

**OUDE TESTAMENT**

ARMGARDT, M., B. KILCHÖR and M. ZEHNDER  
(eds.) — Paradigm Change in Pentateuchal Research.  
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The contributions collected in this volume are papers presented in an international symposium held in March 2017 in Riehen (Basel, Switzerland). Only Koorevaar's study was

submitted later. The title of the volume implies, first, that an old paradigm is superseded, namely Wellhausen's model presented especially in his *Prolegomena* (1899). Second, the authors do not indicate with precision which paradigm they propose, but they insist on the importance of empirical evidence.

There are three main types of contributions. A first group pinpoints the deficits of Wellhausen's paradigm, especially his chronology (older sources, Deuteronomy, Priestly Writings). A second group discusses the dating of texts, proposing, most of the time, an earlier, pre-exilic dating. A third group examines different aspects of the priestly literature and questions its traditional exilic or postexilic dating.

After the preface presenting the volume and all its contributions (VII-XXIII), a first series of articles is dedicated to introductory and methodological questions (3-76). G. Fischer opens fire in "Time for a Change! Why Pentateuchal Research is in Crisis" (3-20). In a contribution focusing mainly on general issues, he complains about the excessive number of publications, the multiplicity of contradictory positions and conflicting methods. He sees the roots of this crisis in a rationalist approach of the Bible going back to the Enlightenment. Another problem is the difficulty, sometimes the impossibility, of identifying the sources we are looking for whereas the final shape of the texts at hand is too often disregarded. The criteria for separating sources and redactions are sometimes ambiguous or inadequate. G. Fischer insists, as in several of his publications, of the essential function of the so-called Priestly texts in the Pentateuch in its present form. Personally, I think that this idea is not very far from that of Wellhausen when he says that P is the scarlet thread on which the pearls of older sources were strung (*Prolegomena*, 336; the text is quoted by Van Bekkum in this volume, p. 71, note 55). The same idea is present in M. Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichte*, 11. G. Fischer insists in his conclusion on the necessity of methodological humility and self-criticism, and on the idea that there is often unity beyond or behind the perception of multiplicity. This is perhaps not completely new (see Qo 12:12), and most of what is said seems reasonable. The attentive reader, however, may perceive, between these lines, traces of some unresolved conflicts with a critical reading of the Bible.

R. Averbeck's "Reading the Torah in a Better Way: Unity and Diversity in Text, Genre, and Compositional History" (21-43) is an attempt to read the patriarchal narratives against the background of Bedouin culture. A recent work in this field is Clinton Bailey, *Bedouin Culture in the Bible* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018). In a Bedouin culture, genealogies are essential parts of the tradition and traditions carry true historical memories. This is also the case in Genesis. Writing down these traditions becomes necessary only to cement together the different elements of an emerging nation. For this reason, R. Averbeck contests that Genesis and Exodus were combined at a late date. A critical reader may notice that we find in these pages many insights put forward earlier by H. Gunkel, H. Greßmann and others, but with very different conclusions.

Joshua Berman, in "The Limits of Source Criticism: The Flood Narrative in Genesis 6-9" (45-57) picks up one example of a text where, according to scholars from the time of Astruc, Eichhorn and Ilgen, two parallel versions were combined. The author challenges this idea, following perhaps unknowingly some earlier attempts in the same direction, as,

for instance, B.W. Anderson, "From Analysis to Synthesis: The Interpretation of Genesis 1-11," *JBL* 97 (1978) 23-39, reprinted in "*I Studied Inscriptions from before the Flood*" (ed. Richard S. Hess) (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994) 416-435. This essay was discussed by John A. Emerton, "An Examination of Some Attempts to Defend the Unity of the Flood Narrative in Genesis: Part I," *VT* 37 (1987) 401-420 and Part II, *VT* 38 (1988) 1-21. In a few words, J. Berman questions an *a-priori* application of theory to the text, neglecting other tools, in the first place a painstaking comparison with extra-biblical sources, for instance Tablet XI of the Gilgamesh epic. In his conclusion, J.B. admits that "this account [Gen 6-9] contains seemingly irreconcilable contradictions and a wide array of doublets" (56) but rejects the source-critical approach in favor of a solution proposed by S. Loewenstamm and U. Cassuto, insisting more on the final shape than on the prehistory of the text: "If aspects of the text defy our capacity to understand them, so be it" (56). I would add: and so be it too with those who try to cope with doublets and contradictions. Why not? After all, the Genesis account of the flood is surely less coherent and unified than the accounts in Atrahasis or in the Gilgamesh epic.

