Introduction

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In critical biblical scholarship, there is general agreement that the Pentateuch is a heterogeneous entity that is the result of a long tradition history. This is true even for scholars like Benno Jacob,[1] Umberto Cassuto,[2] or R. Norman Whybray,[3] who deem the Pentateuch to be the work of a single author, albeit one who employed, combined, and reworked older traditions he had at hand.

The mainstream of pentateuchal scholarship, however, goes beyond the assumption of just one author or compiler for the Pentateuch. Traditional and also newer source-critical approaches reckon with four basic documents that were included in the Pentateuch, although Wellhausen admitted that there were many more:

> Der Einfachheit wegen abstrahiere ich meistens davon, dass der literarische Process in Wirksamkeit complicierter gewesen ist und die sogenannte Ergänzungshypothese in untergeordneter Weise doch ihre Anwendung findet. J und E haben wol erst mehrere vermehrte Ausgaben (J^1 J^2 J^3, E^1 E^2 E^3) erlebt und sind nicht als J^1 und E^1, sondern als J^3 und E^3 zusammengearbeitet. Ähnliches gilt von JE, Dt und Q, bevor sie mit den betreffenden grösseren Ganzen vereinigt wurden.[4]

> For reasons of simplicity, I prescind in most cases from the fact that the literary process was in fact more complex and the so-called Supplementary Hypothesis can indeed be used in a subordinate way. J and E were probably edited and augmented several times (J^1 J^2 J^3, E^1 E^2 E^3), and they were combined not as J^1 and E^1, but as J^3 and E^3. A similar process took place for JE, Dt, and Q before they were combined with the relevant unities.

Hugo Gressmann supported Wellhausen's notion and highlighted the complex nature of the textual material that stands behind J and E:

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[1] B. JACOB, *Das erste Buch der Tora: Genesis* (New York: Schocken, 1934); IDEM, *The Second Book of the Bible: Exodus; Translated with an Introduction by Walter Jacob in association with Yaakov Elman* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1992); German version, *Das Buch Exodus* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1997).

[2] U. CASSUTO, *The Documentary Hypothesis and the Composition of the Pentateuch: Eight Lectures* (trans. I. Abrahams; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961).

[3] R.N. WHYBRAY*, The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study* (JSOTSup 53, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994 [1st ed., 1987]).

[4] J. WELLHAUSEN, *Die Composition des Hexateuch* (3rd ed.; Berlin: Reimer, 1899), 207.

> Zu einer befriedigenden Erklärung wird man nur kommen, wenn man JE für Redaktoren oder *Sammler* hält.[5]

> The only satisfying explanation is to consider JE as redactors or *collectors*.

Hermann Gunkel was even more emphatic. He stated in his commentary on the book of Genesis:

> Die schriftliche Sammlung der Sagen ist nicht von einer Hand und in derselben Zeit geschehen, sondern von mehreren oder gar vielen in einem ganz langen Prozess. Wir unterscheiden in diesem Prozess zwei Zeitalter: das ältere, dem wir die Sammlungen des Jahvisten (J) und Elohisten (E) verdanken, dann eine spätere, durchgreifende Umarbeitung durch den sogenannten Priesterkodex (P).[6]

> The literary collection of the tales does not emanate from one hand or one era but was achieved by some or even many hands in a very long process. We distinguish two eras in this process: the older era, in which the Yahwist (J) and the Elohist (E) were written, and a later, thoroughgoing transformation by the so-called Priestly Codex (P).

Therefore, Gunkel highlights the collective nature of J and E:

> "J" und "E" sind also nicht Einzelschriftsteller, sondern Erzählerschulen.[7]

> "J" and "E" are not individual writers but schools of narrators.

In addition to the traditional sources, scholars also posited a set of redactors. In nineteenth-century scholarship, usually three of them were assumed (R[JE], R[JEP], R[JEPD]), although current Neo-Documentarians tend to assume only one: "[H]e [i.e., the redactor] is a necessary side-effect of the recognition of multiple sources in the text, not a primary feature of the theory. The theory demands a redactor, because the source were evidently combined by someone – but no more than one."[8] Neither traditional nor Neo-Documentarian scholars attribute much textual material to the redactors, whose main task was to combine and compile the documents they had before them.[9]

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[5] H. GRESSMANN, *Mose und seine Zeit: Ein Kommentar zu den Mose-Sagen* (FRLANT 1/18; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1913), 372; see also 368: "In vielen Fällen sind JE weiter nichts als Etiketten, die man beliebig vertauschen darf" ("In many cases, JE are no more than tags that can be arbitrarily exchanged").

[6] H. GUNKEL, *Genesis* (6th ed.; HKAT 1/1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), lxxx.

[7] GUNKEL, *Genesis*, lxxxv.

