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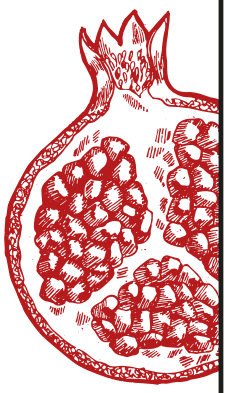

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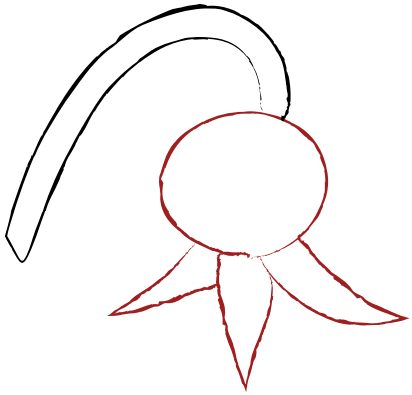
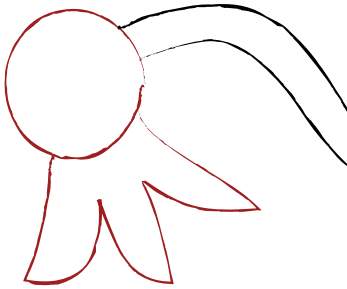


Categories and Boundaries in Second Temple Jewish Literature



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BEYOND DEFINITIONS OF PRAYER: APPLYING GENRE THEORY TO SOME PERSISTING PROBLEMS IN THE CATEGORISATION OF LITURGICAL TEXTS AMONG THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

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Abstract

This essay highlights two long-standing and persisting methodological problems attending scholarly discussion of liturgical texts found at Qumran, presenting a range of insights drawn from genre theory as means by which these problems can be overcome. A close examination of a definition of prayer which has been operative in this sub-field of Qumran scholarship for over a quarter of a century reveals the inadequacy of current methods, in particular an over-reliance on static definitions and adherence to overly rigid categorizations on the basis of formal characteristics. A survey of engagement with modern genre theory at once highlights the shortcomings of these approaches and suggests constructive avenues for future research. An emphasis on the analysis of intertextual relationships through comparison of material, textual and literary features is advocated, and this approach is illustrated through a study of 4Q381 15 and Psalms 86 and 89, as attested in 1Q10, 4Q87 and 4Q98g.

Dieser Aufsatz hebt zwei seit langem bestehende methodologische Probleme hervor, die die wissenschaftliche Diskussion von den liturgischen Texten aus Qumran begleiten, und präsentiert eine Reihe von Einsichten aus der Gattungstheorie als Mittel, mit dem diese Probleme überwunden werden können. Eine genaue Untersuchung zur Definition des Gebets, die im Bereich der Erforschung der Schriftrollen vom Toten Meer seit über einem Vierteljahrhundert verbreitet ist, offenbart die Unzulänglichkeit der derzeitigen Methoden, insbesondere ein übermäßiges Vertrauen in statische Definitionen und das Festhalten an übermäßig starren Kategorisierungen nach formalen Merkmalen. Überblickt man die Ansätze der modernen Gattungstheorie werden sofort die Mängel dieses Ansatzes deutlich. Deswegen müssen neue und konstruktive Wege für die zukünftige Forschung erarbeitet werden.. Eine Betonung der Analyse intertextueller Beziehungen durch Vergleich materieller, textlicher und literarischer Merkmale wird befürwortet, und dieser Ansatz wird durch eine Untersuchung von 4Q381 15 und Psalmen 86 und 89 veranschaulicht, wie in 1Q10, 4Q87 und 4Q98g bezeugt.

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Introduction

The present study identifies two persisting methodological problems that continue to be operative in the sub-field of Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship concerned with the study of liturgical texts. The two problems to be examined can be summarized as an over-reliance on static, inadequate definitions, and an adherence to overly rigid categorizations based on formal characteristics. Despite the fact that theories developed in the field of genre studies present a strong critique of these long-established approaches and offer more appropriate methodological alternatives, the impact of these theories has not yet been sufficiently felt in the study of prayers and psalms found at Qumran. The formation of categories has a significant impact on interpretation of individual texts and of the corpus as a whole, and these methodological

questions therefore influence the shape of ongoing research. In what follows, a close examination of a persisting yet inadequate definition of prayer—in conjunction with a survey of insights from modern genre theory—demonstrates the shortcomings of existing approaches, and also highlights some of the methodological alternatives available. Genre theory provides a range of tools and concepts which can guide the task of categorization, and while no single theory is presented as a cure-all, three key insights are highlighted as signposts beyond the long-standing methodological impasse described below.

The Problem of Definitions

In a "state-of-the-question" conference address published in 2017 on the subject of "Functions of Psalms and Prayers in the Late Second Temple Period," Eileen Schuller re-iterates an observation that she had previously made over twenty years earlier (Schuller 2017, 12). In 1994, she stated that "there is at present little agreement about terminology, even for such basic designations as psalm, hymn, song, prayer" (Schuller 1994, 160). It appears that by 2017, little progress on this issue had been made, as Schuller raised the point again as an outstanding challenge facing ongoing research into liturgical texts and their functions (Schuller 2017, 12). Questions surrounding the definition of these terms are closely related to discussions of literary form and genre, and the way in which apparently distinct genre categories might be understood to relate to one another. Is it possible to speak of categories of psalms, hymns, or prayers, without a basic definition of what a psalm or prayer is? If a basic definition is necessary, how should it be obtained? The following discussion demonstrates that these questions have not yet received satisfactory answers with regard to liturgical texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and does so by examining definitions of prayer that continue to be operative in scholarly discourse despite their shortcomings. Following that examination and the identification of methodological problems, insights drawn from genre theory are considered as potential strategies for overcoming these difficulties.

Theoretical Complexities

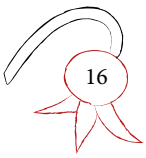
At the outset, it cannot be assumed that it is appropriate to speak of terms such as psalm, hymn, or prayer as referring to genres, or even to clearly distinct and distinguishable literary forms. Hindy Najman has questioned the suitability of "genre" as a label for categories of Second Temple Jewish texts, preferring to develop Walter Benjamin's idea of "constellations" of "*features* or *elements*" as a possible alternative (Najman 2012, 315–16 [original emphasis]). Najman's suggestion emerges from a nuanced discussion of the role and benefits of genre theory (though she finds the term ultimately inadequate for her purposes), and she is among a number of Dead Sea Scrolls scholars who have engaged fruitfully with that discipline.[1] In what way, then, should psalms and prayers from the Second Temple Period be categorized? Should it be in terms of form, content, or function? Should we, as exemplified by Daniel Falk on the basis of Catherine Bell's work, begin to categorise these texts in terms of ritual function (Bell 1997; Falk 2018)?

Mika Pajunen has recently highlighted the widely perceived inadequacy of categorizations based on the assumptions of traditional form criticism, and the need to keep in mind the diverse and changing functions of psalms and prayers in diachronic perspective (Pajunen 2019). It is worth extending this observation to acknowledge that it is not only diachronic diversity of function that must be taken into account, but also synchronic diversity. Psalms can perform a number of different functions (such as historical reflection, instruction, scribal education, liturgical performance, meditation, community formation, thanksgiving, intercession, confession, praise) simultaneously, and these functions can overlap and coalesce in numerous ways even within a discrete historical or social setting.