K. van Bekkum, "The Divine Revelation of the Name: Warranted and Unwarranted Confidence in the Literary-Critical Analysis of Exodus 3 and 6" (59-76), as J. Berman, combines methodological questions with the analysis of specific texts. This article is surely more informed about the history of research on the Pentateuch, quoting, among others, Spinoza, Astruc, Eichhorn, Hupfeld, De Wette, Colenso, Wellhausen, etc. The analysis of the texts leads to this conclusion, "For whatever can be said, it is clear that the connection between the books of Genesis and Exodus and the identity of the God of the patriarchs and of Moses are essential elements in the literary work of Genesis to 2 Kings. Untying these traditions is not without risk" (71). All in all, the author prefers Hupfeld to Wellhausen, "It was his [Hupfeld's] intuition that there is a *plan* behind the composition of Genesis, or, as I would propose as a working hypothesis, of the Enneateuch, a plan with a P-like framework from Genesis to Numbers and a dominant overtone of deuteronomistic historiographic tradition from Exodus to 2 Kings" (70). It seems to me that we find, in this proposal, echoes of I. Engnell, M. Noth and E. Blum. The author recognized the existence of "great breaches and irregularities" in the text but "it is hard to extract sources" from the final narrative unit (71). The problem is how to explain in a satisfactory way the presence of breaches and irregularities.

The second section of the book is dedicated to legal history (77-175). The first contribution by M. Armgardt is entitled "Why a Paradigm Change in Pentateuch Research is Necessary: The Perspective of Legal History" (79-91). After a scathing critique of previous scholarship in the field, accused of subjectivity, arbitrariness, circular reasoning, the author takes as example studies in Roman law. These studies have renounced the idea that there were multiple interpolations in the Corpus Iuris Civilis. He recommends to do the same in biblical exegesis. In a second step, he relies on the Egyptologist K. Kitchen and affirms that there are connections between biblical texts and first millennium parallels. On the other hand, he considers that the attempts to find connections between the Esarhaddon Vassal Treaty and Deuteronomy, just as the attempt to uncover affinities between the Law of Gortyn and the Roman Twelve Tables, have both

failed. In a more positive way, he goes to second millennium BCE to find some solid parallels to biblical treaties – just as G.E. Mendenhall, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Pittsburgh, PA: The Biblical Colloquium, 1955)? Eventually, he analyses the role of Judah in the Joseph Story who promises to “be a pledge of Benjamin’s safety” in Gen 43:9. The author finds a strong similarity between this text and Old-Babylonian deeds of the same kind. This would be a solid handhold for the dating of this text. However, is a single element, and perhaps debatable, sufficient for dating the whole of the Joseph Story? Is, for instance, the presence of a fossil, or the possible trace of a fossil, in a stone a key element for dating the whole building? The article does not examine the possible Egyptian background of the Joseph Story nor does it deal with its problematic reception history.

G. Pfeifer, in “The Pentateuch Paradigm and Ancient Near East Legal History – A Look Back from the Environment” (93-100) handles only problems of methods, more precisely the use of paradigms. It even seems that this contribution undermines in some way the project of this volume when saying that there is perhaps no need for new paradigms. What would be more useful might be a refinement of questions and methods. This is the conclusion of a reflection upon the context of Ancient Near Eastern law: “[...] we must face the lack of background information about the origin and functioning of the [legal] texts” or “Theory belongs to Greece, Mesopotamia gets away with method” (96). Or, to put it with L. Alonso Schökel, there is poetry in the Bible, but no poetics. Does it mean, however, that we cannot look for a logic and an organization in ancient legal systems, as we look for a grammar in ancient languages although no grammar of those languages was written in Antiquity?

