

The Priestly Writing as a Source: A Recollection

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The subtitle “a recollection” permits the following to be read either as an obituary of the Priestly writing as a source of the Pentateuch or as a view toward its revival. Both readings can be justified. That this essay is no more than a recollection further indicates that there is nothing new to be said. After two and a half centuries of modern research all conceivable arguments have been brought to the table.

1. The Problem of the Documentary Hypothesis

When the research community was celebrating the 250th anniversary of Robert Lowth’s *De sacra poesi* and Jean Astruc’s *Conjectures* in 2003,¹ Rudolf Smend said the following in a ceremonial address:

The books of the two illustrious dilettanti contain ... two discoveries that are so obvious that one wonders why they had to be made at all...: in Lowth’s, the discovery of the *parallelismus membrorum* ... as the main feature of Hebrew poetry; in Astruc’s, the discovery that in Genesis two sources [*mémoires*] can be separated by the fact that they have different names for God, Elohim/God being the one, Jehovah/Yahweh/the Lord the other.²

1. Robert Lowth, *De sacra poesi Hebræorum prælectiones academicæ Oxonii habitæ* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1753); Jean Astruc, *Conjectures sur les mémoires originaux Dont il paroît que Moïse s’est servi pour composer le livre de la Genèse: Avec des remarques, qui appuient ou qui éclaircissent ces Conjectures* (Paris: Fricx, 1753).

2. Rudolf Smend, “Das alte Israel im Alten Testament,” in *Bibel und Wissenschaft: Historische Aufsätze* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 1–14, esp. 1 (my translation).

One of these two conclusive facts, the *parallelismus membrorum*, has not, at least for now, been called into question. The same cannot be said for the Documentary Hypothesis.

The problem of the Documentary Hypothesis was and remains that it is so obvious. This has hampered the appreciation of the fact that the combination of two (or more) large narrative works can only have been an exception in the literary history of the Old Testament and presupposes exceptional, unrepeatable circumstances.

Since the (older) Documentary Hypothesis is so clearly apparent in Genesis and especially the primeval history, one did not always take sufficient note of the historical and literary-technical preconditions this hypothesis necessarily requires. Even today, it can happen that the real or apparent self-evidence of a critical analysis causes us to forget the synthesis this invariably implies. This synthesis, however, is crucial in supplying a frame to the analysis. No matter how convincing it may seem, an analysis that cannot be made plausible from the point of view of the scribes and disregards their literary means and their theological and historiographic aims is worthless.

A closer look at the beginnings of modern Pentateuch criticism reveals that all proposals presented were originally more nuanced than they may appear in hindsight. The text never submitted to the simplistic game of J-E-P that older exegesis is generally accused of. Even the oldest versions of the Documentary Hypothesis as formulated by Astruc and Johann Gottfried Eichhorn depended on the Fragmentary Hypothesis. As such they were, at least as far as the two pre-Mosaic histories are concerned (which correspond more or less to what we today call “Priestly writing” [P] and “Yahwist” [J]), hypotheses similar to those that are current in exegesis today.³ It was not P and J (as later research has called them) that were the “documents” of the older Documentary Hypothesis but the sources used by P and J. Just like the idea of *Elohist as narrator*, the Yahwist as narrator is a creation only of the nineteenth century and has, like the former, come to be exposed as a “wrong track of Pentateuch criticism.”⁴

3. In Astruc’s view, the authors of the two great histories A and B integrated a great number of independent literary documents into their works. He further assumed ten additional fragments that he declined to assign to either A or B because the criterion of the divine names was not applicable. He called them C (in the flood narrative) or D. A similar approach was taken by Johann Gottfried Eichhorn, *Einleitung ins Alte Testament*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Weidmann & Reich, 1780–1783), 2:294–381.

4. See Paul Volz and Wilhelm Rudolph, *Der Elohist als Erzähler: Ein Irrweg der*

2. Ilgen and de Wette: Documentary or Supplementary Hypothesis

Karl David Ilgen, who made great advances in identifying the documents in Genesis, remarked already in 1798 that:

Discerning and separating out the documents the first book of Moses is compiled out of is such a distinct business, and so unique in its nature, that no pursuit of that form of criticism which is known as the *higher* is comparable.⁵

It was, however, Ilgen himself, who set the wrong course in increasing the number of sources. His exegetical ensemble consisted of a compiler and seventeen documents, which he assigned to three authors, in place of the two identified by Astruc and Eichhorn:

All the dissected parts I have combined into *seventeen* self-sufficient documents, of which *ten* belong to [Eliel] Harischon, *five* to Eliel Haschscheni, and *two* to Elijah Harischon.⁶

By distinguishing between *Eliel Harischon* and *Eliel Haschscheni*, Ilgen anticipated the later distinction between Priestly writing and Elohist, though he assigned the textual material differently. The third author, *Elijah Harischon*, corresponds to the later Jehovist or Yahwist. Moreover, Ilgen completed his puzzle by adding in the option of a second Yahwist, Elijah Haschscheni, even if this figure remained a theoretical one.

The ten documents of the first first Elohist—that is, the Priestly writing (in later terms)—follow the *toledot*-formula in Genesis. Five documents

Pentateuchkritik? An der Genesis erläutert, BZAW 63 (Gießen: Töpelmann, 1933). That this implies “the definitive ‘farewell to the Yahwist,’” as has been claimed by Erhard Blum, “Die literarische Verbindung von Erzvätern und Exodus,” in *Abschied vom Jahwisten: Die Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion*, ed. Jan Christian Gertz, Konrad Schmid, and Markus Witte, BZAW 315 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002), 119–56, esp. 121, is the most recent wrong track (“Irrweg”) in Pentateuch criticism.

5. Karl David Ilgen, *Die Urkunden des Jerusalemischen Tempelarchivs in ihrer Urgestalt*, vol. 1 (Halle: Hemmerde & Schwetschke, 1798), 341 (my translation). On Ilgen, see Bodo Seidel, *Karl David Ilgen und die Pentateuchforschung im Umkreis der sogenannten Älteren Urkundenhypothese*, BZAW 213 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1993).

6. Ilgen, *Urkunden*, 494: “Ich habe die sämtlichen zerlegten Theile zu *siebzehn* für sich bestehenden Urkunden verbunden, davon *zehn* Harischon, *fünf* Eliel Haschscheni, und *zwey* Elijah Harischon gehören.” He means: “zehn *Eliel* Harischon.”

are given to the second Elohist, including the entire non-Priestly text of the primeval history, and two to the Jehovist. The first Jehovist document begins with Gen 12 and ends with Gen 33, while the second consists of Gen 38. The story of Joseph is divided between the two Elohist. In sum, that once again means that the Documentary Hypothesis merges with the Fragmentary Hypothesis. For Ilgen, the source writings derive not from authors in the strict sense but from collectors and compilers—or, one could say, from redactors.

