

Text – Reader – Author  
Towards a Theory of Exegesis: Some European Viewpoints

by  
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*1. The Starting Point: a Triple Crisis*

The starting point of these reflections is what seems to me an evident crisis of orientation in Old Testament exegetical studies in Europe, and especially in Germany. Of course, to establish the existence of a crisis always has a subjective aspect, which I have no desire to cover up or obscure. But nor do I wish to stop short at an observation of the crisis. I should like to go on to carry over the sense of crisis into a description of the situation which can be followed inter-subjectively, so as from that point to talk about some fundamental questions in exegetical method which underlie this crisis but which have not been adequately addressed. It is here, in the identification and working out of these fundamental open questions, that I see the theoretical task. In this discussion I shall remain largely in the pre-theological field of literary studies. Consequently I make no claim to offer a contribution to the theory of theological exegesis itself—only, as I have said, to its prolegomena. Nor do these reflections belong to the sphere of hermeneutics, if we follow Klaus Berger in defining hermeneutics as the discipline for mediating between exegesis and an application of the texts to theology and church.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, my reflections do have hermeneutical consequences, upon which I should like to comment briefly at the end of this article.

Let me first turn briefly to the exegetical crisis as I see it. According to my own impression, this has three focuses:

1.1. Loss of consensus and the avoidance of theory

The first focus centres on the fact that Old Testament scholarship is no longer confident about its own traditional questions, methods and results, particularly in the sphere of historical criticism. This uncertainty shows itself as a loss of consensus about the validity of certain historical explanatory models. "Conservative" scholars belonging to the German tradition especially are conscious of this uncertainty. In view of the vanished consensus "in essential basic questions," Ludwig Schmidt, for example, can "only hope that agreement about fundamental questions can after all be arrived at once more where the genesis of the Pentateuch is concerned."<sup>3</sup> Horst Dietrich Preuß summed up his impression about research

into the Deuteronomistic History as follows: "In an 'integrated' or 'close reading,' the interpreter can of course find everything which is important for himself; in questions of historical criticism, he generally finds that which conforms to the school to which he deems himself to belong. Thus the individual schools and methods exist side by side, and every Old Testament scholar does not merely fabricate his own theory about the Pentateuch . . . he will soon (?) be doing the same for his picture of DtrG."<sup>4</sup>

Up to now most German exegetes have not been enduringly discouraged by this lack of consensus. The general view is that one must only research long and intensively enough for a model to emerge which will explain the findings in the best possible way, and will gain widespread assent.<sup>5</sup> "In Old Testament studies too," writes O. Kaiser, "difficulties exist to be solved, not repressed."<sup>6</sup> Consequently old models are refurbished and produced anew, with enormous and meticulous labour, but also with a degree of self-referential scholasticism—and yet the sheltering port of a general consensus, or anything approaching it, is still out of sight. But what then, if loss of consensus with regard to the texts has to be put down to their inescapable poly-interpretability, and is a regrettable loss only from the perspective of some of their academic recipients? Does exegesis not then lay itself open to the reproach of having neglected the fundamental question about its conditions and limitations, and in so doing to have fallen victim to a forgetfulness of theory, even indeed to "an avoidance of theory"? <sup>7</sup>

## 1.2. Inadequate Alternatives and an Excess of Theory

It is true that in the last 25 years many attempts have been made in the field of OT studies, in the German-speaking countries too, to incorporate into exegesis theoretical approaches and suggestions drawn from the field of non-theological literary, textual and hermeneutical studies. But attempts of this kind are viewed by a considerable number of people with skepticism and rejection. The skepticism is directed at the often alarming ballast of theoretical and methodological language in these approaches. That is to say—and this is the second focus of the crisis—these new questions and methods have not been successfully presented in a plausible form, and so far reduced to their elements that the textual interpretation is not continually overlaid and overloaded by reflections about theory and method. A concentration on theory of this kind (which may perhaps still be inevitable at the present time) is the opposite pole to the "forgetfulness of theory" among scholars still working in the traditional way. In the long run, neither the one extreme nor the other is desirable.

### 1.3. Loss of Acceptance

A third focus of the orientation crisis can be found in the circumstance that both the questions and the answers which academic exegesis can offer lose acceptance outside the field of exegesis itself. On the fringes of scientific exegesis, forms of contextual exegesis have evolved—the exegesis initiated by liberation theology, for example, or feminist exegesis, psychoanalytical exegesis, biblio-drama—all forms which have a considerable fascination for the academic and the non-academic public. But at the present time they cannot be linked up with the "central sphere" of academic—and especially German—exegesis.<sup>8</sup>

One feature common to all these new forms of biblical-exegetical praxis is that they are more interested in the way the texts are perceived by particular persons and groups than in their historical genesis or meaning. The texts are perceived just as they are, as "aesthetic subjects" (I shall explain the term in a moment), and in their reception are then also altered and *verfremdet*—defamiliarized. The historical-critical passion of traditional exegesis makes no impact on these approaches, largely speaking. It could well be that this very fact manifests the difference between exegesis and application; if this were the case we should be dealing with a hermeneutical problem. But it could also be that exegesis sees very clearly with one eye—the historical one—but is almost blind in others to the aesthetic aspect, and to the aesthetics of reception. The loss of acceptance would then indicate a problem in the theory of exegesis itself. To put it in the form of an example: fortunately almost every ancient inscription fragment gains scholarly publicity forthwith; modern receptions of OT texts, on the other hand, receive hardly any attention in the academic world. I am thinking, for instance, of the Exodus interpretation presented by the American social philosopher Michael Walzer,<sup>9</sup> or the picture of Moses in the novel *Children of Gebelawi* by Nagib Machfus,<sup>10</sup> Egyptian winner of the Nobel prize for literature.

What emerges from these observations?

In all three focuses of the crisis, what is at stake is the ability or inability of OT exegesis to arrive at a critical self-awareness. The uncertainty which this involves affects both confidence in the possibilities (still) latent in the traditional questions and methods, and the capacity to be open to new academic and non-academic approaches, to make them fruitful, to integrate them, or to offer interfaces with them. The task of a "theory of exegesis" would therefore be to construct a system of co-ordinates which would offer a basis for transformations of the traditional questions in keeping with the times, and would make it possible to integrate recent scientific trends, as well as the dialogue with contextual approaches.

Let me now indicate the lines along which I could conceive such a system of co-ordinates, starting from the familiar distinction between synchronic and diachronic exegesis—though this distinction itself has to be called in question and requires critical examination.

