The Qur'anic Talut (Saul) and the Rise of the Ancient Israelite Monarchy: An Intertextual Reading[1]

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Abstract

Using contemporary ideas of intertextuality, this study investigates the Qur'anic story of Talut (2:246-51), the first Israelite monarch, as it is set against the background of the Biblical account. A verse-by-verse analysis yields the Qur'anic sequence of events, which includes Talut's nomination, the Ark's appearance, crossing the river, Goliath's defeat, and David's succession. The Biblical counterparts, located within the books of Joshua, Judges, and I Samuel, feature such characters as Joshua, Gideon, Samuel, and Saul. The Qur'an is thereby reading the books of Joshua, Judges 6-8, I Samuel 1-7, and I Samuel 8-31 synoptically, and the Talut story is a harmonized account of these narratives. Reading between the two texts enhances the Qur'anic story, showing how it functions as a blueprint for the synoptic reading, in addition to furthering our understanding of Talut, who provides a typological prefiguration for Muhammad. However, the synoptic reading also enhances the Biblical story, showing the skill with which the multiple consecutive narratives implicitly argue for judgeship as opposed to kingship in the post-exilic context.

Introduction

The Bible and the Qur'an contain many stories featuring common characters, such as David, Goliath, and the first king of Israel, called Saul in the Bible and Talut in the Qur'an. Although there is some overlapping between the

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Biblical and Qur'anic accounts, they demonstrate profound differences that scholars have read in diverse ways, each often privileging their own tradition at the expense of the other. Whereas classical Muslim scholars tended to supplement the minimal Qur'anic accounts with details from the Bible and related literature,[2] their modern counterparts often dismiss the Biblical accounts as inaccurate or irrelevant.[3] On the other hand, nineteenth- and twentieth-century western scholars have conducted extensive comparative studies, explaining similarities as proof of borrowing and differences as the inadequacies of Muhammad's knowledge. This approach has often been termed *historical-critical*,[4] or, more recently, the *influence* paradigm.[5]

However, recent developments in literary theory have opened up new possibilities for reading the relationships between the texts, an undertaking that adds a new dialogic dimension,[6] often under the broad-ranging term *intertextuality*. This study, located within these new approaches, will point out some of the meanings gained by exploring the interactions between the two texts, meanings that cannot be accessed by viewing each text in isolation. The study will not cover all textual relations, however, since this is not possible within the confines of one paper; rather, it will focus on some of the ones associated with the first king of Israel.[7] In addition, it will provide a general idea of the kinds of intertextual relations, concentrating in particular on the synoptic character of the Talut account, indicating that it seems to be a harmonized reading of several Biblical books, beginning with Joshua and ending with the story of Saul in I Samuel.

Even though the term *intertextuality* has recently appeared in Qur'anic studies,[8] it is still somewhat murky.[9] Therefore, a brief glimpse of its use in the broader area of literary theory may prove useful. Since its introduction in the late 1960s,[10] it has come to describe a variety of distinct approaches, even influence theory,[11] although many scholars today clearly distinguish between influence and intertextuality.[12] The former is concerned with the notion of originality, which arose in the mid-eighteenth century and is characterized by a preoccupation with the figure of the author and the attempt to identify precursor texts.[13] The older texts are privileged as the influencing texts, and the more recent ones are read for these "influences," thereby locating power and intentionality in the older texts. In this paradigm, meaning lies with the author, and in order to discern it one must uncover what the author intended. On the other hand, more recent developments emphasize the reader's role, a change that has sometimes been referred to as "the death of the author."[14] The reader is now viewed as an active participant in the creation of meaning, a process that can involve his or her memory of other previously read texts.

Some literary theorists use this change of focus from author-oriented to reader-oriented approaches to explain the shift from influence to intertextuality.[15] Perhaps one of the most visible ways in which this difference comes to light is how intertextuality can defy historical time, since it is the reader's reading history that comes into play: if the reader has read the more recent text first, this text will shape the meaning of the second.[16] However, what seems to be most characteristic about intertexuality is the dialogic relationship that it assigns to texts and the concern with uncovering the layers of meaning between them. The premise of these readings is a view held by modern-day theorists: in order to discover meaning, one must unravel a text's relationship to preceding texts:

> Reading thus becomes a process of moving between texts. Meaning becomes something which exists between a text and all the other texts to which it refers and relates, moving out from the independent text to a network of textual relations.[17]

In light of these developments, applying ideas of intertextuality to the relationship between the Qur'an and the Bible can prove fruitful. However, prior to exploring this avenue, it behooves us to take a brief look at some of the relevant contemporary reader-oriented approaches to the Qur'an. Within these approaches, one should place Andrew Rippin's use of reception theory (reader response literary theory) and suggestion that the Qur'an is a reading of the Biblical text and to view it, among other things, as a response to the Bible along with Jewish and Christian responses.[18] Walid Saleh takes a similar approach in his treatment of Talut in the Qur'an, in which he shows the skill with which the story was adapted to its new historical context and the emerging theology.[19] In conversation with reception theory, the Qur'an is thereby framed as a seventh-century response to the Bible. The approach taken here is somewhat similar, but is centered on the contemporary reader who reads the Qur'an today, as opposed to Muhammad, who may have been exposed to the Bible in his own timeframe. Thus, the focus will be more on how the Qur'anic text reads the Bible in the mind of a contemporary reader who knows the Bible, as opposed to Muhammad, whose knowledge of the Bible is debatable.

Nonetheless, the Qur'an comes with a historical context known to the contemporary reader, as does the Bible. In the case of the Talut story, this historical setting is invoked in the reader's mind from the very beginning, since it starts with the address to Muhammad: "Have you not turned your vision to the elders of the Children of Israel?"[20] Thus, Saleh's approach reflects the text's self-grounding and acknowledgment of the existence of

the Talut story in some form or other within Muhammad's cultural milieu. His work is invaluable for this study, for it shows the mastery with which the story adapts and transforms Biblical ideas to fit the needs of its time. But literary artistry is not unique to the Qur'an, for it has also been identified in connection with the Bible.[21] Consequently, the intertextual space can also illuminate aspects of the Bible's literary mastery when viewed within its own historical context. Thus, even though this study will focus on the intertextual space from the contemporary reader's perspective, it will also touch upon each text's historical setting and compositional skill.

