

READING ECCLESIASTES INTERTEXTUALLY

Edited by

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and

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QOHELETH'S ISRAEL IN JEROME'S *COMMENTARIUS IN ECCLESIASTEN*

Jennie Grillo

At one point in his commentary on Ecclesiastes, Jerome offers in passing an image of how he sees the biblical writers' own intertextual relationships: commenting on Eccl 3:7, "a time to tear and a time to sew," Jerome writes,

there is a tearing away from the law so that the Gospels may be stitched together—which is what the separate evangelists have done, stitching together from the Law and the Prophets testimonies to the coming of the Lord.¹

This captures well the patchwork character of Jerome's Bible, and thus of Jerome's commentary-writing: he sees Scripture as a tapestry of joined threads, intricately inter-connected and taut with the pull of thousands of tiny tensions. But while the image hints at the delicate textual tracery performed by Jerome as he tugs on a particular thread, it also focuses for us the two most daunting problems in using Jerome as any kind of guide to the book of Ecclesiastes: Jerome is very often non-critical in his exegesis; and he is infamously anti-Jewish.

To the first difficulty, that Jerome's way of reading the Bible is not simply pre-critical but largely non-critical, I borrow a rationale given by Boyarin 1990 to explain his focus on another pre-modern, non-critical body of biblical interpretation, midrash. There, he asks, "What in the Bible's text might have motivated this gloss on this verse? Can I explain this text in such a way that this gloss makes sense as an interpretation of the verse?"² In the same way, I want to ask what in Ecclesiastes has prompted Jerome's reading; and if it is reasonable to believe that part of what a text *is* is what it *does*, then my aim is to understand Ecclesiastes better by seeing what that book has done to Jerome as a reader.

1. *Comm. Eccl.* 3:7 (PL 23:1089d). Unless otherwise specified, all translations are my own (with Luca Grillo); see now Goodrich and Miller 2012.

2. Boyarin 1990, ix.

The second issue, Jerome's anti-Judaism, is more intractable. While there may be ways that we can temper our reaction by understanding Jerome's rhetorical context (as Wilken has done with Cyril of Alexandria and Chrysostom,³ Fredriksen has done with Augustine,⁴ and Williams has done a little with Jerome, as I read her⁵), nevertheless, in the end Jerome's anti-Judaism has an irreducible core. The only excuse to be made for Jerome is that this is not all he had to say; but if what Jerome does say about Jews and Judaism made someone decide it was not worth knowing what he said about anything else, that would be reasonable. I have taken another course here, but I offer no comprehensive solution to dissipate the unease of reading an anti-Jewish Jerome, and reading him across the amplifications of the sixteen centuries which lie between us.⁶

1. *Jerome and Intertextuality*

With these difficulties granted, Jerome can be a suggestive guide to Ecclesiastes' intertextual relationships because intertextuality is what Jay (1985) has called the bone-structure of his commentaries; Jerome characteristically makes meaning in Scripture by citing other Scripture.⁷ In this, he nudges us towards a construal of intertextuality not as a "method" deployed by either author or interpreter, but simply as a sensibility saturated with antecedent speech. Stephen D. Moore and Yvonne Sherwood offer a well-placed critique of the disciplinary tendency within biblical studies to wrench intertextuality from a texture of discourse to a critical method, and their citation of Barthes is worth quoting in full for its aptness to describe the Bible Jerome reads and offers to his own readers: it is a text

woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages... antecedent or contemporary, which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony. The intertextual in which every text is held, it itself being the text-between of another text, is not to be confused with some

3. Wilken 1971, 1983.

4. Fredriksen 2008.

5. Williams 2006, 221–32; see also Kamesar 1994 for a background in the classical rhetoricians' disparagement of "historical" material such as Jerome borrowed from his Jewish sources.

6. For the indissoluble link between Jerome's anti-Jewish polemic and his knowledge and mediation of Jewish traditions, see Hennings 1992; Kedar-Kopfstein 1994. This finds its strongest analytical expression in the work of Andrew Jacobs, especially Jacobs 2004.

