ARON FREIDENREICH

# Mutual Influence in Priestly and Non-Priestly Pentateuchal Narratives

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# Mutual Influence in Priestly and Non-Priestly Pentateuchal Narratives

## A Study of the Dynamic Interaction Behind the Textual Growth of P and Non-P

Mohr Siebeck

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# Acknowledgments

No author writes in a vacuum. This notion is so intuitively obvious that it does not even bear mentioning. So, a study aimed at uncovering the important influences behind and between the writers of the Pentateuch's most central texts hardly seems necessary. Nevertheless, the ways in which biblical authors affected one another tend to be overlooked and underappreciated, since their sources of inspiration are never acknowledged overtly in the text and can only be inferred through careful examination. Ancient writers' disinterest in citing their sources is perfectly understandable, given that they did not even take credit for their own contributions: theirs was a culture in which the scribe's function was to serve the larger community, and their writings were intended to shape and preserve a collective memory rather than a personal one. Still, both their efforts and their influences deserve our recognition. Indeed, one of the beautiful outcomes of the modern field of diachronic biblical scholarship has been to acknowledge the endeavors of the many long-forgotten individuals and schools whose literary works have ultimately impacted the world more than any other textual collection. It is hoped that this small contribution can further that effort by recognizing the ways in which these biblical writers significantly impacted one another as they developed the works that have so significantly impacted us.

Naturally, I too have benefited immeasurably from the hard work of the many distinguished scholars who have preceded me. I fully recognize that I am standing on the shoulders of giants, building off of the invaluable contributions of both traditional religious commentators and modern critical academics. I have tried wherever possible to credit their work within footnoted entries throughout this study. I hope that I have done proper service to each of them in my renderings of their words and ideas, and that my deep respect for their work comes through even when I note how my own position diverges from theirs. The full list of their names can be found in the bibliography, but I would like to call special attention to those whose treatments I found to be particularly thought-provoking when researching for this project, namely: Joel Baden, Erhard Blum, David Carr, Umberto Cassuto, H. Holzinger, Benno Jacob, Abraham Kuenen, Christophe Nihan, Albert de Pury, Gerhard von Rad, Thomas Römer, Konrad Schmid, Baruch Schwartz, Jean-Louis Ska, Martin Noth, Julius Wellhausen, and Claus Westermann.

It has been a true honor for me to interact with and learn from so many brilliant scholars who are still active in the field and whom I regard so highly. Although they may not be aware of the effect that just a brief conversation, a small accolade, or simply a few words of support have had on me, I want to express my appreciation to Ellen Birnbaum, Joseph Blenkinsopp, Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, Alan Cooper, Jaeyoung Jeon, Christoph Levin, Ely Levine, Thomas Römer, Konrad Schmid, Mark Smith, Ben Sommer, James Watts, Andrea Weiss, and Ziony Zevit for their kind encouragement and interest in my work over the years. In addition, Sara Milstein has been particularly encouraging during my prolonged writing process, somehow always making me feel reenergized about my project and excited to forge ahead.

So many incredible mentors and role models have inspired me over the years to embark upon the enriching and rewarding paths of biblical scholarship and teaching. I am grateful to Alan Odess for stimulating me already in high school to pursue a career in teaching Tanakh, and I thank Art Green, Reuven Kimelman, and Noam Zion for demonstrating through their own examples how to be an inspirational educator. When I started teaching, my supervisors, Susan Friedman and Jay Lieberman, became like a second mother and father to me with their nurturing mentorship and encouragement. I am so appreciative that they and colleagues like Chaim Galfand and Judd Levingston believed in me and supported my vision to develop curricula that emphasize academic approaches to biblical study.

I would never have acquired such a deep love for critical biblical scholarship in the first place were it not for the influence of the wonderful teachers and advisors who generously gave of their time and effort to guide me on my journey. It was David Inbar who first opened my eyes to how much the Tanakh has to offer beyond its religious value to those who are truly willing to approach it authentically and creatively. Years later, David's unequivocal excitement about my idea to begin doctoral study in the Hebrew Bible convinced me to follow through on that aspiration, and although he did not live to see me fulfill it, my pursuit of biblical scholarship is dedicated to his memory. Marc Brettler has been a transformative mentor to me ever since my freshman year of college, serving as a consistent source of information and encouragement. I am so grateful to continue to gain tremendously from his immense wisdom and gentle supportiveness to this day. Jeffrey Stackert was my teaching assistant in the course that first introduced me to diachronic study, and it was his charitably enthusiastic comments on my first foray into the evolution of a biblical text that propelled me toward a lifelong interest in such investigations. As I first began to probe this field of study, Baruch Schwartz kindly responded painstakingly to each of my questions and emerging theories. I am awe-inspired by his fervor for the Hebrew Bible's careful examination and by his ability to transmit that passion infectiously to his students.

