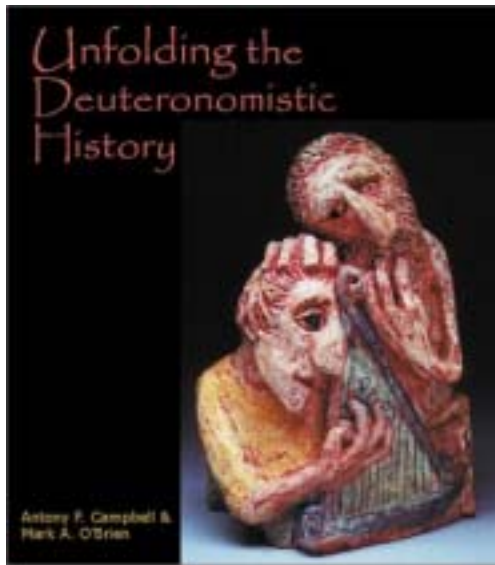


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**Campbell, Antony F., and Mark A. O'Brien**

*Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History: Origins, Upgrades, Present Text*

Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2000.  
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Ralph W. Klein  
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago  
Chicago, IL 60615

In the nearly sixty years since the publication of Martin Noth's classic study of the Deuteronomistic History (DH), that hypothesis has become ever more complicated and contested. Hence our joy at this publication. This book offers students a chance to see the DH at a glance in a virtually unchanged printing of the NRSV; members of the guild may lament the lack of a Hebrew version of this work and a lack of significant attention to the LXX or the manuscripts from Qumran.

Noth's proposal has never been without its critics, in whole or in part, and in these postmodern times we hope in vain for the "assured results" of biblical criticism. There clearly is no present consensus on the DH, so this book is really only a handbook to the reconstruction of that history by Campbell and O'Brien rather than a handbook to *the* DH.

The vast majority of scholars subscribe to the idea of some kind of DH, though there are notable exceptions: Graeme Auld, Ernst Axel Knauff, Claus Westermann, and others. While there is much on which most scholars working with this hypothesis agree on about the DH, there are the following major differences:

- Whether the DH was composed in preexilic times, at the time of Josiah (Cross, Nelson, Provan, Knoppers), or first in the exile (Noth, Smend and the Göttingen school, and now recently McKenzie; I also place myself in the latter number). In a sense Campbell and O'Brien embrace—and modify—both the Cross and the Smend proposals.
- Among those who identify Josianic and exilic editions, there is disagreement about whether the post-Josianic additions were relatively minor (Cross, Nelson) or major, as in the volume under review and in the works of Levenson, Boling, Peckham, and Mayes.
- Whether there was a pre-DH document called the Prophetic Record, extending from 1 Sam 1 to 2 Kgs 10 and containing all the passages listed in columns I and II on my chart dealing with their assignment of the materials of 1 and 2 Samuel to various strata (available on my website: <http://www.geocities.com/ralphklein2001> [under Deuteronomistic History]; variations of this hypothesis can be found in Birch and McCarter), or whether the pre-DH documents consisted only of such pieces as the Ark Narrative, the History of David's Rise, and the Succession Narrative (Noth, many others).
- Whether the Deuteronomistic editing was minimal in the books of Samuel, as in Campbell-O'Brien (see my chart), or sizeable, as in Dietrich and Veijola. There are only four verses in 1 Samuel and parts of nine verses in 2 Samuel that Campbell and O'Brien attribute to the Josianic Dtr. There are supplements to the Josianic Dtr from a royal focus and from a national focus in the chapters dedicated to the rise of kingship in 1 Sam 7–12. The only post-Josiah Dtr addition in 2 Samuel according to Campbell-O'Brien is 2 Sam 7:22–24.

