

THE PROPHETS SPEAK ON FORCED MIGRATION

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THE PROPHETS SPEAK ON
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Edited by

Mark J. Boda, Frank Ritzel Ames,
John Ahn, and Mark Leuchter

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PREFACE

The present volume represents the laborious efforts of many people. First and foremost, we are grateful to the contributors, whose patience and dedication to the publication of this volume is inspiring. The collection of essays here lingered in exile for quite a while before finding a home with the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL)—which is fitting, since they all originated as papers presented at SBL meetings a few years ago (Urzeit is indeed Endzeit, apparently). We are also extremely grateful to Leigh Andersen at SBL, whose understanding and support created a context in which we could complete this project. Sincere thanks and credit must also be given to Meghan Musy, whose copious attention to detail on the copy editing and helpful insights and suggestions for each essay was essential to our production of this volume.

Finally, we wish to thank Tiglath-pileser III, Shalmaneser V, Sargon II, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar, without whom many writers—biblical and contemporary—would have to find another line of work. Thanks for keeping us employed.

Mark J. Boda
Mark Leuchter

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
ABIG	Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte
AfO	Archiv für Orientforschung
AIL	Ancient Israel and Its Literature
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
AThANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
AUMSR	Andrews University Monographs Studies in Religion
AUSS	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BHRG	<i>A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar</i> . Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze. Biblical Languages: Hebrew 3. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999.
BHS	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> . Edited by Karl Elliger and Wilhelm Rudolph. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983.
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibOr</i>	<i>Biblica et orientalia</i>
BibSem	Biblical Seminar
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BK	<i>Bibel und Kirche</i>
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament

BN	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
BO	Bibliotheca orientalis
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur ZAW
CahRB	Cahiers de la Revue biblique
CurBR	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
DSD	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
EdF	Erträge der Forschung
EncJud	<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i> . Edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder. 16 vols. Jerusalem: Keter, 1971–1972.
ETL	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
ETR	<i>Etudes théologiques et religieuses</i>
ETS	Erfurter theologische Studien
EvT	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
FB	Forschungen zur Bibel
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
HALOT	<i>Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann Jakob Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 5 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–2000.
HAR	<i>Hebrew Annual Review</i>
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HBM	Hebrew Bible Monographs
HBT	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTKAT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
IB	<i>The Interpreter's Bible</i> . Edited by George A. Buttrick. 12 vols. New York: Abingdon, 1951–1957.
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
IBHS	Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O'Connor, <i>An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax</i> . Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990.
ICC	International Critical Commentary

<i>IDB</i>	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.</i> Edited by George A. Buttrick. 4 vols. New York: Abingdon, 1962.
<i>IDBSup</i>	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: Supplementary Volume.</i> Edited by Keith Crim. Nashville: Abingdon, 1976.
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JANER</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religion</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JHebS</i>	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JPS</i>	Jewish Publication Society Version
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
<i>JSJSup</i>	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods Supplement Series
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>KAT</i>	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
<i>KJV</i>	King James Version
<i>KTU</i>	<i>Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit.</i> Edited by Manfred Dietrich, Oswald Loretz, and Joaquín Sanmartín. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995.
<i>LHBOTS</i>	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
<i>MMWR</i>	<i>Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report</i>
<i>NCB</i>	New Century Bible Commentary
<i>NET</i>	New English Translation
<i>NIB</i>	<i>The New Interpreter's Bible.</i> Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994–2004.
<i>NICOT</i>	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
<i>NJB</i>	New Jerusalem Bible
<i>NJPS</i>	New Jewish Publication Society Version
<i>NRSV</i>	New Revised Standard Version
<i>NTT</i>	<i>Norsk Teologisk Tidsskrift</i>
<i>OBO</i>	Orbis biblicus et orientalis

OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
Or	<i>Orientalia</i> (Rome)
OTG	Old Testament Guides
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTM	Oxford Theological Monographs
OtSt	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i> .
RGG	<i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> . Edited by Hans Dieter Betz et al. 4th ed. 9 vols. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998–2007.
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SBAB	Stuttgarter biblische Aufsatzbände
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLStBL	Society of Biblical Literature Studies in Biblical Literature
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SHANE	Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East
SHBC	Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary
SJOT	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
STAR	Studies in Theology and Religion
SymS	Symposium Series
ThB	Theologische Bücherei
TLOT	<i>Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann. 3 vols. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997
TLZ	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TZ	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZABR	<i>Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZBK	Zürcher Bibelkommentar
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>

INTRODUCTION

John Ahn and Frank Ritchel Ames

Since 2008, the critical study of the exilic period, the sixth century BCE, has been enriched by the Exile-Forced Migrations in Biblical Literature Group of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL). The great attention this topic has received and the strong support for the group's sessions is an indication of how deeply the topic has affected the spectrum of literature studied in all corners of the guild. The participating panelists in the early years of the group contributed to a much needed conversation on the issue of the Bible's own manifold attempts to categorize and qualify the experience of exile-forced migration, which has led to the publication of important volumes on this matter. The first volume, *By the Irrigation Canals of Babylon: Methods in the Study of the Exile* (2012), highlighted and collectively examined problems on the exile through historical, literary, and sociological lenses by bridging scholars from North America and Europe. This second volume addresses the important subject matter of Exilic Prophetic Gattung in a parallel format. In the 2009 SBL annual meeting, the Exile-Forced Migrations Group (Consultation back then) held four sessions. Three sessions dealt with Exilic Prophetic Gattung: "North American Perspective," "European Perspective," and "From the Minor Prophets to the Mishna Avot." This volume is composed of selected papers from those sessions.

In this short introduction, we note simply that migration is a biological and social fact of life. Migration is found in flora, fauna, and humanity. A seed from China is carried across the Atlantic Ocean through jet streams to break new ground on the west coast of the United States of America. Fish, whales, birds, the Calabooses, among others, all migrate; some returning to their spawning ground after months of an exhaustive journey, only to reproduce and then die. Indeed, death brings life. The story of human beings from the very beginning is one of migration, a forced migration

out of Eden (or Africa). Adam and Eve's expulsion from paradise, when read through cultural memory or cultural or social trauma, speaks to the experience of the first-generation Judeans being forced out of their homeland. In the ensuing generation, Cain also experienced forced migration. Even the account of Noah may offer a new perspective on forced migration across or upon the chaos of raging waters. The Primeval History ends (Gen 11) where it began (Gen 1), in Babel or Babylon. In short, in every major section of the Hebrew Bible or, for that matter, even in the New Testament, exile or forced migration takes the center stage of religious life and activities.

Forced migration or exile is no longer viewed as punishment for sin. Complementing such a view is its antithesis—that is, forced migration saves lives. Laden with indescribable pain and hardship in the actual task of migrating, new meaning making is undertaken, old and new values collide in new settings, and hope and new creation are forged for ensuing generations that are the beneficiaries of the selfless first generation. Forced migration sheds new light on the exilic period. For the first time in the history of biblical studies on the exile, forced migration studies has enabled scholars to see and hear real variables that affect peoples on the move. The analysis of migration: Derivative Forced Migration (DFM), Purposive Forced Migration (PFM), Responsive Forced Migration (RFM), and the types of displacement and resettlement imposed on peoples, Development Induced Displaced Persons (DIDPs), Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and Refugee Studies (RS) provide a framework to not only demarcate 597, 587, and 582 events but once resettled, generational consciousness provides a new cadre for reexamining redactional literary activity that is reflexive of each generation.¹

Acculturation or assimilation into the host or dominant culture is a goal of every generation—but not always. The most powerful ideology stems from a desire to transcend and move beyond where one's parents or grandparents started from—not just to mark accomplishment or boast success—but to truly and humbly honor the very first generation that sacrificed and dreamed for a brighter future. Each generation is interconnected, creating a system, a mode for going beyond survival to actualize the desire to “be fruitful and multiply.” Such is the mind-set and work ethic

1. See further the contribution by John Ahn to the present volume.

of many (im)migrants in modern and possibly ancient times. Each generation is a carrier of the previous generations' memories.

