

ABSTRACT

I propose that Bernard Levinson's statement, "In its hermeneutics of innovation, Deuteronomy is more radical than most contemporary hermeneutical theory," needs reassessment through engagement with Paul Ricoeur's phenomenological hermeneutics, namely his thesis of *cultural imagination*. Ricoeur argues that the phenomena of ideology and utopia operate within the rhetoric of social action where one assesses the validity of the other within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation. Using Ricoeur as a theoretical foundation, I aver that the Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic process of scribal revision is best contemplated within a broader stream of shared tradition and intentionality. Broadly defined, *D* phenomena represent innately connected social discourse upon corporate constative experiences. A phenomenology of *Deuteronomism* brackets out specific attempts at defining the "elusive Deuteronomists" arguing instead for a historical dialectic where successive/concurrent discernable voices interact within a stream of ideological competition, each voice providing competing visions of the best version of Israel.

Throughout the dissertation, I engage in a progressive historical analysis. Northern priestly-prophetic voices project a choice between the utopia/dystopia (blessings/curses) inherent to covenant faithfulness. Subsequent socio-political challenges throughout the Levant during the Late Eighth Century prompt the Judean court to strike a "grand bargain" between Pre-D concerns and an ideology of Davidic sanction through the depiction of a utopian united monarchy. Correspondingly, the rhetorical geography of Deuteronomy 12-26 intimates a centripetal force that draws the reader from the periphery to a utopian center where the king is established as the ideal type for Israel, meditating on Torah and maintaining righteous justice.

Beyond engaging in a historical theology of ancient Israel, this study provides a model for appreciating the dialectical nature of both canon formation and reformation within confessional communities. Throughout Scripture, we find a dialog between two existential questions. The first is about identity, "Who is Israel (The Church)?" and the corresponding one is about praxis or mission "What does Israel (the Kingdom of God) look like?"

A DISSERTATION
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PAUL RICOEUR'S CULTURAL IMAGINATION AND A PHENOMENOLOGY OF
DEUTERONOMISM

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	The Anchor Bible
ABD	The Anchor Bible Dictionary
AnBib	Analecta biblica
ApOTC	Apollos Old Testament Commentary
<i>AUSS</i>	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
<i>BASOR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
<i>BFCT</i>	<i>Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie</i>
<i>BO</i>	<i>Bibliotheca orientalis</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
<i>CBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
<i>COS</i>	<i>The Context of Scripture</i>
D	Deuteronomic
<i>D</i>	Deuternomism
DLC	Deuteronomic Legal Code (Deut 12-26)
Dtr	Deuteronomist(s)
DtrH	Deuteronomistic History
DOTHB	The Dictionary of Old Testament Historical Books
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FAT2	Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2. reihe

FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
HH	Hezekian History
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology</i>
<i>IOS</i>	<i>Israel Oriental Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JCS</i>	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
<i>JHebS</i>	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
<i>J. Polt. Ideol.</i>	<i>Journal of Political Ideologies</i>
<i>J. Theol. Interpret.</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Interpretation</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
LHB/OTS	Library Hebrew Bible/ Old Testament Studies
LAI	Library of Ancient Israel
LOTK	Law of the King (Deut 17:14-20)
NAC	New American Commentary
NCB	New Century Bible Commentary

NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIDOTTE	New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis
NIVAC	New International Version Application Commentary
<i>OBO</i>	<i>Orbis biblicus et orientalis</i>
<i>OBS</i>	<i>Österreichische biblische Studien</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
PFES	Publications of the Finish Exegetical Society
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLWAW	Society of Biblical Literature Writings of the Ancient World
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SBTS	Sources for Biblical and Theological Studies
SHANE	Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SPEP	Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy
SWBA	Social World of Biblical Antiquity
UCNES	University of California Near Eastern Studies
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
WANEM	Worlds of the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament

WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

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bridged the distance between my lonely desert island and the mainland. I am also indebted to my colleagues at Lincoln Christian University, Steve Cone and Christopher Simpson, for their encouragement through the slog that is the writing process, and assistance in navigating some of the more “technical” aspects of philosophical hermeneutics. It was comforting to find out that not every brilliant scholar is in and out in less than a decade.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1997 Bernard Levinson wrote, “Central to Deuteronomy is the question of hermeneutics.”¹ In an exploration of the development of the Deuteronomic Law Code (DLC), foundational to a so-called *Ur-Deuteronomium*, Levinson details what he calls the “hermeneutics of revision.” He avers that the constructors of deuteronomic legislation were skilled in the principles of *legal reinterpretation*, a common scribal practice throughout the Ancient Near East where older legal traditions were recontextualized responding to or legitimizing, socio-political changes. Through an analysis of key passages such as the altar laws (Deut 12) and the Passover regulations (Deut 16), Levinson argues that the DLC represents a recontextualization of the Covenant Code (Ex 20:22-23:33). Responding to a seismic ideological shift away from localized power structures toward a centralized polity and cult, scribal circles within the Judean court adjusted previous legal and economic systems, shifting power away from the periphery toward the core.

¹ Bernard Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 4.

These sophisticated legal interpreters were in Levinson's words "confronting a central problem in the history of religions: the justification of innovation."² For Levinson, innovation is a hermeneutical problem. Subsequently, Deuteronomy must be seen as a hermeneutical phenomenon as opposed to a monolithic disquisition with roots deep in the plains of Moab. In his words,

Deuteronomy was already a complex hermeneutical work from the beginning: it was the composition of authors who consciously reused and reinterpreted earlier texts to propound and justify their program of cultic and legal reform...Previous scholarship has not fully recognized, let alone conceptualized, the centrality of this hermeneutical question to Deuteronomy's authors.³

Levinson organizes said failed scholarship into two methodological camps: canonical criticism (synchronic) and inner-biblical exegesis (diachronic), finding faults with incarnations of both.

Against canonical criticism, Levinson levels several critiques. First, he views the emphasis on poetics, and narrative artistry often downplays the study of scribal techniques. Reducing literary skill to the use of metaphor and plot diminishes the critical tradition of

² Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 4.

³ Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 4.

textual reproduction in honing the scribal craft throughout the ANE.⁴ Canonical criticism also flattens a text by placing interest only in a final form. Consequently, purely synchronic methodology runs the risk of disavowing textual reuse and evolution within the realm of public policy. Furthermore, canonical criticism on its own fails to fully recognize the implications of the phenomena of rewriting, as evidenced within the canon itself, the exemplar being the Chronicler's rewriting of the so-called Deuteronomistic History.⁵ The canonical critic may appreciate the poetics of intertextuality at the macro level; however, discussions of reinterpretation within the genetic makeup of a text are deemed incompatible.

Related to his appraisal on canonical criticism, Levinson critiques many incarnations of inner-biblical exegesis. He argues that many expressions of inner-biblical exegesis focus on the interplay of one text and another as a complementary method for emphasis and clarification. For Levinson, this approach fails to satisfy the nature of scribal innovation on

⁴ Several key studies have been published on the evidences for and heuristic models of scribal activity in the Levant and greater ANE: Karel van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009); David Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); William Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁵ Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 14.

the level evidenced in Deuteronomy. He argues, “[T]he canon was not simply a textual mine for subsequent creative borrowing but a problem that had to be overcome hermeneutically.”⁶ He asserts the authors of Deuteronomy were not interested in interpretation but transformation. Exegesis may not engender continuity but dis-continuity under the guise of continuity. A proposed motivation of concealment prompts Levinson to adopt a derogatory tone. He writes, “The old saw of Deuteronomy as a pious fraud may thus profitably be inverted. Is there not something of an impious fraud – of *pecca fortiter!* – in the literary accomplishment of the text’s authors?”⁷

Levinson’s analysis of Deuteronomy has become a lightning rod, namely, within evangelical scholarship. Detractors often challenge proposed claims of theological innovation by refuting specific details of his research, which are seen as questioning the literary integrity of Deuteronomy.⁸ Although these critiques present valid arguments, they

⁶ Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 14.

⁷ Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 150.

⁸ For an example of evangelical dialog with Bernard Levinson see J. Gordon McConville, “Passover and Maṣṣôt: A Response to Bernard M. Levinson,” *JBL* 119.1 (2000): 47–58; Bernard Levinson, “The Hermeneutics of Tradition in Deuteronomy: A Reply to J. G. McConville,” *JBL* 119.2 (2000): 269–86. See also Christopher B. Ansberry and Jerry Hwang, “No Covenant Before Exile? The Deuteronomic Torah and Israel’s Covenant Theology,” in *Evangelical Faith and the Challenge of Historical Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 74–94. Ansberry and Hwang summarize the concerns driving the defense of Deuteronomy’s literary integrity: “Since historical-critical scholarship generally considers the canonical form of Deuteronomy

fail to address the broader methodological issues at the heart of that Levinson's scholarship.

In fact, by arguing for a position of Deuteronomic "unity," they effectively embody the methodology that he is interrogating, favoring synchronic over diachronic methods, poetics over genetics. Consequently, any adequate critique of Levinson's "hermeneutics of revision" must address the methodological concerns and not merely contextual points in question.⁹

One fruitful attempt to reconcile synchronic/critical and diachronic/canonical analysis of the Book of Deuteronomy is Bill Arnold's distinction between the *ipsissima vox* and the *ipsissima verba* of Moses.¹⁰ Arnold acknowledges that efforts to prioritize

to be a product of the exilic or post-exilic periods, it is not surprising that evangelicals have attempted to shield the document from the force of such reconstructions. The apparent implications of these reconstructions raise questions that can be troubling if the core of Deuteronomy (*Ur-Deuteronomium*) is a pious fraud composed during Josiah's reign to legitimate his reform movement, what does that mean for its authority as Scripture?" Ansberry and Hwang, "No Covenant Before Exile?," 74.

⁹ On a broader methodological level, Levinson's scholarship is driven by an attempt to dispel what he sees as an exegetical priority placed upon narrative texts over legal corpora. For greater context of Levinson's critical project see Bernard Levinson, *The Right Chorus: Studies in Biblical Law and Interpretation*, vol. 54 of *FAT* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).

The debate over methodological priority predates Levinson's work. In fact, nearly two decades prior the publication of *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Revision* Robert Polzin wrote, "The very question that today confronts anyone who attempts to analyze biblical material in a scholarly context is: Should one's approach be primarily historical or literary, diachronic or synchronic?" Robert Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History* (New York: Seabury, 1980), 1. Although Polzin did not deny the importance of *genetic* or diachronic analysis, he assigned "operational priority" to the literary analysis of a text's "final form." For similar methodological discussion see Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1985).

¹⁰ Bill T. Arnold, "Deuteronomy as the *Ipsissima Vox* of Moses," *J. Theol. Interpret.* 4.1 (2010): 53–74.

synchronic methodology in regards to Deuteronomy are often driven by scholarly models that view Mosaic authorship as a theological necessity. Without dismissing the importance of Moses as an authoritative figure, Arnold avers that disregard of critical scholarship on scribal processes is “irresponsible.”¹¹

Arnold appeals to a discussion within New Testament scholarship, which discerns a distinction between the exact words of Jesus (*ipsissima verba*) and the message of Jesus (*ipsissima vox*) as a heuristic model for arguments concerning Mosaic authorship. Taking up an *ipsissima vox* paradigm recognizes that the “voice” of Jesus is still accessible even though the precise spoken word might not be. Arnold argues for embracing the idea of *ipsissima vox* when exploring the relationship between Moses, Deuteronomy, and the Pentateuch as a whole as it mediates concerns for authoritative attribution to a historical figure while also recognizing the process of scribal processes of reinterpretation.

In concert with the *ipsissima vox* model, Arnold pairs Michael Fishbane’s distinction between *traditum* and *traditio* with the concept of *mimesis* found in classical literature.¹²

¹¹ Arnold, “*Ipissima Vox*,” 61.

¹² Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985). Fishbane was also an influential voice for Bernard Levinson serving as his doctoral advisor at Brandies University.

Interested in early examples of Jewish exegetical tradition, Fishbane distinguished between the content of a received tradition (*traditum*) and the process of reception (*traditio*). This base tradition was not immutable, in the sense that the content and form never experienced modification over time, but was the result of a complex process of interpretation and reinterpretation.¹³ Similarly, the classical literary tradition of *mimesis* or imitation represents the reuse of an authoritative text, although the tradition does not develop through aggregation. A specific exemplar, either a particular text or overall genre, is reshaped into emerging contexts over time without diminishing the authoritative nature even though efforts to meticulously recreate content are not a priority.

Paul Ricoeur And Philosophical Hermeneutics

Foundational to all discussions of reinterpretation, including Bernard Levinson, Bill Arnold, and Michael Fishbane, is an appeal to recognized hermeneutical practice and methods. In

¹³ For a similar discussion see Prosper Grech, "Inner-Biblical Reinterpretation and Modern Hermeneutics," in *Philosophical Hermeneutics and Biblical Exegesis*, WUNT 153 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 221–37. Grech employs Fishbane's model of *traditum* and *traditio* when discussing the relationship between *intentio auctoris* and *intentio textus*. Grech posits, "Is reinterpretative hermeneutic an appeal to the *sensus auctoris* or to the *sensus textus*?...In reinterpretation, a text must be read both diachronically and synchronically if it is to provide an answer to questions posed by its readers." Grech, "Inner-Biblical Reinterpretation," 235–36.

this regard, Levinson makes the bold claim, “In its hermeneutics of innovation,

Deuteronomy is more radical than most contemporary hermeneutical theory.”¹⁴ Unpacking

this statement, he continues,

Deuteronomy breaks down any facile bifurcation between text and interpretation or between text composition and text reception. Many recent works of literary and philosophical hermeneutics, detached from the philological method, fail to recognize the intellectual, authorial, redactional, and radically transformative nature of ancient Israelite textually.¹⁵

The suggestion that Deuteronomy represents a conscious hermeneutical exercise, “possibly more complex than appreciated in previous scholarship,” is insightful; however, one must ask what Levinson means by “contemporary hermeneutical theory” and “philosophical hermeneutics.”¹⁶

I suggest that an appeal to the methodology of Paul Ricoeur has significant heuristic value in situating Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic “voices”¹⁷ within both genetic and poetic

¹⁴ Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 17. Italics added for emphasis.

¹⁵ Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 17.

¹⁶ In building his definition of philosophical hermeneutics Levinson cites Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*, SPEP (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1969). Also Brayton Polka, *Truth and Interpretation: An Essay in Thinking* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1990). Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 17 n.46.

¹⁷ Throughout the dissertation I will generally apply the term “voice(s)” opposed to “author(s)” as it allows for a polyphonic definition of authorial intent. See discussion in Chapter 1.

hermeneutical processes. One of the most influential individuals in philosophical hermeneutics in the 20th Century, Ricoeur explores the nature of human relationships with texts and how the use and reuse of literary and communicative structures are integral to the development of identity formation. With explanations of the hermeneutical process akin to Fishbane, Ricoeur's work on the relationships between ideological critique and narrative imagination is enlightening for the illumination of scribal reinterpretation and inner-biblical exegesis.

Born in Valence, France, Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005)¹⁸ began his academic training at the University of Rennes (1932), taking courses in both philosophy and the classics. He furthered his training with a master's degree in philosophy at the Sorbonne in Paris (1934), where he was heavily influenced by the existentialist Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973). Following the German invasion into Western Europe, Ricoeur was drafted into the French army

¹⁸ For general biography of Ricoeur see Paul Ricoeur, "Intellectual Biography," in *The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*, ed. Lewis E. Hahn, vol. 22 of *The Library of Living Philosophers* (Chicago: Open Court, 1995), 3–53; Charles E. Reagan, *Paul Ricoeur: His Life and His Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Dan R. Stiver, *Ricoeur and Theology*, Philosophy and Theology (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012); Anthony C. Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 228–54. The most influential appropriation of Paul Ricoeur in Biblical Studies is Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Biblical Narrative in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur: A Study in Hermeneutics and Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

(1940); however, he spent most of the war, five years, in a German prisoner of war camp. While in captivity, he studied essential works of German philosophy: the existentialism of Karl Jaspers, the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, and the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. During his internment, Ricoeur translated significant philosophical works into French, and, along with fellow academics in the camp, lectured and offered courses. Upon liberation, Ricoeur returned to the academy, teaching at the University of Strasbourg (1948-1956), returning to the Sorbonne in 1956 as a lecturer. After spending most of the 1960s in experimental universities throughout Paris, in 1970, Ricoeur traveled to the United States, where he succeeded Paul Tillich as the John Nuveen Professor of Philosophical Theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School. It was this tenure that solidified his place as a significant influence in biblical studies, namely in the area of hermeneutic philosophy.¹⁹

¹⁹ For a heuristic analysis of Paul Ricoeur's influence in biblical studies and theology see Boyd Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy*, Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2010). Blundell distinguishes "three Ricoeurs," asserting that understanding the subtle distinctions is necessary to curb misappropriation. For example, within many confessional circles, Ricoeur is often appreciated as a biblical hermeneuticist; however, Blundell argues that this role, although "profitable," was never a moniker Ricoeur claimed. The intent of Ricoeur's biblical exposition is not exegesis for shaping a faith community as much as it is an exploration of universal human existence. Secondly, Ricoeur's writings on the biblical text have often led readers to view him as a theologian more so than he was. Blundell deems Ricoeur as a "philosopher of religion," an enterprise distinct from being a theologian. Blundell's "third Ricoeur" represents the core of Ricoeur's professional project, developing a so-called *philosophical anthropology*, a quest to understanding human *being*. For Ricoeur, hermeneutic philosophy extends beyond the text to asking questions of selfhood. Developing both cooperate and individual

Detour and Return

The core of Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutical philosophy is what he calls a pattern of *detour* and *return*.²⁰ For Ricoeur, the hermeneutical process begins with a moment of critical reflection on the meaning of symbolic structures (i.e., signs, metaphors, narrative). Upon a distancing from a text,²¹ a richer version of identity emerges. The pattern of *detour* and *return* exhibits the central dialectic tension within hermeneutical philosophy: the relationship between *explanation* (*Erklärung*) and *understanding* (*Verstehen*). *Explanation* refers to the attempt at objective knowing through analytical techniques, whereas *understanding* is more personal and intuitive, an existential experience akin to knowing a friend.²²

identities, bears implications beyond "self-awareness" into all facets human being, e.g. moral norms and ethical aims. Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy*, 3–6.

²¹ The usage of the term "text" throughout this dissertation represents the broadest application of the term. This approach is heuristic for approaching ancient literary traditions that extend beyond the written word to oral discourse. Ricoeur posits that the base level of textuality is the sentence structure. It is here that a shift from language to discourse manifests in five characteristics: event, choice, innovation, reference, and subjectivity. Ricoeur embraces the so-called "4s" definition of discourse attributed to Émile Benveniste: *someone* says *something* to *someone* about *something*. Paul Ricoeur, "The Canon Between Text and Community," in *Philosophical Hermeneutics and Biblical Exegesis*, WUNT 153 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 8–12; Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy*, 71–72. See also Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 103–13.

²² Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction*, 9–10. Kevin Vanhoozer abridges the relationship as one between *method* and *truth*. Vanhoozer, *Biblical Narrative*, 87.

Paul Ricoeur argues that both *explanation* and *understanding* are vital moments within the hermeneutical experience. Engagement with a text prompts, forces one, to appropriate it into an understanding of identity, both corporate and individual. One must take up a “hermeneutics of suspicion,” attempting to question both the motives of a text, and the self; however, there is a richness of language, symbol, and metaphor in both the historical, cultural origins of a text as well as an existential relationship that one cannot wholly detach themselves. When applying this dual operation to the biblical text, or any sacred text, critical interpretation using historical-critical methodologies and philology is essential; however, there is also a relationship with source traditions based on personal experiences that cannot be denied or dismissed as disingenuous. Ricoeur famously writes, “*Hermeneutics seemed to me* to be animated by this double motivation: willingness to suspect, wiliness to listen; vow of rigor, vow of obedience.”²³

There are two corresponding manifestations of the *detour* and *return* in Ricoeur’s work: the *critical arc* and the *narrative arc*. Paul Ricoeur’s representation of the *critical arc* presents a heuristic model when engaging with the synchronic/diachronic methodological

²³ Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1970), 27.

dichotomy. For example, one begins with an inherently synchronic “naïve understanding” of a text as it exists in its canonical form. However, to arrive at a place of genuine *understanding (truth)*, one must take up a critical position of *explanation (method)* toward both the text and self. Critical *distanciation* includes a multitude of methodologies, including both poetics, and inherently diachronic approaches that appreciate the aggregate process of reception. However, the *critical arc* does not leave the reader in a position of “suspicion,” but in fact should prompt a return to the text with a more profound appropriation. The essential goal of reflection is always re-engagement, the result of the *critical arc* being an “*unstable equilibrium* between suspicion and sympathy.”²⁴ One might argue that the return position is the same location as the beginning as genuine *understanding* is always from the final form of the text. However, unlike purely synchronic approaches, the critical arc acknowledges diachronic realities. Distanciation forces engagement away from monolithic interpretations to noting both dialectical realities, and

²⁴ Boyd Blundell explains the movements of the critical arc, “Among these are detours from hermeneutics of tradition through a critique of ideologies to a critical hermeneutics, from conviction through critique to deeper conviction, and from ethical aims through moral norms to practical wisdom.” Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy*, 2. Blundell borrows the term “unstable equilibrium” from Andrzej Wiercinski.

potential dialogical tensions, what one might call “fractures” in the text.²⁵ An impetus to “harmonize” is circumvented for a greater appreciation of the fundamental nature of the text.

The *narrative arc*, central to Paul Ricoeur’s discourse on the correlation between history and experienced time, explores the interrelationship between text and action, how the experience is collated into the formation of narrative identity. Ricoeur writes, “*We are following, therefore, the destiny of a prefigured time that becomes a refigured time through the mediation of a configured time.*”²⁶ The *prefigured* is the received tradition, the symbolic networks in which action takes place. *Configuration* functions as the “*detour*” within the *narrative arc* being the process of reshaping received text to align with the author(s) ideology.²⁷ The moment of *configuration* represents the application of narrative techniques akin to critical methodologies that are a part of *distanciation*. The moment of

²⁵ For the terminology of textual “fractures” in the Old Testament, David M. Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis: Historical and Literary Approaches* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1996).

²⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative. Vol. 1*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 54. Italics original to author.

²⁷ I will explore the complexity of the term *ideology* in Chapter 1. The working definition for *ideology* throughout the dissertation is: *a constitutive paradigm for social integration utilized to conserve, legitimate, and/or distort socio-political structures within the process of narrative identity formation.*

return is when the *configured* text becomes appropriated by a new audience resulting in *refiguration*, taking the *configured*, as Boyd Blundell writes, “[B]ack into the field of action by its readers...and applied as a paradigm for both the making of decisions and the interpretation of new experiences.”²⁸

The trajectory of the *narrative arc* aligns with Ricoeur’s appropriation of *mimesis*.²⁹ Ricoeur describes *mimesis* as a tripartite process integral to a proper understating of historical identity. Following the *prefigured, configured, refigured* schema, *memesis₁* locates representation within a system of received communicative structures. *Memesis₂* represents the mediating function between *prefigured* and *refigured* with *memesis₃*, marking “[T]he intersection of the world of the text and the world of the hearer or the reader; the intersection, therefore of the world configured ...and the world wherein real action occurs and unfolds its specific temporality.”³⁰

²⁸ Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy*, 3.

²⁹ Ricoeur’s thesis of *mimesis* develops through an analysis of Aristotle’s correlation between *muthos* (plot) and *mimesis* (representation). Ricoeur reads Aristotle as equating the two concepts (*mimesis* = *muthos*) which prompts the admission, “I am calling narrative exactly what Aristotle calls *muthos*, the organization of the events.” However, for Ricoeur, *muthos* is not a structure, but the act of structuring. Consequently, he defines *mimesis* as the “active process of imitating or representing something.” Ricoeur states, “[I]mitating or representing is a mimetic activity inasmuch as it produces something, namely the organization of events by emplotment.” Ricoeur, *TN 1*, 33–36.

³⁰ Ricoeur, *TN 1*, 71.

Cultural Imagination

Returning to Levinson's comment that the actions/intentions of the Deuteronomic scribes were more “innovative” than broad hermeneutical theories allow, I argue Paul Ricoeur provides a framework for appreciating natural interpretive/reinterpretive hermeneutical process within Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic literary traditions.³¹ Levinson argues that the Deuteronomic writers reinterpreted older legislative traditions into the legal framework of an *Ur-Deuteronomium*. In the context of Ricoeur's philosophical hermeneutics, Pre/Proto Deuteronomic traditions represent a *prefigured* field of cultural reference (*memesis*₁). These traditions are subsequently configured (*memesis*₂) to reflect particular ideological intentionality³² (e.g., covenant faithfulness, centralization). Consequently, the reinterpreted text becomes reinterpreted once again in the minds of the readers (*memesis*₃) appropriated as an effectual “cipher” for the organization of a Deuteronomistic history. In

³¹ This is not to suggest that ancient scribes were consciously aware of the hermeneutical process, but Ricoeur's theory is an explanation of the inherent, presumably unconscious, processes of identity formation in textual production.

³² I will expound on the term *intentionality* in chapter 1. *Intentionality* refers to the essential structures or ideal content of conscious experience regardless of empirical experience. Regardless of empirical differences, it is conceivable for disparate individuals or groups to have similar conscious experiences of the same phenomena, i.e. a shared stream of tradition.

every stage of the process, ideology is contemplated, evaluated, and contrasted/supported using both scribal techniques of revision and reinterpretation alongside literary conventions of plot and metaphor.^{33 34}

Throughout the dissertation, I will focus on what I view as an intersection within the roadmap of detour and return. The moment where a received tradition is evaluated and subsequently given shape, where critical engagement and narrative formation align

³³ In the presentation of his threefold mimesis, Ricoeur explicitly highlights the relationship between law and narrative within the Book of Deuteronomy. For example, in Deuteronomy, the giving of the law is framed in the context of Yahweh's deliverance from Egypt, the Decalogue itself prefaced with the narrative statement, "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt out of the land of slavery." The intersection of narrative and law ultimately shape both; law is part of history and history systematized in relationship to the law. The dialectical relationship between both genres is further evident in the organization of a so-called Deuteronomistic History. Israel fashions a vast narrative history introduced by the reception of covenant legislation which in turn functions an organizing principle for shaping the history. Kevin Vanhoozer writes, "In Ricoeur's view, the enduring temporality of the law carries with it the dimension of God's faithfulness. Yahweh keeps his word. This is what the whole course of the Deuteronomistic history shows: obedience results in blessing, disobedience in downfall. The latter events of Israel's history are not simply added to the originating events but augment their meaning. The combination of law and narrative, in other words, results in a cumulative history of the faithfulness of God. The conjunction of law and narrative is thus of theological significance: not just any theology or form of life results from such a combination. This intertextuality of law and narrative decisively shaped Israel's historical existence, her traditions and her very Identity." Vanhoozer, *Biblical Narrative*, 201–2.

³⁴ As Ricoeur avers, no narrative representation of events is entirely "objective." History is inherently *emplotted* in ways that reflect/promote an ideological position. The term *emplotment* was coined by Paul Ricoeur and can be defined as, *the organization of a series of events within the historical field of reference into a narrative explanation with a conscious plot*. Ricoeur, *TN 1*, 33–36. On the ideological nature of historical emplotment see also the work of Hayden White namely: *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

(distanciation and configuration), effectively updating the prefigured field into the context of the author, embodies what Paul Ricoeur designates *cultural imagination*. For Ricoeur, *cultural imagination* represents a dialectic relationship between the social constructs of *ideology* and *utopia*. The two phenomena interact within a critical spiral where the former is critiqued and challenged/supported by projections of the later. However, the reverse relationship is also inherent. When a vision of society becomes too far removed from realistic expectations, it also must be reined in by the constitutive core ideology of a society.³⁵

Boyd Blundell traces the roots of Ricoeur's detour and return to the idea of "secondary reflection" (*reflexion seconde*).³⁶ According to Blundell, a key concern of existentialism is the relationship between *abstract* and *concrete*. The abstract is a proposed

³⁵ Scholars have noted that Ricoeur's work on ideology and utopia, and critical theory in general, represent an often-overlooked portion of his oeuvre. David Kaplan posits that "Hermeneutic philosophers are not considered members of the club of cultural critics. They are seen as belonging to a different area of philosophy, only mentioned by critical theorists as examples of how not to think critically." David M. Kaplan, "Ricoeur's Critical Theory," in *Reading Ricoeur*, ed. David M. Kaplan (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 2008), 197–212. For a detailed analysis of Ricoeur's work as a critical theorist, namely in light of his interaction with interaction with Habermas see John B. Thompson, *Critical Hermeneutics: A Study in the Thought of Paul Ricoeur and Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

³⁶ The concept of "secondary reflection" originates in the work of Gabriel Marcel. See Blundell, 58-62 for a summary of Marcel's influence on Ricoeur.

conceptual understanding of a concrete object/event, the “existential mystery” being how to understand the interaction with the concrete. For example, justice is an abstraction, and just action a concrete event. Interaction between two individuals or entities experienced as equitable, impartial, right, etc., prompts an existential mystery, how does one speak of this event, and others like it? Subsequently, the abstract identifier “Justice” is conceived.