It is impossible to prove or pin down a single specific *Sitz im Leben*, or a single specific function for psalm texts. Numerous variables and possibilities must always be acknowledged and borne in mind. It cannot be assumed that in any given historical or social context psalms were

[1] As representative examples: Brooke 2013; Collins 2010; Najman 2012; Zahn 2020.

performed in one way only, or that a particular psalm may not have fulfilled a variety of functions. Questions of hierarchies of terms and categories must also be addressed—do "prayers" form an overarching category which is comprised partly of psalms, or do "psalms" in fact constitute a meta-category which includes some prayers?[2] Can a composition be understood to inhabit more than one genre, and if so, are such categorizations in fact meaningful or helpful? Similar questions of genre and classification have long been considered in Psalms scholarship beyond the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls specifically, although such is the significance of the finds at Qumran that Psalms scholarship can no longer be conceived apart from recognition of the vital impact and central importance of Scrolls research.[3] Furthermore, some of the methodological baggage that has attended (for instance) form criticism of the book of Psalms has been carried over to the study of poetic material found at Qumran, and many of the same difficulties need to be addressed whether we are dealing with the 150 psalms canonized in the Masoretic tradition alone, or taking the full range of psalms manuscripts found in the Judean Desert into account.[4]



Underlying—or perhaps overshadowing—these issues, is the matter of the extent to which any of these approaches may impose etic or anachronistic categorizations upon Second Temple literature, risking distortion of the data, or whether they are discovering emic classifications that offer a truer reflection of aspects of thought which lie behind the production of texts in this period. These various difficulties only briefly indicate some of the theoretical complexity that attends

[2] A number of issues concerning hierarchies of genre are raised in Brooke 2013.

[3] The central importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for study of the Psalms may be argued in a number of ways. It is sufficient to observe here that study of the history of the text of the Psalms, the history of the collection and canonization of the Psalms, and multiple factors concerning the composition, interpretation, transmission, and reception of Psalms must inevitably all now be shaped by study of the many psalms manuscripts discovered at Qumran. I refer to lower-case "psalms" purposefully in this last instance to indicate that both those psalms found at Qumran that are labelled "biblical" and those that are labelled "non-biblical" or "non-canonical" are relevant to this discussion.

[4] The methodological problems alluded to will be discussed explicitly below.

the task of classification. At the heart of all these discussions, however, lies the deceptively basic yet equally challenging issue of the definition of terms. A given definition influences categorization, which in turn has a profound impact on interpretation. Questions of definition and categorization are thoroughly intertwined, and it is for this reason that the study of genre—a scholarly field in which these concepts have been thoroughly examined and theorized—has an important contribution to make to the present discussion. The following examination of some definitions of prayer that have been explicitly operative in Dead Sea Scrolls research both illustrates the problem and clarifies some of the methodological obstacles that need to be addressed.

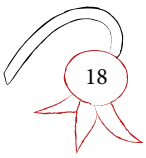
Defining Prayer

To explore this issue further, and to illustrate the problems involved in the task of defining liturgical terms, I will consider one particular definition of "prayer" that has been operative in Qumran scholarship for over twenty-five years. This example is highlighted in order to illustrate the inadequacy of static or feature-based definitions as tools for the categorization of liturgical texts, in preparation for the discussion of genre theory below which will explore alternative approaches to the task of categorization. These alternatives are presented as more appropriate and effective theoretical tools for the task, though they are only signposts towards improved methods and potential solutions. It is necessary, however, first to fully articulate a problem which has proved apparently intractable for over a quarter of a century, before considering theories which may offer alternative and preferable ways forward.

In her 1994 paper, "Prayers from Qumran and Their Historical Implications," Esther Chazon adopted a pragmatic and inclusive definition of prayer as "any form of human communication directed at God" (Chazon 1994, 266). Chazon had good reason for employing such a working definition at a stage when the full range of extant liturgical texts from Qumran was still emerging, and no comprehensive overview of prayer material had yet been attempted (Bilhah Nitzan's systematic study was published in the same year: Nitzan 1994). Some kind of interim definition—however imperfect—was necessary in order

to be able to de-limit the data and offer the fresh and vital analysis that Chazon provided. As Chazon herself acknowledged, however, once her definition was adopted, it quickly became clear that for the categorization of psalms and prayers a number of complex and problematic implications followed (Chazon 1994, 266).

Some of the key problems that attend the application of this definition are well illustrated by an examination of a sub-group of texts included in Chazon's categorization of "Prayers from Qumran" (Chazon 1994, 265–68). Counted within the inclusive category she proposes as a starting point are "Collections of Psalms," including "a score of biblical scrolls," and "several collections which juxtapose biblical and apocryphal psalms, such as the large Psalms Scroll from Cave 11" (Chazon 1994, 268). Clearly, Chazon's definition and categorization of prayer at this stage embraces "biblical Psalms." If, however, we examine the appropriateness and consistency of the definition as applied to Psalms in the Masoretic canon, a striking insconsistency becomes apparent, illustrating the unsuitability of the definition.



If prayer is "any form of human communication directed at God," then a large number of Masoretic Psalms must indeed be labelled "prayers." Immediately we encounter the problem of another term ("psalm") lacking definition, a further complication which is, however, temporarily avoided by limiting discussion to the Masoretic collection of 150 Psalms in order to preserve clarity and reduce the number of variables at play. The observation that many psalms should be labelled "prayers" comes as no surprise to anybody, but the converse implication—that by this same criterion, many psalms should *not* be identified as prayers—highlights some significant methodological difficulties. If we apply Chazon's apparently inclusive definition of prayer to the Masoretic Psalter, we discover that approximately forty Psalms do not in fact contain any communication explicitly directed towards God at all, and should therefore not (according to this particular definition) be designated as prayers.[5]

[5] I include in this count Pss 1–2, 11, 14, 24, 29, 34, 37, 46–47, 49, 50, 53, 78, 81, 96–98, 100, 103, 105, 107, 111–114, 117, 121–122, 127–128, 133–134, 136–137, 146–147, 148–150.

It is relatively easy to count psalms that do not address God directly, but much harder to identify Psalms that consist entirely of direct communication with God. This is because the majority of remaining compositions in the Masoretic Psalter contain either a mixture both of speech that is explicitly directed towards God and speech that is not, or they are—at least in portions—highly ambiguous. Psalms that unambiguously contain only communication directed towards God are very much in the minority.[6] Although I list in the footnotes twenty-four such examples,[7] it is nearly impossible to come to a precise number, because by their very literary (and, one might suggest, liturgical) character, psalms in fact stubbornly resist dissection on this particular basis. The criterion of whether communication is directed towards God or otherwise turns out to be an extremely blunt tool for the purpose of analyzing and categorizing psalms.

There are a number of reasons why this does not work. Firstly, in its literary setting, much communication in the Psalms is aimed at objects or audiences other than God. These might be other human recipients, such as Israel or the implied congregation, the king, or at times unspecified audiences. On other occasions, speech is directed towards divine or angelic beings—gods, sons of god, or angels (Pss 82:6; 103:20–21; 148:2). At times, God's creation in general or universal terms is addressed (Ps 103:22), and at times the Psalmist directs speech towards their own soul (Pss 42:5–6; 43:5; 103:1–2). The Psalms also contain numerous examples of the quoted speech of God towards his people. Secondly, speech clearly directed at God often includes reference to the name of God in the third person, meaning that the use of speech in the second or third person is not a generally reliable indicator as to whether God is being addressed directly or not (see, for instance, Pss 7:6–8; 9:1; 21:9–10; 26:1–2; 89:1; 93:1–2).[8] Thirdly, Psalms

[6] For instance: Pss 5, 8, 17, 35, 38–39, 51, 56–57, 61, 65, 70–72, 74, 80, 83, 86, 88, 90, 101, 139, 141, 143.

[7] Pss 5, 8, 17, 35, 38–39, 51, 56–57, 61, 65, 70–72, 74, 80, 83, 86, 88, 90, 101, 139, 141, 143.

