

“Wily, Wise, and Worldly:
Instruction and the Formation of Character in the Epistle to the Hebrews”
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The work of this group has not previously taken up the Epistle to the Hebrews as a site for the exploration of ideas and practices related to wisdom and apocalypticism. It is, however, a text in which sapiential motifs are intertwined with apocalyptic images and thus accords with the working hypothesis of this group, namely, that wisdom and apocalyptic were not separate realms of thought and possibly not the provinces of separate groups of religious practitioners in early Judaism and early Christianity.¹ As we take up the question of the nature and practices of instruction in this year’s work, it is my hope that Hebrews will provide fruitful material for our work both through its explicit

¹ It is not my purpose in this paper to examine which aspects of Hebrews belong to sapiential tradition and which to apocalyptic, although I shall note these in connection with other observations. I would simply flag here some of the instances of each, as summarized in Harold W. Attridge’s commentary (*The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; ed. Helmut Koester; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989). Apocalyptic motifs include the notion of a final consummation, “the approaching day” (10:25), the “coming world” (2:5), and undergirding the warnings language that recalls apocalyptic judgment (6:8; 10:29–31; 12:29); Attridge also mentions positive images rooted in apocalyptic tradition: the promised “rest” (4:1–11), the resurrection of the dead (6:2; 11:19), a heavenly home or the heavenly Jerusalem (11:10, 16; 12:22–28); and the motif of a reward (11:6, 26); see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 27–28. It is striking that many of these motifs are found in the catalogue of faithful heroes in Hebrews 11, a catalogue which in many ways is similar to the lists of exemplary figures in sapiential literature, as, for example, in Sirach 44–50. Wisdom material in Hebrews includes the formulation of the journey into the heavenly realm in terms of the Exodus and wilderness story, as in Wis 10:15–21 as well as the “sapientially inspired mythical pattern of the exordium” (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 80). It is widely agreed that depiction of the Son in the exordium, relying most likely on an early Christian hymn, tropes the portrayal of divine Wisdom in Wis 7:25–26. The portrayal of the word of God in Heb 4:12–13 may also draw upon the depiction of Wisdom in Wis 7:23–24. In addition, the compositional technique of using catchwords (see Albert Vanhoye, *La structure littéraire de l’Épître aux Hébreux* [StudNeot 1; Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1963] to link one thought to the next may also point to a sapientially informed didactic context. The intertwining of sapiential and apocalyptic strands is evident in the exordium itself, which presents the “Son” within a wisdom Christology as the means of God’s speech “in the end of these days” (1:2).

statements about learning and instruction and through the ways in which it is possible to discern instruction being done in this text.

In seeking to understand how instruction is "performed" or practiced in Hebrews, the paper examines the matrix of instruction, character formation, and community formation as these take place in Hebrews through scripture and its interpretation. It attends to how Hebrews instructs its inscribed audience in the ways to engage the scriptures of Israel and to locate their own identity through scripture. This scriptural matrix, although primarily informed by the Sinai covenant (together with traditions of its renewal) and the wilderness journey, also draws significantly upon material and strategies from wisdom literature. It also utilizes some dimensions of an apocalyptic view of the cosmos to depict the contrasting ends of the faithful and of those who "fall away." Through this scriptural matrix and the techniques of scriptural interpretation in which the audience is trained, Hebrews endeavors to shape community and character in terms of mutual solidarity.

Juxtaposed to the strategies of deploying scripture that Hebrews demonstrates to its audience are explicit statements about instruction. These, as we shall see, focus on the necessity of learning through suffering and hardship more than on the social structures or institutions of learning. The emphasis is on character formation, to which participation in the community is seen as integral. The contrast exists therefore between the explicit statements about instruction or learning and the practices utilized by the text itself. This contrast prompts the question about the relation between learning through suffering and being skilled in the interpretation of scripture, skilled, that is, in locating one's identity through the medium of scripture. I would propose that one way in which to resolve this

contrast is to understand the skills in the arts of scriptural interpretation as part of what the audience needs in order successfully to endure suffering and to maintain solidarity with the community. Moreover, the particular art of interpreting scripture demonstrated by Hebrews is one appropriate to the versatility of character necessary to the endurance of suffering. I suggest therefore that in these ways Hebrews aims at forming a community skilled in what James C. Scott has termed “the arts of resistance.”²