Of course, I owe my greatest debt of gratitude to my tirelessly devoted doctoral-adviser-turned-colleague-and-friend, David Carr. The numerous references to his writings peppered throughout the following chapters are a testament to his influence on my approach and methodologies. I am completely amazed by David's intellectual prowess and his monumental works. Somehow, in the midst of all of his teaching, research, and writing, David always found the time to review draft after draft of my dissertation and offer extensive feedback, without which this study would be woefully inferior. Whatever erroneous views and overconfident language still remain in this study are undoubtably the result of my own obstinance against his wise counsel. After all, throughout his teaching and guidance, David always advocated for and indeed exemplified a scholarly humility, and despite his formidable expertise, he allowed me the freedom to forge my own path. Even more meaningful than his formative impact on me academically has been his steadfast encouragement of me on a personal level. David never ceased in his genuine belief in my value and his commitment to my success, even when I faltered and delayed. It is due to his unwavering support that my doctoral studies came to their full fruition.

This book comprises a careful revision of my doctoral dissertation. Its improvement is due in large part to the much-appreciated constructive criticism of my two secondary readers, Esther Hamori and Daniel Fleming. Each of their unique perspectives helped me polish and enhance this study, and their judicious guidance and insightfulness have impacted my thinking in ways that extend far beyond the confines of this work. Of course, my manuscript would not have become a book if it were not also for the industrious efforts of the boundlessly helpful people at Mohr Siebeck, including Elena Müller, Marianne Curschmann, and most notably, Matthias Spitzner and Markus Kirchner. I am so appreciative of their friendly assistance throughout this final stage of the process, and I take full responsibility for all editing errors I have committed against their advisement.

In addition to acknowledging the powerful influences of my many advisers, mentors, colleagues, and friends over the years, I must also pay tribute to all of my students. Rabbi Ḥanina's adage in the Babylonian Talmud (Taanit 7a) is absolutely true: "I have learned much from my teachers and even more from my friends, but from my students more than from all of them." It is my students' eager curiosity and love of learning that have fueled my desire to expand my own understanding, while their enthusiasm for my classes pushed me to further cultivate and refine my craft. It would be impossible to enumerate all of the ways in which my students have impacted me over the past twenty-one years, but I am eternally grateful for their profound effect on my life.

I am especially fortunate and thankful to have such a supportive and loving family, complete with professors who are willing to listen to my thoughts and review my writings as well. My brother, David Freidenreich, is always up for engaging in stimulating discussions on the Hebrew Bible, and he offers sage

advice on the best ways to convey my ideas. My parents, Phil and Harriet, raised me in an incredibly warm and loving environment, always supporting me in every sense of the word and encouraging me to pursue my dreams. I know that they are proud of my accomplishments, but I could never fully express how proud I am to have them as my parents.

All told, from its initial conception to its ultimate publication, this book represents the efforts of a full twelve years, as I worked to juggle my pursuit of a dissertation and finished manuscript with both a full-time teaching job and family responsibilities. That period accounts for more than half of my marriage at this point and a considerably larger percentage of the lives of my three children, the youngest of whom can only ever recall having a father with this project hanging over his head. Yet despite the challenges, my family remained devoted and encouraging throughout, and they have even taken an interest in my field of study. I have experienced no greater joy than engaging in deeply meaningful discussions of the Tanakh with my wife and kids. My children, Nerya, Amitai, and Zemer, amaze me with their genuine kindheartedness, their intelligence and inventiveness, and their lived values. My wife Tova has been a constant source of unconditional love and support; she is the greatest partner and friend I could ever have. Her creativity is astounding, her thoughtfulness is never-ending, and her selfless devotion to our family and community is nothing short of inspirational. To Tova, Nerya, Zemer, and Amitai, I feel truly blessed to have such unbelievably wonderful, compassionate, and supportive people to come home to each day. I am infinitely thankful for the gift of sharing my life with you! This book is dedicated to you, the true loves of my life.

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Chapter 1

# A Reintroduction to the Relationship Between P and Non-P

## A. On the Distinctiveness of P and Non-P

Perhaps the most important and enduring contribution of critical scholarship on the Pentateuch's formation over the past two centuries has been the clear-cut distinction between "Priestly" ("P") materials and other "non-Priestly" ("non-P") traditions. Whereas many other theories that have been put forth over the course of the history of biblical criticism have failed to maintain widespread scholarly support through the years, the notion that certain texts can be distinguished from their surroundings and identified as hailing from Priestly origins has retained overwhelming acceptance since its inception.[1] Moreover, scholarship has come to a relative consensus on the overall contours of the Priestly and non-Priestly corpora, and even on the particular passages belonging to each.[2] The ascription of Pentateuchal texts to P and non-P has undergone only minor adjustments over the years, so that the list of verses assigned to Priestly versus non-Priestly hands in recent treatments diverges only minimally from those delineated by the earliest source critics.[3] In a field that has undergone a

[1] The most notable early work distinguishing Priestly from non-Priestly materials is Theodor Nöldeke, *Untersuchungen zur Kritik des Alten Testaments* (Kiel: Schwers, 1869), 1–144.

