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Meer, M.N. van der; Postma F., Spronk K.

Citation

Meer, M. N. van der. (2002). A New Spirit in an Old Corpus? Text-Critical, Literary-Critical and Linguistic Observations regarding Ezekiel 36:16-38. In S. K. Postma F. (Ed.), *The New Things. Eschatology in Old Testament Prophecy. Festschrift for Henk Leene* (pp. 147-158). Maastricht: Shaker Publishing. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/13540>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

A NEW SPIRIT IN AN OLD CORPUS ?

Text-Critical, Literary-Critical and Linguistic Observations regarding Ezekiel 36:16-38¹

Michaël N. van der Meer

An important passage dealing with eschatology in Old Testament prophecy is Ezekiel 36:16-38.² It describes the reasons for Israel's Diaspora (36:16-19) and return to their land as rehabilitation of YHWH's sacred name (36:20-23), which will result into an inward transformation of the Israelite people (36:24-32) and outward restoration (36:33-36) and repopulation of the ruined cities (36:37-38). The self-contained sections 36:33-36 and 36:37-38 are generally held to be secondary appendices to 36:16-32, as evidenced by the new messenger formulas, the explicit links 'on the day that I cleanse you from all iniquities' (בַּיּוֹם טהָרִי 36:33) and 'even this' (עַד זֶה 36:37) and the change from second to third person in the designation of Israel in 36:37-38.³

¹ This study is dedicated to professor H. Leene, who introduced me in the field of the study of the Old Testament and supervised my MA thesis on Synchrony and Diachrony in Ezekiel 36:16-38. The present study is based on that thesis.

² See e.g. S. Herrmann, *Die prophetischen Heilserwartungen. Ursprung und Gestaltwandel* (BWANT 5), Stuttgart 1965, 271-273; C. Levin, *Die Verheißung des neuen Bundes in ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Zusammenhang ausgelegt* (FRLANT 137), Göttingen 1985, 209-214; H.G. Reventlow, 'The Eschatologization of the Prophetic Books: A Comparative Study', in: H.G. Reventlow (ed.), *Eschatology in the Bible and in Jewish and Christian Tradition* (JSOTSup 243), Sheffield 1987, 169-188. For a short survey of early Jewish and Christian interpretations of the passage, see G.A. Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel* (ICC), Edinburgh 1936, 390-393.

³ Thus, e.g., J. Herrmann, *Ezechiel übersetzt und erklärt* (KAT XI), Leipzig/Erlangen 1924, xxix; G. Hölscher, *Hesekiel, der Dichter und das Buch. Eine literar-kritische Untersuchung* (BZAW 39), Giessen 1924, 174; A. Bertholet, *Hesekiel* (HAT I/13), Tübingen 1936, 125-127; G.A. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 386; W. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel* (BKAT XIII/2), Neukirchen 1969, 872-873; J.W. Wevers, *Ezekiel* (NCB), London 1969, 271-272; H. Simian, *Die theologische Nachgeschichte der Prophetie EzechIELs. Form- und traditionskritische Untersuchung zu Ez 6; 35; 36* (FzB 14), Würzburg 1974; F.-L. Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen zu Komposition und Theologie des Ezechielbuches* (FzB 20), Würzburg 1977, 287-340; Levin, *Die Verheißung*, 210; L.C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48* (WBC 29), Waco 1990, 176-178; S. Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu. Zur Sicht der Zukunft Israels nach Ez 11,14-21; 20,1-44; 36,16-38; 37,1-14.15-28* (FzB 64), Würzburg 1991, 203-282; K.-F. Pohlmann, *Der*

The first section seems to conclude with the so-called ‘recognition formula’ in 36:23b α ‘The nations will know that I am the Lord, says the Lord God’, but a large segment follows with the important notions of a new heart and a new spirit (36:26). This section is introduced by the clause ‘when I sanctify myself to you before their eyes’ (36:23b β) which makes a link with the first clause of 36:23: ‘I am going to sanctify my holy name’, and is concluded by a repetition of 36:23a β (‘not because of you I am doing this’) in 36:32a α .

A special problem is posed by the absence of Ezekiel 36:23b β -38 in the oldest witness of the Greek translation of Ezekiel, papyrus 967, which also reflects a chapter sequence different from the received text: Ezekiel 36:1-23b α – Ezekiel 38-39 – Ezekiel 37 – Ezekiel 40-48. This manuscript dates from the late second or early third century CE and reflects the pre-hexaplaric Old Greek text of Ezekiel.⁴ The sixth century CE Old Latin codex Wirceburgensis supports this different and shorter version of Ezekiel.⁵ Already in 1903, H.St.J. Thackeray had demonstrated that the Greek text of Ezekiel 36:23b β -38 as attested by the younger Greek manuscripts, is the result of another translator than the surrounding translation unit (LXX Ezek β : Ezek 28-39),⁶ which make it clear that the section must have been missing

Prophet Hesekiel/Ezechiël, Kapitel 20-48 (ATD 22,2), Göttingen 2001, 482-491.

