Networks of Intertextual Allusion in Luke's Gospel

Introduction

Samuel Sandmel's memorably-titled presidential address to the annual meeting of SBL in December 1961, 'Parallelomania,' sounded an enduring warning to anyone imprudent enough to take a scholarly interest in linkages or alleged linkages between biblical texts and their supposed literary influences.[1] Sandmel put his finger on what he saw as an endemic problem within our guild in his time – not just the problem of highlighting parallels *between* texts, but the problem of attributing *intentionality*, and *directionality*, to those parallels.

Now in reality, Sandmel's paper was more of a harangue than it was a balanced argument, directed more against proponents of parallels between Paul and the Rabbis than between the New Testament as a whole and its supposed Old Testament antecedents. Yet the title of the paper, if not the specifics of the content, has cast a long – *and, I think, broadly helpful* – shadow over succeeding generations of scholars, justly requiring us to justify our judgements in this sphere. It isn't sufficient simply to identify familiar shapes from the Old Testament in the New like participants in a theological reworking of Rorschach's famous inkblot test.[2] The study of intertextual allusions is *a discipline in need of controls*.

1. Maximamania

But the problem with the various controls that have been proposed in the succeeding decades is that *they too* are susceptible to an equally endemic scholarly problem. Let's call it 'maximamania' – the tendency to expand any genuinely good or illuminating insight we might have to the point where it becomes *the only* thing that can or should be said about the questions in which we're interested.

The structure of the academic enterprise, of course, is a significant extenuating factor in our vulnerability to this problem. It's obviously easier to sell a book or publish a paper if it makes a grand, totalising claim than if it merely 'cautiously contributes' to an ongoing conversation. But that doesn't entirely exonerate us when we jump on the bandwagon, and buy into one untenable maximalist position after another, and the problem of establishing controls for the study of allusions has repeatedly struggled to escape from such unhelpful oscillations of the academic pendulum.

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[1] Sandmel, 1962, 1–13.

[2] Ziony Zevit credits Michael Fox with this stinging simile (Fox, 2009, 481 cited in Zevit, 2017, 5).

Let me give three examples:

1.1 Shared Language

A version of 'maximamania' that particularly afflicts readers of a more conservative persuasion is the insistence that allusions should only be considered allusions-in-good-standing if they conform to certain pre-determined, objective linguistic criteria – normally, that they should contain a certain minimum number of words that are recognisably shared with the text to which they allude.

Armin Lange and Matthias Weigold's book, *Biblical Quotations and Allusions in Second Temple Jewish literature*, offers a model of how this kind of objectivist conception of allusions might work.[3] Using a computer to scan not just the Hebrew Bible but the entire literary corpus of the eastern Mediterranean from 520 BC to AD 70 (with certain judicious exceptions), the authors imposed the requirement that any true allusion:

- Should share between 2 and 6 words in common with the text it evokes (depending on their respective genres)
- And that it should neither add, nor omit, more than one word in the course of any such evocation.

The results, as we can all imagine, were both illuminating and maddening. Many very evident allusions were located – unsurprisingly, given that 'very evident' allusions were used as the basis for defining the criteria in the first place. But the exercise also returned an enormous number of false positives *and failed to return* many commonly recognised examples.

Part of the difficulty lies in the fact that the texts in question are awash with *non-referential shared language*, simply because they emerge from closely-connected literary cultures. As Ziony Zevit helpfully notes, in certain settings, shared language signals little more than awareness of the 'conventional dress' of a well-told story – it's a marker of literacy, but not necessarily of conscious allusion.[4] And we all know there are many other ways to explain shared language without an appeal to direct literary dependence.[5]

Nobody would deny, of course, that shared language is an important tool in the hands of both author and reader when it comes to creating and detecting allusions, and analyses of allusions that employ it have generated a host of common-sense proposals to guide our response. Jeffrey Leonard is surely right to note that *rare or otherwise distinctive* shared language should encourage the diagnosis of allusions, that shared *phrases* should weigh more heavily with us than isolated words, and that where shared language *accumulates* across an evoking text we should feel particularly confident that an intentional connection is being made.[6] Richard Hays proposes similar tests in his discussion of scriptural 'echoes' in the works of Paul.[7]

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[3] Lange et al., 2011,

[4] Zevit, 2017, 8-9.