[2] As Kratz explains, P's "extent has been established since Nöldeke's 'Investigations' and is still more or less undisputed" (Reinhard G. Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament* [trans. John Bowden; London: T & T Clark, 2005], 228).

[3] This can be shown by comparing the listings of Priestly ascriptions in such works as Abraham Kuenen, *An Historico-Critical Inquiry into the Origin and Composition of the Hexateuch (Pentateuch and Book of Joshua)* (trans. Philip H. Wicksteed; London: Macmillan, 1886), 66, 69–70, 95–7; Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), 327–32; Martin Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions* (trans. B. W. Anderson; Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 17–9; Karl Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung der priesterlichen Geschichtserzählung," *ZTK* 49 (1952): 121–2; Norbert Lohfink, *Theology of the Pentateuch: Themes of the Priestly Narrative and Deuteronomy* (trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1994), 145 n.29; Antony F. Campbell and Mark A. O'Brien, *Sources of the Pentateuch* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1993), 22–90, 260; and Thomas Pola, *Die ursprüngliche Priesterschrift: Beobachtungen zur Literarkritik und Traditionsgeschichte von Pg* (WMANT 70; Neukirchen-

multiplicity of transformations, the separation of Priestly and non-Priestly materials has remained an extraordinarily constant paradigm that serves effectively as a sturdy baseline for further inquiry.[4]

This remarkable stability owes itself in large part to several distinguishing features appearing both on and beneath the surface that help to separate P definitively from its non-Priestly surroundings. On a purely literary and stylistic level, P exhibits certain noticeably idiosyncratic characteristics, including distinctive Priestly terminology,[5] recurring Priestly formulae,[6] precisely patterned

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Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1995), 343 n.144. A helpful side-by-side comparative chart of Pentateuchal verses attributed to P by Noth, Elliger, Lohfink, Weimar, and Holzinger can also be found in Philip Peter Jenson, *Graded Holiness: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World* (JSOTSup 106; Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992), 221–4.

[4] As Carr explains, "overall, the basic identification of Priestly material (whether source or, in some cases, redactional) across the Hexateuch remains one of the more assured results of the last two centuries of biblical scholarship" (David M. Carr, "The Formation of the Moses Story: Literary-Historical Reflections," *The Journal of Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 1 [2012]: 10). Blum has characterized this overwhelming acceptance of distinctly Priestly writings as an "erstaunlichen Konsens [astonishing consensus]," commenting that, "Sosehr auch über Fragen der Literargeschichte debattiert werden mag, die substantielle Bestimmung der (im weiteren Sinne) priesterlichen Texte im Pentateuch ist in der Forschung so gut wie unstrittig! [as much as questions of literary history may be debated, the substantial determination (in a broader sense) of Priestly texts in the Pentateuch is as good as undisputed in research!]" (Erhard Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* [BZAW 189; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990], 221). Unless otherwise stated explicitly, all translations of foreign-language passages, whether biblical, rabbinic, or modern, are my own (with my sincerest apologies if I have rendered any such works inaccurately).

[5] Lists of Priestly terms are common in the literature. One prominent example that will resurface on a number of occasions throughout this study is the Priestly blessing combining the verbs פרה and רבה.

[6] P's execution formula, whereby "X did according to all that God/YHWH commanded him," serves as a prime example (see Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Structure of P," *CBQ* 38 [1976]: 276–92, particularly 276–7). Note that although this study presents a modern critical analysis of the Hebrew Bible rather than a religious one, I still aim to respect traditional sensitivities regarding the subject-matter's sacredness. I therefore follow the practice of hyphenating all divine names written in Hebrew (so, for example, אֱ-לֹהִים, שַׁדָּ-י, אֲ-דֹנָ-י, and יְ-הוָה) and capitalizing their English equivalents, even within quotations of materials where those terms are not similarly hyphenated or capitalized. At the same time, however, I will accurately reflect my predecessors' gendered views of God when quoting their works, whether ancient, medieval or modern, even as I use gender-neutral language in my own references to the deity.

lists,[7] a special interest in numbers,[8] and an explicit compositional design.[9] Though particular aspects of these features are not entirely exclusive to P alone, as a general rule such elements make Priestly texts especially recognizable, even at first glance.[10]

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[7] Priestly genealogical lines, with their characteristic *toledot* introductions, appear throughout the book of Genesis, while travel reports and itinerary notices can be found within P's patriarchal and Moses materials (though these are sometimes also duplicated by post-Priestly redactors and glossators). On the *toledot* materials, see especially Sven Tengström, *Die Toledotformel und die literarische Struktur der priesterlichen Erweiterungsschicht im Pentateuch* (ConBOT 17; Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1981); David Carr, "Biblos Geneseôs Revisited: A Synchronic Analysis of Genesis as Part of the Torah," *ZAW* 110 (1998): 159–72, 327–47. On the itinerary notices, see, for example, Peter Weimar, "Struktur und Komposition der priesterschriftlichen Geschichtsdarstellung," *BN* 23 (1984): 81–134; 24 (1984): 138–62; Thomas B. Dozeman, "The Priestly Wilderness Itineraries and the Composition of the Pentateuch," in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid, and Baruch J. Schwartz; FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 257–88.

