

S. D. Giere

A New Glimpse of Day One

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S. D. Giere

A New Glimpse of Day One

Intertextuality, History of Interpretation,
and Genesis 1.1 – 5



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For
Amy LuAnn,
Isaac Oban,
and
Shonagh Josephine

Foreword

This book flows out of my commitment to and interest in the on-going interpretation of sacred texts, especially within and among religious communities. In 1997, I completed a thesis at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, USA, that explores the possibility of a midrashic relationship between Leviticus 19 and the New Testament book of James. While the results of the thesis were not earth-shattering, during the process of writing I began to consider more fully the hermeneutical process from different angles – especially the engagement of scripture with scripture¹ and dynamic of the relation of the reader with scripture.² This curiosity about the hermeneutical process was only further peaked during my experience as a parish pastor and teacher, in particular reading texts with parishioners, students, and colleagues. To these, my fellow readers past and present, I owe a great deal. I hope that this little project adds to the conversation.

What follows is a revision of my doctoral thesis completed in 2006 at St Mary's College, University of St. Andrews, under the supervision of Prof. James R. Davila, to whom I am indebted for his guidance and wisdom and for whom I have great admiration as a scholar who embodies integrity to both text and academy. I am also appreciative of the examiners of this project as a doctoral thesis: Dr. Mark W. Elliott and Dr. Jennifer M. Dines. Their careful critique and input helped make this a better work. It also has been a pleasure to work with Carsten Burfeind and Sabina Dabrowski of Walter de Gruyter. Their suggestions along with those of the editors of *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* have made this a stronger work.

Since the advent of this project eight years ago I have also benefited from many colleagues to whom I wish to extend my thanks. Most recently, I am appreciative of my colleagues at Wartburg Theological

1 M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985).

2 D. Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990).

Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, USA, for their on-going support. As this project was reaching its germination as a doctoral thesis, I enjoyed the collegiality of and conversations with colleagues in the Religion Department of Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota, USA, whose hospitality and support were most appreciated. Also, thanks to those who gathered regularly at the pub formerly known as Lafferty's for conversations that intermittently bore intellectual fruit, often granted perspective, and always provided release.

Throughout the writing and revision of this book I have come to appreciate more fully the profound value of the librarian. The hospitality and helpfulness of Colin Bovaird and Lynda Kinloch at the King James Library, St Mary's College, made work and life more enjoyable. Also, in the writing-up of the project, I worked out of the Carl B. Ylvisaker Library, Concordia College. While the Ylvisaker Library is not a research library, Leah Anderson by way of interlibrary loan greatly helped the completion of this project. Most recently, I am thankful to Susan Ebertz and Karen Lull at the Reu Memorial Library, Wartburg Theological Seminary. And to those who make institutions work – Debbie Smith, Susan Millar, and Margot Clement at St Mary's, and Mary Thornton at Concordia – many thanks. I also wish to express my thanks to my student assistant, William Rosin, for his help in preparing the indices.

I also grateful to many who have supported this project – the Division for Education of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in particular the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Strandjord, the foundation of Elim Lutheran Church, Fargo, North Dakota, and Dennis and Sandy Giere, my father and step-mother. As much, I would like to thank Dale and Ann Current, my in-laws, who by their help with childcare and general moral support made the initial completion of this thesis possible and lightened the trauma that these things can cause to families.

I owe my greatest gratitude to my wife, Amy Current, for her support, careful reading, helpful critique, and constant companionship, and to our children, Isaac Oban and Shonagh Josephine. They have endured my long hours away, preoccupation, and the general grind. To them I extend my heartfelt thankfulness and love, and it is to them that I dedicate this work.

Finally, while the work and ideas of many come together in this study, any and all errors are mine.

S D Giere
15 October 2009

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
AJSL	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature</i>
AJT	<i>Asia Journal of Theology</i>
APOT	<i>The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament.</i> Edited by R.H. Charles. 2 vols. Oxford, 1913.
Aug	<i>Augustinianum</i>
BDB	Brown, F., S.R. Driver, C.A. Briggs, <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament.</i> Oxford, 1907.
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BibInt	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BIOSCS	<i>Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche
CahRB	Cahiers de la Revue biblique
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaeicarum ad Novum Testamentum
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
DSD	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
ECDSS	Eerdmans Commentaries on the Dead Sea Scrolls
ESLL	<i>Educational Studies in Language and Literature</i>
ExAud	<i>Ex audito</i>
ExpTim	<i>Expository Times</i>
FOTL	Forms of Old Testament Literature
GTJ	<i>Grace Theological Journal</i>
HAR	<i>Hebrew Annual Review</i>
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
HeyJ	<i>Heythrop Journal</i>
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary

IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
Jastrow	Jastrow, M. <i>A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature</i> . 2 nd ed. New York, 1903.
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JECS	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JNSL	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JSJ	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
JSJSup	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods: Supplement Series</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series</i>
JSP	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JSSMS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies Monograph Series</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
Judaism	<i>Judaism</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LDSS	Literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
LSJ	Liddell, H.G., R. Scott, and H.S. Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9 th edition with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996.
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NCB	New Century Bible
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
Mils	<i>Milltown Studies</i>
OstSt	<i>Ostkirchlichen Studien</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTP	<i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> . Edited by J. H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. New York, 1983.
OtSt	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
PVTG	<i>Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece</i>
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i>

<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
<i>RHR</i>	<i>Revue de l'Histoire des Religions</i>
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLTCS	Society of Biblical Literature Text Critical Studies
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SDSSRL	Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature
<i>Semeia</i>	<i>Semeia</i>
<i>SPhA</i>	<i>The Studia Philonica Annual</i>
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StPB	Studia post-biblica
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigraphica
<i>Tarbiz</i>	<i>Tarbiz</i>
<i>Text</i>	<i>Textus</i>
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
VC	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
VD	<i>Verbum domini</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
WBC	Word Bible Commentary
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

ברוך אושה מעשה בראשית:

Blessed is the one who fortifies the works of creation.

m.Ber. 9.2

“The tracing of intertextual relations is endless,
and quite literally, pointless.”

