

THE BOOK OF RUTH AND THE LOVE OF THE LAND

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The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof;
the world, and they that dwell therein.

Psalm 23

The land must not be sold forever: for the land is mine;
for you are strangers and sojourners with me.

Leviticus 25.3

In the Introduction to his and Frank Kermode's collection *Literary Guide to the Bible*, the critic Robert Alter describes the Hebrew Bible as a work of "extreme heterogeneity," and speculates that the selection of the canon "was at least sometimes impelled by a desire to preserve the best of ancient Hebrew literature rather than to gather the consistent normative statements of a monotheistic party line... In fact, the texts that have been passed down to us exhibit not only extraordinary diversity but also a substantial amount of debate with one another." I like to couple this description with one of the sayings about Torah in *Pirke Avot*, *The Wisdom of the Fathers*: "Turn it and turn it, for everything is in it." Everything? Including both dogma and resistance to dogma? Law and subversion of Law? A Father God, certainly, but also hints, here and there, of the Divine Mother who was edited out of historical memory? Feminists have been noticing for at least a century that the Bible is, to put it mildly, patriarchal. When we look between the cracks of this great founding scripture designed so splendidly to subordinate women, can we find tracks and traces of women's truths, women's values, women's powers?

If we remember that the Bible was composed over a period of about 1000 years – something like the time between Beowulf and T. S. Eliot – and compiled and edited over another 400 or so, we can more easily recognise that Scripture has at no single moment in its history been a unified, monolithic text. It has always been a radically layered, plurally authored,

multiply motivated composite, full of fascinating mysteries, gaps and inconsistencies, a garden of delight to the exegete. The biblical scholar Elizabeth Schussler-Fiorenza points out that the Bible may be seen both as an instrument of oppression and as a resource of liberation. And so it is for women.

I am going to speak today about the Book of Ruth as a countertext, which is to say a text embedded in scripture which stands in opposition to scripture's dominant patriarchal ideas and assumptions, and thereby – paradoxically – enriches and deepens our heritage. I take the term from Ilana Pardes' recent book *Counter-Traditions in the Bible*. My intention is to explore an interlocking array of ways in which Ruth radically deviates from Biblical norms while yet remaining seamlessly attached to them. For, as a feminist poet and critic, I want to emphasise the importance in feminist thinking of replacing the customary dualisms of our culture. Confronted with a polarised choice of either/or, feminism prefers to respond both/and. So, I want to make clear, the Book of Ruth departs from biblical norms in four crucial ways, yet it does not break away from its biblical context, but integrates a radical vision into an ongoing tradition.

What are the departures? 1) The genre of the Book of Ruth is pastoral. It is an idyll, taking place during a lovely loophole of peace between wars, a fact which is crucial to its other deviant qualities. 2) It is gynocentric, woman-centred, where most of the Bible centers on male figures. 3) God's presence in the Book of Ruth is uniquely tied up with fertility – and is represented chiefly through invocation, as if God were made real through human discourse, through the fertility of the heart. 4) the book's view of land and of boundaries between lands is also unique, not duplicated anywhere else in the Bible. And I want to suggest that these differences are interdependent.

Briefly to recapitulate the story: the Book of Ruth begins with a famine in the city of Bethlehem from which a man named Elimelech flees to the neighbouring country of Moab with his wife Naomi and two sons. Elimelech dies; the sons marry Moabite women and live there for ten years; then they too die. Naomi, learning of a good crop in Bethlehem, decides to

return, and vehemently urges her daughters-in-law to return to their own mothers' houses and find themselves new husbands. Orpah agrees, but Ruth clings to her mother-in-law, uttering one of the most poignant speeches in scripture: "Entreat me not to leave you," she says to Naomi. "For wherever you go, I will go. Where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die and there I will be buried. May God do such and more to me if anything but death parts us." Or, in another possible translation, "if even death parts us."