7. Jay 1985, 300–307, 142–47.

origin of the text: to try to find the ‘sources,’ the ‘influences’ of a work, is to fall in with the myth of filiation; the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet already read: they are quotations without inverted commas.⁸

Even Jerome’s “literal sense” is itself a richly intertextual sense: what is literal (*iuxta litteram* and many other terms) for Jerome is often interchangeable with what is historical (*secundum historiam*);⁹ and this historical sense is most often created by strategies of intertextuality. For Jerome, giving the historical sense means setting the biblical text within the sacred history it refers to, using biblical texts or Jewish traditions;¹⁰ so, in Jerome’s reading of Ecclesiastes, the Solomonic fiction becomes the anchor for the whole book and generates numerous relationships with the biblical Solomon story in much the same way that the Targum will read the book.¹¹ Jay (1985), writing on Jerome’s Isaiah commentary, notes that this intertextual habit presupposes a shared field of associations between Jerome and his readers, or the free play of a memory soaked in Scripture;¹² a practice like this is particularly fruitful for a book so literary and so late in the biblical corpus as Ecclesiastes, because what is true between Jerome and his readers is perhaps also especially true between Qoheleth and *his* readers in a way that was only beginning to become possible in the Hellenistic period. A shared biblical echo-chamber allows the writer of Ecclesiastes to make meaning intertextually by his echoes of earlier texts held in common; Jerome, similarly appealing to a shared pool of textual tradition, offers a reading which catches something of the patchwork character of Qoheleth’s biblical pastiche.

I will sample Jerome’s intertextual reading of Ecclesiastes by looking at particular ways Jerome speaks of Qoheleth’s Israel. This is not to attempt a full survey of each way that Jerome uses the term “Israel”: much of this usage is not unique either to Jerome among early Christian

8. Moore and Sherwood 2011, 33–35, citing Barthes 1987, 160.

9. See Duval 1985, 52–55; Jay 1985, 132–35.

10. Duval (1985, 68) locates this technique within a classical tradition of commentary-writing, whereby the whole history of Rome flashes past in the commentary of Servius on the Aeneid just as the history of Israel does in Jerome’s commentaries on the prophets.

11. E.g. on Eccl 2:18–19, “He does seem to be reconsidering wealth and riches: since, according to the Gospel, we die suddenly—snatched away by death—we never know what kind of heir we will have, and whether the one who will enjoy our labor is a fool or a wise man. And this happened to Salomon as well, for he had a son, Roboam, much unlike himself. From this it is clear that not even a son is worthy of his father’s legacy, if he is foolish” (PL 23:1084a); cf. Targum Qohelet *ad loc.*

12. Jay 1985, 304.

authors or to this commentary among his many exegetical writings. I concentrate here on two ways Jerome speaks of Israel which are particularly constructed out of intertextual connections with other Hebrew Bible texts, and which therefore allow Jerome as an adventurously intertextual reader to place Ecclesiastes within the biblical tradition for us in ways which illuminate the book's own wide intertextual web of relationships.¹³ Those two ways of speaking about Israel are Jerome's treatment of landscape and of cities.

2. Landscape

Andrew Jacobs has rather devastatingly captured Jerome's pose as the expert guide to the Holy Land, along with its ideological underpinnings of "academic imperialism," or knowledge as a form of appropriation and domination in the service of the Christian colonial project in Roman Palestine.¹⁴ And of course Jerome's invention of himself as an embedded correspondent from the Bible lands served personal ambitions as well as colonial ones: as the "man on the spot," Jerome could offer superior instruction to readers on the basis of his unrivalled eyewitness experience of the background to the Bible. In a frequently quoted piece of promotional prose, Jerome writes: "Just as Greek histories are better understood by those who have seen Athens, and the third book of Virgil by those who have sailed from Troy...so, too, will he gaze with greater clarity upon Holy Scripture who has contemplated Judaea with his own eyes, and come to know the memorials of ancient cities."¹⁵ But when we superimpose this template of the Jerome "who has contemplated Judaea with his own eyes" onto the book of Ecclesiastes, the result is a rather exact correspondence between the central figures of the two works: in the commentary, Jerome's insistence on his own eye-witness is very like the portrait of the all-seeing king in Ecclesiastes. The rhetorical construction of Jerome as ancient documentary-maker in Roman Palestine draws our attention to the no less constructed figure of the Solomon-like King Qoheleth, reporting on biblical Israel from the evidence of his own eyes.