## 2. *The Diastasis of the Diachronic and the Synchronic Approach, or the Trichotomy of the Three Intentions of Interpretation?*

Let us look first at the terms. With the "trichotomy of intentions" I am picking up a terminological suggestion made by Umberto Eco in his book The Limits of Interpretation. According to Eco, interpretation can be understood in three ways: as the "research of the intention auctoris, ... as the research of the intention operis and . . . as imposition of the intention lectoris."<sup>11</sup> Eco makes it clear that these three types of interpretation interact, especially the intention operis and the intention lectoris. Interpretations can be characterized by the weight they give to one or other of the three "intentions" and the relation in which these are put to one another. We shall find all this confirmed in the course of the following reflections.

As we know, the paired terms "diachronic" and "synchronic" are borrowed from modern linguistics, but have developed a life of their own in biblical exegesis.<sup>12</sup> The exegesis which looks to the conditions of an existing text's genesis and history (literary history) is called diachronic. The word synchronic can be applied in general to any exegesis which investigates a particular text in a particular–synchronic–communication context, without regard to its historical genesis. A more specialized but widespread use of the term "synchronic exegesis" means by "text" the final biblical text as it is now before us, and is more interested in the "synchronic" interplay of its linguistic and literary elements than in its historical communicative synchronicity. It is this more literary understanding of the term "synchronicity," an understanding which takes its bearings from the final text, which I am taking as point of departure in what follows.

It may first of all be said that neither of the two perspectives exists on its own. Diachronic exegesis is inconceivable without synchronic elements—that is to say, without taking account of the linguistic form of the presently existing text; and conversely, synchronic exegesis cannot deny—and generally has no wish to deny—the complex history of the text's development. To this extent most exegetes may be said to recognize the justification of both perspectives.

And yet, for all that, the two perspectives are locked in conflict. The dispute has to do with the validity and the radius of the two perspectives. They are perceived as a dichotomy, indeed as a diastasis.

The proponents of the diachronic method among OT exegetes—and they are the majority, at least in German and other European exegesis—insist that ultimately only an interpretation which takes its bearings from historical criticism brings us closer to an understanding of the text. According to this view, texts can only be interpreted appropriately if they can in origin be assigned to historically defined and definable communication situations and, within these again, to defined and definable "form and utterance intentions" of determinable "authors" in each

given case. Interpretation means tracing the "final" text back critically to the original intentions of the author which are implicit in it, if necessary going behind the form of the final text, in order to reconstruct "the texts behind the text"<sup>13</sup>—its "sources" or "redactions," for example. Actually, this means two things :

1. It is not the text in its presently existing form which carries the meaning and is the medium of communication; it is "the texts behind the text," called into being by way of a reconstruction of what is behind the text as it now is. "The texts behind the text" reconstructed in this way are then assigned to presumed historical authors.

2. The goal of this interpretation is not the texts themselves, neither the final text nor "the texts behind the text." The aim is to reconstruct the communication contexts and intentions which take form in these texts, and that means, ultimately speaking, reconstructing the intentions of the author in any given case ("intentio auctoris").<sup>14</sup>

In this way diachronic exegesis defines texts and their textuality in the light of the phenomenon of communication. It can thus be traced back to the both simple and fundamental "transmitter–receiver" communication model.<sup>15</sup> This abstract basic model has to a certain extent been interpreted in diachronic exegesis as the "speaker/author–listener/reader" model, in which the text has simply and solely the function of the organon, the medium of communication. From the perspective of this model it is completely plausible that a text should be primarily comprehensible because a speaker—i.e., the author—wishes to say something at a particular time in a particular context to a recipient—i.e., the listener or reader.

The handful of synchronists<sup>16</sup> nevertheless cling firmly to the specific importance and specific justification of "their" perspective, and insist on the independence of the synchronic viewpoint. They can for their part point out that the existing text—in whole or in part—is actually read and interpreted even without any knowledge (as a rule hypothetical) of the original, historical, i.e., so-called "real" authors and readers or their communication contexts. The texts evidently also speak "just by themselves" to readers outside the narrowly defined situations in which they originated.

Thus even the synchronic approach neither can nor may forego the communication aspect. For, as we have said, from the reader's point of view the existing text evidently and actually belongs to the sphere of communication events. Accordingly, what is required is a communication model which takes account of this. It can only be a model in which the abstract vis-à-vis of transmitter and receiver is given concrete form and interpreted in terms of the vis-à-vis of text and reader. This form of communication model of course requires modifications over against the receiver-transmitter model, interpreted as author-reader relationship.

Let us begin with the receiving side. A receiver here cannot be interpreted as an individual, historically precisely definable reader (or an individual reading community), but must be a potential reader: every actual and every possible reader can assume this position. This being

so, the communication model modified in this way is not historically circumscribable, as is the model of the authorial production situation. But it is not a-historical either, for reader or reading community are always historical entities. This is therefore a historically open model.

Modifications are also necessary on the transmitting side. In the usual communication model, texts are media: they are the organon between author and reader. In our model the texts do not lose this character, but—at least in the context of literary studies—they no longer have behind them any real and personally identifiable speaker subject. In the perception of the reader, they are simultaneously the perceived organon and the transmitting subject. In this sense I should like to talk about texts as "aesthetic subjects." Our concept of the aesthetic subject links up in a certain way with the concept of the "aesthetic object" put forward by the Prague structuralist Jan Mukarovsky.<sup>17</sup> Mukarovsky understood by aesthetic object the idea which readers of a literary work have of it as a material artifact. The aesthetic object as that which is contained in the consciousness is dependent on the context and the traditions of the reading community in any given case, and is thus variable over against the work. When we talk about the work as an aesthetic subject, we intend by so doing to stress that the interrelation between the work and the reader's awareness of it is not conditioned solely by the awareness of the reader and its contexts, but proceeds from the productive encounter between the work and its readers.

Texts as aesthetic entities do not have intentions towards the reader in the sense that (empirical) authors can have intentions in what they say and the way they say it. But texts do nevertheless have forms, in the sense of perceivable surface structures, and they have thematic, deep structural content. To put it the other way round and more simply: they say something in a quite definite and unique way. To this extent we may talk—though of course metaphorically—about an intentio operis. At the same time, the semantic content of aesthetic subjects is not unequivocal. If an unambiguous meaning is to be arrived at, the reader is required. Seen from the reader's point of view, the forms and statements of the text are not given facts; they are potentials, which have to be received, translated and transformed; in short, the intentio operis and the intentio lectoris are dependent on one another.

