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The Promise of the Land and the Extent of P

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1 Introduction

It has often been said that, in spite of the recent denial of the classical Documentary Hypothesis, the Priestly source survived more or less intact. The hypothesis of P has also, however, received close scholarly scrutiny, especially concerning its extent. The conclusion of P was first thought, by the Graf-Wellhausen school, to be the distribution of the Land at the end of the Book of Joshua; later, initiated by Martin Noth, P was believed to end at Deuteronomy 34 with the death of Moses.¹ Noth's thesis, however, was challenged again by Lothar Perlitt, who disproved the existence of P in Deuteronomy 34² and critics such as Thomas Pola and Erich Zenger began to search for the end of P in the Sinai pericope.³ Pola claimed that the depiction of the people as an *ecclesia militans* in Numbers contradicts the notion of religious community envisioned in Pg (until Exodus).⁴ He further maintained that Pg was designed following Ezekiel, that is concluded with the vision of the future temple. Christoph Nihan, on the other hand, claimed that Pg follows the ANE literary pattern that the creation of the world is concluded with the building of a sanctuary.⁵

Recently, an increasing number of critics have agreed with the Sinai ending of P, with differences in details. Eckart Otto, most radically, found P only up to

1 See, Martin Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, vol. 1: *Die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament*, Schriften der Königsberger Gelehrten Gesellschaft. Geisteswissenschaftliche Klasse 18,2 (Halle, Saale: M. Niemeyer, 1943), 191–201.

2 See, Lothar Perlitt, »Priesterschrift Im Deuteronomium?«, *ZAW* 100 (1988): 65–88.

3 See, Thomas Pola, *Die ursprüngliche Priesterschrift: Beobachtungen zur Literarkritik und Traditionsgeschichte von Pg*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 70 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1995); ed. Erich Zenger, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, KST 1,1 (Stuttgart et al.: W. Kohlhammer 2004), 164 ff.; idem, »Priesterschrift«, *TRE* 27 (1997): 435–446, esp. 438 f.

4 See, Pola, *Priesterschrift*, 51–93.

5 See, Christophe Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus*, FAT II 25 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 31–68.

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Exodus 29⁶; Pola, Reinhard G. Kratz, and others found the end of P in Exodus 40⁷; Zenger found the end of P in Leviticus 9⁸; Thomas Römer and Nihan detected P only up to Leviticus 16.⁹ Also, Israel Knohl limited the extent of original PT (Priestly Torah) to Leviticus 16.¹⁰

Criticizing the recent trend, however, some scholars have advocated the Nothian framework of P's conclusion in the plain of Moab (either Numbers 27 or Deuteronomy 34)¹¹ or looked for it again in Joshua.¹² The major argument against the Sinai ending is associated with the significance of the promise of the land given to the patriarchs (especially Gen 17:8). It is true that the land promise is fulfilled with the occupation so that, in a narrative perspective, P's ending without it would be rather abrupt. Noth also recognized this problem, when he rejected

6 See, Eckart Otto, »Forschungen zur Priesterschrift,« *TRu* 62 (1997): 1–50, esp. 24 ff.

7 See, Pola, *Priesterschrift*, 213–298; Reinhard G. Kratz, *Die Komposition der erzählenden Bücher des Alten Testaments*, UTB 2157 (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Göttingen, 2000), 102–117; Graeme Auld, »Leviticus at the Heart of the Pentateuch?,« in *Reading Leviticus: A Conversation with Mary Douglas*, ed. John F. A. Sawyer, JSOTSup 227 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1996), 40–51; idem, »Leviticus: After Exodus before Numbers,« in *The book of Leviticus: Composition and Reception*, eds. Rolf Rendtorff and Robert A. Kugler, VTSup 93 (Leiden/Boston, MA: Brill, 2003): 41–54.

8 See, Zenger, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, 2004, 164 ff.; idem, »Priesterschrift,« *TRE* 27 (1997): 435–446, esp. 438 f.

9 See, Hans-Peter Mathys, Thomas Römer, Rudolf Smend and Walter Dietrich, *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments*, Theologische Wissenschaft: Sammelwerk für Studium und Beruf 1 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2014), 90–93; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 340–394. See also, Matthias Köckert, »Leben in Gottes Gegenwart. Zum Verständnis des Gesetzes in der priesterschriftlichen Literatur,« *JBTh* 4 (1989): 29–61, esp. 56 ff.

10 See, Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

11 See, e. g., Ludwig Schmidt, *Studien Zur Priesterschrift*, BZAW 214 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1993), 241–251; Christian Frevel, *Mit Blick auf das Land die Schöpfung erinnern: Zum Ende der Priestergrundschrift*, Herders Biblische Studien 23 (Freiburg i. Br./Basel et al.: Herder, 2000). Also Blum follows Noth for the extent of his Priestly Composition (KD). See, Erhard Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, BZAW 189 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1990), 219–285.