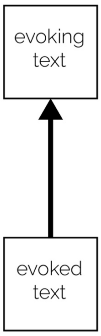
[5] 'Filiations between literary works are to be expected and adjudged normal, whether or not they derive from conscious or unconscious choices,' T. S. Eliot cited in Zevit, 2017, 6.

But the problem comes when these helpful descriptions of real-world allusions are raised to the status of abstract *prescriptions*. Subtler allusions woven from the threads of thematic similarities, similarities in characterisation and plot; allusions whose impact lies less in what they share with the evoked text than in what they omit – are easily silenced.[8]

This problem is expertly illustrated by John Hollander in his analysis of William Empson's allusion to a famous line from Tennyson's *Tithonus*: 'the woods decay, the woods decay and fall.' In Empson's villanelle, 'Missing Dates,' the refrain clearly awakens a memory of this specific precursor – 'The waste remains, the waste remains and kills' – but the only items of shared language are banal articles and conjunctions.[9]

1.2 'Single Channel' Connections

A



A second area of vulnerability to the establishment of false maxima in the study of allusions stems from the larger trend toward *atomising analysis*. The apparatus of our own, dearly-beloved NA28 encourages us down this path by creating the impression that allusion is a phenomenon associated with linkages between *individual verses* [A]. Our task as readers is to read along until we find an allusion flagged in the margin, stop, drill down, master the reasons why the Nestlé, Aland and co. thought there was a connection *at this point,* and then move on. But this is hardly the mode of reading envisaged by the original authors. Something of the kind similarly afflicts Greg Beale and Don Carson's compendious volume, the *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament,* where a tendency to strip evoking texts – and the texts they evoke – from their contexts is frequently apparent.[10]

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[6] Leonard, 2008, 241–265.

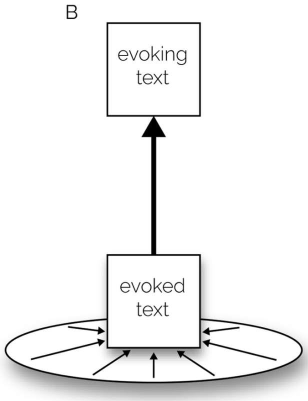
[7] Hays, 1989, 29-32.

[8] As Leonard himself concedes, his principles are a 'guide to identifying and determining the direction of allusions [but] the process is often more art than science' (Leonard, 2008, 264).

[9] Hollander, 1981, 95-6.

[10] Beale et al., 2007. Even the title gives me slight palpitations – creating the impression that the New Testament writers were more interested in 'using' the Old Testament to lend credibility to a narrative that

B



Richard Hays, of course, has challenged this artificially narrow understanding of allusion in recent years by drawing attention to the narratological device, *metalepsis* [B]. Following Hollander, C. H. Dodd, and scholars in the Jewish tradition going back into the mists of time, Hays argues that evoking texts broker connections *not just* to the specific words or phrases they evoke *but* to elements in the larger setting of these texts *that are not* explicitly referenced.[11]

On this basis, Luke's allusion to the Song of Hannah in Mary's Magnificat should not be seen merely as an excuse to analyse the linguistic similarities between Luke 1.46-55 and 1 Sam 2.1-10 and the parallel reflections of the two female singers. Instead, it should inspire us to think more broadly about the function of Hannah and her son in the larger Samuel narrative – noting the impending demise of the corrupt priesthood of Eli and the downfall of Saul and the elevation of David, with all their attendant resonances in the life and ministry of Jesus.[12] We might also consider reception-historical factors, noting the allusion to Hannah's song in Psalm 113 and the use of this Psalm in Passover rituals with which Jesus himself may have been familiar.[13]

But even here we should note that we're still restricted to a single, narrow channel of connection between the Testaments, through which the expansive implications of the larger Old Testament context are being funnelled. Hays is strangely reticent – in Luke at least – about the possibility that connections to specific Old Testament narratives might be influencing extended sections of the evoking text. 'It is not Luke's style,' he says, 'to develop sustained sequences in which the patterns coincide and run parallel; rather, almost as soon as we recognize one such narrative convergence, the moment has passed, and a different image appears on the backdrop, perhaps suggesting an entirely different set of linkages.'[14]

1.3 Terminological Limitation

A third example of maximamania in the study of biblical allusions has a terminological focus, concentrating on the question of whether the textual phenomena before us should be described as 'allusions,' or 'echoes,' or instances of 'intertextuality.'