The independent synchronic interpretation therefore has a trend to the reception, to the reader. It has to reckon with productive receptions and be open for these. Over against this, diachronic exegesis has rather, practically speaking, a "conclusive" character. It says first of all what the text meant (according to the intention of the historical authors), how it became that which it now is. Any future development beyond its historical meaning is, strictly speaking, outside the interest and the competence of the diachronic exegete. The term "Endtext" or "Endgestalt" (of the Pentateuch), for example, brings out this limitation of diachronic exegesis very clearly—perhaps contrary to the wish of the diachronic exegetes. The existing text is in this way described as an actual or virtual end of OT literary history,<sup>18</sup> an end preceded (as the phrase final redaction implies) by other meaningful texts. In them, so much

meaning has been "used up," so to speak, that not a great deal is left for the final text. Perhaps this final text is only a "necessary postulate of exegetical reason" (E. Blum's phrase),<sup>19</sup> or even merely a historically fortuitous and hence fundamentally insignificant agglomerate (see C. Levin).<sup>20</sup>

The problem is raised to a different level if the existing text is seen in the light of its character as "canonical text" (B. S. Childs). It then becomes the text that has become normative for a particular reading community. The communicability between text and reader is thus made dependent on a normative structure of interdependencies.

Both qualifications of the existing text, its qualification as "final text" and its qualification as "normative text," have their own relative justification. But in my view they pass too lightly over the fact that "the act of reading" initially (and again and again) means perceiving the existing, transmitted text, the text as an aesthetic subject. In this foundational and generative act of perception the reader encounters the text not necessarily as a historically "finished" or normative "sacrosanct" entity, but as an aesthetic subject open for perception in the present. In my view exegesis cannot ignore this fact, either in its theory or its practice.

Thus the dichotomy "diachronic/synchronic" proves to be a dispute about the relative importance of the three "intentions"—the intentio auctoris, the intentio operis and the intentio lectoris. Behind the dichotomy stands a trichotomy.

The proponents of the diachronic method put the whole weight of their interpretation on the intentio auctoris. The intentio operis has for them a merely heuristic value in its bearing on the intentio auctoris; the reader comes into the picture only as vis-à-vis of the original authors.

The supporters of the synchronic view assign to the intentio operis its own justification and importance. The text as aesthetic subject is the primary object of their interpretative endeavour. From there the ways open up, first to the intentio lectoris and then to the intentio auctoris.

Our further reflections will now be roughly orientated towards the three intentions. We shall enquire about the main problems that arise within the scope of these "intentions," and—in accordance with the title of the article—shall look at the intentio operis, the intentio lectoris and the intentio auctoris.

### *3. Exegesis and Text Theory (questions within the circumference of the intentio operis)*

In principle, every OT or other biblical text can be viewed as an aesthetic subject of exegesis. This is so whether it is one of the standard Hebrew texts passed down to us,<sup>21</sup> whether it is an ancient or modern translated text, or whether it is even a reconstructed source or redaction text. We shall take as starting point the transmitted Masoretic text as the aesthetic subject of exegesis. Even if it is not in all cases to be seen as the "parent text," it can and must count as at

least the most widely accepted text of reference and comparison for the whole Jewish, Christian and secular translation and reception tradition of the Hebrew Bible. That is to say, everyone who is concerned with interpreting OT texts builds sometime and somehow on the Hebrew text, or comes back to it. (Here, in this context, the fact that this text may also enjoy canonical validity in the theological sense is irrelevant.)

Determining the intentio operis of this text means—if we are talking about a scholarly reader—describing, first, its linguistic and literary form or surface; second, its thematic content or depth structure; and third, its elements of illocution. In other words, it means describing its pragmatically communicative content. Descriptions of this kind are employed in a more or less intuitive way not only by every exegete, but also by every reader who is asked about his or her impressions after hearing or reading a text. But the problem is to apply the description in such a way that initially the work can "speak" without the reader's presumptions of its meaning, so that—to use terms borrowed from U. Eco – it is possible to explain the structural characteristics which enable the text to be filled with meaning in this or another way.<sup>22</sup> This critical interpretative task can only be met with the help of a professional tool.

The development of just such a tool has been behind every attempt to introduce scientific textual procedures into exegesis ever since the 1970s. Its impetus was, first, to satisfy the claims of linguistic professionalism—i.e., to accord with the text<sup>23</sup>—and second, to develop a terminological system "which leads to conclusions that can be tested or confuted."<sup>24</sup> It was therefore essentially a matter of intersubjectivity and rationality in the scientific exegetical discussion. These attempts started from different angles. We must first mention the Catholic Old Testament scholar Wolfgang Richter (Munich) and his programme of exegesis as a "descriptive literary study."<sup>25</sup> Picking up structural linguistic and literary studies, he turned almost exclusively to the formal Ausdrucksseite, the surface structures, as the most easily objectifiable condensation of a text. The content aspect (the "innere Form") came, and comes, to expression only as the weaker wing of the Ausdrucksseite, and then appears in some sense as an annex<sup>26</sup> or appendage to exegesis, where "the form constitutes the content's reference system . . ." <sup>27</sup>

Criticism of Richter's programme have above all pointed out that the texts are perceived too one-sided from the formal aspect, communication as the condition for the text's production thereby being neglected.

In this connection—as well as the viewpoints of Klaus Koch,<sup>28</sup> H. Schweizer<sup>29</sup> and others—we must mention C. Hardmeier's "Texttheorie und biblische Exegese. Zur rhetorischen Funktion der Trauermetaphorik in der Prophetie." Hardmeier was able to show in a way that could be comprehended even by non-literary scholars that texts grow up out of a Kommunikationsaktprogramm, and how they do so. This Kommunikationsaktprogramm first of all generates a semantic depth structure, i.e., content, and only afterwards goes over to a



semiotic ("formal") text surface.<sup>30</sup> Theoretically this established an important counterpoint to Richter's stress on the structural, formal aspect. From the angle of the text's genesis, the content takes priority—i.e., the circumstance that someone wants to say or hear something—not the formal surface of the text. That is the linguistic crystallization of what is meant to be said or heard, and of course it cannot be dispensed with.