Timothy K. Beal

דבי רי ישמעאל תנא
וכפטיש יפוצץ סלע מזה פטיש זה מתחלק לכמה ניצוצות
אף מקרא אחד יוצא טעמים

In R. Ishmael's school it was taught:
And just as a hammer divides rock –
just as [the rock] is split into several pieces,
so too one scriptural text goes forth as several meanings.

b.Sanh. 34a

Chapter 1

Intertextuality & Method

1.1 Initial Thoughts

To say the least, Genesis 1.1-5 or Day One contains just but a small serving of the vastness of language. Though to say 'contains' is not altogether accurate. While words that occur inside the boundaries of Gen 1.1-5 are controlled to a degree by grammatical rules and syntactical relationships therein,¹ controls that help the reader understand, the words themselves are not solely limited to or by their context. Ontologically and epistemologically, words spill out of and into text.² For as much as Gen 1.1-5 'contains' a word, the reader of the text and its word – the interpreter – seeks to understand it within the expansive sea of words and texts available.³ Words, and the discourses/texts which they

1 Saussure's *langue*.

2 H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, (trans. J. Weinsheimer and D.G. Marshall; 2nd revised ed.; New York: Continuum, 1996), thinking about 'word' in the context of the relation of the divine and the human word, writes: 'Whereas God expresses his nature and substance in the Word in pure immediacy, every thought that we think (and therefore every word in which the thought expresses itself) is a mere accident of the mind. The word of human thought is directed toward the thing, but it cannot contain it as a whole within itself. Thus thought constantly proceeds to new conceptions and is fundamentally incapable of being wholly realized in any. This incapacity for completeness has a positive side: it reveals the true infinity of the mind, which constantly surpasses itself in a new mental process and in doing so also finds the freedom for constantly new projects.' (425-426)

3 'Reading is an active organization of readers' awareness of the various elements in the text. Readers use their entire corpus of knowledge (linguistic, cultural, and literary) constructed from previous readings and life experiences that formed the associations and connotations and serve as a basis for intertextual reading.' I. Elkad-Lehman, "Spinning a Tale: Intertextuality and Intertextual Aptitude," *ESLL* 5 (2005) 40. Also cf. P. Ricoeur's understanding of text as 'discourse under the condition of inscription,' *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian University Press, 1976) 23.

comprise, 'live' in this dynamic, multidimensional, infinite (?) conversation between (con)text, reader, and intertexts.⁴

This study explores the living nature of texts by way of examining the intertextuality of an individual text, in this case Genesis 1.1-5 in Hebrew and Greek texts up to c. 200 CE, with an eye towards the implications of an individual text's intertextuality for the history of interpretation

1.2 Intertextuality

As exemplified by the epigraph from the pen of Timothy Beal,⁵ intertextuality and (especially) its relevance for the history of interpretation may elicit questions of validity and/or viability. What role can intertextuality play? Is intertextuality a method? How can intertextuality be useful without digressing *ad infinitum*? What follows is an explication of a broad understanding of intertextuality and an argument for its viability in an historically bound literary study such as this, all the while observing the wise counsel of Daniel Boyarin insofar as he suggests that intertextuality is 'neither some sort of game of allusion-hunting, which some have taken it for, nor a self-indulgent mode of anything goes exegesis.'⁶

4 '...the text is never a complete "work" as such, with a clear unitary meaning implicit in its words. Instead, it always requires interpretation, in each individual encounter. Authorial intent may provide one set of meanings for the text, but these meanings – no matter how clearly they may be conveyed – are always susceptible to revision and reinterpretation, either by the author/editor(s) themselves, or by other redactors and interpreters. Audiences, in turn, may reshape and reconsider the potential meanings of the text, in light of their own needs and ideologies, providing interpretations of "the meaning" of a text that serve their own immediate and pressing concerns at different moments in the history of the text. The result of this sort of literary critical approach is an understanding of textual meaning as something that is fundamentally dynamic, and fundamentally contested, as well.' M.L. Grossman, *Reading for History in the Damascus Document: A Methodological Study*, (STDJ 45; Leiden: Brill, 2002) 24.

5 T.K. Beal, "Intertextuality," in *Handbook of Postmodern Biblical Interpretation* (ed. A.K.A. Adam; St Louis: Chalice, 2000) 129.

6 D. Boyarin, "Issues for Further Discussion: A Response," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995) 294.

1.2.1 Toward Understanding Intertextuality

Intertextuality is an observation of relationships between texts that places the generation of meaning in the dynamic conversation between text/intertext/reader.⁷ What follows are a few points outlining an understanding of intertextuality.

First, intertextuality was a product of the cultural and political upheaval in France in the 1960's. Julia Kristeva, most often identified as the originator of intertextuality,⁸ her teacher, Roland Barthes, and other post-structuralists, attempted to intellectually subvert what they perceived to be the bourgeois, elitist power structures of their context by reexamining some of the basic elements of culture, the understanding of 'text' being one such element. Intertextuality at its inception was not an isolated or neutral intellectual observation, but 'a means of ideological and cultural expression and of social transformation.'⁹ It was a tool

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- 7 Some other definitions of intertextuality: Kristeva's definition, '...tout texte se construit comme mosaïque de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d'un autre texte.' J. Kristeva, "Le mot, le dialogue et le roman," in *Semiotiké: Recherches pour une sémanalyse* (ed. J. Kristeva; Paris: Seuil, 1969) 146. Roland Barthes' definition of text in which his understanding of intertextuality is readily apparent: 'The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from innumerable centers of culture.' R. Barthes, "From Work to Text," in *Image - Music - Text* (ed. S. Heath; Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1977) 146. Ellen van Wolde: 'The intertextual approach starts from the assumption that a writer's work should not be seen as a linear adaptation of another text but as a complex of relationships; the principle of causality is left behind. Moreover, in an intertextual analysis or interpretation of a text it is the reader who makes a text interfere with other texts. The writer assigns meaning to his own context and in interaction with other texts he shapes and forms his own text. The reader, in much the same way, assigns meaning to the generated text in interaction with other texts he knows. Without a reader a text is only a lifeless collection of words.' E. van Wolde, "Trendy Intertextuality," in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in honour of Bas van Iersel* (ed. S. Draisma; Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J.H. Kok, 1989) 47. J.W. Voelz: '...from an intertextual perspective...through the presence of a multiplicity of texts, both written and non-written, the meaning of a text arises in the presence of the interpreter.' J.W. Voelz, "Multiple Signs, Aspects of Meaning, and Self as Text: Elements of Intertextuality," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995) 150. [Voelz's emphasis.]
- 8 It is thought that the concept of 'dialogicity' in the 1920's thought of Russian Formalist, Mikhail Bakhtin, may be a precursor to Kristeva's intertextuality. Note especially her own presentation of Bakhtin's thought in a 1966 article - J. Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue, Novel," in *The Kristeva Reader* (trans. A. Jardine, et al.; ed. T. Moi; Oxford: Blackwell, 1986) 34-61. A noted detractor of this is H.-P. Mai, "Bypassing Intertextuality," in *Intertextuality* (ed. H.F. Plett; Research in Text Theory 15; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1991) who, among others, argues that 'Bakhtin's relevance for the intertextual debate is rather doubtful.' (33)
- 9 G. Aichele and G.A. Phillips, "Introduction: Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995) 9.

of revolution. This said, there are those who would like to discredit the observation of intertextuality because of its beginnings (the Marxist, Maoist, Freudian, and generally subversive and revolutionary influences on Kristeva's thought).¹⁰ Acknowledging the context and motivation of its genesis, intertextuality is larger than its beginnings and continues to be a useful concept within semiotics, text linguistics, philosophy, and biblical studies. As such, intertextuality appears to be here to stay...at least for some time.¹¹

Second, intertextuality at its heart is an understanding of text. Given a dialogical or conversational understanding of text/intertext, the question of what a text is broadens *ad infinitum* to include, not merely written texts, but history, culture, art, etc. Life becomes the model for text.¹² As lives lived are inevitably lived in conversation with the other,¹³ so texts participate in a dialogical existence with the other (intertext/reader/context) in the reading of the reader. Human existence at its very nature is in dialogue with the world around it.¹⁴ As dialogue is at the heart of human existence, similarly it is at the heart of text.

