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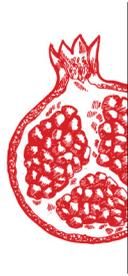
*Thematic Issue:
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REWRITING EZEKIEL: *FORTSCHREIBUNG* AND MATERIALITY IN THE EZEKIEL TRADITION

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Abstract

The article investigates how the reuse of scriptural materials in the Qumran Pseudo-Ezekiel composition can inform the understanding of processes of literary development within the scriptural prophetic book. Identifying five specific features of rewriting, the argument makes a strong case for using the historical-critical perspective.

Cet article analyse comment la réutilisation de matériel scripturaire dans la composition du Pseudo-Ézéchiél à Qumran permet de comprendre les processus de développement littéraire du livre prophétique scripturaire. Il identifie cinq caractéristiques spécifiques à cette réécriture et plaide fortement en faveur de l'emploi de la perspective historico-critique.





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REWRITING EZEKIEL: *FORTSCHREIBUNG* AND MATERIALITY IN THE EZEKIEL TRADITION¹

Anja Klein



Introduction

For scholars of the prophetic book of Ezekiel, it has always been exciting that the findings from Qumran Cave 4 contain a work with—in the words of their first editor John Strugnell—“a notable pseudo-Ezekiel section” (1960, 344). Eventually, scholarship identified a group of six manuscripts as representatives of a Pseudo-Ezekiel composition (4Q385, 4Q386, 4Q385b, 4Q388, 4Q385c, 4Q391).² The texts mention

¹ I would like to thank my colleague and friend Dr Mika Pajunen, who commented on a draft of this article, and the anonymous reviewers involved in the forum review process. Their combined feedback greatly helped to improve my argument.

² For the official publication of 4Q385, 4Q386, 4Q385b, 4Q388, and 4Q385c, see Devorah Dimant’s edition in *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* (DJD 30, 2001); 4Q391 is published by Mark Smith in DJD 19 (1995), but has been classified as part of the same composition by both scholars (see Dimant 2001, 9; Smith 1995, 153–54; further Wright 2000, 289–98). The forthcoming doctoral thesis of Anna

the prophet Ezekiel by name (4Q385 f4 4; 4Q385 f6 5; 4Q385b 1), and they engage with the materials of the scriptural book by integrating them into a new work. These literary characteristics account for the consideration of Pseudo-Ezekiel in the wider discussions around “re-written scripture.”³

From a biblical studies perspective, the connections between the scriptural Ezekiel materials and Pseudo-Ezekiel open up two directions of research. The focus of the first is on the question of how the composition makes use of the scriptural tradition. A number of recent investigations of this issue have demonstrated that the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition represents a form of rewriting.⁴ In particular, the study by Molly Zahn on “Prophecy Rewritten” comes to the conclusion that “it is fair to view PsEzek as a reworking and interpretation of earlier Ezekiel traditions that bear some relationship to the versions that have come down to us” (2014, 361). This conclusion touches on the important question about the state of the scriptural prophetic book during the late Second Temple period. My argument proceeds from the current understanding that the ancient author of the Qumran text was clearly familiar with some form of the materials that are part of the existing versions (Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Papyrus 967⁵). However, it should be assumed that the scriptural book in the Second Temple period still



Shirav (“Ezekiel Traditions in the Second Temple Period: The Case of 4QWords of Ezekiel in Its Broader Context”) furnishes further proof that the six scrolls are representatives of an independent composition that includes 4Q391.

³ The composition is allocated to the genre of rewritten bible both in DJD 30 and in the *Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*; the use of “re-written scripture” instead of “re-written bible” reflects the recent history of research, acknowledging that there was no canonical collection in the late Second Temple period (see Zahn 2010, 323–63; 2011, 96; Petersen 2014, 13–48). The terms “scripture” and “scriptural” refer more generally to any text or collection considered sacred and authoritative in this period (Zahn 2011, 96–97).

⁴ See Strugnell and Dimant 1988; Dimant and Strugnell 1990; Brady 2005; Schöpflin 2009; Klein 2014; Zahn 2014; Shirav 2022.

⁵ The significance of Papyrus 967 as an important witness for the textual history of Ezekiel is widely acknowledged. See Lust 1981, 517–33; Schwagmeier 2004; Lilly 2012; Tooman 2015.

underwent editorial changes, and that different editions circulated simultaneously.⁶ Thus, the different textual traditions will have to be considered where appropriate.

The second direction, a rather new avenue of research, is the question of how these documented cases of rewriting in Pseudo-Ezekiel can inform our models of the literary history of the scriptural book. This concerns the wider topic of how materiality—understood here as (external) material evidence—contributes to our understanding of the creation, tradition, and transmission of the scriptural writings.⁷ This article will add to this fundamental discussion by offering a case study that assesses the relationship between the scriptural book of Ezekiel and the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition in its significance as a model for undocumented processes of literary growth.

Nearly ten years ago, I addressed this question for the first time with the enthusiasm of a fresh postdoctoral scholar. Focusing on the vision of the dry bones in Ezek 37 and its interpretation in the Qumran work, I concluded with the thesis that “postbiblical” exegesis starts where “in-nerbiblical” exegesis ends (Klein 2014, 215). The argument suggests a rather linear process of interpretation, following the literary history of Ezek 37:1–14 through to the interpretation in the vision of the bones in the reconstructed work of Pseudo-Ezekiel (Klein 2014, 210–17). Yet in view of the current state of research on both the phenomenon of rewriting and the issue of textual pluriformity in the Second Temple period, it seems time to revisit the argument and change perspective. Instead of extending the scriptural redaction history to the Qumran materials, I will draw my conclusions from the documented cases in



⁶ In particular, a shorter version, represented most distinctly by Papyrus 967, and a longer version, represented by the Masoretic Text, existed side by side (Tooman 2015; see here for an overview of the textual history of Ezekiel). On the state of textual pluriformity in the Second Temple period, see Ulrich 1999, 17–33, 79–120; 2013, 83–104; Tov 2012, 169–90.

⁷ On this emerging field of research, see in particular the edited volume by Jeffrey H. Tigay (1985) and the studies by Kratz (2011, 2020); Müller, Pakkala, and ter Haar Romeny (2014), and Müller and Pakkala (2022); a more skeptical perspective is offered by the contributions in the volume edited by Raymond F. Person, Jr. and Robert Rezetko (2016).

Pseudo-Ezekiel and reflect on the implications for our models of literary growth. For this purpose, I will start, in the first section, with some methodological considerations that introduce the current framework and clarify the use of terminology. At this point, a significant conversation partner is the recent study on the phenomenon of rewriting in Second Temple Judaism by Molly Zahn (*Genres of Rewriting in Second Temple Judaism*, 2020) that paves the way for rethinking critical methodology in biblical studies. The second section comprises the analysis of the use of scripture in Pseudo-Ezekiel, while the third section draws some conclusions on *Fortschreibung* in the Hebrew Bible.

Methodological Considerations



Undeniably, the findings from Qumran have revolutionized the field of biblical studies by providing scholarship with a significant number of works that resemble the scriptures that later became “biblical”—that is, part of the canonical collections. Early on, scholars commented on the various links in topics and technique between the two bodies of literature. However, the development of common terminology and the discourse on shared methodological grounds continue to be compounded by the respective subject-specific standpoints and what Molly Zahn calls “the artificial divide between ‘biblical’ and ‘non-biblical’” (Zahn 2020, 74).⁸ In the following paragraphs, I will briefly summarize the current state of research and outline some key methodological considerations.

In biblical studies, historical-critical research goes back to the impact of the Reformation and the Enlightenment, when biblical theology emancipated itself from church dogmatics and considered the scriptures as documents written by humans. The insight that the scriptural texts have a history of literary development led to the quest for the original core that was held in high esteem—the *ipsissima verba* of the historic prophets, the sources of the narratives in the Pentateuch, the oldest law materials, and the original songs and poems. In the course

⁸ On the discussion, see already VanderKam 2002, 42–43; Campbell 2014, 50, 58–64; Petersen 2014, 24–27, 28–31.

of this quest, the nineteenth century saw the development of literary criticism; scholars used criteria such as doublets, tensions, and incoherencies to analyze the literary unity of texts and reveal their original core.⁹ The aim was to uncover the oldest sources that—in the view of the times—granted access to the inspired historic figures behind the texts, whose words needed to be separated from the inferior work of later epigones (see Becker 2021, 93–94).

Yet the twentieth century saw a gradual change in the assessment of secondary materials that (especially European) scholarship came to appreciate as forms of theological reinterpretation in light of changing historical contexts. This development was accompanied by a new esteem for the redactor as an author in their own right, who takes an active part in interpreting and supplementing the existing *Vorlage*. From the 1970s onward, the approach of redaction criticism / redaction history became prevalent; it complemented the analytical quest of literary criticism with a synthetic approach.¹⁰ The method aims to reconstruct the gradual literary growth of the existing text (under consideration of the different textual versions) and to investigate the theological motifs and historical contexts that stand behind the productive development.

One of the key contributions to this discussion came from Walther Zimmerli, who introduced the idea of *Fortschreibung* (“continuation”/ “supplementation”) in his commentary work on the book of Ezekiel (1969; English translation 1979). He used the term to describe the progressive supplementation of a prophetic kernel through later reinterpretation by the prophet’s school.¹¹ While this original understanding of *Fortschreibung* limits the phenomenon to the close literary context of a prophetic word, the related concepts of biblical interpretation and innerbiblical exegesis describe a wider understanding of the phenomenon and denote processes of interpretive supplementation in the closer



⁹ On literary criticism in historical-critical perspective, see Schmidt 1991, 211–21; Römer 2013, 393–423; Becker 2021, 48–50.

¹⁰ On definition and the history of research, see Steck 1995, 79–98; Kratz 1997, 367–78; Nihan 2013, 137–89; Becker 2021, 90–113; Berner 2021, 141–59.

¹¹ See Zimmerli 1979, 68–71 (1969, 106*–9*); 1980, 174–91.

and wider contexts of existing texts.¹² In a specific development, mainly German-speaking scholarship has introduced the reconstruction of systematic revisions through redactional layers that comprehensively reshape earlier versions of a composition.¹³ What these different models of literary supplementation have in common, though, is the emphasis on the interpretive aspect of productive literary growth. The redaction history of the texts shows the attempt to actualize the existing scriptural materials for a new context, and thus represents a form of reception history.¹⁴ Consequently, the question of whether or not a *Tendenz* (“tendency”), a specific theological interest, distinguishes different literary layers or individual text elements has become increasingly important for this approach (*Tendenzkritik*).¹⁵

The literary techniques and hermeneutics that characterize redaction and interpretation within the later biblical texts are not phenomena that are limited to the body of literature known as the Hebrew Bible or the Old Testament. While already Isaac Seeligman (1953) and Michael Fishbane (1985) pointed to the continuations between interpretation in biblical scriptures and later stages of Jewish scriptural exegesis, a number of publications apply the insights from biblical interpretation and redaction history to the interpretation in Qumran materials, describing



¹² Seminal is the study on biblical interpretation by Michal Fishbane (1985). See also the history of research by Schmid 2000, 5–34; Kratz 2020, 209–46, and the case studies on supplementation in the collected volume by Saul M. Olyan and Jacob L. Wright (2018).