12 See, Horst Seebass, »Pentateuch,« *TRE* 26 (1996): 185–209, 192; Ernest A. Knauf, »Die Priesterschrift und die Geschichten der Deuteronomisten,« in *The Future of the Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Thomas Römer, BETL 147 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000), 101–118; Norbert Lohfink, »The Priestly Narrative and History,« in *Theology of the Pentateuch: Themes of the Priestly Narrative and Deuteronomy*, ed. idem, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Edinburgh: T&T Clark/Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994): 136–172; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible*, ABRL (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 237. For criticism of these attempts, see, Thomas Römer, »Israel's Sojourn in the Wilderness and the Construction of the Book of Numbers,« in *Reflection and Refraction: Studies in Biblical Historiography in Honour of A. Graeme Auld*, ed. Rim T. Rezetko and Graeme Auld, SVT 113 (Leiden: Brill, 2007): 419–446, 424 ff.

the notion of the Hexateuch in favor of DtrH and made a claim for the P ending in Deuteronomy 34. His solution was to find the real purpose and highlight of P at the revelation at Sinai and to claim that P was not so interested in the »land« issue. For Noth, therefore, P has an ›open end‹ regarding the patriarchal land promise.

Paradoxically, however, recent attempts to reaffirm the Nothian P ending have advanced their primary arguments by emphasizing the importance of the land in P. For instance, Christian Frevel, who devoted a monograph to arguing against the recent trend, elaborated the theological significance of the land in P. He argues that the thread of the land issue starting from Gen 17:8 continues through Exod 6:8 and Numbers 13 (20 and 27). Recently, Susanne Boorer also tries to disprove the Sinai ending of P by claiming that the P texts in Numbers 13–14 and 20 focus on the patriarchal land promise.¹³

The heart of the matter is, therefore, whether the land-promise motif in Genesis–Exodus continues to Numbers. In this essay, in favor of the P's ending at the Sinai pericope, I will analyze three narratives in Numbers that directly deal with the land issue: the abortive conquest (Numbers 13–14); the disapproval of Moses' entrance to the land (Numbers 20; 27); and the future distribution of the land (Numbers 32; 34; 36). Comparing them with Exodus 6, this essay will suggest that they exhibit different notions of the land from the latter and reflect a different socio-historical context. Before starting the analysis of those texts in Numbers, I will first look into the recent discussion of the land promise and its significance in Exodus 6.

2 The Motif of the Land Promise to the Patriarchs in P: Exodus 6

As has been much discussed in recent Pentateuch research, the literary continuity between Genesis and Exodus is not so obvious in pre-Priestly texts.¹⁴ The passages that had previously been regarded as pre-P link between Genesis and Exodus, such as Gen 15:13–16; 50:24–26; Exod 1:6,8–10, are now regarded as post-

¹³ See, Suzanne Boorer, *The Vision of the Priestly Narrative: Its Genre and Hermeneutics of Time*, Ancient Israel and Its Literature 27 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2016), 73.

¹⁴ See, Thomas Römer, »Exodus 3–4 und die aktuelle Pentateuchdiskussion,« in *The Interpretation of Exodus*, Festschrift C. Houtman, ed. Riemer Roukema et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 65–79; Albert de Pury, *Promesse divine et légende culturelle dans le cycle de Jacob*, 2 vol. (Paris: Gabalda, 1975).

Priestly additions.¹⁵ Also, the pre-P link in the non-P call narrative (Exodus 3–4) is doubted, for the passage mentions several times the names of the three patriarchs (Exod 3:6,15,16; 4:5) without mentioning the divine covenant with them. Erhard Blum, for instance, claims that Exodus 3 is pre-P, but has only the names of Patriarchs, which is not a complete bridge between the two traditions.¹⁶ In my previous work, I have also argued that the passage is pre-P and represents a stage before the two traditions were completely combined.¹⁷ Other critics have assigned either the names of the patriarchs¹⁸ or the entire chapters (Exodus 3–4)¹⁹ to a post-P redaction.

Another type of literary link between the two traditions in non-P texts was made by the Dtr oath form with *נשבַע*, which is also regarded as a late, post-P redaction. Römer, for instance, distinguishes the instances of the oath form in the Pentateuch into two groups: the oath form used with simply ›fathers‹ (*אבות*) (e. g., Exod 13:5,11; Num 11:12; 14:16,23); and the forms used with the names of the three patriarchs (e. g., Gen 50:24; Exod 32:13; 33:1; Deut 34:4). He claims that, whereas the fathers in the former group indicate the exodus generation, the explicit mentions of the patriarchs in the latter are late additions by the post-Dtr and post-P Pentateuch redaction.²⁰

15 See, e. g., Jan C. Gertz, »The Transition Between the Books of Genesis and Exodus,« in *A Farewell to the Yahwist? The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation*, ed. Tomas B. Dozeman and Konrad Schmid (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006): 73–87.

16 Blum revised his previous *KD* model denying *KD* in Genesis. See, Erhard Blum, »Die literarische Verbindung von Erzvätern und Exodus. Ein Gespräch mit neueren Forschungshypothesen,« in *Abschied vom Jahwisten. Die Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion*, ed. Jan C. Gertz, Konrad Schmid and Markus Witte (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2002): 119–156.

17 See, Jaeyoung Jeon, *The Call of Moses and the Exodus Story: A Redactional-Critical Study in Exodus 3–4 and 5–13*, FAT II 60 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 200–203.

18 See, e. g., Jan C. Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung. Untersuchungen zur Endredaktion des Pentateuch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 261–304; idem, »The Transition between the Books of Genesis and Exodus,«; Römer, »Exodus 3–4,«: 74 f.; idem, *Israels Väter. Untersuchungen zur Väterthematik im Deuteronomium und in der deuteronomistischen Tradition*, OBO 99 (Freiburg: Academic Press/Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 552 ff.

