

Redactional Models: Comparisons, Contrasts, Agreements, Disagreements ¹

The *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* by Brevard S. Childs represents an important shift in the research on prophetic books.² In the legacy of Hermann Gunkel the main interest had been in the small units which could be perceived as delivered in an oral setting. It was common to imagine the prophet standing somewhere in the streets confronting his hearers with the divinely inspired message. In his commentary on Hosea, for example, Hans W. Wolff considered many texts to be "*Auftrittsskizzen*" written hastily during or immediately after the oral communication.³ Wolff impressively presented Hosea, Amos and Micah as participants in the social conflicts of their historic societies, trying to make the conflicting parties hear the unambiguous word of God. At the same time, he noted in his commentary on Amos that many passages, including important ones, were written by redactors from different times.⁴ Since then, interest in the historical prophet has declined. Instead, the canonical prophetic book has become more and more important.⁵ Prophetic books include the original prophetic oracles in such a fashion that it is, in most cases, almost impossible to reconstruct the oral setting.⁶ The final text is, for the most part, the result of many different redactional activities, which wanted to focus the prophetic claims upon new generations. Within this new stream of research the fact was registered with fresh insight that the Book of the Twelve Prophets was considered as one book in antiquity. It seems appropriate to

¹ I would like to thank Prof. J. Nogalski for improving the English of this paper.

² B. S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979.

³ H. W. Wolff, *Dodekapropheten 1: Hosea*. Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament, vol. 14,1. Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1961, XXV.

⁴ Compare H. W. Wolff, *Dodekapropheten 2. Joel und Amos*. Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament, vol. 14,2. 3 ed. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1985,129-138.

⁵ As an example one may quote O. H. Steck, *Die Prophetenbücher und ihr theologisches Zeugnis. Wege der Nachfrage und Fährten zur Antwort*. Tübingen: Mohr, 1996, who states that a "durch die heutige Zeit donnernder Amos ... seine unmittelbare Stunde längst gehabt" habe (p. 124).

⁶ Steck, *Prophetenbücher*, 120-123 is very skeptical in this respect.

reserve the word "book" to denote the collection as a whole and to speak of the twelve units ascribed to different prophets as "writings."⁷

The Book of the Twelve as a Redactional Unit

E. Ben Zvi has vehemently denied that the Book of the Twelve was originally meant to be a unit.⁸ He conceives the book as a collection of writings, some of which may indeed manifest thematic overlaps, or even allude to one another, but which have no redactional sense as a whole. A reader may impinge a meaning upon the whole, but one should be clear that this is not what the final redactors had in mind. They wanted to preserve the individual writings. Ben Zvi rightly emphasizes the problem regarding how one can discern that the redactors wanted to present the twelve prophets as part of a larger unity. The most unambiguous evidence is lacking: the Book of the Twelve has no superscription. So, what else can be accepted as signal of redactional purpose?

Widely acknowledged is the "*Stichwortverkettung*" (catchword chain) phenomenon. F. Delitzsch noted that the ending of one writing and the beginning of the adjacent one often share significant vocabulary.⁹ Most often the following instances were considered to be significant: Hos 14:2 // Joel 2:12; Joel 4:16 // Amos 1:2; Amos 9:12 // Obad 19; Obad 1 // Jonah (as messenger to the nations); Jonah 4:2 // Mic 7:18-19 // Nah 1:2-3; Nah 1:1 // Hab 1:1 (אֲשֶׁר); Hab 2:20 // Zef 1:7. Some assumed that redactors grouped writings together that accidentally contained such *Stichwörter*. Others postulated that the *Stichwörter* were implemented in order to stitch together writings, which the redactors wanted to place after one another. This second hypothesis is strongly supported by J. Nogalski, who has most thoroughly treated the *Stichwort* phenomenon. He even discovered a lot of *Stichwörter* which had been overlooked to that point. For example, the inconspicuous

⁷ That's the way J. Nogalski has done it.

⁸ Ben Zvi, E. "Twelve Prophetic Books or 'The Twelve'? A Few Preliminary Considerations." *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts*. Edited by J. W. Watts, and P. R. House. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996, 125-156.

