

and peaceful ruler. I have brought to light evidence that justifies identifying this great master with the prophet Nathan, the first teacher and statesman of the moral tradition. The value of Nathan's book was so apparent that it was adopted by the Jerusalemite priests as their school text. Before adopting it, however, they revised it so as to make it conform to their priestly views and interests. Some generations later, during the anti-Phoenician resistance movement of the mid-ninth century, the book was annotated—in the north by the prophetic guild headed by the prophet-statesman Elisha, and in the south by the priestly school in Jerusalem led by the priest-regent Jehoiada. The first annotator was substantially the northern Elohist (E); the second was the southern Elohist—the priestly narrator who wrote the oldest portions of the so-called P document, indicated in this book as Pn.

After the fall of Samaria, the northern literature came to Jerusalem and the sacred writings were collected under King Hezekiah. The Hezekian editors kept both Elohist versions, preserving each of them intact, without making any attempt to harmonize their contradictions. They also re-edited and amplified the basic Deuteronomic Code, which was originally a northern Elohist book of laws. The Hezekian editors adapted this code to their own religious needs, eliminating all pagan symbols and the high places, and concentrating the cult in a single national sanctuary. This Jerusalemite edition of Deuteronomy was hidden during the long reign of the paganizing King Manasseh and was rediscovered under King Josiah. But the times had changed; the priests and cultic prophets felt that Deuteronomy was inadequate for purposes of the cult. The times required a rich and colorful sacrificial cult, with an elaborate ritual of atonement, a well-articulated priestly hierarchy, and a finely robed high priest; stricter observance of purity and sex taboos; heavier sanctions against foreign cults and magical practices, sex crimes, sabbath desecration; and finally, effective land reform on the basis of a jubilee legislation. The recognition of these needs led to the compilation of the Priestly Code and its incorporation into the Torah. This code consisted, to a great extent, of ancient material, orally transmitted through the priestly school in Jerusalem.

The new approach suggested by the present writer views the Pentateuch as a pre-exilic book, to a great extent even antedating