B. Kilchör is one of the leading figures in this group of scholars. In his article, “Wellhausen’s Five Pillars for the Priority of D over P/H: Can They Still Be Maintained?” (101-113) he verifies his methodological assumptions in analyzing a series of legal texts. In the *pars destruens*, he undercuts Wellhausen’s post-exilic dating of priestly literature, a point that created most opposition as soon as that idea was presented for the first time, according to R. Smend, *Julius Wellhausen. Ein Bahnbrecher in drei Disziplinen* (München: Siemens Stiftung, 2006). The author goes along the line of Menahem Haran, “Behind the Scenes of History: Determining the Date of the Priestly Source”, *JBL* 100 (1983) 321-333 or Avi Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel : A New Approach to an Old Problem* (Paris: Gabalda, 1982). The five elements of Wellhausen’s system dismantled by the author are, (1) the place of worship; (2) sacrifices; (3) sacred festivals; (4) priests and Levites; (5) the endowment of the clergy. More positively, for our author, Deuteronomy depends on Leviticus, Ezekiel is posterior to Priestly texts, and Jeremiah presupposes P-texts as well, and not the other way around. In sum, in the Pentateuch and in the rest of the Bible, the canonical order is the only solid ground on which we can build up our hypotheses. “In the legal hermeneutics of a synchronic reading of the Torah, therefore, not only the Covenant Code but also the P/H texts constitute the background of the Deuteronomic Law” (102). This is what the author endeavors to demonstrate in this article. Whether he is successful or not is a question that I leave up to the reader to answer. I myself have some hesitations. In the New Testa-

ment, the Gospels come before Paul’s epistles. Is this also the chronological order? That there is a certain logic in the arrangement of books in the canon is without question. But is this the solution to all critical problems? I am not sure of the answer to this question, and this without entering into the details of the discussion.

The last study in this section is by M. Zehnder, “Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28: Some Observations on their Relationship” (115-175). It is the longest article in this volume. A long series of textual studies of both Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 from a lexical and structural perspective, of the several possible connections between the two texts and with prophetic texts, and a comparison between these two texts and extra-biblical material brings to the conclusion that (1) Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 are largely independent compositions; (2) Deuteronomy 28 might have had some knowledge of Leviticus 26, perhaps in an earlier version; (3) both texts can be dated before the exile and before the neo-Assyrian period (cf. 171-172). In this case too, the Law precedes the Prophets (and all of them?). Just a final remark on this article: the author himself acknowledges that in many cases “only tentative answers can be given, often with a considerable degree of uncertainty” (172). The author multiplies cautionary statements of this kind. The impression is that the building rests more on sand than on rock. Lastly, the author works without quoting some specialists in the field such as Lohfink, Braulik, Weinfeld or Hans Ulrich Steymans, *Deuteronomium 28 und die adê zur Thronfolgeregelung Asarhad-dons. Segen und Fluch im Alten Orient und in Israel* (OBO 145; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995). In conclusion, it seems to me that the merits of this article are more in the particulars than in the whole construction.

The third section of the book speaks of Torah and Prophets (177-223), a question already treated by several contributors in the first two sections. E. Otto sets off in this part with “Deuteronomy as the Legal Completion and Prophetic Finale of the Pentateuch” (179-188). E. Otto is an indisputable specialist in the field. His bibliography lists twenty of his own titles besides nineteen by others. The first purpose of this article is to reintegrate Deuteronomy into the Pentateuch and to make it a legal completion of the Torah and its prophetic finale rather than the “measuring stick” of Israel’s unfortunate destiny in the Promised Land. In this way, Deuteronomy, in its final shape, not only rereads and reinterprets the Code of Covenant, but also the Torah of Leviticus. In Deuteronomy, Moses becomes the first and most important prophet, the archetype of all prophecy. Moreover, an analysis of Moses’ song in Deut 32 with its many allusions to or quotations of, psalms, proverbs, and prophets, especially Isaiah, leads to this conclusion: “*Torah*, prophets, psalms and proverbs now speak together as the word of God announcing Israel’s salvation after all its doom” (186). This fact corrects the impression that God confirms only Moses’ announcement of doom. Deuteronomy is therefore the finale of the Pentateuch and connects it “to the rest of the emerging canon of the Hebrew Bible” (186). It is certainly difficult to deny E. Otto’s competence and it was probably natural for him to give Deuteronomy the lion’s share after studying this book for so many years. Some would perhaps add a few nuances here and there. But this article is surely one of the most thought-provoking in this volume.

