

Emmanuel Gerard

2/12/23

OT655

Lesson 3 Essay

There are multiple different theories regarding the composition regarding the book of Amos. The first theory is that the book of Amos came from Amos himself. This isn't to say that Amos wrote the book himself, as it seems Amos did teaching orally as opposed to writing. As Barton mentioned in *Theology of the Book of Amos*, "But the eighth century provides such a congenial context for much of the teaching preserved in the book of Amos that there seems little reason to think it does not go back to the prophet himself." At the same time though, due to some inconsistency in tone and message (primarily in Amos 7 and 9), some wonder if this is truly the case. In regards to the epilogue in Amos 9, Barton mentions that "Nevertheless, most scholars see the passage as an addition, probably reflecting the exile or postexilic age, when the line of David had ended - one that expressed the hope that it would be restored, and this must mean that it does not come from Amos himself".

The second theory is the idea that the book is a result of multiple stages of redaction, in other words, derived through several edits. W.H Schmidt and Han Walter Wolff are the main influential figures in this narrative. In their respective works, each described how, based on passages in this book and the time period in which it was written (for example, the deuteronomistic movement as mentioned by Schmidt), it is likely to have gone through multiple prophetic reviews. Questions circle around the likelihood as to whether or not the aforementioned authors are in a position to be able to make the claims which they make, and on what basis? This scholarly review intrigues me the most out of all of them, primarily because I am interested in the multiple stages of editing that this theory mentions. The third theory is that it is constructed based on multiple sources of information. Amos 3-6 is used to help assert this fact,

primarily 5:1-17. Barton analyzes these verses to show this, though again many question how credible this theory could be based on the different “sources”. The fourth theory is that Amos was actually *invented* much later than the eighth century. Many question this timeline though, using Wolff as a main source of the argument.

Considering Amos is considered to be the first Hebrew prophet who has a book named after him, it seems that a lot of what constitutes a *prophet* is circled around Amos. Thus, a lot of the studies done around him have heavy implications on the understanding of the Hebrew Bible.