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*Studien zur Redaktion und Komposition des Amosbuchs*

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Rottzoll offers a detailed redactional analysis of the book of Amos. As a point of departure, he accepts the insights of de Waar, Lust, Jeremias, and Bergler concerning the chiastic structure of Amos 1:2-9:6. Given the key role of Amos 3-6 in this structure and the fact that it consists of highly disparate materials, Rottzoll posits that the redactor (R^RK) responsible for this “ring composition” will have either post-dated the redaction of Amos 3-6 itself or been responsible for shaping Amos 3-6 as well. Since, however, some material in the book stands outside this chiastic structure, R^RK will not have been the final editor. This observation provides a first key as to the relative chronology of the redaction history of the book. Two other already-noted features of the book serve as additional initial criteria. Rottzoll notes the near-consensus concerning the presence of deuteronomistic materials in Amos, although he announces his intention to examine closely the vocabulary of these passages for evidence of greater nuance and subtlety than is often acknowledged by the ready characterization of a text as “deuteronomistic.” Thirdly, at the other extreme, he accepts the notion that the “earthquake” motif can be taken as an indication of “authenticity.” Rottzoll employs standard historical-critical techniques.

The author identifies twelve redactional layers in Amos. Its foundation, the authentic sayings of Amos, he finds concentrated in the nations (1:3-8, 13-15; 2:1-3, 6, 7aa*, b 8aa, 7ba, 8ba, 12a, 13, ba) and vision (7:1a, 2-3, 4a*, ba, 5-6, 7*, 8; 8:1-2; 9:1a*) cycles, as well as in a few other scattered sayings (3:3-6, 7, 12; 4:1-3*). The sayings all concern the earthquake. Another group juxtaposes a faulty sense of community solidarity and the idolatrous cult (4:4-5*; 5:4-5*; 5:12a, 7, 10, 12b; 5:21, 22ab, b, 24; 6:12 [?]). Shortly after Amos, or his students, committed the original sayings to writing, they were collected and edited as a book. Those responsible for this first edition contributed only very slight editorial material, adding only an early form of the superscription, 3:1a, and 3:8; the expression “sons of Israel” in 3:12 and 4:5b; and 7:10-15.
A “Judean redaction” dating to shortly after 722/21 reinterpreted the previously ambiguous earthquake threat in terms specifically related to the military devastation that had befallen the Northern kingdom (additions to 2:14-15*; 9:1b; 4:3a; and all of 5:3; 5:27; 6:1aa, ba, 6ab. b 7; 6; 14). Notably, this redaction refers to the Northern kingdom as “Joseph.” A second “Judean redaction” of the book (circa 711) expanded (6:1bb, 2, 3b) the woe cry against self-confident Samaria (6:1-7*), with the intention of emphasizing the pedagogico-hortatory potential of the previous redaction. A series of early post-exilic additions can only be classified as to time-period by virtue of their post-deuteronomistic themes and vocabulary (2:9; 3:13-14*; 3:14ba; 4:6-12; 6:8; 2:12bb; 7:1bb; 7:4bb).

As has been observed, the most significant redaction of the book (early fifth century) structured Amos 1:2-9:6 as a carefully shaped “ring composition.” The redaction’s primary approach involved separating originally contiguous texts to create balancing pairs in the two halves of the composition, thereby separating the nations and visions cycles, for example. The hymn in Amos 5:8 functions as the center of this composition. The redaction further created a distinction between “words of Amos” (Amos 3-4) and “words of God” (Amos 5-6) and, by means of the hymns (1:2; 5:8-7; 9:5-6). further created a sequence focusing first on nature, then on the realm of human culture, and finally on the whole earth together with its inhabitants.

Shortly after this most foundational redaction (mid-400’s), a “priestly-deuteronomistic” redactor, so identified because of stylistic affinities with both deuteronomisticism and the priestly tradition, inserted a series of texts (2:4-5, 7bb, 8ab; 3:7; 7:9[16-17]) concerned with heeding declarations of God’s will. Amos 5:11, 13 and Amos 6:9-10 represent two, possibly three, isolated expansions datable to a period after the constitution of the “ring composition,” but prior to the insertion of 8:(3,)4-14.

The last significant re-working of the book involved additions to the visions cycle (8:[3,]4-14) and the conclusion of the book (9:7-15). Although these two units contain unrelated materials, they share a common interest in intertextual linkages to previous portions of the book. In fact, the conclusion borrows material from the larger prophetic canon, specifically Jeremiah. Indeed, recognition of the dependence of this text on Jeremiah resolves the question of whether it is deuteronomistic or late post-exilic: it is a later re-working of a deuteronomistic text.

Due to similarities to Joel 4:4-8, the sayings against Tyre (1:9-10) and Edom (1:11-12) probably date to the same period (400-343). Finally, with the addition of "Chronistic” material in 5:22aa (23?) and 6:5b, the book reached substantially its final from. The fifth vision underwent minor expansion and revision in two phases during roughly the same period (9:2 was supplied with an allusion to Ps 139:8-10; and in a second phase 9:1, 3, 4a were expanded).
Because Rottzoll asks essentially no new questions, approaching an often-addressed problem from a standard perspective, this study often resembles a summary assessment of previous scholarship. He frequently weighs established positions, choosing between options already proposed by others. His assumption that texts may always be linked to identifiable historical settings on the basis of references to localities or circumstances (e.g., the earthquake) fails to account sufficiently for the way in which motifs and language can assume ahistorical tropic functions. While thorough, then, Rottzoll’s study propounds few new insights. His insistence on carefully differentiating between varieties of “deuteronomistic” language represents a conspicuous exception.