The above-mentioned address of "Have you not turned your vision" invokes more than Muhammad's historical context: it may actually be invoking the various intertexts that describe the rise of the first Israelite monarchy. It thereby moves the whole story into the intertextual space, encouraging it to be read together with the other texts. However, since there is no agreement among scholars on how to perform an intertextual reading, it becomes necessary to point out in greater detail what this reading will entail. In this study, unraveling the Talut story's relationship to its Biblical precursors will begin with the Qur'anic text on a verse-by-verse basis, thereby identifying some of its main components and pinpointing their Biblical counterparts. It will explore some of the textual interactions between them, which can revolve around certain motifs, such as the questioning motif, or can be in the form of allusions to certain characters or events. Chronological variations will also be investigated, identifying the Qur'anic sequence of events and reading the Biblical narratives according to the Qur'anic chronology. The resulting reading will then be used to enhance both the Qur'anic and the Biblical stories, showing how the layers of meaning between the texts can give them a new dimension, and to indicate some of the skill with which each composition conveys its message within its time frame.

Perhaps some introductory notes on the historical context of each text are in order. The story of King Saul is located in the book of I Samuel, which forms part of a larger history, the Genesis – II Kings account, also known as the Deuteronomistic history. Most scholars place the final redaction of the text, which shows evidence of modification during the transmission process, in the second temple period (539 BCE-70 CE). Barbara Green has presented a convincing reading of Saul's story as a riddle responding to the following theological question:

> When the exile community prepares to return to Judea from Babylon, once it is possible to do so (after 539 or so), shall the people return under the leadership of kings or not? In retrospect we can see that the answer is pretty clear: without kings.[22]

The text's main redactor is usually referred to as the Deuteronomist,[23] a single author, or more likely a close-knit group of scholars, who put together the Deuteronomistic history from pre-Exilic material. A main objective was to explain Israel's fate as due to its apostasy from the true worship of God and failure to uphold its end of the covenant. Of primary concern was to emphasize the legitimacy of the Davidic dynasty as opposed to Saul, thereby downplaying Saul and glorifying David.[24]

For the Qur'an, Saleh has drawn a compelling picture of the early Muslim community in Madinah, when the Talut verses were revealed. Muhammad and a small band of followers had fled the persecution in Makkah and were trying to establish a base in Madinah, from which they could launch attacks at their former city, in order to establish a new polity. Resistance took the form of apathy and lip service to the new faith, insofar as it required fighting: "The question asked by the Qur'an (from the mouth of Samuel addressing the Israelites) becomes very telling: Should fighting be imposed on you, will you then not fight?"[25]

Having briefly sketched the historical context, we will now turn to the six-verse Qur'anic story, which begins with the following verse:

> 246. Have you not turned your vision to the Chiefs of the Children of Israel after (the time of) Moses? They said to a Prophet (that was) among them: "Appoint for us a King, that we may fight in the cause of Allah." He said: "Is it not possible, if you were commanded to fight, that you will not fight?" They said: "How could we refuse to fight in the cause of Allah, seeing that we were turned out of our homes and our families?" But when they were commanded to fight, they turned back, except a small band among them. But Allah has full knowledge of those who do wrong.

The above verse recalls two Biblical parallels, Joshua 1:1 and I Samuel 8: the first because of its placement directly after Moses, and the second because of the similarities in events. However, the Bible portrays Joshua and Saul as chronologically far removed: Joshua is located directly after Moses, while there are several judge-type figures between Joshua and Saul, among them Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Abimelech, Tolah, Jair, Jephtah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson, Micah, and even Samuel. The Qur'anic placement of this episode after Moses is the first hint that the prospective king is to be identified with the Biblical Joshua. However, the second parallel contains many more similarities, indicating that the Qur'anic king-to-be may also be identified with the Biblical Saul. This could indicate that the Qur'an is reading the Biblical Joshua and Saul as one and the same person.

Some of the close parallels with I Samuel 8, which underline the iden-
tification with Saul, include the Israelite elders requesting their prophet to
appoint a king for them, his hesitation, and their insistence. In the verse
above, the elders give the reason for the request as "to fight in the cause of
God," which resonates with I Sam. 8:19-20, two verses of which seem to
enshrine ancient Hebrew poetry.

While the Qur'an seems to be alluding to the reason given in the second
verse, for the Deuteronomist the first reason, "so that we may be like all the
nations," was of primary concern and the real reason for the elders' request.
He does not present war as their purpose, but as one of kingship's disadvan-
tages (I Sam. 8:11-18).[26] However, as events unfold in the Biblical narrative,
a large part of Saul's activities are battles. For the purposes of the situation
in Madinah, emulating the surrounding nations was not an issue, but gather-
ing support for fighting them was.

The Qur'anic reading of war as the reason for having a king seems to be
echoed in the way Samuel attempts to dissuade the Israelites. He is portrayed
as explaining the king's rights, which consist of economic and physical bur-
dens largely associated with war, such as conscripting soldiers, making war
instruments, and providing supplies (I Sam. 8:11-18). On the other hand, the
Deuteronomistic focus on emulating the surrounding nations is supported by
the words of Yahweh, who is portrayed as interpreting their request as a rejec-
tion of their deity. There seems to be a discrepancy between what Yahweh
ordered Samuel to do and what he actually does, since Samuel failed to com-
municate to the people that Yahweh understood their request as an avenue of
potential covenant-breaking.[27] In the Qur'an, he similarly attempts to dis-
suade them, however, out of concern that they may not prove obedient to God
if they are commanded to fight. Reading between the texts brings out the
irony in this portrayal, since the Qur'anic prophet seems to fulfill what the
Biblical Samuel failed to do.

> 247. Their Prophet said to them: "Allah has appointed Talut as king over
> you." They said: "How can he exercise authority over us when we are bet-
> ter fitted than he to exercise authority, and he is not even gifted with wealth
> in abundance?" He said: "Allah has chosen him above you and has gifted
> him abundantly with knowledge and physique.[28] Allah grants His authority
> to whom He pleases. Allah is All-Embracing and knows all things."

This verse indicates that Talut is physically taller than his fellows, which
connects it to I Sam. 10:23, in which Saul is portrayed as being taller than all
the people.[29] The Arabian name seems to derive from the root *twl* (to be tall);
however, it is not Arabic in form[31] and has no etymological equivalent in the

Hebrew Bible. But it does appear in the poetry attributed to al-Samaw'al ibn `Adiya' (d. ca 560 CE), a northwest Arabian pre-Islamic Jew or Christian.[31]

There is a subtle interplay between the Arabian and Hebrew names, since the former name avoids the negative puns associated with the latter one. "Sha'ul" derives from the root *š'l* (to ask) and has been negatively compared to both David and Samuel. Whereas Samuel was asked of God (I Sam. 1:11), Saul was asked by the people (1 Sam. 8:5).[32] Moshe Garsiel also sees a contrast between Saul's association with *š'l* (to question) and Samuel's *šm`* (to listen, to obey).[33] There is also the contrast with David, to whom God gives answers, and Saul, whom the deity chooses to answer with silence (I Sam. 14:37 and 28:6).[34] The Qur'anic name for Saul circumvents these puns, while confirming his identification with Saul, who was taller than the people.

