

Ex. 20:23–23:19). One example will suffice. The refusal to return a pawned cloak to a poor man by evening (Amos 2:8) violates a stipulation of law in the above-mentioned code designed to protect the disadvantaged:

If ever you take your neighbor's garment in pledge, you shall restore it to him before the sun goes down; for that is his only covering, it is his mantle for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate. (Ex. 22:26–27)

What appears to be a parallel to this situation came to light with the discovery of the Yavneh-Yam ostraccon (from Mesad Hashavyahu south of Tel Aviv), from about a century after Amos, in which a farm laborer petitions the local governor for the return of his cloak, confiscated probably for failure to repay a loan.<sup>36</sup> Neither Amos nor the anonymous petitioner refers to the stipulation of law quoted above, so it is possible that all three draw on a traditional, humanitarian community practice, one facet of a consensual ethic in danger of disappearing under pressure from the coercive power of the state.

A further and final point: By linking indictment and verdict as cause and effect, and by affirming that the verdict is to be carried out by means of natural events (locusts, drought, earthquake), but even more through political events, and specifically the Assyrian campaigns in the west,<sup>37</sup> Amos laid the basis for a certain understanding of divine action in history that would be immensely influential but also very problematic. His is only one prophetic voice, and some of the limitations of his vision were already apparent to those who preserved and transmitted his words. It is arguable, nonetheless, that his career marks a major turning point in the religious history of Israel, indeed of the ancient world in general.

## 10. HOSEA

P. R. Ackroyd, "Hosea and Jacob," *VT* 13 (1963): 245–59; F. I. Andersen and D. N. Freedman, *Hosea: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1980; E. Baumann, "Wissen um Gott" bei Hosea als Uiform von Theologie?" *EvTh* 15 (1955): 416–25; M. J. Buss, *The Prophetic Word of Hosea*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1969; J. F. Cragham, "The Book of Hosea: A Survey of Recent Literature," *BTB* 1 (1971): 81–100, 145–70; G. I. Davies, *Hosea*, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993; G. I. Emmerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judah Perspective*, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984; G. Fohrer, *Die symbolischen Handlungen der Propheten*, Zurich: Zwingli Verlag, 1968; A. Gelsion, "Kingship in the Book of Hosea," *OTS* 19 (1974): 71–85; W. R. Harper, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Amos and Hosea*, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905; E. Jacob, "L'Héritage cananéen dans le livre du prophète Osée," *RHR* 43 (1965): 250–59; A. W. Jenks,

*The Elabist and North Israelite Traditions*, Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977, especially 112–17; P. J. Kling, *Amos, Hosea, Micah—An Archaeological Commentary*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988; K. Koch, *The Prophets*, vol. 1, *The Assyrian Period*, 76–93; M. Kieckert, "Prophete und Geschichte im Hoseabuch," *ZTK* 85 (1987): 3–30; N. P. Lemche, "The God of Hosea," in E. Ulrich et al., eds., *Priests, Prophets and Scribes*, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992, 241–57; H. G. May, "The Fertility Cult in Hosea," *AJS* 48 (1932): 73–98; J. L. Mays, *Hosea: A Commentary*, Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969; H. S. Nyberg, *Studien zum Hoseabuch*, Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1935; H. H. Rowley, "The Marriage of Hosea," *BRL* 39 (1956): 200–23 (= *Men of God*, London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1963, 66–97); W. Rudolph, *Hosea*, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1966; M. Scott, *The Message of Hosea*, London: S.P.C.K., 1921; C. L. Seow, "Hosea, Book of," *ABD* 3:291–97; J. A. Soggin, "Hosea und die Aussenpolitik Israels," in J. A. Emerton, ed., *Prophets*, 131–36; J. M. Ward, *Hosea: A Theological Commentary*, New York: Harper & Row, 1966; "The Message of the Prophet Hosea," *Int* 23 (1969): 387–407; H. W. Wolff, "Wissen um Gott" bei Hosea als Uiform der Theologie," *EvTh* 12 (1952–53): 533–54; "Hoseas geistige Heimat," *TfZ* 91 (1956): 83–94; *Hosea*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974; T. Worden, "The Literary Influence of the Ugaritic Fertility Myth on the Old Testament," *VT* 3 (1953): 273–97.