When Naomi sees how determined Ruth is to go with her she ceases to argue and the two go on until they reach Bethlehem. Here they are greeted by a chorus of women who are amazed to see Naomi again. Angrily, she tells them not to call her "Naomi" (sweetness) but "Mara" (bitterness), because the Lord has dealt bitterly with her: she went out full, and God has returned her empty. As readers, we may at this point notice that Naomi makes no reference to Ruth. Soon, however, as it is barley harvest time, Ruth goes out to glean in the fields after the reapers. Here she encounters the landowner, Boaz, who admires her loyalty to her mother-in-law, gives her food, and bids her glean freely in his fields, telling his reapers to leave extra gleanings for her and telling the men not to molest her. When she bows to the ground before him, asking why he is so kind to her, a foreigner, he replies, "I have been told of all that you did for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband, how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth and came to a people you had not known before. May the Lord reward your deeds. May you have a full recompense from the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have sought refuge." (Note that the Hebrew *kanfei* is an ambiguous word that may mean either "wings" or "robe;" when used metaphorically it signifies protection.) When Ruth recounts her story in the evening, Naomi praises God "who has not failed in his loving kindness to the living or the dead," and announces that Boaz is a kinsman of Elimelech - "*goel*, a redeeming kinsman," which in Jewish law meant that he was legally entitled to redeem property belonging to Elimelech. So the plot thickens, and soon it thickens further. When the barley harvest and wheat harvest are done, Naomi instructs Ruth in a bold

plan: she is to dress up and perfume herself, go to the threshing floor at night, find where Boaz is sleeping after the harvest festivities, uncover his feet and lie down next to him. Here it is important to note, as numerous scholars have done, that "feet" may be a euphemism for another part of the anatomy. But whatever the instructions may or may not precisely signify, Ruth follows them – and when Boaz wakes, startled, we have a third dialogue: "Who are you?" "I am your handmaid Ruth, and you will spread your robe (or wings) over your handmaid, for you are a *goel*.." "May God bless you, my daughter," he replies, "your latest deed of loving kindness is greater than the first, for you have not turned to younger men whether rich or poor."

In the final chapter of the Book of Ruth we have first some negotiations: Boaz gives a nearer kinsman the opportunity to redeem a parcel of land belonging to Elimelech, and to marry Ruth. When this man refuses (thus paralleling Orpah), Boaz takes Ruth as his wife with the blessing of the town's elders. Ruth bears a son, and the women congratulate Naomi: "Blessed be God who has not withheld a redeemer from you... He will renew your life and sustain your old age, for he is born of your daughter-in-law Ruth, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons." In a coda to the story, a genealogy tells us that this son, Obed, becomes the grandfather of King David.

Now let me turn to the beautifully unique qualities of the tale, which so clearly has elements of folktale, and yet is composed with exquisite art, like a poem in which every word counts and resonates, along with a finely balanced structure, eloquent and elegant dialogue, and a fullness of wordplay and allusion which deepen and transform its meaning. First, though we know nothing of its origin, Ruth is among the few portions of the Bible which may come from women's storytelling traditions;¹ at the same time it is also clearly intended to provide an ancestry for David, and consequently of the Messiah who is also to come from the root of Jesse. Some scholars have speculated that it is a Hebraised adaptation of the Eleusinian mysteries around Demeter and Persephone, or a historicised version of the epic of the Canaanite goddess Anat; yet it is read at the time of

the feast of Shavuoth, which celebrates the giving of the Torah at Sinai and the covenant between God and the children of Israel. In other words: women's and men's traditions have been blended to form this book. And – for a change – the women's traditions powerfully dominate. In the Hebrew Bible Ruth is located among the five Scrolls in the Writings; like the Song of Songs and the Scroll of Esther, it is woman-centred. Unlike Lamentations and Ecclesiastes it is deeply optimistic, with an optimism generated not in the usual way by concentrating on ideas of nationhood and obedience to law, but by looking at the possibilities of *chesed*, or loving kindness – lovingly generous human behaviour at the most intimate of levels. In the Christian Bible Ruth follows the book of Judges, in whose historical period it is supposed to take place, and the contrast is overwhelming. For Judges is a book of relentless violence, slaughter and war, both external and internal. It also contains the horrific stories of Jephthah's daughter and the Levite's concubine, and is a perfect illustration of the idea that a militarised society is a bad thing for women. Ruth, in contrast, occurs in peacetime, its story is not public but domestic, its values have nothing to do with conquest and killing but with generosity and ongoing life. Most extraordinarily, it is about an erasure of the boundary between one's own people and the enemy.

