

Dentan, Robert C., The Knowledge of God in Ancient Israel (The Seabury Press: New York) 1968

p. 259 Note 1.

A. Alt believes that the so-called apod(e)ictic (that is the unconditional, mostly negative laws ) of the Book of the Covenant (Exod. 20.22-23.19) and some other ancient legal codes are the product of Israel's earliest period in Canaan and her attempt to assert and preserve her identity in the presence of an alien culture; see his essay "The Origins of Israelite Law" (cited above in ch. 1, note 11). Alt's views have, however, been subjected to basic criticism in E. Gerstenberger's Wesen und Herkunft des "apodiktischen Rechts" (Neukirchen, 1965). Gerstenberger finds the source of these laws in family or tribal Wisdom rather than in cultic proclamation. An increasing number of scholars is inclined to take seriously the tradition of a Mosaic, or at least very early, origin for the Decalogue: see H. H. Rowley, "Moses and the Decalogue" in BJRL 34 (1951-2), pp. 81-118; J. J. Stamm and M. E. Andrews, The Ten Commandments in Recent Research, SBT n.s. 2(Naperville, 1967); E. Nielsen, Die zehn Gebote (Copenhagen, 1965; he says the Decalogue as a whole is not Mosaic, though the first four commandments may be, pp. 106f.). On the possible proclamation of law as a cultic act in early Israel, see above, pp. 83ff.; also W. Beyerlin, Origins and History of the Oldest Sinaitic Traditions, pp. 49-67.