⁴ Papyrus 967 originally constituted a 236 pages codex with the Old Greek versions of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Esther. The first and final 18 pages, containing respectively LXX Ezek 1:1-11:25 and LXX Esth 8:7-10:11 have been lost. The remaining pages are divided over the libraries in Barcelona, Cologne, Princeton and Madrid; see F.G. Kenyon (ed.), *The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri. Descriptions and Texts of Twelve Manuscripts on Papyrus of the Greek Bible. Fasciculus VII: Ezekiel, Daniel, Esther*, London 1937; A.C. Johnson e.a. (ed.), *The John H. Scheide Biblical Papyri. Ezekiel* (Princeton University Studies in Papyrology 3), Princeton 1938; M. Fernández-Galiano, ‘Nuevas páginas del códice 967 del A.T. Griego (Ez 28,19-43,9) (PMatr.bibl.1)’, in: *Studia Papyrologica. Revista española de papirología* 10 (1971), 7-77; and P.L.G. Jahn (ed.), *Der griechische Text des Buches Ezechiël nach dem Kölner Teil des Papyrus 967* (Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen 15), Bonn 1972.

⁵ As demonstrated by P.-M. Bogaert, ‘Le témoignage de la Vetus Latina dans l’étude de la tradition des Septante Ezéchiel et Daniel dans le Papyrus 967’, *Bib* 59 (1978), 384-395; see further E. Ranke (ed.), *Par palimpsestorum Wirceburgensium antiquissimae Veteris Testamenti latinae fragmenta e codd. reascriptus*, Vindobonae 1871.

Another witness to the pre-hexaplaric Old Greek text might be the Coptic-Sahidic codex Bibliothecae Bodleianae Coptico-Sahidicus bombycinus edited by A. Erman, which contains Ezek 21:14-17; 28:1-19 and 36:16-23b α , see A. Erman, ‘Bruchstücke der oberägyptischen Uebersetzung des alten Testamentes’, in: *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften und der Georg August Universität zu Göttingen* 1880 (Nr. 12), 401-440. This manuscript, however, is a not a complete Bible text, but a lectionary. Therefore it is not possible to draw conclusions from this text.

⁶ H.St.J. Thackeray, ‘Notes and Studies. The Greek Translators of Ezekiel’, *JTS* 4 (1903), 398-411; see also H.St.J. Thackeray, *The Septuagint and Jewish Worship. A Study in Origins (The Schweich Lectures 1920)*, London 1921. Thackeray’s conclusions regarding the translation units in LXX Ezekiel have recently been re-

in the Greek text in a very early stage in the history of its transmission, if not right from the beginning.

One of the editors of the Princeton part of the codex, E.H. Kase, made the suggestion that the shorter and different Greek text reflected by papyrus 967 is not the result of a scribal error due to the *homoioteleuton* of 36:23bα (γνώσονται τὰ ἔθνη ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος) and 36:38 (καὶ γνώσονται ὅτι ἐγώ κύριος),⁷ but in fact reflects a Hebrew 'Vorlage' different from MT.⁸ A few years later in 1943, W.A. Irwin took the following step by stating that the 'cogent lines of evidence establishes conclusively that the passage was not in the Hebrew text at the time of its translation into Greek' and therefore makes it a 'late passage, as far as we know the latest in the Book of Ezekiel and probably in the entire Old Testament'.⁹

J. Lust further developed this thesis.¹⁰ He argues that the passage is too long to be overlooked by a scribe, which makes the *parablepsis* solution highly improbable. The different sequence of chapters in papyrus 967 and the codex Wirceburgensis also argue against a scribal error explanation. More important for the thesis that the passage reflects a late addition to the Hebrew text are his observations concerning the vocabulary of the passage, which contains a number expressions that are atypical of the book of Ezekiel, but occur relatively frequently in the (later strata of the) book of Jeremiah.¹¹ [1] In Ezekiel 36:28 the longer form of the first personal pronoun אַנְכִּי, whereas everywhere else in Ezekiel the shorter form אָנָּי occurs, while in Jeremiah the longer form occurs thirty-seven times (e.g. Jer 11:4; 24:7; 30:22, where the similar Deuteronomistic covenant formula occurs) along with fifty-four occurrences of the shorter form אָנָּי. [2] Likewise, the word for 'evil conduct', מַעַלְל, occurs in Ezekiel 36:31 as in Jeremiah (seventeen times), whereas everywhere else in Ezekiel the feminine form עַלְלָה occurs, which on its turn does not occur in Jeremiah. Another Jeremianic expression is [3] the image of building (בְּנָה) and planting (עַתָּה) in 36:36, which is generally held to be typical for the Deuteronomistic redaction of the book of Jeremiah, and recurs in Ezekiel only in the late section Ezekiel 28:25-26. [4] Another expression typical for