[8] Theology of the divine name might explain this phenomenon, to which a text such as Ps 54:6–7 may testify.

often contain rhetorical questions for which an implied addressee is not specified or clear. Fourthly, Psalms employ a literary style that frequently shifts mode and object of speech—the fluidity of implied addressee and direction of communication appears in fact to be a distinguishing characteristic of Psalms in general.[9]

This last point is perhaps the most salient—it appears that the literary character of Psalms permits and even requires a fluidity in direction of communication and implied recipient. This often gives the impression that speech directed at human recipients is uttered somehow in the presence or hearing of God, and likewise communication directed at God is uttered in the presence or hearing of a human audience. Of course, in liturgical settings where psalms are sung or prayed *corporately*, these aspects would occur simultaneously. If we consider texts from Qumran such as the War Scroll or the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, as well as examples such as Pss 103:20–21 and 148:2, we could conceivably introduce angelic beings into that complex of implied audiences. Psalm 103 explicitly addresses angelic hearers (vv. 20–21), the Psalmist's own soul (vv. 1–2) and God's creation in general (v. 22). Though my comments so far have been based on the Masoretic Psalter as a convenient illustration, the same kinds of characteristics are equally present, for instance, in a collection of Psalms such as 11QPs[a], which shares much material with the Masoretic Psalter and includes other compositions which exhibit similar trends.

The converse implication of the definition that Chazon employed back in 1994, therefore, is that although many Psalms can be classified as "prayers," by the same criterion many of the Masoretic 150 should *not* be classified as prayers. The foregoing discussion simply illustrates that if we are to define prayer as "human communication directed at

[9] "Speaker ambiguity" is a phenomenon that has been identified in some recent Psalms research as an important and deliberate literary technique (Hildebrandt 2020). According to Hildebrandt, the ambiguity of polyphonic discourse is a consciously employed scribal technique which serves important literary, rhetorical, and (I further suggest) *liturgical* purposes. The exegetical impulse to identify the speaker of ambiguous portions thus risks distorting the message and potentiality of the text (Hildebrandt 2020).

God," then we must only identify a minority proportion of Masoretic Psalms (for example) as "Prayer Texts," and we must dissect individually the remaining majority of Psalms as partially consisting of prayer and partially not. This examination of Chazon's definition as applied to a sub-set of her own category of "Prayers from Qumran" thus demonstrates the inadequacy of the definition, though does not undermine the great value and contribution of her overall analysis in the study in which that definition appears (Chazon 1994). It does however, render all the more surprising the fact that this definition continues to be accepted and applied nearly a quarter of a century later, as will be observed below.

At a methodological level, then, the criterion of "human communication directed at God" falters specifically when applied to the categorization of prayer texts found at Qumran. Chazon was well aware that the "array of technical and methodological problems" she encountered included "the problem of defining boundaries between prayers and other genres" and texts that appear to "suit different genres and functions" (Chazon 1994, 266). Again, questions of liturgical function and basic definition are unavoidably intertwined with questions of genre. In order to clarify matters by way of categorization, Chazon then turned to analyze formal features among the two hundred-plus prayer texts that she had identified (a figure that rose to more than three hundred if "biblical prayers and psalms" were counted; Chazon 1994, 267).

Categorization of liturgical texts according to form is an approach that has been adopted by a number of scholars, and so any attendant methodological problems relate to something of a trend in Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship, rather than to one or two isolated cases (Falk 2018, 424). Chazon identified seven formal categories within the corpus of prayer texts: liturgies for fixed prayer times, ceremonial liturgies, eschatological prayers, magic incantations, collections of Psalms, Hodayot hymns, and prose prayers (Chazon 1994, 267). And here lies the obstacle that undermines the definition, even as a pragmatic, working compromise: Chazon's initial pool of evidence for analysis comprises large collections of Psalms, many of which, according to the given definition, should already be excluded from the discussion on the

basis that they do not in fact contain human communication directed towards God.[10]

Since 1994 Qumran scholarship has, of course, benefitted from a wealth of valuable research in the area of prayer and liturgy.[11] Nevertheless, it appears—according to Schuller's assessment in 2017 and upon consultation of a more recent survey—that the problem has not gone away. In the 2018 *T&T Clark Companion to the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Daniel Falk contributes an entry on liturgical texts (Falk 2018). Having acknowledged that there remains "little agreement on what is meant by 'liturgy' and hence what constitutes a 'liturgical text,'" he goes on to classify prayer as a "subset of liturgy," and in doing so *assumes the same definition for prayer that Chazon had used in 1994*, without further discussion (Falk 2018, 423). Prayer is described in passing as "human communication with the divine" (Falk 2018, 423). Falk, in fact, goes on to refine this definition by excluding private, spontaneous, and non-verbal prayer in order to distinguish prayer which is *liturgical* from prayer which is not (Falk 2018, 423).

When Chazon used this definition in 1994, she intended for it to be an *inclusive* definition, yet on closer investigation it turns out to be far more selective and exclusive than is apparent either in theory or in practice (Chazon 1994, 266–68). In defining liturgical prayer in 2018, Falk is narrowing the category a little further. The precise formulation of a definition of prayer is not Falk's focus, and its lack of attention does not detract from his valuable overview of the field, which includes a particularly helpful application of developments in ritual studies to the interpretation of liturgical texts (Falk 2018, 424–32). The point remains, however, that scholarly discussion of liturgical texts and

[10] Of course, other definitions have been offered, and in 1994 Nitzan also offered an apparently broad description of prayer as "a general term to designate all the types of poetry used in the worship of God" (Nitzan 1994, 4). This definition also fails to achieve its goal of universality, however. If, for instance, prayer designates types of poetry, can it not be expressed through prose? According to the definition, prose works would be necessarily excluded. Additional problems attend Nitzan's description, though limitations of space preclude further discussion here.

[11] See the bibliographies in Falk 2018 and Pajunen and Penner 2017 for a wide cross-section of research relating to prayer in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

functions continues to operate with the same inadequate definition of prayer that has been critiqued above.

Once a definition is settled upon, it dictates the terms of the categorization of texts—or at least should do so, if applied consistently. The results of a survey and analysis of prayer texts from Qumran, therefore, will be contingent upon the data-set that is established by the initial definition. Any conclusions about the character of prayer or prayer texts from Qumran are therefore shaped by that definition and subsequent categorization. Perhaps our implementation of the definition is not rigorous, or consistent, so that many texts which we instinctively consider to be prayer texts are included, even though they do not in fact satisfy the terms of our definition. We may in this way discover much useful information about prayer texts from Qumran, and this is precisely why so much valuable research has been produced despite the lack of a functional definition. But our findings can only take us so far—as we continue to seek greater understanding of liturgy and liturgical functions reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls, we inevitably encounter the limitations and lack of clarity bound up with our prior categorizations. How then do we proceed?

Definition of Prayer as Symptomatic of Wider Problems

Is the issue simply that after seventy years of Dead Sea Scrolls research, we still lack an adequate definition of "prayer"? My impression is that the problem is deeper than this. When we begin to scratch beneath the surface of our attempts at definition and categorization, we find that we appear to be seeking a taxonomy which cannot avoid distorting the evidence somewhat. Why is that so? Does the problem lie with the aim itself, with the terms of the search and the motivations that lie behind it? We feel the need to establish a taxonomy of boundaried definitions of genre and liturgical function in order to understand our material—but did the cultures that produced and used these texts in antiquity share that impulse? This is not a new question to be asked within Qumran scholarship, or in Psalms studies, and there have previously

been calls for categorizations that are more "emic"—that is, which aim to honour the language and thought-forms of the source culture rather than impose external or anachronistic taxonomies.[12]

These appeals have come from different angles, but concerning liturgical texts and functions specifically, in 1996 Schuller proffered the suggestion that replacing older form-critical categories with more "emic" terms (such as *tefillah*, *berakhah*, *mizmor*, *tehillah*, *shir*) might provide a constructive way forward.[13] She appears now to interpret the lack of uptake of this model as an indication that it is not the likely solution to the problem (Schuller 2017, 12). However, this kind of re-drawing of fundamental boundaries and categories represents something of a sea-change in approach and analysis, and implementing such foundational shifts in thinking is no easy task.

