

Continuity and Discontinuity

Chronological and Thematic Development
in Isaiah 40–66



Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments

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Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer and Hans M. Barstad (ed.)

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Foreword

This volume is the result of a conference, »Continuity and Discontinuity in Isaiah 40 – 66,« which was held under the auspices of the Department of Divinity and Religious Studies at King's College, the University of Aberdeen, 7 – 8 October, 2011. The conference was organized by the Edinburgh Prophecy Network, an international scholarly association with a wide range of international participants from major universities.

The focus of the meeting was the relationship between the different texts within Isaiah 40 – 66. The papers reinvestigate and challenge the traditional division between chapters 40 – 55 and 56 – 66 and explore new ways of reading the last 27 chapters of the book of Isaiah. Each contribution examines Isaiah 40 – 55 and/or Isaiah 56 – 66 and discusses continuity/discontinuity within this textual corpus.

The authors use a variety of methods. Some contributions belong to the tradition of historical-critical research. They examine existing models of textual development of Isa 40 – 66, and offer new suggestions. These contributions also explore the interplay between the historical development of the text and its thematic continuity and discontinuity. Is the consistent use of a theme a sign of single authorship? Alternatively, are changes in the way a given issue is treated a sign of multiple authorship? Other articles explore the final form of Isa 40 – 66 and suggest reading strategies that do justice to the message of the extant text. Yet other essays make case studies of specific elements of Isa 40 – 66. What is the significance of these texts for the theological development of the ancient Israelite religion? Further, how do they interact with and transform other texts in the Hebrew Bible?

The volume opens with the contribution by Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer. She offers a history of research of the relationship between the last 27 chapters of the book of Isaiah. Her article focuses on the composition history of Isa 40 – 66, where she notes the lack of consensus regarding its formation. She further surveys the interconnected issue of the development of literary themes and theological ideas

throughout these chapters, and she emphasizes both the thematic continuity and discontinuity between the various parts.

Hans Barstad discusses the pros and cons of reading the book of Isaiah according to its traditional, historical-critical divisions of First, Second, and Third Isaiah. He advocates reading the final form of Isa 56 – 66 in order to hear its own message, rather than to compare and evaluate it in the light of the preceding material in Isa 1 – 55. Through a textual study of its key lexemes and its use of intertexts, Barstad detects two key themes in Isa 56 – 66: the promotion of the Sabbath and the inclusion of eunuchs and foreigners. Notably, both themes are highlighted in the opening section in Isa 56:1 – 8.

Ulrich Berges reopens the question of where Trito-Isaiah begins. He notes the pivotal character of Isa 54:17b where, for the first time in Isa 40 – 66, the plural term עבדי ה' appears. Also, up until this verse, the male figure of YHWH's Servant and the female figure of Zion have featured in an alternating fashion. Berges further notes three devices which the scribes responsible for 1QIsa^a used in order to highlight the importance of this half-verse, probably understood as a superscription of the text to follow. This, in turn, suggests that in the final form of the book of Isaiah, Isa 55 is the starting point of its concluding part. It further has consequences for the interpretation of Isa 55 and 56:1 – 8, two passages which display thematic and lexical affinity.

Joseph Blenkinsopp evaluates old and new arguments for and against seeing Isa 40 – 55 as a text which originated in Judah. On the whole, he argues that the issue of location is unimportant for the interpretation of the text. Rather, readers should focus on the message of a new beginning inherent in the text: to return to and to reconstruct Zion. The Zion theme is prevalent not only in Isa 40 – 55 but also in Isa 60 – 62, considered by Blenkinsopp to constitute the core of Isa 56 – 66. Ultimately, Blenkinsopp offers two new arguments for a Babylonian origin of Isa 40 – 55: the fact that Zionism essentially is a diasporic phenomenon, and the significance of the Jacob narrative in Isa 40 – 55.

Elizabeth Hayes uses conceptual metaphor theory and conceptual blending theory as two ways of exploring the plant and tree metaphors extant in Isa 40:6 – 8, 23 – 24; 53:2; and 60:21. In particular, she looks at the metaphors »people are plants« and »society is a plant,« with focus on how the metaphors use various biological attributes and characteristics of plants to illustrate the behaviour of the people of Israel. She concludes that while the plant imagery in Isa 40 – 66 adds nuance to the text, it is used in different ways in different texts and, as such, does not demonstrate continuity between the pertinent texts.

Corinna Körting offers an intertextual reading of Isa 62:1 – 7 and Ps 45. The depiction of Zion as a bride in Isa 40 – 66 invites the reader to identify the bride in Ps 45 with Zion. She highlights the shared aspects between the two texts, yet also emphasizes that they envision Zion as having different pasts, and thus also

two different paths along which to become queen. The portrayal in Isa 62:1 – 7 has Zion's past suffering as its starting point, as Zion is transformed from a forsaken, suffering woman into the crown in YHWH's hand. In contrast, although the depiction of Zion in Ps 45 has many parallels to that in Isa 62:1 – 7, Körtting highlights that the psalm views Zion's past differently, as something shameful that she needs to forget.

Øystein Lund argues that the »way« motif, prevalent in Isa 40 – 66, is used consistently throughout the text. He further notes that this motif often appears in conjunction with the notion of »right« (משפט) (e. g. Isa 40:27; 58:2; 59:8 – 10; 64:8), or »law« (תורה) (e. g. Isa 42:24), or »commandments« (מצוה) (e. g. Isa 48:17 – 18). He further highlights that the »way« motif in Isa 56:11 resembles that in Isa 53:6. Likewise, the road motif in Isa 57:14 echoes both Isa 40:3 and Isa 62:10. He concludes that the themes of »way« and »right« is attested fairly consistently throughout Isa 40 – 66, and that they allude to each other in a conscious fashion. This observation needs to be taken into account when considering the issue of authorship of the last 27 chapters of Isaiah.