¹³ See, for example, the idea of the Deuteronomistic History, which was formulated by Martin Noth (1943, 1948), and the redaction-historical studies by Winfried Thiel (1973, 1981) on the book of Jeremiah; Odil Hannes Steck (1985) on the book of Isaiah; Reinhard G. Kratz (1991) on the book of Second Isaiah, and Konrad Schmid (1996) on the book of Jeremiah.

¹⁴ Kratz 1997, 370; 2020, 212; Steck 2000; Berner 2021, 144–45.

¹⁵ While different seminal contributions in German scholarship use the term (e.g., Kaiser 2000, 200–17; Kratz 2020, 245; Becker 2021, 67), a comprehensive definition and description of the approach as part of the method canon is still pending. However, there is some agreement that *Tendenzkritik* or tendency criticism investigates the theological intention of a text element or literary layer.

these processes in terms of “postbiblical exegesis”.¹⁶ Scholars have also investigated the connections between materials within the scriptural texts and materials from various other compositions from the Second Temple period from the other side of the subject divide. In 1961, Geza Vermes first coined the term “rewritten bible” for a group of texts that he described as inserting “haggadic development into the biblical narrative” (1961, 95). Since then, the phenomenon has undergone extensive research, with some scholars arguing for a distinct genre and others preferring to speak of an exegetical technique.¹⁷ It should be noted that this definition also applies to the reworking of the books of Samuel and Kings in 1 and 2 Chronicles or the rewriting of the Pentateuchal law in the book of Deuteronomy, which in short represent cases of biblical rewritten bible (Brooke 2000, 778).

The different labels and categories to describe the phenomenon of rewriting both within the later biblical collections and beyond have sparked debate in recent years. The terminology suggests the existence of a “biblical” corpus to describe literary and exegetical processes in times before the canonical collections were consolidated. In many ways, the differentiation between interpretation within the later biblical scriptures (“innerbiblical”) and in external compositions (“postbiblical”) runs the danger of being anachronistic (Zahn 2020, 75–80). Rather, from a methodological point of view, the decisive differentiation focuses on the question of whether the textual processes concern the continuous transmission of the same literary work (internal *Fortschreibung*), or whether the literary operations create an entirely new composition by rewriting a given tradition (external *Fortschreibung*) (see Müller and Pakkala 2022, 8). In view of this complex problem, the recent definition of rewriting by Molly Zahn offers a more adequate concept to describe the phenomenon. Zahn defines rewriting as “*the deliberate, unmarked reproduction and modification of one text by another*” (2020, 38) and



¹⁶ See Vielhauer 2007, 207–23 (with regard to 4QpHos^a and 4QpHos^b); Kratz 2011, 99–145 (on Peshar Nahum); Klein 2014, 18–22 (with regard to Pseudo-Ezekiel).

¹⁷ On the term and scholarly discussion thereon, see Brooke 2000, 777–81; Bernstein 2005; Falk 2007; Zahn 2010, 323–36; 2020, and the contributions in the volume *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years*, edited by József Zsengellér (2014).

distinguishes two forms: while revision results in the production of a new copy of an existing work, reuse leads to a new composition that draws on a source text (2020, 38). In an analysis of various documented case studies from the Second Temple period, Zahn demonstrates that rewriting represents a widespread phenomenon that was the norm rather than the exception.¹⁸

This groundbreaking study presents biblical scholars with a unique opportunity to refine their understanding of and approach to ancient texts. First, Zahn adds a powerful voice to the choir of exegetes who make a strong case for the need to presuppose rewriting also in those cases for which there is no material evidence. Yet at the same time, she states that the documented cases of rewriting challenge traditional scholarly confidence in their ability to offer detailed reconstructions of previous literary stages of existing texts (Zahn 2020, 93). Zahn's concerns coincide with a current crisis taking place in the context of the traditional historical-critical approach. Having been the established method of biblical criticism for the second half of the twentieth century, the historical-critical method has increasingly been replaced by new (literary) approaches¹⁹ and faces fundamental criticism. The latter has three aspects to it: first, how suitable, in general, is an approach that presupposes a history of additional growth but only rarely considers the possibilities of transposition, omission, and editorial work—techniques of rewriting that cannot be reconstructed without documented evidence.²⁰ This is certainly a valid point and touches on the limits of literary and redaction-historical models, yet a number of studies on material evidence confirm that the expansion of works represents the



¹⁸ See Zahn 2020, 4 (“a widespread, even ubiquitous scribal technique in early Judaism”); and the conclusions in Zahn 2020, 196–32.

¹⁹ In these new approaches, the term “literary” refers to the critical analysis of the scriptural texts as literature and should not be confused with the traditional method of literary criticism as described above.

²⁰ For a major voice in this discussion, see the study *Kritik des Wachstumsmodells* by Benjamin Ziemer (2020). He concludes that not additional growth but selective interpretation governs processes of rewriting (2020, 697–700). A comprehensive critique of this study is not possible as part of this argument, but see the review by Juha Pakkala (2021).

general disposition of rewriting.²¹ Second, the criteria used to question literary unity rely on modern understandings of coherence and incoherence, which leads to the objection that modern scholars project their own understanding onto the ancient scribes and their work.²² It is certainly a requisite to question our assumptions and reflect on the objectivity of the exegete, but in this question we can only think within the framework of our times: it is “the task of the modern exegete to reconstruct the thinking of the ancient scribe and readers on the basis of available sources and the understanding of his or her times” (Kratz, 2020, 210). Third, the increasing differentiation and specialization of the redaction-historical reconstructions have engendered criticism pertaining to the scholarly ability to reconstruct accurately the different stages of development and to the method’s atomizing tendency. However, the historical-critical approach operates on the basis of clearly defined criteria and safeguards the analytical results of literary criticism with the synchronic countercheck of redaction history (see Berner 2021, 148). Thus, complexity is unavoidable and actually desired if the argument can demonstrate that the model is appropriate to explain the problems of the text and gives insight into the world behind it. A synchronistic reading that proceeds from the surface level of a “final form” cannot answer any questions about the historical setting of a text and its developmental contexts. Furthermore, in view of current models of the textual history of the Hebrew scriptures, which describe a transition period in which the rewriting of some works continued while others were already transmitted, the idea of a “final form” is a problematic hypothesis. Even proceeding from the Codex Leningradensis does not offer a safe starting point, as it entails the problem that the manuscript was written in the Middle Ages and—strictly speaking—should only be interpreted against this background. Any attempts to establish an earlier form of the Hebrew text requires critical engagement with the different textual witnesses and necessarily leads to questions of literary development. Thus, I struggle to see any alternative to the use of the



²¹ See Müller, Pakkala, and ter Haar Romeny 2014; Zahn 2020; Berner 2021, 145–49; Müller and Pakkala 2022.

²² On this discussion, see Teeter and Tooman 2020, 94–129; Kratz 2020, 210–14.

historical-critical perspective when engaging in discussions of the literature, theology and history of ancient Israel.²³

In the following section, I will use the textual evidence represented by the composition Pseudo-Ezekiel to ask how the relationship between the scriptural book of Ezekiel and the Qumran work informs our understanding of the phenomenon of *Fortschreibung*.²⁴ And I should note that—in the terminology of Molly Zahn—this question considers implications for the reconstruction of rewriting in the form of revision (scriptural book of Ezekiel) by analyzing documented cases of rewriting in the form of reuse (Pseudo-Ezekiel).²⁵ There is thus a scholarly caveat with regard to the knowledge transfer, but the documented work of ancient scribes is the only point of access that we have to develop and refine our understanding of rewriting in the scriptures—that is, if we do not want to give up on the task altogether.



²³ Lastly, it is a valid point that the increasing specialization of the field poses challenges for knowledge exchange, teaching, and collaboration with other disciplines. However, these challenges do not question the appropriateness of the historical-critical method but rather necessitate improved communication and sustained discourse.

²⁴ For a similar undertaking, see Pakkala 2015, 101–27, who analyses cases that illustrate editorial processes in the Temple Scroll in order to understand “what these cases tell us about the editorial processes of the Hebrew Scriptures and their authoritative law texts in particular” (106).

²⁵ In theory, the Qumran composition could also constitute a copy of (scriptural) Ezekiel, thus representing a form of revision rather than reuse. However, Molly Zahn has demonstrated convincingly that the evidence points toward a “new, independent work,” referring to a tendency of abbreviation and omission, the small overlap with the text of scriptural Ezekiel, the substantial amount of new materials, and the transmission together with the Apocryphon of Jeremiah C materials (2014, 362).

Rewriting in Pseudo-Ezekiel

Overview: The Composition

As discussed, the Pseudo-Ezekiel materials comprise a group of six manuscripts (4Q385, 4Q386, 4Q385b, 4Q388, 4Q385c, 4Q391). While most materials of the group are fragmentary, seven fragments offer a substantial amount of legible text (4Q385 f2, f3, f4, f6; 4Q385b; 4Q386 f1 col. i–iii; 4Q388 f7). The text preserved offers a mix of materials that show links with prophecies or visions of the scriptural book and “new” materials that were previously unknown (Zahn 2014, 342). With regard to the scriptural materials, three fragments rework the scriptural vision of the bones in Ezek 37 and overlap in parts (4Q385 f2; 4Q386 f1i; 4Q388 f7). Closely connected to this group is 4Q385 f3, which seems to continue the resurrection scene. Another substantial fragment, 4Q385 f6, has clear links with the visions of Yhwh’s glory in the scriptural composition (Ezek 1; 10; 43), while 4Q385b engages with Ezek 30:1–5, the lamentation for Egypt. Finally, the badly preserved text in 4Q391 f25 shows some connections with the lamentation over Tyre in Ezek 27–28. When it comes to the new materials, 4Q385 f4 comprises a dialogue between prophet and God, in which God grants the prophet the request to hasten the (end-)days. Another dialogue in 4Q386 f1ii discusses the oppression of the people before they will be gathered and returned, while 4Q386 f1iii compares Babylon to a judgment tool (f1iii 1: ככוס) in the hands of the Lord. Finally, the account in 4Q388 f6 describes an (end)-battle with horse and chariot involved.