Problems in the definition and categorization of prayer texts are a small symptom of a much larger issue that is coming to the fore across the field of Qumran scholarship, to which Najman and Tigchelaar have explicitly drawn attention (Najman and Tigchelaar, 2014). Established classifications and terminology are demonstrated to be no longer compatible with advances in the field. An improved definition of "prayer" is both possible and desirable, but will offer a mere sticking plaster to a much broader and deeper *maladie*—that of the inadequacy of larger frameworks of categorization which rely on definitions that are too narrow and too rigid, and that have not proved to be functional. The process of constructing and re-ordering frameworks of thought is logically preceded by an uncomfortable initial process of interrogation and de-construction of existing categories and terminology.

If we need a definition to facilitate the task of analysis, how do we get to that definition, and where does it come from? How do we develop it and justify it? This is not clear in any of the literature I have discussed

[12] For relevant discussions, see: Brooke 2011; 2015; Najman and Tigchelaar 2014; Schuller1997.

[13] Schuller refers to making the suggestion at the first symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the proceedings of which were published in 1998, including her contribution: Schuller 1998b; 2017, 12. For further discussion concerning emic terminology, see also her comments in Schuller 1994, 160; and Brooke 2011; 2015; as well as Najman and Tigchelaar 2014.

above. Is the solution to observe the texts that *present themselves* as prayers or psalms, observe and describe their characteristics, and then allow that description to shape our definition of what constitutes a "prayer" or "psalm" in the late Second Temple Period? We may face the subsequent challenge that the literature we are dealing with does not itself employ terms in a consistent manner, or work with consistent definitions. "Emic" terms are not necessarily attached to particular classifications or genres in the ancient mind, and this may go some way to explaining why Eileen Schuller's suggestion to introduce emic terms for liturgical texts has not in fact been taken up, by herself or others.

Equally, it is possible that intertextual networks and shared characteristics might be observable from an historical distance, and may give rise to appropriate and illuminating descriptions of categories, despite the fact that they come from an essentially "etic" perspective. The issue of "emic" versus "etic" categories alone, therefore, is not likely to provide an easy solution to the problems of definition described above, and some further methodological reflection is therefore required. The fields of Qumran studies and biblical studies more widely have both sought to draw from genre theory in order to grapple with such methodological challenges, yet the impact has clearly not yet been sufficiently felt in the study of liturgical texts from Qumran. It is therefore appropriate to review some insights from genre theory that have proved fruitful in other areas, and consider how they might offer beneficial avenues for research into psalms and prayers found among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Applying Insights from Genre Theory: Function and Communication

Those scholars who have brought Dead Sea Scrolls research into conversation with genre theory are already offering ways beyond the kind of methodological impasse described above.[14] It is recognized that

[14] For representative examples see: Brooke 2013; Najman 2012; Newsom 2007; Zahn 2020; and *DSD* 17 (3) (2020), which focuses on genre analysis in particular recognition of John Collins' contribution in that area.

genre performs a function integral to the process of communication between producers and consumers of texts (Brooke 2013; Fishelov 1999, 57, 62; Najman 2012; Newsom 2010, 273–74; Zahn 2020, 56–57). According to this functional approach, genre signals the intentions and purposes of an author and shapes the expectations of a reader (Brooke 2013; Najman 2012; Zahn 2020, 56–57). In one sense, then, this understanding of genre as a communicative function cannot be etic, external, or inductive: it is seen as an inherent feature of written communication (Fishelov 1999, 57; Zahn 2020, 56–57). Genre, so conceived, is the product of a dynamic, dialectical process between author and reader in which the reader's subjectivity plays a key role in the perception of a genre category. The modern genre critic, however, also subjectively perceives and describes a category in order to generate a hypothesis as to how works would have been received in antiquity, thus introducing an additional dimension of reader-response into the process of genre formation.

Though the function of genre is seen as a communicative process inherent to the composition and reception of ancient texts, and is therefore in a sense "emic," it remains possible that genre dynamics might be observed from a historical distance even where ancient authors and readers were not consciously aware of them, and where they are not explicitly signalled. This "etic" dimension is legitimate in the sense that it aims to illuminate genre categories which functioned as an unconscious or implicit aspect of author–reader communication. The expectations and subjectivity of the reader are influential in the construction of a genre category both at the point of reception in antiquity, and also at the point of observation in contemporary scholarship. Understanding genre as a communicative function in this way suggests that the emic/etic contrast alone is not in fact at the heart of the problems described above, and solutions must be sought in other directions.

Fluidity of Categories

Though Zahn's focus is on texts that employ "rewriting," her reflections on the way that categories relate to one another address directly the problems outlined above concerning liturgical texts. As I have

argued through my critique of a specific definition of prayer, Zahn too acknowledges that problems exist not just with the labels that we use, but with "*thinking about* those categories in relationship to one another" (Zahn 2020, 56). If there is a key insight to be gleaned from her survey of genre theory, it is perhaps that "genres are flexible and dynamic" (Zahn 2020, 57). Like Najman's concept of drawing constellations on the basis of observing features of actual, existing texts—rather than possible texts which meet abstract criteria of qualification—the generic expectations of readers are based on "real texts, not theoretical ideals" (Najman 2012, 317–18; Zahn 2020, 57–58). In 2010, Brooke drew attention to this kind of flexible dynamism in a discussion of the "evolution" and "instability" of genres, pointing to the need to pay close attention to diachronic development (Brooke 2013, 126; see also Frow 2015, 147). He too observes, as with Najman's "constellations" model of categories, that "genres change every time a new text is added as an illustration of a particular genre" (Brooke 2013, 126; Najman 2012, 308, 317; Wright 2010, 292).

In 2007, Carol Newsom reflected concerning developments in the field, that "genre theorists have grown increasingly dissatisfied with an approach that defines genres by means of lists of features," because "definitional and classificatory approaches are now seen as not representing well the functions of genre in human communication" (Newsom 2007, 20).

A definition based on identifying key characteristics as necessary qualifying features of a category-member is not effective, in part because it is sometimes the differences between texts that indicate their intended genre (Sinding 2002, 3; Wright 2010, 291–92; Zahn 2020, 58). Furthermore, some categories defy definition on the basis of shared features at all, as notoriously difficult to define modern genres such as "novel" or "satire" illustrate (Sinding 2002, 3, 7–11; Snyder 1991, 1; Zahn 2020, 60–61). Though some genres endure with consistency over long periods of time, it must be acknowledged that genres frequently shift, change, develop, and give rise to new genres (Brooke 2013, 126–28; Frow 2015, 147; Sinding 2002, 5; Snyder 1991, 1; Zahn 2020, 57). This happens through a gradual intertextual process, as new works respond to existing texts and develop common features, yet also innovate, adapt,

and combine features from multiple genres (Sinding 2002, 5–12; Zahn 2020, 57–61). Every new work therefore subtly alters the character of an existing genre, and the drawing of a boundary around categories of texts which are fluid and shifting can only be achieved by subjective choices on the part of the observer (Najman 2012, 316; Wright 2010, 291–92; Zahn 2020, 59; 2021).

When applying these insights to the categorization of liturgical texts, it becomes yet clearer that a binary classification based on a feature-based definition is not appropriate to the task.

Even a brief review of engagement with genre theory highlights the problems associated with overly rigid tendencies when defining categories of liturgical texts (Newsom 2010, 272–73). For instance, what evidence is there that sectarians imagined the Hodayot or Barkhi Nafshi to inhabit a category of "non-canonical" psalms as opposed to the "canonical" MT 150? Would Psalms such as Psalm 154 (found in 11Q5) or those contained in 4Q380–381 have been perceived in terms of a recognizably different generic category to the Psalms that we know as Book I of the Masoretic corpus? These questions typify well-worn paths of debate in Qumran scholarship, yet dividing texts which clearly exhibit markers of generic relationship in this way effectively pre-judges multiple interpretative issues, and cannot help but shape and colour subsequent analysis.