affirmed with some slight modification by L.J. McGregor, *The Greek Text of Ezekiel. An Examination of Its Homogeneity* (SBL-SCS 18), Atlanta 1985.

⁷ Thus F.V. Filson, 'The Omission of Ez 12:26-28 and 36:23b-38 in Codex 967', *JBL* 62 (1943), 27-32. Filson's view has been adopted by Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 273; B. Lang, *Ezechiel* (EdF 153), Darmstadt 1981, 31; and T. Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte im Ezechielbuch* (BZAW 180), Berlin/New York 1989, 446.

⁸ Johnson, *The John H. Scheide Biblical Papyri. Ezekiel*, 10.

⁹ W.A. Irwin, *The Problem of Ezekiel. An Inductive Study*, Chicago 1943, 62-65.

¹⁰ J. Lust, 'De samenhang van Ez 36-40. Theologische relevantie van het ontbreken van Ez 36,23c-38 in enkele handschriften', *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 20 (1980), 26-39; and J. Lust, 'Ezekiel 36-40 in the Oldest Greek Manuscript', *CBQ* 43 (1981), 517-533.

¹¹ Lust, 'Ezekiel 36-40', 521-524. Similar observations have been made by Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 873; Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen*, 308-328.

the Deuteronomistic strata of the historical books and Jeremiah is the phrase 'the land which I gave to your fathers'. Among the other unusual expressions are [5] the construction *חַחַת אֲשֶׁר*, 'instead of' (36:34), [6] the emphatic pronoun *הַלֹּז*, 'this' (36:35), which occurs only in post-biblical Hebrew, and [7] the construction *וְעָשֵׂיתִ אֶת אֲשֶׁר*, 'I will make that', which according to Cooke has its only parallel in Qohelet 3:14.¹²

According to Lust, these and some other somewhat less significant expressions point to the late secondary character of Ezekiel 36:23bβ-38 and to its literary dependence on the late (Deuteronomistic?) strata of the book of Jeremiah. The passage is based on related sections such as Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:22; 37:15-28.¹³ It was composed as a bridge between Ezekiel 36:16-23bα and Ezekiel 37, when the original and more logical order reflected by papyrus 967 and codex Wirceburgensis was altered towards its present form, probably by Pharisees who wanted to avoid an apocalyptic interpretation of the order of a battle at the end of time (בְּאַחֲרִית הַשָּׁנִים) Ezek 38:8) followed by the resurrection of the dead (Ezek 37:1-14), as found in the book of Daniel.¹⁴ Lust's views have been fully adopted and integrated into a larger redaction-historical model by K.-F. Pohlmann in his recent commentary on the book of Ezekiel.¹⁵

In this case, text-critical, literary-critical and linguistic observations seem to strengthen each other and would all lend support to the thesis that Ezekiel 36:23bβ-38 contains a literary expansion of the older text 36:16-23bα. Hence the eschatological concepts of the new heart and spirit would be extraneous ideas to the original composition of Ezekiel 36 and borrowed from the Deuteronomistic redaction of the book of Jeremiah. For these reasons, the passage is not important only for the study of the theme of Eschatology in the Old Testament, but also for the history of redaction of the book of Ezekiel, the relationship between the books of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, and the question of the relation between textual and literary criticism.¹⁶

¹² Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 395.

¹³ Lust, 'Ezekiel 36-40', 525-528.

¹⁴ Lust, 'Ezekiel 36-40', 529-533.

¹⁵ K.-F. Pohlmann, *Der Prophet Hesekiel/Ezechiel 1-19* (ATD 22,1), Göttingen 1996, 29-32; Pohlmann, *Ezechiel 20-48*, 482-491. See also his *Ezechielsstudien. Zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Buches und zur Frage nach den ältesten Texten* (BZAW 202), Berlin/New York 1992, 77-87, 122.