I turn now to a detailed examination of what Hebrews says overtly about instruction and learning, with an eye to seeing the place of instruction and learning within Hebrews’ overall scheme of the journey toward perfection. In other words, if we think of Hebrews as containing two intersecting narratives—one of Jesus’ descent from the heavenly realm, earthly residence, and return to the celestial temple and the other, modeled on the Exodus and wilderness journey of the people of God, concerned with the progress of the audience, who are enabled through Jesus’ death to be perfected (2:10) and to enter into the promised heavenly place of “rest” (4:9) and into the celestial temple (10:19)—then a useful question is to ask where in these narratives Hebrews locates “instruction.” Another, complementary way of thinking about this question is to focus on Hebrews as a parenetic text, built out of homiletic material,³ and to examine the role that statements about instruction or references to it play as strategies to motivate the audience.

² James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990). My thinking about Hebrews is informed by Scott’s work, although I am not working fully with his notion of a hidden transcript. I use the term to denote the variety of ways in which a subordinate or subject community cultivates and maintains its identity and values in the midst of a dominant culture that it perceives as exerting various sorts and degrees of pressure to change the values, behaviors, and affiliations of the subject group.

³ See Lawrence Wills, “The Form of the Sermon in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity,” *Harvard Theological Review* 77 (1984) 277–99; C. Clifton Black, “The Rhetorical Form of the Hellenistic Jewish

We may note first that those "instructed" in and through this text are addressed neither as students or disciples, nor in subordinating familial language such as "my son" or "children." Rather, the inscribed audience is addressed with as "brothers" (**adelphoi**, 3:12; 10:19; 13:22) or "holy brothers" (3:1). This form of address is consonant with the soteriological construction of the audience as those whom Jesus presents to God as his siblings (2:11–13). Here the solidarity of Jesus with the community is central to his work of bringing them to perfection. In this same context, Jesus' being perfected through suffering, being tested as his siblings are, and becoming like them in every respect (2:10–18) underscore the cohesion of the group. Although the inscribed author occasionally speaks to the audience in the second person plural (3:12; 5:11–12; 12:12–13; 13:1–19), much of the time the exhortations and addresses are in the first person plural, wrapping the author and audience into the same group and further emphasizing the solidarity. There are no offices mentioned, only the command to remember "those who lead you" (**tôn hêgoumenôn**, 13:7).⁴ Thus the audience is not addressed in ways that draw attention to the practices of instruction.

A critical text for understanding the place of instruction in Hebrews is the lengthy quotation of Jer 31:31–34 in Heb 8:8–12. This quotation functions to introduce the contrast developed in Hebrews 9–10 between the "first" covenant and a new covenant established through Jesus' death. Along with the new covenant, according to Jeremiah,

and Early Christian Sermon: A Response to Lawrence Wills [77:277–299 1984], *Harvard Theological Review* 81 (1988) 1–18; Harold W. Attridge, "Paraenesis in a homily (lovgo" paraklhvsew)" *Semeia* 50 (1990) 211–26.

⁴ Rather than indicating fixed offices, the participial form here, in my view, draws attention to the motif of the wilderness journey under the leadership of Moses and Joshua, as a typology for the life of the community.

comes knowledge of God throughout the community, along with the end of instruction. “This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach one another or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest” (Heb 8:10–11). Although the end of instruction and the unlimited availability of knowledge of God are not facets of the quotation that Hebrews explicitly picks up in the subsequent chapters, I would suggest that indirectly the quotation indicates that instruction, teaching, and insufficient knowledge all belong to the time of journeying into perfection and “rest.” That is, when the community experiences the full rewards of covenant faithfulness and share with Jesus in heavenly glory, then instruction will no longer be necessary, because of the complete internalization of the covenant (“I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts”). Heb 10:12–18, in citing again Jer 31:33, makes this internal inscribing of the covenant the result of Jesus’ work of perfecting and sanctifying the community. Instruction therefore belongs not to heavenly life, but to the present situation of the audience, in which the text exhorts them to “hold fast” and “not to fall away” (e.g. 2:1; 6:6).⁵

