Whoever works with German scholarly materials now has a splendid online resource of free materials at www.zeno.org, organised by the Zenodot Verlagsgesellschaft of Berlin, Germany. Here one can find online-versions of many German authors and world classics (such as Dante’s Divine Comedy; Augustine’s Confessions; Anselm of Canterbury’s Cur Deus homo etc.) in older but often classic German translations. Luther’s Bible is represented by the complete text of the historical edition published in 2 volumes in Munich 1972. Several major encyclopedias are also included, along with specialized dictionaries such as J.E. Stadler et al., Vollständiges Heiligenlexikon (5 vols., 1858–1882) and B. Hederich, Gründliches mythologisches Lexikon (1770). All items included in this growing library are also available on 3 DVD disks for those wishing to work with the material offline (giving the full range of materials available in November 2007; for additions, consult www.zeno.org). Regrettably, however, the disks require a Personal Computer and don’t work on the Macintosh system. Never mind – just go online, and you won’t regret it. – Boxed set of three DVD disks.


OLD TESTAMENT EXEGESIS

Introduction – general

Konrad Schmid, Literaturgeschichte des Alten Testaments. Eine Einleitung

After the loss of the classical consensus about the dating of the books of the Old Testament in ca. 1978, and ensuing three decades of chaotic redatings, the time has come for a new synthesis. Here are some of his suggestions: (1) very early texts dating from between the 10th and the 8th centuries BCE include Psalms 29; 45; 68 and Solomon’s word of dedication for the temple (1 Kings 8:12–13); (2) literature dating from Assyrian times (8th and 7th centuries BCE): Psalm 72, Proverbs 22:17–24:22; a Moses-exodus story; the Abraham-Lot cycle; Hosea and Amos; Isa 1–11 and 28–32; Book of the Covenant (Exod 20:22–23:23); (3) literature of the Babylonian period (6th century BCE): Lamentations, a History comprising much of Exod 2 through 2 Kings 25, the story of Joseph (Gen 37–50), Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Second Isaiah, Deuteronomy; (4) Persian period (5th and 4th centuries BCE): the Priestly Code, Job, the Primeval History (Gen 2–11), the legends of Daniel (Dan 1–6), Haggai, Zechariah, Holiness Code; (5) Ptolemaic period (3rd century BCE): Prov 1–9, Qoheleth, Chronicles, Esther, the formation of a long Isaiah corpus; (6) Seleucid period (2nd century BCE): Daniel 8–12, Baruch, books of the Maccabees. – Regrettably, the author does not say anything on the Song of Deborah (Judg 5) which used to be placed at the very beginning of ancient Hebrew literature.

Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt (2008) 1–272

John J. Collins, A Short Introduction to the Hebrew Bible

This introduction to the Hebrew Bible is meant as a college textbook that guides the reader through Torah, Deuteronomistic History, prophetic books, and the Writings, in this sequence. Collins represents the mainstream of critical biblical scholarship in the United States, and stays away from controversies about “minimalist” or “maximalist” options discussed in current scholarship. – Illustration, bibliographies, glossary, index.

Fortress Press, Minneapolis, Min. (2007) XI/1–324
Michael B. Dick, Reading the Old Testament. An Inductive Introduction

Unlike other introductory textbooks, this one has three special features: (1) it is organized as a book that may be used for personal or academic classroom study, complete as it is with study questions, bibliographies, maps, and the like; (2) it has a focus on ancient Near Eastern textual material of which the author, an internationally respected authority in Assyriology, offers his own translations – see the following passages: After Anu had created (pp. 106–107); When Arm, Ea and Enlil (p. 108); When the gods were man (Atrahasis, pp. 313–332); prayer to Ishtar (pp. 267–272); vassal treaty of Esarhaddon (pp. 332–338); (3) the author includes his own revised versions of a number of biblical passages, with particular emphasis on the correct tenses (examples can be found on pp. 114–115, 119); and includes a literal version of Ps 29 (pp. 259–260). Although the author stays with fairly traditional views on the literary growth of the Pentateuch, with a Yahwist dated to ca. 850 BCE, the overall perspective is mainstream and intelligent. – An excellent textbook, written by a major specialist.


George Barr, Prolegomena to Scalometric Analysis of the Hebrew Bible

This article prepares the way for a full scalometric analysis of the Hebrew Bible. It places on record the cumulative sum graphs of the books of the Hebrew Bible using the Masoretic punctuation, draws attention to certain features in these graphs and indicates some areas for future study.


Ronald E. Clements, The Enduring Value of the Old Testament – An Interesting Quest

The claims of the uniqueness of the Old Testament rapidly lost credibility in the last century when fuller knowledge of the social world of antiquity became better known through archaeological and anthropological research. Such claims could be shown to depend largely on the Bible’s own polemic. Nevertheless the idea of enduring value of the OT bears welcome comparison with comparable concerns to define what entitles any literary work to be regarded as a classic, and to deserve universal approval. Useful criteria can be set out but fail to command any wholly definitive acceptance. Rather, the best that can be achieved is to note those features and qualities which give to certain writings an intrinsic power to generate a continuity of interest and appeal. The history of the interpretation of the Old Testament shows that it performs well in such a context.

BI 16/1 (2008) 25–42

Konrad Schmid, Buchtechnische und sachliche Prolegomena zur Enneateuchfrage


BZAW 370; Martin Beck et al., Auf dem Weg zur Endgestalt von Genesis bis II Regum; Walter de Gruyter, Berlin (2006) 1–14 (EB)