The title of Hosea is similar to that of Amos, naming Jeroboam (second of that name) as ruler of Samaria but adding the three Judean kings who followed Uzziah, namely, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (Hos. 1:1). This notice, possibly of Deuteronomian origin, is not very helpful, however, since Jeroboam's reign ended in 746 and Hezekiah came to the throne in 715, therefore after the fall of Samaria in 722.<sup>38</sup> It is generally assumed, nevertheless, that the prophet's career spanned a period of more than thirty years, but it came to an end before 722. This conclusion would be consistent with the absence of allusion to the fall of Samaria in the book, though a passage toward the end implies that the monarchy has come to an end (13:9–11), presumably with reference to the fate of Hoshea last ruler of the Northern Kingdom and the prophet's namesake. We take it, then, that Hosea was a contemporary of Amos but that his prophetic activity lasted longer.

The historical allusions in the book support, or at least are not inconsistent with, a career covering the last two decades of the kingdom of Samaria. The early chapters (Hosea 1–3) presuppose a period of political stability, and the condemnation of the Jehu dynasty (the reference to Jerzeel in 1:4–5) would most naturally be understood as preceding the coup of Shallum in 745 B.C.E. The frequent denunciations of the monarchy and of those who "devour their rulers" (7:7) in the rest of the book fit the last quarter century of the Northern Kingdom during which four out of six kings were assassinated. The allusion to Ephraim's going to

Assyria (5:1-3) may refer to the submission of Menahem (2 Kings 15:19-20), or possibly that of Hoshea (2 Kings 17:3), and there is also a reference to overtures in the direction of Egypt (Hos. 7:11; cf. 9:3; 11:5; 12:1 [MT 12:2]), a standard response to danger from the opposite direction. It seems likely that the long passage 5:8-6:6 reflects the fateful events of 734-733 B.C.E., the so-called Syro-Ephraimite war, when Israel and Damascus attempted to force Judah into an anti-Assyrian coalition. The result was that Ahaz of Judah called in the Assyrians, which led to the extension of Tiglath-pileser's empire into Damascus and the northern and eastern regions of the kingdom of Samaria.<sup>39</sup> The last of such historical or history-like references is to the deposition of Hoshea and the end of the monarchy (13:9-11) two or three years before the fall of Samaria, followed by the incorporation of the entire kingdom into the Assyrian empire. What happened to Hosea thereafter we have no way of knowing.

That Hosea stands in a prophetic tradition of opposition to monarchy in the Northern Kingdom, a tradition represented by Ahijah of Shiloh, Elijah, and others mentioned earlier, will be obvious at once. His description of the prophets as the instruments by which the divine decree of judgment is carried out (Hos. 6:5) may be taken to refer to these predecessors; and since it follows a passage referring to the disastrous effects of the Syro-Ephraimite war (cf. 2 Kings 16-17; Isaiah 7) it also could include Amos whose predictions of disaster were proving only too correct.<sup>40</sup> Elsewhere Hosea quotes an opinion, no doubt widely shared, that "the *nabî* is a fool, the man of the spirit (*šîr hārîṭah*) is mad" (Hos. 9:7), and goes on to state that, nevertheless, the prophet is the watchman (*šōpēṭ*) of Ephraim (9:8).<sup>41</sup> Here too Hosea places himself within a tradition reaching back into the past:

I spoke to the prophets;  
it was I who multiplied visions,  
and through the prophets give parables.  
(Hos. 12:10 [MT 12:11])<sup>42</sup>

Recent attempts to describe that tradition more precisely have focused on the thesis of Hans Walter Wolff that Hosea was associated with Levites in the Northern Kingdom who not only formed part of Hosea's support group but took a leading role in transmitting his sayings.<sup>43</sup> Wolff claimed that this association provides the best explanation of several features of the book that have long been acknowledged: Hosea's concern for the cult and the sacred traditions of the old tribal federation, his opposition to the state priesthood (Hos. 4:4-10), his identification of Moses the Levite as prophet (12:13 [MT 12:14]) and fountainhead of "amphictyonic" prophecy, and the close linguistic and thematic links between

his reported sayings and Deuteronomy. Wolff does not say that Hosea himself was a Levite but, given his arguments, it is difficult to see how that possibility could be excluded.