In an ideal world, a study of the rewriting of scriptural materials in different parts of Pseudo-Ezekiel should investigate the exegetical processes in light of the materials’ setting in the whole composition. That leads to the question of what can be said about the nature and framework of the Qumran work. A number of publications have described the content and material aspects of the fragments, and have discussed a possible reconstruction of the composition.²⁶ The analysis of the content relies greatly on manuscripts 4Q385 and 4Q386, which between them

²⁶ Dimant 2000, 18–20; Shirav 2022, 3–17; see also Zahn 2014, 340–42; Klein 2014, 202–10.



contain five fragments with a substantial amount of text and overlap in part. A number of fragments of the 4Q385 group are the starting point for the material reconstruction; they show similar damage patterns, which speaks for a sequential arrangement (Shirav 2022, 9).²⁷ The initial reconstruction made by Devorah Dimant in DJD 30 (2000, 21) provides for a consecutive sequence that roughly follows Ezek 37–43 (4Q388 f7 – 4Q385 f2+3 / 4Q386 f1 – 4Q385 f4 – 4Q385 f6). Yet as Anna Shirav (2022, 5) has pointed out, the integration of different scrolls in one material reconstruction is methodologically problematic. In her doctoral thesis, Shirav re-evaluates the evidence and offers a new proposal with the order 4Q385 f4 (accelerating time) – 4Q385 f6 (divine *merkabah*) – 4Q385 f2+3 (revivification of the bones).²⁸ Furthermore, Shirav (2022, 13–17) identifies 4Q385b as a “replacement sheet” that has preserved the beginning and the title (“Words of Ezekiel”) of the composition. I find the idea of 4Q385b as a replacement sheet for the beginning wholly convincing. However, seeing that any material reconstruction relies on a few preserved fragments with substantial gaps in between, I am hesitant to base the following observations on any one model. Decisive is the fact that the rewriting of scriptural materials in the fragments of Pseudo-Ezekiel should be considered as part of a larger composition with a clear eschatological orientation: it discusses the timing of the last days, the defeat of the enemies, the restoration of Israel, and the resurrection of the righteous. The following observations will thus focus on the parts of the composition that engage with the scriptural materials, and consider their literary setting when appropriate.



The Revivification of the Bones (4Q385 f2; par. 4Q386 f1i; 4Q388 f7 + 4Q385 f3)

As noted above, the text of the revivification of the bones in Pseudo-Ezekiel is preserved in three overlapping fragments, with the substantial text of 4Q385 f2 offering the blueprint for the reconstruction. The first line in 4Q385 f2 comprises the end of the preceding section where Yhwh presents himself as the redeemer of his people who has

²⁷ See already Klein 2014, 203–4.

²⁸ Shirav 2023, 67–171. See also Shirav 2022, 3–17.

given them the covenant (par. 4Q388 f7 2–3); the break is also indicated by a lengthy *vacat*. The section in 4Q385 that comprises the scriptural materials consists of three parts. While the first part (f2 2–4) exposes the central problem in a dialogue between God and the prophet, the second part describes the materialization of the bones (f2 5–9). Finally, the third part ends with another dialogue (f2 9–10), which is, however, only partially preserved.

The text of the first part does not have any direct links in vocabulary with the scriptural materials, but it mirrors the initial dialogue between Yhwh and the prophet in Ezek 37:3 (see Brady 2005, 96). Here, God leads the prophet around the dry bones in the valley and then asks the rhetorical question: “Can these bones live?” (37:3: התחיינה העצמות האלה) —a question that the prophet wisely passes on. The concern in the Pseudo-Ezekiel account is a different one, and it is the prophet who voices it. He states that he has seen “many of Israel (f2 2: ראיתי רבים מישראל) who have loved your name”²⁹ and wonders about their fate: “And th[ese] things—when will they come to be and how will they be recompensed for their piety (f2 3: ישתלמו חסדם)?” God replies that he will make it manifest to the children of Israel, closing with the recognition formula (f2 4: “they shall know that I am the Lord”). The dialogue in 4Q385 f2 is introduced without a specific narrative setting, whereas the scriptural vision locates the events “in the middle of the valley” (Ezek 37:1: בתוך הבקעה). While it is possible that the previous (unpreserved) part of the Qumran work provides some information about the location, the *vacat* at the end of 4Q385 f2 1 and the change of topic indicate a new scene—more likely, the author expects the audience to recognize a rewriting of the scriptural vision.³⁰ It is only the continuation in the second part 4Q385 f2 5–9 that introduces the bones explicitly and shows that the question for recompense reveals a concern for the



²⁹ All transcriptions and translations follow the editions of Devorah Dimant (2001) and Mark Smith respectively (1995), accessed through the Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library (<https://brill.com/display/package/dsso?language=en>).

³⁰ See Klein 2014, 210. See also Dimant 2000, 531: “Altogether omitted is the biblical scene of a valley of bones. The bones are directly introduced as a familiar subject (4Q385 2 5).”

validity of the connection between deed and consequence beyond death. Furthermore, the recompense of the righteous is put into an eschatological context, as the prophet is concerned with the question of when these things will happen (f2 3, 9) (Klein 2014, 211). Thus, the rewriting of the introductory scriptural dialogue in Pseudo-Ezekiel creates a new framework for the revivification of the bones and shows a concern for the fate of the righteous.³¹

With regard to the second part of the Qumran composition, the account preserved in 4Q385 f2 5–9 shows clear links in vocabulary to the vision part in Ezek 37:4–10, yet the use of tenses and the organization of the events differ from the scriptural materials (see Zahn 2014, 345). Both versions describe how Ezekiel prophesies over the bones and how these come to life. The initial address to the prophet³² and the commission to prophesy in f2 5 (וַיֹּאמֶר [בֶּן אָדָם הַנְּבִיאָה עַל הָעֲצָמוֹת וְאָמַרְתָּ]) are a close match with the introduction in Ezek 37:4 (וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הַנְּבִיאָה עַל־הָעֲצָמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם) (see Zahn 2014, 345). Yet while the verb אָמַר introduces direct prophetic speech in the scriptural vision, the account in Pseudo-Ezekiel uses an indirect third-person description of the events, voiced by the deity himself.³³ The direct prophetic speech in Ezek 37 starts from the participial promise that Yhwh will bring back spirit into the bones (37:5: מְבִיא) and continues with a series of perfect consecutivum forms that promise the restoration of body components sinews, flesh, skin, and the spirit (37:6: וְנָתַתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם גְּדִים וְהָעֵלְתִי עֲלֵיכֶם בָּשָׂר וְקִרַמְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם עוֹר וְנָתַתִּי בְכֶם רוּחַ). Following this initial promise that concludes with another recognition formula in 37:6, the account in 37:7–10 describes the fulfilment of the divine promise in two stages, using the perfect consecutivum as narrative tense



³¹ This eschatological interpretation in Pseudo-Ezekiel is well established in scholarship, though opinions differ on the question of whether the scriptural vision already presupposes the idea of bodily resurrection. See Dimant 2001, 32; Brady 2005, 96; Schöpflin 2009, 82; Klein 2014, 210; Zahn 2014, 347–48.

³² While the address in terms of בֶּן אָדָם (“son of man”) is missing in Codex Leningradensis, it is attested in some Hebrew manuscripts, the Old Latin and the recensions of Origen and Lucian; this suggests that the reading of Pseudo-Ezekiel was already attested in the Hebrew *Vorlage*. See Dimant 2001, 26; Zahn 2014, 345.

³³ Dimant 2001, 26; Zahn 2014, 346.

(37:7, 8, 10).³⁴ In a first act, the prophet witnesses how the bones come together (37:7: עֲצָם אֶל-עֲצָמוֹ) to be furnished with sinews and flesh and covered with skin (37:8: וְהָגַה-עֲלֵיהֶם גְּדִים וּבָשָׂר עָלֶיהָ וַיִּקְרָם עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹר מִלְּמַעְלָה). Yet the lack of the spirit (37:8) initiates a further commission to the prophet: Ezekiel is now told to prophesy to the spirit of the four corners of the earth, which shall breathe upon the slain to bring them back to life (37:9: וּפָחִי בַהֲרוּגִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיְחִיּוּ). The verse 37:10 comprises the realization of this commission.

In contrast, the Pseudo-Ezekiel account in 4Q385 f2 offers a shorter version that distinguishes three stages, each of which closes with a fulfilment formula.³⁵ It is noteworthy that the wording of the indirect prophetic command draws on the fulfilment of the prophetic action in Ezek 37:7–10 rather than on the formulation of the promise in 37:5–6.³⁶ First, the instruction that bones and joints shall come together (4Q385 f2 5–6: עֲצָם אֶל עֲצָמוֹ וּפְרָק [אֶל פְּרָקוֹ])³⁷ relates to Ezek 37:7 (עֲצָם אֶל-עֲצָמוֹ) but adds the “joint” (פְּרָק) as another part of the skeleton. This body component is absent in the Masoretic tradition, but the Greek text (with Papyrus 967) attests to a variant, according to which the bones approach each other, connecting at the joints (καὶ προσήγαγε τὰ ὅσῃ ἑκάτερον πρὸς τὴν ἄρμονίαν αὐτοῦ). Considering these witnesses, the variant in 4Q385 f2 most likely represents a double reading, reflecting both the proto-Masoretic tradition and the Hebrew *Vorlage* to the LXX (Zahn 2014, 349). In the second part (4Q385 f2 6–7), Ezekiel is



³⁴ The use of the perfect consecutivum as a narrative tense does not conform to the classical use (see in detail Bartelmus 1984, 366–89) and is usually explained as a later influence from Aramaic (see GesK §112pp; Bartelmus 1984, 375; Joüon and Muraoka 2006, §119z). This phenomenon in Ezek 37 has been used as a literary-critical argument to distinguish a literary layer in 37:7–10. See also note 51.

³⁵ The first formula in 4Q385 f2 6 (וַיְהִי כֵן) can be reconstructed with the help of the parallel in 4Q386 f1i 5–6 (וַיְהִי כֵן), yet the other two occurrences in 4Q385 f2 7, 8 rely on restoration.

³⁶ See Brady 2000, 99; Zahn 2014, 346.

³⁷ The last two words can be reconstructed with the overlap in 4Q386 f1i 5 (וּפְרָק אֶל פְּרָקוֹ).

again instructed to prophesy, so that sinews³⁸ shall come up and skin shall cover the bones (ויעלו עליהם גדים ויקרמו עור [מלמעלה]). The vocabulary draws on the wording in Ezek 37:8, but there is a variation in the body components and some alteration in the use of verbs. In Ezek 37:8, the prophet sees not only the materialization of sinews and skin, but also how flesh comes upon the bones, before skin covers these (והנה עליהם גדים ובשר עלה ויקרם עליהם עור מלמעלה). While the flesh is missing in Pseudo-Ezekiel, the verb עלה refers now to the sinews, the restoration of which the scriptural account describes in a nominal sentence. It is difficult to find an explanation for the alteration of the body components; Dimant (2001, 27) suggests that the Qumran work focuses on two different types of what she calls “body members,” hard ones and soft ones. This is a possible explanation, which, however, would also work with the flesh instead of either sinews or skin. It is also noteworthy that the parallel in 4Q386 f1i 7 attests to a variant in place of the fulfilment formula in 4Q385 f2 7. The remaining letters and the size of the *lacuna* in line 7 suggest a longer text that illustrates the growth of sinews and skin in the same way as the scriptural account in Ezek 37:8.³⁹



In the third stage of the materialization, the instruction to prophesy over the four winds of the heavens (4Q385 f2 7: רוח (אנבא על ארבע רוחות השמים ויפחו רוח מארבע רוחות באי 37:9). In the scriptural vision, however, God instructs the prophet to call the spirit from the four corners of the earth (37:9: מארבע רוחות באי). The difference is subtle but may suggest a changed understanding of the spirit, which in the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition takes the shape of four personified wind spirits.⁴⁰ There is also the question of what

³⁸ Dimant 2001, 27, translates the noun גיד as “arteries” in Pseudo-Ezekiel, referring to the use of the term in two other Qumran texts. However, as the scriptural vision attests to the same noun, it is more likely that the meaning in Pseudo-Ezekiel follows the scriptural use (see also the translations by Brady 2000, 100; Zahn 2014, 346).

