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**Gertz, Jan Christian**

***Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung:  
Untersuchungen zur Endredaktion des Pentateuch***

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Writing a book on the composition of the Pentateuch is always a challenging task. If one takes the current situation into account one cannot but admire the courage of J.C. Gertz when he proposes a solution to the problem of the final redaction of the Pentateuch. The extensive work is the slightly revised version of the author's 1999 *Habilitationsschrift* submitted to the Faculty of Theology of Göttingen University. As such it is a detailed literary-critical study of Exod 1-15. The selection of texts is remarkable, because it shows that Gertz aims at a reconstruction of the literary sources of the Pentateuch, which does not originate in the book of Genesis; thus the work can avoid the problems apparent in such a reconstruction.

The starting point of the study is the minimal consensus in Pentateuchal research that we can distinguish—following the insights of Th. Nöldeke—between priestly and non-priestly material in the Pentateuch. The process responsible for the joining of both groups of texts is called final redaction (*Endredaktion*) by Gertz. However, one has to realise that this final redaction is not responsible for the final form of the Biblical text; also, the author stresses that the use of the term 'final redaction' does not provide any information regarding the status of the priestly and non-priestly material, i.e. whether both texts have once been independent sources or whether one text has to be seen as a redactional layer (*Bearbeitungsschicht*) of the other (pp.10-11). Also it is important for Gertz to stress that the final redaction itself has to be seen as a creative enterprise and not only as a compiler of some form of the Pentateuch. Despite these remarks regarding the character of the final redaction the present reviewer cannot help the impression that final text and final redaction are identical in Gertz's study.

After these introductory remarks follows a detailed study of Exod 1-15. The reason for choosing this part of the Pentateuch is the fact that these chapters form an independent literary unit and function as a bridge between the Patriarchal narratives in Genesis and the following history of the people of Israel. The starting point for Gertz is the pericope in Exod 12:1-13:16 since it is here that we find an interesting connection between law and narrative. In this passage Gertz is able to detect that both the priestly and the non-priestly material have been extensively reworked in a final redaction which is well acquainted with the priestly and the deuteronomic/deuteronomistic language and aims at the harmonisation of both schools of thought. Already here we encounter one of the characteristic traits of Gertz's final redaction: the tendency to harmonise originally conflicting narratives. The next chapter (pp. 74-188) is devoted to the plague-cycle in Exod 7:8-11:10; 12:29-36. Again Gertz is able to show that the final redaction is responsible for the current connection of priestly and non-priestly material. Also it seems likely that both versions of the plagues were originally two independent traditions. The priestly version consisted of five legitimisation wonders (*Legitimationswunder*), which continue the P narrative of the call of Moses and Aaron in Exod 6:2-7:7. Gertz will show in the following that we can find a coherent and continuing narrative of P in Exod 1-15. The non-priestly narrative knows of four plagues, which envisage the larger context. Also we get to know the final redactor a little bit better: it becomes clear that the redaction is not merely adding the two narrative traditions but also does so in a creative way: it uses the basic format of P, adds to it the non-priestly material and expands the two narrative traditions: hail, locusts and the darkness are the creation of the final redaction. The insight of two independent narratives in Exod 1-15 can also be found in Exod 13:17-14:31. It is remarkable that the non-priestly material does neither seem to know a parting of the waters by Moses nor a crossing of the sea. Again, the final redaction harmonises the two narratives. The same can be said of the work of the final redaction in Exod 2:2-7:7. Also, the passage shows that P envisages a larger context, because the call of Moses is seen as a continuation of the patriarchal narrative. The non-priestly material does not know of such a continuation (Gertz states that the non-P material is multilayered, but he refuses to attribute these layers to two different literary strata according to the documentary hypothesis, since he argues for a *Ergänzungshypothese* [pp. 346-347]). Only through the addition of the two narratives through the final redaction do we get such a continuation for both narratives; in addition the final redaction links the call narrative to the events at Sinai to stress that the prophet Moses is bound to the revelation of the will of God.

In many ways, chapter 6, dealing with Exod 1:1-2:22 is one of the most interesting parts of the work, because Gertz is forced to leave his original textual basis and has to apply his insights regarding the redactional processes to the broader context of the Pentateuch. The final redaction in Exod 1-15 envisages the Hexateuch as a whole. Here it will be necessary for further studies to verify Gertz's insights especially with regard to Deuteronomy and its relationship to the final redaction of the Pentateuch.

As far as P in Exod 1-15 is concerned it cannot be regarded—according to Gertz—as a redaction of the non-priestly material, since it has originally been an independent source which was always constructed as a continuation of the priestly version of the patriarchal narrative. As such P is the only continuing source of the Tetrateuch; in contrast to that, the non-priestly source cannot be found in the Tetrateuch as a whole—thus it is not possible to label it J. As far as the dating of the final redaction is concerned, Gertz proposes the time after 515 B.C.E.

In proposing that we cannot find a prelude to the non-priestly Exodus narrative in the patriarchal narrative, Gertz is surpassing the scope of his study and opens further debate. The strength of the study is clearly the straightforward argumentation and the fairly simple source critical division of priestly and non-priestly material as well as the demonstration that the final redaction is also a creative enterprise that harmonises different traditions and thus creates a new document with own accentuations. The book, however, is not an easy read and combing through a plethora of detailed textual analysis requires a lot of stamina and effort. Gertz has probably realised that himself and provides a summary of the preliminary results after every chapter for which the reader is more than grateful.

It remains open if the solution proposed for Exod 1-15 will hold true for the Tetrateuch/Hexateuch as a whole. The present reviewer learned a lot about the redactional processes in the Tetrateuch/Hexateuch but misses the incorporation of the book of Deuteronomy and the solution of the problem how such a final redaction solves the problem of the existence of a Pentateuch within the canon of the Hebrew Bible. Gertz' book will clearly serve as an important contribution to the problem of the origin of the Pentateuch. Nobody working in the area can afford to overlook this study.

The monograph closes with an appendix of the literary strata in Exod 1-14, an extensive bibliography and a detailed index of biblical passages.