All readers, but especially beginning students, may have to struggle to master the rather complicated system of typefaces by which our authors distinguish the several hands that produced this massive work. As far as I can tell, the authors have achieved a high degree of accuracy, except for the following types of errors:

- Formatting in 2 Sam 6:20-23 (290), where the single sideline identifying this chapter as a pre-Dtr pericope is omitted.
- In discussing the sin of Jeroboam, the authors remark on page 326 that “At no point is Jerusalem given a characterization equivalent to ‘the place that the Lord will choose in one of your tribes.’” Surely they mean that at no point is Bethel given such a characterization.

- On page 418, the single sideline is placed alongside only the left-hand column (1 Kgs 5:11–21), but it is clearly needed alongside of both columns.
- 2 Kgs 22:1a $\alpha$  (457), which specifies the length of Josiah’s reign, is judged to be later than the Deuteronomistic Historian, but it is printed in normal Roman type with a serif.

At several points in the book Campbell and O’Brien lament that a particular topic cannot be pursued for space reasons. In that spirit I would recommend that they create a web site to provide additional materials for readers. Using the electronic copy the authors have already prepared, many of the items on this web site would be very easy for them to prepare. I think the web site could have the following features not contained in the book:

- The full text of the Prophetic Record and the “Josianic Deuteronomistic History” formatted as independent documents. Clearly the idea of a ninth-century Prophetic Record is a favorite hypothesis of the authors, since there is a longer discussion of it than either the Josianic or final Deuteronomistic Histories in the introduction to this book. However, with all the subsequent revisions and incorporations of other materials they propose, there is no way a scholar can detect the effect of the Prophetic Record on a reader.
- This web site might also include the “original” texts of other precanonical sources, such as the “Conquest Narrative” from Joshua, the “Deliverance Collection” from Judges, the “Ark Narrative” from 1 and 2 Samuel, and the “Hezekian King List” from the books of Kings.
- A third desideratum on this web site would be a table listing all the source and redactional assignments for the complete DH (available on my web site now for Samuel and Kings). I found that it was almost impossible for me to understand their proposal without making such tables for myself. In fact, I would suggest that if a second edition of this book is printed, such tables be included as an appendix. A table comparing and contrasting their series of exilic additions with those exilic additions identified by Cross or Nelson and a table noting the various Dtr strata of the Göttingen school would also help readers note similarities and differences between the proposals.
- A fourth addition on the web site would be the text of the NRSV printed out much as it is in the book, but using fonts of many colors to represent their source and redactional assignments. The distinction between serif and sans-serif type and between indented and nonindented copy in the present volume is not dramatic enough except for the

most attentive reader. Color coding of the text—a new Regenbogen Bibel—would make the understanding of their proposal much easier to understand.

The identification of various editions and redactions in the present book might inadvertently lead to misreadings by students. Campbell and O'Brien, for example, print flush left all the pre-Dtr materials *and* the redactional additions of the Deuteronomistic Historian himself, with the latter printed in bold type. A student might think he or she is reading Dtr by paying attention only to these bold-faced paragraphs, and indeed one would expect to find here the clearest statements of Dtr's theology or ideology. But the pre-Dtr documents they identify, such as the Prophetic Record in Samuel and Kings, the Conquest Narrative in Joshua, the Deliverance Collection in Judges, and the Ark Narrative in 1 and 2 Samuel, are now a full part of the Josianic DH. A comparison with Chronicles may be helpful. To study the message of Chronicles, one reads not only the *Sondergut* but those extensive materials the Chronicler has incorporated from the DH, the Psalter, and elsewhere. The difference between the Chronicler's History and the DH is that we can tell, more or less, which passages the Chronicler has omitted, which he has added, and how he has changed the texts of the DH or the Psalter he has incorporated. But the whole of 1 and 2 Chronicles is the witness of the Chronicler, save for those passages that may have been added later. Similarly, the Josianic DH is not just the bold paragraphs marked out in this book but also the pre Dtr documents that were included by the person who drafted these paragraphs printed in bold.