K. Bergland, “Jeremiah 34 Originally Composed as a Legal Blend of Leviticus 25 and Deuteronomy 15” (189-

205) is a summary of the author's thesis, *Reading as a Disclosure of the Thoughts of the Heart: Proto-Halakhic Reuse and Appropriation between Torah and the Prophets* (BZAR 23; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2019). This article focuses entirely on Jeremiah 34:8-22. The author contests Wellhausen's chronological order, namely Exod 21, Deut 15, Jer 34 and Lev 25. On the contrary, "I will contend that there is a reuse of both Lev 25 and Deut 15 in Jer 34, and that this reuse cannot be separated from the original composition of Jer 34 without collapsing the passage itself" and "And by arguing for the priority of the Pentateuch and it being reused in the prophets, we challenge Wellhausen's romantic idea of the originality of the prophets" (190). Lev 25 is reutilized to insist on God's charge against re-enslavement. In this, the author is close to M. Zehnder's article, he follows the approach of B.M. Levinson, "Zedekiah's Release of Slaves as the Babylonians Besiege Jerusalem: Jeremiah 34 and the Formation of the Pentateuch", in *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Rise of the Torah* (eds. P. Dubovský – D. Markl – J.P. Sonnet) (FAT 107; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016) 313-327, and is very critical towards Simeon Chavel, "'Let My People Go!' Emancipation, Revelation, and Scribal Activity in Jeremiah 34.8-14", *JSOT* 76 (1997) 71-95.

In my opinion, there are several unsolved problems with this thesis. Jer 34:8-14 presupposes a situation which is very different from that of the laws in Lev 25 and Deut 15. In Jeremiah 34, the manumission of slaves (1) is the effect of a royal decree, "a one-off decree prompted by a particular situation"; see B. Jackson, "Justice and Righteousness in the Bible: Rule of Law or Royal Paternalism?" *ZAR* 4 (1998) 218-262; (2) the edict does not mention at all the cycle of six/seven years (cf. Deut 15:12); (3) it is the stipulation of a covenant concluded by the king with the people, in Jerusalem, not the enactment of a law; (4) it is abrogated without further ado by those who endorsed it; one of the main points of Jeremiah's oracle, actually, is the opposition between this kind of covenant and the covenant associated with Exodus (Jer 34:12-14); (5) what about the relevant differences between the Masoretic text and the LXX?

Carsten Vang, "The Non-Prophetic Background for the King Law in Deut 17:14-20" (207-223) concludes this section. This time, the investigation starts with the Pentateuch and not with a prophetic text as in Bergland's study. Generally, scholars interpret the King Law in Deuteronomy as a prophetic reaction to some negative experiences of kingship, dated either to the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE, to the exile, or to the postexilic period. For the author, on the contrary, "A more plausible background to the King Law should perhaps be sought in pre-monarchic circles in ancient Israel. It appears to stem from a period where Israel has not yet any direct experience with monarchy as governmental system but would be tempted to adopt the value system of ancient Near Eastern kingship together with the very notion of royal government" (208). This is repeated in the conclusion, "Deut 17:15 in particular and the restraints in King Law make best sense against the backdrop of a pre-monarchical background" (220) especially because there are no clear allusions to prophetic criticisms of kingship. This study, as some others, insists often on the fragility of its argumentations and conclusions. What is not explained, in my view, is the preservation and transmission of this text during the whole monarchic period.

The fourth and last section of the volume broaches *Dating Issues* (225-338). A first contribution by H.J. Koorevaar,

"Steps for Dating the Books of the Pentateuch: A Literary and Historical Canonical Approach" (227-242) deals uniquely with methodological issues. First, he pinpoints the weaknesses of Wellhausen's classical documentary hypothesis. Of the four sources, only D can be identified with certainty. The author also considers that dating is first of all a literary question. From a literary perspective, Genesis is part of a series of books that finishes with Kings. Koorevaar argues that the Pentateuch forms a triptych, Genesis and Deuteronomy surrounding the three central books, Exodus-Leviticus-Numbers. Each of these books or groups of books requires a different dating. In the second part of this study, the author suggests five literary-canonical criteria to address this question. (1) What is the last-mentioned event in the book? (2) What are the possible indications about the time of the author? (3) What is the place and country in which the book was written by its author? (4) A schematic presentation of all temporal remarks. (5) What is the ratio or necessity for the proposed date? There are surely several interesting points in these reflections. I just wonder why this study does not mention empirical evidence and extra-biblical witnesses, since this was part of the initial project.