⁹ Delitzsch, F. "Wann weissagte Obadja?" *Zeitschrift für die gesammte Lutherische Theologie und Kirche* 12 (1851): 92-93.

word "time" (עת) connects Zeph 3:20 with Hag 1:2,4. The glorious future envisioned in Zeph 3:9-20 is contrasted with the unsatisfactory state of the people living around the ruins of the temple.¹⁰

B. A. Jones and Ben Zvi doubt that the *Stichwörter* can provide evidence for the redactional linking of the writings. One problem is that shared vocabulary exists between writings that do not stand adjacent to one another. Obadiah, for example, could as easily follow Joel 4:19 (where Edom is mentioned) as Amos 9:12, especially since the decisive term "Edom" in Amos 9:12 is (according to Jones) lacking in the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the Septuagint.¹¹ Jones and Ben Zvi rightly argue that in many cases the *Stichwörter* are not significant enough to preclude an accidental allusion of the respective passages. However, if additional arguments are found, the *Stichwörter* are still valuable clues to the redactional plan. Most important are source critical observations. If, to use a disputed example of Nogalski, almost all differences between Obadiah and its *Vorlage* in Jer 49 pick up vocabulary and themes present in Amos 9, it is probable that Obadiah was designed to fit into its position after Amos.¹² Jones too easily dismisses the arguments of Nogalski, when he states: "Even if Nogalski's conclusion is correct, however, that Obadiah has been shaped redactionally under the influence of Amos 9, again this may explain but does not *require* the arrangement of Amos and Obadiah in the MT Book of the Twelve. One should not be surprised that a relatively late book such as Obadiah has been influenced by the Book of Amos."¹³ However, it is unjustified to require this high degree of probability only from the proponents of the idea of a redactional unity. For too long, the Book of the Twelve as a whole was ignored. One should challenge this commonly held reading by inverting the burden of proof. One should start with the

¹⁰ J. D. Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve*. BZAW 217. Berlin / New York: de Gruyter, 1993, 215.

¹¹ B. A. Jones, *The Formation of the Book of the Twelve: A Study in Text and Canon*. SBL.DS 149. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1995, 175-191.

¹² J. D. Nogalski, *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve*. BZAW 218. Berlin / New York: de Gruyter, 1993, 61-74.

¹³ Jones, 211-212.

assumption that the Book of the Twelve is a unit and only relinquish it if the opposite can be demonstrated.¹⁴

A further question for detecting redactional intention is whether the reading process is designed in such a way that the small units appear as parts of a global discourse structure. One has to ask for example, if a unit presupposes a thought from a previous text or uses a lexeme that has a specific connotation that was established in an earlier passage in the reading process. Frames are also important. For example, Hosea starts with a *Fremdbericht* (Hos 1) and Amos included one in the final vision cycle (Amos 7:10-17). Likewise, a meaningful superstructure points towards a deliberate ordering, e.g., the historical ordering of the writings with Hosea being first (because it mentions the "House of Jehu" in Hos 1:4) and Malachi being last (because it presupposes an operative second temple).¹⁵

The Order of the Writings

The manuscript evidence of the Book of the Twelve has been investigated by Jones, Fuller and Steck.¹⁶ So far, three variants are known. In the Hebrew tradition all manuscripts follow the Masoretic order with the exception of one of the oldest scrolls, 4QXII(a), where the most plausible reconstruction is that Jonah followed Malachi.¹⁷ In the Septuagint tradition we find a third option. The first six writings are arranged: Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah. The problem of whether we have enough evidence to reconstruct the goal of the final redactors comes up again. Do the different

¹⁴ Steck, *Prophetenbücher*, 30.

¹⁵ Compare A. Nogalski, *Die Entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuchs. Neubearbeitungen von Amos im Rahmen schriftenübergreifender Redaktionsprozesse*. BZAW 260. Berlin / New York: de Gruyter, 1998, 133-150.

¹⁶ Jones (see footnote 11); R. E. Fuller, "The Form and Formation of the Book of the Twelve: The Evidence From the Judean Desert." *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D. W. Watts*. Edited by J. W. Watts, and P. R. House. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996, 86-101; Steck, O. H. "Zur Abfolge Maleachi - Jona in 4Q76 (4QXIIa)." *ZAW* 108 (1996): 249-253.

