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Bridging Worlds or Fusing Horizons? A Review of Three Recent Collections of Essays on the Pentateuch

Torsten Uhlig

SUMMARY

Reviewing three important recently published volumes on Pentateuch criticism, Torsten Uhlig highlights their merits and limits, evaluates their contribution to the interpretation of the Pentateuch and summarises some of the central issues that Pentateuch studies need to address. Among them,

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Torsten Uhlig stellt drei wichtige kürzlich publizierte Aufsatzsammlungen zur Pentateuchkritik vor und arbeitet ihre Verdienste ebenso wie einige Grenzen heraus. Er bewertet ihren Beitrag für die Interpretation des Pentateuchs und fasst einige zentrale Aufgaben zusammen, die der Behandlung in Studien zum Pentateuch bedürfen. Darunter zählt er die Notwendigkeit der Integration von diachronen und

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RÉSUMÉ

Torsten Uhlig fait la recension de trois anthologies importantes récemment publiées traitant de la critique du Pentateuque. Il présente leurs mérites et leurs limites, évalue leur contribution à l'interprétation du Pentateuque et résume certaines des questions centrales que les études sur le Pentateuque doivent aborder. Parmi celles-ci, il

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1. Introduction

For almost 100 years scholarship on the interpretation of the Pentateuch predominantly worked on the basis of the so-called 'new documentary hypothesis' as it was formulated by Julius

he raises the issue of integrating diachronic studies and narrative approaches. Moreover, while previous evangelical contributions to Pentateuch studies often focused on aspects of unity, Uhlig indicates the merits of acknowledging and integrating the diversities in a narratological approach. He concludes with some hermeneutical reflections that also interrelate with other disciplines of theology.

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narrativen Ansätzen. Gegenüber früheren evangelikalischen Beiträgen zur Interpretation des Pentateuchs, deren vorrangiges Augenmerk auf dessen Einheit lag, weist Uhlig auf die Chancen hin, die Differenzen im Rahmen eines narrativen Ansatzes ernst zu nehmen und zu integrieren. Er beschließt seinen Aufsatz mit einigen hermeneutischen Überlegungen, die auch zu anderen Disziplinen der Theologie in einer wechselseitigen Beziehung stehen.

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mentionne le problème de l'intégration des études diachroniques et des approches narratives. En outre, alors que les contributions évangéliques antérieures ont surtout insisté sur des aspects de l'unité, Uhlig montre l'intérêt qu'il y a à reconnaître et intégrer les diversités dans une approche narratologique. Il conclut par quelques réflexions herméneutiques qui ont aussi une portée pour d'autres disciplines théologiques.

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Wellhausen under enormous influence of Abraham Kuenen.¹ In a popular, yet hugely simplified form, the 'documentary hypothesis'² explains the formation of the Pentateuch as a process of several hundred years during which four main sources (or

‘documents’) were gradually combined together to form the Pentateuch (Genesis – Deuteronomy) or Hexateuch (Genesis – Joshua). Each of the sources allegedly contains typical terminology, expresses a specific theology and applies to a particular situation in the history of Israel.³ The first source was called the ‘Jahwist’, because it indiscriminately uses God’s name Jahweh (siglum: J).⁴ Originating during the monarchy of the 10th or 9th century BC, one of its concerns were JHWH’s promises (cf. Gen 12:1-4) as they were regarded as fulfilled in the reign of David and Solomon. The second source restricted itself to the use of the designation Elohim for Israel’s God (hence the ‘Elohist’, siglum E). It was supposedly written in the 8th century in the North in order to highlight the transcendence and superiority of Israel’s God over against Canaanite deities and promoted the ‘fear of God’ as the appropriate response to his acts (cf. Gen 20; 22:12 [!]; Ex 1:15-21). The cornerstone of any reconstruction of the Pentateuch’s history is Deuteronomy⁵ with its demand for the centralization of Israel’s cult (cf. Deut 12) and its alleged close relationship to the Josianic reforms (2 Kgs 22–23). On the basis of the latter, Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette had argued for Deuteronomy’s origin around 622 BC. Comparing Deuteronomy 12 with the seemingly indiscriminate erection of different altars in Exodus 20:22-26 on the one hand and with the exclusive single cult as a matter of course in Exodus 25–31, Leviticus and Numbers on the other, Wellhausen argued that J and E must predate Deuteronomy (siglum D), which – following de Wette – he dates around 622 BC. Consequently, the Priestly material (siglum P) must be the last source, which originated during the Babylonian exile. It is only the latter source which emphasizes monotheism and divides history into clear-cut periods, each characterised by a covenant with God.⁶ While there have been earlier ‘redactors’ (siglum R) who combined J and E (called the ‘jehowistische Redaktion’, R^{JE}) and JE with D (R^{JE D}), the combination of all four sources (R^{JE DP}) took place in postexilic times and may be related to the promulgation of the Torah by Ezra.

For a considerable time this hypothesis was regarded as the best explanation of the differences, tensions and contradictions within the Pentateuch on the one hand (hence, *different sources*) and the features of continuity (continuous narrative, interrelationships, verbal links etc.) on the other (hence, *different sources*). Astonishingly, it even survived the paradigm shift from rigorous

Literarkritik to form criticism and was consolidated in a simplified form by post-World War II studies on the kerugmata of J, E, D and P.

While doubts about the existence and shape of the Elohist (E) never ceased, criticisms touching on more fundamental aspects of the documentary hypothesis increased in the 1970s, questioning the date of the Jahwist and its relationship to other sources as well as the approach of source criticism in general. Parallel to these inquiries which remained within the scope of traditional historical criticism, the rise of the canonical approach and the intrusion of new literary criticism and narrative criticism respectively in biblical studies shook the foundations of the documentary hypothesis.

In the meantime the number of approaches to biblical studies in general and to the study of the Pentateuch in particular increased to an almost bewildering plurality and diversity. But even within the quite limited field of scholars discussing the genesis of the Pentateuch, the range of proposals reached a level which hardly any exegete is able to oversee and interrelate.⁷ While many who had been educated within the paradigm of the documentary hypothesis, faced with the evaporation of their foundations, spoke of a ‘crisis in Pentateuch studies’, more recent surveys appropriately point at the chances of the newly regained openness for new proposals and solutions.

In this context, the present article reviews the remarkable collection of essays *The Formation of the Pentateuch*, which according to its subtitle wants to ‘bridge academic worlds’ and highlights the contributions and limits of current discussion of the genesis of the Pentateuch to its interpretation (2. below). This review will be followed by reviews of two further books. One of these is limited to the interpretation of the book of Numbers and serves best to illustrate the currently discussed models of the Pentateuch’s origin (3. below). The other deals with post-Priestly redaction processes and highlights the interpretation of differences and correspondences as a central issue of Pentateuch criticism (4. below).⁸ The article closes with some general remarks and suggests a different metaphor for the challenge of Pentateuch criticism.

2. Bridging academic worlds? Review of *The Formation of the Pentateuch*

J.C. Gertz, B.M. Levinson, D. Rom-Shiloni and K. Schmid (eds), *The Formation of the Pentateuch*:

Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 111; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016); from here *The Formation*

The first collection to be reviewed is the most recent of the three. It is the outcome of a combined effort that included a research year at the Israel Institute of Advanced Studies from September 2012 to June 2013, two conferences, various panels at the World Congress of Jewish Studies (Jerusalem, Summer 2013) and the Annual Meeting of SBL (Baltimore, November 2013) to bridge the gaps between worlds that are noticeable in regard to Pentateuch studies. According to the editors, the current state of Pentateuch studies is not only characterised by plurality and diversity, but by 'the fragmentation of discourse altogether',⁹ a 'breakdown in a shared discourse'.¹⁰ They seek to reflect 'on methodological assumptions and the theoretical models that inform the discipline'¹¹ as the 'lack of a shared intellectual discourse hampers what might otherwise be a moment of opportunity in the creative development of the discipline'.¹²