¹⁶ See, e.g., E. Tov, 'Recensional Differences between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint of Ezekiel', *ETL* 62 (1986), 89-101, reprinted in E. Tov, *The Greek and Hebrew Bible. Collected Essays on the Septuagint* (VTSup 72), Leiden 1999, 397-410; G. Dorival, M. Harl, O. Munnich, *La Bible grecque des Septante. Du judaïsme hellénistique au christianisme ancien*, Paris 1994, 181; J. Trebolle Barrera, *The Jewish Bible and the Christian Bible. An Introduction to the History of the Bible*, Leiden 1998, 397-381.

Nevertheless, several scholars have cast doubt on this thesis. W. Zimmerli already pointed out that without section 36:23b β -38 it remains unclear what YHWH is going to do for the sake of his name (36:22-23b α).¹⁷ Even more important is the observation made by M.V. Spottorno that the size of the missing passage equals one folio in the codex format attested by papyrus 967, which originally did not contain page numbers.¹⁸ Probably then, early in the history of transmission of the Old Greek text of Ezekiel, the original folio had been lost, due to frequent use or *parablepsis*, and the order of the other folios was confounded. S. Ohnesorge argues that it is hard to imagine that such an extensive addition to the text would have been made in such a late stage in the history of the book. Moreover, if the passage would date from the last centuries BCE, one would have expected to find more Aramaisms in it.¹⁹ Since – in his view – the passage 36:23b β -38 reflects no less than five literary accretions,²⁰ it is unlikely that this text forms a single literary addition. M. Greenberg, who sees no evidence for redactional activity in the book of Ezekiel altogether,²¹ adds to this that the oldest witness to the text of Ezekiel 36, the Ezekiel fragment from Masada dating to the first century CE,²² fully supports the present MT.²³ Therefore, from a text-critical point of view there are serious reasons to doubt the thesis held by Irwin, Lust and Pohlmann.

Yet, there still remains the problem of the distinctive vocabulary of the passage. For this reason, L. Allen reckons with ‘two separate phenomena, redactional amplification within the Hebrew text and coincidental omission of a wider block of material in the Greek tradition’.²⁴ It is the intention of this contribution that also from a linguistic and literary-critical point of view, there is no reason to regard the passage missing from papyrus 967, forms a later addition to the preceding text Ezekiel 36:16-23b α .

At this point it is useful to distinguish between two types of evidence regarding the allegedly late or atypical vocabulary of the passage Ezekiel

¹⁷ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 873.

¹⁸ M.V. Spottorno, ‘La omisión de Ez 36,23b-38 y la transposición de capítulos en el papiro 967’, *Emérita* 50 (1982), 93-98.

¹⁹ Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 203-207: ‘Exkurs: Das Fehlen von 36,23b α_2 -38 und die Umstellung der Kapitel 37 und 38f. im ältesten griechischen Textzeugen Papyrus 967.’

²⁰ Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 207-282.

²¹ M. Greenberg, ‘What Are Valid Criteria for Determining Inauthentic Matter in Ezekiel?’, in: J. Lust e.a. (ed.), *Ezekiel and His Book. Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation* (BETHL 74), Leuven 1986, 123-135.

²² Now published by S. Talmon (ed.), *Hebrew Fragments from Masada* (Masada: the Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963-1965: Final Reports VI), Jerusalem 1999, 59-75.

²³ M. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 22/2), New York 1997, 738-740.

²⁴ Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 177-178.

36:23bβ-38: several phrases would occur only in late or post-biblical writings (e.g., the pronoun **הלוּ** and the phrase **את אשר עשה**) and would thus be significant from a linguistic point of view while other expressions occur in older biblical writings but would express ideas atypical of the book of Ezekiel (e.g. the lexeme **מעל** and the combination of **בנה** and **נטע**) and thus require a literary-critical analysis.

An appropriate method for dealing with the linguistic data can be derived from the study of Mark Rooker.²⁵ He regards the language of the book of Ezekiel as a transitional stage between the early, pre-exilic biblical Hebrew attested by the books Genesis – II Kings and the Hebrew inscriptions from the pre-exilic period, and late, post-exilic Hebrew, attested by the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles, Esther, Daniel, the non-biblical Qumran scrolls, and the Mishna. The distinction between these two stages are made on the basis of linguistic contrast and linguistic distribution: for instance the contrast between the words for 'kingdom' in Samuel – Kings and **מלוכה** in Chronicles and the occurrence of the latter form in other late biblical Hebrew writings such as Daniel, Esther, and various non-biblical Qumran writings.²⁶ Although Rooker is only interested in the diachronic study of the Hebrew language not that of the book of Ezekiel, he provides an interesting example where his approach may prove to be useful to the study of the literary formation of Ezekiel as well as to the related question of the relation between textual and literary criticism. The dominant verbs for 'gathering' throughout the book of Ezekiel are **אסף** and **קבץ**,²⁷ which are the usual verbs in early biblical Hebrew compositions. The contrasting verb is the Aramaic verb **כונס**, which occurs for instance in Neh 12:44, 11QTemple 34:7, and replaces the verb **אסף** in Exod 3:16 in the Targum Onqelos version of that verse.²⁸ In the book of Ezekiel, the verb occurs twice (Ezek 22:21 and 39:28), both times in clauses that interrupt the logical sequence of the text and which are absent from LXX. The converging lines of independent linguistic and text-critical analysis make it plausible that the passages missing in LXX are indeed late additions to the Hebrew text.²⁹ With due caution the criteria of linguistic contrast and distribution might thus be

