

Critical Remarks on a New Introduction to the Old Testament*

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Summary

This review article presents the recent German critical introduction to the structure and formation of the Hebrew Bible and the Old Testament Apocrypha. It situates this book within the context of the modern research on the Old Testament and evaluates the various theories for the tradition- and composition history of the individual writings in the Old Testament, which Rudolf Smend, Thomas Römer, Walter Dietrich, and Hans-Peter Mathys discuss in their work.

The present work¹ is a completely revised edition of Rudolf Smend's introduction to the Old Testament, which first appeared in 1978 and was released in its fourth and final edition in 1989.² Apart from the three-volume *Grundriss der Einleitung* by the Marburg Old Testament scholar Otto Kaiser (b. 1924) and the revised editions of Werner H. Schmidt's (b. 1935) and Rolf Rendtorff's (1925–2014) *Einführungen*,³ Smend's work from 1989 is the last German-language critical introduction to the Old Testament by a single author. In order to do justice to the significant diversification of Old Testament research and the flood of publications stimulated by internationalization and digitalization, in 1995 the Roman Catholic biblical scholar Erich Zenger (d. 2010) introduced a paradigm shift by distributing the writing of an introduction to the Old Testament among a group of twelve authors.⁴ Zenger's approach was followed by Thomas Römer, Jean-Daniel Macchi, and Christophe Nihan, who edited an introduction to the

* I warmly thank Stephen Germany for the English translation of this article.

- 1 Walter Dietrich, Hans-Peter Mathys, Thomas Römer, Rudolf Smend, *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments*. Neuausgabe, Theologische Wissenschaft, Bd. 1, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 2014, Paperback, 594 Pages, 36,99 €, ISBN 978-3-17-020354-9.
- 2 R. Smend, *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments*. Vierte, durchgesehene und durch einen Literaturnachtrag ergänzte Auflage, ThW 1, Stuttgart *et al.* 1989.
- 3 O. Kaiser, *Grundriß der Einleitung in die kanonischen und deuterokanonischen Schriften des Alten Testaments*, I–III, Gütersloh 1992.1994; W. H. Schmidt, *Einführung in das Alte Testament*, Berlin 1978 (5., erweiterte Auflage 1995); R. Rendtorff, *Das Alte Testament, Eine Einführung*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1983 (7. Auflage 2007).
- 4 E. Zenger *et al.*, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, KStTh 1,1, Stuttgart 1995. This work has been revised a number of times and is currently in its ninth edition, which was published in 2015 and edited by Christian Frevel.

Old Testament with 18 authors.⁵ With the participation of four authors, *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments*, which was initiated by the Bernese Old Testament scholar Walter Dietrich (b. 1944), occupies a middle ground between the works of Smend and Kaiser on the one hand and those of Zenger *et al.* and Römer *et al.* on the other. As such, it maintains a stronger literary and stylistic consistency, albeit without achieving the authorial unity of the old classics, to which could be added the monumental works of Otto Eissfeldt, Robert Henry Pfeiffer, Adolphe Lods, or Aage Bentzen from the past several generations.⁶ In comparison to Smend's earlier monographic versions of *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments*, the "revised edition" has grown to twice the length of the latter. It has remained faithful to the specific approach of Smend's book insofar as it consistently begins with the so-called "final form" of the Old Testament and its individual books and traces the process of its formation backwards from the presumably latest layers to the oldest attainable kernels of tradition. In this respect, adequate consideration is taken of redaction-critical research, which reveals the nature of Israelite-Jewish literature to be traditional literature characterized by continuous interpretation and adaptation. The potential that redaction-critical research has for elucidating the processes of textual growth in the scriptures of early Judaism, as well as for reflecting social and cultural history, has not yet been fully realized. Thus, the work of Dietrich and his colleagues does not begin with a presentation of the "pre-literary stages" (i. e., *Gattungen*; so, e. g., Eissfeldt) or of the "presuppositions of Old Testament literature" (land, history, language, writings, scribal practices, tradents, oral tradition, text; so, e. g., Kaiser) but rather with the canon and text of the Old Testament.

In contrast to a truly *literary-historical* approach, which, following the program of Hermann Gunkel (1906)⁷ seeks to correlate Israelite-Jewish literature with contemporary historical events and thus provides a genetic diachronic treatment of individual texts without regard to book boundaries (so, e. g., Johannes Hempel, Adolphe Lods, Georg Fohrer and more recently Konrad Schmid and David M. Carr),⁸ Dietrich *et al.* follow the principle of the classical histori-

5 Th. Römer *et al.*, Introduction à l'Ancien Testament, Genf 2004 (2009, German: Einleitung in das Alte Testament, Zürich 2013).

6 O. Eissfeldt, Einleitung in das Alte Testament, Tübingen 1964; R.H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, New York/London 1941 (1957), A. Lods, Histoire de la littérature hébraïque et juive depuis les origines jusqu'à la ruine de l'état juif (135 après J.-C.), Paris 1950; A. Bentzen, Introduction to the Old Testament, I–II, Copenhagen 1952 (1958).

