

# The Deuteronomistic History since Martin Noth

In this opening chapter, I want to briefly address three topics: (1) the methodological approach that I will be adopting to analyze texts; (2) the state of DtrH studies since Martin Noth; and (3) an overview of my proposed authors of the DtrH. This opening chapter is not intended to be a thoroughgoing discussion of the history of scholarship; that has been handled by other scholars elsewhere. While I will offer notes where needed for further reading, my main goal is to situate the reader in the world of the discussions as they exist today.

## Methodology

Throughout this book I will adopt a canonical or a holistic approach to the text—what some people term a “synchronic” as opposed to a “diachronic” approach.<sup>1</sup> While higher-critical methods will be

1. Whereas Moshe Greenberg adopted the term *holistic* for his study of the book of Ezekiel (cf. *Ezekiel 1–20 and 21–37*, AB 22 and 22a [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983, 1997]), Brevard

utilized when needed (e.g., rhetorical, form, narrative-critical theory, etc.), it is neither my desire, nor my goal, to get bogged down in the minutiae of the redaction-critical discussion. Moreover, I do not wish to enter into a “slugfest” with those who posit various strands of tradition on the micro-level, and who often bifurcate verses into subsections and sub-subsections, and so forth.<sup>2</sup> Rather, my purpose is to look at the Former Prophets in their canonical form and discuss possible options for who may have written or compiled these accounts, in whole, or in part, and their possible reasons for doing so. Instead of “picking at the loose threads” of the intricate DtrH tapestry until all that one has left is a pile of “threads,” my goal is to draw readers into the world of the text and encourage them to ask questions of the larger narrative, and then, from the greater whole, begin to appreciate the detail and literary elegance of the final form.<sup>3</sup> This, I believe, will generate a greater interest in these books—books that have been the centerpiece of Sunday-school classrooms for more than a century, and seminary and university lecture halls for even longer. The methodology adopted throughout will, hopefully, foster

Childs introduced the *canonical approach* (cf. *Introduction to the Old Testament* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979], 355–72). Childs’s assessment of biblical books from a canonical perspective revolutionized the way in which scholars looked at the biblical text. While Childs still embraced historical-critical tenets, in his mind, the methodology employed and conclusions often drawn by such approaches were inadequate to address the real needs of the biblical exegete. See also comments by Robert R. Wilson, “Unity and Diversity in the Book of Kings,” in *A Wise and Discerning Mind: Essays in Honor of Burke O. Long*, ed. Saul M. Olyan and Robert C. Culley, BJS 325 (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 2000), 293–310, esp. 293.

2. In the next section, I will briefly orientate the reader into the world of the redaction discussion. For a more recent treatment of the strands and insertions of the DtrH, see Anthony F. Campbell and Mark A. O’Brien, *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History: Origins, Upgrades, Present Text* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000).
3. See Anthony F. Campbell, *Of Prophets and Kings: A Late Ninth-Century Document (1 Samuel 1—2 Kings 10)*, CBQMS 17 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1986), 205–208. Campbell notes that the sources available to Dtr “were far more extensive and already much more organized than hitherto suspected . . .” (208), yet goes on to give a somewhat intricate history of how all these sources were incorporated into the DtrH. It seems much more plausible to see an ongoing synthesis of Israel’s history as opposed to a later weaving of sources and strands.

a spirit of inquiry into the biblical text that moves beyond the “trees” to view the “forest” as a whole.<sup>4</sup> While micro-analysis is indeed important and vital for the exegete, there is much to commend a macro-analysis of texts, which can include any number of books at one time.

### The State of the Deuteronomistic “Question”

In the beginning was the Deuteronomistic History. It was not *tohu wabohu* but a well ordered creation by one author who had access to Israel’s traditions. We knew not his name, though scoffers say it was Martin Noth. We called him simply “Dtr.” And it was good. But as scholars multiplied on the Deuteronomistic History so did Dtrs. Soon, there arose a great division in the earth. Those in the North—of America—followed Cross while those across the Sea went after Smend. Each faction did what was right in his own eyes, and there was little interaction between them. Then in the 50th year an invitation went out from America saying, “Come, let us celebrate and let us reason together”.<sup>5</sup>

Steven McKenzie’s comment, while humorous, does in fact summarize well the state of DtrH studies as of 1993.<sup>6</sup> Since that

4. So, too, the perspective of Richard D. Nelson, “The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History: The Case is Still Compelling,” *JSOT* 29, no. 3 (2005): 333.

5. Steven L. McKenzie, “The Divided Kingdom in the Deuteronomistic History and in Scholarship on It,” in *The Future of the Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Thomas C. Römer (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000), 135–45, at 135. “Cross” and “Smend” refer to the Hebrew Bible scholars Frank Moore Cross and Rudolf Smend.