19 See, Konrad Schmid, *Genesis and the Moses Story: Israel Dual Origins in the Hebrew Bible* (Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures 3. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 66 f.; 97 ff.; 271 ff.; idem, »The So-Called Yahwist and the Literary Gap between Genesis and Exodus,« in *A Farewell to the Yahwist?: 29–50*, esp., 39 ff.; Eckart Otto, »Die Nachpriesterschriftliche Pentateuchredaktion,« in *Studies in the Book of Exodus: Redaction – Reception – Interpretation*, ed. Mark Vervenne, BETL 126 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996): 61–111.

20 See, Römer, *Väter*, 544–566.

The logical consequence of the arguments that deny the pre-P connection of the two traditions is that it was P that literarily combined the traditions of patriarchs and exodus for the first time. The most relevant text in this vein is the Priestly version of the commissioning of Moses (Exod 6:2–8, also 2:23ab–25), which is marked by the combination of the motifs of the exodus and the patriarchal covenant. Looking into the text in detail, Yhwh mentions the three patriarchs by their names revealing that He was known to them as El-Shaddai (אל שדי: Exod 6:3), as found in P texts in Genesis (Gen 17:1; 28:3; 35:11). In the next verse, Yhwh refers to the land promise to the patriarchs with a verbatim quotation from the divine covenant with Abraham in Gen 17:7–8, e. g. הקמתי את בריתי (Gen 17:7) and ארץ מגריהם (Gen. 17:8; 28:4) combined with ארץ כנען (Gen 17:8). In v. 5, the divine speech moves to the hardship of the current generation, making a parallel with the patriarchal promise with the expression וגם אני שמעתי ואזכר את בריתי at the end of the verse, the speech combines the two traditions in the way the patriarchal promise functions as the *rationale* for the divine salvation (exodus). Such a causal relationship between the two traditions is further strengthened by the conjunctive particle לכן at the beginning of v. 6, which reveals Yhwh's plan for the salvation from Egypt. Verse 7 again refers to the covenant with Abraham that Yhwh will be the God for him and his descendants (להיות לך לאלהים ולזרעך אחריך: Gen 17:7b) with the similar expression והייתי לכם לאלהים. Verse 8 concludes the divine speech by explicitly combining the land promises to the patriarchs and the exodus generation. I will return to this verse shortly.

Our passage, however, not only refers to Genesis 17 but also exhibits a close literary affinity to Ezekiel, especially chapter 20.²¹ It is already widely recognized that Exodus 6 shares the idea with Ezekiel 20 that Yhwh revealed Himself in Egypt to give the promise of land to the exodus generation (Exod 6:3,8; Ezek 20:5–6).²² These two passages commonly use ידע (*Niphal*) for the revelation, as well as the specific oath formula נשא followed by יד for the land promise.²³ Further, the «recognition formula» אני ה' אלהיכם combined with ידע (Exod 6:7) is a characteristic expression in Ezekiel (used a total of 72 times, including, e. g., Ezek 5:13; 6:10; 11:12, etc.); the description of the land as מורשה (combined with נתן) in Exod 6:8 also corresponds to a number of verses in Ezekiel (Ezek 11:15; 25:4,10; 33:24;

²¹ See, further, Jean-Louis Ska, «La place d'Ex 6,2–8 dans la narration de l'Exode,» *ZAW* 94 (1982): 130–148; Römer, *Väter*, 495 ff.; 547 f.

²² See, further, Pola, *Priesterschrift*, 185 f.; Otto, «Nachpriesterschriftliche Pentateuchredaktion»: 110; Schmid, *Genesis*, 186; Jaeyoung Jeon, «A Source of P?: The Priestly Exodus Account and the Book of Ezekiel,» *Semitica* 58 (2016): 77–92.

²³ For the use of נשא followed by יד for the land promise, see, further Römer, *Väter*, 504–506.

36:2,5).²⁴ The literary similarity is further found in expressions such as *הקמתי את לכן אמר* (Exod 6:4) together with *ואזכר את בריתי* (Exod 6:5; Ezek 16:59–63)²⁵ *לכן אמר* (Exod 6:6; Ezek 11:16 f.; 20:30, etc.), ... *והוצאתי אתכם מ* (Exod 6:6; Ezek 11:9; 20:34), *נצל* in *Hiphil* form (Exod 6:6; most similarly, Ezek 34:27), and *הבאתי אתכם אל הארץ* in relative sentences starting with *אשר* (Exod 6:8; Ezek 20:38,42). In addition, the common terms for Exodus 6 and Genesis 17 are found also in Ezekiel: *ארץ מגריהם* (Exod 6:4; Ezek 20:38)²⁶ and *והייתי לכם לאלהים* (Exod 6:7; similarly, Ezek 11:20; 14:11; 34:24; 36:28; 37:23,27).²⁷

In spite of the literary affinity between the two passages, what attracts our attention is that Ezekiel 20 neither mentions, nor gives any clue regarding the patriarchal land promise; the land is promised to the exodus generation exclusively (e. g. Ezek 20:6).²⁸ Ezekiel nevertheless recognizes the patriarchal tradition in connection with the possession of the land. In Ezek 33:24, in particular, Ezekiel mentions Abraham's possession of the land and negatively assesses the remainees' claim of the land based on this tradition. For Ezekiel, therefore, the true divine promise of the land has been given only to the exodus generation.