7 H. Gunkel, Die israelitische Literatur, in: P. Hinneberg (ed.), Die Kultur der Gegenwart. Ihre Entwicklung und ihre Ziele, Berlin 1906, 51–102 (reprint: Leipzig 1925; Darmstadt 1963); *Id.*, Die Grundprobleme der israelitischen Literaturgeschichte, *Deutsche Literaturzeitung* 27 (1906), 1797–1800; 1861–1866 (reprint in: *Id.*, Reden und Aufsätze, Göttingen 1913, 29–38). On this see M. Witte, Von der Analyse zur Synthese. Historisch-kritische Anmerkungen zu Hermann Gunkels Konzept einer israelitischen Literaturgeschichte, in: U.E. Eisen/E.S. Gerstenberger (eds.), Hermann Gunkel revisited. Literatur- und religionsgeschichtliche Studien, Münster 2010, 21–51.

8 J. Hempel, Die althebräische Literatur und ihr hellenistisch-jüdisches Nachleben, Wild-

cal-critical introductions to the Old Testament. That is, they treat the books of the Old Testament in accordance with their literary shape and position within the Hebrew Bible. Thus, for example, the different layers of the book of Isaiah are discussed within a single chapter and not in several different chapters on literature from the Neo-Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Hellenistic periods according to the presumed date of the respective layers. A book-oriented approach is naturally supported by the clarity of presentation, the history of canon formation, and reception history as well as by the hypothetical nature of dating the literary layers, which can often only be situated within a relative chronology. On the other hand, in a genetic, literary-historical presentation of compositions or writings of different literary genres that were presumably composed around the same time (narratives, oracles, psalms, legal texts, etc.), the literary- and cultural-historical picture of a particular period emerges more clearly. Within this “revised edition,” Hans-Peter Mathys hints at this approach, even if *ex negativo*, when he refers to the Song of Songs as a “brother of the Yahwist” dating to the 10th c. B.C.E. (a dating which he rejects with good reason), which the classical Documentary Hypothesis also situated in the time of Solomon, yet: “Both are dead: the Yahwist from the 10th c. B.C.E. and the Solomonic enlightenment” (p. 549). That is certainly correct, even if Dietrich does not completely bid farewell to King Solomon in his section on the Historical Books of the Old Testament.

In Part A, “Das Alte Testament,” the Göttingen Emeritus and master of Old Testament *Einleitungswissenschaft* and history of scholarship Rudolf Smend (b. 1932) presents a concise history of the Old Testament canon spanning 36 pages. Apart from updates to the bibliography, the text largely corresponds to the version from 1989. Smend also refers briefly to the particular significance of the prophetic tradition for the history of Israelite literature and of the Torah for the history of the Jewish canon. He describes the variety of textual groups (MT, Samaritan Pentateuch, Qumran) and the ancient translations (Septuagint, Targumim, Peshitta, Vetus Latina, Vulgate) as well as the profile and textual basis of the critical editions of the Hebrew Bible (BHS, BHQ, HUB, OHB).⁹ Finally, he sketches the contents of the so-called Apocrypha over the space of only nine pages. This represents an advance over the first and following editions of his textbook. Yet in its basic focus on the Masoretic canon, this “revised edition” falls behind the older works of Carl Steuernagel,¹⁰ Eissfeldt, and Kaiser

park-Potsdam 1930–1934 (²1968); A. Lods, *Histoire* (see note 6), G. Fohrer, *Erzähler und Propheten im Alten Testament. Geschichte der israelitischen und frühjüdischen Literatur*, Heidelberg/Wiesbaden 1988; K. Schmid, *Literaturgeschichte des Alten Testaments. Eine Einführung*, Darmstadt 2008 (²2014; English: *The Old Testament: A Literary History*, Minneapolis 2012); D.M. Carr, *An Introduction to the Old Testament: Sacred Texts and Imperial Contexts of the Hebrew Bible*, Malden/Oxford 2010 (German: *Einführung in das Alte Testament. Biblische Texte – imperiale Kontexte*, Stuttgart 2013).

⁹ On this see the thematic volume on “Bible Editions” in *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 2 (2013), 1–120.

¹⁰ C. Steuernagel, *Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, Tübingen 1912.

or the newer presentations of Zenger *et al.* and Römer *et al.* The Qumran and Septuagint research of the last 20 years have made clear the plurality of textual groups of the “canonical” books and the variety of Hebrew and Aramaic scriptures within early forms of Judaism and have thus (once again) raised awareness of the literary-, religio-, and reception-historical—as well as theological—significance of early Jewish literature from outside the Tanakh. In light of these developments, a presentation of the books of the Hebrew Bible that does justice to the history of research and literary history of the biblical texts should at least include the writings that extend beyond the Masoretic canon traditionally designated by the term “Septuagint.” The textual differences between the MT and LXX discussed briefly in the chapters on the books of Jeremiah, Daniel, and Esther as well as the listing of Qumran manuscripts by Hans-Peter Mathys for the *Ketuvim* can only rectify this conceptual shortcoming to a limited extent. Insofar as the old codices of the Septuagint differ in the question of whether one or another writing belongs to the Old Testament, a presentation of the formation of the Old Testament that takes into account the LXX would be better served by following the selection of texts found in editions such as the *New English Translation of the Septuagint* or the *Septuaginta Deutsch*.¹¹

