Marking Innerbiblical Allusion in the Book of Ezekiel

How did ancient Israelite authors make it clear that they were purposefully alluding to other texts? After all, the presence of verbal parallels between two texts can be attributed to coincidence, to unconscious dependence, or to the use of formulaic language where words assume a fixed shape because of the social setting and literary genres in which they are used. If an author was concerned that the reader might not recognize the source of the allusion, he could simply identify the text in question (e.g., Num 21,14-15; Josh 10,13; Dan 9,2). But if it could be plausibly assumed that the reader was familiar with the source text, what techniques were available to an author who wished to mark the allusion so as to make it more conspicuous and highlight its purposeful nature [1]? Short of repeating such a large number of locutions that a reader would not fail to recognize the presence of allusion, an author could use two techniques: inversion of elements, and the splitting and redistribution of elements. In this article I will examine the use of these marking techniques in Ezekiel's allusions to the Holiness Code (Lev 17–26). The large number of locutions common to Ezekiel and the Holiness Code has long been recognized, and there is a broad consensus that these shared locutions are due to literary dependence [2].

*
* *

One way in which an allusion can be marked is by the inversion of the order of elements in the borrowed locution, a technique sometimes referred to as "Seidel's Law" [3]. P. Beentjes, who explored the formal qualities of such

---

[1] On the marking of allusion and quotation, see H. PLETT, "Intertextualities", in *Intertextuality* (ed. H. PLETT) (Research in Text Theory 15; Berlin 1991) 11-12; R. SCHULTZ, *The Search for Quotation*. Verbal Parallels in the Prophets (JSOTSS 180; Sheffield 1999) 211-212, 225. The classic work on allusion by Z. Ben-Porat also includes a discussion of marking, though by "marker" she means the formal elements common to both texts ("The marker is always identifiable as an element or pattern belonging to another independent text"). See Z. BEN-PORAT, "The Poetics of Literary Allusion", *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Language* 1 (1976) 108.

[2] Those who recognize this literary dependence account for it with a variety of compositional models for H and Ezekiel, since there is no consensus on the direction of literary dependence; see for example G. COOKE, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel* (ICC; Edinburgh 1936) 63; G. FOHRER, *Die Hauptprobleme des Buches Ezechiel* (BZAW 72; Berlin 1952) 146-147; R. KILIAN, *Literarkritische und Formgeschichtliche Untersuchung des Heiligkeitsgesetzes* (BBB 19; Bonn 1963) 164-179, 185; R. LEVITT KOHN, *A New Heart and A New Soul*. Ezekiel, the Exile, and the Torah (JSOTSup 358; Sheffield 2002) 111-112; C. NIHAN, "The Holiness Code between D and P: Some Comments on the Function and Significance of Leviticus 17-26 in the Composition of the Torah", in *Das Deuteronomium zwischen Pentateuch und Deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk* (ed. E. OTTO – R. ACHENBACH) (FRLANT 206; Göttingen 2004) 108-110. While I am in no way ignoring the complexities of the literary formation of H and Ezekiel, my own position is that Ezekiel was using H. For support of this position, see M. LYONS, "From Law to Prophecy: Ezekiel's use of the Holiness Code", (Ph.D. diss., University of

inversion, describes the function of this technique as follows: "we can say that in an existing formulation (a sentence, a colon, an established expression, a rare combination of words) the author reverses the sequence. And by this deviating model he attains a moment of extra attention in the listener (or the reader), because the latter hears something else than the traditional words" [4].

In the following example, adjacent clauses from the Holiness Code appear as inverted adjacent clauses in the book of Ezekiel:

> And the land will give its produce,
> and the trees of the field will give their fruit (Lev 26,4b).

> And the trees of the field will give their fruit,
> and the land will give its produce (Ezek 34,27a).

Another inversion occurs a few verses earlier in Ezek 34; here we find locutions from non-adjacent clauses in the Holiness Code:

> And your threshing will overtake the grape harvest, and the grape harvest will overtake the sowing, and you will eat your bread to the full, *and you will live securely* in your land. And I will put peace in the land, and you will lie down and there will be no one who terrifies. *And I will finish off wild animals from the land*, and the sword will not pass through your land (Lev 26,5-6).

