



3-1 The Documentary Hypothesis, Empirical Models and Holistic Interpretation¹

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The subtitle of this volume, and of the workshop, on which it based, is “The Collapse and Remaking of Traditions”. The two main parts of this paper will address this theme by describing (1) the Documentary Hypothesis, which represents the collapse of the tradition that ascribes the Torah to a single author, and (2) the remaking of the tradition as represented in the work of scholars who, while accepting the view that the Torah combines the work of multiple authors, have nevertheless developed methods of reading by which they appreciate the Torah holistically.

I. The Documentary Hypothesis

The Development of the Documentary Hypothesis

During the period of the Israelite Second Temple — roughly, the late 6th century B.C.E. through the year 70 C.E., the belief developed that the entire Torah (i.e., the Pentateuch, or the Five Books of Moses) was given by God through Moses, and this became the normative view within Judaism and Christianity.² But already in Late Antiquity there were minor exceptions to this view. At least one rabbi in the Talmud thought that the final verses in Deuteronomy, which tell about Moses’s death and burial and the subsequent mourning (Deut. 34:5–12), were written after Moses’s death by his successor, Joshua.³ In the Middle Ages, Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra (1089–1164) and others noted several other verses in the Torah that could not have been written in Moses’s lifetime because they contain information not available when Moses was alive, or they reflect conditions that did not exist then, such as a saying about the mountain on which King Solomon erected the First Temple some two centuries later (Gen. 22:14).⁴

Ibn Ezra didn’t say who he thought added these verses to the Torah, but Rabbi Joseph Bonfils (fourteenth century), who wrote a commentary on Ibn Ezra’s commentary, said that these verses were written by later prophets and were based on oral tradition. As for any theological questions these observations might raise, Bonfils held that since the additions were also made by prophets and were based on tradition, it made no difference whether they were written by Moses or a later prophet because the essential thing is belief in the truth of tradition and prophecy.⁵ In other words, the essential thing isn’t necessarily who wrote the verses or when, but the fact that they are divinely inspired and true.

Similar critical observations were made about other Biblical books. Ibn Ezra hinted that the second part of the Book of Isaiah was not written by the prophet Isaiah but by a different prophet who lived a century and a half after him. During the Renaissance, the

Jewish statesman and philosopher, Isaac Abravanel (1437–1508), argued that Joshua and Samuel couldn't have written the books bearing their names because those books say that the effects of certain things that happened in the days of Joshua and Samuel lasted “until this day” which implies that these statements were written long after the events they describe.⁶

All of these observations were forerunners of the critical method that dates Biblical books on the basis of careful analysis of the available evidence, particularly their own contents, rather than tradition. These early observations didn't add up to a collapse of the traditional views about the authorship of different parts of the Bible, but people feared that this could happen. For that reason, Ibn Ezra limited himself to cryptic statements indicating that the verses in question concealed a truth that it was not prudent to speak about. The works of Christian writers who made similar observations were placed on the Church's index of forbidden books.

With Spinoza (*A Theologico-Political Treatise*, 1670) such observations gathered momentum and were eventually, in the 18th and 19th centuries, developed into a systematic historical-critical approach to the authorship of the Torah and other books of the Bible. Important milestones in the development of this approach include the observations of Jean d'Astruc (1684–1766) about the different names used for God in Genesis, and the classic formulations of the Documentary Hypothesis by K.H. Graf (1797–1830) and J. Wellhausen (1844–1918), who worked out the theory that four original sources were combined, in successive redactions, into the Torah as we know it today.

Astruc noticed that different parts of Genesis used different names for God, particularly the name YHWH⁷ on the one hand, and the title “God” (Heb. *'elohîm*). Astruc theorized that Moses had used different written sources to compose Genesis, which dealt with the period before he lived. In his view, all of these sources were written earlier than Moses, and they each used different names for God, so a verse using the name *'elohîm* was from one source, and a verse using YHWH was from a different source. He thought that Moses put the sources in parallel columns (like a Gospel harmony) and that the columns were later *interwoven* to form the running narrative that we have today.

Following up on Astruc, subsequent scholars noticed other vocabulary differences that went along with the different names of God. For example, passages that used one name for God would typically use a particular verb for “create” (*bārā'*) while passages that used another name would use a different verb (*yāšar*). The same went for different idioms referring to male and female animals, and for many other terms. More important than different names or vocabulary were *contradictions* about the names and other matters. For example, in Exodus 6:3 God tells Moses that He had appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by the name “El Shaddai” and had not told them of his other name, YHWH. But according to Gen 15 he *did* identify himself to Abraham as YHWH: “Then He said to him, “I am YHWH who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans...” Numerous other

contradictions were also noticed, such as differences in the order of creation between the first two chapters of Genesis, differences in the number of animals that Noah was to take on the ark (one pair or seven pairs), and the number of years one could hold a fellow Israelite as a slave (six or forty-nine; see Exod. 21:2 and Deut. 15:12 versus Lev. 25:10, 39). Also important were doublets (stories or actions told more than once), such as the two stories of creation (Gen. 1 and 2), two introductions to flood story (Genesis 6:5–8 and verses 9–13), the name of Beersheba being explained twice (Genesis 21:31; 26:33) and the two revelations of God’s name to Moses (Exod. 3:13–15 and 6:2–3).

Scholars eventually built these observations into the theory known as “the Documentary Hypothesis”, according to which the entire Torah was composed by compilers weaving together four different *documents* that covered roughly the same ground. They call these original documents J, E, P and D,⁸ and the compiler or compilers are called redactor(s), abbreviated as R.⁹ Each document presented the narratives and laws and other materials of the Torah in its own style and from its own point of view. These varying points of view included the differences in details such as those I mentioned above — the order of events in creation, the number of animals on the ark, etc. Weaving these sources together therefore produced contradictions within the final product, as well as repetition of episodes (doublets) because the redactor(s) chose to incorporate the sources with minimal omissions and revisions rather than choose one version over another or smooth out the contradictions and eliminate repetitions.¹⁰

The analytical methods used in Biblical criticism were applied simultaneously to classical literature, starting with Richard Bentley’s *Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris* (1699), and were eventually applied to the Homeric epics, most famously by F.A. Wolf (1759–1824) and eventually Wilamowitz (U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, 1848–1931). The shared methods involved attentiveness to inconsistencies within a book as well as repetitions, thematic and stylistic variations, disturbances of order, and anachronisms. All of these were considered incompatible with composition by the same author or at one time or with an early date.

Critiques of the Documentary Hypothesis

The Italian-Israeli scholar Umberto (Moshe David) Cassuto (1883–1951), described the shared history of Homeric and Biblical criticism and subjected their methods to an extensive critique.¹¹ He observed (as had others before him) the fact that the shared methods were the result of intellectual developments in recent centuries,¹² and expressed the opinion that these methods might reflect the intellectual fashion of the period in which they developed rather than purely objective facts. He supported this claim by noting that a reaction against the excesses of the analytical methods had already begun among Biblical scholars and even more so among classical scholars. He was right in claiming that some scholars rejected the hypercritical analysis of the Biblical text into ever smaller segments and fragments, and the penchant to find contradictions everywhere or to instinctively

assume that authors never varied their vocabulary or style and never incorporated contradictory materials in their work. But among biblical scholars there never did develop a widespread rejection of the Documentary Hypothesis or source criticism. It is true that some Homeric scholars rejected the analytic approach and that the field divided up into what were called Analysts and Unitarians.¹³ More recently Homeric scholarship has gone in a very new direction after the researches of Parry and Lord.¹⁴ But even in recent years there have been Homeric scholars such as Geoffrey Kirk who believe that there are parts of the *Iliad* in which conflation and adaptation of separate and variant sources are the most convincing explanation of serious inconsistencies in the text.¹⁵

Be that as it may, Cassuto proceeded to re-examine the basis of the Documentary Hypothesis by critiquing what he called the five “pillars” of its methodology, such as the different names used for God, vocabulary differences, contradictions and the like, asking whether they necessarily imply multiple authorship or might be explained better in a different way. Cassuto argued, for example, that the different names of God — YHWH and *’elohîm* — were not merely equivalents but have different connotations and were intentionally chosen because the different connotations to fit the varying contexts in which they were used. That the names of God have slightly different meanings is true enough: the first is God’s personal name (“Yahweh”, or “Jehovah”), while the second is a title (“God”). But Cassuto’s attempts to show why each name was chosen for each context were forced. For example Genesis 6:5–8 and 6:9–13 each use a different name for God, but both passages are introductions to the story of the flood. Since the contexts are the same there is no convincing reason why they should use different names; by Cassuto’s definitions of the names, *’elohîm* would have suited both.¹⁶

Arguments against the Documentary Hypothesis — Cassuto’s and others’ — were usually based on internal critical analysis of the Biblical text, essentially denying the cogency of the arguments that it is composite. But a small number of scholars took another approach and claimed that the Documentary Hypothesis is unrealistic because books were never, or at least not in the ancient Near East, patched together the way the Documentary Hypothesis supposes.¹⁷ As we shall see, however, such methods were, indeed, employed in composing ancient texts and, in fact, these methods of composition led to the types of textual phenomena that lie at the heart of the Documentary Hypothesis.

