the Elide writer and the Zadokite writer differ substantially from the style and interests of the Priestly writers of the Pentateuch. This important observation calls for extensive explanation. The authors doubt the existence of a prophetic redaction of Samuel, because the book is preeminently concerned with rise of kingship. The same concern with kingship could raise questions, however, about the hypothesis of priestly redactions. It is unclear why authors (the Elide and Zadokite writers) associated with particular cults do not evince more of a sustained interest in priesthood, rituals, or sacrifice. The lack of any indices or charts summarizing the strands that the authors discern in Samuel complicates the attempt to reconstruct precisely which texts are to be assigned to the three principal writers.

If the introduction (19 pp.) to this lengthy commentary is too brief, the commentary on individual chapters of Samuel is comprehensive. The discussions of philological and thematic issues are generally well-informed and lucid. The authors' careful attention to details in the MT is commendable. By making copious references to secondary treatments, Caquot and de Robert provide readers with a clear sense of critical issues and acquaintance with the work of a wide variety of modern scholars. The authors also conveniently provide overviews of the history of Jewish and Christian interpretation. Hence, even if one disagrees with the authors' approach, one can learn much from their work. Those who wish to gain a sound acquaintance with the current state of critical scholarship on Samuel can do no better than to consult this volume.

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Knoppers here completes his detailed study of selected kings at the beginning and end of the monarchy—Solomon, Jeroboam, and Josiah—and furthers the case for a pre-exilic edition of the Deuteronomistic History (Dtr). Volume 1 was reviewed in JBL 114 (1995) 302–4.

According to Dtr, the division of the kingdom conformed to the divine will, but Jeroboam subverted the arrangement by which Israel was to be politically, but not cultically, detached from Judah. Jeroboam's cultic initiatives, in this view, perpetuated Aaron's apostasy and fostered a cult that was "un-Israelite." 1 Kings 13 spells out the prospects for the new cult and makes the Bethel cultus the object of divine concern even after the Assyrian capture of Samaria. Both from 1 Kings 14 and from the supplement in 3 Reigns we learn about the impact that Jeroboam's cultic sins had on the kingdom itself. What the Davidic promises accomplish positively for Judah in Dtr, the decrees against Jeroboam accomplish negatively for Israel. Jeroboam's commitment to the state cult brings about a precipitous reversal in the prospects for his dynasty and kingdom.

Knoppers argues that Dtr employs a quasi-antimonaarchical law code (Deuteronomy) to authorize massive royal reforms by Josiah. Thus the story of the finding of the torah is used to justify Josiah's intrusion into the religious affairs of the people. While
Dtr is credited by Knoppers with the vast majority of the text of Kings, he proposes that the first oracle of Huldah was created in the exile and the second oracle was substantially edited then. His reconstructed, preexilic version of Huldah’s oracle confirmed danger to Judah but encouraged Josiah to make amends. Whoever modified these oracles—Knoppers doubts it was Dtr2—ran the risk of making Josiah’s obedience ineffectual and turning Huldah’s original oracle into a mockery. In the present, secondary text, Josiah has become a model of repentance. From the perspective of the Josianic Deuteronomist, Josiah’s reforms distinguish him from all preceding monarchs. From the perspective of the later editor, Josiah’s “obsequiousness” (I find this noun too pejorative) defines his merit. Josiah did not enshrine Urdeuteronomium, in spite of Dtr’s assertion that he does so. Rather, the historian has erased the restraints placed on kings by Deuteronomy 17. Josiah’s reign represents more the triumph of deuteronomistic ideology than the triumph of Deuteronomy itself.

1 Kings 13 offers an apologia for Josiah’s reforms. These reforms are the answer to the problems that led to the disruption of the united kingdom, the demise of Israel, and the decline of Judah. Josiah’s reforms are definitive because they assail the institutional foundations of prohibited cult practices, and they place him in a good position to lay claim to the heritage of the united kingdom. Josiah’s northern reforms cancel the unrequited sins of the northern monarchy, and his abolition of the Bethel cultus reestablishes Jerusalem’s exclusive status. In the light of probable objections to Josiah’s actions, Dtr makes a literary effort to convince disparate constituencies of the need for reform.

