

## Pentateuch, John E. Anderson

Question: Discuss the history of Pentateuchal scholarship.

- I. Introduction
  - a. A lack of consensus in the last 30 years of scholarship
  - b. Both diachronic and synchronic approaches, documentarian and supplementarian approaches
  - c. To understand where we *are*, it is important—briefly—to look at *from where* we have come
- II. Precursors to the Documentary Hypothesis: Working Towards JEDP (emergent source-criticism)
  - a. Spinoza (1670): “it is thus clearer than the sun at noonday that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, but by someone who lived longer after Moses” (also Hobbes)
  - b. Jean Astruc (1753): isolates in Genesis an E and J source, w/ other independent material (yet did not challenge Mosaic authorship; Moses as redactor)
  - c. Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette (1780-1849) – decisive new phase in Pentateuchal invest.
    - i. Saw religious institutions in Chronicles as retrojection from time of writing in late Persian/early Hellenistic period
      1. thus reasonable that Pentateuchal legal material dates from time after monarchy
      2. Pentateuchal narrative traditions cannot be used as historical source material
    - ii. 1805 – id’d law book discovered by Josiah as early version of Deut (dates to 7<sup>th</sup> cent)
  - d. H. Hupfeld (1853): in Gen, identifies earlier E strand (corr. to P) and later one; also an even later J document
  - e. K.H. Graf (1860s): Hupfeld’s E1=Priestly and is *latest, not earliest* source (also Reuss prior and Kuenen after re: dating)
  - f. Julius Wellhausen (*Prolegomena to the History of Israel*)
    - i. J & E = earliest sources; not always clearly distinguishable by use of divine names
      1. combined by a *Jehovistic* editor
    - ii. Q (*quattuor*, four covenants) provides basic chron. structure for P material fitted in
    - iii. P
      1. ritual law in Holiness Code (Lev 17-26), which is dependent on Ezek
      2. thus P the *latest stage* in editorial history of 5x/6x, save for some late Deuteronomistic retouchings
    - iv. Deuteronomy
      1. comes into existence independent of other sources
      2. 622 w/ Josiah = first edition
      3. familiar w/ JE but not P, so combined with JE prior to P → JEDP
      4. end result = publication of Pentateuch in final form @ time of Ezra (5<sup>th</sup> century)
    - v. Reveals an evolutionary view of Israelite religion (sees Moses as at end rather than beginning of historical process)
      1. JE = nature religion, spontaneous worship arising in daily life and festivals tethered to agrarian calendar
      2. D = centralization of worship, ends spontaneity, seals prophecy w/ emphasis on written law
      3. P = denatured religion dominated by clerical caste that remade past in own image
    - vi. This view of sources dominated largely for nearly a century
- III. Refining the Documentary Hypothesis: First Half of The Twentieth Century
  - a. Gunkel (1901 Genesis commentary begins a shift away from reigning hypothesis)
    - i. Does not question existence of sources, but interested rather in their *prehistory* (nonliterate culture of premonarchic Israel) – Gen a collection of legends and sagas
      1. deems it possible to establish *Gattungen* and *Sitz* of Gen’s narrative units
      2. result is that narrative achieves ‘final form’ by means of oral transmission

