

OTTO EISSFELDT

THE OLD TESTAMENT

An Introduction

*including the Apocrypha and
Pseudepigrapha, and also the
works of similar type from
Qumran*

THE HISTORY OF THE FORMATION
OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

CRITICAL 2

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tion, which for a long time was determinative in more modern scholarship and still is so in some circles even today (cf. for example, Theis and Amon), contradicts this view. For this tradition, as the position of Joel between the eighth-century prophets Hosea and Amos shows, regards the book as a product of the earlier period, though we cannot yet discover with certainty on what grounds this dating was determined.

§ 51. AMOS

Literature: Andrews, 'Hesiod and Amos' JR 23 (1943), pp. 194-205; Bach, 'Gottesrecht und weltliches Recht in der Verkündigung des Propheten Amos' *Dehn-Festschr.* (1957), pp. 23-34; Balla, *Die Droh- und Scheltworte des Amos* (1926); Baumann, *Der Aufbau der Amosreden* (1903); Baumgartner (§ 49); Botterweck, 'Zur Authentizität des Buches Amos' BZ 2 (1958), pp. 161-76; Brilllet (§ 49); Budde, 'Zur Geschichte des Buches Amos' BZAW 27 (1914), pp. 63-77; 'Zu Text und Auslegung des Buches Amos' JBL 43 (1924), pp. 46-131; 44 (1925), pp. 63-122; Copass, *Amos* (1939); Cramer, *Amos. Versuch einer theologischen Interpretation* (BWANT 51, 1930); Cripps, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos* (21955); Dumeste, 'Le message du prophète Amos' Vie Spirit. 74 (1945), pp. 834-52; 75 (1946), pp. 424-37; Gordis, 'The Composition and Structure of Amos' HThR 33 (1940), pp. 239-51; Hammershaimb, *Amos* (21958); Irwin, 'The Thinking of Amos' AJSL 49 (1933), pp. 102-14; Junker, 'Amos, der Mann, den Gott mit unwiderstehlicher Gewalt zum Propheten macht' Trierer ThZ 65 (1956), pp. 321-8; Kapelrud, 'God as Destroyer in the Preaching of Amos and in the Ancient Near East' JBL 71 (1952), pp. 33-8; *Central Ideas in Amos* (SNVAO 1956, 4, 1956 (1961)); 'Profeten Amos og hans yrke' NTT 59 (1958), pp. 76-9; L. Koehler, *Amos* (1917); 'Amos-Forschungen von 1917-1932' ThR 4 (1932), pp. 195-213; Lehming, 'Erwägungen zu Amos' ZThK 55 (1958), pp. 145-69; Loehr, *Untersuchungen zum Buche Amos* (BZAW 4, 1901); Maag, *Text, Wortschatz und Begriffswelt des Buches Amos* (1951); Mays, 'Words about the Words of Amos. Recent Study of the Book of Amos' Interpret. 13 (1959), pp. 259-72; McCullough, 'Some Suggestions about Amos' JBL 72 (1953), pp. 247-54; Morgenstern, 'Amos Studies' HUCA 11 (1936), pp. 19-140; 12/13 (1937/8), pp. 1-53; 15 (1940), pp. 59-305 (these studies published 1941 as a book); 32 (1961), pp. 295-350; 'The Universalism of Amos' *Tribute to Leo Baeck* (1954), pp. 106-26; Neher, *Amos, Contribution à l'étude du prophétisme* (1950); Eva Osswald, *Urform und Auslegung im masoretischen Amostext. Ein Beitrag zur Kritik an der neuen traditionsgeschichtlichen Methode* (Diss. theol. Jena, 1951) (typescript, cf. ThLZ 80 (1955), col. 179); Rieger (§ 49); Hans Schmidt, *Der Prophet Amos* (1917); Seierstad, 'Erlebnis und Gehorsam beim Propheten Amos' ZAW 52 (1934), pp. 22-41; Speier, 'Bemerkungen zu Amos' VT 3 (1953), pp. 305-10; 'Bemerkungen zu Amos II' *Homenaje à Millás-Valllicrosa* II (1956), pp. 365-72; van Steenberg, *Motivation in Relation to the Message of Amos* (Diss. theol. Univ. of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1953); Stephany, 'Charakter und zeitliche Aufeinanderfolge der Drohsprüche in der Prophetie des Amos' CuW 7 (1931), pp. 281-9; Susumu Jozaki, 'The Secondary Passages of the Book of Amos' Kwansai Gakuin University Annual Studies 4 (1956), pp. 25-100; Valetton (§ 49); Vuilleumier (§ 49); Watts, 'The Origin of the Book of Amos' ET 66 (1954/5), pp. 109-12; *Vision and Prophecy in Amos* (1958); Weiser, *Die Prophetie des Amos* (BZAW 53, 1929); Wolfe (§ 49); Würthwein, 'Amos-Studien' ZAW 62 (1950), pp. 10-52. Cf. also Literature §§ 48, 49, 126.