Also along these lines, within the discussion of intertextuality the boundaries of text are always questionable, always permeable. In a

10 T.R. Hatina, "Intertextuality and Historical Criticism in New Testament Studies: Is There A Relationship?," *BibInt* 7 (1999) charges that intertextuality is 'inimical' to historical criticism of the New Testament because of its roots and, even more so, the 'fashionable' and uncritical use of the term within biblical studies. (28-43) Hatina's critique is largely ideological, possibly echoing piety rather than scholarship. At the same time, his critique of the use of intertextuality without some knowledge of its philosophical baggage is not without value. van Wolde, "Trendy Intertextuality," takes up a similar argument without the baggage of Hatina's historical-critical piety. (43-49)

11 While William Irwin, "Against Intertextuality," *Philosophy and Literature* 28 (2004) 227-242, raises valid critiques of the frequent misuse of 'intertextuality' for 'allusion,' however, he himself falls prey to his own critique, throwing the valid descriptive nature of intertextuality, the proverbial baby, out with the bathwater of its misunderstanding and misuse.

12 'Being that can be understood is language,' Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 474.

13 'Language is not an instrument that I can pick-up and put down at will; it is always there, surrounding and invading all I experience understand, judge, decide, and act upon. I belong to my language far more than it belongs to me, and through that language I find myself participating in this particular history and society.' D. Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity: Hermeneutics, Religion, Hope*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

14 Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity*, writes about 'reality' in a similar way: 'Reality is neither out there or in here. Reality is constituted by the interaction between a text, whether book or world, and a questioning interpreter.' (48)

sense, all texts are intertexts. This is evident in H.F. Plett's definitions of 'text' and 'intertext':

A text may be regarded as an autonomous sign structure, delimited and coherent. Its boundaries are indicated by its beginning, middle and end, its coherence by the deliberately interrelated conjunction of its constituents. An intertext, on the other hand, is characterized by attributes that exceed it. It is not delimited, but de-limited, for its constituents refer to constituents of one or several other texts. Therefore it has a twofold coherence: an *intratextual* one which guarantees the immanent integrity of the text, and an *intertextual* one which creates structural relations between itself and other texts.¹⁵

Plett's own distinction between text and intertext both questions whether or not there is such a thing as a text that is not an intertext and stresses what Derrida calls the *débordement*, or the spillage of text in which the borders and divisions commonly ascribed to text are called into question. In Derrida's words:

...a "text" that is henceforth no longer a finished corpus of writing, some content enclosed in a book or its margins, but a differential network, a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself, to other differential traces. Thus the text overruns all the limits assigned to it so far (not submerging or drowning them in an undifferentiated homogeneity, but rather making them more complex, dividing and multiplying strokes and lines) – all the limits, everything that was to be set up in opposition to writing (speech, life, the world, the real, history, and what not, every field of reference – to body or mind, conscious or unconscious, politics, economics, and so forth).¹⁶

15 Heinrich F. Plett, "Intertextualities," in *Intertextuality*, Heinrich F. Plett, ed. (RTT 15; Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991) 5. The trajectory of Plett's comments is to play with the paradoxical relationship of text and intertext, proposing a continuum between text and intertext with a sliding scale of intertextuality. The extreme ends of this continuum he describes: '...a text which is no intertext, and an intertext which is not text. What does this mean? The text which has no interrelations with other texts at all realizes its autonomy perfectly. It is self-sufficient, self-identical, a self-contained monad – but is no longer communicable. On the other hand, the intertext runs the risk of dissolving completely in its interrelations with other texts. In extreme cases it exchanges its internal coherence completely for an external one. Its total dissolution makes it relinquish its beginning, middle and end. It loses its identity and disintegrates into numerous text particles which only bear an extrinsic reference. It is doubtful that such a radical intertext is communicable at all.' (6)

16 J. Derrida, "Living On: Border Line," in *Deconstruction and Criticism* (trans. J. Hulbert; ed. H. Bloom, et al.; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979) 81-82. Also quoted by G.A. Phillips, "Sign/Text/Différance: The Contribution of Intertextual

Derrida points out that without the broader context of language, individual words, sentences, even whole texts are meaningless. Without a context in the language world of the reader, the text is meaningless. It follows, then, that all texts in as much as they are a part of a broader language world are intertexts and products of and participants in 'various cultural discourses.' (Barthes) And as all texts taken on an atemporality (Ricoeur)¹⁷ insofar as their inscription allows a text to read wherever and whenever there is a reader, a text as intertext participates in times, languages, cultures, and worlds beyond (not even imagined by) the original author's.

Third and related to this atemporality of text, another aspect of intertextuality is the placement of meaning or the generation of meaning in the conversation of text/intertext/reader. Because of the dialogical nature of meaning, it follows that meaning is fundamentally not static.¹⁸ In the words of G. Phillips, '...there is no eschatological reader who at some point in time and space will read the text right, will

Theory to Biblical Criticism," in *Intertextuality* (ed. H.F. Plett; Research in Text Theory 15; Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991). Phillips' description of Derrida's motive is helpful here: 'Derrida makes the outlandish claim that the text overruns everything established as a limit to its working, be that limit defined in traditional terms as the textual corpus, the reader's intended meaning, or even the historical context itself. Derrida attempts to defamiliarize the "natural" distinction between the textual and the extratextual; his aim is to compel reflection upon the taken-for-grantedness of the boundary conditions and their relationship to the various "analytico-referential" interpretive strategies used to read texts today.... [Derrida's] effort is to direct slumbering attention to the border and the fact of the border as a way of lifting a corner of the camouflage so as to draw attention to the natural, unreflected-upon distinction that allows the modern critic to so neatly separate text from context from reader from the extratextual and to discover the 'truth' of the text, i.e., its meaning, its referent, its world-of-meaning, etc.' Phillips, "Sign/Text/Différance," .