However, when one speaks of “justice,” there must be a phenomenological return to the concrete interaction evaluating if the abstract is an accurate representation of the event/object. Blundell writes, “The concrete makes no sense without the abstraction, but the abstraction itself is not real, so the only way to proceed is in a constant state of reflective dialectic that is employed ‘for the sake of the concrete.’”³⁷ Primary reflection represents the abstract understanding of concrete experience, whereas secondary reflection is a “doubling back, a re-collection of the original situation in which the problem arose.” Blundell explains, “Primary reflection works at the level of the abstract, but secondary reflection acts as a reflection on the act of primary reflection and reaffirms the abstract “problem” arose in the context of an existential mystery.”³⁸

³⁷ Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy*, 61.

³⁸ Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy*, 60.

For Israel, the existential mystery is a unique relationship with Yahweh God. This mystery has roots in real experience(s): the encounter with Yahweh God through the Exodus event and the divine revelation on Sinai/Horeb. The first institutes the unique relationship, and the second defines the parameters of said relationship. These existential mysteries prompt a question, in light of this event: “Who are we (Israel)?” The primary reflection produces an abstract proposal, “This is who we are (Israel).” These proposals take the form of both ideologies (i.e., cult centralization, Davidic sanction, Zion theology) and projected visions (i.e., a prosperous empire, a wise and pious king, a just and equitable society). Both are in constant competition for the “better/best” answer to the existential question, each evaluating the other in relation to the concrete event, the “existential mystery.”

The Way Forward

I argue Deuteronomic scribal “innovation” should not be isolated to the DLC but is best contemplated within a broader shared stream of tradition. Deuteronomy and its genetic ilk represent innately connected discourse mediating defining experiences through a multitude of social constructions: i.e., prophetic oracles, court histories, legal codes, programs for

cultic purity. Although the phenomena may vary, the intention is always equivalent, a mediation on the existential mystery. Therefore, in the following dissertation, I will overlay Paul Ricoeur's model of *cultural imagination* upon a proposed stream of tradition, delimiting a phenomenology of *Deuteronomism*.

The crucible of this theoretical progression is the Judean State Period of ancient Israel (Eighth - Sixth Century BCE), a period of significant social upheaval.³⁹ Major geopolitical developments, such as the western expansions of the Neo-Assyrian Empire under Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727 BCE) and subsequent fall of Samaria (722 BCE), engendered deliberation on the constative nature of Israelite identity. Varying abstract ideologies and concrete proposals were challenged/supported through utopian visions of social organization "better" than present realities.

Chapter 1 will be devoted to theoretical discussions and the definition of terminology. I will present literature reviews on the application of the concepts of *ideology*

³⁹ Prosper Gretsch states, "[H]istory is an essential hermeneutical key for a people with a proud awareness of its origins. In such a turbulent region as the ancient Middle East especially, political and social changes were bound to introduce new mentalities often in conflict with earlier ones. Therefore, as a backbone of national self-identification and identity was to be retained, flexibility in the interpretation of earlier data was inevitable. Diversities and contradictions must be smoothed out to maintain continuity... The *Sitz im Leben* of reinterpretation is the change in socio-historical situations, which calls for new attitudes of faith and a rewriting of texts along the line of foundational tenets." Gretsch, "Inner-Biblical Reinterpretation," 222.

and *utopia* in HB/OT scholarship with a specific focus on Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic literary traditions. These reviews will highlight the absence and/or misrepresentation of Paul Ricoeur's analysis of the dialectical relationship of ideology and utopia. Ricoeur's proposition of *cultural imagination* gestated through a series of lectures Paul Ricoeur first delivered at the University of Chicago in 1975.⁴⁰ I will spend considerable time breaking down Ricoeur's arguments within the *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia* alongside more concise discourses on *cultural imagination* within the Ricoeurian oeuvre. Throughout this discussion, I will introduce working definitions of essential concepts such as *Deuteronomism, ideology, utopia, and cultural imagination*.

In Chapter 2, I will explore the roots of Deuteronomism as cultural imagination through an appeal to the symbol/metaphor of covenant. I argue that the literary phenomena of covenant functions as the prefigured field of historical reference for Israelite constitutive narrative identity. Found throughout the ancient Near East culture streams, the

⁴⁰ Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, ed. George H. Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). The first nine lectures present Ricoeur's development of a working paradigm for the term ideology, beginning with a historical and philosophical trajectory of Marxist applications of the term. Stating with Marx himself, Ricoeur mediates other 20th century theorist who attempted to move ideology beyond purely materialistic models namely Karl Mannheim. Also vital for Ricoeur is Clifford Geertz, an influential 20th century theoretician in the disciplines of sociology/anthropology. The last three lectures shift to *utopia* and how literary phenomena functions in relationship to *ideology* within social imagination.

covenant as cultural imagination inherently represents a dialog between competing ideologies. One particular ideology is supported by a utopian vision (blessings), whereas a competing ideology is challenged by presenting it as potentially dystopian (curses). I will also introduce the role of dystopia as a literary phenomena complementary to utopia.

In Chapter 3, the discussion of covenant as a constitutive symbolic phenomenon within Deuteronomism will be grounded in an analysis of the Hosianic prophetic tradition. Representing a Pre-Deuteronomic ideology, the Hosianic “voice” upholds covenantal obligations as essential to Israelite constitutive identity. Consequently, cultic syncretism and reliance upon geopolitical alliances are considered anathema. The prophet encourages Israel to recall the time of their youth when Yahweh God found them in the wilderness. By restoring covenant faithfulness, renewal of that relationship is a future possibility.

In Chapter 4, I will suggest how significant socio-political challenges throughout the Levant during the Late 8th Century engendered ideological/theological dialog about the organization of both polity and cult. I will argue that centralization is at the heart of Deuteronomism and becomes the core ideological challenge for the Davidic dynasty. The Judean court had to present valid legitimation as the promoter and protector of constitutive

Israelite traditions within a monumental shift from decentralized tribal structures to monarchical government.

In chapter 5, I will explore the Deuteronomic Legal Code (DLC) as a utopian vision meant to both challenge and support images of a potential centralized society that fails to uphold the obligations toward righteous justice foundational to covenantal duties with Yahweh God. I will argue that centralization is not only an ideological tenet within the DLC but functions as a structuring norm. The rhetorical geography of Deuteronomy Chapters 12-26 provides a centripetal force that draws the reader from periphery to center and backs out again. I will pay special attention to the so-called LOTK, functioning as the representative center of utopian polity and image of an exemplary Israelite.

Societal shifts often force the hand of reflection. How do we, as a society, process current events within the parameters we understand to be constitutive to our identity as a people? During the Eighth Century BCE, the Levant faced seismic geopolitical upheaval on a level not experienced since the collapse of the great city-states three to four centuries prior. A people Israel who emerged from the ashes of the Bronze Age were confronted with an existential crisis. The social constructs that had served well in the past were revisited; a literary tradition emerged. Legal codes were reworked to maintain the principles behind

the law within new social realities. These new social constructs, although reflecting a different moment, still mediate the constitutive experience. In each generation there are competing proposals for the “better/best” answer to the existential question, what does it mean to be Israel?

CHAPTER ONE

ESTABLISHING THEORETICAL MODELS

(1.1) Introduction

This dissertation is a mediation of Paul Ricoeur's theory of *cultural imagination* as a heuristic model for understanding so-called "hermeneutics of revision" in ancient scribal literature, namely the Book of Deuteronomy. A cross-discipline dialog such as this needs to make a substantial effort in establishing foundational parameters and definition of terminology. Therefore, in the present chapter, I will spend considerable time breaking down Ricoeur's foundational arguments regarding *cultural imagination*. For Ricoeur, *cultural imagination* represents a dialectic relationship between the social constructs of *ideology* and *utopia*. The two phenomena interact within a dialectical spiral where the former is critiqued and challenged/supported by projections of the latter, and the latter is reined in by the constative nature of the former. However, the reverse relationship is also inherent. When a vision of society becomes too far removed from realistic expectations, it also must be reined in by the constitutive core ideology of a society. I view *cultural imagination* as an intersection within the hermeneutical roadmap of detour and return

where a received tradition is evaluated and subsequently given a renewed configuration. As an articulation of Ricoeur's proposal, I offer a working definition of *cultural imagination* as *an expression of a dialectical relationship between the phenomena of ideology and utopia within the rhetoric of social action where one assesses the validity of the other within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation.*

A working definition of cultural imagination only further reasons a need for illustrating the parts of the whole. Accordingly, the following chapter will explore the two key components of ideology and utopia. Clarity of terminology is imperative as both terms represent varying applications throughout biblical studies. For example, *ideology* is a multivalent term bearing a range of meaning from the nuance of distortion used to promote the interests of ruling classes, to broad definitions as "world-view." Utopia also has diversity in its analysis. Often discussed as a literary phenomenon, the relationship between visions grounded in possibility, and those deemed fantastic, schizophrenic, and even apocalyptic, are complex. I will present brief literature reviews on the application of both ideology and utopia in HB/OT scholarship with a specific focus on Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic literary traditions highlighting throughout the absence and misrepresentation of Paul Ricoeur's relationship between the two social constructs.

I argue that the application of cultural imagination will not only assist in an appreciation of scribal revision within the Book of Deuteronomy, but it is also imperative to an overarching goal of defining *Deuteronomism*, an apt goal as Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic, or *D* terminology is inextricably tied to the hermeneutical process. *D* vocabulary evolved from the LXX translation δευτερονόμιον of the Hebrew מִשְׁנֵה הַתּוֹרָה found in Deut. 17:18. Located at the rhetorical center of the Deuteronomic Legal Code (DLC), within the so-called Law of the King (LOTK) [Deut. 17:14-20],¹ both the Greek and Hebrew lexemes reflect an act of textual production in the creation of a second, or copy of a foundational document. In effect, scribal processes are central to *D*. The LOTK presents a newly enthroned monarch with a weighty task; the king is expected to draft a copy of “*this* Torah” (הַתּוֹרָה / νόμος) emulating of the scribal craft.² Although the assumption appears to be the production of a verbatim duplicate, as opposed to *reinterpretation* in the formal sense, hermeneutical processes take place in the broad sense

¹ On the central location of the Law of the King within the Deuteronomic Legal Code see Chapter 5.

² Looking again at morphological origins, adding the suffix *-ism* to an abstract noun, in this case *Deuteronomic*, converts the root into an action, condition, state of being, or doctrine. The Oxford English Dictionary offers that the suffix *-ism* bears the meaning of “taking side with” or “imitation of.” Consequently, *Deuteronomism is an active inclination, proposed state of being, in imitation of Torah, “This Law.”* As an *ism* is also often a synonym for an ideology, and one could transpose Deuteronomism for Deuteronomology.

that discourse is mediated through textual production. Although passively present, the ceremonial role of the priest, albeit ambiguous, bears a prospect of didacticism. In terms of Ricoeurian *mimesis*, the LOTK might bear witness to Levitical *refiguration* alongside the royal *configuration* of a *prefigured* tradition.

(1.1.1) D Terminology

Like both ideology and utopia, *D* terminology itself has a murky history. In 1979 Walter Zimmerli issued a ‘challenge’ to develop differentiated criteria for a more acute appreciation of “the phenomenon of 'Deuteronomism,'" and its prehistory, which in his words “certainly did not fall suddenly complete from heaven.”³ Concern for clarification of usage came to a head by the end of the 20th Century in the hopes of curbing a so-called pan-Deuteronomism.⁴ In this regard, Richard Coggins presents three categorical designations of

³ Walter Zimmerli, “The History of Israelite Religion,” in *Tradition and Interpretation: Essays by Members of the Society for Old Testament Study*, ed. G. W. Anderson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 380.

⁴ For a discussion on the so-called epidemic of pan-Deuteronomism see Linda S. Schearing and Steven L. McKenzie, eds., *Those Elusive Deuteronomists: The Phenomenon of Pan-Deuteronomism*, JSOTSup 268 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).

how *D* terminology has been employed in Old Testament studies, warning that the same vocabulary is often used for “essentially different phenomena.”⁵

The first category represents a simple relationship between a defined literary entity and its genomic ilk. The word *Deuteronomy* designates the biblical book known by that name. *Deuteronomic* literature refers to the legal material in the said book whereas *Deuteronomistic* refers to non-legal writing built upon, or bearing a genetic relationship to, the code itself. These common distinctions have origins in dating back to Wellhausen and 19th Century biblical studies.⁶

Coggin's second category is the designation for a process of redaction, and ultimately canonization, where diverse textual traditions with the tenets characteristic to a *D* literary corpus are aligned into varying redactional schema. Martin Noth's watershed thesis of a Deuteronomistic Historian (DtrH), a redactor who used *Deuteronomic* material as a type of cipher for shaping a vast national history, resulted in the development of

⁵ Richard Coggins, “What Does ‘Deuteronomistic’ Mean?,” in *Those Elusive Deuteronomists*, ed. Linda S. Schearing and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 268 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 22–35.

⁶ Norbert Lohfink, “Was There a Deuteronomistic Movement,” in *Those Elusive Deuteronomists*, ed. Linda S. Schearing and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 268 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 37–38. Lohfink cites Julius Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (3rd ed., 1899; repr., Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1963), 117.

numerous editorial theories each with its schematic sigla (i.e., Dtr¹, Dtr², DtrG, DtrH, DtrN, DtrP).⁷ A significant concern for Coggins and others is that these designations have sailed beyond the shores of what might constitute distinguishable *D* material and are employed as noting editorial layers in the broader pentateuchal traditions and throughout the HB/OT as a whole.⁸

Although applications of the first two categories bear weight throughout this dissertation, it is Coggins' third classification that will be the most influential. Coggins recognizes the designation Deuteronomism as a potential representation for "an *ideological movement* which played a major part in shaping the self-understanding of Judaism."⁹ However, the existence of a so-called Deuteronomistic "school" or "movement" has been a point of contention.¹⁰ Discussions of a "movement" or "school" typically align with

⁷ For an overview of redactional theories see Sandra Richter, "Deuteronomistic History," *DOThB*, 219–30.

⁸ For proposals of Deuteronomistic influence throughout the entire HB/OT see various essays in Schearing and McKenzie, *Those Elusive Deuteronomists*.

⁹ Coggins, "What Does 'Deuteronomistic' Mean?," 35. Italics added.

¹⁰ See David Noel Freedman, "The Deuteronomistic School," in *Fortunate the Eyes That See: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman*, ed. A. B. Beck (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 70–80. A flurry of literature on the topic of scribal culture in the Ancient Near East has cast doubt on the presence of a "school" in a formal sense. See Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature*; Philip R. Davies, *Scribes and Schools: The Canonization of Hebrew Scriptures*, LAI (Louisville: Westminster/John

historical-critical models asking, “Who *were* the Deuteronomists?” Whether it is Van Rad’s Levites¹¹, Nicholson’s prophets¹², or Weinfeld’s scribes¹³, each theory tries to determine a specific social location for Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic thought, typically singling out a particular attribute, be it a connection to Mosaic tradition, emphasis on prophetic authority, or an affinity with ANE wisdom rhetoric.

Writing against the language of a Deuteronomistic “School/Movement,” Norbert Lohfink asks what constitutes a “movement?”¹⁴ Appealing to the German term *Bewegung* designating “a large number of humans come together to realize a common (political) project, Lohfink writes, “the idea of a movement (*Bewegung*)...goes beyond the limits of an organization created ad hoc, of a given political party or individual groups. Numerous and

Knox, 1998); D. W. Jamieson-Drake, *Scribes and Schools in Monarchic Judah: A Socio-Archeological Approach*, SWBA, First Series 6 (Sheffield, UK: Almond Press, 1991); Susan Niditch, *Oral World and Written Word: Ancient Israelite Literature*, LAI (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1996).

¹¹ Gerhard Von Rad, *Studies in Deuteronomy*, trans. Davis Stalker, SBT 9 (London: SCM Press, 1953). See also Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology, Vol. 1*, trans. Davis Stalker (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 69–77.

¹² Ernest W. Nicholson, *Deuteronomy and Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967).

¹³ Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992).

¹⁴ Lohfink, “Was There a Deuteronomistic Movement,” 36–66.

differentiated groups and even isolated individuals can join a movement.”¹⁵ For Lohfink, a movement wants to “set [processes] in motion,” often promoting social and political change. Consequently, he cautions against speaking of a Deuteronomistic movement/school, reserving D terminology for describing either textual affiliation (Coggins’ category one/two) or “concrete phenomenon” such as Deuteronomistic formulations or theologoumenon.¹⁶

(1.1.2) A Phenomenological Definition

I argue for a needed shift in methodology away from purely socio-historical reconstructions, toward a phenomenological understanding of Deuteronomism. Phenomenology as a philosophical discipline begins with acknowledging that one's perception of reality is not objective, in the sense of being object-centered, but is reliant upon sensory input.¹⁷ The

¹⁵ Lohfink, “Was There a Deuteronomistic Movement,” 45. Although he does find elements of a movement during the reign of Hezekiah, it is only under Josiah that he considers applying the term, see p. 59.

¹⁶ Lohfink, “Was There a Deuteronomistic Movement,” 39.

¹⁷ For an overview to phenomenology and its historical developments see David R. Cerbone, *Understanding Phenomenology* (Durham: Acumen, 2006); Michael Hammond, Jane Howarth, and Kent Russell, *Understanding Phenomenology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); Dermont Moran, *Introduction to Phenomenology* (London: Routledge, 2000).

phenomenologist is interested in delineating the difference between what one experiences and the perception of the experience.¹⁸ Consciousness of an experience, or even more so, consciousness itself, is more critical than material study. To this goal, one suspends judgment on the reliability of her observations, engaging in a thought exercise where presuppositions about the surrounding world are “bracketed off.” This practice allows participation in an *eidetic reduction* revealing things as they appear as phenomena rather than describing them from a position of systematic detachment.¹⁹

Eidetic reduction allows for the delineation of *essential structures* of conscious experience. Regardless of empirical differences, it is conceivable for disparate individuals or groups to have similar conscious experiences of the same phenomena. The fact that two distinct individuals have analogous thought episodes does not suggest that both share empirical or causal structures but points to essential structures, or ideal content, within the

¹⁸ As David Cerbone explains, “The word ‘phenomenology’ means ‘the study of phenomena,’ where the notion of phenomenon coincides, roughly, with the notion of experience. Thus, to attend to experience rather than what is experienced is to attend to the phenomena.” Cerbone, *Understanding Phenomenology*, 3.

¹⁹ Karl Simms provides an example of an eidetic analysis of a tree. “As a phenomenologist I do not focus on what appears as a material object (e.g. the physical structure of the tree), but on how the tree, myself, and the world around myself and the tree, all interact with one another. The description is not of how the tree is perceived but perception of the tree is a starting point.” Karl Simms, *Paul Ricoeur*, Routledge Critical Thinkers (London: Routledge, 2003), 11.

thought. According to David Cerbone, the similarity “[S]pecifies something essential about the thought, something essential to its being the particular thought that it is, in a way that all the particular characteristics of the psychological states and processes do not.”²⁰ The phenomenologist often refers to consciousness of ideal content as *intentionality*. Karl

Simms writes,

I don’t just think in the abstract, but I think *that* something is the case. Moreover, if I think that something is the case, I might also believe, consider, opine, judge, hope, etc. that it is the case. Each of these ways of thinking is an *intentional state*; I have an *intentional attitude* towards the world around me.²¹

Central to Paul Ricoeur’s professional project is a hermeneutical phenomenology where texts are approached as phenomena.²² Although recognizing that a complete eidetic reduction is unachievable, Ricoeur avers that one ought to engage in the phenomenological exercise, “bracketing off” predispositions toward discourse with an intent to uncover the

²⁰ Simms, *Paul Ricoeur*, 16.

²¹ Simms, *Paul Ricoeur*, 35. The concept of *intentionality*, although first advanced by the philosopher Franz Brentano (1838-1917), was developed in phenomenological parlance by Husserl in his *Logical Investigations* (1900).

²² For Ricoeur’s own writing on the relationship between phenomenology and hermeneutics, see Paul Ricoeur, “Phenomenology and Hermeneutics,” in *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and John B. Thompson, SPEP (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1991). See also Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy*, 57–72; Kaplan, “Ricoeur’s Critical Theory,” 17–28.

intrinsic mode of intentionality.²³ This model extends beyond textual communication. As human existence is mediated through multiple forms of discourse (i.e., symbols, rituals, written texts, etc.), for Ricoeur hermeneutics views existence itself as textual. Karl Simms explains,

Ricoeur develops hermeneutics as a phenomenological philosophy, in that it suspends judgment about what I can know about the world through direct perception, in order to explore the routes of understanding the world. For Ricoeur, the main route to understanding the world is by reading it as if it were a text, or, at least, reading texts is the best way to come to an understanding of the world.²⁴

I propose that Ricoeur's hermeneutical phenomenology provides a heuristic model for developing a response to the question, "What is Deuteronomism?" Deuteronomism is grounded firmly in "texts," but to a greater extent represents broad social discourse mediated through cultic, legal, geopolitical, and public policy regulations. By bracketing off purely historical-critical models, one experiences Deuteronomism as the ideological/utopian

²³ Boyd Blundell, "The central method of phenomenology, the "eidetic reduction" brackets out all metaphysical or empirical "common sense," putting the phenomenologist in the role of allowing the phenomenon to emerge. However, Ricoeur's philosophy is fundamentally a hermeneutics, not a phenomenology, recognizing, and indeed emphasizing the impossibility of such a reduction. But the fact that the phenomenologist can never achieve the full critical distance that the method describes in no way negates the value of the attempt." Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy*, 8.

²⁴ Simms, *Paul Ricoeur*, 42–43.

phenomena it is. This exercise provides for a more fruitful orientation toward understating and appropriating shared intentionality within extant D voices. However, I do not deny the usefulness of reconstructing concrete manifestations of Deuteronomism; in fact, I believe that a phenomenological approach will assist in developing historical-critical models. I point to Robert Wilson as a voice of mediation. Wilson suggests:

Instead of thinking of the Deuteronomists as a small discrete group working at a particular time...and with particular interests in mind, it may be necessary to explore the possibility that Deuteronomism was a wide-ranging movement that was much more diverse than scholars commonly think and that was active over a very long period of time.²⁵

In concert with Wilson's explanation, a phenomenological approach to Deuteronomism embraces polyphonic expressions of shared intentionality. My application of *cultural imagination* does not isolate a single social construct that is Deuteronomism.²⁶

²⁵ Robert Wilson, "Who Was the Deuteronomist? (Who Was Not the Deuteronomist?): Reflections on Pan-Deuteronomism," in *Those Elusive Deuteronomists*, ed. Steven L. McKenzie and Linda S. Schearing, JSOTSup 268 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 82.

²⁶ Although I am interested in the function of Deuteronomism as broad social phenomena more so than isolating specific thematic/lexical markers, it is essential to note that there are several "themes" (essential structures or *ideal content*) associated with Deuteronomism. Steven McKenzie presents a brief survey of key "ideological items...either introduced or enhanced" by Deuteronomism: the doctrine of centralization, the so-called name theology (allowing for immanence in the Temple, but still affirming a transcendent God), the notion of Israel as an "ethnic, national, and religious entity," covenant theology, and also stirrings of the idea of Scripture. Steven L. McKenzie, "Postscript: The Laws of Physics and Pan-Deuteronomism," in *Those Elusive Deuteronomists*, ed. Linda S. Schearing and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 268 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 262–71. For proposed common Deuteronomistic phraseology see Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, 320–65.

Throughout the dissertation, I will highlight multiple phenomena (e.g., treaty forms, prophetic oracles, narrative histories, legal codes). The term *Deuteronomism* will be employed as an all-encompassing designation for a stream of tradition, which includes *Pre-Deuteronomic*, *Proto-Deuteronomic*, *Deuteronomic*, and *Deuteronomistic* literary traditions.²⁷ Each representation of Deuteronomic intentionality, what I refer to as “D voices,”²⁸ act as agents in the dialog of *cultural imagination* dialog. Each *D voice* contemplates the essential structures of Israel’s constitutive experience, e.g., the revelation of a unique election by Yahweh God. Ideological expressions of this experience are evaluated on their appropriate level of congruence within the stream of intentionality as each voice engages in the hermeneutical process. Evaluation is followed by a refiguration of

²⁷ Although definitive designation of this terminology is debatable, there is heuristic value in their usage. Throughout the dissertation I will apply designations as I deem appropriate within the context of a proposed historical trajectory of ideological development.

²⁸ I will often represent a broad use of the terms Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic with the sigla “D-voices” (e.g., Pre-D, Proto-D, Deuteronomic, Deuteronomistic). Throughout the dissertation I will generally apply the term “voice(s)” opposed to “author(s)” as it allows for a polyphonic definition of authorial intent. For example, speaking of a Hosianic “voice” does not deny that the mind of a historic Hosea is discernable, but acknowledges the mediated nature of the text where discussions of the “author” of the Book of Hosea fall short.

the constitutive experience, which either supports, qualifies, or rejects the proposed ideological expression.

(1.2) Ideology

When speaking of Deuteronomism as ideological phenomena with shared intentionality, attention is needed to define how one employs a multivalent term such as *ideology*. The usage of the word varies greatly. In his book *Ideology: An Introduction*, Terry Eagleton catalogs sixteen different connotations in common parlance.²⁹ Similarly, James Barr denotes approximately seven usages common within biblical studies, many of which place *ideology* in opposition to objective ‘scientific’ perspectives of reality, the way things “really are.”³⁰ As

²⁹ Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (New York: Verso, 1991), 1–2. Eagleton offers six categories ranging from neutral to pejorative in connotation. 1) The general material processes of the production of ideas, beliefs, and values of social life. 2) Ideas and beliefs (whether true or false) which symbolize the conditions and life-experiences of a specific, socially significant group or class. 3) The promotion and legitimation of the interests of such social groups in the face of opposing interests. 4) The assumption that dominant ideas help to unify social formation in ways convenient to its rulers. 5) Ideas and beliefs which help to legitimate the interests of the ruling group or class by distortion and dissimulation. 6) False/ deceptive beliefs that do not come from a dominant class, but from the material structure of society. Eagleton, *Ideology*, 28–30.

³⁰ Barr groups usages into seven categories: 1) In contrast to “pragmatic.” A worldview held so intensely that factual reality does not matter. 2) In contrast to original thought. One person meticulously delimits an issue (history, science, philosophy) and another person takes a few pieces without considering the whole. “The original thought is serious thought, the half-unthinking is ideology.” 3) An unconscious character determined by someone’s race, gender, sociopolitical/economic status, or background. 4) A system linked and built out of an idea. The idea is not an ideology, the system is. 5) A generalization of a particular belief. 6) Social property. An opinion becomes an ideology when it is shared by a section of society. 7) The opposite of

Barr states, ideologies are often understood as “*mistaken* ideas.”³¹ As Eagleton quips,

“Ideology, like halitosis, is in this sense what the other person has.”³²

Definitions of *ideology* typically align with one of two mainstream lineages. One tradition, traversing through Hegel, Marx, and the writing of the so-called Frankfurt School, focuses on ideas of true and false cognition, designating *ideology* as distortion or illusion.³³ A divergent line evident in French philosophical traditions, more concerned with sociological interests than questions of epistemology, explores the function of ideas within social life. Both streams have their limitations. The first approach often focuses heavily on class consciousness and economic structures, whereas non-Marxist strategies tend to collapse into the concept of ‘world-view’; a (*conscious/unconscious*) *comprehensive system*

objectivity. James Barr, *History and Ideology in the Old Testament: Biblical Studies at the End of a Millennium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 102–5.

