

Kaufmann, Yehezkel, The Religion of Israel (U. of Chi. Press) 1960
Trans. and abr. by Moshe Greenberg.

Find a statement like this in one of the standard works

p. 171 What is of crucial historical importance ~~is~~ in the fact that each of the codes has its own characteristic style. is that no cross-influences are in evidence. No traces of a priestly redaction can be detected in the laws of D or JE. More important, nothing characteristic of D's style can be seen in P. Nor is there warrant for the view that JE has undergone a Deuteronomic editing. . . . The monumental fact is that not a single peculiarity of one legal corpus has insinuated itself into either of the others.

This is all the more remarkable, since these corpora are themselves composites, as is clear from the variants, repetitions, openings, and conclusions that can be found in them. That the three codes nonetheless remain distinguishable in style and form testifies to a highly ramified literary development.

p. 178 The preconceptions which led the Wellhausen school to regard the festival laws of P as late have no foundation in the reality of ancient times. Fixity in times and rites and absence of "natural spontaneity" characterize the festivals of ancient Babylonia, Egypt, and all known early civilizations. . . .

Wellhausen's characterization of P's laws, in contrast with those of JE and D, as ritualistic, fixed, and unconnected with nature, is obtained only by the arbitrary connection of Leviticus 23 with JE and D, rather than with its present context, P.

p. 180 The theory that P symbolizes the idea of centralization by the Mosaic tent of meeting, as if to represent Second Temple conditions as Mosaic institutions, is groundless. P, as we have seen, does not contain a single law in which centralization is its Deuteronomic form is expressed.

p. 182 To be sure, P knows of but one legitimate sanctuary, the tent of meeting. But P's tent is not represented as a law, but as a historic fact. . . .

p. 183 This local unity of worship that P depicts for Moses' time is not, however, a concept peculiar to priestly writings. JE also knows of only one camp, one tent, one ark, and one leader. P adds a priestly touch by insisting that only a sanctified precinct - and in the desert there was only one such precinct - is qualified for sacrifice. If this results in "centralization of worship" for the desert period, it is not as a demand and a law, but as a historical necessity.

p. 193 The one pillar of Wellhausen's structure that has not been shaken by later criticism is his reconstruction of the history of the Levites and the priesthood. The argument here seems to be conclusive. . . .

p. 194 The Levites of postexilic times are, thus, descendants of the demoted priests of the high places. P, which alone of the pentateuchal sources carefully distinguishes priests from Levites, reflects the circumstances of Second Temple times and must, therefore, be postexilic.

This view, however, is beset by several difficulties