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Die deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerke: Redaktions- und religionsgeschichtliche Perspektiven zur „Deuteronomismus“—Diskussion in Tora und Vorderen Propheten

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This volume is based on presentations given at a conference in Heidelberg, June 2005. Contributions discussing Deuteronomistic covenant theology and the legal history of the ancient Near East presented at Mainz (December 2005) are added. Despite its autonomous emergence, the book might be regarded as a companion volume to *Abschied vom Jahwisten* (ed. Jan Christian Gertz; BZAW 315; Berlin, 2002) and *A Farewell to the Yahwist?* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman and Konrad Schmid; SBLSymS 34; Atlanta, 2006). Noth's Deuteronomistic History (DtrH) presupposed the source theory of the Pentateuch, so revisions of the source model necessitates revisions of the DtrH concept. Doubtlessly more collections by the same authors/editors on other parts of the Hebrew Bible canon are already published, planned, or to be expected.

The book's conception is ambitious: it aims, on the one hand, at a discussion of theological historiography and, on the other hand, the legal and religious histories of Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and Palestine in their inter- and transcultural relationships. This plan is executed in six parts: (1) "Research History and Methodology"; (2) "The

‘Deuteronomistic’ Deuteronomy”; (3) “Pre- and Post-Deuteronomistic Material in the Former Prophets”; (4) “Aspects of the History of Religion”; (5) “The Deuteronomistic Covenant Theology and Its Contexts”; and (6), “Selected Literature on Deuteronomism Research.”

1. Research History and Methodology

The first essay issues from one of the few non-German scholars in this volume. David M. Carr (“Empirische Perspektiven auf das DtrG”). Under the fashionable label of empiricism, which is increasingly used in theology and biblical studies, he pleads for a synoptical comparison of Kings and Chronicles. He concludes that both stem from a common source that underwent distinct revisions and expansions; thus he confirms A. G. Auld’s study (*Kings without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible’s Kings* [Edinburgh, 1994]). His literary-historical presuppositions are his study *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart* (2005), in which he argues for biblical traditional literature being passed down over generations of the scribal elite. He concludes that more texts than previously thought must have been passed down orally. That explains the trend of expansion due to successive additions.

Konrad Schmid (“Hatte Wellhausen Recht? Das Problem der literarhistorischen Anfänge des Deuteronomismus in den Königebüchern”) resurrects Wellhausen’s assumption of a late preexilic date of the Deuteronomic passages in the book of Kings and discusses several scholarly works that assume an exilic origin of the DtrH: H. Spieckermann, *Juda unter Assur in der Sargonidenzeit* (1982); C. Levin, “Joschija im deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk” (1984); R. G. Kratz, *Die Komposition der erzählenden Bücher* (2000); and E. Aurelius, *Zukunft jenseits des Gerichts* (2003). Analyzing the Deuteronomistic evaluations of the individual kings, he concludes that DtrH in Kings reaches only to 2 Kgs 23 (43), which implies that DtrH must be preexilic.

Thomas Römer (“Entstehungsphasen des ‘DtrG’”) largely gives a summary of his new book *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History* (2005): he postulates a three-staged DtrH with a basic layer from the seventh century, a *Fortschreibung* during the times of the Babylonian exile, and an actualization in the Persian time period. All three stages are examined in light of Deut 12.

2. The “Deuteronomistic” Deuteronomy

Eckart Otto (“Das postdeuteronomistische Deuteronomium als integrierender Schlußstein der Tora”) pursues two basic aims: (1) the link between synchronic and diachronic perspectives on the Old Testament; and (2) the definition of the Pentateuch’s plot. He

rigorously disapproves of Pakkala's exegetical results (see *infra*), who approves of Veijola's theory of a covenant redaction. DtrB is also rejected by Steymans.

Jan Christian Gertz ("Kompositorische Funktion und literarhistorischer Ort von Deut 1–3") sees in Deut 1–3 a relecture of the preceding desert stories with the function to link Deuteronomy and Exodus to Joshua within a non-Priestly macro story (105). He asserts that Deuteronomy, in a former state, must have reformulated the older Book of the Covenant and therefore must have been just a legal text. It is Deut 1–3 and connected texts that make Deuteronomy Moses' testament and valediction as it now is (123).