Dtr’s preoccupation with the early northern kingdom (1 Kings 12–14) and with the ways in which Josiah righted its wrongs would be highly surprising, according to Knoppers, if the history had been written during the Babylonian exile. After 722 BCE, the nation of Israel was finished, but its people, land, and cult were not. Note the priest sent to Bethel by the Assyrians. Dtr expected all kings to support the Jerusalem cultus, and he viewed massive royal intervention as the best means to address heteropraxis. The powers of Davidic kingship are intrinsic to the solution.

As in volume 1, Knoppers employs a wide variety of critical methodologies and gives particularly strong attention to textual criticism. His selection of Solomon, Jeroboam, and Josiah as critical to understanding Dtr is astute and effective, and he makes a plausible, if not quite necessary, case for the Josianic date of Dtr1. Those who favor an exilic or later date are not likely, in my judgment, to be convinced by his arguments. He argues, for example, that it would make little sense to deride Jeroboam’s bull iconography, priesthood, sanctuaries, pilgrimage, and festival in the aftermath of 586. Others, however, do find sense in that post-586 date, contending that Jeroboam’s sins were continued and echoed by southern monarchs from the beginning to the end. The “sense” argument is also used against the idea of a later editor concocting the torah scroll story since it makes more sense to use that story to undergird the authority of a relatively new system of laws (pp. 137–38). At times he needs to provide more details for his argument and demonstrate the direction of influence, as when he asserts that the frequency of parallels between Huldah’s oracles and Jeremiah points to a reworking of Huldah’s message that was substantial and not merely glossing (p. 148). When he states that Sinai and Zion are not in opposition, the historian would surely at least have preferred the word Horeb. To fit Dtr1 between 622 and 609 assumes that Josiah had to justify himself and his intervention into northern affairs and appeal to Judahites and the inhabitants of the
northern kingdom to rally behind him. Was the post-722 cult at Bethel really a threat to the Jerusalem temple? The frequent appeal to Žeidel’s law (the literary technique of inverting a quotation) in making literary-critical judgments seems not to be documented in this volume.

The narrative argument moves well, though it would have been aided by editing here and there. He uses “evinces” much too often, especially in the expression “evinces logic.” Is Yahweh’s word really “indefatigable” (p. 61)? The “semipternal” promises to David (p. 235) are better described as “everlasting.”

At the end of these two volumes, readers have absorbed a massive description of what the Deuteronomistic Historian might have been up to if he in fact wrote during the last decade of Josiah’s life. I fear, however, that we are not much closer to a definitive argument for a preexilic edition.

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Specialists in wisdom literature of the ancient Near East have made huge strides during the last three decades, but progress toward recovering the social-historical context in Israel has lagged behind other interests such as literary conventions and religious themes. Who composed the proverbial sayings, the book of Job, and the reflections of Qoheleth? In what setting did these unknown authors carry out their daily tasks? For whom did they gather together the wisdom corpus? Did all of them, composers and targeted audience alike, belong to an elite segment of society? Did they have any relationship with a royal court?

Washington’s Ph.D. dissertation, completed at Princeton Theological Seminary under the direction of C. Leong Seow, addresses this vexing problem of social setting by posing a test case: the social-historical worlds of the Instruction of Amenemope and the section in Prov 22:17–24:22 that it influenced in quite specific ways. His conclusion, that the biblical defense of the poor, a reversal of the dominant tendency to blame the victim, derives from the Egyptian Instruction, overlooks far too many alternative sources for this social ethic. Surely, prophetic voices in ancient Israel did not fall entirely on deaf ears, nor did royal ideology, according to which kings were obligated to champion the cause of the marginalized citizens of their realm. The thesis that “blame the poor” arose in the Hebrew village is not borne out by Claus Westermann’s penetrating analysis of the book of Proverbs (Wurzeln der Weisheit [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990]), nor does R. N. Whybray detect evidence of such cruel deductions in these sayings (Wealth and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs [JSOT 99; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990]).

The real value of Washington’s investigation lies elsewhere—in illuminating the social situations behind the two texts being compared. To clarify the context for Amenemope, he selects the scribal community of Deir el-Medina, where literacy was live-