6. I do not seek to be comprehensive in this summary, but only to offer a general overview of how the discussion has evolved since Noth’s work. For a detailed treatment of the development of theories since Noth, see the work of Jeremy Hutton, *The Transjordanian Palimpsest: The Overwritten Texts of Personal Exile and Transformation in the Deuteronomistic History*, BZAW 396 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 79–156. Much of the summary and bibliography that follows is based upon Hutton’s work. See also the works of Thomas Römer and Albert de Pury, “Deuteronomistic Historiography (DH): History of Research and Debated Issues,” in *Israel Constructs Its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research*, ed. de Pury, Römer, and Jean-Daniel Macchi, *JSOTSup* 306 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 24–141; and the compendium of essays in Steven L. McKenzie and M. Patrick Graham, eds., *The History of Israel’s Traditions: The Heritage of Martin Noth*, *JSOTSup* 182 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994).

time, a consensus on the authorship, date, purpose, scope, and so forth, of the DtrH is far from being reached. On the contrary, in the survey that follows, Jeffrey Geoghegan's assertion that "The field of Deuteronomistic studies can no longer be characterized as *refining* Noth's original hypothesis, but rather as *reconsidering* it or, in some cases, *rejecting* the whole," indeed sheds light on the true nature of DtrH studies in the first decade of the twenty-first century.<sup>7</sup>

Martin Noth's seminal 1943 work, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* (*The Deuteronomistic History*), set the bar for later scholars when discussing the DtrH in its final form.<sup>8</sup> Noth avers that the books of Deuteronomy through 2 Kings (with the exclusion of the book of Ruth) comprise the DtrH.<sup>9</sup> Noth's basic assertion is that the DtrH was compiled from a variety of earlier extant sources, which may have formed a proto-, albeit segmented, history of Israel.<sup>10</sup> The key to understanding the theology behind these reworked extant sources is the book of the law (i.e., Deut. 4:44–30:20), which Noth links to the law book found by Hilkiah (2 Kgs. 22:8–10). These sources were brought together and edited, in some cases heavily, in the sixth century (c. 550 BCE), perhaps from somewhere within Palestine. Theologically, the Deuteronomist (hereafter Dtr) wrote with an eye

7. Jeffrey C. Geoghegan, *The Time, Place, and Purpose of the Deuteronomistic History: The Evidence of "Until This Day,"* BJS 347 (Providence, RI: Brown University, 2006), 119 (italics original).

8. Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History*, JSOTSup 15 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1981), trans. from Noth's *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, 2d ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1957), 1–110.

9. Not every scholar of Noth's era agreed with his conclusions. For example, see Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction*, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 241–48, esp. 246–47; and Georg Fohrer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, trans. David Green (London: SPCK, 1970), 195. Fohrer asserted that "we have a series of books Deuteronomy—Kings, each composed or edited in a different way." As cited by Gary N. Knoppers, "Is There a Future for the Deuteronomistic History?," in Römer, ed., *Future of the Deuteronomistic History*, 120.

10. Wolfgang Richter, *Die Bearbeitungen des 'Retterbuches' in der deuteronomischen Epoche* (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1964); and idem, *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Richterbuch* (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1963), argued for earlier blocks of history that were later brought into the DtrH by the Deuteronomist.

to explaining the failure of the monarchy, why the nation of Israel had lost the land, and why it found itself in exile. Generally speaking, Noth sees unity in the final form, with the author(s) presenting a clearly focused end goal.<sup>11</sup>

Since then, a number of scholars have proposed theories in an attempt either to explain particular redactional layers of the DtrH in an effort to improve upon Noth's theory or to do away with it totally.<sup>12</sup> While the scope and focus of this work does not allow me to go into a detailed discussion of the many nuanced perspectives proposed for the redaction of the DtrH, what follows will be a general overview of some of the main contributors since Noth.<sup>13</sup> In this vein, Frank Moore Cross, for example, takes issue with Noth's dating of the final form because of what he sees as indications of earlier material. Cross suggests that there is an earlier layer, what he calls Dtr1 (c. 620 BCE), which was written in support of Josiah's reforms and the Davidic monarchy.<sup>14</sup> Cross goes on to suggest that

11. So, too, Knoppers, "Is There a Future," 119. See also idem, *Two Nations under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies*, HSM 53 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1994). Steven L. McKenzie, "The Books of Kings in the Deuteronomistic History," in McKenzie and Graham, eds., *History of Israel's Traditions*, 297, is no doubt correct when he muses, "Although most scholars have accepted only the first half of this proposition, I question whether it is possible to accept the unity of [the] Deuteronomistic History without acknowledging its essential unity of authorship."
12. This, of course, does not negate the numerous works that have been done on the DtrH since Noth not mentioned here. For example, Gerhard von Rad, *Studies in Deuteronomy* (London: SCM, 1953), 74–91; Hans Walter Wolff, "The Kerygma of the Deuteronomistic Historical Work," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Gary N. Knoppers and J. Gordon McConville (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 66; trans. from "Das Kerygma des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerks," *ZAW* 73, no. 2 (1961): 171–86. Some scholars argue against the idea of a DtrH and, rather, in favor of independent books with separate redactional histories. It is these separate histories that account for discrepancies in the text. See for example, Claus Westermann, *Die Geschichtsbücher des Alten Testaments: gab es ein deuteronomistisches Geschichtswerk?* (Gütersloh: Kaiser, 1994); or Artur Weiser, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963), 117–66. These last two as noted by Geoghegan, *Time, Place, and Purpose*, 114–15, and n.76.
13. See, for example, the work of Geoghegan, who lists no fewer than ten categories of scholars who have "improved" or moved away from Noth's theory. Geoghegan, *Time, Place, and Purpose*, 96–118.