That said, the methodological constraints become visible in the details. A good example is Ilgen's treatment of the scheme of seven days in the first creation account—specifically the account's orientation toward the Sabbath, which Werner Carl Ludewig Ziegler and Johann Philipp Gabler had identified as the product of literary reworking.⁷ In assigning this revision to the second Elohist, Ilgen used the Documentary Hypothesis to guide his interpretation, rather than applying the Supplementary Hypothesis, as would have been appropriate.⁸ To do so, he had to assume that the majority of the supposed document is lost in the chapter. Such *argumenta e silentio* later became common among scholars separating sources.

Ilgen's *Urkunden des Jerusalemischen Tempelarchivs* was followed by Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette's *Kritik der Mosaischen Geschichte*. De Wette is considered the originator of the Supplementary Hypothesis. He disputed that the change from Elohim to Yahweh could be used as a criterion in distinguishing documents: "The names Elohim and Jehovah are not the distinguishing property of two different writers but probably of two different periods or religious schools."⁹ The power of Ilgen's main criterion, which was based on Astruc's discovery and had been popularized by Eichhorn, had thus been dampened. In its place, de Wette now for the first time based himself on the work we now call the Priestly writing.

7. Werner Carl Ludewig Ziegler, "Kritik über den Artikel von der Schöpfung nach unserer gewöhnlichen Dogmatik," in *Magazin für Religionsphilosophie, Exegese und Kirchengeschichte*, ed. Heinrich Philipp Conrad Henke, vol. 2 (Helmstädt: Fleck-eisen, 1794), 1–113; Johann Philipp Gabler, *Neuer Versuch über die Mosaische Schöpfungsgeschichte aus der höhern Kritik: Ein Nachtrag zum ersten Theil seiner Ausgabe der Eichhorn'schen Urgeschichte* (Altdorf: Monath & Kußler, 1795).

8. See Christoph Levin, "Tatbericht und Wortbericht in der priesterschriftlichen Schöpfungserzählung," *ZTK* 91 (1994): 115–33.

9. Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette, *Kritik der Mosaischen Geschichte*, vol. 2 of *Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Halle: Schimmelpfennig, 1807), 29–30 (my translation).

Genesis and the beginning of Exodus are originally based on an original whole, a kind of epic poem, that, earlier than almost all other pieces and at the same time the original of these, as it were, served as a the foundation to the collection of documents about this part of the history, to which the others are added on as explications or supplements. This we must seek to emphasize and characterize. If we are successful, this will shed light on the other pieces appended to it; we will understand those only through this.¹⁰

However, de Wette was not able to make the Priestly writing plausible as the basic text of the entire Pentateuch, a fact Hermann Hupfeld later drew attention to.

With true critical caution and austerity, he [de Wette] confined himself to pursuing the *Urschrift* he sought only in *broad strokes* and in its *sure* traces, without attempting, as usual, a complete assignment of the individual parts, which at that stage could not be achieved without arbitrariness and vague conjectures; as such, he assigned to the *Urschrift*, besides the main stages—creation, deluge, and the call of Abraham—and the tribal registers that fill the gaps, with certainty only chapter 23; 35:9–15; 46:2ff; 48:1–7; 49:29–33; 50:12, 13 (also, as it seems, the Elohim source of the Joseph-story ...). From this he distinguishes with fine sense ... later *imitations* and *embellishments*.... And certainly the form of the *Urschrift* would have emerged even more definitely from these and other utterances of that first work even then, if that had been his goal and his intention had not chiefly been to prove the mythical (unhistorical) character of the narration.¹¹

De Wette had no interest in literary history in the narrow sense. He was primarily focused on defining the *genre* of the Mosaic story, that is, on demonstrating that it was not a historical source in the strict sense but a myth. As such, he was able to confine himself, after Gen 17, to a rather general treatment of the text.

The Supplementary Hypothesis had a strong impact on Heinrich Ewald, Friedrich Tuch, August Knobel, and others.¹² In the preface to his

10. De Wette, *Kritik der Mosaischen Geschichte*, 28–29.

11. Hermann Hupfeld, *Die Quellen der Genesis und die Art ihrer Zusammensetzung* (Berlin: Wiegandt & Grieben, 1853), 3–4 (my translation).

12. Heinrich Ewald, *Die Komposition der Genesis kritisch untersucht* (Braun-

Genesis commentary, Knobel describes the supposed foundational text (“*Grundschrift*”) as follows:

The ancient document, on which the books of Moses and Joshua are founded, easily reveals itself to the critical eye by its firm purpose and plan and its invariably stable manner and language. In my view, it can be detected with some certainty, especially since it seems to be fully preserved with the exception of a small number of statements. The business of criticism is more challenging by far, however, for those pieces, which have been added to the old *Grundschrift* by the editor’s hand. They show no such unity as do the parts of the *Grundschrift*.¹³

The disposition of the Pentateuch could thus most easily be explained by a single document that was later supplemented. The elegant simplicity of this explanation caused the obvious gaps of the *Grundschrift* to be tolerated. Here lies the key weakness of the Supplementary Hypothesis.

3. Hupfeld and Nöldeke: The Newer Documentary Hypothesis

As a result, the Documentary Hypothesis gained the upper hand once more, and it was Hermann Hupfeld (1853) who set the course. He turned the three writers Ilgen had posited into three sources. The first crucial prerequisite for his hypothesis was that Hupfeld developed the profile of the “*Urschrift*,” as he now judiciously called what is today the Priestly writing, with greater precision, in order to separate from it the text of the other documents, which we now call Elohists and Yahwists.

Such is the *first* task of this work, which has the purpose first and, on the one hand, of *proving a number of previously overlooked parts of the Urschrift* and in doing so establish their coherence; on the other hand, and primarily, of *rejecting a number of later pieces with which it has been wrongly burdened* and thereby to free its image of foreign traits and establish it in its *purity*. This is followed by a *second*: the study of the *later sources*, especially of the pieces designated by the name *Yhvh*, of their historical character and connections, as well as the mode by which

schweig; Ludwig Lucius, 1823); Friedrich Tuch, *Kommentar über die Genesis* (Halle: Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1838).