Part B is dedicated to the *Pentateuch*. Here, Thomas Römer (b. 1955), a member of the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies in Lausanne (Switzerland) and of the Collège de France in Paris and a long-time contributor to scholarship on the Pentateuch and the so-called Deuteronomistic History (DtrH), begins his 114-page presentation with an overview of narrative, legal, cultic/ritual, and poetic textual genres in the Pentateuch and their profile within its final shape; a consideration of Leviticus as the possible compositional center of the Pentateuch; and a discussion of the Pentateuch’s open-ended nature with respect to the historical books that follow. This is followed by a brief history of critical research on the Pentateuch¹² and a detailed introduction to the content, structure, and redaction history of the individual books of the Torah.

The presentation of the history of research begins in the 18th century and ends with a description of current trends and open questions. The following points emerge as the most significant: (1) determining the literary-historical relationship between Priestly and non-Priestly texts, (2) ascertaining the literary and theological profile of Priestly texts within Gen–Lev (P^G and P^S), (3) elucidating the origins of an independent *Hebrew* literature during the 8th c. B.C.E.,¹³

11 A. Pietersma/B.G. Wright (*eds.*), *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title*, New York/Oxford 2007; W. Kraus/M. Karrer (*eds.*), *Septuaginta Deutsch. Das griechische Alte Testament in deutscher Übersetzung*, Stuttgart 2009 (2010).

12 The bibliographic reference to H.-J. Kraus, *Geschichte der historisch-kritischen Erforschung des Alten Testaments*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1982, should be replaced in future editions by M. Sæbø (*ed.*), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation*, III/1–2. From Modernism to Post-Modernism, Göttingen 2013.2015.

13 This dating corresponds precisely with the beginnings of the prophetic tradition and with

(4) the legal-, social-, and literary-historical place of the various legal corpora (Covenant Code, Deuteronomic law, Lev 1–16 as a genuine ending to P, the Holiness Code as a conscious mediation between Priestly and Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic concepts and the activity of a “Holiness School”), which also includes the relationship between narrative and legal texts, particularly in the books of *Genesis* and *Exodus*, (5) the relationship between the ancestral narratives (including the multi-layered Joseph story) and the Moses-exodus-narrative as presumably once-independent myths of Israel’s origins, (6) the significance of the book of *Numbers* (outside of the Documentary Hypothesis) for the redaction history of the Pentateuch, (7) the historical context of the redaction(s) of the Pentateuch, possibly in opposition to an earlier “Hexateuch redaction,” during the middle of the Persian period (connected to the still hotly-debated question of a “Persian imperial authorization” of the Pentateuch),¹⁴ and (8) the encounter of diverse exegetical cultures and ways of approaching the text. The model of the classical Documentary Hypothesis, including in its simplification by the “Neo-Documentarians” Baruch J. Schwartz and his students, who fall behind the observations of Julius Wellhausen (1844–1918),¹⁵ is thereby also subjected to critical evaluation, as is the relationship of *Deuteronomy* (and its numerous earlier literary stages) to the Neo-Assyrian Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon (VTE § 56 as a “source” for Deut 28?), to the Josianic reform,¹⁶ and to the Deuteronomistic History, however that is defined in its particulars. Modern modifications of older supplementary and fragmentary hypotheses, such as those found in recent research in the highly diverse redaction-critical models of scholars such as Reinhard Achenbach, Rainer Albertz, Erhard Blum, Reinhard G. Kratz, Christoph Levin, Eckart Otto, Jean-Louis Ska, Konrad Schmid, John Van Seters, as well as by Thomas Römer and his student Christophe Nihan, are also presented.¹⁷ In his discussion, Römer repeatedly ventures to draw a

epigraphic evidence; on this cf. J. Renz/W. Röllig, *Handbuch der althebräischen Epigraphik. Die althebräischen Inschriften, I–II*, Darmstadt 2016.

- 14 P. Frei/K. Koch, *Reichsidee und Reichsorganisation im Perserreich*, OBO 55, Fribourg/Göttingen 1996; K.-L. Lee, *The Authority and Authorization of the Torah in the Persian Period*, CBET 64, Leuven 2011.
- 15 J. Stackert, *Rewriting the Torah*, FAT 52, Tübingen 2007; J. Baden, J, E, and the Redaction of the Pentateuch, FAT 68, Tübingen 2009.
- 16 The comprehensive study by M. Pietsch, *Die Kultreform Josias. Studien zur Religionsgeschichte Israels in der späten Königszeit*, FAT 86, Tübingen 2013, was not taken into consideration by Römer, whose discussion of the relationship between Deuteronomy and the VTE did, however, draw on the 2014 article by K. Watanabe, *Esarhaddon’s Succession Oath Documents Reconsidered in the Light of the Tayinat Version*, in: *Orient* 49 (2014), 145–170.
- 17 R. Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora. Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte von Hexateuch und Pentateuch*, BZAR 3, Wiesbaden 2003; R. Albertz, *Exodus, I–II*, ZBK.AT 2/I–II, Zürich 2012.2015; E. Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuchs*, BZAW 189, Berlin/New York 1990; R.G. Kratz, *Die Komposition der erzählenden Bücher des Alten Testaments*, UTB 2157, Göttingen 2000 (English: *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament*, London *et al.* 2005); C. Levin, *Der Jahwist*, FRLANT 143, Göttingen 1993; E. Otto, *Das Deuteronomium im Pentateuch und Hexateuch*, FAT 30, Tübingen 2000; J.-L. Ska, *The Exegesis of*

correlation between contemporary developments and exegetical models, such as when he draws a connection between Wellhausen's high regard for the Israelite monarchy and the founding of the German Empire in 1871 (pp. 60–61), or when he searches for historical anchors for the figure of Moses and for the geographic and temporal origins of the worship of Yahweh.¹⁸