³⁹ See also Brady 2000, 101: “It is possible that such a fuller account was provided in 4Q386 I i as well.”

⁴⁰ See Klein 2014, 21: “[T]he four winds have undergone a literary upgrading from being mere cardinal points in the biblical vision to becoming agents of salvation in their own right in Pseudo-Ezekiel.”

the object of the salvific action is. In Ezek 37:9, the prophet calls on the spirit to blow into the slain ones (בהרוגים), which suggests that the bones are the remains of humans that met with a violent death; these are subsequently revived and stand up as a great army (37:10: ויעמדו על-רגליהם חיל גדול מאד-מאד).⁴¹ The corresponding line in 4Q385 f2 8 begins with a *lacuna*, but the preserved words speak of the revivification of a large crowd of humans, who bless Yhwh of Hosts⁴² (וי[ה]יו עם רב אנשים ויברכו את יהוה צבאות). In her DJD edition, Dimant restores the *lacuna* of 4Q385 f2 8 to read “into the slain ones” (בהרוגים), drawing on the scriptural materials (see Ezek 37:9: בהרוגים).⁴³ However, the restoration is problematic in the context of the Qumran composition, as the revivification of a large crowd lacks the military connotation of Ezek 37:10 (“a mighty army”)—it fits less well with the idea of the bones as remains of humans that have been killed.⁴⁴ The initial

⁴¹ The Greek tradition (with Papyrus 967) shows some variants, as it attests the reading συναγωγή πολλή σφόδρα (“a very great congregation”) in 37:10. Similarly, it reads τοὺς νεκροὺς τούτους (“these dead”) at the end of 37:9, so that the Greek text does not share in the understanding that the bones are the remains of humans that have met with a violent death. It is safe to assume that “the term for who was raised in the bones-vision was in flux in the Hebrew literary tradition” (Lilly 2012, 115). The different versions attest to different interpretive interests: an interest in either a generalization or a specification of those that are revived.

⁴² This divine title is absent in scriptural Ezekiel, but occurs frequently in other prophetic books (e.g., Isa 1:9, 24; 2:12; Jer 8:3, 9:6, 14).

⁴³ Unfortunately, the text is also missing in the parallel, 4Q386 f1i, though the size of its *lacuna* and the remaining text suggest a variant. Dimant reconstructs ויפחו בם (“let them blow into them”) in 4Q386 f1i, acknowledging that the remaining letters and the size of the *lacuna* require a different reconstruction than in 4Q385 f2 8 (2001, 62).

⁴⁴ See García Martínez 2005, 170: “This is the reason why I think that the reconstruction of ‘the slain’ (הרוגים) with Ez 37:9 by Dimant is incorrect, since the allusion to the military character of the biblical text has been carefully avoided.” One might make the point that the scriptural account in 37:11 identifies the bones with “the whole house” of Israel, a designation that similarly has no military connotation. However, the context of 37:11 suggests a metaphorical discussion of resurrection that should be distinguished from the vision in 37:1–10 and most likely represents a different literary layer. See the argument in the following section.



dialogue in 4Q385 f2 that concerns the fate of the pious (f2 3) is further evidence that the Qumran work does not assume the context of a military conflict. Of exegetical interest is, however, the clear addition in 4Q385 f2 8 that sees the resurrected crowd engaging in a blessing of Yhwh of Hosts. The benediction might point to liturgical practices at the time⁴⁵ or satisfy the need for an appropriate reaction of the crowd, which gives thanks for their divine salvation.⁴⁶

The third part of the Qumran composition (4Q385 f2 9–10) does not have any links with the scriptural materials, though a second dialogue draws on the initial discussion between God and the prophet. Ezekiel resumes the question of when these things shall come to be (4Q385 f2 9), but from the divine answer only the enigmatic phrase remains that a tree shall bend and stand erect (4Q385 f2 10).

An interesting case is 4Q385 f3, which connects thematically with the bones materials. The passage f3 2–3 describes a group of people that rise up and stand to thank Yhwh of Hosts (ויקומו כל העם ויעמדו על רגליהם ולהלל את יהוה צבאות). The second and third verb are fragmentary, but it is clear that f3 2–3 repeats the scene in f2 8–9 but with different terminology. The verb עמד offers, however, a clear link with Ezek 37:10 (ויעמדו על-רגליהם). The account in 4Q386 then continues with the note that the prophet spoke to the people (f3 3), before Yhwh commissions him with a message, which is only partly preserved (f3 5–7). Dimant suggests an allusion to Ezek 37:12–13 in her reconstruction: “In the place of their burial] they will lie until [(f3 4:]מקום קבורתם] ישכבו עד אשר [(f3 5:]מקום קבורתם] ומן הארץ]” (2001, 29–30). However, the verb שכב does not occur in Ezek 37:12–13, and the reading of “your graves” (קבורתם) relies on one (poorly) preserved consonant of the lemma in question. While it is tempting to assume the sequence of events in Ezek 37:1–14 as continuous intertext for the sequence of 4Q385 f2 and f3 (thus Dimant 2001, 30), I find that this thesis lacks support. What



⁴⁵ Thus Dimant 2000, 533; 2001, 34.

⁴⁶ See Tromp 2007, 74, who comments: “one could say that blessing the Lord after having regained life is no more than the decent thing to do, either in reality, or in a vision.”

we are left with is a doublet of the scene where the people rise up and thank their God, which is, however, continued with a different divine message in each fragment. As both fragments will have been part of the same work, we can surmise a repetition within the storyline of the composition.⁴⁷ From a historical-critical perspective, this looks like a classic case of *Wiederaufnahme* (literary resumption) that evidences a prior *Fortschreibung*. The resumption of the scene and the back reference that the prophet (previously) engaged with the people in 4Q385 f3 2–3 could have served to integrate the addition of a new divine oracle following in 4Q385 f3 5ff. On that assumption, the copy of the Qumran work preserved in scroll 4Q385 would attest to an earlier process of revision. However, this hypothesis must remain highly speculative due to the small amount of text preserved in 4Q385 f3.

Described poignantly as “a kind of commentary” (Dimant 2001, 32), the interpretative interest of the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition in the scriptural materials in Ezek 37 is obvious. It is thus time to ask how the documented cases of reuse in this passage of the Qumran work can inform our understanding of the processes of revision that we assume for the scriptural tradition. From a phenomenological perspective, the differences between the two works present as cases of addition, omission, abbreviation, and alteration.⁴⁸ The most significant addition in Pseudo-Ezekiel’s rewriting is the new hermeneutical framework in 4Q385 f2 2–3, 9–10 that actualizes the scriptural idea of resurrection for a new time and a new context.⁴⁹ It draws on the initial dialogue between God and the prophet in Ezek 37:3 and does not only introduce the recompense for the righteous, but it also inquires about the question of timing.



⁴⁷ Both Dimant and Shirav assume a direct sequence of 4Q385 f2 and f3 in their material reconstructions; while Shirav 2022, 6, suggests a space of roughly ten lines between the two fragments, there is a smaller space in Dimant’s model (2001, 18).

⁴⁸ See Dimant 2001, 31–37, who distinguishes these four techniques in her analysis of 4Q385 f2 and f3. I find this a useful template to classify the different uses of scripture in the Qumran work, though my argument differs in the choice and description of examples.

⁴⁹ Brady 2000, 93; Dimant 2001, 33–34; Klein 2014, 210–11; Zahn 2014, 347–48.

There is, however, some evidence to suggest that the scriptural account in Ezek 37:1–14 already comprises different ideas of resurrection. While the section in 37:11–14 promises a metaphorical resurrection of Israel in exile by restoring the people to their homeland, the vision segment in 37:7–10 describes the resurrection of physical bodies. The thesis that Ezek 37:7–10 speaks of bodily resurrection is further strengthened by a number of allusions to the creation accounts such as the word that sets the recreation in motion (Ezek 37:7, 10; see Gen 1) and the creation verb *נָפַח* that is used to describe the bestowal of the (life) spirit (Ezek 37:9; see Gen 2:7).⁵⁰ These allusions to the creation accounts are acknowledged in Pseudo-Ezekiel and continue through the addition of the fulfilment formula (see Gen 1) and the resumption of the verb *נָפַח* (4Q385 f2 7). There has been an extended discussion in scholarship about how to account for the inconsistency that the bones are scattered on the face of the valley in Ezek 37:1–10 and God’s promise that he will raise the bones from the graves in 37:11–14.⁵¹ In my own analysis, I suggest that a basic vision account about the restoration of Israel (37:1–6*) was supplemented first with the symbolic idea that Israel will be “resurrected” from their graves in exile (37:11–14*), before the promise of bodily resurrection—and its associated imagery—was inserted in 37:7–10.⁵²

The rewriting in Pseudo-Ezekiel thus adds a further chain to the scriptural *Tendenz* that focuses on changing ideas about who the bones represent and what their materialization symbolizes. The Qumran



⁵⁰ On the links with creation in both Ezek 37:1–14 and Pseudo-Ezekiel, see Klein 2014, 200; Dimant 2000, 532.

⁵¹ See the overview in Klein 2008, 273–76.

⁵² For a detailed analysis, see Klein 2008, 270–83; 2014, 197–201. My analysis here also relies on the use of the perfect consecutivum as a narrative tense in 37:7–10 to distinguish a late literary layer in these verses; on the classification of 37:7–10* as latest literary layer in Ezek 37:1–14, see further Bartelmus 1984, 385–89; Ohnesorge 1991, 287–93; Wahl 1999, 223–28; Schöpflin 2009, 82. Most of these scholars distinguish between a metaphorical idea of restoration on earlier stages of the development and a later *Fortschreibung* with the idea of bodily resurrection; see Bartelmus 1984, 385–89; Ohnesorge 1991, 336–38; Pohlmann 2001, 497; Schöpflin 2009, 76–80.

composition draws specifically on the promise of bodily resurrection in Ezek 37:7–10, but limits revivification to the group of the pious and discusses it in its significance for recompense beyond death.⁵³ The addition of the prophet’s question about when these things will happen (4Q385 f2 3, 9) and the final blessing of the resurrected crowd (4Q385 f2 8) further develop the theme. The rewriting does not want to present a new version of the vision of the bones, but it *reuses* the materials in order to discuss a new problem. Finally, my analysis has also considered some smaller additions such as the insertion of the prophet’s address and the joints as additional body parts. Here, the different variants in the versions suggest that the text was still in flux, and the results thus advise caution in giving too much exegetical weight to these additions.

