

RB 64 (1957), 420-22

rough translation of R. de Vaux's review of Growth of the Pentateuch

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Historical books- Several years have passed, since I. Lewy proposed, under the title The Birth of the Bible, a novel solution to the problem of the Pentateuch. Since the criticism has been rather reticent (l. cf., for example, RB, LVIII, 1950, p.271), the author has wished to prop his thesis by more developed proofs and has written The Growth of the Pentateuch. It is a paradoxical book, since according to his plan this "growth" is described backwards, by beginning with some elements estimated as the most recent. Three dominant ideas are exposed: all of the Pentateuch is previous to the Exile, except some rare additions; the Pentateuch is not the product of a combination of independent sources, but it is the development of one fundamental writing which has been annotated, revised, re-edited through the epochs and in different environments; the principle stages of its development can be derived by the historical personalities of which psychology and preoccupations explain the contradictions of the final work.

And here are the results: Moses is not the author of the Decalogue. The latter, by prophetic inspiration, is essentially a Decalogue of the prophet Nathan, which has afterwards received some annotations. On the contrary, some elements of the Code of Alliance are traced to Moses, in the measure in which it is apedictic, Dracenic,