II. Empirical Models

The Search for Empirical Models

It would, of course, be wonderful if archaeologists were to discover separate copies of the four main putative sources of the Torah, those dubbed J, E, P and D by scholars. But that is not likely to happen. So the question is whether other evidence can be found, particularly evidence that does not rely solely on internal critical analysis of the text, a process that admittedly leaves room for subjective judgments. Here is where what I call “empirical

models” come to help. By empirical models I mean case studies of the history of a literary work in which various stages of its development can be *documented* with versions from two or more stages of its history.¹⁸ By comparing the stages to each other we can see how texts actually change over time. We can see if the *kind* of literary development that Biblical critics think took place in the case of the Bible resembles the *documented* development of other texts. In some cases we can see whether the processes of revision and redaction leave behind tell-tale clues, such as contradictions and vocabulary differences and the other kinds of clues that Biblical critics rely on. Such case studies may also suggest other kinds of literary development that critics have not thought of.

Biblical critics did not entirely lack more empirical models. In the late nineteenth century, W. Robertson Smith made extensive use of the Septuagint as a model of the redactional processes underlying parts of the Bible.¹⁹ He explained the value of the analogy as follows:

Higher criticism is often supposed to have no other basis than the subjective fancies and arbitrary hypotheses of scholars. When critics maintain that some Old Testament writings, traditionally ascribed to a single hand, are really of composite origin, and that many of the Hebrew books have gone through successive redactions...it is often supposed that these are mere idle theories unsupported by evidence. Here it is that the Septuagint comes to justify the critics [i.e., Biblical critics, “analysts” — JHT]. The variations of the Greek and Hebrew text reveal to us a time when the functions of copyist and editor shaded into one another by imperceptible degrees. They prove that Old Testament books were subjected to such processes of successive editing as the critics maintain...

Prominent among Smith’s examples were the differences between the Septuagint and Masoretic texts of the book of Jeremiah. The Masoretic version is longer and it illustrates the process of revision of the book. Another example is the two conflicting accounts of the story of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17, where the absence of the intrusive verses from manuscripts of the Septuagint convinced Smith that those verses represent an alternate version of the story and that the Hebrew Masoretic version has combined two separate accounts of the episode.²⁰

The analogies based on the book of Chronicles and the Septuagint had the advantage of coming from within the literary and textual tradition of the Hebrew Bible itself. But there were not many examples from within the textual tradition of the Hebrew Bible and scholars began to look for examples from later times and further afield. In 1890, G. F. Moore adduced the analogue of Tatian’s *Diatessaron*, a harmony of the four Gospels produced around the year 170 C.E. in Syriac or Greek. The *Diatessaron* wove the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), each a biography of Jesus, into a single running narrative.²¹ Its conflate character was no secret; its Greek name *Diatessaron* means “[the Gospel] by means of the four,” and in Syriac it was called the “Gospel of the Mixed [Gospels]” (*Evangelion da-Meħalletē*).²² Moore showed that the *Diatessaron* contains most of the signs of compositeness that critics found in the Torah (e.g. contradictions and

doublets), and by comparing it with its sources, the four Gospels, he was able to show that these characteristics were indeed the result of its being pieced together from multiple sources — a demonstration that led one observer to characterize the Torah as “the *Diatessaron* of the Old Testament”.²³ It has since been cited frequently as a good model for Pentateuchal criticism.

New Empirical Models

One of the most important developments in the past century is that Assyriology, the study of ancient Mesopotamia, which was in its infancy when Biblical criticism reached its classic formulation, has developed to the point where we now have multiple versions of various Babylonian and Assyrian compositions that enable us to trace their literary development over many centuries. Furthermore, the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls and simultaneous advances in the study of the Septuagint and the Samaritan version of the Torah (SP) give us a much fuller picture of how the Biblical text developed during the Second Temple period.²⁴ Case studies of such models show that inconsistencies in fact and style can indeed be evidence of composite and conflate composition.

Let us analyze some examples, from the late Babylonian *Gilgamesh Epic* and from the Samaritan version of the Torah, to see how they show this.

1. Our first example is the eleventh tablet of the late, Standard Babylonian version of the *Gilgamesh Epic*.²⁵ In this tablet, Gilgamesh, the hero of the epic, visits Utnapishtim, to learn how he became immortal. Utnapishtim tells him the story of the ancient flood and how he and his wife survived it and were granted immortality by the gods. Utnapishtim’s narrative occupies 199 of the tablet’s 328 lines (lines 8–206), the rest of which describe Gilgamesh’s encounter with Utnapishtim (continued from Tablet X) and his return home to his city Uruk. Utnapishtim’s narrative was not composed by the author of the *Gilgamesh Epic*. It was borrowed from another Babylonian epic, the *Atrahasis Epic*, which narrated the early history of mankind from creation down through the flood, in which the survivor of the flood is named Atrahasis instead of Utnapishtim.²⁶ While Utnapishtim’s account of the flood is thus from the *Atrahasis Epic*, which we can call Source A, the rest of the narrative about Gilgamesh’s meeting with Utnapishtim (100 or so lines from Tablet X, and the rest of Tablet XI (lines 1–7, 207–328) is from the hand of the writer who produced the late version of the *Gilgamesh Epic*, which we will call Source G. We thus have the advantage of knowing at the outset that the Utnapishtim section of *Gilgamesh* is composed of material from diverse hands, and we know which portions of the tablet come from each set of hands. A comparison of the flood account in *Gilgamesh* with that in *Atrahasis* can help show whether or not the passage from the *Atrahasis* source (A) was modified when it was incorporated in *Gilgamesh*, while a comparison of the flood section of *Gilgamesh* XI to the rest of the tablet (B) (and to the epic as a whole) can help show whether or not its style and contents are consistent with those of its new context in *Gilgamesh*.

What we find includes the following.²⁷

- a. The first difference is lexical. In tablet XI, in passages from Source A, Utnapishtim's wife is called his *sinništu*, literally "woman" (ll. 191, 194), while in the rest of the tablet (from Source G) she is termed his *marḥītu*, "wife" (lines 212, 215, 219, 273). Since both terms refer to the same woman in *Gilgamesh XI* and each is restricted to a separate component of the tablet, the differences clearly represent the vocabulary of the original components in this particular tablet.
- b. The second difference is a formulaic one. Passages from G consistently use a single formula for introducing speeches, "A said to him/her, to B" (lines 1, 8, 212, 215, 219, 231, etc.) while passages from A normally use a different formula: "A opened his mouth to speak, saying to B" (lines 36–37, 177–178, 181–182).²⁸ Here, then, we have two different formulas, each restricted to one of the component parts of the Utnapishtim section and clearly reflecting the vocabulary of its components in this pericope. Since these differences are the result of having imported the flood story into the *Gilgamesh Epic* from a different epic, it would be a mistake to rationalize these differences as expressing different points the author wanted to emphasize.
- c. There is also a difference in the names used for the survivor of the flood. In G the survivor is consistently called Utnapishtim (Uta-napishtim; lines 1, 2, 8, 212, 215, etc.), whereas in A he is usually called Atrahasis (lines 49, 197), the name consistently used in the *Atrahasis Epic*. Hence the names, too, reflect the compositeness of the text, much like the names of God in the Torah. In this case, however, the picture is complicated by lines 203–205, at the very end of Utnapishtim's account of the flood, which I have presumed is from A. In this passage the god Enlil, in granting Utnapishtim and his wife immortality, uses the name Utnapishtim. I have no convincing explanation for this. Perhaps this is a case in which the redactor did choose a name because of its meaning, as Cassuto suggested regarding the Bible, since "Utnapishtim", which means "he found (*ūta*) life (*napištim*)",²⁹ fits this moment in the plot better than the name Atrahasis ("exceedingly (*atra*) wise (*ḥasīs*)") does. If so, this would not be the only adjustment that the redactor of GE XI made to fit the story to the new context. He also changed the third-person narrative of *Atrahasis* to first person to fit the plot of *Gilgamesh* in which the hero meets with Utnapishtim and hears the story from him firsthand in response to his inquiry about how Utnapishtim became immortal.³⁰ Other explanations are conceivable. Perhaps this passage was not taken from the *Atrahasis Epic* but from some other version of the flood story (it is not attested in any of the known copies of *Atrahasis*, and we do not know for sure that the survivor was granted immortality in *Atrahasis*,³¹ though this part of *Atrahasis* is poorly preserved in general so we cannot be sure). Or the name could be a scribal revision of an original reading "Atrahasis", made under the influence of the upcoming passage "Who will bring the gods to assembly for you, so you can find (*tuttâ*) the life you search for" (lines 207–208).³²

Our remaining examples come from the Torah text of the Samaritans, a non-Jewish

sect, centered around a sanctuary on Mount Gerizim in Nablus (ancient Shechem), claiming descent from the tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel (the “good Samaritan” of the New Testament was one of them). Their text, apart from a few sectarian elements, is based on a type of manuscript found among Jews in Second Temple times (e.g. among the Dead Sea Scrolls). One of its distinguishing characteristics is that when certain stories appear in both Exodus and Deuteronomy, the Samaritan Torah splices the parallel Deuteronomy verses into Exodus, so that Exodus contains a composite version of those stories. These composite versions contain various inconsistencies and alternating vocabulary, just as the traditional, Masoretic version of the Torah does in so many places.