Yet there seems to be more to the questioning motif in the above verse. The Israelites are portrayed questioning the prophet's choice on the grounds that they are better suited for the job and Saul's lack of wealth. Their doubt is echoed in I Sam. 9:21, where Saul describes himself as coming from the smallest clan in the smallest Israelite tribe. But in the Bible, the Israelites accept him as Yahweh's chosen candidate, except for some worthless fellows (I Sam. 10:24-27). In both stories, the choice of candidate is questioned, the difference being by whom. Whereas in the Bible Saul is doing the questioning, in the Qur'an it is the Israelites. There seems to be a delicate interplay between the two texts centered on the questioning motif; in a way, the Qur'an returns the negative pun on Saul by portraying the Israelites as the ones doing the questioning.

In addition to the questioning motif, the texts seem to interact on the theme of knowledge, with which Talut is credited and that can refer to the divine knowledge a prophet receives from God.[35] The Book of Samuel also portrays Saul as a prophet (I Sam. 10:10ff, 11:6, and 19:23-24), but one whom the spirit of God eventually left (I Sam. 16:14). The question "Is Saul too among the prophets" is asked twice (I Sam. 10:12 and 19:24): the first in association with genuine prophetic activity, while the second gives it a kind of Janus-face.[36]

The Qur'anic verse, when read together with the Biblical verses, affirms Saul's prophetic capacity and subtly absolves him of the negative allusions contained in the Bible. In a way, Muhammad's role parallels that of the first Israelite king, since both were prophets and military leaders of their people. A negative portrayal of the monarch would not have helped consolidate Muhammad's authority and mobilize the early Muslim community to fight; in reality, it might have subtly undermined it. On the other hand, one of the Deuteronomist's primary concerns was to assert the legitimacy of the

Davidic dynasty, as opposed to Saul. Presenting Saul as somehow unworthy conveys this idea.

> 248. And (further) their prophet said to them: "The sign of his kingship is that there shall come to you the Ark of the Covenant, with (an assurance) therein of security from your Lord, and the relics left from the family of Moses and the family of Aaron, carried by angels. In this is a symbol for you, if you indeed have faith."

The above verse mentions the "sign of kingship," a miracle or divine sign indicating the deity's approval and constituting part of the kingship procedure. Diana Edelman, who has discussed the kingship procedure in connection with the Biblical Saul,[37] views it as a tripartite ritual consisting of nomination, a military feat in which the candidate proves himself, and coronation. While Samuel performed Saul's nomination (I Sam. 9-10:25), the military feat came in the form of the defense of Jabesh Gilead (I Sam. 11:1-13) and is followed by his coronation (I Sam. 11:14-15).

In the Qur'an, the kingship procedure also seems to be composed of three events. The first is Talut's nomination by the unnamed prophet (2:246-47). This is not followed by a military feat, however, but by a divine sign to allay the Israelites' doubts: the miraculous return of the Ark. The third part is the military feat, portrayed in the verses below (2:249-51). The Qur'an parallels the Biblical kingship procedure only in the nomination. Absent is the coronation, which was irrelevant to the early Muslim community, since Muhammad was never crowned king.[38] For the Deuteronomist, the coronation supports David's position and the hopes for the Davidic Messiah.

While the Qur'an seems to have replaced the Jabesh-Gilead incident with the Ark's return, the Bible associates the latter with another sequence of events, in which young Samuel is the hero and Saul seems entirely absent: the Ark narrative, which covers I Sam. 4:1b-7:2. The Philistines are portrayed as defeating the Israelites and capturing the Ark, but returning it due to the deity's intervention (I Sam. 4-6). They placed it in a cart pulled by oxen, which miraculously reached its destination (I Sam. 6:10-7:2). Its return heralded the turn of Israel's fortunes and its subsequent victories over the Philistines.

Saul's presence in connection with the Qur'anic Ark is noteworthy and indicates a chronological difference. Whereas in the Qur'an the king's nomination took place before the Ark's return, in the Bible it seems to have occurred decades after its return. Moreover, by associating Israel's king with the Ark, the Qur'an is alluding to a major role of the Biblical Ark narrative, a role with a military character. It seems to point to the Biblical Samuel's sub-

sequent victories over the Philistines (I Sam. 7:7-14), so that they would thereby be attributed to the king. Talut would then also be identified with the Samuel of I Sam. 1-7 and be placed at the forefront, a leader who combines the roles of both prophet and military commander, recalling the historical Muhammad.[39] On the other hand, the Deuteronomist, by portraying Samuel as a successful judge, serves two purposes: he is downplaying Saul's success and providing an argument in favor of judgeship as opposed to kingship.

The addition of Samuel to the Biblical personages identified as Talut seems to entangle the network of textual relations established so far. Whereas Joshua and Saul were distinct characters, making it possible to establish a clear link between them and Talut, the figure of Samuel is already intertwined in both the Qur'anic and the Biblical stories. Thus, the inevitable question becomes: Is the Biblical Samuel to be identified with the unnamed prophet in the first verse (2:246) or with Talut?

Recent scholarship can shed light on how to unravel this dilemma and can enhance the subtle interplay between this verse and the Biblical texts. Miller and Hayes have observed the composite nature of the Biblical Samuel:

> Actually three quite different Samuels emerge from the stories about him: there is Samuel the priest-prophet at Shiloh (I Sam. 1:1-4:1a); Samuel the local "seer" from the land of Zuph (I Sam. 9:1-10:16); and Samuel of Ramah, the last of the judges, the king maker and king rejecter (I Sam. 7:3-8:22; 10:17-25; etc.). This threefold picture of Samuel results, in our opinion, from the fact that Samuel has been introduced secondarily into stories and contexts that actually did not involve him originally.[40]

Thus, it is possible to distinguish several different Samuels in the Bible. It follows that the Qur'an's unnamed prophet may allude to the Samuel of I Sam. 8-28 (henceforth referred to as "Samuel the prophet"), while Talut may allude to the Samuel of I Sam. 1-7 (henceforth referred to as "Samuel the judge"), thereby distinguishing the textual relations between the Qur'anic characters and their Biblical counterparts. The Biblical narrative is thereby split into two stories: I Sam. 1-7, in which Samuel the judge is to be identified with Talut, and I Sam. 8-31, in which Samuel the prophet is to be identified with the Qur'an's unnamed prophet.

