

Gard Granerød
Abraham and Melchizedek

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Gard Granerød

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in Genesis 14 and Psalm 110

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Preface

This work was submitted to MF Norwegian School of Theology (henceforth MF) in June 2008 as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree *Philosophiae doctor* (Ph.D.) and was defended in a public disputation on December 11, 2008. In connection with the publication it has been revised at selected points. In addition, indices on sources and names have been included.

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To a large extent, this work has been a family enterprise. During the process of writing my wife, Antone, gave me much freedom and space. I dedicate this book to her and to our four children, of whom two were born when this work was in progress and of whom the youngest was born just a couple of months after the public defence of the dissertation: Berge (b. 2002), Ansgar (b. 2004), Bror (b./d. 2007), and Eira (b. 2009).

Stokke, near the town of Tønsberg
September 2009

Gard Granerød

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Part I: Introduction

1. Background, Method, Aim, and Overview

1.1 Genesis 14: A Late Work of a Scribe's Desk, Made on the Basis of Early Traditions?

Es bleibt dann nur ein methodisch sicherer Zugang [zu Genesis 14], der traditionsgeschichtliche.¹

One can answer the question of the origin and setting of Gen. 14 only by making *appropriate distinctions*. None of the constituent parts grew out of the patriarchal period itself; only personal names . . . and some individual elements (use of certain words) were taken from the patriarchal story already assembled in the Pentateuch. *The narrative 14:12–24 (without the name Abraham) originated in the period of the judges* and comes from a cycle of savior narratives. When Abraham becomes the subject of the story, he acquires the importance of a savior hero, analagous [*sic*] to the figures in Judges. *The addition (vv. 18–20) very probably arose in the time of David*; an experience of Abraham is narrated with the purpose of legitimating cultic innovations in that period. *The report of the campaign (vv. 1–11) with its many names is certainly of extra-Israelite origin*; it follows in style and structure the royal inscriptions of Assyrian-Babylonian kings. It cannot be traced back to a definite historical event in the form in which it is preserved. The manner of presentation is unhistorical despite the acknowledgment of a historical campaign in a clumsy way. *The composite text of vv. 1–11 and 12–24 is the work of a scribe's desk from the late postexilic period*, to be compared with other late Jewish writings.²

The two quotations summarize Claus Westermann's method for solving the question of the origin and setting of Genesis 14—an enigmatic text that some have argued somehow renders history or tradition from the second millennium or first part of the first millennium BCE,³ and others

1 Claus Westermann, *Genesis 12–50* (EdF 48; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1975), 41.

2 Claus Westermann, *Genesis 12–36* (trans. John J. Scullion; Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1985), 192–93 (my emphasis).

3 See, e.g., Friedrich Cornelius, 'Genesis XIV', *ZAW* 72 (1960): 1–7; J. R. Kirkland, 'The Incident at Salem: A Re-examination of Genesis 14:18–20', *Studia Biblica et Theologica* 7 (1977): 3–23; Niels-Erik Andreasen, 'Genesis 14 in Its Near Eastern Context', in *Scripture in Context: Essays on the Comparative Method* (ed. Carl D. Evans, William W. Hallo and John B. White; PTMS 34; Pittsburgh, PA: Pickwick, 1980), 59–77; Benjamin Mazar, 'The Historical Background of the Book of Genesis', in idem, *The Early*

have labelled a late midrash or given comparable designations indicating a very late date of origin,⁴ whereas still others have analyzed it from the perspective of philosophy and ethics.⁵ Moreover, Westermann's conclusion seems to be taken as state of the discipline with respect to this enigmatic text—at least in European scholarship. On the one hand Genesis 14 is seen as one of the latest additions to the compositional growth of the Abraham narratives (Genesis 12–25). On the other hand, although the composition as such is often taken to be late, the textual

Biblical Period: Historical Studies (ed. Shmuel Ahitub and Baruch A. Levine; trans. Ruth and Elisheva Rigbi; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1986), 49–62; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (WBC 1; Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 306–7 (cf. xlii–xlv), 318–320; Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation: Commentary by Nahum M. Sarna* (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 102; Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 398–401; Chaim Cohen, 'Genesis 14—An Early Israelite Chronographic Source', in *The Biblical Canon in Comparative Perspective* (ed. K. Lawson Younger, William W. Hallo, and Bernard Frank Batto; Scripture in Context 4; Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Studies 11; Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1991), 67–107; Kenneth A. Kitchen, 'Genesis 1–50 in the Near Eastern World', in *He Swore an Oath: Biblical Themes from Genesis 12–50* (ed. Richard S. Hess, Gordon J. Wenham, and Philip E. Satterthwaite; 2d ed.; Carlisle, PA: Paternoster, 1994), 67–92; Francis I. Andersen, 'Genesis 14: An Enigma', in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom* (ed. D. P. Wright et al.; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 497–508; idem, 'The Enigma of Genesis 14 Revisited', *Buried History: Quarterly Journal of the Australian Institute of Archaeology* 35, nos. 2–3 (1999): 62; Othniel Margalith, 'The Riddle of Genesis 14 and Melchizedek', *ZAW* 112 (2000): 501–8; Amos Frumkin and Yoel Elizur, 'The Rise and Fall of the Dead Sea', *BARev* (Nov./Dec., 2001): 42–50; and Dominique Charpin, "'Ein umherziehender Aramäer was mein Vater": Abraham in Lichte der Quellen aus Mari', in *"Abraham, unser Vater": Die gemeinsamen Wurzeln von Judentum, Christentum und Islam* (ed. Reinhard Gregor Kratz and Tilman Nagel; Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003), 40–52.

