme. I prefer cascade as it suggests an ongoing sparking of new ideas.

⁸ This is not to say there are not coherences with other liberation movements like the black struggle in apartheid South Africa. Nevertheless, in politically critical situations, armed revolution should not an option for Christian liberationists.

- The narrative preparation of the first three chapters of Luke finds focus in Jesus' mission statement in Luke 4:18-19. The intertextual proclamation in Nazareth is immediately followed by a confrontation with the people of Jesus' hometown at the very beginning of his ministry. It is clear that the rhetorical introduction of Jesus in the third gospel necessarily leads to the risk of persecution. Conflict with the status quo, the powers that be, whether in Nazareth or Rome, is a key aspect of the Jesus story. The Nazareth proclamation and explanatory 'exegesis' in Luke 4 also serve to begin setting the parameters of the political base community which is to be established later in the gospel. Intertextual associations with the Jubilee social structures of debt-forgiveness and regular restoration of property are signalled in Isaiah 61:2 and begin to delineate the political characteristics of the incoming reign of God. Importantly, however, this new kingdom is not exclusive to the Jewish people who claim the Scriptural traditions as their own. Jesus' interpretation of the stories of Elijah and Zarephath, Elisha and Naaman stand against the possibility of a closed (self)righteous political community. It is not God's liberating fulfilment of the covenant that enrages the Nazarenes, but rather the inclusion of Gentiles in this liberation. It may well be that the inclusion of Gentiles in the transforming action of God is *the* central theme of Luke-Acts.⁹ For our purposes however, it is enough to say that the emerging kingdom-centred political base community is inclusive and not restrictive. And so the social-ethic sought by Yoder is actually found in a community or a movement of people, the boundaries of which are inclusive, especially of those who are typically regarded as unworthy.
- The social-ethics after which Yoder seeks is finally given form in the base political movement which Jesus commissions throughout the gospel. The core of this community is commissioned in Luke 6:12-16 and its values are shaped by the blessings (and the woes) of 6:20-26ff. It is to be a movement marked by servanthood (22:24-30) and a collective where everyone is fed (Luke 9:10ff). The revolutionary action commissioned by Jesus is both peaceable (against swords in Luke 22) and able to go through persecution even unto the cross (14:25ff). The intertextual richness which brings colour to this burgeoning political community emerges out of the Scripture of Israel. The fulfilment of promise by God to feed the Israelites, the binding authority of the law of Moses 'brought down from the mountain to

⁹ As argued by Bovon and many others. There is no claim made by Yoder that he offers a comprehensive reading of Luke-Acts or even Luke itself. I would argue, however, that Yoder's Lukan ethical inquiry is weakening by his failure to explore "love" as a framework for ethics. Yoder does explore love later in *The Politics of Jesus* but largely in the context of Revelation and the Pauline writings. See for example, Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus (2nd edition)*, 94, 104, 116-123, 132-135, 147, 218, 219-226. and so on. A helpful corrective may be found in Burridge, *Imitating Jesus: An Inclusive Approach to New Testament Ethics*, 258ff.

the plain', and the disciples' new identity as 'sent ones' of God, bind them to God's action across time. This deep sense of being agents of God's justice and liberation is underscored by the allusions to the twelve disciples carrying with them the 'plan' for the twelve tribes of Israel.¹⁰ The rhetorical interrogation of the third gospel by Yoder finds its fruition in a political base community shaped by not only the teaching, but also the life (and death) of Jesus. It is in this way that a social-ethic which is framed around the *imitatio Christi* is realised in the continuing politically-charged action of the Spirit-filled people of God.

Finally, I conclude that Yoder's reading of Scripture exemplifies many of the aspects of the meta-hermeneutic of intertextuality which emerges from poststructuralist discourse. Yoder does not use the term intertextuality as such, yet his use of Scripture, social and cultural intertexts, and the post-textual weight of New Testament scholarship underscore the breadth of his approach. Yoder seeks not to apply a specific method to the biblical text in order to ask specific methodological questions. Rather he reads in the name of generative interpretation and for the sake of shaping the social-ethics of Christian community; Yoder binds together a range of approaches. In so doing Yoder is able to chart a course of interpretation that is both new and applicable while at the same time bearing fidelity to the old and authoritative.¹¹ The intertextual witness to Jesus of the third gospel paints a rich, colourful image of Jesus, an image which contextualises and frames Christian moral action, even millennia later.

4.4 Further study

The interpretive approach to the New Testament heretofore explored prompts a wider exploration of the hermeneutical use of the Bible in the construction of politics and social-ethics. This study would ask questions like: What interpretive epistemologies underscored the formation of the radical reformers' sect-like pacifist communitarianism? Which were the core texts, the 'canon within the canon', for the development of liberation theology? How does the 'Christian Right' in the United

¹⁰ Importantly, this is not a replacement of the twelve tribes but rather an inclusive continuation. The disciples were predominantly Jews after all.

¹¹ For connecting old and new in helpful ways is a central feature of all scriptural interpretation. See and Richard N. Longenecker, *Studies in Hermeneutics, Christology and Discipleship* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2004), 19-33. In gospel analogy see also Anders Eriksson, "The Old is Good: Parables of Patched Garment and Wineskins as Elaboration of a Chreia in Luke 5:33-39 about Feasting with Jesus," in *Rhetoric, Ethic, and Moral Persuasion in Biblical Discourse: Essays from the 2002 Heidelberg Conference* (New York and London: T & T Clark, 2002). Eriksson's 'ethical' reading of Luke 5:33-39 contends that the "new wine" cannot represent Jesus' message as it is regarded as of lesser quality to the "old wine". Here the questions of ideological normativity that "new is better" prevalent in recent times, is named as an ideological position. I hope that in my reading I have not fallen into the rhetorical default positions that either "new is better" or "old is better". By way of example I look to Luke T. Johnson, *Faith's Freedom: A Classic Spirituality for Contemporary Christians* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990).

States justify its political allegiances from Scripture? In what ways does Bonhoeffer's (anti)-ethics differ from the Aristotelian approach of Aquinas and others? Specifically what role and authority is afforded the New Testament text in these formations? An intertextually-aware analysis of each may well allow the formation of an interrelating meta-hermeneutic and the potential for fresh, generative conversation.

There has been no suggestion in this study that intertextuality is the only way of constructing a linking meta-hermeneutic in New Testament study. The textured language of Robbins, the transferral of ancient interpretative approaches to today explored by Longenecker, the various recent movements by Brevard Childs and James A. Sanders towards a 'canonical criticism', and the attempts by Schüssler Fiorenza¹² and others to approach the text 'ethically' all move beyond the reductionism of methodological particularity. It is in the context of these interpretive movements that intertextuality may continue to offer helpful insights.

¹² I cite Schüssler Fiorenza here as a leading advocate of 'ethical' interpretation. I do not, however, find all her ethical constructions justified – especially those listed in the appendices of Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and ethic: the politics of biblical studies*. While I prefer Fiorenza's approach, it is the particularly liberationist ethics underscoring the reading of other feminist scholars like Rosemary Radford Ruether and Phyllis Trible more convincing. It is possible to agree with Schüssler Fiorenza that ethical discourse and reflection is critical in biblical interpretation without agreeing with the ethical framework that she ends up advocating. For a helpful comparison of feminist hermeneutics and scripture (supporting Schüssler Fiorenza) see Claudia V. Camp, "Feminist Theological Hermeneutics: Canon and Christian Identity," in *The Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 53-69.

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