

Genesis 2,4 Restudying a *locus classicus*

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I

A: The opinion that Genesis 2,4 should be divided in two half verses assigned to two different sources is truly a classic in modern Biblical scholarship:

Initially the division between Genesis chapters 1 and 2 was drawn between 2,3 and 2,4. Bernhard Witter (1711), Jean Astruc (1753), Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1779/80) and Johann David Michaelis, (1787) – all observing the divine name in 2,4b – claimed that not only a new story, but even a new source occurs in verse 2,4 (a).

In 1780 Johann Wilhelm Friedrich Hezel took the view that the first part of 2,4 is not the beginning of a new source, but rather the closing of the preceding story. He based his view on the terminological links between 2,4a and 1,1 – 2,3. This view was supported by influential scholars in the subsequent decades. Karl David Ilgen (1779) and Heinrich Georg August Ewald (1823) – holding different source theories – both assumed that the first story ends in 2,4a and the second starts in 2,4b¹. By the time Wellhausen wrote his *Composition des Hexateuchs* (first published 1876/77, manuscripts closed 1872/73), the issue of Gen 2,4 was already settled; he simply stated that the story of »Q« ends in 2,4a with the »Jehovist« story starting in 2,4b².

This opinion has been left practically unchallenged. Based primarily on the verb ברא and the phrase השמים והארץ in 2,4a (both paralleling Gen 1) and the divine name in 2,4b (resembling Gen 2 – 3), most scholars never doubted that the first shift between two source documents of the Pentateuch occur in Genesis 2,4. Being also conveniently clothed in

¹ For all this see Martin Metzger: Die Paradieserzählung. Die Geschichte ihrer Auslegung von J. Clericus bis W. M. L. de Wette, 1959, 12 – 23.

² J. Wellhausen: Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments, 1963, 2 – 3. (Cfr. Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels, (3. Auflage) 1886, p. 315.) Wellhausen was among the first not to comment upon the division in Gen 2,4; cfr. Schrader: Studien zur Kritik und Erklärung der biblischen Urgeschichte, 1863, 27 – 40.

easily readable Hebrew, this verse became a classic example of the Documentary hypothesis, indeed the first example most students of the Old Testament would meet. Not many commentators on Genesis 2–3 after Wellhausen spent time or space on the question of sources in Gen 2,4³. Those who did, do not seem to have made lasting impression on their colleagues:

There has been a number of scholars arguing for the opinion that 2,4a introduce the »J« story 2,4b–3,24: Apart from Skinner (1910/1930), considered below, we note H. L. Strack: *Die Bücher Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus und Numeri*, 8th edition 1894. Eduard König: *Die Genesis, eingeleitet, übersetzt und erklärt*, Gütersloh 1919, wrote »... dieser Satz 2,4a von einem *Sammler* der ihm vorliegenden Darstellungen eingefügt worden ist, indem er die bei P in 5,1; 6,9 usw. auftretende Formel nachgeahmt hat« (p 190). Alfons Schulz: »Gn 2,4«, BN 1932, 339–41 argued that none of the traditional arguments for dividing the verse were convincing. Johannes Brinktrine argued that Gen 2,4a originally was a »P« heading, but in the final text had become a heading to Gen 2–3; »Gen 2,4a, Überschrift oder Unterschrift?«, BZ NF 9 (1965), 277. More recently Brevard S. Childs explicitly followed Skinner in his *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, Philadelphia 1979, p 145, cfr 145–49. Similar view is found in F. M. Cross: *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, Philadelphia 1973, p 303 and R. Rendtorff: *Das Alte Testament. Eine Einführung*, Neukirchen (3. Aufl.) 1988, p 141, cfr. p 168. None of these doubted that the »J« story starts in 2,4b.

A different approach occurs in B. Jacob: *Das erste Buch der Tora, Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, Berlin 1934, pp 71–79 who contested the traditional view of the sources of the Pentateuch. His main argument for reading 2,4a as integral part of Gen 2–3, was that »creation« in Hebrew thought has indeed several affinities to birth, thus Adam as *toledoth* of heaven and earth (2,4a) is quite explicable. Even U. Cassuto gave a characteristic interpretation: *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis. I: From Adam to Noah, Genesis I–VI,8*, Jerusalem 1961 (transl. of 1944 Hebrew ed.). Like Jacob he took the entire verse to be consistent part of the