1. *The period, place of origin and person of the prophet.* The superscription in i, 1, indicates that Amos saw his words in the days of Uzziah king of Judah,

and in the days of Jeroboam . . . king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. Unfortunately the mention of the earthquake, referred to also in Zech. xiv, 5,¹ does not help us to arrive at a more exact dating of the activity of Amos or rather—for it is in this way that the mention of the exact year is primarily to be understood—of its beginning, since we do not know when it took place. But even without this, it can be seen that the dating given in the superscription placing Amos under Uzziah (784–746) and Jeroboam (786–746) is correct. The period of about forty years thus indicated may be somewhat further limited. vii, 9, where Amos threatens that Yahweh will arise with the sword against the house of Jeroboam, confirms the information of the superscription. This mention of the *house of Jeroboam* does not imply its last member, Zechariah, who was assassinated after a reign of only six months, as can be seen from other passages which presuppose that Israel was at the time at the height of her power, and more particularly had won significant victories over Aram (vi, 13;² cf. v, 18; vi, 1). The national pride which echoes in these passages can be most readily understood about the middle, or alternatively towards the end of the brilliant reign of Jeroboam (cf. II Kings xiv, 23–9³). We must therefore put the appearance of Amos in about 760–750. It was the time when Aram, its power broken by Adad-nirari III (810–782), could not be any danger to Israel, and when on the other hand Assyria itself was not advancing near enough to threaten her.

*The superscription names Tekoa as Amos' home town, and this presumably means the place which lies about 12½ miles south of Jerusalem, mentioned also in II Sam. xiv, 2; I Chron. ii, 24; II Chron. xi, 6; the modern *Khirbet Tekū'a*, and not, as Hans Schmidt⁴ has suggested, a place of the same name, otherwise unknown, in the northern kingdom. Amos was by profession a shepherd,⁵ which probably means that he was an independent cattle owner rather than a shepherd looking after cattle belonging to others. In addition, according to vii, 14, he also grew sycamore figs or was expert—thus the literal meaning of בִּלְלִים in vii, 14—in the tending of their fruit.⁶ Since sycamore fig trees do not flourish in Tekoa because it lies too high, we must assume that Amos may have

¹ Loewe, 'Zechariah xiv, 5' ET 52 (1940/1), pp. 277–9; *Ha'arot* II (p. 250, n. 9), pp. 24–36.

² Metzger, 'Lodebar und der *tell-el-mghannije*' ZDPV 76 (1960), pp. 97–102.

³ Gordon, JBL 70 (1951), pp. 161 f., translates xiv, 28aβ: 'restored Damascus and Hamath from Judah into Israel', identifying Judah here with Sam'al. Lit. § 126.

⁴ 'Die Herkunft des Propheten Amos' BZAW 34 (1920), pp. 158–71. Cf. Speier, VT 3 (1953), pp. 305 f.

⁵ i, 1. בִּקְרֹן *tender of small cattle*, vii, 14 בִּקְרֹן *tender of large cattle*. It is scarcely necessary to alter vii, 14; following i, 1, in spite of the mention of *small cattle* in vii, 15, since Amos may in fact have possessed or shepherded small cattle (sheep and goats) and large cattle. In the Ugaritic texts, *nqd* appears as the title of cult servants, cf. I AB VI 54–5, where *rb nqdm*, 'chief of the shepherds' stands in parallel with *rb khnm*, 'chief of the priests' (Montgomery, AThR 18 (1936), p. 254). This does not justify the suggestion made by Bič, 'Der Prophet Amos—ein Haepatoskopos' VT 1 (1951), pp. 293–6, to regard בִּקְרֹן and בִּלְלִים in Amos i, 1; vii, 14, as designations of a cultic functionary, and to see in Amos an inspector of the liver; cf. Murtonen, 'The Prophet Amos—a Hepatoscoper?' VT 2 (1952), pp. 170–1.

⁶ Keimer, 'Eine Bemerkung zu Amos vii, 14' Bibl 8 (1927), pp. 441–4; 'An Ancient Egyptian Knife in Modern Egypt' *Ancient Egypt* (1928), pp. 65 f.