Dtr2 (c. 550 BCE) reworked Dtr1 in an effort to explain why the reforms of Josiah had failed to have a lasting effect and why the nation ended up in exile.<sup>15</sup> Cross's work does help to explain why there is a dominant theme of blessing and support for the Davidic kingship, Jerusalem, and the temple, especially in light of the eternal promises of 2 Samuel 7.<sup>16</sup> Cross argues that if, as Noth asserts, the material is exilic in setting, then the stressing of these motifs would be less likely, especially after the dissolution of the monarchy and the destruction of the city and temple.<sup>17</sup> Not surprisingly, more recently there has been a move within scholarship to highlight these positive elements within the DtrH.<sup>18</sup>

Others such as Rudolf Smend Jr. and his protégés, Timo Veijola and Walter Dietrich, have proposed no fewer than three redactional layers.<sup>19</sup> These layers included, beyond the basic DtrH, a "prophetic"

14. Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 274–89. This essay originally appeared as "The Structure of the Deuteronomistic History," in *Perspectives in Jewish Learning*, ed. J. M. Rosenthal, ACJS 3 (Chicago: College of Jewish Studies, 1968), 9–24. Note also the work done by Cross's students: Richard D. Nelson, *The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History*, JSOTSup18 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981); Richard E. Friedman, *The Exile and Biblical Narrative: The Formation of the Deuteronomistic and Priestly Works*, HSM 22 (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1981), esp. 1–43; Baruch Halpern, *The Constitution of the Monarchy in Israel*, HSM 25 (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1981). See also Steven L. McKenzie, *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, HSM 33 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1984). For a critique of the double-redaction (i.e., Dtr2) hypothesis, see Steven L. McKenzie, *The Trouble with Kings: The Composition of the Book of Kings in the Deuteronomistic History*, VTSup 42 (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 135–45. McKenzie (149–50) opts for a Josianic date for the DtrH with minor revisions at a later date.
15. For a critique of Cross's perspective, see J. Gordon McConville, "Narrative and Meaning in the Books of Kings," *Bib* 70, no. 1 (1989): 31–49.
16. Cf., for example, 2 Sam. 7:8–17; 1 Kgs. 2:4; 8:20, 25; 11:13, 32, 36; 15:4; 2 Kgs. 8:19, as cited by Hutton, *Transjordanian Palimpsest*, 93.
17. For more on the problems with this motif, see Wolff, "Kerygma," 62–78.
18. See, for example, Victor Hamilton, *Handbook on the Pentateuch*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 376, and those listed there.
19. Rudolf Smend, "The Law and the Nations: A Contribution to Deuteronomistic Tradition History," in Knoppers and McKenzie, eds., *Reconsidering Israel and Judah*, 95–110; for the German original, see idem, "Das Gesetz und die Völker: Ein Beitrag zur deuteronomistischen Redaktionsgeschichte," in *Probleme biblischer Theologie: Festschrift Gerhard von Rad zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Hans Walter Wolff (Munich: Kaiser, 1971), 494–509; Timo Veijola, *Historiographie: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, AASF B/198 (Helsinki: Suomalainen

strand (DtrP, as per Veijola and Dietrich) and a strand focused on the law called the “nomistic” layer (DtrN, proposed by Smend)—the prophetic layer coming at a slightly earlier period than DtrN, c. 580–560 BCE.<sup>20</sup> Thomas Römer’s caution here is important to bear in mind: “This approach risks inflating the number of redactional layers (and sigla), whose precise extent no one has yet defined in the deuteronomistic work; and the descriptions of certain ‘layers’ often appear quite arbitrary.”<sup>21</sup> Moreover, Chaim Rabin has made a strong case for observable differences between prophetic speech in the DtrH from earlier periods exemplified by Moses, Nathan, Elijah, and Elisha, and the period of the classical prophets (e.g., Hosea and Amos). For example, the “Old Rhetoric” that appears in Moses’ and Elijah’s speeches is devoid of parallelism, which is characteristic of the later classical prophetic utterances.<sup>22</sup>

Another perspective that has been put forward is one that sees even earlier materials, which can be dated to the period of Hezekiah and before.<sup>23</sup> Those holding this perspective posit a varying number of

Tiede-akatemia, 1977); idem, *Die ewige Dynastie: David und die Entstehung seiner Dynastie nach der deuteronomistischen Darstellung*, AASF B/193 (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiede-akatemia, 1975); and Walter Dietrich, *Prophetie und Geschichte: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk*, FRLANT 108 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1972). These last three sources as noted by Hutton, *Transjordanian Palimpsest*, 94–101 esp. n.63.