From this point of view, perhaps I may be permitted to touch briefly on the attempt I myself made in my Munich post-doctoral thesis, "Das Heiligtum und das Gesetz,"<sup>31</sup> to introduce perspectives and methods derived from text theory. In a deliberate counter-move to Richter's outline, I chose semantic depth structures as a point of departure. Here I followed the Dutch text theorist Teun van Dijk particularly. Starting from the existing text under consideration, I tried first to move away from thematic propositions and to arrive at the wider thematic complexes, the macrostructures, in order then and only then—in a kind of counter-check—to search for limited surface texts. In so far my starting point was "synchronically" orientated towards the intentio operis—the statement potential of the text—and only then diachronically concerned.<sup>32</sup>

Fundamentally speaking, the above-mentioned approaches, and others unmentioned, permit all essential levels of text description to be thought through and tried out—the substantial-thematic level, the formal-linguistic level, and the communicative (pragmatic) level. The important thing now would be to integrate them, above all reducing them to their essential elements in such a way that they are open for a wider acceptance in exegetical research and teaching.

Common to the approaches which we have discussed hitherto is that basically they can claim validity for every text, i.e., for every kind of text especially. The more specialized approach to particular types of text in the Hebrew Bible certainly also seems conceivable and promising. This is particularly true for the biblical narrative texts, where scientific textual approaches are probably most advanced.

For a long time, indeed, the interpretation of OT narrative texts has really been carried out in a kind of exchange with non-theological narrative research. As long ago as 1910, H. Gunkel (and incidentally even C. Westermann, as late as 1981) cited A. Olrik's Epische Gesetze der Volksdichtung, published in 1909,<sup>33</sup> while M. Noth turned back to André Jolles' Einfache Formen (1930)<sup>34</sup>.

More recent English, American and Dutch work on biblical narrative is, on the one hand, influenced by structuralist narrative models; on the other hand it proceeds from "rhetorical criticism".<sup>35</sup> The contributions of Robert Alter, Schimon Bar Efrat and Adele Berlin above all achieve a high standard as scientific literary studies. Only unfortunately they have received little or no attention in the German-speaking sector, and—although they are standard works—have not even been translated. This is probably due to the fact that they have to be characterized as "text-centered, viewing a literary work as a world in-itself."<sup>36</sup>

That distinguishes them from the biblical narratology found in the German-speaking countries, which has up to now been represented almost exclusively by the work of C. Hardmeier.<sup>37</sup> Hardmeier's "pragmatische Erzähltextanalyse" is directed particularly to narrative as "communicative act"<sup>38</sup> (cf. above), and from this draws the conclusion that "a transmitted narrative text . . . primarily and directly only gives information about the author of that text—even though that author is generally speaking unknown." Consequently, according to Hardmeier, "the author's perspective, his intended effect, as well as the situation in which the text comes into being . . . are the most immediate factors determining a text in its specific, total substantial structure and its unique linguistic form."<sup>39</sup>

In my view, the relation in biblical narratology between the approaches I have indicated—those centered on the text and those centered on the author—urgently requires discussion, especially since these approaches seem almost to ignore each other's existence.

4. *"The Aesthetics of Reception" or "Anything goes"? (questions within the circumference of the intentio lectoris)*

"The aesthetics of reception"<sup>40</sup> is the name given in general literary studies to the interpretative approach according to which texts—pre-eminently written and "fictional" texts, but not only those—acquire their meaning with the help of the reader's participation. This accords with their nature as texts, and is from the outset implicit in them, through the aspect of indeterminacy which they contain. In the act of reading, these indeterminate aspects become stimuli for readers, inciting them to generate meaning in interaction with the text's "sense" potential or "semantic" potential.<sup>41</sup> To put it more simply: literary texts do not just "mean" something; they are a guide to readers with the help of which they themselves create meaningful content.

The reader-orientated approach of the aesthetics of reception differs from the category of "Wirkungsgeschichte" or "Auslegungsgeschichte,"<sup>42</sup> which is entirely familiar in exegesis and theology. The category "influence" underestimates the reader's share in the text event.<sup>43</sup> Influence sees reception beyond the situation in which the work comes into being as a secondary phenomenon, a phenomenon belonging to the text's "subsequent history;"<sup>44</sup> productive reception, on the other hand, is a primary aesthetic and literary phenomenon. It is always already initiated or incited by the texts themselves.

Many people are afraid that an exegesis that leans towards the intentio lectoris would replace "the character of the biblical texts as something over against the here and now . . . by subjectively arbitrary reflections of the text in the ego."<sup>45</sup> Stress on an intentio lectoris in the framework of the aesthetics of reception would leave the door wide open for an unrestricted "anything goes" which would run counter to the normative function which exegesis has for the church especially.

With what was certainly a polemical exaggeration, but one thereby contributing to clarity, Gerhard Sauter,<sup>46</sup> for example, asks whether the approach by way of the aesthetics of reception is not "a call for co-determination in matters of reading," where it is even still a question "whether the result is at least co-determination on equal terms, arranged between author, text and reader."

Incidentally, polemic does not prevent Sauter in his character as dogmatic reader from being powerfully aware of just such a co-determination, when he stresses "three basic distinctions . . . as reading guides" for biblical texts: "the spirit and the letter, law and gospel, promise and fulfillment."<sup>47</sup>

In my view, this criticism overstates the normative function of the biblical texts, even and especially for the congregation. After all, biblical texts ought not only—indeed should not even primarily—regulate and restrict; they should enthuse, motivate and inspire. They can only do this if they are open for their readers and offer some point of contact.

Nevertheless, the question about the limits of the intentio lectoris in interpretation is a justifiable one. And the discussion in literary studies shows that the intentio lectoris is also woven into the interplay of the other "intentions." The "inventor" of the "opera aperta" himself, U. Eco, thinks it important to stress that the intentio lectoris finds its guideline and its limit in the intentio operis. He both defends the literal sense and concedes initiative to the reader. True: "The initiative of the reader basically consists in making a conjecture about the text intention." But it is also true that ". . . any interpretation given of a certain portion of a text can be accepted if it is confirmed and must be rejected if it is challenged by another portion of the same text. In this sense the internal textual coherence controls the otherwise uncontrollable drives of the reader."<sup>48</sup> In other words, if the intentio operis, the statements of a text as its semantic potentialities, are described sufficiently critically, then the reader can be told, not only what is possible; what is not possible, or is no longer possible, can be indicated too.

At this very point Eco now also brings the author and his intention into play, and into the interplay with the other two intentions: "Since the intention of the text is basically to produce a Model Reader able to make conjectures about it, the Model Reader consists in figuring out a Model Author that is not the empirical one and that, at the end, coincides with the intention of the text."<sup>49</sup> I am taking Eco's statement as the occasion for now turning to this viewpoint myself.