The limited space of this essay would not allow me to engage in discussion on the direction of literary influence between Ezekiel and P. However, the inter-textual features in Exodus 6 clearly reveal that the Priestly author composed the divine speech in Exod 6:2–8 by combining the elements of the Priestly patriarchal covenant (esp. Gen. 17:7–8) and those from Ezekiel, especially Ezekiel 20.²⁹ Such

²⁴ מורשה occurs only once in Deut 33:4 in the Hebrew Bible except Exod 6:8 and Ezekiel.

²⁵ See, also, Johan Lust, »Exodus 6,2–8 and Ezekiel,« in *Studies in the Book of Exodus*: 209–224, esp. 215; Thomas Kruger, *Geschichtskonzepte im Ezechielbuch*, BZAW 180 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1989), 329–331; Thomas Wagner, »Ungeklärte Verhältnisse«. Die priesterliche Urgeschichte und das Buch Ezechiel,« *KuD* 59 (2013): 207–229.

²⁶ In Exod 6:4 the term indicates the land of Canaan, whereas in Ezek 20:38 it means the lands in which the people were scattered. The term is typically Priestly in the Pentateuch, while it occurs only once in Ezekiel.

²⁷ See also Lust, »Exodus 6,2–8 and Ezekiel«; Risa L. Kohn, *A New Heart and a New Soul: Ezekiel, the Exile and the Torah*, JSOTSup 358 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 2002), 98 ff.; Bernard Gosse, »Le livre d'Ezéchiel et Ex 6,2–8 dans le cadre du Pentateuque,« *BN* 104 (2000): 20–25; idem, »Exode 6,8 comme réponse à Ezéchiel 33,24,« *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses* 74 (1994): 241–247; Jeon, »Source of P«.

²⁸ There are a number of occasions that mention »fathers« (אבות) in Ezekiel 20 (e. g. vv. 4,18,24,27,30,36,42). Yet in all those cases »fathers« indicate the exodus or (the second generation of) the wilderness generation. For further information, see Römer, *Väter*, 495–503; Ska, »La place d'Ex 6,2–8.«

²⁹ See, for the opposite direction of influence, e. g., Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible 22 (New York: Doubleday,

a combination is highlighted in Exod 6:8a, which adds the patriarchal land-promise motif in the frame of the promise of land to the exodus generation found in Ezek 20:28a,42b.³⁰

Ezek 20:28a	Exod 6:8
ואביאם אל הארץ אשר נשאתי את ידי לתת אותה להם	והבאתי אתכם אל הארץ אשר נשאתי את ידי לתת אתה לארברהם ליצחק וליעקב ונתתי אתה לכם מורשה אני ה'
Ezek 20:42b	»I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; I will give it to you for possession. I am YHWH.«
בהביאי אתכם ... אל הארץ אשר נשאתי את ידי לתת אותה לאבותיכם	

The expressions in Exod 6:8b such as מורשה and אני ה' are also, as we saw above, typical Ezekielian terms. Therefore, the major focus and literary achievement of P in Exodus 6 is not only to synthesize the patriarchal and exodus traditions,³¹ but also to combine the two different notions of land promise, one from Ezekiel and the other from P in Genesis.³²

There is another passage that combines the motifs of the patriarchs and the land at the end of the Holiness Code (Lev 26:40–45). In particular, v. 42 mentions the covenant with the three patriarchs with the names in a rather loose connection with the land only with the expression, »and the land I will remember«. The reversed order of the patriarchs from Jacob to Abraham is unique in the Pentateuch, yet it is most likely based on P.³³ The verse or the entire passage (vv. 40–45)

1983), 363 f.; Michael Fishbane, *Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts* (New York: Schocken Books, 1979), 131 f.; Kohn, *A New Heart and a New Soul*. For a linguistic analysis of Ezekiel and P, see, Avi Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel: A New Approach to an Old Problem*, Cahiers de La Revue Biblique 20 (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1982).

³⁰ See, also, Lust, »Exodus 6,2–8 and Ezekiel«: 221–223.

³¹ See, further, Schmid, *Genesis*, 252–259.

³² Some critics have argued that either vv. 6–8 or, at least, v. 8 belongs to a post-P addition by the Holiness School or Dtr. See, Fujiko Kohata, *Jahwist und Priesterschrift in Exodus 3–14*, BZAW 166 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1986), 28–41; Peter Weimar, *Untersuchungen zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Pentateuch*, BZAW 146 (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1977), 113–153; Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 91. However, as Lust and Gertz already effectively reputed, the verses are well structured reflecting the previous verses (vv. 2–5), and, therefore, should be considered as an integral part of P. See, Lust, »Exodus 6,2–8 and Ezekiel«: 218–222; Gertz, *Tradition*, 245–250. But Gertz assigns זרוע נטויה (v. 6*) to the final redaction. See, also, Römer, *Väter*, 546 n. 356.