Notable as well is the omission of certain elements of the *Vorlage* in the rewriting of Pseudo-Ezekiel. One first notices that the rewriting seems to draw exclusively on the imagery of the bones scattered throughout the valley and does not show any clear links with the materials in Ezek 37:11–14.⁵⁴ The most likely explanation for this is that the authors recognized the different ideas of restoration in the scriptural materials and made the choice to focus on the imagery that illustrates bodily resurrection.⁵⁵ It is also interesting that the remaining text of the Qumran vision does not contain the characterization of the bones as being “dry” (יבש). This feature is the only link that connects the vision part of the scriptural account in 37:1–10 (37:2: והנה יבשות מאד; 37:4: העצמות היבשות) with the prophecy about the graves in 37:11–14 (37:11: אמרים יבשו עצמותינו). There is, however, good reason to suggest



⁵³ Thus Klein 2014, 210–17; Schöpflin 2009, 82. Differently, some scholars argue that the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition reworks “a symbolic scene of Israel’s national revival into a scene of real resurrection as eschatological recompense for individual piety” (Dimant 2000, 532); similarly Puech 1993, 611–16; Zahn 2014, 347–48; Evans 2015, 75.

⁵⁴ See, however, the discussion of possible links between Ezek 37:11–14 and 4Q385 f3 above.

⁵⁵ Similarly, García Martínez 2005, 170, who comments on the fact that the author of the account in 4Q385 f2 does not consider Ezek 37:11–14: “For him, the vision is no longer a promise of national restoration and return from exile, but a promise of individual resurrection from the dead.”

that the adjective originally belongs to 37:11–14, as the idea of being dry fits better with the situation of hopelessness expressed in the saying in 37:11.⁵⁶ With regard to the Qumran account, it could simply be the case that the adjective was not preserved in the remaining text. However, the rewriting of the commission to prophesy clearly draws on the commission in the first half of Ezek 37:4b and not the second half in 37:4b that addresses the bones as dry ones (4Q385 f2 5; 4Q386 f1i 4). The easiest explanation, then, is that the author of Pseudo-Ezekiel made a conscious decision to omit the aspect of dryness, as it does not contribute to the illustration of the fate of the pious.⁵⁷

The difference between omission and abbreviation is fluid, as each abbreviation is technically also a case of omission. Focusing on clear cases that still correspond to the scriptural version but present a shorter text, it is foremost the account of the materialization that has been abbreviated in Pseudo-Ezekiel. What is a rather convoluted and repetitive description of a promise and a two-stage fulfilment in Ezek 37:4–10 has been rewritten as a concise three-stage process in the Qumran work. Furthermore, the actual materialization of the stages that the prophet envisions after each of his prophecies in Ezek 37 has been replaced with the fulfilment formula. The formula enhances the links with the creation accounts and supports the interpretation in terms of bodily resurrection. The continuous abbreviation of the materialization account suggests that the audience was familiar with the scriptural events, so that a full repetition was unnecessary. This might also explain why the author of the Qumran work altered the genre of the vision that now presents as an indirect account with short summaries. Instead of the different uses of the perfect consecutivum, the Qumran account relies



⁵⁶ In contrast, there is evidence to suggest that the use of the adjective in 37:2 and 37:4 goes back to later redactional work. See Klein 2008, 279–80.

⁵⁷ Among Qumran scholars, only Popović 2009, 234–35, comments on the omission of the adjective “dry” in Pseudo-Ezekiel, which he interprets as an attempt to strengthen the interpretation as bodily resurrection and to avoid a metaphorical (mis)interpretation. It has become established, though, to refer to this part of the Qumran work as the vision of the “dry bones.” See, e.g., Dimant 2001, 41; Zahn 2014, 344.

on indirect jussive forms in the instruction parts and the imperfect consecutivum as narrative tense. Overall, the abbreviation of the account makes it seem a lot more coherent, as it presents a shorter and well-ordered sequence.

The final group of literary phenomena concerns alterations. As a working hypothesis, alterations differ from additions insofar as they change or emphasize the scriptural materials without adding new elements. This concerns first the position of the prophet, who has a much more active role in the Qumran work. Ezekiel takes to the floor twice: it is the prophet who starts the dialogue at the beginning and at the end of the account, and who asks the decisive questions (4Q385 f2 2–3, 9). If we also consider the witness of 4Q385 f3, the prophet addresses the crowd following their resurrection. This contrasts first with the introductory dialogue in the scriptural vision, in which the prophet plays a minor part—he replies meekly to Yhwh’s rhetorical question in Ezek 37:3. Yet he takes a more active role in the vision sequence in 37:7–10, when Ezekiel functions as a mediator between Yhwh and the spirit.⁵⁸ The function of the spirit has also undergone some changes. The scriptural vision starts with a general promise of the spirit of life (37:5–6) that in 37:7–10 emanates from the four winds (37:9) and appears as a hypostasis. In 37:14, however, the prophecy speaks decidedly about the divine spirit (37:14: רוחי), which connects with the initial promise in 37:5–6.⁵⁹ The description in Pseudo-Ezekiel comes closest to the conception of the spirit in Ezek 37:7–10, and continues the idea that God acts through intermediaries. The prophet now prophesies to the four winds of the heavens, who have turned into agents of salvation (4Q385 f2 7).

In summary, the reuse of the scriptural bones materials in Pseudo-Ezekiel confirms first that rewriting relies on additional growth. While the direct comparison of the two works has shown some cases of omission, the account in Pseudo-Ezekiel presupposes the scriptural materials and thus represents an external *Fortschreibung*. The two compositions



⁵⁸ Ohnesorge 1991, 292; Bartelmus 1984, 381; Klein 2008, 277.

⁵⁹ On the different manifestations of the spirit in Ezek 37:1–14, see Klein 2008, 277.

might even have been transmitted side-by-side, but Pseudo-Ezekiel is dependent on the scriptural vision, which confirms the suggestion that it represents a case of reuse rather than revision. Second, the rewriting shows a clear *Tendenz*. The Qumran composition continues the scriptural discussion about resurrection that begins in the redaction history of Ezek 37:1–14, and reconceptualizes it against the discourse of the recompense of the righteous. Third, there is some evidence to suggest that the rewriting connects with concerns in later stages of the text’s literary development. The idea of bodily resurrection, the more active role of the prophet, and the conception of the spirit as an independent agent draw especially on the materials in 37:7–10, a part of the scriptural vision that can be considered to be the latest literary layer.⁶⁰ It is unlikely that the ancient author of Pseudo-Ezekiel was an excellent redaction-critical scholar who spent their time reconstructing the literary development of their *Vorlage*. Yet it is reasonable to suggest that their concerns were more representative of the theological interests that arose during later stages of the scriptural transmission.



The Merkabah Vision (4Q385 f6)

The fragment 4Q385 f6 has preserved a rewriting of the prophet’s visions of Yhwh’s glory in the book of Ezekiel that focuses mainly on the introductory vision in Ezek 1 and elements in Ezek 10; 43. The first four lines are fragmentary and comprise the end of a divine speech that focuses on the inner state of the people. It also touches on the idea that there is little time left until the end (4Q385 f6 3: “conceal yourself for a little while”).⁶¹ The shift to a third person account about the “vision that Ezekiel saw” (המרראה אשר ראה יהזק[אל]) in line 5 introduces the section about the *merkabah* vision. The closest parallel for this formulation is the introduction of the Temple vision in Ezek 43:3 (וכמרראה המראה אשר ראיתי), when Ezekiel sees the return of Yhwh’s glory to the Temple in the new city.⁶² In contrast, the introduction to the first

⁶⁰ See above, note 51.

⁶¹ Dimant 2001, 49, sees in this formulation an allusion to Isa 26:20.

⁶² Similarly, Dimant 2001, 21, connects the *merkabah* vision in 4Q385 f6 with Ezek 43:3: “However, Ezek 43:3 suggests that the vision of the final eschatological

vision in Ezek 1:1–3 presents a specific historical setting in times of the first *golah*—referring to King Jehoiachin’s exile—and locates the experience in exile at the River Chebar. The easiest explanation for the shorter introduction in 4Q385 is the position of the *merkabah* vision in the reconstructed composition, which most likely stood in the middle or at the end of the work.⁶³ However, none of the texts preserved in the Qumran work seems to discuss the first *golah* setting that is characteristic of the scriptural book. Similarly, the putative opening of the work in 4Q385b 1 starts from the simple phrase “the words of Ezekiel” and does not present a specific setting in the history of Israel. While the Qumran audience will have known that scriptural Ezekiel was affiliated with the first *golah*, I want to suggest that—as in later layers of the scriptural book—it was not relevant for their transmission of Ezekiel traditions.

Furthermore, while the vision in Ezek 1 starts with a dramatic theophany experience (1:4), the account in 4Q385 f6 6 replaces this visual event with a statement of what Ezekiel saw, namely “a radiance of a chariot” (נגה מרכבה). The term מרכבה is only in later texts used for the divine means of transport (e.g., Sir 49:8) and suggests an established tradition that the author of 4Q386 f6 reapplied to the scriptural vision in Ezek 1.⁶⁴ A similar development shows the Greek text of Ezek 43:3, which attests καὶ ἡ ὄρασις τοῦ ἄρματος οὗ εἶδον (“the vision of the chariot which I saw”), while the Hebrew has a shorter text that does not mention the chariot (כמראה אשר ראיתי). Most likely, the Hebrew text represents the earlier reading, while the Greek variant reflects the later identification of the prophet’s visionary experience with the appearance of the chariot (see Zimmerli 1969, 64, 1071). The use of the noun נגה (“shine”) that forms a construct relationship with מרכבה in 4Q385 f6 6 draws on the scriptural use. While in the scriptural vision the shine accompanies



temple revealed to Ezekiel also involved a vision of the Merkabah.” She goes so far as to consider a Temple setting for the Qumran passage (51).

⁶³ Dimant 2001, 18–20, places 4Q385 f6 in the last column of her reconstruction, while Shirav 2022, 5–6, places the fragment in the middle section.

⁶⁴ Similarly Zahn 2014, 351: “It is more likely that by the mid to late Second Temple period, the object seen by Ezekiel in his vision was becoming generally known as מרכבה (as attested by Sir 49:8 [B]...)”

the cloud (1:4: ונגה לו), radiates from the fire between the living beings (1:13: ונגה לאש) or from the glory of Yhwh himself (1:27–28; 10:4), in the account of Pseudo-Ezekiel the shine has been transferred onto the chariot that transports the deity.

The further account in 4Q385 f6 continues with the description of the four living beings in f6 6 (וארבע חיות) and their manner of movement in lines 6–7. Thus, the author of the Qumran composition brings together the initial mention of the four living beings in Ezek 1:5 (דמות ארבע חיות) and the description of their movements, which follows in 1:7 and 1:12. The first description in 1:7 focuses on the straight legs of the living beings (ורגליהם רגל ישרה) and the soles of their feet, while 1:12 describes how they move forward without turning (לא יסבו בלכתן). In 4Q385 f6, the preserved noun אחור (“back”) at the beginning of line 7 suggests that the preceding *lacuna* in line 6 should be restored with a similar description of the beings not turning;⁶⁵ however, the noun represents an addition in the Qumran composition. The further description of the creatures’ movement in line 7 specifies that they are moving on two legs (ושתי רגלניה). This detail similarly has no counterpart in the scriptural vision, but it might originate from the notion that the creatures have human form (Ezek 1:5), which suggests walking on two feet (see tentatively Zahn 2014, 351). The following line 4Q385 f6 8 is fragmentary at the beginning, but in its second half reports the presence of a spirit (נשמה), before it proceeds to the introduction and description of the four faces of the creatures (line 8–9). The noun נשמה does not occur in the scriptural book, and the vision materials only engage with a “spirit/wind” (רוח: 1:20, 21, see also 10:17) that controls the movement of the wheels. The lemma could possibly refer to the breath of life that makes the creatures living beings, a use that is established in Qumran (see 1QS V:17; 11Q19 LXII:14), but Dimant and Strugnell summarize poignantly: “In the present state of preservation it is difficult to reconstruct the complete context of the original phrase.”⁶⁶ Differently, the description of the four faces in 4Q385 f6 9 draws clearly on the *Vorlage* in Ezek



⁶⁵ Dimant 2001, 43, 46, opts for the restoration ובלכתן לא יסבו (“and while walking they would not turn”). See also Zahn 2014, 350.