3. leads to a shift from large-scale documents to small units, from texts to traditions, from authors to preliterate society
- ii. Gunkel does not explicitly challenge documentarians, but *form-criticism* and *tradition history* elicit questions that documentarians would find difficult to answer
- b. von Rad (“The Form-Critical Problem of the Hexateuch,” 1938)
  - i. addressing a stalemate; gone too far already in analyzing source documents
  - ii. agrees w/ Gunkel that answers sought by source critics were to be found in earliest period of oral traditions
  - iii. emphasizes *final form* of Hexateuch (a massive expansion of *kleine credo*: Deut 26:5-9 and Josh 24:2-13)
    1. creeds speak of entry into Egypt, exodus, and land occupation, but Sinai missing
    2. concludes Sinai belongs to separate tradition
    3. *settlement* tradition originates in Shavuoth/Weeks at Gilgal at time of Judges, Sinai tradition in Sukkoth at Shechem/Tabernacles in central highlands.
  - iv. the work of J
    1. two traditions joined together for first time by *J writer* during *United Monarchy* upon their separation from the cult (Settlement tradition as outline plan)
    2. also adds primeval history and ancestral narratives to create national epic of origins
    3. J as ‘controlling genius’; main contribution is method governing arrangement, establishing framework of Pentateuch to which others add
    4. Hexateuch achieves final form by hand of redactors
  - v. Criticism: credos actually date much later (could they not be a distillation?)
- c. Martin Noth (*The Deuteronomistic History*, 1943; *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions*, 1948)
  - i. Tradition-history
  - ii. Deut an intro to Former Prophets (Josh – 2 Kgs); thus have Tetrach, not Pentateuch
    1. no J, E, P in Joshua; D stands on its own
  - iii. 1948 – origin and development of traditions constituting Israelite origins
    1. traditions limited in scope and tied to specific localities (usually sanctuaries)
    2. over time coalesced into 5 major “themes,” which are a ‘deposit’ of very early oral tradition
      - a. guidance out of Egypt (Exodus)
      - b. guidance into land
      - c. ancestral promise
      - d. guidance in the wilderness
      - e. Sinai revelation
    3. main contribution: essential content, themes, and sequence of history laid down before any document was written (contra von Rad’s conception of J)
      - a. shape and most of contents of J and E already fixed in pre-existent common tradition (“G,” *Grundlage*)
        - i. JE an ‘enrichment’ of P, which now serves as basic framework for the whole
      - b. accepts documents J, E, and P (attributed to individual authors), but they added nothing essential to what was already there (save for early history of humanity by J, genealogical linkage by P)
- d. The ‘Consensus’ by the 1970s
  - i. J = 10<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century Judean proto-Pentateuch
  - ii. E = a later, independent Northern Pentateuch
  - iii. D = comprised mostly of the book of Deuteronomy
  - iv. P = exilic/post-exilic priestly source

#### IV. Challenging the Consensus: Criticisms of the Documentary Hypothesis

- a. Rendtorff (*The Problem of the Process of the Transmission of the Pentateuch*, 1976)
  - i. Saw source-criticism as incompatible with tradition-historical method in von Rad, Noth
    1. Noth and von Rad too beholden to Wellhausen, so even their discussions of pre-history fed into the four sources
    2. argued that moving from smallest units to larger complexes of tradition as evident in work of Noth and von Rad leaves no room for *hypothetical literary sources*
  - ii. Held that larger units attained their form independent of one another; editorially combined at late stage (thus no continuous pre-exilic narrative sources corr. to J and E)
    1. J and E eliminated (no consensus re: their respective continuity)
  - iii. Blocks of tradition (*not sources*)
    1. different traditions (i.e., Abraham, Jacob, Exodus, etc. – ‘character centered’) come together in blocks
      - a. Gen 1-11 has different literary character than 12-50
      - b. Exodus story does not presuppose ancestral narratives, nor do the remaining blocks (“absence of cross-references,” 177)
      - c. Six units of tradition
        - i. Primeval history (Gen 1-11)
        - ii. Patriarchal narratives (Gen 12-50)
        - iii. Moses and the Exodus (Exod 1-15)
        - iv. Sinai (Exod 19-24, 32-34)
        - v. Desert sojourn (Exod 16-18, Num 11-20)
        - vi. Land occupation (Num 20-36)
    2. editorial linkage by a D-redactor by extending promise of land, nationhood, and divine guidance/blessing to entire corpus through strategically placed cross-references (e.g., Gen 50:24; Exod 33:1-3)
      - a. cohesion given by means of *theme of promise* of land (cf. Clines below)
    3. post-exilic Priestly editorial strand in Exod 6:2-9 only
- b. Whybray (*The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study*, 1987)
  - i. Most comprehensive attempt to date attempting to refute documentary hypothesis?!
  - ii. Critiques of documentary hypothesis (see esp. pp. 129-131) – key word: “*assumption*”
    1. “relies on a complexity of converging arguments”
    2. cannot account for all material in Pentateuch
      - a. Wellhausen even forced to admit law codes did not fit tidily
      - b. Distinction b/w earliest sources J and E often blurred
    3. “dependent on a particular view of the history of the religion of Israel”
    4. authors and their consistency, which is unparalleled in ancient lit and ignores possibility of deliberate use of these features for aesthetic and literary purposes
      - a. authors required consistency, but this same criterion not applied to redactors!!
      - b. Other explanations are possible to explain the seeming ‘disunity’ of the Pentateuch (doublets, repetitions, inconsistencies, etc. – all hallmark evidence used by documentarians)
    5. doublets, repetitions, inconsistencies may already have existed in oral stage of transmission
    6. breaking up of these narratives (‘scissors and paste method’) lacks ancient literary analogies, and destroys literary/aesthetic qualities of the narratives that should not be ignored
    7. over-emphasis on differences of language and style (esp. given our ignorance of history of Hebrew language)
    8. ‘constants’ required *throughout* each document (single style, purpose, theology) and an unbroken narrative thread do not exist