¹⁷ Russell E. Fuller, The Minor Prophets Manuscripts from Qumran, Cave IV. In: Eugene Ulrich, ed., *Qumran Cave 4*, vol. 10: *The Prophets*. DJD 15. Clarendon Press Oxford, 1997, 221-318 + plates XL-LXIV.

variants signal that the order of the writings was meaningless, or to the contrary, that the sequence was important to express a new understanding of the whole by the redactors and/or translators? The consensus so far was that the Masoretic order was the original one.¹⁸ By contrast, Jones considers the Septuagint order to be older.¹⁹ The aim was to group together writings that were similar in content. This is, for example, the reason why Obadiah immediately follows Joel. The main problem with Jones' hypothesis is that it has no explanation as to how the Masoretic order came into being. Much more convincing is the idea that the Septuagint version placed Amos and Micah immediately after Hosea and left all other writings in the order they had in the Masoretic sequence. The reason probably was the historical setting given by the superscriptions. Since Hosea, Amos and Micah prophesied partly under the same kings, they form a closed group, to which Joel, Obadiah and Jonah do not belong.

More convincing is Jones' hypothesis that the oldest order had Jonah after Malachi, as represented by 4QXII(a). Since Jonah has a different position in each of the three variants, Jones argues that it came into the collection last.²⁰ It seems to be an imaginable process that this strange writing was first attached to the end of the collection, and in a second step found its place close to the prophets from the 8th century, because Jonah ben Amittai lived under Jerobeam II (2 Kings 14:25).

The Global Structure of the Twelve

If the Book of the Twelve is purposefully arranged, one should expect to find a coherent global structure, which directs the reading process.²¹ Most important in that respect are the beginnings of the writings, of which nine

¹⁸ Schneider, D. A. *The Unity of the Book of the Twelve*. Ph.D. Yale University, 1979, 224-225; Nogalski, *Precursors*, 2.

¹⁹ Jones, 218-220.

²⁰ Jones, 129-169; Schart, 290.

²¹ T. Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah. The Redaction Criticism of the Prophetic Books*. The Biblical Seminar 20. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993, 65; P. R. House, *The Unity of the Twelve*. Bible and Literature Series 27. JSOTSup 97. Sheffield: Almond, 1990, 67-71.

contain superscriptions.²² Since the dated beginnings follow in a historical sequence, the reader gets the impression that the whole collection intends to unfold a certain part of the history of prophecy. The deepest break is located between Zeph and Hag. At this point the Babylonian exile is presupposed, but not mentioned.

According to P. House the implied picture of the history of Israel follows the scheme, "sin – punishment – restoration."²³ Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah belong to first topic. These writings are not exclusively but mainly concerned with the sin of Israel and the nations. Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah describe extensively the punishment of that sin. The writings Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi envision the restoration of Israel within the nations. Although House's description of the global structure of the Twelve contains many insights into the intertextual relationship of the different writings, his scheme seems to be too imprecise.²⁴ At first glance, it is obvious that all three topics are regularly part of a single writing. Malachi, for example, contains more numerous and more specific accusations than Joel. As a result, it is difficult to limit the aim of Joel to disclosing the sin of Israel or to limit the aim of Malachi to Israel's restoration.²⁵

²² Schart only wants to speak of a superscription, if "die Informationen, die sie enthält, auf einer Metaebene zum restlichen Textkorpus liegen und sie weder grammatisch noch semantisch eine lineare Anknüpfung an den folgenden Text aufweist" (32). This is true only for Hos 1:1; Joel 1:1; Amos 1:1; Obad 1a; Mic 1:1; Nah 1:1; Hab 1:1; Zef 1:1 und Mal 1:1.

²³ House, 63-109.

²⁴ As examples of observations, which were picked up by others, one may name the following: House perceives the summon to hear in Hos 4:1 as opening of an accusation speech, which comes to an end in Mic 6:2-16. In both passages the *lexem ryb* "lawsuit" plays an important role (House, 87; compare Schart, 191-192). Another observation is that the prominent role, which the "love of God" plays in Malachi, refers back to Hosea (House, 108; compare Collins, 81).