³ After Karl Budde's *Biblische Urgeschichte* (Giessen 1886), nearly all source discussion to Gen 2–3 focused upon sources within that narrative, not its demarcation over-against Gen 1. Counting only the more significant scholars, we note that the partition of Gen 2,4 was practically un-commented by: Dillmann: *Genesis*, 1892; Holzinger: *Genesis*, 1898; Gunkel: *Genesis*, 1901/1911; Driver: *Genesis*, (2nd ed.) 1904; Procksch: *Genesis*, 1913; Heinisch: *Buch Genesis*, 1930; Budde: *Die biblische Paradiesesgeschichte*, BZAW 60, 1932; Begrich: »Die Paradieserzählung. Eine literargeschichtliche Studie«, ZAW 50 (1932), 93–116; Humbert: *Études sur le récit du Paradis et de la chute dans la Genèse*, 1940; Coppens: *La Connaissance du Bien et du mal et le Pêché du Paradis*, 1948; von Rad: *Das Erste Buch Mose, Genesis*, 1949/1972; McKenzie: »The Literary Characteristics of Genesis 2–3«, TS 15 (1954); Speiser: *Genesis*, 1962; Fuß: *Die sogenannte Paradieserzählung*, 1968; Steck: *Die Paradieserzählung, Biblische Studien* 60, 1970; Nielsen: »Creation and the Fall of Man. A Cross-Disciplinary Investigation«, HUCA 43 (1972), 1–11; Coats: *Genesis; with and Introduction to Narrative Literature (FOTL 1)*, 1983.

following story. However, he did at the same time read Gen 1 as the *toledoth* in question, thus intermediating with the traditional source theories; 96–100. For the opinion that Gen 2,4 (a + b) is redactional heading to Gen 2–3, see below.

B: Close reading of modern exegetical literature does however betray that there is less consistency in the interpretation of Gen 2,4 than the broad scholarly unanimity would suggest. In fact recent exegesis has shown critical problems in both half verses, leading influential scholars very near to a denial that any of them are really part of their respective »sources«.

A distinguished interpreter of the verse in question is Werner H. Schmidt. In the first edition of his book he found that 2,4a was no integral part of the source »P«, but rather an editorial note closing 1,1–2,3⁴. In the second edition of his book he added a chapter on the Yahwistic creation story, thus approaching the final half of the same verse. Once again he found that the item was not part of the original source document, but rather a redactional note leading from Gen 1 to Gen 2–3⁵. Thus the second note (2,4b) links to the story summarized in the first (2,4a). And yet the two notes are ascribed to different editors; the first to the final editor of the »P« document, the second to the editor of the Pentateuch. While admiring the scientific confidence in this detailed analysis, one cannot but ask whether perhaps it is more reasonable to read two neighbouring and related editorial notes as the work of one hand.

The monumental commentary of Claus Westermann will remain standard reference to Genesis for decades. As for 2,4b, however, Westermann's interpretation is even more astounding than that of Schmidt. Following Schmidt, Westermann wrote that »Die seltene Reihenfolge »Erde und Himmel« ... ist ebenfalls eine ad hoc-Bildung zum Unterschied von 1,1, um die Andersartigkeit des Folgenden anzudeuten«⁶. At the same time he consistently ascribed 2,4b to »J«⁷, even explicitly arguing that it is the head of the »J« story, paralleling the beginning of *Enuma elish* (see below). Given this position, it would seem like nonsense for Westermann to subscribe to Schmidt's interpretation: Any »J« in the traditional sense could not have »reversed« the »heaven-and-earth« formula of 1,1 (or 2,4a)

⁴ Werner H. Schmidt: *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift*, WMANT 17, 1964/1967, 91–93. See 91: »... keine ursprüngliche Über- oder Unterschrift zu Gen 1 ... Schlußsatz, unter Anlehnung an das Formelgut der Toledot-Überschriften gestaltet worden ... kann deshalb nur dem letzten Stadium der Überarbeitung der Schöpfungsgeschichte angehören«.

⁵ *Ibid*, 196, n. 1.

⁶ Claus Westermann: *Genesis*, BKAT I/1, 1974, 271, cfr. 269.

⁷ *Ibid* 270. For source criticism cfr. 24–26.

in order to distinct his story from the P-account. According to the Documentary hypothesis »P« was not yet to be written in some 400 years by the time »J« made his remarks. On the other hand Gen 2,4a never received separate exegesis in Westermann's book⁸. Thus in this impressing commentary the picture of Gen 2,4 is anything but clear.

Given this inconsistency, one might have thought that Sven Tengström was bound to receive attention and affirmation when in 1982 he promoted the view that Gen 2,4 is a complete, literary unit authored by a redactor as heading for Gen 2–3⁹. Such general affirmation has however failed, perhaps because the thesis raised in Tengström's book¹⁰ did not convince his colleagues. (Tengström's arguments for his interpretation of Gen 2,4/Num 3,1 did not presuppose this thesis). Another reason perhaps, was that given his scope and task, even Tengström made a rather brief discussion of Gen 2,4, not reviewing all exegetical questions nor the history of interpretation.

In most recent scholarship there are indications that the classic interpretation of Genesis 2,4 is no longer self evident. Kikawada and Quinn (1985) stated a view similar to Tengström's with a very short discussion. Gordon J. Wenham (1987) explicitly referred to Tengström and also gave a short discussion of his own¹¹. Howard N. Wallace (1985) offered two notes dealing with possible objections to the traditional partitioning¹², and Ellen van Wolde (1989) lifted the discussion into her main text¹³. Both Wallace and van Wolde reached the traditional position, thus confirming the general picture that the classic reading of Gen 2,4 still stands firm.