20. Hutton, *Transjordanian Palimpsest*, 96. See also the work of Nelson, “Double Redaction,” 319–37.
21. Thomas Römer, “Deuteronomy in Search of Origins,” in Knoppers and McConville, eds., *Reconsidering Israel and Judah*, 116. See further, idem, “The Book of Deuteronomy,” in McKenzie and Graham, eds., *History of Israel’s Traditions*, 178–212. For a concise critique of the “Smend school,” see Gary Knoppers, *Two Nations under God: The Reign of Solomon and the Rise of Jeroboam*, HSM 52 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1993), 38–42.
22. Chaim Rabin, “Discourse Analysis and the Dating of Deuteronomy,” in *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honour of E. I. J. Rosenthal*, ed. J. A. Emerton and Stefan C. Reif (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 176–77.
23. For example, those who see an earlier strand dating to the period of Hezekiah include Norbert Lohfink, “Culture Shock and Theology,” *BTB* 7, no. 1 (1977): 12–22, esp. 13; Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1–11*, AB 5 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 44–54; Ronald E. Clements, “Jeremiah 1–25 and the Deuteronomistic History,” in *Understanding Poets and Prophets: Essays in Honour of George Wishart Anderson*, ed. A. Graeme Auld, JSOTSup 152 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic

sources, which were at the disposal of the final Dtr. Helga Weippert, Baruch Halpern, Iain Provan, and Andrew D. H. Mayes offer varying perspectives of this theory.<sup>24</sup> One of the basic premises is that 2 Kgs. 18:5 points to a culmination of an earlier version of the DtrH composed in Hezekiah's day. The text reads, "He [Hezekiah] trusted in YHWH the God of Israel and after him there has not been one like him among all the kings of Judah or among those who lived before him." I will address this concept in more detail in chapter 10 below.

Another theory which in some ways reflects the thesis I am proposing is the idea that the DtrH was the product of a "school" or "circle" of scribes over a period of time. The main proponents of this line of inquiry include Ernest Nicholson, Moshe Weinfeld, and Raymond F. Person.<sup>25</sup> Now, to be sure, the major differences between the variations of this proposed theory and what I am presenting in this work are the dating, motives, location of this "school," and the scope of their works. Nevertheless, the position that

Press, 1993), 108; F. García López, *Le Deutéronome: Une Loi prêchée*, CaE 63 (Paris: Cerf, 1988), 9–13, esp. 10.

24. See Helga Weippert, "Die 'deuteronomistischen' Beurteilungen der Könige von Israel und Juda und das Problem der Redaktion der Königsbücher," *Bib* 53, no. 3 (1972): 301–39; idem, "Die Ätiologie des Nordreiches und seines Königshauses (I Reg 11 29–40)," *ZAW* 95, no. 3 (1983): 344–75; Baruch Halpern, "Sacred History and Ideology: Chronicles' Thematic Structure—Indications of an Earlier Source," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature: Composition and Redaction of the Biblical Text*, ed. Richard E. Friedman, NES 22 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 35–54, esp. 54; Baruch Halpern and D. S. Vanderhoof, "The Editions of Kings in the 7th–6th Centuries B.C.E.," *HUCA* 62 (1991): 179–244, esp. 182, 239; Iain Provan, *Hezekiah and the Books of Kings: A Contribution to the Debate about the Composition of the Deuteronomistic History*, BZAW 172 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988); A. D. H. Mayes, *The Story of Israel Between Settlement and Exile: A Redactional Study of the Deuteronomistic History* (London: SCM, 1983). Cf. also comments by Geoghegan, *Time, Place, and Purpose*, 105–108.
25. Ernest W. Nicholson, *Deuteronomy and Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), esp. 123–24; Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 7–9, esp. 9; and Raymond F. Person Jr., *The Deuteronomistic School: History, Social Setting, and Literature*, SBLStB 2 (Atlanta: SBL, 2002), 7. Person sees this group at work in the exilic or Persian periods. On these works, see the comments by Geoghegan, *Time, Place, and Purpose*, 108–109; and Römer, "Deuteronomy in Search of Origins," 117. Even though my dating would be vastly different, even Smend concluded that there must have been a "school" of sorts that existed for generations. Cf. Rudolf Smend, *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1978).



the DtrH was the product of an amalgamation of works over time has much to commend it and, in all reality, appears to make the most sense of the biblical material as we have it.

Now, while all of these theories have been met with varying degrees of acceptance and/or rejection, there may be a more simplistic answer as to why, for example, prophetic and nomistic aspects find expression in the DtrH. If my proposal is correct, the priestly line of Abiathar and especially Jeremiah would have been extremely interested in both of these facets as the history of Israel was being brought together and reworked.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, what has tended to be the case since Noth's theory was proposed, especially as of late, is a desire to know how much of Dtr1 may be attributed to the earlier period and what that strand may have looked like.<sup>27</sup> It is precisely in response to such queries that I move the discussion forward and propose a theory of what this earlier strand may have entailed, at least coming from the hands of those at Anathoth.<sup>28</sup>

Closely connected to this discussion is the problem of identifying, specifically, the individual(s) responsible for writing the DtrH. Robert Wilson notes that in a not-so-distant period most scholars accepted a narrowly focused corpus of Dtr influence. He avers,

Traditionally scholars have seen the hand of the Deuteronomists in an impressive amount of biblical literature, but their influence was still confined to a relatively small portion of the biblical corpus. They were responsible for Deuteronomy, of course, and for most of the so-called Deuteronomistic History—Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings.