In Heb 5:11–6:3, we find explicit discussion of levels of instruction and of what is expected of the inscribed audience. Here the author reproaches the audience for not being where they ought in the process of learning, “for though by this time you ought to be

⁵ Hebrews speaks in a variety of ways of the contrast between faithfulness and rebellion; the various exhortations remain faithful or to hold fast (to the confession, the confidence, the hope, etc.) underscore the theme of staying with the community (10:25), whereas the exhortations not to rebel or to fall away from the community are grounded in the story of the disobedience of the wilderness generation. The parenthetic contrast is developed most fully in the quotation of Psalm 95 and its interpretation in Hebrews 3–4.

teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic elements of the oracles of God” (5:12). They need “milk,” rather than “solid food.” This common hellenistic metaphor for levels of instruction⁶ would appear here to distinguish elementary learners from advanced ones, “neophyte Christians” from “mature Christians,” and the basics of Christian teaching from the more complex teaching taking place in Hebrews itself.⁷ What follows in 6:1–3 supports this dichotomy in that it separates “going on toward perfection” from the “foundation” or “the basic teaching about Christ” which is spelled out as a “repentance from dead works and faith toward God, instruction about baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.” (6:2). We should note, however, that Hebrews speaks of “solid food” as what is proper for **teleioi** (5:14) rather than for the **nêpioi** (5:13). Although this language is found in other instances of reflection upon the educational process (e.g., Philo *Agric.* 9), it may well be an example of Hebrews’ tendency to use *double entendre*. That is, within the larger conceptual scheme of Hebrews, being **teleioi** is something more than possessing maturity; it designates being perfected, sanctified, entering into the heavenly sanctuary, and completing the journey with Jesus and the community into the promise. The term may be employed proleptically here to designate those who are on their way toward perfection, that is, those who maintain solidarity with Jesus and the community.

Those who are **teleioi** are further described as “those whose senses (**aisthêtêria**) have been trained (**gegumnasmèna**) through habit (**hexis**) to distinguish good and evil”

⁶ See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 159, who cites Philo *Agric.* 9; *Congr.* 19; *Migr. Abr.* 29; *Som.* 2.9; *Omn prob. lib.* 160; Epictetus *Diss.* 2.16.39; 3.24.9; and 1 Cor 3:1–3.

⁷ Attridge, *Hebrews*, 162.

(5:14). This statement also utilizes vocabulary of hellenistic instructional practices, particularly around the development of ethical discernment.⁸ With the athletic imagery of the gymnasium, it points to an instructional mode that is concerned with the formation of the whole person through the cultivation of one's habits. Here recent discussions of asceticism seem to me to provide a useful framework, following Richard Valantasis, that "asceticism may be defined as performances designed to inaugurate an alternative culture, to enable different social relations, and to create a new identity" thus permitting the practitioner "to function within the re-envisioned or re-created world."⁹ By employing the term "asceticism" here, I do not intend it in a narrow sense of certain practices of bodily deprivation, but to indicate "character formation" in the broadest sense, pertaining to the *ethos* of a person within a community. Elsewhere in Hebrews agonistic vocabulary and metaphors are employed to speak of the work in which the community is engaged, as, for example, at Heb 12:1–2, with the image of "running the race (**agôn**)."⁹ It seems to me that the situation of the audience is envisioned in the text as a time of **agôn**, in which they are both learning the practices necessary for reaching the goal and developing the orientations (covenant faithfulness, obedience, solidarity) proper to their heavenly identity as the brothers and sisters of Jesus.

⁸ Attridge, *Hebrews*, 161.

⁹ Richard Valantasis, "A Theory of the Social Function of Asceticism," in *Asceticism* (ed. Vincent L. Wimbush and Richard Valantasis New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 548, 550. This definition seeks to avoid conceiving of the ascetic as exotic, but draws instead upon the classical and hellenistic Greek notion of ἀσκησις as exercise, practice, or training in a profession, set of skills (for example, in poetry, the gymnasium, or the military), or a mode of living. The asceticism of the hellenistic gymnasium aims at cultivating in the epebes of the city the practices, relationships, and character appropriate to civic culture.