9. pre-exilic authors appear to know nothing of ancestral and Mosaic traditions, raising doubt about early J or E
  10. attempts to modify the hypothesis are only indicators of its breakdown
  11. supplementary and fragmentary hypothesis have been neglected and need to be reassessed
- iii. Form-critical and tradition-historical hypothesis (critique, see esp. pp. 215-219)
    1. argument that large part of Pentateuchal narratives formed, transmitted, developed orally *from very ancient times* b/c writing not used for these purposes in aNE until late period is “fallacious,” based on selective use of evidence and on confusion b/w true oral tradition and practice w/in other cultures of oral recital of texts that were already in written form
      - a. *assumption* that Pentateuchal narratives are very ancient, and this assumption used to prove could not have been written at early date
    2. use of foreign models from practice of oral tradition among other peoples and in different periods problematic
      - a. Olrik’s ‘epic laws’ – likely used by writers and oral narrators
      - b. Icelandic ‘family sagas’ (Jolles, Noth, Koch, Westermann) – now agreed these sagas not based on more ancient oral traditions but are literary comps; also little resemblance b/w these sagas and ancestral narratives
      - c. Analogies from modern ‘oral literature’ – what *modern* oral lit is truly comparable to that of the OT? Also usually comparisons made b/w OT *prose* texts and modern *poetic* texts (problematic)
    3. ‘fluidity of oral tradition’ – modifications occur throughout the transmission process, and what is put in writing is just one of any number of potential versions (oral tradition “has no fixity: fluidity is its major characteristic”)
    4. how could a continuous oral tradition have been maintained when the OT makes no mention of a “class of professional storytellers in ancient Israel”?
    5. no satisfactory technique exists to detect origins of written narratives from evidence provided by texts themselves – *subjective* method
  - iv. His proposal: a single author for the Pentateuch
    1. agrees w/ Van Seters that Pentateuch may be compared to Greek historiographical works (i.e., Herodotus); author/compiler thus an ancient historian
    2. first edition = final edition (6<sup>th</sup> century BCE)
    3. uses a variety of available materials from the tradition, and invents where the tradition is inadequate
      - a. uncertain about nature of these sources
      - b. is clear, though, that are not sustained documents like J, E, or P
      - c. only Exodus tradition can truly be said to be ancient
    4. thus there is, in a sense, ‘unity’ to the Pentateuch, despite its diversity

V. New Approaches to the Formation of the Pentateuch: Sources and Traditions (in light of Rendtorff [and Whybray])

a. Erhard Blum

- i. Student of Rendtorff; carries his methodology forward
  1. Pentateuch made up of independent tradition complexes
- ii. Tradition-history, but concerned w/ *literary* history (*not oral history*)
- iii. *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte*, 1984
  1. traces development from smallest literary units to final revision and incorporation into Pentateuch (focuses here on ancestral narratives)
  2. Evidence of independent traditions: no ‘cross-referencing’ b/w Gen 12-50 and Exod-Num to suggest a larger work including ancestral history and Moses prior to respective D and P redactions