On the whole, the different compositional models presented by Römer agree in their notion that *all* of the books of the Torah preserve texts and compositions from the monarchic period and that even after the largely formative Deuteronomistic and Priestly redactions from the exilic/post-exilic period there was a considerable amount of (partly very small-scale) successive expansions in the individual blocks of tradition (primeval history, ancestral narratives, Moses-exodus-narrative, legal corpora). In this respect, it is clear that beyond the creative authors, whom particular representatives of the classical Documentary Hypothesis believed to have discovered in the Yahwist or Elohist, and beyond the assumption of unclassifiable textual growth, larger redactional interventions with distinctive profiles must be reckoned with.¹⁹ Thus, a significant task for further Pentateuchal research will be to identify clusters of expansions and to correlate these with expansions in the *Nevi'im* and *Ketuvim* (particularly in *Chronicles*) but also in Jewish texts that did not achieve canonical status. For behind these processes of expansion that extend into the Hellenistic period (as is shown in the differences between the MT, Qumran Pentateuchal manuscripts, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the LXX), the underlying processes of social and religious identity formation during the Second Temple period are also reflected.

A presentation of the redactional history of the individual books of the Torah and the division of the individual texts (going as far as individual verses or partial verses) into different layers in the various models discussed by Römer goes beyond the scope of this review; the same is true of the overviews of the composition history of the *Nevi'im* and *Ketuvim* below.²⁰ In Römer's treatment, however, the reader has access to a representative overview of current literary-critical research²¹ and of the hermeneutical and theological signifi-

the Pentateuch, FAT 66, Tübingen 2009; K. Schmid, *Erzväter und Exodus. Untersuchungen zur doppelten Begründung der Ursprünge Israels innerhalb der Geschichtsbücher des Alten Testaments*, WMANT 81, Neukirchen-Vlyun 1999 (English: *Genesis and the Moses Story. Israel's Dual Origins in the Hebrew Bible*, Winona Lake 2010); J. Van Seters, *The Pentateuch. A Social-Science Commentary*, Sheffield 1999; C. Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, FAT II/25, Tübingen 2007.

18 On this see the thematic volume "Anfänge und Ursprünge der Jahwe-Verehrung" in *Berliner Theologischen Zeitschrift* 30 (2013), which is not evaluated by Römer.

19 For a representative example of the latter approach cf. H.-Chr. Schmitt, *Theologie in Prophetie und Pentateuch*, BZAW 310, Berlin/New York 2001.

20 For the P texts in Genesis and Exodus, reference should be made to the overviews on pp. 104–105 and 118; on the identification of different layers in Deuteronomy see pp. 161–166.

21 On this see also Th.B. Dozeman/K. Schmid/B.J. Schwartz (eds.), *The Pentateuch*, FAT 78, Tübingen 2011; K. Schmid/R.F. Person (eds.), *Deuteronomy in the Pentateuch, Hexateuch, and the Deuteronomistic History*, FAT II/56, Tübingen 2012; F. Hartenstein/K. Schmid (eds.), *Abschied*

cance of literary- and redaction-historical analyses of the Torah as a source for Israelite-Jewish religious history and as a central point of reference for Jewish and Christian faith.

In the most extensive portion of the book (over 300 pages), Walter Dietrich, known above all for his studies on the DtrH, his commentaries on Samuel, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Nahum, but also for the fully revised edition of the Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament,²² discusses the *Former and Latter Prophets*. The description of the literary history of the individual books of the *Former Prophets* (Part C) is preceded by a presentation of the Deuteronomistic History hypothesis, critiques against it,²³ and its development, in which Dietrich played an active part as a representative of the so-called “Göttingen model,” which he (like Römer in Part B) adopts. Despite significant modifications with regard to the sources that supposedly lay before a “Deuteronomistic historian” and the redactions that followed his work, the spirit of Martin Noth (1902–1968) still asserts itself strongly here.²⁴ In addition to outlining the synchronic profile of DtrH and the latest redactions in the books of Josh–2 Kgs, Dietrich gives particular attention to the pre-Deuteronomistic sources and the political and religious discourses reflected in them. For the book of *Joshua*, in addition to Priestly and Deuteronomistic redactions, Dietrich also finds older conquest narratives and lists, identifying Josh 10* as the oldest core of a Joshua tradition. The same can be said for the book of *Judges*: notwithstanding a multistage Deuteronomistic reworking of older savior narratives in Judg 3–12, Dietrich argues that the Song of Deborah, at least in its core, originated in the pre-monarchic period. Regarding the diverse and multi-layered pre-Deuteronomistic narrative cycles in 1 Sam–2 Kgs (which were earlier part of smaller narrative works such as that of a “courtly narrator” in 1–2 Sam or in a “Book of the History of Solomon” in 1 Kgs 3–11*) and the literary sources incorporated into these cycles (such as in the narratives of Elijah, Elisha, and Jehu as a prophetic narrative about Yhwh’s fight against Baal), Dietrich argues that “careful historical information” (p. 259) and “valuable details from the history of the monarchic period” (p. 273) can be found. Even if it would have made the scope of the book more extensive, a brief excursus on the history of Israel, at least a timeline, would have been helpful, such as is offered in the introduction by Zenger *et al.*