A further dimension can be added to the Qur'anic reading by some of the scholarly debates surrounding the Jabesh Gilead battle, which the Qur'an replaced with the Ark's return. Several scholars have pointed out the geographic difficulties associated with the historic placement of the Jabesh-Gilead battle in between Saul's nomination and coronation, since it would have required Saul to delve too far into Philistine-held territory and

thus expose his home base to attack.[41] They therefore relegate it to the end of Saul's reign and replace it either with the subsequent battle at Michmash (I Sam. 13:23) or with a battle at Gibeon.[42] The Qur'an seems to be subtly interacting with these various possibilities, choosing the Ark's return for its own sequence of events. It is thereby juxtaposing both Biblical narratives (I Sam. 1-7 and I Sam. 8-31), reading them in a chronologically parallel manner, as opposed to the consecutive events depicted in the Bible.

The parallel reading adds another dimension to the dialogue between the Qur'anic and Biblical narratives, since the juxtaposed Biblical texts interact with each other and thus produce yet another layer of textual connections. Since both Samuel the judge and the Biblical Saul are alluded to as one and the same character, this identification can initiate an exploration of the dialogic relationship between their respective narratives. One feature stands out: the accomplishments of the Biblical Saul and Samuel the judge seem to overlap, since both leaders fought and drove the Philistines out of Israelite lands (I Sam. 7:10-14, 13:1-14:52, 17:1-2, 18:20-30, and 19:8). This connection is now in a different layer, an intra-Biblical layer, a connection that is enhanced by the Qur'anic allusion.

Modern scholarship sheds light on yet another link between these two Biblical stories (I Sam. 1-7 and I Sam. 8-31), a link between Saul and the narrative of Samuel's birth and dedication at Shiloh (I Sam. 1:1-4:1a). Some scholars attribute this narrative to Saul, since they consider the explanation of the child's name (I Sam. 1:20) to be a better match for Saul than Samuel, and Saul is supported by the priests of Shiloh in his later career (I Sam. 14:3, 18).[43] Thus the Biblical Saul is linked to the birth narrative (I Sam. 1.1-4:1a), the Ark narrative (I Sam. 4:1b-7:2), and Samuel's further accomplishments (I Sam. 7:3-17), thereby spanning the whole of I Sam. 1-7. In light of the above, there seem to be two layers of literary interaction between the above Qur'anic verse and the Biblical text: a first layer in which the Qur'an interacts with the Biblical text, and a second layer in which the juxtaposed Biblical texts interact with each other.

> 249. When Talut set forth with the armies, he said: "Allah will test you at the river; if any drinks of its water, he goes not with my army; only those who taste not of it go with me; a mere sip of the hand is excused." But they all drank of it except a few. When they crossed the river – he and the faithful ones with him, they said: "This day we cannot cope with Goliath and his forces." But those who were convinced that they must meet Allah, said: "How often, by Allah's will, has a small force vanquished a big one? Allah is with those who steadfastly persevere."

This verse contains parallels with three Biblical characters: the previously identified Saul (I Sam. 14:24), Joshua (Josh. 1:2 and 11), and a new character named Gideon (Judg. 7:5-7). Gideon similarly tested his troops near the water; however, whereas he chose the ones who lapped the water like a dog, Talut chose the ones who did not drink, except for those who took a mere sip of the hand.[44] The verse also confirms the previously suggested identification of Talut with Joshua, since Joshua similarly crossed the Jordan river prior to his campaign (Josh. 1: 2 and 11). Thus, this verse alludes to two more identifications for Talut, enriching the layer of Qur'anic allusions. It also adds more layers of intra-Biblical interaction, since the texts associated with Joshua, Gideon, Samuel the judge, and Saul are also in conversation with one another.

Similar to the above, modern scholarship can enhance the Qur'anic parallel reading; some scholars have suggested that certain Joshua narratives may have originally featured Saul. For example, Miller and Hayes propose that some of Joshua's campaigns (Josh. 10:29-43) are a misplaced report of Saul's activities in southern Palestine.[45] Although we may never be able to separate fact from fiction, Miller and Hayes' connection indicates a textual relation that, in the realm of literature, enriches the two stories by furnishing them with a new dialogic dimension.

Parallels also exist between Saul and Gideon. For example, both led Israel to victory. However, it is unclear whether Gideon was formally crowned king or not, even though he seems to have ruled Israel. One of his sons, Abimelech, succeeded his father and was crowned king with the help of his mother's relatives (Judg. 9:1-6). Both Saul and Gideon's sons seem to have been killed by their successor, with the exception of one survivor (Judg. 9:5 and II Sam. 21:1-14, 4:4, and 9:1-14).

In light of the above, this verse adds two more narratives to the previous parallel reading, so that the number of juxtaposed Biblical texts becomes four: Joshua, Judg. 6-8, I Sam. 1-7, and I Sam. 8-31. When read in parallel, these narratives are in conversation with one another, forming multiple layers of secondary interaction in addition to the primary layers between the Qur'an and the Biblical narratives.

250. When they advanced to meet Goliath and his forces, they prayed: "Our Lord! Pour out constancy on us and make our steps firm. Help us against those who reject faith."

251. By Allah's will, they routed them and David slew Goliath. Allah gave him power and wisdom and taught him whatever (else) He willed. Did not

> Allah check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed
> be full of mischief. But Allah is full of bounty to all the worlds.

The above verse, which mentions the name of the chief enemy (Goliath), recalls I Sam. 17: 4-51, thereby enhancing the parallels between Talut and Saul. David's slaying of Goliath and his succession of Talut is further correspondence between Talut and Saul, since Saul is succeeded by David in II Samuel. The Qur'anic chronological boundaries for Talut and the parallel reading are thereby Moses and David. Thus, Talut covers the corresponding range between the Biblical Moses and David, which consists of the books of Joshua, Judges, and I Samuel, offering a parallel reading for them.[46] Since each of the four above-mentioned stories is a self-contained narrative and offers a general view of the whole of the first monarchy – when read in parallel, that is – it may also be termed a synoptic reading. They can perhaps be compared to the synoptic gospels, which similarly offer a general view of the life of Jesus. Whereas the compilers of the New Testament placed them side by side in a chronologically parallel manner, the Deuteronomist knitted his narratives together in a consecutive fashion.