Joachim Schaper explores the links between monotheism, aniconism, and creation in Isa 40 – 55, with focus on the relationship between the anti-idol passages in Isa 40 – 46 and the divine statement in Gen 1:26 בנצלנו כדמוחנו. Schaper argues that the point of the polemic of »forming a deity« in Isa 43:10 (נוצר אל) and 44:10 (מי יצר אל) is that God alone has the capability and the authority to »form a deity.« Schaper further demonstrates that the anti-idol material in Isa 40 – 55 is dependent upon and alludes to the P material in Gen 1. This allusion, especially in Isa 40:18, does not serve to deny YHWH's corporeality – that is taken for granted – but to emphasize the futility of producing images of him. Only YHWH, the Creator-God, can produce an image of himself: האדם (Gen 1:26 – 27).

Blaženka Scheuer places the accusations against YHWH, expressed in Isa 63:15 – 19a, against the background of God's undisputable bond with his people: he has failed in his responsibilities towards the lamenters. These accusations echo the lament traditions in the Hebrew Bible, yet convey a new twist. Not unlike the thoughts expressed in Job 12:24 – 25, YHWH is accused of causing the people to sin. Scheuer locates the reason behind this development in the post-exilic situation. While Isa 40 – 55 saw the problem as the broken relationship between YHWH and his people, Isa 63:15 – 19a understood the relationship to be malfunctioning. She concludes that human inadequacy cannot be the deciding factor in the relationship between YHWH and his people.

Konrad Schmid explores the use of intertexts in Isa 65:17 – 25. First, Isa 65:17 – 25 extends the mythical horizon of Isa 43:16 – 21. The »old« and the »new« things in Isa 43, understood by Schmid to juxtapose the old and the new exodus, are transformed in Isa 65 into a comparison of the old and the new

creation. Schmid suggests that this transformation was triggered by the collapse of the Persian Empire in the third century BCE, which caused loss of confidence in the present order of creation. Secondly, Isa 65:17 – 25 draws on the earlier prophecy in Isa 11:6 – 9. Thirdly, Isa 65:17 – 25 alludes to and also reverses both the beginning (Gen 1:1; 3:14) and the end (Deut 28:30, 39 – 41) of the Torah, thus implying that the new creation will make the law obsolete.

Jacob Stromberg argues that the prophecies of restoration in Isa 40 – 55 were reinterpreted in Isa 56 – 66 to refer to the distant future, along the same lines as what we find in Daniel. Stromberg detects three hermeneutical reflexes in place when chs 56 – 66 allude to the earlier chs 40 – 55: (1) to reaffirm the divine restoration, (2) to regard the earlier restoration promise as having been delayed because of sin, and (3) to transform the restoration in accordance with a new theological paradigm. In particular, Isa 56 – 66 transforms the rhetoric in Isa 40 – 48 about Cyrus and the accompanying statements concerning the »former« and the »latter« things, from speaking about the transition from judgement to restoration into the transition from persecution to a new, future creation beyond the prophet's day.

Hugh Williamson offers an analysis of the occurrences of the name Jacob in Isa 40 – 66 and discusses the significance of and reasons for their uneven distribution. Why does the use of the name Jacob bridge the divide at the end of chapter 48, only to stop abruptly with three occurrences in chapter 49? Williamson suggests that the two final appearances of the name Jacob in 49:5 and 6 offer the solution as to why it does not appear again in Isa 40 – 55: Jacob-Israel, i.e. the people as a whole, has failed in their role as the Servant. As a result, God is reassigning the task to the prophet and his support group, with the hope that they will be more successful. Williamson further maintains that the use of Jacob in Isa 58 – 59 is independent of that in Isa 40 – 55.

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Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer and Hans M. Barstad,
Aberdeen and Edinburgh, November, 2013

Continuity and Discontinuity in Isaiah 40 – 66. History of Research

Introduction

Scholars have long explored the relationship between the various chapters in Isa 40 – 66. Much of this research began with Duhm's watershed theory which differentiates – in time and in space – between chs 40 – 55 and chs 56 – 66. According to Duhm, Isa 40 – 55 was written in Babylon before 539 BCE, while Isa 56 – 66 was composed in Judah after 539 BCE.¹ This historical-critical theory has had tremendous impact on Isaiah scholarship, determining the structure and delimitation of commentaries and monographs. The present article surveys two interconnected areas in Isaiah scholarship that are influenced by, yet also challenge, Duhm's theory, namely the composition history of Isa 40 – 66 and the development of literary themes and theological ideas within Isa 40 – 66.

1. The Growth of the Text of Isaiah 40 – 66

Scholars have suggested a cornucopia of theories pertaining to the composition history of Isa 40 – 66. Most of these theories fall into one of the four main categories which follow.

