This is a big book (over 500 pages) proposing a very detailed account of the development of the books from Deuteronomy to Kings. Like Martin Noth, Campbell and O’Brien operate with a model in which Deuteronomistic authors assembled diverse source materials (the core of Deuteronomy, the conquest story, and so on), while other material was added later to what the Deuteronomists had produced. Like many of Noth’s successors, they operate with more than one Deuteronomist. Yet unlike some of these—Veijola, for example, who in developing Smend’s model was able to embrace some of Noth’s “other material added later” within the contribution of a second Deuteronomist—our authors have increased the Deuteronomists and contrived at the same time to increase substantially the amount of text marked “other.” Their justification: the “other” materials “do not contribute in the present text to a clarification and identification of what is dtr contribution and dtr theology” (13). However, this does make for a very uneven volume: extremely detailed exploration of some portions of Deuteronomy–2 Kings, while other large blocks are passed over with hardly a comment.

What concerns me in this is not the resultant unevenness in detailed analysis: if all the text were handled in close detail, the book would be quite unwieldy. It is rather that, like many proponents of some form of the DH hypothesis, they “limp with two opinions” (if that is what Elijah meant to convey [1 Kgs 18:21]): (1) the DH is the books from
Deuteronomy to Kings; (2) the DH is a subset of that material, or the heart of that material, composed by one or more identifiable Deuteronomists. The limp leads to a fall, as I see it, as they seek to describe the “potential” of the “present text.” In some cases, the local contribution of “other” text, added later, is noted, but often this is not done. It is all very well to say, in terms of a more tightly defined DH, that the “other” materials “do not contribute in the present text to a clarification and identification of what is dtr contribution and dtr theology,” but what is their contribution to all of Deuteronomy–Kings, if that “present text” is also properly called DH?

The different strata they identify are printed in different fonts. Deuteronomy 1–3 are divided equally between the Josianic DH and “other,” with only 1:4–5 attributed to the Dtr reviser who contributed 4:1–40. For Deut 5 and the first part of 6 a complex analysis is displayed, but from the rest of 6 through to 25 our authors use only two fonts: Deut 12–25 is set as “main pre-DH lawcode” and 6–11 as its introduction (later than it but still pre-DH). Chapter by chapter below this text, Campbell and O’Brien simply tabulate the results of the widely divergent analyses by Mayes, Nielsen, and Preuss and add minimal comment of their own. A notable absence is any discussion of how the presentation of the various leaders in Deut 16–18 might relate to issues in Judges-Kings. They cite elsewhere the article by Albertz in *Israël construit son histoire* (1996, now available in English as *JSOTSup* 306 [2000]); they could have usefully discussed those of Dietrich and Mayes on this topic from the same volume.

I am surprised at any unfolding of the layering of Josh 3–11 without comparison of MT and LXX. I also find close attention to Josh 3–4 and 6 strange, while 5 is passed by: the shorter LXX on Joshua’s Passover is eminently Deuteronomic. Other reviewers are also pointing to this issue. Julio Trebolle-Barrera helpfully sets this issue in context (“Qumran Evidence for a Biblical Standard Text,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in their Historical Context* [ed. T. Lim et al.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000], 89–106). He puts three questions to the Qumran materials: (1) Which biblical texts are attested in multiple copies and which in a few? (2) Which biblical texts are commonly cited and which hardly at all? (3) Which biblical books attest few textual variants and which many? The answers to all three questions are convergent. The books of Moses, Isaiah, the Twelve, Psalms, and Job provide the standard. By contrast, the Former Prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel are scantily attested, little cited or commented on, and they exhibit different text forms. Quite as significant, this textual diversity among the nonstandard books mirrors the diversity in these same books between MT and LXX, where MT is normally the fuller and more Deuteronomistic text. If these are the facts—and they have a ring of authenticity clearer than many of the statements we trade in biblical studies—they represent a tricky starting point for unfolding the Former Prophets—or Jeremiah—from MT, unless we keep a close eye on the text-critical scene. A Masoretic plus in these books is unlikely ever to be a safe
diagnostic element in a late monarchic or even exilic text—let alone a part of one of its sources. *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History* does follow this principle over David and Goliath (259–65), but hardly elsewhere.

In broad terms, *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History* has based its analysis on the Cross model rather than the Smend one. Although *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History* is more complex than Cross, the first draft of the DH is Josianic: both critique of the already-fallen north and hope for the Davidic-led south can be sensibly held together in a document emanating from the optimism of a reforming period. The authors insist that some texts “could not have originated in an exilic edition…. divine commitment to the temple, the Davidic dynasty, and the city of Jerusalem is clearly expressed and never countermanded. A conditional formulation is given to the dynastic commitment; however questionable such retrospective theology may be, the condition is not applied to temple or city” (15). The commitment to Jerusalem, if first given expression in an exilic document, “would demean God” (16, my emphasis). The authors show their concern elsewhere over responses by its readers to the biblical text: their introduction to Joshua opens with the observation that “no other generation in the biblical history of Israel received the praise that is bestowed on the generation of Joshua; no other book of the Bible has been so widely condemned by so many as a symbol of all that is appalling and inhuman” (101).