In conclusion, reading the six Qur'anic verses composing the Talut story against the Bible's backdrop uncovered a network of textual relations between the two texts. This paper explored some of those relations, such as the interplay of puns centered on the questioning motif and allusions to Biblical personages and events. These allusions led to identifying Talut with four Biblical people (Joshua, Gideon, Samuel the judge, and Saul) and a chronologically parallel reading of the books of Joshua, Judges 6-8, I Samuel 1-7, and I Samuel 8-31. Since the narratives are self-contained and provide a general picture of each character's life, they may be termed *synoptic*, and the parallel reading is thereby a harmonized reading of these synoptic narratives. This reading led to the discovery of several layers of meaning between the two texts, a layer in which the Qur'an interacts with the Bible, and multiple layers in which the parallel Biblical texts interact with each other.

Within the literary framework, reading between texts enhanced the Qur'anic story, showing how it functions as a blueprint for the synoptic reading and enriching it with layers of allusions. In addition, the Biblical precursors further our understanding of Talut, who provides a typological prefiguration for Muhammad[47] by combining a prophetic and a military role. On the other hand, reading the two texts together enhanced the Biblical stories, since the synoptic reading adds a new dimension to intra-Biblical textual relations. It also forms a foil for the Deuteronomistic consecutive portrayal, showing the skill with which the multiple successive stories implicitly argue for judgeship, as opposed to kingship, in the post-exilic context.

This study focused on the texts' literary interaction, even though some of these interactions were deduced from the realm of historical scholarship, such as the work of Miller and Hayes. The Bible's literary and historiographical character has long been recognized, and it has been studied both as literature and as history, two approaches that vary extensively even within these disciplines. Literary approaches vary from Biblical criticism to studying the Bible's literary artistry and poetics, with occasional polarization between these two approaches. Historical approaches range from those who insist on the literal accuracy of all historical details to the minimalists, who reject the entire account, except for those parts supported by extra-Biblical sources. Thus, the texts have been engaged in various ways, and it is not unusual for studies from multifarious fields and disciplines to inform one another.

The question then becomes: what are the prospects of the synoptic reading outside of the purely literary domain? How well does it transfer into other fields, such as history, archaeology, or Biblical criticism? As history, the consecutive reading of Joshua – I Samuel has not fared well, in particular the book of Joshua, which many historians have discarded altogether. Archaeological evidence is often paramount for historical reconstruction, and there is little to support the Joshua account. For example, many of the sites associated with Joshua's conquest of the holy land do not seem to have been occupied, much less destroyed, in the Late Bronze Age (the period associated with his invasion).[48] These sites include Jericho, Ai, Gibeon, Arad, and Heshbon.[49] There is also a curious lack of reference to such battles in the extensive Egyptian records of the period, whereas the Egyptians maintained a strong military grip on the region.[50] The synoptic reading may offer new possibilities, since it could transpose the Joshua sequence of events to Saul's time in the early Iron Age, which may or may not fare better in terms of the required settlement patterns and destruction levels. However, the Iron I period has generated a great deal of scholarly interest and much debate, and so this transposition will require large-scale engagement with these various discourses.

The synoptic gospels are perhaps the closest parallel to the proposed synoptic reading of Joshua, Judges 6-8, I Samuel 1-7, and I Samuel 8-31. It is not inconceivable that a personage of Saul's stature may have generated multiple accounts of his life and deeds, just as Jesus did. The wider divergence in contents could be explained by the millennia or so separating these two historic personages: Saul's narratives may have had more time to grow and diverge before they were eventually written down and canonized. The oral character of ancient Israelite transmission has long been recognized and discussed, largely in connection with the double narratives[51] – Biblical accounts that display a closer textual resemblance – but also in connection with the Rabbinic Oral Torah.[52]

There may even be more than the four above-mentioned parallel read-
ings. Simcha Shalom Brooks has similarly drawn attention to the parallels
between the Biblical stories of Samson and Saul via Samuel's birth nar-
rative.[53] They not only seem to share a Nazirite birth, but also a similarly
heroic character. She suggests that the Biblical writer may have had the first
Israelite king in mind when he wrote down Samson's story. Thus, it is not
impossible that there were several Saul-inspired stories in circulation in the
Second Temple period, when the final redaction may have taken place.

Perhaps the greatest hurdle in the way of the synoptic reading is the name
variation, replete with diverging genealogies. However, Jesus is also credited
with two different genealogies (Matthew 1 and Luke 3) and Gideon with
another name (Jerubbaal [Judg. 7:1]), so this is not entirely unprecedented.
The names could also be descriptions or titles for the character: he could be
Joshua (God saves), Gideon (mighty warrior), Samuel (his name is God),[54]
and Saul (the requested one) at the same time. Talut, the Arabian name for
him, may be another such variation, since al-Samaw'al ibn `Adiya' could
have received it from a northwest Arabian Jewish textual or oral tradition.

On its own, the Qur'an is not generally regarded as a historical source,
at least not for ancient Israel. Thus, the Talut account has not fared well as
history. However, it may record ideas that were previously circulating in the
Madinan milieu at the time of revelation. Although the evidence is some-
what scanty, al-Samaw'al's poetry may shed some light on these ideas.
Below is a translation of the relevant verses[55]

> 14. The news of David's kingdom has reached me,
>   so that I have become glad and content.
> 15. And Solomon and the apostle Yahya (John),[56]
>   And Manasseh[57] and Joseph as if I were close by.
> 16. And the rest of the tribes, the tribes of Jacob,
>   the one who studied the Torah and the Ark.
> 17. And the waves splitting into two mountains before
>   Moses, and after that, the one who was declared king, the Talut.
> 18. And the one afflicted by the Ifris when he disobeyed Allah,
>   and when he afflicted Goliath at the same time.

Common elements with the Qur'anic verses include Moses, David,
Talut, Goliath, the Ark of the Covenant, and the placement of Talut after
Moses. Elements missing in the Qur'anic story include the apostle Yahya,
Manasseh, Joseph, and the Ifris. Although no direct dependency between the
poetry and the Qur'anic story can be discerned, there is a similarity.