5. *Historical Criticism—Defined in Terms of the Aesthetics of Reception? (questions within the circumference of the intentio auctoris)*

If we look at important exegetical work produced in recent years—for example C. Levin's Der Jahwist or T. Pola's Die ursprüngliche Priesterschrift<sup>50</sup>—we might be left with the impression, if only because of the titles themselves, that in diachronic, historical-critical exegesis the author model of communication holds complete, unquestioned and undisputed sway. But this impression is deceptive. The interpretation theories underlying diachronic exegesis are also the object of theoretical reflection,<sup>51</sup> even if in somewhat scattered cases. Indeed there are also already voices which relate redactional criticism and reception aesthetics to each other.<sup>52</sup>

This seems to me to be in tendency a useful way forward. Let me illustrate what I mean by way of two lines of thought.

### 5.1. The Role of the Historical Critic as Reader

Historical criticism in its traditional form is fostered by the observation of "tensions," "unevennesses" and "interference" in the text under consideration. For this, objectifiable facts cannot always be produced in evidence—for example in the surface of the text. Here the historical critic has to draw on aesthetic and historically factual presuppositions (reference models). The person who discovers tensions cherishes notions of a tension-free text ("Textvorstellungen"<sup>53</sup>). Many people seem to have in their mind's eye as aesthetic ideal a linearly coherent progression of ideas, and a regular, well-formed body of text, a continuous thread.<sup>54</sup> In all this the historical critic appears not only as a detached observer but also as a reader with an undoubtedly subjective participating share in the process. But at the same time "coherence perceptions" of this kind are the basis for the presumption about historical source and redaction authors.

Here in my view we have to ask whether the exegetes who are interested in the intention auctoris are sufficiently aware that the author they elicit (the author of the source or the redactor) is initially a product of the reception, an "implied author" or "model author,"<sup>55</sup> a design created by the reader—an author who cannot necessarily be equated with a real, historical author, but who is nevertheless continually, by preference, so equated. In other words, even in the author category, which holds such significance for diachronic exegesis (whether it be source author or redactor) the scientific reader is initially under discussion. The problem about this hermeneutical circle (if one likes to call it that) is not that it exists, but that there is too little awareness of it.<sup>56</sup>

### 5.2. Lecture and Relecture

What I have said is not intended as an assertion that the judgments of historical criticism rest solely on the reader subjectivity of modern interpreters.

Nevertheless, it would seem to me useful and desirable to broaden out the historical basis for judgments of this kind. No one, after all, has up to now had in his or her hands the words of OT authors or redactors as renowned as the Yahwist or the Deuteronomists—in whichever of the versions proposed. If, therefore, there are no direct witnesses, a way out could be to turn to the typology of the historical-critical processes to which the texts behind the text can be put down. For this, in my view, important approaches already exist.

I should like to mention here John Van Seters. Explicitly picking up Gerhard von Rad's approach, he tried to make literary types in Hellenistic historiography fruitful for Pentateuchal exegesis.<sup>57</sup>

Above all, however, Odil H. Steck's category of "Prophetischen Prophetenauslegung"<sup>58</sup> established a historically typological framework—even if a very broad one—for the literary history of the prophetic books: the activity of "interpretation." But now interpretation is by no means a purely authorial activity; it is a highly crafted interweaving of reading and authorship, of "lecture" and productive "relecture." In the productive, inner-prophetic interpretation, intentio lectoris and intentio auctoris are bonded together—and in this order.<sup>59</sup> In other words, a continuing written prophecy and one interpretative of scripture is a reading prophecy before it becomes something to be written down.<sup>60</sup> Written prophets are "active readers."<sup>61</sup>

Thus from two sides—from the side of scholarly interpretation and from the side of the texts' typology—aspects can be identified which show that in the interpretation of biblical texts the intentio auctoris also has a trend towards the intentio lectoris. This does not make the definition of the texts behind the text and their real authors any easier. But it can be said that the product of that ramified process of lecture and relecture—the text of the Hebrew Bible—is at no point fortuitous or arbitrary in a literary sense. The aesthetic unity of the existing text which results is certainly not a simple unity; it is a complex unity which provokes further reading.

Having so far taken stock, I shall break off there, and should like to draw some conclusions in three brief theses.

## 6. Conclusions

1. OT exegesis can no longer be viewed exclusively as a "historical" discipline, as has generally been the case ever since Schleiermacher's "Kurzer Darstellung des Theologischen Studiums."<sup>62</sup> In turning to the descriptive perception of the text—the presently existing text too, and above all—as well as to the role of its readers in constituting its meaning, exegesis is in the first instance a literary, an aesthetic discipline.

2. At the same time, exegesis is still always historical. But it is historical not only in its attention to the genetic contexts of the Hebrew Bible; it is so in all contexts of communication and reception. As a historical discipline, therefore, it reaches from the first accessible readers to recipients and interpreters at the present day. This means that the reception of biblical texts ought to be put on the agenda of OT exegesis more than has been the case up to now. From here interfaces with the contextual reading and application of the texts today emerge, but links with other theological disciplines in addition.

3. Finally let me make a theological and hermeneutical comment. Exegesis cannot replace the reading of the Bible inside the church or outside it, nor is this its aim. The distinction between scientific exegesis and application remains of the essence. But exegesis can and should be addressed to application. In so doing, however, it should not so much regulate the application of biblical texts historically or normatively, but should on the contrary help to open up and disclose the potential of meaning within the texts themselves.

### Abstract:

The starting point of the article is a triple crisis of the traditional historical exegesis of the OT. Proposed is a "theory of exegesis" which offers a basis for transformations of traditional questions and methods and which offers "interfaces" for both, the integration of recent trends of literary sciences and the dialog with non-academic, contextual approaches. The (biblical) text is basically understood as an "aesthetic subject" in order to stress that the interrelation between the text and its readers proceeds from the productive encounter between both. As "co-ordinates" of the theory function U. Eco's three "intentions of interpretation" and their relations: the "intentio operis" which opens the perspective on descriptive text theories, the "intentio lectoris" which integrates "aesthetics of reception" and the "intentio auctoris" which offers the link to the traditional historical-critical exegesis.

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<sup>1</sup> The following text was first presented as a discussion paper at the colloquium "Theorie der Exegese" held at the Augustana-Hochschule Neuendettelsau on 9th/10th March, 1996.

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It was then read as a lecture at the faculty meetings of the Protestant theological faculties in Bavaria on 4th May, 1996. The lecture form has been retained here. A German version of this article will appear in 1998 in the Biblische Zeitschrift.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. K. Berger, Hermeneutik des Neuen Testaments, Gütersloh 1988, 108.

