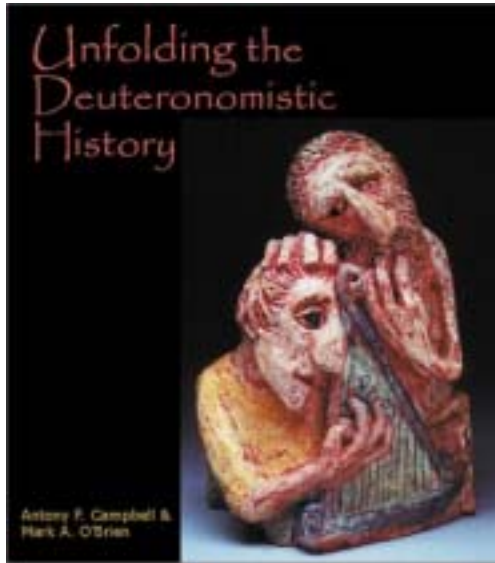


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**Campbell, Antony F., and Mark A. O'Brien**

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

Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2000.  
Pp. vi + 505. Cloth. \$37.00. ISBN 0800628780.

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On behalf of us both, I should like to thank our reviewers for their kindness and compliments, ranging from offering “the opportunity to see in every detail the reconstruction” of the DH (Nihan) to “the pedagogical importance of books that strive to provide such a comprehensive explanation” (Person), or simply “our joy at this publication” (Klein). This is particularly appreciated when we remember that in planning the SBL session where the first versions of these papers were presented (Denver, 2001), the organizers decided to seek out speakers whose approach, in the main, was different from that of the book under discussion. For the most part, therefore, the papers do not—and were not intended to—review the achievements of the book; they were intended to discuss it in the light of alternative approaches.

Klein kindly acknowledges “a high degree of accuracy” while noting four typos. Three of these can be conveniently repeated here and two more added, in advance of any second printing. The first four relate to omissions of the single sideline, indicating pre-Dtr origin (the text itself is clear on the point). These are:

- Single sideline needed for Judg 10:17–11:11 and 11:29–12:6 (with a break in the sideline between 12:6 and 12:7). This original Jephthah story is probably not part of the Deliverer Collection, but is “other pre-DH” (196–99).
- Single sideline needed for 2 Sam 6:20–23 (290).
- Single sideline needed for 2 Sam 20:23–26 (315).
- Single sideline needed for 2 Kgs 5:22–6:3 (418).

Also, thanks to Klein:

- The first word on page 326 should indeed be Bethel and not Jerusalem.

A remark may be permitted on the formatting. It has been found difficult by Person and Klein (who would prefer color) but “clear and practical” by Nihan. Others do not seem to have had difficulty: for example, Jean-Louis Ska, “la répartition ... est immédiatement apparente” (the attribution ... is immediately evident; *Bib* 83 [2002]: 112); Walter Dietrich, “Und natürlich bietet das Buch, so wie es angelegt ist, die Möglichkeit, rasch einmal festzustellen, was zur Einordnung dieser oder jener Stelle ‘Campbell und O’Brien sagen’. (Ob man dem dann folgen will, ist eine andere Frage)” (Naturally, as it is formatted, the book offers the possibility of rapidly determining how Campbell und O’Brien attribute this or that occurrence. [Whether one agrees is another question]; *TLZ* 127 [2002]: 742). I conclude that formatting in black and white has much the same effect on its readers as a balance sheet has on others—some read with delight, and others find their gaze automatically blurred.

Text criticism needs a word of comment. It is not a panacea; it is a discipline at present undergoing change. My initiation began in Melbourne, with Aimo Murtonen, himself a Paul Kahle pupil. I was with Norbert Lohfink in Munich when his presence with the expertise of an exegete was requested on the United Bible Society text-critical team. At Claremont, I came to benefit from the text-critical commitment of James A. Sanders. Once upon a time, text criticism was regarded as one of the more arcane and also one of the least subjective fields in Old Testament studies. With the recent discoveries from the Judean Desert revealing a plurality of text families, exegetical reflection has become important in evaluating textual differences. Eugene Ulrich remarks: “the Scriptures were pluriform ... quite possibly as late as 135 or beyond. Thus we must revise our imaginations and our explanations of many of the biblical books.”<sup>1</sup> Subjectivity has

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<sup>1</sup>E. Ulrich, “The Bible in the Making: The Scriptures at Qumran,” in *The Community of the Renewed Covenant: The Notre Dame Symposium on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed.

correctly crept up on the text critic. Within the context and aims of *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History*, in some cases discussion could not be avoided; in others, we thought it wiser to remain with the MT. The book was going to be big enough as it was.