There seem to be problems with verse 15: the name "Manasseh" may
actually be "Matta" (Matthew), thereby adding to the Christian character of

this verse.[58] Since most autobiographers identify al-Samaw'al as Jewish, Hirschberg considers the verse to be hopelessly corrupted, based on these Christian elements.[59] However, it is not unusual for al-Samaw'al to include some Christian elements in his poetry, since he had a Christian mother; the sources identify her provenance as the tribe of Ghassan, who were known to be Christian.[60] It is also not unexpected for the classical autobiographers of a patrilineal society to identify him as Jewish, even if he had Christian elements in his faith, since his father was Jewish.[61]

Ghawth has also questioned the attribution of these verses to al-Samaw'al on the basis of the absence of the name "Talut" from the Torah and its appearance only in the Qur'an.[62] If the poetry is indeed derived from the Qur'an, it could explain the similarities. However, the relationship between the two texts is not so easy to ascertain – it seems to be a case of "which came first, the chicken or the egg?" – the poetry could also have come first. The beginning of the Qur'anic account, "Have you not turned your vision," may refer to this material, indicating that it was already in circulation before the Talut verses appeared. If so, the Qur'an would thereby be in conversation with this material in addition to the Biblical texts. There may also be a connection between al-Samaw'al and the Jews of Madinah: some identify him as the brother of another poet, Sa`ya of the Banu Hadal, a Jewish tribe that lived with the well-known Banu Khuza`ah.[63] Sa`ya converted to Islam and became a well-known Companion.[64] Thus, the mere appearance of the name is not sufficient evidence to conclude that the verses stem from Islamic times and are therefore falsely attributed to al-Samaw'al.

Samad, who seems to have used stylistic criteria to classify the poetry into al-Samaw'al's poetry collection and what is falsely attributed to him, has placed these verses in the poetry section. However, even if a case could be made for some kind of historical recollection based on this poetry, it is inconclusive at best. Therefore, on its own, the Qur'anic story's historical import is somewhat unclear. But when read with the Bible, it gains significance in the form of the juxtaposed Biblical texts. Thus the synoptic reading may have prospects as an entrée into the world of history, archaeology, Biblical criticism, and other related fields and disciplines. The Qur'an could thereby engage and become engaged with their various tools, methods, and discourses, joining in the conversation with its Abrahamic scriptural precursors.

One other area where intertextuality may have prospects is in investigations of *nazm*, a concern with the Qur'an's style and organization, which covers everything from word choice and function within a sentence to the relationship between sentences, verses, passages, and even *surahs*. These investigations have a long history, beginning with al-Jahiz (d. 255/868 or 869),[65]

and are quite current today, as can be noted in the work of `Abd al-Muta`al al-Sa`idi[66] and Amin Ahsan Islahi.[67] Intertexuality can add a new dimension to word choice, as in "Talut," since it elucidates the interplay of puns. It also sheds light on the choice of ideas and their organization, showing how they lead, step-by-step, to the synoptic reading. In addition, it elucidates the concision of the Qur'anic *nazm*, which yet has immense implications for rereading the Bible. Although the Qur'anic narrative is minimal – it consists of only six verses – every verse is loaded with allusions, so that it is sufficient to indicate the synoptic reading. Thus, intertextuality makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the Qur'an's style and organization.

The discovery of the synoptic reading could perhaps encourage further investigations into the intertextual space located between the Qur'an and the Bible and the implication of the Qur'anic rereading of the Bible. The Qur'anic discourse's allusive quality has previously been recognized. For example, Wheeler has noted the pun in the choice of the Arabic *sami`na wa `asayna* (2:93: *we have heard and have disobeyed*), which interacts with the Hebrew `asinu (Deut. 5:27: *we do*, or even in this context *we obey*).[68] Wright has also pointed to the Qur'anic discourse's allusive quality and locates it within its initial context in Madinah, suggesting that it characterizes the prophetic project of the early Muslim community as one based on a robust religious pluralism and dialogic activity.[69] He points to the existence of Madinah's learned rabbinic elite, which would have enabled this process of intercultural translation. Last but not least, Angelika Neuwirth has recently presented a study of the textual connections between *Surat al-Rahman* and Psalms 104 and 136, showing how the *surah* rereads, appropriates, and attempts to surpass these popular psalms within the cultural milieu of the Qur'an's emergence.[70]

However, even though work on Qur'anic allusions is beginning, it is still minimal and the bulk remains to be investigated. If this study has conveyed that there is far more than influence in the space located between the two texts and the need to explore the implications of the Qur'anic allusions more fully, then it has served its purpose.

Endnotes

1.   A summary of this paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in San Diego, on 18 November 2007. An earlier version was presented at the Toronto Arabic Studies Colloquium, convened by Sebastian Günther, Toronto, 10 February 2006.
2.   See, for example, Muqatil ibn Sulayman (d. 150/767), *Tafsir Muqatil ibn Sulayman*, ed. `Abd Allah Mahmud Shihatah, 5 vols. (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-

Misriyyah al-`Ammah li al-Kitab, 1979); Abu Ja`far Muhammad ibn Jarir ibn Yazid al-Tabari (d. 310/923), *Jami` al-Bayan `an Ta'wil ay al-Qur'an*, ed. Mahmud Muhammad Shakir, 16 vols. (Cairo: Dar al-Ma`arif, 1954).

3. See, for example, Muhammad `Abduh (d. 1905), *Tafsir al-Manar*, 12 vols. (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-`Ammah li al-Kitab, 1990), 8 ff. See also Roberto Tottoli, *Biblical Prophets in the Qur'an and Muslim Literature* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2002), 175-88.

4. Gustav Weil seems to have been the first one to use that term in *Historisch-Kritische Einleitung in den Koran* (Bielefeld: Verlag von Belhagen & Klafing, 1844).

5. See, for example, Abraham Geiger, *Was hat Mohamed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?* (Bonn: 1833); 2d ed. (Leipzig: M. W. Kaufmann, 1902) and Heinrich Speyer, *Die Biblischen Erzählungen im Qoran* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1961).

6. The term *dialogic* is often associated with Mikhail Bakhtin's work. See his *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981). Scholars view Bakhtinian dialogism as the historical roots of *intertextuality*, since Julia Kristeva came up with the term in connection with her work on Bakhtin. See Patricia Tull, "Intertextuality and the Hebrew Scriptures," *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies,* no. 8 (2000): 68-73.

7. For a project that seeks to cover all of the parallel texts, see the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaft's Corpus Coranicum, directed by Prof. Dr. Angelika Neuwirth. www.bbaw.de/bbaw/Forschung/Forschungs-projekte/Coran/de/Startseite.