<sup>3</sup> L. Schmidt, "Zur Entstehung des Pentateuch, ein kritischer Literaturbericht," Verkündigung und Forschung 40 (1995) 3–28, 27f.

<sup>4</sup> H.D. Preuß, "Zum deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk," Theologische Rundschau 58 (1993) 229–264, 341–395, 394f.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. O. Kaiser, Grundriß der Einleitung in die kanonischen und deuterokanonischen Schriften des AT, vol. 1: Erzählende Schriften, Gütersloh 1992, 50.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>7</sup> An example of an avoidance of theory of this kind is for me Christoph Levin's book on the "Yahwist" (Der Jahwist, FRLANT 157, Göttingen 1993). Levin gives the impression that exegetical explanations are the result of a Big Bang of pure observation: "At the beginning stood, not a hypothesis—nor the dispute with generally accepted hypothesis—nor even a particular question, but a fortuitous critical observation in the story of the patriarchs in Genesis. When I followed this up, it emerged in comparison with similar texts that here the guiding redactional thread of the Yahwistic Pentateuchal source had been found. Only after that did the Yahwist become the motif. The consequence of the discovery was immediately plain . . ." (10, my italics). According to my own impression, Levin's description of "the origin" of his discovery—though undoubtedly subjectively credible—belongs to the genre of legend. Incidentally Levin does not tell us here at what point in the narrative of the patriarchs he made this discovery. He talks similarly about a "discovery" in connection with Genesis 39 (40).

<sup>8</sup> The traditional "interface" between scientific exegesis and praxis was always preaching, as the communication of the Word, aimed at, for example, in the structure of the Biblicher Kommentar series ("Form, Setting, Commentary or Interpretation, Purpose or Aim;" see the volumes published in translation by Augsburg Press and in the Hermeneia series, Fortress Press); but this has diminished in importance in comparison.

<sup>9</sup> Exodus and Revolution, Basic Books, New York 1985.

<sup>10</sup> In Arabic: Awlad Haratina, Beirut 1959; in English: Washington 1988.

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- <sup>11</sup> U. Eco, The Limits of Interpretation, Advances in Semiotics, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1990, 50.
- <sup>12</sup> Cf. here J. C. de Moor (ed.), Synchronic or Diachronic? A Debate in Old Testament Exegesis, OTS XXXIV, Leiden 1995.
- <sup>13</sup> U. Körtner talks about "the text behind the text" in Der inspirierte Leser, Göttingen 1994, 56, in connection with F. Overbeck's hermeneutics.
- <sup>14</sup> We find this principle of "the aesthetics of production" already formulated by F.D.E. Schleiermacher, and in highly pointed form: "Die Einheit des Werkes, das Thema wird hier angesehen als das den Schreiber bewegende Princip, und die Grundzüge der Composition als seine in jener Bewegung sich offenbarende eigenthümliche Natur" (F.D.E. Schleiermacher, Hermeneutik, nach den Handschriften neu herausgegeben und eingeleitet von Heinz Kimmerle, Heidelberg 1959, 107).
- <sup>15</sup> This communication model (or better: model for information theory) derives from C. Shannon and W. Weaver, The Mathematical Theory of Communication, Urbana 1949. It is taken from communications engineering (cf. here "Informationstheorie," Handbuch der Linguistik, ed. H. Stammerjohann, Munich 1975, 198f.). It was then transferred to linguistic communication and text theory, where it underwent considerable expansion (cf., for example, E. Gülich and W. Raible, Linguistische Textmodelle [UTB 130], Munich 1977, 24 ff.; as Gülich/Raible stress, *ibid.*, K. Bühler's "organon" model plays a role here. We are understanding the "application" to text theory as an interpretation of the basic model in information theory, and shall be participating in this interpretation in what follows.
- <sup>16</sup> In the German-speaking countries, purely or mainly synchronic exegesis (orientated towards the final text) has hardly been able to gain a footing in OT studies up to now. It is increasingly acquiring friends, however; see, e.g., G. Fischer, Jahwe unser Gott, Sprache, Aufbau, und Erzähltechnik in der Berufung des Mose (Ex 3–4) (OBO 91), Fribourg – Göttingen 1989; N. Lohfink, "Ich komme nicht in Zornesglut' (Hos 11,9). Skizze zu einer synchronen Leseanweisung für das Hoseabuch." in: R. Kuntzmann (ed.), Ce Dieu qui vient: Études sur L'Ancien Testament offerts au Professeur Bernard Renaud à l'occasion de son soixante-cinquième anniversaire (LeDiv 159), Paris 1995, 163–190, and I. Fischer, Tora für Israel – Tora für die Völker, Das Konzept des Jesaiabuches (SBS 164), Stuttgart



1995, 12f. In the European framework things are different, although approaches differ widely. Without attempting a comprehensive list, the following may be mentioned: in the Netherlands, J. P. Fokkelman, E. Talstra, the "Amsterdam school" (F. Breukelman, K. Deurloo); in the English sector, C. Conroy, D. L. Gunn, D. Jobling; in French, J. L. Ska's work. I am leaving American "literary criticism" on one side here.

<sup>17</sup> Cf., for example, J. Mukarovsky, Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts (trans. from Czech) Ann Arbor 1970, and H. Utzschneider, Gottes langer Atem, Die Exoduserzählung (Ex 1–14) in literarischer und historischer Sicht (SBS 166), Stuttgart 1996, 9.

<sup>18</sup> According to O. H. Steck, Exegese des AT, 12th ed. 1989, 92, diachronic exegesis extends to "the final productive change in a section of text and/or its context at the conclusion of the OT writings."

<sup>19</sup> E. Blum, "Gibt es die Endgestalt des Pentateuch?," VTS XLIII, 57.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. C. Levin, Jahwist (see n. 7) 441.

<sup>21</sup> That is to say, in the form, for example, of an unvocalized or vocalized text deriving from one of the Masoretic schools.

<sup>22</sup> U. Eco, Limits (see n. 11), 54: "Critical interpretation is . . . a metalinguistic activity—a semiotic approach—which aims at describing and explaining for which formal reasons a given text produces a given response. . ."

<sup>23</sup> This demand was already made by J. Barr, The Semantics of Biblical Language, in 1961.

<sup>24</sup> W. Richter, Exegese als Literaturwissenschaft, Entwurf einer atl. Literaturtheorie und Methodologie, Göttingen 1971, 37.