There is an adage that runs something like this: whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent. Where we believed we had something to say, we said it; where our expertise or industry were not engaged, we believed it wise to remain silent.

Some comments on the individual reviews are in order. Raymond Person notes that the “dtn lawcode,” the Conquest Narrative, the Deliverance Collection, and the Prophetic Record “are all printed in italics.” They are not. In the context, a typo is hardly likely; more probably, the error may reflect confusion from misreading the footer without checking against the text—which does not inspire confidence. Person finds our use of the phrase “the present biblical text” problematic, “especially since it refers to the NRSV.” It does not. In our experience, “the present biblical text” is used to refer to the final text, in its original language, after all compositional and editorial work has been completed—in other words, the present canonical text. I find this error inexplicable, especially since *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History* is manifestly based on the Hebrew.

Graeme Auld has nothing complimentary to say; although myself a Glaswegian Scot by heritage, I find this surprising. He asks about the contribution to the DH of what we have called “other,” “if that ‘present text’ [“all of Deuteronomy–Kings”] is also properly called DH?” Deuteronomy–Kings is properly called “present text”; in our judgment, Deuteronomy–Kings is not properly called DH. Without going into details, Josh 13–22; Judg 13–21; 2 Sam 21–24, for example, were not considered part of the DH by Noth, nor by Cross, Smend, or us. Auld remarks: “I also find close attention to Josh 3–4 and 6 strange, while 5 is passed by.” We believed we had something significant to say on Josh 3–4 and 6 that would be of interest to readers; we did not believe that was the case for Josh 5. Auld considers 2 Sam 24 and 1 Kgs 22 “early and vital components of the material in hand”—not therefore to be treated as later than the Dtr, classified “other,” and marked with a double sideline. It is important to note—and is said more than once in *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History*—that the category identified by a double sideline relates to the time of incorporation into the text without prejudice to the time of composition of the material so marked (see 35). Much more discussion remains, but this is an important starting point.

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E. Ulrich and J. VanderKam; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 77–93, see p. 92.

I am grateful for Ralph Klein's comment that we "embrace—and modify—both the Cross and the Smend proposals." I believe this to be correct. However, I have difficulty with the concept of "levels." What constitutes a "level"—how much text, how much continuity? Does anyone read any text looking for levels? I read biblical text and notice variants, upgrades, and the like along the way; I do not read for levels. I may look at levels later, for the purpose of synthesis, but that is another matter. Klein asks: "Are we really able to perform such textual archaeology?" Rhetorical questions do not help; evaluation of alleged evidence helps.

Christophe Nihan laments, as have others, that we provided no analysis for the collection of laws in Deut 12–26, simply referring "to the results attained by three different commentaries." Perhaps we were not brutal enough in our expression. We noted, for this material, that "consensus in scholarship has been remarkable by its absence" (41). We used synopses from the three commentaries to highlight the apparently insurmountable diversity of opinion. Where angels trod so diversely, we thought it better not to tread at all. Nihan refers to the possibility, advanced by some, that "the Dtr writer simply created stories of his own at several places in order to fill the gaps between his various sources." My resistance in general to this approach is that I do not see how writers creating their own text would produce the tensions and inconcinnities that trigger critical analysis. Individual cases might be possible; they would need to be clearly identified and boundaries established. In many cases, I prefer to avow modern ignorance rather than appeal to ancient invention. Where "historical settings" are concerned, traces of a document may remain in our text; often, they do not offer even a base for speculation about a historical setting.

I trust this response may help clarify aspects of where I believe we were as authors. Our gratitude for all that is helpful in these reviews remains.