2.1 The contents of *The Formation*

The Formation of the Pentateuch contains fifty-six essays, written by forty-nine scholars. These essays are organised into ten parts, each of which has its own introduction. Part One collects essays on external evidence (e.g. the contribution of inscriptions for evaluating the writing infrastructure in the tenth and ninth centuries; comparative material from the ANE; documented cases of text transmission and scribal activity in second temple Judaism). Part Two includes essays that deal with the relationship between diachronic studies and the Pentateuch as narrative. Part Three introduces some proponents and critics of dating the Pentateuch on the basis of the periodisation of the Hebrew language. Essays that deal with the evidence of scribal activity in the Dead Sea Scrolls and their contribution to the question of redactional activities in the Pentateuch are collected in Part Four together with two studies on the Pentateuch in Ezra-Nehemiah. Part Five is supposed to address evidence of redactional activity in the Pentateuch. Diverse essays on the nature of pre-existent material and how it was integrated in and influenced the developing Pentateuch are collected in Part Six. Part Seven is one of the most consistent sections of the book, as it includes essays on historical geography and the function of geography in liter-

ary texts as well as on archaeological perspectives with a restricted focus on the book of Numbers. Only very few essays discuss the relationship between the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets in Part Eight. The most extensive part, Nine, deals with correspondences between the prophets and the Pentateuch and their implications. The book concludes in Part Ten with essays dedicated to theological implications of the debate.¹³

2.2 Evaluation of *The Formation*

There is no doubt that most of the essays in this collection are of the highest academic standard. But what remains after this huge effort of bringing together different voices and worlds to contribute to the debate on the formation of the Pentateuch? That is the humbling experience of how many issues and questions are involved in interpreting the Pentateuch, or as David Carr puts it in his concluding remarks,

I am ever more struck with just how fraught and difficult it is for us to know anything secure and detailed about the undocumented prehistory of any text. The field is littered with the carcasses of dead theories by once-prominent pentateuchal scholars, and I suspect that many theories advanced today will fare no better. ... I think that all of us, whatever our models for pentateuchal formation, could use more humility about our reconstructive abilities and modesty about our respective research results.¹⁴

There remains a high esteem of the exceptional quality of most contributions. There remain illuminating interpretations of individual passages and relationships. One can highlight both studies by Jean-Pierre Sonnet on YHWH and Moses as agents of *Fortschreibung* in the narrative of the Pentateuch and on the latter's double closure;¹⁵ Karin Finsterbusch's reading of the Song of Moses in LXX and MT (Deut 31:1–32:47);¹⁶ Jan Christian Gertz's interpretation of Num 21:4-9;¹⁷ Angela Roskop Erisman's differentiation between historical geography and literary geography and its application to the Transjordan journey in Deuteronomy 2 and Numbers 21 and 32;¹⁸ Dalit Rom-Shiloni's contribution on Jeremiah's use of Deuteronomistic and Priestly texts;¹⁹ John Kessler on Amos 4 and Leviticus 26²⁰ and Shimon Gesundheit's illuminating introduction to Part Three.

There remains the introduction of two often neglected fields of research to a wider audience: the contribution of research in scribal activities as

witnessed in the Dead Sea Scrolls and other manuscripts from the Second Temple Period to the debate (Part Four) and the question of linguistic development (Part Three). Given their conflicting conclusion about the finalisation of texts, further interaction is indispensable.

There remains a compilation of different views on the formation of the Pentateuch (and related issues), that are often separated from each other. The main 'schools' do not engage in real dialogue in this collection, but it serves to highlight the often conflicting data related to the composition of the Pentateuch, such as the history of the Hebrew language, the emergence of a writing infrastructure, the relationship between diachronic studies of biblical texts and the different textual witnesses.

Most importantly, there remains the division of *The Formation* into ten parts which highlight some of the central issues that are involved in the discussion of the Pentateuch's formation.

2.3 Specific issues

Some critical issues remain to be addressed. While it is not possible here to engage with individual essays, a few notions are due to the general approach and its presentation.

2.3.1 Uneven introductions to the parts

It has to be appreciated that each part of the book is introduced, but the scope, amount and quality of the introductions vary considerably. According to the editors the goal of each introduction is 'to highlight the larger intellectual goals and rationales of the papers included'.²¹ One would expect to find here some notions of methodological differences, criteria involved and conflicting presuppositions that contribute to different interpretations. One would wish for a summary of the essays or at least an orientation as to what the general approach of each contributor is. A brilliant example is Shimon Gesundheit's introduction to Historical Linguistics (Part Three), which presents well the assumptions and issues involved in the debate about Classical and Late Hebrew and its implications for the formation of the Pentateuch. Bernard Levinson helpfully summarises the challenging contributions on the Dead Sea Scrolls, scribal activity and Second Temple Literature for the Formation of the Pentateuch. One would wish for similar introductions to the other parts.

2.3.2 Juxtaposition instead of exchange

The editors report a second phase in which the members of the research group studied specific biblical texts (the Joseph story; the plague cycle of Exodus) together 'for a significant amount of time'.²² Unfortunately, hardly anything of this exchange is recognizable in the present volume. There is almost no explicit reference to or exchange with other positions in the main texts. Many studies are confined to summaries of previously published monographs. To a certain degree the volume appears like the sketch of the different academic worlds instead of bridging them. One helpful means could have been the inclusion of responses by some of the main (disagreeing) participants.

2.3.3 Some parts are disappointing

As noted above, in general the quality of the essays is exceptional. This also applies to a large extent to the selection of the different parts, but some parts are rather disappointing. This applies in particular and surprisingly to one of the most intensely disputed aspects: redactional growth (Part Five). Entitled 'Evidence for Redactional Activity in the Pentateuch' one expects this part to address presuppositions of redaction history, criteria for diachronic distinctions and for differentiating between redaction or source criticism and so on. Instead, one gets only Jean-Louis Ska's essay on empirical evidence,²³ in which the examples only point to possible diachronic distinction rather than to its specific kind (redactional growth or compilation of sources or local expansion/glossing etc.). Apart from this, there is only a summary of Christoph Levin's rather isolated kind of redaction criticism that restricts its arguments to references to other publications of the author,²⁴ and a translated, recently published, survey of the history of post-Priestly redactions by Konrad Schmid.²⁵

Part Two leaves an ambivalent impression. Entitled 'Can the Pentateuch Be Read in Its Present Form? Narrative Continuity in the Pentateuch in Comparative Perspective', this part is supposed to address one of the major criticisms raised by synchronic studies against the formation of the Pentateuch approach, but it rarely engages in the methodological issues at stake. While Jean-Pierre Sonnet presents a fascinating narrative interpretation of God and Moses as incorporations of revision and exegesis in the Pentateuch, the other studies predominantly evolve around the claim

(of 'Neo-Documentarians') about the unreadable narrative of the Pentateuch. Ska, well acquainted with narrative approaches to the Old Testament,²⁶ objects to this judgment on the basis of E.M. Forster's differentiation between chronological order (story) and logical order (plot).²⁷ Jeffrey Stackert on the other hand refers to social science studies on reading comprehension and understanding in order to argue that the impression of narrative continuity in the Pentateuch is primarily due to human predisposition to attend to features of coherence.²⁸ These two studies at least raise methodological questions, although one would want to engage with Ska about the means of creating logical order²⁹ and with Stackert about the concepts of reading, literature and historical epistemology.³⁰ What is disappointing in this part (and in the whole book) is the fact that it lacks any engagement with those foundational studies in Biblical narrative³¹ which question the very premises of diachronic studies, namely contradictions, tensions and repetitions as criteria for identifying different literary streams or sources.

Finally, the promises of land in Genesis and Exodus and the search for their fulfilment (Ex 40?; Num 32?; Josh?), the close connections between Numbers 25–36 and Joshua 13–21, the odd content and placement of Joshua 24 in relation to the Pentateuch and the disputed relationships of passages in the Former Prophets (e.g. Jdg 11; 1Kgs 8) with the Pentateuch all raise questions about their implications for theories on the formation of the Pentateuch, which Part Eight aims to address. But apart from Thomas Römer's very helpful survey of relevant passages and theses on the relationship between the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets dealing with the related question about the origin of a Hexateuch,³² the outcome of this part remains limited. Only a single essay is devoted to Joshua 1 and its relationship to the (formation of the) Pentateuch,³³ while Baruch Schwartz's playing with the idea that the Pentateuch's sources continue in the Former Prophets lacks any substantiation.³⁴

It must be stressed, however, that many other parts of the volume are well put together and reasonably argued: Some illuminate the issue at stake from different points of view (e.g. Parts One, Three and Four) or illustrate one question with a specific literary corpus (e.g. the book of Numbers in respect to 'Historical Geography and Archaeology and Their Contribution to the Book of Numbers' in Part Seven).