13. In tracing a concept such as "Israel" across the whole of a single commentary, I am working within the framework established by Kamesar (1993), who sees Jerome as more than simply a haphazard compiler of eclectic borrowings. In the words of Kraus (1999–2000, 188), "Although Jerome does lay various opinions before the judicious reader, he also articulates a conceptual unity mediated through his own judgements"; see also Jay 1985, e.g. 13–14, 72–72. The approach to a single commentary as a discursive whole is exemplified by studies such as Rousseau 2009.

14. Jacobs 2004, especially 56–60, 67–100.

15. *Praef. Par. (LXX)* (PL 29:423a), as translated in Jacobs 2004, 67.

It is well established that the book of Ecclesiastes is above all the story of Qoheleth's seeing: Michael Fox has made perhaps the clearest case that the cumulative insistence of reported observation in the book makes it in essence a record of wisdom gained by the unflinching observation of the naked eye.¹⁶ In this insistence on eyewitness, the grandiose king setting up his establishment in the heart of Israel and at the narrative centre of the book of Ecclesiastes strikes a similar figure to the Jerome whom we meet in the *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten*.

What is important for the purposes of the present study is that this seeing in Jerome is done intertextually: the Holy Land which he reports on is filtered through the Bible, and especially the Old Testament, as his guidebook.¹⁷ Jacobs writes of the weight of the biblical past with which Jerome invests the sights and sounds of the environment around his monastery in Bethlehem, quoting from a letter to Marcella back in Rome: "Wherever you turn, the farmer at his plough keeps chanting 'Alleluia!' The sweaty harvester distracts himself with Psalms, and the vine-dresser pruning the vine with his curved hook sings any of David's songs."¹⁸ We find a good example of Jerome's biblical way of seeing in the middle of his otherwise allegorical interpretation of Qoheleth's royal boast over the court he built for himself in Jerusalem (2:4–10). In the midst of his spiritual explanation, Jerome stops and turns away from allegory to a piece of Palestinian topography. At Eccl 2:6, the text has "I made myself pools of water, to irrigate from them a forest shooting up trees," which Jerome glosses this way:

The trees of forests and woods, which produce no crop and bear no fruit, are fed neither by rain from heaven nor by waters from above, but by those waters which collect in pools from streams. Now, flat and low-lying Egypt, like a garden, is irrigated by surface waters flowing from Ethiopia; but the promised land, which is mountainous and elevated, waits for early and late rain from the sky.¹⁹

Why this geographical interruption in a chain of spiritual interpretation? I suggest that Jerome is solving a perceived problem of inner-biblical harmonization, to bring the Israel of the book of Ecclesiastes into line with the larger textual picture of biblical Israel.²⁰ Qoheleth's mention of

16. Fox 1989, 100 and 1999, 79, 85, noting Qoheleth's repeated "I have seen."

17. See the analysis of Jerome's reported travels with Paula and Eustochium in Stemberger 2000, 101–5.

18. *Ep.* 46.12.3 (CSEL 54:342–43), as cited in Jacobs 2004, 73; see also 161–66.

19. *Comm. Eccl* 2:6 (PL 23:1079a).

20. For intertextuality as a strategy for harmonizing differences across the biblical corpus in Jerome, see Duval 1985, 59–60.

irrigation systems does not sit easily with a more formative scriptural passage which Jerome seems to have in mind here:

For the land that you will enter to possess is not like the land of Egypt from which you went out where, when the seed is sown, watering streams flow forth as in a garden. But it is [both] mountainous and level, waiting for rain from the sky. (Deut 11:10–11, trans. from Vg)

Both passages contrast the human-made garden of flat Egypt with the mountainous (*montuosa*) land of the promise, a land which waits for rain from the sky (*pluviam exspectat e coelo / de caelo expectans pluvias*). This is a classic biblical description of the Promised Land: the “early and late rain” (the adjectives are *temporaneus et serotinus*) of the Ecclesiastes commentary finds an echo two verses later in Deuteronomy in rain that is *temporivus et serotinus*, a recurring motif for the biblical land (Deut 11:14; cf. Hos 6:3; Jer 5:24; Jas 5:7). Jerome is solving the problem of why a king of Israel would need to build water-pools when biblical Israel is by definition a rained-on land. His answer is that it is only, exceptionally, forest-trees which grow this way, unlike the fruit-producing trees of the previous verse;²¹ but the larger point of the whole excursus is to establish that Qoheleth’s Israel is biblical Israel, first and foremost a textual reality. Its topography is determined by literary models, and the eyewitness local knowledge which Jerome brings to support this is correspondingly a textual and traditional kind of seeing.