4 See, e.g., Abraham Kuenen, *An Historico-Critical Inquiry into the Origin and Composition of the Hexateuch (Pentateuch and Book of Joshua)* (trans. Philip A. Wicksteed; London: Macmillan, 1886), 139, 143 n. 4, 324 n. 12; Julius Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (4th unrev. ed.; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1963 [= 3d rev. ed., 1899]), 24–25, 311–13; H. Holzinger, *Genesis* (KHC 1; Freiburg i. B.: Mohr, 1898), 146–47; P. Asmussen, 'Gen 14, ein politisches Flugblatt', *ZAW* 34 (1914): 36–41; Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis* (4th ed.; HKAT, Abteilung 1: Die historischen Bücher 1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1917), 288; Roland de Vaux, 'Les Hurrites de l'Histoire et les Horites de la Bible', *RB* 74, (1967): 481–503 (503); and Reinhard Gregor Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament* (trans. John Bowden; London: T. & T. Clark, 2005), 273–74. See also Otto Eißfeldt, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament unter Einschluß der Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen sowie der apokryphen- und pseudepigraphenartigen Qumrān-Schriften* (3d rev. ed.; Neue theologische Grundrisse; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1964), 281.

5 See, e.g., Harold Brodsky, 'Did Abram wage a Just War?', *JBQ* 31.3 (2003): 167–73.

parts that one assumes Genesis 14 is composed of are thought to be traditions stemming from much earlier periods than the time a redactor combined them and added the resulting composition to the rest of the Abraham narratives.

Admittedly, Westermann was neither the first nor the last to approach Genesis 14 or parts thereof (particularly the so-called Melchizedek episode) by means of traditio-historical method.⁶ Rather, he explicitly built on previous traditio-historically oriented research, with John A. Emerton and Werner Schatz as his most recent predecessors.⁷

The stress on the traditio-historical method as the adequate approach to Genesis 14 evident in the works of Westermann and his predecessors did not emerge in a scholarly vacuum. On the contrary, it was dependent on several factors. First, the textual integrity of Genesis 14 had already been questioned. Gerhard von Rad proposed that the chapter was a composition of no less than three parts.⁸

Second, Westermann worked within a traditio-historical paradigm. Various guises of tradition history were in vogue.⁹ Form criticism had

6 See, e.g., H. S. Nyberg, 'Studien zum Religionskampf im Alten Testament', *ARW* 35 (1938): 329–87; H. Schmid, 'Jahwe und die Kultrationen von Jerusalem', *ZAW* 67 (1955): 168–97; H. W. Hertzberg, 'Die Melkisedek-Tradition', in idem, *Beiträge zur Traditionsgeschichte und Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 36–44; J. G. Gammie, 'Loci of the Melchizedek Tradition of Genesis 14:18–20', *JBL* 90 (1971): 385–96; M. Delcor, 'Melchizedek from Genesis to the Qumran Texts and the Epistle to the Hebrews', *JSJ* 2 (1971): 115–35; N. Habel, "'Yahweh, Maker of Heaven and Earth": A Study in Tradition Criticism', *JBL* 91 (1972): 321–37; K. Baltzer, 'Jerusalem in den Erzväter-Geschichten der Genesis? Traditionsgeschichtliche Erwägungen zu Gen 14 und 22', in *Die hebräische Bibel und ihrer zweifache Nachgeschichte* (ed. Erhard Blum and Rolf Rendtorff; FS R. Rendtorff; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990), 3–12; F. L. Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition: A Critical Examination of the Sources to the Fifth Century A.D. and in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (SNTSMS 30; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); and P. J. Nel, 'Psalm 110 and the Melchizedek Tradition', *JNSL* 22 (1996): 1–14.

7 See Westermann's outline of the history of exegesis and in particular, the section devoted to the 'question of the unity and composition' of Genesis 14, in idem, *Genesis 12–36*, 189–90. Moreover, see John A. Emerton, 'Some False Clues in the Study of Genesis XIV', *VT* 21 (1971): 24–47, idem, 'The Riddle of Genesis XIV', *VT* 21 (1971): 403–39; and Werner Schatz, *Genesis 14: Eine Untersuchung* (Europäische Hochschuleschriften 23/2; Bern: Herbert Lang; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1972).

8 See Gerhard von Rad, *Das erste Buch Mose: Genesis* (9th ed.; ATD 2/4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972), 137; and 2.2.2 below, Genesis 14*: A Compound Narrative?

9 Admittedly, there were different 'schools'. Westermann did strongly attempt to anchor the origin of patriarchal traditions in historical figures, even though he is unable to say *when* they lived. To him, it was impossible that all the patriarchal stories were invented. Nevertheless, he argued that the elements of oral tradition are something

already been established as a method and had reoriented Old Testament scholarship away from source criticism as the sole approach to the Pentateuch. Whereas Julius Wellhausen had focused on the sources of the Pentateuch and by doing that stressed the *literary* character of the biblical narratives,¹⁰ Hermann Gunkel was more interested in the *oral* stages of the origin and transmission of the narratives prior to the literary fixation; the opening clause in Gunkel's Genesis commentary was accordingly 'Genesis ist eine Sammlung von Sagen.'¹¹ As Westermann puts it, it had already been acknowledged that each individual narrative had its distinct tradition history *before* it was incorporated into a written document.¹² Once the textual integrity of Genesis 14 had been questioned, then it was appropriate to seek the possible preliterate background for each of the textual units of which the chapter was assumed to have been composed.