²⁵ House does implicitly admit the difficulty: "Unlike the recipients of Hosea's condemnation, the sin of God's people in Joel is much more subtle. Judgment is fast approaching, but is not coming because of an obvious rejection of Yahweh and a subsequent embracing of idolatry. Rather, the religion pictured in Joel has lost its vitality. The Lord and His presence are taken for granted" (76).

T. Collins presents a more complex model. He identifies a set of recurring themes. "The principal themes of the whole book are those of covenant-election, fidelity and infidelity, fertility and infertility, turning and returning, the justice of God and the mercy of God, the kingship of God, the place of his dwelling (Temple/Mt. Zion), the nations as enemies, the nations as allies."²⁶ Every prophet adds a certain aspect to the topics, sometimes in accordance, sometimes in opposition to other writings. Collins tries to find the overall unity which can make sense of all the different aspects. How this works may be illustrated from passages dealing with the temple. Hosea accuses the temple of Northern Israel of idolatry, because a calf is worshipped there. In contrast, Joel's call to repentance makes clear that the true worship of YHWH is taking place at the temple in Jerusalem. It is not until Mic 3:12 that the temple on Mt. Zion is condemned. However, immediately thereafter it is envisioned that Mt. Zion will once again be the center of the world, to which all nations will come spontaneously in order to accept the torah as the way to universal peace. Zeph 3:9-20 further explores this topic. In order to fulfill its eschatological responsibility, Mt. Zion must be cleansed and must be the home of holy community. This thought sets the stage for Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Especially Zech 8, which once formed the end of a smaller collection, reminds the reader of Zeph 3 (cf. Zech 8:3 with Zeph 3:11, 15). Malachi then recognizes that the promised, glorious future of Zion "is still impeded by the unworthy behaviour of the priests in the temple, the very place where God's name should be honored most." (Collins, 81). Collins' model is certainly more complex than House's model, but it does more justice to the variety of topics and the sometimes striking differences between the writings than to the unity.

An outstanding topic of the Twelve is the Day of YHWH. No other prophetic book contains as many passages about this day, which are at the same time so central for the overall structure. In addition, the day of YHWH is the concept, which integrates at least some of the basic topics into one scenario. The writing of Joel impressively introduces the Day of YHWH into the collection and the reader is forced to perceive what follows within this framework. R. Rendtorff gives a good example.²⁷ The passage Amos 5:18-20 implies that

²⁶ Collins, 65.

²⁷ R. Rendtorff, "Alas for the Day! The "Day of the LORD" in the Book of the Twelve." In: *Festschrift Brueggemann*, to appear in 1998.

the opponents of Amos are longing for the day of YHWH. Since Amos himself never spoke about this day, the hearers must know about it from elsewhere. From the perspective of the reader of the Twelve, it is obvious that they have already heard Joel's message. From reading in this manner, one gets the impression that the contemporaries of Amos used Joel's prophecy in order to evade the call to turn back to God (Amos 5:4-6, 14-15). How they did it, is not spelled out. Amos restates the severe scenario of Joel: for those who do not repent, the coming day will bring complete darkness. Likewise, this reading sets the stage for understanding the Day of YHWH in Obad 18, where it is announced that the "House of Jacob" will burn the "House of Esau." According to Amos 5 and 9:8-10 this eschatological "House of Jacob" will comprise only those who did not reject the message of Amos and at the same time belong to those persons called by God, as stated in Joel 3:5. Rendtorff rightly observes that the nearness of the day of YHWH inspires a call to repentance (Joel 2:12-14; Amos 5:4-6, 14-15; Zeph 2:1-3; Mal 3:24). The reader may also infer that every reference to a decisive day, on which YHWH will punish the sin and restore the true Israel, e.g., "on that day" (Amos 2:16; 8:3); "day of trouble" (Nah 1:7), points toward the one Day of YHWH.