While it has the advantage of highlighting several dominant themes in Hosea, the hypothesis is weakened by the obscurity shrouding the early history of the priesthood in Israel. Certain underlying assumptions about early Israel in general, and its putative amphictyonic organization in particular, also call for revision. However, Dir blames Jeroboam for appointing some priests to the state sanctuary of Bethel (and presumably also to Dan) who were not of Levitical descent (1 Kings 12:31), and it is possible that the Levitical clergy excluded from employment joined the ranks of the opposition, as Wolff suggests, or emigrated to Judah, as 2 Chron. 11:14 states. Hosea's opposition to the state cults could, therefore, give some plausibility to the hypothesis, though Levites are never mentioned in Hosea and those features of the book to which Wolff alludes do not absolutely require this explanation.<sup>44</sup>

Like Amos, Hosea contains both biographical and autobiographical passages and ends with the prospect of eventual well-being. The biographical passage with which the book opens (1:2-2:1 [MT 1:2-2:3]) has its own title, "the beginning of Yahweh's speaking with Hosea," which suggests a rather lengthy prophetic activity. The passage has been expanded by a statement exempting Judah from the same fate as Israel (1:7) and a final note promising reunification of north and south under a Davidic ruler (1:10-2:1 [MT 2:1-3]). The brief autobiographical passage dealing with the treatment of an unfaithful wife (3:1-5) has also been expanded, at least by the addition of the phrase "and David their king" (v. 5), more likely by the addition of the entire passage dealing with political reunion under a Davidic ruler (vv. 4-5). Like certain editorial expansions in Amos and Isaiah, these retouchings probably reflect the extension of Josiah's activity into the northern territories in the last decades of the Assyrian empire. Judean editing is apparent also at several points later in the book (4:15; 5:5; 6:11; 8:14).

The first three chapters comprise a distinct unit with its own logic. The problems it creates for the reader are well known: Is it a real account of Hosea's marital vicissitudes or purely fictional? In either case, were two women involved or one only? If one, was this "wife of whoredom" (NRSV; *šîṣṭ z'nānīm*) sexually promiscuous before Hosea had relations with her or did she become so afterward? If she was not a woman of easy morals whom Hosea was told to "make respectable," was she perhaps, or did she subsequently become, a cult prostitute? Or finally, since one cannot go on indefinitely, was she just one of the many Israelite women who,

following an alleged local custom, played the role of the hierodule once only before marriage to ensure fertility.<sup>245</sup>

One plausible solution to one of these issues is that the first-person narrative in chapter 3 is an alternative version of the biographical passage in chapter 1, but that it has been subsequently reinterpreted as a sequel to it by the simple expedient of adding the adverb "again": "Go again, love a woman . . ." (3:1).<sup>46</sup> The effect of this rereading of the text is to bring the prophet's marital vicissitudes, real or fictional, more in line with a historical perspective on Yahweh's dealings with Israel, which include the possibility of a reestablished relationship, a possibility that Hosea leaves open.

If this reading of the two passages is correct, the allusion to the "children of Israel" (*bnê yisrā'el*, Hos. 3:1) has probably suggested the extension of the marital metaphor in the first chapter to include the three named offspring of Hosea's union with Gomer daughter of Diblaim.<sup>47</sup> These children are given names of progressively sinister connotation. Jezreel, punningly close to Israel, refers back to the bloody coup of Jehu in the city of that name (2 Kings 9—10) and forward to the extermination of the dynasty (2 Kings 15:10). The name of the second, a daughter Lo-Ruhama (Not-Pitied), meant that the time for mercy and forgiveness, and therefore for prophetic intercession, had run out. We are reminded of the point between the second and third vision of Amos when the intercessory voice falls silent:

I will no longer pass by them.  
(Amos 7:8)

I will no longer have pity on the house of Israel.  
(Hos. 1:6)

The third child's name, Lo Ammi (Not-My-People), marks the end of the special relationship established, as the tradition tells it, long ago in the wilderness: "You are not my people, and I am not your I AM" (Hos. 1:9; cf. Ex. 3:14).<sup>48</sup> Here, too, we are reminded of the verdict pronounced by Amos after the fifth and last vision that negates the special relationship based not on the theophany of the burning thornbush, as in Hosea, but on the exodus (Amos 9:7–8).