That the Book of Ruth is woman-centered is obvious, but just *how* woman-centered may not be so evident on the surface. As has often been noticed, Naomi and Ruth make their way alone and destitute in a world where women without male protection are utterly at risk, and they do so by a combination of mutual caring and initiative-taking of a sort that does not occur elsewhere in the Bible. Ruth's abandonment of her own family and nation to cling to Naomi is unprecedented for a woman; her gleaning represents initiative and energy; and her dialogues with Boaz demonstrate something very close to manipulateness, while Naomi's shift from alienation to connection represents hope for a class of people, widows without sons, usually seen as without resource, the lowest of the low. Their loving relationship is unique in a world where rivalry between women (cf. Sarah and Hagar, Rachel and Leah, Hannah and Peninah) is the norm enforced by patriarchal social structure.

But there is more. Ruth is the only book of the Bible that gives us a hint of a women's community and social life existing alongside yet distinct from male society. When Naomi tells her daughters-in-law not to follow her, she tells them to return to their *mother's* houses, not their fathers'. Later, the women who greet Naomi and at the tale's close congratulate her, offer blessing, and name the newborn child, are like a chorus around the main action. (The daughters of Jerusalem invoked by the Shulamite in the Song of Songs is another such chorus, though less grounded in a sense of ongoing community life.) But there is also more than this, and here we must look at the extraordinary intertextuality of the Book of Ruth and what it signifies.

Is Naomi merely an individual widow with a good daughter-in-law who makes things turn out happily for her? Is Ruth merely an individual who forms an individual attachment to her mother-in-law which turns out happily? Not exactly. For the verbal links of this story to other stories give it a depth far beyond the folk-tale aspect of loyalty rewarded. Naomi, complaining to Ruth and Orpah that "the hand of the Lord has struck out against me," and later to her former neighbours that "the Lord has testified against me, and Shaddai has afflicted me" is a female version of Job. Job too speaks "*bemar nafshi*" – in the bitterness of my spirit. Not only grieving but angry, Naomi like Job rejects proffered comfort and directly blames God for her woes. Moreover, one of the names she uses for God, *Shaddai*, typically translated "Almighty" in English, also appears in Job, and comes from Hebrew and Akkadian words for breast or hill, so that the God being addressed might best be translated God of the breast-hill-mountain. It is a name used in connection with the blessings of fertility. So the underlying issue here is not merely one woman's bad luck but the benevolence – or lack of it – of God.

And what of Ruth? As more than one commentator notes, Ruth is a female version of the patriarch Abraham, who in Genesis 12.1 is told by God to "go forth from your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you." She too leaves family and country behind, in a leap of faith. As Boaz says admiringly to her, "you went

to a people you have never known." And she goes not commanded by God, or even encouraged, but out of love. She is not "chosen;" she chooses. She herself chooses. She makes a covenant. She is in a sense something greater than Abraham, as if he represents a past in which humanity must be told what to do, but she a future in which the heart itself judges rightly. At the same time we may note that Ruth's extraordinary clinging or cleaving to Naomi is like that of Adam to Eve, flesh of flesh, bone of bone, about which we are told that therefore a man will leave father and mother and cleave to his wife; it is also like the implausible love of Jonathon for David, again a story about leaving the father for a beloved. As Ruth declares her vows to Naomi, so Jonathan's soul "was knit with the soul of David." The male story is of course tragic, the women's story joyous.

But even these are not the only strands tying Ruth to other portions of the Bible. Boaz calls Ruth *eshet chayil*, woman of valour, and the listeners to the tale would recognise this familiar expression, a male version of which is used in the exodus story when Moses has to delegate authority to *anshe chayil*, men of valour. What is suggested is leadership, worth, courage. The Ruth of this story is not Keats' Ruth, listening to the nightingale, sick for home, standing "in tears amid the alien corn." On the contrary, though she is certainly an alien, she is also a woman of will and action. We as audience recognise the accuracy of Boaz' epithet for her, for we see that Ruth always bravely goes further than she is told. In the scene at the threshing house, most dramatically, she has been told by Naomi to uncover Boaz' feet (or whatever), lie down next to him and "he will tell you what to do." Instead of this, while behaving with perfect demureness, it is she who tells him: when he wakes and asks "Who are you?" She answers "I am Ruth, your handmaid; you will spread your robe (or wings) over your handmaid, for you are a *goel*." Here we may notice thematic echoes of the daughters of Lot (Genesis 19), and of Tamar's seduction of Judah (Genesis 38) in this episode; like those earlier women, if more delicately, Ruth is taking the law into her own hands. The Israeli Bible scholar Aviva Zornberg points out that what is usually translated as an imperative – spread your robe – is actually a simple future tense – you will spread your robe. And what Zornberg hears is like a