In modern and ancient analysis of forced migration, the framework for migrations is by and large economics, though other factors are taken into consideration. Economists generally agree that calculated and planned immigration policies promote economic development. With this said, the use of mass deportation by the Assyrians, the more local and repeated small waves of forced migration for regional economic development through establishments of ethnic enclaves by the Babylonians, or the use of return migrations to control overpopulation or infrastructure problems during the Persian period all attest to the theory of migration and economics. For many forced migrants, economics is often weighed against religion—not financial gain or resources but God or faith is prescribed as the most important value in life. For people in flight particularly, the driving force in their forced migrations is (paradoxically) God. The prophets of the Hebrew Bible speak to this phenomenon. From a Luhmanian perspective,² in a system of religion, religion needs migration.

Broadly speaking, then, after genocide, forced migration is the most pressing humanitarian issue in the twenty-first century. Even the most cursory glance at events regularly reported in the contemporary media reveals the pervasiveness of this theme and the depth of its impact upon local and distant communities and cultures, and the same can be said of the ancient sixth to third centuries BCE. By drawing attention to the prophets on forced migration, a collective voice is heard across time: to be economically viable, socially engaged, culturally relevant, and religiously resolute. To be prophetic is to be conscious and then to speak the divine word, knowing that it is charged with judgment and death but also with redemption and life. The present volume devotes its attention to the recurring motif of exile-forced migration in the prophetic literature in the effort to elucidate and appreciate the intellectual and theological strategies these authors and their audiences deployed while enduring conditions that were viewed as both catastrophic and redemptive at once.

In "Prophetic Rhetoric and Exile," David L. Petersen contrasts the exilic experience and rhetoric of Israel under the Neo-Assyrian Empire with that of Judah under Neo-Babylonian domination. After discussing

2. Niklas Luhmann, *Die Religion der Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000); Eng. trans.: *A Systems Theory of Religion*, trans. David A. Brenner with Adrian Hermann, ed. André Kieserling (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).

the importance of defining exile precisely, Petersen differentiates forced migration, voluntary migration, and incarceration; describes the practices of Assyria and Babylon; and examines the rhetoric of exile in Amos, Hosea, Isaiah ben Amoz, Micah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. He concludes that exile under Assyria and Babylon differed in the number of captives, effect on identity, and emotional register and that the rhetoric of the prophets in Neo-Babylonian times was shaped not simply by contemporary events but by past Neo-Assyrian experiences. By considering several prophetic books, Petersen surveys the broader conceptual topography of prophetic literature in the context of ancient Mesopotamian imperialism, demonstrating that irrespective of specific nuance, all of these texts contribute to a grammar of perception regarding Israel and Judah's tenuous position on the world stage.

In "Provenance as a Factor in Interpretation," Christopher Seitz considers the exilic/postexilic material embedded within the book of Isaiah in hermeneutical conversation with the material in First Isaiah. Seitz examines how the historical/geographical contexts of these later "Isaiahs" differentiate them from the preexilic material while simultaneously creating a single canonical exhortation that reframes the terms of the exile. The indiscernible within the material of First Isaiah is finally fully expressed by the later material's genetic connection to the earlier oracles. The canonical form of the book relocates material ostensibly originating in Babylon to a Zion-centered context, providing dramatically new meaning for the material. Isaiah, Seitz concludes, emphasizes the comfort of Zion and the far side of judgment, with all nations witnessing the work of the one God who judges and restores Israel.