The central panel of this triptych (2: 2–23 [MT 2:4–25]), consisting in a legal indictment of the land of Israel (*'eres*, a feminine noun) represented as an unfaithful wife, is intended as a key to decrypt the marriage symbolism. The forensic metaphor (sons bringing legal action against their mother) was suggested by the political situation of that time when, as the book attests at several points, confederate and vassal treaties were

being made and unmade and oaths sworn and foresworn (cf. 6:7; 8:1; 10:4; 12:2 [MT 12:3]). The sustained homiletic style of this and subsequent discourses, quite different from the Amos sayings, has contributed notably to the high cadence of the Deuteronomist school, which also developed Hosea's theme of the broken covenant.<sup>49</sup> At the end of this section there are two editorial expansions, both introduced by the phrase "in that day" (*be'yo'm khatit*), which promise the end of idolatry, freedom from the ravages of wild beasts, fertility, and a secure and permanent relationship between Israel and its God (Hos. 2:16–20, 21–23 [MT 2:18–22, 23–25]). The same reversal from curse to blessing has been noted in Amos and will be seen to be a regular feature of preexilic prophetic books.

From the remainder of the book (Hosea 4—14) it is clear that the process of transmission followed different lines from that of Amos, perhaps because of the much longer time span of Hosea's activity. These chapters appear to fall into two sections (Hos. 4:1–12:1 [MT 12:2]; 12:2–14:9), both presented as legal indictments of an unfaithful people. The individual units are not always easy to distinguish because there are few lead-in formulae of the kind frequently encountered in Amos. They appear to be transcriptions or reconstructions of discourses delivered on different occasions over a period of at least two decades. We have the distinct impression that the editors aimed at a rough chronological order, ending with the deposition of Hoshea and the prospect of military occupation (Hos. 13:9–16 [MT 13:9–14:1]). In addition, some of the discourses are organized around dominant metaphors such as harlotry (4:11–19) or a heated oven (7:4, 7).

The style is remarkably homogeneous with relatively few indications of editorial reworking. Apart from the passage referring to the Syro-Ephraimite war (Hos. 5:8–6:6) allusions to Judah are cautionary, if not condemnatory (4:15; 5:5; 6:11; 8:14); understandably so if Judah was to learn from the fate of its northern neighbor. These editorial adjustments may be from disciples of Hosea who went south after the fall of Samaria. It is even possible that they came to the attention of Hezekiah, who was inclined to listen to prophets (2 Kings 19:2–7, 20–34; 20:1–19) and whose reforms aimed at preventing Judah from suffering the same fate as Israel. The Judean strand in the book would, at any rate, help to explain the connections that many scholars claim to detect between Hosea and the Deuteronomist reform movement in the kingdom of Judah.<sup>50</sup>

Needless to say, there is no consensus on how the books of Amos and Hosea reached the form in which we have them, but a conservative reconstruction of the process would run somewhat as follows. The first

small collections of sayings were put together during the careers of the prophets or shortly thereafter. Oral composition and transmission played a limited role at this stage, and the sayings may have been transcribed in some cases shortly after they were delivered. The generally bad state of the text of Hosea may, in fact, be due in part to the difficulty of transcribing relatively long discourses delivered over several decades and probably not under ideal conditions. Indictments pronounced in the kingdom of Samaria would inevitably have been applied, with the necessary modifications, to Judah after the disaster of 722 B.C.E., perhaps even earlier. We assume that this process was furthered by Hezekiah who carried out extensive reforms (2 Kings 18:4, 29; 2 Chron. 29:3–31:21) and sponsored considerable literary activity (Prov. 25:1). The short-lived hope of reunification inspired by Josiah's activity, about a century later (2 Kings 23:15–20), marked a further and particularly important stage in the editorial history of eighth century prophecy. The publication of a Deuteronom(ist)ic edition during or shortly after the Babylonian exile did not prevent further expansions and glosses during the period of the Second Temple, though these are much less in evidence in Amos and Hosea than in Isaiah and other prophetic collections of originally Judean origin. We see that during this entire period there were those who felt authorized not only to reinterpret prophetic sayings in the light of new situations but to incorporate their commentary in the text itself.