R. C. van Leeuwen observes, how the first six writings make use of Exod 34:6-7, a text that contains "an elaboration of the name YHWH expressing the bipolar attributes of mercy and retributive justice."²⁸ The first allusion he sees already in Hos 1:6, where it is unambiguously declared that the merciful character of God is no longer operative. However, Hos 14:10 implies that the wise know that God forgives those who repent. The redactors seem to exploit the tension God's between mercy and justice in order to show that different prophets emphasized various attributes of the very same God. Joel 2:12 cites Exod 34:6-7. Jonah cites the same verse in 3:9 and 4:2. Micah cites it in 2:8 (conjectured) and 7:18-20. Finally, Nahum cites Exod 34:6-7 in 1:2-3a. The tensions between the different writings are deeply rooted within God. Only a diverse multiplicity of approaches does justice to the mystery of God's personality.

²⁸ Leeuwen, R. C. v. "Scribal Wisdom and Theodicy in the Book of the Twelve." In: *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*. Edited by L. G. Perdue, B. B. Scott, and W. J. Wiseman. Louisville, KY: Westminster / John Knox, 1993, 32.

The Book of the Twelve shares certain features with the Book of Isaiah. One may note, for example, that the Judean kings listed in Isa 1:1 (Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah) are identical with the ones listed in Hos 1:1. Also, Isa 2:2-4 and Mic 4:1-4 are almost identical. For these and other reasons Bosshard-Nepustil has closely examined the relationship between both books. It is remarkable how many cross-references on different layers he detects. He proposes that the main redactions in the Book of the Twelve, which he calls the "Assur/Babel-Redaktion^{xliii}" and the "Babel-Redaktion^{xli}," were influenced by similar redactions in the Book of Isaiah.²⁹ Although he tries to display his results in well-structured tables, the sheer complexity of his reconstructions is overwhelming. Many of his source-critical decisions appear to be problematic, and one often has the feeling that the intertextual allusions cannot be controlled.

Models for the Redaction History of the Book of the Twelve

There is no question that a simple synchronic approach is insufficient. The superscriptions already make it unambiguously clear that the different writings originated in different centuries. All of the redaction critical models proposed so far assume that smaller collections predated the final book. Indeed it is highly unlikely from the outset that twelve independent books were combined for the first time in Hellenistic times.

R. E. Wolfe was the first to propose that the thirteen redactional layers, which he differentiates, worked across the boundaries of the individual writings. This is why he labels his model "strata hypothesis."³⁰ A notable layer, for example, is the "Day of Jahwe Editor," which contains the following passages: "in Amos 4:12b (from עקב); 5:13, 18c (from הווא); 20; Obad 15a (to הגוים); Joel 1:15; 2:1d (from כי)-2b (to וערפל), 10-11; 3:1-5; 4:1-3.12.14-17; Zeph 1:7-8a (to יהוה).14-16.18c (from ביום); 2:1-3; 3:8b-e (from חכו)" (103). Thus, almost every passage containing the phrase "Day of YHWH" belongs to this layer. Wolfe discerns four steps. First, Amos and Hosea were combined. Second, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah

²⁹ E. Bosshard-Nepustil, *Rezeptionen von Jesaja 1-39 im Zwölfprophetenbuch. Untersuchungen zur literarischen Verbindung von Prophetenbüchern in babylonischer und persischer Zeit*. OBO 154. Freiburg (Schweiz) / Göttingen: Universitätsverlag / Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997, summary on page 408.

³⁰ R. E. Wolfe, "The Editing of the Book of the Twelve." *ZAW* 53 (1935): 91.

were added, yielding a collection of the six pre-exilic prophecies. Third, a "Book of the Nine" developed by the insertion of Joel, Jonah, and Obadiah. The book became complete with the addition of Hag, Zech, and Mal.

D. A. Schneider thinks along similar lines.³¹ The basis was the collection of Hosea, Amos and Micah in the time of Hezekiah. Under Josiah's rule Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah were attached. During the exile, Joel, Obadiah, and Jonah entered the collection. Finally, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were added in the time of Nehemiah.