³³ See, Römer, *Väter*, 548.

is regarded as a later addition to the Holiness Code³⁴ made in a combination of the priestly and Dtr conceptions.³⁵

3 The Land-promise Motif in the So-called Priestly Texts in Numbers

3.1 The Scout Narrative (Numbers 13–14)

The observations above lead us to the question whether such a combined concept of the land promise persists through the post-Sinaitic alleged Priestly material. To answer the question from the outset, such a combination never appears, even in the strategic points that mention or describe the Land of Canaan. The most significant passage in this vein is the alleged Priestly version of the scout narrative in Numbers 13–14. The scout narrative has a significant structural function in the wilderness tradition, comparable to that of Exodus 6 in the exodus tradition. The latter anticipates the whole story of Exodus, functioning as a literary hinge between the patriarchal and exodus traditions; the scout narrative (Numbers 13–14) also initiates the 40 years of the wilderness period, functioning as a literary link, according to Olson's structural analysis of Numbers, between the two censuses for the old and new generations in Numbers 1 and 26.³⁶ More importantly for our concern, the scout narrative is the only wilderness story that directly deals with the occupation of the land. Particularly in its relationship with Exodus 6, the present story can be understood as the first chance to fulfill the combined land promise to the patriarchs and the exodus generation given in Exod 6:8. Our story should, therefore, be the right place to reaffirm the earlier combined promise, if the story belongs to P.

In the alleged Priestly version of the narrative, however, the land is introduced as if it is an entirely unknown place for the people, without giving a clue for remembering the patriarchal promise. In Num 13:2a, Yhwh Himself desig-

³⁴ For instance, Zimmerli assigns only v. 42 to a later hand. See, Walter Zimmerli, »Sinaibund und Abrahambund. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der Priesterschrift,« *ThZ* 16 (1960): 268–280. But Cholewinski effectively argues for the unity of the passage (vv. 40–45). See, Alfred Cholewinski, *Heiligkeitsgesetz und Deuteronomium. Eine vergleichende Studie* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976), 128. Römer attributes the passage to »Holiness Code redactor« (HG-Redaktor). See, Römer, *ibid.*, 449.

³⁵ Römer indicates the literary affinity with the current passage and Jer 11:10. See, Römer, *ibid.*, 549. Note the expression ברית ראשנים in v. 45 and אבות ראשנים in Jer 11:10.

³⁶ See, Denis T. Olson, *The Death of the Old and the Birth of the New. The Framework of the Book of Numbers and the Pentateuch* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985).

nates the land only as *הארץ אשר אני נתן לבני ישראל* (the land that I am giving to the people of Israel). Similarly, at the end of the narrative, Yhwh announces the future possession of the land by the next generation (Num 14:31b β) again without referring to the patriarchal covenant. In Num 13:17 also, the narrator indicates the land briefly as the Canaanite land. The scouts, in vv. 32–33, even describe the land as the land that devours its inhabitants, mentioning the threat of the Nephilim, which are incompatible with the notion of the promised land in the P texts in Genesis–Exodus. In the people’s murmuring in Num 14:3, the land is simply *הארץ הזאת*. Notably, in his programmatic statement in favor of the land (Num 14:7–8), Joshua asserts that a successful occupation is dependent on Yhwh’s favor on them rather than Yhwh’s promise to the patriarchs (*אם חפץ בנו ה’* »if Yhwh is pleased with us«). The idea that the possession of the land is solely dependent on Yhwh’s favor sharply contradicts the notion found in Exod 6:8 that the unconditional land promise to the patriarchs is the reason for giving the land to the exodus generation.³⁷

Joshua’s speech, however, betrays such a sequence and acknowledges only the conditional nature of the land possession, which is closer to the Dtr notion.³⁸

Probably the most striking absence of the patriarchal motif would be the divine speech in Num 14:26–38. In v. 30, in particular, the land promise to the exodus generation is mentioned in an almost identical form to that of Exod 6:8 בוא (*Hiphil*) followed by *הארץ אשר נשאתי את ידי*. The verse nevertheless lacks the motif of the patriarchal covenant; just as in Ezek 20:6,28,42, the *נשאתי* formula is used for the grant of the land only to the exodus generation. This fact indicates either that our verse presupposes Exod 6:8 yet intentionally omits the patriarchal motif or that it was written independently from Exod 6:8, being directly influenced by Ezekiel. Whichever is the case, the present verse and Exod 6:8 may not belong to the same hand.

In the scout narrative, therefore, almost all the characters are speaking about the land, yet none of them, including Yhwh and Joshua, mentions the patriarchal

³⁷ For the unconditional nature of the patriarchal promise, see, e.g., Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*, vol. 2: *From the Exile to the Maccabees*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1994), 212f. For a further discussion of the merging of the unconditional and conditional possession of the land, Schmid, *Genesis*, 265–267. For an overview, see, Lothar Perlitt, »Motive und Schichten der Landtheologie im Deuteronomium,« in *Das Land Israel in biblischer Zeit*, ed. Georg Strecker (Göttingen, 1983), 46–58; John Van Seters, *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), 228–233; 237 f.

³⁸ See, e.g., Deut 7:12 ff.; 11:8 ff.; 28. For the contrast between the unconditional patriarchal promise and the Dtr notion of the conditional possession of the land. See, also, Albertz, *ibid.*, 405; Schmid, *Genesis*, 265.

covenant. It is hard to believe that such a total absence of the patriarchal motif in all the places where it could or should be mentioned is merely a coincidence.³⁹