3. Stages of growth in ancestral narratives (2 stages: pre-P [Deuteronomic] and P)
  - a. Vg1 – etiological folk history used as a programmatic document for political consolidation *under Jeroboam I* (ca. 721 at earliest)
    - i. Combination of *Jakobgeschichte* with Abraham-Lot story
    - ii. Done through promises (Gen 13:14-17; 28:13, 14)
  - b. Vg2 – major revision and expansion of Vg1 during *exile*
    - i. Framework provided by four speeches of God (Gen 12:6-9, 10-20; 16; 21:8-21; 22; 26)
  - c. this combined work revised by a D redactor (Gen 15; 24; rest of Pentateuch) – post exile (ca. 530-500)
  - d. Priestly revision (*El-Shaddai* texts, *toledot* framework, and chronological statements) belongs to larger Pentateuchal revision
    - i. A ‘compromise document’
4. Note: no J or E (no continuous sources in Pentateuch)
- iv. *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, 1990
  1. Focuses here on Exod and Num (some treatment of Lev)
  2. Pentateuch emerges from inclusion of D work into more inclusive P work (both D and P date to post-exilic period); note also P is not an independent source for him!
    - a. Continues D source from Gen 12-50, Exod, Num
    - b. Reworked and expanded by P narrator
    - c. Eventually linked to Deut Hist = continuous narrative from Abe to exile
    - d. Pentateuch a document fulfilling various needs
      - i. For those returning from exile
      - ii. Response to Persian demand for civil constitution
  3. KD (*D-Komposition*)
    - a. Extensive pre-P composition (ancestral narratives, exodus, Sinai, wilderness)
    - b. *After* Deut Hist (attached to it, thus post-exile and a *D-Komposition*)
    - c. Theme: new presentation of Israel’s origins by incorporation of ancestors and foundation of Israel’s life in obedience to prophetic word which is *Torah* (KD not a history book, contra Van Seters, but is *Torah*)
  4. KP (*P-Komposition*)
    - a. Limited to Pentateuch, ending with Num 28ff.
    - b. Neither a source nor a redaction but a revision and expansion of earlier material but also an extensive composition also including its own traditions
      - i. Emphasis on presence of God, election of people through Abraham, and est. orders of the cult for continued presence
    - c. *Gives the basic shape of the Pentateuch*
      - i. Is also *Torah*, but scope is now world history, not Israel’s history
      - ii. Compositional character of KP an ‘inner-Jewish compromise’ at time of Persian period, reflecting a community that was coalition of peasants and priests
  5. Final form of the Pentateuch
    - a. Sees evidence still of *post-Priestly* additions
      - i. Not a final redaction; no evidence of a single hand
  6. Main contribution: stories typically viewed as earlier (J, E) actually Deuteronomic composition
    - a. Came together much later, associated w/ Deut
    - b. Priestly composer was last redactor of Pentateuch
    - c. No continuous literary sources in Pentateuch (rather pre-existing, independent literary units come to make up Pentateuch)