2.3.4 Limited range of proposals

It is undoubtedly an achievement of the present volume that it combines approaches to the formation of the Pentateuch from Europe, Israel and North America. It challenges those working in European contexts, who tend to date the Pentateuch and its parts late, with proposals of earlier dates even of the Priestly material. It also raises questions about independent sources in the light of the European stress on inner-biblical interpretation.³⁵ Yet one may question the metaphor used by the editors for their project. They speak of 'bridging (academic) worlds', but the book rather resembles some bridges between isolated cities within these worlds, as other cities or areas remain unnoticed. Further projects would need to include other perspectives as well.

By and large the volume represents those who adhere to the 'Neo-Documentary Hypothesis'³⁶ on the one hand (Israel and North America) or to the late combination of different fragments by the Priestly source and its subsequent supplementation by further redactions on the other (Europe).³⁷ But in Israel, North America and in Europe, which also may include British and Scandinavian scholars, there are also scholars who pursue the traditional documentary hypothesis³⁸ or a refined version of it,³⁹ who reckon with a hexateuchal narrative thread before P,⁴⁰ who think of P as an early source edited by J,⁴¹ who ascribe the combination of different material in the Pentateuch to one single process⁴² or who opt for a much earlier date and process of the Pentateuch's formation.⁴³

2.3.5 Exclusion of challenges to diachronic explanations

Situated within the scholarly debate about the compositional history of the Pentateuch, the project takes for granted that the Pentateuch is the result of different processes over a certain period of time. But at least in those parts of the book that address the very foundations of these presuppositions one should expect some notes on proposals that question the reliability of diachronic approaches. This applies especially to Parts Two and Five. To discuss 'Narrative Continuity' (Part Two) almost without reference to or interaction with the works of Robert Alter, Meir Sternberg, Shimon Bar-Efrat and hundreds of narratological and rhetorical studies following them, is a serious flaw. Equally, any treatment of 'Evidence for Redactional Activity in the Pentateuch' (Part

Five) has to engage with literary approaches that reject disruptions, contradictions and tensions as foundational evidence for redactional activity and instead interpret them as sophisticated stylistic means.

2.3.6 Limited discussion of methodological issues and criteria

The most severe shortcoming of the present collection, however, is the sporadic discussion of methodology and criteria. To be sure, the differentiation and naming of the book's ten parts is an important achievement of the editors. The titles of the individual parts do indeed serve as a reminder of the central and diverging aspects involved in any discussion of the formation of the Pentateuch. And as soon as parts like 'Can the Pentateuch Be Read in Its Present Form? Narrative Continuity in the Pentateuch in Comparative Perspective' (Part Two) really interact with specialists in narrative criticism or when 'Evidence for Redactional Activity in the Pentateuch' (Part Six) is accepted as a serious inquiry, different academic cultures will indeed 'move toward a set of shared assumptions and a common discourse',⁴⁴ as the editors hope.

In the present book, however, explicit discussions of methodology, criteria and assumptions appear only occasionally. In his important essay David Carr notes that one can hardly expect to reconstruct complete sources like P and J.⁴⁵ But on what basis would it then be possible to reconstruct sources (or supplements) and on what basis would one falsify a certain proposed reconstruction? Jeffrey Stackert includes social science studies in reading comprehension,⁴⁶ but on what basis do we decide whether the texts of the Pentateuch can be compared with recent texts read sequentially sentence by sentence at a monitor? How do we decide whether Pentateuch texts were composed for a few expertise *literati* or for reading in a public setting?⁴⁷ Another example of the all too sparse discussion of methodology is Part Six. Here Joel Baden helpfully identifies some of the questions involved in the debate about integrating pre-existing literary material and its impact on the subsequent shape of the corpus,⁴⁸ but most essays that follow get lost in details without paying attention to the methodological issues involved.⁴⁹ Only in a few cases authors indicate the wider philosophical presuppositions and discussions involved.⁵⁰

2.3.7 Prioritising evidence and criteria

Reading the diverging approaches in this volume, one is struck by the overwhelming presence of conflicting results resulting from different methodologies and evidences. The anthology illustrates well the need to engage in a discussion about the primacy of criteria, evidence and philosophical assumptions. Just a few examples: Even if P can be integrated in the Classical Hebrew Language as a late-exilic or early postexilic source,⁵¹ linguistic dating excludes the possibility of substantial later supplements in post-exilic times because they would be traceable as Late Hebrew language.⁵² Textual witnesses of the Pentateuch in Qumran indicate a completion of the Pentateuch close to the ministries of Ezra and Nehemiah.⁵³ Some redaction-critical studies reckon with substantial additions in the Pentateuch even in Hellenistic times. Studies in scribal practices as they are evident from the Dead Sea Scrolls, raise the question whether there was a clear break between the conclusion of the Pentateuch and its textual transmission. All these inquiries deserve acknowledgment and detailed study, but how do they relate together? What determines how we prioritise the conflicting results? These questions need to be addressed once the differing approaches are juxtaposed, as this collection helpfully does – if there were a true desire for bridging.

3. Bridging Priestly and Deuteronomistic worlds? Review of *Torah and the Book of Numbers*

C. Frevel, Th. Pola and A. Schart, *Torah and the Book of Numbers* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament II/62; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013); from here *Torah and Numbers*

To a certain degree a second collection of essays, published in 2013, already meets the goals envisioned by *The Formation* as it brings together different approaches but focuses on the specific subject of the formation of the Book of Numbers. *Torah and Numbers* deserves attention for several reasons: 1) It focuses on Numbers alone, which helps to grasp the differences in the individual approaches. 2) As such it enhances the interpretation of this most neglected book of the Pentateuch enormously. 3) In almost all contributions intense interaction takes place with (some) other models of the formation of the Pentateuch so that the

strengths and limits of individual models come to the fore. 4) The volume fairly represents the diversity of the main current models. 5) The essays illustrate well that Numbers is the decisive test case for all current proposals regarding the origin of the Pentateuch.

The book is part of a research project called 'Traditions- und Redaktionsprozesse im Buch Numeri und ihr Zusammenhang mit der Entstehung des Pentateuch' ('Processes of transmission and redaction in the Book of Numbers and their relationship to the formation of the Pentateuch').⁵⁴

3.1 The contents of *Torah and Numbers*

The volume contains fifteen essays together with indices of sources and authors. The first contribution by Christian Frevel helpfully sketches the present state of Pentateuch studies, highlights core issues in contemporary research on the book of Numbers, and exemplifies its fundamental role in reconstructing the formation of the Pentateuch, which is well illustrated by the subsequent essays.⁵⁵ Subsequently one finds contributions from advocates of the traditional 'documentary hypothesis' (L. Schmidt, H. Seebass, H. Specht)⁵⁶ or refinements of it (Th. Pola, A. Schart),⁵⁷ different versions of models of gradual redactional supplementations applied to specific texts or themes (R. Achenbach and E. Otto, O. Artus, Ch. Nihan, Th. Römer),⁵⁸ a combination of different models emerging from the Balaam story (J.M. Robker) and a distinguished proponent of the 'Neo-Documentary Hypothesis' (J. Baden).⁵⁹ Finally, one leading scholar in the narrative analysis of Numbers is included as well (A. Leveen).

3.2 Evaluation of *Torah and Numbers*

This book is an indispensable resource for any interpretation of Numbers and the debate on Pentateuch criticism. It provides a representative collection of different approaches to the question of the composition of Numbers, it deals with important texts in Numbers, discusses some of its central theological issues (e.g. holiness and space; the relationship between law and narrative; the significance of the hierarchical order of priests, Levites and the people; the struggle of leadership; legal hermeneutics) and it provides some fascinating synchronic readings: the essay by Leveen is a highlight, but note also Schart and to some degree Seebass. In respect to Pentateuch criticism this anthology is of importance for several reasons:

3.2.1 Intense interaction and probing of representative models

An important contribution of this book is its fair representation of different models and the intense interaction with other proposals that distinguish many of the essays. As indicated above, the essays do not only cover supplementary hypotheses and the Neo-Documentary Hypothesis, but they also provide sufficient space for the classic documentary hypothesis, refinements of it, and other approaches.⁶⁰ The only position one misses is the position of the priority of P over Deuteronomy. Interacting with various conflicting models, many essays enable readers to compare these models and to notice their individual strengths and limits. In this article it is only possible to point at a few examples.