1.1 Isaiah 40 – 66 as One Authorial Unity

According to the first category, all of Isa 40 – 66 was written by the same person. Although this is clearly a minority view nowadays in mainstream scholarship, there are nevertheless a few critical scholars, primarily Jewish and/or Israeli ones, who hold on to this view. Recently, Paul advocates single authorship of the

1 Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja* (HKAT 3/1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1892), 390 – 91.

entire corpus of Isa 40 – 66.² The theory that Isa 40 – 66 is an authorial unity rests primarily on the perceived *stylistic* and *thematic continuity* throughout Isa 40 – 66. Among modern scholars, Sommer in particular has argued that the material in Isa 40 – 66 is defined by a *coherent literary style* and therefore likely to constitute an authorial unity:

1. Repeated imperative (e. g. “comfort, comfort my people”) or other repeated words (48:11, 15; 51:12) are found throughout the whole corpus of Isa 40 – 66 (40:1; 51:9; 52:11; 57:14; 62:10).
2. A predilection for alliterations, punning and sound play characterizes all of Isa 40 – 66. Similar sounding words are placed in proximity to each other (e. g. Isa 48:19; 61:2 – 3), certain letters are emphasized by the repetition of certain sounds in the same sentence (e. g. Isa 40:6; 57:6 – 7), and the same word is used twice in one sentence, once with one meaning and once with another meaning (Isa 42:3 – 4; 57:6 – 7).³

Several earlier scholars voiced the same kind of sentiments as Sommer. Kaufmann, Haran, as well as Gruber, challenged the reigning consensus which followed Duhm’s division and argued in favour of authorial unity of Isa 40 – 66 on the basis of thematic continuity.

Kaufmann argues for *thematic continuity*, as well as for *geographic continuity*. He detects no reason for dating Isa 56 – 66 to the post-exilic period as these chapters contain no mention of Zerubbabel and Joshua and of the building of the temple, and no reason for placing it in Judah as these chapters contain no indication of the local environment and betray no knowledge of the social conditions in Judah (such as the poverty referred to in Haggai). Kaufmann further maintains that there is a strong thematic unity throughout Isa 40 – 66. For instance, texts throughout Isa 40 – 66 speak of the ingathering of the exiles, and no text differentiates between those exiles that have already returned and those who will.⁴ Kaufmann’s position is significantly weakened, however, especially by his insistence that those texts in Isa 56 – 66 which criticize the con-

2 Shalom M. Paul, *Isaiah 40 – 48* (Hebrew; A Bible Commentary for Israel; Tel Aviv/Jerusalem: Magnes, 2008), 1:3. The same information is found in the English version of his commentary: Shalom M. Paul, *Isaiah 40 – 66: Translation and Commentary* (The Eerdmans Critical Commentary; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 2.

3 Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40 – 66* (Contraversions; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 187 – 95. See also B.D. Sommer, “Allusion and Illusions: The Unity of the Book of Isaiah in Light of Deutero-Isaiah’s Use of Prophetic Tradition,” in *New Visions of Isaiah* (ed. Roy F. Melugin and Marvin A. Sweeney; JSOTSup 214; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 156 – 86.

4 Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Babylonian Captivity and Deutero-Isaiah (History of the Religion of Israel. Vol. 4 chapters 1, 2)* (New York: Union of American Congregations, 1970), 66 – 70.

ditions in Judah speak of the situation in pre-exilic Judah rather than their author's contemporary situation.

Building on Kaufmann's claims, Haran postulates that the *thematic continuity* throughout Isa 40–66 (e. g. road imagery, servant(s), focus on Zion, see further below) suggests authorial unity. Yet, as Haran detects *geographic discontinuity* between chs 40–48 (Babylon) and chs 49–66 (Judah), he postulates one single author who composed Isa 40–48 in Babylon and then, after having moved to Judah, wrote the material in Isa 49–66.⁵ Glahn, in 1934, had already put forward a similar position. Recognizing a change at Isa 56, he suggested that the author of Isa 40–66, after composing Isa 40–55, returned from Babylon to Judah where he wrote the last 11 chapters around the year 530 BCE.⁶ Along similar lines, Gruber maintains that the *thematic continuity* throughout Isa 40–66 points towards authorial unity. Notably, the use of maternal metaphors in association with God characterizes the entirety of Isa 40–66.⁷

These theories are convincing insofar as the material in Isa 40–66 attests general similarities in terms of language and style. However, as more recent scholars have pointed out, the various parts of Isa 40–66 reveal important differences in choice of vocabulary and style.⁸ As to chronological continuity, there is little doubt that the social situation, presupposed especially in Isa 56–59 and 65–66, is markedly different from that in Isa 40–55.⁹

Another small minority of past scholars have regarded all of Isa 34–35* and 40–66 as an authorial unity. The strongest advocate of this view is Torrey. He argues that the abovementioned chapters stem from a prophet living in Judah at the time of the compilation of the Chronicles.¹⁰ Along slightly different lines,

5 Menahem Haran, *Between RI'SHONÔT (Former Prophecies) and HADASHÔT (New Prophecies): A Literary-Historical Study in the Group of Prophecies Isaiah 40–48* (Hebrew; Publications of the Perry Foundation for Biblical Research in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem: Jerusalem: Magnes, 1963), 81–102. See also Menahem Haran, "The Literary Structure and Chronological Framework of the Prophecies in Isa XL–XLVIII," in *Congress Volume, Bonn 1962* (VTSup 9; Leiden: Brill, 1963), 127–55.

6 Ludvig Glahn, *Hjemkomst Profeten: Enheden af Jesajabogens Kp. 40–66* (Copenhagen: Haase, 1929), esp. 203–208, 264–65. The information above is taken from the Danish original. Glahn's book was later translated into German as *Der Prophet der Heimkehr (Jesaja 40–66)*. Vol. 1 and 2 (transl. Viktor Waschnitius; Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1934).

7 Mayer I. Gruber, "The Motherhood of God in Second Isaiah," *RB* 90 (1983): 351–59 (353–54).

8 E.g. Pierre E. Bonnard, *Le second Isaïe, son disciple et leurs éditeurs Isaïe 40–66* (EBib; Paris: Gabalda, 1972), 315–17. See also further below.

9 Cf. Jan L. Koole, *Isaiah. Part 3, Volume 1: Isaiah 40–48* (HCOT; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1997), 19–20.