- d. This is the tradition out of which the Dozeman/Schmid volume comes
- b. Joseph Blenkinsopp (*The Pentateuch*, 1992)
  - i. Historical-critical and literary methodology
  - ii. Method: start with most objectively solid foundation (P) then expand out to more conjectural (cf. Carr below)
  - iii. The ‘sources’
    - 1. P – dates b/w destruction of Jerusalem and rebuilding of Temple in 515; from creation to setting up wilderness sanctuary at Shiloh (Joshua 18-19)
    - 2. D - associated with reforms of Josiah (640-609); ‘canonical’ corpus inclusive of Deuteronomy, collection of ‘Mosaic prophetic books’ ending with Jeremiah, and history of period after Moses
    - 3. Other sources – J material is late, if it is there at all! (no E)
  - iv. Proposal: combination of D and P
    - 1. P as a base line narrative for the Pentateuch
    - 2. Deuteronomic redaction of material (evidence: promissory covenant in Gen 15 and making/breaking/remaking Horeb covenant in Exod 19-34)
    - 3. resultant document, the Pentateuch, is a “constitutional document”
  - v. final form of Pentateuch
    - 1. represents compromise between different interest groups worked out in several stages during two centuries of Persian rule
    - 2. authorized by imperial authorities as the *law and constitution of Jewish ethnos*
- c. David Carr (*Reading the Fractures of Genesis*, 1996)
  - i. Combines synchronic and diachronic approaches to illuminate one-another
    - 1. synchronic analysis can point out the ‘fractures’ and inform book’s formation
    - 2. diachronic analysis can help maintain ‘fractures’ and has a bearing on interp
  - ii. after the transmission history of Genesis to help understand its final form
  - iii. fractures = doublets, breaks in continuity, contradictions (resumptive repetition)
    - 1. “intratextuality” – how a later text builds self around earlier text, claiming to reproduce it (12); this is the way to see the ‘fractures’
  - iv. method
    - 1. moving from youngest to oldest textual strands
    - 2. uses other examples of textual growth to ground his arguments (i.e., Gilgamesh Epic, MT/LXX/SP)
  - v. Two sources:
    - 1. non-P (early independent texts supplemented and shaped into a “Proto-Genesis”)
    - 2. P (separate source, reaction or alternative to “Proto-Genesis”)
    - 3. P and “Proto-Genesis” combined by a redactor (Rp)
    - 4. P as originally separate but not independent (based on non-P), but designed to stand over-against non-P and replace it (47)
  - vi. five stage evolution of Genesis
    - 1. Primeval history and two versions of Jacob-Joseph narratives (from N and S) in independent circulation
    - 2. Primeval history and S Jacob-Joseph narrative under structure of “promise theme,” resulting in “Proto-Genesis”
    - 3. Deuteronomistic influenced revisions made to Proto-Genesis
    - 4. early post-exilic period, P composes own version of Genesis to replace account on which it was based (so P aiming to replace non-P)
      - a. non-P = Gen of exilic and post-exilic lay leaders
      - b. P = Gen of priestly contemporaries
    - 5. Rp merges Proto-Genesis with P
      - a. Goal of Rp = “preservation”
      - b. Result is a “multivoiced whole”

- c. Persian sponsorship of Rp; a ‘compromise document’ b/w Priestly and non-Priestly groups to maintain status under Persian hegemony
- vii. Points to note re: Carr
  - 1. his study seems almost to be a ‘hinge’ in Pentateuchal scholarship
    - a. very traditional in seeing non-P (=J?) material as quite ancient (monarchy), and as first
    - b. yet also highlights the growing hesitancy that so-called ‘sources’ can be isolated (or dated) with any level of confidence – note his designations of P and *non-P*
  - 2. In a way he hearkens back to the emergence of the documentary hypothesis with his emphasis on Genesis, the text which set off this enterprise
- d. John Van Seters (*The Pentateuch: A Social-Science Commentary*, 1999)
  - i. Supplemental theory of composition for Pentateuch
    - 1. *contra* Rendtorff, emphasis is on creative role of authors; *Grundlage* rejected; no need for redactors (each worked with pre-existing documents)
    - 2. *contra* Rendtorff, no gradual growth or development of tradition complexes can account for intellectual and creative endeavor necessary to produce final Pent.
  - ii. Critiquing Pentateuchal theories (part one of his book)
    - 1. DH: “greatest weakness of the Documentary Hypothesis is its lack of clarity about the literary role and function of the ‘redactor’ and how one can identify redactional activity in the text” (41)
    - 2. Form-criticism/tradition history: “fine in *principle*, but it becomes too speculative in *practice* (48)
  - iii. Forming the Pentateuch (see p. 78)
    - 1. Deuteronomy – 7<sup>th</sup> century; used as intro to Deut Hist; first “source”
    - 2. J expansion – late exilic period; from creation to the death of Moses
      - a. J as “historian”; Pentateuch as historiography (corresponds to Greek historiography) – shares genealogical form and antiquarian interest
      - b. Used a body of traditional fragments—some literary, others as motifs or stories—all used and shaped with his own theological and ideological concerns
      - c. Produces a combined D+J work; produces a unity for the whole
    - 3. Priestly *supplement* in post-exilic period, again with own traditional material and ideological interests (P an expansion of J)
  - iv. The Works
    - 1. Deuteronomy
      - a. D originates in North (cf. affinities w/ Hosea) as part of Josiah’s reform program and comes to South with fall of N; Manasseh is king at this time
      - b. Vassal treaties of Esarhaddon offer better analogy to covenant in Deut; thus dates to late monarchic period (7<sup>th</sup> century)
        - i. Also dates D prior to J and P because of no references to ancestral narratives
        - ii. Confident of his D dating, so is the basis for everything subsequent
    - 2. YHWHist
      - a. J follows conventions of ancient historiography (pattern: genealogical framework, itineraries, theme of divine promise)
        - i. Gen 1-11 is type of material one would expect in antiquarian histories
      - b. Dated to Babylonian exile
        - i. Notes similarities in stories (i.e., flood narrative) to Babylonian myths
        - ii. Gen 1-11 written in response to these Babylonian myths