⁶⁶ Dimant and Strugnell 1990, 228; Dimant 2001, 46.

1:10 that mentions human, lion, ox, and eagle on specific sides of the appearance (פני אדם ופני אריה אל-הימין לארבעתם ופני-שור מהשמאול לארבעתן) (ופני-נשר לארבעתן). The (shorter) Qumran version attests a different sequence of faces (lion—eagle—calf—human) and lacks the information about the positioning of the faces (4Q385 f6 9: אדם (הפנים אחד ארי אח) ד נשר ואחד עגל ואחד של אדם). The restoration further suggests a variant word for the lion,⁶⁷ while the preserved text has the noun עגל (“calf”) in the place of שור (“ox”). The Greek tradition in Ezek 1:10 follows the sequence preserved in the Masoretic tradition but attests the reading “face of a calf” (πρόσωπον μόσχου), which corresponds to the variant in 4Q385 f6. It is difficult to make a case for a specific exegetical interest in the Qumran rewriting; one should rather assume some flux in the order and species of living beings that allowed for some variation.

The text at the end of the line 4Q385 f6 9 is not preserved (f6 9: והית[ה]), so that the context for the noun אדם at the beginning of line 10 is unclear (f6 10: אדם מחברת מגבי החיות ודבקה ב[כנפיהן]). Dimant (2001, 47) reconstructs אדם [ה יד] והית, with reference to the mention of a single human hand in Ezek 10:8 (see further the plural forms of יד in 1:8; 10:21).⁶⁸ However, unlike the scriptural account, this restoration assumes that the hand is located on the backs of the creatures, attached to the wings (f6 10), rather than under the wings as consistently stated in Ezek 1:8; 10:8, 21. In any case, 4Q385 f6 10 can be considered a rewriting of Ezek 1:8–9, 11 that recognizes something human attached to the creatures and their wings. Both verbs in line 10 have some connection to scriptural materials: while the participle מחברת links with the use of *qal* forms of the verb חבר in Ezek 1:9, 11, the verb דבק describes in 2 Chr 3:12 how one wing of a cherub touches the wing of another in the Solomonic Temple.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ See Dimant 2001, 46: “This sequence and the space in the *lacuna* call for the restoration ארי.”

⁶⁸ See also Dimant and Strugnell 1990, 335.

⁶⁹ The use of the latter verb has led to the reconstruction of the wings at the end of the line. See Dimant and Strugnell 1990, 341.



The next section in 4Q385 f6 11 describes the wheels, focusing on the details that these are joined to each other and that something emanates from the two sides of the wheels (אופן חובר אל) (אופן בלכתן ומשני עברי הא)ופנים. In contrast, the scriptural *Vorlage* comprises a lengthy description of the wheels in Ezek 1:15–22 that presents as a new section through the resumption of the verb ראה at its beginning (1:15: וארא). Both characteristics that describe the wheels in 4Q385 f6 do not occur in the scriptural vision. Yet the idea that the wheels are attached to each other resumes the verb חבר from the previous line 4Q385 f6 10 and shows some interest in matching the description of the wheels with the other components. The following line, line 12, gives a rather enigmatic description of living creatures that are in the middle of the coals, burning like coals of fire (והיה בתוך גחלים חיות כגחלי אש). The text is clearly a conflation of the passage in Ezek 1:13–14.⁷⁰ The author combines the notion that something with the shine of burning coals moves between the living beings (1:13: מתהלכת בין החיות) and identifies the phenomenon with the living beings that dart back and forth (1:14: והחיות רצוא). Similarly, the Temple vision in Ezek 10:1, 6, 7 suggests the existence of coals and fire in the middle of the cherubim. While the Pseudo-Ezekiel account does not explicitly make the identification of the living beings with the cherubim, the idea of coals in the middle of the living beings seems to allude to the motif in Ezek 10 (thus Brady 2000, 127). The first half of 4Q385 f6 13 continues the topic, mentioning the living beings and the wheels, but the text is too fragmentary to derive its meaning.

With the second half of line 14, the composition transitions to the description of the throne plate that in the scriptural vision comprises Ezek 1:22–25. In 4Q385 f6 14, two elements are preserved. First, the text mentions the “terrible ice” (הקרה הנורא) that in Ezek 1:22^{MT} describes the appearance of the dome (כעין הקרה הנורא).⁷¹ Second, the noun קול suggests a rewriting of Ezek 1:25 that refers to the divine voice from

⁷⁰ See Dimant and Strugnell 1990, 343; Brady 2000, 127.

⁷¹ The LXX reads ὡς ὄρασις κρυστάλλου (“as the appearance of crystal”) and does not have an equivalent for the participle הנורא, thus missing the aspect of fear or awe. This might suggest an affinity of 4Q385 f6 for the proto-Masoretic tradition.



above the dome (קול מעל לרקיע).⁷² All that can reliably be said is that the rewriting of the scriptural passage presents a condensed version that assembles motifs that in the scriptural *Vorlage* stand several verses apart (see Zahn 2014, 353).

In summary, the rewriting in 4Q385 f6 fits in many respects with the different cases that have been identified in the Qumran version of the vision of the bones (4Q385 f2). The text of 4Q385 f6 shows an acquaintance with the three major visions of Yhwh in the scriptural book (Ezek 1; 10; 43) but draws mainly on the sequence and description of the introductory vision in chapter 1. In Pseudo-Ezekiel, the vision materials take the form of an “exegetical abridgement” (Dimant and Strugnell 1990, 346) or a “condensing paraphrase” (Zahn 2014, 353). While it is clear that the text deals with the same events as the scriptural vision(s), the account lacks detail and omits several redundant elements. Thus, the components of the vision broadly follow the sequence of the scriptural vision, but each element occurs only once, before the account proceeds to the next component. Remarkably, the “streamlined” version in 4Q385 f2 is a surprisingly close match with the reconstruction that Walther Zimmerli in 1969 identified as the original core of the scriptural vision.⁷³ Furthermore, the lengthy description of the wheels in Ezek 1:15–22 that has long been identified as a later addition⁷⁴ has been integrated into the sequence of the other components. The question is what to make of these observations. I do not want to suggest that the ancient author looked for a “core” or acknowledged literary seams. However, in the case of 4Q385 f2, their decisions in abridging the sequence and rearranging the components matches with modern redaction-critical models.

Considering that the remaining fragments of Pseudo-Ezekiel do not make specific reference to the first *golah*, I consider the shorter



⁷² On this connection, see Dimant and Strugnell 1990, 343; Brady 2000, 128; Zahn 2014, 353. The noun קול also occurs in Ezek 1:24 to describe the sounds that the wings of the creatures make, which is “like the thunder of the Almighty” (1:24: כקול-שדי).

⁷³ Zimmerli 1979, 108 (1969, 33–34).

⁷⁴ Zimmerli 1979, 104–5 (1969, 28–29); Keel 1977, 167; Pohlmann 1996, 59–62.

introduction in 4Q385 f6 5 to be a case of omission. It suggests an actualization that allows the appropriation of the *merkabah* vision by the Qumran audience—it makes the visionary experience timeless and placeless. When it comes to additions, the most remarkable supplement is the mention of the chariot (מרכבה), which demonstrates that the author of Pseudo-Ezekiel understood the scriptural vision to be part of a by-then established tradition about the deity's appearance and means of transport. Furthermore, the mention of the breath (נשמה) is clearly an addition. The use might harken back to the idea that the beings were alive and reflect a preference of Qumran-specific terminology. Some minor alterations are noticeable. The idea that the living beings walk on two feet represents an exegetical inference of the scriptural idea that they had the appearance of humans. Furthermore, the variation in the animal faces most likely points to a flux in the textual traditions or to some degree of creative freedom.



The similarities with the exegetical techniques observed in 4Q385 f2 confirm the notion that these two fragments are part of the same composition. First, the rewriting of the *merkabah* vision similarly shows a general tendency to omit redundant details and streamline the description of the elements. Yet it is difficult to detect a comparable tendency for the rewriting of the *merkabah* materials. While the vision does not have an opening function for the Qumran composition—as it does in Ezek 1—it would certainly be helpful to have a clearer idea about its contextual setting. Shirav positions the vision in her reconstruction immediately before the vision of the bones in 4Q385 f2.⁷⁵ This setting would emphasize the significance of the resurrection scene and imply the presence of the divine *merkabah* during the action.

The Oracle against Egypt (4Q385b)

The text of the fragment 4Q385b engages with the oracle of judgment against Egypt and other nations in Ezek 30:1–5. In the scriptural book, the oracle is part of a larger series of prophetic words against the

⁷⁵ Shirav 2002, 12. In her unpublished PhD (Shirav 2023, 202–3), she suggests that the *merkabah* vision symbolizes a “diasporic” revelation prior to the resurrection scene.

pharaoh and Egypt that comprise Ezek 29:1–30:26. The Qumran version begins with a double introduction. The first heading [ואלה דב]רי יחזקאל (4Q385b 1: “These are the words of Ezekiel”) does not have a match in the scriptural oracle and most likely forms the beginning of the whole composition.⁷⁶ The second introduction (4Q385b 1–2: (ויהי דבר יהוה אל[י] לא[מר] בן אדם הנבא ואמרת)) is a close match with the introduction in Ezek 30:1–2a, reusing the word event formula and the instruction to prophesy. The close match allows the reconstruction of the prophetic address in terms of the “son of man” (Dimant 2001, 73). The remainder of line 2 in 4Q385b comprises the central message and announces that a day of destruction is coming for the nations (הנה בא יום אבדן גוים). Dimant (2001, 73) has suggested that the line comprises “a condensed and somewhat altered version” of the corresponding oracle in Ezek 30:3. Here, however, the argument should consider the different textual traditions. The Hebrew text in Ezek 30:3 announces the day of Yhwh in four nominal sentences. These describe the day as approaching (30:3aα: כִּי־קִרֹב יוֹם) and specify it further as the impending Day of Yhwh (30:3aβ: וקִרֹב יוֹם לַיהוָה), a day of clouds (30:3ba: יוֹם עָנָן), and a time for the nations, suggesting a time of judgment (30:3bβ: עַתָּה גוֹיִם יִהְיֶה). The Greek version attests to a shorter variant in 30:3, comprising only two statements. The first part announces that the Day of the Lord is near (ὅτι ἐγγύς ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου), while the second statement declares “a day, an end of the nations” (ἡμέρα πέρας ἐθνῶν ἔσται). Established rules of textual criticism suggest that the (shorter) LXX variant represents the older text (*lectio brevior potior*).⁷⁷ On this assumption, the variant in the proto-Masoretic text of 30:3a presents as a dittography, while the addition of עָנָן in 30:3b might be an attempt to



⁷⁶ Already considered by Zahn 2014, 355, and demonstrated convincingly by Shirav 2022, 13–17.