Seebass emphatically points at the weakness of recent supplementary hypotheses which cannot explain the distinctive characters of Leviticus and Numbers within the Pentateuch.⁶¹ If these books are the product of gradual additions, how can they be identifiable books with their own characteristics? Seebass also raises serious doubts about the alleged concentric arrangement of the Pentateuch. He presents his reading of Numbers, which works (almost) without any knowledge of Leviticus. In contrast, Achenbach and Nihan show how several legal texts in Numbers presuppose Leviticus 17–26 and Deuteronomy. In this way they undermine one of Seebass' central arguments. At the same time, however, they fail to explain the distinctive character of Numbers as a book.

Otto amplifies his previously published view, according to which there is no continuous thread of the spy narrative and the Sihon-Og episode before Deuteronomy. However, his hypothesis demands the existence of a pre-deuteronomic Sihon-Edom narrative, which Ludwig Schmidt exposes as an unlikely postulate.

3.2.2 Different models deal with a specific and limited literary corpus

The various essays of this book do not only interact with other models of Pentateuch formation, but they are also dedicated to a quite limited section of it. This concentration leads to several interferences and amplifies the comparability of the different approaches to the same texts.

3.2.3 Several contributions highlight decisive texts

The classical models for the composition of the Pentateuch, source criticism, supplementary hypothesis and fragment hypothesis, were developed primarily in view of Genesis, while it is the legal texts that play the decisive role in dating the different sources or strata.⁶² The present collection, however, substantiates a growing awareness of the fact that any hypothesis about the composition of the Pentateuch will have to be evaluated in view of its applicability to Numbers.

The problem of the place of Numbers within the Pentateuch was complicated by Martin Noth's thesis of a 'deuteronomistic history', the single literary corpus of Deuteronomy – 2 Kings. Prior to Noth, scholars usually traced the sources J (or J/E) and P into the book of Joshua, hence the common designation 'Hexateuch'.⁶³ When Deuteronomy – 2 Kings is seen as a literary work of its own, two questions need to be addressed in particular. First, how do the promises to the patriarchs regarding the land and to the exodus generation fit in when their fulfilment is not narrated within the same literary stratum? Secondly, what is the role of Numbers in all this, when there is no direct continuity from Numbers into Deuteronomy and Joshua? This puts Numbers at the centre of all debate. Some of its texts emerge as crucial test cases for all hypotheses on the origin of the Pentateuch/Hexateuch. This includes Numbers 21 and 32 and their relationship to Deuteronomy 1–3 and the book of Joshua, the relationship between Numbers 27 and Joshua, the Balaam narrative (Num 22–24) and its omission in Deuteronomy 1–3 (and appearance in Deut 23), the relationship between Numbers 27–36 and Joshua, legal texts (e.g. Num 1–10, 15, 18 and 28–29) in their relationship to legal texts in Exodus 16 and 31; the Covenant Code, Leviticus 17–26 and Deuteronomy 12–28 as well as a proper recognition of the underestimated vagueness of the actual death of the first generation (somewhere) between Numbers 18–21 and its narrative representation in Numbers compared with Deuteronomy 1–3. Several contributions deal with these texts and thereby represent well the importance of Numbers in current Pentateuch studies.

3.2.4 A remaining desideratum

The book contains a noteworthy example of close reading by Adriane Leveen. She includes considerations of *Leitwörter* and their distribution as

well as notions of spatial aspects within the narrative world and their relationship to the presence (nearness) of YHWH in the sanctuary. Her analysis results in a differentiated and nuanced reading of the text that is lacking in many diachronic contributions. At the same time Seebass' retelling of Numbers, to some degree, and in particular Aaron Schart present profound readings of the final form *after* taking in-depth note of the diachronic layering of the texts. While the question of the relationship between synchronic and diachronic studies is not of particular interest to the editors (see e.g. Frevel's introductory essay), the final form of their book testifies to its importance: Final form readings do not produce simple interpretations (any more). The question is to what degree attention to diachronic growth enhances those interpretations (e.g. Schart) or distracts from them.⁶⁴ *Torah and Numbers* in many ways presents the paradigmatic realisation of a dialogue between the main different approaches, schools and paradigms in respect to the one book of the Pentateuch (Numbers) that puts all models of development most severely to the test.

4. Bridging at all? Review of *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch*

F. Giuntoli and K. Schmid (eds), *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch: New Perspectives on its Redactional Development and Theological Profiles* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 101; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015)

A third collection of essays deserves to be introduced which, due to its focus on supposedly late texts in the Pentateuch, also touches on another central question of Pentateuch criticism: how are features of difference and contradictions, on the one hand, and coherence and harmony, on the other, to be related?

4.1 The contents and an evaluation of *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch*

The Post-Priestly Pentateuch is dedicated to the question of the character, extent and profile of texts within the Pentateuch that emerged after the production of the Priestly texts. While in former times interpretation concentrated on distinctive sources or editorial layers that were supposedly compiled only roughly and superficially, more recent studies have focused on the creative and theologically substantial contribution of late editorial work on

the Pentateuch. Potentially, this way of inquiry not only serves to highlight differences between texts but also illuminates how they function together and form a literary whole. The present volume is a tribute to the Catholic Old Testament scholar Jean-Louis Ska, who, one among few, combines expertise in narrative criticism⁶⁵ with investigation of the different sources, strata and editions of the Pentateuch, having dedicated various studies to the issue of post-Priestly redactional work in the Pentateuch in particular.⁶⁶

It is not possible to review the individual essays of this volume here.⁶⁷ Most contributors have presented distinguished proposals regarding the formation of the Pentateuch elsewhere. In this book they usually take up one example of post-Priestly addition⁶⁸ in order to clarify how this fits into their hypothesis of the Pentateuch's origin. The degree of interaction with other proposals varies considerably.

All studies in *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch* evolve around the central question in Pentateuch criticism: how do we discern, evaluate and relate aspects of difference, contradiction, dependence, unity and coherence within the Pentateuch. While all of them take for granted the distinctive character of P (the Priestly source), they differ hugely in respect to the question how the other texts relate to P, whether they antedate or post-date P, whether later texts try to harmonise different views with P or maintain or amplify differences and consequently, whether later stages of editorial growth represent a more harmonious and unified text or are hardly readable. Only a few authors reflect explicitly on methodology in their contributions; most notably, David Carr continues his meticulous pursuit of a transparent methodology that has to be measured against empirical data of documented cases of transmission history.⁶⁹ Noteworthy is also Bernard Levinson's observation that even attempts at harmonising different sources can be noticed because of the discrepancies they produce.⁷⁰ Furthermore, Christopher Nihan's contribution can serve well to illustrate the merits of differentiating between sources on the one hand (the understanding of *b^erit* 'covenant' in P and D) and elucidating later correlations (the understanding of *b^erit* 'covenant' in Lev 26).⁷¹

In general, one might question the often undisputed presupposition of many contributions, according to which texts that show no signs of agreement are earlier texts from different sources or editions, while texts that are interrelated are late

works of editors. But most of the studies heighten the awareness of the distinctiveness of texts as well as of those (many) instances of interrelationships. In this regard this collection substantially enhances the perception of the Pentateuch in its diversity as well as its interrelatedness and, thereby, serves well as a tribute to Jean-Louis Ska. However, this commendation applies only to terminological and conceptual/theological aspects. Unfortunately, the book completely ignores Ska's other field of interest: narrative criticism and its impact on Pentateuch criticism.

5. Bridging worlds or fusing horizons?

Reviewing some of the most important recent collections of essays on Pentateuch criticism shows how complex the interpretation of the Pentateuch is. In fact, the models of its origin, the methodologies applied, the prerequisites of interdisciplinary work and the sheer number of publications are so diverse and complex that even specialists in the field have difficulty keeping up with developments. Often, even they are only able to engage with a few other models and hypotheses. However, the aim of this review article is not to ridicule the current state of Pentateuch studies or to foster sarcastic dismissal of them. All the more as many diachronic studies search for answers to questions and issues which also concern more traditional or narrative readings. The present review serves to illustrate the complexity of unity and diversity within the Pentateuch as well as in its readings. It seeks to do justice to such a complexity and to embrace it in order to point out its advantages. Accordingly, the following concluding remarks highlight some of the current issues of Pentateuch studies as they interrelate with the concern for illuminating the complexity *within* the Pentateuch (5.1) and put the complexity of different reading strategies of the Pentateuch into broader hermeneutical contexts (5.2).