strange echo of what we hear in Exodus 20: "I am the Lord your God, and you will have no other gods...." "I am Ruth your handmaid, and you will spread your robe...." Like God, Ruth says things and they come to pass. Trust, faith, confidence and virtue bring them, as it were, to pass, as the story deftly weaves a web in which women are at the center, attached by verbal and thematic strands to some of the most important topoi of the Bible, doubt and faith, exile and wandering, sexuality and love and progeny, God's power and human actions, transforming these themes, feminising them in such a way as to make them nonviolent, producing a conflict-reduction story.

At the same time, of course, Boaz too is being likened to God: he is a redeemer, he will spread his robe, he acts with *chesed*, kindness, to the living and the dead. This diffusion of Godlike *chesed* brings us to another curious facet of the Book of Ruth: the role of God. In most biblical narrative, God is an active agent, very much on the scene, intervening with a vengeance. Here, God takes note of his people and gives them food near the beginning of the story; at its close, the Lord gives conception to Ruth, and she bears a son. He is in effect if not in name, a fertility God. Between the opening and the close God does not appear, but is continually invoked. "May the Lord deal kindly with you as you have dealt with the dead and with me," Naomi says to her daughters-in-law in 1.8. In 1.13 she is negative and accuses God of causing her suffering. Immediately thereafter, Ruth in her great oath-taking speech declares allegiance to Naomi and to God, swearing fidelity unto death to Naomi, in God's name. Naomi again rails against God at her return to Bethlehem. So in this opening chapter there is a kind of oscillation about God: He is a source of benevolence, but maybe malevolence too. In the second chapter this shifts. Boaz appears in the field, and there is a gracious greeting and response between him and his workers: "The Lord be with you," he says to them, and they reply, "The Lord bless you." With this we immediately feel Boaz' goodness, and a sort of penumbra of God's goodness. This is heightened when he speaks to Ruth: he knows her kindness to Naomi, and invokes God to reward her deeds. When Ruth tells Naomi what happened that first day in the field, Naomi exclaims, "Blessed be he of the Lord, who has not failed in his *chesed*/kindness to the living or

to the dead." (Is the unfailing one God or Boaz? We cannot tell, and this ambiguity is important.) When surprised by Ruth, Boaz exclaims "The Lord bless you, my daughter," and ends his speech by swearing in God's name to find Ruth a redeemer or become that person himself. When he publicly announces his intention to marry Ruth, the elders and all the people at the city gate declare their hope that the Lord will make her fruitful; when she gives birth, the women bless the Lord one more time.

All of this invoking of God's benevolence is reinforced by the idea of redemption. The root *gal* (redeem) occurs 21 times in the story, always referring to human beings as redeemers, but no listener would fail to connect the term with the familiar epithet for God, *goel Yisrael*, the redeemer of Israel. It is also supported by the repeated verb *davak*, cling or cleave: Ruth clings to Naomi, Boaz tells her to cling to the girls in his fields, and the echo comes not only from Adam and Eve, but from Deuteronomy, where the verb is repeatedly used to describe devotion to God. The overwhelming effect in The Book of Ruth is that God and human beings seem to mirror each other. God's kindness, invoked by human beings, is also enacted by them. Or perhaps what is happening is that the kindness of human beings reveals the kindness of God.

But here we have also to consider another linked theme of the Book of Ruth: the idea that, as the 24th psalm says, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." For the Book of Ruth is an extraordinary illustration of a possible meaning of those words, a redeemed meaning, if I can put it that way, that acts as counterbalance or antidote to the usual biblical connection made between God's ownership of the world – of the land – and his power as "king of glory; the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." For the Lord has nothing to do with military might in the present story. There are no battles. And here I will be turning to speak of the book's poetry, and its deep ethical significance, if I can, as an amazing fusion.

