

Appendix to Lecture Note Part II: Pentateuchal Criticism

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"The notion that the Pentateuch is a kind of many-layered tell whose strata can be uncovered to reveal the history of Israel's religious beliefs from the earliest times up to the time of the Exile or later is still presupposed in one form or another by many scholars and widely taught to students." (9) This applies to the narrative; however, the Covenant Deuteronomic, and Priestly law codes may indeed be approached diachronically (10).

This book is concerned with the first four books.. Deuteronomy being of a different sort (13).

Part I: Literary Theories

A. Presuppositions

Nothing can be known about the possibility of composition in the oral stage, so the problem is purely literal (17). [This is what the Form Criticism and the Tradition Criticism attacked most.]

B. Theories [Chart mine]

	<i>Fragmentary Hypothesis</i>	<i>Supplementary Hypothesis</i>	<i>Documentary Hypothesis</i>
<i>Editor</i>	One	Several	One or more
<i>Sources</i>	A mass of short, independent written pieces	One major work	Several independent accounts, composed at different times and with different outlooks
<i>Method</i>	Editor later combined them.	Editors later made additions with some distortion.	Editor wove them together later.

C. Conditions for Documentary Hypothesis to stand:

1. Motives: Composition and Redaction

The motives for the composition of the documents, and the motives for the redactions, must be ascertained (18).

2. Four independent documents

The Documentary Hypothesis must also prove that there are these four documents that, once extricated, can stand on their own (18-9).

3. Redactions

It must further be explained why the redactors so distorted the sources by dovetailing them (18).

The JE redactor (R^{JE}) left out parts of each, especially E. (21) R^D did only a little intermixing, as it is only concerned with Moses. P "predominates in Exodus and Numbers, and is the sole source of Exodus 25-31; 35-40 and of Leviticus" (21). There are also a few fragments and supplements.

D. Basis of Documentary Hypothesis

1. Reconstruction

Reconstruction of the sources, thus it was not billed as a negative, but as a positive procedure (22).

2. Normal Markers

<i>Level</i>	<i>Markers</i>	<i>Example</i>
<i>Formal</i> <i>(Vocabulary)</i>	Choice of different proper nouns and common nouns (23).	Divine Names, locality
<i>Stylistic</i>	Duplicate stories (doublets or triplets) Repetitions of details (23).	
<i>Editorial</i>	Insertions of unnecessary materials (e.g., Judah in Joseph's story) (24); Contradictions	
<i>World-viewl</i>	Differences of cultural and religious points of view (24).	

2. Problem

a. Neutral Passages

Some passages were seen to be 'neutral' with regard to the normal markers, and were assigned to the document in which they functioned to fill a gap of story-line continuity (which was assumed) (25-6).

b. Fragmented nature: E

This does not work with E, which is fragmented (28).

E. Motive: Preservation and Relevant reinterpretation [re-actualization]

"To preserve the received traditions as far as possible while at the same time reinterpreting them in accordance with the theologies of their times." (27)

1. Problems: No consensus in its method and application

<i>Area</i>	<i>Detail</i>
Identity of Writers	Authors or collectors? Individuals or 'schools'
Number of Sources	Same method à Different results
Boundary of Pentateuch	Dt- Joshua- Judges - Samuel - Kings?
Relationship between sources	Whether E was familiar with J?

2. Deuteronomistic History

a. Noth: A Separate

Noth (1943) saw the Deuteronomistic History (Dt-Kings) as a separate work from the Tetrateuch, not conflated (32-3).

b. DeVaux (1953) and Fohrer (1965) tried to account for the oral tradition; the latter saw materials coming from addition, supplementation, and composition. (33-4)

F. Criticism

1. Questioning the criteria

a. E?

Which cast doubt on the necessity of E, or else wondered if they had been divided enough (35-6)

b. Composition: Development

There was also the suggestion that the documents developed over several years, and thus had internal inconsistencies (36).. or maybe the whole thing was composed gradually (36-7), even orally, which obviates the method (which was based on Western ideas of composition) (37);

c. Unity

Since the end product is aesthetically pleasing, and since the themes cut across documents, the text must be made up of larger units than the Documentary Hypothesis supposes (37-8).

2. Studying the oral traditions: Not Documents but oral traditions

a. Response to DH

Called into question the presuppositions, and also the claim that the Documentary Hypothesis is the only adequate explanation of the facts (38)

b. Priority of the Oral

Smaller, and ancient stories had been combined into 'cycles', or even 'creeds', in an oral stage that preceded the literary stage of the 'historian' (39-40).

c. Rendtorff (1977)

a. Form Critical insight

He said that with the oral development, the Documentary Hypothesis was unnecessary. He agreed with the methods, but disputed the findings (41).

b. Redactional insight

He also disputed the claim that each source has its own characteristic and consistent theology.. rather each narrative section has consistent theology (42).