3.2 The Disapproval of Moses' Entrance to the Land

The patriarchal land-promise motif is missing also in the final scenes of Moses' mission: the Kadesh-Meribah episode (Num 20:1–13); and the announcement of Moses' death (Num 27:12–14). The latter, since Noth, has often been regarded as a part of the original conclusion of P.⁴⁰ In these alleged P passages, Moses is disqualified from leading the people to the land, which means his failure to fulfill himself Yhwh's plan announced at the beginning of his mission in Exodus 6. In the frame of the Nothian P hypothesis, these passages should be the conclusion of Exodus 6 (as well as the entire P) and, therefore, a close literary connection between them is to be assumed. In both Num 20:12b and 27:12b, however, the land is simply indicated as the land that Yhwh gave to the Israelites (the exodus generation) without following the combination of the land promises in Exodus 6. The absence of the patriarchal motif persists through the passages that presuppose Num 27:12–14, such as Deut 32:48–52 and Deut 34 (1*, 7–8*).⁴¹ This fact indicates that the absence of the motif is original in Numbers 20; 27 rather than an accidental omission during the textual transmission.⁴² In particular Num 27:12 (also Deut 32:49) describes that Moses takes a view of the Canaanite Land before his death, which ›almost‹ completes his mission in Exodus 6 in the Pentateuchal horizon. If P had a systematic design from Genesis to Numbers (or Deuteronomy), this place

39 Frevel argues that the P-narrative Numbers 13–14 continues the land promise in Exod 6:2–8, for in the former the grant of the land is still valid for the next generation. See, Frevel, *Mit Blick*, 367f. However, the granting of the land to the next generation is validated within the narrative itself as a polemical anti-thesis of people's unfaithful complaint (Num 14:31). Also, as will be discussed below, Numbers 13–14 has a closer literary affinity not only to Exod 6:2–8 but also to the Ezekiel texts (e. g. ch. 20) in which the motifs of the sins of the exodus generation and the settlement in the promised land appear together. In any case, the settlement of the people in the land is historically presupposed fact, which does not necessarily require ›literary‹ justification. From a literary point of view as well, it is hard to imagine that P took pains to combine the patriarchal and exodus land promise in Exodus 6 to give it up immediately in the following wilderness narrative.

40 See, above, n. 11.

41 Deut 32:49 repeats Num 27:12, adding ›the land of Canaan‹ and לְאֶרֶץ in the verse.

42 There is no textual variant for those passages in LXX, SamP, 4Q f44, 4Q27 f13i_14:24, XHev/Se2 1:43, etc.

should be the right place to reintroduce the patriarchal land promise just as it was introduced in Exod 6:8 with grave importance.

The awkwardness of the motif's absence is obvious when it is compared to the non-P/p passage in the same scene. In Deut 34:4, Moses' death is reported with the patriarchal land promise with the Deuteronomistic נשבע oath form:

YHWH said to him, »This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, ›I will give it to your descendants‹; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there.« (Deut 34:4)

Putting aside the relative chronology between the Dtr oath formula and the different layers of so-called priestly texts for the moment, this non-P/p text is a fitting example that shows what we may expect from P's proper ending, if P really ends with Moses' death report. The conclusion of Moses' mission in the current form (Numbers 27; Deuteronomy 32; 34) would therefore provide neither a balanced nor a consistent ending for P.

3.3 The Episodes about Distribution of the Land

The patriarchal land-promise motif is similarly absent in the episodes so far regarded as late phases of P (P^s), especially the passages dealing with the future distribution of the land. For instance, the settlement account of the two-and-a-half tribes mentions giving the land only to the current generation (Num 32:7)⁴³; the description of the future border of the land (Num 34:1–15) simply designates the land as ארץ כנען זאת הארץ אשר תפל לכם בנחלה (»the land of Canaan, this is the land that shall fall to you for an inheritance«: v. 2); the episode of the daughters of Zelophehad (Num 36:1–13) mentions the land very briefly without any extra modifier (v. 2). In addition, the introduction of the collective administration for the land distribution (Num 34:16–29) also describes the Canaanite land simply as the land that will ›fall (תפל)‹ to them as an inheritance (בנחלה, Num 34:2); and the account of the allocation of the Levitical cities describes the land as the place the people and God Himself dwells (Num 35:34). These two designations of the land in Num 34:2; 35:34 are unique in Numbers, yet neither of them refers to the patriarchal promise. The only exception in these so-called late P texts is Num 32:11, which mentions the patriarchal land promise in the Dtr oath form with נשבע. However, Num 32:9–11 recalls the scout story in Numbers 13–14 as the present form of the text in which non-P/p and the alleged P strands are already com-

⁴³ The verse 11 is an exception. I will return to this verse momentarily.

bined.⁴⁴ The Dtr form of the land promise in our text simply refers to Num 14:23 the non-P/p text, rather than the late priestly author's own literary invention.

Critics generally agree that those chapters in the last part of the Book of Numbers belong to the youngest layers of the Pentateuch added by late priestly scribes. The chapters have often been assigned to P^s or, recently, by Achenbach, to the late phases of Theocratic Revision conducted by the priestly scribes in Jerusalem in the late Persian period.⁴⁵ Similarly, Albertz, attributes Numbers 25–36 to the Pentateuchal redaction, which he assumes to be the last phase of the formation of the Pentateuch.⁴⁶ These observations further support that, in later redactional stages, the patriarchal land-promise motif was irrelevant to the agenda or ideology of the land of the priestly scribes. Probably for those late priestly scribes, the land issue had a different implication from that of P, which will be discussed shortly.

As we have observed so far, the motif of the patriarchal land promise, which is a key motif that literarily combines the patriarchal and exodus traditions in P, does not persist through the description of the land in the post-Sinaitic, alleged P narratives in Numbers. Such an absence is hardly accidental, considering that it happens in all three major narrative units directly related to the Land of Canaan. The absence leads us to consider whether it reflects a different socio-historical context of the late priestly scribal circle.