5.1 What remains to be addressed in Pentateuch studies

5.1.1 In search of 'pillar texts' to test each hypothesis

One problem of the present state of Pentateuch studies is that each model is applied to those texts that are most suitable to confirm it. It seems that different texts support different models of development. Thus, a central need in future Pentateuch

studies would be to identify those texts that are of particular importance in the discussion and to apply each hypothesis to the same texts while interacting with each of the competing models. These texts, which might be called 'pillar texts', would have to contain phenomena of difference and contradiction as well as traits of correspondence. *Torah and Numbers* comes closest to meeting this demand. Some of these 'pillar texts' and related questions may include the flood story (Gen 6:5–9:28), the relationship between Genesis 15 and 17, the Joseph story (Gen 37–50), the theophany in Exodus 19, the different texts of Numbers 20–21+32 and their relationship to Deuteronomy and Joshua; finally, Judges 11:14–23 needs to be related to each model of the Pentateuch's origin.

Here only a few remarks on three distinctive examples can be given. The flood story is a paradigmatic text in every textbook on Pentateuch criticism, but the different models of its development are rarely correlated with the artistry of its composition. Moreover, many exegetes find it easy to differentiate between two different strata (though the debate continues about their nature as sources or editorial layers), but some verses cannot be ascribed to either one of them. The nature of these verses and their position within the final form of the flood story need further consideration.

Genesis 15 and 17 form corresponding texts within the concentric arrangement of Genesis 12:10–20:18. In diachronic studies Genesis 17 is a foundational text of P, while the date given to Genesis 15 varies considerably from being part of the earliest source⁷² to one of the latest additions.⁷³ This raises the question of the relationship between these chapters at several levels and highlights a significant methodological question: Does the addition of a text with a different theological concept (here: 'covenant' in Gen 15 and Gen 17) correct or change the already existing text or correlate with it?

While Numbers played a minor role in Pentateuch studies for a long time, mostly because it is so difficult to differentiate between sources, it is centre stage in more recent studies. The highly diverse material (narratives, laws, festival calendars, aetiologies etc.), incoherent narratives, terminological correspondences with P (Num 13–17*, 20*, 27:12–23*), parallels with Deuteronomy as well as gaps (e.g. the Balaam story of Num 22–24 is lacking in the parallel narrative of the wilderness journeys in Deut 1–3) and its nature to serve as the bridge between the promise of the land and

the exodus on the one hand and the conquest of the land on the other make it the test case of every model of the Pentateuch's origin.

5.1.2 The need to correlate narrative approaches and diachronic studies

Especially the collections *The Formation* and *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch* are typical of most Pentateuch studies: there is almost no interaction between diachronic and synchronic analyses. Advocates of diachronic studies build their cases of different sources and redactions on observations of breaks and contradictions that from the point of view of narrative criticism are crucial elements within a story.⁷⁴ At the same time, narratological studies tend to underestimate the differences in style, terminology and theological concepts while concentrating on the plot and structure of a text. Instead, a narratological analysis of the Pentateuch or parts of it should include the observation that the texts widely ascribed to P stand out by their style, terminology and consistent theological concepts.⁷⁵ Equally, diachronic studies need to refine their criteria of inconsistency in the light of narrative criticism.

A particular area of fruitful correlation could be a question that, to my knowledge, has not been addressed adequately so far: In Genesis and Exodus it is only at the beginning of each book that a differentiation between strata is achieved with a considerable amount of general agreement. Both books begin with separate strata (Gen 1: P; Gen 2–4: non-P; Ex 3–5: non-P; Ex 6–7*: P) that are later interwoven (Gen 6–9; Ex 8–11 and others). The further one reads the less one can achieve agreement in identifying and differentiating individual strata. This feature of Genesis and Exodus also applies to Genesis – Numbers + Joshua as a whole. One may ask whether this coincides with a certain narrative logic. Accordingly, it makes most sense to introduce different perspectives separately at the beginning, while subsequent stories develop each perspective further and elaborate on how they interrelate with each other in respect to specific issues, challenges, people etc. Such a reading would not undermine either diachronic studies or narrative criticism but benefit from both of them.

5.1.3 The relationship between the 'world within the text' and the 'text within the world'

Another aspect that deserves more reflection concerns the relationship between the world as

it is depicted in the text ('world within the text') and what role a text plays within the world ('text within the world'). It is obvious that a text is influenced by the conditions in which it is written. It presupposes certain images and stories, is related to them or changes them.⁷⁶ At the same time, every narrative creates a world on its own and frequently raised concerns about reading the actual circumstances of a writer into a text ('mirror reading') are highly justified. Thus, a text is to be interpreted on its own terms as much as it cannot be treated in isolation.⁷⁷ How exactly these things are related to each other, however, needs far more consideration, which has to include other disciplines. The same applies to the related question of the relationship between history and narrative representation.

5.1.4 Integrating the differences and breaks in synchronic readings

The central task for any synchronic study is to integrate the obvious phenomena of differences and breaks in the Pentateuch/Hexateuch instead of concentrating only on the unity and coherence. Differences between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2–3, between Genesis 15 and 17, between Exodus 3–4 and 6–7, between the legal corpora (Ex 20:22–23:33, Lev 17–26 and Deut 12–26) as well as within Genesis 6–9, Exodus 5–12, Exodus 13–15 and Numbers 13–14 need to be addressed as central features in the narrative world of the Pentateuch. This also includes a narrative explanation for the different closures within the Pentateuch and Hexateuch (Ex 40, Lev 26, Num 26, Deut 34, Josh 24). Similarly, one has to take into account when different narrative threads start and end at different places and are interrelated only scarcely or at a few fundamental positions within the Pentateuch/Hexateuch.⁷⁸

One may point at the debate about the date and placements of the combination of the patriarchal and exodus narratives for illustration: In several recent studies it is argued that there was no literary combination of the origin of Israel with the patriarchs and with the exodus before the exilic P. Accordingly, P was the first to integrate the patriarchal narratives and the story of the exodus. However one evaluates some of the tradition-historical presuppositions and historical judgments in this debate, the thesis of a late combination of Genesis and Exodus is based on some certain features of the texts. A narrative approach cannot be restricted to highlighting the few texts that com-

bine both threads. Instead, one may highlight the value of the *relatively* independent presentations of Genesis and Exodus in the Pentateuch, which creates the perception of a double origin of Israel: On the one hand, Israel is the result of God's call and guidance of *individual persons*, the patriarchs (and their families) that eventually became a people. On the other hand, Israel is the result of God's salvation of the *people* from the bondage in Egypt. These narrative threads (or blocks) are interrelated, but at the same time both highlight an aspect that is crucial for the existence of Israel: it is founded by a gracious act of rescue of a whole people and also has its foundation on the faith of individual persons.

5.1.5 In search of a 'perfect text'?

Another question that needs more serious reflection concerns what kind of text one presupposes. Proponents of diachronic differentiations and narrative criticism alike often seem to take the presence (narrative criticism) or reconstruction (*Literarkritik* in source criticism and redaction criticism) of a 'perfect text' for granted. But how likely is it that writers in the Ancient Near East were seeking literary unity in composing a text without breaks, contradictions and alike?⁷⁹ Do their narrative and aesthetic conventions overlap with those of the eighteenth century and later (and more: with those of mostly male, white, Western exegetes)? Thus, more debate is necessary about concepts of a text⁸⁰ and their historical presuppositions and preconditions.