Nogalski attributes the most extensive redactional activity to the "Joel-related layer." This redaction combined a pre-existing "Deuteronomistic Corpus" (Hosea-Amos-Micah-Zephaniah) with Nahum, Habakkuk, Haggai, Zechariah 1-8, Joel, Obadiah and Malachi. Subsequently, Jonah and Zechariah 9-14 entered the collection.³²

Schart assumes some more steps in which the collection continually grew. First, Hosea and Amos were combined. For the next step he agrees with Nogalski that there must have been a Corpus consisting of Hosea-Amos-Micah-Zephaniah. Then Nahum and Habakkuk were inserted. After that Haggai and Zechariah 1-8 were attached. Subsequently, Joel, Obadiah and Zechariah 9-14 were added. Finally, Jonah, as a satirical narrative, and Malachi completed the book.³³

The main difficulty for all the different models is the problem of establishing controls about what is to be considered as deliberate redactional shaping and what is only accidentally connected. Which features should be construed as important goals of the final text, and which should be viewed as less significant ones? It seems wise to begin the reconstruction of the redaction history with those passages, which most obviously stem from editors: the superscriptions.³⁴ Given that starting point, it is most plausible that Hosea,

³¹ Schneider (see footnote 18).

³² See his summaries: Precursors, 276-282; Processes, 274-280.

³³ See his summary, 304-306.

³⁴ See already G. M. Tucker, "Prophetic Superscriptions and the Growth of a Canon." In: *Canon and Authority. Essays in OT Religion and Theology*. Edited by G. W. Coats, and

Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah once existed as a separate collection. The superscriptions of these four writings follow the same type and through the names of the kings mentioned, they convey the following scenario: First, Hosea and Amos prophesied simultaneously in the Northern Kingdom, thereafter Hosea and Micah at the same time in Judah.³⁵ The writing of Hosea was deliberately placed in the first position, although the historical prophet Amos probably delivered his oracles earlier than Hosea. The redactors wanted the reader to perceive the writing of Amos in the light of Hosea, presumably because they were committed to Hosea's theological position. Some have used the concept "deuteronomistic" to characterize those redactors.³⁶ This seems unwise, since typical Deuteronomistic language can only rarely be identified, e.g., in Amos 3:7 ("his servants the prophets").³⁷ To be more cautious, one may speak of a redaction which inserted some passages in addition to the superscriptions, passages which come close to Deuteronomistic thoughts.³⁸ Schart, especially, has pulled together numerous observations concerning this redaction which have already been made in the past.³⁹ The central topic is that all transgressions were conceived as conducted directly against God. The root of all the evil is the distortion of the personal relationship to YHWH, which was established through the Exodus. In order to underline the last point, the redactors inserted passages referring to the exodus at crucial points of the composition of the collection (Amos 2:10; 3:2; 9:7; Mic 6:4-5). Social, cultic, or juridical degeneration is seen to

B. O. Long. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977, 65: "It is all but self-evident that the superscriptions were not created by the prophets themselves. They refer in the third person, and retrospectively, to the activity of the prophet, and to the books which contain the prophetic words."

³⁵ D. N. Freedman, "Headings in the Books of the Eighth-Century Prophets." *AUSS* 25 (1987) 16-20; Collins, 62; Nogalski, *Precursors*, 84-89; Schart, 41-46.

³⁶ Schmidt, W. H. "Die deuteronomistische Redaktion des Amosbuches: Zu den theologischen Unterschieden zwischen dem Prophetenwort und seinem Sammler." *ZAW* 77 (1965): 171; Nogalski, *Precursors*, 86-88.

³⁷ See the critique of Schmidt by N. Lohfink, "Gab es eine deuteronomistische Bewegung?" In: *Studien zum Deuteronomium und zur deuteronomistischen Literatur III*. Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1995, 65-142.

³⁸ Collins, 62; Schart, 46.

³⁹ See for example Schmidt, 191-192; Schart, 218-233.

be the result of the fundamental corruption of the identity of Israel, which is determined by the exodus. It is remarkable, that the redaction also reflected upon the role of the prophets within God's history with Israel and Judah (Amos 2:11-12; 3:7).