Similar problems surface in the application of terms such as "poetry" and "prose" and in the identification of characteristics which supposedly render a text suitable or unsuitable for liturgical performance. Shem Miller has countered scholarly arguments that perceive the form of the Hodayot to be somehow un-poetic, vulgar in style, or unsuitable for singing, because they exhibit a form which appears irregular or prosaic in comparison with "biblical" poetry (Miller 2012, 191–252; Nitzan 1994, 322 [n. 4]). Miller argues that the Hodayot display a poetic style that should not be derided in comparison with "biblical" poetry, but recognized as poetry of a different order and character, nonetheless consciously developing traditions familiar to us in—for instance—the Masoretic book of Psalms (Miller 2012, 191–252). Applying Zahn's methodology, the Hodayot poetry can legitimately be seen as existing in some kind of generic relationship to the Masoretic Psalms, though

the nature of this relationship needs to be carefully analyzed and expressed. Categories that rigidly separate these works as of an entirely different generic grouping undermine the value and necessity of such analysis.

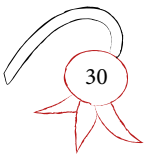
Genres are not always hierarchical (though hierarchical relationships may still occur), and thus do not always consist of "broader genres which encompass more narrowly defined ones" (Zahn 2020, 60).[15] Rather, they can relate in multiple ways which may be better imagined as overlapping circles, acknowledging membership of multiple categories at once (Zahn 2020, 60–61). To this point, I add the observation that the communicative interplay between authorial intentions and reader-subjectivity means there are multiple possibilities for envisioning and describing such relationships—the generic character of a given text need not be exclusively conceptualized in one way only (Zahn 2021). This means that for liturgical texts, a work might simultaneously be categorized as a prayer, a psalm, a poem, a hymn. In such cases, the particular descriptor or categorization applied would depend to a large extent upon the perspective and purposes of the reader or audience—the text might legitimately be grouped in a number of ways. Thus, a scholarly survey of "wisdom" literature might include some psalms, as would a scholarly survey of "prayer" texts. Similarly, a categorization of "psalms" would include and therefore overlap with those groupings of prayer and wisdom literature.

The categories are not exclusive, and indeed their definitions are not fixed and unmoving—rather, they describe *relationships* to other known texts, and a communicative function between author and reader, or between performer and audience (Frow 2015, 26). The real progress lies not in the separating of these texts into discrete conceptual boxes on the basis of tight definitions, but in the sophisticated analysis of their relationship to other known texts (Frow 2015, 26). Analysis of these relationships can shed light upon the communicative power and

[15] Brooke raises a number of questions about hierarchies of genres in Brooke 2013, 117, 120, 126, 128; and Sinding 2002, 3, 6–7, comments in passing on the shortcomings of hierarchical models.

function of the texts in question.[16] This model accounts for and draws insights on the basis of the creative and innovative elements of new works, rather than being troubled by the perceived blurring of previously defined boundaries and the possible absence of shared formal features which can be treated as diagnostic markers.

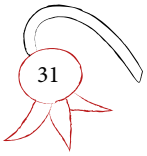
There is a particular need to move beyond using formal features as prescriptive criteria when it comes to identifying texts with a liturgical function. Falk has acknowledged that in the field of Dead Sea Scrolls Studies certain formal features have come to be recognized as key indicators of liturgical use (Falk 2018, 424; Newsom 2010, 277–78). These features include, according to Schuller's summary: relative shortness of prayers, "set formulae, particularly at the opening and conclusion," "rubrics or titles specifying when the prayers are to be recited," "a dialogical element implying two or more voices," formulation in the first-person plural, and content which is "communal and/or cosmological, (not individualistic or specific)" (Falk 2018, 424; Schuller 2003, 174). The reductive application of these criteria has rightly been criticized by both Falk and Miller (Falk 2018, 424; Miller 2018, 362). Falk notes their usefulness in a descriptive sense—as observable features of texts that were used liturgically—and consequently their usefulness as positive identifiers (Falk 2018, 424). They are ill-suited, however, to being used as indicators by which works can be *excluded* from a category of "liturgically performed" texts on the basis of their absence (Falk 2018, 424).



In addition, Falk comments that these formal markers fail to account for other types of text that likely functioned in some sense liturgically, such as the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, other poems and hymns that do not necessarily bear these specific features, tefillin, and "scriptural scrolls" (Falk 2018, 424). To these examples might be added such texts as the War Scroll, or the hymn represented in 1QS IX–XI. Falk also introduces two additional factors that should be taken into account when seeking to positively identify texts that functioned liturgically: firstly, "physical features of manuscripts" as "evidence

[16] Zahn elaborates on this communicative function: Zahn 2020, 61–63.

of special purposes," and secondly "whether the text corresponds to ritual practices otherwise attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls, or known for Jewish communities in the Second Temple Period or more broadly for voluntary associations in the Greco-Roman world" (Falk 2018, 424).[17] In the course of Miller's critique of the same methodological limitations, he suggests one further marker from internal evidence: "descriptions of communal praise and worship" (Miller 2018, 361).[18] Falk and Miller are thus looking beyond characteristics of literary form alone, introducing additional diagnostic factors of materiality, ritual features, and content. Should genre be determined on the basis of form, content, ritual function, or some other criteria? Whichever of these features are given priority, the problem of definition on the basis of a fixed set of markers remains. If Zahn and the genre theorists she draws



[17] Falk's own investigation of the material characteristics of prayer manuscripts leads him to the tentative identification of certain trends (Falk 2014, 80–82). He finds that "liturgical prose prayers are more commonly written on papyrus than any other genre of texts found at Qumran," and that "they are also the major category of texts written on opisthographs." These features are contrasted with the material characteristics of "scriptural manuscripts, which are rare on papyrus and never as opisthographs." Falk interprets the tendency towards more compact, papyrus copies as opposed to larger "*de luxe*" presentation as indicative of personal copies in contrast to either copies for ritual performance or "master copies." Mika Pajunen has a more recent survey of material aspects of prayer manuscripts which focuses on readability, and highlights the importance of this criterion for future studies (Pajunen 2020). There are evidently reasonable grounds for assuming that material characteristics can yield clues as to the function of manuscripts, even if such theories work "on the level of probabilities" and offer "no certainties" (Pajunen 2020, 68). The uncertainty of such conclusions should prompt us to always keep in mind that other functional explanations are possible. It should also, however, be acknowledged that any given material instantiation of a text may not have been restricted to a single functional purpose: even a single manuscript may have had several uses. Once again, it is more important to acknowledge complexity and breadth of possibility than to tie a specific material form to a single function. This also implies that any generic classification on the basis of function is only one possibility among a variety of potential categorizations.

[18] Ps 154:12, found in lines 10–11 of 11Q5 XVIII, is arguably an example of such a description.

upon are correct, then establishing a set of fixed distinctive features will not work for many genres and categories. It does not matter whether the category is defined on the basis of formal features or features of content: a static definition on the basis of shared features is insufficient in either case, and an alternative way to describe categories must be sought.

In the sense that they are looking beyond formal markers alone, then, Falk and Miller are operating with insights that have also been explicitly worked through in the field of genre studies (Frow 2015, 24–26; Sinding 2002, 2–3, 44 [n. 1]; Snyder 1991, 1). Falk is acknowledging the same problem previously addressed by Sinding, who comments that "some critics also despair of definition because of the supposed circularity of finding the features of a set then defining the set by these features" (Sinding 2002, 44 [n. 1]). Falk also follows Sinding's conclusion that despite this circularity, the identification of typical features indeed serves a purpose, if rightly conceptualized and applied (Sinding 2002, 44 [n. 1] Falk 2018, 424). As Zahn later highlights, Sinding upholds prototype theory as one potential means by which we can move beyond circularity, in that: "we learn from examples first, build up a cognitive model, and locate new instances in relation to the model" (Sinding 2002, 44 [n. 1]).