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might otherwise have lacked it, than they were in writing from within an unfolding story that was already copiously self-referential.

[11] See Hollander, 1981. See also Dodd, 1965, 126–127; Hays, 1989, 20, 87–88, 182; Hays, 2005, 1–24.

[12] Hays, 2016, 195–199.

[13] Hays, 2016, 197–198.

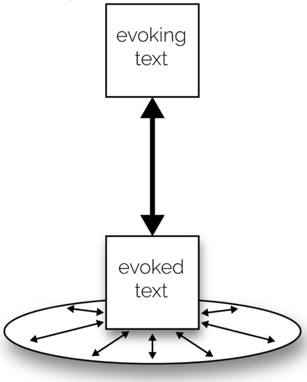
[14] Hays, 2016, 193.

Russell Meek claims it is 'misleading and unethical' to use the language of 'intertextuality' – with its origins in the post-structuralist literary scholarship of the 1960s – if we're not prepared to abandon with it any interest in texts themselves as loci of meaning. 'The "text" in intertextuality,' he says, 'is *broken free* from the constraints of the written word.'[15] 'Intertextuality *necessarily precludes* author-centred, diachronic studies,' 'The intertextual method is *unconcerned* with developing criteria for determining intertextual relationships between texts.'[16]

Strong stuff, and not without a certain irony, given that Julia Kristeva – who originally coined the term 'intertextuality' – would have doubtless been puzzled by this implacable insistence on the inviolability of her own authorial intentions. Kristeva's whole project, after all, was founded on the belief that words can only ever be received in the light of the reader's unique experience in other contexts, and that allusions in particular explicitly hand over interpretative control to the reader by appealing to external reference points whose impact on them is unknowable at the point of their composition.[17] Kristeva's position is itself, perhaps, not without a hint of *maximamania*. But, for the most part, scholars following in her wake have acknowledged within it at least a helpful *component* of the truth.

And as a result, I judge it both natural and legitimate to use the term 'intertextuality' to refer to the rich blend of authorial intention and reader response that, in different ratios, characterises every communicative interaction [C]. I use the word 'intertextuality' in the title of this paper in that spirit, encouraged by a broad spectrum of contemporary scholars seeking *via media* between the alluring maxima we have so far described. And I'm similarly relaxed about the flexible use of descriptors like 'echo', 'inner-biblical allusion,' and 'inner-biblical exegesis,' and so on, provided the authors using them make it clear what they have in mind.

C



2. Via Media

2.1 The Poetics of Literary Allusion

What then of those *via media*?

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[15] Meek, 2014, 283.
[16] Meek, 2014, 284.
[17] See Kristeva, 1980, 65. See also Alkier, 2009, 4; McKay, 2013, 84–106.

Reassuringly for the inexperienced explorer, many of the roads being cut through this contested territory in contemporary scholarship share at least one common landmark as a waypoint – Ziva Ben-Porat's classic 1976 article, *The Poetics of Literary Allusion*.

This is the article where Ben-Porat – who served for many years as Professor of Poetics and Semiotics at Tel-Aviv University – framed her justly famous definition of literary allusion as 'a device for the simultaneous activation of two texts.'[18]

Restricting herself to allusions between works of literature, Ben-Porat embraced Julia Kristeva's emphasis on the intrinsically unpredictable results of such mutual activations, noting the production of 'intertextual patterns whose nature [cannot] be predetermined.'[19] But though *total* prescription of the reader's response clearly eludes the authors of allusions, for Ben-Porat, allusions remained a valid means to *influence* that response; a means, which when used skilfully, held the potential for even greater influence than bare, unallusive prose. For Ben-Porat, inviting the reader to identify an evoked text and frame their interpretation in the light of it, permitted the author not only to communicate but also to guide the interpretation of that communication from a position outside the text.

When an author evokes the name of *Hamlet*, for example, they influence the reader's interpretative frame of reference – incompletely of course, for what author could know the precise images and memories such an evocation would produce in a specific reader? – but predictably nonetheless, at least as far as its major elements are concerned, priming the reader to process the composition with an alertness to themes like indecision, cowardice and heroism, suicide and so on.[20]

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[18] Ben-Porat, 1976, 107. Steve Moyise provides a powerful example of this kind of mutual activation in his analysis of 'Lion' and 'Lamb' imagery in Rev 5.5–6 (Moyise, 2009, 25–26).