3. Presuppositions

a. Philosophical and Religio-historical:

Evolutionism: Animism--> Henotheism --> Monotheism

Wellhausen said the four documents would reflect stage in the evolution of the Religion of Israel, which was the current theory traceable from Hegel to Vatke (43).

b. Linguistic

More recent theories do not distinguish as many stages.. so that all the OT prose fits into the same stage except Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, and Ecclesiastes (44). Further, it is likely that the sources would have been recast for each generation of redactors (44). The differences can be accounted for as differences of style and other ways (45).

c. Literary

1) No oral

It was assumed that the development was not to be attributed to the oral stage.. despite the work of the brothers Grimm with European folk tales in 1812-5 (45).

2) Method of historiography

It was also assumed that the method of historiography involved conflating complete accounts to form a new account.. but none of de Vaux's examples

(except the *Diatessaron*, which is much later) are conflated from complete sources, but from fragments (45-6).

d. Cultural

They assumed that the Ancient Near East authors worked the same way as they would.

1) Consistent and Continuous?

Their purpose was to write a consistent and continuous account of the History of Israel (47), but it is an anachronism to call J a brilliant historian (48), and there is no evidence that his work was extant before the exile (48-9).

2) Similar motives?

The redactors were assumed to have similar motives (49), but then why did he leave the inconsistencies?

3) Contradictions?

"They assumed that a writer never makes a statement twice over, never allows himself a digression but always sticks to the point, and never contradicts himself even in the smallest matter." (50). The Qumran Temple Scroll has these same 'inconsistencies' (50), suggesting that it is characteristic of the Eastern way (51).

4) Cutting and Pasting?

They assumed a certain motive for cutting and pasting, but Alter has shown that they are stylistic motives (51-2).

5) Authors or collectors?

They assumed that each document could be assessed for its aesthetic qualities (despite the fact that there is little contemporary material to compare them with) (53), which in turn assumes that they were 'authors', not collectors of oral materials.. but they also claim the latter!

4. Criteria

a. Language and Style

He assumes the changes are a result of different documents, not conscious choices on the part of the author or compiler to vary his style (55-6).

1) No Synonyms?

They assume that certain words are absolute synonyms (57), and one writer will not use two different synonyms (56); or that it was two documentary sources, not oral (57).

2) Differences in Stylistic and aesthetic characters?

They try to set out and use (62-3) the stylistic and aesthetic characteristics of the various sources, but are inconsistent in doing so, and do not find uniformity (58-9).

3) The different names for the deity?

It was assumed that since E & P believed that YHWH was unknown before Moses they didn't use that name in earlier narratives, but there is no reason for them to do this (64-5); even though this criterion only applied to Genesis, they used it to establish patterns in Genesis which were then used in other books.. but it is not even consistent in Genesis (65).

So it tries to say, at the same time, that the authors were consistent, and there are exceptions (65-6), but in the Pentateuch, in the whole OT, and in other Ancient Near Eastern literature there is not consistency (67-8). Note: David is also 'the king' and 'King David' (68). Further, the redactors may not have been consistent (68-9). Alternation between proper name and title was a feature of Hebrew prose (71-2).

b. Repetitions, Duplications and contradictions: doublets (Abraham wife/sister), repetition (Gn 7:21-3 "died"), contradiction (2/7 animals) (73).

These could not be the work of a single author (73-4), yet could be of a single editor (74). In Gn 1/2, they assumed:

- 1) Obsession with literal accuracy
- 2) The account is factual, not religious.
- 3) The two stories have the same purpose.
- 4) They are not complementary (75).

5. Critiques

a. Doublets:

- 1) Expulsion of Hagar.

It might be a literary device surrounding the miraculous birth (76).

- 2) Regarding wife/sister

These too are stories of threats to God's promise overcome despite human meddling, inserted at crucial moments in the story (77)..not once but three times God prevailed (78).