II

Reading the Hebrew text in Gen 2,4, it is evident that the traditional interpretation is loaded with problems more severe than those of scholarly consistency:

⁸ *Ibid* pp. 11, 18 f.; 36; 43, 118, Westermann ascribes 2,4a to »P«. Cfr. his acceptance of »Wellhausen's« results in: Genesis 1–11, *Erträge der Forschung* 7, 1972, 27.

⁹ Sven Tengström: Die Toledotformel und die literarische Struktur der priesterlichen Erweiterungsschicht im Pentateuch, *CBOTS* 17, 1982, 54–59 (on Genesis 2,4 and Numeri 3,1).

¹⁰ »P« is neither a separate source, nor last redaction of the Pentateuch, but an »Erweiterungsschicht«; an extension of another pre existing literary entity: 59.

¹¹ Genesis 1–15, *Word Biblical Commentary* 1, 1987, 49 and 55–56. Isaac M. Kikawada and Arthur Quinn: *Before Abraham Was. The Unity of Genesis 1–11*, 1985, 60.

¹² Howard N. Wallace: *The Eden Narrative*, *Harvard Semitic Monographs* 32, 1985; n. 1 (23), n. 39 (59).

¹³ Ellen J. van Wolde: *A Semiotic Analysis of Genesis 2–3*, *Studia Semitica Neerlandica* 25, 1989, 72–73.

The Documentary hypothesis itself is severely disturbed by the word תולדות in Gen 2,4a. It would seem, namely, that this expression does require some following story, but this may hardly be any of the surrounding »P« texts¹⁴. An accurate presentation of the problem was given by Skinner:

The formula (and indeed the whole phraseology) is characteristic of P; and in that document it invariably stands as introduction to the section following. But in this case the next section (2.4b–3.24) belongs to J; and if we pass over the J passages to the next portion of P (ch. 5), the formula would collide with 5.1, which is evidently the proper heading to what follows. Unless, therefore, we adopt the improbable hypothesis of Strack, that a part of P's narrative has been dropped, the attempt to treat 2.4a in its present position as a superscription must be abandoned. On this ground most critics have embraced a view propounded by Ilgen, that the clause stood originally before 1.1 as the heading of P's account of the creation. But this theory also is open to serious objection. It involves a meaning of תולדות which is contrary both to its etymology and the usage of P. Whatever latitude of meaning be assigned to the word, it is the fact that in this formula it is always followed by gen. of the progenitor, never of the progeny: hence by analogy the phrase must describe that which is generated by the heavens and the earth, not the process by which they themselves are generated ..., neither as superscription nor as subscription can the sentence be accounted for as an integral part of the Priestly Code ...¹⁵

Skinner's observation on the etymology of the term תולדות will be further discussed below. Here we consider only the redactional question. After the second war most interpreters have seen in Gen 2,4 an original »P« text correctly located as a subscript to Gen 1,1–2,3. The scholars arguing for this view did not feel too uncomfortable letting 2,4a be the only incident in the Hebrew Bible where this formula is used as a subscript and not a heading. And they seem not to have been bothered by the collision between 2,4a and 5,1 in the »P« document. A modified solution to this problem is that 2,4a is due to a very rude »P« editor (as in W. H. Schmidt above). Reviewing the arguments for this position one realizes that they were often exclusively redactional, taking the source hypothesis for a fact, allowing the assumed rude redactor negligence of any semantic or syntactical convention elsewhere observed in this formula¹⁶. Today this kind of argumentation does seem defective and

¹⁴ Opposite view in Peter Weimar: »Struktur und Komposition der Priesterschriftlichen Geschichtsdarstellung«, *BN* 23 (1984), 81–134, 93 n. 47 (cfr. *BN* 24 (1984), 138–62).

¹⁵ Skinner: *Genesis, ICC*, 1910, here cited after second edition, 1930, 40–41.

¹⁶ Von Rad held that the »subscript« had been very untypically interpolated; *Genesis* (1972), 42. Jürgen Kegler: *Politisches Geschehen und theologisches Verstehen. Zum Geschichtsverständnis in der frühen Königszeit*, *CThM* A8, 1977, 24–25, said that 1) a narrative of a »Beginning« would not allow any such heading, 2) the story had nevertheless to be isolated from the following, thus requiring a closing formula, 3) P issued the formula to indicate awareness and critique of the myth of the birth of the

very hypothetical. Skinner himself argued that 2,4 was no part of »P« (source nor redaction), but was interpolated by the final redactor of the Pentateuch, who applied this formula in accordance with the other (mostly »P«) formulae as a heading to the following »J« story. Skinner nevertheless interpreted 2,4a under the heading I.1–II.3, and entitled the subsequent chapter »II.4b–III.24«.