10 Charles C. Torrey, *The Second Isaiah: A New Interpretation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928), 20.

Smart suggests that one author, active in Judah around 538 BCE, wrote Isa 35, 40 – 66. As above, Torrey's and Smart's interpretations are based on the *stylistic and thematic continuity* throughout the Isaianic text. To cite Smart, it would be unlikely for two or even three different prophets to share such similar views and attitudes and to express these views in such similar language.¹¹ As to the provenance of Isa 40 – 66, Torrey and Smart uphold *geographic* continuity. In contrast to Kaufmann, however, they do not place the Isaianic author in Babylon but in Judah. According to them, the material in Isa 40 – 66, as well as that in chs 34 and/or 35, was composed in Judah. The critique against unorthodox rites in Isa 56 – 66 was levelled against the community in post-monarchic Judah.

1.2 Isaiah 40 – 55 and 56 – 66 as Two Distinct Bodies of Literature

The second category consists of those scholars who treat Isa 40 – 55 and Isa 56 – 66 as two distinct bodies of literature. The different theories in this category fall into one of five sub-groups:

1.2.1 Each set of texts forms an authorial unity

The notion of two distinct authors, one responsible for Isa 40 – 55 and the other for Isa 56 – 66 has been a dominant view in much of biblical research from Duhm onwards. This commonly held notion gave rise to the names Second Isaiah/Deutero-Isaiah (DI) and Third Isaiah/Trito-Isaiah (TI) who were often treated as two individual prophets. This notion advocates both *chronological* and *geographical discontinuity*: while Second Isaiah lived in Babylon before 539 BCE, Third Isaiah lived in Judah after 539 BCE.

The *thematic continuity* between their two compositions has often been explained by the supposition that the two prophets belonged to the same tradition or Isaiah school. A variant of this theory has been to maintain that TI was the editor of the material in Isa 40 – 55. As above, this view implies that the material in Isa 56 – 66 is later than the texts in Isa 40 – 55, yet regards the relationship between the two textual corpora as organic and intimately connected to a high degree. The link between Isa 40 – 55 and 56 – 66 is closer than that of two in-

11 James D. Smart, *History and Theology in Second Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 35, 40 – 66* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1965), 21 – 23, 30 – 33. From a different perspective, Paul, *Isaiah*, 5, is also open to the possibility that DI wrote all of Isa 35 and 40 – 66. He postulates that Isa 35 was once placed immediately before Isa 40 – 66, prior to the addition of Isa 36 – 39. See also William L. Holladay, "Was Trito-Isaiah Deutero-Isaiah After All?" in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah*. Vol. 1 (ed. Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; VTSup 70; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 193 – 217, who argues that the author of Isa 35; 40 – 66 uses the same technique when reusing and appropriating earlier material.

dependent prophetic compositions, the authors of which belonged to the same prophetic tradition. This theory was first suggested by Elliger who argued that TI, a distinct individual and the author of Isa 56–66, edited the earlier material in Isa 40–55*. TI also added significant chunks of text to the earlier Deutero-Isaianic corpus, among them the material in Isa 54–55.¹²

1.2.2 Isaiah 40–55 is an authorial unity but Isaiah 56–66 is a redactional unity. Many scholars hold on to the authorial unity of Isa 40–55 (with the possible exception of the four so-called Servant Songs), written by an individual prophet (DI). In contrast, Isa 56–66 is considered to be a compilation of texts, written either by DI's disciples and/or by members of some kind of Isaiah school.¹³ Several scholars maintain that there was an individual prophet, TI, who wrote the kernel of Isa 56–66, often located in Isa 60–62*, while a series of later authors added the remaining material of Isa 56–66 in subsequent redactions or *Fort-schreibungen* of Isa 56–66 and/or of the book of Isaiah.

In a few instances, these redactors added already written, external material to the growing corpus of Isa 56–66. In particular, the lament in Isa 63:7–64:11 is often regarded as an originally independent text which at some point was incorporated into the growing body of texts in Isa 56–66.¹⁴ Other scholars challenge this view, instead claiming that Isa 63:7–64:11 is purpose-written for its current place in the book of Isaiah by a redactor involved in its *Fort-schreibung*. While Steck upholds that Isa 63:7–64:11 was composed as part of the final stages of the *Fortschreibung* of the book of Isaiah,¹⁵ Goldenstein sees it as an individual instance of *Fortschreibung*.¹⁶

12 Karl Elliger, *Deuteriojesaja in seinem Verhältnis zu Tritojesaja* (BWANT 63; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933), 267–72. For the authorial unity of Isa 56–66, see Karl Elliger, *Die Einheit des Tritojesaja (Jesaja 56–66)* (BWANT 45; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1928), 57.

13 See, e.g., Claus Westermann, *Das Buch Jesaja* (ATD 19; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), 10–11, 237–46, James Muilenburg, “The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66,” in *IB* 5 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1956), 384–85, 414, Paul D. Hanson, *Isaiah 40–66* (IBC; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 186, Elizabeth Achtemeier, *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56–66: A Theological Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1982), 12–16.

14 See, e.g., R. Norman Whybray, *Isaiah 40–66* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1975), 42, Klaus Koenen, *Ethik und Eschatologie im Tritojesajabuch: Eine literarkritische und redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie* (WMANT 62; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1990), 158–59, 168, Wolfgang Lau, *Schriftgelehrte Prophetie in Jes 56–66: Eine Untersuchung zu den literarischen Bezügen in den letzten elf Kapiteln des Jesajabuches* (BZAW 225; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 286–87, 315, Brooks Schramm, *The Opponents of Third Isaiah: Reconstructing the Cultic History of the Restoration* (JSOTSup 193; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 150.