A third factor, in light of which one should understand the stress on tradition history, is the question of the possible historical authenticity of Genesis 14. As a consequence of the accelerating number of ancient Near East cuneiform inscriptions that were discovered and published in the nineteenth century and later, the question of the identity of the kings with whom Abram waged war, according to Genesis 14, was put on the agenda.¹³ The traditio-historical approach to Genesis 14 came in part as a response to the deadlock represented by philological and historical discussions. The goal of these discussions was to identify King Amraphel of Shinar, King Arioch of Ellasar, King Chedorlaomer of Elam, and King Tidal of Goiim (see Gen. 14:1) with historical figures known from cuneiform inscriptions. The ultimate goal was to give an answer to the question of *when* a four-king alliance under the leadership of Elam, similar to the alliance described in Genesis 14 (see vv. 5, 17), could have been

different from history. According to him, the question about the historicity of the patriarchal stories and figures is 'a question wrongly put'; cf. Westermann, *Genesis 12–36*, 43. However, on the other side, scholars such as Ivan Engnell, a leading figure of the so-called Uppsala school, argued that oral transmission prior to the literary fixation was a *reliable* process, also with regard to the question of the historicity of the narratives. See Engnell, 'Traditionshistorisk metod', in *SBU*, cols. 1254–64. For a brief orientation, see Klaus Koch, *Was ist Formgeschichte? Methoden der Bibelexegese* (5th and rev. ed.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1989), 67–71, 97–106; Douglas A. Knight, 'Tradition History', *ABD* 6:633–38; and Martin Rösel, 'Traditionskritik/Traditionsgeschichte: I. Altes Testament', *TRE* 33:732–43.

10 See Wellhausen, *Composition*, 1–2.

11 Gunkel, *Genesis*, vii.

12 Westermann, *Genesis 12–50*, 20.

13 For a history of research on Genesis 14, see Schatz, *Genesis 14*, 13–62; and Westermann, *Genesis 12–36*, 187–90.

a historical reality in the second millennium. One can understand that such identifications were intriguing. In case of a positive identification between one or even several of the members of the four-king alliance in Genesis 14 and one or more kings mentioned in the cuneiform texts, the consequences for biblical scholarship would be tremendous. By identifying the kings that Abram fought with in Genesis 14, it would be possible—on the basis of extrabiblical sources—to answer *when* the so-called patriarchal period actually was. However, traditio-historical oriented scholars did not find this approach to be convincing.¹⁴

1.2 Brief Outline of Westermann's Results and My Objections

However, a traditio-historical approach can be problematic in many ways. *First*, from a methodological point of view, one can raise objections against its lack of control. I by no means reject that quite a few biblical texts have an oral, preliterate origin. In other words, in many cases biblical texts probably originated and were transmitted orally before they were eventually written down. Nevertheless, as soon as we are left to ourselves with no literary sources, we can at best make conjectures that are speculative.

Second, I question an important presupposition shared by scholars who have approached Genesis 14 by way of the traditio-historical method. Their axiom that more or less every patriarchal narrative stems from an originally self-contained oral tradition is beyond control. The presupposition has had a great influence of the prevailing view about Genesis 14, in particular with respect to its assumed lack of textual integrity. Even though I will discuss this later,¹⁵ I find it necessary to anticipate the discussion already at this point: Within the paradigm of tradition history (here represented by Westermann), Genesis 14 is explained as the result of an amalgamation of three narrative parts:

- a. an annalistic-styled campaign report (roughly Gen. 14:1–11),
- b. a hero story about the patriarch (roughly vv. 12–17, 21–24), and
- c. a story about Abram's meeting with the pre-Israelite priest-king Melchizedek, which builds on pre-Israelite, Canaanite traditions (vv. 18–20).

14 See, in particular, Emerton, 'Some False Clues in the Study of Genesis XIV', 24–47.

15 See 2.2.4 below, The Textual Integrity of Genesis 14*: A Unified and Internally Consistent Narrative.

The hero story about Abram's rescue of his kin Lot (b) is taken by Westermann and others to be the earliest one, and assumed to be dated to the premonarchic period. Subsequently, in the (early) monarchic period, this hero story was augmented by the story about the patriarch's meeting with Melchizedek, the priest of El Elyon and king of Salem (c). Finally, Westermann and other traditio-historically oriented scholars assume that the campaign report (a) was put at the beginning of the entire chapter, either shortly before or even during the Babylonian exile.

As for me, I am sceptical about the possibilities of doing research on the preliterate stages of biblical texts in general. Such research is done with few or meagre sources. In addition, I am not convinced that Genesis 14 lacks textual integrity. On the contrary, Genesis 14 is, according to my reading, an internally consistent narrative—however, with one important exception: I find that there are strong literary-critical arguments for the proposal that the so-called Melchizedek episode (vv. 18–20) is a secondary interpolation.¹⁶ Contrary to Westermann and others, however, I find it unlikely that the assumed hero story about Abram's rescue of Lot (Gen. 14:12–17, 21–24) originally had a life of its own, independent of and earlier than the alleged annalistic-styled campaign report (Gen. 14:1–11), which introduces chapter 14 in the received biblical text.¹⁷ Finally, I question the idea (often unarticulated) that the story about Abram's meeting with Melchizedek reflects cultic traditions in pre-Israelite Jerusalem/Jebus.¹⁸

Third, Westermann and other traditio-historically oriented scholars have not satisfactorily accounted for the immanent features in Genesis 14 that make this chapter so characteristic vis-à-vis the rest of the patriarchal narratives. Again, I find it necessary to anticipate some of my observations: The narrative framework of Genesis 14 resembles stories found in Joshua, Judges, 1–2 Samuel, and 1–2 Kings much more than any other story about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moreover, the author of Genesis 14 seems to have drawn much of his geographical information from the Table of Nations (Genesis 10). In addition, there are several similarities

16 See 2.2.3 below, Critical Examination of the Theory of a Tripartite Division; and 2.2.4, The Textual Integrity of Genesis 14*: A Unified and Internally Consistent Narrative.