There are exegetical problems for the standard interpretation even in the second half of the verse, but let us first consider one presumably strong argument for the opinion that a new story begins in 2,4b: According to Westermann Gen 2,4b is a Hebrew variant of a standard ancient Near Eastern introduction to »creation stories«, like »The Babylonian Creation Epic«, *Enuma elish*¹⁷. This argument is however not as straight as Westermann implies. Herrmann Gunkel – the first to issue the argument – did *not* apply it to 2,4b, but to 2,5, focusing on the negative description of »before creation« there given¹⁸. In von Rad's commentary the same argument was applied to the whole sentence (in his view) 2,4b–7¹⁹. In Westermann's interpretation the Babylonian parallel is applied explicitly to 2,4b; the temporal clause parallels it with *Enuma Elish*'s »Als droben ...«. Without engaging in detailed exegesis, we may note that possible parallel Sumerian or Akkadian texts unquestionably give an initially *negative* picture of the »world« before it was »created«. Gen 2,4b, however, does seem to give a *positive* account of the »world« prior to »creation of man«. This was exactly why Gunkel applied the parallel to 2,5. Once identified, it is evident that this tension is present also in Westermann's text, betraying that even he emphasized the negative description in 2,5²⁰. The case could deserve further comment. What is said here, however, is sufficient to reject the assumed »parallel« of Gen 2,4b and *Enuma elish*. There is no external evidence indicating that 2,4b is the start of a new story. If there is such evidence, it does indeed indicate that this start takes place in 2,5 (טָרַם יְהוָה being the temporal clause Westermann found in 2,4b).

The only way, then, to read Gen 2,4b as original part of Gen 2–3 is to take it as a dependent sentence. Such a sentence would according

gods, 4) P told the story of *elohim*'s creation of heaven and earth *first* in order to issue effective critique of the pagan theogonies using the formula as a subscript, and 5) the formula of 2,4 is P's device for signalling the continuity between creation and history. All very speculative.

¹⁷ Westermann: Genesis (1974), 269, 270.

¹⁸ Gunkel: Genesis (1910), 5.

¹⁹ G. von Rad: Genesis (1972), 52.

²⁰ Westermann: Genesis (1974), 269 dismisses the two positive clauses 2,4b and 6, as »secondary«. On the very next page he explicitly takes the temporal clause of 2,4b to be parallel to *Enuma elish*, again demonstrating his ambivalence as regards 2,4b.

to common opinion pre-announce what is going to take place in the following story (like Gen 1,1)²¹. In that case one must accept the well known syntactical peculiarities in 2,4b–7²². This will give a translation like RSV; »In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens ..., (7) then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground.« This demonstrates how ill conducted heading 2,4b would make to the following. Gen 2–3 simply does not give any account of the creation of heaven, nor earth. If a narrator really wished to record the creation of those two, he would hardly do it exclusively in a (peculiar) dependant sentence. On the contrary Gen 2,4b does indicate that the reader is aware of some *other* story giving the account of the creation of earth and heavens. This story must have been very similar – one might infer identical – with the one now given in Genesis 1.

III

It does appear therefore that fixed »results« of source research in Gen 2,4 have prevented excellent interpreters from appreciating obvious cross-links between Gen 2,4a and Gen 2,5 ff. and between 2,4b and Gen 1,1 ff. Those who saw this cross linking, were forced to account for it in a way incompatible both with the text and with the Documentary hypothesis itself. Trying now to reread this *locus classicus* we should avoid all unnecessary assumptions of redactions and sources. The only obvious state of affairs in Gen 1–3 is that we have here two rather different stories following each other successively. This alone will be the basis for my investigation.

A key point in the understanding of Genesis 2,4 must be the term תולדות, simply because it is part of a formula. With 38 occurrences in the Hebrew Bible out of which thirteen are parallel to the formulaic use in Gen 2,4²³, we are in an unusually happy situation interpreting this verse.

²¹ Cfr. O. Loretz: Schöpfung und Mythos. Mensch und Welt nach den Anfangskapiteln der Genesis, SBS 32, 1968, 276–83.

²² Read 2,4b as dependent clause to 7, with two complete verbal sentences in between (vv. 5 and 6), see discussion by Skinner: Genesis (1930) 5; Gunkel: Genesis (1910) 4.

²³ Parallel to 2,4; Gen 5,1; 6,9; 10,1; 11,10.27; 25,12.19; 36,1.9; 37,2; Num 3,1; Ruth 4,18; 1 Chr 1,29. (Other use in Gen 10,32; 25,13; Ex 6,16.19; 28,10; Num 1,20–42; 1 Chr 5,7; 7,2.4.9; 8,28; 9,9.34; 26,31.)

