

sacrifices. In D, the Levitical priest was the only authorized official to carry out this function, which was further narrowed to the family of Aaron in P.

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2. ~~Rejection of Wellhausen's Theory of Development~~ <sup>Development Hypothesis</sup>

Modern Old Testament scholars have reacted against this picture of a rigid evolutionary development of Israel's religion. ~~Dr.~~ W.F. Albright, ~~emeritus~~ <sup>Emeritus of Semitic Languages</sup> Professor at Johns Hopkins University and one of America's foremost archaeologists, has stated (in his book, Archaeology and the Religion of Israel (4th ed., Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956):

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We may observe that such uncompromising rigidity of unilinear evolution is without good historical parallel and that historical evolutionary processes are more given to oscillation than to advance in a straight line... While interpolation is often quite justified where the line of historical evolution is fixed by earlier and later data, extrapolation, where only data of later date are known, is perilous to the highest degree and ought to be abandoned by historians (p. 204, footnote 37).

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~~That~~ Albright's position is not unique. G. Ernest Wright of Harvard University has written a book which undercuts Wellhausenian assumptions of unilinear <sup>developmental</sup> evolutionary development at every turn (The Old Testament Against Its Environment, Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, SCM Press Ltd.: London, 1950). He says:

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In the first place, it is increasingly realized that the attempt to make of the Old Testament a source book for the evolution of religion from the very primitive to highly advanced concepts has been made possible only by means of a radical misinterpretation of the literature. In the history of Israel as in the history of other peoples there are numerous primitive survivals. Is it possible to construct a system out of them in Israel and thus presume that we have defined early Hebrew religion? One cannot do this, we now know, with the contemporary polytheisms of Egypt, Canaan, or Babylon, nor for any known religion of the ancient world. Doubt must therefore be thrown on any picture of the God of Israel which attempts to portray him as a purely localized, anthropomorphic, nature deity, limited to tribe, shrine, or mountain, pacified by human sacrifice, a crude,