[19] Ben-Porat, 1976, 108.

[20] Ben-Porat, 1976, 108. Returning to the contemporary scholarly scene, Joseph Ryan Kelly sees a template here for a balanced view of allusion embracing the expansive and unpredictable interpretative horizons surfaced by poststructuralist theorists like Kristeva without sacrificing the legitimacy of the question, 'what did the author intend?' (Kelly, 2017, 22–40). Joseph Pucci responds with his concept of 'The Full Knowing Reader' – an ideal reader who perceives every allusion in a text. Pucci attributes 'the potential for meaning' to the intentionality of the author and 'the actualisation of that potential' to the intentionality of this all-knowing ideal. Notice that even 'The Full Knowing Reader' actualises *the potential* for meaning in a text, not the meaning itself. And yet the art of the allusion *writer* lies in such a manipulation of the reader's perception, that when this potential *is* actualised, the outline, at least, of their thought world is recreated in the mind of the reader with minimum loss (Pucci, 1998, 40-42).

2.2 Metaphorical and Metonymic Allusions

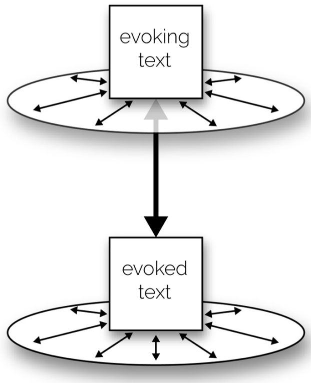
Ben-Porat's article not only described specific stages in the process of allusive communication but it also captured the difference between *two importantly different classes of allusion* – which she called 'metaphorical' and 'metonymic' allusions respectively. Let's think about these in turn.

2.2.1 Metaphorical Allusions

If I claimed that my aim in this paper was to 'bury one of the authors in my bibliography not to praise them' – that would make a good *metaphorical* allusion, linking the *dissimilar worlds* of today's BSNT conference and Antony's famous speech in Julius Caesar, Act III, Scene II – inviting you as listeners to think your way into the surrounding Shakespearean context and apply the insights you gain to my present argument. You might conclude that what seems, on the surface, to be a snub against this unfortunate inhabitant of my endnotes is in fact an attempt – at least in some important respects – to rally you against their critics.

Returning to our earlier diagrams [D], Metaphorical allusions gravitate around discrete, and often carefully flagged, connections between evoked and evoking texts, applying insights gained through a metaleptic reading of the former and making them available for sensitive appropriation *throughout* the latter.

D



2.2.2 Metonymic Allusions

Metonymic allusions, however, are drawn between texts that inhabit *related* literary contexts and, in these cases, the evoking text can be influenced by the text it evokes *so extensively* that, without the identification of that text, the result can make very little sense at all. Metonymic allusions involve complex networks of intertextual activation, some perhaps extremely obvious and loaded with shared language, but others trading in subtler parallels in narrative structure, rhythm, or form – highlighting dissonance as well as

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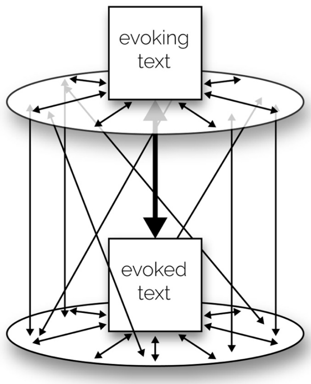

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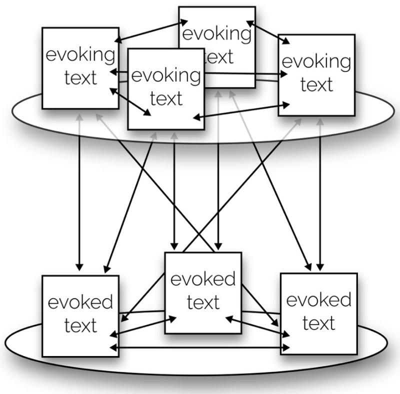

similarity between the evoked and the evoking contexts, which can only be identified with confidence in the light of the wider metonymic connection [E and F].[21]

2.3 Summary and Prospect

Of course, metaphorical allusions clearly exist within the Bible, and an enormous amount of scholarly endeavour has been devoted to their identification and analysis. When it comes to the New Testament 'use' of the Old Testament, however – a field of inquiry where the literary contexts of the evoked and the evoking texts are clearly densely interwoven – it seems to me that the presence of metonymic allusions should also be anticipated and, on my own reading of Luke's Gospel, that is, I think, exactly what we find.