2. Exodus chapter 18 tells how Moses established a judiciary system for the Israelites while they were traveling to the promised land (see Appendix A). In the Masoretic version of this episode Jethro, Moses’s father-in-law, sees him sitting as a judge by himself from morning to evening and advises him to delegate authority so that he not collapse under the burden of being the sole judge for the entire people. Moses follows Jethro’s advice and appoints subordinates to handle most cases, reserving only the difficult ones for himself. The story of how Moses established the judiciary is told again in Deuteronomy 1, with differences. One is that the story is told by Moses himself, in the first person, forty years later, which is in keeping with Deuteronomy which consists largely of speeches that Moses addresses to the people shortly before his death forty years after the exodus from Egypt. Another difference is that Moses does not mention Jethro’s suggestion to him but proposes the idea to the people on his own. In the Samaritan Torah, in Exodus 18, both versions of the story are spliced together, arranging the conflicting details in sequence in such a way that they do not seem contradictory or inconsistent, but as different moments in the story. First come Jethro’s advice and Moses’s compliance, from Exodus; then, from Deuteronomy, Moses broaches the idea to the people, the people approve, and Moses appoints the subordinates and charges them. All of this is absent from the Masoretic version of Exodus save the appointment, which comes about halfway through the Deuteronomic insert; rather than interrupt the insert momentarily for the sake of a variant from Exodus that offers nothing substantially different from the description in Deuteronomy, the Samaritan text preserves the version of Deuteronomy and drops that of Exodus. The hand of the redactor is visible in the change from the first and second person, which befits the insert’s home in Deuteronomy, to the third person where necessary, as suits the narrative context of its new home in the Samaritan Exodus, and in the dropping of Deuteronomy’s “at that time”, which fits Deuteronomy’s retrospective stance but not that of Exodus. This illustration of the redactor’s procedure supports the following characterization by M. Greenberg of the (Masoretic) Pentateuchal redactor’s operation:

... intent on forging a continuous narrative. He therefore incorporated significant, complementary variants side by side, attempting to elaborate a single, reasonably effective narrative out of them. At times we suspect he may have regarded the result as a restoration of the true complexity of the event — a complexity dissolved into its elements among the various

traditions he received.’³³

The conflated text displays the kinds of internal discrepancies that are at the core of the Documentary Hypothesis. Jethro advises Moses to choose men “from among all the people” (from Exod. 18:21); but in complying, Moses chooses “the tribal leaders” (from Deut. 1:15). Jethro recommends “capable men who fear God, trustworthy men who spurn ill-gotten gain” (from Exod. 18:21), but Moses chooses “wise, discerning and experienced men” (from Deut. 1:13, 15). Jethro speaks only of “chiefs of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens” (from Exod. 18:21), but Moses appoints these plus “officials” (from Deut. 1:15). Jethro advises that the chiefs bring “major” matters to Moses (from Exodus 18:22), but Moses tells them to bring him matters that are “too difficult” (from Deut. 1:17).³⁴ The differing vocabulary of the sources is manifest in the alternation between Jethro’s remark, “they shall bring” difficult cases (from Exod. 18:22), Moses’s saying, “you shall bring near” (from Deut. 1:17), and the summary, “they would bring” (from Exod. 18:26). Harmonistic exegesis might regard such a variation as an attempt to avoid monotony; the redactor may have told himself the same. But having seen his sources, we know that the variation stems from differences in the sources.

3. Another example from the Samaritan Pentateuch is the narrative about the theophany at Mount Sinai in Exodus 20, during which God announces the Ten Commandments. This is another episode that Moses retells 40 years later, as narrated in Deuteronomy 5 with some variations in detail (see Appendix B). The main differences appear in the aftermath of the theophany as the people are terrified by their encounter with God and ask Moses to spare them further direct contact with God and to receive God’s instructions on their behalf. Here, too, in the Samaritan Pentateuch the variant account of Deuteronomy is fully spliced into the Exodus version, with the selections from each book arranged in sequence as different moments of the event. Here, too, just as we suppose with texts in the Torah built up from J, E, and P, one finds the Samaritan Exodus flitting back and forth between the “Masoretic” Exodus and Deuteronomy, adding or dropping a phrase or detail here and there, in an attempt to fit the differing accounts together. The joining of the two versions produces a variation in the terms used for God. The passages from Deuteronomy 5 call Him “YHWH our God”, but the verses from Exodus refer only to “The God”.³⁵ The shift is particularly noticeable in verses 16c–16d, where it comes in mid-sentence: “You go close and hear all that YHWH our God tells you...but let not The God speak with us...” A notable feature of this pericope is the way the Samaritan Pentateuch interpolates yet another passage into the midst of the narrative, namely the law about prophets, imported from elsewhere in Deuteronomy (Deut. 18:18–22). It is inserted right after God has approved the people’s request that Moses serve as intermediary, and it speaks of future intermediaries (prophets), how they are to prove their authenticity, and what will happen to those who disobey them. Only after this digression does God get to the point of what Moses should do in *his* role as intermediary. The digression interrupts the

natural connection of verses 18a–b and 18h–i and produces a glaring *non sequitur* in which instructions on how to respond to a future false prophet (v. 18g) are followed by instructions on how Moses is to proceed immediately (v. 18h). Nor was this digression relevant to the Israelites who had just witnessed the theophany, since their concern was with the immediate future, not the distant future.

4. A final example from the Samaritan Torah. Immediately after the “Masoretic” Decalogue the Samaritan text adds its own tenth commandment,³⁶ which requires the Israelites to build a sacrificial altar of unhewn stone on Mount Gerizim, near Shechem, as soon as they enter the promised land (see Appendix C). The location of God’s chosen sanctuary on Mount Gerizim is the cardinal rule of Samaritan religious practice, the one that distinguishes them from the Jews, who locate the sanctuary in Jerusalem. Such a command is found in Deut. 27:1–8, although there the altar is to be built on nearby Mount Ebal (Mount Gerizim is mentioned later in the chapter, in another context). But it was so important to the Samaritans that they wished to endow it with the status of being ordained at Mount Sinai as part of the Ten Commandments. To create this tenth commandment, the SP took parts of Deut. 27:2, 3, and 4, combined these with part of Deut. 11:29 and 11:30, added a few new phrases and emended Ebal to “Gerizim”.³⁷ The techniques employed in creating this supplement are mostly similar to those described above and will not be reviewed here. But it is notable that the interpolation creates a conflict in the text: its demand for a stone altar conflicts with Exodus’ own altar law stated just a few verses later (vv. 21–22), where the altar is to be made of earth; the possibility of using stone is only a concession (vs. 22a). This conflict is a price that the Samaritan interpolator was willing to pay for placing his religion’s central dogma into the Ten Commandments. Although he did not edit this conflict out, he did make one slight change in the grammar of verse 21b in order to accommodate the interpolation to its new context: he emended the phrase, “In every place where I allow³⁸ my name to be invoked,” which contemplates several places as yet unnamed, to “In the place where I have allowed my name to be invoked (*’zkrty*, a hybrid form), there I will come and bless you.” It thus refers to the site of Gerizim, named just a few verses earlier, and not the as-yet-unnamed Jerusalem. It is notable that even this tendentious supplement is composed in almost every detail of elements already present in the Masoretic version of the Torah, and thus admittedly divine. On the whole, this redactor accomplished his tendentious purpose with material already present somewhere in his sources.

The examples we have reviewed here show that the process of redaction reconstructed by Biblical critics is realistic, that is, the redactorial combination of pre-existing written sources does indeed, at least sometimes, produce inconsistencies of fact and vocabulary, digressions and non-sequiturs, of the type that provide the primary evidence for source criticism. It has sometimes been argued that explaining inconsistencies as due to multiple authorship merely transfers the problem from the author to the editor: if we cannot believe

that a single, careful author would produce an inconsistent document, why should we assume that a redactor would? The examples reviewed above answer this question by demonstrating that redactors did not always allow themselves the freedom to rewrite their texts in order to resolve inconsistencies. Even if they resolved the inconsistencies exegetically in their own minds, in the written text they did not allow themselves to do much more than juxtapose or interweave the sources and add some transitional phrases.

Why the redactors were reluctant to remove inconsistencies is something about which we can only speculate. Perhaps it was out of respect for the sources' authors. Talmudic literature records a number of cases in which liturgical texts were produced by conflation of different versions. In each case two or more rabbis prescribed their own version of the wording, and the Talmud concludes "Therefore we will say both, or all, of them".³⁹ The thinking behind such decisions may be the same thinking that was expressed explicitly by Rabbi Jacob Emden (1697–1776) in his decision about the wording of *Kol Nidrei*, a liturgical declaration to nullify vows that is recited in the synagogue on the Jewish Day of Atonement. Some versions of the text nullify vows made during the past year, while others, in agreement with the position of the great legal authority Rabbenu Tam (ca. 1100–1171), nullify vows that will be made during the coming year. Emden was certain that the original version referred to vows made in the past, but he decided to approve a composite text that combines both versions, nullifying vows of both the past year and the coming year. His reason, he explained, is out of deference to the view of Rabbenu Tam, "since it came from the mouth of that saintly man".⁴⁰ This suggests that one reason for preserving both versions of a text may be out of deference to the stature of their authors. Another possibility is that the redactors considered all the sources they preserved as valid, or at least potentially so. No one version of the past, of a law, or of a belief, necessarily preserved the whole truth, and where they felt unable to decide, they preserved what they had received, fit the sources together as well as they could, and left the rest to readers. Whatever their motivation, their method of operation is clear.

Difficulties and Questions

The use of these models entails certain problems.