Beyond Definitions: Prototype Theory

The findings of genre theorists may render the thorny problem of definition (as exemplified in the discussion above) obsolete. Acknowledging the example of prototype theory as a means of moving beyond the circularity of rigid formal criteria, Sinding refers to a number of critics who regard definition as a tool inappropriate to the task of formulating genre.[19] Indeed, it would appear that prototype theory,

[19] Sinding 2002, 3, drawing on Dubrow 1982; Fowler 1982, 40–42; Hirsch 1967. Wright uses prototype theory to move beyond definitions when discussing "Wisdom" as a potential genre, and Hindy Najman also uses Wisdom as a case study for her "constellations" model; see Wright 2010, 291; Najman 2017.

when applied to the description of categories, renders feature-based, exclusive definitions inadequate and unsuitable to the task of categorization. The elucidation of prototypes may involve a diachronic account, which is the telling of a story concerning the origins and development of a category, beginning with the emergence of prototypical examples: "significant exemplars emerge, and then crucially *develop* through imitation, elaboration and revisioning" (Sinding 2002, 8; Frow 2015, 59–60).

Once prototypical examples of a category have been identified, therefore, other members (or potential members) of the category are identified in terms of their relationship to the prototypical examples.[20] This may be on the basis of shared features of form and content, but not necessarily. Aim, or function, may constitute the point of connection in the generic relationship, as with a literary category such as "satire," which can appear in a multiplicity of literary or media forms, and may consciously ape particular forms, such as the newspaper article, poem, or documentary film.[21] Importantly, then, genre cannot be identified on the basis of features of form, content, or function alone—it is the *relationship* between given texts that is determinative, and that relationship can be construed in multiple ways that are not restricted to form, content, or function alone (Fishelov 1999, 57, 62; Frow 2015, 24–26). A category can only be described satisfactorily in terms of that relationship, or rather in terms of multiple intertextual relationships. One way of giving shape and definition to a category described in terms of intertextual relationships is to identify prototypical examples, yet these are not identified merely in order to generate a list of required features for membership of the genre. The prototype or prototypes instead provide(s) a focus and starting point for an examination of intertextual relationships.

[20] See Sinding 2002, 5–11, and Zahn 2020, 65–66, for summary explanations of prototype theory with examples.

[21] Sinding 2002, 9–11, and Zahn 2020, 60, expand on the significance of satire as an example.

Another dynamic at play in the fluid processes of category development is the employment of "schematic oppositions", meaning that members of the category can relate to prototypical or other members precisely by consciously inverting characteristic features.[22] If this is the case, then there can be no static defining features of a category, as categorizing involves describing processes of development and innovation (Frow 2015, 141–47; Sinding 2002, 8–9; Snyder 1991, 1). Telling the history of a category and describing these processes of development becomes the only way to define the category. With this approach, diagnosing and listing key features cannot adequately or fully account for the relationship between members of a category.

It is true that there may be an "imitation" stage of a development process in which key features are consciously reproduced, and that even in the process of innovation, key features might occur in order to signal the norm from which a new example is deviating. However, categories may be formed by a variety of techniques which develop, play with, react to, and oppose key features, as well as blending them with features from other categories. The only way to define a category in such cases is to describe the nature of the relationships between members of the category, which may at times involve describing a diachronic process of development (Brooke 2013, 126). Even prototypical members may bear some but not all "definitive" features of the category, and may also inhabit multiple categories (Frow 2015, 26; Sinding 2002, 3, 8–9, 36; Snyder 1991, 1; Zahn 2020, 57–61, 65–66; 2021). By conceptualizing the definition of a genre as the description of a network of intertextual relationships, we move beyond the need for a fixed and determinative checklist of features that must be exhibited in order to qualify for membership of the group. While some genre categories may display the same consistent shared features over a long period of time, many genre categories will not.

Analysis of complex and varied intertextual relationships will therefore frequently be necessary for the formulation of a genre category. This observation is prompted by three key insights highlighted

[22] Sinding gives the example of the schematic opposition between romance and realism in the development of the novel: Sinding 2002, 8.

in our survey of genre theory: firstly, the communicative function of genre; secondly, the recognition that many genre categories are flexible and changing over time through innovation; and thirdly, the model of prototype theory.

Application to the Analysis of Texts

How might the insights drawn out above be applied in practical terms to the analysis of texts? The purpose of the present study has been to highlight multiple potential avenues beyond longstanding problems, and consequently no single method is suggested as a catch-all solution. While space does not permit the inclusion of a full case study here, the following preliminary analysis of a specific small network of textual relationships serves to illustrate some of the issues at hand.

Psalms 86, 89, and 4Q381 15

The manuscripts 4Q380–381 contain a number of psalms which probably originate from the Persian/Hellenistic period, and have been labelled as "non-canonical psalms" (Schuller 1986, 5–14). Fragment 15 of 4Q381 preserves a single psalm which is based upon a systematic re-use of material found in Psalms 86 and 89. Portions of these Psalms are substantially quoted as part of a new composition, with evidence of textual variation in comparison with MT and some re-arrangement of verse order (Schuller 1986, 35, 97–104). Lines 2 and 3 re-use material from vv. 16 and 17 of Psalm 86, and lines 4 to 7 re-use material from vv. 7, 8, 10–12, 14 and possibly v. 18 of Psalm 89 (Schuller 1986, 35, 97–104). In order to apply some of the theories explored above, the task of categorization must not begin through the lens of static definitions or form-critical assessments proposed in earlier biblical scholarship, but with a focus on the description of relationships between specific texts. 4Q381 15 offers an opportunity to explore the relationship between the composition attested therein and pre-existing literary material known to us through Psalms 86 and 89. What happens when we examine these relationships without recourse to definitions and categories which are

no longer viable, according to the arguments set forth above? In order to avoid approaching these texts through the lens of existing meta-catagories, it is necessary to begin with a "ground-up" approach which gives close attention to the material, textual and literary character of the manuscripts in question.

Material Comparisons

Psalms 86 and 89 are partially attested among the Dead Sea Scrolls in the manuscripts 1Q10 (Ps 86:5–8), 4Q87 (Ps 86:10–11, 20–22, 26–28, 31, 44–46, 50–53), and 4Q98g (Ps 89:20–27; Schuller 1986, 103).[23] An initial material comparison between these manuscripts and 4Q381 reveals variety and range across a number of features. In terms of palaeographical dating 4Q98g is the earliest, and being placed in the middle of the second century BCE is in fact one of the two oldest Psalms manuscripts discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls.[24] 4Q381 is dated in the first century BCE (Schuller places it around 75 BCE), and 1Q10 and 4Q87 are both dated around the middle of the first century CE (Flint 2000, 31, 34; Schuller 1998a, 88). Only Psalm 89 is preserved in 4Q98g, whereas 4Q381 contains at least twelve compositions, 1Q10 preserves parts of six psalms, and 4Q87 contains twenty extant psalms (Flint 2000, 31, 34–35; Schuller 1998a, 90).

The orthography of both 1Q10 and 4Q381 is towards the defective end of the spectrum, whereas 4Q87 uses an expanded orthography, and 4Q98g displays a number of highly unusual and possibly archaic features, apparently with some Aramaic influence (Flint 2000, 31, 34; Schuller 1986, 64; Skehan, Ulrich, and Flint 2000, 163–64). Information concerning size for each of these manuscripts is limited due to their fragmentary nature, though at least two comparisons can be made:

[23] Nomenclature for the manuscript containing Ps 89 reflected in the secondary literature is somewhat confusing—it has been variously referred to as 4Q236, 4QPs89, and 4QPs^{x}, and is listed in DJD XVI as 4QPs^{x}/4Q98g. I will follow the editors of the DJD volume and use the latter designation. See Skehan, Ulrich, and Flint 2000, 163.