17 See 2.2.1 below, The Melchizedek Episode (= ME) in Genesis 14:18–20: A Secondary Interpolation; and 8.6, Preliminary Conclusion and Point of Departure: The ME—A Doubly Late Interpolation.

18 See 8.4 below, The Terms and Concepts in the ME: Inconclusive with Respect to the Date of the Episode.

between Genesis 14 and the wilderness wandering narratives (Numbers 10–21; Deuteronomy 1–3) that need an explanation.¹⁹

1.3 Why a Study on Genesis 14? A Brief Epistemological Consideration

Why is there a need for a new study of Genesis 14 or, for that matter, any other part of the Bible? Have they not been subject to research before? In the following I will briefly discuss this fundamental epistemological question.

In general, there are several things that can cause scholars to question earlier research and formulate new hypotheses. The easiest explanation is that (1) scholars are able to disprove the argumentation and/or results of previous research and point to a lack of logical reasoning and lack of coherence.

Moreover, (2) scholars' perceptions of the sources that were used in previous research may lead them to formulate new hypotheses. In the eyes of 'younger' scholars, previous research has left out sources/material that they consider relevant for the particular issue in question. Consequently, although previous works, strictly speaking, are coherent and reached legitimate results when evaluated solely on the background of the premises and sources that they explicitly build upon, 'younger' researchers nevertheless consider these works to be insufficient because sources that, to their estimation, are relevant, have been left out. The weaknesses in the premises (e.g., the sources used) continue in the results.

Further, (3) the publication of new sources that somehow are relevant to the problem may open up possibilities for formulating new hypotheses. For instance, research on biblical hermeneutics in late Second Temple period Israel that was published *before* the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls must necessarily be considered unsatisfactory today. The obvious reason is that the early research was ignorant of these important sources.

Eventually, (4) younger generations of scholars may prefer other methods, ask other questions, have other focuses, or work within paradigms that are different from those of earlier generations.²⁰

19 See chapter 6, The Literary Building Blocks of the Author of Genesis 14*; and chapter 19, The Addition of Genesis 14 to the Torah in the Light of Second Temple Period Book Production.

20 Throughout the history of research, there are dozens of examples. The post-Enlightenment questioning of the received Judeo-Christian concept of a Mosaic authorship for

In the case of the enigmatic Genesis 14, I am not able to prove that previous tradition-historically oriented research on Genesis 14 suffers from lack of internal coherence or has other shortages in terms of reasoning (see 1 above). Neither can I point to new relevant primary sources that have been published after the emergence of Westermann's Genesis commentary or any other traditio-historically oriented contribution to Genesis 14 (see 3).

However, the reason why I intend to approach Genesis 14 with a new hypothesis is

- in part related to how I evaluate earlier research, in particular my scepticism to the methodological underpinnings of the traditio-historical method,²¹
- in part because I believe that previous traditio-historically oriented approaches have left out biblical texts that I believe are relevant for explaining the origin of Genesis 14,²² and
- in part a result of my own affinity with the model for the growth of many biblical texts that underlies concepts such as 'inner-biblical interpretation', 'inner-biblical intertextuality', and *Fortschreibung*.²³

From an argumentative viewpoint I can summarize the results of previous research under the lemma *X*. Although it no doubt is an over-simplification to subsume the results of previous research, I nevertheless do it for the sake of clarity in order to put on display how I justify the present study. Correspondingly, the conclusions I will draw in the discussions in subsequent chapters can to a large extent be called *non-X*.²⁴

However, proving the weaknesses of earlier theses does not prove my own hypothesis. If I summarize my own hypothesis under the

the Pentateuch is but one example. In the seventeenth century Baruch (later: Benedictus) Spinoza abandoned the Mosaic authorship all together, and a century later Jean Astruc attempted to identify the sources that he thought Moses used when composing the Pentateuch. Despite the lack of consensus concerning the questions of the origin, textual integrity, possible sources, etc. of the received Pentateuch, no one today seriously any longer argues that Moses composed it. See Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (AB Reference Library; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 2–4.

21 See iv above and 2.2.4 below, *The Textual Integrity of Genesis 14**: A Unified and Internally Consistent Narrative; and my reference to John Van Seters' critique there.

22 See ii above and chapter 6 below, *The Literary 'Building Blocks' of the Author of Genesis 14**.

23 See 1.4, *The Emergence of the Paradigm of Diachronic, Inner-Biblical Intertextuality*.

24 See 2.2 below, *The Textual Integrity of Genesis 14*; chapter 4, *Genesis 14** and the Composition History of the Abraham Narratives; and chapter 5, *Why Was Genesis 14* Composed and Inserted into the Abraham Narrative? An Attempt at a Literary Answer*.

lemma Y , I can not infer that Y is correct on the basis of the conclusion that X is *not* correct (*non-X*). Y and (*non-X*) are *incommensurable entities*.

Nevertheless, pointing out the weaknesses of earlier theses is a sufficient reason for testing out a new hypothesis. My hypothesis—to which I shall return below—will be formulated partly on the basis of observations I and others have made about Genesis 14 and partly on the basis of my affinity with scholarly works in general done within a distinct paradigm I find promising.²⁵

As is evident so far, there is a circular movement between my a priori presuppositions and the results of my investigations. This epistemological reality is, as I see it, representative of how knowledge is acquired within most, if not every, study within the field of humanities. Because it is unavoidable, the best thing that I can do is try to make the nature and grounds of the results of the present study as transparent as possible. In that way I hope to make as clear as possible the limits of the results.²⁶ In the end, it is my hope that the validity of the study will benefit from such transparency.