15 Odil H. Steck, *Studien zu Tritojesaja* (BZAW 203; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991), 233–42.

16 Johannes Goldenstein, *Das Gebet der Gottesknechte: Jesaja 63,7–64,11 im Jesajabuch* (WMANT 92; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2001), 170–98 (188–90), 193, 197–98.

1.2.3 Neither Isaiah 40 – 55 nor Isaiah 56 – 66 is an authorial unity

While it has been commonplace for many years to see Isa 56 – 66 as a redactional unity, it is only relatively recently that a significant number of scholars have begun to question the authorial unity of Isa 40 – 55. As already hinted at, scholars have perceived a change in focus after Isa 48. In view of this change, several scholars distinguish between Isa 40 – 48 and 49 – 55 in terms of authorship and/or location. Haran, mentioned above, argues that the earlier Isa 40 – 48 reflects a Babylonian setting while the later Isa 49 – 55 is shaped by its origins in Judah.¹⁷ More recently, it has become common to regard Isa 40 – 55 as comprised of at least three chronologically distinct textual layers of differing geographical origins.¹⁸ What follows is a rough amalgamation of the more prevalent redactional schemes.

1. A core layer in Isa 40 – 52* is thought to have been composed by an individual or a group of peoples in the exilic community in Babylon shortly before 539 BCE. This early edition was contained within the framework of Isa 40:1 – 11* and Isa 52:7 – 10, identified by their affinity to each other.
2. Upon their arrival in Judah, the people responsible for the core text and/or their disciples redacted the existing core text and also added significant amounts of material to the gradually growing textual corpus of Isa 40 – 55, thus creating a new edition of Isa 40 – 55. At this point the texts in Isa 52:11 – 55:13 were added. A new framework was also written, consisting of an extended introduction in Isa 40:1 – 11 and a new conclusion in Isa 55:1 – 13.

Many variations of this theory exist and no consensus exists as to how much of Isa 40 – 48 goes back to the earliest core, yet all maintain that the final form of Isa 40 – 55 cannot be earlier than the last quarter of the sixth century BCE. Some

¹⁷ Haran, “Literary Structure,” 148 – 55.

¹⁸ See further my overview of scholarly redactional schemes in L.-S. Tiemeyer, *For the Comfort of Zion: The Geographical and Theological Location of Isaiah 40 – 55* (VTSup 139; Leiden: Brill, 2011), 32 – 40. The most important schemes are: Klaus Kiesow, *Exodustexte im Jesajabuch: Literarkritische und motivgeschichtliche Analysen* (OBO 24; Freiburg, Schweiz: Universitätsverlag, 1979); Hans-Jürgen Hermisson, “Einheit und Komplexität Deuterjesajas: Probleme der Redaktionsgeschichte von Jes 40 – 55,” in *The Book of Isaiah* (ed. Jacques Vermeylen; BETL 81; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1989), 287 – 312; Odil H. Steck, *Gottesknecht und Zion* (FAT 4; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992); Jürgen van Oorschot, *Von Babel zum Zion: Eine literarkritische und redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (BZAW 206; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993); Reinhard G. Kratz, *Kyros im Deuterjesaja-Buch* (FAT 1; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991); Ulrich Berges, *Das Buch Jesaja: Komposition und Endgestalt* (HBS 16; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1998), 338 – 413, 549 (summary); Jürgen Werlitz, *Redaktion und Komposition: Zur Rückfrage hinter die Endgestalt von Jesaja 40 – 55* (BBB 122; Berlin, Bodenheim: Philo, 1999), (see especially the conclusion on pp. 359 – 63); Rainer Albertz, *Israel in Exile: The History and Literature of the Sixth Century B.C.E* (transl. D. Green; SBL 3; Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2003), 392 – 433.

texts in Isa 40–55 may thus have been written at the same time as the earliest material in Isa 56–66, a possibility to which we shall return shortly.

In this context, it is also important to mention that, ever since Duhm, it was commonplace to regard the four Servant Songs as external to Isa 40–55. By now, however, this idea has largely lost its appeal from both a text-historical and a literary perspective. From a text-historical viewpoint, this theory has been superseded by the aforementioned, more elaborate, redactional theories pertaining to the growth of Isa 40–55. From a more literary perspective, the Servant Songs and the material about Daughter Zion form an alternating pattern, and both sets of texts are understood to contribute to the overarching message of (the final) text.¹⁹

1.2.4 Isaiah 40–55 and Isaiah 56–66 are two contemporary literary corpora According to the aforementioned three categories, the majority of the texts in Isa 40–55 were written prior to the composition of any of the texts in Isa 56–66. A fourth and a fifth category exist that question this chronological order.

First, a minority of scholars maintain that the two textual corpora in Isa 40–55 and Isa 56–66 respectively were written roughly at the same time but at different locations and addressing different communities. Recently, Uhlig has argued that Isa 40–55 and Isa 56–66 constitute two roughly *contemporaneous* texts, written in the early years of post-monarchic period. They differ from one another in terms of their target audience: while the material in Isa 40–55 addresses the exiles in Babylon, the material in Isa 56–66 addresses the Judahite population. The difference between the two textual corpora is thus geographical, not chronological.²⁰ The critical problem of this theory is its failure to explain the notable thematic and stylistic continuity between Isa 40–55 and 56–66. If these two textual corpora were written at the same time by two different authors at two different locations, how can we explain the similarities between their compositions?

1.2.5 Isaiah 56–66 was written before Isaiah 40–55

Secondly, another scholarly minority advocate at least the possibility that many, if not most, of the texts in Isa 40–55 were written *after* the material in Isa 56–66. Koole is the best example of this view, as he argues that the greater part of Isa 56–66 (excluding Isa 56:1–8) originated in Judah shortly after the catastrophe in 587/6 BCE and addresses the situation in Judah in the first decades after the fall

19 See especially Patricia Tull Willey, *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah* (SBLDS 161; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), 105–106, 175–81.