von der Priesterschrift? Zum Stand der Pentateuchdebatte, VWGTh 40, Leipzig 2015; F. Giuntoli/K. Schmid (eds.), *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch: New Perspectives on its Redactional Development and Theological Profiles*, FAT 101, Tübingen 2015.

22 W. Dietrich/S. Arnet (eds.), *Konkise und aktualisierte Ausgabe des Hebräischen und Aramäischen Lexikons zum Alten Testament*, Leiden/Boston 2013.

23 On this see M. Witte *et al.* (eds.), *Die deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerke. Redaktions- und religionsgeschichtliche Perspektiven zur „Deuteronomismus“-Diskussion in Tora und Vorderen Propheten*, BZAW 365, Berlin/New York 2006.

24 M. Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien. Die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament*, SKG.G 18, Halle 1943 (reprint: Tübingen 1957; Darmstadt 1967; partial English translation: *The Deuteronomistic History*, JSOTS 15, Sheffield 1981).

The presentation of the *Latter Prophets* (Part D) is preceded by an overview of the phenomenon of prophecy in ancient Israel and by a short history of research on the prophetic literature. Here, Dietrich briefly traces how interest shifted from the figure of the individual prophet in the 19th century to the prophets' relationship to tradition during the first half of the 20th century and finally to the redaction history of the prophetic books since the rise of redaction-critical research with the groundbreaking commentaries of Otto Kaiser on proto-Isaiah, Wilhelm Rudolph on Jeremiah, and Walther Zimmerli on Ezekiel.²⁵ Dietrich considers it a "welcome" development that in present scholarship, in addition to the question of redaction (with reference to the prophetic book), an increased focus is once again being placed on tradition (with reference to the historical figure of the prophet) (p. 332). Dietrich considers the view that the earliest prophets in Israel, in whose names individual books were handed down, were exclusively prophets of weal to be a scholarly error, as is the evaluation of written prophecy as a phenomenon that developed by means of constant self-interpreting expansions.

For the book of *Isaiah*, Dietrich produces an eight-stage model of composition based on the literary-historical hypotheses that he presents from earlier scholarship. Within this model, the starting point consists of texts in Isa 6*²⁶; 8*²⁷; 14–19*²⁸; and 28–31* that are connected to the historical prophet Isaiah, while the endpoint consists of texts such as Isa 63–66 and Isa 24–27, which Dietrich dates to the 3rd c. B.C.E. Thus, current research shows that the questions surrounding the composition of Deutero-Isaiah cannot be isolated from the redactional history of the book of Isaiah as a whole and (at certain levels) must also be considered in light of the composition of the book of Jeremiah. For the book of *Jeremiah* itself, Dietrich rejects the theory of a "rolling corpus" containing a large amount of unclassifiable expansions, such as is found already in the commentaries of Robert P. Carroll and William McKane.²⁶ Instead, Dietrich regards a redaction-critical differentiation between the following stages as more plausible: (1) pre-Deuteronomic collections of authentic utterances by Jeremiah, including the "confessions"; (2) a first and a second Deuteronomic version; (3) the addition of smaller messianic and sapiential texts; and (4) a proto-apocalyptic reworking from the Hellenistic period.²⁷ In contrast to the highly nuanced presentation of the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah,²⁸ Dietrich's treatment of the book of *Ezekiel* is somewhat weaker, especially regard-

25 O. Kaiser, *Der Prophet Jesaja*. Kap. 1–12, ATD 17, Göttingen 1981; Kap. 13–39, ATD 18, Göttingen 1985; W. Rudolph, *Jeremia*, HAT I/12, Tübingen 1968; W. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, I–II, BK 13/I–II, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1979.

26 R.P. Carroll, *Jeremiah: A Commentary*, OTL, London 1986; W. McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah*, ICC, I–II, Edinburgh 1986.1996.

27 Cf. G. Wanke, *Jeremia*, I–II, ZBK.AT 20/I–II, Zürich 1995.2003.

28 This discussion overlooks, however, the review of research by R. Liwak, *Vierzig Jahre Forschung zum Jeremiabuch*, I–IV, in: *ThR* 76 (2011), 131–179; 265–295; 415–475; 77 (2012), 1–53.

ing the systematics of its presentation. Here, in his discussion of forms, structures, themes, and colors (*sic!*) in Ezekiel, Dietrich presents a simplified version of Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann's model for the formation of Ezekiel,²⁹ drawing a distinction only between a more Golah-oriented redaction and a redaction directed more towards Judah. As in the case of Isaiah and Jeremiah, Dietrich concludes his discussion of Ezekiel with a portrait of the historical prophet. The fact that the presentation of Ezekiel lags behind that of Isaiah and Jeremiah also signals the need for more research on this book; a similar state of affairs is shown by Dietrich's overview of the cycles of Oracles against the Nations in these three major prophetic books.