- c. J material contains all essential elements of D and then some, while D has nothing that is not in J (thus, J must be dependent)
    - d. Each story (primeval history, ancestors, Moses) all fit cogently into the time period of exile and its social context; fosters an *ethnic* identity
  - 3. Priestly revisions
    - a. Dated to Persian period (in which he also sees final form of Pentateuch)
      - i. Does not, however, see final form as not arising from urging of Persian authority to create a constitutional Jewish document
      - ii. Reason: J had already done this
    - b. P's additions to J represent "a series of etiologies that explain and legitimate priestly thought and practice and set out a program for cultic reform" (183)
  - 4. Law in the Pentateuch
    - a. J and P as two separate responses to Deuteronomic reform
    - b. Holiness Code (Lev 17-26) and Covenant Code (Exod 20:22-23:33) presuppose Deut 12-26
    - c. Holiness Code shares perspective w/ Ezek; Covenant Code used to regulate life in Jewish community during exile
    - d. After Temple cult reestablished in Persian period, Priestly code seeks to elevate priesthood to supreme political and religious authority
  - v. Conclusions
    - 1. Faults documentary hypothesis for reading J as earlier than D and P
    - 2. Conservative: refusal to abandon D, J, P
    - 3. Progressive: different (later) dating; does not see them as sources
- e. Dozeman/Schmid, ed. (*A Farewell to the Yahwist?*, 2006)
  - i. Arises out of Pentateuch seminar at SBL; concerned with addressing uneasiness re: lack of direction in wake of Noth and von Rad; Pentateuchal composition in European interp
  - ii. Carrying forward Rendtorff's theory of 'complexes of tradition' in growth of Pentateuch
  - iii. This volume also seeks to address the 'literary gap' between Gen and Exod treated by Blum (see above); Blum saw KP as bringing about first *literary* connection b/w the two
  - iv. Thesis of the volume: was P author the first to combine tradition of ancestors with that of Moses/exodus, creating a master narrative of salvation history?
    - 1. pre-P independence of stories in Gen and Exod; represent two distinct narratives of Israel's origins
    - 2. first literary outline of Pentateuch not J of monarchic period or pre-P exilic J (Van Seters) but the Priestly author in postexilic period
    - 3. non-P lit presupposing same master narrative of SH was composition of post-P redactor dependent on P material
    - 4. P lays the foundation for the Pentateuch, is one responsible for putting together these blocks of tradition (Dozeman's essay offers a dissenting voice, seeing pre-P author of Exod 3-4 as doing this)
- v. The Essays (in brief): A Sampling
  - 1. Thomas Römer: HoR on J, concludes J debate is 'confused' and not everyone defends the same conception of J still
  - 2. Konrad Schmid: J as coherent redactional work only evident in Gen; negative (lack of pre-P connection, i.e., ancestral promises do not presuppose exodus) and positive (redactional links b/w Gen and Exod) evidence treated; *explicit* literary connections b/w Gen and Exod exist only in P or that which presupposes P
  - 3. Albert de Pury: non-P Jacob story is preexilic and a Northern *gesta*; Jacob tradition rejected by prophetic tradition (see silencing in Deut 26:5); Pg recuperates old story to situate founding of Israel's mission w/in history of God's work in world; Pg thus lays blueprint for 'Pentateuch-to-be'