5.2 Bridging worlds or fusing horizons?

The editors of *The Formation* perceive a huge divide between different 'academic cultures' in the study of the Pentateuch. They seek to bridge these cultures, which is a commendable metaphor, for it acknowledges that different 'stand-points' are involved and it implies the huge efforts of movements (flights, conference attendances, workshops etc.) that undoubtedly stand behind the books noted here. But there are more issues involved in studying the Pentateuch than bridging geographical distances and cultures. Some of the fiercest controversies take place on all continents, e.g. about the relationship between diachronic studies and narrative criticism.⁸¹ Moreover, this metaphor does not disclose how the 'object of study' is affected but emphasizes the position of the exegetes. The Pentateuch cannot simply be 'moved' from one place to another, it is part of and

interwoven with cultures, approaches and historical developments. Furthermore, the contours of presupposed concepts such as history, text and narrative style are often implied rather than explicitly discussed or reflected upon. This plurality of approaches, interpretative issues and results needs not and must not lead to discouragement and isles of interpretation nor to sarcastic dismissal of exegesis altogether. Rather it could result in a growing awareness of the different 'horizons' involved in the interpretation of the Pentateuch. There are the horizons of historical differentiation, of narrative continuity, of similar and contrasting aesthetic conventions in the Ancient Near East, of different concepts of a text, and of the determination of intertextual relationships. One may even use the term 'horizons' in respect to different 'strata' in the Pentateuch and to different 'models' of its origin.⁸² As it is commonly agreed in hermeneutics that only 'if we respect the distinctiveness of the horizons of the text as against the distinctiveness of our own reader-horizon can a creative and productive interaction of horizons occur',⁸³ Pentateuch studies will be further enhanced when the presuppositions and outline of the different horizons are clarified as much as interaction between them is amplified. The books reviewed here have contributed in different ways to such a clarification and interaction and, therefore, serve well to illustrate the benefits and challenges of engaging the complexity of unity and diversity within the Pentateuch and within different reading strategies of the Pentateuch.

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Endnotes

- 1 For helpful surveys of the history of Pentateuch criticism apart from introductions to the Old Testament, see e.g. H.-J. Kraus, *Geschichte der historisch-kritischen Erforschung des Alten Testaments* (4. Auflage; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchen, 1988); C. Houtman, *Der Pentateuch: die Geschichte seiner Erforschung neben einer Auswertung* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 9; Kampen: Kok, 1994); with special focus on Deuteronomy within the Pentateuch: E. Otto, *Deuteronomium 1–11: Erster Teilband 1,1–4,43* (Freiburg im Breisgau etc., 2012) 62–230.
- 2 In the study of the Pentateuch the term 'older docu-

mentary hypothesis' refers to the beginnings with Astruc, Eichhorn and Ilgen. Their work led to an impasse in the late eighteenth century and to other hypotheses (fragmentation hypothesis and supplementation hypothesis) before the 'new documentary hypothesis' (German: 'neuere oder jüngere Urkundenhypothese') of Hupfeld and then Graf, Kuenen and Wellhausen modified the older documentary hypothesis. The designation 'new documentary hypothesis' is widely used in scholarship, but here we will drop the potentially misleading word 'new'. See the overviews in introductions to the Old Testament and Kraus, *Geschichte*, 152–155, 246–248.

- 3 This was Wellhausen's primary concern as he developed his hypothesis about the formation of the Pentateuch in preparation of his view on the history of Israel and her religion; hence the title *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, in which book he discusses the origins of the Pentateuch: J. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (6. Auflage; Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 1927/1981).
- 4 The English-speaking world spells the name as YHWH or Yahweh, so for them a siglum Y would be more meaningful.
- 5 See e.g. G.J. Wenham, 'The Date of Deuteronomy: Linch-Pin of Old Testament Criticism, Part One', *Themelios* 10 (1985) 15–20; G.J. Wenham, '...Part Two', *Themelios* 11 (1985) 15–18; and esp. Eckart Otto in many publications and reviews (see esp. in the *Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte*); e.g. E. Otto, *Deuteronomium im Pentateuch und Hexateuch* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 30; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000).
- 6 The primary layer of P originally received the siglum Q (*quattuor*, four) in J. Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (3rd edn; Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1899) 1, because Wellhausen assumed four covenants of God, hence 'book of four covenants' (*liber quattuor foederum*).
- 7 For helpful surveys see J.L. Ska, *Introduction to Reading the Pentateuch* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006); Th.B. Dozeman, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017); E. Zenger, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (8th edn; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2012) 108–147 (note that the ninth edition of 2016, pp.111–123 is less detailed!); and Th. Römer, 'Der Pentateuch' in M. Dietrich, B. Mathys, Th. Römer, R. Smend, *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2014) 53–93, esp. 64–93. For interesting correlations between important contributions and different conferences and occasions in the immediate past, see esp. Th.B. Dozeman and K. Schmid, 'Introduction' in Dozeman and Schmid (eds), *A Farewell to the Yahwist? The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation*

- (Atlanta: SBL, 2006) 1-7 and E. Otto, 'The Integration of the Post-Exilic Book of Deuteronomy into the Post-Priestly Pentateuch' in F. Giuntoli and K. Schmid (eds), *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch: New Perspectives on its Redactional Development and Theological Profiles* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 101; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015).
- 8 Other previously and simultaneously published important collections of Pentateuch studies include J. C. Gertz, K. Schmid und M. Witte (Hrsg.), *Abschied vom Jahwisten* (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2002); E. Otto und R. Achenbach (Hrsg.), *Das Deuteronomium zwischen Pentateuch und deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004); Dozeman and Schmid, *Farewell*; Th. Römer et K. Schmid (eds), *Les dernières rédactions du Pentateuque, de l'Hexateuque et de l'Ennéateuque* (Leuven: University Press et Peeters, 2007); S. Shectman and J.S. Baden (eds), *The Strata of the Priestly Writings* (Zurich: TVZ, 2009); Th.B. Dozeman, Th. Römer and K. Schmid (eds), *Pentateuch, Hexateuch, or Ennéateuch? Identifying Literary Works in Genesis Through Kings* (Atlanta: SBL, 2011); Th.B. Dozeman, K. Schmid and B. J. Schwartz (eds), *Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011); R.E. Gane and A. Taggar-Cohen (eds), *Current Issues in Priestly and Related Literature* (Atlanta: SBL, 2015); F. Hartenstein und K. Schmid (Hrsg.), *Abschied von der Priesterschrift?* (Leipzig: EVA, 2016).
 - 9 Gertz, Levinson, Rom-Shiloni, Schmid, 'Convergence and Divergence in Pentateuchal Theory' in *The Formation*, 2.
 - 10 Gertz *et al.*, 'Convergence' in *The Formation*, 2.
 - 11 Gertz *et al.*, 'Convergence', 2.
 - 12 Gertz *et al.*, 'Convergence', 3.
 - 13 For a full list and brief summaries of all essays, see Torsten Uhlig, 'Summary of *The Formation of the Pentateuch*' on the website of the *European Journal of Theology*. <http://www.paternosterperiodicals.co.uk/ejt-28-1/Torsten-Uhlig-Pentateuch-1.pdf>
 - 14 D.M. Carr, 'Data to Inform Ongoing Debates about the Formation of the Pentateuch – From Documented Cases of Transmission History to a Survey of Rabbinic Exegesis' in *The Formation*, 106 (Part One).
 - 15 J.-P. Sonnet, 'Does the Pentateuch Tell of Its Redactional Genesis? – The Characters of JHWH and Moses as Agents of *Fortschreibung* in the Pentateuch's Narrated World' in *The Formation* (Part Two); J.-P. Sonnet, 'The Dynamic of Closure in the Pentateuch' in *The Formation* (Part Ten).
 - 16 K. Finsterbusch, 'Integrating the Song of Moses into Deuteronomy and Reshaping the Narrative – Different Solutions in MT Deut 31:1–32:47 and (the Hebrew Vorlage of) LXX Deut 31:1–32:47' in *The Formation* (Part Six).
 - 17 J.C. Gertz, 'Hezekiah, Moses, and the Nehushtan – A Case Study for a Correlation between the History of Religion in the Monarchic Period and the History of the Formation of the Hebrew Bible' in *The Formation* (Part Seven).
 - 18 A. Roskop Erisman, 'For the Border of the Ammonites Was ... Where? – Historical Geography and Biblical Interpretation in Numbers 21' in *The Formation* (Part Seven).
 - 19 D. Rom-Shiloni, 'Compositional Harmonization – Priestly and Deuteronomic References in the Book of Jeremiah – An Earlier Stage of a Recognized Interpretive Technique' in *The Formation* (Part Nine).
 - 20 J. Kessler, 'Patterns of Descriptive Curse Formulae in the Hebrew Bible, with Special Attention to Leviticus 26 and Amos 4:6-12' in *The Formation* (Part Nine).
 - 21 Gertz *et al.*, 'Convergence', 6.
 - 22 Gertz *et al.*, 'Convergence', 5.
 - 23 J.L. Ska, 'Some Empirical Evidence in Favor of Redaction Criticism' in *The Formation*.
 - 24 C. Levin, 'The Pentateuch – A Compilation of Redactors' in *The Formation*.
 - 25 K. Schmid, 'Post-Priestly Additions in the Pentateuch – A Survey of Scholarship' in *The Formation*. See on *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch* below.
 - 26 Cf. esp. J. L. Ska, 'Our Fathers Have Told Us': *Introduction to the Analysis of Hebrew Narratives* (subsida biblica 13; Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1990).
 - 27 J.L. Ska, 'What Do We Mean by Plot and by Narrative Continuity?' in *The Formation*.
 - 28 J. Stackert, 'Pentateuchal Coherence and the Science of Reading' in *The Formation*.
 - 29 It seems to me that one of the central features of (Hebrew) narrative is to create logical order/relationship by other means apart from explicit causal markers, as Ska argues (cf. Ska, 'Some Empirical Evidence', 220-221). These are exactly the questions of methodology that are in need of being addressed more fully.
 - 30 Stackert's point of departure from a 'perfect novel of Jane Austen' as well as the experimental set-up of social science studies in reading comprehension, which confront their subjects with subsequent sentences on a monitor, raise the issue of comparability. Are Pentateuch texts composed for oral/aural settings or for a few *literati*? What do we know of epistemology and aesthetics in the Ancient Near East at all? What does the distinction between perspective and aspective perception contribute to the question of epistemology and reading comprehension in Ancient Israel? On the issue of ANE texts perceived as inconsistent by modern readers, see now e.g. J. Berman, *Inconsistency in the Torah: Ancient Literary Convention and the Limits of Source Criticism* (New