The 100-page presentation of the *Book of the Twelve* contains a detailed synchronic and diachronic description of the entire collection as well as an introduction to the literary profile and redaction history of the individual books. Regarding the redaction history of the Book of the Twelve as a whole, Dietrich evaluates the relevant studies of Jörg Jeremias, Aaron Schart, James Nogalski, and Jakob Wöhrle, among others, and adopts the theory of a "Book of the Four" consisting of Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah from the exilic period.³⁰ During the early post-exilic period, Haggai-Zechariah and Nahum-Habakkuk as well as Joel and Obadiah were combined with this work, forming a "Book of the Ten." Finally, during the Hellenistic period, this "Book of the Ten" was expanded through the addition of Jonah and the detachment of the basic material in Malachi, which according to Odil Hannes Steck and others was originally an expansion of Haggai/proto-Zechariah,³¹ as its own prophetic writing, thus resulting in the Book of the Twelve. The results of recent scholarship on the individual books of the *Book of the Twelve* leads to the fundamental conclusion that one should reckon with an independent history of composition for almost every book in the collection and that one must differentiate between utterances that go back to the historical figures who gave their names to the respective books, book-immanent redactional reworkings, and overarching redactions spanning multiple books. In certain cases, Dietrich allows for a remarkably vivid profile of some of these prophets as "prophets of opposition" (p. 454) (i. e., Hosea, Amos, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah). According to

29 K.-F. Pohlmann, *Der Prophet Hesekiel/Ezechiel, I–II*, ATD 22/I–II, Göttingen 1996.2001.

30 J. Jeremias, *Hosea und Amos*, FAT 13, Tübingen 1996; A. Schart, *Die Entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuches*. Neubearbeitungen von Amos im Rahmen schriftenübergreifender Redaktionsprozesse, BZAW 260, Berlin/New York 1998; J. Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve*, BZAW 217, Berlin/New York 1993; *Id.*, *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve*, BZAW 218, Berlin/New York 1993; J. Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen des Zwölfprophetenbuches*. Entstehung und Komposition, BZAW 360, Berlin/New York 2006; *Id.*, *Der Abschluss des Zwölfprophetenbuches*. Buchübergreifende Redaktionsprozesse in den späten Sammlungen, BZAW 389, Berlin/New York 2008. For a critical view of this theory see C. Levin, *Das "Vierprophetenbuch"*. Ein exegetischer Nachruf, ZAW 123 (2011), 221–235.

31 O.H. Steck, *Der Abschluß der Prophetie im Alten Testament*. Ein Versuch zur Frage der Vorgeschichte des Kanons, BThSt 17, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1991, 32–35; 196.

Dietrich, special cases from the Persian period include the book of Joel, which Dietrich regards as a compositional unity, and the book of Malachi, which represents a learned scribal product, as well as the narrative of Jonah, which originated no earlier than the 4th or 3rd c. B.C.E. and into which the psalm in Jon 2 was inserted secondarily. Overall, Dietrich's presentation moves beyond the tendency of earlier scholarship on the Book of the Twelve, particularly during the 1990s, to focus either on the Book of the Twelve in its final form or on the literary history of individual prophetic books within that collection.

In contrast to the treatments of Smend, Römer, and Mathys, Dietrich presents and evaluates selected scholarly positions in much more detail. Due to limitations of space, these discussions, which allow for a rapid review of different positions, are printed in smaller text. They clearly demonstrate the lasting influence that Hans Walter Wolff (1912–1983) exerted on research on the prophetic literature.³² In contrast to the distanced and sober discussion of individual scholarly opinions in the respective sections of his co-authors, Dietrich's evaluation of other positions is clear, whereby his classification of a particular model as "simple" has a tendentious, positive connotation, while his classification of a model as "complicated" has a negative valence. Yet in light of the complexity of the literary evidence, particularly in the prophetic literature, determining whether the "simpler" model is always the better one must be done on the basis of the texts. Here it should be stressed that Dietrich himself by no means rejects diachronic hypotheses; indeed, he reckons with numerous layers and at the same time—with good reason—considers the *literary-sociological* background to the production and redaction of scriptural texts. Even if all of the present book's authors touch on this aspect in their respective sections, the overall work would have benefited from a separate chapter on this topic.³³

The fifth and final part (E) is dedicated to the *Writings* and is written by Hans-Peter Mathys (b. 1951), Professor of Old Testament and Semitic Philology in Basel. Over the course of 115 pages, Mathys first provides an overview of poetry in the Old Testament and then turns to the individual books in the *Writings* and their critical study. The individual sections are less schematically structured than those in Parts B–D, which is due in part to the literary diversity of the *Ketuvim*. In his discussion of other scholarly positions, Mathys is also more selective than Römer and especially Dietrich and is sometimes also less up-to-date. Thus, in the bibliography on individual books, some of the recent commentaries that were published before the present "revised edition" went

32 Cf. J.C. Gertz/M. Oeming (eds.), *Neu aufbrechen, den Menschen zu suchen und zu erkennen*. Symposium anlässlich des 100. Geburtstages von Hans Walter Wolff, BThSt 139, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2013.