<sup>25</sup> W. Richter, *ibid.*, 29. Richter's programme has borne rich fruit in the monographs published in the series "Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im AT" (St. Ottilien). But in general his programme has continued to be subjected to criticism because of his stress on the "expression" side and has rather remained a matter for "insiders" (the "Richter school"). This is not just my own impression. Cf. J. W. Rogerson's balanced comments, "Exegese als Literaturwissenschaft: revisited," in: Text, Methode und Grammatik, Wolfgang Richter zum 65. Geburtstag, ed. W. Gross, H. Irsigler and T. Seidl, St. Ottilien 1991, 379–86.

<sup>26</sup> W. Richter, Exegese (see n. 24) 174ff.

<sup>27</sup> W. Richter, *ibid.*, 177.

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- <sup>28</sup> Cf. K. Koch, "Amos. Untersucht mit den Mitteln einer strukturalen Formgeschichte," in: AOAT 30 (1976) 14f.
- <sup>29</sup> Cf., for example, H. Schweizer, Metaphorische Grammatik, Wege zur Integration von Grammatik und Textinterpretation in der Exegese, 1981, 2nd ed. 1990, especially 20f., as well as the work cited in the Foreword to the 2nd edition of the Metaphorische Grammatik. Schweizer's contributions are among those which make extensive claims on the methodological linguistic competence and tolerance of its readers (cf. 1.2 above).
- <sup>30</sup> Cf. C. Hardmeier, "Texttheorie und biblische Exegese. Zur rhetorischen Funktion der Trauermetaphorik in der Prophetie," in: BEvTh 79, Munich 1978, 109ff., 133. Hardmeier's ideas are inspired especially by J. R. Searl's speech-act theory, as well as the important (text) linguistic positions that are indebted to it, such as that of Siegfried J. Schmidt.
- <sup>31</sup> Das Heiligtum und das Gesetz (OBO 77), Fribourg–Göttingen 1988. I have drawn especially on R. A. de Beaugrande and W. Dressler, Einführung in die Textlinguistik, Tübingen 1981; T. A. van Dijk, Textwissenschaft, Munich 1980 (Dutch: Tekstwetenschap. Een interdisciplinaire inleiding, Utrecht/ Antwerpen 1978).
- <sup>32</sup> On semantic depth structure as "the guiding principle in the genesis of surface texts," cf. again Hardmeier, Texttheorie (see n. 30) 120: "Results of psycho-linguistic investigations especially have made it clear that the detailed structure of the text surface (choice of words, syntax, use of formulas), particularly from the viewpoint of tradition and transmission history, can be conceded very much less relevance than is generally assumed in exegetical research" (ibid.).
- <sup>33</sup> A. Olrik, "Epische Gesetze der Volksdichtung," Zeitschrift für Deutsches Altertum und Deutsche Literatur 51 (1909), pp. 1-12. Cf.. H. Gunkel, Genesis, 1910, XXXVIff. [Eng. trans, The Legends of Genesis, 1964]; C. Westermann, Genesis 12–36., BK I,2, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1981, p. 26 [Eng. trans. 1985].
- <sup>34</sup> M.Noth, Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch, Stuttgart 1948, 47 [Eng. trans., History of the Pentateuchal Traditions, 1972].
- <sup>35</sup> R. Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative, Berkeley 1981; A. Berlin, Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative (1983), new ed. Winona Lake 1994; S. Bar-Efrat, Narrative Art in the Bible (JSOTS 70), Sheffield 1989. Cf. D. M. Gunn, "New Directions in the Study of Hebrew Narratives," in: JSOT 39 (1987) 65–75.

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- <sup>36</sup> M.A. Powell, The Bible and modern literary criticism, a critical assessment and annotated Bibliography, 1992, 5.
- <sup>37</sup> C. Hardmeier, Prophetie im Streit vor dem Untergang Judas. Erzählkommunikative Studien zur Entstehungssituation der Jesaia- und Jeremiaerzählungen in II Reg 18–20 und Jer 37–40 (BZAW 187), Berlin 1990. R. Lux follows Hardmeier's approach in Jona, Prophet zwischen >Verweigerung< und >Gehorsam<, Eine erzählanalytische Studie (FRLANT 162), Göttingen 1994.
- <sup>38</sup> C. Hardmeier, Prophetie im Streit (see n. 37) 25.
- <sup>39</sup> C. Hardmeier, *ibid.*, 29f. One sees that the diachronic/synchronic problem also extends into more recent approaches.
- <sup>40</sup> It will not escape the well-versed reader that I am basing what I say in what follows on Wolfgang Iser's outline of a theory of reception especially. In America, this generally goes under the designation "reader response criticism." Cf., for example, W. Iser, Der Akt des Lesens, Theorie ästhetischer Wirkung, Munich, 2nd ed. 1984; also his "Die Appellstruktur der Texte. Unbestimmtheit als Wirkungsbedingung literarischer Prosa," in: R. Warning, Rezeptionsästhetik, Theorie und Praxis, 228–252; H. Utschneider, "Das hermeneutische Problem der Uneindeutigkeit biblischer Texte—dargestellt an Text und Rezeption der Erzählung von Jakob am Jabbok (Gen 32,23–33)," in: EvTh 48 (1988) 182–198; C. Dohmen, "Rezeptionsforschung und Glaubensgeschichte. Anstöße für eine neue Annäherung von Exegese und systematischer Theologie," in: TThZ 96 (1987) 123–134; K. Koch, "Rezeptionsgeschichte als notwendige Voraussetzung einer biblischen Theologie – oder: Protestantische Verlegenheit angesichts der Geschichtlichkeit des Kanons, in: Sola scriptura, Das reformatorische Schriftprinzip in der säkularen Welt, ed. H.H. Schmid und J. Mehlhausen, Gütersloh 1991, 143–156; H. Utschneider, "Zur vierfachen Lektüre des Alten Testaments, Bibelrezeption als Erfahrung von Diskrepanz und Perspektive," in: Konsequente Traditionsgeschichte (FS Klaus Baltzer), ed. R. Bartelmus, T. Krüger and H. Utschneider (OBO 126), Fribourg /Göttingen 1993, 383–401.
- <sup>41</sup> In a somewhat over-simplified form, Eco could also talk about texts as "machines for producing meaning" (Nachschrift to Im Namen der Rose, Munich 1984, 9, 13, cited in Körtner, Leser [see n. 13] 89) .
- <sup>42</sup> H.G. Gadamer puts forward fundamental hermeneutical reflections on "the principle of

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Wirkungsgeschichte" in Wahrheit und Methode, 5th ed. 1986, 305ff. (Eng. trans. Truth and Method, 1983). He is less interested in the effects of individual works than in the position or importance of Wirkungsgeschichte for the historicity of understanding. "We are not demanding that Wirkungsgeschichte should develop as a new, independent auxiliary discipline in the humane sciences, but that we should ourselves learn to understand it more correctly and recognize that in all understanding . . . the effect of this Wirkungsgeschichte is making itself felt" (306; quotation translated directly from German). On historical and substantial questions about Wirkungsgeschichte, cf. recently H. Raisänen, "Die Wirkungsgeschichte der Bibel. Eine Herausforderung für die exegetische Forschung," in: *EvTh* 52 (1992) 337–347.