³¹ Barr, *History and Ideology*, 105.

³² Eagleton, *Ideology*, 2.

³³ James Barr suggests that approaches which place ideology in opposition with truth can have two nuances. He writes, “At one extreme, ideology means false ideas, ideas created by the social and economic system, ideas which disguise the reality of things; reality, however, can be known and can thus be opposed to ideology. At the other extreme, everything is ideology: there is no access to reality apart from ideology, for what we call ‘reality’ is something that we construct, and any attempt to pass to a ‘real’ appreciation of reality is only a more deceptive ideology than any other.” Barr, *History and Ideology*, 28–29.

*of belief held by a collective section of society.*³⁴ Any use of the term ideology must balance an emphasis on basic societal belief systems with the acknowledgment of the political nature of such systems.³⁵ An a priori position of distortion disregards the symbolic mediation of all social action, whereas ‘worldview’ definitions fail to concede the intrinsic relationship between ideology and questions of power.³⁶

Taking a phenomenological approach to *ideology*, Paul Ricoeur does not set out to define the term as much as explore the function of a social construct. To this extent, his analysis is unique in that he links *ideology* to another symbolic system, *utopia*. Noting the ambiguity common to both terms as they cover a range of objectives, from distortion to constitutive, sustaining to pathological, Ricoeur binds the two in a dialectical relationship he calls *cultural imagination*. Approaching this link through the mediation of hermeneutics

³⁴ Barr, *History and Ideology*, 102.

³⁵ Eagleton cautions assuming ideology and politics as identical. Distinguishing the two “is to suggest that politics refers to the power processes by which social orders are sustained or challenged, whereas ideology denotes the ways in which these power processes get caught up in the realm of signification...ideology concerns less signification than conflicts within the field of signification.” Eagleton, *Ideology*, 11–12.

³⁶ Eagleton avers that ideology has an inherent relationship to power structures. “It is true that people sometimes use the word ideology to refer to systematic belief in general...But ideology is surely often felt to entail more than just this...The term ideology...would seem to make reference not only to belief systems, but to questions of power...The force of the term ideology lies in its capacity to discriminate between those power struggles which are somehow central to a whole form of social life, and those which are not.” Eagleton, *Ideology*, 8.

and critical theory, Ricoeur explores how ideological critique functions within moments of distanciation. For Ricoeur, the “detour” of ideological critique is bound to the *return* of visionary imagination. When one questions explanations of “real experience,” they respond through the construction of an alternate version of the explanation.

(1.2.1) Ricoeur on Ideology

Undergirding Ricoeur’s discourse on *cultural imagination* is an attempt at mediating Marxist and non-Marxist approaches to the relationship between representation and the praxis of social action.³⁷ Ricoeur begins his discussion on *ideology* at what he sees as the commonly appropriated “surface level” function of concealment and distortion. Through a careful analysis of *The German Ideology*,³⁸ Ricoeur recovers three core traits of Marxist approaches: 1) Marx presupposes a gap between representation (i.e., religious, political, ethical, and aesthetic, etc.) and praxis, in the process of social action; 2) The maxim that

³⁷ Ricoeur’s discourse on ideology and utopia stem from a series of lectures delivered at the University of Chicago in 1975, published as: Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia* (ed. George H. Taylor; New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). For a condensed presentation of the relationship between ideology and utopia see: Paul Ricoeur, “Ideology and Utopia,” in *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and John B. Thompson (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 308–24.

³⁸ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, ed. C. J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1970). [Edition cited in *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*.]

man has grown dependent on representation over praxis; on the imaginary more than reality itself; 3) Application of the metaphor of the “inverted image,” an echo of reality, to ideology stimulating the idea of distortion or concealment.³⁹

Ricoeur is not anti-Marxist. He holds Marx, along with Nietzsche and Freud, as one of the “great destroyers” and “masters of suspicion,” which for Ricoeur, are positive appellations, noting the significance of these interpreters in “clearing the horizon for a more authentic word.”⁴⁰ However, Ricoeur views Marx as failing to provide any theoretical framework for the language of “real life.” If, as Marx proposes, *praxis* (what people are and do) and *representation* (how they appear in their own or other’s imagination) move on different planes, how can the later express the former? If *imagination* is truly the inverse of reality, how can real life ever be expressed? As Ricoeur avers that all action is mediated

³⁹ Paul Ricoeur, *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and John B. Thompson (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 310.

⁴⁰ Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy*, 33. See also Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction*, 232–36; Anthony C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 347–50.

Karl Simms suggests that at the core of Ricoeur’s entire hermeneutical project is the notion that the two main tasks of “restoring meaning to symbols and to criticizing them” are not contradictory, but complementary. Hermeneutics must not only “explain what the allegorical meaning of a symbol is,” but also “why any particular symbol functions in any specific allegorical manner.” For Ricoeur, “...hermeneutics respects the priority of meaning within symbols, rather than assuming that there has already been a philosophy lying behind symbols which their symbolic nature, or the myth in which symbols are couched, has set out to veil,” Simms, *Paul Ricoeur*, 33.

through social constructs, *imagination* is foundational to *representation*; the prefigured field of experience is only accessible through a moment of configuration. Consequently, how does one account for the autonomy of *representation*, which allows for distortion to take place?⁴¹

In opposition to a Marxist *materialist model*, Ricoeur finds a more solid foundation in the *motivational model* of sociologist Max Weber.⁴² Marxist readings of ideology are grounded in the social tension between infrastructure and superstructure where “The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas.” However, Ricoeur maintains that no social order operates by force alone; therefore, power cannot be framed merely as a causal relation of economic forces. Weber’s paradigm provides Ricoeur space to explore the interplay between the two key factors central to the legitimation of authority: the *claim* by the governing body, and the *belief* in legitimacy conferred by its vassals. Ricoeur posits that ideology also functions at a “secondary level” as *legitimation*; filling the gap between claim and belief. An ideology is promoted, bearing a “surplus of meaning,” when there is not

⁴¹ Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 313.

⁴² Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978). [Edition cited in *Lectures*.]

enough belief in the underlying claim alone. This “surplus” is necessary to inspire and reinforce the citizenry; however, it also makes ideology vulnerable to concealment of illegitimacy, which precipitates the “surface level” understanding of distortion.

Although Weber offers Ricoeur a more satisfactory model for the autonomy of representation; he is yet to be satisfied with a complete bifurcation of imagination from reality. Marx’s dichotomy between *praxis* and *representation* is, in fact, hollow if distortion is not understood as a pathological offshoot grafted onto the root of symbolic action.⁴³ As Terry Eagleton observes, if ideology has any hope at realization, it must be more than a cunning artifice but have some basis in reality. Eagleton states, “In short, successful ideologies must be more than imposed illusions, and for all their inconsistencies must communicate to their subjects a version of social reality which is real and recognizable enough not to be simply rejected out of hand.”⁴⁴

⁴³ Ricoeur avers, "Without recourse to the ultimate layer of symbolic action...ideology has to appear as the intellectual depravity that its opponents aim to unmask. But this therapeutic enterprise is itself senseless if it is incapable of relating the mask to the face. This cannot be done as long as the rhetorical force of the surface ideology is not related to that of the depth layer of symbolic systems that constitute and integrate the social phenomenon as such." Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 317.

⁴⁴ Eagleton, *Ideology*, 15.

Seeking a more solid foundation, Ricoeur draws upon the writing of sociologist Clifford Geertz on the fundamental constitutive function of ideology within social systems.⁴⁵ Geertz suggests that human behavior is plastic and, therefore, not strictly governed by intrinsic sources of information, but to a significant extent, is organized by extrinsic information in the form of symbolically mediated patterns.⁴⁶ Geertz states, “Culture patterns – religious, philosophical, aesthetic, scientific, ideological – are ‘programs’; they provide a template or blueprint for the organization of social and psychological processes, much as genetic systems provide such a template for the organization of organic processes.”⁴⁷ Consequently, Ricoeur suggests that ideologies function on a “foundational level” as a means of *constitution* and *conservation* of narrative identity. He states,

Whether it preserves the power of a class, or ensures the duration of a system of authority, or patterns the stable functioning of a community, ideology has a function of conservation in both a good and a bad sense of the word. It preserves, it

⁴⁵ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973). Specific attention is given to the essay “Ideology as a Cultural System,” 193-233.

⁴⁶ Geertz advocates applying Kenneth Burke’s concept of symbolic action to the theory of ideology. Geertz additionally advocated the application of rhetorical analysis to understand ideology treating ideology as a kind of figurative language. This allows Ricoeur to apply his theories of metaphor and figurative language to a theory of ideology, as its most basic level.

⁴⁷ Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 216.

conserves, in the sense of making firm the human order that could be shattered by natural or historical forces, by external or internal disturbances. All the pathology of ideology proceeds from this "conservative" role of ideology.⁴⁸

Although, as stated above, Paul Ricoeur does not set out to define *ideology*, for the sake of this project, it is vital to establish a working definition. As James Barr noted, many applications of the term ideology bear derogatory connotations. I argue that Ricoeur's progression from Marx, through Weber, and ultimately Geertz, allows for a non-pejorative concept of ideology although acknowledging the nefarious potential. Any use of the term must balance an emphasis on basic societal belief systems with the acknowledgment of the political nature of such systems. Noting the inherent multivalent function of ideology, from distortion to constitutive, sustaining to pathological, I offer a working definition of ideology as *a constitutive paradigm for social integration utilized to conserve, legitimate, or distort socio-political structures within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation.*

⁴⁸ Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 318.

(1.2.2) Approaches to Ideology in Old Testament Studies

By the end of the 20th Century, just as scholars warned of a pan-Deuteronism, ideology became the buzz word of biblical studies.⁴⁹ Walter Brueggemann wrote, “The notion of ideology is now an important and pervasive one in Old Testament scholarship, and a student of Old Testament theology cannot afford to neglect its significance.”⁵⁰ The emergence of ideological criticism in the 1990s had a widespread impact; however, there continued to be considerable debate as to the meaning and use of terminology. Applications of both synchronic literary analysis and diachronic historical-critical methodology relating to Deuteronism wrestled with appropriate models. Although some scholars have interacted with Paul Ricoeur, many isolate *ideology* from the broader concept of *cultural*

⁴⁹ For a helpful literature review on the subject of ideology and OT studies with heuristic guidelines on future research see Barr, *History and Ideology*, 102–40; Patrick D. Miller, “Faith and Ideology in the Old Testament,” in *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God*, ed. Frank M. Cross, Werner E. Lemke, and Patrick D. Miller (New York: Doubleday, 1976), 464–79. Miller’s agenda is to demarcate ideology from theology in the OT. I am unsure if this distinction is possible. It is my opinion that OT theology is poly-vocal in nature and Deuteronism represents one of the major “voices” discernable in the OT. For a similar argument on the polyvocal nature of OT theology with focus on the Pentateuch see Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1992). Blenkinsopp argues for a discernible D and a P voice.

⁵⁰ Brueggemann comments “Confusion results because two distinct meanings of the term *ideology* are at the same time operative...The term is used in Old Testament study without care and consistency.” He points to Ricoeur’s *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia* as a helpful influence upon his on reflections on ideology. Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 51 n. 150.

imagination leading to misrepresentation. Furthermore, it is crucial to distinguish Ricoeur's philosophical project on ideological critique from a methodology of ideological criticism to appreciate the extent of heuristic potential.

(1.2.2.1) Ideological Criticism. Recognizing that ideology is often unconscious, uncovering the presuppositions of readers and biblical scholars asking is also central. Ideological criticism asks both “Whose voice is dominant within the text?” and “What does one brings to the text?” The goal of ideological criticism is to “unmask” a set of ideas held by a particular group or social class, subsequently “liberating” particular groups (i.e., class, gender, race, sexual orientation, etc.) perceived as “silenced.”⁵¹ David Clines, a pioneering voice in ideological criticism and the HB/OT, writes that his goal as a scholar has always been to “[T]ry to reach beneath the surface of the text of the Hebrew Bible and the texts of biblical scholars and to expose what I think is ‘really’ going on beneath the claims and

⁵¹ For general discussion of the impact of ideological criticism on biblical studies see Eryl W. Davies, *Biblical Criticism: A Guide for the Perplexed*, Guides for the Perplexed (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 61–80. See also David J. A. Clines, *Interested Parties: The Ideology of Writers and Readers of the Hebrew Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995). For representative examples of ideological criticism see the essays in Tina Pippin, ed., *Ideological Criticism of Biblical Texts*, Semeia 59, 1992.

commands and statements of the biblical and the scholarly text – at the level of big ideas, I mean, of ideology.”⁵²

Although ideological critique is inherent to Ricoeur’s *cultural imagination* (e.g., ideology is evaluated and subsequently challenged/legitimated through utopian projections), the overarching goals differ from most forms of ideological criticism. One must always keep in mind, that just as the text often functions as a tool of legitimation, and the interpreter is inherently unobjective, ideological criticism has its own inherent biases. Hermeneutical phenomenology does not set out to merely uncover presuppositions within discourse, but to explore the critical processes as they play out within both a text and its subsequent appropriation. *Cultural imagination* demonstrates how ideological critique is part of natural hermeneutical methods. I argue that through Ricoeur’s approach to ideological critique he provides two fruitful options to the ideological critic. First, although not denying pathological expressions, he presents a non-pejorative function of ideology as social integration at its foundational level. Second, his approach to the dialectical

⁵² Clines, *Interested Parties*, 12. Clines approaches ideology in the vein of worldview, a set of ideas special to a particular social class or group, noting that ideology is often something one is unaware of, assumed. Clines, *Interested Parties*, 10–11.

relationship between ideology and utopia allows for viewing the text itself as critical phenomena.

(1.2.2.2) Ideology in Poetics. Similar to ideological criticism, the exploration of the intentionality of a text is foundational to the field of poetics. For example, Meir Sternberg's influential book, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* bears the subtitle, *Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*.⁵³ However, at least for Sternberg, the relationship between literary analysis and ideological criticism appears conflicted as he is hesitant to apply the term "ideological literature" to biblical texts. For him, labeling a text "ideological" promotes a distinction between sacred and secular writing, where 'ideological writing' is primarily associated with the secular/political arena. Since the Bible presents itself as sacred writing it should be taken this way. Sternberg is further uncomfortable labeling the Bible as ideological because, at least in his opinion, the designation embraces the notion of didacticism, i.e., indoctrination. For Sternberg, the Bible does not "indoctrinate" in that it habitually generates ambivalence and discordance.⁵⁴

⁵³ Sternberg, *Poetics*.

⁵⁴ Sternberg challenges the notion that the Bible is "didactic." He is again pushing back against a perceived dichotomy between didactic discourse and true "literature"; "art for art's sake." Sternberg suggests that we must avoid the approach to the Bible as either literature or doctrine. "Strictly defined, the didactic genre moves beyond commitment to self-immolation: it not only advances a doctrine but also ruthlessly

Sternberg; however, appears schizophrenic when it comes to ideology. For one, his definition of ideology is broad, emphasizing an effective flattening of the Bible into a singular worldview, an apparent contradiction to the idea of discordance. He writes,

If the Bible is ideologically singular – and I believe so – then its singularity lies in the world view projected, together with the rhetoric devised to bring it home. And as long as we adhere to the texts self-definition as religious literature...we need not even submit to the dictate of identifying ourselves as religious or secular readers.⁵⁵

Yet, Sternberg allows for the application of the term “ideological” to the Bible as “it remains a universal of writing that representation is never disassociated from evaluation.”⁵⁶ How a text can be both evaluative and not didactic is irreconcilable. Sternberg represents the failure of literary readings to hold both synchronic and diachronic realities in tandem.

(1.2.2.3) Ideology and ANE Historiography. Ideological criticism has also had an impact on the study of the historical nature of the biblical text. If objectivity is elusive, how

subordinates the whole discourse – the plot, the characters, the arena, the language, their ordering and interlinkage – to the exigencies of indoctrination.” Sternberg, *Poetics*, 38. Sternberg’s over emphasis on the poetic “ambivalence” of the text fails to account for the clear examples of didactic intentionality. For example, the Deuteronomistic History is far from ambiguous in his position on the “high places” in Israelite worship. It is hard to argue that he Deuteronomistic voice(s) do not “ruthlessly subordinates the whole discourse” to “advance a doctrine.”

⁵⁵ Sternberg, *Poetics*, 37.

⁵⁶ Sternberg, *Poetics*, 37.

can any historical account represent impartial analysis? History is often written from the perspective of the ruling class. K. Lawson Younger continues to point out the theme of inconsistent definition when labeling biblical history as “ideological.” In his book *Ancient Conquest Accounts*, Younger notes that the term is often negative emphasizing “distortion.” Furthermore, few scholars who employ the word fail to take into consideration the common use of metaphor in ideological literature. He advocates for a “neutral” definition:

Ideology is a ‘schematic image of social order’, a pattern of beliefs and concepts (both factual and normative) which purport to explain complex social phenomena’ in which there may be simplification by means of symbolic figurative language, code shifting and/or over-coding.⁵⁷

Marc Brettler takes Younger’s definition as “cumbersome.”⁵⁸ In his book, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel*, Brettler advocates for the use of French historian George Duby’s definition of ideology: “a system (possessing its own logic and structure) or

⁵⁷ K. Lawson Younger, *Ancient Conquest Accounts: A Study in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical History Writing*, JSOTSup 98 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 51. Younger’s definition aligns with Ricoeur as both share similar concerns. Like Ricoeur, Younger engages with both Mannheim and Geertz, on the constitutive nature of ideology. His lack of conversation with Ricoeur might be attributed to the fact that the lectures on ideology and utopia were published only five years before his writing. Furthermore, interest in Ricoeur in biblical studies took off after the publication of Vanhoozer’s work in 1990. In many ways the present dissertation could represent an extension of Younger’s analysis.

⁵⁸ Marc Zvi Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 13. Brettler states that Younger has applied Julius Gould’s definition of ideology with which he takes issue. *A DICTIONARY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES*, s.v. “Ideology.”

representations (images, myths, ideas or concepts) existing and playing a historical role within a given society.”⁵⁹ He believes this definition emphasizes the “systematic nature” of ideologies and “offers a convenient umbrella for understanding how religious and political belief systems shaped the writing of history in Israel.”⁶⁰ Furthermore, it aligns with the term’s usage in Assyriological studies.

(1.2.3) Approaches to Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic Ideology

Most approaches to Deuteronomism as ideological phenomena center around historical models for the “elusive Deuteronomists.” Contrary to scholarship looking for the origins of Deuteronomism as a stage in the evolution of orthodoxy/orthopraxis, ideological criticism often focuses on the mature form of a tradition. The motive to “unmask” the interests of power structures results in isolating Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic thought/theology to a faction within the Judean ruling classes. Models vary from the Late Eighth Century to post-Exilic communities.

⁵⁹ Brettler, *The Creation of History*, 13.

⁶⁰ Brettler, *The Creation of History*, 13.

In determining a social location for a “Deuteronomistic ideology,” Martin Rose⁶¹ builds upon a French definition of ideology as *an assemblage of ideas, beliefs, and doctrines specific to an epoch, to a society or a class*.⁶² For Rose, Deuteronomistic ideology is discernable through the “ideas, beliefs, and doctrines” of the author of a so-called Deuteronomistic History. Approaching the DH as a singular “literary work,” Rose emphasizes a proposed editorial conclusion as an ideological cipher.⁶³ Consequently, his dating scheme drives his analysis. As 2 Kings concludes with the hope of a Davidic remnant, Rose locates the Deuteronomistic “epoch” within the first deportation of Judah in 598.⁶⁴ He states, “The theme of the loss of the land and that of the deportation are constitutive of the work as a whole.” His “society” is the Judean court in Babylon, shaped by

⁶¹ Martin Rose, “Deuteronomistic Ideology and Theology of the Old Testament,” in *Israel Constructs Its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research*, ed. Albert de Pury, Thomas Römer, and Jean-Daniel Macchi, JSOTSup 306 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 424–55.

⁶² *Le Petit Robert* (Dictionnaires Le Robert, 1967). Rose unpacks each element of the definition (epoch, society, and class) in relationship to Deuteronomism. Rose, “Deuteronomistic Ideology,” 425.

⁶³ Rose accepts 2 Kgs 24.20 as a proper conclusion reading Chapter 25 as a later harmonization with passages in Jeremiah.

⁶⁴ Rose, “Deuteronomistic Ideology,” 440. Rose provides a small window of dating: “after 587 and probably before 561, the date of king Jehoiachin’s return to favor,” The “redactional layers” he dates to the Persian period between 530 and 520. Rose, “Deuteronomistic Ideology,” 441.

pre-exilic national traditions and institutions.⁶⁵ Concerning “class,” Rose forsakes economic characteristics for the designation of a “social group,” identifying the members of the elite Judean royal court as this faction. Rose describes the ideology of the Deuteronomists as contemplation of nationalistic traditions and identity under the realities of the diaspora. In response to present circumstances, the Deuteronomists believed these traditions as constative to their society and preservation was of utmost priority. He states, “[The author of the Deuteronomistic History] must have been a genuine theologian, but also an expert in royal history and politics. In short, he was a *theologian* of great ability or a *scholar* with a remarkable theological profile.”⁶⁶

Patricia Dutcher-Walls’ insightful work “The Social Location of the Deuteronomists: A Sociological Study of Factional Politics in Late Pre-Exilic Judah,”⁶⁷ applies insights from

⁶⁵ Rose writes, “For the authors, it would be very important to gather together the traditions of Israelite society, preserve all the traditional laws, as they are now found in Deuteronomy, ... [all were gathered together in the exile] since their authors diagnosed that the fundamental identity of their society, their thought and their ideology were still determined by all these traditions, despite the situation of radical rupture implied by the deportation and the exile,” Rose, “Deuteronomistic Ideology,” 441–42. However, I propose that the collection of traditions has already begun prior to the Exile.

⁶⁶ Rose, “Deuteronomistic Ideology,” 444.

⁶⁷ Patricia Dutcher-Walls, “The Social Location of the Deuteronomists: A Sociological Study of Factional Politics in Late Pre-Exilic Judah,” *JSOT* 52 (1991): 77–94. Dutcher-Walls states, “[C]an we locate within ancient Israelite society the place where the compilers of the Deuteronomistic History stood? To answer this I will utilize the social and political analysis of agrarian and aristocratic societies done by two

social scientific analysis of agrarian and aristocratic societies to develop a portrait of royal court society in the final decades of pre-exilic Judah. Noting an impasse between scholars on precisely who the Deuteronomists were, Dutcher-Walls, akin to Rose, begins from the point of the compilation of a Deuteronomistic History, which alternatively, she locates in the pre-exilic Judean court. Although her insights are significant, I argue that isolating an analysis of Deuteronomistic ideology to the final decades of the Judean State disregards the significance of developing thought extending back to the late Eight Century and shifts all international socio-political overtones into the Neo-Babylonian period.

A.D. H. Mayes⁶⁸ builds upon Dutcher-Walls in his essay “Deuteronomistic Ideology and the Theology of the Old Testament.” Consequently, there is little difference in his analysis of social location from Dutcher-Walls. In his essay, Mayes intends to address the distinction, or in his view, a lack thereof, between discussions of ideology and HB/OT theology, a concern beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, Mayes is one of a few

prominent social scientists, in order to build a model useful for understanding ancient Israel in the time of the late monarchy.” Dutcher-Walls, “The Social Location of the Deuteronomists,” 77.

⁶⁸ A. D. H. Mayes, “Deuteronomic Ideology and the Theology of the Old Testament,” in *Israel Constructs Its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research*, ed. Albert de Pury, Thomas Römer, and Jean-Daniel Macchi, JSOTSup 306 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 456–80.

studies of Deuteronomistic ideology that directly engages with Paul Ricoeur's Lectures on *Ideology and Utopia*. That said, Mayes misrepresents Ricoeur through a lack of full engagement with his polar relationship between ideology and utopia, or any mention of utopia, resulting in an unfounded critique.

Mayes provides an adequate presentation of Ricoeur's critical points on ideology; however, his points of criticism leveled at both Ricoeur and Geertz are questionable. His main concern is with both the theorists' emphasis on the "integrative function" of ideology. Mayes levels a two-pronged critique: 1.) He does not find enough evidence to support the idea that "[A] fundamental range of common values and beliefs, common symbols and representations, which functioned solely as a unifying influence," is ever discernable within a society;⁶⁹ 2.) He suggests that Ricoeur and Geertz have their doubts about the primary integrative (constitutive) function of ideology. This second point makes Ricoeur appear circular in thought. Mayes concludes, "The role of ideology cannot then, be understood simply in terms of integration and constitution; rather, from the beginning, it belongs in a context of opposition to other ideologies and thus has a legitimating function."⁷⁰ Mayes'

⁶⁹ Mayes, "Deuteronomic Ideology," 63.

⁷⁰ Mayes, "Deuteronomic Ideology," 64.

emphasis on a distinction between integrative and legitimating is unconvincing. Ricoeur does not deny that ideology has a legitimating function, but that legitimization must be constructed upon a shared core system of social identity.

Attempting to redeemed Deuteronomic ideology from ideological criticism's emphasis on unmasking power structures, Peter Vogt appeals once again to the problem of definition.⁷¹ In his book *Deuteronomic Theology and the Significance of Torah*, Vogt suggests that prevailing models of Deuteronomistic theology have misinterpreted its so-called "revolutionary" intention.⁷² He rejects approaches that create a dichotomy between ideology and faith as well as the correlation of ideology with 'self-interest.'⁷³ Vogt further pushes back against any discussion of ideology related to discord within the field of social

⁷¹ Peter Vogt, *Deuteronomic Theology and the Significance of Torah* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006).

⁷² Vogt avers that readings of Deuteronomy which find a revolutionary program of "centralization, demythologization, and secularization" have misinterpreted the theological intentionality of the book. He suggests that "[A]t the core of Deuteronomy is a theology of the supremacy of Yahweh, expressed in the life of Israel through adherence to *Torah*." Vogt, *Deuteronomic Theology*, 5–6.

⁷³ Vogt, *Deuteronomic Theology*, 15–17. In support of his approach, Vogt appeals to the Decalogue, which in his opinion should not be understood as ideological in the sense that it is a distortion of reality forced upon lower classes of Israelite society; however, it is ideological in the sense that everyone agreed to its merits. He finds too reductive and based on a materialist understanding of social structures.

signification, arguing that *consensus*, not *conflict* is central to an understating of ideology.⁷⁴

For Vogt, ideology represents “the system of beliefs (including religious beliefs), attitudes, values, and assumptions of a community or part of a community.”⁷⁵

In his analysis of ideology, Vogt, highly reliant on Mayes, interacts with Ricoeur’s work on cultural imagination.⁷⁶ However, many of Vogt’s points are decidedly reductive. For example, Ricoeur’s threefold regressive analysis of ideology (distortion, legitimization, integration) is condensed into the statement, “ideology distorts by disguising self-interest in the form of a divine mandate.”⁷⁷ Furthermore, Vogt suggests that Ricoeur promotes the idea that “conflict between ideologies is necessary for there to be ideology at all,” citing a

⁷⁴ Vogt comments, “Yet, it is hard to imagine factions that were in favor of adultery, stealing, disrespect toward parents, and so forth. Rather, it is in everyone’s interest (not just the elites’) that adultery and murder be condemned. It seems, then, that consensus, not conflict, lies at the heart of a text such as the Decalogue,” 18.

⁷⁵ Vogt promotes a definition of ideology akin to worldview, favoring a position which “recognizes that ideology may represent a consensus in society.” He continues, “This is not to suggest that there were no differences among various groups in Israelite society, but it does imply that there was some prevailing or commonly held views.” Ideology is not merely theoretical, it “has tremendous practical implications.” Vogt, *Deuteronomic Theology*, 18–19.

⁷⁶ Vogt is heavily reliant on Mayes’ reading of Ricoeur (see my criticism of Mayes above) as he directly cites Ricoeur only once.