[8] So, for example, the precise ages offered at each link in the genealogical chain from Adam to Noah in Genesis 5 markedly distinguish this Priestly Sethite line from the parallel non-Priestly Kenite line found in Genesis 4:17–24, which reflects no such interest. The Priestly focus on certain figures' lifespan totals and ages at significant events will come up again in the case study on Genesis 17:15–21. Much has been written on the possible Priestly chronological frameworks that may underlie these notations; see, for example, Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 308; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 48–51; Pola, *Die ursprüngliche Priesterschrift*, 342; as well as longer treatises such as Jeremy Hughes, *Secrets of the Times: Myth and History in Biblical Chronology* (JSOTSup 66; Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1990); Philippe Guillaume, *Land and Calendar: The Priestly Document from Genesis 1 to Joshua 18* (Library of Biblical Studies 391; New York: T&T Clark, 2009).

[9] For a structural analysis of particular Priestly materials, see especially Sean E. McEvenue, *The Narrative Style of the Priestly Writer* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971), as well as Weimar, "Struktur und Komposition," 81–134, 138–62, and Odil Hannes Steck, "Aufbauprobleme in der Priesterschrift," in *Ernten, was man sät: Festschrift für Klaus Koch zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Dwight R. Daniels, Uwe Glessmer, and Martin Rösel; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Vlg., 1991), 287–308. Whereas those treatments maintain that such structural elements were intended to lend coherence and organization to the Priestly work alone, others assert instead that they were meant to do so for the Pentateuchal canon as a whole: see especially Rolf Rendtorff, *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch* (trans. John J. Scullion; JSOTSup 89; Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990); William Johnstone, "From the Sea to the Mountain, Exodus 15,22–19,2: A Case Study in Editorial Techniques," in *Studies in the Book of Exodus: Redaction – Reception – Interpretation* (ed. Marc Vervenne; BETL 126; Leuven: Peeters, 1996), 245–63. This has been an important area of contention for the determination of the relationship between P and non-P.

[10] Unfortunately, in marking out clear distinctions between P and non-P, sometimes scholars develop overly absolutist positions, whereby certain terminology and stylistic fea-

These distinguishing aesthetic characteristics are joined by key distinctions in the principles and ideologies underlying the two sets of material as well.[11] As might be expected between texts deriving from Priestly versus non-Priestly origins, part of this divide involves matters relating to the cult specifically.[12] Yet, their ideological differences extend far beyond explicitly cultic issues to reveal highly divergent worldviews and understandings of history.[13] The competing theologies of P and non-P are evident in the ways in which Israel's deity

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tures found *predominantly* in Priestly literature are mistakenly attributed *entirely* to P, resulting in questionable textual ascriptions of passages that otherwise display no otherwise discernable Priestly qualities. So, for example, even though P has a penchant for noting ages at various events, this does not mean that all such notices are necessarily Priestly, as if non-Priestly authors are precluded from including such information (see the critiques of the ascriptions of Genesis 37:2 and 41:46 to P within the Joseph novella, for instance, in such disparate treatments as Rendtorff, *Problem*, 139 and Baruch Jacob Schwartz, "Yeridato shel yosef le-mitsrayim," *Beit Mikra: Journal for the Study of the Bible and Its World* 55 [2010]: 3 n.3 [Hebrew]). Such instances of over-reliance on terminological factors and stylistic elements do not negate the usefulness of delineating distinctive features between P and non-P, but should serve as a reminder to use those indicators carefully as further corroboration to supplement other, more solidly grounded, arguments related to ideology, message, agenda, and intent. Similarly, scholars must be cautious not to be too rigid about the Priestly work's structural and repetitive exactitude, by denying P any amount of flexibility and freedom to deviate from established patterns and relegating all such divergences from the strict norm as non-Priestly interruptions or post-Priestly glosses (see especially the criticisms of Rendtorff, *Problem*, 156–63 *et passim*).

[11] These ideological differences are especially highlighted when Priestly and non-Priestly authors present duplicate conflicting versions of the same event, since their descriptions are strongly colored by their distinctive conceptual frameworks. This phenomenon will be explored more thoroughly below.

[12] A most glaring difference between P and non-P concerns their respective views on pre-Sinaitic sacrificial worship, which occurs repeatedly in non-Priestly traditions but is dogmatically absent in P. Whereas non-Priestly traditions in Genesis often describe characters laudably erecting altars and offering sacrifices at numerous locations, parallel Priestly literature avoids any such references, in accordance with the Priestly conviction that divinely condoned sacrificial activities were only first instituted at a later time in Israel's history and were restricted to a certain Priestly line at a designated location. (This topic is examined carefully in William K. Gilders, "Sacrifice before Sinai and the Priestly Narratives," in *The Strata of the Priestly Writings: Contemporary Debate and Future Directions* [ed. Sarah Shectman and Joel S. Baden; ATANT 95; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2009], 57–72.) Moreover, since that Priestly line is said to descend from Aaron alone, that priestly progenitor occupies a special position in P, as will be discussed in the case study on Exodus 4:14–16.