> And I will make a covenant of peace for them, *and I will finish off wild animals from the land*, *and they will live securely* in the wilderness, and they will sleep in the forests (Ezek 34,25).

In the following example, locutions from Lev 26,9 are inverted in Ezek 36,11, with a change in verbal stem and person [5]:

Wisconsin-Madison 2005) 44-57, 74-82; A. KLOSTERMANN, "Ezechiel und das Heiligkeitsgesetz", in *Der Pentateuch*. Beiträge zu seinem Verständnis und seiner Entstehungsgeschichte (Leipzig 1893) 386-402; L. PATON, "The Holiness Code and Ezekiel", *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 26 (1896) 110-114; S. DRIVER, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (Cleveland 1956) 145-151; J. MILGROM, *Leviticus 23–27* (AB 3B; New York 2001) 2348-2362.

[3] Named after M. Seidel, who noticed this inversion in his study of shared locutions in Isaiah and Psalms; see "Parallels between Isaiah and Psalms", *Sinai* 38 (1955-56) 150.

[4] P. BEENTJES, "Discovering a New Path of Intertextuality: Inverted Quotations and their Dynamics", in *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategy in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. L. DE REGT – J. DE WAARD – J. FOKKELMAN) (Assen 1996) 49. Beentjes found numerous examples in the Hebrew Bible, in the Septuagint, in literature found at Qumran, and in the New Testament. Others who have noted the presence of inversion in innerbiblical allusion include S. TALMON, "The Textual Study of the Bible — A New Outlook", in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (ed. F. CROSS – S. TALMON) (Cambridge 1975) 358-378; B. LEVINSON, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (New York 1997) 18-20, 35; and I. KALIMI, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, Ind. 2005) 232-274.

[5] The locution "be fruitful and multiply" is not unique to H and Ezekiel (cf. Gen 1,22.28; 8,17; 9,1.7; 17,20; 28,3; 35,11; 47,27; 48,4; Exod 1,7; Jer 3,16; 23,3). However, it is virtually certain that the source of this locution in Ezek 36,11 is Lev 26,9, seeing as Ezekiel is aware of the context in H: the locution "I will turn to you" (ופניתי אליכם), also from Lev 26,9, is found two verses earlier in Ezek 36,9.

And I will turn to you, and *I will make you fruitful and multiply you*, and I will establish my covenant with you (Lev 26,9).

And I will multiply humans and cattle upon you, and *they will multiply and be fruitful*; and I will cause you to dwell as in your former times, and I will do more good than in your previous times, and you will know that I am Yhwh (Ezek 36,11).

Note also the inversion of locutions from Lev 18,19-20 in Ezek 18,6:

And you shall not come near a woman in her menstrual impurity in order to uncover her nakedness. And you shall not have sexual relations with *the wife of your neighbor so as to become unclean* with her (Lev 18,19-20).

[If] he does not eat on the mountains, and does not lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, and does not *defile the wife of his neighbor*, *and does not come near a woman in her menstrual period* . . . (Ezek 18,6).

Ezekiel does not only use this technique when alluding to the Holiness Code. Beentjes notes an example of inversion in Ezek 22,24-28, in which Ezekiel borrows the locution "its priests profaned what is holy; they did violence to instruction" (Zeph 3,4b) and inverts it to form the construction "its priests have done violence to my instruction, and they profaned my holy things" (Ezek 22,26a)(⁶).

<p style="text-align:center">*
* *</p>

A second way in which an allusion can be marked is by the splitting and redistribution of elements in the borrowed locution. In his work on innerbiblical allusion in Isaiah 40–66, B. Sommer notes that Deutero-Isaiah takes phrases from his sources, then splits up these phrases when placing them in the new context. As an example, Sommer cites the use of שכר לפעלתך "a reward for your service" (Jer 31,16) in Isa 40,10, where the author splits the phrase into שכרו אתו ופעלתו לפניו "His reward is with him, and his recompense for service is before him". Other convincing examples include e.g. Jer 2,32 // Isa 49,15.18; Ps 37,29 // Isa 60,21; and Ps 71,18 // Isa 46,4(⁷).