The symbolic marriage narrative in the first three chapters leads into the question of Hosea's appropriation of historical traditions as they circulated at that time. As we read on in the book, it becomes apparent that for Hosea the first encounter between Yahweh and his people took place in the wilderness (Hos. 9:10a; also 2:14 [MT 2:16]; 11:3–4; 12:9 [MT 12:10]; 13:5–6) and that, after entry into the land, Israel abandoned Yahweh for another partner (Hos. 9:10b). For the symbolism to work, therefore, it would be necessary for Hosea to marry a woman who only subsequently "went wrong" rather than one who was transgressive before the marriage. The allegory of the unfaithful spouse in Ezekiel 16, certainly based on Hosea 1–3, confirms this reading, since it presents Yahweh's betrothal to a young girl who only later became a prostitute. It would also be consonant with denunciations of the Baal cult in the book to suppose that the prostitution in question was of the cultic variety (Hos. 4:12–14). Whatever the state of mind of the patrons of these "holy ones" (*ḥdšōt*, 4:14), on which it is hardly necessary to speculate, the practice was intended to reenact the marriage between the fertility deity and his consort and thus ensure the fertility of the fields, the cattle, and the wom-

enfolk.<sup>51</sup> The woman, therefore, whether she existed only as a literary figure or as the prophet's partner, corresponds to Israel in the phase of its existence that began with the settlement on the land.

Following the lead of Elijah, the ecstatic conventicles, Rechabites, and other groups that rejected any form of cultural accommodation, Hosea presented the religious situation in terms that are starkly contrasted—Baal against Yahweh—and also greatly (and perhaps inevitably) oversimplified. The depiction of pagan priests (*ḫmrīm*, Hos. 10:5) servicing the state sanctuary, worshippers kissing calves (13:2), and so on, is clearly tendentious, and must be balanced by a close reading of other biblical and nonbiblical (especially Ugaritic) texts together with the archaeological record.<sup>52</sup> These suggest a somewhat more nuanced conclusion. The dominant religion, not only in Israel but in Judah, and not only then but throughout almost all of history, was a syncretic blend of the Yahweh cult with other cults of the region, especially those directed to the Canaanite pantheon (especially El, Asherah, Baal, Anath). The basic motivation behind this option was not a characteristically Canaanite addiction to sexual excess—in keeping with a routine way of discrediting the opposition—but the desire to survive and perhaps even flourish in the kind of subsistence agrarian economy characteristic of the entire Mediterranean rim.

Having made this point, we would have to add that for Hosea false worship, "turning to other gods" (Hos. 3:1), is at the root of both moral failure and social disintegration. False worship is, however, conceivable only when a community abandons its traditions, that for Hosea happened when Israel settled in the land (9:10) and passed over to monarchy (8:4; 9:15). Hence any prospect of reformation depended on recovering and reappropriating the traditions that conferred on Israel its specific character and identity.<sup>53</sup>

In Hosea, for the first time, we find an outline of the Hexateuchal narrative, if in fragmentary and rudimentary form and with many gaps. He is familiar with one version of the fate of the twin cities by the Dead Sea (Hos. 11:8; cf. Gen. 19:24–29; Deut. 29:23) and the Jacob story (Hos. 12:3–4, 12 [MT 12:4–5, 13]), though not quite as it is presented in Genesis 25–35.<sup>54</sup> The liberation from Egypt under prophetic leadership (Hos. 2:15 [MT 2:17]; 11:1; 12:13 [MT 12:14]) is for him of unique significance because it places the God of Israel in the context of history rather than nature (cf. "Your God from the land of Egypt," 12:9 [MT 12:10]; 13:4). In spite of the "murmurings" (13:5–6), the wilderness period was the time of Israel's innocence and intimacy with its God (2:14 [MT 2:16]; 9:10; 11:3–4; 12:9 [MT 12:10]), and it was there that Yahweh revealed himself as EHYEH, the "I AM" of the burning thornbush, the one who is

with his people (1:9). Appeal to these normative events and disclosures implied for Hosea a drastic relativizing of contemporary sociopolitical and religious structures. In refusing to acquiesce in them or to take them seriously, Hosea demonstrated the revolutionary strength of the prophetic movement of the eighth century B.C.E. In his inability to propose an alternative, other than condemnation of the utopian and unrealistic option of a return to some kind of nomadic existence, he demonstrated one of the fundamental weaknesses of Israelite prophecy in general. In the Deuteronomistic school, in some but by no means all respects the heir of Hosea, we find something of the same utopianism, but blended with a more solid sense of the realities of life in society.