Recent literature: Josef Scharbert: »Der Sinn der Toledot-Formel in der Priesterschrift«, Wort–Gebot–Glaube [Festschrift für W. Eichrodt], ATANT 59, 1970, 45–56; Westermann: Genesis (1974), 17–24; Peter Weimar: »Die Toledot-Formel in der priesterschriftlichen Geschichtsdarstellung«, BZ NF 18 (1974), 65–93; Jürgen Kegler: Politisches Geschehen (1977), 19–25; Tengström: Toledotformel (1981); Weimar: Struk-

Many scholars take the term תולדות to mean simply »history« or »history of origin« (»Entstehungsgeschichte«). If, however, we count out Gen 2,4, the first of these translations is dubious, the second impossible²⁴: תולדות is used in two functions, introducing either genealogical lists or narrative sections. It always starts at the root of the family, never losing the procreative, descending character of the root ילר – a verb also often occurring in the context when the formula is attached to genealogical lists. So »Genealogy« in the sense »descending family record« is a proper translation in many instances. The meaning of the word may however be broader, including a sense of »history«, as appears in its use in the narrative material: In Gen 11,27 תולדות Terah seem to have a double function, signalling both the genealogy and the narrative. First we learn about Terah's sons (vv. 28–30), as in standard genealogical lists, before a short recurrence to Terah himself (31–32). Reading this paragraph isolated, verses 27–30 must be the תולדות in question, indeed very short for a תולדות in narrative context. Secondly, however, the vv. 27–32 single out to us to the main actors in 12,1 ff.; Abram (Sarai) and Lot. These are indeed תולדות Terah. So 11,27–32 may well be read as introduction to the entire cycle of stories about Abram, Sarai and Lot, 12,1–25,18.

At the end of this cycle appears Isaac (Gen 21–25 passim). Even he is regarded as תולדות Terah (structurally parallel to Lot), because the next main part is introduced as תולדות Isaac (that is Joseph), 25,19²⁵, only some verses after Abraham is dead, 25,11. The lack of a presentation of Isaac as תולדות Abraham reflects the lack of emphasis on Isaac in the narratives of Genesis. He serves either as a Son of his father (Gen 21, 22, 26) or as a device for the intrigue between Esau and Jacob (Gen 27–28).

תולדות Isaac is the story of his sons Esau and Jacob. The focal points of this story are announced at the outset (25,19–26); the tension around the mother and the rivalry between the two brothers. This cycle carries on (with two further parentheses; Gen 36,1.9) until the cycle of Joseph, introduced as תולדות Jacob in Gen 37,2.

In the entire Bible there is one single example that breaks the pattern of descending family story: In Gen 6,9 תולדות Noah seem to introduce the story of Noah *himself*, more than of his sons (who nevertheless are

tur (1984); brief discussion in Klaus Koch: »P – kein Redaktor! Erinnerung an zwei Eckdaten der Quellenscheidung«, VT 37 (1987), 446–67, 452 f.; broader, but more traditional in B. Renaud: »Les généalogies et la structure de l'histoire sacerdotale dans le livre de la Genèse«, RB 47 (1990), 5–30.

²⁴ For relevant discussion; Tengström: Toledotformel (1981), 17–18, 57; Scharbert: Toledot-Formel (1970), 51–52.

²⁵ תולדות Ishmael (25,12) is a parenthesis within the story of Terah's descendants.

present in 6,10; 9,18). To maintain coherent use of the formula in this instance, one might assume that תולדות is here locally restricted to 6,10 only, which would however also be untypical in a narrative context²⁶.

We may conclude that the meaning »descending family story« is basically maintained throughout the Hebrew Bible. In the genealogical lists the descending »offspring« element is more focused, in the narratives the »history« element prevails. But the basic meaning »offspring-history« and the descending relation is never obscured. (This usage of תולדות is apparently contrary to later Hebrew²⁷.)

So much for the translation of the term. Its literary function is even clearer: In combination with the particle אלה (as in Gen 2,4) תולדות does without exception *introduce* a new section, and the תולדות referred to are unequivocally those following²⁸. In all cases this appears to be a rather rigid formula, without exception first giving the name of the »progenitor« (father) and then the story of the progeny (son/sons and their wives and sons).

Twice the formula אלה תולדות is immediately followed by a ביום clause, just as in Gen 2,4b; Gen 5,1 and Num 3,1. In both cases the text introduced by the temporal clause refers to vital aspects of the foregoing narration, »reminding« the reader of the conditions under which the following תולדות (emphasis on »history«) took place. Most scholars would count the first occurrence as a »P« text²⁹, whereas the authenticity of the later is discussed³⁰. Original or not, the occurrence of a dependant sentence starting with ביום attached to תולדות in two instances outside Gen 2,4 clearly suggests that his was an acceptable construction for a competent Hebrew reader.

The thirteen pericopae so coherently introduced by the תולדות formula are themselves anything but coherent in the eyes of the source critics: Leaving aside Gen 2,4 and the »P« text in Gen 6,9 (see above) we observe that two of the remaining texts are traditionally ascribed to »J« (Gen 25,19 ff.; 37,2 ff.), whereas one usually is called redactional

²⁶ Or are perhaps Noah's acts his תולדות, (»products«) in a very broad sense? Cfr. the idiomatic use of ילר in for instance Isa 26,18; 33,11; Ps 7,15; Job 15,35; Prov 27,1.