13. August Knobel, *Die Genesis erklärt* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1852), from the preface (my translation).

they were assembled into a whole together with the *Urschrift*, that is, the mode of *redaction*.¹⁴

Hupfeld clearly rejected the Supplementary Hypothesis:

In this quest for unity and simplification of the process of composition and redaction of the components, one has now come to assume in the Pentateuch ... only *one single independent written source*, the *Urschrift Elohim*, and to assign the *Yhwhistic* components—apart from a few special documents—to the *redactor*, or rather *author* of the book itself, who supplemented the basic document, that is, extended and embellished it according to later points of view and needs, and thus created the present work; he is hence called after this activity the “*supplementer*”.... It is the natural impetus and consequence of this view, that first, as the gaze seeks everywhere after connection, relation and relationship, the *peculiarities* and *differences* are easily *overlooked* or neglected; and second, that involuntarily the impact of the *Yhwhist* as supplementer is supposed to be as *slight and insignificant as possible*: because additions that contain indispensable constituents of the story or substantial deviations from the written source available to him (as well as, on the other side, mere repetitions of what is said) would prove damaging to his character as a mere supplementer and make the whole assumption unlikely. For this double reason one cannot avoid *burdening the Urschrift with as much and as diverse material as possible*.¹⁵

Hupfeld recognized that in order to make the Supplementary Hypothesis possible at all, the Priestly writing had been assigned too much text and its profile effaced in the process.

Hupfeld’s skill is apparent in the fact that he not only separated the documents but also considered their mode of composition at the same time:

In general, the redaction of Genesis from the three established documents is comparable to the project of composing a *gospel harmony* out of the gospels, especially the first three, as was attempted already early on; and had the sources from which they are composed been lost and forgotten, the case would be quite the same. But the fact that the project in our book was not unsuccessful is proved already by the fact that it has for so long hidden its origin from such diverse component parts and

14. Hupfeld, *Die Quellen der Genesis*, 5.

15. Hupfeld, *Die Quellen der Genesis*, 78–79.

could be regarded as a unified work and is still considered such by many to this day; and yet, at the same time, it has made it possible to recent criticism to separate the sources woven together in it more or less clearly and exactly.¹⁶

This comparison to Tatian's gospel harmony has since been occasionally repeated, with particular emphasis by Herbert Donner.¹⁷

Hupfeld's impact was significant. Theodor Nöldeke, who is generally seen as a key figure in identifying the Priestly writing, followed his work,¹⁸ as did later Abraham Kuenen and Julius Wellhausen. Ever unpretentious, Kuenen describes the Priestly writing of the Documentary Hypothesis as follows:

We have no difficulty in discovering in certain Elohîm-passages in Genesis the now scattered segments of a systematic work that begins with the creation in six days, followed by a genealogy from Adam to Noah; describes the deluge and the covenant of Elohîm with Noah and his posterity; passes by another genealogy (from Shem to Terah) on to the tribal fathers of Israel, Abram, Isaac, and Jacob; and continues their history down to the death of Jacob in Egypt. All this has come down to us nearly, but not quite, complete. There are some few verses and passages of which we cannot yet determine whether they do or do not belong to the work, for it is only the study of the other elements of the Hexateuch and of the method of its redaction that can settle the point. But, generally speaking, the now scattered portions so obviously belong to each other and resemble each other so closely in language, style, and character that there is no room for the smallest doubt as to their common origin, so that, in point of fact, almost complete agreement exists on the subject.¹⁹

16. Hupfeld, *Die Quellen der Genesis*, 195.

17. Herbert Donner, "Der Redaktor: Überlegungen zum vorkritischen Umgang mit der Heiligen Schrift," *Hen 2* (1980): 1–29.

18. Theodor Nöldeke, "Die s. g. Grundschrift des Pentateuchs," in *Untersuchungen zur Kritik des Alten Testaments* (Kiel: Schwers'sche Buchhandlung, 1869), 1–144.

19. Abraham Kuenen, *An Historical-Critical Inquiry into the Origin and Composition of the Hexateuch*, trans. Philip H. Wicksteed (London: Macmillan, 1886), 65–66. Dutch original: Kuenen, *De Thora en de historische boeken des Ouden Verbonds*, vol. 1 of *Historisch-critisch onderzoek naar het ontstaan en de verzameling van de boeken des Ouden Verbonds*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Engels, 1885), 66.

4. Wellhausen and Kuenen: From the Supplementary Hypothesis to the Documentary Hypothesis (and Back Again)

In 1871, Wellhausen drew not on Hupfeld but on his teacher Ewald and thus on the Supplementary Hypothesis:

Also in the Pentateuch no two or more large historical works with the same subject were originally written independently of each other, so that the later takes no note of the earlier. Instead, partly smaller pieces were attached to a core, in which for the first time the hitherto isolated oral and written stories had been joined together ..., partly the whole was reworked in light of this new connection, perhaps in such a way that it itself in its essential content remained incorporated into the new edition right from the start, or in such a way that only the basic elements of its plan were significant for the latter, which made it possible for a later redactor to combine the old and the new—there is much to be said for both possibilities.²⁰

If Wellhausen was soon to abandon the Supplementary Hypothesis, this was due less to insights gained from literary history and more to his interest in the history of religion. Since the Priestly writing was the youngest element of the Pentateuch, as Wellhausen had undertaken to show, it could not have acted as the *Grundschrift* for the literary history of the text. The text needed a new foundation. This was provided by the other sources, as offered by Hupfeld. Wellhausen merely changed the sequence: instead of P-E-J, it became J-E-P. Since Deuteronomy (Dt) was able to act as the fulcrum in the history of tradition, it was assigned a key role in the argument.

In 1877 Wellhausen summarized his views in his *Composition des Hexateuchs* before embarking on his *Geschichte Israels I*, from 1878, which he called *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* from the second edition onward.

Having reached the conclusion of my investigation, I shall briefly summarize its results once more. From J and E derived JE, and Deuteronomy was later connected with JE; an independent work beside it is Q.²¹ Extended into the Priestly writing, Q is now united with JE + Dt and this created the Hexateuch. For the sake of simplicity, I usu-

20. Julius Wellhausen, *Der Text der Bücher Samuelis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1871), x–xi, my translation.

21. Q (*liber quattuor foederum* = book of four covenants) was Wellhausen's first

ally abstract from the fact that the literary process was in effect more complicated, and the so-called Supplementary Hypothesis therefore does still find its application in a subordinate manner. J and E probably experienced several enlarged editions (J¹ J² J³, E¹ E² E³) and were worked together not as J¹ and E¹ but as J³ and E³; the same applies to JE, Dt, and Q, before they were combined with the larger entities in question. But I am convinced that, apart from Deuteronomy, there are only three independent writings that fully presented the matter, J and E and Q. Admittedly, I have not succeeded in following the thread of J and E through the whole.²²

In university textbooks, this is usually given in a shortened and simplified form. This obscures the extent to which the Supplementary Hypothesis remained significant to Wellhausen. After all, Wellhausen willingly corrected himself in an exchange with Kuenen:

I am by no means wedded to the views I expressed about the composition of the Hexateuch—except for the principle that except for the main sources there were all kinds of excrescences, that the Supplementary Hypothesis can be justified, and that the mechanical mosaic hypothesis is absurd. Kuenen's essays are corrections in line with my own intentions; in this respect, I admit all he says, even what he did not yet say.²³

What this can mean for the analysis of the texts can be observed by looking at the supplements added to the *Die Composition des Hexateuchs* in 1885. There the Supplementary Hypothesis is extensively used:

I have been led by textual criticism to literary criticism, because it turned out that sometimes there was no boundary to be found between where the glossator's work ceased and that of the literator began. Already early on, this made me suspicious of the manner in which the Hebrew history books were regarded as a mere mosaic.... In examining the composition of the Hexateuch, I realized that there are indeed three independent narrative threads running through it, but that these grand arcs have not merely been cut to size and lightly sewn up but have, before, upon,

siglum for the Priestly writing; see Julius Wellhausen, "Die Composition des Hexateuchs," *JDT* 21 (1876): 392–450; *JDT* 22 (1877): 407–79, esp. 392.