- 17 Similar is P. Ricoeur's observation that a text is 'a kind of atemporal object, which has, so to speak, cut its ties from all historical development... the transfer of discourse to a sphere of ideality that allows an indefinite widening of the sphere of communication.' *Interpretation Theory*, 91.
- 18 Grossman, *Reading for History*, asserts three observations about text: (1) 'texts are not fixed entities and... their meanings depend on how they are interpreted,' (2) 'that interpretations of even the most authoritarian texts can change over time, depending on the audiences' expectations and agendas,' and (3) 'that competing interpretations of a text may arise even in a single interpretive community.' (ix) Also along these lines, D.R. Blumenthal, "Many Voices, One Voice," *Judaism* 47 (1998) in his "(re)writing" of Genesis 1 from the perspective of Medieval Jewish commentators, Ramban, Rashi, Rashbam, and Ibn Ezra, attempts to show the 'competing interpretations' (Grossman) and what Blumenthal calls the 'multivocal, plurisignificant' nature of the text. (468)

critique the text without the possibility of another word, a remainder.’¹⁹ Insofar as intertextuality acknowledges the fundamental interconnectedness of texts with other texts as part and parcel of the reader’s discernment of meaning and insofar as a text can be read in any number of times and spaces within any number of intertextual matrices, it follows a deconstructionist line of thought that pushes language and words to the edge of ‘meaning’ – especially when this means *the* meaning. As a linguistic and hermeneutical observation, intertextuality’s posture is one of openness to possible readings.

Intertextuality places an emphasis on the dynamic interaction of the reader with the intertextual mosaic encountered/perceived in a text. If a text is an intertext, and an intertext is a mosaic of other texts, it follows that it is the reader’s²⁰ place to trace the meaning of a text by interpreting the text’s intertextuality.²¹ G. Phillips proposes a term for this interaction – ‘intergenesis’ – an understanding that the space between texts is the place from which meaning emerges. ‘Meaning does not lie “inside” texts but rather in the space “between” texts. Meaning is not an unchangeable ideal essence but rather variable, fluid, and contextual depending upon the systematic forces at work that bind texts to one another.’²² In concert with this, however, it should be noted unequivocally that without the texts themselves the space of ‘intergenesis’ would prove a vacuum.

19 Phillips, “Sign/Text/Différance,” 92. Derrida, “Living On: Border Line,” makes a similar observation: ‘...no one inflexion enjoys absolute privilege.’ (78)

20 Or plural readers. When considering the place of intertextuality of legal (e.g. the Constitution of the United States of America) and sacred texts (e.g. Torah, Bible, Qu’ran, etc), it is important to acknowledge the place and importance of reading communities lest the reader be assumed to be untethered from community/communities.

21 ‘...there is one place where this multiplicity [intertextual mosaic] is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed...’ Barthes, “From Work to Text,” 148.

22 Aichele and Phillips, “Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis,” 14-15. I would temper Philip’s observations to the degree that the text as it is inscribed does bear within itself a range of possible interpretations, in the way that the rabbis understood Scripture to continue to speak with authority, as D. Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990) suggests: ‘...midrash is literature, but all serious literature is revision and interpretation of a canon and a tradition and is a dialogue with the past and with authority which determines the shape of human lives in the present and future. The rabbis were concerned with the burning issues of their day, but their approach to that concern was through the clarification of difficult passages of Scripture.’ (19)

Finally, at its core intertextuality is an observation not a method. It is an observation of the nature of text and of the relationship of text/intertext/reader. While intertextuality is a fuzzy concept, maybe intentionally so, in its purest form it cannot be a methodology. Critiques of the improper methodization of intertextuality come from Hatina,²³ Aichele and Phillips,²⁴ van Wolde,²⁵ and Beal,²⁶ noting especially the confusion of 'agency', 'influence', and 'allusion' for intertextuality among contemporary biblical scholars. Rather, intertextuality is an observation of a broad notion of 'text' and the integral role of the reader/reading community in the production of meaning.

To summarize, the study of intertextuality leads down a plethora of winding paths of complex relationships and multi-layer conversations between texts/intertext/reader. All the while, texts are in conversation with other texts/intertexts, loosely comprising an intertextual mosaic (referred to as a 'tapestry' in this study) extending *ad infinitum* into a blurry horizon, portions of which are picked up and digested by the reader in the creation of meaning. Meaning happens in the conversation of text/intertext/reader, the confluence of a broad understanding of text that includes culture, history, art, etc., and the reader's varied awareness of the text's intertextuality.

1.2.2 A Viable Intertextuality & The History of Interpretation

The question, then, is whether or not this *ad infinitum* observation of intertextuality is useful within the study of the history of interpretation, contra Timothy Beal. And if so, how might intertextuality be employed? I argue that the observation of intertextuality can be harnessed to provide insight into the mosaic of interrelated texts within a given corpus. The harnessed observations that intertextuality provides can be particularly helpful within the history of interpretation as they provide a glimpse of the intertextual tapestry from which later readers/interpreters drew their interpretations.

Following the lead of Ellen van Wolde, with some limitations intertextuality is a window that 'makes a special perception of the text

23 Hatina, "Intertextuality and Historical Criticism," 28ff.

24 Aichele and Phillips, "Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis," 11-12.

25 van Wolde, "Trendy Intertextuality," 43ff.

26 Beal, "Intertextuality," 129.

possible'.²⁷ Though not a method, the observation of intertextuality is employable in that it provides an understanding of the relationship between texts that opens angles of insight on the text outside the bounds of the questions of source, *Sitz im Leben*, author, authorial intentions, etc. Given the broad sense of intertextuality, that is the *débordement* [Derrida] of text *ad infinitum*, some modification and/or limitation of the concept is both necessary and possible.

Van Wolde employs a metaphor of the relationship between a drop of water and a river to both explain and critique the 'usefulness' of the Kristeva, Barthes, Derrida, etc. school of intertextuality within biblical studies:

Their standpoint might be compared to a river: elements from other texts are incorporated in a text like drops of water in a river. In addition, they find that it is not the writer who is determinative of the intertext, but the reader. Expressed in the images of metaphor: it is not the writer who determines where the drop ends and river begins, but the reader who distinguishes particular drops within the unfathomable quantity of water.²⁸

Van Wolde finds this broad understanding of intertextuality unhelpful because of the inherently vague nature of the concept and the uselessness of an observation that deals with the droplet-level observation of something as large as a river. She echoes W. van Peer's critique of Kristeva's intertextuality as having 'little analytical power'.²⁹ While I am not convinced that Kristeva would say that intertextuality is meant to be analytical, van Wolde sees enough value in Kristeva's intertextuality to offer a modification of it that proves useful within her exegetical goals.