20 Torsten Uhlig, *The Theme of Hardening in the Book of Isaiah* (FAT 2/39; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 52–55, 62, 71, 248, 249.

of Jerusalem. At a later stage, new material (Isa 40 – 55) was added to the existing Isa 56 – 66 in order adapt the Isaianic message to the situation among the exiles in Babylon.²¹ Koole bases his dating and his postulated geographical setting of Isa 56 – 66 on two key factors. First, he argues that the affinity between Lamentations and Isa 56 – 66 suggests that the two textual corpora stem from the same geographical place and the same time-period, namely Judah in the earliest post-monarchic period.²² In particular, he detects significant correspondences – which are atypical of the lament genre in general – between Lamentations and the complaints of Isa 59:9 – 15 and 63:7 – 64:11.²³ Secondly, he maintains that, in close study of the thematic and stylistic similarities between them, Isa 40 – 55 and Isa 56 – 66 are best understood if Isa 56 – 66 contains the earlier texts to which the later author of Isa 40 – 55 alludes, in order to adjust the message to fit the Diaspora community in Babylon.²⁴ The present arrangement of the texts in Isa 40 – 66 serves to place the proclamation of the Servant in the centre (Isa 53) and thus to highlight his message.²⁵

1.3 Isaiah 40 – 66 as a Gradually Grown Literary Corpus

In addition to the aforementioned five theories, a few scholars dispute the principal division after Isa 55. These scholars reject the idea that Isa 40 – 55 and Isa 56 – 66 are two distinct bodies of texts. Instead, they see Isa 40 – 66 as a compilation of texts which, within the context of the formation of the book of Isaiah, has gradually grown into its current form. According to this view, some texts in chs 40 – 55 may be younger than texts appearing in chs 56 – 66.

Steck, the dominant representative of this view, challenges the notion that Isa 40 – 55 ever existed as an independent collection of texts to which Isa 56 – 66 was at one point juxtaposed. On the contrary, the book of Isaiah underwent consecutive redactions/*Fort schreibungen* when, at each subsequent point, new material was added. Steck postulates a total of four layers of growth of Isa 40 – 66 in the post-monarchic period:

1. An early collection contained Isa 40 – 55*; Isa 60:1 – 11, 13 – 16; 61:1 – 62:7.

21 Koole, *Isaiah*, 3/1, 23, 27 – 28.

22 Koole, *Isaiah*, 3/1, 32 – 33. He lists, among other things, the contrast between light and darkness (Isa 58:10; 59:9; 60:1 ff.; and Lam 32).

23 Max Löhr, “Der Sprachgebrauch des Buches der Klagelieder,” ZAW 14 (1894): 31 – 50 (42 – 43, 44, 47, 48), Koole, *Isaiah*, 3/1, 31 – 32. See also my discussion in L.-S. Tiemeyer, “Two Prophets, Two Laments, and Two Ways of Dealing with Earlier Texts,” in *Die Textualisierung der Religion* (ed. Joachim Schaper; FAT 62; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 185 – 202 (189, n. 19).

24 Koole, *Isaiah*, 3/1, 23 – 26.

25 Koole, *Isaiah*, 3/1, 38.

According to this model, the material in Isa 60–62* stands in direct continuity with Isa 40v55*.

2. At this point, the body of texts was brought together with Isa 1–39*. The redactor responsible for this move composed and added Isa 51:1–8, 11–16; 52:3–6; 62:10–12 to the existing Isa 40–55* and 60–62*. He also wrote, among other texts, Isa 34:2–4; 35 (the rest of Isa 34 had been written earlier).
3. Another redactor composed and added Isa 56:9–57:19; 58:1–12; 59:1–21. He also extended the present Isa 60–62* with Isa 60:17–22; 62:8–9 and added Isa 63:1–6.
4. Shortly before the final redaction of the book of Isaiah, yet another redactor added Isa 56:1–8; 57:20–21; 58:13–14; 60:12; 63:7–66:24.²⁶

As we can see, the proposed chronological overlaps between chs 40–55 and chs 56–66 are restricted mainly to chs 49–55 and 60–62. This shows a general agreement with many of the aforementioned redactional schemes according to which the texts in Isa 49–55 are understood to be later *Fortschreibungen* of the earlier core material in Isa 40–48. It also concurs in a broad sense with those theories which regard Isa 60–62 to be the earliest material in Isa 56–66.

1.4 A New Beginning in Isaiah 55:1 or in Isaiah 56:9

One debate bridges across the abovementioned categories, namely the debate about the role of Isa 55:1–56:8 within the book of Isaiah. From what we have seen so far, even those scholars who reject the notion of two fixed textual corpora and instead see Isa 40–66 as a gradually growing body of text nevertheless treat Isa 56:1 as the beginning of a new textual section. There are, however, a significant number of scholars who challenge such a division of the text.²⁷ The main reason behind this challenge is the many notable similarities between Isa 55 and Isa 56:1–8. First, there are three examples of verbal similarities between the two sections:

1. The expression *אֲשֶׁר הִפְצִירִי* appears in Isa 55:11 and 56:4a.

26 Odil H. Steck, *Bereitete Heimkehr: Jesaja 35 als redaktionelle Brücke zwischen dem Ersten und dem Zweiten Jesaja* (SBS 121; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1985), 80.