Juha Pakkala ("Der literar- und religionsgeschichtliche Ort von Dtn 13") defends Veijola's point of view that Deut 13 is a Torah-abiding supplement from exilic times, the "late-Deuteronomistic" phase (126). Otto's opinion that Deut 13 is dependent on Esarhaddon's vassal treaties must be rejected due to several differences between the two corpora.

3. Pre- and Post-Deuteronomistic Layers in the Former Prophets

Uwe Becker ("Endredaktionelle Kontextvernetzungen des Josua-Buches") holds that a Hexateuch never existed. Joshua 24 in all its literary layers reshapes a preexisting transition between Joshua and Judges, whose function was to mark a sharp break between the two books (148). The oldest transition between Joshua and Judges is found in Josh 11:23* and Judg 2:8ff. and 24:29ff., respectively. Remarkably, Becker uses Joshua-LXX and Qumran to illuminate the final phases in the shaping of the book of Joshua, although only for a few texts (e.g., Josh 8:30–35).

Alexander A. Fischer ("Die Saul-Überlieferung im deuteronomistischen Samuelbuch [am Bsp. von 1 Sam 9–10]") finds a pre-Deuteronomistic tradition in 1 Sam 9–10 followed by an old Deuteronomistic royal history ranging from 1 Sam 9 to 1 Kgs 2, while 1 Sam 8 stems from a younger Deuteronomistic layer, connecting Samuel to Judges. This argues for the existence of more than one or two DtrHs.

In "Motivik, Figuren und Konzeption der Erzählung vom Absalomaufruch," Klaus-Peter Adam reconstructs a pre-Deuteronomistic version of Absalom's rebellion. He understands it as a Geshurite-Israelite conspiracy against the Judahite King David. The story is formulated from a pro-Judahite perspective. Absalom is seen not as David's son but as his courtier, although Adam does not prove his point. He buttresses, however, his assertions by a comprehensive analysis of conspiracy motives and audience scenes.

Simon B. Parker ("Ancient Northwest Semitic Epigraphy and the 'Deuteronomistic' Tradition in Kings") searches the Syro-Palestinian royal inscriptions for possible linguistic

or factual connections to Deuteronomistic texts in 1 and 2 Kings. Linguistically, his conclusions are mainly negative: “No Hebrew inscriptions recovered thus far from the areas and periods of the Israelite and Judean monarchies have manifested that peculiar phraseology and ideology” (213). His note, however, that some inscriptions may reflect older versions, is of interest, for it means that some inscriptions are the product of redactional processes. Therefore, “they may provide a model for some of the copying, updating, and combining of comparable records in the palaces of Samaria and Jerusalem—and ultimately in the literary adoption of some of the sources used by the Deuteronomists” (227).

4. Aspects of the History of Religion

Udo Rütterswörden’s (“Die Liebe zu Gott im Dtn”) interest is in the history of thought. He examines Deuteronomy, the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon, ancient Near Eastern epigraphy as well as Greek sources and concludes that “love” is a topos in treaty formulas. The fact that the word “love” is used in various texts does not imply literary dependency between them. “Love” is a cultural term to govern behavior facing the question of loyalty in a time of huge upheavals.

In his second essay in this volume, Juha Pakkala (“Die Entwicklung der Gotteskonzeptionen in den dtr Redaktionen von polytheistischen zu monotheistischen Vorstellungen”) examines conceptions of the divine in Deuteronomy–2 Kings. In preexilic polytheistic times Israel practiced a tolerant monolatry. With the destruction of the temple and the exile, the nomistic parties successfully implemented an intolerant monolatry. As a result, monotheistic theologies developed. Pakkala refrains from aligning this development extensively to Deutero-Isaiah’s monotheistic theology.