Within van Wolde's complex literary analysis, she proposes a limited use of intertextuality that 'starts from an acknowledgement of the autonomous value of each of the compared texts on their own, and continues with the explication of the textual markers shared by the texts.'³⁰ She goes on to propose specific criteria for intertextual study of

27 E. van Wolde, "Texts in Dialogue with Texts: Intertextuality in the Ruth and Tamar Narratives," *BibInt* 5 (1997) 3.

28 van Wolde, "Texts in Dialogue with Texts," 3.

29 E. van Wolde, *Word Become Worlds: Semantic Studies of Genesis 1-11*, (Biblical Interpretation 6; Leiden: Brill, 1994) quoting W. van Peer, "Intertextualiteit: traditie en kritiek," *Spiegel der Letteren* 29 (1987) 16.

30 van Wolde, "Texts in Dialogue with Texts," 7. By 'textual markers' van Wolde is referring to a broad range of characteristics including words, semantic fields, larger textual units, theme, genre, analogies in character type, and similarities in narrative style.

the Hebrew Bible for purposes of exegesis: (1) study the texts on their own; (2) compile an inventory of repetitions in the compared texts; and (3) analyse the 'new network of meaning originating from the meeting of the two texts.'³¹ Van Wolde's criteria provide a means to explore and/or to test the intertextuality of texts, criteria, which with some modification, are useful within the history of interpretation.

For the ancient interpreter, namely ancient rabbinic sages but presumably ancient interpreters in general, scripture was a dynamic revelation of the divine.³² That is, revelation was not a completed event. Each generation was present again at Sinai and charged with understanding and inwardly digesting Torah.³³ Writing about Rabbinic midrashim, Daniel Boyarin continues this thought:

The rabbis, as assiduous readers of the Bible, developed an acute awareness of these intertextual relations within the holy books, and consequently their own hermeneutic work consisted of a creation process of further combining and recombining biblical verses into new texts, exposing the interpretive relations already in the text, as it were, as well as creating new ones by revealing linguistic connections hitherto unrealised. This recreation was experienced as revelation itself, and the biblical past became alive in the midrashic present.³⁴

Such a realization about the ancient rabbis, along with ancient biblical interpreters in general,³⁵ is reason enough for the use of a limited

31 van Wolde, "Texts in Dialogue with Texts," 7-8.

32 The work of M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), demonstrates that interpretation was fundamental to the fabric of Israel's scripture from its earliest history. Looking at inner-biblical exegesis he notes that the biblical text itself was subject to 'redaction, elucidation, reformulation, and outright transformation....They [biblical texts] are, in sum, the exegetical voices of many teachers and tradents, from different circles and times, responding to real theoretical considerations as perceived and anticipated.' (543)

33 Two theologians of undoubtedly more who have worked constructively with this idea are: E.L. Fackenheim, *God's Presence in History: Jewish Affirmations and Philosophical Reflections*, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970), from the perspective of post-Holocaust Judaism, and J. Plaskow, *Standing Again at Sinai: Judaism from a Feminist Perspective*, (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990), from a contemporary Jewish Feminist perspective.

34 Boyarin, *Intertextuality*, 128. Also, M. Fishbane, *The Exegetical Imagination: On Jewish Thought and Theology*, (Cambridge: Harvard, 1998) 20.

35 Rowan Greer suggests similar things about early Christian interpreters of scripture prior to Irenaeus, though from a perspective of 'transformation'. Early Christian interpreters were of a similar mind to their early Jewish counterparts that scripture was divine revelation. Their interpretation was a transformation of the Hebrew scriptures to 'disclose their true significance' in light of their accepted messiah, Jesus. J.L. Kugel and R.A. Greer, *Early Biblical Interpretation*, (LEC 3; Philadelphia:

intertextuality in the history of interpretations. If it is true that the ancient scribe/rabbi/interpreter had a concordance-level knowledge of their sacred texts, then some measure of intertextuality can provide a sound observational tool for reconstructing the scriptural mosaic that was foundational to subsequent interpretations. Within the history of interpretations and more specifically for this particular study, then, it is key that intertextuality can serve as a window into the textual/language world of the ancient interpreter. Providing such a glimpse is the goal of this study.

Some modest modifications of van Wolde's proposed criteria are in order to 'use' intertextuality within the history of interpretation. The first step in this method (1) remains the same, beginning with the study of the primary text under consideration. This means that the initial text placed under the microscope is the text whose intertextuality is to be studied. For this study, the primary text is Genesis 1.1-5.

Step two (2) involves identifying intertexts within a predetermined corpus of similar texts, in the case of this study, the Hebrew Bible (ch.2), the Greek equivalents of the text of the Hebrew Bible (ch.3),³⁶ and Hebrew (ch.4) and Greek (ch.5) texts from before 200 CE that fall outside those covered in chapters two and three. A means to this end is identifying intertextual markers, that is individual words, minor phrases, or word-pairs within the primary text whose recurrence elsewhere in the corpus might spur interest in the primary text. These are words that occur infrequently and/or are central to the primary text. In such an atomic level study of the corpus, these words are examined thoroughly in the variety of meanings they bear and the variety of contexts in which they appear. In effect, a mosaic of usage/meaning is sketched for each intertextual marker. This atomic level study is useful

Westminster, 1986) 126ff. Also, pre-rabbinic texts exist that point to the importance of interpretation, as noted by James Kugel, especially the book of Daniel in which Daniel is the interpreter of revelation and in Ben Sira's understanding of the role and importance of the sage in *Sir* 39.1-6. (58, 62-63)

36 The issue of 'canon' is a sticky wicket in a study such as this. Whose canon ought to be employed to delineate texts, if one should be used at all? Since this study begins with the Hebrew text of Gen 1.1-5, which is undoubtedly the most 'original', the Hebrew canon, a.k.a. the Hebrew Bible or Tanakh, is used as a benchmark throughout this study. While this may not be an ideal solution, it is a solution nonetheless. E. Ulrich, "Our Sharper Focus on the Bible and Theology Thanks to the Dead Sea Scrolls," *CBQ* 66 (2004) based on the texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls draws a clear picture of the 'shadowy beginnings' of the Hebrew Bible. (1-24)

in identifying the variety of understandings of a given intertextual marker in subsequent interpretations.³⁷

Step three (3) is the identification of texts that have a significant repetition of intertextual markers from the primary text and bear its theme(s). The primary goal of this step is to provide a collection of identifiable intertexts. Commonality is most important. As such, while intertextual markers are the initial draw to a given text, and the more the better, also included in this equation are theme and other words common to both the primary text and the intertext. In this stage, then, intertextual markers function as a beacon, but theme and the wider commonality maintain the attention of the interpreter. In this study of Genesis 1.1-5, the broad theme is that all the texts at some level have to do with the creation of the cosmos.