33 On this see D.M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart. Origins of Scripture and Literature*, Oxford 2005 (German: *Schrift und Erinnerungskultur. Die Entstehung der Bibel und der antiken Literatur im Rahmen der Schreiberausbildung*, Zürich 2015); K. van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible*, Cambridge, Mass., 2007.

to press are not mentioned.³⁴ This, however, by no means diminishes the easy readability of this section.

The section on the *Psalter*, which takes into consideration the various anthologies of psalms found at Qumran, begins with a discussion of the book of Psalms, its stages of composition, and its ancient Near Eastern parallels, then turns to the question of the date and authorship of the psalms and finally, following the classical typologies, presents the major genres of lament, thanksgiving, and hymn. In the section on the book of *Job*, Mathys sketches the book's tradition-historical background, ancient Near Eastern "theodicy poetry," and a selection of the redaction-critical models for the book's formation, among other aspects.³⁵ This discussion also responds to the recognition that is becoming established in current scholarship that the various authors who contributed to the book of *Job* also drew critically and to varying degrees on texts from the Pentateuch and prophetic literature. The section on the book of *Proverbs* contains a general introduction to Wisdom literature in ancient Israel (and within its broader context), an overview of the most significant stages in the composition and redaction of the book of Proverbs, whose literary origins are traditionally sought in collections two and three (Prov 10:1–22:16 and Prov 25–27; 28–29) from the monarchic period and whose final stages of reworking are identified in the first, sixth, and seventh collections (Prov 1–9; 30; 31) from the 4th/3rd c. B.C.E., as well as a description of the different literary genres of Proverbs. According to Mathys' evaluation of the research, the book of *Ruth* is a unified literary work that carries out scriptural interpretation in narrative form and already presupposes the macro-context of the Torah. The *Song of Songs* is understood as a collection of profane love songs from different time periods whose imagery—following the work of Othmar Keel³⁶—is indebted above all to Egyptian love poetry, but in its final form should be approached as a Jewish counterpart to the Hellenistic-period love poetry from Alexandria. Regarding the book of *Qohelet*, which is highly discursive and plays with a variety of other biblical texts, Mathys argues against multilayered compositional

34 Thus on *Psalms*: M. Oeming/J. Vette, *Das Buch der Psalmen. Psalm 42–89*, NSK.AT 13/2, Stuttgart 2010 (now followed by: *Id.*, *Das Buch der Psalmen. Psalm 90–150*, NSK.AT 13/3, Stuttgart 2016); on *Job*: D.J.A. Clines, *Job 21–37*, WBC 18a, Nashville 2006; *Job 37–42*, WBC 18b, Nashville 2011; J. Gray, *Job*, Sheffield 2010; C.-L. Seow, *Job 1–21*, *Illuminations*, Grand Rapids, MI 2013; on *Proverbs*: M.V. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, AncB 18A, New York 2000; *Id.*, *Proverbs 10–31*, AncB 18B, New Haven 2009; M. Sæbø, *Sprüche*, ATD 16/I, Göttingen 2012; on *Qohelet*: A. Schoors, *Ecclesiastes*, *Historical Commentary on the Old Testament*, Leuven *et al.* 2013 (now also M. Köhlmoos, *Kohelet. Der Prediger Salomo*, ATD 16/V, Göttingen 2015); on Wisdom literature as a whole see L.G. Perdue, *The Sword and the Stylus: An Introduction to Wisdom in the Age of Empires*, Grand Rapids/Cambridge 2008.

35 T. Mende, *Durch Leiden zur Vollendung. Die Elihureden im Buch Ijob (Ijob 32–37)*, TThSt 49, Trier 1990; M. Witte, *Vom Leiden zur Lehre. Der dritte Redegang und die Redaktionsgeschichte des Hiobbuches*, BZAW 230, Berlin/New York 1994.

