

THE GROWTH OF THE HEXATEUCH

from a possible charge of undue impressionism. He established the existence in the Hexateuch of a document, J<sup>1</sup>, which told of the Israelites journeying directly to Kadesh from the Red Sea, and showed that this document had been elaborated by a later writer, J<sup>2</sup>, who added the material telling of the journey of Israel to Sinai and of the lawgiving there.

Having established this point, Meyer proceeded to argue that the southern tribes had entered Palestine not from the east by crossing the Jordan, but from the south.<sup>26</sup> His argument was based not upon a reconstruction of an early narrative of the Conquest—which indeed he believed to be irrecoverable—but upon the geographical position of the tribes of Judah and Simeon, cut off as they were from the north until the rise of the monarchy; upon the political situation in the time of Saul and earlier; and upon the narrative reflecting a movement northward from Kadesh in Num. 21:1-3, and its variants in Num. 14:39-45 and Exod. 17:8-16.

In analyzing the narrative of the Conquest,<sup>27</sup> beginning with Num. 13 and ending with Judg. 2:5, one may isolate what is probably the earliest account of an invasion of Palestine from the south (as postulated by Meyer). This appears to belong to the same stratum of the J material as the Kadesh narrative of the Exodus. We thus have an account of the Exodus and the Conquest which embodies the tradition of the southern tribes only.

Just as the Kadesh narrative of the Exodus was elaborated by the addition of material telling of the Israelites going to Sinai following the deliverance at the Red Sea, so the account of an invasion of Palestine from the south has been enlarged by the addition of material telling of all the tribes proceeding from Kadesh to the land of Moab, of their miraculous crossing of the Jordan at Jericho, and of their conquest, under the leadership of Joshua, of the land occupied in historical times by Ephraim and Benjamin. Following this the narrative reverts to the earlier account—now preserved in Judg. 1—of the conquest of the south, though with the order of events changed to make it fit the new representation that it was a movement not northwards from Kadesh, but southwards from Joshua's (supposed) headquarters in the vicinity of Jericho.

This secondary conquest material seems to belong to the same stratum of J as does the Sinai material, that is, J<sup>2</sup>. Since it is concerned with Benjamin and Ephraim, one may tentatively infer that the specific tradition upon which J<sup>2</sup> had drawn in his elaboration of the

southern J<sup>1</sup> narrative was the tradition of those two tribes.

Further support for this inference is furnished by an analysis of Genesis which takes full account of the duplications and inconsistencies in the J material noted by Wellhausen, Budde, and Kuenen, for which Smend and Eissfeldt sought to account by postulating two originally independent documents, both characterized by expressions and modes of thought which earlier critics had noted as indications of J.

By this analysis a narrative is isolated which contains traditions most of which bear the marks of having been current either in the vicinity of Hebron, the capital of the southern tribes, or in the land east of the Jordan. Significantly, the author of this narrative nowhere reveals any firsthand knowledge of the traditions of the Joseph-Rachel tribes, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin. It is thus a southern document, with certain east-Jordan affinities, and it appears to belong to the same stratum of the J tradition as the Exodus Kadesh narrative and the related account of the conquest of the south.

This J<sup>1</sup> material in Genesis has been subjected to the same kind of elaboration as the J<sup>1</sup> narrative of the Exodus and the Conquest. There has been added to it a great deal of material which reveals for the most part an interest in legends which are rooted in the north. This material is from the same stratum as that dealing with Sinai and the conquest of the north.

The conclusion demanded by the observation of these phenomena would seem to be that the inconsistencies and repetitions within the J material of the Hexateuch, to which Wellhausen first called attention in 1876, are due to the fact that the document is based on a very simple narrative, J<sup>1</sup>, embodying the tradition of the southern tribes; and that this was later elaborated by another writer, J<sup>2</sup>, who added to it the tradition of the Joseph tribes, reconciling the two traditions as best he could.

The "second edition" of the J document itself received some further additions, but this elaboration did not have the systematic character which marks the work of J<sup>2</sup>. It was the completed J document—J<sup>2</sup> plus supplements—which was ultimately conflated with the E document to form the narrative JE.

This conclusion, it may be noted, is within the framework of the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis, and indeed is in substantial agreement with the suggestions advanced, however tentatively, by Wellhausen himself. It rejects the theory—also congruent with the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis—espoused in different forms by Budde, Smend, and others, that the J narrative is the

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72-77.

<sup>27</sup> Simpson, *Early Traditions of Israel*, pp. 230-329.