22. Wellhausen, "Die Composition des Hexateuchs," 478–79 (my translation).

23. Julius Wellhausen to Adolf Jülicher, 8 November 1880, published in *Briefe*, ed. Rudolf Smend (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 78 (no. 94) (trans. Margaret Kohl).

and after their unification (which did not occur at the same time), been greatly increased and revised, that, in other words, the literary process by which the Hexateuch originated was very complicated and that the so-called Supplementary Hypothesis does indeed find its application though in a different sense than originally formulated. However, the last layer of sediment, which superficially covers the whole bedload, I have not properly appreciated, at least in the narrative parts, especially where it is strikingly prominent. Here Kuenen has, as I have already gratefully said elsewhere, freed me from the leftover remnants of the old leaven of the mechanical separation of the sources.²⁴

With regard to the text's composition, Wellhausen maintained the notion that P acted as its basis. In doing so, he recognized that the nature of the sources and their relative age are not necessarily connected. He further saw the difference between the history of tradition and the history of religion, on the one hand, and the place of the sources in the text's redaction history, on the other. All in all, however, literary history was a means to an end to him, as it had been for de Wette: a way of reconstructing history and history of religion.

5. Budde and Smend: The Newest Documentary Hypothesis

Wellhausen's rejection of the "mechanical mosaic hypothesis" has not prevented others from using his observations to separate the sources with greater precision. One example, itself a book with admirable exegetic acumen, is Karl Budde's *Urgeschichte* of 1883.²⁵ Budde wanted to penetrate the complex literary-historical process by using the example of Gen 1–11 and to establish Wellhausen's hypothetical entities J¹ J² J³ as precisely as possible. In doing so, he made a wealth of apt observations. But whenever he merged the Supplementary and Documentary Hypotheses and combined the sequence of the versions with some sort of concurrency, in such a way that the differently edited versions had later been combined into a new literary whole, he went too far.²⁶

24. Julius Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs* (Berlin: Reimer, 1885), 314–15 (my translation).

25. Karl Budde, *Die Biblische Urgeschichte (Gen. 1–12, 5) untersucht* (Gießen: Ricker, 1883).

26. Budde later proceeded similarly in his analyses of Judges and Samuel. See Karl Budde, *Die Bücher Richter und Samuel, ihre Quellen und ihr Aufbau* (Gießen: Ricker,

Wellhausen voiced his opinion of Budde's approach in a letter to William Robertson Smith:

I find Pentateuch criticism the more repugnant the more people generally are grimly determined to undertake it. It is really high time that they were offered some other subject. I do not much care for Budde's analysis of Gen 1 ff. either, even in its refined form. The very fact that the matter is probably so extremely complicated, should make one modest in one's claims. But Kuenen seems delighted with the book.²⁷

In his great commentary on Genesis (1st ed. 1901; 3rd ed. 1910), Hermann Gunkel separated the sources using a "zipper principle" that often produced implausible results in terms of literary history. A drastic example are the nine verses of the tower of Babel narrative (Gen 11:1–9), which he divided into two parallel sources: a city recension that ended in the confusion of the languages and a tower narrative that told of the dispersion of mankind across the earth.²⁸

In his 1912 *Erzählung des Hexateuch*, Rudolf Smend Sr. understood the composition of continuous narratives that were intended to supersede their older predecessors and nevertheless were later combined with them as the rule:

The compilation of the younger narrative works with the older ones was not intended by their authors. Of course, J² was dependent on J¹, and E dependent on J, but J² wanted to replace J¹, and E the compilation J. Nonetheless, J² was compiled with J¹ and E with J. This peculiar process has been repeated in the history of the Hexateuch ever since.²⁹

The result can be best observed in Otto Eißfeldt's *Hexateuch-Synopse* of 1922. Eißfeldt took Smend's results and presented them in synoptic columns. The method is strikingly mechanical:

1890); Budde, *Das Buch der Richter erklärt*, KHC 7 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1897); Budde, *Die Bücher Samuel erklärt*, KHC 8 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1902).

27. Julius Wellhausen to William Robertson Smith, 30 December 1883, published in Smend, *Briefe*, 138 (no. 177) (trans. Margaret Kohl).

28. Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis Translated and Interpreted*, trans. Mark E. Biddle (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 94–95.

29. Rudolf Smend, *Die Erzählung des Hexateuch auf ihre Quellen untersucht* (Berlin: Reimer, 1912), 342–33 (my translation).

In the Hexateuch, with D excluded once again, one can point to about fifty passages, in which fourfold elements appear; if one succeeds in arranging these fifty times four items into four rows of items, or rather, if comprehensive observation of the facts urges one toward this order; and if in the process the whole substance of the Hexateuch is almost completely used up: then the assumption of a fourfold narrative thread may be considered proven.³⁰

If one reads the parallel columns that result from these premises, one will find many cases in which a meaningful narrative sequence fails to emerge. Contrary to its intent, the Hexateuch synopsis fails to demonstrate the documentary hypothesis and in fact involuntarily provides a counter-argument.

6. From Klostermann to Blum: A Farewell to the Priestly Writing

In the meantime, Wellhausen's opponents had sounded the charge. The first victim was the Priestly writing. Its late dating by Karl Heinrich Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen would, sooner or later, call into question its status as the *Grundschrift* in the literary history,³¹ and the lack of continuous literary coherence is much more evident in P than in J. In 1893, August Klostermann voiced his opinion quite clearly:

I think it is among the most brilliant attestations of his taste and his fine sense of the natural that Wellhausen finally admitted that the narrative of Q, as criticism has unearthed it, did not exist for itself and could be explained only by its direct relation to the Jehovist narrative, moreover,

30. Otto Eißfeldt, *Hexateuch-Synopse: Die Erzählung der fünf Bücher Mose und des Buches Josua mit dem Anfange des Richterbuches* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922), 6 (my translation).