Athletic imagery is also employed in a third passage where Hebrews reflects on instruction itself, Heb 12:3–12, which follows immediately upon and draws upon the metaphor of “running the race,” looking toward Jesus as the **arkhêgos**. Here again the ethical dimension is foregrounded, since the audience is reminded of their “struggling against (**antagônizomenoi**) sin” (Heb 12:4), which is linked to Jesus’ endurance of “hostility from sinners” (Heb 12:3). The discussion moves to the topic of **paideia**, drawing upon the quotation of Prov 3:11–12, in which **paideia** comes from “the Lord” and is connected to being disgraced or shamed (**elegkhomenos**) and scourged (**mastigoi**), as well as seen as part of God’s love and acceptance. I would simply note some of the work that this complex passage does in Hebrews’ treatment of it. First, it connects whatever suffering is endured by the community not only to Jesus’ endurance, but also to the process of **paideia**. That is, it interprets suffering and hardship within an instructional framework, suggesting that the social experience of instruction is a meaningful organizing principle for this community. Secondly, the experience of such **paideia** is used here as a criterion of legitimacy for belonging to God’s family; “If you do not have that **paideia** in which all sons share, then you are illegitimate and not sons” (Heb 12:8). Within the larger context of Hebrews, experiencing **paideia** thus supports the theological claim that the community participates with Jesus in God’s household as legitimate children (cf. 2:10–18). It is thus tied to the notion of family solidarity for the community as they journey together, in Jesus’ wake, toward their promised goal, as long as they remain faithful. Interpreting as **paideia** those experiences of hardship which might cause the community to lose heart and fall away (e.g. 10:32–39) situates those experiences as proof of God’s faithfulness to the covenant and functions rhetorically as encouragement

for the community. The conclusion of the section (Heb 12:12–13) expresses this encouragement clearly with further scriptural and agonistic imagery (“Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees,” alluding to Isa 35:3).

In this context, moreover, we may note that the goal of the *agôn*, the result of successfully experiencing **paideia** is envisioned in apocalyptic terms in Heb 12:18–29. Here the ends of faithfulness and rebellion are contrasted through the opposition of the heavenly Jerusalem, the unshakeable kingdom, with the shaking and removal of created things on earth, in which those who “reject the one who warns from heaven” (12:25). Thus the ultimate outcome of instruction in the fullest sense is participating in the realm that remains unshakeable in the last days. Apocalyptic imagery here functions as a sanction on covenant faithfulness, which is cultivated through the practices of **paideia**.

The instructional **agôn** of the community, as we have seen, is seen in Hebrews as undertaken in solidarity with Jesus and by following Jesus’ leadership (e.g. 12:1–3). It is striking, however, that Hebrews does not speak of Jesus as a teacher but as one who learns. Heb 5:7–10, utilizing traditions of Jesus’ passion,¹⁰ portrays Jesus as one who “although he was a son, learned obedience through what he suffered” (Heb 5:8). Here the wordplay between **emathen** and **epathen** engages a common instructional proverb about learning through experience, but is here particularized in terms of Jesus’ passion.¹¹ It thus focuses the instructional experience on the engagement of suffering with endurance and faithfulness. Suffering, for Jesus, becomes the instructional means for the formation of

¹⁰ See Ellen Bradshaw Aitken, “The Morphology of the Passion Narrative” (Th.D. diss.; Harvard University, 1997), 182–89.

¹¹ See, for example, Aeschylus *Ag.* 177; Herodotus *Hist.* 1.207; and the discussion in Attridge, *Hebrews*, 152–53.

character here both as "son" and "high priest." As in Heb 12:3–12, instruction is presented as the interpretive framework for suffering, suggesting that the practices of instruction were a significant piece in the community's self-identity.

Moreover, since Jesus is a pattern of faithfulness for the community, this passage implicitly encourages the community in the embrace of suffering as part of their instructional practices. Since at other points Hebrews exhorts the community to enter into the situation of suffering of others in the community (e.g., 13:1–3; cf. 10:33) as part of the ethic of solidarity, part of what may be going on in Hebrews is the redefinition of existing instructional practices in terms of the embrace of the suffering of others in the community. In other words, this is a community with existing instructional practices, perhaps one in which instruction was central to the practices that defined and constituted the community. The author can therefore draw upon these practices not only as a organizing principle for the experience of suffering but also as a rhetorical strategy for cultivating an ethic of solidarity in suffering within the community.