3) A Literary Device

In fact, that there are doublets within one source proves that repetition was a literary device of the time (Gn 37:5-11 [Joseph's two dreams]; 45:21-8 says that two accounts are in fact one) (78). Thus, the frequency of doublets does not support, but shows the weakness of the Documentary Hypothesis (80).

b. Repetitions

Some are overlooked.. the coming of the water in the Flood accounts occurs twice in each document (80). Thus, it is a literary device, and also used in oral transmission, which the Pentateuch may come from (81) and poetry is nothing if not repetitious.. likewise good prose is marked by repetition with important variation (Alter in 82). Further, the flood account repeats most crucial elements not twice, but three to five times (83; see Wenham).

c. Contradictions

Widely separated contradictions are not evidence of multiple complete sources, but contradictions within one event may be (85) but they may also be explained by conflation in the oral stage, or at the first time of writing (86). Further, the gaps, e.g. in the J parts of the Flood, argue against complete sources (87). Further, all of Gen 2-3 is attributed to J, yet the parts about the Tree of Life seem to be added later, which are said to be fragments (88). So the interpolations in the Flood could also be fragments (89). Sometimes E is not easily discerned, removed and reconstructed, but in Joseph they waver between saying it is discernible and it must be read as JE (89-90).

d. Differences of culture, religion, and theology

a) Presuppositions

They did not allow for the possibility of tension and complexity within a single individual, or of the diversity of fragmentary source materials.

Further, evolution of religion was a 19'th century concept (91).

b) Broad time-span

Also, all four documents were found to cover a broad time-span, and to contain a broad scope of religious development since the early documents (JE) contained post-exilic ideas the theological criterion is useless. And again, the determination was circular: parts were assigned to sources on grounds of the theology of what had already assigned to that source on the grounds of theology.. though later scholars used literary methods as primary (92). There is some question whether theological and literary considerations coincide in the documents (92-3).

e. Theology of J

a) Comprehensive

J selected and arranged fragments to show that God continued to intervene to show favor to Israel (von Rad in 93-4), but since von Rad's J was so comprehensive, it almost obviated the Documentary Hypothesis (95). Yet there were things he could have omitted, e.g., Jacob and Laban's tricks, to make his point better (97-8).

b) Rendtorff: Smaller --> Larger

1. Development Process

He suggested that instead of complete accounts developing, rather smaller accounts developed into larger pieces, which were combined into larger and larger pieces (Abraham + Isaac + Jacob = Patriarchs) (99).

2. Theology of 'Larger Units' of the Compiler

Each of these 'larger units' has its own theology, or presented a single theological theme. There is no continuity between blocks, thus no single J or E author; e.g., the "Moses/Exodus" compiler was ignorant of the theological development of the "patriarchs" author (99). The only references to things like "promise" and "blessing" are in the additions of the final redactor (101-2).

3. Exile as the Key

The fact that the patriarchs are not mentioned in pre-exilic prophecies implies that "the exilic period was the period when the theological importance of the promises to Abraham was first drawn out." (103-4). Thus, perhaps there was no complete, much less 'official', history of Israel before the exile.. contra proposals for the dating of J or E (104).

c) Schmidt

He found that in the J materials in Exodus Deuteronomistic or (post-exilic) prophetic formulae were employed.. thus even J shows 'late,' highly developed (e.g., covenantal) theology (106-7). Thus Rendtorff said theological development was early, but Schmidt said the documents were late.. the accounting for the data, calls into question the general Documentary Hypothesis approach (107-8).

f. Theology of P

The literary problems make it hard to define the theology of P (108-9). Some (Volz, Cross) suggest P has no continuous narrative, only law (109). There are serious gaps (110).

g. Theology of E

E is only some extracts embedded in J, sometimes inseparable, and thus not a complete document (112). It might make more sense to speak of an E editor, who interpolated some "new" theology (Volz, Rudolph Westermann, Mowinckel) (112-3). Wolff proposes "the fear of God" as the theme of E (114-5).

7. Application of the criteria

Perhaps the methods are correct, but wrongly applied (116). Is the force of the criteria cumulative? Are there "constants" that consistently occur throughout each document (Driver, DeVaux)? (116)

In Genesis, "this alternation of the divine names coincides with variations of vocabulary, literary form, purpose and teaching" (De Vaux, 191; in 117). However, there are many texts where there is not more than one mark (117).

If some passages can be shown to be from separate documents, by analogy it can be assumed that these documents run through the whole Pentateuch (117-8). So even where the evidence doesn't support the Documentary Hypothesis, it is assumed (118); though the strands in Joseph each contain elements common to the other, it is presumed that it is composite, and that the editor (R^{JE}) mingled them (118-9). (Volz & Rudolph countered).

Rendtorff, using the same method but without the presuppositions, concludes that there were not two continuous sources, but editorial expansion while combining fragments (119).

8. The role of Redactors

a. Selection and arrangement--conservative (120).