1. As mentioned above, Robertson Smith cited the two conflicting accounts of the story of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17, where the absence of the intrusive verses from manuscripts of the Septuagint convinced Smith that those verses represent an alternate version of the story and that the Hebrew Masoretic version has combined two separate accounts of the episode. This view has had other advocates since, including Emanuel Tov.⁴¹ Alexander Rofé, on the other hand, argues that the longer MT version is original and the Septuagint version represents an abridgement.⁴² This debate illustrates the fact that empirical models don't always explain themselves. Even when we have two or more versions of a text, it is not always crystal-clear which is the earliest. Their relative chronology must be established in each case and it is possible for different scholars to

reach opposite conclusions on that question and the question of how one version developed from the other. Sometimes the disagreement reflects different scholarly presuppositions, methodological or otherwise. Such cases indicate that “empirical” models may not be entirely straightforward, even though they are relatively more so than the analyses of classical source criticism.⁴³

2. In the case of models from ancient Mesopotamia there is less of a problem since the relative dating of versions is usually clear from the archaeological context in which they are found or from their paleography. But there can be other difficulties, since various versions of a text do not necessarily stand in a lineal relationship to each other. The earlier versions are not necessarily the direct or even indirect prototypes (*Vorlagen*) of the later ones. Which versions reach us depends on accidents of discovery. And sometimes the versions are incomplete — we may have fragments of one part of a text from the Old Babylonian period, and fragments of another part of the same text from a later period, or we may have broken fragments, making comparison difficult. We saw an example of this in our discussion of the flood story: because the surviving tablets of the *Atrahasis Epic* are all broken at the point where the survivor is granted immortality, we cannot be sure whether the survivor was called “Atrahasis” at that point (as would be expected) or “Utnapishtim” (as he is in *Gilgamesh*), or whether the *Atrahasis Epic* even included the episode at all.

3. Another question is the appropriateness of models from ancient Mesopotamia for our purposes. Since the decipherment of cuneiform literature, the study of Mesopotamian parallels has played a central and fruitful role in Biblical studies. Contacts between Israel and Mesopotamia are described throughout the Bible, and close similarities between Biblical narratives and Mesopotamian narratives, such as story of the flood, or Biblical laws and those of Hammurabi and others, confirm these contacts. But we have no idea whether Israelite scribes had any knowledge at all of how scribe-authors worked in Mesopotamia, including how they edited and revised texts. That such techniques may somehow have passed from Mesopotamia to Israel is conceivable, but hardly to be taken for granted.

Nevertheless, I am not sure that this is a relevant consideration for our topic. It is not the function of an analogue to confirm any particular theory about the development of an Israelite composition. Even another text by the same author cannot prove how he produced a particular text. Analogues can only serve to show what is plausible or realistic by showing what has happened elsewhere.⁴⁴ When scholars make claims such as the claim that the Documentary Hypothesis “reflects a modern, anachronistic book view, and attempts to interpret ancient biblical literature in modern categories, an *interpretatio europaeica moderna*”,⁴⁵ analogues from anywhere in the ancient world are sufficient to show them wrong.⁴⁶ Demonstrating that particular techniques were indeed used in the ancient Near East can help scholars evaluate the *realism* of an existing theory about the

development of that text or it can suggest a new theory about it. While the absence of a known analogue for a particular theory is not *ipso facto* an argument against its plausibility (what is unique is not implausible), the existence of an analogue can enhance the plausibility of a theory by showing that it is not out of line with types of literary development attested in other cases.

Finally, it may be a mistake to think that similarities in redactional techniques could only be the result of cultural contact. Enough similarities in techniques are known from around the world to suggest that they can arise independently as well as through cultural borrowing. Greek and Islamic literary history offer some valuable and instructive parallels to the techniques underlying biblical literature.⁴⁷ The same is sometimes true of Talmudic literature and early Christian literature (the *Diatessaron*), and even of literature from more distant quarters. The technique of conflating was practiced by medieval English chroniclers, who wrote accounts of Thomas Becket's return to England by conflating and revising earlier accounts.⁴⁸ In the nineteenth century, Thomas Jefferson compiled *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth* by literally cutting and pasting extracts from the four Gospels to produce a single running (though selective) account.⁴⁹ In the early twentieth century the Hebrew writers H. N. Bialik and Y. H. Rawnitzki composed their anthology of aggadic literature by combination and conflation.⁵⁰ It is quite possible, then, that we are dealing with common-sense techniques that developed independently among the transmitters of literary traditions when they faced similar tasks.

If we are indeed dealing with widespread common-sense techniques, and if ancient Near Eastern and postbiblical Jewish analogues cannot claim exclusive validity as models for biblical literary criticism, they will nonetheless retain a preeminent position among extrabiblical models used by Biblical scholars. These are the bodies of extrabiblical literature best known and most accessible on a scholarly level to students of the Hebrew Bible. Furthermore, we cannot exclude the possibility that literary techniques *are* shared because of cultural borrowing, and scholars will naturally feel more comfortable with analogues from cultures with known relations to Biblical Israel. But so long as the main use of analogues is to show what is realistic, even distant analogues will have heuristic value, especially if our knowledge of how they developed is empirical rather than hypothetical.⁵¹

III. Redaction Criticism, Holistic Interpretation and

Similar Approaches

Despite the great achievements of the Biblical "Analysts" who engaged in source criticism and created the Documentary Hypothesis, their focus on recovering the original sources of the Torah led them to ignore the meaning of the final product. They came to view the redactors as an irritant, as second-rate minds.⁵² This was "the collapse of the tradition" at

its peak.

Particularly since the 1960s some scholars have begun to argue that the redactor's selection and interweaving of passages from J, E, D, and P was not merely a mechanical process, nor was it haphazard. In their view the redactor was motivated by the goal of preserving more than one version of something, and he exercised thoughtful judgment about where to place things and how to organize them. He believed, implicitly, that the truth is complex, and that no single version was complete or adequate to represent the full truth. This approach incorporates what has come to be known as redaction criticism, which studies "the way the writers of the materials, as we now have them, selected, combined, and arranged already existing materials to express special concerns and emphases",⁵³ and employed "structural and thematic patterns...to create a finely crafted, aesthetic final product",⁵⁴ and as the holistic method, which "emphasi[z]es the organic or functional relation between parts and wholes".⁵⁵

In what follows we survey some modern scholars and thinkers who "remake the tradition" by appreciating and validating the composite, conflate final product even while recognizing its disparate origins.

One of the first to do so was the Jewish theologian Franz Rosenzweig (1886–1929), who dealt with this as a religious question. He expressed a view of revelation that combined faith with criticism. In 1927, in a letter to Jacob Rosenheim, a leader of Orthodox Jewry in Germany, he wrote:

Our difference from Orthodoxy lies in this: that from our belief in the sanctity, i.e., the uniqueness of the Torah and in its revelational character we cannot draw any conclusions concerning its literary genesis...[I]f all of Wellhausen's theories were right...this would not in the least affect our belief... We, too [Rosenzweig and Martin Buber] translate the Torah as a single book; to us, too, it is the work of one spirit. We do not know who he was; that it was Moses we cannot believe. Among ourselves we identify him by the siglum used by critical scholarship for its assumed final Redactor: R. But we fill out this R not as redactor but as *rabbenu* [our Teacher].⁵⁶

Rosenzweig stressed that what counts is the final product produced by the redactor:

For, whoever he was and whatever material he had at his disposal, he is our Teacher, his theology is our Teaching. For example: even if criticism should be right and it were true that Genesis 1 and 2 really stemmed from distinct authors...even then, what we must know about creation is not to be got out of one of the two chapters alone, but only out of taking them together and harmonized — and from the harmonization precisely of their apparent contradictions from which critical analysis starts: namely the "cosmological" creation leading to man of the first chapter and the "anthropological" creation beginning with man of the second. Only this ... is the Teaching. Another example: the smoking Sinai and the chapter with the 13 attributes [of God; Exodus 34:6–7] cannot by themselves teach us what revelation is, but only the interlacing of this narrative with the *mishpatim* [the rules of Exodus 21–23] and the Tabernacle [Exodus 25–31].⁵⁷

A similar position was adopted by the Pontifical Biblical Commission of the Roman Catholic Church. In a document presented to Pope John Paul II in 1993, with a preface by

then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI), the commission describes the various types of critical methodology. For our purposes, what it says about redaction criticism is important:

... Finally, redaction criticism studies the modifications that these texts have undergone before being fixed in their final state, [and] it also analyzes this final stage, trying as far as possible to identify the tendencies particularly characteristic of this concluding process... While the preceding steps have sought to explain the text by tracing its origin and development within a diachronic perspective, this last step concludes with a study that is synchronic: At this point the text is explained as it stands, on the basis of the mutual relationships between its diverse elements, and with an eye to its character as a message communicated by the author to his contemporaries. At this point one is in a position to consider the demands of the text from the point of view of action and life ... *[I]t is the text in its final stage, rather than in its earlier editions, which is the expression of the word of God.* But diachronic study remains indispensable for making known the historical dynamism which animates sacred Scripture and for shedding light upon its rich complexity...⁵⁸

Rosenzweig and the Pontifical Biblical Commission addressed the question in purely religious terms. Others focus on it as a scholarly issue as well as a religious one, yet others as a purely scholarly issue. For all of them, an attentive study of the final product in its own right is a necessary final stage even in a critical analysis of the Bible. Several scholars in recent years have acknowledged the achievements of the Documentary Hypothesis while at the same time emphasizing the importance of the redactors' contribution. According to Nahum M. Sarna:

Whatever the merits or demerits of [the Documentary Hypothesis], it is beyond doubt that the Book of Genesis came down to us, not as a composite of disparate elements but as a unified document with a life, coherence, and integrity of its own. For this reason, a fragmentary approach to it cannot provide an adequate understanding of the whole. ... A totality — things in combination — often possesses properties and engenders qualities neither carried by nor necessarily inherent in any of its discrete components.⁵⁹

Similarly, Robert Alter who approaches the Bible as a literary scholar writes:

The Torah is manifestly a composite construction, but there is abundant evidence throughout the Hebrew Bible that composite work was fundamental to the very conception of what literature was, that a process akin to collage was assumed to be one of the chief ways in which literary texts were put together. What we have, then, in the Five Books is a work assembled by many hands, reflecting several different viewpoints, and representing literary activity that spanned several centuries. ... The Torah exhibits seams, fissures, and inner tensions that cannot be ignored, but it has also been artfully assembled through the ancient editorial process to cohere strongly...⁶⁰