1.4 The Emergence of the Paradigm of Diachronic, Inner-Biblical Intertextuality in Recent Research

In the last few decades there seems to have been a trend in Hebrew Bible/Old Testament scholarship to focus on *inner-biblical interpretation*—in a broad sense.²⁷ Although there have been voices calling for a methodological and terminological refinement,²⁸ various contributions share the

25 See 1.4 below, The Emergence of the Paradigm of Diachronic, Inner-Biblical Intertextuality in Recent Research; and 1.5, The Paradigm of Diachronic, Inner-Biblical Intertextuality: A Promising Paradigm for Exploring the Background, Origin and Purpose of Genesis 14.

26 See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke. II Hermeneutik II: Wahrheit und Methode* (UTB 2115; J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck]: Tübingen, 1986/1993), 57–65.

27 Konrad Schmid opens his outline of the history of research on this issue by stating ‘Das Thema innerbiblischer Schriftauslegung hat gegenwärtig Konjunktur in der alttestamentliche Wissenschaft’; cf. idem, ‘Innerbiblische Schriftauslegung: Aspekte der Forschungsgeschichte’, in *Schriftauslegung in der Schrift: Festschrift für Odil Hannes Steck zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Reinhard Gregor Kratz, Thomas Krüger, and Konrad Schmid; BZAW 300; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2000), 1–22 (1).

28 See, e.g., Benjamin D. Sommer, ‘Exegesis, Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible: A Response to Lyle Eslinger’, *VT* 46 (1996): 479–89; and Karl-William Weyde, ‘Inner-Biblical Interpretation: Methodological Reflections on the Relationship between Texts in the Hebrew Bible’, *SEÁ* 70 (2005): 287–300.

position that the origin and purpose of relatively late biblical passages or even entire books can be explained as either a *literary response to*, a *comment on*, or even a *continuation of* relatively earlier biblical texts.

1.4.1 In the Field of Prophetic Literature

In recent German-speaking biblical scholarship, one often finds the term *Fortschreibung* used, particularly in connection with the growth of the prophetic literature.²⁹ For instance, with respect to the history of the composition of the prophetic books, one can—at least in principle—distinguish between two types of redactional phenomena, the *Erstverschriftung* (‘original codification, initial literary fixation’, however not to be confused with the *ipsissima verba* of the prophet!) and the chronologically later *Fortschreibung* (‘continual writing’). This distinction is not only useful in distinguishing between material of different ages. On the contrary, it says something about the value attributed to the earlier composition that someone found it worthy of commenting on. The *Fortschreibung* of a book and its redaction history is at the same time part of the history of interpretation. Whereas one can understand the *Erstverschriftung* as a written interpretation of the prophet’s *oral* preaching, the *Fortschreibung* for its part continues or interprets the already-written text.

1.4.2 In the Field of Pentateuchal Studies

Moreover, recent study on the Pentateuch has been enriched by different types of *supplemental models*, all somehow challenging the now classic Documentary Hypothesis and its idea that the Pentateuch is a composition of four individual sources.³⁰ The growth of the Pentateuch

29 See, e.g., Reinhard Gregor Kratz, ‘Die Redaktion der Prophetenbücher’, in *Rezeption und Auslegung im Alten Testament und in seinem Umfeld: ein Symposium aus Anlass des 60. Geburtstags von Odil Hannes Steck* (ed. Reinhard Gregor Kratz and Thomas Krüger, and Odil Hannes Steck; OBO 153; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1997), 9–28. For a large-scale application of such a model, see Burkard M. Zapff, *Redaktionsgeschichtliche Studien zum Michabuch im Kontext des Dodekapropheten* (BZAW 256; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1997).

30 The classic scholarly model attempting to account for the disunity in the Pentateuch has been the so-called Documentary Hypothesis, a term coined by Julius Wellhausen in *Composition*. According to this model, the Pentateuch represents a composition (or perhaps better *collocation*) of four sources: in chronological order, the Yahwist, the Elohist, Deuteronomy, and the Priestly Writer (Wellhausen: ‘Q’, from ‘quatuor’ = ‘book of four covenants’). However, this model has been under critique from many sides,

is explained in a way comparable to the *Fortschreibung* model for the growth of the prophetic literature: The assumed late layers in the Pentateuch are explained as supplements to earlier texts in the Pentateuch.³¹

1.4.3 . . . and in General

Finally, besides the obvious term ‘inner-biblical interpretation’, other terms such as ‘allusion’, ‘echo’, ‘relecture’, and ‘(biblical) intertextuality’³² are often found in recent scholarship, as is also reflected in the titles of several books and articles.³³ This supports the assumption expressed above—that is, at least when they are used in a diachronic sense, meaning

above all for its lack of clarity about the literary role and function of the ‘redactor’ who—somehow—must have combined/collocated the sources. See John Van Seters, *The Pentateuch: A Social-Science Commentary* (Trajectories 1; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 41.