There has been no attempt to define the motives of the redactors--why combine complete works to form something not entirely new? (121)

R^P did not succeed in supplanting earlier work (121-2). It makes more sense to suppose that P incorporated JE in his new work, recasting it in his new theology (122).

b. Method

Why did they sometimes leave long accounts intact, side-by-side, and sometimes dovetail? (122) and the material attributed to the redactor himself is often only that which doesn't fit the method (122-3). Yet it is not clear whether the redactor's motives are harmonistic (seams) or not (combining without modification)--the Documentary Hypothesis people would like to have it both ways (123).

Since there is no evidence of edition by D in Genesis-Number, some reject that there was a R^D, but that the D material was just tacked on (123-4). Others say there was no JE, but D composed (not redacted) Genesis-Numbers as a preamble to Deuteronomy (124) [Moses!]

It makes more sense to see P as compiled for the purpose of being united with JED (Pfeiffer), than to see R^P's motives for redacting P with JED (125-6). It seems hard to believe that P would combine his material with JED, which he did not agree with but it is also hard to believe anyone (R^P) would try to combine them (126).

G. Comparison with Other Literary Hypotheses

1. Not either or

The Supplementary and Fragmentary Hypotheses may have been used on parts, and the Documentary Hypothesis on other parts (126-7).

2. Strength and weakness

While the Documentary Hypothesis is "simpler", it has been seen to have feet of clay and while the Fragmentary Hypothesis and Supplementary Hypothesis are more complex, but at the same time more tenable (128-9).

H. Summary and Conclusions

1. One among many

The Documentary Hypothesis is one theory among many. It rests on complex converging arguments which need examination (129).

2. Not comprehensive coverage

It was claimed the Documentary Hypothesis accounted for almost all the material, but the law-codes are not accommodated and also J and E are blurred (129).

3. Prejudiced view of history

It is dependent on a particular view of the history of the religion of Israel (130).

4. Assumptions about the authors

The authors are assumed to have avoided repetitions and contradictions--more so than any other ancient or modern author, and despite the possibility of using such things as literary devices--yet the reconstructed documents do contain problems which the Documentary Hypothesis people ignore.

5. No allowance was made for the existence of inconsistencies in the oral tradition.

6. 'Scissors and paste'

- 1) Have no ancient precedent

2) Breaks up aesthetically complete documents.

7. Too much emphasis was placed on style--despite our limited grasp of the dead language--other explanations of language phenomena are possible.

8. The 'constants', on which the Documentary Hypothesis is dependent, are not found throughout. The analogical argument is epicycles.

9. Extra-biblical pre-exilic authors did not know the OT--raising doubts about the existence of JE (130). (?)

10. Recent modifications have weakened the original claims of complete continuous documents (130-1).

11. Supplementary Hypothesis and Fragmentary Hypothesis need to be reassessed as viable (131).

Part II: Form Critical and Traditio-historical Hypothesis

A. A new approach

Herman Gunkel (ca. 1910) tried

1. His goal:

To identify and classify separate stories, akin to *Sagen*, and determine the *Sitz im Leben* from which they arose (133).

2. His theory

He contended that the OT was put together

a. Over a long period

b. From oral stories that had once been independent--- put together in the oral stage

c. Into complexes of *Sagen*,

d. Then collected by writers into a single, continuous account (134).

3. History of the Religion of Israel in the Oral Period

Identifying stories gave rise to form criticism. He, then more so Noth, developed his into the study of the history of traditions, especially of the oral tradition (135). they considered this the basis for determining the history of the religion of Israel in the oral period, just as JEPD does for the literate period (135).

B. The Meaning of 'Tradition'

1. A custom or belief passed on for several generations (136)

2. Historical Tradition: Narrative

While belief is implicit, historical traditions are explicitly given in narrative (136-7). Noth's (and our) use of 'tradition' means these narrative accounts (137).