[13] For full investigations into the Priestly work's kerygma, see especially Rudolf Kilian, "Die Priesterschrift: Hoffnung auf Heimkehr," in *Wort und Botschaft: Eine theologische und kritische Einführung in die Probleme de Alten Testaments* (ed. Josef Schreiner; Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1967), 226–43; Walter Brueggemann, "The Kerygma of the Priestly Writers," *ZAW* 84 (1972): 397–414; Suzanne Boorer, "The Kerygmatic Intention of the Priestly Document," *ABR* 25 (1977): 12–20; Ralph W. Klein, "The Message of P," in *Die Botschaft*

is presented as interacting both with certain individuals[14] and with varying segments of humanity,[15] and in the types of relationships that God forms with different populations.[16] Integrally connected with these beliefs are distinct perspectives regarding how Israel is meant to relate to its neighbors and to its land.[17] Taken together, these deep ideological differences converge with P's

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*und die Boten: Festschrift für Hans Walter Wolff zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. Jörg Jeremias and Lothar Perlitt; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981) 57–66; Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Abraham as Paradigm in the Priestly History in Genesis," *JBL* 128:2 (2009): 225–42; Suzanne Boorer, *The Vision of the Priestly Narrative: Its Genre and Hermeneutics of Time* (Ancient Israel and Its Literature 27; Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016). On the Priestly work's reenvisioning of history though its own systematizing, theologizing, and mythologizing, see Volkmar Fritz, "Das Geschichts-verständnis der Priesterschrift," *ZTK* 84 (1987): 426–39.

[14] Non-Priestly traditions often include divine communications to all sorts of individuals spanning across genders and national affiliation, so that figures such as the Egyptian maidservant Hagar (Genesis 16, 21) and Abimelech the king of Gerar (Genesis 20) experience divine encounters just as prominently as do patriarchal figures like Abraham and Jacob. In contrast, Priestly beliefs about the worship of God solely through proper cultic practices involving a specified cohort of entirely male officiants precludes divine communication to all but the most elite figures in Israel's past. In keeping with this more restricted sense of divine interactions with humans, Priestly materials do not include any references to angelic theophanies and dream visions, an absence that is especially pronounced in cases that parallel non-Priestly stories that are centered around such features. The suggestion that these elements of non-Priestly stories were offensive to Priestly sensibilities is common in scholarly treatments, and will resurface in the discussions of Genesis 17:15–21 and Genesis 35:10 within this study.

[15] P's theological framework, involving a three-staged development of God's revelations to progressively confined segments of humanity through increasingly intimate divine names, will be explored in the case study on Exodus 3:15.

[16] Much has been written on the Priestly conceptions of divine covenants, though scholars have not always agreed on key aspects of this central feature in P. Compare, for example, Walther Zimmerli, "Sinaibund und Abrahambund: Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der Priesterschrift," *TZ* 16 (1960): 268–79; Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 295–300; and Christophe Nihan, "The Priestly Covenant, Its Reinterpretations, and the Composition of 'P'," in *The Strata of the Priestly Writings: Contemporary Debate and Future Directions* (ed. Sarah Shectman and Joel S. Baden; ATANT 95; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2009), 87–134. Exactly who is included in and excluded from P's Abrahamic covenant will be a focal issue in the case study on Genesis 17:15–21.

[17] On P's understanding of the land of Israel, see especially Christian Frevel, *Mit dem Blick auf das Land die Schöpfung erinnern: Zum Ende der Priestergrundschrift* (HBS 23; Freiburg: Herder, 2000), 349–71, and Guillaume, *Land and Calendar*, 126–62. Regarding P's views on outsiders, the Priestly work is often said to espouse a coexistent tolerance toward foreign nations, so much so that some scholars have even described P as "ecumenical" (see, for example, Albert de Pury, *Die Patriarchen und die Priesterschrift: gesammelte Studien zu seinem 70. Geburtstag* [ed. Jean-Daniel Macchi, Thomas Römer, and Konrad Schmid; ATANT 99; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2010] 38–39, 73–89; as well as

stylistic peculiarities to allow Priestly and non-Priestly materials to be distinguished with considerable certainty, yielding results that have achieved incredibly widespread agreement.[18]

At the same time, however, this very same distinctiveness has also led to some problematic theories about the historical and compositional relationships between P and non-P. Diachronic models regarding the Priestly and non-