26. So, too, the conclusion of Geoghegan, *Time, Place, and Purpose*, 139, 152–53. I will deal with this in more detail in subsequent chapters. P. Kyle McCarter, *I Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction: Notes and Commentary*, AB 8 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980), 18–23; idem, *II Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction: Notes and Commentary*, AB 9 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 7–8; and Campbell, *Of Prophets and Kings*, offer variations of the prophetic redaction of the DtrH.

27. Hutton, *Transjordanian Palimpsest*, 94.

28. See Baruch Halpern, "Shiloh," *ABD* 5:1213–15, for connections between Shiloh, Anathoth, and the DtrH.

Outside of these obviously Deuteronomistic books, the Deuteronomists were usually thought to be responsible primarily for the non-narrative prose in Jeremiah, for Isaiah 36–39 (paralleled almost verbatim in 2 Kgs 18–20), and for small units in Amos and Hosea.<sup>29</sup>

Unfortunately, within OT studies, authorship attributed to the nebulous, and all-pervasive, Deuteronomists has reached a level of incredulity. When faced with the need for a new dissertation, book, or paper topic, scholars cast a suspicious eye to almost any book of the OT and, in an accusatory tone, deconstruct traditional authorship attributions, often propounding later authorship to these ever-elusive Deuteronomists. As of 1999, Wilson summed up this “pan-Deuteronomism” madness by noting,

Modern Pentateuchal studies seem to find the Deuteronomists represented in most of the books of the Torah, and some scholars have even gone so far as to suggest that the Deuteronomists were in fact the compilers, if not the authors, of the Torah as we now have it. In the Deuteronomistic History itself the Deuteronomists are being given credit for creating most of their material out of whole cloth, and, in some extreme circles, they are being credited with shaping virtually all of the prophetic books, not to mention a number of the Psalms. Indeed, even a casual reading of recent scholarly literature suggests that we are rapidly entering an era of pan-Deuteronomism. Whenever the authorship of a particular piece of biblical literature is investigated, the identity of the author(s) always turns out to be the same: the Deuteronomists.<sup>30</sup>

29. Robert R. Wilson, “Who Was the Deuteronomist? (Who Was Not the Deuteronomist?): Reflections on Pan-Deuteronomism,” in *Those Elusive Deuteronomists: The Phenomenon of Pan-Deuteronomism*, ed. Linda S. Schearing and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 268 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 68. Wilson notes the work of Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jeremia*, KHC 11 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1901).

30. Wilson, “Who Was the Deuteronomist?” 68. Wilson notes the influential work of Lothar Perlitt, *Bundestheologie im Alien Testament*, WMANT 36 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1969), as key in opening the floodgates for theories of Deuteronomistic influence on the Torah. He goes on to cite H. H. Schmid’s book, *Der sogenannte Jahwist: Beobachtungen und Fragen zur Pentateuchforschung* (Zurich: Theologischer, 1976) as one example of this extreme. See, further, his short bibliography on advancements of Schmid’s theory in Wilson’s article on p. 70 nn.4–6. In the discussion that follows, I will be relying heavily on Wilson’s brief, but concise,

Of course, the main problem with most of these theories is that they place the dating of the Deuteronomists, almost exclusively, in the Josianic period or later. Little room is left for the possibility of earlier writings with only minor editing at a later period. To be fair, at least Noth, and many from his era, were willing to see older sources in the DtrH (e.g., The Deuteronomic Law Code: Deuteronomy 12–26; The Ark Narrative: 1 Samuel 4–6; The History of David’s Rise: 1 Samuel 15—2 Samuel 8; and Solomon’s Succession Narrative: 2 Samuel 9–20; 1 Kings 1–2).<sup>31</sup> Indeed, one can look to the text itself and find references to what Wilson calls, “a sort of scholarly reference for the reader,” which reflects extant sources used by the author(s) of the DtrH.<sup>32</sup> These sources include, for example, the book of Jashar (Josh. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18), the book of the Acts of Solomon (1 Kgs. 11:41);<sup>33</sup> and the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel (1 Kgs. 14:19; 15:31; 16:5, 14, 20; 16:27; 22:39; 2 Kgs. 1:18; 10:34; 13:8, 12; 14:15, 28; 15:11, 15, 21, 26, 31); and Judah (1 Kgs. 14:29; 15:7, 23; 22:45; 2 Kgs. 8:23; 12:19; 14:18; 15:6, 36; 16:19; 20:20;

analysis of the state of the problem. In the past decade, not much has changed in rectifying the pan-Deuteronomism prevalent throughout OT scholarship. See, for example, the discussion by Thomas Römer, “L’école deutéronomiste et la formation de la Bible hébraïque,” in idem, ed., *Future of the Deuteronomistic History*, 179–93; and the final footnote of P. Kyle McCarter in “The Books of Samuel,” in McKenzie and Graham, eds., *History of Israel’s Traditions*, 280. See also cautions by Rob Barrett, “The Book of Deuteronomy,” in *A Theological Introduction to the Pentateuch: Interpreting the Torah as Christian Scripture*, ed. Richard S. Briggs and Joel N. Lohr (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 148–50; and Richard Coggins, “What Does ‘Deuteronomistic’ Mean?” in Scheering and McKenzie, eds., *Those Elusive Deuteronomists*, 22–23. For a rebuttal of Coggins and a defense of “pan-Deuteronomism” as a concept, see Person, *Deuteronomistic School*, 13–16.