- 31 Different kinds of *supplemental models* have been proposed by Rolf Rendtorff, *Das überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch* (BZAW 147; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1976); Erhard Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984); idem, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW 189; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1990); and Kratz, *Composition*.
- 32 For a brief discussion of how I use the term ‘intertextuality’, which was first introduced by Julia Kristeva, see also 13.1 below, The ‘Abrahamic’ Interpretation of Psalm 110 and Other Cases of Early Intertextual Readings of Genesis 14 and Psalm 110.
- 33 Perhaps serving as a door opener for a wider academic audience was Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985). See also idem, ‘Inner-Biblical Exegesis’, in *HBOT 1:33–48*; and idem, ‘Types of Biblical Intertextuality’, in *Congress Volume Oslo 1998* (ed. André Lemaire and Magne Sæbø; VTSup 80; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000), 39–44. Moreover, see John Barton, ‘Intertextuality and the “Final Form”’, in *Congress Volume Oslo 1998*, 33–37; David Carr, ‘Intratextuality and Intertextuality—Joining Transmission History and Interpretation History in the Study of Genesis’, in *Bibel und Midrasch: zur Bedeutung der rabbinischen Exegese für die Bibelwissenschaft* (ed. Gerhard Bodendorfer and Matthias Millard; FAT 22; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 97–112; Reinhard Gregor Kratz, ‘Innerbiblische Exegese und Redaktionsgeschichte im Lichte empirischer Evidenz’, in *Das Judentum im Zeitalter des Zweiten Tempels* (ed. Reinhard Gregor Kratz; FAT 42; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 126–56; Esther Menn, ‘Inner-Biblical Exegesis in the Tanak’, in *A History of Biblical Interpretation* (ed. Alan J. Hauser and Duane F. Watson; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003–), 55–79; Kirsten Nielsen, ‘Intertextuality and Hebrew Bible’, in *Congress Volume Oslo 1998*, 17–31; Paul R. Noble, ‘Esau, Tamar, and Joseph: Criteria for Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions’, *VT* 52 (2002): 219–252; Sommer, ‘Exegesis, Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible’, 479–89; Jeffrey H. Tigay, ‘An Early Technique of Aggadic Exegesis’, in *History, Historiography and Interpretation: Studies in Biblical and Cuneiform Literatures* (ed. H. Tadmor and M. Weinfeld; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1984), 169–89; Raymond Jacques Tournay, ‘Les relectures du Psaume 110 (109) et l’allusion à Gédéon’, *RB* 105 (1998): 321–31; and Weyde, ‘Inner-Biblical Interpretation’, 287–300.

that a late text somehow relates to a chronologically earlier one. It is my impression that the terms in biblical scholarship are used within a framework where the chronological order of the biblical texts is important—irrespective of the fact that the chronological order between the texts is questioned from time to time.

1.4.4 Common Denominators: Diachrony and Inner-Biblical Intertextuality

It is my assertion that all the approaches outlined above work within a common theoretical framework. I tentatively propose to subsume these approaches under the following name: *the paradigm of diachronic, inner-biblical intertextuality*.

Characteristic of this trend is that the Bible is addressed as a *written text* and the compositional history of passages and even books in the Bible is accordingly modelled as a *literary process*. This process took place in a community that already used and cherished earlier versions of the same biblical books. In some cases, the later passages or books can be interpretations of earlier texts. In other cases, the earlier texts may in various ways have provided templates for those who composed the later texts.³⁴

The paradigm of diachronic, inner-biblical intertextuality represents another paradigm that differs from the traditio-historical one represented by Westermann, among others, which focuses more on the pre-literal oral origin and transmission of the biblical texts.

By 'intertextuality' I mean that texts belonging to different chronological stages in the growth of the biblical textual corpus are in dialogue with one another, or to be more precise, that later texts are in different ways in dialogue with earlier ones.³⁵ Moreover, a salient feature for all the approaches outlined above is that they have a diachronic component.

Finally, in all these approaches, the authors of the later texts seem to have intentionally related to earlier works. In some cases the purpose may have been to interpret the earlier text, that is, intending to impose a certain meaning on it. In other cases, the intention may not have been to interpret but rather to compose an entirely new and meaningful text

34 See also 19.4 below, Echoes of Earlier Texts in Genesis 14 and the Role of Literary Templates for the Production of New Texts.

35 For instance, late portions of the *Dodekapropheton* may have been conceived as *literary continuations* [German: *Fortschreibungen*] of chronologically earlier portions.

for its own sake, while using the literary building blocks/templates provided by earlier texts.

1.5 The Paradigm of Diachronic, Inner-Biblical Intertextuality: A Promising Paradigm for Exploring the Background, Origin, and Purpose of Genesis 14

I have attempted to show that objections can be raised against both the traditio-historical method in general and the traditio-historical approach to Genesis 14. Moreover, I have argued that such a critique opens up the opportunity for testing out a new hypothesis.

Further, I have attempted to show that one perhaps can argue that a paradigm shift has taken place during the last few decades. If the term 'paradigm shift' is too strong, then at least one can definitely observe that issues pertaining to 'inner-biblical interpretation' (in a broad sense) have been emphasized much more in recent research than in earlier contributions to Old Testament scholarship.

Therefore, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the background, origin, and purpose of the enigmatic and troublesome text Genesis 14 can be investigated within the paradigm of diachronic, inner-biblical intertextuality.

1.6 Aim, Scope, and Fundamental Hypothesis

This investigation focuses on the enigmatic text Genesis 14 in particular and seeks to discuss

- *when* the text was composed,
- *how* and *why* it was done,
- *who* did it, and
- *what* meaning the author may have intended.

In light of the discussion above I will seek to fulfil the task within the paradigm of diachronic, inner-biblical intertextuality. The fundamental hypothesis is that the author (or authors) of Genesis 14 composed the text somehow in relation to an already-existing text, either as a commentary or as a literary continuation.

1.7 Overview of Part II, Part III, and Part IV

For the sake of clarity, I will outline the body of the present study (part II to IV). By doing so, I hope to clarify to the reader the progress of the argument from one chapter to the next.