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Konrad Schmid, "Gibt es eine 'abrahamitische Ökumene' im Alten Testament? Überlegungen zur religions-politischen Theologie der Priesterschrift in Genesis 17," in *Die Erzväter in der biblischen Tradition: Festschrift für Matthias Köckert* [ed. Anselm C. Hagedorn and Henrik Pfeiffer; BZAW 400; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009], 67–92, which includes a bibliographical list of other scholars who focus on this topic as well on p.73). Such a characterization will be assessed most directly in the case study of Genesis 17:15–21, and touched upon as well in the following chapter focusing on Genesis 26:34–35; 27:46. This stance, however, should not be confused with a sense of equality among the nations or a desire for close interaction between Israel and foreigners. Just as P stratifies Israel's own population into distinct divisions related to their levels of proximity to the cult and access to the divine, P likewise organizes all peoples into hierarchical rankings expressed in both genealogical materials and covenantal materials (again, see the case study on Genesis 17:15–21). In addition, P shows a concern for the strict separation of peoples delineated by clearly defined boundaries, matching Priestly ideas about the importance of separating between pure and impure and between acceptable and unacceptable in cultic matters. Nihan consequently describes P as maintaining "a policy of peaceful cohabitation combined with strict ethnic segregation," in Christophe Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus* (FAT II 25; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 385.

[18] As Blenkinsopp explains, "The task of disengaging this source from the other narrative strands with which it has been combined is rendered less arduous than it might otherwise be on account of P's distinctive style, idiom, vocabulary, and theological orientation" (Blenkinsopp, "Abraham as Paradigm," 226). Carr likewise remarks on "the distinctiveness of this Priestly material, so set off from its non-Priestly counterparts by language and conceptuality as to be easily identifiable" (David M. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2011], 292, see also 215). Lists of P's distinctive qualities similar to the one presented here are common in scholarly literature. So, for example, in an introduction to the Priestly work, Haran points out that P "is distinguished by certain clear and sharply defined characteristic features, so that it is easily recognized even when combined with other sources. Among the features typifying this source are concern for the cult and cult-related matters; the presentation of genealogical lists; a penchant for detail; an abstract conception of the deity; a stereotyped style; etc." (Meir Paran, *Darkhe ha-signon ha-kohani ba-Torah: Degamim, shimushe lashon, mivnim* [Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1989], v). Guillaume similarly observes that the "identification of the *Priesterschrift* primarily on the basis of language has held its ground, thanks to a propensity for numbers and formula, strikingly different theological concepts and a consistent chronology. Pg's style was often deemed stiff and pedantic, which helps to make it easy to recognize. Hence Pg is so peculiar that its identification is much more objective than is the case with other potential layers" (Guillaume, *Land and Calendar*, 5–6).

Priestly contributions[19] to the Pentateuch have often sought to match the noticeable divergences between these two sets of material with an equally stark chronological and literary separation between the two corpora. P is so clearly distinct from non-Priestly materials that it has often been envisioned to have grown out of its own separate world, isolated in all ways from its non-Priestly counterparts. This complete disjuncture between the two works would certainly justify the sharp divides observed between P and non-P: their differences would be caused by, and therefore be reflective of, their extreme distance in time and space. However, such an absolute severance between P and non-P proves in the end to be entirely overexaggerated, causing major challenges for developing an accurate conception of both sets of material, as well as impeding our full appreciation of the significant impacts of their interrelationship. The following review of the chronological, compositional, and ideological relationships between the Priestly and non-Priestly corpora will lead to an altogether different picture, one that acknowledges P's distinctiveness from non-P while also envisioning a far closer interaction between the two corpora than has been commonly recognized.[20]

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[19] I deliberately use the vague term "contributions" here (as opposed to labels like "sources" and "documents" on the one hand or "strata" and "layers" on the other) to keep open the compositional process by which these materials were formed, at least until such time as the particular relationship between these textual traditions can be properly discussed. Throughout this study, I will likewise refer to the producers of these works as "contributors," as well as "authors," "writers," or "composers," all used interchangeably, with the understanding that an "author" need not create something entirely new from scratch (and that "composer" does not necessarily endorse the "composition" model to be explained in Excursus 1). To highlight that neither P nor non-P likely ever constituted a uniform block with a single origin, I often use plural language when referring to Priestly or non-Priestly "contributions," "traditions," "materials," or "writings," and this intention should be assumed even when I revert to more commonly-employed singular expressions like "the Priestly writer" or "the Priestly work."

[20] The following is intended to offer a thematic overview of scholarly positions on the relationships between P and non-P, rather than rehearsing a detailed history of scholarship on the matter. Excellent reviews of the history of scholarship on the dating of P and its relationship with non-P can be found in such varied works as Antony F. Campbell, "The Priestly Text: Redaction or Source?" in *Biblische Theologie und gesellschaftlicher Wandel. FS Norbert Lohfink* (ed. Georg Braulik, Walter Groß, and Sean McEvenue; Freiburg: Herder, 1993), 32–47; David M. Carr, "Changes in Pentateuchal Criticism," in *The History of Old Testament Interpretation, volume 3.1, The Twentieth Century* (ed. Magne Saebo (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 454–8; David M. Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis: Historical and Literary Approaches* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 133–9; Gordon J. Wenham, "The Priority of P," *VT* 49 (1999): 240; Joseph Blenkinsopp, "An Assessment of the Alleged Pre-exilic Date of the Priestly Material in the Pentateuch," *ZAW* 108 (1996): 495–518; Jacob Milgrom, "The Antiquity of the Priestly Source: A Reply to Joseph Blenkinsopp," *ZAW* 111 (1999): 10–22. In addition, bibliographical lists of supporters of various positions on P's date and origins are collected in Konrad Schmid,