L. Peterson, "The Linguistic Profile of the Priestly Narrative of the Pentateuch" (243-264) is a summary of a forthcoming PhD thesis, *Syntax of the Verb in the Priestly Narrative of the Pentateuch – A Diachronic Study*. The work builds upon previous research in the field. Special mention should be done of A. Hurvitz with fourteen titles in her bibliography; J. Joosten with ten titles; and M. Eskhult with six titles. R.E. Longacre and A. Niccacci are also much present. This means to say that the author rejects Wellhausen's idea that P projects into a Mosaic past a series of postexilic institutions (see 259, n. 51). On the contrary, "[...] the possibility of an author in the LBH [Late Biblical Hebrew] period consciously avoiding features of LBH verbal syntax – let alone having a complete mastery of SBH [Standard Biblical Hebrew] verbal syntax – would have been highly unlikely, if not non-existent" and "Thus, it is safe to conclude that the syntax of the verb in the Priestly Narrative of the Pentateuch reflects Standard Biblical Hebrew Usage" (260).

The analyses are conscientious and meticulous, undoubtedly. From my part, I would simply refer to Alexander Rofé, "Not by Language Alone: The Dating of Biblical Sources", in Juha Pakkala – Martti Nissinen (eds.), *Houses Full of Good Things: Essays in Memory of Timo Veijola* (Helsinki: The Finnish Exegetical Society – Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008) 656-665. Let me mention some other cases that could oblige to add some nuances to what is affirmed in this article. Sumerian, for instance, was used as an official, academic and erudite written language until the first century CE whereas it had disappeared as a spoken language around 2000 BCE. It had survived circa 2000 years. Similar phenomena can be observed in Antiquity in the case of Hieratic and Demotic Egyptian and, closer to us, with Classical and colloquial or vernacular Arabic, or with Dimotiki – Demotic – and Katharevousa Greek. Latin is still used in some official documents of the Catholic Church even in our days. As for Latin, Renaissance and humanistic Latin is surely much closer to Cicero's language than Medieval Latin, but it is surely more recent. The evolution of a language is rarely linear.

J. Retsö grapples with a similar problem in "The Tabernacle and the Dating of P" (265-286). Here is a summary of



his main thesis: “P’s sanctuary is probably an alternative to the (first) Jerusalem temple while it was standing, the cult of which was not acknowledged by some circles. The image of the restored temple in the book of Ezekiel may in fact be a Jerusalemite answer to the ideal sanctuary of P” (281-282). After a close reading of the text, the author concludes that the Holy of Holies is a canopy on four columns and with a cloth-covering. Inside, the *kappōret* is a standing plate with two cherubs at each side. The *kappōret*, therefore, is not the cover of a chest, the *’arōn*, but a standing item, perhaps with some pictures on it. This kind of object was vigorously condemned from 600 BCE onwards. This is an argument in favor of an early date. This conclusion may come as a surprise to many of us, since it would mean that P is at loggerheads with the official cult in Jerusalem. Who preserved these long texts for many centuries? And there is no serious acknowledgement, in this article, of the many discrepancies between the Masoretic text and the Septuagint, especially in Exod 37-40 (cf. 266, n. 4).

With J. Bergsma, “A ‘Samaritan’ Pentateuch? The Implications of the Pro-Northern Tendency of the Common Pentateuch” (287-300) we breathe again a pre-exilic atmosphere. Over against a common tendency to ascribe the final stages in the composition of the Pentateuch to some Jerusalem circles, especially priestly groups, the author points out several facts that go in another direction. (1) Jerusalem and its temple are never mentioned in the Pentateuch whereas other sites, especially Shechem, are; (2) Joseph is surely more important than Juda, especially in Gen 37-50, for instance in Gen 48; (3) Joshua is preferred to Caleb; (4) there is no trace of a rivalry between Judaeans and Samaritans/Samaritans in our Pentateuch. (5) The Book of Jubilees, on the other hand, offers by contrast a version of Pentateuchal traditions heavily influenced by Jerusalem circles. Here is the conclusion, “It is necessary, therefore, to look for the origin of the Common Pentateuch in the shared cultural tradition in an earlier (pre-exilic) period of the history of Israel and Judah. This would agree well with the mounting evidence that the exilic prophetic books (Ezekiel, Jeremiah, second Isaiah, and others) already knew and drew upon various pentateuchal texts and traditions” (298).

This is fine, of course, and based on careful analyses. Personally, I would have liked something more substantial on the differences between the Samaritan Pentateuch and our Pentateuch, especially in Gen 18:3, Exod 7-11, 18 and 20, or in the Samaritan version of the present or future election by YHWH of a place of worship (Deut 12:5, 11, 21...). Other question, when and how did this Samaritan/Samaritan Pentateuch become the official Pentateuch of the Jewish synagogue?