1.7.1 Ad Part II: Genesis 14*

In chapter 2 I will

- discuss the characteristics of Genesis 14* vis-à-vis the other patriarchal narratives and other texts (see 2.1),
- discuss the textual integrity of Genesis 14 (see 2.2),
- account for some text-critical issues related to the narrative (see 2.3), and
- formulate a more concrete hypothesis to be tested out in the rest of part II (see 2.4).

An important point is that Genesis 14, on the one hand, contains features that are not typical of the rest of the patriarchal narratives but, on the other hand, are typical of other types of biblical literature. This observation gives an important impetus for formulating a general hypothesis about the origin of Genesis 14* (for the meaning of the asterisk, see the following paragraph): The easiest explanation for what seems to be an accumulation of literary borrowings in the text is that Genesis 14 is the work of a scribe's desk (German: *Schreibttischarbeit*), composed by someone who is versed in the Scriptures—and not merely an editor who puts together assumed ancient traditions.

The conclusion drawn from the discussion about the textual integrity of Genesis 14 will be important for the outline of the entire present investigation, namely, that the so-called Melchizedek episode (Gen. 14:18–20) is a secondary interpolation. Unlike Westermann and others, however, I conclude that the rest of Genesis 14 is a unified and internally consistent narrative. Henceforth, I will refer to this text as 'Genesis 14*' (i.e., the narrative with the exception of the Melchizedek episode). Correspondingly, most of part II will be devoted to Genesis 14*, whereas part III will be devoted to the secondary interpolation in vv. 18–20 (the Melchizedek episode).

In chapter 3 I will briefly touch on the discussion concerning the age and growth of the Abraham tradition. It will be argued that the Abraham tradition probably represents a relatively late development. The relevance for this study is that a late origin for the Abraham tradition as such weakens the probability of earlier proposals, namely, that Genesis 14 somehow renders a very old tradition.

In chapter 4 I will discuss the compositional growth of the Abraham narratives. The focus will, in particular, be on the block Genesis 14–17 that appears as a wedge between an assumedly more original and immediate connection between Genesis 13 and 18. Moreover, an important conclusion will be that Genesis 14* appears to have been part of the composition of the Abraham narratives in one of its latest stages. There are at least two reasons for this. First, Genesis 14* is part of the interrupting block Genesis 14–17 that in itself is late (although not the work of a single hand). Second, the narrative is neither referred to nor presupposed later on in the Abraham composition.

In chapter 5 I will attempt to explain *why* Genesis 14* was composed. Among other things, I will point to the fact that the author of the Aramaic *Genesis Apocryphon* from Qumran (1Q20) already recognized a *Leerstelle* after Gen. 13:17–18 in his *Vorlage*. I propose that Genesis 14* is composed for its present position in the Abraham narratives in response to that which its author considered to be a *Leerstelle* after Genesis 13. Following immediately after Gen. 13:14–18, Genesis 14* plays on Abram's failure to comply with Yahweh's command to walk through the length and breadth of the land by making the invading kings the first ones to actually fulfil the act of taking possession of it. However, Abram eventually defeats the invaders and completes the walk through the land.

In chapter 6 I will attempt to argue for the thesis that Genesis 14* is a product of literary activity. I argue that it, among other things, appears to contain several literary borrowings from other biblical texts (in particular from 1 Samuel 30, the Table of Nations [Genesis 10], and the wilderness wandering narratives [Deuteronomy 1–3; Numbers 10–21]). However, I will also argue that the author got some of the names occurring only in Genesis 14* (some of the names of the members of the four-king alliance and some of their kingdoms) from another, nonbiblical, source. This latter source may not necessarily have been a written document. On the contrary, the source may have been oral communications from the Elamite and other diaspora communities living in Second Temple period Samaria (see Ezra 4) and stems from their (quasi-) historical and (quasi-) geographical knowledge. In sum, I will discuss *how* Genesis 14* was composed.

In chapter 7, which completes part II, I will discuss the historical meaning of Genesis 14* and the ideology of its author. A prerequisite for this is to determine a date of composition for Genesis 14*. Therefore, I first synthesize the data from the various approaches to Genesis 14* that are relevant for establishing a *terminus a quo* and a *terminus ante quem*. I argue that it cannot have been composed much before the fifth century and not later than the first half of the second century BCE. On the basis of the time frame thus established and certain trends and conceptions that

one can infer, based on other sources, to have been current among Jews in the Persian and early Hellenistic periods, I conclude part II with a historically qualified conjecture about the historical meaning of Genesis 14*. My proposal is that the author wanted to plea for the restoration of the land under the control of Abraham's children.

1.7.2 Ad Part III: The Melchizedek Episode (= ME) in Genesis 14:18–20

In part III I will address the questions of the origin and purpose of the Melchizedek episode (= 'ME', Gen. 14:18–20).

In chapter 8 I will offer a brief orientation on previous research on the ME and Psalm 110. As briefly touched upon above, I hold the ME to be late in a double sense (both in terms of date of interpolation into Genesis 14* and date of composition; see 8.6, Preliminary Conclusion and Point of Departure: The ME—A Doubly Late Interpolation; see also 2.2.1, The Melchizedek Episode (= ME) in Genesis 14:18–20: A Secondary Interpolation). Because the ME is dependent upon the narrative in Genesis 14*, it has probably never had a 'life of its own' independent of Genesis 14*. Therefore, contrary to what is often implied—in particular in works on the history of Israelite religion—the ME has a limited value (if any at all) for the early history of the religion of Israel and/or pre-Israelite Jerusalem.

In chapter 9 I formulate a hypothesis for the origin of the Melchizedek episode on the basis of the paradigm of diachronic, inner-biblical intertextuality, which is, as mentioned, fundamental for the present study. According to the model I propose for *why* the ME was composed and interpolated into the narrative, the episode is the result of an assimilation between two texts: Genesis 14* on the one hand and Psalm 110 on the other (see chapters 11, 13, and 14).