- York: Oxford University Press, 2017).
- 31 Cf. R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981); M. Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); S. Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989).
- 32 Th. Römer, 'The Problem of the Hexateuch' in *The Formation*.
- 33 C. Edenburg, 'Do the Pentateuchal Sources Extend into the Former Prophets?' in *The Formation*.
- 34 B.J. Schwartz, 'The Pentateuchal Sources and the Former Prophets - A Neo-Documentarian's Perspective' in *The Formation*.
- 35 It deserves mentioning that Molly Zahn questions the widely-used term 'inner-biblical exegesis' on the basis of phenomena of textual transmission in Second Temple Judaism; cf. M. Zahn, 'Innerbiblical Exegesis - The View from beyond the Bible' in *The Formation* (Part One).
- 36 According to the 'Neo-Documentarians', the Pentateuch is composed of four independent sources (J, E, D and P) that may have been supplemented, but were combined in only one editorial effort. See e.g. J.E. Baden, *J, E, and the composition of the Pentateuch* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 68; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009); J.E. Baden, *The Composition of the Pentateuch: Renewing the Documentary Hypothesis* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2012).
- 37 According to this hypothesis, only the exilic or post-exilic Priestly source for the first time combined the primordial history, the history of the patriarchs and the exodus in one narrative. In several stages the Priestly source was combined with pre-Priestly materials (smaller fragments and narratives), deuteronomistic literature (depending on individual hypotheses, this consists of Deut only or the Deuteronomistic History), in the course of which further additions were made to correlate Priestly and deuteronomistic material. After this, further local supplements or redactional layers may have been added. Cf. e.g. the pivotal studies by K. Schmid, *Erzväter und Exodus: Untersuchungen zur doppelten Begründung der Ursprünge Israels innerhalb der Geschichtsbücher des Alten Testaments* (WMANT 81; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1999) and J.C. Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung: Untersuchungen zur Endredaktion des Pentateuch* (FRLANT 186; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000) and the more general outlines in C. Nihan and Th. Römer, 'Die Entstehung des Pentateuch: Die aktuelle Debatte' in Th. Römer, J.-D. Macchi and C. Nihan, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Zurich: TVZ, 2013) 138-164, 138-145; Römer, 'Der Pentateuch', 69-89; J.C. Gertz, 'I. Tora und Vordere Propheten' in Gertz (ed.), *Grundwissen Altes Testament* (UTB 2745; 5th edn, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016) 193-312, 214-217.
- 38 Among the few who actively engaged with the more recent proposals from the point of view of the documentary hypothesis, see in particular many essays by Ludwig Schmidt in the last decade. See also Schmidt, *Das 4. Buch Mose Numeri. Kapitel 10,11-36,13* (ATD 7,2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004).
- 39 Cf. e.g. the so-called 'Münsteraner Pentateuchmodell', which is regarded as a development of the documentary model. According to this hypothesis there was a 'Jerusalem History' which already contained a version of the primeval history, the history of the patriarchs and the exodus in pre-exilic times; cf. in particular Zenger, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (8th edn 2012) 120-130, 189-231; (9th edn 2016) 123-135, who also mentions further advocates of this model.
- 40 Cf. R.G. Kratz, *Die Komposition der erzählenden Bücher des Alten Testaments: Grundwissen der Bibelkritik* (UTB 2157; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), English *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament* (London: Continuum, 2005).
- 41 Cf. G.J. Wenham in his commentaries: *Genesis 1-15* (WBC 1; Nashville: Word, 1987); Wenham, *Genesis 16-50* (WBC 2; Nashville: Word, 1994).
- 42 Cf. e.g. R.N. Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987); Whybray, *Introduction to the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).
- 43 Cf. e.g. J. Berman, 'CT 133 and the Hittite provenance of Deuteronomy 13', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130 (2011) 25-44; Berman, 'Histories twice told: Deuteronomy 1-3 and the Hittite treaty prologue tradition', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132 (2013) 229-250; P. Pitkanen, 'Reading Genesis-Joshua as a unified document from an early date: a settler colonial perspective', *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 45 (2015) 3-31; Pitkanen, 'The Use of Priestly Legal Tradition in Joshua and the Composition of the Pentateuch and Joshua', *Old Testament Essays* 29 (2016) 318-335 in addition to his commentaries on Joshua (Apollon Old Testament Commentary; Nottingham: Apollon, 2010) and Numbers (London, New York: Routledge, 2018); J.K. Hoffmeier, A.R. Millard and G.A. Rendsburg (eds), *Did I Not Bring Israel Out of Egypt? Biblical, Archaeological, and Egyptological Perspectives on the Exodus Narratives* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2016); Koert van Bekkum, 'Geography in Numbers 33 and 34 and the Challenge of Pentateuchal Criticism' in Klaas Spronk and Hans Barstad (eds), *Torah and Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2017) 93-117; D.I. Block and R.L. Schultz (eds), *Sepher Torath Mosheh. Studies in the Composition and Interpretation of Deuteronomy* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2017) and the forthcoming volume by M. Armgardt, B. Kilchör and M. Zehnder