⁷⁷ Vogt, *Deuteronomic Theology*, 17. Vogt aligns Ricoeur with Geertz, but also Gottwald, and to a certain extent Clines.

passage from the *Lectures*.⁷⁸ Although, in the passage referenced, Ricoeur asks if pre-modern cultures can be said to possess ideology as there is yet a rejection of “universal agreement,” Ricoeur poses the question, “If we look only at the integrative function of a culture, and if this function is not challenged by an alternative form for providing integration, may we have ideology?” Ricoeur doubts that if one can “project ideology” outside of post-Enlightenment contexts “as all modern cultures are now involved in a process not only of secularization but of fundamental confrontation about basic ideals.” He suggests that “integration without confrontation is pre-ideological.” However, he concludes, “Nevertheless, it is still important to find among the conditions for the possibility of having a distorted function a legitimating function and under this legitimating function an integrative function.”⁷⁹ Vogt’s interest in consensus drives his reading of Ricoeur. Vogt wants to deny the possibility of conflict within Deuteronomic theology,

⁷⁸ Vogt cites *Lectures* p. 259. Vogt, *Deuteronomic Theology*, 17 n. 68.

⁷⁹ Ricoeur, *Lectures*, 259. I suggest that an awakening of ancient Israelite ideology, e.g., Deuteronomism emerges during the Judean State Period when “basic ideals” are challenged, namely with the fall of Samaria and the threat of Assyrianization.

defending a position of unity as necessary to maintain its authoritative nature. Yet, as historical theology shows, conflict in interpretation does not deny orthodoxy.⁸⁰

(1.3) Utopia

Most scholarship engaging with Paul Ricoeur's project on ideology often misrepresents his thesis by focusing on a singular phenomenon; however, his approach to ideology cannot be fully appreciated apart from his understanding of the social construct utopia. In fact, it is arguable that utopia is more significant in Ricoeur's thought than ideology.⁸¹ The failure to appreciate the importance of utopia in Ricoeur's critical theory could be a result of the unequal treatment of ideology and utopia within the *Lectures*. Whereas Ricoeur devotes fifteen lectures to a phenomenology of ideology he concludes the series with only three lectures on utopia. Ricoeur himself acknowledges the uneven content, attributing the lopsidedness to a lack of concurrent work on utopia as opposed to the vast literature on

⁸⁰ For example, the existence of both Calvinists and Arminians does not negate a shared adherence to historic creedal confession.

⁸¹ Lyman Tower Sargent, "Ideology and Utopia: Karl Mannheim and Paul Ricoeur," *J. Polit. Ideol.* 13 (2008): 263–73.

ideology.⁸² Additionally, he suggests that ideology and utopia are not considered in tandem because differences between the two tend to disappear in Marxist thought as both are equated with the unreal or irrational. As David Kaplan states, “From a Marxist perspective, the non-congruence of utopia with reality makes the concept itself ideological.”⁸³ Steven Schweitzer explains that Marxist approaches fail to adequately describe the utopian nature of social critique. “Utopia is not opposed to ideology, but it is an ideological position itself that can be identified in a text, a counter ideology designed to question the present historical situation.”⁸⁴

Ricoeur’s vehicle for exploring utopia is in interaction with the so-called ‘paradox’ of Karl Mannheim. An influential early 20th Century German sociologist, Mannheim was the first philosopher to correlate the social constructs ideology and utopia. A collection of Mannheim’s essays was first published in German in 1929 as *Ideologie und Utopie* with a markedly different English version in 1936 under the title, *Ideology and Utopia: An*

⁸² Ricoeur, *Lectures*, 269.

⁸³ Kaplan, “Ricoeur’s Critical Theory,” 62.

⁸⁴ Steven J. Schweitzer, “Utopias and Utopian Literary Theory: Some Preliminary Observations,” in *Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature*, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi, PFES 92 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 18–19.

Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge.⁸⁵ Although critical, Ricoeur saw Mannheim's work as a foundational platform for his dialogue. Mannheim argued that the way a person thinks, or their system of belief (ideology), is inherently influenced by one's social situation. George Taylor writes, "The value of Mannheim for Ricoeur's project lies as much in his failures as in his successes. One of Mannheim's real achievements is that he expands the concept of ideology to the point where it encompasses even the one asserting it."⁸⁶

However, Mannheim's assertion creates an apparent paradox. If all discourse is intrinsically ideological, what is the epistemological basis for ideological critique? How does one escape their inherent social condition to evaluate discourse effectively?⁸⁷

Ricoeur highlights a lack of concurrent work on ideology and utopia since Mannheim, attributing the shortage to the development of two divergent fields of interest.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ The English edition reshaped the German to fit within the context of the sociology of knowledge. Mannheim removed the original preface and a very detailed table of contents. He also added an introduction to the sociology of knowledge and additional essays on that topic. Sargent, *Utopia*, 118-120.

⁸⁶ George H. Taylor, "Introduction," in *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, ed. George H. Taylor, by Paul Ricoeur (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), xv.

⁸⁷ Ricoeur asks, "How can this discourse escape its own exposition, its own description? If sociopolitical thought itself is entwined with the life situation of the thinker, does not the concept of ideology have to be absorbed into its own referent?" Ricoeur, *Lectures*, 9.

⁸⁸ There has been recent interest in "ideology and utopia" in scholarly literature on Chronicles, most of which is developed upon the work of Karl Mannheim (see the discussion of Ricoeur's critique of Mannheim below). A significant work which applies utopian literary theory is Steven J. Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in*

Ideology is typically studied within the realm of critical theory,⁸⁹ whereas; utopia has been examined through historical/sociological models with little connection to *Ideologiekritik*.

Utopia is a literary genre, while we approach ideology as if it has no literary existence.⁹⁰ As Ricoeur states,

Ideology is always a polemical concept. The ideological is never one's own position; it is always the stance of someone else, always *their* ideology....Utopias, on the other hand, are advocated by their own authors...Thus, the linguistic presence of ideology and utopia is not at all the same. Utopias are assumed by their authors, whereas ideologies are denied by theirs.⁹¹

Chronicles, LHB/OTS 442 (London: T & T Clark, 2007). Although Schweitzer's analysis and literature review on conceptual aspects of Utopias are insightful, his emphasis on utopian literary forms lacks congruence with the present thesis (see the discussion on utopian "mode" and "spirit" below). Also Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Ideology and Utopia in 1-2 Chronicles," in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?*, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi and Diana V. Edelman (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 89–103. Blenkinsopp has potential of being paradigmatic for the present study; however, there is no engagement with Paul Ricoeur. Blenkinsopp presents a two-sphere analysis of the Chroniclers' social reality unpacking "the situation in the international sphere and in the cultic world that the author inhabited and against which he reacted by constructed his utopian vision of the past," (89). In the present study on Deuteronomism one could posit international sphere = Neo-Assyrian cultural assimilation; cultic realm = centralized Judean Yahwism. A distinction between Blenkinsopp's interest and the present study is emphasis on a proposed utopian present reality opposed to a reconstructed utopian past.

⁸⁹ For an introduction to critical theory see David Couzens Hoy and Thomas McCarthy, *Critical Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

⁹⁰ Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 318.

⁹¹ Ricoeur, *Lectures*, 2.

For Ricoeur, to comprehend the polarity between ideology and utopia, one must first disregard (bracket off) the idea of specific 'utopian' literary content and structure, developing an appreciation for utopia as a "mode" of discourse and a rhetorical "spirit." Utopia, as a literary genre, does not exhaust the utopian mode or spirit of discourse.⁹²

Within utopian literature, one finds the durability of certain themes (family, social-political organization, consumption and appropriation of goods, etc.); however, these themes are not an inherently contradictory representation of social realities. Throughout time there are examples of social projects which represent utopian discourse beyond the confines of literary conventions, e.g., monastic communities, religious communes, kibbutz, etc.

Although these societies may not stand the test of time, there is a physical reality, not just schizophrenia idealism.

⁹² Steven Schweitzer provides some helpful discussion on definition utopianism which correlates to Ricoeur's discussion of reading utopianism beyond literary genre. Schweitzer notes three manifestations in biblical studies: 1) the literary genre of utopia; 2) an ideology through which the world is viewed; 3) a sociological movement that writes utopias (i.e., a community of similar ideals). He advocates for a similar approach to "utopianism" as current trends in "apocalypticism" where discussions have developed beyond strictly literary genre, but the content within non-typical literary examples. There is a greater emphasis on textual traditions emerging from "apocalyptic" communities. Schweitzer concludes, "[T]hus, just as Biblical scholars now restrict the designation of 'apocalypse' to a literary genre, but are willing to discuss the 'apocalyptic' content of a text composed in the milieu of 'apocalypticism' by a community or individual so a similar distinction must be made when the terms 'utopia,' 'utopian,' and 'utopianism' are employed. This precision allows for the reading of 'utopian' content and the work that would not typically be classified as a 'utopia' proper by genetic considerations." Schweitzer, "Utopias and Utopian Literary Theory," 13–14.

The term “utopia/utopian” often bears the meaning of fanciful and impossible. However, although an alternative vision of reality, one must not deny the term potential of real possibility. Steven Schweitzer states, “The imagined place is both idealized and does not exist in reality...Thus, it’s spatial existence is constantly a point of tension in a utopian text. Utopia exists in space, if only in the ideological space of the text.”⁹³

In its origins, there is polyvalence to the word utopia. Thomas Moore’s original work implies a wordplay on the idea of “good place” (*eutopia*) and “no place” (*outopia*).⁹⁴ In both definitions, the utopia does not point to something realized but bears the hope of realization. Building upon the idea of “nowhere,”⁹⁵ Ricoeur sees the utopian vision as not purely escapist, but as a necessary “leap” into the “field of the possible.” He ponders, “The question, therefore, is whether imagination could have any constitutive role without this leap outside.”⁹⁶ He continues:

⁹³ Schweitzer, “Utopias and Utopian Literary Theory,” 14.

⁹⁴ Schweitzer, “Utopias and Utopian Literary Theory,” 14. See the discussion of Deuteronomy and the construction of “no-place” in Chapter 6 below.

⁹⁵ Thomas Moore, *Utopia: A New Translation, Backgrounds, Criticism (Norton Critical Edition)*, ed. and trans. Robert M. Adams (New York: W. W. Norton, 1975). [Edition cited in *Lectures*.]

⁹⁶ Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 320.

Utopia is the way in which we radically rethink what is family, consumption, government, religion, and so on. The fantasy of an alternative society and its topographical figuration "nowhere" works and is the most formidable contestation of what is. What some, for example, call cultural revolution proceeds from the possible to the real, from fantasy to reality?⁹⁷

The emphasis of a utopia as a break with present reality does not necessarily mean a break with the present. In temporal terms, the utopia is not necessarily future-orientated or eschatological. Thomas Moore located his Utopia in his present-day within the context of the recent exploration of the New World.⁹⁸ The unifying element of any utopian text or social construct is the call for a society better than the present. Steven Schweitzer argues that one should not merely read these texts as “*blueprints* for ideal societies,” but rather “*revolutionary texts*.” The intent of a utopia is,

[T]o challenge the *status quo* and question the way things presently are being done. Thus, utopia depicts the world ‘as it should be’ not “why it is the way it is.’ In other words, *utopias are not works of legitimation* (providing a grounding for the present reality), *but works of innovation* (suggesting an existence that *could be*, if it’s parameters were excepted).⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 320.

⁹⁸ Schweitzer, “Utopias and Utopian Literary Theory,” 15. Writing in 1512, Thomas Moore claims to be introduced to the existence of the island of Utopia by one Raphael Hythlodæus proposed to be a part of Amerigo Vespucci’s expeditionary forces in the exploration of Brazil only a decade prior.

⁹⁹ Schweitzer, “Utopias and Utopian Literary Theory,” 23.

Regarding this revolutionary nature, Ehud Ben Zvi states:

[T]he terms utopia in utopian...do not simply refer to constructions of circumstances that stand in time and/or space separate from and are simply “better” than the present but.... they offer a drastic break with the present and its constitutive circumstances, and by necessity point at perceived central lacks in society.¹⁰⁰

Ricoeur does not provide a clear definition of utopia. He states, “I see utopia as itself a complex network of elements with different origins. It’s not something simple but a cluster of forces working together.”^{101 102} However, he defines the “utopian mode” as “the imaginary project of another kind of society, or another reality, another world,”¹⁰³ which conveys the rhetorical intention of promoting a change in the social order and a search for

¹⁰⁰ Ehud Ben Zvi, “Utopias, Multiple Utopias, and Why Utopias at All? The Social Roles of Utopian Visions in Prophetic Books within Their Historical Context,” in *Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature*, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi, PFES 92 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 56.

¹⁰¹ Ricoeur, *Lectures*, 251.

¹⁰² Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 321. Here Ricoeur is drawing upon terminology “utopian mode” and “utopian spirit” developed by Raymond Ruyer, *L’utopie et Les Utopies* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1950).

¹⁰³ Ricoeur states, “The utopian mode is to the existence of society what invention is to scientific knowledge.” Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 319.

“otherness.”¹⁰⁴ Imagination in this mode is constitutive in an *inventive* rather than an *integrative* manner. In other words, utopia constructs identity in an *inventive* manner where ideology constructs identity in an *integrative* manner.

Ricoeur suggests that there are three “components” to utopia. First, there is the notion of self-reflection, which he calls the *transcendental component*. The second is the *cultural component*; all discourse is historically conditioned. He states, “The utopia is then not merely a transcendental element without history, for it is part of our history...Self-reflection has both an ahistorical factor, what I have called its transcendental component, and a cultural component, a history.”¹⁰⁵ The third component is fantasy, which Ricoeur equates with the positive notion of illusion, which he borrows from Freud. He states, “Illusion is differentiated...from delusion, where delusion is both the unverifiable and the unrealizable. Illusion or fantasy is the element of hope, a rational hope.”¹⁰⁶ Building upon Ricoeur’s three layers, I suggest a working definition of utopia as *inventive discourse on*

¹⁰⁴ Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 319. The idea of a search for “otherness” promotes a reading of Deuteronomism as central to Pan-Israelite identity especially when faced with the reality of a powerful cultural “other” known to assimilate other cultures (i.e. Assyria, and later Babylonia).

¹⁰⁵ Ricoeur, *Lectures*, 252.

¹⁰⁶ Ricoeur, *Lectures*, 252.

social structures based upon a rational hope and historically conditioned self-reflection within the hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation.

Ricoeur correlates the phenomenological “layers” of utopia as counterparts to those of ideology. As ideology operates along a trajectory from positive construct to pathological deconstruction, utopia progresses in the opposite direction, from positive deconstruction to devolution into the negative construction of false realities. Ideology, understood at its base function of social integration, is parallel to utopia’s core function as social subversion. Just as ideology is always in some way related to power structures, utopias suggest alternative ways of using power (family, political, economic, or religious). Ideologies help define social organization; utopias call established systems of power into question. Consequently, ideology as a tool of legitimation, bridging the gap between claim and belief, correlates with the function of utopia to expose overvalue within a system of legitimacy.¹⁰⁷

As with ideology, Ricoeur avers that a pathological definition of utopia, as fantasy or escapism, fails to articulate the inherent ambiguity of social function. Just as an ideology can function as a distortion of reality, utopia tends to submit reality to dreams and self-contained schema of perfectionism. This escapism is akin to schizophrenia, forsaking all

¹⁰⁷ Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 319–22.

logic and ignoring the genuineness of historical possess. Ricoeur states how “the pathology of utopia conceals under its traits of futurism the nostalgia for some paradise lost,” and “the denial of the logic of action...inevitably ties undesirable evils to preferred means and...forces us to choose between equally desirable but incompatible goals.”¹⁰⁸

Returning to Mannheim’s paradox, how do we assume a non-ideological perspective to critique a distorted reality? Ricoeur offers a two-tiered response. The first is implicit within his critique of Marx’s bifurcation of representation and praxis. For Mannheim, both ideology and utopia were false representations of reality and therefore needed conquering. Mannheim believed that ideological critique was only possible through what he called ‘vertical’ or ‘social mobility.’ He placed faith in a so-called ‘free-floating’ egalitarian stratum of the intelligentsia who were capable of rising above their social/class situation, through the study of historical processes, and position themselves as ‘objective observers.’¹⁰⁹

However, Ricoeur avers that there is no real contradiction between historical belonging to tradition and emancipation; both positions presuppose the other. Therefore, true ideological distancing is a misnomer. Hermeneutics and the critique of distorted communication are

¹⁰⁸ Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 322.

¹⁰⁹ Sargent, “Ideology and Utopia: Karl Mannheim and Paul Ricoeur,” 265.

fundamentally inseparable from acts of self-understanding, interpreting one's cultural belonging, and interpersonal communication.¹¹⁰ Emancipation, or distancing, itself cannot escape from historicity; consequently, we must use imagination as a critique of imagination. As David Kaplan clarifies,

It is in the practical activity of recovering the past and projecting a better future that we creatively interpret ourselves on the basis of a communicative ideal...the processes of hermeneutics and the critique of distorted communication are essentially inseparable from acts of self-understanding, interpreting one's cultural belonging, and interpersonal communication.¹¹¹

Ricoeur's second response to Mannheim is through his theory of *cultural imagination*. Mannheim was critical of both ideology and utopia, deeming them as forms of *non-congruence* with reality; *similar* deviations with present reality in need of objective (scientific) analysis.¹¹² Mannheim argued that both ideology and utopia emerge from political conflict, describing ideology as the belief systems of those in power and utopia as

¹¹⁰ Kaplan, *Ricoeur's Critical Theory*, 64.

¹¹¹ Kaplan, *Ricoeur's Critical Theory*, 64.

¹¹² Lyman Sargent explains, "In both cases, their beliefs [those in political conflict] hid or masked the reality of their positions. Ideology kept those in power from becoming aware of the difficulties of changing the system. And both [ideology/utopia] kept the believers from seeing the strengths in the other's position." Sargent, *Utopia*, 120.

the belief system of those in hopes of overturning the current political structure.¹¹³ Ricoeur critiques Mannheim by continuing to affirm that representation and praxis are not in opposition but exist within a *spectrum of non-congruence* in which individual and collective social reality is both constructed and deconstructed.¹¹⁴ Consequently, ideology and utopia should not be understood as *similar* figures of non-congruence, but as *complementary*, existing in a dialectical relationship: *cultural imagination*. Where one constructs, the other deconstructs, and vice versa. David Kaplan explains,

From the perspective of the cultural imagination, both ideology and utopia are simply imaginative variations of a broader, symbolic structure of social life. They are among the creative interpretations that constitute historical belonging, yet offer an alternative, non-congruent way to interpret and be-in-the-world.¹¹⁵

The critique of ideology is possible from the utopian ideal. Conversely, we reign in utopianism by grounding ourselves in the constitutive nature of ideology. Ideology and

¹¹³ Terry Eagleton states that for Mannheim, "Ideology... is antiquated belief, a set of obsolescent myths, norms and ideals unhinged from the real; utopia is premature and unreal, but should be reserved as a term for those conceptual prefiguration which really do succeed in realizing a new social order." Eagleton, *Ideology*, 109.

¹¹⁴ Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 308–9.

¹¹⁵ Kaplan, "Ricoeur's Critical Theory," 62.

utopia can contrast/challenge/deconstruct each other; the two can also support each other.

We criticize the “negatives” of one with the “positives” of the other.

(1.4) Summary Conclusions

I affirm that Paul Ricoeur’s theory of *cultural imagination* should function as a heuristic model for understanding a “hermeneutics of revision,” as evident within the Book of Deuteronomy and genetic literary traditions. I view *cultural imagination* as an intersection within the hermeneutical roadmap of detour and return where a received tradition is evaluated and subsequently given a renewed configuration. As an articulation of Ricoeur’s proposal, I put forward a working definition of *cultural imagination* as *an expression of a dialectical relationship between the phenomena of ideology and utopia within the rhetoric of social action where one assesses the validity of the other within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation.*

I argue for a needed shift in methodology away from purely socio-historical reconstructions, toward a phenomenological understanding of Deuteronomism. By “bracketing off” an emphasis on answering the question “Who are the Deuteronomists?” in the sense of identifying a singular school, social class, ideological movement in time, the

focus can shift to experiencing Deuteronomism as ideological phenomena. The phenomenological approach delineates the *essential structures* of conscious experience. Although *D* phenomena may vary, the ideal content or intentionality of genetic “texts” is always equivalent. Therefore, we can speak of a phenomenology of Deuteronomism as a stream of tradition with shared intentionality: the configuration of the existential mystery that is the unique relationship between Yahweh God and themselves. This narrative identity, in each incarnation, is compared/contrasted alongside a constitutive tradition within the historical field of reference.

When speaking of Deuteronomism as ideological phenomena with shared intentionality, attention is needed to define how one employs a multivalent term such as *ideology*. Usage of the word varies greatly, and the concern over definition has been a thread throughout applications of ideological criticism. Definitions of *ideology* typically align with one of two mainstream lineages: one focusing on ideas of true and false cognition and a second exploring the function of concepts within social life. Both streams have their limitations. Any use of the term must balance an emphasis on basic societal belief systems with the acknowledgment of the political nature of such systems. I argue that Ricoeur’s progression of Marx, Weber, and Geertz, allows for a balanced approach to

ideology noting the inherent layered complexity of ideology, from distortion to constitution, sustaining to pathological. Building upon Ricoeur's phenomenological investigation, I offer a working definition of ideology as *a constitutive paradigm for social integration utilized to conserve, legitimate, or distort socio-political structures within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation.*

As I have shown, most scholarship that interacts with Paul Ricoeur on ideology fails to recognize the significance of the relationship to utopia in his work. Beyond the disparity of content given to both phenomena (ideology/utopia) within the *Lectures*, two systemic factors are prompting this oversight. Most scholarship on utopia, building upon Marxist theory, views both utopia and ideology as similar deviations from reality. However, although ideological in nature, Ricoeur, and scholars such as Steven Schweitzer, recognize the non-congruent relationship between the two manifests in the function of utopia as ideological critique.

Furthermore, for Ricoeur to comprehend the polarity between ideology and utopia, one must first "bracket off" the idea of utopia as a literary genre. He suggests developing an appreciation for utopia as a "mode" of discourse and a rhetorical "spirit." Literary analysis often paints utopia as fanciful and the impossible; however, although an alternative vision

of reality, one must not deny the term potential of real possibility. The utopia does not point to something realized but bears the hope of realization. In temporal terms, the utopia is not necessarily future-orientated or eschatological. In its origins, there is a duality of meaning. Thomas Moore's Utopia is both a "good place" (*eutopia*) and "no place" (*outopia*). The unifying element of any utopian vision is the call for a society better than the present. Utopias are revolutionary texts, challenging the status quo and the present order with a "passion for the possible."

This dissertation intends to provide the interpreter of Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic texts a nuanced understanding of Deuteronomism that incorporates diachronic considerations within a "final" literary form appreciating the inherent theological dialog within. Ricoeur's dialectical relationship between ideology and utopia promotes a broadminded, developmental definition of Deuteronomism. As ideology, Deuteronomism bears the potential toward concealment and distortion. It also most likely functioned as legitimation. However, at its core is the integration of an 'Israelite' social identity. As utopia, Deuteronomism can possess the potential toward escapism and schizophrenia. Nonetheless, it also must be understood as a positive critique of distorted social identity. A utopian reading of Deuteronomism is not novel and can be traced back to

Hölscher in 1923; however, *cultural imagination* offers an understanding of utopia beyond mere exilic nostalgia.¹¹⁶

Hebrew Bible/Old Testament scholarship continues to ponder how the phenomena of Deuteronomism, in its nascent, developed, and waning incarnations influenced Israelite religion. I argue that this dissertation provides a fruitful voice in these discussions as my application of *cultural imagination* does not isolate a single social construct that is Deuteronomism but as an all-encompassing designation for a stream of tradition, which includes *Pre-Deuteronomic*, *Proto-Deuteronomic*, *Deuteronomic*, and *Deuteronomistic* literary traditions. Throughout the dissertation, I will highlight multiple phenomena (e.g., treaty forms, prophetic oracles, narrative histories, legal codes). Each manifestation of Deuteronomic intentionality, what I refer to as “D voices,” act as agents in the dialog of *cultural imagination* dialog. Each *D voice* contemplates the essential structures of Israel’s constitutive experience, e.g., the revelation of a unique election by Yahweh God.

¹¹⁶ See Gustav Hölscher, “Komposition and Ursprung Des Deuteronomiums,” *ZAW* 40 (1923): 161–225. See also, Norbert Lohfink, “Zur Neuren Diskussion Über 2 Kon 22-23,” in *Das Deuteronomium: Entstehung, Gestalt Und Botschaft*, ed. Norbert Lohfink, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium (Leuven: University Press, 1985), 25. For a recent discussion on reading Deuteronomy as utopia see Kåre Berge, “Literacy, Utopia and Memory: Is There a Public Teaching in Deuteronomy?,” *JHebS* 12.3 (2012): 1–19. Berge’s interest in a utopian reading of Deuteronomy is in the didactic nature/intent of the book. Although she does interact with Karl Manheim’s work on the relationship between ideology and utopia, she does not engage with Paul Ricoeur.

Ideological expressions of this experience are evaluated on their appropriate level of congruence to essential structures of a received tradition. Evaluation is followed by a refiguration which either supports, qualifies, or rejects the proposed ideological expression. Answers to the abstract question, who are we? are challenged/supported by a concrete (in the sense of giving a representative form) statement, this is who we are (or should be)? However, the constructed vision must also align with the core tenets of share constitutive cooperate identity.

CHAPTER TWO

COVENANT/LAW CODE AS CULTURAL IMAGINATION

(2.1) Introduction

The stated goal of this dissertation is the development of a model for appropriating so-called hermeneutics of revision, with interest in deuteronomic/deuteronomistic texts. To this end, I argue that Paul Ricoeur's theory of *cultural imagination* provides a heuristic tool for understanding the natural hermeneutical processes of ancient scribal traditions. I define *cultural imagination* as *an expression of the dialectical relationship between the phenomena of ideology and utopia within the rhetoric of social action where one assesses the validity of the other within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation*. An appeal to *cultural imagination* represents a crucial methodological shift in HB/OT studies away from an emphasis on questions such as "Who are the Deuteronomists?" to experiencing Deuteronomism as ideological phenomena. A phenomenological approach to Deuteronomism delineates ideal content of conscious experience across multiple manifestations. Although *D* phenomena may vary, we can speak of phenomenology of Deuteronomism as a stream of tradition with shared intentionality; consequently, my

application of *cultural imagination* does not isolate a single social construct, but a chorus of “D voices.”

Ricoeur’s discourse on *cultural imagination* emerged as a response to the question: how is ideological critique possible if all discourse is effectively ideological? Ricoeur affirms that *praxis* (what people are and do) and *representation* (how they appear in their own or other’s imagination) are not in opposition but exist within a *spectrum of non-congruence* in which individual and collective social reality is both constructed and deconstructed. Ideological critique is possible through utopian projections, but utopianism is also reined in by appeal to the constitutive nature of ideology. However, as utopia is inherently ideological, in the criticism of one ideology, there is intrinsic support of a competing ideology in the field of reference. Consequently, although ideology and utopia contrast/challenge/deconstruct each other, the later can also be a tool of legitimation for the former.

Representing an intersection within the hermeneutical roadmap of *detour* and *return*, where a received tradition is evaluated and subsequently given a renewed configuration, I approach *cultural imagination* as a dialogue between abstract proposals attempting to answer an existential mystery. For ancient Israel, the essential question is

how to express the unique relationship with Yahweh God. This quest prompts a question: “Who are we (Israel)?” I suggest the social construct of covenant represents an attempt to answer the existential mystery, functioning as a constitutive social construct. The covenant form provides a concrete framework for a social-political organization by stating: “This is who we (Israel) are.’ By commitment to a covenantal relationship, Israel submits all aspects of social organization to the terms set out by their suzerain, Yahweh God.