The first hypothesis I will formulate in chapter 9 is that at some point in the Second Temple period, Psalm 110 was read historiographically, that is, it was connected to an assumed historical event. Consequently, the psalm was read as a poetic version of the narrative found in Genesis 14* about Abram's war with the four kings. Moreover, in chapter 13 I attempt to substantiate this hypothesis. On the basis of cases from the early rabbinic literature and the early Jewish hermeneutics of intertextuality, I will argue that the intertextual connection between Psalm 110 and Genesis 14 started before the Melchizedek episode was composed and interpolated into the latter narrative.

The second hypothesis I formulate in chapter 9 is that the assumed similarities between Genesis 14* and Psalm 110—which assumedly were identified by the Second Temple period readers who interpreted Psalm 110 as a historiographic psalm spoken to Abraham—functioned as a catalyst for an additional assimilation. In chapter 11 I attempt to substantiate this hypothesis by showing that there are analogies in the Bible to the phenomenon of assimilation. Moreover, in chapter 14 I propose that the concrete result of the additional assimilation was the Melchizedek episode itself.

At first glance, chapter 10 and chapter 12 seem to fall outside the sequence of thought in part III. However, I consider both discussions to be necessary in order to substantiate the assimilation model I propose for the origin of the ME. In chapter 10 I focus on Psalm 110, attempting in particular to discuss and identify the characters speaking and being spoken to, attempting to account for certain issues in the history of research of this particular psalm that are relevant in this context, and, finally, arguing that one probably should date its composition to the monarchic period. Moreover, in chapter 12, I will discuss the troublesome and enigmatic half verse Ps. 110:4b *עַל־דְּבַרְתִּי מִלְכִּי־צֶדֶק*. I argue that Psalm 110 was interpreted in a different way in the Second Temple period (and when the ME, I argue, was composed and interpolated into Genesis 14*) compared to how it appears to have been read around the time of its composition in the monarchic period. In short, in chapter 12 I argue that the Hebrew *hapax legomenon* *עַל־דְּבַרְתִּי* (Ps. 110:4b) probably originally (i.e., in monarchic period) had a causal sense and that *מִלְכִּי־צֶדֶק* (Ps. 110:4b) probably originally was a nominal clause. Consequently, the English translation ‘after the order of Melchizedek’ that is traditionally found (so the NRSV etc.) renders more closely the late LXX translation *κατὰ τῆν τάξιν Μελχισεδεκ* (LXX Ps. 109:4b) than it renders the Hebrew *עַל־דְּבַרְתִּי מִלְכִּי־צֶדֶק*. The LXX version evident in LXX Ps 109:4b probably presupposes knowledge of the ME and the biographical data about the priest-king Melchizedek offered there.

In chapter 15 I build on the conclusions of the previous chapters and address the question of the origin of the figure Melchizedek whom we meet in the ME. I argue that the priest-king Melchizedek who appears in the ME probably is the result of a personification of the words *מִלְכִּי־צֶדֶק* in Ps. 110:4. In other words, the Melchizedek figure appearing in the ME is probably an invented literary character (see also 12.6, The Two Words *מִלְכִּי־צֶדֶק* in Psalm 110:4b). However, because I cannot entirely exclude the possibility that *מִלְכִּי־צֶדֶק* was a personal name in the monarchic Psalm 110 from the outset, I consider another possibility as well. According to this alternative explanation, in the ME we have a situation in which an

originally marginal biblical figure (the Melchizedek of Psalm 110, otherwise not mentioned in the biblical literature) has been given a secondary legendary biography. According to the alternative model on the origin of the Melchizedek figure, the Melchizedek episode deals with the originally marginal Melchizedek figure in a way comparable to how the late Enoch literature dealt with the originally marginal Enoch figure (see 15.2, Alternative Explanation: Creation of Legendary Biographies and New Narrative Roles). Finally, discussing genre, I tentatively propose that the ME represents an early example of an aggadah that has been incorporated into the biblical text itself (see 15.4, Assimilation—In Form of an Aggadah?).

In chapter 16 I will synthesize the information from previous chapters that are relevant for proposing the date of composition and date of interpolation of the ME. I will argue that several texts from the last centuries BCE seem to betray knowledge of the ME. Therefore, given that they indirectly attest to the existence of the ME, these texts also provide valuable clues for the *terminus ante quem*. Yet, because the episode probably is dependent on Genesis 14*, the date of composition of Genesis 14* serves as *terminus a quo*. So, I will argue that it is possible to establish a relative chronology. Although I lack absolute dates, I will nonetheless argue for a qualified guess: We should probably seek the date of composition of the ME around the middle of the Second Temple period or perhaps earlier.

In chapter 17 I will finish part III with a critical assessment of the assimilation model I have developed for explaining the origin of the ME.

1.7.3 Ad Part IV: The Addition of Genesis 14* and the Melchizedek Episode in Perspective

In the final, and relatively brief, part IV I will seek to put in perspective the conclusions drawn in part II and part III concerning Genesis 14* and the addition of the Melchizedek episode respectively.

First, in 19.2, The Technical Aspect, I will discuss how Genesis 14* and, subsequently, the Melchizedek episode may have become part of the biblical text from a technical viewpoint. Therefore, I will seek to relate the assumption that Genesis 14* and the ME are late additions to the book of Genesis to the available knowledge about how books were produced in the Second Temple period (writing material, book format, the division into textual units, etc.). I will conclude that the likeliest explanation is that Genesis 14* was added in connection with the production of a new copy.