[Distribute handout]

3. Patterns of Intertextual Allusion in Luke's Gospel

3.1 Resurrection Psalms in Luke's Passion Narrative

To get us oriented to the world of metonymic allusions in Luke's Gospel, I want to begin by considering the well-known references to Psalm 22 and its thematic pair, Psalm 69, in Luke's account of Jesus' crucifixion.

As you might be able to see from my handout if your eyesight is *really* good, the connections are epidemic – beginning in the latter part of chapter 22, where we first read about Jesus being 'mocked' and 'insulted,' re-resurfacing with the repetition of the same vocabulary in chapter 23 verse 11, and coming to a seeming climax in chapter 23 verses 34, 35, and 36 where we hear that the soldiers divided up Jesus' garments by casting lots, that the people and the rulers sneered at him, sniping at what they took to be his Messianic pretensions, and the soldiers offered him vinegar to drink.

The only weak point in this analysis is the absence of the heart-rending opening line of Psalm 22 that features in both Matthew and Mark, 'My God, My God why have you forsaken me?' and the probable Johannine reference to the final line of the Psalm in the Hebrew original, כִּי עָשָׂה – 'He has done it,' or 'it is finished!'

Speculation about what might have motivated these variations from the wider gospel tradition, of course, continues as we track the text forward over the scene boundary into Luke's account of the immediate aftermath of Jesus' death. In Matthew and Mark, famously, the Roman centurion at the foot of the cross makes the memorable confession, 'Surely this was the Son of God!' (Mk 15.39; Matt 27.54). But, in Luke, the remark is moderated to the more palatable formulation, ὄντως ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος δίκαιος ἦν – 'Surely this was a righteous man!' (Luke 23.47) – just the kind of thing that might make us sign up for a Conzelmanian low Christology, perhaps, not to mention the idea that Luke is trying to avoid an awkward collision with the emperor cult![22]

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[21] For allusive criteria ranging beyond shared language, see Leonard, 2017, 96. See also Sommer, 2008, 6–31, and Meek, 2014, 286, 288.

But if the resurrection Psalms are doing more than just 'flickering' in and out of sight here – to borrow Hays' evocative description of the transience of Lukan allusions – perhaps there is some mileage in asking ourselves if this synoptic oddity might be explainable in some other way?[23]

Luke, as we've noted already, has chosen not to highlight the opening or the closing of Psalm 22 by means of a direct quote. But if we see these two narratives as interconnected – as enmeshed in Luke's mind such that he sees the crucifixion of Jesus as a whole through the lens of the Psalm – then it should strike us that the centurion's confession fits elegantly with the hypothesis that Luke still has the closing *in mind*.[24] In the final stanza of the Psalm, the author's mind turns outward to the international implications of the main protagonist's emergence from suffering to exultation. In verse 27, we read that 'all the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him' – suggestive perhaps of this *Roman* military man surveying the scene after Jesus' death and announcing his vindication.

But the link becomes more than suggestive, I think, when we read on and discover how this international reaction develops. The Psalmist tells us that 'Posterity will serve him, and future generations will be told about the LORD. They will proclaim *his righteousness*' – exactly what Luke records our centurion proclaiming – 'declaring to a people yet unborn "he has done it!"' or '"it is finished!"' Metonymic allusion, then, brings us to a richer reading here, transforming the perceived damp squib of the centurion's reaction into a triumphant declaration of victory with impending global implications. Not to mention the fact that the explicit ascription of all this to 'the LORD' in the Psalm makes a wreckage of the low Christology hypothesis that previously seemed so appealing.

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[22] Hays, 2009, 114. On the use of allusions as a promising direction of synoptic comparison, see Hays, 2016, 198–199.
[23] Hays, 2016, 193.
[24] This of course is really saying little more than C. H. Dodd famously concluded in his work on Old Testament *testimonia*. See Dodd, 1965, 57-60.