Now Jerome does this kind of thing often, so I am not suggesting that his doing it here, in commenting on King Qoheleth’s landscaping experiments, is anything more than fortuitous; we could find the same reading habits in many of Jerome’s commentaries and letters. However, bringing Ecclesiastes and Jerome’s commentary together into conversation does throw into relief certain aspects of King Qoheleth’s self-fashioning which are seen with particular clarity by being attentive to Jerome’s self-fashioning. In Ecclesiastes, the king’s establishment, which the book tells us to call “Israel,” is also fabricated out of biblical materials; it is as much a literary pastiche as Jerome’s promised land. King Qoheleth’s royal boast is itself woven out of the biblical Solomon traditions, but in Second Temple literary practice that mould has been repeatedly recast for the good rulers of Israel’s story from David through Hezekiah and down past Josiah, in works from Chronicles to Ben Sira: multiple

21. In his earlier summary of the whole building narrative he even glosses this verse with a slightly nonsensical piece of harmonizing, “Waters gathered in pools irrigated them from above” (*collectae in piscinas aquae desuper irrigarent*)—the added-in *desuper*, reflecting nothing in the Hebrew, makes it clear that water in the promised land always comes from above.

iterations of this typology now stand behind Qoheleth's constellation of motifs like wealth and works, building and gardening, treasure-collecting, and incomparable greatness.²² Qoheleth's king, then, just as much as Jerome, paints himself in a scriptural Israel; putting the two texts together establishes a particular synergy with this aspect of the biblical writer's procedure.

I turn now to examine the effect of having this intertextually constructed, stereotypical biblical landscape—which Jerome has shown us—as the backdrop for the whole book of Ecclesiastes. I suspect that Jerome as amateur naturalist, reporting on the local rainfall patterns and water cycle, is a better guide than we might expect to the way in which landscape functions in Ecclesiastes. A physical encounter with the land of Israel is an important part of the experience which Qoheleth claims in the book, and which his report seeks to mediate imaginatively to his readers, and thus the landscape of Israel is a significant part of the subject-matter of the book, in somewhat the same way as Robert Alter suggested that the landscape of Israel in Song of Songs moves between vehicle of figuration and object of the poet's gaze.²³ Older commentators sometimes speculated on where Ecclesiastes might have been written on the basis of what they identified as the Palestinian sensibility of the text: Whybray (1989) points to the seaports of the eastern Mediterranean coast as a background for the traders' saying "Cast your bread upon the waters" (11:1), the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Jerusalem as a melting-pot for the Greek philosophical conversations overheard in the book, and the local conditions, customs, flora and fauna (12:5), clouds and rain (11:3; 12:2), and changing winds (1:6; 11:4).²⁴ Arguing from all of this for a Palestinian place of authorship is perhaps a tangential deduction from what is in fact an important perception, that the land and landscape of Israel do have a strong imaginative presence in Ecclesiastes; and the reader is also shown hot sun (*passim*) and cold nights (4:11); dusty earth worked by humans and animals (3:18–22); hunting-grounds and fishing-places (9:12); forests, quarries, fields and mills (9:9; 10:17; 11:4–6; 12:3), feasting-hall and graveyard (10:19; 12:5); streams running to the sea (1:6); north and south (1:6; 11:4); lions, snakes, dogs and grasshoppers (8:4; 9:8–11; 12:5); caper-berries and thorns (6:7); the royal court (8:2–3) and the temple (4:17–5:6).

22. See Throntveit 2003; Aitken 2000.

23. Alter 1985, 185–203.

24. Whybray 1989, 21. Similarly Podechard 1912, 123; Hertzberg 1957.

I suggest that this backdrop gives to the book's meditations on futility, injustice, death and pleasure a local rather than simply a universal colouring, and a setting in the specific Israelite context where the fictional frame locates the narrating voice. What Qoheleth says about oppression and poverty, domestic intimacies and the agricultural round, he says as he walks through the land of Solomon and his successors. Jerome certainly has his own reasons for cataloguing the mountains and valleys, flora and fauna of Qoheleth's kingdom, but in doing so he does latch onto something which a more disembodied reading of the book's argument alone misses. The Israelite setting of Ecclesiastes is not just a matter of its superficial framing in the kingdom of Solomon, but it is woven into both the poetic texture of the book and its structure of thought about kingship, trouble, social life and final destiny; local and even national consciousness is a thread running throughout the developments of these themes.²⁵ The book's Israelite setting is constructed for the reader through the mediating viewpoint of a narrator who is himself a pastiche of biblical traditions, and Jerome, in turn, announcing himself as eyewitness in Judaea but seeing largely a patchwork of biblical memories, works with the grain as a guide to Ecclesiastes.