[24] 4QPs^{a} (4Q83) is also dated to the mid-second century BCE. See Skehan, Ulrich, and Flint 2000, 163.

there is evidence that 4Q87 uses at times 25 and at times 26 lines per column (an inconsistency which is apparently unusual), and 4Q381 contained at least 16 lines per column (Schuller 1986, 61; Tov 2004, 94). In two lines, 4Q98g can be measured as allowing 22 and 31 letter spaces per line (Skehan, Ulrich, and Flint 2000, 163). For 4Q381 fragment 31, the column width is reconstructed as 15 cm, allowing for around 95 letter spaces, whereas in other fragments it is about 13.5 cm (around 65 letter spaces; Schuller 1998a, 87). 1Q10 contains both stichometric and prose formats, though the stichometric layout is reserved only for Psalm 119 (Tov 2004, 168–69). The other three manuscripts are all presented in prose format (Flint 2000, 34, 38).

The association of stichometric layouts with "biblical" as opposed to "non-biblical" psalms is misleading and unsustainable (Davis 2017, 170–71). 4Q380 also contains some stichographic layout, and Davis has shown that there is no consistent pattern or practice with regards to stichography among psalm scrolls (Davis 2017). Tov also acknowledges that a meaningful pattern is difficult to discern (Tov 2004, 169–70). The fact that both formats are used within the single manuscript of 1Q10 is a further indication that stichography should not be considered a major distinguishing factor between these four manuscripts.

Some of the fragments of 4Q87 indicate that a large writing block was used, which according to Tov's criteria might be indicative of a "*de luxe*" format (Tov 2004, 101–103). The indicative large upper margin is on the lower end of the spectrum though (at 2.7 cm), and therefore does not represent a vast difference compared to what might be viewed as average (Tov 2004, 103). Concerning methods for separating poetic compositions within a manuscript, two different approaches are evident within 4Q87. It leaves the remainder of the line blank at the end of a composition (known as an "open section") before Psalms 77, 104, 116, 130, and 146, and a gap in the middle of a line between compositions (a "closed section") before Psalm 126 (Tov 2004, 163–64). 4Q381 also uses more than one approach: on the one hand, it too uses an open section at times (line 3 of fragment 24 and line 4 of fragment 31), as part of an apparently consistent system involving entirely blank lines in places (Tov 2004, 163; Schuller 1986, 62). Where the previous composition ends before the half-way point of a line, the remainder of

line is left blank as an open section (24, l. 3; 31, l. 3; 76–77, l. 6; Schuller 1986, 62). Where the end point of a composition is beyond half-way in a line, the remainder of the line and an additional blank line are left before the beginning of a new composition (Schuller 1986, 62). Schuller comments that "this is similar to standard scribal practice for psalter texts and for other psalm-like collections" such as 4Q380, 1QH^{a} and *Barkhi Nafshi* (Schuller 1998a, 88).

4Q98g displays the most unusual features of material presentation of any of the manuscripts addressed here, and is indeed unusual even in the context of the entire corpus of Dead Sea Psalms scrolls (Skehan, Ulrich, and Flint 2000, 163–64). It appears to be very early in comparison with other psalms manuscripts, and uses a "highly unusual" and possibly archaic orthography which displays some Aramaic features (Flint 2000, 38; Skehan, Ulrich, and Flint 2000, 163). It contains letters squeezed together, endings of lines which crowd the left margin, supralinear words, non-final letters in final position, the unusual joining of a preposition to the following word, and cancellation dots above and below the letters of entire words (Flint 2000, 38; Skehan, Ulrich, and Flint 2000, 163–64). It is one of only six manuscripts among those found in the Judean Desert which Tov categorizes as displaying an "unclear orthography" (Tov 2004, 198). For these reasons, it has been variously characterized as a "practice page written from memory," a "source for the Psalter", and as "belonging to a libretto of messianic testimonia" (Skehan, Ulrich, and Flint 2000, 164; Tov 2004, 19).

Finally, it is important to observe that all of the manuscripts compared, though clearly reproducing the same poetic works, are at variance with the text of MT in multiple instances. Though these differences cannot be detailed here due to constraints of space, some general comments are offered in the brief literary and textual comparison that follows.

Literary and Textual Comparison

Of the two manuscripts that preserve more than one psalm known in the Masoretic Psalter (1Q10 and 4Q87), both arrangements of psalms are at variance with the canonical Psalter. For the third "biblical" manuscript considered here (4Q98g), the Psalm it preserves

is substantially re-arranged in terms of verse order vis-à-vis the MT (vv. 20–22, 26, 23, 27–28, 31; Skehan, Ulrich, and Flint 2000, 164). This variance is of a similar kind to the difference in arrangement of verses when comparing 4Q381 15, 4–10 with the MT of Psalm 89 (vv. 10–11, 12b, 14, 7, 18a[?] in 4Q381; Schuller 1986, 35, 96–97). Multiple textual differences of various kinds vis-à-vis the MT occur in all of these manuscripts, though between 1Q10, 4Q87 and 4Q98g, only one of these instances involves Psalms 86 or 89 (4Q87 6, 1; Flint 2000, 52–61). Flint lists three instances of variation versus MT in 1Q10, twenty-two in 4Q87, and twenty in 4Q98g (which he refers to as 4QPs89; Flint 2000, 52–61). Considering fragment 15 of 4Q381 alone, six of the eight verses reproduced from Psalms 86 and 89 contain text-critical differences vis-à-vis the MT (aside from the re-arrangement of verse order), and some of these contain several differences within a single verse (Schuller 1986, 35, 97–104).

Psalm 86 (LXX Ps 85) receives the superscription "prayer of David" (תפלה לדוד/Προσευχὴ τῷ Δαυιδ) in both MT and LXX. It maintains a voice of second-person address towards God throughout the Psalm, and as such is one of the minority of Masoretic Psalms which fulfils Chazon's definition of "prayer" unequivocally.[25] Psalm 89 (LXX Ps 88) carries the superscription *maskil* (משכיל) in MT, rendered as Συνέσεως in the LXX. Both attribute the Psalm to Ethan (or Αιθαν), who is identified as an Ezrahite in the MT and an Israelite in the LXX. Though mostly addressed directly to God in the second person, Psalm 89 displays some of the ambiguity of implied addressee which is identified as typical of Psalmic style in the discussion above (vv. 1, 6, 52). A superscription or title is not preserved for 4Q381 15, but the aspect of the psalm is also predominantly that of second-person address towards God. The psalm strikes a tone of praise more so than petition, in contrast to Psalm 86—indeed, it is only the re-production of material from Ps 86:16–17 at the beginning of the fragment which expresses supplication. This perspective may be somewhat skewed, however, due to the fact that materially there is no way of being certain as to what preceded the material preserved in fragment 15—we may

[25] See the discussion in the section "Defining Prayer" above.

have the beginning of a new composition, or alternatively more of Psalm 86 may have been included. Psalm 89, too, contains both supplicatory and laudatory material. It is also worth noting that Psalm 86 uses an explicit thanksgiving formula, אודך אדני אלהי ("I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God"), like that so characteristic of the Hodayot collection among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Psalm 89 contains what may be considered a liturgical postscript in v. 52, and 4Q381 15 also displays a liturgical turn at the end of the surviving fragment in line 9, by means of a phrase perhaps best translated as "we will call on Your name, my God" (כי בשמך אלהי נקרא; Schuller 1986, 103).