The Hebrew lexeme ברית bears a central meaning within ancient Israelite thought/theology.¹ Throughout the OT, the term represents oath-bound promises, both individual and geo-political. There are parity treaties, suzerain-vassal treaties, and, most significantly, the unique relationship between Yahweh God and Israel. Refraining from the analysis of particular covenants (i.e., the Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, or Davidic) I will focus on the essential structures of the phenomena of covenant. My main concern is how this social construct functions as cultural imagination, metaphorical appropriation representing an integrative ideology for ancient Israel. The covenant became the primary symbol of the existential mystery of Israelite identity.

¹ J. Gordon McConville, “ברית,” *NIDOTTE* 1:747–55.

From a phenomenological position, little distinction is necessary between law codes or treaty (parity/suzerain-vassal) forms.² Both forms carry ideological concepts of identity (i.e., cultural, social, economic, political structures) and the idea of advantages/disadvantages (utopia/dystopia) related to covenant obligations. Scholarship has appealed to both forms when contemplating Deuteronomism. Moshe Weinfeld argues the authors of Deuteronomy combined known elements of both legal codes and suzerain/vassal treaties to express the relationship between Yahweh God and Israel. The treaty aims to ensure loyalty, not to delimit a system of laws, but there are often sections of “legal” stipulations. Deuteronomy deviates from common treaty forms by including a highly structured legal code dedicated to civil, cultic, and criminal concerns, instead of general covenantal stipulations. However, extant examples of ANE law codes (i.e., Hammurabi) also bear treaty-like structure (e.g., preamble, historical prologue, stipulations, and blessings and curses).³

² Mendenhall and Herion write, “It follows that a covenant cannot be understood merely by reading it as a rigid literary form, nor can it be understood by reducing it to literary law code, a ritual act, or a theological or political idea or concept.” George E. Mendenhall and Gary A. Herion, “Covenant,” *ABD* 1:1180.

³ See Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, 148–57.

(2.2) Covenant and Deuteronomism

Since the emergence of modern critical scholarship on the Old Testament, there have been staunch debates over the role of covenant as an organizing social construct for ancient Israel. Influenced by the positivism of the 19th Century, which placed religion as less significant than other aspects of society (i.e., economics), Julius Wellhausen saw covenant as a relatively late theological development in ancient Israel. Wellhausen attributed the critical idea to the great writing prophets who appropriated the concept of a covenant to define a special relationship between Yahweh God and Israel.⁴

By the early 20th Century, social theorists began to appreciate the constative role religion had for social organization. Subsequently, an emphasis on the antiquity of the covenant surfaced. This change in the academic method established fundamental principles for future study. First, the antiquity of the covenant bolstered its appropriation as the principal metaphor to express the existential mystery that was the historic exodus event. This association extended deep into Israel's historical consciousness, and its renewed

⁴ For comprehensive literature review on the history of Old Testament scholarship on the concept of covenant see Ernest W. Nicholson, *God and His People: Covenant and Theology in Ancient Israel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

“actualization” became a central element in cultic ceremonies.⁵ Ernest Nicholson writes, “This view of a recurring cultic ‘actualization’ of Israel’s covenant tradition...carried with it an understanding of the covenant not as a theological idea but as having a particular religio-sociological function: the ordering of Israelite society as the people of Yahweh.”⁶

A concurrent thesis that emerged was that of a tribal federation or “amphictyony,” as an integrative model for early Israelite society. Appealing to examples from ancient Greece and other Mediterranean cultures, Martin Noth proposed that disparate tribes bound together as mutual adherents to a treaty between each other and a shared deity. He pointed to the tradition of a covenant instituted at Shechem as recounted in the Book of Joshua (Chapter 24) as the archetypal formulation. This historical account represented the model for regular reaffirmation of the relationship, reinforcing an integrative ideology. Noth’s theory had ripple effects for a generation of subsequent scholarship. George Mendenhall argued that the Sinai covenant/law code was the constitutive phenomena of the ancient Israelite tribal federation; the laws of the Decalogue being the legal foundation of the

⁵ The scholar most notable for this position was S. Mowinckel. See Sigmund Mowinckel, *Psalmstudien II. Das Thronbesteigungsfest Jahwäs Und Der Ursprung Der Eschatologie* (Kristiania, 1922).

⁶ Nicholson, *God and His People*, 54.

community.⁷ Noth's theory has been widely criticized in modern research; however, rejection of covenant as a constitutive "social institution" need not preclude discussions of the integrative "social function" of covenantal ideology, even if not in a pre-monarchial historical practice.

In the Mid-20th century, interest shifted from exploring the idea of covenant as "historical" social integration to a greater emphasis on connecting the covenant/treaty forms evident throughout ANE cultures to the study of the HB/OT, namely the Book of Deuteronomy. Structural parallels were compared between Deuteronomy and various treaty forms. Although these explorations would fuel debate over dating schemes (i.e., appeal to Hittite treaties extends possible connections to the Late Bronze age, appeal to Neo-Assyrian vassal treaty associates with the Judean State Period), scholars such as Dennis McCarthy began to emphasize the metaphorical application of treaty forms within Deuteronomism. Representation of covenantal social phenomena need not reflect historical documentation,

⁷ George E. Mendenhall, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Pittsburg: The Biblical Colloquium, 1955). Ernest Nicholson states "[M] saw the value of the use of the treaty model for Israel's covenant with Yahweh to lie precisely in the way in which it would have functioned both in the sphere of religion and also sociologically by creating, on the one hand, a bond, between the tribes and Yahweh...and, on the other, solidarity between the tribes themselves as Yahweh's 'vassals' Nicholson, *God and His People*, 83–84.

but as “*theological reflection*” using the suzerain-vassal relationship as an analogy for the affiliation between Yahweh and Israel.⁸

Accordingly, Moshe Weinfeld suggests that the authors of Deuteronomy took literary license continuing the development of covenant and its constitutive social function. The vassal treaty form was combined with that of a law code creating a literary pastiche placed into a homiletical voice. Weinfeld states, “The author of Deuteronomy had in mind the covenantal pattern in the form in which it had been lying before him in the tradition and in the manner in which it was generally formulated at the time. Nevertheless, he presented the materials in a style that is free from adherence to formality.”⁹

Steven Cook argues that the idea of covenant is not an adequate ideal to organize early Israel into an organized society. Cook distinguishes covenant from the broader

⁸ See Dennis McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, AnBib 21A (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981), 290–92. McCarthy deems many well known covenant texts (i.e. Deut, Ex 19:3b-8; Josh 24; 1 Sam 12) as ‘literary reflective texts’. Nicholson writes, “[I]t may be argued that the view that the authors of Deuteronomy adapted political and diplomatic forms of language to the religious sphere...carries with it...the view that these authors had in effect abandoned earlier cultic and institutional concepts of this covenant, if such there were, and were concerned with creating an ideology...” Nicholson, *God and His People*, 84–85. Mendenhall and Herion suggest Footnote: “[I]t is also necessary to distinguish between covenants as *socially enacted historical realities* that were expected to bring about functional changes in patterns of behavior, and covenants as *formal or symbolic concepts* that were supposed to be the objects of tradition and belief.” Mendenhall and Herion, “Covenant,” 1:1179–80.

⁹ Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, 157.

concept of culture, i.e., kinship ties, which would be the building blocks of Israelite identity. He argues, “Covenant may overlay, regularize, and reinforce elements of culture, but it does not create culture.”¹⁰ However, this is not to say that the idea of covenant must be a late creation, [e. g. post-exilic] ala Perlitt.¹¹ Cook argues that covenant represents the ideology of a small vocal minority. Prophets, traditional Levitical priestly lineages, and the clan elders around Jerusalem advocated for the concept of the Sinai covenant, but it didn’t become pervasive until the reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah.¹² Although covenant may not represent the building blocks of ancient Israel, the groups that come together to represent Deuteronomism promote covenant as a constitutive ideology. Cook states,

In Israel’s case, covenantal norms set boundaries to distinguish Israel from its neighbors, reformed customary practices, and emphasized protection of the venerable. The covenant had its greatest impact in connecting Israel’s culture with Yahweh’s purposes in redeeming and liberating the Hebrews and settling them in God’s land.¹³

¹⁰ Steven Cook makes the distinction between the concept of covenant as “a people in relationship with Yahweh” and specific phrases that define Israel as a “people.” Stephen L. Cook, *The Social Roots of Biblical Yahwism*, Studies in Biblical Literature (Society of Biblical Literature) 8 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 158–60.

¹¹ Lothar Perlitt, *Bundestheologie Im Alten Testament*, WMANT 36 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1969).

¹² Cook, *The Social Roots of Biblical Yahwism*, 159.

¹³ Cook, *The Social Roots of Biblical Yahwism*, 159.

Although there is a consensus that the idea of covenant, if even a metaphor, had a bearing on the emergence of Deuteronomism, the antiquity of the social construct is still in dispute.¹⁴ If covenant had any constituting function early in Israel, after the settlement period, it became mere historical memory. Ernest Nicholson suggests that it remained in the mists of time until the Deuteronomic movement molded it into “a *theologoumenon* of fundamental importance.”¹⁵ If covenant existed as a Pre-D concept or was something appropriated by D, either way, it became an integrative ideology for Israel in the during the Late Judean monarchy.

(2.3) Covenant/ Law Codes as Ideology/Utopia

I suggest that both covenant forms and law codes throughout the ANE embody cultural imagination. Both social constructs represent a dialog between competing ideologies. A proposed shared set of obligations is supported by a utopian vision (blessings), whereas a competing ideology is challenged by presenting it as a potential dystopia (curses).

¹⁴ On the issues concern the dating of covenant traditions and their relationship to Deuteronomy see Ansberry and Hwang, “No Covenant Before Exile?”

¹⁵ Nicholson, *God and His People*, 87.

(2.3.1) Ideology

A phenomenological exploration of covenant as ideology forgoes arguments over the historicity of an “event” to emphasize its function as a social institution. Returning to a working definition of ideology as *a constitutive paradigm for social integration utilized to constitute, legitimate, and/or distort socio-political structures within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation*, the paradigm of covenant bears an essential integrative function, constituting a communal identity (social, political, power structures, etc.). The function of the covenant was to assimilate the vassal into a new sphere of influence. By pledging fealty to a greater power all facets of life are potentially affected. The relationship imposed new economic, military, and religious obligations, which may or may not be native cultural markers.

The concept of covenant connected an overarching ANE cultural idea that of the divine ordering of the cosmos. In most situations, the suzerain, functioning as the representative of the deity(ies), accomplished this harmony, therefore legitimizing his authority. In this vein, Mendenhall and Herion aver that “[C]ovenant is the instrument constituting the rule (or kingdom) of God, and therefore is a valuable lens through which

one can recognize and appreciate the biblical ideal of religious community.”¹⁶ The uniqueness of the paradigm within Israel is that the suzerain is not a divinely sanctioned agent, but God himself. Yahweh God reigned alone as king over Israel, becoming the standard for all social-political constructs. The implication being that the covenant represented a constative function not determined by geopolitics but derived from the “deep structures” of cultural identity. This relationship was not “new,” therefore needing a lesser level of legitimation. The gap between claim and belief was considerably narrower.

Most treaty forms begin with the identification of the covenant grantor, providing a plethora of names, titles, and divine designations. Late Bronze age (e.g., Hittite) examples include a historical prologue referencing past events as a means of legitimation. By recalling how previous ancestors shared similar oath-based agreements, the new relationship represents an extension of the latter. Past relationships with progenitors are appealed to as congruent, similar relationships with similar presumable outcomes. Here the historical field of reference is ideologically refigured. These appeals are acts of legitimation, filling the gap between claim and belief.

¹⁶ Mendenhall and Herion, “Covenant,” 1:1179.

Upon establishing the foundations of the covenant, there is a general regularity of structure across represented forms. The obligations of the lesser party are laid out through a series of stipulations, which may or may not bear a resemblance to a legal code.

Following the obligatory content, provisions are established for both deposit, typically in a place of social/cultic significance, and the periodic public reading of the covenant.

Witnesses, comprised of entire pantheons of deities, those known by either party or shared by the two, as well as the elements of creation itself, are called upon to solidify and further legitimate the relationship. The treaties often conclude with a list of blessings and curses that would come upon the lesser party through the upholding of the covenant.

Later Iron Age forms, represented by Neo-Assyrian examples, were less sophisticated in that they lack some of the formal elements of the early texts. Although designations of both parties and a list of divine witnesses are present, there is often an absence of any reference to historical events. The implication being that the grantor felt no need to appeal to the past to assert dominion. His present power, often manifested through military strength, was enough legitimation in itself. Stipulations noting all the ways the vassal could break the covenant through both acts of commission and omission are present. However, there is a marked absence of any blessing. By the Iron Age, at least those instituted by the

Neo-Assyrian Empire, the treaty forms became more brutal and excessive imposition of military dominance.¹⁷

(2.3.2) Utopia/ Dystopia

Exploring the social construct covenant as a representation of what Paul Ricoeur calls cultural imagination, it is imperative to visit Ricoeur's emphasis on utopia as represented by more than specific literary content and structure, but as a "mode" of discourse and rhetorical "spirit."¹⁸ Ricoeur speaks of the "utopian mode" as "the imaginary project of another kind of society, or another reality, another world,"¹⁹ which conveys the rhetorical intention of promoting a change in the social order and a search for "otherness." Interest in the utopian nature of ANE texts has been a topic of interest in Old Testament studies. A

¹⁷ However, that is not to say that early LB covenants were wholly manifestos of peace. Mendenhall and Herion write, "The treaties...were imposed relationships in which the vassal had freedom to choose either capitulation under the covenant or annihilation; thus, the LB treaties were instruments of propaganda, not practical reality. Nevertheless, as instruments of propaganda they appealed to a different matrix of ideas than did the (equally propagandistic) loyalty oaths of the Iron Age." Mendenhall and Herion, "Covenant," 1:1183.

¹⁸ For discussion on "utopian mode" and "utopian spirit" see Chapter 1. Ricoeur borrowed the terminology developed by Ruyer, *L'utopie et Les Utopies*.

¹⁹ Ricoeur states, "The utopian mode is to the existence of society what invention is to scientific knowledge." Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 319.

significant contributor to this discussion is Bernard Levinson.²⁰ Levinson argues that ANE law codes are inherently utopian, often representing an “ideal type” of social organization.²¹ He states, “Although both biblical and Near Eastern legal corpora seem like judicial texts ...in fact they were never implemented as law, nor were they intended to have a direct application to society.”²² One warrant Levinson points to is the literary nature of ancient legal codes. For example, ANE legal corpora are often placed within a narrative framework introducing the reader to a divinely inspired speaker, telling of the origins of his judicial wisdom. In some instances, the document itself might represent a hypostatization of the lawgiver, effectively bringing the reader into the world of equity and justice laid out before them.

²⁰ Bernard Levinson, “The Right Chorale: From the Poetics to the Hermeneutics of the Hebrew Bible,” in *The Right Chorale: Studies in Biblical Law and Interpretation*, FAT 54 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 30–39.

²¹ Levinson borrows the terminology “ideal type” from Max Weber. See Bernard Levinson, “Deuteronomy’s Conception of Law as an ‘Ideal Type’: A Missing Chapter in the History of Constitutional Law,” in *The Right Chorale: Studies in Biblical Law and Interpretation*, FAT 54 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 85–86.

²² Levinson, “The Right Chorale,” 31. Levinson adds a caveat in that his discussion is based on civil and ethical laws and not ritual laws that “have a somewhat different history.”

When examining the actual stipulations within the codes, one notices a lack of comprehensiveness. Levinson notes that many examples generally lack laws that are crucial for a functioning society.²³ For example, turning to the biblical material, the Pentateuch has no laws regulating normalized marriage or inheritance rights. The regulations presented are often for irregular situations prompting Levinson's to suggest that ANE legal codes, biblical codes included, "[R]epresent theoretical reflections on ethical issues, considerations of the proper thing to do in a certain case, such reflections the product of a scribal *intelligentsia* and primarily circulated within scribal schools."²⁴ He points to the example of Laws of Hammurabi (1792-1750 BCE). Although an integral part of the scribal curriculum for over a millennium, there is no extant record of the code ever being cited in a contemporary legal document. However, Levinson offers the caveat "The one citation of Laws of Hammurabi found occurs in a political treaty nearly one thousand years after the Code's promulgation.

²³ Levinson, "The Right Chorale," 31.

²⁴ Levinson, "The Right Chorale," 31. He cites Jacob J. Finkelstein, "The Ox That Gored," *Trans. Am. Philosophical Soc.* 71.2 (1981): 1-89 [13-14, 25-47]. Also Jacob J. Finkelstein, "Cuneiform Law," *Encyclopedia Judaica* 16:1505f-1505k.

Strikingly, the citation is not of the actual laws, but of the curses found in the poetic frame of the Code.”²⁵

The structure of the covenant presents both a construct for a “new order,” but also a vision of the benefits the just and equitable society will bring. The blessings represent a utopian ideal, potentially realized in the present, in support of the constitutive ideology of covenant identity. However, with the blessings also come the curses. If the first can be deemed utopian then the latter can bear the descriptor dystopian.²⁶ Although both visions represent a rejection of the current culture as a failed community, where the latter sees a

²⁵ Levinson, “The Right Chorale,” 31. 31, n32. Levinson cites Godfrey R. Driver and John C. Miles, *The Babylonian Laws* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1952), 1:53. Also Rykle [Riekle] Borger, “Marduk –zākir – šumi I. und der Kodex Hammurapi,” *Or* 34 (1965): 168-169.

²⁶ Lyman Tower Sargent traces the use of the word “dystopia” to the middle of the 18th century in a speech by John Stuart Mill to Parliament in 1886. However, the literary use of the term did not become prominent until the 20th century spurred on by war, disease and poverty on a global scale. See Lyman Tower Sargent, *Utopianism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 27; Krishan Kumar, “Utopia and Anti-Utopia in the Twentieth Century,” in *Utopia: The Search for the Ideal Society in the Western World*, ed. Ronald Schaer, Gregory Claeys, and Lyman Tower Sargent (New York: The New York Public Library/Oxford University Press, 2000), 251–67. Also Lyman Tower Sargent, “Utopia and the Late Twentieth Century: A View from North America,” in *Utopia: The Search for the Ideal Society in the Western World*, ed. Ronald Schaer, Gregory Claeys, and Lyman Tower Sargent (New York: The New York Public Library/Oxford University Press, 2000), 333–45. Interesting comment: “From the perspective of utopianism, the twentieth century has been a dialectic between utopia/good place and dystopia/bad place,” (333). One might argue that the tension is not new but evident in the ancient world in the blessing/curses of the ANE law codes/treaties.

path to a better version of the present society, the former envisions potential horrors to come if society does not alter course. Steven Schweitzer explains,

The dystopia typically is depicted as the result of the logical extrapolation of present abuses or problems either in terms of their intensity or pervasiveness in the literary reality of the dystopian text. However, a dystopia may also be formed by the removal of key elements in the present society that either promote well-being or hope for the future. Thus, stripped of the good, Society succumbs to its worst aspects, practices, and beliefs in the realization of a dystopia.²⁷

Returning to the working definition of utopia as *inventive discourse on social structures based upon a rational hope and historically conditioned self-reflection within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation*, I suggest that this characterization, with slight variation, is also applicable to dystopia. Like the utopia, the treaty curses represent a vision of both the present and future situations as a confrontation of competing ideologies. Although on the surface, the idea of “hope” seems contradictory to dystopian rhetoric, there is still an inherent desire to bring about change. Both utopia and dystopia present social critique in the same rhetorical “mode” and “spirit.” However, the difference comes from perspective. Lyman Sargent suggests that dystopias are typically written from within a society, whereas to the utopian view often comes from an outside observer. As he

²⁷ Schweitzer, “Utopias and Utopian Literary Theory,” 16.

states, “[Dystopias] are clearly connected to the present in which they are written. In that connection, they provide an explicitly positive message to go with the negative one. They say...that this is what will happen if we fail to act, but if we do act, this future can still be avoided.”²⁸ Based on these observations, the following distinction is evident. The utopia’s objective is to *inspire a society into corporate transformation*; whereas, dystopias intend to *castigate a society into corporate repentance*. In essence, dystopia is a warning and utopia and acts of positive motivation.

(2.4) Proposed Case Studies

Arguing the heuristic value of reading ANE treaty forms/law codes through the lens of cultural imagination, it is beneficial to offer case studies. In the following section, I will present readings of representative texts from the aforementioned literary genres. I will demonstrate how each document portrays an ideological claim, typically through an appeal to the historical field of reference and/or the divine nature of initiator of the relationship. Support for the ideology comes through depictions of both utopian possibilities and a harbinger of dystopia.

²⁸ Sargent, *Utopianism*, 29.

Representing formal legislation, I will offer a reading of the Code of Hammurabi, one of the most ubiquitous examples of the genre. I will explore both the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age examples of treaty forms. Hittite treaties represent both the ideological nature of the historical prologue and utopia/dystopia in the blessing/curses. Neo-Assyrian treaties exhibit an ominous dystopian emphasis as a means of legitimation. Considering these examples, I will present a summary reading of the Book of Deuteronomy itself. Each treatment will be cursory but present essential points of reference for further analysis.

(2.4.1) The Code of Hammurabi²⁹

Reigning in the Early/Mid-Second Millennium, Hammurabi (ca. 1792-1750 BCE) represented a dynasty of Amorite nomads who settled in the city-state of Babylon and surrounding regions. These non-indigenous peoples easily assimilated into the urban Mesopotamian culture and socio-political structures, quickly rising to power. Under his rule, the kingdom expanded through military campaigns, subjugating numerous regional

²⁹ For translation and detailed bibliography see Martha Roth, *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*, 2nd ed., SBLWAW 6 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997). Also Martha Roth, trans., “The Laws of Hammurabi,” in *Monumental Inscriptions From the Biblical World*, vol. 2 of *COS*, ed. William W. Hallo (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 335–53. (COS 2.131:335-353).

rivals and establishing Hammurabi as “King of Sumer and Akkad.” Later in his life, Hammurabi turned his focus to domestic endeavors. It is during this period that his law code emerged representing a divinely inspired just society.

Although multiple copies exist, the widely noted specimen of Hammurabi's code is engraved upon a stela initially set up for public display. The inscription contains both the text of the legal stipulations as well as an image of the king receiving the laws from Shamash, the Babylonian god of Justice. A prologue, in which the voice of Hammurabi narrates how the gods made Babylon the exalted and supreme city in the world, establishing an enduring dynasty, introduces the legislation. The prologue contains over 200 lines of glorious appellations representing the source of Hammurabi's piety, strength, patronage, and wisdom. This catalog concludes, “When god Marduk commanded me to provide just ways for the people of the land...I established truth and justice as the declaration of the land, [and] I enhanced the well-being of the people.”³⁰ The Babylonian pantheon designated Hammurabi “the pious prince.” As the devout king, Hammurabi provided “high abundance and plenty,” for sacred temples throughout his kingdom. As designated dwelling places of

³⁰ *COS* 2.131:337

the gods, each of these locations representing a type of utopian hub.³¹ As both representative and embodiment of divine justice, Hammurabi was empowered to institute utopia on earth, chosen to “make justice prevail in the land, to abolish the wicked and the evil, to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak.”

Legitimation for Hammurabi’s authority is again present in the epilogue. The king appeals to his reputation and history of achievements. Reflecting on his reign, he revels in the fact that he achieved what he was tasked by the gods, represented through the society ordered by the preceding code. The voice of Hammurabi states, “I annihilated enemies everywhere; I put an end to wars, I enhanced the well-being of the land, I made the people of all settlements lion safe pastures, I did not tolerate anyone intimidating them. The section concludes, “They prospered under my protective spirit, I maintained them in peace, with my skillful wisdom I sheltered them.”³²

Hammurabi expects his utopia to extend past his death. He speaks to future readers of his law, beckoning them to recall the society which he established and to maintain or recreate it in their lifetime. The concluding blessings are not directed to the general

³¹ *COS* 2.131: 336

³² *COS* 2.131: 351.

populace but for future kings. Hammurabi charges these fellow monarchs to upkeep the just principles he was inspired by the gods to institute. If they pursue this endeavor without wavering, the gods will extend their reign.³³ The only reference to the people is in the depiction of an individual bringing a legal matter before the king, even after his death. The maltreated may come before the stela and find justice for his case.³⁴ The situation is ambiguous. It could be describing a type of legal proceeding or suggest the supplicant merely standing in the presence of a hypostatic image of the king, a conduit for assurance that justice will be served. The significance is an appeal to the utopian vision of the past as a rule for the present.

Throughout the stela's text, the relationship between utopia and dystopia is evident. In both the prologue and epilogue, upon presenting his vision for a just society, Hammurabi warns future kings the outcome of a failure to heed his words. The warning extends to any act of defacing his image or tarnishing his reputation. There are a series of curses directed to the various gods of the Babylonian pantheon requesting that each one enact tragedy in his or her domain of influence. The resulting afflictions vary in detail, but

³³ *COS* 2.131:352.

³⁴ *COS* 2:131:351

reference impact on the fertility of the land, loss of dynastic rule, military defeat, and the onset of physical malady. The dystopian warning is indiscriminate, “whether he is king, a lord, or a governor, or any person at all.”³⁵

(2.4.2) Hittite Treaties Forms

Extant examples of Hittite treaty forms bear a strong emphasis on past interactions between parties involved. A common element is an extensive historical prologue. The king offering the agreement recites the relationship between the previous kings of each nation or city-state. Often these relationships were between direct ancestors of the present parties, e.g., fathers, grandfathers, great grandfathers, etc. For example, in a treaty between Muršili, king of Hatti, and his vassal Duppi-Tešub, the “Great King” reminds his supplicant of the generous relationship between both of their progenitors.³⁶ Azira, the father of Duppi-Tešub, pledged fidelity to the previous Hittite king, Šuppiluliuma. The alliance provided military protection for both parties based on a pledge of mutual support in times of regional uprising. Upon the death of his father, Muršili extended the same relationship to Duppi-

³⁵ *COS* 2.131:352.

³⁶ *COS* 2.17b:96-98.

Tešub, even though the latter was ill and presumably engendered an image of weakness.³⁷

Consequently, the peace and security (utopia) of the previous generation continued, providing legitimation for the present, and assumed continuation into the future, as long as Duppi-Tešub and his children, and grandchildren were faithful to the terms.

In the treaty between Hattusilis of the Hittite empire and Ramses II of Egypt,³⁸ the so-called “Eternal Treaty,” the utopian ideal extends beyond the present, but in atypical terms. This matchless example of an international treaty, of which copies from both parties are extant, establishes a connection of peace and goodwill that extends beyond time. Ramses II (Rea-mashesha mai Amana in the text) opens the treaty by proclaiming to the Hittite king that the function of the agreement was “In order to establish good peace (and) brotherhood in [the relationship] of the land of Egypt with the Hatti land forever...”³⁹ The special relationship is envisioned as existing in perpetuity. The treaty represents an

³⁷ COS 2.17b:96.

³⁸ Albrecht Goetze, “Treaty Between Hattusilis and Ramses II,” in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, ed. James B. Pritchard, 3rd ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), 201–3.

³⁹ ANET, 202.

extension of the idealized relationship between both parties sanctioned by the gods from the beginning of time. The guarantor of treaty states:

Behold [Ramses II], the great king, the king of the land of Egypt, in order to bring about the relationship that the Sun-god and the Storm-god have effected for the land of Egypt with the Hatti land finds himself in a relationship valid since the turn of the which [does not permit] the making of hostility between [them] until all and everlasting time.”⁴⁰

The present treaty is seen as even more idealistic than past relations. Again, Rameses II states, “And as for us, our brotherhood and our peace is being brought about, and it will be better than the brotherhood in the peace which existed formally for the land of Egypt with the Hatti land.”⁴¹

The blessing and curses found in Hittite treaty forms are typically short and standardized. In these proclamations, the dual relationship between utopia and dystopia is evident. Maintenance of the covenant will bring peace and security to the parties for both their reign and future generations. An extended representation of this form is in a treaty

⁴⁰ *ANET*, 202.