²⁷ Cfr. the Medieval Jewish book *Toledoth Jeshu* – the Story of Jesus. Compare even Matt 1,1 with LXX Gen 5,1 (and 2,4a!). If Matt 1 had an Aramaic origin or was inspired by Jewish genealogical conventions, תולדות was there used differently.

²⁸ Eight instances: Gen 6,9; 10,1; 11,10; 25,12.19; Num 3,1; Ruth 4,18; I Chr 1,29.

²⁹ Differently Weimar: Toledot-Formel (1974), 76 ff., contrary arguments by Tengström: Toledotformel (1981), 66–68.

³⁰ M. Noth, took Num 3,1–4 as secondary: Das vierte Buch Mose, Numeri, ATD 7, 1966, 31–33, similarly Weimar: Struktur (1984), p. 89, n. 30. Tengström: Toledotformel (1981), 55 f., argued for its originality, and so did Otto Eissfeldt: »Biblos geneseos«, Gott und die Götter [FS Erich Fascher], 1958, 31–40 (Now in *idem*: Kleine Schriften III, 1966, 458–70), 461–62; 468–69.

(Gen 36,2b–5) and the authenticity of another is discussed (Num 3,1). Two are outside the Pentateuch and thus inevitably non »P« texts (I Chr 1,29 and Ruth 4,1). Even the »P« texts are not entirely consistent. Some instances employ a subsequent formula (ואלא שמות), one focus more on the female side of the progenitive history³¹, while some introduce material diverging from other »P« תולדות lists in the context³². As for the formulae themselves, even their authenticity is contested; apart from Gen 2,4 and Num 3,1 (above) even Gen 36,9³³.

In other words; the coherence in the use of the תולדות formula cross any hypothetical source boundaries. This observation could be interpreted in two ways: 1) Either it was »the final hand« of the Pentateuch who applied all formulae to whatever text he found suitable. In that case we should not read Gen 2,4 differently from the other instances. 2) Or the coherence is simply due to conventional Hebrew language, which gave homogeneity throughout the Hebrew Bible. Even in that case Gen 2,4 must be read like all other occurrences: It is hard to account for a native Hebrew writer failing to follow conventional language, but it is even harder to explain that the product eventually was conventional, and that his readers would nevertheless fail to read it conventionally!

As for Gen 2,4, the person who applied the formula, knew both the preceding and the following story: he was a redactor. From other instances it appears to be an equally reasonable assumption that some »sources« utilized by the »final hand« of the Pentateuch did also bring תולדות formulae quite parallel to the ones applied by the »final hand«³⁴. That assumption finds some support in the fact that I Chr 1,29 and Ruth 4,18 are quite similar to the other occurrences: therefore perhaps attesting that this simply was a way of thinking and writing history. On the other hand an occurrence of the formula in some »source« does of course not exclude the possibility of an intelligent system of תולדות statements in the present state of the Pentateuch. A redactor applying the formula conventionally would of course make his and his predecessor's formulae appear coherently, without leaving sufficient traces for us to decide which formulae are new and which are edited from earlier sources. Thus in this case we may hardly reach behind the final text with any degree of certainty.

³¹ For these two groups see Kegler: Politisches Geschehen (1977), 19–22.

³² Gen 36,1 vs 36,9 see Otto Eissfeldt: »Toledot«, Studien zum Neuen Testament und zum Patristik [FS Erich Klostermann], 1961, 1–8, (Now in *idem*: Kleine Schriften IV, 1967, 1–7), 2–3. More on the same within Gen 1–11 below.

³³ Eissfeldt, *ibid* took 36,9 to be secondary, admitting though that it might be 36,1 which is not authentic. Weimar: Struktur (1984) agrees with the first view.

³⁴ Gen 5,1, cfr. von Rad: Die Priesterschrift im Hexateuch, 1934, 33 ff., recently followed in part by Kegler: Politisches Geschehen (1977) 21–22, and (more reluctantly) by Koch: P – kein Redaktor (1987), 453. See also Gen 36,9; Eissfeldt: Toledot (1961).

We are bound to draw the following conclusions: 1) אלה תולדות in Gen 2,4 shall introduce the story of the progeny, the »product« of heaven and earth, *not* the story of the genesis of these two themselves. 2) This story of the »product« is undoubtedly the »J« story in Gen 2–3. No other story presents itself as a possible substitute. 3) The ביום clause in Gen 2,4b is a conventional extension of the תולדות formula, so both halves of Gen 2,4 are to be read as a literary unit. 4) Gen 2,4 presupposes Gen 1. Thus the narrator in this way introducing Gen 2–3 was familiar even with Gen 1 in its present place. Therefore we locate him relatively late in the literary process of Genesis, presumably subsequent to the first fashion of the story now given in Gen 2.

In that case Gen 2,4 (a + b) is a literary unit bridging Genesis 1 and 2–3. So we should abandon both the traditional Documentary hypothesis in Gen 2,4 and the more recent attempt to read Gen 2,4a as redactional introduction to Gen 2,4b–3,24.