⁷⁷ Scholarship differs on this question. While Zimmerli 1980, 122–23, argues for the priority of the Masoretic Text variant, Allen 1990, 112–13, speaks of a dittography and prefers the Greek text in 30:3a.

restore a more balanced style, possibly establishing a connection with the subsequent context in 30:18.⁷⁸

Turning to the first statement in 4Q385b 2, there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that the author draws on a specific textual representative. It is clear, however, that the first phrase **בא יום** replaces a statement about the approaching day (**כי קרוב יום** / **ὅτι ἐγγύς ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου**). The form **בא** can be read either as a participle (“the day is coming”) or as a finite verb *qal* perfect third person (“the day has come”). In either form, the prophecy in Pseudo-Ezekiel reveals an intensification, suggesting that the day has already arrived.⁷⁹ It is noteworthy that the formulation **הנה באה** occurs in Ezek 30:9, which similarly addresses a day of doom for Egypt; here, it adds to “a more clearly eschatological passage” (Lilly 2012, 143). This suggests that the author of 4Q385b drew on a *Vorlage* in the immediate literary context of Ezek 30:3 to actualize the prophecy with a sense of doom that has already begun. The second statement in 4Q385b 2 shows a clear connection with the Greek tradition, which leads to a Hebrew *Vorlage* **יום קץ גוים** (**ἡμέρα πέρας ἐθνῶν ἔσται**) (see Dimant 2001, 73). The use of the term **אבדן** in 4Q385b in the place of **קץ** is noteworthy; the root **אבד** appears in the scriptural materials to describe impending doom.⁸⁰ As the term **אבדן** also occurs in 4Q391 f25 5, another manuscript of the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition, the use might reflect a particular preference of the author.

The next section in 4Q385b 3–4 draws on Ezek 30:4 that announces judgment against Egypt and Cush, but the version in 4Q385b uses fewer words and has a slightly different sequence (see Zahn 2014, 356). It speaks of trembling in Put instead of Cush (4Q385b 3: **בפוט** [**ותהי הלחלה**]; see Ezek 30:4: **בכוש** **ותהי הלחלה**), and introduces the notion of a sword in Egypt (**ותהי הרב במצרים**), while the scriptural prophecy speaks of the slain ones falling in Egypt (30:4). It is safe to assume, though, that the scriptural image suggests a judgment carried

⁷⁸ Ezek 30:18 comprises the announcement that clouds will cover Egypt (**ענן יכסנה**), a threat that is also transmitted in the Greek tradition of 30:18 (**καὶ αὐτὴν νεφέλη καλύψει**).

⁷⁹ Similarly, Zahn 2014, 355, characterizes the rewriting in 4Q385b 2 as “tersely”.

⁸⁰ Ezek 6:3; 7:26; 12:22; 19:5; 22:27; 25:7, 16, 17; 28:16; 30:13; 32:13; 34:4, 16; 37:11.



out by the sword, which is a frequent instrument of judgment in the book.⁸¹ Finally, the formulation of “throwing down the foundations” in Ezek 30:4 (ונהרסו יסודתיה) is in 4Q385b 4 rendered with the verb form ת[תקלקל (“will be shaken”): “It might represent additional material, or it might constitute an alternative formulation of נהרסו” (Zahn 2014, 356). The divergences in the identification of the nations concerned continue through the remaining lines in 4Q385b. The scriptural text in Ezek 30:5 announces that Cush, Put, Lud, the whole “mixture” (of the nations), Cuv, and the sons of the land of the covenant shall fall by the sword. In contrast, the version in 4Q385b 4–6 announces judgment against Cush, Pul, the mighty ones of Arabia, and the sons of the covenant.⁸² The Greek text of Ezek 30:5 adds to the geographical confusion by naming the Persians, Cretans, Lydians, and Libyans; the mixed multitude and the children of God’s covenant. It is thus safe to assume that different textual representatives had different lists of nations, perhaps increased by different conventions about peoples, their names, and their locations.⁸³

The passage 4Q385b 4–6 is also one of the few cases in which the Qumran composition attests a longer text with a significant plus. While the oracle in Ezek 30:5 makes the general statement that the nations shall fall by the sword (בחרב יפלו), the text in 4Q385b 5 specifies an exact location for their defeat: יפולו בשער[י]מצרים (“they will fall at the gates of Egypt”). The location שער מצרים is without parallel in the scriptural materials and has only one further occurrence in 4Q385a f13 3, where, however, the context is not preserved. Dimant (2001, 74–75) suggests that the formulation refers to a specific site and connects it with the defeat of the Ptolemaic army at Pelusium (at the gates of Egypt) by the Seleucid army of Antiochus IV in 169 BCE. If this assumption is



⁸¹ See Ezek 5:2, 12, 17; 6:3, 8, 11, 12; 7:15; 11:8, 10; 12:14, 16; 14:17, 21; 16:40; 17:21; the so-called “Song of the Sword” in 21; 23:10, 25, 47; 24:21; 25:13; 26:6, 8, 11; 28:7, 23; 29:8; 30:4, 5, 6, 11, 17, 21, 24–25; 31:17, 18; 32:10–12, 20–32; 33:2–4, 6, 26; 35:5, 8; 38:8, 21; 39:23.

⁸² This relies on the restoration of בני הברית in 4Q385b 4–5. See Dimant 2001, 72; Zahn 2014, 355.

⁸³ See the comments of Dimant 2001, 74, on these verses.

correct,⁸⁴ the rewriting of the materials of Ezek 30:5–6 in 4Q385b 4–6 evinces an actualization of the scriptural prophecy, which is rewritten as a prophecy *ex eventu*. Further support for this understanding offers the interpretation in 4Q385b 2, which conveys an immediacy of the day of doom (בא יום). Finally, line 6 repeats the mention of the sword of Egypt together with the verb שדד (בחרב מצר[ים] תשדד). While this verb is not used in Ezek 30:1ff., it occurs in Ezek 32:12 to announce the ruin of the pride of Egypt (ושדדו את־גאון מצרים). This confirms that the horizon of rewriting does not only focus on one specific text, it also makes use of links to the literary context of the *Vorlage*.

In summary, the cases of rewriting in 4Q385b conform in many ways to the patterns discussed in the preceding sections of this study. There is some evidence to suggest that the addition of the location “at the gates of Egypt” (4Q385b 5) shows an exegetical interest in actualizing the prophecy. Thus, the author of the Qumran composition updates the prophecy of a near day of doom for the nations to refer to a specific historical event that must have been known to the audience.⁸⁵ This thesis also fits with the intensification of the announcement in 4Q385b 2, suggesting that the day of doom has already dawned. There is some variation in the names of the nations in the rewritten prophecy. In this case, it is difficult to argue for a specific exegetical interest; rather, the changes might point to different conventions about peoples and their geographical locations. Scholarship agrees that the rewriting in 4Q385b presents the scriptural materials “in a summary fashion” (Brady 2000, 86).⁸⁶ Yet the abbreviation is less sweeping than in the cases of the bones vision or the *merkabah* vision. While there is a general lack of detail, all the verses in Ezek 30:1–5 have a correspondence in 4Q385b, and the two compositions are comparable in length. Matching the preserved words in 4Q385b with the scriptural materials in Ezek 30:1–5, the tally



⁸⁴ Zahn 2014, 356, is certainly right in pointing out that “this is a great deal of conjecture to base on one small phrase,” but she refers to 4Q386 1ii, which provides some support by showing that the author of Pseudo-Ezekiel may be placing *ex eventu* prophecies in the mouth of Ezekiel.

⁸⁵ See the deliberations of Zahn 2014, 356–57.

⁸⁶ See also Zahn 2014, 355.

shows 38 to 52; considering the safe reconstructions in 4Q385b and the shorter text of the LXX, the numbers come even closer with 42 to 47. While these counting exercises are of limited value and there is a small range of preserved text, the rewriting is still unique in following the scriptural materials verse by verse. It might show the specific significance of the passage for the Qumran authors that needed a new interpretation in view of historical change. Considering that there is good reason to suggest that 4Q385b has preserved the beginning of the composition, the Qumran work opens with a day of doom for the gentiles that has already arrived.

The Lamentation over Tyre (4Q391 f25)

My final example is the papyrus fragment 4Q391, which has been classified as part of the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition. This manuscript comprises 78 fragments, most of which are only poorly preserved. However, 4Q391 f25 shows some possible links with the oracles against Tyre in Ezek 27–28.⁸⁷ In the following, I will give a short overview about the materials in order to discuss how the exegetical observations contribute to the overall discussion about rewriting in the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition.

4Q391 f25 shows five lines with discernable text. The preserved words are not enough to reconstruct the content of the passage, but they allow for the matching of the remaining text with parallels in the scriptural Tyre materials. The first line attests five (partly) preserved words, which can be translated as “in your midst shall fall all the” (f25 1:]וה כל יפלו בקרבך יפלו כל ה[). These words can be linked with Ezek 27:27, where the prophet announces that the possessions and the whole company of Tyre will fall into the middle of the sea (בכל־קהלך אשר בתוכך יפלו בלב ימים). The connection relies on the resumption of the noun כל and the third person plural form of נפל, while the noun הוך is replaced with the noun קרב. The line 4Q391 f25 2 reads



⁸⁷ On the connection with the scriptural Tyre materials, see Wright 2000, 292–93; Zahn 2014, 357–59. On the other hand, Brady 2000, 517–18, focuses on links to a wider range of materials in the scriptural books without arguing that 4Q391 f25 represents a rewriting of the Tyre oracle in the book of Ezekiel.

the four words על הארץ ויעלו אפר (“on the earth and they will bring up dust”), which matches the account in Ezek 27:29–30. Here, the mariners stand on the shore (27:29: אלה הארץ יעמדו), after they have left their ships. They throw dust on their heads (27:30: ויעלו עפר) and roll in ashes (27:30: באפר יתפלו). Apparently, the Qumran composition presents a condensed account of these acts of desperation. The next line 4Q391 f25 3 uses vocabulary of lament to describe the fate that shall befall an addressee (ועליך קינות ובכי). The line resonates with the content in Ezek 27:31 (ובכו אליך) and 27:32 (ונשאו אליך בניהם קינה), yet the rewriting in 4Q391 seems to have turned the verb בכה into a noun to match the preceding noun קינה. The single preserved word לאבדן in 4Q391 f25 4 similarly has no match in the Tyre oracles, but it occurs also in 4Q385b 2, where it denotes the coming doom. This might demonstrate an overarching exegetical interest that connects the rewriting of different materials in Pseudo-Ezekiel. Finally, the last preserved line in 4Q391 f25 comprises a commission to speak to the king (אמור למלך). Scholars have connected this line with the address of the Prince of Tyre in Ezek 28:2 (אמר לנגיד צר).⁸⁸ While this assumption allows the conclusion that 4Q391 f25 offers a rewriting of the specific passage Ezek 27:27–28:2, it disregards the fact that there is an identical match with the Qumran address in the following context in Ezek 28:12, when the prophet is commissioned to raise a lament over the King of Tyre (שא קינה על-מלך צור). The identification as lament (קינה) strengthens the match of Ezek 28:12 with the address in 4Q391 f25 5—both texts assume the context of a lamentation. There is good evidence to suggest that Ezek 28:1–10 and 28:11–19 represent different literary layers in the oracles against Tyre.⁸⁹ However, as the preserved Qumran text breaks off at this point, it cannot be deduced if it continued with the rewriting of either of these passages in particular. In any case, the author in 4Q391 opts for the address of the king and avoids the designation of



⁸⁸ Thus Wright 2000, 293; Zahn 2014, 357–58.