<sup>43</sup> For the distinction between the aesthetics of reception and Wirkungsgeschichte cf. C. Dohmen, Rezeptionsforschung, 128f.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. the title of H.W. Hertzberg's undoubtedly valuable early article "Die Nachgeschichte atl. Texte innerhalb des AT," in: Werden und Wesen des AT, ed. P. Volz, F. Stummer and J. Hempel (BZAW 66), Berlin 1936, 110–121.

<sup>45</sup> O.H. Steck, Exegese (see n. 18) 2.

<sup>46</sup> "Die Kunst des Bibellesens" (*EvTh* 52 [1992] 347–359). Sauter links the act of reading, in so far as it extends to the Bible, with the canonical question. For a Christian reader, and especially a dogmatic theologian, this is legitimate. But it is curious and by no means self-evident when he interprets the canonical question as "a question of power": "Canonical means . . . knowing something about the Bible which we cannot deal with of our own power—and learning to read with this deadlock" (*ibid.*, my italics). I doubt whether one can, or even should, subject reading, whether it be of the Bible or any other text, to fundamental reading instructions. What is canonical about the canonical texts is, in my view, not their "compulsive" character, but their character as standard, i.e., as an entity that serves for comparison, reference and orientation.

<sup>47</sup> G. Sauter, *ibid.*, 355.

<sup>48</sup> Eco, Limits (see n. 11) 58f.

<sup>49</sup> Eco, *ibid.*, 59.

<sup>50</sup> T. Pola, Die ursprüngliche Priesterschrift. Beobachtungen zur Literarkritik und Traditionsgeschichte von Pg (WMANT 70), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1995.

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- <sup>51</sup> Cf., for example, H. Schweizer, "Literarkritik," in: ThQ 168 (1988) 23–43; J. Werlitz, Studien zur literarkritischen Methode. Gericht und Heil in Jes 7,1–17 und 29,1–8, (BZAW 204) Berlin 1992; R. Wonneberger, Redaktion. Studien zur Textfortschreibung im AT, entwickelt am Beispiel der Samuelüberlieferung (FRLANT 156), Göttingen 1992.
- <sup>52</sup> As well as C. Hardmeier (cf. his comments on the process of textual transmission as a sequence of communicate act games, Texttheorie [see n.30] 75 ff.) and O. H. Steck, C. Dohmen was one of the first to point out that an approach from the angle of the aesthetics of reception ought to be introduced "in the field of the historical-critical investigation of Holy Scripture—especially in the sector of redaction criticism." "In line with Einflußgeschichte and Wirkungsgeschichte, the phenomena to be treated here can be more precisely grasped and described; for a consistent enquiry based on the aesthetics of reception cannot concern itself solely with identifying the stages of a text's growth. It must understand these stages of growth as independent receptions of the original word or text. This is also inextricably bound up with the question about the concern of the reception" (intentio lectoris! H.U.) (C. Dohmen, "Rezeptionsforschung" [see n.40], 131).
- <sup>53</sup> On this term cf. H. Utschneider, "Die Renaissance der atl. Literaturwissenschaft und das Buch Exodus," in: ZAW 106 (1994) 197–223. H. Schweizer seems to have something similar in mind when he writes: "Breaches . . . can only be detected if one has at least intuitively an idea of 'unity'" ("Literarkritik" [see n. 51] 25).
- <sup>54</sup> A question which—as far as I can see—is hardly ever asked is the question about the origin of this ideal. I could imagine that it derives from German classicism. Cf. for example, Goethe's definition of the epic as a "clearly narrating . . . natural form of poetry" (Westöstlicher Divan, Hamb. edition, vol. II, 187). He describes the book of Ruth as "the sweetest little whole . . . that has been passed down to us in epic and idyll" (ibid., 128). H. Schweizer's assumption seems to me less plausible: that in order to perceive coherence one can—indeed must—start from "fundamental pragmatic premises" which go beyond "every cultural and temporal limitation, or the bounds of a single language" ("Literarkritik" [see n.51] 27) and must assume in the recipient an equally supra-temporal "treasure-trove of experience" which "permits the growth of an idea of what is (still) possible in successful communication, and what . . . bursts apart the framework of a unified (= coherent) message" (ibid., 28).

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- <sup>55</sup> Cf. U. Eco, Lector in fabula, dtv 4531, Munich 1990, 76f.
- <sup>56</sup> "We must be aware of our own preconceived ideas in order that the text may present itself in its otherness . . ." (H. G. Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode [Truth and Method; see n. 42] 274).
- <sup>57</sup> Cf., for example, J. van Seters, Der Jahwist als Historiker (ThSt [B] 134), Zürich 1987, 60.
- <sup>58</sup> "Prophetische Prophetenauslegung," in: Wahrheit der Schrift – Wahrheit der Auslegung: eine Züricher Vorlesungsreihe zu G. Ebelings 80. Geburtstag, ed. H.F. Geisser et al. , Zürich 1993, 198–244.
- <sup>59</sup> If I understand it rightly, the aim of R. Wonneberger's "redaction theory" is also to develop a typology of "redactional acts" conceivable in the "continued writing of a text" and hence to create a historical argumentation basis for literary criticism.
- <sup>60</sup> Cf. H. Utzschneider, "Künder oder Schreiber? Eine These zum Problem der Schriftprophetie auf Grund von Maleachi 1,6–2,9," BEAT 19, Frankfurt 1989, esp. 75ff; also H. Utzschneider, "Die Schriftprophetie und die Frage nach dem Ende der Prophetie. Überlegungen anhand von Mal 1,6–2,16," in: ZAW 104 (1992) 377–394.
- <sup>61</sup> G. Grimm, Rezeptionsgeschichte, Grundlegung einer Theorie, Munich 1977, 17ff.
- <sup>62</sup> F.D.E. Schleiermacher, "Kurze Darstellung des theologischen Studiums zum Behuf einleitender Vorlesungen," Halle edition, 1830; cf. above all §§ 26; §§ 103ff.