For Sommer, this phenomenon is more than just a repeated literary pattern. It is part of Deutero-Isaiah's poetics of allusion, and functions as a formal marker that an earlier text is being referenced. While he remarks (p.

(⁶) BEENTJES, "Inverted Quotations", 38. The allusion actually goes far beyond the inversion of a single phrase from Zephaniah; Ezekiel references several locutions from Zeph 3,1-4.8 in Ezek 22,24-28 and conflates the material from Zephaniah with locutions from Lev 10,10; 20,25; 22,15. Ezekiel's second reference to "prophets" (v. 28) is based on Ezek 13,6-7.10, and the content of the accusation against the "people of the land" (Ezek 22,29) is based on Lev 19,13.33. See M. FISHBANE, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (New York 1985) 461-463.

(⁷) See B. SOMMER, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*. Allusion in Isaiah 40–66 (Stanford 1998) 68-69; for his discussion of the examples cited, see 37, 111, 121, and his comments on 237-38 nn.114, 115.

238, n.114) that "it is not clear that other authors repeatedly used such divisions as a literary technique", I have found that this technique is well-attested in the book of Ezekiel.

For example, when Ezekiel uses H's locution ואתכם אזרה בגוים "And you I will scatter among the nations" (Lev 26,33), he splits the clause and redistributes the elements to create a new two-line parallel expression והפיצותי אותך בגוים וזריתיך בארצות "And I will disperse you *among the nations*, *and I will scatter you* among the lands" (Ezek 22,15; also 12,15; 20,23; 29,12; 30,23.26; 36,19; note the same pattern with variations in word choice in Ezek 6,8; 11,16).

Ezekiel creates two notable variations on this pattern. In the first, he replaces the verb זרה "scatter" (taken from Lev 26,33) with אבד "perish" (taken from Lev 26,38, "you will perish among the nations"), and supplies the verb כרת "cut off" as a parallel term. This yields the statement והכרתיך מן־העמים והאבדתיך מן־הארצות "I will cut you off from the peoples and make you perish from the lands" (Ezek 25,7). In the second variation, Ezekiel creates a reversal of his two-clause construction, yielding "I will gather (קבץ) you from the peoples and assemble (אסף) you from the lands" (Ezek 11,17; see the same structure with variations in the use of synonymous verbs in Ezek 20,34.41; 34,13; 36,24; 37,21) (⁸).

Ezekiel uses the technique of splitting and redistribution twice in chapter 18, where he splits the single clause of H's regulation אל־תקח מאתו נשך ותרבית "Do *not take interest or accrued interest* from him" (Lev 25,36) into בנשך לא־יתן ותרבית לא יקח "At *interest* he does not give, and *accrued interest* he *does not take*" (Ezek 18,8.13).

Splitting and redistribution of elements also occurs several times in chapter 20, where Ezekiel alludes to H's exhortation (Lev 18,5 // Ezek 20,11.13.21) (⁹):

> And you shall *keep my statutes and my ordinances*, which if a man does them, then he will live by means of them (Lev 18,5).

> In *my statutes* they did not walk, and *my ordinances* they did not *keep* so as to do them, which if a man does them, then he will live by means of them (Ezek 20,21).

This technique of splitting and redistribution is not limited to Ezekiel's use of H. R. Levitt Kohn has argued that Ezekiel alludes to a number of passages in Deuteronomy. One of the shared locutions she notes is the phrase "in anger and in fury" (באף ובחמה; Deut 9,19; 29,27; Jer 7,20; 21,5; 32,31; 33,5; 36,7; 42,18; 44,6; Ezek 5,13.15; 7,8; 13,13; 20,8.21; 22,20; 23,25;

(⁸) D. Block notes that the variations fall into semantically meaningful patterns: "Although *'ammîm*, 'peoples', and *gôyim*, 'nations', are often interchanged, a pattern is evident in the way Ezekiel employs these expressions in these formulae. Wherever dispersal is the issue, *gôyim* parallels *'ărāṣôt*, 'lands' . . . . With the exception of 36:24, however, announcements of regathering prefer *'ammîm* opposite *'ărāṣôt*". See D. BLOCK, *The Book of Ezekiel. Chapters 1–24* (NICOT; Grand Rapids 1997) 352, n.38 (though Ezek 25,7 constitutes another exception).