⁸⁹ Hölscher 1924, 140–43, and Pohlmann 2001, 389–95, suggest that 28:11 is the beginning of the oldest oracle in Ezek 28, while 28:1–10 represents a later insertion; Saur 2008, 98–106, however assumes a more complex history of literary growth.

prince. This shows that the rewriting of Ezek 27:27ff. took place against the background of its scriptural context and that the author felt free to vary the addressee, as the context offered a different option.

Finally, I would like to note a problem in the textual sequence that appears in both the *Vorlage* and the rewriting. Both texts attest to the enigma that all (warriors) will fall (Ezek 27:27; 4Q391 f25 1), only for the mariners to stand (quite alive) on dry land in the subsequent context (Ezek 27:29; 4Q391 f25 2). In the scriptural oracle, a literary-critical differentiation of Ezek 27:27 and 27:29 offers a possible solution,⁹⁰ but this explanation does not work for the version in Pseudo-Ezekiel. The context of this statement in the Qumran work is unfortunately too fragmentary to give any indication as to whether the author addressed this issue in any way.

***Fortschreibung* Revisited**



This argument started from the question of how the reuse of scriptural materials in the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition can inform our understanding of processes of literary development within the scriptural book. The investigation of four major passages in Pseudo-Ezekiel has shown five specific features of rewriting. First, the reuse of scriptural materials in the Qumran work is characterized by a clear interpretive interest—an exegetical agenda that aims at actualizing the scriptural ideas, phrases, and themes to address issues of relevance to the historical audience.⁹¹ While it is important to acknowledge that all forms of rewriting are broadly interpretive, there is a difference between the regrouping of known materials in new collections and the reconfiguration of scriptural traditions with a clear interpretive agenda or tendency. A tendency can be detected in nearly all cases of rewriting in the Pseudo-Ezekiel materials with the exception of the reuse of the

⁹⁰ Both Pohlmann 2001, 383, and Saur 2008, 66–71 offer a redaction-historical model of Ezek 27, in which verses 27 and 29 are allocated to different literary layers.

⁹¹ See also the conclusions in Brady 2005, 104–8; Zahn 2014, 361–64.

lamentation Ezek 30:1–5 in 4Q391 f25, which is too fragmentary to allow for reliable conclusions.

To start with the interpretation of the bones vision in 4Q385 f2 and f3, this rewriting uses a new hermeneutical framework and actualizes the scriptural resurrection of the dead to answer the questions of how and when the pious will receive recompense. In the rewriting of the *merkabah* vision in 4Q385 f6, the omission of the scriptural introduction reflects the intention to actualize the message for the Qumran audience, who did not identify with the concerns of Ezekiel's first *golah*. Furthermore, the function of the vision has changed: while in the scriptural book, the appearance of God opens the composition and the deity reappears at important points in the plot, in Pseudo-Ezekiel the *merkabah* stands in the main body and most likely precedes the resurrection of the bones. Instead, the Qumran work starts from the prophecy in 4Q385b that comprises a word of doom over the gentiles. Its reuse of Ezek 30:1–5 reveals an interest in identifying the day of doom with the defeat of the Ptolemaic army, which turns the oracle into a prophecy *ex eventu*. The rewriting offers a hermeneutical lens for the following events that now take place against the background of Yhwh's judgment, which has already begun. Considering the Qumran composition as a whole, the results point to an eschatological framework for the reconfiguration of the scriptural materials. The authors strengthen the apocalyptic features already present in the book of Ezekiel and add further elements such as the interest in the timing of the final events, the presence of mediating agents, and increased dialogue between God and the prophet, who becomes the recipient of special knowledge. In the process of rewriting, new materials blend with the rewritten scriptural texts and thus contribute to the growth of the Ezekiel tradition. Coming back to the question of what can be gained for the understanding of processes of revision within the scriptures (internal *Fortschreibung*), the results of my analysis demonstrate, first, the significance of *Tendenzkritik* or tendency criticism, and support the idea that redaction history represents a form of reception history. Further research should work toward an established definition of tendency criticism and integrate this approach fully into the method canon of biblical studies.



Second, all of the rewritings in Pseudo-Ezekiel offer a shorter and simplified version of the scriptural passages that they reuse.⁹² Consistently, the authors have omitted repetitions and redundancies in the scriptural materials to present a streamlined sequence. This is true to a lesser extent for the rewriting of the oracle against Egypt in 4Q385b, which offers a verse-by-verse interpretation of the scriptural *Vorlage*. However, this might be explained by its specific position at the beginning of the composition. The general tendency of abbreviation is relevant in two respects. Focusing on the wider question of transmission of the Ezekiel tradition, the rewriting in the Qumran work represents first a new chain in the history of transmission. This substantiates the idea that interpretation takes place through processes of productive supplementation. Yet considering the methodological distinction between revision and reuse, the picture is more complex. While the rewritten work comprises a new addition to the transmission, it forms an independent composition, and its relationship with the scriptural *Vorlage* is characterized by omissions and changes. The fact that this phenomenon is wide-ranging and occurs quite consistently throughout the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition suggests that the technique was established and did not just arise when the rewriting processes led to the production of new works.⁹³ Consequently, while we should have confidence in reconstructing processes of revision through models of additional growth, these models should take into account occasional omissions and changes—processes that will be out of reach for the redaction-historical reconstruction (see Berner 2021, 146). Furthermore, the phenomenon of shortening and simplifying in the rewriting of Pseudo-Ezekiel touches upon the question of coherence. It is certainly right to assume that the ancient authors did not share modern understandings of coherence. However, the comparison of cases of rewriting in Pseudo-Ezekiel with the scriptural materials shows that abbreviation occurs especially with regard to passages



⁹² On this characteristic, see Dimant and Strugnell 1990, 346; Brady 2005, 97; Zahn 2014, 361–62.

⁹³ Similarly, cases where we have access to several textual versions of the same work demonstrate that occasionally redactors omitted parts or streamlined accounts. For a thorough study, see Pakkala 2013.

that are the product of complex literary growth in the scriptural book, such as the account about the materialization of the bones (Ezek 37) and the description of God’s appearance (Ezek 1). Further case studies are necessary, but abbreviations in the rewriting of complex scriptural passages might serve as external evidence with which to identify redactional work in the scriptural books. This concerns cases in which successive additions and later explanations have resulted in overly detailed or convoluted accounts.

Through the lens of the theology of history, however—and this is my third point—the selection and arrangement of materials in rewritten texts point to topics and ideas that were of relevance to later authors. It is more likely that these authors and their communities were interested in issues discussed closer to their own times, meaning in later stages of the development of the scriptural texts. In this case, the interpretation of Ezek 37:1–14 in 4Q385 f2 offers a good example. The rewriting focuses on the bodily resurrection of the bones described in Ezek 37:7–10, which I consider to represent the latest literary layer. A continuing discussion emerges that leads from the promise of metaphorical restoration and bodily resurrection in Ezek 37 to a specification, promising resurrection as a reward for individual piety in 4Q385 f2. Thus, the selection and arrangement of materials in rewritten scriptures can also shed light on the reconstruction of the history of theology.

Fourth, while I have identified specific “base texts” for each of the different parts of rewriting in Pseudo-Ezekiel, the authors drew also on texts in the context of their specific *Vorlage* (e.g., 4Q385b f2; 4Q391 f25 5), while some of the references point to texts outside of the scriptural Ezekiel tradition. This indicates that the source texts are discussed in light of a wider scriptural discourse (see also Zahn 2014, 359). While we do not know exactly what collection of scriptures the ancient authors had access to, it is safe to suggest that these exceeded the later canonical books and included several other writings that were considered important in the authors’ respective communities. This insight—while hardly surprising for any scholar of Second Temple literature—strengthens the idea that redaction history should not only focus on the close literary context, but also work on the assumption that a wider body of scriptural materials was in the focus of the ancient redactors. In consequence, the



phenomenon of innerbiblical exegesis or biblical interpretation might be more dominant than some redaction-historical models acknowledged in the past. In keeping with recent developments in scholarship, however, I propose using the term “scriptural interpretation” in the future.

Finally, some vocabulary used in Pseudo-Ezekiel differs from the (Hebrew) scriptural book, and the composition shows a number of smaller additions and changes. Clear examples are the blessing of the revived crowd in 4Q385 f2 8, the different ideas of creatures in 4Q385 f6 9, and the use of אבדן instead of קץ in 4Q385b. While most of these cases qualify as interpretive, the decisive question is whether they go back to the authors of the Qumran composition, or whether the authors relied on a different version of the scriptural materials, so that the change originated in a prior stage of transmission. In a few cases, the existing versions of the book of Ezekiel offer variants that are also attested in the Pseudo-Ezekiel composition, but in even more cases, we do not have documented evidence. Concurring with Molly Zahn, there is no clear preference for either the proto-Masoretic text or the Greek version(s) (Zahn 2014, 362–63); rather, the Qumran composition is a witness to the pluriformity of textual traditions in the Second Temple period. This assumption is of some relevance for the hermeneutics of the historical-critical approach. The results advise caution in placing too much weight on small deviations in content or differences in vocabulary that lead to detailed linear reconstructions of editorial changes. Rather, literary criticism and redaction history should continue to embrace the inclusion of textual history and acknowledge that changes might be due to diverse textual representatives, some of which have not been preserved.

To sum up, this study of the use of scripture in Pseudo-Ezekiel concludes with a strong recommendation in favor of using the historical-critical approach. Even though there is the necessity to reflect constantly on our methodological toolbox and embrace new findings in research, this approach remains the most appropriate method to date. It does not rely on models of modern literary theories but acknowledges hermeneutics and principles as far as we can gather these from the work of ancient authors and scribes. The historical-critical perspective



is thus the only available method that leads to informed claims about the circumstances of ancient scriptural texts in their historical contexts. It is the only way to reach back to the theology, literary history, and religion of ancient Israel and its neighbors. Responsible scholarship means, however, that we should reflect critically on the limitations of this approach and be prepared to adapt and revise our models as needed. After all, this is discourse in the humanities at its best.

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