Richard E. Friedman writes about the effects produced by the redaction of the early chapters of Genesis:

The combination of J and P ... produced something that was more than the sum of the pieces. The story was now richer, with new interpretive possibilities. ... The mixing of the sources into one text enriched the interpretive possibilities of the Bible for all time. ... When the redactor combined all the sources, he mixed two different pictures of God...he formed a new balance

between the personal and the transcendent qualities of the deity... It was a balance that none of the individual authors had intended. But that balance, intended or not, came to be at the heart of Judaism and Christianity. ...both religions have lived and struggled ever since with a cosmic yet personal deity. ...An extraordinary idea. But... it was not planned by any of the authors. *It was probably not even the redactor's design.* It was so embedded in the texts that the redactor could not have helped but produce the new mixture as long as he was at all true to his sources.⁶¹

The scholar who has engaged the interplay between the sources and the final product in the greatest detail is Moshe Greenberg (1928–2010), who called his approach the *holistic approach*. Greenberg defined the term, quoting Webster's dictionary, as a method "emphasizing the organic or functional relation between parts and wholes".⁶²

Greenberg first developed this approach in his commentary on Exodus 1–11, *Understanding Exodus* (1969).⁶³ He began by observing that:

Modern scholars are inclined to devote attention to matters other than the message of the present text. Ever since the discovery of the composite nature of the Pentateuch was made in the eighteenth century, scholarship has focused on the elaboration of the findings and historical implications of the source analysis. Attention has been diverted from the textual entity transmitted by tradition to its newly analyzed, hypothetically reconstructed elements. This is sometimes justified on the ground that the elements reflect higher, pristine levels of spiritual power; that the compilation of elements into the traditional, received form is the work of a second-class mind.⁶⁴ But the received text is the only historically attested datum; it alone has had demonstrable effects; it alone is the undoubted product of Israelite creativity. True, there are strong indications that the text is composite, but there is also evidence that the composition was thoughtful and expressive of a viewpoint that merits consideration in its own right. The hypothetical reconstruction of the primary components of our text is a legitimate, indeed an inevitable, exercise of historical-philological imagination. But preoccupation with such exercise to the virtual exclusion of other interests is unjustifiable. Paying due attention to the work of composition, our effort will be directed primarily toward understanding how the redactor (or a contemporary) might have grasped the text in its wholeness.⁶⁵

Accordingly, Greenberg thoroughly discussed the process by which each section of Exodus 1–11 was redacted and how the final product coheres. A fine example of his method is his study of the narrative in Exodus 3–11, from the burning bush episode through the ninth of the ten plagues. One of the focal points of his analysis is the recognition that the revelation of God's name to Moses in Exodus 6:2–8, seems redundant after essentially the same information was already narrated in 3:13–15. Source criticism, as Greenberg explains, has shown that these two passages are essentially variant accounts of the same event, the former from the JE source and the latter from the Priestly source, or P. Greenberg goes on to ask why the redactor chose to include both versions, and why he placed the second one exactly where he did, right after the failure of Moses' first meeting with Pharaoh. Focusing on the key words and phrases in the narrative, particularly God's name YHWH and the phrase "knowing that I am YHWH", he shows that the redactor very effectively turned the second (P) revelation of God's name from a mere doublet of the first revelation into a rejoinder to both Pharaoh and Moses who, each in his

own way, had challenged God’s power, capacity, authority — all that is implied by his name: Pharaoh by contemptuously declaring that he does not “know YHWH” and Moses by complaining that speaking to Pharaoh in God’s name had made things worse. At the same time, the redactor turned the second revelation into an introduction to the plague story, which revolves around the theme of God’s revelation of his name — who He is, his power, his authority — to Pharaoh, to the Egyptians, and to the entire world.

In analyzing the plague narrative itself Greenberg shows how the ten-plague structure was also built out of the two earlier sources, in each of which there were only seven plagues, some identical in both sources and some different. Building on an insight first mentioned by Rashbam and elaborated on by Abravanel and Cassuto, Greenberg shows that in the present form of the narrative the first nine plagues are arranged in a remarkable symmetrical structure of three triads, in each of which the first, second and third plagues have matching characteristics. In addition, it was the passages from P that saw the plagues as demonstrations of God’s power; those from JE conceived of the plagues as punishment. By fusing the two sources the redactor gave the narrative an added dimension: a sense of the multi-valence of events. Such enrichment of the values of the narrative, Greenberg concluded, is characteristic of the redactor’s work throughout the Pentateuch.

In ferreting out the redactor’s methods Greenberg concluded that the redactor sought to string the variants together in a temporal sequence that would create “a single, reasonably effective narrative out of them. At times we suspect he may have regarded the result as a restoration of the true complexity of the event — a complexity dissolved into its elements among the various traditions he received...”⁶⁶ In addition, the redactor sometimes ordered the variants in such a way as to achieve a dramatic effect or convey a theological message.⁶⁷

Assessing the results of his analysis of these and other sections of Exodus, Greenberg observed that source criticism provided a valuable stimulus for inquiry that uncovered a grand structure in the present form of the narrative, and that this analysis enables us to appreciate the redactor not as a “second-class mind” but as a creative artist who skillfully deployed what tradition gave him and endowed the text with a deeper and richer meaning.

IV. Conclusions

We have reviewed the development of the critical approach to the Torah, particularly the Documentary Hypothesis, which led scholars to conclude that the Torah was not the product of a single author but of a long process in the course of which several older written sources were combined to produce the Torah in the form in which it has been known since the Second Temple Period. A survey of pertinent empirical models enabled us to see that the hypothesis is realistic, that is, it conforms to redactional processes that were demonstrably used in ancient times to create other literary texts based on earlier written sources. We have seen how critics were so focused on discovering the original sources that

they came to regard the final text as a hindrance and had little appreciation for its qualities as an independent work, notwithstanding the fact that it is the only actually attested form of the Torah and is the one that has exercised such a profound influence on subsequent history. But we have also seen that in recent decades scholars have recognized the importance of the final product and begun to recognize that redaction was not simply a mechanical process of cutting and pasting — though that was part of it — but involved careful thought and both theological and artistic judgment and that the final product was designed to describe a coherent history and a theological message and to do so in an aesthetically pleasing way. In this way, scholars are “remaking” the tradition and finding in the Torah a kind of literary integrity that transcends the signs of multiple authorship that abound in it.

Appendix A: The text of Exodus 18:21–27 in the Samaritan Torah and its sources in the Masoretic Text. Different fonts are used for material from each (Roman = Masoretic Exodus, Italic = Masoretic Deuteronomy); underlining indicates redactorial alterations.

3-1 The Documentary Hypothesis, Empirical Models and Holistic Interpretation

| Exodus 18 (Masoretic) | Exodus 18 (Samaritan) | Deuteronomy 1 (Masoretic) |
|--|--|---|
| <p>²¹You shall also seek out from among all the people capable men who fear God, trustworthy men who spurn ill-gotten gain. Set these over them as chiefs of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, and ²²let them judge the people at all times. Have them bring every major matter to you, but let them decide every minor matter themselves. Make it easier for yourself by letting them share the burden with you. ²³If you do this — and God so commands you — you will be able to bear up; and all these people too will go home unwearied.”</p> <p>²⁴Moses heeded his father-in-law and did just as he had said.</p> | <p>²¹You shall also seek out from among all the people capable men who fear God, trustworthy men who spurn ill-gotten gain. Set these over them as chiefs of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, and ²²let them judge the people at all times. Have them bring every major matter to you, but let them decide every minor matter themselves. Make it easier for yourself by letting them share the burden with you. ²³If you do this — and God so commands you — you will be able to bear up; and all these people too will go home unwearied.”</p> <p>²⁴Moses heeded his father-in-law and did just as he had said.</p> <p>^{24a}<i>Thereupon <u>Moses</u> said to the people:</i> <i>“I cannot bear the burden of you by myself. ^{24b}The LORD your God has multiplied you until you are today as numerous as the stars in the sky. — ^{24c}May the LORD, the God of your fathers, increase your numbers a thousandfold, and bless you as He promised you. — ^{24d}How can I bear unaided the trouble of you, and the burden, and the bickering! ^{24e}Pick from each of your tribes men who are wise, discerning, and experienced, and I will</i></p> | <p>⁹<i>Thereupon I said to you:</i> <i>“I cannot bear the burden of you by myself. ¹⁰The LORD your God has multiplied you until you are today as numerous as the stars in the sky. — ¹¹May the LORD, the God of your fathers, increase your numbers a thousandfold, and bless you as He promised you. — ¹²How can I bear unaided the trouble of you, and the burden, and the bickering! ¹³Pick from each of your tribes men who are wise, discerning, and experienced, and I will</i></p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>²⁵Moses chose capable men out of all Israel, and appointed them heads over the people — chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, and chiefs of tens;</p> <p>²⁶and they judged the people at all times: the difficult matters they would bring to Moses, and all the minor matters they would decide themselves. ²⁷Then Moses bade his father-in-law farewell, and he went his way to his own land.</p> | <p><i>appoint them as your heads.”</i> ^{24f}<i>They answered and they said,</i> <i>“What you propose to do is good.”</i> ^{24g}<i>So he took their tribal leaders, wise and experienced men,</i> ²⁵<i>and he appointed them heads over them: chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, and chiefs of tens, and officials for their tribes.</i> ^{25a}<i>He charged their judges at that time as follows,</i> <i>“Hear out your fellow men, and decide justly between any man and a fellow Israelite or a stranger.”</i> ^{25b}<i>You shall not be partial in judgment: hear out low and high alike. Fear no man, for judgment is God’s. And any matter that is too difficult for you, you shall bring near to me and I will hear it.”</i> ^{25c}<i>Thus he instructed them</i> <i>about the various things that they should do.</i></p> <p>²⁶and they would judge the people at all times: the major matters they would bring to Moses, and all the minor matters they would decide themselves. ²⁷Then Moses bade his father-in-law farewell, and he went his way to his own land.</p> | <p><i>appoint them as your heads.”</i> ¹⁴<i>You answered me and you said,</i> <i>“What you propose to do is good.”</i> ¹⁵<i>So I took your tribal leaders, wise and experienced men, and I appointed them heads over you: chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, and chiefs of tens, and officials for your tribes.</i> ¹⁶<i>I charged your judges at that time as follows,</i> <i>“Hear out your fellow men, and decide justly between any man and a fellow Israelite or a stranger.”</i> ¹⁷<i>You shall not be partial in judgment: hear out low and high alike. Fear no man, for judgment is God’s. And any matter that is too difficult for you, you shall bring near to me and I will hear it.”</i> ¹⁸<i>Thus I instructed you,</i> <i>at that time,</i> <i>about the various things that you should do.</i></p> |
|---|--|--|