27 See further the brief discussion in Joseph Blenkinsopp, “The Servant and the Servants in Isaiah and the Formation of the Book,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah* (2 vols.; ed. Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans; VTSup 70; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1:155–75 (156). Blenkinsopp points out that there are many passages that could serve, together with Isa 40:1–5, as an inclusio around a textual corpus. While Isa 55:12–13 is one candidate, so are Isa 53:11–12 and 57:14–21.

2. The term ברית is attested in Isa 55:3 and 56:4a. While Isa 55:3 – 5 speaks of an “everlasting covenant” (ברית עולם), Isa 56:6 refers to “[God’s] covenant” (בריתי).
3. The phrase לא יכרה שם [...] occurs in Isa 55:13 and 56:6.

Secondly, two important themes connect Isa 55 with the subsequent material in Isa 56:

1. Isa 55:11 – 12 lacks information about what God’s word will accomplish in the anticipated future and who can partake of that future. Isa 56:3 – 8 responds to those questions by declaring who exactly can be part of God’s people.
2. The (sincere) invitation to come and eat and drink in Isa 55:1 – 2 corresponds to the (ironic) call in Isa 56:9 – 12 to the animals of the field to come and eat (v. 9).²⁸

Thirdly, the text in Isa 55:5 – 9 has more affinity with the following material in Isa 56 – 66 than with what precedes in Isa 40 – 54:

1. The roots מנצח, דרש and קרב in 55:6 are used anew in Isa 65:1 (מנצח, דרש) and in 58:2 (קרב and דרש).
2. The “way metaphors” in Isa 55:7 bring Isa 59:7 – 8 to mind. Also, both texts use the term דרך.

These similarities have caused some scholars to question the notion of a main break (between DI and TI) at Isa 56:1, and instead come up with alternatives structures. Kissane postulates a main break *after* Isa 56:8. He argues, in view of the abovementioned similarities between Isa 55 and 56:1 – 6, that the material in Isa 56:1 – 8, part of the subsection of Isa 55:1 – 56:8, concludes the longer section of Isa 52:13 – 56:8.²⁹ Other scholars place the main break *earlier* at the beginning of Isa 55. As Kissane, they view Isa 56:1 – 8 as the original continuation of Isa 55. Watts, for example, treats all of Isa 54:17b–56:8 as one section. In contrast to the preceding material in Isa 40 – 54 which, according to Watts, addresses the exiles in Babylon, the subsequent material in Isa 55 – 57 speaks to a larger, undefined group of people about the use of the temple.³⁰ Along slightly different lines, Sweeney argues that *in the final form of the text*, the main break is already at Isa

28 Willem A.M. Beuken, *Jesaja* (De prediking van het Oude Testament 3 A; Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1989), 29 – 30, 37, 49 – 53. See also Willem A.M. Beuken, “Isaiah 56.9 – 57.13: An Example of the Isaianic Legacy of Trito-Isaiah,” in *Tradition and Re-Interpretation in Jewish and Early Christian Literature: Essays in Honour of Jürgen C.H. Lebram* (ed. J.W. van Henten, H.J. de Jonge, P.T. van Rooden, and J.W. Wesselius; StPB 36; Leiden: Brill, 1986), 48 – 64.

29 See, e.g., Edward J. Kissane, *The Book of Isaiah* (2 vols.; Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1943), 1:201 – 202.

30 John D.W. Watts, *Isaiah 34 – 66* (WBC 25; Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 244 – 45.

55:1. On the one hand, Isa 55 and Isa 56:4–5 both speak of the covenant. On the other hand, there is a change from f.sg. imperatives in Isa 54 to m.pl. imperatives in Isa 55. On this basis, Sweeney maintains that Isa 55 fits best together with the following Isa 56:1–8. Looking more broadly at the final form of Isa 40–66, Sweeney argues that Isa 55 has two functions. First, it forms, together with Isa 66, a thematic ring-structure around the intermediate material. Isa 55 begins and Isa 66 ends with speeches which discuss God's criteria for selecting those who fulfil his conditions for participating in the covenant. Secondly, Isa 55 serves as the bridge between Isa 40–54 and 56–66. The link between Isa 55 and 56:1–8 does not, however, reflect the gradual growth of the Isaianic textual corpus. On the contrary, Sweeney upholds the traditional view that Isa 55 was composed originally to serve as the conclusion of Isa 40–55.³¹ Most recently, in the present volume, Berges follows Sweeney's lead and argues that TI begins at Isa 54:17b. Berges lists the change from a singular "servant" throughout Isa 40–53 to plural "servants" in Isa 54:17b.

Seitz has suggested a variant of these theories. He stays away from the notion of two corpora in Isa 40–66 and instead divides the text into four sections: (1) Isa 40–48; (2) Isa 49:1–52:12; (3) Isa 52:13–53:12; and (4) Isa 54–66. The distinction between the third and the fourth section is made in part because of the aforementioned change from one servant in chs 40–53 to many servants in chs 54–66.³²

The chief difficulty with these theories concerns the frameworks which are thought to exist, on the one hand, between Isa 55:10–11 and Isa 40:6–8, and, on the other hand, between Isa 56:1–8 and 66:17–24. Isa 55 also agrees with Isa 54 as both chapters are loosely organized under the covenant theme.³³ These problems can be partly solved by treating Isa 56:1–8 as a very late, redactional unit which connects backwards to Isa 55 and forward to Isa 66:17–24. Notably, many scholars argue that Isa 56:1–6 was written as a development of the thoughts expressed in Isa 55.³⁴ Koole, for instance, maintains that the similarities between Isa 55 and 56:1–8 are redactional rather than organic to the whole corpus of Isa 56–66. In other words, the author/redactor responsible for Isa 56:1–8 reused the material in Isa 55 in order to compose a beginning to Isa 56–

31 Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–4 and the Post-exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Tradition* (BZAW 171; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988), 87–88.