At one point Campbell and O'Brien seem to fall victim to such a misreading of their own handbook. On page 326, they write: "The Josianic DH has little to say about the north, leaving it to the PR [Prophetic Record] which lays the blame squarely on the people (2 Kgs 17:21–23)." But of course in the Josianic DH, the Prophetic Record has become fully part of the Deuteronomistic Historian's own message, so he is leaving nothing to another hand. What is more, by incorporating the Prophetic Record the Josianic Dtr indicts the whole people, an accusation they attribute elsewhere to the exilic Deuteronomistic revision with a national focus.

When the Josianic Dtr incorporated the earlier sources, did he change them? Did he leave out irrelevant or contrary paragraphs, just as the Chronicler omitted almost all of the Succession Narrative and 1 Sam 1–30? Did the Deuteronomistic Historian incorporate previous materials without any changes at all? Students of Chronicles know that there is hardly a verse in Chronicles that is exactly the same as its *Vorlage* in Samuel-Kings. Some of these differences are trivial spelling differences, but the vast majority are small or larger adjustments of the *Vorlage*. Would we not expect a somewhat similar procedure by the Josianic Dtr? If one removed the *Sondergut* from Chronicles, one would not be left with the DH but with chapters from that history that have been revised and occasionally

even put in a different order. If one removes from the DH the Josianic additions to the precanonical sources, is one really left with the Prophetic Record or the other alleged sources? At most we have the Deuteronomistic Historian's version (or revision) of the Prophetic Record and other hypothetical documents and not the Prophetic Record itself.

Campbell and O'Brien not only distinguish between the Josianic redactor and an exilic updating that includes later events, but they also identify other exilic Dtr redactions and ascribe to separate hands passages that have a royal focus from those that have a national focus. They also assign a significant number of verses to a fourth Dtr hand from the late exilic period. The materials ascribed by them to the Prophetic Record contain materials that antedate that redaction, and the original Prophetic Record is later extended to include the fall of the northern kingdom. Other pre-Dtr documents include the Ark Narrative, selected chapters in 1-2 Samuel, and the Succession Narrative. They also identify a Hezekian king list, isolated by unique royal judgment formulas. In passing, I am not persuaded that the polemic against the high places in all the southern kings from Rehoboam to Hezekiah requires the identification of this otherwise unknown document. Campbell and O'Brien claim to detect at least eight levels within the present text. Are we really able to perform such textual archaeology?

Campbell and O'Brien acknowledge that some of their literary judgments have been affected by their own—and Helga Weippert's—study of the judgment formulas that are attached to the accounts of the kings. They distinguish the following patterns in these judgment formulas: (1) pattern A, which they attribute to the *extension* of the Prophetic Record, dealing with the northern kings from Jehu to Hoshea (2 Kgs 10:29–17:23); (2) pattern B, which they attribute to the Hezekian king list, including the southern kings from Rehoboam to Hezekiah, who are praised, with the reservation that the high places were not taken away; (c) pattern C, which relates to the northern kings within the Prophetic Record (33), though the pattern itself is also attributed to the Josianic Historian (324); (4) a mixed pattern B/C, which is used only for Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah; and (5) pattern D, which is used for the four kings after Josiah, who were not included in the Josianic edition of the history.

We will not discuss here pattern B/C, which is only used with Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah, and pattern D, used only with the last four kings. The question is whether the fluctuations among patterns A, B, and C are slight enough to allow for their composition by a single author (Provan) or whether these variations can be explained as changes required by the context (McKenzie). Campbell and O'Brien argue in the negative in both cases. They believe that the author of the original Prophetic Record (33) or the Deuteronomistic Historian (324) used pattern C for the northern kings from Jeroboam to Joram and that the person responsible for the extension of the Prophetic Record, from

Jehu to Hoshea, used pattern A. In their view the distinctive nature of pattern A points to this as a block of text existing in its own right, originally unconnected with its wider context in the DH.