Luke, it seems, sustains an allusion here over an extended section of his text, transgressing the scene boundaries imposed on him by our modern, western narrative idiom, making multiple independent points of contact with a series of related Psalms – *some of which* pass the standard tests for shared language *and others of which* do not – and yet each of them plays a potent part in the larger network of connections that Luke seems to have so carefully crafted.

Might this then provide us with a model for Luke's use of allusion in other parts of his gospel? Even if 'metaphorical' allusions predominate – 'flickering' in and out of view without brokering sustained connections between the evoked and the evoking text – might there be *some* metonymic counterexamples, and might identifying them bring us more nearly within the influence of the author – given, of course, that that influence can never be more than partial?

That's the crux of the research question I'm beginning to explore in my current project, and for the remainder of this paper, I want to share with you two examples of my own experience as a reader, *working on the assumption* that Luke is capable of mounting these kinds of sustained allusive connections, and testing that hypothesis in practice. You'll see from my chart that there are many more to which we *could* have turned.

3.2 Joash and the Parable of the Tenants

First, I want to share with you an example inspired by a question from my 16-year old daughter, who came to me one breakfast time after reading the story of Joash in 2 Chronicles 24 and asked me if it had anything to do with the Parable of the Tenants.

Scholars in the past have noted similarities to the parable – if not outright allusive connections – in the curtain-lowering description of the history of Israel in 2 Chron 36.15-16:

> *The Lord, the God of their ancestors, sent word to them through his messengers again and again, because he had pity on his people and on his dwelling place. But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the Lord was aroused against his people and there was no remedy.*

Certainly we can see the broad outlines of Jesus' diagnostic paradigm in the parable here, although I doubt there's anything really unique about this summary in 2 Chronicles that isn't equally evident in a whole host of other prophetic texts.

But the sense of a conscious connection to *2 Chronicles 24* is harder to resist. You be the judge…

Here we're introduced to the Judean king, Joash, famously rescued as a baby from the murderous clutches of his grandmother, Athaliah, and hidden by the faithful priest Jehoiada until his proclamation as king when he reaches the age of seven. He rules well under Jehoiada's influence for the best part of 40 years. But then Jehoiada dies, and we pick up the story in 2 Chron 24.17:

> [17] *After the death of Jehoiada, the officials of Judah came and paid homage to the king, and he listened to them.* [18] *They abandoned the temple of the Lord, the God of their ancestors, and worshiped Asherah poles and idols. Because of their guilt, God's anger came on Judah and Jerusalem.* [19] *Although the Lord sent prophets to the people to bring them back to him, and though they testified against them, they would not listen.*
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> [20] *Then the Spirit of God came on Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest. He stood before the people and said, "This is what God says: 'Why do you disobey the Lord's commands? You will not prosper. Because you have forsaken the Lord, he has forsaken you.' "*
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> [21] *But they plotted against him, and by order of the king they stoned him to death in the courtyard of the Lord's temple.* [22] *King Joash did not remember the kindness Zechariah's father Jehoiada had shown him but killed his son, who said as he lay dying, "May the Lord see this and call you to account."*
>
> [23] *At the turn of the year, the army of Aram marched against Joash; it invaded Judah and Jerusalem and killed all the leaders of the people. They sent all the plunder to their king in Damascus.* [24] *Although the Aramean army had come with only a few men, the Lord delivered into their hands a much larger army. Because Judah had forsaken the Lord, the God of their ancestors, judgment was executed on Joash.* [25] *When the Arameans withdrew, they left Joash severely wounded. His officials conspired against him for murdering the son of Jehoiada the priest, and they killed him in his bed. So he died and was buried in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.*

To me – despite the fact that I've searched *in vain* through commentaries on Luke and on Chronicles both ancient and modern, and through specialist studies on parables and on the wicked tenants in particular to find this connection – this is as clear an example of a narrative parallel as one could hope to find.

In a recent contribution to an edited volume on sutler forms of allusion, Jeffery Leonard – mentioned earlier as an advocate of 'shared language' criteria – discusses exactly this kind of thing under the rubric of 'narrative tracking' – where irrespective of other markers – two texts are drawn together through the parallel development of their respective plotlines.[25] His example is the well-worn analogue between the lives of Moses and Jesus in Exodus and Matthew's gospel respectively. But the principle could not, I think, be better illustrated than it is here.