4. Jan Christian Gertz: reads transition b/w Gen 50 and Exod 1; P and redactional links; “The string holding the pearls of the non-Priestly pentateuchal narratives was furnished by P!”
  5. Erhard Blum: motif of Joseph’s bones→profile of related texts (Gen 50:24-26; Exod 1:6, 8; Judg 2:6-8; Josh 24:28-31) that represent redactional stratum by same author seeking to fashion a *Hexateuch* (“the book of the Torah of God,” Josh 24:26); post-P author dependent on P composition of Exod 1:1-5 in composing Gen 50:24-26 and Exod 1:6, 8 suggest P first to connect major traditions of Pentateuch
  6. Thomas Dozeman: compares Exod 3-4 to P version in 6-7 to see whether is pre or post-P; form-criticism shows Exod 3-4 is pre-P and 6-7 P version dependent on it; concludes pre-P author of Exod 3-4 was first to relate Gen and Exod into master narrative of Pent
- vi. Responses (in brief)
1. Christoph Levin: emphasizes areas of agreement (late combo of Gen and Exod; non-P texts not forming coherent work from beginning; narrative formation of Tetrateuch in postexilic period); does not see relationship b/w Gen and Exod as central problem in formation of Pent; sees pre-P “editor J” as redactor responsible for first fashioning of continuous narrative of Tetrateuch
  2. John Van Seters: critical of emphasis on redaction and complex editorial processes to account for Pentateuch’s formation; argues for von Rad’s view of J as author and historian; study of Gen 50-Exod 1 shows a pre-P, exilic J author combined ancestral material in Gen w/ story of Moses in Exod-Num
  3. David Carr: debate over identification of pre-P Pentateuch has nothing to do w/ classical J source; sees ways in which post-P material is identified as problematic
- vii. Conclusions
1. Offers a significant ‘snapshot’ of Pentateuchal studies at present, w/ main essays, a dissenting voice (Dozeman), and formal responses (Levin, Van Seters, Carr)
    - a. P and non-P material as central ‘designations’
    - b. Viability of saving J (in a modified, later-dated form such as in VS), or doing away with it (see Römer, Schmid)
  2. highlights the persistence and flexibility of the question of Pentateuchal composition, as well as the lasting effect of Rendtorff’s seminal study
  3. P as first to combine Gen-Exod→Pentateuch is new
    - a. Cf. early documentarians who saw P as the *last source*
    - b. Cf. above, where P is a final *redactor*, not the one responsible for providing the base for the Pentateuch (although Blenkinsopp seems to be saying this in a way)

## VI. Approaches Emphasizing Literary Unity

### a. David Clines (*The Theme of the Pentateuch*, 1978)

- i. Argues OT scholarship has read Pentateuch either atomistically or genetically; as response he proposes a reading of the final form
- ii. “*The theme of the Pentateuch is the partial fulfillment—which implies also the partial non-fulfillment—of the promise to or blessing of the patriarchs.*” (30)
  1. three parts:
    - a. posterity – dominant in Gen 12-50
    - b. relationship – dominant in Exod-Lev
    - c. land – dominant in Num-Deut
  2. promise does not occur in all its particulars always, but allusions continue throughout Pentateuch
- iii. theme of Gen 1-11: creation-uncreation-recreation (sin pervasive, God’s grace)