31. Upon closer inspection, the foundations of this were laid already by Karl Heinrich Graf, when he drew conclusions for the narrative of the Pentateuch from the proof that the laws of the Priestly writing are to be dated late (Karl Heinrich Graf, "Die Bestandtheile der geschichtlichen Bücher von Genes. 1 bis 2 Reg. 25 [Pentateuch und Prophetiae priores]," in *Die geschichtlichen Bücher des Alten Testaments: Zwei historisch-kritische Untersuchungen* [Leipzig: Weigel, 1866], 1–113; Graf, "Die s. g. Grundschrift des Pentateuchs," in *Archiv für wissenschaftliche Erforschung des Alten Testaments*, ed. Adalbert Merx, vol. 1 [Halle: Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1869], 466–77). He nevertheless maintained the term *Grundschrift*: "This solution is simply that the so-called *Grundschrift* text forms that part of the Pentateuch that was added last and with the insertion of which the redaction was completed" (468, my translation).

that what was omitted from Q by R and replaced with elements from JE was parallel to these and probably not much different from them.³²

Once again, the Supplementary Hypothesis comes into play, with JE now acting as *Grundschrift*. Klostermann was not to remain a solitary voice. In 1908, Bernardus D. Eerdmans in Leiden contended:

The so-called Priestly, historical-legislative writing, which began with Gen 1, demands much in the way of critical good faith. It seems quite peculiar that such great agreement has been reached precisely in distinguishing these Priestly parts.³³

The so-called P-elements are not fragmented parts of a certain writing but traditions of various origins, which cannot be plausibly said to have been assembled by a priestly, exilic, or postexilic writer as an introduction to a legal work.³⁴

Johannes Dahse (1912) also attempted to make the Supplementary Hypothesis plausible for the Priestly writing:

Surely there can no longer be any doubt that our compiler and exegete is Esra the scribe who made “the book” suitable for the practice of preaching at the service. He was concerned not with adding something new to the traditional scripture but to “clarify the meaning so as one might understand what had been read” [cf. Neh 8:8] and that the community would be edified by it. *Genesis, as we now have it, is an adaptation of an older narrative type for the purposes of worship; in most of the so-called P-fragments, but also in other sentences, we are dealing, as it were, with liturgical frills....* In conclusion, I may be permitted to draw on the analogy that would arise in our German Bibles if the chapter headings were to be rendered unrecognizable as such and printed together with the rest of the text. Then a new “P” would be created in our Bibles.³⁵

32. August Klostermann, *Der Pentateuch: Beiträge zu seinem Verständnis und seiner Entstehungsgeschichte* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1893), 10 (my translation).

33. Bernardus D. Eerdmans, *Die Komposition der Genesis*. Vol. 1 of *Alttestamentliche Studien* (Gießen: Töpelmann, 1908), 2 (my translation).

34. Eerdmans, *Die Komposition der Genesis*, 33 (my translation).

35. Johannes Dahse, “P in Genesis 12–50,” in *Textkritische Materialien zur Hexateuchfrage*, vol. 1 (Gießen: Töpelmann 1912), 144–74, here 161–62 (my translation).

Such a position is not altogether devoid of eccentricity, but the observations put forward still have some merit.

Another exponent of such criticism was Max Löhr (1924), who could already draw on Eißfeldt's Hexateuch synopsis:

Finally, it is questionable whether what is ascribed to P in Genesis can really be taken out of its context and, however much the redactions may have suppressed, can be regarded as the substance, in content and arrangement, of an independent source text.... It seems more natural to me to suppose that the diverse material of Genesis, at least for the most part, is assembled for the first time by *one* man and his assistants, with a definite plan and a definite purpose, than to postulate the very complicated process of assembling a series of independent source texts.... There are also endless glosses and changes in detail.³⁶

A similar line was taken by Paul Volz (1933), who regarded not only the Elohist but also the Priestly writing as a “wrong track of Pentateuch criticism”:

The theory of source separation assumes that, besides J and E, P too had provided a continuous narrative of the primeval history and the history of the patriarchs, so that a threefold (to some even a fourfold) work of parallel narratives existed and that in some stories J, E, and P are now intertwined. This assumption can hardly be maintained with regard to P, any more than that of the narrative work E. It can be only laboriously asserted even by the adherents of the source theory.³⁷

Frank Moore Cross (1973) may serve as an important Anglophone voice here:

The Priestly Work was composed by a narrow school or single tradent using many written and, no doubt, some oral documents. Most important among them was the Epic (JE) tradition. The Priestly strata of the Tetrachem never existed as an independent narrative document. The Priestly tradent framed and systematized JE with Priestly lore, and, especially at points of special interest, greatly supplemented JE. The Priestly work had as its central goal the reconstruction of the covenant of Sinai

36. Max Löhr, *Der Priesterkodex in der Genesis*, vol. 1 of *Untersuchungen zum Hexateuchproblem*, BZAW 38 (Gießen: Töpelmann, 1924), 1, 30, 31 (my translation).

37. Paul Volz, “Anhang: P ist kein Erzähler,” in Volz and Rudolph, *Der Elohist als Erzähler*, 135–42, here 135 (my translation).

and its associated institutions. At the same time, it was a program written in preparation for and in hope of the restoration of Israel.³⁸

In his study of the patriarchal narrative, Erhard Blum (1984) argued:

In fact, it seems quite astonishing to me that the textual material in Gen 12–50 that has been claimed for “P” did not lead to a general problematization or questioning of the hypothesis of an independent P-narrative. This rather more than thin and “patchy” thread ... is a caricature of a narrative rather than a patriarchal story.³⁹

These observations all support a Supplementary Hypothesis in the form of an edition.

7. Von Rad and Noth: From Tradition History to Redaction Criticism

The fact that the flaws of the P-hypothesis did not become ever more pronounced is probably due to the shift in interest toward the history of tradition, which dominated Old Testament studies from the 1920s onward. Once one had decided that the historiographical concept of the Pentateuch was based on orality and certain *Sitze im Leben* (“discursive frames”), the question as to why the hypothetical sources could have one and the same outline—which is most easily answered using the Supplementary Hypothesis—lost much of its urgency. The literary history was relegated to second string.

The “Short Historical Creed” (Deut 26:5b–9; 6:20–24; Josh 24:2b–13) Gerhard von Rad postulated as the reason for the uniform disposition of the Pentateuch sources soon turned out to be a late summary.⁴⁰ Even the

38. Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 324–25.

39. Erhard Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte*, WMANT 57 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 426–27 (my translation).