## B. On the Chronological Relationship Between P and Non-P

When the concept of a Priestly work was initially proposed, P was imagined to be particularly ancient, constituting the very first document to have narrated the events of Israel's archaic roots. It was often termed the *Grundlage* (foundational basis) or *Grundschrift* (foundational writing) onto which all other material was later added.[21] The very nature of Priestly writings seems to furnish this impression: the Priestly genealogical records appear to serve as the basic skeletal structure of the Genesis corpus, while Priestly itinerary notices can be thought to function similarly for the wilderness stories of Exodus and Numbers. P was therefore seen as providing the initial string upon which non-Priestly narrative pearls were later fashioned and attached to further adorn the emerging Pentateuchal necklace.

Of course, that Priestly thread could also have been formulated at a later time, and only then introduced into the corpus to lend a sense of coherence and consistency to much older non-Priestly traditions.[22] In fact, such a reversed sequence gained in popularity with the accumulation of evidence within the Priestly work of its likely exilic or even post-exilic provenience.[23] P's promotion in particular of circumcision, Sabbath observance, and endogamy correspond much better to the circumstances of a people struggling to preserve its identity in a foreign or mixed population environment than to a pre-exilic period with far less of an identity threat.[24] In addition, P's location of the origins

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*Genesis and the Moses Story: Israel's Dual Origins in the Hebrew Bible* (trans. James D. Nogalski; Siphrut 3; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 254 n.560; Saul M. Olyan, "An Eternal Covenant with Circumcision as Its Sign: How Useful a Criterion for Dating and Source Analysis?" in *The Pentateuch* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid, and Baruch J. Schwartz; FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 348–9 n.3.

[21] See, for example, Hermann Hupfeld, *Die Quellen der Genesis und die Art ihrer Zusammensetzung* (Berlin: Wiegandt und Grieben, 1853), 2 *et passim*.

[22] This, in fact, is how Wellhausen uses the necklace analogy to explain the relationship between P (which he termed "Q") and non-Priestly traditions (his "JE"): "It is as if Q were the scarlet thread on which the pearls of JE are hung" (Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 332). Campbell and O'Brien later transform that metaphor into a description of P itself, since the Priestly work contains terse plotline reports highlighted with more expansive stories (Campbell and O'Brien, *Sources of the Pentateuch*, 9, 21, 28 n.16).

[23] See Kuenen, *Historico-Critical Inquiry*, 172–3; Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 345, 390; Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 231, 234; Fleming James, *Personalities of the Old Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), 425; Otto Eissfeldt, *Die Genesis der Genesis: Vom Werdegang des ersten Buches der Bibel* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1958), 33. Boorer includes a full discussion of the rationale behind this later dating of P in Boorer, *Vision*, 100–103.

[24] See H. Holzinger, *Genesis: Erklärt* (Freiburg: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1898), XXII-XXIII; Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 341; Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 230–31;

of the cult and its personnel outside of Canaan and prior to the establishment of a monarchical structure seems aimed at asserting the independence of priestly institutions from possession of the land and Davidic rule, so that they continue to be relevant once those situations are no longer the reality. Similarly, the Priestly narrative highlights the births and deaths of many of Israel's ancestors outside of the land and presents them as mere "sojourners" when in Canaan.[25] Furthermore, P's repeated stress on the divine promise of the land as part of an eternal covenant that God will remember at a future point seems designed to inspire hope in an exilic community longing to return home.[26] Indeed, many of these same emphases and hope-inspiring messages are found in demonstrably exilic and post-exilic prophetic texts such as Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah, to which a number of specific linkages have been discovered within the Priestly work.[27]

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Kilian, "Die Priesterschrift," 229; Carr, *Fractures*, 137–8, 140. Olyan's argument for an exilic provenance of P over a pre-exilic dating (and, in his view, over a post-exilic dating as well) is based largely on P's emphasis on circumcision specifically (Olyan, "Eternal Covenant," 347–58; see also Blenkinsopp, "Abraham as Paradigm," 237). Nihan offers a detailed case for a specifically post-exilic date for P in the fifth century BCE (Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 383–94, 614), exploring the issue of endogamy versus exogamy and its connection to post-exilic Israel in ibid., 384–5. The centrality of circumcision within P's Abrahamic covenant will be discussed in detail in the case study of Genesis 17:15–21, while P's promotion of endogamy will be discussed further in the chapter on Genesis 26:34–35; 27:46.