It should be noted here that intertextuality and influence are two different, some would say opposed, observations. Intertextuality is concerned with relationships but not with direction, causality, and thus influence. The intertexts identified in step two, then, need only be demonstrably similar to the primary text in vocabulary and theme. No inference of direction should be made at this point.

Step four (4) examines the material compiled in step three with the goal of drawing thematic lines among the intertexts, that is, getting a broad look at the intertextual tapestry. This provides another view of the tapestry and hence another lens through which subsequent interpretations can be studied. Again, direction and causality are not an issue here. Rather, the analysis is based on thematic similarities among the intertexts identified in step three.

Step five (5) is similar to van Wolde's step three, with the difference being the locus of the new meaning being in the subsequent interpretations rather than in contemporary exegesis. Van Wolde's concern is using a limited intertextuality as an exegetical tool leading to 'new' observations. Whereas the usefulness of intertextuality within the history of interpretations is as a foundational lens through which to make 'new' observations of 'old' exegesis – seeing not new exegesis but intertextual 'afterlives' of the primary text. The tapestry that intertextuality serves to illuminate provides a glimpse of the language world(s) within which the ancient reader worked.

37 These intertextual sketches of individual intertextual markers can be found in Appendices A and B.

It is my hope, then, that this method will provide a new glimpse at old material – and in particular a new glimpse of Day One in this intertextual history of Gen 1.1-5 up to 200 CE.

1.2.3 History, Tapestry, Lacunae

History

This study attempts to contribute to the body of work that can be called the history of interpretation of biblical texts.³⁸ In defense of this attempt at history via intertextuality, I look to Maxine Grossman. In response to Philip Davies' assertion that reader response approaches³⁹ 'do not produce history',⁴⁰ Grossman asserts:

It is [*sic*] possible to 'produce history' while working from a literary critical perspective. A history of this sort may look unfamiliar, but its very difference will provide insights that are not revealed by a more standard historical analysis...⁴¹

Indeed, this study is an attempt at history that does not look familiar. It sketches intertextual relationships between texts based on common vocabulary in an attempt to see wider interpretive matrices, to gain new glimpses of old material. It is not interested in wading into the questions of agency, influence, causality, allusion, etc..., but it is interested in relationship. Few of the texts examined are deliberate retellings of Gen 1.1-5. The vast majority of texts are held together by the commonality of language or intertextual markers. As a result, the reality of this intertextual history is that it is both messy and modest. There

38 From among the many works in this corner of the academy- a corner that has seen significant growth in the past decade, two pioneering works are J.P. Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature*, (Leiden: Brill, 1968); and S.D. Fraade, *Enosh and His Generation: Pre-Israelite Hero and History in Postbiblical Interpretation*, vol. 30, (SBL Monograph Series; Chico, CA: Scholars, 1984); and from a post-modern perspective Y. Sherwood, *The Biblical Text and its Afterlives: The Survival of Jonah in Western Culture*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) explores the interpretation within tradition, 'science,' art, and culture. Also of value will be the on-going publication of *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, H.-J. Klauck, et al, eds (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009-).

39 Intertextuality is related to reader response criticism insofar as texts can be portential intertexts on paper (or parchment or papyri) with the intertextuality only fully (or partially) realized in the reading of the interpreter.

40 P.R. Davies, *Behind the Essenes: History and Ideology in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, (BJS 94; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987) 11.

41 Grossman, *Reading for History*, ix.

are many loose ends – texts that are obvious inclusions are viewed alongside texts barely connected with the larger whole.

The scope of this study is necessarily limited. For this study the words come from the bounds of the Hebrew and Greek versions of Gen 1.1-5, a.k.a. Day One in the First Creation Story.⁴² While it is with Day One that this study begins and to which it returns again and again, it is the intertextuality of Day One that is of primary interest. What are the intertextual relationships of Day One? How does Day One spill over into the intertextual vastness and vice versa? The texts in this study are also limited in that they all share a creation theme, a common denominator organic with Gen 1.1-5. Finally, all of the texts in this study were produced prior to 200 CE. As with any specific date on the sea of global history, this date could likely be abandoned in favor of a more important and/or meaningful date. However, the reasons for using 200 CE as a cutoff are (1) that this is the approximate date of the compilation of the Mishnah, and (2) that it draws an historical line before Origen and his *Hexapla* come into play.

Tapestry

The primary objective of this study is to gather a glimpse of the intertextual tapestry of Gen 1.1-5. The hand-woven textile art known as a ‘tapestry’ is used throughout this study as an image for the broader intertextuality of Gen 1.1-5. The image in mind is a tapestry in an incomplete state still tied to the loom.⁴³ That is, it is an image of threads woven together, with the boundaries not entirely clear. It is an image with spindles of thread hanging off the edge and loose threads not completely tied in. Some threads are bright and distinct, others are dull and common. Some threads appear at one spot and another with no trace of the thread that runs beneath the surface linking the two. Some threads come together to provide a certain picture in one corner of the whole, while another corner may look completely different – though they are ultimately of the same work. While the employment of any image brings with it its own limitations, the image of tapestry-in-

42 Limiting the scope of this study to texts that are extant in Hebrew or Greek excludes consideration of texts such as 2 Enoch. Were there an extant Hebrew or Greek manuscript of the likes of 2 Enoch, it would undoubtedly warrant inclusion in this work.

43 I draw this image from trips to Stirling Castle in 2002-2003, during which I observed the slow and careful progress of the weaving of a recreation of ‘The Unicorn in Captivity,’ a South Netherlandish tapestry woven from 1495-1505, now part of the collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, New York.
[http://www.metmuseum.org/Works_of_Art/departement.asp?dep=7]

progress provides a metaphorical conception of the intertextuality of Gen 1.1-5.

Lacunae

The fragments from the Dead Sea Scrolls that are examined in chapter four, important pieces of the intertextual history of Gen 1.1-5 as they are, are illustrative of text and this project as a whole. In their present state, these fragments are broken and partial. Barring some future discovery of a complete or more complete manuscript, these fragments are all that remains, the *lacunae* on the parchment and between fragments fertile ground for the scholarly imagination. While only a portion of the texts covered in this study are physically broken, our knowledge and understanding of all of them is fragmentary and partial. Given the historical, cultural, linguistic distance with ancient texts, the danger with having a full manuscript is to assume that it is completely accessible. The fragmentary scrolls from the Dead Sea in their current state serve as a reminder of the partiality of our knowing and thus the 'relative adequacy'⁴⁴ of our readings.

In addition, the corpus of texts available to study is limited by the accidents of history. Were it not for the arid climate and lack of a curious canine in search of a play-thing, the Masada fragments of Ben Sira could be forever unknown. One must wonder what other texts remain hidden to us by the accidents of time. Finally, I must also mention the accidents of the author. Two eyes helped by spectacles, a certain set of ideological assumptions (some conscious, others not) about text, history, current scholarship, etc... Needless to say but important to note, the results of this study are limited by the limitations of its author.