36 O. Keel, *Das Hohelied*, ZBK.AT 18, Zürich ²1992.

models³⁷ and in favor of the overall literary unity of the book (apart from the epilogues in 12:9–11, 12–14, which have traditionally been regarded as secondary) and against a Persian-period dating in favor of a historical location in the Ptolemaic period.³⁸ In the book of *Lamentations*, individual laments from different time periods have been compiled, whereby Lam 2 and 4 should be regarded as the oldest materials and Lam 3 as the latest composition. Following Jean-Daniel Macchi, the book of *Esther* is characterized as the “Persica of the Old Testament.”³⁹ Against the commonly-held view that the book originated in the eastern Diaspora during the Persian period, Mathys adopts a Ptolemaic-period origin in Alexandria. Here, he includes a brief discussion of the Greek Versions of *Esther* (the LXX and the so-called Alpha Text), which diverge significantly from the MT, as well as a discussion of the festival of Purim. In the section on the book of *Daniel*, Mathys likewise considers the divergent version of the Septuagint, draws a broad compositional distinction between the older part in Dan 1–6 and the later part in Dan 7–12, and interprets the book as a whole as a reflection of the Maccabean period. For the books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, Mathys argues that the theory of a “Chronistic History” should be abandoned; rather, one should reckon with individual authors who based their work on earlier sources (possibly to be found in *Ezra* 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26; and the *Nehemiah Memoir*) as well as with redactional reworkings, whose extent and relationship to the redaction history of the Pentateuch has not yet achieved a scholarly consensus. The section on *Chronicles* is the most original in the treatment of the *Ketuvim*. Mathys describes *Chronicles* as the work of an author from the Hellenistic period, such that here, even if later reworking cannot be ruled out, it is no longer possible to speak of traditional literature as in the case of *Samuel-Kings*, but rather authorial literature. The Chronicler appears as a contemporary of Manetho, Hecataeus, and Berossus—yet not in the same way that some far-fetched theories for the Pentateuch formulate⁴⁰—and his work is a learned scribal composition which, following the classic studies of Thomas Willi,⁴¹ can be categorized by the key concepts of redaction and interpretation and whose most significant characteristics include an orientation toward the Torah, a critique of the Hellenistic ruler cult, a philosophy of history marked by the concept of retribution, as well as a particular interest in the Levites.

37 M. Rose, Rien de nouveau. Nouvelles approches du livre de Qohéleth. Avec une bibliographie (1988–1998) élaborée par B. Perregaux Allisson, OBO 168, Fribourg/Göttingen 1999.

38 C.-L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, AncB 18C, New York 1997.

39 J.-D. Macchi, Le livre d’Esther: regard hellénistique sur le pouvoir et le monde perses, *Trans-euphratène* 30 (2005), 97–135.

40 R.É. Gmirkin, *Berossus and Genesis, Manetho and Exodus. Hellenistic Histories and the Date of the Pentateuch*, LHBOTS (JSOT.S) 433, London/New York 2006

41 T. Willi, *Die Chronik als Auslegung*, FRLANFT 106, Göttingen 1972.

Finally, if one returns to the overall conception of the book, there are clearly differences in focus and presentation, which is only to be expected in light of the book's authorship by four different scholars and in light of the diverse textual corpora within the Old Testament. The actual historical development of individual books is pursued in most detail by Dietrich, who traces the beginnings of individual areas of tradition as far back as the early monarchic period. Here, it is sometimes possible to imagine a somewhat more critical perspective regarding such a historical evaluation. Mathys places more weight on the final form(s) reached during the Hellenistic period of the texts which he discusses. For Part B, a more detailed presentation of certain points (and at times also a more precise presentation) would have been desirable, while Parts C and D could have been more tightly structured. Inasmuch as the present book is described on its back cover as a work for "theologians and religious pedagogues for studies and profession," this review should conclude with a few notes on the pedagogical structure of the volume. Each major section and each chapter is preceded by a select bibliography printed in smaller text that generally lists formative works (monographs, commentaries, specialized studies, and occasionally also important articles) from the middle of the 19th century up to around the year 2012. In some places, however, the review of literature ends with works from 2010 or even earlier.⁴² From the perspective of the history of scholarship, it is unfortunate that for some works the relevant first editions are not listed but rather later reprints. Due to the chronological ordering of the bibliographies, finding the works of particular authors—who are only referenced by name in the body text—can be somewhat laborious. Unfortunately, the book does not contain an index or a list of abbreviations. Footnotes have been completely omitted. A more pedagogically accessible presentation of individual redactional models would have also been desirable. As in this and other textbook series published by Kohlhammer, the margins are too narrow, which makes adding notes difficult. Hebrew words are inconsistently reproduced, some being in pointed square script and others in simplified transcription that varies among the individual parts of the book. Notwithstanding these small formal points and the aforementioned deficiency in the area of the so-called Apocrypha, this "revised edition" of Smend's *Die Entstehung des Alten Testament* by these four authors represents an *opus magnum*, which, based on its content, deserves to be placed alongside the other major historical-critical introductions to the Hebrew Bible within the Protestant tradition, as it successfully clears a path through the increasingly entangled jungle of literary-historical research on the Old Testament. Below the level of comprehensive, mono-

42 Some of the bibliographic entries contain errors, including in the spelling of individual authors' names: the bibliography on p. 271 should read "Köhlmoos" rather than "Kühlmoos"; on p. 441 one of the references should read "van der Wal" rather than "Wahl"; and on p. 520 one should read "Mende" rather than "Mendes" (who, moreover, is a female author).

graph-length reviews of research on individual biblical books, this work offers a useful, critical presentation of groundbreaking studies, which were carefully selected and synthesized to an impressive degree. In doing so, the complexity of the literary history of the texts collected in the Old Testament is illustrated very well. In short, this work represents an up-to-date and helpful overview of the formation of the Old Testament, which can be used profitably by students and teachers of theology as well as by other scholars interested in the history of Israelite-Jewish literature, and its authors are to be commended for the contribution to scholarship that it represents.