[25] Wörhle points out that nearly all of the ancestors in P's Genesis (including Abraham, all twelve tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh, and, in Wöhrle's view, possibly even Isaac and Jacob!) are born outside of the land, in deliberate contrast to Esau's descendants who are native to it (Jakob Wöhrle, *Fremdlinge im eigenen Land: Zur Entstehung und Intention der priesterlichen Passagen der Vätergeschichte* [FRLANT 246; Göttingen: Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 2012], 176–81). An audience in exile would be more likely to identify with P's focus on Abraham's origins in Ur of the Chaldeans (see Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 342) and with the inability of Moses's generation to enter into the land (assuming that P extends that far; see Kilian, "Die Priesterschrift," 229–30).

[26] On this central agenda of P, see Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung," 141–3; Kilian, "Die Priesterschrift," 229–31, 244; Klein, "Message of P," 61–66; Carr, *Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 297. Blenkinsopp contends that the Priestly Abraham story in particular was composed with the purpose of providing hope for an exilic community, with Abraham serving as the paradigmatic figure for those returning and wanting to return to Judea in 539 BCE (Blenkinsopp, "Abraham as Paradigm," 230–31). Wöhrle also notes that P has the fulfillment of the divine promise of proliferation occur outside of Israel in Genesis 47:27b and Exodus 1:7 (Wöhrle, *Fremdlinge im eigenen Land*, 182), signifying that the Israelite people were fully constituted outside of the land (ibid., 184). He contends that through these claims about Israel's roots, the Priestly writer intended to assert that the population exiled into Babylonia comprised the only true people of God (ibid., 188–9).

[27] So, for example, Ezekiel 40–48 and P both concentrate on the (re)establishment of the cult and (re)building of the cult center, along with (the return of) God's "presence" (Pola,

As a result of these many findings, even though certain isolated traditions within P may still derive from pre-exilic times, the Priestly corpus as a whole has generally come to be recognized as constituting a later composition from the exilic or post-exilic periods.[28] Such a dating of P is set in contrast to the

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*Die ursprüngliche Priesterschrift*, 310–25). Blenkinsopp remarks that the verb ברא is relatively infrequent outside of P's Genesis 1–6* and Isaiah 40–55 (Blenkinsopp, "Abraham as Paradigm," 230), and he lists specific connections between P's "judgments" against Egypt in Exodus 6–12* and those alluded to in Ezekiel 30:1–32:32, noting that the phrase, "then they will know that I am YHWH" appears in both corpora (Blenkinsopp, "Structure of P," 284, n. 35). Nihan likewise points out that the rare term מורשה is found in both Exodus 6:8 and Ezekiel 33:24, to which, according to Nihan, P was alluding (Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 65 n.237; 387). Both Blum and Pola also find linkages between P (especially Exodus 6:2–9) and Ezekiel 20 (Blum, *Studien*, 236–7, 240 n.43; Pola, *Die ursprüngliche Priesterschrift*, 147–212, 352). This connection is pivotal in Pola's argument that Sinai in P is an allegory for Zion, and that since Zion is the end goal in Ezekiel 20:40ff., Sinai must be the end goal for P (Pola, *Die ursprüngliche Priesterschrift*, 192–7, 310–25, 348, 352–3). The difficulty lies in determining the direction of dependence that would explain such correspondences, and scholars' differing views on this flow of influence have affected their dating of the Priestly work. Cross, for example, dates P to the same time as the composition of Ezekiel 40–48 and slightly before Deutero-Isaiah (Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 323–5), whereas Schmid and Kratz shift P past Second Isaiah (Schmid, *Genesis and the Moses Story*, 252–3; Kratz, *Composition*, 245–6) and Haran oppositely moves P prior to Ezekiel 40–48 (Menahem Haran, "The Character of the Priestly Source: Utopian and Exclusive Features," *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* [1981]: 135). Rather than coming to a definitive decision regarding this direction of dependence, Carr proposes simply agreeing that their correspondences indicate their similarly exilic provenience: "To be sure, one might argue for a dependence of P on Ezekiel and Second Isaiah or vice versa, and some have. Here, I suggest that it would make more sense to suggest that all three documents share a common exilic profile, especially since there is not sufficient overlapping language to establish clear literary dependence of one on the other" (Carr, *Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 297).

[28] Some scholars have indeed claimed a late pre-exilic date for P instead, though their arguments have not found widespread acceptance. Support for a pre-exilic P tends to be brought based on two sets of grounds:

(a) Lexical examinations of the Priestly work in relation to different stages of Biblical Hebrew. For instance, Hurvitz contends that P was written in pre-exilic Hebrew, since its terminology and grammar do not show evidence of the transition from Classical Biblical Hebrew (BH) to Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH), which began at the end of the First Temple period. Surveying a substantial amount of lexical data (focusing largely on technical cultic terms appearing within Priestly legal material rather than its narrative), he concludes: "The evidence of language . . . demonstrates that P does not reflect nor anticipate the situations and conditions which characterize the exilic and post-exilic period. . . . P's 'historical horizon' . . . and its *Sitz im Leben* . . . are definitely indicative of the pre-exilic period" (Avi Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel: A New Approach to an Old Problem* [CahRB 20; Paris: J. Gabalda, 1982], 9). Unfortunately, arguments based solely on lexical data can be highly problematic, as Blen-

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