²⁵ M.F. Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition. The Language of the Book of Ezekiel* (JSOTS 90), Sheffield 1990.

²⁶ Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew*, 55-64.

²⁷ **קבץ**: Ezek 11:17; 16:37,37; 20:34,41; 22:19,20; 28:25; 29:5,13; 34:13; 36:24; 37:21; 38:8; 39:17,27. The related verb **זבך** occurs in Ezek 11:17; 24:4; 29:5; 38:12; 39:17. Because of the broad attestation of these verbs throughout the book, it is difficult to see why the formula of gathering (and return) does not belong to the original stratum of Ezekiel, as argued by J. Lust, "Gathering and Return" in *Jeremiah and Ezekiel*, in: P.-M. Bogaert (ed.), *Le livre de Jérémie. Le prophète et son milie, les oracles et leur transmission* (BETHL 54), Leuven 1981, 119-142.

²⁸ Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew*, 156-158.

²⁹ J. Lust, 'The Final Text and Textual Criticism. Ez 39,28', in: Lust, *Ezekiel and His Book*, 48-54.

fruitful for the assessment of diachronical questions within the book of Ezekiel.

A close examination of the alleged late biblical Hebrew expressions in Ezekiel 36:23b-38, however, does not support the secondary origin of the passage.

[1] Already the first example, the difference between the longer and shorter form of the first personal pronoun is a case in point. The shorter form **אני** is characteristic for late biblical Hebrew, whereas the longer form **אנכי** characterizes the early biblical Hebrew writings, as becomes evident by the substitution of the forms in I Sam 2:23 in MT (**אנכי**) and 4QSam^a (**אני**) and Isa 46:9 in MT and 1QIsa^a (**אנכי**).³⁰ The linguistic variation would have been a strong argument in favor of the secondary character of Ezekiel 36:23b-38, had the longer form been the dominant one in Ezekiel, and the shorter the sole exception attested in Ezekiel 36:28. The reverse, however, is the case, which would rather suggest that this passage is older than the remainder of the book. Yet, we also find throughout the early biblical Hebrew writings both forms used alternatingly, where the longer form expresses emphasis.³¹ The same applies to the occurrence of **אנכי** in Ezekiel 36:28, which underlines the distance between the shameful people and the transcendent Deity, who restores Israel's fate for the sake of his own name.

[2] Similar observations can be made with respect to the alleged late biblical Hebrew expression **את אשר עשית**, 'I will make that'. The alleged parallel text in Qohelet 3:14 has a different construction with the late biblical Hebrew relative pronoun **ש**-: **והאללים עשה שיראו מלפני: ש**, 'God has made it so that men should fear before him'. Whereas the relative pronoun **ש**- is found almost exclusively in late books of the Hebrew Bible,³² the construction used in Ezekiel 36:27 with **את אשר** as introduction to an object clause is common in Ezekiel (e.g., 5:9; 14:23) and early biblical compositions.³³ The reason why the verb **עשַׁה** in the sense of 'to make, to cause' has been employed as an auxiliary verb to **הָלַךְ** instead of the *Hiph'il* formation of that verb as in v. 12 (**וְהוֹלְכָתִי עֲלֵיכֶם אָדָם אֶת-עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל**) probably lies in the wish to emphasize the role of YHWH and his acts, hence the threefold use of this verb with YHWH as subject in the section Ezekiel 36:22-32 with the framing clause **אני עֲשָׂה** as inclusion (vv. 22,32).

[3] The fact that the expression **תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר**, 'instead of', is a *hapax legomenon* in the book of Ezekiel in 36:34, as Zimmerli and Lust have

³⁰ The longer form occurs also in Egyptian, Akkadian, Phoenician, Moabite and Ugaritic, see E.Y. Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, Jerusalem/Leiden 1982, 30; Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew*, 72-74.

³¹ F. Brown, S.R. Driver, C.A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Oxford 1906, 59.

³² So, e.g., P. Joüon – T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Subsidia biblica 14), Roma 1991, § 38.