8. Brannon Wheeler has observed that the trend has shifted from the idea of "borrowing" to the idea of "intertextuality." Brannon Wheeler, *Moses in the Qur'an and Islamic Exegesis* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), 5f. Noteworthy is the collection of articles edited by John Reeves in *Bible and Qur'an: Essays in Scriptural Intertextuality* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003). Although the term is in the title, it rarely appears within the articles.

9. For example, the distinctions between *intertextuality*, *intra-textuality*, and *transtextuality* seem to vary. While Jane McAuliffe uses *transtextuality*, relying on Gérard Genette's definition of "*tout ce qui le met en relation, manifeste ou secrète, avec d'autres texts*," she notes that this definition is closer to the way she has been using *intertextual*. Jane McAuliffe, "Text and Textuality: Q. 3:7 as a Point of Intersection," *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'an*, ed. Issa Boullata (Richmond: Curzon, 2000), 67 and 74, n. 65. Gérard Genette, *Palimplsestes: la littérature au seconde degré* (Paris: Seuil, 1982), 7. Then again, McAuliffe uses *intra-textuality* to refer to relationships of texts located within the Qur'an (McAuliffe, "Texts", 58 ff.), for which Michael Sells, for example, uses *intertextuality* in "A Literary Approach to the Hymnic Suras of the Qur'an: Spirit, Gender and Aural Intertextuality," *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'an*, ed. Issa Boullata (Richmond:

Curzon, 2000). Asma Barlas also uses *intertextuality* in the *intra-textual* sense. See Asma Barlas, *"Believing Women" in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Inter- pretations of the Qur'an* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002).

10. Julia Kristeva is credited with using the term for the first time in her essay, "Bakhtine, le mot, le dialogue et le roman," *Critique* 33, no. 239 (1967): 438-65. See also Andrea Bernardelli, "Introduction: The Concept of Intertextuality Thirty Years On: 1967-1997," *Versus* 77-8 (1997): 3.

11. For an overview of the various approaches, see Graham Allen, *Intertextuality, The New Critical Idiom*, ed. John Drakkas (London: Routledge, 2000) and Bernardelli, "Introduction," 3-16 and 20-22.

12. Whereas Bernardelli does not consider Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influ- ence* to be an intertextual approach, Allen does. See Bernardelli, "Introduction," 11-12. See also Allen, *Intertextuality*, 133-41. Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973). Liter- ary theorist Linda Hutcheon excludes influence from her definition of *intertex- tuality*. See Linda Hutcheon, "Intertextuality," *International Encyclopedia of Communications,* vol. 2, ed. Erik Barnouw (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 349.

13. I am indebted to Tull's concise overview of influence theory in her previously mentioned article "Intertextuality and the Hebrew Scriptures," 66-68.

14. Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," *Aspen* (1967).

15. See, for example, Hutcheon, "Intertextuality," 349-50.

16. I am indebted to Hutcheon for this insight. Ibid., 349-51.

17. See Allen, *Intertextuality*, 1.

18. Andrew Rippin, "The Qur'an as Literature: Perils, Pitfalls, and Prospects," in *The Qur'an and Its Interpretive Tradition* (*Variorum Collected Studies Series CS715*) (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 44.

19. Walid Saleh, "King Saul (Talut) in the Qur'an and Post-Quranic Literature," in *Saul in Story and Tradition*, eds. Carl S. Ehrlich in cooperation with Marsha C. White, *Forschungen zum Alten Testament* 47 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, c2006), 261-83.

20. Translation of all Qur'anic passages in this paper by Yusuf `Ali, with minor modifications.

21. See Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981).

22. Barbara Green, *King Saul's Asking* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), xvi.

23. Recently, John Van Seters has argued that the Deuteronomist should be viewed as a historian, as opposed to a redactor. John Van Seters, "The Deuteronomist-Historian or Redactor? From Simon to the Present," in *Essays on Ancient Israel in Its Near Eastern Context: A Tribute to Nadav Na'aman*, eds. Yairah Amit, Ehud Ben Zvi, Israel Finkelstein, and Oded Lipschits (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 359-75.

24. See J. Maxwell Miller and John Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), 125. For the importance of Miller's

and Hayes' work, see V. Philips Long, "Historiography of the Old Testament," in *The Face of Old Testament Studies: A Survey of Contemporary Approaches*, eds. David W. Baker and Bill T. Arnold (Grand Rapids, MI: Apollos, Baker Books, 1999), 156-57. See also Simcha Shalom Brooks, *Saul and the Monarchy: A New Look* (Aldershot, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005). Basing her work on old and new evidence, both textual and material, Brooks considers the Biblical portrayal of Saul to be a negative distortion and presents a new and more positive view of him.

25.   Saleh, "King," 273-74.

26.   It is also not spelled out in the duties of kingship (Deut. 17:14-20).

27.   Compare also Diana Edelman, *King Saul in the Historiography of Judah* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 39-41 and 41, n.1.

28.   Yusuf `Ali has "bodily prowess" instead of "physique." I prefer the latter, because the Arabic *zadahu bastah fi ... al-jism* signifies an extension in body.

29.   "Extension in body" seems to indicate tallness. See note above.

30.   Abd al-Jawwad al-Tayyib, *Al-I`rab al-Kamil li-Āyat al-Qur'an al-Karim*, 15+ vols. (Cairo: Maktabat al-Adab, 1994), 2:253. Abu Hayyan Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Andalusi, *Tafsir al-Bahr al-Muhit*, eds. `Adil Ahmad Abd al-Mawjud and `Ali Ahmad Mu`awwad, 11 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al- `Ilmiyyah, 1993), 2:258.

31.   For the poetry, see Mukhtar al-Ghawth, *Al-Samaw'al: Akhbaruh wa al-Shi`r al-Mansub ilayh* ([Beirut], 1994), 128; Wadih al-Samad, *Diwan al-Samaw'al* (Beirut: Dar al-Jil, 1996 ), 87. Joachim Wilhelm Hirschberg, *Der Diwan des as-Samaw'al ibn `Adiya'* (W Krakowie: Nakl. Polskiej Akademji Umiejętnosci, 1931), 25. It is not entirely clear whether he was a Jew or Christian, and may have been a Nazarene or a Judaeo-Christian. See Samad, *Diwan*, 25-27, 87 n.1. The date of his death is not entirely clear, but is probably around 65 before *hijrah*/560 CE. See Samad, *Diwan*, 28.