When Ruth and Boaz marry, theirs is not just any happy marriage. For Ruth is a Moabitess, and for much of Biblical history the Hebrew people are commanded to treat Moab as an eternal enemy – "No Ammonite or

Moabite shall enter the assembly of the Lord," commands Deuteronomy 23:3 – both because this people stem from the incestuous union of Lot with his daughter, and are therefore identified with licentiousness, and because they refused aid to the children of Israel during their sojourn in the wilderness. Yet Ruth crosses the border between the land of Moab and the land of Judah and is not only accepted by the Hebrew people but given a place of high status. Boaz, moreover, as a genealogy tells us, stems from the union of Tamar with Judah – a righteous union into which she tricked him by pretending to be a prostitute when he failed to honour the code of Levirate marriage requiring a dead man's brother or other kin to marry his widow. The code Judah tried to elude is precisely the code Boaz obeys. Ruth and Boaz, then, represent boundary-crossing both geographical and moral. What is most marginal becomes the center. What is unacceptably transgressive becomes, in this story, welcome.

Now, what does *land* signify in this picture? Not that which is to be conquered. I want to suggest that it means *potential for life*, and that *fertile land* is what mediates between God and human beings. There is a leitmotif running through the story, in transformative ripples, which in poetic terms creates a charming music and in ethical terms a higher morality. I will try to suggest how this works, although it takes reading the whole book as if were a poem to hear what I hope to get at, and although the Hebrew meanings are in part effaced by translation.

First, in the opening sentence of the Book of Ruth we encounter a sort of verbal paradox: famine in the *land* (*ha-eretz*) affects the city of Bethlehem – *Beit-lechem*, which means *house of bread*. From there Elimelech goes to what most translations call the *country* of Moab but which is literally the *fields* of Moab. After the account of the deaths of Elimelech, the term is repeated twice, as Naomi decides to return from the *fields of Moab* because God has given his people *bread*. So there is this chiasmic opening movement of exile and return, of which the music is *land, bread, fields*, then *fields, bread, land*. The close of chapter 1 is a bit of recapitulation and the beginning of a linked leitmotif: "Thus Naomi returned from the *fields of Moab*...they arrived in *the house of bread* at the beginning of the *barley harvest*." In

chapter 2, this second leitmotif, the theme of harvest, moves forward. Chapter 2 continues to use the terms *fields* and *field*, though now we are looking at the field of Boaz, a verbal parallel to the fields of Moab. Now to this thread is joined active imagery of harvest: gleaning among the ears of grain, gleaning in a field behind the reapers, gleaning and gathering among the sheaves behind the reapers. Boas tells Ruth not to glean in another field, but to keep her eyes on the field his girls are reaping; she gets up after lunch to glean, and he gives order to his reapers to let her glean. The terms are like a refrain all through here, and at the close of chapter 2 comes the refrain of fulfilment; Ruth quotes Boas as saying "cling to my workers... until all my harvest is finished" and the narrator tells us she clings to Boas' maidservants and gleans until the barley harvest and the wheat harvest were finished. (Notice the continued "clinging," usually translated keep fast by or stay close to.)

We advance in Chapter 3 from harvest to winnowing on the threshing floor, and this term too is repeated: "go down to the threshing floor," "so she went down to the threshing floor," "let it not be known that a woman came to the threshing floor...." Alongside this imagery of separating grain from chaff which supports the theme of natural fruitfulness but also the concept of life-altering decision making, we have the crucial terms *goel/gal*, redeemer/redeem, recurring five times, and the "six measures of barley" Boaz gives Ruth, repeated twice. Lastly, as we move into the final chapter of the Book of Ruth, variations on the term redeemer and redeem recur an astonishing 12 times in the first 8 verses – along with the *field* of Moab from which Naomi has returned and the *field of Elimelech* which she is selling. Now here is a verbal reprise which is also a surprise in terms of plot. We have not been told of this field before – and almost the instant that we learn of it we learn also that whoever redeems this field must also acquire Ruth with it. Why have we not heard earlier of this parcel of land? Why does it appear only in the tale's final chapter? One reason is of course that mentioning it earlier might spoil our sense of Naomi and Ruth's entire destitution. A more interesting reason is that the narrator is moving us more and more deeply as the story proceeds, into issues of Jewish law and