Back from Joshua to Jerusalem—I have concerns at different levels about the “demeaning” of God. First, I find it inappropriate to argue on religious or theological grounds a case within literary history: “they surely could not have meant that” is a dangerous literary-critical criterion. Then, while we generally disapprove of retrospective legislation, still any theology that learns from and interprets history must have a retrospective component. The authors themselves seek to present how “the Josianic text was revised to bring theological reality into line with the lessons of harsh reality” (3). However, these matters notwithstanding, I think my main concern is this third one. It is possible to hold (1) that the earliest statement of the promises to city, temple, and royal line within an identifiably Deuteronomistic document was not preexilic and at the same time (2) that it was not in that document that such commitments had first been made. It seems reasonable to me to hold that the “Davidic” story (in the widest sense of that term) within Samuel-Kings is a narrative theodicy, taking up the challenge of material such as Ps 89. That (exilic?) protest is concerned over the apparent disconfirmation of what had long been held to be divine promises.

Of old thou didst speak in a vision to thy faithful one. (89:19)

Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David. (89:35)
Yet Ps 89 does not object that God is demeaned, but rather asks the question “How long, O Lord?” (89:46) When will the apparent disconfirmation be over?

Is it really the case (p. 459) that Josiah’s violent death after his reform is odd in a Dtr context, that we are dealing here with “the deconstruction of the dtr theology of reward”? Deconstruction of a theology of reward, perhaps—but no surprise in a Deuteronomistic context. Surely the choice of life and not death and the blessings and the curses are only part of the theology of Deuteronomy and of the books of Kings. Another part is the entail over generations of gross wickedness. This is clearly enshrined in the Decalogue: “counting the guilt of fathers against sons—and against grandsons and great-grandsons of those who hate me” (Deut 5:9bβ). For the books of Kings, it is king Manasseh who brings the houses down—but not upon his own head: Josiah and his successors are trapped in what grandfather Manasseh and father Amon had done. And the fall of northern Israel had already been attributed to the actions of its first king, two centuries earlier. Jeremiah and Ezekiel, among Trebolle Barrera’s other nonstandard books, do not share this view, nor does the Chronicler. The traditions about David’s house inherited by the author of Kings may have been even more unsettling, but that belongs rather to my next point.

From the perspective of my own research, I suggest as a final point why I think 2 Sam 24 and 1 Kgs 22 are early and vital components of the material in hand, why to relegate them to the company of materials sidelined is to skew our understanding of how Samuel-Kings developed. I sketched in a few words at the Oslo IOSOT Congress how the story of David’s census fitted the document that I hold underlies Samuel and Kings. Moreover, a paper currently in press seeks to demonstrate how the theological challenge of that story is taken up in episode after episode of 1 and 2 Samuel. David may be responsible for the fall of the Davidic house. That argument may not persuade all its readers, but it is buttressed at least on one side by some facts. The few prophetic stories shared by Samuel-Kings and Chronicles—about Nathan, Gad, Micaiah, Isaiah, and Huldah—share an important feature over against the many other prophetic stories in these books: they either state or imply that the prophet in question was consulted by the king. The king took the initiative in seeking his god’s will; in most other stories in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles, the deity sent a prophet or seer to confront the king. For that and many other reasons these narratives deserve to be treated as a group—and a group, moreover, at the center and not the periphery of the tradition.

In the case of 1 Kgs 22, although they also mark it as “other,” Campbell and O’Brien do recognize that it fits its context (406). And fitting its narrative context is a more appropriate opening observation than the familiar argument among commentators and historians whether or not this campaign of Jehoshaphat and the king of Israel can be
integrated with our glimpses from afar into actual relationships between ancient Israel and Aram. King of Israel and house of David are ranged against Aram for the first time since David; they ask divine guidance, as David did before fighting Philistines; they consult a prophet, as David did over building a house. Micaiah sees “all Israel scattered as sheep without a shepherd,” “all Israel” reminding us of the time before the split in the kingdom, just as David is the only “shepherd” of his people in all of Samuel and Kings. The links are many and varied: enumerating them helps to explain why Ahab is hardly given his name in the story, why he is termed instead “king of Israel” throughout, but is called by his own name by Yahweh right in the middle of the story (v. 20). And the links are all with material that our authors, rightly, attribute to a pre-Dtr source. This closely related story strongly suggests that those whom Yahweh has separated should not be joined together again by any king of Israel or son of David named Yeho-shaphat. What the Deuteronomists made of such a story needs to be part of their unfolding; it cannot be sidelined.