⁴¹ *ANET*, 202.

between Suppiluliumas of Hatti and Kurtiwaza of the Hurrians.⁴² Following a list of witnesses, which includes the pantheon of both parties, Suppiluliumas warns, “If you...[the prince of and sons of Hurri]...do not fulfill the words of this treaty, may the gods, the lords of the oath, blot you out,” He continues with a string of curses including, “May they overturn your throne... May they exterminate from the earth your name and your seed... May the earth be coldness so that you fall down slipping. May the soil of your country be a hard and quagmire so that you break in, but never get across.”⁴³ On the other hand, the blessings present a utopia. If the Hurrian king maintains the treaty, the gods will protect his family, both present and future, extend his territory, and maintain a never-ending dynasty.⁴⁴

⁴² James B. Pritchard, ed., “God List, Blessings and Curses of the Treaty Between Suppiluliumas and Kurtiwaza,” in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, trans. E. F. Weidner, 3rd ed. (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), 205–6.

⁴³ *ANET*, 206.

⁴⁴ *ANET*, 206.

(2.4.3) Neo-Assyrian Treaty Forms

The differences between the Hittite treaty forms and the later treaties of the Neo-Assyrian period, namely the Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon⁴⁵, are well known. The most notable variation is the absence of a historical prologue. As noted in previous examples, the preface situated the political relationship within a historical field of reference. The present represented an extension, or refiguration of the past, a reinstatement of an idealized peace. Furthermore, the prologue often extended the relationship in perpetuity based on mutual covenant faithfulness. With the absence of these elements, the primary concern of the Neo-Assyrian treaty is the submission of the weaker power to “the king of the world,” merely in the present. Historic relationships did not matter and were not assumed; however, the vassal was expected to extend loyalty to the crown prince.

The bulk of these treaties is comprised of stipulations presented in the form of conditional clauses (e.g., “If you do this....). The exhaustive list of ways one might break the treaty, many relating to rebellion, specifically against Esarhaddon’s successor

⁴⁵ D. J. Wiseman, “The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon,” in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, ed. James B. Pritchard, 3rd ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), 534–41.

Ashurbanipal, is followed by an equally thorough list of curses, many calling upon

witnesses from the divine pantheon. A characteristic example reads:

May the great gods of heaven and earth, who inhabit the world, all those that are named in this tablet, strike you down, look with disfavor upon you, curse you angrily with a baleful curse, on earth, may they uproot you from the living, below, may they deprive your spirit of water (libations), may they chase you away from both shade and sunlight so that you cannot take refuge in a hidden corner, may food and drink forsake you, and hunger, want, famine and pestilence never leave you...⁴⁶

This dystopian representation of reality is presented by further specifics, many depicting a ghastlier demise.

Just as there is no historical prologue establishing an idealized past and future relationship, there are also no blessings. There is no inherent promise of utopia. The absence of blessings would only suggest that for the Assyrian king, utopia is not needed to “fill the gap” between claim and belief. In this instance, the suzerain is not promising an idealized relationship. He is only suggesting that dystopia is merely staved off through fidelity.

⁴⁶ *ANET* 539, no. 56, 472ff.

(2.4.5) The Book of Deuteronomy

As aforementioned, since the 19th Century, the analysis of covenant forms has been central to the study of Deuteronomy. Scholars note the similarity of structure between the Book of Deuteronomy and various examples of ANE treaty form and law codes, yet there continues to be a dispute over if the book aligns with early Hittite types or later Neo-Assyrian models. I will reserve the overall ideological and utopian nature of the Deuteronomic Legal Code (DLC) for a later chapter;⁴⁷ however, considering the present discussion, I will highlight the greater structure of the book highlighting the historical prologue and blessings and curses found in Chapters 27-28.

Following common treaty forms, the Book of Deuteronomy begins with a historical prologue. The book starts by establishing the projected historical setting for the giving of the treaty, e.g., on the plains of Moab overlooking the land of promise, after the defeat of powerful adversaries (e.g., Og and Sihon). Akin to Hammurabi and the authorial voices behind other treaties and law codes, Moses's voice is placed in the first person. The difference being, Moses is not the suzerain himself, but the mediator between the true king and his vassals.

⁴⁷ See Chapter 5.

There is a reference to the relationship between the Great King and the ancestors of the vassals. The voice of Yahweh God, through the mouth of Moses, states, “See, I have set the land before you. Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and their offspring after them.”

[Deut 1:8, ESV] The current relationship is established as a reimagining of the historical field.

The prologue continues with a recounting of Yahweh’s generosities in the face of ungrateful disobedience. Although Israel has rebelled continually, Yahweh gave victories removing significant obstacles prohibiting the promise of peace and prosperity.

Beginning in Deuteronomy Chapter 4, the covenant principles are established, highlighting the nature of the parties. The suzerain, Yahweh God, is unique and singular. Therefore, he alone bears obedience before all other gods or human authorities. He is gracious and compassionate toward his vassals, establishing the relationship not based upon their merits, but upon his merciful love, choosing them above all others. The stipulations of the covenant are divided into two broad sections. The first presents the ideological claims for obedience and how those claims should be reflected in the relationship between the suzerain and the vassal (Chapters 4-11), and a utopian vision in support of the ideological claims (12-26). The relationship between the suzerain and vassal

plays out into all relationships. Upholding the obligations of the covenant (Torah) peace and harmony will be established and sustained.

After the stipulations of the DLC, there is a series of blessings and curses. In Chapters 27-28, the utopian and dystopian possibilities are presented. By maintaining the covenantal obligations, the people will receive utopian abundance represented in unparalleled fecundity in all aspects of life. The blessing will “overtake” [נִשְׁגָּ] ⁴⁸(Deut. 28: 2) the people. They will also gain victory over their enemies. The utopian promise is effectively summarized in Deut 28:11. Yahweh will הוֹתִירֶךָ לְטוֹבוֹתָהּ “Pour out an abundance of good things,” upon the people.

A dystopian reality is also present. Disobedience will open the door for the curses to “overtake” just as would the blessing (Deut 28:15, 45). The curses represent general reversals of the blessings. Lack of fertility, affliction upon the people, and lack of peace; famine, physical maladies, and the horrors of war. Even the loss of the land and a return to the slavery from which Yahweh had delivered them. Obedience to the stipulations is encouraged and supported by a utopian vision, whereas, obedience to the stipulations is also inspired by the

⁴⁸ This verb is only found in the *hip'il* throughout the OT. It is considered a hunting term and is often used in the context of one individual pursuing another. In the present context, the blessings and curses function as a representation of Yahweh. Yahweh pursues Israel in both his compassion and his wrath. Robin Wakely, “נִשְׁגָּ,” *NIDOTTE* 3:163–70.

threat of nullification of the covenant all together and a return to a life of hardship and oppression.

(2.5) Summary Conclusions

Covenant forms and legal codes are common throughout the ANE with extant examples dating from the Middle Bronze Age and into the Judean State Period. The widely representative nature across multiple culture streams suggests that these were an essential construct for social and political life. They combine historical reference, common ideas associated with the nature of religion, described norms of social/political behavior, literary forms, and ritual acts. They were common social constructs that bound the societies together through both proposed systems of equability and justice, or military and economic allegiance. In each instance, a proposed narrative identity is compared/contrasted alongside a constitutive tradition within the historical field of reference. The ideology behind the text is a call to allegiance. In both legal codes such as instituted by Hammurabi or suzerain-vassal treaties, a relationship purported on the claim of a more powerful individual or empire. These claims were bolstered by contingent realities based upon faithfulness, or lack

thereof. These curses and blessings represent utopian and dystopian images of society either in support of or warning or covenant faithfulness.

Representing an intersection within the hermeneutical roadmap of *detour* and *return*, where a received tradition is evaluated and subsequently given a renewed configuration, *cultural imagination* represents a dialogue between abstract proposals attempting to answer an existential mystery. For ancient Israel, the essential question is how to express the unique relationship with Yahweh God. This quest prompts a question: “Who are we (Israel)?” I suggest the phenomena of covenant/ law code represents a proposed answer to the existential mystery, functioning as a constitutive social construct. Each text provides a framework for a social-political organization by stating: “This is who we (Israel) are.’ By commitment to a covenantal relationship, Israel submits all aspects of social organization to the terms set out by their suzerain, Yahweh God.

CHAPTER THREE

THE HOSEANIC VOICE

(3.1) Introduction

Paul Ricoeur's theory of cultural imagination is heuristic for understanding how a received tradition is appropriated into new contexts. Cultural imagination represents *an expression of the dialectical relationship between the phenomena of ideology and utopia within the rhetoric of social action, where one assesses the validity of the other within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation*. Ideological critique is at the forefront of textual reuse as the received text is configured/refigured to align with, or challenged in relation to, the perceived constative tenets of social integration. One organization of reality is appraised by a better vision. This evaluation happens not only through positive imagery but also through forecasts of doom; projections of utopia *inspire a society into corporate transformation*, whereas dystopian warnings *castigate a society into corporate repentance*.

Undertaking a phenomenological analysis of Deuteronomism, my effort forgoes isolating a single social location for the "elusive Deuteronomists" for exploration of a historic stream of shared intentionality. I employ the term Deuteronomism as an all-

encompassing designation for a stream of tradition which includes *Pre-Deuteronomic*, *Proto-Deuteronomic*, *Deuteronomic*, and *Deuteronomistic* literary traditions. Arguing for a polyvocal approach to Deuteronomism¹, I speak of to “D voices,” as agents in the dialog that is cultural imagination. Each “D voice” contemplates the essential structures of Israel’s constitutive experience, e.g., the revelation of a unique election by Yahweh God, making an “assessment” of received “texts,” ranging from oral traditions, written law codes, and/or cultic representations.

Based on linguistic coherence and conceptual similarities, there is a general agreement of shared ideological content and rhetorical style between the Book of Hosea²

¹ Although I am interested in the function of Deuteronomism as broad social phenomena more so than isolating specific thematic/lexical markers, it is essential to note that there are several “themes” (essential structures or *ideal content*) associated with Deuteronomism. Steven McKenzie presents a brief survey of key “ideological items...either introduced or enhanced” by Deuteronomism: the doctrine of centralization, the so-called name theology (allowing for immanence in the Temple, but still affirming a transcendent God), the notion of Israel as an “ethnic, national, and religious entity,” covenant theology, and also the stirrings of the idea of Scripture. McKenzie, “Postscript: The Laws of Physics and Pan-Deuteronomism.” For proposed common Deuteronomistic phraseology see Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, 320–65.

² Note major commentaries on Hosea: Francis I. Anderson and David Noel Freedman, *Hosea*, AB 24 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1980); Ehud Ben Zvi, *Hosea*, FOTL 21A (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005); Graham I. Davies, *Hosea*, NCB (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992); Andrew Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010); Duane A. Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, vol. 19a of *NAC* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997); James Limburg, *Hosea-Micah*, IBC (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988); James Luther Mays, *Hosea*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969); Thomas E. McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets, Vol. 1: Hosea, Joel, Amos* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992); Joshua N. Moon, *Hosea*, vol. 21 of *ApOTC* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2018); Gary V. Smith, *Hosea, Amos, Micah*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids:

and the broader Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic oeuvre,³ making the “Hosianic voice” an appropriate starting point to explore Deuteronomism as a historical stream of shared intentionality. Speaking of a Hosianic “voice” acknowledges the mediated nature of the text without denying access to the mind of a historic orator named Hosea.⁴

This selection aligns with the suggestion that Deuteronomism emerged from northern prophetic circles. Ernest Nicholson located the foundations of Deuteronomism in spheres of influence, such as Hosea and his disciples labeling them as caretakers of the

Zondervan, 2001); Douglas Stuart, *Hosea-Joel*, WBC 31 (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1987); Hans W. Wolff, *Hosea*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974).

³ Robert Kugler argues that sorting out the direction of influence between Hosea and Deuteronomy can be “particularly vexing,” suggesting that evidence often cited as D redaction of Hosea (and the later prophets in general) has yielded negative results. Attempting to sort out the confusion, Kugler offers four categories of diminishing influence. He examines evidence of D rhetoric and content asking if the material evidence genetic coherence or contextual dissonance (integration or contradiction)? Kugler suggest that integration suggests original D influence in Hosianic thought, contradiction evidences later redaction. One clear instance of influence is in the language of covenant found in Hosea, notably 8:1 and 6:7 (see discussion below). Kugler suggests that these texts fall into a category of influential passages best understood to “shape Deuteronomy.” Robert Kugler, “The Deuteronomists and the Later Prophets,” in *Those Elusive Deuteronomists*, JSOTSup 268 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 127–44.

⁴ Although there are sound reasons to acknowledge the redactional nature of the Hosianic traditions, with likely Judaic glosses, complex redactional theories are highly subjective. See Gale A. Yee, *Composition and Tradition in the Book of Hosea: A Redaction-Critical Investigation*, SBLDS 102 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987); Ben Zvi, *Hosea*. Gale Yee suggests four stage redaction process: H= Hosea; C= collector dated to the time of Hezekiah’s reforms; R1 and R2 which she aligns ideologically with Dtr1 and Dtr2 in the Cross school. For a different approach to redaction with focus on potential Judaic glosses see Grace I Emmerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, JSOTSup 28 (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1984).

ancient covenantal traditions.⁵ These traditions were held as the constative ideology for Israelite society. Although not necessarily novel within the south,⁶ covenantal faithfulness became a core tenet of Deuteronomism as these circles gained influence within the Judean court following the fall of Samaria.⁷ H. W. Wolff calls the Hosianic group “forerunners of the Deuteronomic movement.”⁸ Albrecht Alt similarly maintained, “The program of Deuteronomy is rooted in the same soil as the prophecy of Hosea.”⁹

Moshe Weinfeld highlights the shared language and imagery between Hosea and Deuteronomy as a sign of either direct dependence from the former to the latter or at the least, the evidence of a similar source influencing both traditions.¹⁰ For example, the idea

⁵ Nicholson, *Deuteronomy and Tradition*.

⁶ For arguments on the presence of constative traditions similar to Hosea evident in Judah prior to the fall of Samaria see Cook, *The Social Roots of Biblical Yahwism*.

⁷ See Chapter 4 below for discussion on the integration of Northern ideology within the Judean court during the Late Eighth Century.

⁸ Wolff, *Hosea*, xxxi. See also Wolff, *Hosea*; Hans W. Wolff, “Hosea Und Das Deuteronomium: Erwägungen Eines Alttestamentlers Zum Thema ‘Sprache Und Theologie,’” *Theol. Lit.* 110.1 (1985): 14–23; Hans W. Wolff, “Hoseas Geistige Heimat,” *Theol. Lit.* 81 (1956): 83–94. In particular the use of the lawsuit motif, “had a deep impact on the Book of the Law discovered in the Temple in Josiah’s day.”

⁹ Alt “Die Heimat des Deuteronomiums” in *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (3 vols.; Munich: Beck, 1953), 2:250–75. [need to find this quote on my own]

¹⁰ Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, 366–70.

of “transgressing the covenant” is a central theme to both texts. Also, an emphasis on the concept of love between God and Israel is present in both traditions; however, the metaphorical vehicle differs. In Hosea the metaphor of God’s love, is that of husband/wife, bearing an affectionate connotation. In Deuteronomy, the love between Yahweh and Israel is placed within the covenantal relationship, one based on loyalty. Furthermore, Hosea is also concerned with cultic purity, namely the condemnation of the proliferation of altars, aligns with the Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic chastisement of the “high places.”¹¹

Hosea offers the reader a reflection of the “existential mystery” of Israel and its impact on both orthodoxy and orthopraxis. The prophet’s primary concern is covenantal obligations and the imposition of social phenomena seen as outside the bounds of Israelite identity. Hosea challenges what he deemed as distorted, cultic practices and power structures. The failure of the leaders, both priest and king, to teach Torah and eschew syncretism, is the grave crime levied against Israel. Xenophobia is a significant dogma evidenced throughout Northern prophetic traditions extending back to the influence of

¹¹ Condemnation on the proliferation of altars in Hos 4:13 represents a stylized reform slogan evident within broader D literature (e.g., Hos 4:13; Deut 12:2; 1 Kgs 14:23; 2 Kgs 16:4; 2 Kgs 17:10; Jer 2:20, 3:6, also 3:13 and 17:2 in a shortened form). On the relationship between these texts see William Holladay, “On Every High Hill and Under Every Green Tree,” *VT* 11 (1961), 170-176. Holliday traces the origins of the catchphrase to Hos 4:13 and suggests that Deut 12:2 is “a prosaicized form” of the Hosea text.

Elijah and Elisha on Jehu's coup and subsequent Judean court purge.¹² The worship of Yahweh God was so central to Israel that, in the prophetic mind, any perceived outside influence was a threat.

Whether part of an organized group of prophets or not, Hosea saw his role of covenant mediator as part of a "phalanx"¹³ of prophets reaching back to Ahijah the Shilonite, Elijah and Elisha, and ultimately Moses the Deuteronomic prophetic archetype. Wolff writes, "We ought not to think of Hosea, however, as a solitary figure in his opposition to Israel's conduct. He considered himself thoroughly allied with other prophets."¹⁴ In calling people back from non-Israelite social constructs, Hosea draws attention to the constitutive traditions of Israelite corporate identity, interacting with both the Exodus-Wilderness tradition and the patriarchal narratives. Hosea takes a *metahistorical* view of these traditions, with a typological approach to past present and future. The

¹² On the xenophobic tendencies of Israelite prophetic thought see Baruch Halpern, "'Brisker Pipes than Poetry': The Development of Israelite Monotheism," in *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 77–115. Baruch Halpern, "'Brisker Pipes than Poetry': The Development of Israelite Monotheism," in *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 77–115.

¹³ Wolff, "Hoseas Geistige Heimat," 85.

¹⁴ Wolff, *Hosea*, xxii. On the possibility of Hosea himself having a group of disciples, Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period, Volume 1: From the Beginnings to the End of the Monarchy* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), 177 n. 139.

failures of the present generation are mere extensions of the apostasy of their progenitors.

The prophet challenges Israel to contemplate Jacob their progenitor and how best to reflect, and not to reflect, his character. However, there is a future hope based on a return to her “first love.”

(3.2) Hosea In Historical Context

Whereas Ninth Century prophetic opposition was more individualistic in critique, beginning in the Eighth Century BCE, both Northern and Southern prophets alike, directed their complaints against both society and the state as a whole. At times referred to as an “axial age,” the Eighth Century displayed significant philosophical advancements throughout the greater Mediterranean and Near Eastern world.¹⁵ Rainer Albertz argues that at this time there was a prophetic “reorientation of Yahwistic religion,” namely represented by universalization of the idea of god. Yahweh is over the nations, and therefore political choices, foreign alliances, and changes in the ruling class are subject to God. This global reorientation emphasizes the ethical side of Yahweh religion. God is not an automatic

¹⁵ For discussion on the descriptor “axial age” see Halpern, “Brisker Pipes.”

guarantor of the status quo. Injustice and the machinations of the monarchy, military, and the cult are not automatically sanctioned. Albertz notes, “[T]he prophets...submit official of Yahweh religion to a comprehensive ideological criticism. They deny the powerful - the political and cultic leaders and the upper class, which controls economic activity - the right to claim Yahweh for the religious legitimation of their own interests.”¹⁶

(3.2.1) Eighth Century BCE Israel

The Eighth Century BCE was a watershed moment in the political history of the Levant.

The primary geopolitical concern for Israel at the turn of the century was the regional power Aram-Damascus.¹⁷ With the rise of the Neo-Assyrian Empire and the conquest of Damascus in 796 by Adad-Nirari III, there was a regional shift in power. This geopolitical upheaval was beneficial for Israel as they had been an Assyrian vassal since the reign of Jehu in 841. Assyria experienced a decline during the reigns of Shalmaneser IV (782-773 BCE), Ashur-

¹⁶ Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, Vol 1, 176.

¹⁷ See 2 Kgs 12:18-19; 2 Kgs 13:3-5, 22-25; 2 Chron 24:23-25. The decline of the Neo-Assyrian Empire beginning under Shalmaneser III (858-824), opened the door for the rise of a regional Aramean kingdom based in Aram-Damascus beginning under Hazael and extending into the reign of his successor Ben-Haddad. Extant records suggest the Hazael did not merely dominate Israel, but, as well as Judah, function as a vassal states of Aram-Damascus. Brad E. Kelle and Brent A. Strawn, “History of Israel 5: Assyrian Period,” *DOTHB*, 465.

Dan III (772-755 BCE) and Ashur-Nirari V (754-745 BCE) allowing Aram-Damascus to regain strength and destabilize the region. Weakened following the death of Jeroboam II, the Omride dynasty fell into disarray resulting in a succession of military usurpers. One of these would-be kings, Pekah ben Remaliah, allied with Rezin of Damascus and laid siege to Jerusalem. Ahaz of Judah appealed to Tiglath Pileser III of Assyria for aid setting the stage for the so-called Syro-Ephraimite War.¹⁸

The reign of Jeroboam II represented the height of the economic and cultural status of Israel. During this period northern boundaries were extended to Damascus and Hamath, and the empire controlled most of the Transjordan, especially critical trade routes throughout the region.¹⁹ Israel developed strong trade relations with Phoenicia and dominated commerce along northeastern Sinai which in turn extended export opportunities

¹⁸ For a reconstruction of the events of the Syro-Ephraimite War and its relationship with the OT see Stuart A. Irvine, *Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraimite Crisis*, SBLDS 123 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990). See also Michael E. W. Thompson, *Situation and Theology: Old Testament Interpretations the Syro-Ephraimite War*, Prophets and Historians 1 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1982).

¹⁹ Sandra Richter, "Eighth Century Issues: The World of Jeroboam II, the Fall of Samaria, and the Reign of Hezekiah," in *Ancient Israel's History: An Introduction to Issues and Sources*, ed. Bill T. Arnold and Richard S. Hess (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 322. See also Israel Finkelstein, *The Forgotten Kingdom: The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 129.

into the Mediterranean Sea. Major exports were olive-oil, wine, and horses.²⁰ Ostraca discovered at Samaria appear to be notations of the transactions of luxury goods. Also, the discovery of carved ivory reliefs, likely used as inlays in the palace furniture, point to the wealth and opulence of the Israelite kingdom during this period.²¹

Israel was experiencing an economic revolution during the period. The kinship structures constitutive of Israelite social identity were crumbling under urbanization and a market-driven economy. Before the Eighth Century, Israel was an advanced agrarian society. The accumulation of wealth by the throne gave rise to an economically stratified society with large landholders, court officials, and emerging military and merchant classes. A patrimonial inheritance system was replaced by a royal land grant scheme widening the gap between landowners and dependent farmers. Many of the smaller farmers found themselves in dire economic straits. By switching to mono-crop culture to satisfy the markets, small farmers were no longer able to proceed with caution against weak gains

²⁰ Israel Finkelstein, *The Forgotten Kingdom: The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel*, 132–38.

²¹ The ostraca appear to represent tax receipts recording payments from the ancestral houses in the region to the royal court. Richter, “Eighth Century Issues: The World of Jeroboam II, the Fall of Samaria, and the Reign of Hezekiah,” 323–24.

through diversification. Higher burdens of taxation and involuntary labor forced more dependence on usury. The revival of the exacting ancient laws of credit and debt allowed for creditors to seize not only a farmer's whole property but also his family. Cycles of poverty evolved as smaller farmers lost their land to pay the debt, essentially becoming tenants on their ancestral allotment.²²

(3.2.2) The Historical Hosea

The editorial superscription of the Book of Hosea provides little information regarding the prophet's personal life. Although a central focus of the book is Hosea's immediate family (his wife and children),²³ there is no explicit allusion to tribal lineage or ancestral territory. There is only a passing reference to his father [בְּאֵרִי]. Rabbinic tradition associates the name

²² Albertz, *Israelite Religion, Vol 1*, 160–61. Although extreme, these actions were totally legal. Albertz suggests, “[T]hough breaches of law and deception may have occurred in individual cases, what happened here was predominantly the effect of a structural violence which had its basis in economic and social developments under the monarchy. The members of the upper classes probably saw the traditional small farmers, intent only on self-sufficiency, as being behind the times, and outdated form of economy which in any case was doomed to extinction.” (161)

²³ For a detailed analysis on the history of interpretation of Hosea's familial relationships see Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, 80–88.

Berri with an Assyrian deportee from the tribe of Reuben (1 Chr 5:6).²⁴ However, early Christian scholars associated Beerli with the tribe of Issachar. Any speculation on his identity bears little weight on Hosea's ministry.²⁵

Although no direct suggestion of residence or general locale of ministry, the settings referenced throughout the Hosianic traditions situate the prophet in the region of Ephraim and locations of interest associated with the Israelite monarchy. There are references to the Omride capital of Samaria (7:1; 8:5f; 10:5, 7; 14:1) and the major cult centers of Bethel (4:15; 5:8; 10:5; 12:5) and Gilgal (4:15; 9:15; 12:12). Hosea's oracles were likely public orations. He appears to speak both in the city gate (4:1-3; 5:1-7; 5:8-14; 12:1-14:1) and at the cult sites themselves (2:4-17; 4:4-19; 9:1-9). However, wherever he delivered a message, it was as an "outside" voice and not as someone with official status.²⁶

The superscription of the Book of Hosea does provide a list of monarchs dating the prophet's ministry into the Mid- to Late Eighth Century BCE. Akin to collections of

²⁴ Berri/Berrah is referred to as a "chief" (רֹאשׁ) of the tribe of Reuben who was taken into captivity with specific reference to the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III. See also 1 Chron 5:26.

²⁵ Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 153.

²⁶ See the discussion on Hosea's possible priestly lineage below.

contemporary prophets,²⁷ a line of Judean kings is given: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Only the name of Jeroboam II (son of Joash) is provided for Israel. Lack of further Israelite kings is of note as Hosea continued his ministry beyond the death of Jeroboam II into the chaotic final days leading up to the fall of Samaria.²⁸

(3.3) Hosea as Covenant Mediator

Evidence for a theology of covenant in the Book of Hosea is not universally accepted, especially among scholars who view the concept as a “late” invention.²⁹ However, both lexical and thematic evidence intimate a presence of either the vestiges of older covenantal ideology or the emergence of the metaphor within the Hosianic traditions. John Day notes what he calls “pre-Deuteronomic allusions” to covenant in Hosea writing, “[H]owever much the Deuteronomists may have given increased prominence to the notion of covenant, they did not evolve it out of nothing. Rather, they developed a tradition that was already attested

²⁷ See David Noel Freedman, “Headings in the Books of Eighth-Century Prophets,” *AUSS* 25 (1987): 9–26.

²⁸For discussion on a historical location of the prophet Hosea see Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 31–39.

²⁹ The most influential 20th Century adherent is Perlitt, *Bundestheologie Im Alten Testament*. For an analysis of Perlitt’s late thesis see Nicholson, *God and His People*, 109–17.

in both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms in pre-Deuteronomic times.”³⁰ Ernest Nicholson sees the mention of “covenant” in Hosea (see below) as evidence of a Pre-D concept.³¹ However, he is hesitant to date the idea earlier than the Eighth Century, arguing Hosea might be the originator of the theological metaphor. Nicholson writes,

The notion of a *berit* between Yahweh and Israel would certainly have been in keeping with his [Hosea’s] manifest fondness for a wide variety of imagery. The notion of a *berit* between Yahweh and Israel may have suggested itself to him as an alternative to his more familiar ‘marriage metaphor,’ so that both metaphors are employed to signal that solemn commitment of Yahweh to Israel and Israel to Yahweh.³²

The theme of covenant faithfulness is present throughout the Book of Hosea; however, central to the analysis is the presence of the word *berith* (בְּרִית) in two passages: 6:7 and 8:1.

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³⁰ John Day, “Pre-Deuteronomic Allusions to the Covenant in Hosea and Psalm LXXVIII,” *VT* 36.1 (1986): 11–12.

³¹ Nicholson argues that the only extant textual description of the/a covenant in the HB/OT that can be considered Pre-D is Ex 20:22-23:33 and 24:3-8. Nicholson, *God and His People*, 164–78.

³² Nicholson, *God and His People*, 187.