Continuing the examination of the book of Isaiah are two studies of interpretation within the Isaianic tradition. In his essay, "You are my witness and my servant' (Isa 43:10): Exile and the Identity of the Servant," Ulrich Berges argues that Isa 40–55 was composed not by an anonymous individual but by members of a group whose identity as descendants of Jacob (Israel) was renewed in exile. Exile forged the group into witnesses of YHWH's universal sovereignty, and these witnesses, who were called to comfort Zion (Jerusalem), as a group constituted Isaiah's Servant (Isa 43:10) and, like David, command all nations not through conquest and domination but by declaring the commandments of YHWH. Stephen Cook highlights the distinctiveness of Second Isaiah's response to the exile over against the very different approaches displayed in the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel in his essay, "Second Isaiah and the Aaronide Response

to Judah's Forced Migrations." Key to Second Isaiah's unique handling of the exile is an impressive sampling of priestly reflections, seen in the close match in orientation and theology between Second Isaiah and the Priestly Torah. While the two writings express themselves with different moods and styles, they share particular themes, motifs, and concerns oriented on a theology of reverence before the numinous otherness of God.

The essays by Berges and Cook point to a growing interdependence between prophetic literature and the texts that would eventually become part of the Pentateuch; this may be a function of exilic conditions that amplified the need to more actively engage ancestral and ritual traditions among communities separated from their ancestral estates and the sacral institutions of the homeland. The Isaiah tradition, steeped in the lore and legacy of Zion and Jerusalem, would be an entirely appropriate forum for the countenancing of these concerns on the literary level, but different approaches are adopted in the other major prophetic texts generated under the hegemony of the Mesopotamian empires.

Turning attention to the book of Jeremiah, Konrad Schmid proposes a solution to an interpretive problem associated with Jer 36:30 in his essay, "Nebuchadnezzar, the end of Davidic Rule, and the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah." As Schmid argues, Jer 36:30 predicts that the Davidic dynasty ends with Jehoiakim in 605 BCE, but the prediction appears to be erroneous because the Davidic dynasty continues under Jehoiakim's successors until 587 BCE. Jeremiah 36:30, however, has a theological rather than documentary purpose and must be read as symbolic. The oracle reveals a shift in the cosmos and sacral history where the center point of divine intention revolved around Babylon and its ruler Nebuchadnezzar, and it offers a powerful theological explanation for foreign dominion over Israel. This explanation, from Schmid's perspective, emerges from a learned scribe involved with the redaction of the book of Jeremiah, for whom the experience of the Babylonian exile forever changed the course of history.

A different issue with respect to geom mythology in the Jeremiah tradition is discussed by Mark Leuchter in his essay, "Sacred Space and Communal Legitimacy in Exile: The Contribution of Seraiah's Colophon (Jer 51:59–64a)." Leuchter shows that Seraiah's colophon (Jer 51:59–64a) was part of a scroll that was deposited into the Euphrates and functioned as a foundation inscription, establishing that Mesopotamia, though destined for destruction, was sanctified space, whereas Jerusalem, which eventually would be restored, was unclean. The scroll and colophon, embedded in Jeremiah, gave rise to divergent view of communal identity and sacred

space, including rival claims about the relative sanctity of the exiles of 597 and 587 BCE. Leuchter discusses the perspectives of Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Ezra-Nehemiah, and the persistence, moderation, and irony of this new understanding of sacred space and community identity.

The nexus between the Jeremiah and Ezekiel traditions as containing variant perceptions of the exilic experience (or perhaps better, experiences) is further developed in a series of contributions focusing on the book of Ezekiel. In his essay “Ezekiel 15: A מִשַּׁל,” John Ahn examines the design and provenance of Ezek 15, showing how the prophet’s puzzling words refer to the exiled communities of 597, 587, and 582 BCE. The prophet’s words, Ahn suggests, may explain how changes in the exilic community were accommodated, allowing the exiles of 597 to accept the exiles of 587 through an oracle that blames the exiles of 582 for the desolation of the land. The essay draws attention to what is often overlooked, namely, that the different waves of exile were not rehearsals of the same experience but constituted distinct experiences unto themselves, producing attitudes to which the trustees of the Ezekiel tradition needed to respond.