40. Gerhard von Rad, “The Form-Critical Problem of the Pentateuch” (1938), repr. in *From Genesis to Chronicles: Explorations in Old Testament Theology*, ed. E. W. Trueman Dicken (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 1–58, esp. 3–7. See Leonhard Rost, “Das kleine geschichtliche Credo,” in *Das kleine Credo und andere Studien zum Alten Testament* (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1965), 11–25; Wolfgang Richter, “Beobachtungen zur theologischen Systembildung in der alttestamentlichen Literatur anhand des ‘Kleinen geschichtlichen Credo,’” in *Wahrheit und Verkündigung: Michael Schmaus*

entity G that Martin Noth envisaged behind J and E⁴¹ has been laid to rest by the Elohist's gentle demise.⁴² Since the 1960s at the latest, scholars had to focus on redaction history, as one can see already in Noth's work in 1943:

The most important point to grasp, in my opinion, is that in terms of the overall structure of his narrative P unmistakably follows older tradition just as we have it in fixed literary form, primarily in J. This does not mean that J has to have been used by P as a literary *Vorlage*. The situation is rather that the structure of the tradition concerning the pre-history of Israel as we encounter it in J was undoubtedly determinative for P as he shaped his work.⁴³

This shift toward redaction history then occurs explicitly with Hans Walter Wolff's *Kerygma des Jahwisten* (1964).⁴⁴

8. The Dilemma of the Priestly Writing: Edition or Source?

In spite of the wealth of exegetic counter-arguments, the Priestly writing continues to be thought of by many as the “Archimedean point of Pentateuch scholarship.”⁴⁵

zum 70. Geburtstag, ed. Leo Scheffczyk et al., vol. 1 (Munich: Schöningh, 1967), 175–212; Brevard S. Childs, “Deuteronomic Formulae of the Exodus Traditions,” in *Hebräische Wortforschung: Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Walter Baumgartner*, ed. Benedikt Hartmann et al., VTSup 16 (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 30–39; Norbert Lohfink, “Zum ‘kleinen geschichtlichen Credo’ Dtn 26,5–9,” *TP* 46 (1971): 19–39.

41. Martin Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1948), 40–44.

42. Volz and Rudolph, *Der Elohist als Erzähler*; Wilhelm Rudolph, *Der “Elohist” von Exodus bis Josua*, BZAW 68 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1938).

43. Martin Noth, *The Chronicler's History*, trans. Hugh G. M. Williamson, JSOTSup 50 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 136; German original: *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1943), 207.

44. Hans Walter Wolff, “Das Kerygma des Jahwisten” (1964), repr. in *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament*, 2nd ed., TB 22 (Munich: Kaiser, 1973), 345–73.

45. Konrad Schmid, “Differenzierungen und Konzeptualisierungen der Einheit Gottes in der Religions- und Literaturgeschichte Israels,” in *Der eine Gott und die Götter: Polytheismus und Monotheismus im antiken Israel*, ed. Manfred Oeming and Konrad Schmid, ATANT 82 (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2003), 11–39, esp. 19.

Since its critical separation out of the Pentateuch by Theodor Nöldeke, the Priestly writing (= P) has been the starting point and foundation of all literary-historical theorization of the Pentateuch. Establishing its relations to the nonpriestly pieces of the Pentateuch sets the course for their assessment.⁴⁶

Ploughing on in a rut that should have been abandoned in the nineteenth century, scholars continue to insist that P is the *Grundschrift* and the remaining text is characterized by not being part of the Priestly writing.⁴⁷ In fact, however, the Priestly writing poses a dilemma so thorny, it can hardly be resolved.

(A) A number of established reasons make it difficult to accept the Priestly writing as an independent source.

(1) Its independence is called into question mainly by the fact that the narrative is not a continuous sequence. It presupposes significant amounts of material that is found only in the non-Priestly text: the destruction of Sodom (for Gen 19:29); the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah (for Gen 25:20); Jacob's wealth in flocks that he gained from Laban and his flight (for Gen 31:18); the story of Joseph and the move of Jacob's sons to Egypt (for Gen 37:2; 41:46; 46:6–7; 47:27–28).

Even if one presupposes that in these cases the redaction R^{JP} ignored the text of the Priestly writing in favor of the parallel account, keeping only the dates in Gen 16:16; 21:5; 25:26; 50:22, the supposed omission remains a serious flaw. Exegesis has long overlooked this problem with surprising ease by interpreting the Priestly writing as “the scarlet thread on which the pearls of JE are hung.”⁴⁸

One of the most secure results of a literary-critical analysis of these books is that both in general and in matters of detail the redactor took the P-narrative as his starting point and worked the older sources into it. Whenever possible, this was done without anything being cut out, but

46. Eckart Otto, “Forschungen zur Priesterschrift,” *TRu* 62 (1997): 1–50, here 1 (my translation).

47. The term *non-P* is now gaining traction mainly because one has grown so eager to avoid the term *Yahwist*. The cost this simplification incurs, in that such a negative definition is hardly satisfactory, especially given that it glosses over the complex literary evidence, is being paid with surprising willingness.

48. Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, trans. J. Sutherland Black and Allan R. Menzies (Edinburgh: Black, 1885), 332.

if the need arose the older sources were cut and rearranged in favour of the P-narrative which was being used as the basis. This method of the redactor, which is too well known to require any more precise exposition, was not only determinative for the combination of the sources in individual cases of greater or lesser significance. By extension, it was also responsible for the delimitation of the larger whole which emerged from this redactional process.⁴⁹

It is not for nothing that these claims remain without a “precise exposition” that gives textual evidence to support them. In fact, the Priestly writing has substantial gaps in the patriarchal history. Without this history, however, the Priestly writing is unimaginable as an independent literary work, since it would lack the necessary literary coherence from the Creation to the Sinai.

(2) The thorniest problem is that essential information is not provided. An example is Moses, who suddenly appears in Exod 6:2 without having been introduced.

(B) On the other hand, is also impossible to read the Priestly writing as a mere supplement to the older, non-Priestly text. The most important arguments are as follows:

(1) The primeval history Gen 1–11 and the story of Moses’s calling in Exod 6 up to and including the miracle at the sea in Exod 14 can be adequately understood only if one presupposes two parallel narratives. This has been demonstrated aplenty.⁵⁰

(2) The Documentary Hypothesis clearly applies to the flood narrative in Gen 6–9 and the miracle at the sea in Exod 14.⁵¹ Already Eichhorn began his attempt to prove that Genesis was a compound of two histor-

49. Noth, *Chronicler’s History*, 138.

50. For the primeval history most recently in several contributions by Jan Christian Gertz, e.g., “Beobachtungen zum literarischen Charakter und zum geistesgeschichtlichen Ort der nichtpriesterschriftlichen Sintfluterzählung,” in *Auf dem Weg zur Endgestalt von Genesis bis II Regum: Festschrift Hans-Christoph Schmitt*, ed. Martin Beck and Ulrike Schorn, BZAW 370 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006), 41–57; Gertz, “Source Criticism in the Primeval History of Genesis: An Outdated Paradigm for the Study of the Pentateuch?,” in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research*, ed. Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid, and Baruch J. Schwartz, FAT 78 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 169–80; Gertz, “The Formation of the Primeval History,” in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, ed. Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen, VTSup 152 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 107–36.