31. This list appears in Marsha White, “‘The History of Saul’s Rise’: Saulide State Propaganda in 1 Samuel 1–14,” in Olyan and Culley, eds., *‘A Wise and Discerning Mind’,* 271–92, at 272.
32. Wilson, “Who Was the Deuteronomist?” 72. See also the list of possible blocks of material that served as sources for Dtr in Douglas A. Knight, “Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomists,” in *Old Testament Interpretation Past, Present, and Future: Essays in Honour of Gene M. Tucker*, ed. James Luther Mays, David L. Petersen, and Kent Harold Richards (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 61–79, at 66–67.
33. The Chronicler adds the following to the sources for the period of Solomon and Rehoboam: the records/prophesies of Nathan, Ahijah, Shemaiah, Iddo the seer (cf. 2 Chr. 9:29; 12:15). He also notes the acts of Abijah, the son of Rehoboam, which were recorded by Iddo (2 Chr. 13:22).

21:17, 25; 23:28; 24:5). On a side note, one could easily argue, as I do below, that the earliest “Deuteronomist” may have been someone much earlier than the sixth century, especially in light of the absence of the book of Jashar after 2 Sam. 1:18. This source was extant at the time of the early monarchy but appears to have been lost by the time of the recording of the book of Kings.

Next, within the last thirty years or so, attempts have been made to push the theory that the entire history of Israel was either written in the postexilic period or that good portions of it are nothing more than a fabrication, which were authored predominantly by one person.<sup>34</sup> In the former case, Brian Peckham argues for a postexilic writing of the DtrH whereby “Dtr2” (Peckham’s designation) had at his disposal sources (in this order “J,” “Dtr1,” “P,” “E”), which had been compiled over generations and commented on along the way.<sup>35</sup> For Peckham, the writing of Israel’s history was one that took place over centuries with each subsequent author/editor reworking that history so as to make earlier layers undetectable.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, John Van Seters postulates that the bulk of the DtrH was written in the exilic or postexilic period to offer the nation of Israel hope in the midst of suffering an ignominious exile—a people without a past, unlike, for example, the Greeks.<sup>37</sup> In this regard, Steven L.

34. Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 84, asserts that Dtr was not interested in “fabricating the history of the Israelite people.”

35. Brian Peckham, *The Composition of the Deuteronomistic History*, HSM 35 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1985), 1, 73. Peckham’s model in ways parallels what I am proposing here, although he would not date the larger blocks of material as early as I do.

36. So McKenzie, *Trouble with Kings*, 16.

37. John Van Seters, *In the Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983) and idem, *The Biblical Saga of King David* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009). So, too, Wilson, “Who Was the Deuteronomist?” 72. For a concise example of Van Seters’s methodological approach to the text, see idem, “The Deuteronomistic History: Can It Avoid Death by Redaction?,” in Römer, ed., *Future of the Deuteronomistic History*, 213–22. For a concise, but accurate, critique of Van Seters’s methodology, see Robert Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History Part II: 1 Samuel* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 13–17; or Tomoo Ishida, “Adonijah the Son of Haggith and His Supporters: An Inquiry into Problems

McKenzie's query concerning the postexilic theory, while not profound, does bear weight on the discussion. He posits, *If Dtr wrote in the postexilic period, why does the history stop where it does c. 560 BCE?*<sup>38</sup>

Recently, Kurt L. Noll has proposed that Noth's theory of a sixth-century Dtr should be abandoned totally for a much later text and compilation in the Persian or Greek period.<sup>39</sup> Elsewhere, Noll goes on to propound, "The notion that the Former Prophets add up either to an interpretation of the past or to a coherent theological message derives from a mistake. It derives from the Bible's 2,000-year status as a revealed 'Word of God,' an artificial status that has nothing to do with the text but has nevertheless motivated religious readers to find history or theology, or both, where none exists."<sup>40</sup> Holding variations of this type of thinking are scholars such as Philip R. Davies, Niels P. Lemche, and Thomas L. Thompson.<sup>41</sup> In most cases, those proposing minimalistic theories decry the long-running scholarly "marriage"

about History and Historiography," in *The Future of Biblical Studies—The Hebrew Scriptures*, ed. Richard E. Friedman and H. G. M. Williamson (Atlanta: Scholars, 1987), 167–68.

38. McKenzie, "The Books of Kings," 303.

39. Kurt L. Noll, "Deuteronomistic History or Deuteronomic Debate? (A Thought Experiment)," *JSOT* 31, no. 3 (2007): 316. See also competing comments by Walter Dietrich, "Martin Noth and the Future of the Deuteronomistic History," in McKenzie and Graham, eds., *History of Israel's Traditions*, 159. Here Dietrich rightly notes, "Even before Chronicles, the language and thought of the Persian period as a whole represents a *terminus ad quem* for the Deuteronomistic historical writing."