³³ See, e.g., W. Gesenius – E. Kautzsch, A.E. Cowley, *Hebrew Grammar*, Oxford 1910, § 157c; Joüon – Muraoka, *Grammar*, § 157c.

pointed out,³⁴ is no indication of the secondary character of its literary context (Ezek 36:23bβ-38), since it occurs only thirteen times in the whole Hebrew Bible. Only in a few cases we are dealing with post-exilic (Isa 53:12) or late biblical Hebrew passages (II Chr 21:12), while in most other passages there is no clear evidence for a late post-exilic date (Num 25:13; Deut 21:14; 22:29; 28:47,62; I Sam 26:21; II Kgs 22:17 = II Chr 22:17; Jer 29:19; 50:7). The expression occurs in rabbinic literature only in biblical quotations. The same holds true for the sole occurrence in the non-biblical Qumran literature, where 11QTemple^a LXVI line 11 contains a quotation of Deuteronomy 22:29.

[4] The situation is somewhat different with respect to the demonstrative pronoun *הַלּוּ*, 'this' (36:35), which does not occur elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, but does occur with some frequency in rabbinic passages such as Mishna Yebamot 14, Tosefta Yebamoth 13; Talmud babli Yebamoth 18a; 79b; 109a; and Talmud yerushalmi Yebamoth 73b.³⁵ Yet, the male form of this demonstrative pronoun *הַלּוּ* and the common gender form *הַלּוּ* can be found in Gen 24:65; 37:19; Judg 6:20; I Sam 14:1; 17:26; II Kgs 4:25; 23:17; Zech 2:8 and Dan 8:16. Hence the corresponding female form *הַלּוּ* can not be held as an indication of the late date of composition of Ezekiel 36:23β-38. According to Gesenius – Kautzsch – Cowley the pronoun has a strengthened demonstrative force,³⁶ which corresponds well with the proleptic position of the phrase *הָאָרֶץ הַלּוּ* at the initial position of the clause. Full stress is thus placed on the land that was ruined (הַנֶּשֶׁמֶת Ezek 36:34b, 35a), but is now tilled (36:34a) and turned into a garden of Eden (36:35a).

More difficult to assess are the phrases that would be atypical of Ezekiel but would be characteristic of the Deuteronomistic stratum of the book of Jeremiah. As Lust rightly noted, the circumstance that a given passage contains a number of peculiarities and *hapax legomena* in itself is not extraordinary.³⁷ By the same token, one could ascribe intertextual relations between passages from Jeremiah and Ezekiel to mere circumstance or to the fact that the two textual corpora date from roughly the same (exilic) period. The fact that a given phrase occurs rarely in one corpus and regularly in another only becomes significant from a literary-critical point of view if the phrase expresses an idea that is distinctive of the main ideology of the first corpus but characteristic of the second. On the basis of this criterion numerous prose additions to the poetic sections of the book of Jeremiah can be labeled as Deuteronomistic as they reflect the distinctive vocabulary and ideology that characterizes the book of Deuteronomy and related sections in the historical books.³⁸

³⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 872-873; Lust, 'Ezekiel 36-40', 522.

³⁵ M.H. Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, Oxford 1927, 41-42.

³⁶ Gesenius – Kautzsch, *Hebrew Grammar*, § 34f. Cf. Joüon – Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, § 36b: 'a reinforced demonstrative'.

³⁷ Lust, 'Ezekiel 36-40', 521-522.

³⁸ See e.g. Herrmann, *Die prophetischen Heilserwartungen*, 162-204; and Herr-

[5] The word מַעַלְלָה seems to meet these conditions: Apart from Ezekiel 36:31 it does not occur in the book of Ezekiel while the female word עַלְלִיָּה occurs frequently in Ezekiel, notably in Ezekiel 36:17 and 36:19 and further in 14:22,23; 20:43,44; 21:29 and 24:14. The reverse situation occurs in the book of Jeremiah, where the female word עַלְלִיָּה is not attested, while the male form מַעַלְלָה occurs no less than seventeen times.³⁹ It should be noted, however, that this lexeme occurs both in Deuteronomistic and non-Deuteronomistic portions of Jeremiah (e.g. Jer 4:4,18; 17:10; 18:11; 21:12, 14), only once in Deuteronomy (28:20) and once in the Deuteronomistic portions of the Former Prophets (Judg 2:19). Therefore, the lexeme can not be held characteristic for Deuteronomistic phraseology and ideology.⁴⁰ One should further note that the contrast between the two lexemes is only one of gender. Similar variations between male and female lexemes without literary-critical significance or apparent difference in meaning occur in Ezekiel in the case of for instance the variation in the words קָרָא and קָרָה, and the male and female forms of the noun עַצְם. Furthermore, we find in Jeremiah 32:19 the corresponding noun עַלְלִיָּה, and in Ps 77:12-13 both מַעַלְלָה and עַלְלִיָּה. For these reasons no literary-critical weight can be attached to the occurrence of the word מַעַלְלָה in Ezekiel 36:31.