- (eds), *Paradigm Change in Pentateuchal Research* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz).
- 44 Gertz *et al.*, 'Convergence', 4.
- 45 Cf. Carr, 'Data', 101.
- 46 Cf. Stackert, 'Pentateuchal Coherence'.
- 47 On the one hand this is a question of general approach to Pentateuch studies. Frank Polak ('Oral Platform and Language Usage in the Abraham Narrative' and 'Storytelling and Redaction – Varieties of Language Usage in the Exodus Narrative', both in *The Formation* Part Three) even uses the difference between an 'oral' and a 'written' concept as a means for identifying two different strata in the Pentateuch. This raises all the more the issue of criteria and assumptions on literacy and orality/aurality that is hardly addressed in the book.
- 48 Cf. Baden, 'Introduction' in *The Formation*, 608 (Part Six).
- 49 But see the essay by Finsterbusch, 'Integrating the Song of Moses'.
- 50 In particular Th.B. Dozeman, 'The Historical Geography of the Pentateuch and Archaeological Perspectives' and A.R. Erisman, 'Border' in *The Formation* (Part Seven).
- 51 Cf. the remarks in Blum, 'The Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts – An Approach with Methodological Limitations' in *The Formation*, 314 (Part Three).
- 52 Cf. the arguments in J. Joosten, 'Diachronic Linguistics and the Date of the Pentateuch'; W.M. Schniedewind, 'Linguistic Dating, Writing Systems, and the Pentateuchal Sources', which are hardly addressed in Th. Römer, 'How to Date Pentateuchal Texts – Some Case Studies'. But see the remarks in Sh. Gesundheit, 'Introduction' (all in *The Formation* Part Three).
- 53 Cf. esp. A. Lange, 'From Many to One – Some Thoughts on the Hebrew Textual History of the Torah' in *The Formation* (Part One).
- 54 A conference on this project was held at the Ruhr Universität Bochum on 12-13 April 2011 under the title 'Torah in the Book of Numbers'.
- 55 For a full list and brief summaries of all essays, see Torsten Uhlig, 'Summary of *Torah and the Book of Numbers*' on the website of the *European Journal of Theology*. <http://www.paternosterperiodicals.co.uk/ejt-28-1/Torsten-Uhlig-Pentateuch-2.pdf>
- 56 Ludwig Schmidt deals with the Sihon and Og episodes in Num 21 and Deut 2, defending a pre-deuteronomistic narrative of E in Numbers. Herbert Specht argues for Num 20* as part of a primary Priestly source (PG) and Horst Seebass highlights the distinctive character of Numbers, which cannot be explained by the supplement hypothesis.
- 57 Aaron Scharf presents an intense investigation of Num 13–14 which leads to a refined documentary hypothesis. Thomas Pola deals more generally with the theological conception of the primary Priestly layer (PG) and its supplementation (PS).
- 58 Reinhard Achenbach and Eckart Otto argue for their model of the formation of Numbers in respect to Num 15 (Achenbach) and the interrelationships between Numbers and Deut 9–11 (Otto) respectively. Olivier Artus deals with Num 32, Christophe Nihan argues for dependence of the tithe law in Num 18 on Lev 27 and Deut 14, and Thomas Römer surveys the texts that deal with 'Egypt nostalgia', concluding that all texts in Num 11–21 are of late redactional origin with no individual source contained in them.
- 59 In respect to Num 17 and its relationship to Num 16, Joel Baden seeks to show that even supplements do support the documentary hypothesis instead of redactional activities.
- 60 The second contribution of Frevel, 'Ending with the High Priest: The Hierarchy of Priests and Levites in the Book of Numbers', questions the late bridging of the concepts of priesthood in Exodus–Leviticus and Deuteronomy, as it is proposed in recent models of redactional supplementation (e.g. Otto and Achenbach, Römer *et al.*), arguing for the 'Münsteraner Pentateuchmodell'. In his analysis of the genesis of the Balaam episode, 'The Balaam Narrative in the Pentateuch / Hexateuch / Enneateuch', Robker comes close to the model of Kratz, *Komposition*).
- 61 Cf. H. Seebass, 'Numeri als eigene Komposition'. This article closely resembles the first paragraph of the introduction to his commentary on Numbers: Seebass, *Numeri 1. Teilband Numeri 1,1–10,10* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2012) 1*-24*.
- 62 Cf. the emphatic conclusion of E. Otto, 'Forschungen zum nachpriesterschriftlichen Pentateuch', *Theologische Rundschau* 67 (2002) 125-155, 154-155.
- 63 Cf. e.g. the titles of the works of Wellhausen (*Composition des Hexateuch*) and G. von Rad, 'Das formgeschichtliche Problem des Hexateuch' in von Rad, *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (3. Auflage; München: Kaiser, 1965) 9-86.
- 64 What John Goldingay noted in respect to redaction criticism in Trito-Isaiah needs to be considered also in Pentateuch criticism. According to him redaction criticism 'enables us to see things' and synchronic readings might end up in 'flat readings'. But solving 'obvious tensions' in a document 'by multiplying authors and life situations' may only generate 'a historical reconstruction "containing a string of flat positions"'. J. Goldingay, *Isaiah 56–66* (ICC; London etc.: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2014) 8; his quotation is from Miroslav Volf.
- 65 Cf. in particular Ska, 'Our Fathers Have Told Us'.
- 66 Cf. Ska, *Introduction*; Ska, *The Exegesis of the Pentateuch: Exegetical Studies and Basic Inquiries* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 66; Tübingen:

- Mohr Siebeck, 2009).
- 67 For a full list and brief summaries of all essays, see Torsten Uhlig, 'Summary of *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch*' on the website of the *European Journal of Theology*. <http://www.paternosterperiodicals.co.uk/ejt-28-1/Torsten-Uhlig-Pentateuch-3.pdf>
- 68 For clarification on terminology, one should consult the essay by Konrad Schmid, 'Von der Diaskeuse zur nachredaktionellen Fortschreibung. Die Geschichte der Erforschung der nachpriester-schriftlichen Redaktionsgeschichte des Pentateuch', as he surveys the history of post-Priestly editorial work and most helpfully navigates through the different and complex terminology.
- 69 Cf. D.M. Carr, 'Strong and Weak Cases and Criteria for Establishing the Post-Priestly Character of Hexateuchal Material'.
- 70 Cf. B.M. Levinson, 'A Post-Priestly Harmonization in the Flood Narrative'.
- 71 Cf. C. Nihan, 'Leviticus 26:39-46 and the Post-Priestly Composition of Leviticus. Some Remarks in Light of Recent Discussion'.
- 72 Cf. e.g. G. von Rad, *Das erste Buch Mose Genesis* (ATD 2-4, 12th edn; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987) 141 who ascribes Gen 15:7-18* to J but notes several inconsistencies in Gen 15.
- 73 Cf. e.g. M. Köckert, 'Gen 15: vom „Urgestein“ der Väterüberlieferung zum „theologischen Programmtext“ der späten Perserzeit' in *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 125 (2013) 25-48. For a lucid critical evaluation of current proposals, see D.M. Carr, 'Strong and Weak Cases and Criteria for Establishing the Post-Priestly Character of Hexateuchal Material' in *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch*, 19-34, 24-28.
- 74 However, note the methodological reflections in many studies of Erhard Blum, Eckart Otto's studies on the Pentateuch, and the new commentary series 'International Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament' on the relationship between synchronic and diachronic readings.
- 75 After all, 'the narrator's style' is an important aspect of narratology, as some of the pioneers of narrative criticism in the Bible have shown, cf. D. Rhoads and D. Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982) republished as D. Rhoads, J. Dewey and D. Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (2nd edn; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999) 46-47.
- 76 While the work of Mikhail Bakhtin has been introduced to biblical exegesis and hermeneutics in particular for his discovery of 'polyphony', juxtaposed multiple voices in narratives (esp. in Dostoevsky) and his insistence on the indebtedness of the author to his context, his idea of 'intertextuality' as dialogic interaction has been considered less. For an orientation see e.g. S. Sasse, *Michael Bachtin – zur Einführung* (Hamburg: Junius, 2010).
- 77 The need to relate these aspects can be sensed in such rigorous reviews as the one by Roland Deines, 'Rezension Boris Paschke: *Particularism and Universalism in the Sermon on the Mount. A Narrative-Critical Analysis of Matthew 5-7 in the Light of Matthew's View on Mission*', *Jahrbuch für evangelikale Theologie* 27 (2013) 265-271. For an attempt to do justice to both concerns, see S. Kürle, *The Appeal of Exodus. The Characters God, Moses and Israel in the Rhetoric of the Book of Exodus* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2013) esp. 7-8, 125-126, 193-195.
- 78 See e.g. the contribution of Sonnet, 'Dynamic' in Part Ten of *The Formation*.
- 79 Again Baden, 'Continuity' in Part Two of *The Formation* on the one hand and Berman, *Inconsistency* on the other, deserve mentioning here.
- 80 There are many controversies in humanities about what a text is and what constitutes a text; see e.g. the anthology by S. Kammer und R. Lüdeke, *Texte zur Theorie des Textes* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2005) and further literature there.
- 81 Note, for instance, how different Jewish scholars in Israel and North America, who advocate the 'Neo-Documentary Hypothesis', attack the narrative approach of mostly Jewish/Israeli scholars without even mentioning them (e.g. Robert Alter, Meir Sternberg, Meir Weiß etc.).
- 82 Every model of the Pentateuch's origin has a certain 'stance', either towards certain texts as points of departure (e.g. Otto and Achenbach: Deuteronomy as the focal point; documentary hypothesis: Genesis) or about the nature of editorial work (documentary and Neo-Documentary Hypothesis: editor as a compiler; redaction-criticism: editor as creator of new texts that 'harmonise' different views or change a certain perspective), etc.
- 83 A.C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992) 8 with reference to Hans-Georg Gadamer.