My own comparison of patterns C and A in the northern kingdom calls this dichotomy into some question. Actually, elements 1–4 in these patterns—dealing with the judgment that (1) the king did evil in the sight of the Lord, (2) in the manner of Jeroboam, (3) who made Israel to sin, (4) and a plain reference to this king’s sins—are virtually identical in the two patterns. Pattern A does add an expression (element 5) that the king did not depart from these sins, but this addition occurs already with Joram, the last king in the preceding pattern C. The notice that the king walked in the way of, or in the sins of, a predecessor (element 6) does occur with five/six of the nine kings in pattern C, but also with one of the ten kings in the subsequent pattern A. Two elements are unique to pattern C: the expression “which he sinned” (element 8) and “provoking Yahweh to anger” (element 9), but element 8 is absent not only from pattern A but from the last three kings in pattern C as well, and element 9 is absent not only from pattern A but from the last king in pattern C as well. In other words the pattern does *not* change where their theories of composition says it should change. For the pattern to change after Jehu (the only king in the north after Jeroboam I who does not do evil in Dtr’s view) does not seem strange to me, let alone demand the identification of an extended version of a document called the Prophetic Record. Even more surprising, even inexplicable to me, is that one of the nine judgment formulas in C—supposedly the work of the author of the Prophetic Record and therefore included by the Josianic Historian—is assigned by them to the exilic national focus document (1 Kgs 14:15–16 [380]), and four of these formulas are assigned by them to the exilic royal focus document (1 Kgs 15:30 [386]; 16:13 [388]; 16:19 [389]; and 16:33b [391]). Thus five of the nine formulas in pattern C are added only *after* the writing of the Josianic DH. The assignment of five of the formulas in pattern C to exilic times is either a mistake that inadvertently entered their work or evidence that the evidence for a first draft of the DH in the time of Josiah may need to be rethought.

I would propose an alternate interpretation of the variation in these judgment formulas: the Deuteronomistic Historian used pattern B for the judgment formulas in the south until Hezekiah (citing the nonremoval of the high places); used a special formula B/C for the polar opposites Manasseh-Amon and Josiah, who are contrasted with one another; and then omitted mention of the high places altogether thereafter since Josiah put the high places out of business once and for all. In the north all the royal judgment formulas except for the last king Hoshea raise a litany about the sins of Jeroboam. Changes in the second half begin with Joram in two cases and with Ahab in another case and thus not with Jehu, as their hypothesis requires.

One of the most helpful features of this volume is a series of notations repeated with most pericopes called text signals and text-history approach. “Text signals” identifies important ideas or vocabulary in the pericope, and “the text-history approach” allows the authors to assign the passage to one or more of the documents they have identified and to show how it expresses the thesis of their several authors. A third type of notation, again appearing with every major unit, speaks of present-text potential, and here the authors offer a synchronic reading of the final form of the canonical text. This kind of notation does not seek to relate the text to any period of composition; therefore, the interpretation is more or less timeless and to my taste somewhat flat. In my judgment, a different understanding of the final form could have been attempted. If the first edition of the DH was written in the time of Josiah as a kind of propaganda for his reform, subsequent additions to this edition radically reversed the meaning of that history from optimistic propaganda to pessimistic theodicy. But of course it is not only the additions to the Josianic DH that make up that final form of the DH. I think the book would have been considerably enriched if the authors would have addressed the interpretation offered to Israel in the sixth century B.C.E. in this massive work that came from a series of Deuteronomistic hands. I would have preferred an interpretation of the final form of the comprehensive DH rather than an interpretation of the canonical shape, which in their reading really has nothing directly to do with the DH as such or with an address to any specific period in Israel’s history. If the proposal of the first edition of the DH proved to be theologically false, it is remarkable that the subsequent editions could correct it and refocus it by making some additions and by incorporating almost all of the failed first edition. Comments in the paragraphs dealing with the present-text potential might have indicated how the final editors could have tolerated the remnants of the Josianic edition, which had proved to be widely mistaken.