I would turn now briefly to the question of how the text performs instruction for its audience. Here the skills the text demonstrates and calls upon in terms of the interpretation of scripture are at the forefront. Hebrews is a text that calls upon the resourcefulness and versatility of its audience and challenges them consistently to "get" the right message. The rich texture of the discourse challenges the audience's interpretive skills in a variety of ways, requiring—to list a few examples—not only the ability to following a complex treatment of a quotation from the scriptures of Israel (as with the exposition of Psalm 95 in Hebrews 3–4) or the allegorization of Israelite cult practice, but also familiarity with a scriptural context and tradition around and beyond what is

specifically quoted (as in the portrayal of Jesus’ agonized prayer in Heb 5:7–10).¹² The rhetorical and homiletical strategies of Hebrews also draw upon the audience’s ability to understand puns and *double entendres* and above all the follow the twists and turns of a complex, wide-ranging, yet highly cohesive argument in such a way as to obtain its theological and ethical import. In other words, inasmuch as successful rhetoric relies upon an audience’s ability to “get” and act upon the values that it promotes, Hebrews’ ideal audience needs expertise in the art of interpretation, as well as certain orientations in the ethical and affiliative aspects of living.¹³

I have argued elsewhere that by the opening adverb **polutropôs** (“with versatility,” or “with many forms”) in 1:1 Hebrews marks its strategies as requiring resourcefulness and versatility.¹⁴ This textual strategy is of a piece with the portrayal of Jesus along the model of the Protean shape-shifting hero (like Odysseus) and with the character of audience as Hebrews seeks to form it as capability of shifting place into solidarity with the suffering of others (Heb 13:1–3). These strategies contribute to the instructional work of developing character capable of resisting suffering imposed by the hostility of others outside the community. Hebrews can thus be understood as developing

¹² What I mean here is that this portrayal of Jesus’ suffering and prayer draws upon a wider psalmic tradition of suffering and vindication (Strobel), as well as the ways in which the prayer of the righteous person is typically depicted (Attridge). I would also argue that this passage shows familiarity with ways of narrating Jesus’ suffering and death, in existence prior to and contributing to the written passion narratives (Aitken, “Morphology,” 182–89).

¹³ This is reflected in the judgment of many modern commentators on Hebrews when they remark that Hebrews aims at an audience with esoteric knowledge and an advanced experience and expertise in Christian tradition and practice.

¹⁴ Ellen B. Aitken, “Hebrews and the Arts of Resistance,” a paper presented at the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Berlin, 21 July 2002; See also my “The Hero in the Epistle to the Hebrews: Jesus as an Ascetic Model,” in *Early Christian Writings Inside and Out* (ed. by David Warren, Ann Graham Brock, and David Pao; Leiden and Boston: Brill, forthcoming 2003).

a culture and community character skilled in the arts of resistance. Within this framework, the various methods of scriptural interpretation and the appropriation of other cultural material¹⁵ contribute to the development of ethical, noetic, and rhetorical resourcefulness, as strategies of resistance, within the ideal community.

The performance of scripture in Hebrews allows us to see how this method of instruction works. A notable feature of the quotation of scripture in Hebrews is that it is consistently placed in the mouth of a divine figure: God, Jesus, or the Spirit. Attridge has described this technique as “ventriloquism.”¹⁶ The result is that Hebrews portrays God, Jesus or the Spirit speaking enigmatic utterances that require interpretation. The divine speaker is thus one who possesses expertise in a modality of discourse wherein multiple meanings are possible, but those “in the know” are capable of “getting” the proper and singular meaning. Thus the speaker, through the medium of the enigmatic utterance, tests the mettle of the audience. This is consistent with the function of scripture in Hebrews, particularly the use of Psalm 95 and the story of the Israelites in the wilderness. The audience is put to the test to see if they “get” the true meaning for themselves, namely, that by not falling away from the community and thus not being like the ancestors who perish, but rather by holding fast to Jesus the **arkhêgos**, they are able to reach the goal of the journey and enter God’s Rest. Hebrews works with scripture in this way, demonstrating its need for interpretation and instructing its audience in the means of

¹⁵ E.g., the imagery and motifs of the Roman triumph, see my “Portraying the Temple in Stone and Text: The Arch of Titus and the Epistle to the Hebrews” in *Religious Texts and Material Contexts* (ed. James R. Strange; Buffalo: State University of New York Press, 2001), 73–88.