All of this is to say that as the texts (some more than others) of this study are fragmentary so are the results. But lest limitation lead to apathy, let the weaving begin.

44 Cf. Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity*, 22, *passim*.

Chapter 2

Genesis 1.1-5 in the Hebrew Bible

This chapter begins to sketch the intertextual tapestry of Gen 1.1-5¹ within its most immediate and original textual context – the corpus of the Hebrew Bible / Tanakh. The following chapter is a parallel exploration of the Greek equivalents. These chapters provide images of the tapestries upon which subsequent interpretations are woven. Again, the long view of this study is that the boundaries between text and tradition, text and interpretation, text and intertext are semi-permeable and that language plays a central role in the afterlives of a biblical text, in this case the first five verses of Genesis.²

This chapter begins with a discussion of the criteria used for establishing intertextuality, followed by an examination of the primary text, MT Gen 1.1-5, both as a structural whole and by verse. The largest portion of the chapter follows with a text-by-text look at the intertexts of MT Gen 1.1-5. Finally, the chapter concludes with a sketch of some of the more prominent threads in the broader intertextual tapestry of MT Gen 1.1-5 by analyzing some prominent thematic threads.

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- 1 Given that in these first two chapters I am looking at two different, though very similar texts, I distinguish between MT Gen 1.1-5 and LXX Gen 1.1-5, following this distinction through to all the intertexts I examine.
 - 2 Y. Hoffman, "The First Creation Story: Canonical and Diachronic Aspects," in *Creation in Jewish and Christian Tradition* (ed. H.G. Reventlow and Y. Hoffman; JSOTSup 319; London: Sheffield, 2002) has taken a similar look at the whole of Gen 1.1-2.3 (First Creation Story) within the Hebrew Bible. The aim of Hoffman's study is to contrast the central status placed upon the First Creation Story by generations of readers in comparison to its place among the 100+ creation texts within the Hebrew Bible. He explores this relationship with searches for citation, reference, and allusion of the First Creation Story in these other biblical texts. His search yields strikingly little evidence, prompting his conclusion that 'the FCS had no authoritative status among the biblical authors. The post-biblical elevated standing of the FCS is therefore not a reflection of its biblical status.' (50) The trajectory of Hoffman's study differs this study insofar as he tests the tradition of interpretation in light of the biblical witness, whereas this study examines intertextuality rather than citation and reference.

2.1 Considering Commonality

In order to achieve a level of commonality upon which to build the claim of intertextuality, certain parts of the whole are identified as words that, when found in another (con)text, may indicate or trigger an intertextual link between texts – in this case between the primary text (Gen 1.1-5) and its intertexts. Throughout this study these individual parts are called intertextual markers. Ideally, intertextual markers occur with relative infrequency within the larger corpus.³ The likelihood that the occurrence of an intertextual marker might signal an intertextual relationship increases with the presence of a creation context and additional words from the primary text in proximity.⁴ The intertextual markers for the examination of MT Gen 1.1-5 are:

words – תָּהוֹם, רוּחַ, מְרַחֶפֶת, בָּדֵל, רִאשִׁית, בְּרָא, תְּהִי, בְּדוּג, חָשֶׁךְ

minor phrases⁵ – יוֹם אֶחָד, כִּי־טוֹב, רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים

word-pairs⁶ – יוֹם and לַיְלָה, אֵוֶר and חָשֶׁךְ, בְּדוּג and תְּהִי, שָׁמַיִם and אֶרֶץ

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- 3 For example, אָמַר, which in MT Gen 1.3 is central to the first creative action of the First Creation Story, occurs 4300+ times in the Hebrew Bible and is thus impractical and of little use in identifying intertexts of MT Gen 1.1-5.
 - 4 A clear example of intertextuality and an exception to this idea about the context of an intertextual marker is *m.Hul* 5.5, in which the infrequently occurring יוֹם אֶחָד in Lev 22.28, a text with no creation theme, sparks a connection with MT Gen 1.5 in the interpretation of the rabbis.
 - 5 Minor phrases function like individual words, i.e., when combined the way they are in the primary text they take on a grammatical unity. Conversely, the individual parts of these word pairs have little if no weight as intertextual markers by themselves, e.g. כִּי carries little intertextual interest when separated from בָּטוֹב.
 - 6 A word-pair functions as a unit within the primary text as a circumlocution for a larger whole, e.g. heaven and earth comprise the larger cosmos. [See the discussion of heaven and earth in Gen 1.1 by U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis; Part 1 - From Adam to Noah*, (trans. I. Abrahams; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961), 20] A word-pair is admittedly more subjective than individual words and minor phrases as their relationship to one another in the secondary text must be evaluated before their relationship with the primary text can be considered. Take for example, שָׁמַיִם and אֶרֶץ. In MT Gen 1.1 these two words function as a pair, hendiadys for the entirety of the cosmos. Their appearance in a secondary text alone, however, is not sufficient to determine intertextuality. Other parameters must be taken into consideration. The first is that the pair ought to be functioning as a pair. This can mean that the two words are separated by a conjunction functioning as a collective subject/object/etc. (e.g. MT Gen 2.4, 2 Kgs 19.15) or a slightly wider separation in parallel ideas (e.g. MT 2 Sam 22.8, Jer 4.23). This parameter rules out occurrences that, while in close proximity to one another, do not function as a pair (e.g. MT Exod 10.22, 32.12). A second parameter is that the pair occurs in a creation context. This rules out occurrences that have a locative function (e.g. MT Gen 9.2, Jer 7.32) and occurrences that represent or personify the cosmic framework of heaven and earth (e.g. MT Deut 30.19, Isa 1.2). A third parameter is that the pair occurs in close proximity

As noted above, these intertextual markers serve as a control group of ‘flags’ for identifying texts with a significant intertextual commonality with Gen 1.1-5. For this and the following chapters, there are appendices that explore the occurrences of the intertextual markers throughout the whole of the Hebrew Bible⁷ and Greek equivalents.⁸ In addition to a commonality of intertextual markers, a second basic criterion for identifying an intertext is that it has a creation or creation-related theme. Both of these controls, intertextual markers and creation theme, facilitate a viable use of intertextuality.

2.2 A Look at MT Genesis 1.1-5

The interest of this chapter is the intertextual tapestry comprised of MT Gen 1.1-5 and its intertexts within the Hebrew Bible. In this section the goal is two-fold: first, to make a few observations about the structure of MT Gen 1.1-5; and second, to look at MT Gen 1.1-5 by verse, paying attention to the use of the intertextual markers in their primary context.