[8] J.S. BADEN, *J, E, and the Composition of the Pentateuch* (FAT 72; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 8–9 (see also 289, 305, and the detailed description on 255–286). Similarly, B.J. SCHWARTZ, "How the Compiler of the Pentateuch Worked: The Composition of Genesis 37," in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation* (ed. C.A. Evans et al.; VTSup 152; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 263–278; IDEM, "Joseph's Descent into Egypt: The Composition of Genesis 37," in *The Joseph Story in the Bible and throughout the Ages* (ed. L. Mazor; Beit Mikra 55; Jerusalem: Magnes, 2010), 1–30 (Hebrew).

[9] H. DONNER, "Der Redaktor: Überlegungen zum vorkritischen Umgang mit der Heiligen Schrift," *Henoch* 2 (1980), 1–30; reprinted as IDEM, *Aufsätze zum Alten Testament aus vier*

Redaction-critical analyses of the Pentateuch posit many more hands responsible for the development of the Pentateuch.[10] One of the most excessive proposals is Christoph Berner's analysis of Exod 1–15.[11] Berner posits that Exod 1–15 can be described as a "Prozess 'midraschartiger' Selbstauslegung" (7). As a result, Berner finds in Exod 1 more than nine layers (48), in Exod 2–4 more than nine layers (135), in Exod 5 more than five layers (151–152), in Exod 6–7 more than four layers (166–167), in Exod 7–9 more than fourteen layers (212–214), in Exod 9–11 more than thirteen layers (264, 266), in Exod 12 more than nineteen layers (339–342), and in Exod 13–15 more than fourteen layers (403–405). This result is further complicated by the fact that the different layers in the different textual segments cannot necessarily be identified with each other (9).

Thus, there are two extremes represented in current scholarship: one hand or an abundant number of hands is responsible for the formation of the Pentateuch. Thus, the most prominent common feature of current redactional criticism on the Pentateuch is its stunning diversity. Apparently, there is a real need for pentateuchal theory to base itself onto more solid ground in this respect.

Of course, it would be most welcome to base redaction-critical theories regarding the Pentateuch on external evidence.[12] But as is well known, no manuscripts of the Pentateuch from the biblical period exist. Nevertheless, there are at least some hints in terms of evidence that may be evaluated diachronically, and they stem from the textual diversity of the different versions of the Pentateuch (Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Samaritan, Qumran, etc.).[13] Of course, it would be too bold to claim that it is always possible to evaluate the differences between these versions in unambiguous, diachronic terms. But the different versions show that there was at least some fluidity in the process of textual transmission of the

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Jahrzehnten (BZAW 224; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 259–285. See also SCHWARTZ, "How the Compiler of the Pentateuch Worked," 263–278.

[10] See, e.g., C. LEVIN, *Der Jahwist* (FRLANT 157; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993); R.G. KRATZ, *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament* (trans. by J. Bowden; London: Continuum, 2005).

[11] C. BERNER, Die *Exoduserzählung: Das literarische Werden einer Ursprungserzählung Israels* (FAT 73; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

[12] Cf. J.H. TIGAY (ed.), *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); IDEM, "An Empirical Basis for the Documentary Hypothesis," *JBL* 94 (1975), 329–342.

[13] Cf. J.W. WEVERS, "The Interpretative Character and Significance of the Septuagint Version," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation* (ed. M. Sæbø; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 1.1:84–107; A. LANGE, *Handbuch der Textfunde vom Toten Meer, Band 1: Die Handschriften biblischer Bücher von Qumran und den anderen Fundorten* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009); G.N. KNOPPERS, "Parallel Torahs and Inner-Scriptural Interpretation: The Jewish and Samaritan Pentateuchs in Historical Perspective," in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research* (ed. T.B. Dozeman et al.; FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 507–531; M.M. ZAHN, "The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Scribal Culture of Second Temple Judaism," *JSJ* 46 (2015), 285–313.

Pentateuch and, in some instances, it is indeed possible to draw some plausible conclusions regarding some specific redactional activities in the Pentateuch.[14]

As the text of the Pentateuch apparently stabilized earlier than did the prophetic books and the writings,[15] the textual differences are often minor in nature. Despite its modest nature, however, some evidence is nevertheless available and needs to be taken into account in reconstructing a redaction history of the Pentateuch. The contributions in this part will discuss the possible evidence for redactional activity in the Pentateuch and also provide an overview of the history of research of its latest, i.e., post-Priestly additions.

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[14] Cf. the approach of J. POPPER, *Der biblische Bericht über die Stiftshütte: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Composition und Diaskeue des Pentateuch* (Leipzig: Hunger, 1862).

[15] Cf. T.H. LIM, *The Formation of the Jewish Canon* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).