³³ The word בְּרִית is found 5x in the Book of Hosea (2:20; 6:7; 8:1; 10:4; 12:2). In 2:20 the context is a restored relationship between Yahweh and not only Israel, but all of creation. In 10:4 the context is legal agreements between two parties, and 12:2

(3.3.1) Hosea 6:7

וְהִמָּה כְּאָדָם עֲבָרוּ בְרִית שָׁם בְּגִדּוּ בִי

They transgressed the covenant at Adam; there they were unfaithful to me.³⁴

Covenant unfaithfulness is a fundamental concern throughout the opening episodes of Hosea. In Chapters 1-3, with the vivid description of the prophet's family, marital unfaithfulness is the central metaphor for Israel's transgressions. The following section, Chapters 4:1-5:7, comprises a series of condemnations against the priests for failing to uphold teaching obligations leading to an absence of covenantal devotion (חֶסֶד).³⁵ With the call to battle in 5:8, running through 7:16, the condemnation shifts to a national focus.³⁶ Following a penitential lament in 6:1-3, a prophetic accusation begins at 6:4, continuing

³⁴ Translation original to the author.

³⁵ The concept of covenantal devotion (חֶסֶד) is pervasive throughout the Hosianic traditions: 2:21; 4:1; 6:4; 6:6; 10:12; 12:7.

³⁶ Wolff, *Hosea*, 108ff; Mays, *Hosea*, 86. For other proposals for the structure of Chapters 5-7 see Ben Zvi, *Hosea*, 121-24.

through 6:10. The allegation of covenant transgression in 6:7 is implied to be against all Israel, the referent “they” being in parallel with Ephraim and Judah in 6:4.³⁷

A significant contention is how to translate the word “Adam” (אָדָם) as it relates to covenant unfaithfulness in 6:7. The simile “like” or “as Adam,” constructed by a *kaph* prefix on the nominative, is obscure. Numerous English translations maintain the theological understanding of “And like Adam...”³⁸ suggesting a reference to the “first sin,” the breaking of the “original covenant” in Gen 3. However, there is considerable support for reading the phrase as a reference to a location.³⁹ For example, the presence of the locative “there” in the following clause suggests designation of a particular locale. Also, the reference to Gilead in the next verse offers a thematic parallel. As a place name, Adam likely corresponds to a site

³⁷ Emmerson argues that the name Judah in Hos 6:4 represents an editorial gloss replacing the name Israel, originally in parallel with Ephraim. Emmerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, 70–74.

³⁸ The KJV maintains “But they like men...” Most translation have “But like Adam...” CSB, ESV, NASB, NLT. The NET has “At Adam...” and the NIV reads similarly with a footnote providing the traditional translation option.

³⁹ *BHS* suggest changing the prep from *kaph* to *beth* although there is no textual witness. H. W. Wolff aggress with the emendation and points to the following locative, “there,” to suggest that a location is meant. Wolff, *Hosea*, 105. Anderson/Freedman argue that the locative meaning does not necessitate textual emendation. The meaning of the text could be “as in/at Adam.” They point to a similar construction with the *Kaph* prefix in 2.5 translated: “as in the wilderness.” They also suggest that the *kaph* can also have the asseverate sense here. Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 439.

on the Jabbok River listed in Joshua 3:16.⁴⁰ This location was the upstream bulkhead for the Jordan River as it parted for the Ark of the Covenant to pass through opposite Jericho. By making historical reference to past covenant unfaithfulness, Hosea ties a line between the Israel of the present and transgressions exhibited during the conquest/settlement period. Hosea provides the only reference to an event at Adam; however, the reference to Baal-Peor in 9:10 provides another correlation to Israel's youthful rebellion.⁴¹

Arguments against reading an ideology of covenant in Hosea propose that 6:7 references a political treaty, albeit metaphorically.⁴² However, there is considerable contextual evidence to interpret *berith* as a theological metaphor. A cluster of additional "covenantal" lexemes are in the vicinity of 6:7. 6:6a bears the well-known declaration, "For I

⁴⁰ "[T]he waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho." Josh 3:16 (ESV). The mention of being the "city that is beside Zarethan" would place the location in the Jezreel valley near Beth Shan (1 Kgs 4:12).

⁴¹ Wolff, *Hosea*, 121. An alternate suggestion by Ernest Nicholson is that since it is difficult to correlate this Adam with any other location in the OT, along with Gilead and Shechem, the reference "[A]lludes to violent acts committed in the course of the political upheavals of revolution in the time of Hosea." Nicholson, *God and His People*, 186.

⁴² Day, "Pre-Deuteronomic Allusions to the Covenant in Hosea and Psalm LXXVIII." Day states that this position is put forward by Perlitt as a means of disqualifying the text as a Pre-D mention to the Covenant. See also Nicholson, *God and His People*, 183–84.

desire *hesed* (חֶסֶד) and not sacrifice...” (ESV).⁴³ Arguing that cultic obligations are secondary to the primary covenantal commitment, exclusive devotion to Yahweh emphasized. The parallel clause in 6:6b continues the idea: “...knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.” Hosea also employs the phrase “knowledge of God” in 4:1 in concert with other covenantal terms *hesed* (חֶסֶד) and *emeth* (אֱמֶת): “Hear the word of Yahweh, children of Israel, for Yahweh has a legal dispute with the inhabitants of the land: there is no *emeth* or *hesed*, and no *knowledge of God* in the land.”

Knowledge is a theme throughout Hosea.⁴⁴ Andrew Dearman highlights the association between “knowing” and marriage. Dearman states, “Of course, the *knowledge of God* in Hosea does not refer to marital physical intimacy, but on the analogy of covenant and marriage it can connote the desired, wholehearted personal fidelity to YHWH’s people.”⁴⁵ James L. Mayes contends that “knowledge of God” is connected to the salvation history of Israel, namely the Exodus. “What is required is the knowledge that Yahweh, as he

⁴³ See also 1 Sam 15:22; Micah 6:6-8; Amos 5:21-22; Isaiah 1:12-17; Psalms 51:6,16-17; 40:6-8.

⁴⁴ See Hos 2:8, 20; 4:6; 5:4; 6:3; 8:2; 11:3; and 13:4. Weinfeld mentions “you shall know/ to know that Yahweh alone is God” as one of his “Deuteronomic phraseology” section Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School*, 331.

⁴⁵ Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, 147.

was revealed in the Exodus, is their only God (13.4), that his healing help saw them through the history of their beginnings (12.3), and that it is Yahweh who gives them the good things of the land.”⁴⁶ Mays continues, “The knowledge of God is Israel’s personal response to the salvation-history of election, and obedience to the requirements of the covenant.”⁴⁷ H. W. Wolff connects the “knowledge of God” to knowledge of his commandments. This association finds a foundation for the likely allusion to the Decalogue in 4:2. Wolff states,

God’s people, as a community which Yahweh has created, exists by the knowledge of God...which is concrete knowledge of God’s commandments...If knowledge of the covenant God – who provides a salutary order for the life of Israel – disintegrates, the community of God’s people as disintegrates.⁴⁸

The responsibility for perpetuating and safeguarding this “knowledge” was set in the hands of the priests, and Hosea calls the priesthood to account. Yahweh does not want mere piety when devotion is in question.

⁴⁶ Mays, *Hosea*, 63.

⁴⁷ Mays, *Hosea*, 64.

⁴⁸ Wolff, *Hosea*, 68.

(3.3.2) Hosea 8:1

אַל-חֲכֹךְ שֹׁפָר כְּנֶשֶׁר עַל-בֵּית יְהוָה יַעַן עָבְרוּ בְרִיתִי וְעַל-תּוֹרָתִי פָשְׁעוּ

(Place) the horn to your lips! The one like an eagle is (looms) over the House of YHWH.

Because they have transgressed my covenant, and against my Torah, they have rebelled.⁴⁹

Of the two locations of the word *berith* in Hosea, 8:1 is the more explicit in reference to covenant. The call to sound the alarm begins a new transmission unit.⁵⁰ Even though the people cry out to Yahweh, “My God, we, Israel, know you!” (8:2b), the prophet pronounces doom. In the context of the Hosianic traditions, this confession is ironic. Israel has “rejected all that is good.”⁵¹ Five actions are laid out as representing covenant unfaithfulness: 1) Instating kings that were not sanctioned by Yahweh [4a]; 2) Production of graven images [4b-6]; 3) Entering into foreign treaties [9-13]; 4) Illegitimate cultic practices [11-13]; 5) Building palace and defense works.⁵²

⁴⁹ Translation original to the author.

⁵⁰ Wolff, *Hosea*, 133.

⁵¹ Wolff argues that the word “good” in Hos 8:3 is a “comprehensive word, which...must certainly also mean conduct in conformity with the covenant.” Wolff, *Hosea*, 138.

⁵² Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 482.

There is evidence of the association of the covenant metaphor with emerging canonical literature. In 8:1, “My *berith*” in parallel with “my *torah*.” Wolff states that Torah in Hosea does not mean an individual instruction given by a priest. “This word denotes the entire disclosure of Yahweh’s will, already fixed in writing, which goes back to God’s own hand (8:12).” He continues, “Thus Hosea inaugurates a comprehensive understanding of the Torah, which was later presupposed by Deuteronomy (Deut. 17:19; 31:9f; 1:5).”⁵³ Mays writes, “[Torah] represents the policy which the Lord has promulgated as the covenant’s stipulation.”⁵⁴ The term Torah represents a body of tradition which was entrusted to the priests who have failed to perform their obligations.

There are clues throughout the book which provide insight into what form of textual tradition Hosea has in mind. In Chapter 4, Yahweh drags Israel into the courtroom for covenantal unfaithfulness. Evidence for lack of “knowledge of God”⁵⁵ is laid up through a

⁵³ Wolff, *Hosea*, 139.

⁵⁴ Mays, *Hosea*, 116.

⁵⁵ See above discussion on the “knowledge of God.”

series of crimes.⁵⁶ Five offenses are listed in 4.2: pronouncing curses/imprecations (אלה)⁵⁷, deceit (כחש)⁵⁸, murder (רצח), stealing (גנב), adultery (נאף). Although there is lexical variation, the list indicates knowledge of either a version of the Decalogue or at least a shared tradition. Mayes concludes, “Hosea thinks primarily in terms of a decalogue formula (4.2) and knows of a written tradition of instruction (8.13).”⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Three of the offences listed share the same terminology as the Decalogue (Ex 20 / Deut 5). The only variance is in the terms for lying/deception. Both versions of the decalogue bear divergent terminology in reference to false testimony in a forensic setting. [Ex. 20:16 = עד שקר; Deut. 5:20 = עד שוא]. A similar litany of offences is in Jer 7:9 [הגנב רצח ונאף והשבע לשקר]. Again, the only variation being in reference to oath swearing and falsity. See Meir Weiss, “The Decalogue in Prophetic Literature,” in *The Ten Commandments in History and Tradition*, ed. Ben-Tsiyon Segal and Gershon Levi, Sidrat Sefarim Le-Ḥeḳer Ha-Miḳra Mi-Yisudo Shel S. Sh. Peri. (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1990), 67–81.

⁵⁷ The term is often in the context of covenant or contractual obligations and can be translated as either “oath” or “curses” based on the context. In Deuteronomy 29, both senses are employed (oath: Deut 29:11[12], 13[14], 18[19]; curse: Deut 29:19[20], 20[21]). There is a similar sense in Hos 10:4 where the people are criticized for taking false oaths, making agreements that have no intention of keeping. Robert P. Gordon, “אלה,” *NIDOTTE* 1:403–5. Anderson and Freedman recognize the possibility of a hendiadys with אלה and כחש meaning false witness in a courtroom situation. However, it is more likely that the two words are separate offences. The first term referring to the third commandment’s prohibition against using the name of Yahweh. In this instance the reference might be to a word of imprecation against another using the divine name. Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 337.

⁵⁸ This term appears as a leitmotif, found 5x throughout the Book of Hosea (4:2; 7:3; 9:2; 10:13; 12:1). The general usage outside of 4:2 is the idea of false hope, in either poor advice (7:3) or perceived bounty (9:2; 10:13). In 12:1 Ephraim is accused of lying. (כחש) is in parallel with (מרמה) the later also used in 12:8 in the context of unscrupulous financial dealings.

⁵⁹ Mays, *Hosea*, 116.

(3.4) Hosea as Cult Critic

The interplay of prophet/covenant and priest/cult within the Hoseanic voice is complex. On the one hand, Hosea elevates covenant faithfulness over sacrificial praxis (6:5-9); however, the level of intimacy with ritual practices, priestly obligations, and cultic traditions infers more than a mere outsider perspective. Xenophobic in nature, Hosea's ideological critique against the cult is directed toward perceived syncretism. Certain practices are viewed as a threat to Israelite constitutive identity, not the cult itself. For instance, the prophet never paints the temple in Jerusalem as illegitimate, although there are countless references to Judah sharing in Ephraim's apostasy. The majority of critique is on the royal investiture of worship praxis, namely at Bethel.

(3.4.1) The Northern Cult

The revolt and ultimate separation of the Northern Israelite tribal coalition from Davidic rule introduced several changes in the national cult. The motivations behind the state-sponsored investiture of cult sites such as Bethel and Dan are complex, and the Biblical record is notably shaped by a Deuteronomic perspective.⁶⁰ 1 Kings 12:26 recalls Jeroboam's

⁶⁰ Steven L. McKenzie, "History of Israel 4: Division of the Monarchy," *DOTHB*, 456.

concerns of diminished loyalty through pilgrimages to the temple in Jerusalem. Separated from Judah, Israel found itself devoid of unified religious symbology. The alteration of the cult became an attempt to provide an integrative national ideology.

The Deuteronomistic narrative suggests that Jeroboam “re-purposed” older cultic sites by setting up an iconographic representation of Yahweh, the god of the Exodus (1 Kgs 12:28). Representations of the “footstool” of YHWH, noting his presence in both locations, legitimized both cultic and royal authority.⁶¹ Although these “bulls” were hypothetically unintended as idols or a hypostatization of Yahweh, the Hosianic voice accuses that, at least by the Eighth Century, they were treated as such.

Whatever the ideological impetus, there is evidence of a significant reorganization of the Israelite cult in the early Eighth Century. Israel Finkelstein notes how local cultic sites such as Megiddo show no sign of continuity between late Iron IIA and IIB.⁶² A royal shrine

⁶¹ As pedestals, these “bulls” would serve a similar function as the Ark of the Covenant, with the cherubim on top. The Deuteronomistic historical traditions record how David moved the Ark of the Covenant, which had northern ties to the cult at Shiloh, into Jerusalem. Solomon built a more permanent location to house the “footstool” of Yahweh. Jeroboam’s bulls might represent an alternative hypostatization appealing to the historical significance of the Ark in the northern cult. McKenzie, “History of Israel 4: Division of the Monarchy,” 456–57.

⁶² Finkelstein, *The Forgotten Kingdom: The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel*, 138–39. Finkelstein proposes a model of reorganization over centralization.

at Samaria was likely as early as the Ninth Century, although no archeological evidence has been found.⁶³ Major cultic sites at Dan and Bethel are evident at this time; however, the later shows little sign of prosperity before the era of Hosea's ministry. The rationale for cultic reorganization could be a reflex of the shift to a more stratified kingdom where the king dominated all facets of society both economically and ideologically. "The reason for the reorganization (though not full centralization) of the cult could have been the advance of a more organized kingdom and the desire of the king to dominate the cult economically and ideologically."⁶⁴

The Hoseanic voice views the contemporary royal cult, namely Bethel, as a weak substitute for real devotion to Yahweh. Baruch Halpern contends that for Hosea, the cult had become no more than "Ephraim's license to sin, rather than his warrant to fidelity" and "a technicality for evading responsibility rather than a real emotional *proskynesis*."⁶⁵ Devotion to Yahweh must not be confused with an homage to a mere representation of

⁶³ Finkelstein, *The Forgotten Kingdom*, 139.

⁶⁴ Finkelstein, *The Forgotten Kingdom*, 139. Finkelstein suggests that the reorganization of the northern cult could have influenced later efforts toward centralization of the cult in Judah. The ideology behind the reorganization, along with a compilation of sacred texts tied to sacred shrines such as Bethel, imported into Judah with northern refugees.

⁶⁵ Halpern, "Brisker Pipes," 95.

reality. Although Hosea's criticism of the cult visages a censure of the revival of fertility practices associated with the Canaanite god Baal; Rainer Albertz deems this reading to be untenable. Albertz suggests that many of the cultic elements criticized by Hosea were longstanding elements of Yahweh worship, albeit syncretized in current practice. Hosea is one of the first to denounce these perceived orthodox practices as "baalistic."⁶⁶ Albertz states,

[I]n the face of the threat of a loss of national identity Hosea insisted on the difference between Yahweh cult and other religions by making a theological assessment and condemnation of it in the light of the specific historical origins of Yahweh religion ushered in a development which subjected the cult that had arisen over the centuries to a fundamental theological revision and excluded many institutions and practices.⁶⁷

Hosea's criticism of the cult had roots in a xenophobic zeal central to the Ninth Century prophetic movements. The prophets Elijah and Elisha supported what Baruch Halpern calls a "revolutionary program" that was "historically nativist in character."⁶⁸ Prophetic sanction led to political rebellion and bloody coups in both Israel, under Jehu,

⁶⁶ Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, Vol 1, 174.

⁶⁷ Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, Vol 1, 175.

⁶⁸ Halpern, "Brisker Pipes," 91.

and the overthrow of Athaliah in Judah. Both crusades were geared toward the removal of Tyrian Baalistic elements within each court, although the latter had less to do with xenophobia than the preservation of the Davidic line. As economic collapse and culture wars often proceed hand in fist, prophetic campaigns against syncretism aligned with the fears of traditional landholders against the growing assault of the monarchy.⁶⁹ In the face of analogous movements toward centralization in Judah, xenophobic intolerance influenced the rejection of syncretism of the Deuteronomic movement. Albertz states,

In the following period, it led to any battle against a religious and cultural takeover being regarded as a battle against the Baal cult, even though no concrete Baal figure was evident behind it. From Hosea to the Deuteronomists, Baal became the religious enemy from which the 'real' Yahweh religion had continually to disassociate itself, and with which, anything that was felt to be incompatible with it was denounced.⁷⁰

(3.4.2) Hosea as Priest/Levite

19th and early 20th Century studies, such as by Wellhausen and Weber, often pitted prophets and the priesthood in opposition; however, an either/or assumption has the

⁶⁹ Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, Vol 1, 152.

⁷⁰ Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, Vol 1, 155. Baruch Halpern suggests that there is a difference between speaking against Baal and baals. Therefore, Hosea is not speaking against Baal in a specific manifestation but general plural manifestations. "for the Israelite, there is no Baal, no Baal-worship, only..."baals." Halpern, "Brisker Pipes," 93.

potential of misunderstanding crucial aspects of Hosea's relationship to the cult. Numerous scholars have suggested that Hosea had a social location of both prophet and priest representative of Levitical heritage.⁷¹ Although the Levitical office appears as a separate entity in the Deuteronomic Legal Code (Deut 18:1-8), the shared identity of both priest and prophet is not novel within Deuteronomism. In Deuteronomy, the Levite has many functions. He "minsters" before Yahweh (Deut 18:1-8), has a judicial role (Deut 17:9, cf. 21:5), and retains an instructional role as tutor to the king (Deut 17:18). Although his tribal lineage is not emphasized in Deuteronomy, as judge (1:9-18) and proclaimer of Torah, Moses represents many of the official Levitical roles. He is also the prophet par excellence (Deut 18:15-22). In the Deuteronomistic historical traditions, Samuel functions as both prophet and cultic functionary. Additionally, many other writing prophets were of priestly lineage, e.g., Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

H. W. Wolff argues that Levitical circles in the north shared the prophetic reformist agenda, a program that predates Hosea, codified under the leadership of Moses. Painting a

⁷¹ Hosea's Levitical lineage was first proposed by Bernhard Duhm, *Die Theologie Der Propheten Als Grundlage Fur Die Innere Entwicklungsgeschichte Der Israelitischen Religion* (Bonn: A. Marcus, 1875). The most influential 20th Century advocate was H. W. Wolff, *Hosea*, xxii-xxiii, 79-81, 121-122, 144, also Wolff, "Hoseas Geistige Heimat," 243-50. Anderson and Freeman suggest Hosea's father Beerī (בְּאִרִי) evinces typical Levite spelling. Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 153.

picture of a Levitical-prophetic “opposition alliance,” Wolff deems this group as Hosea’s “spiritual home.”⁷² Evidence for Hosea’s priestly/Levitical heritage is apparent insider knowledge of the cult. Hosea applies detailed criteria of what constitutes a proper service (4:6, 6:6, 8:12).⁷³ Authentic praxis draws attention to Yahweh’s suzerainty over fertility and orientates the people toward a position of contrition and atonement. The priest accomplishes this goal through the right and proper teaching of the constitutive traditions. Wolff argues many of Hosea’s oracles may not have been delivered publicly, but before a group of devotees who shared a similar reformist ideology.

The Hosianic-Levitical theory has had detractors. Anderson and Freeman argue that the force of the attack on the priesthood makes it unlikely to be coming from one of their own. They argue that working out Hosea’s religious background is a challenge emphasizing, “[I]t has not even been possible to work out exactly what kind of religion Hosea condemned.”⁷⁴ Ernest Nicholson also takes aim at Wolff.⁷⁵ Nicholson ponders, if

⁷² Wolff, “Hoseas Geistige Heimat,” 92.

⁷³ Wolff, *Hosea*, xxii–xxiii, 79–81, 121–22, 144.

⁷⁴ Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 75–76.

⁷⁵ Nicholson, *Deuteronomy and Tradition*, 77ff.

Hosea belonged to a group of faithful Levites, then why is there no mention of such a group in his oracles. Furthermore, if the Levitical priests which Hosea represented were disenfranchised, why is there no direct criticism against the priesthood at Bethel as impostors?

In response to Nicholson, Stephen Cook avers the presence of multiple Levitical groups. Some cohorts were disenfranchised at Bethel, while others benefited from the royal status of the sanctuary. Cook does not suggest that Hosea was an official priest of the sanctioned/centralized, state-sponsored cult worship, but that he was a part of traditional priestly lineages bearing pre-monarchical ties standing in conflict with the contemporary cultic organization.⁷⁶ He argues that Hosea's critique of the priesthood shows both a positive and negative assessment of the institution. Cook provides a new critical appraisal of Hosea's connection with traditional priestly lineages. Hosea represents an ideological conflict between the traditional lineages and emerging new factions, supported by royal endowment and representing sociological changes within society. He states, "Based on his roots in a pre-state priestly lineage, Hosea engaged in a power struggle with his society's

⁷⁶ Cook, *The Social Roots of Biblical Yahwism*, 239.

contemporary cult, not from an outsider's stance, but from within the cultic and ritualistic framework."⁷⁷

Applying anthropological models for the transition of village-based societies into statehood, Cook examines how shifting into a centralized state may instigate cultic and ritual change from lineage-based to a state-based organization. He writes, "[T]he advent of centralizing sacred power may vigorously degrade and supplant the traditional ritual functionaries and features of a society in transition." Furthermore,

Sacral centralization tends to undermine the traditional norms of lineage continuity among priests. It also tends to disrupt a society's traditional line of ritual solidarity, and it vitiates the unifying and mediating role of traditional priesthoods. Traditional priests...naturally, oppose and decry these developments.⁷⁸

(3.5) Hosea as Historian

The concept of *constitutive social integration* abuts discussions of ethnicity and group identity. Discerning ideas of ethnicity are often complicated with differences in methodology.⁷⁹ Kenton Sparks notes that although studies of ethnicity often fall into two

⁷⁷ Stephen L. Cook, "The Lineage Roots of Hosea's Yahwism," *Semeia* 87 (1999): 145.

⁷⁸ Cook, "The Lineage Roots of Hosea's Yahwism," 152–53.

⁷⁹ Asserting ethnicity is essentially about maintaining shared kinship identity. Exactly how groups understand these identities has been debated. Anthropologists have embraced two main approaches to the

emphases – political and psychological – the bifurcation is often not tenable. Sparks admits that a discussion of ethnic identity, especially as it relates to national (constitutive) identity, cannot exclusively focus on “inner realities” but necessarily includes analysis of political, religious, and sociocultural constructs.⁸⁰

Sparks argues that concepts of ethnicity played a central role in Israelite national identity, more so than its surrounding neighbors. Assyrian and Egyptian corporate identity was built along a “territorial periphery” while Israel was constituted on its “historical periphery.”⁸¹ Sparks states, “For the Egyptians and Assyrians, identity was political and cultural, not ethnic, and was linked with kingship, the king's relationship to the deity, and the deity's role in extending the national borders and the native empire to the ‘ends of the

subject: *primordialist*, focuses solely on internal shared cognitive awareness based on presumed kinship; and *constructivist*, focuses on the complex maintenance of social boundaries, specifically in relationship to other groups. The two approaches are often presented as opposites. However, this forced dichotomy is heavy handed and often indicative of politicized motivations. For discussion on ethnicity/identity study and application to OT study see Steven Fenton, *Ethnicity*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010); John Miller, “Ethnicity and the Hebrew Bible: Problems and Prospects,” *CBR* 6 (2008): 170–213; Frederick Barth, “Ethnic Groups and Boundaries,” in *Ethnicity*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 75–82; Kenton L. Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1998).

⁸⁰ Kenton L. Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1998), 16.

⁸¹ Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*, 92.

earth.”⁸² The evaluation of this imperialistic ideology of cultural identity is at the center of Hosea’s critique.

Hosea is one of the most historically conscious prophetic voices in the HB/OT, the traditions of early Israel being a dominant theme of many of his recorded oracles. Dwight Daniels says, “[I]t may reasonably be stated that historical tradition forms the lens through which Hosea perceives God and Israel.”⁸³ Hosea’s use of history is not arbitrarily applied, but the prophet shows a genuine interest in the historical traditions of Israel.⁸⁴ There is a structural connection between the history of Israel’s apostasy and current situations. Daniels reads Hosea’s relationship with history as one of “continuity,” and that the prophet argues “metahistorically.”⁸⁵ The struggle between Yahweh and Israel extends from the past to the present; Israel is and has always been a stubborn, rebellious people. The current

⁸² Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*, 91.

⁸³ Dwight R. Daniels, *Hosea and Salvation History: The Early Traditions of Israel in the Prophecy of Hosea*, BZAW 191 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1990), 130. Daniels continues, “He understood the guiding principle motivating Yahweh’s activity in the history of Israel to be Yahweh’s desire to establish an undisturbed and harmonious relationship with his people,” (128).

⁸⁴ Wolff, *Hosea*, xxvi–xxvii.

⁸⁵ Daniels, *Hosea and Salvation History*, 127.

transgressions are against the loving God of salvation history; however, repentance transports Israel back to the moment of constitutive identity, the Exodus as epilogue.

The Hosianic voice provides a window on the interplay of election traditions in Israel during the Eighth Century BCE. For Hosea, Israelite “otherness” was based on a collective sense of a unique historical relationship with Yahweh God understood through two foundational narratives, e.g., the ancestor and migration (Exodus/Wilderness) traditions. Kenton Sparks says that it is evident that these “[C]onstituent parts of Israelite ethnic identity,” were “assumed by and therefore predated our earliest prophetic traditions.”⁸⁶ All other social constructs (i.e., polity structures and the cult) were judged upon how well they aligned with these constitutive elements and thusly presented as a false ideology.

(3.5.1) Jacob (Ancestor) Traditions

Criticism on both polity structures and the efficacy of the cult (e.g., Bethel) are at the forefront of the historical dialogue within the Hoseanic voice. The prophet draws attention to the ancestor traditions (e.g., Jacob), in his castigation of the priesthood and elevation of the prophetic function of covenant mediator. This critique should not belie the idea that

⁸⁶ Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*, 214.

Hosea labeled the traditions of Israel's forefather as inherently flawed, or "false." The prophet appeals to the character of Israel (Jacob) as a typology for the castigation of the present generation and those who should be good shepherds.

A new proclamation of accusation against Ephraim beginning in 12:1[11:12 Eng] establishes a literary introduction to the prophet's discourse on the Jacob traditions.⁸⁷

Appreciating the following dialectic between the forefather and Exodus/Wilderness traditions, this transition connects the content of Chapter 11 to what follows. In 11:1 Yahweh, God declares paternity over Israel, "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt, I called my son" (ESV). However, the beloved son played the role of the prodigal. Even though Yahweh God was gentle, guiding his first steps, scooping him up in his arms, and bending down to his level to care for their most basic needs, Israel was deficient in the knowledge of their caretaker.