If one asks for precursors to this corpus, it can most convincingly be argued that the writings of Hosea and Amos once formed a single composition. J. Jeremias in particular has proposed this hypothesis.⁴⁰ On the one hand, there are additions in the writing of Hosea, which pick up language from Amos. The second half of Hos 4:15 pulls together words from Amos 4:4; 5:5 and 8:14. Hos 8:14 is closely related to Amos 3:9-11 and 6:8. The passages appear at positions where a reader from Judah possibly could perceive the transgressions of Northern Israel as something that would never happen in Judah. However, the aim of the redactional additions is to counteract those reactions. On the other hand, there are verses like Amos 3:2; 7:9; 2:8; 5:25; 6:8; and 1:5, which are heavily loaded with vocabulary and topics from the writing of Hosea. Almost all of these redactional passages are located at important points in the composition of the writing of Amos. This implies that the composition of Amos, even at an early stage, must already have been designed with the ideas of Hosea in mind. Schart has further pursued this insight.⁴¹ In his view, the same redactors edited both writings as a single composition. The overall structure was governed by the summons to hear (Hos 4:1; 5:1; Amos 3:1; 4:1; 5:1). In both writings the prophet first addresses "the Israelites" (Hos 4:1; Amos 3:1) and secondly the "House of Israel" (Hos 5:1; Amos 5:1). The writings were combined in order to convince the reader that these prophecies of doom are truly the word of God. Schart points towards the letters from Mari, which show that the authority of oracle, especially unfavorable oracles, could be strengthened if a second oracle, which was independently uttered by a different speaker, confirmed the message of the first one.

As a redactional stage later than the corpus which comprised Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah, there must have been something like a "Joel-related layer," which formed a corpus, at the core of which stood the Day of YHWH

⁴⁰ Jeremias, J. "Die Anfänge des Dodekapropheten: Hosea und Amos." In: *Hosea und Amos: Studien zu den Anfängen des Dodekapropheten*. Tübingen: Mohr, 1996, 34-54. Compare already Wolfe, 91-93; Schneider, 23; Schmidt, 173.

⁴¹ Schart, 101-155.

passages. After some forerunners, it was Nogalski, who put together strong and fascinating arguments for this stage in the formation of the book.⁴² Besides large parts of Joel, this layer probably contained a version of Obadiah. According to Nogalski also little glosses dealing with locusts and the fertility of the land were inserted in older writings in order to recall the vivid picture of Joel 1-2, e. g. Nah 3:15aγ.16b and Hab 3:16b-17. However, it seems difficult to find out exactly how many writings and passages this layer comprised. Although Wolfe, Nogalski, Bosshard, and Schart agree, that there was something like a "Day of YHWH-layer," which contained a large part of Joel, the differences between them are considerable. This problem is closely related to those in the last phase of the redaction history of the Book of the Twelve. Did the collection of the Joel-related layer end with an earlier version of Malachi, which was attached to Zechariah 8, as Nogalski proposes?⁴³ Or did it conclude with Zech (9-)14, with Malachi entering later, as Schart prefers? In any case, Jonah was likely the last independent writing to be added. In this respect Nogalski and Schart agree with Jones, who argues from the manuscript evidence that because Jonah's position within the sequence of the Twelve is different in all three variants it was probably added last. Over the last decades there has emerged a strong consensus that Mal 3:22-24 was added to the Book of the Twelve as conclusion to the second part of the Hebrew canon "Nebiim."⁴⁴

⁴² Nogalski, *Processes*, 275-278. See for example Wolfe with his proposed "Day of YHWH-editor," and E. Bosshard, "Beobachtungen zum Zwölfprophetenbuch." *Biblische Notizen* 40 (1987): 30-62.

⁴³ E. Bosshard, and R. G. Kratz, "Maleachi im Zwölfprophetenbuch." *Biblische Notizen* 52 (1990) 27-46 and O. H. Steck, *Der Abschluß der Prophetie im Alten Testament: Ein Versuch zur Frage der Vorgeschichte des Kanons*. Biblisch-Theologische Studien 17. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991 suggest an even more complex connection between Zech and Malachi. They suppose that former versions of Mal originally were designed as immediate extension of former versions of Zech 9-14. The superscription Mal 1:1 came in later and the original cohesion was interrupted.

⁴⁴ W. Rudolph, *Haggai, Sacharja, Maleachi*. KAT vol. 13,4. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1976, 291; Nogalski, *Processes*, 185; Steck, *Abschluß*, 134-136; Schart, 302-303.