Hosea concentrates so much on false worship ("harlotry," "whoredom," and the like) that, unlike Amos, he has relatively little to say about social justice and the civil rights of the disadvantaged. If justice and righteousness (*mišpāt*, *s'dāqāh*) are key words for Amos (5:24), Hosea prefers to speak of fidelity (*hesed*) and the knowledge of God (*dā'at 'lohim*), the latter term implying fidelity to the traditions with all that that implied, including what we might call an emerging consensual ethic. In the indictment with which the second section of the book begins there is what appears to be an earlier form of the Decalogue—swearing, lying, murder, stealing, adultery, with the perhaps significant omission of the Sabbath precept (Hos. 4:2; cf. Jer. 7:9). This does not necessarily imply that the Decalogue was already there to be quoted, since it is equally possible, even likely, that the prophets contributed to its mature formulation in Deuteronomy (5:6–21).

The eighth century prophets are also thought to have contributed to the language of covenant-making and covenant-breaking as we find it in the Deuteronomistic corpus. Covenant language is not, however, used in connection with Hosea's marriage, the covenant with the animal world (2:18) is ecologically interesting but of a quite different kind, and the reference to breaking the covenant and transgressing the law (8:1) may be one of the few examples in the book of Deuteronomistic editing. In fact, covenant language in the eighth century prophets is more conspicuous by its absence than by its presence. In view of the frequent making and breaking of treaties at that time (cf. Hos. 10:4 and 12:1 [MT 12:2]), and the parallels with Assyrian vassal treaties noted earlier, it would nevertheless not be surprising if the language of international relations began to find its place in prophetic teaching during that crucial passage of history. And even if marriage was not yet being expressed in covenantal terms, the metaphor of sexual union in the opening chapters of the book represented a rare breakthrough in the use of language, opening up new and rich veins of meaning.

## 11. MICAH

- M. Collins, "Recherches sur l'histoire textuelle du prophète Michée," VT 21 (1971): 281–97; O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction*, 406–13; H. Gunkel, "The Close of Micah: A Prophetic Liturgy," in *What Remains of the Old Testament*, London and New York: Griffin, 1928, 115–49; D. G. Hagström, *The Coherence of the Book of Micah: A Literary Analysis*, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988; D. R. Hillers, *Micah*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984; ABD, 4:806–10; K. Jeppesen, "New Aspects of Micah Research," JSOT 8 (1978): 3–32; J. Jeremias, "Die Bedeutung der Gerichtsworte Michas in der Exilzeit," ZAW 83 (1971): 330–53; K. Koch, *The Prophets*, vol. 1, *The Assyrian Period*, 94–104; J. L. Mays, *Micah: A Commentary*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976; G. B. Pixley, "Micah—A Revolutionary," in D. Jobling et al., eds., *The Bible and the Politics of Exegesis: Essays in Honor of Norman K. Gottwald on His Sixty-fifth Birthday*, Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1991, 53–60; B. Renand, *La Formation du Livre de Michée*, Paris: J. Gabalda, 1977; W. Rudolph, *Micah-Nahum-Habakkuk-Zephaniah*, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohr, 1975; C. S. Shaw, *The Speeches of Micah: A Rhetorical-Historical Analysis*, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993; J. M. Ward, "Micah," DBS, 592–93; J. T. Willis, "The Structure of the Book of Micah," SEA 34 (1969): 5–42; H. W. Wolff, "Wie verstand Michah von Moreschet sein prophetisches Amt?" SVT 29 (1978): 403–17; *Micah: A Commentary*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1990; A. S. van der Woude, "Micah in Dispute with the Pseudo-prophets," VT 19 (1969): 244–60; "Deutero-Micah: ein Prophet aus Nord-Israel?" NTT 25 (1971): 365–78.

The book of Micah presents the reader with a degree of difficulty disproportionate to its length, beginning with a text as badly preserved as that of Hosea. Some help is at hand in the ancient versions and fragments of text and commentary from the Judean desert (1QpMi; 4QpMi; Muraba'at 88), but much remains obscure, especially the poem listing Judean towns in 1:10–16.

The Deuteronomistic title to Micah puts him within much the same time span as Isaiah, that is, the second half of the eighth century B.C.E. At the end of the following century it was known that he predicted the destruction of Jerusalem under Hezekiah (Jer. 26:18), which again makes him a contemporary of Isaiah. The book itself offers few clues to the date of his activity. The title states that he spoke against Samaria (Micah 1:1), and his prediction of the destruction of that city (1:5–7) would very likely be earlier than 722 B.C.E. The aforementioned poem listing towns in the Shephelah (1:10–16) assumes either the reality or the prospect of military conquest. It is generally taken to refer to Sennacherib's campaign in 701, during which Isaiah played a leading role in Jerusalem, but this is