32 Christopher R. Seitz, "The Book of Isaiah 40–66," *NIB* 6 (Nashville: Abingdon, TN, 1994), 323.

33 Roy F. Melugin, *The Formation of Isaiah 40–55* (BZAW 141; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976), 174.

34 E.g. Steck, *Studien*, 244–48; Koenen, *Ethik und Eschatologie*, 229–30; Jacob Stromberg, *Isaiah after Exile: The Author of Third Isaiah as Reader and Redactor of the Book* (OTM; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 78–79.

66 which would also fit well with the preceding text.³⁵ The same idea is touched upon by Davies who sees Isa 56:3 – 7 as an exposition of Isa 55.³⁶ Rendtorff goes one step further and argues that the juxtaposition of the three terms *משפט*, *צדקה*, and *ישועה* in Isa 56:1 is a conscious attempt to establish continuity of Isa 56 – 66 with Isa 1 – 39 (prevalent use of *משפט* and *צדקה*) and Isa 40 – 55 (prevalent use of *ישועה* and *צדקה*).³⁷

1.5 Geographic Continuity and Discontinuity in Isaiah 40 – 66

Often walking hand-in-hand with the issue of authorship, there has long been the consensus that the division between Isa 40 – 55 and Isa 56 – 66 is also a matter of geography. As already hinted at, scholars tend to maintain that the author of Isa 40 – 55 lived in Babylon around 539 BCE and aimed his message to the exiles. In contrast, the author(s) of Isa 56 – 66 lived in Judah and their message relate to issues in Judah. Lately, however, scholars have begun to challenge this view on more than one front. First, as already mentioned, several exegetes envision a geographic break already after Isa 48. Haran, for example, argues that the message of Isa 40 – 48 was delivered to the exiles in Babylon, while the material beginning in Isa 49 was composed after the prophetic author's arrival in Judah.³⁸ Along related lines, those scholars who view Isa 40 – 55 as a gradually composed literary body recognize only a kernel of texts, located in Isa 40 – 48*, to have been written in Babylon. Subsequent redactions are understood to have taken place in Judah upon the exiles' arrival there. These redactions aimed to adjust the earlier message to fit Judahite circumstances and concerns. According to these theories, there is geographic continuity throughout Isa 49 – 66. Other scholars, among them Barstad,³⁹ Seitz,⁴⁰ and myself,⁴¹ question the validity of a Babylonian setting

35 Koole, *Isaiah*, 3/1, 23 – 24, 36.

36 Graham I. Davies, "The Destiny of the Nations in the Book of Isaiah," in *The Book of Isaiah* (ed. J. Vermeylen; BETL 81; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1989), 93 – 120 (117 – 18).

37 Rolf Rendtorff, "Isaiah 56:1 as a Key to the Formation of the Book of Isaiah," in *Canon and Theology* (transl. M. Kohl; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 181 – 89.

38 Haran, "Literary Structure," 127 – 55 (142 – 44, 149 – 55).

39 See, e. g., Hans M. Barstad, "Lebte Deuterocesaja in Judäa?," *Veterotestamentica* (NTT 83/2, 1982), 77 – 87, *idem*, *A Way in the Wilderness: The "Second Exodus" in the Message of Second Isaiah* (JSSM 12; Manchester: Manchester University, 1989), *idem*, *The Myth of the Empty Land: A Study in the History and Archaeology of Judah During the "Exilic" Period* (SOFs 28; Oslo, 1996), *idem*, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Book of Isaiah: "Exilic" Judah and the Provenance of Isaiah 40 – 55* (Oslo: Instituttet for Sammenlignende Kulturforskning, 1997).

40 Christopher R. Seitz, *Word Without End: The Old Testament as Abiding Theological Witness* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 130 – 48. See also Christopher R. Seitz, "On the Question of Divisions Internal to the Book of Isaiah," in *Society of Biblical Literature: 1993*

of any part of Isa 40–55. A Judahite setting of Isa 40–55 opens up new possibilities for understanding its relationship with the texts in Isa 56–66 which are clearly of Judahite origin.

1.6 Scope for Further Research

As we have seen, there is a striking lack of consensus as to the formation and growth of Isa 40–66 and many new and intriguing areas of research have opened up.

1. The current order of the material in Isa 40–66 in the final form of the book of Isaiah does not necessarily reflect the chronological growth of the text and does not preclude, *a priori*, the possibility that some of the texts that are placed earlier in the book were composed later.
2. Connected to the first point – are the similarities between the different texts on an authorial or a redactional level? Most pertinently, do the similarities between Isa 55 and Isa 56:1–8 mean that Isa 56:1–8 was written by the same author as Isa 55, or do they mean rather that a redactor, at the time of the final redaction of the book of Isaiah, composed Isa 56:1–8 to fit with the preceding material?
3. Do the texts in Isa 40–66 address the same community at different times, or different communities at the same time, or different communities at different times? Expressed differently, how can we explain the thematic and stylistic continuity in Isa 40–66 in terms of time and space?
4. Connected to the third point, are we dealing with (1) one author of the whole corpus of Isa 40–66, (2) a group of authors who were connected with each other through some kind of Isaianic school yet independent insofar as they wrote individual textual units, or (3) one author whose message was subsequently added to and updated by a group of redactors who also wrote sections and who incorporated other, originally independent, material from outwith of the Isaiah tradition?

Seminar Papers (ed. Eugene H. Lovering; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), 260–66 (265), and Seitz, “Book of Isaiah 40–66,” 316, 328.

41 Tiemeyer, *Comfort of Zion*.