[6] The imagery of building (בָּנָה) and planting (נְטוּעָה) is characteristic of the Deuteronomistic redaction of Jeremiah.⁴¹ In Ezekiel this imagery occurs in Ezekiel 36:36 and 28:25-26, which is also generally considered to be a late addition to the oracle against Sidon (28:20-24) and conclusion of the section Ezekiel 25-28.⁴² These observations would imply that the two sections 28:25-26 and 36:(33-)36 are from the same late redactional hand. Yet, this corresponding late section Ezekiel 28:25-26 is fully attested by the Septuagint manuscript tradition including Papyrus 967,⁴³ which implies that textual and literary data do not overlap at this point.

Furthermore, the imagery does not express an idea or ideology that stands in contrast to the main corpus of the book. Similar passages are found in Ezekiel 34:25-27; 36:8; 41:7, passages that describe the fertility of the land and Ezekiel 36:10 where the clause וְהַרְבָּה תָּבִנְיָה offers a close parallel to Ezekiel 36:36. It should also be noted that not all passages in Jeremiah can be ascribed to the Deuteronomistic redaction of the book.

mann, *Jeremia*, 38-181.

³⁹ Jer 4:4,18; 7:3,5; 11:18; 17:10; 18:11; 21:12,14; 23:2,22; 25:5; 26:3,13; 32:19; 35:15; 44:12.

⁴⁰ Hence Thiel, *Deuteronomistische Redaktion*, does not mention the word in his section 'Die Sprache', 93-99.

⁴¹ Jer 1:10; 18:9; 24:6; 29:5,28; 31:28; 35:7; 42:10; 45:4; see further Herrmann, *Die prophetischen Heilserwartungen*, 162-169; Thiel, *Deuteronomistische Redaktion*, 98.

⁴² See, e.g., Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 321-322; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 695-696; Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen*, 327; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 98-99; Pohlmann, *Ezechiel Kap. 20-48*, 397-398.

⁴³ See Fernández-Galiano, 'Nuevas páginas del códice 967', 24-25.

Jeremiah 29:5, which offers a close parallel to Ezekiel 28:26, probably belongs to the pre-Deuteronomistic version of Jeremiah's letter to the exiles in Babylon.⁴⁴ The image also occurs in Amos 5:11

בָּתִי גּוֹיִת בְּנִיתָם וְלֹא-תָשְׁבוּ בָּם כְּרָמִי-חַמֵּד נְטָעָם וְלֹא תָשְׁטוּ אֶת-יִנְמָם
a passage which in all likelihood also predates the Deuteronomistic movement.⁴⁵

From a form-critical point of view it is important to observe that the verbs in the Deuteronomistic passages in Jeremiah 1:10; 18:9; 31:28 occur in infinitive clauses without objects (לְבָנָה וְלְנֶטֶעַ), which represents a highly stylized form of the image. Ezekiel 36:36, on the other hand, does not contain this stylized form but has two clauses with the objects *הַנְּהָרָסֹת* and *הַנְּשָׁמָה*. Whereas the verb *הָרַס* occurs several times in the deutero-jeremianic passages Jeremiah 1:10; 24:16; 31:28; 42:10; 45:4, the verb *שָׁמַם* never does so.

For these reasons it is questionable to consider the clauses in Ezekiel 36:36 as an indication of the literary dependence of Ezekiel 36:23b-38 on the Deuteronomistic redaction of Jeremiah.

[7] The last phrase that requires examination is that of YHWH's gift of the land to the patriarchs in Ezekiel 36:28 וַיְשַׁבְתֶּם בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְאַבְתֵיכֶם, which is an important theme in the theology of the Deuteronomists,⁴⁶ as pointed out by Hossfeld, Lust and Ohnesorge.⁴⁷ The combination of *אָרֶץ* or *אָדָם* followed by a relative clause with the verb *נָתַן* with YHWH as subject followed by *אָבֹות* as indirect object occurs some forty times in the Hebrew Bible, predominantly in the book of Deuteronomy (1:35; 4:1; 6:18,23; 8:1; 11:9,21; 19:8; 26:3,15; 28:11; 30:20; 31:7,20), further in the Deuteronomistic sections of Joshua (1:6; 5:6; 21:43), Judges (Judg 2:1),⁴⁸ Kings (I Kgs 8:34,40,48 = II Chr 6:26,31,38;⁴⁹ I Kgs 14:15;⁵⁰ and II Kgs 21:8), and

⁴⁴ Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 153ff; Thiel, *Deuteronomistische Redaktion*, 11-19; W. McKane, *Commentary on Jeremiah xxvi-lii*, 735-748, esp. 742; see further the survey of scholarly opinions in G.L. Keown, P.J. Scalise, T.G. Smothers, *Jeremiah* (WBC 27), Dallas 1995, 26-52, 64-65.

