

wider spectrum. It is hoped that the logic of this approach will be obvious in due course.

## 2. Statement of principles

In stating principles which support a new critical approach to Israel's early traditions, it may be necessary to adopt some principles which, in fact, have already been used, for example in redaction criticism. Indeed, it may be that all the principles to be stated have been previously used in some sense and that what is new is the actual stating of the principles. Further, it may be that the selection and ordering of certain principles from a range of those already in use, in itself, by virtue of the emphasis created, outlines a new system of Old Testament criticism. In fact, the principles stated below are not new. Each one has been applied previously by someone at some time to criticism of Biblical material. However, the system is claimed to be new because the emphasis is upon the *dynamic processes* involved in the conception and development of Biblical documents. Hence, the system may conveniently be called Process Analysis.

It may be noted, at the same time, that the principles were produced, not a priori, but a posteriori, when an examination of the material had already taken place or, perhaps more accurately, that the principles were formulated intermittently between numerous examinations of the Biblical data. Therefore, though the principles are placed near the beginning of the essay, many of the ideas mentioned below were conceived before the principles. In other words, it was realised that the practical methods used to solve problems seemed, when surveyed, to contain common elements which could legitimately be outlined as a set of principles. The principles of Process Analysis are as follows:

- (1) Try to identify the processes of growth and transmission in the production of Biblical documents.
- (2) Try to produce an overall map of the various processes involved.
- (3) Try to use the creative imagination to understand the people involved in these processes in their historical context.
- (4) Try to identify specific strata in the material.
- (5) Try to identify the motives of the authors and editors of specific strata of tradition.
- (6) Try to link strands of material which have a common source or purpose.
- (7) Try to identify the places or groups through which traditions have developed.
- (8) Try to date the primary and secondary sources of each stratum or group of strata of traditions.
- (9) Try to identify collections of material which existed at various stages of development.

- (10) Try to estimate the effects of the traditions upon the people for whom they were written.

## 3. An appropriate starting point

One collection of early Israelite traditions illustrates the principles of process in an outstanding way. It is commonly accepted that Judges is a collection of ancient, local traditions which have been strung together by a later theologian. This later editor has apparently ascribed national status to a number of local heroes and heroines and, in addition, has used the stories to illustrate a theology of judgement and salvation.

Several questions may be asked about the processes involved in the production of Judges as it exists today. Who wrote the individual stories originally? Which local areas preserved the traditions? Who was the initial collector of the stories and when were they collected? Were the stories part of a larger collection or history? Who gave the whole book its characteristic viewpoint? For how long did the collection exist before the theologian adapted it to his grand design? Where was the collection preserved? These are the sorts of questions the process critic must address to the material before him.

A simple analysis of the traditions in the book produces the following result.

Section	Subject	Tribes or tribal areas
Cap 1	Conflicts in Canaan	Various: Judah, Simeon, Benjamin, Manasseh, Ephraim (and Joseph), Asher, Zebulun
2 <sup>1-5</sup>	Divine pronouncement	Ephraim
2 <sup>6-10</sup>	Death of Joshua	Ephraim
2 <sup>11-36</sup>	Introductory material	
3 <sup>7-11</sup>	Othniel	Judah
3 <sup>12-30</sup>	Ehud	Benjamin/Ephraim
3 <sup>31</sup>	Shamgar	Judah?
4-5	Deborah	Ephraim (other tribes mentioned)
6-8	Gideon	Manasseh
9	Abimelech	Ephraim
10 <sup>1-2</sup>	Tola	Issachar/Ephraim
10 <sup>3-5</sup>	Jair	Manasseh (Gilead)
10 <sup>6-12</sup>	Jephthah	Manasseh (Gilead)
12 <sup>8-10</sup>	Ibzan	Judah
12 <sup>11-12</sup>	Elon	Zebulun
12 <sup>13-15</sup>	Abdon	Ephraim