Appendix B. The text of Exodus 20:15–23 in the Samaritan Torah. Different fonts are used for material from each source (Roman = Masoretic Exodus, Italic = Masoretic Deuteronomy 5; bold = Masoretic Deuteronomy 18); underlining indicates redactional alterations.

¹⁵All the people heard the thunderclaps and the sound of the horn and saw the torches and the mountain smoking; and when all the people saw it, they fell back and stood at a distance. ¹⁶And they said to Moses: “*The LORD our God has just shown us His majestic Presence, and we have heard His voice from out of the fire; we have seen this day that man may live though God has spoken to him.*”^{16a}Let us not die, then, for this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer, we shall die. ^{16b}For what mortal ever heard the voice of the living God speak out of the fire, as we did, and lived? ^{16c}You go closer and hear all that the LORD our God says, and then you speak to us everything that the LORD our God tells you, and we will listen and obey. ^{16d}but let not The God speak to us, lest we die.” ¹⁷Moses answered the people, “Be not afraid; for The God has come only in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may be ever with you, so that you do not go astray.” ¹⁸So the people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where The God was.

^{18a}The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: “*I have heard the sound of this people’s words which they spoke to you; they did well to speak thus.*”^{18b}May they always be of such mind, to revere Me and follow all My commandments, that it may go well with them and with their children forever!

^{18c}**I will raise up a prophet for them from among their own people, like yourself: I will put My words in his mouth and he will speak to them all that I command him; ^{18d}and if anybody fails to heed the words he speaks in My name, I Myself will call him to account. ^{18e}But any prophet who presumes to speak in My name an oracle that I did not command him to utter, or who speaks in the name of other gods — that prophet shall die.”**^{18f}And should you ask yourselves, “How can we recognize an oracle that the LORD did not utter?” — ^{18g}**If the prophet speaks in the name of the LORD and the oracle does not come true, that oracle was not spoken by the LORD; the prophet has uttered it presumptuously: do not stand in dread of him.**^{18h}Go, say to them, ‘Return to your tents.’¹⁸ⁱBut you remain here with Me, and I will speak to you the whole Instruction — the laws and the rules — that you shall impart to them, for them to observe in the land that I am giving them to possess.”¹⁹The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to the Israelites: ‘You yourselves saw that I spoke to you from the very heavens: ²⁰With Me, therefore, you shall not make any gods of silver, nor shall you make for yourselves any gods of gold. ²¹Make for Me an altar of earth and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your sacrifices of well-being, your sheep and your oxen; in the place where I have allowed My name to be invoked, there I will come to you and bless you. ²²And if you make for Me an altar of stones, do not build it of hewn stones; for by wielding your tool upon them you have profaned them. ²³Do not ascend My altar by steps, that your nakedness may not be exposed upon it.

Appendix C: The Samaritan ninth and tenth commandments and their sources. Different fonts are used for material from each (Roman = Masoretic Exodus, Italic = Masoretic Deuteronomy 11; bold = Masoretic Deuteronomy 18); underlining indicates redactorial alterations.

| Masoretic Text | Samaritan Pentateuch, Exodus 20 |
|---|---|
| <p><small>Exod. 20:14</small> You shall not covet your neighbor's house: you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or his female slave, or his ox or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.</p> <p><small>Deut. 11:29a</small> <i>And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are about to enter and possess,</i></p> <p><small>Deut. 27:2</small> As soon as you have crossed the Jordan into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones and coat them with plaster. ⁵And you shall inscribe upon them all the words of this Teaching when you cross over, so that you may enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you —</p> <p>⁴And, upon crossing the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I charge you this day, on Mount Ebal, and coat them with plaster.</p> <p>⁵And you shall build there an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones. Do not wield an iron tool over them;</p> <p>⁶you must build the altar of the LORD your God of unhewn stones. You shall offer on it burnt offerings to the LORD your God, ⁷and you shall sacrifice offerings of well-being and eat them there, rejoicing before the LORD your God.</p> <p>⁸And on those stones you shall inscribe every word of this Teaching most distinctly.</p> <p><small>Deut. 11:29b</small> <i>you shall pronounce the blessing at Mount Gerizim and the curse at Mount Ebal. — ³⁰Both are on the other side of the Jordan, beyond the west road that is in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the Arabah — near Gilgal, by the terebinths of Moreh.</i></p> | <p>¹⁴You shall not covet your neighbor's house: you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, <u>his field</u>,⁶⁸ his male or his female slave, or his ox or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.</p> <p>^{14a}<i>And when the LORD your God brings you into the land <u>of the Canaanites</u> that you are about to enter and possess,</i></p> <p>^{14b} you shall set up large stones and coat them with plaster. ^{14c}And you shall inscribe upon <u>the stones</u> all the words of this Teaching.</p> <p>^{14d} And, upon crossing the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I charge you this day, on <u>Mount Gerizim</u>.</p> <p>^{14c} And you shall build there an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones. Do not wield an iron tool over them;</p> <p>^{14f}you must build the altar of the LORD your God of unhewn stones. You shall offer on it burnt offerings to the LORD your God, ^{14g}and you shall sacrifice offerings of well-being and eat them there, rejoicing before the LORD your God.</p> <p>^{14h} <u>That mountain</u> is on the other side of the Jordan, beyond the west road that is in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the Arabah — near Gilgal, by the <u>terebinth of Morah, near Shechem.</u></p> |

Notes

- ¹ I am grateful to Prof. Isaiah Teshima for conceiving and organizing this enlightening workshop and for his kindness in inviting me to participate; to Prof. Shigeo Yamada for facilitating the invitation; to the International Institute for Advanced Studies for its generosity in sponsoring the workshop; and to all the other participants, from whom I learned so much. All translations of the Hebrew Bible in this paper are based on *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1999), with slight modifications in the direction of literalness (even hyper-literalness) to facilitate comparisons between passages.
- ² Philo, *De Opificio Mundi* §§1–3; Josephus, *Antiquities* 1 §§18ff.
- ³ R. Judah in Babylonian Talmud, Tractate *Bava Batra*, p. 15a; Tractate *Menahot*, p. 30a; *Sifrei* Deuteronomy §357 and parallels.
- ⁴ See the sources collected by A. J. Heschel, *Heavenly Torah as Refracted Through the Generations*. Edited and translated by Gordon Tucker with Leonard Levin (New York and London: Continuum, 2005), pp. 610–640; briefly by Richard E. Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible* (New York: Perennial Library/Harper & Row, 1987), pp. 19–21, 243–244.
- ⁵ D. Herzog, ed., *Joseph Bonfils (Tobh Elem) und sein Werk Şophnath Paneah* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1911–1930), pp. 91–93 (quoted by Heschel, pp. 634–635 and briefly by Friedman, pp. 19, 243–244).
- ⁶ Isaac Abravanel, *Perush 'al Nevi'im Rishonim* (Jerusalem: Torah va-Daat, 1954–1955), pp. 6–8
- ⁷ I am following the scholarly convention of spelling the Biblical name for God only with its consonants; scholars believe that it was pronounced Yahweh, but this is not entirely certain. Most translations render it by “the Lord”, which is not actually a translation of its meaning but of a traditional surrogate used out of respect.
- ⁸ J and E stand for the names of God that are characteristic of these two sources in their narratives about the pre-Mosaic period: JHWH (the spelling of YHWH in European alphabets) and *'elohim*; P stands for the Priestly document, and D for the core of Deuteronomy.
- ⁹ “Redact” is used in the sense of “edit”, not in the sense of “censor” or “delete” as the word is often used today when describing documents that are edited to remove sensitive information.
- ¹⁰ Good descriptions of the analytical method are found in N. Habel, *Literary Criticism of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971); Alexander Rofé, *Introduction to the Literature of the Hebrew Bible* (Jerusalem: Simor, 2009), pp. 166–213; and briefly Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible*, pp. 52–60.
- ¹¹ U. Cassuto, *The Documentary Hypothesis*, translated by Israel Abrahams (repr. Jerusalem: Shalem Press, 2006; the book was first published in Hebrew in 1941). Some earlier critiques of the Documentary Hypothesis include W. Henry Greene, “The Unity of the Pentateuch”, and “Mosaic Origin of the Pentateuch”, in L. W. Munhall, ed., *Anti-Higher Criticism, or, Testimony to the Infallibility of The Bible* (New York: Hunt & Eaton; Cincinnati: Cranston & Curts, 1894), pp. 26–95; D. Hoffmann, *Die wichtigsten Instanzen gegen die Graf-Wellhausensche Hypothese*. 2 vols. (Berlin: H. Itzkowski, 1904–1916).
- ¹² According to Cassuto, the influence between the two fields was mutual. I am not aware whether specific phenomena in the growth of Homeric literature were explicitly invoked in support of theories about the Pentateuch. As for influence of Biblical criticism on Homeric, in the early 20th century G. Murray found “the most best parallel” for the growth and change of a traditional book under ancient conditions to be in “the Hebrew scriptures”, and he wondered “that the comparison has not been more widely used by Greek scholars” (G. Murray, *The Rise of the Greek Epic: Being a Course of Lectures Delivered at Harvard University* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1907], p. 101); the same thing is said a bit more explicitly in the fourth edition (New York, Oxford University Press,