- iv. ‘Diachronic’ chapter: notes that elements of promise are evident in each of the three (does not treat E) traditional Pentateuchal sources
- v. Final shape of Pentateuch:
  - 1. redaction in Babylon, thus an exilic document
  - 2. provides basis for Ezra’s reform; brought by him from Babylonia
  - 3. in existence by end of fifth century
  - 4. addresses post-exilic community in same place as at end of Deut: promise behind them, land before them
  - 5. Pentateuch as interpretation of Israel’s history and summons to obedience in present and hope leading to action (focus on God of promise = certainty)
- b. Thomas Mann (*The Book of the Torah: The Narrative Integrity of the Pentateuch*, 1988)
  - i. Similar to Clines in wanting to read Pentateuch as a single literary work (Mann uses “modern, secular literary criticism” (6)
  - ii. does not deny or abandon, however, traditional four-source hypothesis
    - 1. J – time of David/Solomon (1000-922)
    - 2. E – from North (850)
    - 3. D – dominates in Deut-2 Kgs (620-587)
    - 4. P – before, after, or coterminous with D
  - iii. Torah as a “fictive world” in which the reader assumes and looks for continuity
    - 1. a “historical novel” not cemented in time
    - 2. cf. Van Seter’s “ancient historiography”
  - iv. Pentateuch comes into existence in exile; people are to understand their election as God’s chosen people and to live as such (cf. Moses’ speeches to future gens at end of Deut)
  - v. Creation narrative establishes three themes resonating throughout Pentateuch
    - 1. divinely-established order – reflected in law and sense of responsibility to divine will
    - 2. relationship between human beings and land – punishments of Adam and Cain; land promise to ancestors; anticipation of possession moving toward land in Numbers; land and covenant linked in Deut
    - 3. Blessing – ancestors, Israel’s fecundity at beginning of Exodus; blessings and curses in Deut
- c. Anthony Campbell and Mark O’Brien – show an interesting movement in their two contributions that seems to mirror the larger enterprise of Pentateuchal scholarship
  - i. *Sources of the Pentateuch: Texts, Introductions, Annotations* (1993)
    - 1. argue for a source-critical model of Pentateuchal composition
      - a. accept Noth’s source understandings in his *A History of Pentateuchal . . .*
      - b. do argue, though, that Noth’s “E” is too fragmentary; do away with it
    - 2. Chapters on P, J, E, and “nonsource texts” and “composite texts”
      - a. Lay out, in two-column form, the texts from each source in each book
    - 3. an implicit defense of the documentary hypothesis?!
  - ii. *Rethinking the Pentateuch: Prolegomena to the Theology of Ancient Israel* (2005)
    - 1. propose a “radically new insight that eliminates the documentary sources from the Pentateuch altogether” (xiii)
    - 2. Proposal
      - a. “text-as-base-for-user” approach
      - b. Text a base for storytellers to expand and select from, rather than a completed product to be received by readers
        - i. Text thus a base for development of traditions rather than end process, rather than end-product of such a process
      - c. Evidence often pointed to by documentarians for multiple sources can be explained as the concern to preserve different versions of traditions and

stories for selection by users of these ancient texts (assigning intelligence to ancient writers, something not assumed by documentarians)

- d. Evidence for this proposal:
  - i. Brevity of biblical stories
  - ii. Preserving of variants/doublets
- e. smaller cycles of tradition blend/come together over time

### 3. Evaluation

- a. Move to final form of biblical text; elimination of sources; textual unity
- b. Focus on theology rather than history
- c. Potential difficulties:
  - i. No comparative evidence for 'base-texts' in other cultures
  - ii. Are smaller cycles of tradition displacing or refining doc hyp?
  - iii. Failure to treat legal material is problematic
  - iv. Is it a full-blown giving up of the question?

## VII. Conclusion

- a. A lack of consensus pervades the question of Pentateuchal composition; question remains open and discussion remains quite lively
- b. Important to note that historical-critical questions still persist, are still being asked (evidenced most recently by Dozeman/Schmid volume)
- c. Movement/trends
  - i. Origin of Pentateuch now seen as much later than von Rad; exile and after, mainly
  - ii. Priestly strand still retained; also retain a Deuteronomic presence
    - 1. but what is P? a source? Or a redactional stage?
    - 2. what is D? just Deuteronomy? A redactional stage?
  - iii. A growing agnosticism regarding what was there prior
  - iv. A growing hesitancy to see a J; total elimination of E
- d. Moving forward
  - i. Importance of methodological awareness
  - ii. Importance of remaining tentative (not getting over-confident) in one's conclusions
  - iii. Litmus test for any proposal: does it account fully for *both narrative and legal material*
  - iv. A humble appreciation for the HoR
  - v. Synchronic and diachronic analyses together? (cf. Carr's methodology above)

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