(⁹) The locution is also reversed in Ezek 20,25 and shortened in Ezek 33,15.

25,14; 38,18; see also Deut 29,22; Jer 32,37)(^{10}). Of these occurrences, Ezek 5,13; 7,8; 13,13; 20,8.21 all exhibit splitting and redistribution; see e.g. "I will pour out *my fury* upon you, and I will complete *my anger* against you" (אשפוך חמתי עליך וכליתי אפי בך, Ezek 7,8).

<center>* *
* *</center>

There are a number of points that need to be kept in mind with regard to these ways of marking allusion. First, it should be made clear that these are examples of literary techniques that occur within the framework of a particular textual and hermeneutical relationship. Since these techniques bear a superficial resemblance to other phenomena (e.g., inversion due to free variation in oral performance, or synonymous textual variants)(^{11}), it is necessary to establish at the beginning that the shared locutions in question should be attributed to purposeful literary dependence. This can be done only by a thorough study of the frequency and distribution of the shared locutions and of their function in context.

Second, the techniques in question do not identify the source text for the reader. A reader unfamiliar with the source text would have no idea that another text is being alluded to in the examples cited above. The techniques of inverting elements or splitting and redistributing elements borrowed from the source text are ways to mark an allusion in order to make it more conspicuous and highlight its purposeful nature. These techniques presume the readers' knowledge of the source text, and they make the allusion more prominent because they represent deviations from the known pattern.

Third, these techniques are optional, not mandatory. There are many places where Ezekiel alludes to the Holiness Code without employing inversion or splitting and redistribution. Moreover, the same locution can be found both in a marked form (Lev 25,36 // Ezek 18,8.13) and in an unmarked form (Ezek 18,17; 22,12).

Fourth, at least one of these techniques may be of some use in determining the direction of literary dependence between texts that contain shared locutions. While the presence of inversion indicates nothing about the priority of one text in relation to another, the presence of splitting and redistribution can be used to identify the alluding text. Of course, the identification of this technique is no substitute for a comprehensive study of

---

(^{10}) While this locution can be found in other books (e.g., Isa 63,3.6; Mic 5,14; Ps 6,2; 37,8; 78,38; 90,7; Prov 21,14; 22,24; 29,22; Dan 9,16), it appears most frequently in Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. For a discussion of this locution, see LEVITT KOHN, *A New Heart*, 92; for examples of other shared locutions, see 86-95. On the literary relationship between Ezekiel and Jeremiah, see J. MILLER, *Das Verhältnis Jeremias und Hesekiels sprachlich und theologisch untersucht mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Prosareden Jeremias* (Assen 1955).

(^{11}) Beentjes ("Inverted Quotations", 48-49) points out that the marking of allusions by inversion is not due to free variation because inverted allusions are actually quite rare. If inversion was due to free variation, we would expect the occurrences of marked and unmarked allusions to be evenly distributed. The fact that inverted allusions appear in the literature from Qumran and in the New Testament confirms that this marking is not a merely oral phenomenon.

the shared locutions (including their frequency and distribution) and their relation to and function in their respective contexts. A larger database of examples outside Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah remains a desideratum.

University of Wisconsin-Madison   Michael A. LYONS
Madison, Wisconsin 53706 U.S.A.

SUMMARY

How did ancient Israelite authors make it clear that they were purposefully alluding to other texts? After all, the presence of verbal parallels between two texts can be attributed to coincidence, to unconscious dependence, or to the use of formulaic language where words assume a fixed shape because of the social setting and literary genres in which they are used. This paper examines two techniques by which the biblical authors could mark allusions so as to make them more conspicuous and highlight their purposeful nature: inversion of elements, and splitting and redistribution of elements. Examples of these techniques are taken from the book of Ezekiel.