4 Socio-historical Considerations

It is now increasingly admitted that the two origin traditions of patriarchs and exodus were favored, respectively, by two different groups during the exilic and early Persian period. Namely, the patriarchal narratives were accepted more by those who remained in the land and used for their claim of the land possession,

44 Num 32:11 consists of the literary borrowings from both the alleged P and non-P/p strands: for example, אִם יִרְאוּ (Num 14:23, non-P/p), מִבֶּן עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וּמַעְלָה (14:29, P/p); הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי (14:23, non-P/p; but הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת instead of הָאָרֶץ in 32:11), and the names of the three patriarchs (Dtr land-promise formula in Gen 50:24; Exod 33:1; Deut 1:8 etc.). Also, Num 32:12 has מְלֹאוֹ אַחֲרָי (14:24, non-P/p) and Joshua and Caleb (14:30, P/p).

45 See, e. g., Martin Noth, *Numbers: A Commentary*, trans. James D. Martin, The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: the Westminster Press, 1968), 233–251; Reinhard Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Numeribuches im Kontext von Hexateuch und Pentateuch*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte 3 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003), 557–628.

46 See, Rainer Albertz, »A Pentateuchal Redaction in the Book of Numbers?« *ZAW* 125 (2013): 220–233.

as is found in the negative assessment of such a claim in Ezek 33:24.⁴⁷ The exodus tradition, on the other hand, was preserved and developed by the exiled, most likely in Babylonia, and served as an ideological base for the returnees.⁴⁸ It can be said that, by merging the two traditions, the Priestly author endeavored to make their priest/sanctuary-centered religious system and worldview acceptable for both the returnees and remainees. In particular, the combination of the two land-promise motifs in Exod 6:8 integrates the remainees' claim of the land based on the patriarchal promise and the returnees' claim based on the exodus tradition. The combined land promise in Exodus 6, therefore, functions as an important unifying factor for the two groups, which includes them in P's ideological umbrella. This attempt most likely reflects the early constructive stage of the restored priestly cult in Jerusalem in the early Persian period.

Numbers 13–14, on the other hand, may reflect a later socio-historical context. It has been widely recognized that these chapters also have close literary affinity to Ezekiel.⁴⁹ In Num 13:32 especially, the land is described as ארץ אוכלת יושביה (the land that devours its inhabitants), which most likely came from the similar expression in Ezek 36:13–15 (cf. Lev 26:38). In the latter, as Zimmerly argues, the expression is introduced as a denunciation or mockery of the land circulated among the exiles and the other people around them.⁵⁰ By putting this rhetoric into the mouth of the scouts, the author of Numbers 13–14 identifies the wilderness period as the exilic situation. Consequently, in this context, the refutation of

⁴⁷ See, e.g., Schmid, *Genesis*, 106 f.; 144 f. Schmid advances his theory based on Albert de Pury's discussion of the patriarchs and ארץ האבות. See, Albert de Pury, *Le cycle de Jacob comme légende autonome des origines d'Israël. Congress Volume Leuven 1989*, ed. John A. Emerton (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 78–96, esp. 92; see, also, Herbert Schmid, »Die Gestalt Abrahams und das Volk des Landes,« *Judaica* 36 (1980): 73–87.

⁴⁸ See, e.g., Römer, *Väter*, 537–540; Schmid, *ibid.* See also Willy Staerk, *Studien zur Religions- und Sprachgeschichte des alten Testaments*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1899), 40; Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Studien zum Jeremiabuch. Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Entstehung des Jeremiabuches* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1978).

⁴⁹ For instance, the expression »glory of Yhwh + אִיפְהוּ (Niphal)« is found in Num 14:10 (16:19; 20:6) and similarly in Ezek 1:28; 3:23; etc. Achenbach argues that the expression reflects the theology of Gola in Pentateuchal Redaction. See, Reinhard Achenbach, »Die Erzählung von der gescheiterten Landnahme von Kadesch Barnea (Numeri 13–14) als Schlüsseltext der Redaktionsgeschichte des Pentateuchs,« *ZAR* 9 (2003): 56–123, esp., 104 f.

⁵⁰ See, Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, Vol. 2: *Chapters 25–48*, Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, trans. James D. Martin (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 329. It is therefore misleading that Frevel interprets Ezek 36:13 only as words of the enemies of Israel and relates Num 13:32 f. to »anti-creation«. See, Frevel, *Mit Blick*, 367.

occupying the land in the story may be interpreted as the rejection of the people in exile to return to the land.

In many passages in Ezekiel, wilderness is often associated with or symbolizes the places of exile. In Ezek 19:13, for instance, Babylonia is described as the wilderness (מדבר) where Israel was planted. More directly, Ezek 20:35 speaks of the wilderness (מדבר העמים) (wilderness of the peoples), through which the Israelite people pass during the return to the land from the exile. Furthermore, v. 36 employs an analogy between the pre-monarchic wilderness period and the return from the exile.⁵¹ As the second exodus signifies the return from the exile, so the second wilderness period here signifies the process of return.⁵² Since Numbers 13–14 has obviously been influenced by Ezekiel, the purpose of the alleged Priestly version of the former can be understood in this vein as a harsh criticism of the exiles who refused to join the return as well as a strong urge to return to the land. This is a purpose obviously distinguished from that of P, as we saw, that is to harmonize the claims of the remainees and returnees. The present text reflects the socio-historical context that the later priestly circle further urges the rest of the exiles to join the priestly cult in Yehud. The land promise to the exodus generation is further emphasized, as it is for the exiles; the patriarchal land-promise is omitted, as it is not relevant to them.