C. The Study of the Oral Tradition

1. Assumptions

a. Most are not composed, but based on older materials

b. which were oral

c. and short, of limited scope

- d. The combining only continued what had begun in the oral stage.
 - e. The Pentateuch contains sufficient clues to reconstruct the whole process (138).
2. Even more fundamental assumptions
- a. It was improbable that the events were written at the time they happened.
 - b. The character and process of the oral tradition is comparable to that of peoples being studied today.
 - c. Such oral traditions are capable of fairly faithful transmission.
 - d. Israel has a tradition of storytelling capable of this kind of preservation.
 - e. "It is possible by studying a written text to discover whether it is based on oral composition or not." (139).
3. Critique of fundamental assumptions
- a. Oral tradition and the use of writing
 - a) Nomadic --> No writing?
 - 1. Gunkel assumed the Documentary Hypothesis (139). Since Israel was nomadic until the conquest they didn't learn to write -- but this has been disputed (140).
 - 2. Therefore one can no longer say that the traditions must have been in the oral stage for a long time (141). Nyberg, then Birkeland, Nielsen and Engnell, stretched the oral stage even longer -- merely because writing was not widely used for such things as narratives until forced by crisis (in this case, the exile) (141).
 - 3. Winegren, Mowinckel and van der Ploeg say that they exaggerate the unimportance of writing (141).
 - 4. Big Problem
 - This assumes, too, that the narratives were regarded as unimportant folk-tales for a long time (142).
 - b. Use of foreign models
 - a) German term Sage is purposely loose -- that's good (143-4).
 - b) Olrik's Laws
 - 1. He believes that all *Sagen* follow a single definite pattern (144), formulated as twelve to twenty laws (145). [some of his laws remind me of

Longacre's observations anent plot structure (146-7)]. Some of the laws are less universal than others -- he mixes what must and what may be an element (148).

2. But there is also the question of the applicability to non-European Sagen (149). There is no reason to assume that these laws were not carried over to literary creations. They are thus not an indicator of oral origin (150).

3. Gunkel's Defense

Gunkel proposed that some traditions had undergone development to the point that they no longer held to the laws, but still held that they originally oral (151).

4. Van Seters' Objection

Van Seters (1975) said only a few of the accounts in the Abraham story conformed to the laws (151). Also the method does not identify how old the tradition is -- oral composition did not necessarily come to an end with the rise of literary composition (151-2).

c) Jolles and the Icelandic sagas: Family-stories

1. He proposed that there are 'simple forms' of expression in pre-literally artistic societies (152). He looked for the family-stories behind the modern sagas of Iceland, and compare them to Genesis (1930) (153-4), as did Noth, von Rad, and Westermann (154-5), but only the latter acknowledged that it implied the essential truth of the account (155).

2. Objection

But this method does not apply to the non-nuclear family accounts of Exodus and Numbers (155). However, there has not arisen any agreed criteria for detecting the oral sources behind the sagas -- so the OT form and tradition critics have built on a shaky foundation (157).

Also, the genre 'family stories' is too broad, and Pentateuch stories are quite different from Icelandic sagas -- so no comparison is appropriate (157). High-level abstractions must be made in order to compare them (158).

d) 'Oral literature' in the modern world

1. It can only be performed by trained professionals.
2. The performer develops skill in varying his material creatively, within a degree of continuity.
3. The actual performance is determined by the setting.
4. Audience participation is part of it (159).

5. Therefore there is creativity.
6. Body language and musical accompaniment are part of it.
7. The core plot is traditional.
8. There is use of stock phrases and scenes.
9. Oral literature dies slowly after the development of writing.
10. A written record is only a picture of one performance and that performance was affected by the act of recording (160). Also, the gap between modern African (or whatever) cultures and Ancient Near Eastern cultures is great -- the comparison presupposes a general theory of human social development, either through evolution or diffusion (161-2). but

1) There has been little work done on modern oral narrative -- mostly on poetry, which should not be used for comparison and the scholars have not come to a consensus on various aspects of modern oral prose: the reliability of transmission, the validity of genre assignments, the ability to trace the history of the development of particular stories (162-5). Since the form is changed to fit the setting, the attempts of biblical scholars to identify (and connect) the *Gattung* and the *Sitz im Leben* of a story are dubious (165).

2) The OT materials are too few for a reliable comparison (165-6), and they are not of the same kind -- apples and oranges -- for one thing, the bible is 'sacred' (167-8).

3) There has been no thorough scholarly attempt, written by someone competent in both fields, to compare the prose of the bible with the prose oral literature (Gunn compared it with modern oral poetry, which indicates the problem) (168-9).

c. Oral Tradition: Fixed or fluid?

a) Noth (1948) and Mowinckel (1946): Fluid Period --> Fixed Period (169-170): Nation Israel

It quit being fluid when an entity called "Israel" came to Palestine and needed an identity (170).

b) Objection

However, modern pre-literary societies are fluid (171); laws and cultic material are likely to have been faithfully passed on, and narrative because it is 'sacred'? (171), but there is evidence that prophetic material was not kept well (171-2).

d. Storytellers and audiences in the OT

a) No ancient near Eastern parallel

There was no account of a story of the ancient past being told to an audience (172-3), so some of Gunkel's theories are "entirely inferential hypotheses based on analogies from other cultures" (174).

b) Children's questions and answers?