In the same order as the Parable of the Tenants, 2 Chronicles 24 gives us a delinquent custodian of God's good gifts, addressed by and ignoring multiple prophets, who is finally challenged by a 'son' – in this case the son of the very man from whom he derives his privileged position – whom he then kills, only to experience ejection from his privileges and death at the hands of an invading army sent by the LORD.

Supporting this, we also have confirmation – as noted by Robert Brawley – that Jesus is aware of this precise incident and alludes to it explicitly in a very similar context in Luke 11. He calls down woes on the experts in the law, telling them that the blood of all the prophets from Abel to Jehoiada's son, Zechariah, will be chalked up to their account at the last judgment.[26]

While in principle I agree with Hays, therefore, that the history of reception should significantly influence our readiness to diagnose allusions, and that where they've never previously been detected that's telling us something important, *here* we may be faced with an example where even this eminently sensible guideline should be resisted as an immovable criterion for interpretation – and where the working of God's Spirit among 16 year-olds should also perhaps humble those of us who have been doing this for longer![27]

But what of it?

My instinct on receiving this news with my growing appreciation for Luke as a weaver of intertextual networks, was not just to ask how the presence of Joash in the background here develops and deepens our understanding of the parable but also to re-examine the text fore and aft of it on the *assumption* that Joash might have a wider relevance.

In the parable itself, of course, the bite of Jesus' denunciation of the 'chief priests and the teachers of the law' – whose challenge to his authority in verse 1 of the chapter provokes this response – is clearly *intensified*. He positions them not merely as miscreants hemmed in by the boundaries of his own description, nor even merely as fitting recipients of the warnings stored up in the Isaianic 'Song of the Vineyard' and its many Old Testament analogues which are clearly included within the range of this story. No, he colours them with the palette laid out by one of the worst examples of faithlessness in Judah's history in which the threat of reprisals proved anything but empty.

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[25] Leonard, 2017, 114.

[26] Brawley notes this link in a study devoted to intertextual allusions in the Parable of the Tenants but still fails somehow to see the connection to 2 Chron 24 in Jesus' story. See Brawley, 1995, 27–41.

[27] Hays, 1989, 31.

But the real exegetical excitement here comes when we notice that Joash is stalking this part of Luke's narrative more broadly.

Joash, we'll remember, was a king known only to a few who was concealed from the multitude until a dramatic announcement catapulted him forward to widespread recognition. In 2 Chronicles, the immediate sequel of that announcement was a cleansing of the temple – which had been used for the worship of Baal under the reign of Athaliah. And all of this, of course, finds a close parallel in the events immediately preceding the Parable of the Tenants, not just here in Luke but also in Mark and Matthew, although in Luke it's arguably intensified due to the omission of other elements. Jesus is publicly proclaimed as king when he rides into Jerusalem on a donkey. Immediately afterwards, he enters the temple to cleanse it. And then his authority to do these things is questioned, reminiscent perhaps of Athaliah's outrage when Joash's survival is revealed.

We even have an interesting connection in the story directly after the parable, where Jesus is challenged about the payment of taxes to Caesar. In 2 Chron 24, the primary focus of Joash's initial reforms is the reinstitution of the temple tax specifically addressing the question of where the people's money and capabilities should be invested.

Holding all this together, then, we see Luke crafting a complex interface between his own narrative and the narrative he evokes – Jesus can *be* Joash when Joash acts as the anointed recipient of blessings to bless others, but his enemies are Joash when Joash makes himself an enemy of God. In this way Luke positions Jesus and his interlocutors as opposite poles on a recognisably continuous spectrum; the Jewish leaders are the wicked flipside of the good that Jesus embodies.

Returning to Ben-Porat's *Poetics of Literary Allusion*, we find that this kind of dance between conjunction and disjunction in complex allusions is common.[28] Nathan Eubank discerns this kind of allusive dissonance in Luke's evocation of Daniel 7 at the Last Supper.[29] Hays himself discerns a similar creative dissonance at work in the relationship between Zechariah and Elizabeth and Abraham and Sarah in Luke chapter 1, alerting us to the presence of both positive parallelism and *dissimile*.[30] 'An intertextual approach is interested in both,' comments Steve Moyise, 'for a reader can notice dissonance as well as harmony.'[31] Here then, perhaps, we have not just a previously unrecognised example of Luke's literary craft but a *really good* one.