In her essay, “The Cultic Dimensions of Prophecy in the Book of Ezekiel,” Corinna Körting investigates connections between prophecy and the priestly cult in the book of Ezekiel by addressing the relationship between prophetic message and cultic legislation in Ezek 14:1–11. Her search for the function of the combination of different traditions is accompanied by the question of how these traditions supplement each other in the specific historical or constructed historical situation, a time without a temple—the exile. She concludes that there is an enlarged understanding of prophecy that adds priestly tasks to the prophetic office in a context without temple and cult through *Schriftauslegung*. In addition, there is the establishment of a new, clean cultic community within a hostile environment. Körting engages the oft-pondered issue of how a community so defined by its cultic institutions survives an environment where such outlets were no longer accessible; emerging from her study are important implications for the evolution of both the cult and prophecy that extend the current scholarly conversation.

In the final entry on Ezekiel, Louis Stulman considers the effects of exilic trauma on prophetic rhetoric in his essay, “Ezekiel as Disaster/Survival Literature: Speaking on Behalf of the Losers.” Stulman examines the oracles of Ezekiel, who speaks on behalf of those who experienced defeat in the conflict between Judah and Babylon and as one who has also suffered and survived the trauma. The mythological paradigms that emerge

from dislocation and the struggle to survive emphasize human vulnerability and transience and the traumatization of the divine. Stulman argues that both Ezekiel and YHWH have suffered trauma and that the presence of the divine is experienced not only in triumph and holiness, but through tragedy, destruction, and suffering.

Finally, the volume turns attention to prophetic texts emerging after the period of the Babylonian exile, notably those found in the book of Zechariah. In his essay, "Forced Migrations and the Visions of Zechariah 1–8," Frank Rithel Ames argues that forced migrations in modern communities diminish resources and security, increase mortality and morbidity, and alter social relationships and identities. Then, applying comparative and literary methods to Zech 1–8, he finds evidence of similar outcomes in Judah's experience of exile, describing how the visions and oracles of Zechariah reflect and address the social realities of Judah's forced migration and later restoration. In "Scat! Exilic Motifs in the Book of Zechariah," Mark J. Boda attends to Zechariah's explicit references to exile as forced migration, a motif that follows the movement of both human and divine characters throughout the book. The book, he observes, uses a variety of images to depict the human experience of exile and the diverse identities of exilic communities as well as exile and return for a Babylonian and Judean deity, linking the human and divine experience of exile and restoration.

Both Boda and Ames unveil rhetorical dimensions of postexilic prophecy that dovetail with contemporary discussions on the degree to which literature from the Persian period and beyond is never far removed from the effects of exile; discourses on restoration and redemption are all predicated upon the inescapability of the more traumatic past. Scholars are realizing with greater frequency the persistence of the social, mythological, and theological ruptures that were brought on by the succession of exilic experience under Assyria and Babylon not only in the self-understanding of those groups who experienced forced migration but also among those who did not.³ Not coincidentally, both sets of experiences routinely appeal to prophetic tradition as a gauge of cosmic and covenantal legitimacy, and as a hermeneutical lens through which contemporaneous events could be understood (e.g., Dan 9). The present volume

3. See recently Dalit Rom-Shiloni, *Inclusive Exclusivity: Identity Conflicts between the Exiles and the People Who Remained (6th–5th Centuries BCE)*, LHBOTS 543 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013); Mark Leuchter, "Inter-Levitical Polemics in the Late 6th Century B.C.E.: The Evidence from Nehemiah 9," *Bib* 95 (2014): 269–79.

represents another stage in this important scholarly discussion, which is no doubt still in its early stages.

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