51. On Exod 14, see Christoph Levin, “Source Criticism: The Miracle at the Sea,” in *Method Matters: Essays on the Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Honor of David*

ical works by discussing Gen 6–9.⁵² The analysis of the flood narrative has since become ever more nuanced.⁵³ The best argument in favor of the Documentary Hypothesis is that those exegetes who wanted to make the Supplementary Hypothesis evident have taken both P and J (and vice versa) as either core or supplement. Either one doubts that the Priestly writing can provide an independent account, or one makes the same claim for the Yahwist's version.⁵⁴ There can be no stronger proof that two independent accounts have been combined here.

(3) In the account of the plague of frogs, there is a gap between Exod 8:3 and 11aβ. Such gaps, like the objectless reference to the act of building a window in the ark in the Yahwist's flood narrative (Gen 8:6b), provide strong evidence against the Supplementary Hypothesis. Not that they are fully preserved, but that they have been damaged in the process of merging the sources, most clearly demonstrates that the current text was preceded by two independent narrative works.

(4) In several cases where the P-thread is thin and has been mutilated in the process of merging the sources, it can nevertheless be traced with relative ease. The best examples are Abraham's journey and his separation from Lot (Gen 12:5; 13:6, 11b–12bα; 19:29abα) and the suffering of the Israelites in Egypt (Exod 1:13–14; 2:23aβ–25; 6:2ff.).

(5) A strong indicator in favor of former literary independence is that such fragments show traces of literary growth that is restricted specifically to this literary level. In the depiction of Abraham and Lot one reads:

L. Petersen, ed. Joel M. LeMon and Kent Harold Richards, RBS 56 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 39–61.

52. Eichhorn, *Einleitung ins Alte Testament*, 2:301–9, 311–18. The two creation accounts were not particularly significant to Eichhorn, since he considered Gen 2:4–3:24 a separate document, due to its use of the divine name “Yahweh Elohim”: “Already the second chapter from the fourth verse and the third one make up a separate document.”

53. See esp. Hupfeld, *Die Quellen der Genesis*, 6–16, 132–36; Eberhard Schrader, *Studien zur Kritik und Erklärung der biblischen Urgeschichte* (Zürich: Meyer & Zeller, 1863), 136–48; Budde, *Die biblische Urgeschichte*, 248–76; Gunkel, *Genesis Translated and Interpreted*, 138–42; Christoph Levin, *Der Jahwist*, FRLANT 157 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 112–14.

54. For arguments that the Priestly writing does not have an independent account, see Erhard Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, BZAW 189 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1990), 281–85; and others. For the same claim about the Yahwist, see Jean Louis Ska, “El Relato des Diluvio: Un Relato Sacerdotal y Algunos Fragmentos Redaccionales Posteriores,” *EstBib* 52 (1994): 37–62; and others.

12:5 And⁵⁵ Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions which they had gathered and the persons that they had gotten in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. And they came to the land of Canaan. ^{13:6} And the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. ^{11b} Thus they separated from each other. ¹² Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, while Lot dwelt among the cities of the Plain. ^{19:29} So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the Plain, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow.⁵⁶

The redundancies are not simply due to the style of the Priestly writing but derive from parentheses and restatements.

^{1:13} The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, ¹⁴ and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labour. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them. ^{2:23aβ} The Israelites groaned under their slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. ²⁴ God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ²⁵ God looked upon the Israelites, and God took notice of them. ^{6:2} God spoke to Moses and said to him: I am Yahweh. ³ I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as El Shadday, but by my name Yahweh I did not make myself known to them.

Taken together, the arguments in favor of independence should outweigh the others not only in number, but also in their significance—unless, of course, one were to follow Erhard Blum, who considered the Priestly writing neither a source, nor an edition.⁵⁷ It is questionable, however,

55. The dating in Gen 12:4b is not necessarily part of the chronological system of the Priestly source. It may have been added after the sources were merged; see Smend, *Die Erzählung des Hexateuch*, 12.

56. Contrary to what is usually assumed, not all of verse Gen 19:29 is part of the Priestly writing. “The last part of the verse ‘when he overthrew the cities where Lot had settled,’ is a note on the first part of the verse.” Verse 29bβγ is probably a parenthesis of redaction R^P.

57. Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, 232. See also the considerations of Wellhausen above.

whether this response could provide a way out of the dilemma posed by the literary history without ultimately abandoning the literary unity of the Priestly writing.

9. The Priestly Writing as a Special Case of Tradition History

If the Priestly writing was once an independent account of the early history, it is exceptional in its relationship to the older tradition, since there is no other case in the literary history of the Old Testament in which an older tradition is replaced in this way: it is always continued, updated, and supplemented to reflect the changed circumstances of the day.⁵⁸ What could have caused the Priestly writing to be written as a new, alternative account, rather than as a reworking of the existing one?

The only possible answer is that the conception of history that the Priestly writing formulates involves such drastic change that it could not simply be superimposed on the older account. As a first step, the reasons that may have informed this new approach can be determined by elimination. They are not to be found in (1) the chronological system of the Priestly writing. The system could have been added onto the older text without difficulty and was indeed probably partly created this way.⁵⁹ They are also not to be found in (2) the system of the *toledot*, which has not unreasonably been claimed to have been layered on top of older narratives and genealogies and that is in some cases clearly secondary.⁶⁰ They are not even to be found (3) in the promises made to Noah in Gen 9:9, 11b, to Abraham in Gen 17:7, and to Moses in Exod 6:5–7; 29:45–46, even though these four promises of covenant provide a structure⁶¹ with a theo-

58. This changes only with apocryphal books, such as the book of Jubilees. The Chronicler's narrative that paralleled the Enneateuch may also fit here.

59. See Smend, *Die Erzählung des Hexateuch*, 14: "Originally, P had, at most, information about the age of the patriarchs, and even that is not necessary to assume.... The world era of the Hexateuch ... also requires a connection between the Hexateuch and the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, which tell the story of Israel in chronological order."

60. Not in Gen 2:4a, but certainly in 10:1 and 36:9. See Smend, *Die Erzählung des Hexateuch*, 16: "Given all this, the אלה ת' in Genesis derives in many places from a glossator, who wanted to emphasize the genealogical structure of the Genesis narrative, but acted without the necessary rigor and prudence and occasionally put the formula in the wrong place."

61. See Thomas Pola, *Die ursprüngliche Priesterschrift: Beobachtungen zur Liter-*

logical significance that is most clearly evident in the independent Priestly writing. The addition of the covenant scene of Gen 15⁶² shows that this covenant theology could have been introduced also into the older account.