1. Another of his theories arose in answer to children's questions (Dt 6:20-5) but these answers are short and formulaic, not 'stories' (174-5).

2. Etiological Stories

Some stories may have arisen to apologize for the existence of certain holy cities, such as Bethel and Shechem (175). Alt, von Rad, and Westermann developed this, but never explained the process of the development of the stories (175-6).

e. Oral and written composition: The Question of Criteria

a) Gunkel's hypothesis: Doublets --> Oral?

The hypothesis of oral sources is based on the existence of doublets in European oral stories, corresponding doublets in the Bible, and since other stories in the Bible are like the ones with doublets, it is all from oral sources (Gunkel, in 177).

b) Argument against Gunkel

1. Documentary Hypothesis: Written sources

The doublets were retained in the written version is dependent on a certain concept of the Documentary Hypothesis, which, if rejected, must be accounted for otherwise (177). An alternative is that a writer had some reason to tell a story twice.

2. Alter: The writer used 'type-scenes' to bind a work together

3. Others:

1) A type of emphasis (178).

It is noted that Gen 20 assumes knowledge of Gen 12, and makes new theological points (178-9). The latter was based on a written version of the former (179).

2) Not Scribal

Ringgren said that the differences between identical texts (Ps 18 and 22; Isa 2:2-4 and Mic 4:1-3; Isa 37:22-35 and 2 Kg 19:21-

34) are mostly aural- or memory-related, not scribal (180). But these mistakes could have resulted from oral dictation, or erroneous memorization off a written text with subsequent copying (180). Also, there are few texts, and they are poetry. So one should not extrapolate to the whole bible (180-1).

3) Written in Oral Style?

Ahlstrom said there is no reason that writing should be a different (detectable) style than oral, especially since it would have taken time to develop a distinct literary style, so the first writers would have used the oral style (181). Likewise, Finnegan pointed out that ancient literature was intended to be read aloud, and memorized, so elements common to oral literature would be incorporated (181-2).

From another angle, since writing down a 'performance' affects it, it is presumptive to say that one can see the elements of the oral tradition in the written (182-3).

4. Recent Emphasis: Large units

The recent emphasis on the unity of large units, even the book of Genesis, casts aspersions on the Documentary Hypothesis and on Form Criticism (which looks at story-units). Since Form Criticism says certain units stand on their own, or show inconsistency within other stories, but these can be explained away as literary devices (182-3)

D. Traditio-Historical Method

Some examples above: It is shown that the oral hypothesis cannot be assumed used for a foundation (185).

1. Martin Noth

- a. Goal: sought the *Sitz Im Leben*.
- b. His Assumptions
 - a) Existence of Oral tradition
 - b) Comparative methods

One can use technique to get behind the written texts to the sources. Also the Documentary Hypothesis (186). Also that oral techniques of one people group [Iceland] are like those of others [Israel] (187).

c) Criteria of style

Earliest narrative traditions are short and concise. Elaboration comes later (187). Often subjective, to distinguish early and late parts (188).

d) Change of the Protagonist

He also assumes that stories can change their protagonists, and the good stories attract popular protagonists (esp. Moses) (188). He seems, therefore, to assume that if a story has a popular protagonist, it must have been changed- thus Moses was not involved originally (189) which is proved by his absence from Exod 5:3-19 (193). He is inconsistent whether the same or the opposite happens with popular place names (189). He says the P account of Moses' burial site is reliable, but the P account of Myriam's is not (190).

e) The role of the cult in the preservation of narratives (190).

After Alt and von Rad.

f) Independent stories --> Combined later

He assumes that each stories were originally independent.

1. Num 14:25 and Wilderness Wandering

Since coming from Egypt would result in conquest from the West, and conquest came from the East, he says they were separate stories, and dismisses Num 14:25 and the wandering as a separate, unrelated story. He is manipulating evidence to support his conclusion (192-3).

2. Jacob-Esau and Jacob-Laban

His arguments that the Jacob-Esau and Jacob-Laban story were originally independent are not sound (194). He was generally skeptical, but for some unknown reason considered Moses' marriage to the foreign woman historical (196). Compare with his other treatments of Moses, this suggests subjectivity (197-8).

2. Engnell Nielsen and Carlson

a. Skeptical about the Documentary Hypothesis, and offered traditio-historical as an alternative (199).

a) Writing: Late

Their rejection was based on the idea that writing was late (200).

b) Also skeptical about being able to find the details of the process of the development of the Pentateuch, leading others to say that their work is not 'historical,' but they did not admit it (200-2).

b. Focus on synchronic:

Carlson was relegated to looking only at the stamp of the last editor, D (202). Thus they rejected Noth's second presupposition (you could get back to source through the written text), and effectively were opponents, not supporters, of tradition-historical analysis (202).