5 Conclusion

The observations in this essay have revealed that the careful combination of the two different notions of the land promise in Exod 6:2–8, those to the patriarchs and exodus generation, never appears in the alleged P text in the Book of Numbers. We also discussed that the absence of such a combination is intentional rather than coincidental. Such a difference between P and the late priestly texts can be explained both ideologically and socio-historically. Ideologically, the grant of the land to the exodus generation in Numbers is dependent on the loyalty of the people and Yhwh's favor, so that the generation, and even Moses and Aaron, failed to enter the land. This is probably an influence from the Deuteronomistic concept of the conditional inheritance of the land, which is incompatible with the unconditional promise of the land to the patriarchs. Socio-his-

⁵¹ This passage is often assigned to the later Ezekiel school, probably during the Persian period; it is more than likely that the late Ezekiel and P schools shared this analogy even if they did not, in fact, belong to the same circle.

⁵² Also Römer argues that the »wilderness« in Numbers signifies the situation in diaspora. See, Thomas Römer et al., *Die Entstehung Des Alten Testaments*, 146.

torically, Exodus 6 aims to establish the new priestly cult acceptable to both the exiles and remainees using the land motif as a unifying factor. Nevertheless, the purpose of Numbers, chs. 13–14 in particular, can be understood as an urge for a further return of the exiles to Yehud to join the Jerusalemite priestly cult. The late priestly author ignored the patriarchal motif for it was irrelevant to the exiles.

Considering the thematic and linguistic consistency detected in the P text in Genesis–Exodus (e. g. Genesis 17 and Exodus 6), the lack of the patriarchal land-promise motif in the alleged P text in Numbers indicates that the degree of consistency visible in Genesis–Exodus is not applicable to Numbers. The motif of the land promise, therefore, does not support the extent of P in Numbers. Rather, the motif has different ideological and socio-historical implications in Exodus and Numbers, which adds weight to the argument that P ends at Sinai.

Abstract: While Pentateuchal scholars increasingly support the ending of P in the Sinai narrative, there are still attempts to defend the classical Nothian model of P that ends in the plain of Moab. The major argument of the latter is that the land-promise motif persists through the end of the P material. A close observation of the alleged »Priestly« text reveals the otherwise. The most innovative aspect of the pivotal P text in Exodus 6 is to combine the land-promises to the Patriarchs and to the exodus generation, providing a continuity from Genesis to Exodus. In the alleged P text in Numbers, however, the land-promise is always for the exodus generation; the Patriarchal promise is never mentioned. This phenomenon is not coincidental, considering that those texts directly deal with the occupation and distribution of the promised land (Num 13–14; 20; 27; 34; 36). Such a literary difference between P and the alleged P in Numbers reflects different socio-religious agenda of the different generations of priestly scribal circle.

Zusammenfassung: Während die Forschungsmeinung, nach der die Sinai Perikope das Ende von P darstellt, immer mehr Anhänger findet, gibt es nach wie vor Vertreter des Nothschen Modells, das P in den Gefilden Moabs enden lässt. Dabei stützen sich Letztere auf das Motiv der Landverheißung, das über das Ende des P-Materials hinausreicht. Eine nähere Betrachtung des veranschlagten »priesterlichen« Textes offenbart die Unbrauchbarkeit dieses Arguments. Der innovative Gedanke des Kern-P-Textes in Exodus 6 liegt in der Verbindung der Landverheißung mit den Erzeltern und der Generation des Exodus, die eine Kontinuität von Genesis und Exodus schafft. In dem veranschlagten P-Text in Numeri wird indes die Landverheißung nur auf die Exodus Generation bezogen und die Verheißung an die Erzväter nie erwähnt. Diese Eigenheit kann nicht zufällig sein – zieht

man in Betracht, dass die Texte von der in Besitznahme und der Verteilung des verheißenen Landes handeln (Num 13–14; 20; 27; 34; 36). Solch ein literarischer Unterschied zwischen P und dem veranschlagten P in Numeri spiegelt eine unterschiedliche sozio-religiöse Agenda verschiedener Generationen von priesterlichen Schreiberzirkeln wider.

Résumé: Alors que les exégètes du Pentateuque situent de plus en plus la fin de P dans le récit du Sinaï, des tentatives de défendre l'ancien modèle Nothien de Ps e terminant dans les plaines de Moab (Dt 34*) subsistent. Le principal argument de ces dernières se situe dans le maintien du motif de la terre promise jusqu'à la fin des matériaux de P. L'observation attentive des textes prétendus »sacerdotaux« révèle le contraire. L'aspect le plus innovateur du texte pivot de P, Exode 6, consiste à combiner la promesse du pays aux patriarches et celle à la génération de l'Exode, établissant ainsi une continuité entre la Genèse et l'Exode. Dans les textes des Nombres attribués à P, cependant, la terre promise est toujours liée à la génération de l'Exode ; la promesse aux patriarches n'est jamais mentionnée. Ce phénomène n'est pas une coïncidence, sachant que ces textes traitent directement de l'occupation et du partage de la terre promise (Nb 13–14 ; 20 ; 27 ; 34 ; 36). Une telle différence littéraire entre P et le prétendu P du livre des Nombres reflète les agendas socio-religieux de différentes générations de scribes sacerdotaux.