

one case recorded that the patriarch offered sacrifices. In view of the frequent and indeed casual reference to the practice in other parts of the book (e.g. Gen. 12:7; 22:9; 26:25; 35:7, cited above), it is not likely that this silence is accidental. Its significance becomes apparent when it is found that the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers contain a mass of detailed regulations concerning the modes and dates of sacrifices (Exod. 29:38-42; Lev. 1:2-5:19; Num. 15:1-41; 29:1-39). These regulations are promulgated *de novo*; that is, the assumption underlying them is that hitherto the institution of sacrifice had been unknown. It may reasonably be inferred that they are related to the material in Genesis in which sacrifice is not mentioned. Again, the concern for the proper performance of the cult which finds expression in the regulations regarding sacrifice is also characteristic of the great mass of legislation in Exodus—except that in chs. 20, 23 and 34—Leviticus and Numbers. Furthermore, this legislation is cast in the same pedantic style as the material dealing with sacrifice. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it comes from the same source.

It is this material which constitutes the P document. A comparison of its laws with those found elsewhere in the Pentateuch leaves no room for doubt that they form the latest stratum of the legal material. The document is thus the latest of the four of which the Hexateuch is composed.

When the P material has been removed from Genesis, the presence of duplications and inconsistencies, and the alternating use of the Lord (Yahweh) and God (Elohim), in the narrative remaining indicate that it comes in the main from two different sources. Using the names employed in referring to or addressing the Deity as our criterion—though allowance must be made for occasional redactional alteration, e.g. in Gen. 46:50 (see the Exeg. thereon)—and correlating passages which reveal similarities of style and identity of interest in certain localities, we are able to reconstruct, with, of course, numerous lacunae, two narratives, the documents J and E. An examination of the non-P material in Exodus-Joshua reveals the fact that these documents are component parts of the Hexateuch—with which Judg. 1:1-2:5 really belongs—as a whole. The dependence of E upon J, noted below, indicates the priority of the latter.

The evidence for the literary independence of Deuteronomy, D, is of a character similar to that for the case separate existence of J, E, and P (see below). The style of the book has marked peculiarities which set it off from the natural

simplicity of J and E and from the formal phraseology of P; and (6) the religious tone of the D legislation stands in marked contrast to the simple cult requirements and matter-of-fact secular enactments of the JE codes (Exod. 20:25-23:19; 34:10-27) on the one hand, and to the advanced ceremonialism of P on the other.

The peculiar style and the religious ideas which characterize D are found also in certain passages in the other books of the Hexateuch. These passages are not only unnecessary to the continuity of the reconstructed source documents, but frequently inject an element of inconsistency into their context. They are accordingly assumed to have come from the hand of a redactor, or redactors, belonging to the same circle as the authors of Deuteronomy—RD.

That D is later than JE—the narrative built up by RD through a conflation of the two documents, J and E—is indicated by the fact that the historical recapitulation in the opening chapters of Deuteronomy is dependent upon JE. Furthermore, D incorporates and frequently expands much of the legislative material now forming part of JE.

The priority of D to P is indicated not only by the fact that the laws of the latter are in many cases a development of those of the former, but especially by a comparison of their respective theories as to the priesthood. In D, Levites and priest are practically synonymous terms, and all priests are of equal rank. In P, the Levites are not priests, but ministers of subordinate rank; and at the head of the priesthood stands the high priest, unknown to D. Any suggestion that D is a simplification of P is contradicted by the known fact that the hierarchical system of P remained in force until the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70.

#### VI. The Structure of the Documents

The Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis has commanded the assent of the great majority of Old Testament critics for more than sixty years, and has served as the point of departure for investigation of the internal structure of the several sources. This investigation, indeed, began as soon as the hypothesis had been formulated. Wellhausen<sup>14</sup> himself pointed out that the account of the rise of nomadism, of the discovery of music, and of the beginning of metalworking in Gen. 4:16-24, derived from the J document, was an account of the origin of certain skills which the author implies had continued in un-

<sup>14</sup> For the theories held by the dissenting minority see Simpson, *Early Traditions of Israel*, pp. 44-46; also Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1941), pp. 140-41.

<sup>15</sup> In *Die Composition des Hexateuchs* mentioned above.

broken existence until his own day. This little narrative was accordingly irreconcilable with the story of the Flood (Gen. 6:5-9:19), one strand of which was also derived from J.

