

Ringgren, Helmer, Israelite Religion trans. by D.R.Green(Fortress Press:Phila.)1966
A trans. of Israelitische Religion pub. by Verlag, Stuttgart, 1963

p. 7 The question of how the texts of the Pentateuch were transmitted has been re-opened in recent years by the so-called Uppsala school (Engnell and others).¹⁴ They assert that the three sources J, E, and P were not independent written documents but rather represent the work of various "schools" within the stream of oral tradition. According to them, the Tetrateuch (Genesis - Numbers) represents a "priestly" redaction of material handed down by oral tradition.¹⁵ Even though it is impossible at this time to say that the problem has been conclusively solved, one thing is certain: oral tradition played a much more important role in the transmission of the Pentateuch than the old documentary hypothesis assumed.

14 For discussion and bibliography, see E. Neilsen, Oral Tradition(Chicago: Allenson, 1954); A. H. J. Gunneweg, Mündliche und schriftliche Tradition der vor-exilischen Prophetenbücher(Göttingen:Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959) cf. also G. Widengren, AcOr, XXIII (1960), 201 ff.

15 See the survey by C.R.North mentioned above (note 9) [9 See C. R. North, "Pentateuchal Criticism," The Old Testament and Modern Study, ed. H. H. Rowley(London: Oxford, 1951), pp. 48-83; H. J. Krauss, Geschichte der historisch-kritischen Erforschung des Alten Testaments (Neukirchen:Erziehungsverein, 1956), pp. 399 ff.⁷ E. Engnell's most recent discussion of this question can be found in an article in Religion och Bibel, XVIII (1959), 3ff. More recent traditio-historical studies of the Pentateuch include: R. Rendtorff, Die Gesetze der Priesterschrift (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1954); J. Hoftijzer, Die Verheissungen an die drei Erzvater (Leiden: Brill, 1956); K. Koch, Die Priesterschrift von Ex. 25 bis Lev. 16 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ryprecht, 1959); W. Beyerlin, Herkunft und Geschichte der älteren Sinaitradition (Tübingen: Mohr, 1961).

The Religion of the Patriarchs

p. 17 How much history lies behind these patriarchal narratives? It is obvious that they cannot be used as historical sources just as they stand. Whatever position one may take on the controverted question of the sources of the Pentateuch, one thing is certain: these narratives have come down to us through centuries of oral tradition and through the literary activity of one or more writers, and thus reflect the thoughts and ideas of much later periods as well. It is difficult if not impossible to determine what part of the traditional materials is really ancient and genuine.