

Francesco Cocco

## The Torah as a Place of Refuge

### Biblical Criminal Law and the Book of Numbers

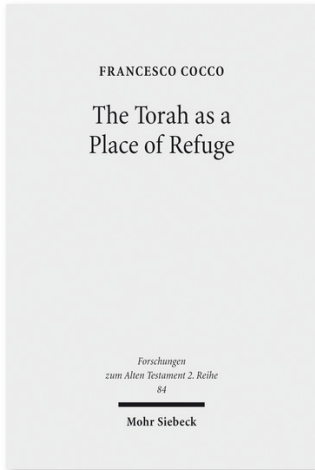
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The law on the »cities of refuge« contained in Num 35,9–34 is almost universally seen as a simple repetition of legal content that is basically already present in the legislation of other biblical books. Francesco Cocco demonstrates that we find ourselves here before a case of reformulation instead of simple repetition, the implications of which are extremely interesting for the understanding of biblical penal legislation. In this particular fragment, it exhibits traces of modernity so surprising as to be as good as the defence of civil liberties in the legal systems currently in force in the majority of democratic states.

The author's enquiry takes its starting point and develops, therefore, from the novel contribution which the legislation in Num 35,9–34 confers on the entire biblical law of a penal character.

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