3. George Fohrer (pub. 1964-73)

a. Follower of Noth in tradition-historical, but comes to different conclusions because of different presuppositions. Not as skeptical. Tend to see the different themes as inextricably linked (204).

b. He says that religions are not founded by an “*agglomeratio* of traditions,” but by a founder, e.g., Moses (205).

4. R. Rendtorff

a. Form Criticism: Continuity

Follower of Gunkel, von Rad, and Noth except that the *Sagen* were not family *Sitz*, but at the city gate (205).

b. Not Documentary Hypothesis: Discontinuity

Rejected Documentary Hypothesis, but still looks for smaller unites and tradition-history (206).

c. His inconsistency

Published 1977.

a) He is inconsistent in that he sees Moses involved from the beginning, but still wants the sources to be totally independent from each other (206).

b) He does not make a big thing about the point in time when oral transmission gave way to written (207).

d. Literary-critical methods

He uses literary-critical methods to reconstruct the larger units (207) and confirm tradition-historical conclusion (108).

e. Promise

Followed Westermann (1964) in seeing the centrality of “promise” in the stories, and said stories where the promise is central are older than those where the promise is tacked on (207-8).

f. Sources?

His literary-critical method presupposes careful attention to literary detail on the part of the composer and transmission, thus assuming some kind of written source, but not Documentary Hypothesis-type sources (208).

g. Deuteronomic editor

Final Deuteronomic editor was the one who inserted the promises of inheriting the land, common in Deuteronomy, but only in Gn 50:24; Ex 13:5,11; 32:13; 33:1-3a; Num 11:12; 14:23; 32:11 (208); however, the other explanation is that the writer of Deuteronomy used this pre-existing theme (208-9).

h. He uses methods similar to Documentary Hypothesis to split up stories, but postulates a bewildering array of sources, not just four (209-10).

5. E. Blum

a. Pupil of Rendtorff

b. Criteria

“Presence or absence of cross-references, links between different passages and differences of outlook and theology” (211).

c. Tradition history

Jacob (North) and Abraham (South) were combined (between 722 and 587) into Patriarchs (second edition during the exile)

Then the Deuteronomic Pentateuch (late sixth century), which was later edited by P (211).

d. Difference from Rendtorff

a) Can assign stages to ages.

b) More precise identification of stages, especially first and second editions of Deuteronomic Pentateuch (Vg¹ and Vg²).

c) Assigns greater role to authors, e.g., to Jacob-Laban account.

d) Does not suppose that the stories are ancient and older than the early monarchy (211-2). This is in part because we cannot speculate any earlier than that because we don't know anything about the history of Israel before that (212-3).

6. Summary and Conclusions

a. Noth

He is impressive, but based on religio-historical and skeptical assumptions, piling one hypothesis on another (213).

b. Fohrer

That Fohrer used similar methods with different presuppositions to arrive at different conclusions points out the subjective nature of the task (214).

c. Engnell and Nielsen

They rejected the Documentary Hypothesis entirely (as a 20'th century literary mindset) and concentrated on the oral tradition, but were agnostic about tracing the history of the sources (214).

d. Rendtorff

He proposed a literary and documentary composition of 'larger units,' but not of any units that ran continuously through the work, which were combined, rejecting the Documentary Hypothesis in favor of a new documentary hypothesis. He actually employed literary-critical methods (214-5).

e. Blum

He developed Rendtorff, looking for minute points of detail like the Documentary Hypothesis people did (215).

E. Concluding Assessment

1. No writing until 6'th c.?

It has shown that the theory that Israel did not use writing before the sixth century is fallacious, though there may have been oral recitation of materials that were written (cf. Qur'an) (215).

2. Foreign models?

Attempts to posit Israel's oral tradition in the light of foreign models has also failed.

a. Olrik's 'epic laws' are not like the Pentateuch, and also cannot be compared because the methods could have been used for the written literature too.

b. Icelandic 'family sagas' may have been literary composition, and do not resemble the peaceful, nomadic lives of the patriarchs.

c. Finnegan has shown that study of modern 'oral literature' is in its infancy and also there are no experts in both fields, modern oral literature and Biblical criticisms, the material in the Bible is too sparse, there are few comparable sagas. However, she has shown that conclusions about genre, *Sitz*, and historical origin are on shaky ground, since such cannot even be found out about living traditions (216-7).

