

DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS

posals; each one of them remained isolated and failed to induce any of the other investigators to forsake the successful view favoured by fortune in order to follow him. Possibly this was due to the fact that many of the opponents did not use correct scientific methods, and that even those whose scientific approach was beyond cavil did not succeed in advancing acceptable interpretations of their own. Be this as it may, the documentary hypothesis enjoyed a position of absolute domination in the scientific world. Already in 1924, in the *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, the leading periodical for Biblical studies in Germany, the editor, H. Gressmann, wrote as follows: 'We must stress, with the utmost emphasis, that there is no school of Biblical scholarship today that is not founded on the critical analysis of the sources in the Hexateuch (that is, the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua), ... and anyone who does not accept the division of the text according to the sources and the results flowing therefrom, has to discharge the onus, if he wishes to be considered a collaborator in our scientific work, of proving that all the research work done till now was futile'.

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Possibly these words were written just because it was already felt that a new epoch of ferment in Biblical criticism was beginning. Even in the circles that had previously been wholly loyal to the documentary hypothesis in all its aspects there arose scholars who commenced to question one or other tenet of the theory and to express misgivings about some of its details. In the very issue in which the editor made the aforementioned statement, W. Staerk, one of the former devotees of the documentary hypothesis, raised certain doubts about the accepted analysis of the sources. In the same year also, M. Löhr published a brochure called *Der Priesterkodex in der Genesis*, in which he endeavoured to prove, contrary to the prevailing theory to which he, too, had hitherto subscribed, that there is no section or verse in the Book of Genesis that could be attributed to source P. So, too, — I am citing, of course, a few examples only — in 1933 P. Volz and W. Rudolph, who were likewise adherents of the documentary theory, wrote a work entitled, *Der Elobist als Erzähler: ein Irrweg der Pentateuchkritik?*, in which they came to the conclusion that there are no independent narratives in the Pentateuch from source E, but that E, if he existed at all,

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U. Cassuto THE DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS and the Composition of the Pentateuch (8 lectures) trans. by Israel Abrahams, Prof. of Hebrew University of Cape Town The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University Jerusalem 1941 (1953, 1959) (1st Eng. ed. 1961) (Dist. in Gt. Brit., the British Commwlth and Europe by Oxford Univ. Press).