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[28] Ben-Porat, 1976, 115.
[29] Eubank, 2007,

3.3 Jesus, Jerusalem, and the City of Sodom

To close, I will share something a little more speculative, just to give another glimpse of how this emerging sensitivity to allusive networks in Luke can function and also perhaps to gesture towards its limits.

In Luke 13, in the parable of the yeast, scholars have long been aware of an allusion to the patriarchal account of Abraham and the three visitors. 'To what shall I compare the kingdom of God?' asks Jesus in the second of a pair of parables dealing with this same question:

> *It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough*

or at least that's how my NIV translates it. The amount of flour in the underlying Greek text is σάτα τρία – 'three measures' or 'three seahs' – the same rather extraordinary quantity of flour that Sarah bakes into bread for 'the LORD' and his angelic attendants in Gen 18.6.

This looks for all the world like a metaphorical allusion, making a discrete and tightly-bounded connection from the evoking to the evoked context. We have shared words – albeit not many of them – but Leonard's remarks about *rare or otherwise distinctive* common language warn us not to dismiss such an extraordinary recurrence. Beyond that, though, we're left scratching our heads as to the significance. Why 'three seahs of flour' here? What does it add to our reading of the parable? The answer to that question is one, it seems, that only Luke could answer.

Perhaps he begins to, though, just two verses later.

Two verses later – i.e. Luke 13.23 – takes us over the scene boundary into a completely different kind of text. Luke resumes his travel narrative, telling us about Jesus' progress through the towns and villages of Judea as he makes his way to Jerusalem. And at this point, like a bolt from the blue, somebody asks him a question: 'Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?'

This is 'a bolt from the blue,' however, only if we read it in – and only in – its specific local context. If we're reading with the suspicion that Luke is not quite such a great a respecter of his own internal ‘scene boundaries’ as we’ve made him to be, and that he sometimes trades in the currency of extended allusive networks, we might stop and notice that the question Jesus is asked here is exactly the question that follows the incident with the three visitors in Genesis 18.

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[30] Hays, 2016, 198, 202.

[31] Moyise, 2009, 31

There, of course, it’s not just a question, it’s a full blown argument. Abraham challenges the LORD about how many people are going to be saved from the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, repeatedly revising his definition of ‘a few’ down from 50 to 45, from 45 down to 40, from 40 to 30 and from there to 20 and to 10, confronting God with the reality that, as ‘the judge of all the earth,’ he *cannot* sweep away the innocent with the guilty.

The same image is in Luke’s mind again, it seems, when we cross the next scene boundary and find Jesus praying for the city of Jerusalem spread out below him in the distance, ‘[longing] to gather her children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings,’ (Luke 13.34). I won’t claim the connection is irresistible, but it’s tempting at least to see an evocation here of Abraham himself ‘[looking] down towards Sodom’ in Gen 18.16, welling up with compassion for his neighbours – and especially for his relative Lot who lived there.

Similarity *and* dissonance are at work here, however, just as they are in the allusions of Luke 20. After commending Sarah as a model of kingdom life, and taking up the role of Abraham as intercessor on behalf of a doomed city, Jesus breaks the mould by walking on into Jerusalem, whereas Abraham trudges disconsolately home. The narrative *telos* of his questions has revealed to him that Sodom has no hope – even if he succeeded in negotiating God down to the deliverance of just a single righteous person, the implication of the text is that such a person could not be found. In Jesus’ case, however, *his continued journey* towards Jerusalem has some striking Christological implications, and perhaps points also toward an alternative outcome, making the Genesis connection brokered in the foregoing parable very much more significant than, at first, it seems. In this text, Jesus may be positioning *himself* as the righteous one for whom Abraham dares not ask.

Conclusion

For now, though, that’s more than enough as an initial glimpse into my little project here in Luke.

As a minimum, I hope it sheds new light on some specific Lukan allusions. But I also hope it may contribute in the end to the larger discussion about how allusions can be detected. Certainly, in my own studies, I’m beginning to use the presence or absence of allusive networks as a tool to qualify debatable Old Testament connections and, as you've already seen, to identify new ones.

It's very early days as no-doubt you can perceive and what I've shared today is very much less than 'everything that could or should be said' about the questions in which I'm interested. And yet it's my hope that it represents at least 'a cautious contribution to an ongoing conversation,' and one that I trust will generate, at least, some interesting discussion now.

Thank you!

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