- ¹ בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:
² וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחָשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים
 מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם:
³ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהי אוֹר וַיְהי־אוֹר:
⁴ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאוֹר כִּי־טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאוֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ:
⁵ וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְאוֹר יוֹם וּלְחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה וַיְהי־עֶרֶב
 וַיְהי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד:

¹ When God began to create the heavens and the earth,

² The earth being formless and void, darkness upon the face of the deep, and the breath of God hovering upon the face of the waters,

³ God said, ‘Let there be light.’ And there was light.

⁴ And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.

⁵ And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night – There was evening, there was morning, day one.

to other Gen 1.1-5 vocabulary, further substantiating the possibility of intertextuality. Finally, when a word-pair occurs verbatim from the primary text theoretically it carries more intertextual weight (e.g. MT Exod 20.11).

⁷ Cf. Appendix A

⁸ Cf. Appendix B

The debate is well worn over how the verses of Gen 1.1-5 relate to one another,⁹ with vv. 1-2 being especially problematic. The business of this study is not to prove the unity of Gen 1.1-5. Rather, a modest goal is to establish the probability that Gen 1.1-5 can be seen as a unit by the reader, whether ancient or modern.

With the structure of MT Gen 1.1-5, two things are clear – the creative speech of God begins in vs. 3, when God speaks light into existence, and vv.4-5 continue the creative action of v.3. The unity of MT Gen 1.1-5, then, rests on the relationship of vv.1-3.

One argument for the unity of MT Gen 1.1-5 is based on a reading of the first letter of the text, ׀, as 'when,'¹⁰ introducing a dependent clause (v.1) that moves into a parenthetical clause (v.2)¹¹ with the thought completed by the main clause (v.3).¹² The creative action of v.3 is extended by the creative actions in vv.4-5 and only concludes with the declaration of the day. Another vantage point on the unity of Gen 1.1-5

9 Cf. J.E. Atwell, "An Egyptian Source for Genesis 1," *JTS* 51 (2000) 451.

10 N.M. Sarna, *Genesis*, (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: JPS, 1989) notes that the creation texts in Gen 2.4, 5.1, begin with 'when'. (5)

11 C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary*, (trans. J.J. Scullion; London: SPCK, 1984) suggests that there is a traditional pattern for beginning ancient cosmologies in the 'When not yet,' a pattern that reappears in MT Gen 1.2 and is common specifically to the Babylonian *Enuma Elish*. (102) Also, B.S. Childs, *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament*, (2nd ed.; SBT 17; London: SCM, 1962) 42. Atwell, "Egyptian Source," concurring with Westermann's general observation, convincingly argues that the most pertinent parallel is not with *Enuma Elish* but with Egyptian cosmology attributable to the priestly cult at Hermopolis. (449-467) The connection with Hermopolis was previously noted by R. Kilian, "Gen. 1 2 und die Urgötter von Hermopolis," *VT* 16 (1966) 420-438, especially 429ff.

12 The varied arguments for the relationship of the first three verses of Genesis help to illustrate the impossibility in coming to any decisive conclusion. Arguments generally begin with the interpreter's understanding of v. 1. These can be separated into three general categories of interpretation: (1) v. 1 is an independent clause with v.2 and v.3 describing subsequent acts of creation – A. Caquot, "Brèves remarques exégétiques sur Genèse 1, 1-2," in *In Principio: Interprétations des premiers versets de la Genèse* (Études Augustiniennes 8; Paris: Centre d'Études des Religions du Livre, 1973) 13-15; Childs, *Myth and Reality*, 31-43, G.J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, (WBC 1; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987) 11-13; (2) v. 1 is an independent clause that functions as a title for the creation account of vv. 2-31 – Cassuto, *Genesis*, 20, S.R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis*, (London: Methuen & Co., 1904) 3, G. von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, (trans. J.H. Marks; OTL; London: SCM, 1961) 51, Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 94, Atwell, "Egyptian Source," 451; and (3) v. 1 is a temporal clause completed by v. 3 with v. 2 as a parenthetical clause – J.D. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence*, (2nd revised ed.; Princeton: Princeton University, 1988 & 1994), Sarna, *Genesis*, 5, J. Skinner, *Genesis*, (2nd ed.; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930) 12-14, E.A. Speiser, *Genesis*, (AB 1; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964) 12-13.

is from the wider literary structure of the First Creation Story (Gen 1.1-2.4a). MT Gen 1.5 concludes with the same formulaic declaration that is used to declare the end of each of the first six days.¹³ The literary pattern of the First Creation Story uses this declaration of the day as a full stop, a natural break in the narrative.¹⁴ From this it can follow that Day One includes the material that precedes the declaration. Thus, the whole of the First Creation Story is divided into seven days with the first segment of the whole being MT Gen 1.1-5.¹⁵

The ambiguity of the relationship of MT Gen 1.1-2 to the subsequent verses likely will never be completely resolved as the ambiguity is inherent in the text itself. It is the position of this author that it is at least reasonable to think, however, that an ancient reader (along with his/her 21st century counterparts) could read the Hebrew text of Gen 1.1-5 as a unit. Though the above points are admittedly far from conclusive, the unity of the first five verses of Genesis remains a viable enough possibility to move on to examining parts of the larger whole.

2.2.1 MT Genesis 1.1

The function of **בְּרֵאשִׁית**¹⁶ is temporal; whether it is relative or absolute is debatable and ought to be left open given the various grammatical and pointing¹⁷ possibilities. Stemming etymologically from **רָשָׁא**,¹⁸ it follows that the range of possible understandings of the word is limited to some indication of beginning. In any case, it both begins the

13 : (number) **וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר יוֹם**

14 F.H. Polak, "Poetic Style and Parallelism in the Creation Account (Genesis 1.1-2.3)," in *Creation in Jewish and Christian Tradition* (ed. H.G. Reventlow and Y. Hoffman; JSOTSS 319; London: Sheffield, 2002) in the midst of an argument for reading MT Gen 1.1-2.3 as a poetic 'Hymn of Creation' (5, 31) suggests that MT Gen 1.1-5 is the first 'stanza' of the creation poem. (11)

15 Cassuto, *Genesis*, has documented 'numerical harmony' based on the use of the number seven that permeates the First Creation Story. (12-15) Cassuto, though he sees Gen 1.1 as an introductory verse, also notes that the Masoretes placed the first paragraph marker after v.5. (13)

16 For a mapping of the usage and contextuality of each intertextual marker, see Appendix A.

17 Origen's Greek transliteration being just one example.

18 BDB, s.v. When considering occurrences of **רָשָׁא** in the intertexts of MT Gen 1.1-5, I also strongly consider **רָשָׁא**, in line with W. Eichrodt, "In the Beginning," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (ed. B.W. Anderson and W. Harrelson; New York: Harper and Row, 1962) 3f.