This is but one of the numerous internal inconsistencies which Wellhausen observed, not only in J but also in E and P. They were evidence that the original documents had, each of them, undergone elaboration before being combined into a single narrative. These successive strata of material Wellhausen represented by the symbols J, J<sup>2</sup>, E, E<sup>2</sup>, P, etc. He was, however, careful to insist upon the provisional character of his conclusions, and left most points of detail to be determined by future investigation.

Wellhausen was followed by Karl Budde,<sup>15</sup> who argued that the J narrative in Gen. 1-11 was composed of two originally independent documents which had been woven together by a redactor. Kuenen<sup>16</sup> likewise recognized divergent accounts of the earliest generations of men in the J material in these chapters, though he was inclined to dissent from Budde's theory of two originally independent documents. He was of the opinion that the inconsistencies, not only in these chapters but in the rest of the J document, were due to the systematic elaboration of one basic narrative. The E material in the Hexateuch, he maintained, had been similarly elaborated—a theory which was further developed by Otto Procksch<sup>17</sup> some years later.

In the quarter of a century following the appearance of Kuenen's treatise on the Hexateuch the study of the separate documents did little more than confirm the fact to which Wellhausen had called attention—that before they had been combined into a single narrative the original documents had in each case been expanded by the introduction of secondary material. The historical circumstances which had given rise to these revisions, the purpose for which they had been undertaken, and the nature of the process by which they had been carried through remained, however, undetermined. A growing disagreement inevitably resulted, not only as to the extent of the supplementary material and, in some cases, as to its affinity, but also as regards the primary form of the documents themselves, the outlines of which, particularly of J and E, became less and less distinct.

Indeed, Hermann Gunkel, in his great and

<sup>16</sup> *Die biblische Ersgeschichte* (Gießen: J. Ricker, 1885).

<sup>17</sup> *An Historico-critical Inquiry into the Origin and Composition of the Hexateuch*, ed. P. O. Weitzel (London: Macmillan & Co., 1892).

<sup>18</sup> *Das nordbräunliche Sagenbuch, die Ezechielquelle* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1898).

epoch-making commentary on Genesis<sup>18</sup> emphatically maintained that it was impossible to answer such questions in detail. Following Budde, he distinguished two independent strands in the J narrative of chs. 1-11; similarly, he found two independent strands in the J material dealing with the patriarchs, though he was unable to decide whether or not these were continuous with the strands in the earlier chapters. He was inclined to regard the question as of little importance, for his interest was in the individual units—myths, legends, poems, genealogical tables, and notices—of which the documents were composed. It was to these that he directed his attention.

Through his brilliant and penetrating analysis Gunkel achieved certain results of fundamental importance: (a) he established once and for all the diverse and independent origins of the literary units which make up the source documents of Genesis; (b) he demonstrated that their present form was in most cases the result of gradual growth and adaptation; (c) he revealed the frequently intricate process by which legends of non-Israelite provenance had become an integral part of the Israelite tradition; and (d) he made clear the fact that the tradition in its final form was complex in the extreme—the product of centuries of assimilation and development of material drawn from many sources.

A few years later Hugo Gressmann,<sup>19</sup> applying Gunkel's techniques to the accounts of the Exodus and the events which followed, threw fresh light upon the narrative of the remaining books of the Pentateuch.

Nevertheless, the work of these two scholars was not pure gain, for in trying (often in modified form) the fragment hypothesis and the supplementation hypothesis of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, they inevitably tended to overlook the fact that the growth and development of the national tradition had been conditioned by political events—such as, for example, the formation and extension of intertribal confederacies—and to underestimate, therefore, the extent to which the articulation of the tradition had been a process consciously and deliberately undertaken.

Now, it must be realized that if the J and E documents should turn out to be not carefully articulated historical narratives—however legendary much of their content may be—but merely collections of legends and other material, so loosely put together that it is frequently doubt-

<sup>19</sup> *Genesis überlieferung und kritik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1901; *Göttinger Handkommentar zum Alten Testament*).

<sup>20</sup> *Alte und neue Zeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1914).

<sup>21</sup> For instances of Gunkel's failure in this respect see Simpson, *Early Traditions of Israel*, pp. 40-45.