IV

A construction with Gen 2,4 intermediating Genesis 1 and Genesis 2–3 would appear to be quite in line with the compositional use of תולדות throughout in the Primeval History (Gen 1,1–11,26). All five occurrences in this section of the Hebrew Bible introduce material which is similar and yet not conform to the immediately preceding material³⁵:

In 2,4 is introduced a new account of the creation of man. Both similarities and differences overagainst 1,26–30 are striking. In 5,1 is introduced a new genealogy of Adam. This genealogy is partly parallel, partly overtly different to the one given in 4,17–26. In 6,9 is introduced a different motivation for God's decision of the flood (the sin of Noah's contemporaries in 6,11–12, overagainst the evil hearts apparently originating in the sexual incident between the sons of gods and the daughters of men in 6,1–7). In 10,1 is introduced another account of the story of the sons of Noah, overagainst 9,18–27. The genealogical implications of 9,18–27 are contradicted in 10,1 ff. if we consider the well known ambiguity within 9,18–27: Canaan is presented as the nephew of Shem and Jafet in 9,18, but is more like their brother in the curses, vv. 25–27. In 11,10 is introduced a new version of the תולדות of Shem, overagainst the one given in 10,21–31 (introduced in 10,1). This second version is not overtly conflicting with the first; all the common names have similar genealogical order in the two lists. However, the sons focused upon in the genealogy 11,10 ff. are consistently *not* the first son of the generation

³⁵ Cfr. the discussion with similar conclusions in Richard S. Hess: »Genesis 1–2 in Its Literary Context«, TynB 41 (1990), 143–53, 144–51.

in question in the parallel genealogy of 10,21 ff. In a patriarchal genealogy this presumably is a notable difference. Furthermore in the second last generation of the list in chapter 10 appears a name unknown in chapter 11. In ch. 10 it is this son (Joktan) whose line is followed in one more generation, where that genealogy ends. In the list of chapter 11 we read only about Joktan's brother (according to Gen 10), Peleg. His line is followed through another four generations. Thus there are differences even between these two lists.

I attempt hereby no full account of the literary arrangement of Gen 1 – 11 or of the compositional facets of the תולדות formula. The bridging feature observed above may indeed be anything but the main compositional element of this formula. It does however seem to be a regular compositional element in the formula within Gen 1 – 11, always introducing material which parallels and yet not quite conforms to the preceding text. So this may intelligibly be assumed to be the case also in Gen 2,4³⁶.

V

The traditional arguments for source division between Gen 2,4a and b were notably the philological ones: a) The use of two different verbs for creation, b) the lacking determinative particles in the second half of the verse, c) the reversing of heaven and earth (4a) into earth and heaven (4b) and d) most notably the use of the name *Yahweh elohim* in the second half of the verse. None of these arguments seem to carry due weight³⁷.

First, there is no reason to follow the suggestion in the apparatus of BHS/BHK to have *elohim* appear in the first half of the verse (as in Gen 1), contrasting *Yahweh elohim* in the later half. But even if he did, it would no longer seem strange. On the contrary a narrator would be compelled to take up the more significant terminology of the two stories to bridge them properly. In fact the semantical links forwards and backwards are so obvious that they should be taken as testimony not of unconscious (source) vocabulary, but rather of explicit, intentional language.

The alleged difference in the two verbs of Gen 2,4 is severely overplayed. As Tengström has shown, switching from ברא to עשה is a typical feature of Gen 1³⁸. Even עשה (2,4b) connects to the preceding story (1,3), so the different use of verbs does not indicate different authors.

³⁶ In the last case of chapter 11 the situation is quite different – see generations of Terah above – an indication, perhaps, that the Primeval History really does end in 11,26.

³⁷ Cfr. even Alfons Schulz: »Gn 2,4«, BN (1932), 339 – 41, 339 f.

³⁸ Tengström: Toledotformel (1981) 67 (n. 50) and 54 – 55.

Neither does the lack of determinative particles in the later half of the verse. This lack is hardly significant at all, at least not for the question of source jargon. See the similar construction with the same verb also lacking particles in Ez 25,12.15. Even more striking parallel is Ps 148, a psalm loaded with creation motifs resembling Gen 1. In verse 13 appear the very same pair of words as in Gen 2,4b – without particles.

This psalm does also indicate that the reversal of heaven and earth in 4b could be a chiasm; cfr Ps 148,1 ff. The same might be said about Jer 10,11. Indeed the »peculiar« order ארץ ושמים is conspicuous only when these two words appear in a pair as an idiom of creation (so Gen 1,1; 2,4a). A »reversed« order of that word pair is given only in Gen 2,4b and Ps 148,13. When appearing together in a narrative context, however, this would appear to be the »normal« order, found in several late texts related to Gen 1 (one of them the sentence immediately following the chiasm in Jer 10,11).³⁹ One might indeed argue that if an ancient Hebrew were to reproduce the story of Genesis 1 not using the standard idiom »heaven-and-earth« with the verb ברא, he would certainly record the creation of the earth first, referring himself to the order in Gen 1,2 and 1,8. Thus I suspect that in 2,4a we meet the standard idiom and in 2,4b the standard narrative report both referring to Gen 1. In 2,4 they are joined in a chiastic construction, which does indeed make a perfect intermediation between Gen 1 (idiomatic) and 2 – 3 (narrative).