40. Kurt L. Noll, "Presumptuous Prophets Participating in a Deuteronomic Debate," in *Prophets, Prophecy, and Ancient Israelite Historiography*, ed. Mark J. Boda and Lissa M. Wray Beal (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 125–42, at 142.

41. Cf. Philip R. Davies, *In Search of "Ancient History,"* JSOTSup 148 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1992), 57–71, esp. 57, 155; Niels Peter Lemche, *The Israelites in History and Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 65–85, 163–67; idem, "The Old Testament—A Hellenistic Book?" *SJOT* 7, no. 2 (1993): 163–93; Thomas Thompson, *The Early History of the Israelite People: From the Written and Archaeological Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 127. In his essay in "tribute" to the work of Martin Noth at fifty years, Thompson gives a scathing critique of Noth's theory and the work of biblical archaeologists while praising the work of Lemche, Heike Friis, Van Seters, and himself. Cf. idem, "Martin Noth and the History of Israel," in McKenzie and Graham, eds., *History of Israel's Traditions*, 81–90, esp. 81–83. One can sense the jaded perspective of the author on page 82 n.2.

between archaeological findings/historical realities and the biblical perspective—a “marriage” they see as needing a “divorce.”<sup>42</sup> Of course, these extreme positions force the assumption that virtually nothing from the Bible prior to the postexilic period has any historical value—a position that is untenable for many DtrH scholars.

### Deuteronomistic Language and Style

Another major hurdle facing DtrH studies has been the discussion of what actually makes something “Deuteronomistic.” Wilson rightly points out that the pervasive problem within DtrH studies is that there really is no consensus in this regard, perhaps with the exception of language.<sup>43</sup> And even here, the criteria for determining what writing style and language peculiarities conclusively demonstrate Deuteronomistic style is questioned.<sup>44</sup> On this, Dietrich avers, “Their

42. The subjective nature of archaeological interpretation in relationship to the Bible cannot be overstated. Having worked in the field of archaeology for several seasons, I am all too familiar with the subjectivity that often accompanies the interpretation of the data collected. If one approaches the data with presuppositions hostile to the Bible as “history” or vice versa, two completely different perspectives can emerge. Of course, few would admit that they are “hostile” toward the Bible because, in their opinion, it is not “history” to begin with. Thus, a circular argument develops. For them, archaeology is “scientific,” whereas the Bible is “myth.” When archaeology appears to compliment the Bible, it is either a mere coincidence or the data is interpreted in such a way to prove the Bible “wrong” and to perpetuate their own theories. This is exemplified in the somewhat recent discovery of the Tel Dan Stele in 1993. When faced with the presence of the “house of David” inscribed in stone, a segment of scholarship, which holds that David either did not exist or was a petty chieftain, argued that the text should be interpreted as the “house of the beloved” or of a god, or “uncle,” or “kettle,” etc. This interpretation, of course, flies in the face of the actual military context of the stele. Cf., for example, Lemche, *Israelites in History and Tradition*, 38–43; Philip R. Davies, “House of David’ Built on Sand,” *BAR* 20, no. 4 (July/August 1994): 54–55; Frederick H. Cryer, “On the Recently-discovered ‘House of David’ Inscription,” *SJOT* 8, no. 1 (1994): 3–19, esp. 14–15. For a scathing refutation of these claims, see Baruch Halpern, “Erasing History: The Minimalist Assault on Ancient Israel,” *BRev* 11, no. 6 (1995): 26–35, 47, esp. 35.

43. Wilson, “Who Was the Deuteronomist?” 78–79. See, too, Römer, “Deuteronomy in Search of Origins,” 116 and n.17. For a comprehensive listing of proposed Dtr language, see Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomist School*, 320–65.

44. Wilson, “Who Was the Deuteronomist?” 79; idem, “Unity and Diversity,” 303; and J. Gordon McConville, “The Old Testament Historical Books in Modern Scholarship,” in *Them* 22, no. 3 (1997): 3–13, esp. 6.

[Dtrs'] vocabulary may have been much richer than has generally—and somewhat condescendingly—been conceded. They could speak the language of others, specifically that of their sources. In fact, given that they reproduced these sources, was it not ultimately necessary for them to adopt the language (and the thought) contained in them?"<sup>45</sup> Here I must wholeheartedly agree with Dietrich's assumption. As a matter of fact, as I move forward with my evaluation of the DtrH and the language and rhetoric of Dtr, in many places I will appeal to specific phrases that seem to reflect a particular period. However, in doing this, I do try to remain open to the number of possibilities for when and who may have used such language. It is only when I can clearly isolate a term or a phrase to a given period and author that conclusions will be drawn.