S. Richter, “What’s Money Got to Do with It? Economics and the Question of the Provenance of Deuteronomy in the Neo-Babylonian and Persian Periods” (301-321). The main idea of this essay is termed in this way, “But the dispersion of the 586 BCE survivors throughout the region; the collapse of the *bêt ’āb* [*sic*] and larger kinship systems which created functioning villages and community-wide infrastructure, and most importantly, the lack of any known operating cult site as a center for in-kind based taxation and redistribution belies any real comparison with the economy assumed and portrayed in the Book of Deuteronomy” (307). The best date for *Urdeuteronomium* is therefore in the transition period between Iron I (c. 1200-1000 BCE) and Iron IIA (c. 1000-

925 BCE). This is based mostly on archaeological data and on a study of the economy, the organization of the society, the cult, the tax-system and currency or monetary systems. This instructive article contains excellent pieces of information. If there is a problem, it is again with the transmission of the text. Texts were copied for centuries, for sure, but not only for “archaeological” reasons. They had also a *raison d’être* for present and future generations. What is the reason for preserving such alleged archaic documents for so long a time?

P. Pitkänen, “Reconstructing the Social Contexts of the Priestly and Deuteronomistic Materials in a Non-Wellhausenian Setting” (323-338) plays a somewhat different music to the other essays. The author postulates that the Covenant Code (Exod 21-23) and the Ritual Decalogue (Exod 34) are earlier than both P and D and were used by both P and D. H is a development of P. Moreover, Genesis-Joshua is a literary unified composition and a blueprint of settler colonialism. It has two authors who worked together, the one from priestly circles writing Genesis-Numbers and the other from Deuteronomistic circles writing Deuteronomy and Joshua. I have the impression of having come across something similar somewhere else... but the author does not mention many of the authors I know. As for the social contexts, P/H and D offer similar images of a stratified society but with egalitarian tendencies. The author quotes J. Berman but not Norman K. Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel 1250-1050 B.C.E.* (London: SCM, 1979). The date proposed for the writing of these documents is sometime before 1050 BCE, before the disaster at Aphek (1 Sam 4), when Shiloh was a prominent cultic place (Josh 18:1, 8-19; 19:51). For our author, the setting of the tent of meeting in Shiloh can be seen as a restoration of creation after the fall described in Gen 3. Later additions and developments cannot be excluded. Writing was already existing in this early period (cf. Khirbet Qeiyafa), most probably on perishable materials and therefore no longer extant. Archaeology, according to the author, cannot provide us with unequivocal pieces of evidence and the utopic ideas in the written documents may have been those of a restricted circle. This is the reason why they did not leave many visible traces. The P/H literature was the work of priests in the South, and D of Levites in the North, an idea supported by location of priestly and Levitical cities in Josh 21. Both priests and Levites were at the service of the tent of meeting in Shiloh. Yahwistic and Elohist traditions were probably oral traditions collected and compiled by priestly and Levitical writers.

I confess that I felt some dizziness in trying to follow the meanders of an exposition which remains conjectural even in the author’s mind: “This paper has outlined a *possible* way of looking at and reconstructing the social context of the priestly and deuteronomistic materials [...]” (335, italics mine). The author also uses a very idiosyncratic version of Shakespeare’s language. As for the content, many questions remain open to discussion, for instance, and to mention only one of them, the historical value of the book of Joshua.

The volume is provided with an index of ancient sources and an index of modern authors.

All in all, I am tempted to say that the contributors of this volume tend to burn what the former generation worshipped and to worship what that generation had burnt, to plagiarize a famous saying by Remigius of Reims. In a few words, the opposition to Wellhausen is not new. Besides R. Smend’s

monograph mentioned earlier, it would be useful to consult John W. Rogerson, *Old Testament Criticism in the Nineteenth Century: England and Germany* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1985). The paradigm is changing, perhaps, but it has changed already many times and the question is now whether this change is going backwards or forwards. As usual in the case of a collection of articles, some contributions are good and others are better. The best essays, however, are those that can combine a good knowledge of various exegetical traditions with new discoveries, either in archaeology, in a comparison with extra-biblical sources, or in the field of text criticism (Qumran, LXX, Samaritan Pentateuch).

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