⁴⁵ H.W. Wolff, *Joel und Amos* (BKAT XIV/2), Neukirchen 1969, 271-276; J. Jeremias, *Der Prophet Amos übersetzt und erklärt* (ATD 24/2), Göttingen 1995, xix-xxii, 59-70. Other parallels are to be found in Deut 28:30 and Zeph 1:13.

⁴⁶ M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School*, Oxford 1972, 341-343.

⁴⁷ Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen*, 319-321; Lust, 'Ezekiel 36-40', 522; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 238.

⁴⁸ See M.N. van der Meer, *Formation and Reformulation. The Redaction of the Book of Joshua in the Light of the Oldest Textual Witnesses*, Leiden 2001, 117-121, 154, 258-264.

⁴⁹ M. Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien. Die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament*, Tübingen 1957, 5, 70.

⁵⁰ M. Noth, *Könige* (BKAT IX/1), Neukirchen 1968, 310.

Jeremiah (Jer 7:7; 11:5; 16:15; 24:10; 25:5; 30:3; 32:22; 35:15) as well as in Nehemiah 9:15,36.

Yet, this theme in Ezekiel 36:28 is not alien to or in contrast to the main themes of the book of Ezekiel. Similar expressions are found in Ezekiel 20:6,15,28,42; 37:25 and 47:14. Again, all these passages are fully attested by the ancient versions. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that in most of the Deuteronomistic passages YHWH's gift of the land to the patriarchs is presented as a divine promise expressed by the verb **עָבַשׁ** *Niph'al*.⁵¹ In the book of Ezekiel, especially in chapter 20, the fact that YHWH once gave the land to Israel's fathers and will do so again in the nearby future is never presented as a promise or present,⁵² but rather as the undeserved result of YHWH's care for his holy name (Ezek 20:5-9,40-44; 36:21-23,32).

The author of Ezekiel 36:16-32 may have taken up phrases and themes known from the Deuteronomistic literature, but apparently did so in his own manner and fully in accordance with the theology of the whole book. In this theology there is no place for a deliberate return of Israel towards YHWH and corresponding prophetic paraeneses (as is the case in for instance Deut 30; I Kgs 8; Jer 7). The imperatives in Ezekiel 36:16-38 do not urge the Israelites to return from their evil doings, but rather to be ashamed (Ezek 36:32). Likewise, YHWH does not act out of love or compassion for Israel (Jer 31), but for the sake of his own holy name.⁵³ As Zimmerli has pointed out, the name-theology in Ezekiel differs from that in the Deuteronomistic writings: in the latter passages, YHWH's name stands for the place where He can be worshipped, whereas in Ezekiel YHWH's name is associated with his properties, i.e., his land and his people.⁵⁴

CONCLUSION

The conclusion must be, then, that from a text-critical, literary-critical and linguistic point of view, there is no decisive evidence for regarding the eschatological passage Ezekiel 36:23b-38 as a late addition to the book of Ezekiel. The absence of the passage in the earliest recoverable stage of the transmission of the Greek version may be due to the loss of a folio. Textual and literary criticism do not overlap in this case. Ezekiel 36:16-32 may be a relatively late contribution to the Ezekielian corpus, and Ezekiel 36:33-36 and Ezekiel 36:37-38 may be even later appendices to that section, these passages still fit well into the overall theology of the book. Intertextual relations with the Deuteronomistic sections of the book of Jeremiah do not necessarily point to a literary dependence of the passage in Ezekiel from these deutero-jeremianic strata, but can also be explained *vice-versa* or

⁵¹ All the passages from Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges cited above and further Jer 11:5 and 32:22.

⁵² See also Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 443.

⁵³ Cf. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 877-880.

⁵⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 875.

alternatively as relatively independent formulations of expectations in the time of the exile.⁵⁵ The eschatological ideas expressed in Ezekiel 36:23-38 need therefore not be dated to a late post-exilic or even Maccabean period, but fit the exilic or early post-exilic period.

⁵⁵ Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte im Ezechielbuch*, 448.