Closely related to the identification of what makes something Deuteronomistic is the theology of Dtr. In this regard, Noll correctly asks, "[I]s this writer pro- or antimonarchic, does this writer hope for restoration or acknowledge an utter end to the covenant, is the writer monolatrous or monotheistic, does the writer handle prophetic and nomistic concerns or are these later additions, etc.?"<sup>46</sup> As for linguistic concerns, Wilson avers that if more was known of biblical-era Hebrew then perhaps we could understand the writing style of a given period. At this juncture, I must offer a word of caution. Dtr does not have a monopoly on "Deuteronomistic" language per se. Other ancient Near Eastern (hereafter ANE) texts share similar themes.<sup>47</sup> For example, the Moabite Stele from the mid-ninth century BCE, which was discovered in 1868, has many "Deuteronomistic" themes written in ancient Moabite!<sup>48</sup> Will the pan-Deuteronomists

45. Dietrich, "Martin Noth," 161.

46. Noll, "Deuteronomistic History," 317. Cf. also Dietrich, "Martin Noth," 167.

47. So, too, Hamilton, *Handbook*, 377.

48. These themes include: losing the land to your enemy (here Israel) because you angered your god (here Chemosh); one's god having mercy on the land and his people; and the idea of

argue that the Deuteronomists wrote this text as well? Furthermore, in some cases many of these ANE texts predate the traditionally “accepted” date of the DtrH by centuries. Are we to assume that Dtr could only introduce these ideas at such a late date?<sup>49</sup> Of course, if one is honest, the answer must be a resounding “No!” In this vein, Wilson correctly notes the tenuousness of asserting Deuteronomistic links between texts by appealing only to tangential connections to motifs and themes of retribution and prophetic interests—something in which any author from almost any period could have been interested.<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, there is the problem of dating the material (either early or late), which compounds the problem of identifying an author(s). When did these authors first begin their writing? Was it during David’s, Hezekiah’s, or Josiah’s period—or later? Is the final form entirely exilic or postexilic, or are there clear indications of earlier compiling? Again, Wilson warns, “it is always necessary to keep open the possibility that all of these suggestions may be correct and that the Deuteronomists were active over a long period of time ...”<sup>51</sup>

Now, to be sure, I can appreciate the borderline fatalistic perspective of Wilson when he opines that perhaps one should cease speaking in terms of Deuteronomistic influence because “the concept of Deuteronomism has become so amorphous that it no longer has

kherem. See also comments by Alexander Rofé, “Ephraimite Versus Deuteronomistic History,” in Knoppers and McConville, ed., *Reconsidering Israel and Judah*, 471.

49. Hamilton, *Handbook*, 377. Noll, “Deuteronomistic History,” 317, posits, “If words and phrases that are identical to passages of Deuteronomy do not seem to affirm a Deuteronomistic worldview, these words and phrases are not necessarily deuteronomistic. Likewise, when we encounter words and phrases that parallel Deuteronomy, but we are not able to demonstrate the direction of influence, the passages are, once again, not necessarily Deuteronomistic.” While Noll’s assertion is in support of a much later date for much of the DtrH, he is still nonetheless correct in his assessment concerning the ambiguity on the direction of influence.

50. Wilson, “Who Was the Deuteronomist?” 80.

51. *Ibid.*, 81.



any analytical precision and so ought to be abandoned.”<sup>52</sup> However, while Wilson may not be ready to make such a leap, it is possible that many scholars are in just such a place. It is for this reason that I insist that it may be best to view this material from the perspective of having historical and rhetorical value for a given *earlier* period. It was only later that this history was reworked for secondary purposes. Of course, it is indeed possible that Dtr simply sought to preserve Israel’s fragile history in a foreign land—a history that could easily be lost in a generation or two once Israel was removed from its homeland. Nevertheless, who would have had motive and opportunity even to begin the process of recording the earliest sources/history? It is to this I now turn as I consider the authors from the city of Anathoth.

### The Priestly Authors from Anathoth

The evidence . . . strongly suggests that Dtr was a Levite or, at a minimum, sought to represent the interests of the Levites. . . . The repeated use of “until this day” with reference to the rights and responsibilities of the Levites demonstrates that they were much more than an antiquarian interest for Dtr, or a faction he had to accommodate when compiling his history. Rather, the “Levitical priests,” as Dtr makes plain in redactional material accompanying our phrase, played a central role in many of Israel’s past success and held the key—quite literally in the “torah of Moses”—to Israel’s future success.<sup>53</sup>

These poignant words by Jeffrey Geoghegan make it clear that the priests were more than an afterthought in the mind of Dtr. Indeed, Geoghegan rightly goes on to conclude that Dtr was from the tribe of Levi!<sup>54</sup> Of course, for Geoghegan, Dtr was from a much later

52. *Ibid.*, 82.

53. Geoghegan, *Time, Place, and Purpose*, 138, 148.

54. *Ibid.*, 149. Gerhard von Rad also posited this theory for the book of Deuteronomy in *Studies in Deuteronomy*, 66–69. Richard D. Nelson, “The Role of the Priesthood in the Deuteronomistic History,” in Knoppers and Gordon, eds., *Reconsidering Israel and Judah*, 191–93, is incorrect in his assessment that because priests appear as secondary “redactional tools” then the Dtr was not interested in them. Are we to conclude that if the author was a priest he would only focus