Christian Frevel (“Wovon reden die Deuteronomisten? Anmerkungen zu religionsgeschichtlichem Gehalt, Fiktionalität und literarischen Funktionen dtr Kultnotizen”) holds that Deuteronomistic representations of cultic activities are not completely understandable when seen as stemming from exilic or even postexilic times; they must, at least in parts, originate in preexilic times. He pays the most attention to methodological questions arguing for less redactional history and more attention to extrabiblical materials. Alongside, he develops several criteria to determine the degree of fictionality in historical texts, such as plausibility, difference, and convergence. This could help to distinguish (global) formalized Deuteronomistic expressions from (detailed) information.

5. The Deuteronomistic Covenant Theology and Its Contexts

Gary Beckman (“Hittite Treaties and the Development of Cuneiform Treaty Tradition”)

first presents the form for Hittite treaties as follows: preamble; historical prologue; provisions; deposition; list of divine witnesses; curses and blessings. Then he offers a historical survey of the Hittite treaties in their chronological order. Finally, he adds a chronological appendix of “Treaties of the Ancient Near East.”

Lorenzo d’Alfonso (“Die hethitische Vertragstradition in Syrien [14.–12. Jh. v.Chr.]”) gives an overview of Hittite treaties with Syro-Palestinian regions, dividing them into “subordination treaties” and “treaties of (pseudo-)equality,” analyzing their forms and some aspects of their contents. Hittite laws and law traditions were known to the Assyrians in Middle-Assyrian times. With respect to Syria (especially Aleppo and Carchemish as the centers of Hittite culture), it can be proved that Carchemish inherited, revised, and used Hittite laws and law traditions.

Hans Ulrich Steymans (“Die literarische und historische Bedeutung der Thronfolgevereidigung Asarhaddons”) discusses Eckart Otto’s view of Deut 13 as being directly dependent on the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon by summarizing his own 1995 book about Deut 28 and Esarhaddon’s *adê*. His answer to the question of whether there was a copy of the *adê* in Jerusalem is: probably. It seems impossible to him, however, that a sovereign such as Manasseh, whose subjects served Assyrian government, was left unsworn.

Karen Radner (“Assyrische *tuppi adê* als Vorbild für Dtn 28,20–44?”) answers the question of whether there was a dependence of Deut 28:20–44 on Assyrian *adê* in the affirmative: (1) the Judahite kings were obliged to give tolls; (2) at the Judahite royal court a *qêpu* (an Assyrian liaison officer) must have existed, as was the case with every Assyrian vassal; (3) *adê* must have been handed over in the written form of *tuppi adê*. Thus, comparative texts must have existed in Jerusalem. However, the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon need not have been the Vorlage.

Christoph Koch (“Zwischen Hatti und Assur: Traditionsgeschichtliche Beobachtungen zu den aramäischen Inschriften von Sfire”) traces some influence from Hittite as well as Neo-Assyrian vassal treaty traditions in the Sfire inscriptions. These traditions were communicated by and within the international network of scribes.

The book’s intention to discuss inter- and transcultural relationships in diverse cultures of the Levant has only been partly achieved. The book’s title fits its contents much better. The dominant impression is that research on the DtrH(s) (Did it ever exist?) is quite disparate: although representatives of mainly one “school” appear in this book, most articles do not enter into discussion with each other. Would a congress volume not have been an ideal opportunity to bring problems to the point or to work on shared answers or

at least questions? Especially the section dealing with the Former Prophets only treats single aspects of individual books. The significant obstacles that the book of Judges raises against the dominant concept of the DtrH are never even envisaged in the volume. The contributions are often difficult to understand and are hardly compatible with each other. Suppressed methodological problems in Old Testament scholarship surface here, even more so as most contributors can be counted among the leading German/European scholars in the field.

On the other hand, the sections on *Forschungsgeschichte* are especially informative. Sometimes the actual problems are brought to the point—although mostly concerning details. The contributions on ancient Near Eastern literature are all very useful. Unfortunately, female scholars have not been included (see only Karen Radner), nor has one feminist issue within DtrH been discussed.

So what remains? We now know that we know nearly nothing. It seems as if the Deuterono-*mists* rise very slowly.