There are two peculiarities of the Priestly writing that are incompatible with the older account, and these played a crucial part in separating the sources from the very beginning. The first is the step-by-step system of the revelation of God's name, beginning with Elohim in the primeval history, followed by El Shaddai in the patriarchal history from Gen 17⁶³ to the final revelation of the divine name Yahweh to Moses from Exod 6:2 on. These tiers could not have been realized on the basis of the older version; for in that, the Yahwist uses the divine name already in Gen 2:5, and Gen 4:26 clearly notes the beginning worship of Yahweh: "At that time people began to invoke the name of Yahweh." In the Priestly writing, by contrast, worship of Yahweh is tied to the residence the Israelites are to build in the desert and where Yahweh's glory will be made apparent. Hence, Yahweh reveals himself with his name only during the Exodus. This sequence could not have been created on the basis of the older version.

This ties into a second peculiarity. The Yahwist stresses that Yahweh is effective and can be worshipped everywhere and especially in foreign lands. In that he responds to the concerns of the diaspora, which were incompatible with the demands of Deuteronomy that tied worship of Yahweh to the sanctuary in Jerusalem (Deut 12:13–14). Already Cain and Abel, the sons of the first human couple, offer sacrifices to Yahweh (Gen 4:3–4), as does Noah (Gen 8:20), who is forced to take a surplus of pure animals into his ark for this very purpose (Gen 7:2). Abraham demonstratively builds altars throughout his journey (Gen 12:7–8; 13:18), and Jacob is even said to have founded the sanctuary at Bethel (Gen 28:11–19)—the nightmare of the Deuteronomists.

arkritik und Traditionsgeschichte von Pg, WMANT 70 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchner Verlag, 1995), 277, following Christoph Levin, *Die Verheißung des neuen Bundes in ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Zusammenhang ausgelegt*, FRLANT 137 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), 222–34.

62. See Christoph Levin, "Jahwe und Abraham im Dialog: Genesis 15," in *Gott und Mensch im Dialog: Festschrift Otto Kaiser*, ed. Markus Witte, BZAW 345.1 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004), 237–57.

63. Gen 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; Exod 6:3. The other instances are later additions: Gen 43:14; 48:3; 49:25.

In the Priestly writing, on the other hand, Noah's sacrifice is notably absent.⁶⁴ Without the central cult site, it was unthinkable. Already in the creation account, the Priestly writing is looking toward the sanctuary that will be created at the Sinai. This is the reason why it was impossible to graft this conception onto the older one—that is, the Yahwist. They are simply mutually exclusive, also at the literary level. These historical accounts were combined only at a later stage. The result are the familiar difficulties and contradictions that were used to separate the sources ever since.

10. Preconditions of the Documentary Hypothesis: Ten Theses

(1) The demanding endeavor of merging two parallel accounts of the salvation history into a third, composite entity is conceivable only if there were compelling theological reasons to undertake it. J and P were considered “unanimous in relation to the truth, and this unanimity was to be preserved and made visible through compilation.”⁶⁵

(2) It follows that the redaction that combined the two sources—one should call it not “final redaction (R)”, but rather “redaction R^{JP}”—preferred neither of them. To R^{JP} the Priestly writing was no more canonical than the Yahwist. The common claim that R was particularly close to P cannot be upheld. The precondition for the combination of the sources was their equal religious weight.

(3) It further follows that the new composition had to preserve the two sources as much as possible. This explains the many repetitions and difficulties that allow the sources to be separated. “This is due ... to the strict *fidelity* with which the redactor or author of the book ... joined his sources verbatim and in full, and compiled them while retaining all their peculiarities.”⁶⁶

(4) This does not necessarily mean that the *exact wording* of both sources had to remain unharmed. It would in any case be both maintained and dissolved within the new literary entity. The redaction aimed only to preserve the theological and historiographical substance. While any attempt to restore the exact wording of the two sources in full is therefore doomed, this restriction does not argue against the practice of separating the sources in itself.

64. The sacrifice offered by the surviving hero of the flood is an indispensable part of the narrative also in the Mesopotamian versions.

65. Donner, “Der Redaktor,” 26.

66. Hupfeld, *Die Quellen der Genesis*, 195–96.

(5) The two sources could only be unified because their historiographical sequences agreed. The structure of the older history, as well as a number of details, must have been known to the younger account, regardless of how this was accomplished.

(6) The procedure in unifying the two sources must have been as simple as possible. The parallel sources were presented one after the other, passage by passage. The zipper principle was used only in two exceptional cases and for good reason: in the flood narrative Gen 6–9 and the miracle at the sea Exod 14.

(7) In the actual process of unification of the two sources, the Documentary Hypothesis transforms into the Supplementary Hypothesis: one of the two sources is the basis, the other is added in, and vice versa. There was no preference for one source or the other. The procedure was determined by the structure and/or the amount of text. While in the primeval history the Priestly writing provides the basis, it becomes the supplement in the patriarchal narrative. P takes back the lead only from Exod 6 onward. Also in the sequence of the first and second part of the Sinai pericope (Exod 19–24; 32–34), the Priestly writing (Exod 25–29 with appendices) is an addition rather than the base.

(8) The sources J and P were combined in an early stage of the Pentateuch's literary history. The majority of the text was added only after these sources were combined. For the primeval history alone, at least a quarter of the current text derives from this later stage.⁶⁷ In Gen 12–50 it is presumably around half. This becomes clear if one considers chapters 14; 15; 18B; 20–22*; 23; 34; 38; 48; 49, all of which are of late date either in full or in large parts. In the middle books of the Torah, such later additions are even more substantial. "The redaction of the Hexateuch, then, assumes the form of a continuous diaskeue or diorthosis."⁶⁸

(9) The fact that the significant majority of the current text presupposes the combination of J and P does much to diminish the plausibility of mechanical source separation. On the other hand, this also provides the reason for the coherence of the current history. The Supplementary Hypothesis probably applies everywhere unless there is clear data to the contrary. Not the Pentateuch sources, but supplements are the rule. One

67. See Christoph Levin, "Die Redaktion R^{JP} in der Urgeschichte," in Beck and Schorn, *Auf dem Weg zur Endgestalt*, 15–34.

68. Kuenen, *Historical-Critical Inquiry*, 315; Dutch original 305.

can separate the sources successfully only if one also attempts to reconstruct their original form (P^G und J^{Q+R}).

(10) The final form is the result of the literary stream of tradition gradually running dry and not of a conscious decision. The book form of the Torah was not made but *grew* over time,⁶⁹ in a fashion only appropriate to a religious text of such great significance. “Provocatively put: There is no such thing as ‘the final redaction.’”⁷⁰

69. See Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jeremia*, KHC 11 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1901), xx.

70. Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, 380.