32.   See, for example, Yairah Amit, "*Hû saûl leyhwh*, Unifying Allusion: Some Methods of Literary Editing," *Beit Mikra*, no. 27 (1981/82): 238-43. See also A. G. van Daalen, "Samuel and Saul," in *Unless Someone Guide Me* (Maastricht: Shaker, 2001), 115-27.

33.   Moshe Garsiel, "Word Play and Puns as a Rhetorical Device in the Book of Samuel," in *Puns and Pundits: World Play in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, ed. Scott B. Noegel (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2000), 181-204.

34.   See Kenneth M. Craig, Jr., "Rhetorical Aspects of Questions Answered with Silence in I Samuel 14:37 and 28:6," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, no. 56 (1994): 221-39.

35.   See, for example, Qur'an 2:120 and 145; 3:61; 12:22 and 68; 13:37; 18:65; 19:43; 21:74, 79; 27:15; 28:14; and 40:83.

36.   See Jan P. Fokkelman, "Saul and David: Crossed Fates," *Bible Review* 5, no. 3 (1989): 28.

37.   Diana Edelman, "Saul," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols. (Toronto: Doubleday, 1992), 5:993.

38. See Saleh, "King," 278-80. He suggests that Muhammad accepted Israelite kingship for the Israelites but rejected it as the model for the new community when grappling with the same fundamental question: "How does God reign?"

39. See the following verse (2:249), where the king combines both roles.

40. Miller and Hayes, *History*, 134.

41. Edelman, "Saul." Siegfried Kreuzer, "Saul Not Always at War: A New Perspective on the Rise of Kingship in Israel," in *Saul in Story and Tradition*, eds. Carl S. Ehrlich and Marsha C. White (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 40-41. Diana Edelman, "Saul's Rescue of Jabesh-Gilead (I Sam. 11:1-11): Sorting Story from History," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft,* no. 96 (1984): 195-209.

42. Ibid.

43. Miller and Hayes, *History*, 125-27. See also Simcha Shalom Brooks, "Saul and the Samson Narrative," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, no. 76 (1996): 19-25.

44. See Saleh's analysis of this episode in "King," 267-69.

45. Miller and Hayes, *History*, 138-39.

46. The Book of Judges contains the stories of several more characters in addition to Gideon. Whereas some could be also read in parallel, such as the Samson narrative below, others would need to be regarded as stories of northern heroism. Interestingly, the Islamicate *qisas al-anbiya'* literature seems to group them together with the Elisha and Elijah stories. See, for example, Muhammad ibn `Abd Allah al-Kisa'i, *Vita Prophetarum: ex codicibus, qui in Monaco, Bonna, Lugd. Batav. Lipsia et Gothana asservantur [Kitab qisas al-anbiya']*, ed. Isaac Eisenberg (Lugdini Batavorum: E. J. Brill, 1922-23), 243-50.

47. For more on typological prefiguration, see Michael Zwettler, "Mantic Manifesto: The Sura of 'the Poets' and the Qur'anic Foundation of Prophetic Authority," in *Poetry and Prophecy: The Beginnings of a Literary Tradition*, ed. James L. Kugel (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 75-119 (text), 205-31 (notes).

48. Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher, *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origins of Its Sacred Texts* (New York: Free Press, 2001), 81-83. Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible 10,000-586 B.C.E.* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 129-32. Miller and Hayes, *History*, 72.

49. Ibid.

50. Finkelstein, *The Bible Unearthed*, 76-79.

51. Aulikki Nahkola, *Double Narratives in the Old Testament: The Foundations of Method in Biblical Criticism*, ed. Otto Kaiser, *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 290* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), 23-54.

52. Harry Fox, "Written-Oral Links in the Dual Torah," Workshop on the Near East in Antiquity, convened by Sarianna Metso and Paul-Alain Beaulieu (Uni-

versity of Toronto: Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, 19 October 2007).

53. Brooks, "Saul and the Samson Narrative," 19-25.

54. The etymology of Samuel's name is somewhat unclear; it is a theophoric name composed of two components: *shmu* (name, his name) and *El* (God). Samuel's name could mean "His name is God," which could indicate "man of God." The derivation from *shama`* (to hear) is unlikely, since the `ayin* consonant is missing. Another possibility is suggested by the Arabian equivalent for Samuel, "Samaw'al," which seems to have the etymology "the eminence of God."

55. Translation mine, based on the Arabic text in Ghawth, *Al-Samaw'al*, 128.

56. Yahya is the Arabic form of John the Baptist, which occurs in Qur'an 3:39.

57. Samad has Matta (Matthew) instead of Manasseh, 87. Hirschberg also seems to read it as Matta (Hirschberg, *Der Diwan*, 25), as does Cheikho in Samad, *Diwan*, 26.

58. See note 57.

59. Hirschberg, *Der Diwan*, 25, note b.

60. Samad, *Diwan*, 19 and 24-25.

61. Ibid.,15-19.

62. Ghawth, *Al-Samaw'al*, 87-88.

63. See Samad, *Diwan*, 22-24 and 133-35. Ghawth, *Al-Samaw'al*, 82. Ghawth discredits the connection and proposes two different Samaw'als: a Madinan one and one from Tayma'.

64. See note 57.

65. `Amr ibn Bahr al-Jahiz, *Nazm al-Qur'an: Jam` wa Tawthiq wa Dirasah* (reconstructed), ed. Sa`d `Abd al-`Azim Muhammad (Cairo: Maktabat al-Zahra', 1995).

66. `Abd al-Muta`al Sa`idi, *Al-Nazm al-Fanni fi al-Qur'an* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Adab, 196-).

67. Mustansir Mir, *Coherence in the Qur'an: A Study of Islahi's Concept of Nazm in Tadabbur-i Qur'an* (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1986).

68. Wheeler, *Moses*, 1-3.

69. Peter Wright, "Modern Qur'anic Hermeneutics." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Diego, 19 November 2007.

70. Angelika Neuwirth, "Qur'anic Readings of the Psalms: A Comparative Literary Approach." Paper presented at the Toronto Arabic Studies Colloquium convened by Sebastian Günther, Toronto, 21 January 2008). See also Angelika Neuwirth, "'Oral Scriptures' in Contact: The Qur'anic Story of the Golden Calf and Its Biblical Subtext between Narrative, Cult and Inter-communal Debate," in *Self-Referentiality in the Qur'an*, ed. Stefan Wild, *Diskurse der Arabistik, herausgegeben von Hartmut Bobzin and Angelika Neuwirth*, band 11 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006).