- 1960, p. 107).
- ¹³ For a recent description of the approaches of the “analysts” and “unitarians” in Homeric studies, see Cedric H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (New York: Norton, 1965), chap. 1.
- ¹⁴ Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (New York: Athenium, 1968).
- ¹⁵ G. S. Kirk, *Homer and the Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
- ¹⁶ See the summary and critique of Cassuto’s arguments by A. Rofé, *Introduction to the Literature of the Hebrew Bible* (Jerusalem: Simor, 2009), pp. 269–272. An example of the kind of special, *ad hoc* explanations that Cassuto’s system requires appears in his commentary on Genesis where Cassuto states that the name *’elohim* is used throughout almost the entire flood story (omitting 6:5–8 from consideration) and that the name YHWH occurs solely when there is a special reason for it, such as passages that refer to sacrifice and animals intended for sacrifice, such as 7:1–3 and 8:20–21 (U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* [Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961], vol. 2, p. 36). This is contradicted by Exodus 18:12 where Jethro offers sacrifices to *’elohim*; in his commentary there Cassuto proffers the forced explanation that this is because Jethro was an alien who, although he recognized the supremacy of YHWH, regarded him as only one of the gods and “had not yet attained to the knowledge of the Lord in all its purity and perfection” (Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus* [Jerusalem: Magnes, 1987], p. 217).
- ¹⁷ For example: “no example of such a ‘crazy patchwork’ can be found in all literature as the one alleged to have been discovered in the Pentateuch” (C. M. Mead, “Tatian’s Diatessaron and the Analysis of the Pentateuch: A Reply”, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 10 [1891], p. 44); “Hebrew literature, or any other literature the world over, cannot show another example of the production of a literary work by such a succession of recurring amalgamations and such a succession of compilers and redactors centuries apart, all working by one and the same method, as attributed by the [Documentary] Theory to the formation of the Pentateuch” (M. H. Segal, *The Pentateuch: Its Composition and its Authorship, and Other Biblical Studies* [Jerusalem: Magnes, 1967], p. 4); “Nowhere in the Ancient Orient is there anything which is definitely known to parallel the elaborate history of fragmentary composition and conflation of Hebrew literature (or marked by just such criteria) ...as the Documentary Hypothesis would postulate” (K. A. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament* [Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1966], p. 115); “Never in the history of the world has a book been spliced together from multiple documents by the kind of elaborate surgery that the critics perform on the Bible text” (Y. Reinman, letter to editor, “Don’t Butcher the Text”, *Biblical Archaeology Review* 34/4 [May/June 2008], p. 12).
- ¹⁸ I am using “empirical” as defined by *The New Oxford American Dictionary* online edition: “based on, concerned with, or verifiable by observation or experience rather than theory or pure logic”.
- ¹⁹ W. Robertson Smith, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, 3rd ed. (New York: Appleton, 1892), pp. 90–126.
- ²⁰ On more recent discussions of the case of 1 Samuel 17–18, see below.
- ²¹ G. F. Moore, “Tatian’s *Diatessaron* and the Analysis of the Pentateuch”, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 9 (1890), pp. 201–215, reprinted in J. Tigay, ed., *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985; reprint Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2005), pp. 243–256. For recent descriptions of the *Diatessaron* see W. L. Peterson, art. “Diatessaron”, in David N. Freedman et al., eds., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), vol. 2:189–90 and S. P. Brock, art. “Versions, Ancient (Syriac)”, in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 6:796.
- ²² Stenning, “Diatessaron”, in J. Hastings et al., eds, *Dictionary of the Bible*, 4 vols. (Edinburgh and New York, 1899–1904), Extra volume, p. 452. This title distinguished it from *Evangelion da-Mefarršē*, “the Gospel of the separated (ones)”.
- ²³ Carpenter and Harford-Battersby, *Hexateuch*, 1.11.

- ²⁴ See E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), pp. 313–349; Z. Talshir, “Textual and Literary Criticism of the Bible in Post-modern Times: The Untimely Demise of Classical Biblical Philology”, *Henoah* 21 (1999), 235–252; Z. Talshir, “The Contribution of Diverging Traditions Preserved in the Septuagint to Literary Criticism of the Bible”. *VIII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies*. Paris 1992. Eds.: Leonard Greenspoon and Olivier Munnich (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), pp. 21–41.
- ²⁵ See the translation of A. R. George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh: The Babylonian Epic Poem and Other Texts in Akkadian and Sumerian* (London and New York: Penguin Books, 2000), and George’s full edition of the epic, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). For the development of the epic see J. H. Tigay, ed. *Empirical Models*, chapter. 1, and Tigay, *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982; repr. Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2003).
- ²⁶ See W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, *Atra-Hasīs. The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969). Different parts of Utnapishtim’s narrative are taken from different sections of *Atrahasis*: lines 15–18 match the Old Babylonian Version of *Atrahasis* I, 7–10; line 19 reflects *Atrahasis* II, vii, 38, 42; and the rest of the narrative, line 20 through approximately 205, reflects *Atrahasis* III, i–vi.
- ²⁷ For further details see Tigay, ed., *Empirical Models*, pp. 159–167.
- ²⁸ A third formula is used in lines 32 and 310.
- ²⁹ See Tigay, *Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic*, pp. 229–30; George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic* vol., pp. 152–153. This meaning must be why the *Gilgamesh Epic* prefers this version of the flood survivor’s name instead of *Atrahasis*, for it expresses the reason why Gilgamesh sought him out: he had found immortal life, which Gilgamesh hoped to find.
- ³⁰ For other adjustments made in *Gilgamesh* see *Empirical Models*, pp. 161–162.
- ³¹ Unless the partially preserved word “life” (*[napi]štam*) in III, vii, 11 reflects that. No other *Atrahasis* fragment in Lambert and Millard’s edition contains the scene about granting *Atrahasis* immortality. The closest thing is the Ras Shamra fragment on pp. 132–33, which calls him *Atrahasis*, but this text is only a flood story, not the *Atrahasis Epic*.
- ³² In manuscripts of the Bible, too, once in a while names of God and other terms characteristic of one source “bleed” into passages from another. For example the Samaritan Torah reads YHWH in place of the Masoretic Text’s *’elohim* in Gen. 7:1 and 9, and *zākār ūn^eqēbā* in place of the Masoretic Text’s *’iš v^e ’išō* at 7:2.
- ³³ M. Greenberg, *Understanding Exodus* (New York: Behrman House, 1969), p. 196
- ³⁴ The conclusion to the episode says that the chiefs would bring Moses “major” matters. The verse as a whole is from Exod. 18:26, but the Masoretic Text there reads “difficult”. I suspect that the Samaritan text here is based on a Hebrew prototype that had homogenized the reading of v. 26 with that of Jethro’s advice in v. 22. Since the reading in the Deuteronomic insert retains “difficult”, the harmonization between vv. 22 and 26 must have taken place prior to the time when the passage from Deuteronomy was spliced into Exodus. Such homogenizations are typical of the Samaritan Torah (or, rather, its proto-Samaritan prototype) as well as the Septuagint. See E. Tov, “Textual Harmonizations in the Ancient Texts of Deuteronomy”, in N. S. Fox et al., eds., *Mishneh Todah: Studies in Deuteronomy and Its Cultural Environment in Honor of Jeffrey H. Tigay* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009), pp. 15–28; revised version in Tov, *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible, and Qumran* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), pp. 271–82. In the present instance the Septuagint likewise homogenizes vv. 22 and 26, but opts for “difficult” in both cases.
- ³⁵ Verses 16d, 17, and 18. The Masoretic text of the first of these verses reads simply “God;” here, too, it appears that the Samaritan text is based on a Hebrew prototype that had homogenized the reading of this verse with that of the next two verses (see above, n. 35). If “God” in the second

