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He means it quite literally: the themes, if I understand him, represent blocks of tradition each with a separate history. They were not (UG, 48) put together all at once in order to furnish a framework for the remaining material, but developed separately and were only gradually coupled one to another.

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As Alt has shown³, these cults were of a type widespread among the semi-nomads of the day, and marked by an intimate personal relationship between the god and the members of the clan.

³ Alt, Der Gott der Väter (Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, 1929; reprinted in Ks I, 1-78).

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(c) Aside from the above material we have the great Jacob-Esau-Laban saga cycle (UG, 95-111). But this is marked, especially by its 'developed saga style' (UG, 96), as a relatively late development in the history of the Jacob tradition. That it has its roots in Transjordan is to be argued from the reminiscence that Jacob was buried there (Gen. 50.10a [J], 11 [E]), for the traditions of a local hero tend to cluster around a grave tradition. While the site of Jacob's grave (Atad, Abel-mizraim) is unknown, the Haft-punkt (UG, 97) of these traditions is clearly in the vicinity of Mt Gilead, an area settled by an eastward migration of Ephraim.

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As for Abraham, 'it can scarcely be doubted' (UG, 120) that the Hebron-Mamre traditions are secondary, for these are to be found only in J and were unknown to G. Besides (UG, 121), this block of material is characterized by its 'younger developed saga style'.