3. Fluidity of Oral tradition

Oral tradition is fluid, therefore the ‘original’ *Sagen* could not be distinguished in the written text (217). Further, writing changes the story; the written form differs from the oral form (218).

4. Storyteller?

There is no evidence of professional ‘storytellers’ in the Old Testament.

5. There are no methods to differentiate oral from literary devices (218).

Part III: An Alternative Approach

A. A Single author for Pentateuch?

1. Single author or accretion?

Sandme proposes that the Pentateuch grew by accretion, in a Haggadic way (cf. the Midrash), and there was never a general editor who consciously sought to make a comprehensive work (221-2).

This explains the inconsistencies, but not the unity. His comparison with the midrash does not work, since it is a commentary, not a composition. It is a supplement hypothesis without an original core.

2. Deuteronomic Pentateuch?

a. Noth: Priority of Pentateuch

Deuteronomy was added on, and did not really fit.

b. Priority of Deuteronomy

a) Schmidt and Rendtorff

Deuteronomist edited the other four. Perlitt says Deuteronomist wrote ‘covenant theology’ into the rest (223).

b) Schmidt follows, saying that the four is a systematic expression of Deuteronomistic theology, highly developed, ‘late Yahwist’ (224).

c) Rendtorff says the four are an introduction to Deuteronomy, and sees stylistic elements in the editorial links that are common to the four, Deuteronomy, and Joshua/Judges etc. (224).

3. A National historian?

a. The Pentateuch and early Greek historians:

a) Van Seters (1983) found similarities between the Bible and Herodotus (226).

b) Presuppositions: 6'th century J (226)

c) Similarities

Herodotus used sources, digressions, and editorial links (226-7). Many sources were oral (but may be fictitious) (227). he used a variety of connecting methods and phrases for stylistic and literary purposes--which Documentary Hypothesis people would ascribe to different redactors (228). Herodotus had moralistic as well as nationalistic purposes for his book (228-9).

d) Van Seters' conclusion: Single author?

The similarity to the Pentateuch suggests that the Pentateuch could also have a single author (229).

b. A Priestly writer?

a) There was some pre-J, then J was the main author, but it was later edited by P (230). Assuming we know the scope, content, and date of P (we don't), J cannot contain P because:

1. P is post-exilic
2. which is incompatible with J (231).

b) Objection

However, Haran (1978, 81) has proposed that P was probably pre-exilic, the time of Ahaz and Hezekiah, though not promulgated to the general populace until Ezra (Neh 8). Thus one can no longer assume a late date for P (231). For Rendtorff, P is not a unified source, nor a consistent redaction, though he still wants to say that it is post-Deuteronomic (232).

c. The author of the Pentateuch

There is no reason why the first edition was not also the final edition, composed by a single historian (232-3). That different people come up with different results, and the stylistic variations of Herodotus, cast suspicions on the objectivity and validity of the research into sources (233).

Alonso Schoekel and Muilenburg were among the first to apply literary criticism to the Old Testament. At first this was done on smaller units (233). Alter (1981) works with larger units, showing, e.g., that Gn 2 follows Gn 1 for literary reasons ('Montage') (234). He said we don't know what the ancient Hebrew mind considered to be contradictory or not (234).

B. The Sources

1. You cannot tell oral from written sources.

2. You cannot tell how old a source is relative to the compilation (235-6).

a. Rejection of Documentary Hypothesis actually means there are more possibilities for sources, and they could be dated any time after the event (236).

b. Fact: whoever was the last to work on the Pentateuch was not concerned with modern concepts of consistency, smoothness, unity (238).

c. Whybray's thesis [I have a problem with his thesis, esp. on fictionality of the OT characters.]

a) There were a many patriarchal-type stories in circulation at the time, the writer chose Abraham over, say Job because he fit his purposes better (239).

b) Fictional characters

Much of the OT is fictional characters--e.g., the Joseph, 'novella'--created to make a point at a later time (also Job, Ruth, Jonah, Esther, Dan 1-6, and parts of Chronicles) (240).

c) Poems: Old

The 'historian' was not likely to have composed laws or poems (241).

d.) The gist of Ex 1-15 is old, but he may have composed the details (242). Gen 1-11 seem to be old, but with anything else we cannot know what was sources and what was composed (242).

e) Pentateuch as supplement/prologue to Deuteronomic history

Pentateuch is a history of Israel, prefaced by a history of the world, perhaps as a supplement/prologue to Deuteronomy. He reworked and supplemented his source material to create his masterpiece (242).