¹⁶ Harold W. Attridge, in a paper for the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Rome, 2001.

finding the true meaning—by looking to Jesus (12:2). In particular, Hebrews emphasizes that when the audience “looks to Jesus” they are to see not only his humiliation and shame (5:7–10), but also his being crowned with glory and honor (2:9). It is this capacity to recognize Jesus that functions as the guarantee of hope for the audience, hope, that is, for their own entrance into the heavenly realm. **Paideia** then functions as training in getting the meaning hidden in the midst of suffering and using that meaning as the groundwork for an ethic of solidarity with those who are suffering.

The way in which instruction is performed in Hebrews works then toward the development of a modality of discourse and a modality of ethical action in the audience. The modality of discourse is demonstrated through the versatility of divine speech as testing the mettle of the audience and in training them in similar ways of reading scripture, through the lens of Jesus’ suffering and glory. I would suggest that this modality is employed in Hebrews not only as part of the persuasive strategies of this text but also to educate the audience in similar arts of speaking with multiple meaning. The modality of action is cultivated through instruction in the embrace of suffering and the maintaining of solidarity within the community. This embrace of suffering relates to the modality of discourse in that it provides the interpretive key for the community and renders them expert in getting the right meaning from scripture. The community is in this sense to be wily and wise, but also worldly in their canniness in enduring suffering and maintaining the character of the community in the face of hostility.

The question of the “target audience” for instruction in Hebrews moves us from the consideration of the rhetorically inscribed audience to the social and historical location of the text. With Hebrews, this is a notoriously vexed question, not least because

of the lack of many concrete historical or geographical markers in the text. There exists a general consensus that Hebrews is a product of Roman Christianity—in or about the city of Rome—in the latter part of the first century CE.¹⁷ On the basis of the ways in which Hebrews appears to work with the ideology of the imperial triumph, I have argued previously that Hebrews should be dated around the time of the erection of the Arch of Titus in Rome (ca. 81–82 CE) as a response to the imperial propaganda of the Flavians as it was made visible in the city of Rome.¹⁸ If this is the case, then we may hypothesize that the instruction in the text is aimed at Christians in the city of Rome, training them in resistance to the specific exercise of imperial power in the city around them and in proper response to hostility perceived as growing out of this situation. Without fully going into the reasons for this social and historical setting of the text, I offer it here simply as a possible point of discussion for understanding instruction in this text.

It remains, however, that Hebrews both reflects upon the process of instruction and performs instruction in ways significant for the formation of character and community. Hebrews also relies on a framework of instructional practices in order to organize its theological and ethical points and as a basis for its persuasive strategies. In portraying the divine voice with the authority of one who trains students in the interpretation of enigmatic utterances, Hebrews further inscribes instructional practices in its theological structure. In other words, the authority of the teacher is deeply encoded in the text, both in the voice of the inscribed author and in the depiction of God. It may be

¹⁷ For the arguments, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 6–13.

¹⁸ Aitken, “Portraying the Temple.”

useful to think of Hebrews as a “teacherly text,”¹⁹ that deploys many types of materials, including wisdom and apocalyptic, in the service of training a community and equipping them to be teachers of one another, until the “coming day” when they shall need teachers no more. It is thus a text that belongs for its audience in the midst of the **agôn** of life as a manual of instruction as much as word of exhortation.

¹⁹ This phrase draws upon Roland Barthes’ distinction between “readerly texts” and “writerly texts” in *S/Z*; I am grateful to Karen King and the Advanced New Testament Seminar at Harvard for the coining of the phrase in the context of a recent discussion of the *Gospel of Truth*.