3. *Cities*

If an Israelite landscape stretches out as the constant backcloth to Jerome's commentary on Ecclesiastes, that landscape is repeatedly punctuated by the skyline of a city. For Jerome, Ecclesiastes stands out among the Solomonic books for its city context: Proverbs, ascribed to "Solomon son of David, king of Israel," has its basic teaching directed at all twelve tribes; Song of Songs, with no civic title for Solomon, is for those who desire heavenly rather than earthly things; but Ecclesiastes is credited to "Ecclesiastes son of David, king of Jerusalem," because "the contempt of the world belongs only to city-dwellers, that is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem."²⁶

On his "spiritual" level of interpretation the city serves Jerome as a picture of the church.²⁷ This becomes preeminently true of the city of Jerusalem used as a type of the church, what Jerome calls "the city built with living stones," borrowing a New Testament figure.²⁸ Thus in Eccl 2,

25. A local consciousness is often denied to Qoheleth; see Fox 1999, 137, 255; Lauha 1981.

26. *Comm. Eccl.* 1:1 (PL 23:1064b).

27. See Bodin 1966, 90–95. For a nuanced treatment of the relation between literal and spiritual sense for Jerome see Williams 2006, 115–23.

28. *Comm. Eccl.* 1:1 (PL 23.1065b); cf. 1 Pet 2:5 (Vg); see Bodin 1996, 93.

the description of Solomon's great works in Jerusalem is elaborated as an allegory of the church: the king's various fruit-trees are the varied graces in the church, his buildings are houses for Father, Son, and Spirit to dwell in, and his flocks of sheep and cattle are the mass of simple church-members.²⁹ Reading through Jerome's commentary, the reader over and over again comes across a whole series of cities which are each the church. To give one example, on Eccl 9:13–16, the tale of a small city besieged by a great king, Jerome first unfolds a literal understanding, and then he writes:

In a different way, the small city, with few men in it compared to the whole world, is the church, against which often the great king, the devil (not because he is great, but because he boasts of being great), rises up and surrounds her with a siege or with persecutions or with another type of distress.³⁰

In the same vein, a whole trail of Qoheleth's complaints about civic misrule, following on from this tale, are read by Jerome on the grid of the church and her leaders: so, the shouting ruler among fools in the following verse is a popular orator in the church; the saying about fools in high places in Eccl 10:5–7 is applied to foolish ecclesiastical leaders; and in the subsequent proverbs about breaking down walls, moving stones and splitting logs, the wall is the doctrine of the church, the stones are church members unsettled by heretics, and the logs to be split are the 'unfruitful timber' of heretics.³¹ The effect of all this on the reader of Jerome's commentary is an awareness of a string of city tales spaced out throughout the book of Ecclesiastes. Yves-Marie Duval writes of what he calls *pointillés*, dotted lines, within a single commentary of Jerome; these join up to make a *fil*, a thread of development.³² Jerome's dotted-line story of the church in the commentary on Ecclesiastes is one such thread: it rewrites but thereby alerts us to the story of a city, which punctuates the book of Ecclesiastes. For the reader of Jerome's commentary, this thematic and theological focus on cities raises Qoheleth's own periodic observations of a city to a higher relief, and draws a connection between them.

29. Here, where Jerome's Solomon figures Jesus, the church in fact pre-dates the Christian era: "By saying 'those who were before me in Jerusalem' he refers to those who governed the congregation of saints and the church before his coming" (*Comm. Eccl.* 2:9; PL 23:1081b).

30. *Comm. Eccl.* 9:13–15 (PL 23:1144b).