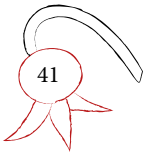
In literary and compositional terms, the psalm preserved in 4Q381 15 is primarily distinguished from the other texts and manuscripts examined here in that it combines material from two pre-existing psalms in a single poetic composition, and adds further material following the quoted portions of these psalms. The additional material following the quoted portions of Ps 89, however, is itself also largely made up of distinct phraseology familiar from other Masoretic Psalms (4Q381 15, 7–10; Schuller 97, 101–103). Certain other phrases, such as בן אמתך in 4Q381 15, 2/Ps 86:16 might reflect a biblical precedent suggesting the translation "son of Your handmaid" (Schuller 1986, 97). Alternatively, this usage might parallel a concept found in the Hodayot, which contrasts בני אמתו with בני רשעה and suggests the translation "son of Your truth" (Schuller 1986, 97). It is necessary, therefore, to consider the possibility that the web of textual relationships reflected here may well extend beyond 4Q381 and the canonical sources focused on here.

The analysis here has begun from a comparison of material, textual, and literary features. What then can we say about categorizations on the grounds of this comparison of three related psalms, attested in four manuscripts from among the Dead Sea Scrolls? There is no question that 4Q381 15 is related in literary and textual terms to Psalms 86 and 89. Can the three psalms be categorized as prayers? All contain some material which meet the narrow definition applied by Chazon and Falk.[26] Only Psalm 86 contains second-person address towards God

[26] See the discussion in the section "Defining Prayer" above.

exclusively, and also carries the title "prayer" in both the MT and LXX. Psalm 89 and 4Q381 15 can also be described as prayers, if we allow for the normal shifting patterns of implied addressee which are common rhetorical currency in canonical Psalms. Can these compositions be categorized as hymns? Perhaps not according to the strict application of form-critical method. The LXX of 2 Chr 7:6, however, uses ὕμνοι ("hymns") to refer in a general sense to the Psalms of David, following an earlier reference to "instruments of odes of the Lord" (ὀργάνοις ᾠδῶν κυρίου) . This Septuagintal usage surely offers a more "emic" perspective than the categories of form criticism, suggesting that from at least one ancient scribal perspective, Psalms 86 and 89 can both be classified as "hymns."

All three compositions are poetic in character, and all three can conceivably be described as "liturgical," though Psalm 89 and 4Q381 15 display at least some commonly accepted indicators of liturgical usage that are absent from Psalm 86. As might be expected when focusing on only three compositions and four ancient manuscripts which preserve them, there are no material, textual, or literary grounds here to suggest a clear division between "biblical/canonical" and "non-biblical/non-canonical" literature. Though 4Q381 appears to originate from a Persian/early Hellenistic context and depends upon Psalms 86 and 89 as sources, there is no evidence to justify an inference of discontinuity in essential terms along the lines of "authority," "canonicity," or "inspiration." The variety of scribal practices, material features, literary and textual features are not distributed across these four manuscripts according to any such pattern. The "biblical" manuscripts and the texts they carry vary between one another to the same degree that they vary with 4Q381, and all of these diverge significantly in comparison with the MT. The primary distinguishing feature of 4Q381 15 is the combination of material from more than one pre-existing psalm in the creation of a new psalm. Our discussion of these psalms therefore supports the assertion that psalms, prayers, hymns, and liturgical texts are overlapping categories, and are not satisfactorily defined in terms of the accepted definitions of prayer or form-critical classifications critiqued above.



How else can we go about categorizing these texts? Perhaps we cannot yet do so adequately, due to being at a point in Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship at which long-accepted categories are still in a stage of deconstruction, and processes of reconstruction are either in their very early stages or have not yet begun. According to the arguments set forth above in light of genre theories, best practice for the formation of categories involves the close examination of *relationships* between texts. This is best achieved by attending to material, textual and literary features without recourse to pre-existing meta-categories. In one sense, we begin to describe a new category simply by describing the relationship between two texts, or as in the illustration given above, the relationship between at least three texts. In doing so, we are arguably describing a "micro-category" in its own right. From the discussion of Psalms 86, 89, and 4Q381 15 it becomes apparent, however, that even when focusing on three specific texts, a wider network of textual relationships is quickly suggested. This occurs through further allusions to pre-existing psalms in the phraseology of 4Q381 15, other linguistic connections with collections of psalms such as the Hodayot, and shared approaches to scribal practices. Through such comparisons a network of textual relationships quickly emerges, forming a newly constituted category. The terms and boundaries of a category such as this are, indeed, subjectively chosen by the interpreter to a large extent. At the same time, however, the category refers to a network of literary relationships which objectively exist and are observable through the comparison of extant manuscripts.

Conclusions

This study has identified two persisting methodological problems in the treatment of liturgical texts found at Qumran: first of all, the inadequacy of feature-based definitions (exemplified by operative definitions of prayer), and secondly, the rigidity of categories organized according to shared formal characteristics. A survey of insights gleaned from genre theory and already being applied in other areas of Dead Sea Scrolls research not only confirms the inadequacy of these approaches, but demonstrates that there are a number of conceptual and methodological

alternatives to categorization which are more appropriate to the task.[27] The functional view of genre as a communicative process, the recognition that genre categories are fluid, changing and overlapping, and the particular insights of prototype theory have been presented as three approaches that both emphasize the shortcomings of existing methods and offer constructive conceptual frameworks which can move beyond them.

Following the lead of scholars such as Brooke, Newsom, Najman, Wright, and Zahn, the foregoing remarks demonstrate that the insights of genre studies provide vital conceptual tools that can enable Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship to move beyond a longstanding problem in the study of liturgical texts. This constitutes, in effect, not only an advertisement and plea for interdisciplinarity and ongoing methodological reflection, but more specifically, for a conscious change in approach for future studies of psalms and prayers found at Qumran. A desire for and adherence to feature-based definitions continues to hamper discussions of liturgical texts, as does the implicit acceptance of outdated classifications that are too rigid and have been formed on the basis of flawed methodological assumptions. Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship has already engaged richly with the field of genre studies, revealing that a range of theories offer beneficial avenues for future research. This impact has, however, not yet been adequately felt in the study and classification of liturgical texts.

As Newsom has argued, different genre theories may be appropriate to different research questions (Newsom 2010). Similarly, genre studies have not given rise to a single universally applicable theory, and, as Wright also acknowledges, it is neither necessary nor appropriate to advocate for one theory as a cure-all for the problems of a specific area of Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship (Wright 2010, 291–92). It is possible, however, to move beyond the current impasse evident in the definition of prayer and liturgical texts by demonstrating the inappropriateness and ineffectiveness of feature-based definitions and rigid,

[27] It should be noted that Zahn has begun to extend her discussion of "rewriting" in light of genre theory towards a "New Map of Second Temple Literature" more widely: Zahn 2021.

static categories, and by pointing to a selection of more appropriate approaches to classification that may be employed according to the needs of the particular task.

It has further been observed that the description of intertextual relationships lies at the heart of several of these methodological approaches, and is a more suitable tool to the task of constructing and describing genres than the formulation of features-based definitions or categorization founded on shared formal characteristics. Future studies of liturgical texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, whether focused or global, need to abandon long-accepted yet inadequate definitions, and need to embrace and employ new conceptual models of categorization. Though in some circumstances static definition and formal categories may be appropriate, this is rarely the case, and future research will benefit from models of categorization that are primarily based on the description of intertextual relationships and fluid, overlapping categories of genre. The example of intertextual relationships between 4Q381 15 and Psalms 86 and 89 illustrates that when such examinations begin with a focus on material, textual, and literary features without recourse to pre-existing meta-categories, extended networks of textual relationships quickly become apparent. These networks constitute categories which are both subjectively determined and objectively present, and are formed apart from recourse to static definitions and form-critical boundaries.

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