ethics. Ruth's gleaning has been mandated by divine commandment, which insists that the collectivity of Israel support those who are poor among them, and that the stranger – the foreigner – be treated with fairness and love. Boas' superfluous generosity illustrates that he acts not merely according to law but according to *chesed*, over and above what is required. (One thinks of King Lear's demand that the rich "shake the superflux" to the poor, "and show the heavens more just.") Though the word is not used here, Ruth is in effect clinging to this field. Whoever takes the land, takes also the woman. When one man does not, the other does. And at the book's close the term *redeemer* is suddenly used for the child born to Ruth and Boaz.

What do these ripples of terms, *bread, land, fields, harvest, threshing, redemption, fields*, moving so musically through the text of the Book of Ruth, tell us about land? Several things. That land is in part collective, in part private property; but that collective borders may be crossed in an act of loving kindness, that fields on one side of a border are very like fields on the other side, and that the borders of private land ideally are not purely private: rather, private property in a world that follows God's dictates is the instrument of generosity. For Boaz, we remember, is simply doing what all Israelites are commanded to do: let the poor share in their wealth. Property in this tale clings to responsibility; fruitfulness is connected to human fruitfulness. Instead of the sharp divisions we are accustomed to encountering in most of the Bible between God and man, male and female roles, one nation versus another nation – divisions which, need I note, govern most of human society today as well – the Book of Ruth gives us a sense of blendings and continuum. Not either/or. Not this land versus that land. Land and fields are in themselves neutral, but can yield a harvest, harvest can be shared, sharing can itself yield a bountiful harvest: moreover, this imagery of fertility comes to fruition in the birth of a child, a son: *he* is a redeemer and will be the grandfather of the great redeemer King David. Ultimately, *land*, in this story, stands between God and human beings, mediating generosity – not only sustaining life and creating new life, but

making community possible, making links between communities possible, and linking problematic past to covenanted future.

To summarise: To the feminist reader the Bible is a massively patriarchal document: its God, its patriarchs, its heroes and warriors, its kings and prophets, are male. The commentators, theologians and scholars of the Bible have, until the day before yesterday, been male also. And yet that is not the whole story.

The Bible's irreducible excess, its contradictoriness, its multiplicity, make it splendid as literature, and also – for me – make it sacred, as a text which points toward the irreducible plenitude and unknowability of God. King Solomon, dedicating the Temple he has just finished constructing in Jerusalem, offers a prayer to God, asking protection for his people. This prayer contains one of the loveliest lines in all the Bible: "Behold," he says to God, "the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded." It is my prayer that fundamentalists and literalists of every stripe – Jewish, Christian and Muslim – might come to understand that the petty structures of our intellects, our theologies and our dogmas, can never contain God.

Where do women fit in? The story of male monotheism is a story designed to erase the memory of female power, both human and divine. The goddesses of the ancient middle east, worshipped for thousands of years before the appearance of male-gendered gods, were officially wiped out. But it is also the case that traces of their stories remain with us, oases in the desert. The Book of Ruth is one such story, an exquisite countertext within the overwhelmingly patriarchal design of the Bible, not least in its treatment of land. It is pastoral and idyllic where the dominant narrative mode is epic. It is erotic and woman-centered rather than heroic or legalistic. Or to put it even more radically, in Ruth, heroic impulses and legalistic precisions serve the cause of female eroticism, making this book a perfect counterweight and antidote to the appalling war stories of the Book of Judges. Ruth stretches our notion of community and nation, quietly endorsing the acceptance of the Other, the outsider. Here, for once, we learn how to make love not war, how to love and accept those who are conventionally supposed to be our

enemies. Finally, if elsewhere in biblical narrative land is to be conquered and guarded in the cause of nationalism and empire, here for once it is to be shared. For the earth is God's, the fullness of it is God's, and God in this story ceases to be a warrior and becomes a source of life and shelter.

REFERENCE

¹ See *Ruth: A New Translation*, Anchor Bible, with introduction, notes and commentary by Edward F. Campbell, Jr. Doubleday, 1975, 22-23.