Hermeneutical Implications

These new insights into the redaction history of the Book of the Twelve change the way in which the meaning of the whole and its parts can be adequately construed.⁴⁵

First, the well-known fact should again be emphasized that the original words of the historical prophets underwent a deep transformation within the literary transmission. Without the different redactors, the first written records would have been left somewhere in an archive. With their adaptation, these records became an unparalleled body of literature which played an important role in the interaction between Israel and its God. The ongoing rewriting of the prophetic heritage certifies that the prophetic collections were successful in mediating the word of God into different historical situations. In this respect the prophetic books pursued the function of the original prophets.

A second well-known fact may also be stressed. The literary remains of the pre-exilic prophets were mostly shaped under the impression of the fulfillment of the original oracles. The exiles of Northern Israel and Judah functioned as the basic proof of truth for a precursor of the Book of the Twelve, which presumably contained at least Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zeph. However, the prophecies of doom also provoked the confident hope that God will once again bring peace and well-being to Israel within the context of a renewed creation.

Thirdly, from an early stage in the transmission process onward, the oracles of one prophet were perceived in light of the history of prophecy. One may already compare Jer 28:8, where Jeremiah uses the conformity of his message with the prophetic tradition as an argument against his opponent. It was even more so the goal of the redactors to present the prophets as a coherent whole. New prophecy had to demonstrate how it is related to the literary prophetic tradition. This does not mean that the prophetic messages remained unchanged during history, but every new prophecy had to be conceivable as picking up and expanding certain aspects of the tradition under the pressure of new experiences of God.

⁴⁵ Very extensively Steck, *Prophetenbuecher*, 127-204 has dealt with the hermeneutical implications of the latest redaction critical enterprises; see also Childs, B. S. "Retrospective Reading of the Old Testament Prophets," *ZAW* 108 (1996): 362-77.

Fourthly, the prophetic writings were transmitted as parts of collections. It is very likely, that the redactors did expand and rewrite given prophetic writings in the opinion that they articulate what the historical prophet, under whose name they worked, would have said, if the prophet were confronted with the problems of their own time. However, whenever they were confronted with a new prophecy, which could not be harmoniously integrated within the existing collection, a new writing was designed under a new author's name. Presumably this writing circulated in many cases independently for a while before it was added to the existing group. The inclusion became possible when the redactors could develop a theological position, in which the differences between the older corpus and the new writings could either be integrated or became insignificant.⁴⁶ Within a given collection, the writings were combined in such a way that the meaning of the whole overruled the meaning that a certain text had in its original historical setting. The theological position that was held by the last redactors was inferred into every part of the collection. For example, within the Joel-related layer all passages dealing with the Day of YHWH were interpreted as references to the scenario described in Joel, no matter what the original meaning of those passages would had been. Therefore, it is imperative that the interpreter not isolate one prophetic writing against others. Rather, the interpreter should read the prophetic writing as part of a collection which contributes to a consistent meaning of the whole. It is especially important to look for those redactional passages which are especially concerned with developing complex scenarios, in which different concepts can be reconciled.

Fifthly, it is important, however, that the redactors did not produce a flat coherence without deviations, tensions, and even contradictions. It must be born in mind that the final text of the Book of the Twelve does not support the idea of one prophet overlooking the whole history of Israel from one point in time, as for example, occurs in the Book of Isaiah. Instead, the corpus presents twelve different prophets from different times. The overarching unity of this book is much more unsettled than in Isaiah. Whereas former exegetes hesitated to conceive the individual messages as part of a higher unity, postmodern thought is intrigued by that idea. The Book of the Twelve postulates that messages from different times, from persons with special insights, speaking from different backgrounds, when read together, form a complex unity. The reader is forced to proceed from

⁴⁶ See Schart, 309-314.

one prophecy to the next, each time imagining the hidden theme of the whole, the judging and restoring presence of God in history, from a different perspective. For the postmodern reader, it is not important to get a final coherent vision of what the book is about. Much more important is the arrangement of the prophecies in a way that the single unit presents a distinct but memorable perspective, which at the same time needs to be balanced by the next unit. None of the prophecies needs to be criticized as long as the reader has delight in moving on. The trajectory of this complex process is the canonical guidance with respect to how the reader can achieve his or her own vision of the God of Israel.