31. See PL 23:1145a, 1148b, 1149b–1151a.

32. Duval 1985, 97–98.

Now Jerome's identification of all these cities as the church highlights for us an important intertextual connection between them, although Jerome himself has transformed that connection: all of them are church for Jerome because all of them in Ecclesiastes derive from Solomon's city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the node from which multiple intertextual connections bind Ecclesiastes to the rest of the biblical tradition. Jerome does not identify the city as Jerusalem in each new iteration of the motif, but it is the defining role given to the first mention of Solomon's Jerusalem at the beginning of the book which licenses his city-as-church typology. This is surely a correct instinct: Qoheleth's declared kingship in Jerusalem at the outset of the whole book does establish Jerusalem as the backdrop for the entire autobiographical report which follows, and thus every city which the king sees has overtones of the city where the book fictionally locates the observing gaze of its narrator. This is particularly true of the two bookends given to Ecclesiastes by the construction of the king's splendid establishment in Jerusalem in ch. 2 and the dissolution in ch. 12 of a similar-sounding urban landscape: the fictional Solomon's earlier buildings, parks, watered gardens and bursting store-houses are matched by the closing poem's closed houses, failing agriculture, dried-up wells and scattered treasures, all of this described in the language of the city-laments most closely associated with Jerusalem and its fall in the Hebrew literary tradition.³³ Jerome himself picks up the echo of devastated Jerusalem in Eccl 12, citing a Jewish exegetical tradition found in Qoheleth Rabbah and elsewhere, which reads Eccl 12 as a meditation on the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar, doing so by means of texts from Lamentations and Jeremiah.³⁴ At the end of Jerome's commentary, then, the city is again Jerusalem as at the start, and the intertextual connections which make this identification are surely also present in the lamenting voice of Qoheleth's own Solomonic king who began the book ruling in Jerusalem. Jerome's light cast on the landscape of the book of Ecclesiastes makes its cities stand out in sharper contours, and thus illuminates the abiding presence of Jerusalem in the book.

At a higher level of abstraction, this also reveals Ecclesiastes' pervasive sense of a community context. I have already drawn attention to the particularism of Qoheleth's location in Israel, in contrast to the universal wisdom perspective often ascribed to the book; here, the distinction I

33. I have explored these connections at more length in Barbour 2012, 138–67.

34. See Kraus 1999–2000, 197–200; the relevant passage in English translation is Cohen 1951, 304–10.

want to draw is not between a universal and an Israelite Qoheleth, but between an individualistic and a social one. Fox judges that Qoheleth “reveals no awareness of himself as part of a nation or a community,” and Martin Hengel has written of “his cool detachment, in which any sense of responsibility for the community of his people is lacking.”³⁵ In contrast, I suggest that Jerome is able to read off his own church community so consistently from the text of Ecclesiastes only because the conscious experience of belonging to a community, and especially a troubled one, already permeates the book and its habits of thought and memory; this is something overlooked by accounts of Ecclesiastes which read it as a purely Greek-inflected piece of serene individualism.³⁶ Although Jerome names the book’s community differently to Qoheleth, his characteristic practice of reading to find the structures of community within the text actually serves Ecclesiastes well in a certain sense. Rousseau (2009) has written of Jerome’s blending of civic and ecclesiological contexts to provide the contours for his thinking as it moved beyond the individual in his *Commentarius in Ieremiam*; in Rousseau’s analysis, the city typology of the Jeremiah commentary is part of the way in which “Jerome’s sentiments are so often cast in plural and corporate terms.”³⁷ It is true that the overall thrust of the *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* is more individual, leaning towards ascetic piety, than that of the *Commentarius in Ieremiam*, which Rousseau calls “a treatise on collective repentance.”³⁸ But Jerome’s vision of individual piety is not easily separated from a larger group context, and his identification of city with church is a recurring site of community within his commentary. Jerome’s city takes over its shape from the cities repeatedly encountered in Ecclesiastes, and it telescopes all those city-scapes onto the single location which is the locus of community for Jerome’s own readers and for Qoheleth’s—the city of Jerusalem as it exists in the texts they share. Jerome’s habit of intertextuality, then, against the tenor of his more rebarbative pronouncements, involves Ecclesiastes more intimately within the scriptural self-understanding of both of the communities for whom the words of Qoheleth serve as sacred text.

35. Fox 1999, 343; Hengel 1974, 1:117.

36. Crenshaw (1988, 25) has also spoken of a Qoheleth turned inwards upon “the selfishness of wisdom literature in general”; for him, this sapiential egotism “finds full expression in Qohelet.”

37. Rousseau 2009, 75–76, 82.

38. Rousseau 2009, 77; italics original. For *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* as an exhortation to contempt of worldly things, see Leanza 1988, 267–82.

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