This chiasm would explain why בהבראם occurs at the end of 4a, splitting the formula and the conventional ביום⁴⁰. As the infinitive is introduced with a ב as in ביום, the obvious reading is to take בהבראם as parallel to ... ביום עשות יהוה אלהים.

VI

What will be the exegetical result of this? Focusing primarily upon Gen 2 – 3, I hold that the most notable exegetical profit is that according to its native introduction the Story of Eden is not a creation story, but a story of what became of heaven and earth some time after their creation. This redactional statement of 2,4 corresponds even to the content of 2,5 ff., and should be taken for granted. The nuance is significant, as the possible parallel Sumerian and Akkadian (and other) texts fall into several categories. One of these is »myth of creation« (as in Gen 1) another is »myth of beginning«. This last group houses myths

³⁹ Isa 45,12 (same verb); 48,12; Jer 10,12 (same verb); 51,15 (same verb); Ps 8,2; Job 8,5 – 9, 8,23 – 28; 38,4; Prov 3,19; 8,23 – 28.

⁴⁰ Cf. Wenham: Genesis (1987), 46; a: heaven, b: earth, c: created; c': made, b': earth, a': heaven.

about creation of man, as in Gen 2–3 (for instance »Enki and Ninmah« or creation of man in *Atrahasis*).

The second point is that the beginning of the proper narration in Gen 2–3 is 2,5, which contains the term טָרַם. This is the term Gunkel focused upon as a typical introduction to ancient Near Eastern »creation« texts. While substituting »creation« to »beginning«, we will still find this parallel useful when moving to the Near Eastern material.

One implication of the above considerations is that the narrator who bridged the two stories, does seem to have been aware of the tensions involved. Furthermore, he seem to betray loyalty more to the second than to the first story. Introducing the name *Yahweh elohim* in the בָּיִם clause as a resumé of the story in chapter 1, he actually says that it was *Yahweh* of chapters 2–3 who was the »real« creator even in chapter 1. Apart from its intriguing significance for the Documentary hypothesis (a »redactor« closer to »J« than to »P«), this statement implies awareness of the question for the different names of God and the distinct characters of the two stories.

A striking difference from all the other תולדות of the Hebrew Bible is that in Gen 2,4 the progenitor is no human, but »heaven and earth«. This metaphorical use does in my opinion not disturb the fact that Gen 2,4 is otherwise consistent to convention. It does however frustrate our understanding of what exactly is the »תולדות« of heaven and earth, as »heaven-and-earth« may hardly be father of plants, man and woman. It seems obvious that »history« rather than »genealogy« is emphasized here. But as the generic element is never totally obscured in this formula, we may ask what kind of relationship is after all implied⁴¹.

Conferring Num 3,1 we may infer that a symbolical rather than a physical relation is expressed in Gen 2,4. In Num 3,1 the statement »These are the תולדות of Aaron and Moses ...« is followed by a list of the sons of Aaron, none of Moses'. Strictly spoken, therefore, Moses is no progenitor despite his inclusion in the formula⁴². The key to understanding appears to lie in verse 3, where a description of those sons is given; »... whom he ordained to minister in the priest's office«. »He« is Moses (cfr. Ex 28,2). Thus the »progenitive« function of Moses in Num 3,1 probably is his ordaining Aaron and his sons. Priestly

⁴¹ Tengström: Toledotformel (1981) denies any procreative relationship between »heaven and earth« and »man«, taking the construction to signal general contemporarity; 57. This fails to account for the use of תולדות. General contemporarity could be expressed simply by בָּיִם.

⁴² Many take Moses to be secondarily interpolated; even Tengströmlsa Toledotformel (1981), 55. This assumption seems superfluous. Anyway one must ask if an interpolator of Num 3,1 inserted sheer nonsense? If not, Num 3,1 may serve as the parallel needed for reading Gen 2,4.

occupation was as decisive to the social rank and identification of Aaron's sons as their strictly genetical relations. Moses is the one »fathering« this significant element in the »offspring-story« of the sons of Aaron. I suggest that the case be similar in Gen 2–3. Even though *Yahweh* himself explicitly is the one giving life to man, plants animals and woman, heaven and earth are nevertheless somehow »fathering« some of their significant elements. What exactly that does imply, should be further investigated in interpretation of Gen 2–3.

Translating the תולדות of Gen 2,4 we should therefore avoid a too procreative expression. I suggest that »aftermath« be a suitable term, indicating both continuity and growth without necessarily stating the concise genetic relationship:

Here follows the story of the aftermath of heaven and earth,
as these two were created,
as *Yahweh elohim* had made earth and heaven.