- half of v. 16 and in v. 16b is taken as referring to YHWH, this would still be different from “The God” in verses 16d–18.
- ³⁶ Since the number ten is mentioned explicitly in the Torah (Exod. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 10:4) and had to be retained, the Samaritans count the Masoretic Ten Commandments as nine, counting all the prohibitions about idolatry as the first commandment (Exod. 20:3–6 – in the MT – counting as in *Tanakh*) such that vv. 7–14 constitute the second through ninth.
- ³⁷ There is no need here to go into the ancient debate about which reading is original (see Josephus, *Antiquities* 13.3,4 §§ 74–79). The Jewish claim that the text originally read “Mt. Ebal” has wide support (e.g., see P. Kahle, “Untersuchungen”, 7; Y. Kaufmann, *Sefer Yehoshua* [Jerusalem: Kirjath Sepher, 1963], 130), but it is not unanimous (see, e.g., R. H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* [New York: Harper, 1948], 101–2; O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* [New York: Harper & Row, 1965], 216 n. 9; but cf. p. 695). See now Carmel McCarthy, *Eleh ha-devarim. Deuteronomy*, Biblia Hebraica Quinta, 5 (Stuttgart, 2007), pp. 122*–123*.
- ³⁸ Tolerative *hiphil*.
- ³⁹ See Tigay, ed., *Empirical Models*, pp. 84–85.
- ⁴⁰ *Sefer She’elat Ya’avets* (Lemberg, 1883/84), Part 1, no. 145, cited in Y. Weingarten, *Hamahzor Hameforash, Yom Kippur* (Jerusalem: Gefen, 5747), p. 25.
- ⁴¹ Emanuel Tov, “The Composition of 1 Samuel 16–18 in the Light of the Septuagint Version”, in Tigay, ed., *Empirical Models*, pp. 97–130.
- ⁴² A. Rofé, “The Battle of David and Goliath: Folklore, Theology, Eschatology”. *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel*. eds. Jacob Neusner, Baruch A. Levine and Ernest S. Frerichs (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), pp. 117–151. For Tov’s reply see his book *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), pp. 334–336.
- ⁴³ The relative priority of each version must be decided on a case-by-case basis. A case in which Rofé does see the Septuagint as reflecting a shorter original text is the case of Joshua 20. There, he argues, the LXX reflects a shorter version of the text which is more plausibly explained as original and not due to abridgement. Linguistically and conceptually the short version agrees with the Priestly source in the Torah, while the additional matter found only in the Masoretic Text agrees with Deuteronomy. The additional verses do not add up to a second complete account of the events, and Rofé therefore argues that these verses could never have existed independently of the version underlying the Septuagint. They must be understood as an addition written expressly to supplement the earlier version. Rofé shows that the linguistic and conceptual inconsistencies in the chapter reflect differences between the two strata, thus validating the critical methods which take such differences as source-critical clues, but that this case is more like the Supplementary Hypothesis than the Documentary Hypothesis. See Rofé “Joshua 20: Historico-Literary Criticism Illustrated”, in Tigay, ed., *Empirical Models*, pp. 131–147.
- ⁴⁴ See M. Tsevat, “Common Sense and Hypothesis in Old Testament Study”, *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* 28 (Leiden: Brill, 1975), pp. 217–230; cf. R. M. Frye’s similar use of analogues from English literature, including the “disintegration” of Shakespeare, in evaluating the source criticism of the Gospels (Roland Mushat Frye, ‘The Synoptic Problems and Analogies in Other Literatures’ in W. O. Walker, Jr., ed., “The Relationship among the Gospels: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue” (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1978) pages 261–302.
- ⁴⁵ Ivan Engnell, *A Rigid Scrutiny* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969), pp. 6–8, 11, 53–54, 163–69; *idem*, *The Call of Isaiah: An Exegetical and Comparative Study* (Uppsala: Lundequistska Bokhandeln), pp. 55–60).
- ⁴⁶ R. Yehuda’s recognition that the last eight verses of the Torah could not have been written by Moses constitutes an awareness that anachronisms may suggest later authorship (see above, n. 3). A passage in the Mishna explains its own use of inconsistent terminology by pointing out that it

- preserves the phrasing of two different sages (see *Empirical Models*, p. 168).
- ⁴⁷ See G. Widengren, “Oral tradition and written literature among the Hebrews: in the light of Arabic evidence, with special regard to prose narratives”, *Acta Orientalia* 23 (1959), 201–262; J. R. Porter, “Pre-Islamic Arabic Historical Traditions and the Early Historical Narratives of the Old Testament”, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 87 (1968), pp. 17–26. A Biblical critic feels very much at home reading such works as C. H. Whitman’s *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (New York: Norton, 1965).
- ⁴⁸ Thomas R. W. Longstaff, *Evidence of Conflation in Mark?: A Study in the Synoptic Problem* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press for the Society of Biblical Literature, 1977), pp. 42–113.
- ⁴⁹ O. I. A. Roche, *The Jefferson Bible* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1964); cf. P. Thomson, “The Four Gospels According to Thomas Jefferson”, *Smithsonian* 14/6 (September, 1983), pp. 139–148.
- ⁵⁰ See Tigay, *Empirical Models*, pp. 87–88.
- ⁵¹ Although we have focused on models that resemble the type of composition reconstructed by the Documentary Hypothesis, other models parallel other compositional hypotheses, such as the Supplementary Hypothesis (see above, note 43), and others may support or suggest other processes of composition. See Tigay, ed., *Empirical Models*, pp. 19–20, 169–170, 240.
- ⁵² G. Fohrer, *Überlieferung und Geschichte des Exodus* (Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1964), p. 5 (“zweitklassiger Geister”); F. V. Winnett: “It may be argued by some that while the narrative does possess a stylistic arrangement, this arrangement is due to the last editor, P or Rp. ... Such a complicated literary process leading to such a highly artistic result makes too great a demand upon our credulity. Did such a process ever lead to the creation of a great work of literature, which the Story of the Plagues undoubtedly is? Great literature simply does not arise in that way. It is the creation of a single imaginative mind, not the mechanical fitting together of pieces drawn from various sources, two verses from J, a half-verse from E, a touch of P. ... Now it may be that some late priestly writer took materials already existing and created out of them the wonderfully dramatic narrative that we possess; but all that we know of the priestly writers is strongly against any such assumption” (F. V. Winnett, *The Mosaic Tradition* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1949], p. 13). Both Fohrer and Winnett are cited by M. Greenberg, *Understanding Exodus* (1969), p. 5 n. 1. Against Winnett’s reasoning, see Z. Talshir, “Literary Design – A Criterion for Originality? A Case Study: 3 Kgdms 12:24a–z; 1 K 11–14, in *La double transmission du texte biblique*. A. Schenker Volume, eds. Y. Goldman and Ch. Uehlinger (Freiburg-Göttingen: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), pp. 41–57.
- ⁵³ H. J. Flanders, Jr. et al., eds., *People of the Covenant* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 34.
- ⁵⁴ M. Brettler and A. Berlin, “The Modern Study of the Bible”, in Brettler and Berlin, eds., *The Jewish Study Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 2088.
- ⁵⁵ See Greenberg, “The Vision of Jerusalem in Ezekiel 8–11: A Holistic Interpretation”, in J. L. Crenshaw and S. Sandmel, eds., *The Divine Helmsman: Studies in God’s Control of Human Events Presented to Lou H. Silberman* (NY: Ktav, 1980), pp. 143–164.
- ⁵⁶ A play on Moses’s traditional designation in Judaism as *Moše rabbēnu*, “Moses our Teacher”.
- ⁵⁷ M. Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, *Die Schrift und ihre Verdeutschung* (Berlin: Schocken, 1936), pp. 47–48; translation by Moshe Greenberg (unpublished).
- ⁵⁸ “The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church”, presented by the Pontifical Biblical Commission to Pope John Paul II on April 23, 1993 (as published in *Origins*, January 6, 1994). Emphasis added. See http://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/PBC_Interp-FullText.htm. On redaction criticism, see Flanders et al. and Brettler and Berlin, cited above, and M. E. Biddle, art. “Redaction Criticism, Hebrew Bible”, in John H. Hayes, ed., *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), pp. 373–376.

- ⁵⁹ N. M. Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary, Genesis*, pp. xvii–xviii. Notwithstanding his acknowledgement of the critical approach, Sarna made clear his distaste for focusing on source criticism: “The present Commentary is primarily concerned with the completed edifice and only to a minor extent with building blocks. It is not based on the coroner’s approach, that is, on dissecting a literary corpse”.
- ⁶⁰ Robert Alter, *The Five Books of Moses* (New York: Norton, 2004), pp. xv–xvi. See also his book *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), particularly chapter 7, “Composite Artistry”, and his comment about Genesis 37–38: “even if the text is really composite in origin, I think we have seen ample evidence of how brilliantly it has been woven into a complex artistic whole” (p. 20). To Alter’s comparison to a collage, compare the following statement by Baruch Schwartz: “What traditional interpretation saw as a single Mosaic text, critical analysis views as a mosaic of texts...It is no less significant for this. In fact, some would argue, a collection consisting of four impressionistic paintings and one collage is actually a better record of an encounter with the ineffable than a single, one-dimensional photograph” (Baruch Schwartz, “What Really Happened at Mount Sinai?”, *Bible Review* 13/05 [October, 1997], pp. 30, 46).
- ⁶¹ R. E. Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* (New York: Harper & Row, etc., 1987), pp. 236, 238; see also his “Sacred History and Theology: The Redaction of the Torah”, in R. E. Friedman, ed., *The Creation of Sacred Literature: Composition and Redaction of the Biblical Text* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1981), pp. 25–34.
- ⁶² See above, n. 55.
- ⁶³ M. Greenberg, *Understanding Exodus* (1969).
- ⁶⁴ Here Greenberg cites Fohrer and Winnet (see above, n. 5).
- ⁶⁵ Greenberg, *Understanding Exodus* (1969), pp. 4–5. See also his more recent article “A Faithful Jewish Critical Interpretation of the Bible”, in J. W. Malino and D. Hartman, eds., *Judaism and Modernity: The Religious Philosophy of David Hartman* (Jerusalem: Shalom Hartman Institute, 2001), p. 211.
- ⁶⁶ *Understanding Exodus*, p. 196.
- ⁶⁷ *Understanding Exodus*, pp. 66, 122, 193. See also the observations of R. E. Friedman, who speaks of the redactor being motivated sometimes by “mechanical” considerations (he does not mean the term pejoratively) and sometimes by literary and theological ones. See his “Sacred History and Theology”, (see above, n. 61).
- ⁶⁸ “Field” is added from Deut. 5:21 (so too the Septuagint and some Hebrew manuscripts).