⁸⁷ The prophetic messenger formula (נְאֻם־יְהוָה) in Hos. 11:11 functions as a hinge between a forensic complex beginning in 4:1 and the introduction of the third and final primary ocular collection of the book (12:1-14:9 Heb). The prophetic messenger formula is used sparingly in the Book of Hosea. 11:11 is the only location outside of the husband/wife cycle (2:15[13], 18[16], 23[21]).

In Chapter 12, the child motif changes arenas. Before the child Israel came up from Egypt, the boy Jacob came forth from the womb.⁸⁸ Hosea 12:1-15 [11:12-12:14] comprises a series of rhetorical units organized around a typological dialogue between Israel and their namesake Jacob.⁸⁹ References to Jacob traditions known elsewhere outside of the Book of Hosea provide evidence of an established biographical cycle.⁹⁰ Parallels between the allusions in Hosea and the broader Jacob cycle in the Book of Genesis include the nature of his birth (Gen 25:19-26) and the time spent in Laban's household (Gen 28-29).

Bethel, the object of Hosea's derision, is a central location in the Genesis accounts. Jacob first meets Yahweh, the God of his fathers, at Bethel (Luz) when he experienced the vision of the heavenly ladder (Gen 28:10-22), subsequently establishing a cultic installation by erecting a *masebah* (מַצְבֵּה), performing a libation ceremony, and renaming the location. These actions are replayed in Gen 35 with the additional establishment of an altar (מִזְבֵּחַ) at Bethel. Both narratives provide an etiology, and subsequent legitimation, for the temple and

⁸⁸ Hosea uses the designation "Jacob" sparingly favoring the title Ephraim. He only uses the name Jacob 2x in Chapter 12 and once in 10:11 where there is a progression from Ephraim, Judah, and Jacob.

⁸⁹ Chapter 12 stands as a contained unit the accusation against Ephraim in 11:12[12:1] and 12:14[15] functioning as an inclusio. Wolff, *Hosea*, 207–9.

⁹⁰ William D. Whitt, "The Jacob Traditions in Hosea and Their Relation to Genesis," *ZAW* 103 (1991): 43.

by extension, the priesthood at Bethel. Stephen McKenzie suggests that Hosea's presentation of the Jacob tradition is a parody of an actual liturgy at Bethel. He states, "The prophet...cites the liturgical piece as an indictment against the people. They are indeed Jacob-Israel, identified with their ancestral namesake. The deeds of their forefather which they extol characterize him (as well as them) as a deceiver."⁹¹

With the Jacob tradition framed as part of a prophetic indictment, Israel's forefather is taken to court, and his character put on trial. The accused has contended/struggled (שָׁרָה)⁹² with others from birth, first with his brother in the womb and persisting into adulthood with God. Also central to Hosea's recitation is the "wrestling" tradition (Gen 32:22-32), although, in the context of Hos 12, the events at Penuel are indistinguishable from Bethel as the former is not named. In the cursory summation of 12:5, the verbal referents are ambiguous. Maintaining the subject-verb alignment of 12:4, Jacob is the one "striving," "prevailing," and ultimately "weeping and pleading for favor." An inter-textual matter arises as in Gen 32, although the identity of the victor is ambiguous, Jacob takes a

⁹¹ Steven L. McKenzie, "The Jacob Tradition in Hosea XXII 4-5," *VT* 36.3 (1986): 320.

⁹² The lexeme שָׁרָה, "to persist/strive," is unique to the wrestling narrative, located only 3x in the MT (Gen 32:29; Hos 12:4, 5) creating a strong linguistic connection between the Genesis and Hosea traditions. The lack of the mention of Penuel in Hos 12, provides evidence for a harmonized Bethel centric tradition.

stance of hubris and not contrition. There are numerous proposed solutions.⁹³ One proposition makes God (El)/The Angel the referent to the verb “prevail” and Jacob the supplicant. Anderson and Freedman maintain the reading that it was Jacob who prevailed. They assign the “weeping” to either the Angel or a reference to Jacob’s later emotional response upon reconciling with his brother Esau (Gen 33:1-3).⁹⁴ It possible that Hosea is embellishing the wrestling tradition making Jacob’s plea more penitent, or the reference is from an alternate tradition.⁹⁵ Either way, the intent is to paint Jacob as a repentant type which Israel should emulate. Luther Mays writes,

The Jacob whom Israel proudly claims as its representative ancestor was overcome by God and brought to tears and dependence. His deceitful self-will failed him in his climactic encounter with God. Here the Jacob story becomes both appeal and warning, for Israel must find in Jacob a typology their own treachery and trouble. As he could not, neither can they prevail against God. Tears and entreaty are their only future.⁹⁶

⁹³ Ben Zvi, *Hosea*, 249–50. See also McKenzie, “The Jacob Tradition in Hosea XXII 4-5,” 314–16.

⁹⁴ Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 613–14.

⁹⁵ Whitt, “The Jacob Traditions in Hosea and Their Relation to Genesis,” 33.

⁹⁶ Mays, *Hosea*, 164.

In 12:5b[4b], the history of Bethel is at the forefront. It is there that Jacob and Yahweh “found” (נָפְצָא) each other, and it is there that Yahweh still “speaks.”⁹⁷ The historical recitation is interrupted with a doxology: “Yahweh, God of Heavens Armies; Yahweh is his solemn designation (זָכָרָה).”⁹⁸ The purpose of the paean is debated;⁹⁹ however, the intent is clearly to designate the God revealed at Bethel as Yahweh. Clarity might have been a necessity as there is variation within the Genesis Bethel traditions. In Gen 28:13, Jacob is introduced to Yahweh, the God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac, and in Gen 35:11, Jacob is introduced to El Shaddai. Coincidentally, in Gen 32:29, although not at Bethel, Jacob’s fellow combatant refuses to give his name upon request.

In 12:11[10], there is an interlude in the Jacob discourse as Hosea highlights Yahweh’s role in salvation history. The divine self-identification in 12:8[9] locates the

⁹⁷ In Gen 35:13,14 Bethel is referred to as the place where God spoke (בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר אֱתֹו) to Jacob. Although the MT reads “to us” in 12:5b[4b] the Massorah suggests the emendation “to him.” Many translations favor the continuation of the 3rd masculine singular of the previous stanzas. However, from a metahistorical perspective, the ambiguous referent highlights meeting of Jacob/Israel and God in both the past and continuing into the present. Anderson and Freeman argue that the plural could represent a collective singular referring to Israel. Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 614.

⁹⁸ See Ex 3:15

⁹⁹ Wolff calls this form a “doxology of judgement.” Wolff, *Hosea*, 213. Wolff notes the comparison of similar doxologies in Amos. In the administration of sacral law, the accused would recite the doxology as an acknowledgment of the accusation and a confession of sins.

knowledge of Yahweh God into the cultural memory of Hebrew enslavement and salvation.

There is a reference to the wilderness period when Israel “dwelt in tents,” memorialized in sacred feasts/festivals. In 12:11-12[10-11], Hosea inserts a reference to the ministry of the prophets as an instrument of mediation. The close association between the prophetic office and the Exodus/wilderness tradition, conjures an image of Moses, the Deuteronomistic prophet par excellence. The text links the destruction of previous cultic sites at Gilead and Gilgal to the unheeded words, visions, and parables of the prophets. Hosea draws attention to the ashes of these historic cultic installations as a potential future of Bethel if his warnings are unheeded.

The emphasis on the importance of the prophets continues as the Jacob tradition returns in 12:13[12]. Unlike the previous dialogue with the etiological traditions, Hosea appeals to the broader Jacob biography. Jacob’s foray in the house of his uncle Laban functions as a typological criticism, not only aimed at the priests at Bethel but the leadership of Israel in general.¹⁰⁰ The broader narrative of Genesis Chapters 29-30 is

¹⁰⁰ Wolff suggests that this is likely an allusion to Israel’s pursuit of foreign political alliances. Wolff, *Hosea*, 216.

summarized in two clauses in 12:13[14]: “(Recall how) Jacob fled to the fields¹⁰¹ of Aram;

Israel worked (there) for a wife, for a wife he guarded (sheep).” Jacob’s actions are

contrasted with the historical role of the prophetic office, 12:14[13]: “(But it was) by a

prophet Yahweh brought Israel up from Egypt, and by a prophet (Israel) was guarded.”¹⁰²

The inference from the contrast of traditions is how Jacob, not directed by Yahweh, left the

land only to pursue agents of foreign influence, entering into a covenant with an alien

wife.¹⁰³ On the other hand, the prophets, as agents of Yahweh, led the people out of a

foreign land, and therefore Israel should look to Yahweh alone as protector. Andrew

Dearman summarizes Hosea’s elevation of the prophetic office in this way,

YHWH’s saving and preserving of Israel through the prophets is the clearest statement in the book to the institutional importance of prophecy and prophetic mediation for the life of Israel. Prophecy is not a marginal factor in maintaining

¹⁰¹ Hosea’s use of the location “field” (שֵׂדֶה) is typically negative referring to the abode of wild animals, cf. 2:14, 20; 4:3; 13:8.

¹⁰² The parallel between two wives and the two prophets in 12:13-14[12-13] as reference to two groups of distinct individuals. Jacob worked for a wife (Leah) and he kept sheep for a wife (Rachel). Yahweh brought Israel out of Egypt by a prophet [Moses] and by a prophet [Samuel] Israel was guarded. Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, 313.

¹⁰³ Hosea’s emphasis on the alien nature of Jacob’s marital covenant is contrary to the context of Jacob/Laban traditions in Genesis. In Gen 28:1-5 Isaac intentionally sends Jacob to Paddan-Aram to take a wife from his mother’s family lest he marry a Canaanite.

national identity, and Hosea's didactic typology is itself a prophetic act through which he implicitly places himself in a historic lineage.¹⁰⁴

Although some scholars find Hosea's final judgment on Jacob ambiguous,¹⁰⁵ by the standard of the prophetic mandate, the patriarch appears lacking. Mays suggests that amid the onset of Assyrian invasions, some political circles turned to the ancestor traditions as a theological "last resort" because it offered a "promise of the land in perpetuity." The Hosianic voice appeals to Jacob as a type for criticism of the priesthood, which was failing to teach covenant faithfulness and the leaders who were failing to "guard" the people. Mayes states, "The appeal to Jacob is an appeal to a deceiver who had himself to be overcome by God's power."¹⁰⁶ The emphasis upon the prophet echoes the central theme of the Hosianic traditions, covenant faithfulness. Wolff concludes that Hosea's interest in the Jacob tradition "lies in the fact that Jacob's history of guilt is overcome by Yahweh's saving history."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, 314.

¹⁰⁵ Daniels, *Hosea and Salvation History*, 50.

¹⁰⁶ Mays, *Hosea*, 164.

¹⁰⁷ Wolff, *Hosea*, 218.

(3.5.2) The Exodus/Wilderness (Migration) Traditions

As evident in comparison with the patriarchal traditions at Bethel, for the Hosianic voice, the historical Exodus was the most important event in Israelite identity formation.¹⁰⁸

Kenton Sparks says, “So it would appear that Jacob served as the poor role model and the Exodus tradition as the ideal mono-Yahwistic origin tradition.”¹⁰⁹ Yair Hoffman concurs, “Hosea considered the historical exodus a constitutive event upon which the covenant was established in the past, and without which no future renewal of the covenant after it has been nullified by the people, is possible.”¹¹⁰ Emphasis on the Exodus tradition goes beyond mere historical appeal. In Hosea, the exodus event, along with the tightly connected wilderness tradition,¹¹¹ functioned as a typological cipher for the critique of the present and foreshadows of the future, what J. Andrew Dearman deems “metaphorical geography.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Yair Hoffman, “A North Israelite Typological Myth and a Judean Historical Tradition: The Exodus in Hosea and Amos,” *VT* 39.2 (1989): 170.

¹⁰⁹ Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*, 134.

¹¹⁰ Hoffman, “A North Israelite Typological Myth and a Judean Historical Tradition: The Exodus in Hosea and Amos,” 171. Hoffman notes the influence of Auerbach on his use of typology.

¹¹¹ There is little to no thematic differentiation in Hosea between the Exodus and Wilderness traditions, the former appearing as the beginning of the wilderness period. Daniels, *Hosea and Salvation History*, 57.

¹¹² Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, 121.

Models for the development of the Israelite wilderness tradition have diverged.¹¹³ In 1896, Karl Budde presented the theory of a so-called “nomadic ideal.”¹¹⁴ The nomadic ideal reconstruction suggested a tradition of Yahweh as a desert god worshiped by semi-pastoral nomads. Budde reconstructed an ancient form of Yahwism built upon the traditions of the Rechabites, a nomadic people mentioned in Jeremiah Chapter 35. The Rechabites did not view Yahweh as an agricultural god and resisted sedentary life. Budde argued that Hosea rejected this limited view of Yahweh’s divine power, asserting that Yahweh was the source of fertility, thus expanding Israel’s wilderness ideology.¹¹⁵

A second dominant approach to the ideology behind ancient Israelite wilderness tradition highlights the idea of “salvation history.” Gerhard von Rad approached salvation history as a form of ‘canonical history.’¹¹⁶ Cultic legends were integrated with historical

¹¹³ See Thomas B. Dozeman, “Hosea and the Wilderness Wandering Tradition,” in *Rethinking the Foundations: Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible: Essays in Honour of John Van Seters*, ed. Steven L McKenzie, Thomas Römer, and Hans Heinrich Schmid (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 55–70.

¹¹⁴ Karl Budde, “Das Nomadisch Ideal Im Alten Testament,” *Preuss. Jahrb.* 85 (1896): 57–79. This theory was further developed by John W. Flight, “The Nomadic Idea and Ideal in the Old Testament,” *JBL* 42.3 (1923): 158–226. For recent presentation see Ronald de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, trans. John McHugh (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 13–15.

¹¹⁵ Dozeman, “Hosea and the Wilderness Wandering Tradition,” 56.

¹¹⁶ Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology, Vol. 1*, 121–28.

experience, which became the basis for constitutive Israelite corporate identity. Two critical assumptions follow: salvation history requires that wilderness imagery be interpreted in relation to the Exodus and conquest, regardless of literary context. Secondly, the wilderness motif is Hosea's typological warning of a return to the crucial period of Israel's being.¹¹⁷ However, scholars who trace the origins of the Exodus traditions to the exilic period, notably John Van Seters,¹¹⁸ suggests that Hosea essentially "created" the traditions. Thomas Dozeman proposes that Hosea is not dependent on earlier source material but is "laying the foundation for" salvation history.¹¹⁹

The Exodus event permeates throughout the Hoseanic traditions. For example, salvation history is implicit within the marriage metaphor in Chapters 1-3. After harsh criticism upon Israel's marital unfaithfulness, in Hosea 2:17[15] Yahweh declares his merciful intent to restore the relationship "as in the days of her youth" (בְּיָמֵי נְעוּרֶיהָ). As this statement is followed by a mention of how Israel "came up" (qal. עָלָה) from the land of

¹¹⁷ Dozeman, "Hosea and the Wilderness Wandering Tradition," 57.

¹¹⁸ John Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1983).

¹¹⁹ However, Dozeman concedes that the possibility of a liturgical tradition with some reference to the wilderness recited at Bethel. Dozeman, "Hosea and the Wilderness Wandering Tradition," 62.

Egypt, an allusion to Israel's youth would correspond to the wilderness period. Later in the book, in the debate with the Jacob traditions (12:14[13]), the Hosianic voice reaffirms the role of the prophet as Yahweh's agent (e.g., Moses) through whom Israel was "brought up" (*hip'il* עָלָה) from Egypt. In 11:1, the father-son metaphor is employed. Yahweh "called" (קָרָא) Israel "from Egypt." In both 12:10 and 13:4, Yahweh introduces himself, "I am your God from the land of Egypt" (אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם).¹²⁰ ¹²¹ Presaging a dystopian existence brought about by covenant disobedience, the prophet warns of a potential reversal of history. In both 8:13 and 9:3, there is the threat of "returning to Egypt" (שׁוּב), a possible association with Deut. 28:68. However, repentance will bring assurance as in 11:5 where Israel "will not return to Egypt."

The self-revelation of 12:10[9] is followed by a warning that Yahweh will return Israel to a time of "dwelling in tents" (עַד אוֹשִׁיבֶךָ בְּאַהֲלִים). The reference to a wandering

¹²⁰ Although common in lexical content, this exact designation is unique to Hosea, only found in 12:10 and 13:4.

¹²¹ James Mays notes that the divine self-designation in 13:4, common to the covenant proclamations (Ex 20:2; Deut 5.6), "[C]omes as near as any element of the tradition used by Hosea to state the central article of his theology." He continues, "In the decalogue formulations the formula established the right of Yahweh as God of the Exodus and covenant to set his policy for the life of Israel. Here it is the basis for the assertion of Yahweh's exclusive role as God of Israel." Mays, *Hosea*, 174.

tradition is tied to a typological feast day (בִּימֵי מוֹעֵד), presumably the celebration of Succoth.¹²² In 9:10, Yahweh “found” (מָצָא) Israel’s “fathers” in the wilderness. The progenitors are compared to the first fruits of the vine and fig tree, ready for harvest. However, the apostasy at Baal-Peor (Num 25) made them “an abomination” (שִׁקּוּץ) in his sight.

(3.6) Wilderness as Utopia/Dystopia in Hosea

In the elevation of the wilderness tradition over other constitutive ideologies (e.g., ancestor/Jacob traditions), Hosea employs Israel’s Exodus/Wilderness experience as a metaphor for living in the blessings and curses of a covenantal relationship. Allusions to the wilderness are multivalent within the Book of Hosea, envisioning both utopian and dystopian realities, past and future.¹²³ Positive and negative depictions of the wilderness period have led to the isolation of two competing visions of the wilderness tradition in

¹²² Succoth was held on the 15th day of the seventh month (Lev 23:33-43; Num 29:12-39). In 1 Kgs 12:32 Jeroboam established a rival feast on the 15th day of the eighth month which became an important ceremony at Bethel (1 Kgs 12:33). The association between the establishment of the bull images and the god of salvation from Egypt makes a particular correlation between the two feasts. Referencing the time Israel dwelt in tents could be veiled criticism of the imposter festival. Yahweh will bring them back to the “authentic” remembrance.

¹²³ Philip R. Davies, “The Wilderness Years: Utopia and Dystopia in the Book of Hosea,” in *Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature*, PFES 92 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 163.

HB/OT scholarship.¹²⁴ The positive traditions reflect the care of Yahweh for his people in the wilderness, painting the image of a utopian ideal. Thomas Römer dates these traditions as “early,” manifest in the prophetic traditions of Hosea and Jeremiah, along with proposed priestly traditions.¹²⁵ However, he argues that post-priestly redactors turned the positive narratives into negative accounts. Römer argues that a collection of “grumbling” stories in the Book of Numbers, represents a “cycle of rebellion, which, “radicalizes the negative view of Israel’s sojourn in the wilderness.”¹²⁶ On the contrary, Dwight Daniels views both traditions, positive and negative, as contemporary to Hosea, creating a tension in the prophet’s understanding of Israel’s early history.¹²⁷ For example, the Baal-Peor incident (Hos. 9:10) represents a typological watershed moment in Hosea’s idea of salvation history.

¹²⁴ Thomas Römer, “Israel’s Sojourn in the Wilderness and the Construction of the Book of Numbers,” in *Reflection and Refraction: Studies in Biblical Historiography in Honour of A. Graeme Auld*, ed. Robert Rezetko, Timothy H. Lim, and W. Brian Aucker, VTSup 113 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 419–45.

¹²⁵ Römer, “Israel’s Sojourn in the Wilderness,” 430. Römer highlights that the only reference to rebellion in the Deuteronomy wilderness tradition (Chapters 1–3), is the refusal to conquer the land (441).

¹²⁶ Römer, “Israel’s Sojourn in the Wilderness,” 433.

¹²⁷ Daniels, *Hosea and Salvation History*, 61. Daniels suggest that the so-called “murmuring tradition” was of southern origin and a possible “positive” wilderness tradition was extant in Hosea’s time. “Hosea then would have derived his positive view of the wilderness period from a form of these traditions which emphasized Yahweh’s care and provision for his people and in which the period was not tainted by Israel’s rebellion.” (61)

Though Yahweh saved Israel, they chose to take part in shameful practices, and continue to do so until this day.

Like many other prophets, Hosea's use of the wilderness metaphor is varied. As Ehud ben Zvi states, "The variety found among utopian images in prophetic literature concerning the past reflects the basic ambivalence about it in these discourses. On the one hand, images of the past were associated with dystopia but on the other with pre-figurations of the future utopia."¹²⁸ For Hosea, the past is viewed as an idealized "honeymoon" period when Yahweh introduced himself to Israel as savior and provider. The wilderness was the period of the institution of the covenant, Hosea's core ideology of Israelite identity. James Mays writes, "'Wilderness' is more than a place; it is a time and situation in which the pristine relation between God and people was untarnished, and Israel depended utterly on Yahweh... As a place, the wilderness is bare and threatening, but as an epoch in the history of God and Israel it represents a point of new begging."¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Ben Zvi, "Utopias, Multiple Utopias, and Why Utopias at All?," 70.

¹²⁹ Mays, *Hosea*, 44.

(3.6.1) Wilderness Past/Present

Hosea views the present as on the cusp of experiencing a dystopian reality. A reversal of utopia is at the center of the biographical cycle, namely Chapter 2. Through both the prophet's words and actions, Yahweh calls Israel to repentance from their "whoring."¹³⁰

The prophet drags Ephraim into court, announcing how they are about to experience covenantal curses. Israel has rejected the potential of utopia, being enticed by a false schizophrenic paradise promised by Canaanite fertility religion. She assumes that it is the Canaanite pantheon that provided her with bread, water, clothing, and luxuries (2:7[5]). Because of her ignorance, fertility and abundance are taken away (2:10[8]). The unfaithful wife will suffer public humiliation (2:5, 12 [3, 10]), stripped naked and exposed for all to see her vulnerable state.¹³¹

¹³⁰ The metaphor of Israel as prostitute is central to Hosea, employed more than any other biblical book זִנְיָוִים "prostitution" 1:2 2*; 2:4; 2:6; 4:12; 5:4; זָנָה "fornication (like a prostitute)" 4:10,12,13,14 *2, 15, 18 *2; 5:3; 9:1), it is not pervasive within Deuteronomism. The metaphor is echoed in Jeremiah (2:20; 3:1, 3, 6, 8; 5:7); however, the metaphor is not found in Deut. The root זָנָה is only found 3x in a forensic context (22:21; 23:19; 31:16).

¹³¹ The idea of being "stripped like a prostitute" is found in the curse section of many ANE covenant treaties. Mays, *Hosea*, 38. See also Delbert R. Hillers, *Treaty-Curses and the Old Testament Prophets*, BO 16 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1964).

In a reversal of fortunes, the woman will be made “like a wilderness” 2:5[3] (כַּמִּדְבָּר).

This wasteland is in contrast to the picture of Yahweh’s favor, mistaken by the woman as coming from the baals. Instead of Yahweh providing rains upon the land, the abode of the woman will be “like a waterless region” (כְּאַרְץ צִיָּה). This barren existence will be a form of capital punishment where she will be “put to death by thirst” (וַיָּהֲמִתֶּיהָ בְּצָמָא).¹³²

Using similar language, 13:4-5 connects the wilderness to the origins of Israel.¹³³ In 13:4 there is a doxology of self-identification. Yahweh revealed himself in Egypt, and he alone is the savior (יֹשֵׁעַ) of Israel. Hosea suggests that the wilderness was a dystopia, a land of “intense drought” (תִּלְאָבוֹת).¹³⁴ However, Israel was spared from the harshness through Yahweh’s grace. In 13:4-8, the wilderness is described with dystopian imagery, which echoes the language of covenantal curses in ANE covenants, some found in the Book of Deuteronomy. Because of their rebellion and rejection of his satiation, Israel will no longer

¹³² By employing the *hip'il* of מוֹת, the form employed in the context of capital crimes, the dystopian wilderness becomes a literal death penalty.

¹³³ Although there is lexical variation, the presence of themes of drought and thirst in both Chapter 2 and 13, suggest potential literary bookends for the Book of Hosea.

¹³⁴ The word תִּלְאָבוֹת is only found here in the MT and interpretation is difficult. For discussion on translating this word see Daniels, *Hosea and Salvation History*, 71. William Holladay suggests “land of feverbouts.” (390) BDB suggests a plural intensive form of a cognate root (תִּלְאָה) meaning “hardship/trouble” (BDB, 520).

be safe in the pasture. Now the sheep will be devoured by the wild beasts: the lion, the leopard, and the bear.¹³⁵ Israel's relationship with Yahweh is one of salvation history. It was Yahweh who revealed himself in the Exodus, and it was he who provided for them in an infertile land. For Hosea, Israel has rejected Yahweh as the source of salvation and fertility: "But when they had grazed, they became full/were filled, and their hearts were lifted up/ therefore they forgot me." (Hos 13:6)

(3.6.2) Wilderness Past/Future

The prophet also shows continuity between the wilderness period and a future reality. Thomas Dozeman writes, "Even though a return to the wilderness is principally an act of judgment for the prophet, the setting is infused with a potentially ideal quality reminiscent of lost youth."¹³⁶ In 2:16[14] Yahweh will "persuade, seduce" (piel פתה) Israel back to the wilderness where he will appeal to her heart. Israel's response will be like in "the days of her

¹³⁵ Possible echo to Deut 28:26. "And your dead body shall be food for all the birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth and no one shall frighten them away." (ESV)

¹³⁶ Dozeman, "Hosea and the Wilderness Wandering Tradition," 58.

youth.” Israel’s youth is tied to the constative moment of the Exodus. The wilderness represents a moment of divine favor.

The Hosianic voice presents a cyclical view of restoration. Wilderness is both utopia and dystopia. The experience is contingent on how Israel responds. Returning to the definition of utopia as *inventive discourse on social structures based upon rational hope and historically conditioned self-reflection*, the prophet offers a fusion of historical consciousness and repentance in the wilderness metaphor. The moment the covenant was offered stands as a point of parallel universes, one of life, the other of death. Divine favor is experienced through the act of changing the “valley of Achor” into a “door of hope.”¹³⁷

In 2:16-23, there are a series of promises, each beginning with the phrase “And in the day...” [12: 16, 18, 21 (Eng.)]. The first (12:16-20) Yahweh will remove the name of the foreign gods from the mouth of Israel and renew the covenant with them. The second “in that day” brings covenant renewal. This renewal will have implications of the restoration of the blessings bringing harmony with the land. Like 12:14-15 above, Yahweh is calling Israel back to the honeymoon of the beginning of the covenant. The utopia does not exist alone in

¹³⁷ The Valley of Achor is the location where Joshua punished Achan in Jos 7. The imagery is of a location associated with guilt will be redeem as a place of comfort, dystopia into utopia. See reference to the Valley of Achor in a similar way in Isa 65:10.

the wilderness. The renewal of the covenant will lead to reaping the blessing of the Promised Land. The curses will be reversed. In 12:21-23, we read how the land will be fertile again. The negative implications of “Jezreel” will be reversed. And the identity of Israel will be restored in the right relationship with Yahweh. Not my people will be called my people.

(3.7) Excursus: Hayden White and a Poetics of Historiography

The relationship between ideology and utopia within historical discourse is central to the work of Hayden White, foremost American philosopher of history. In his seminal work *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (1973),¹³⁸ White set out to explore the deep structures of the historian’s craft in the goal of discerning the ideological propositions within. White delimits three aspects of historical intentionality: *epistemological*, *aesthetic*, and *moral*. These dimensions are communicated through a particular “strategy,” each intended to gain different types of “explanatory effect”: explanation *by formal argument* (epistemological), explanation by *emplotment* (aesthetic), and explanation by *ideological implication* (moral).

¹³⁸ White, *Metahistory*, x.

White defines the *epistemological* dimension of historical discourse, or strategy of *formal argument*, as “An explanation for what happens in the story by invoking principles of combination which serve as putative laws of historical explanation.”¹³⁹ He suggests four modes of argument: *formist*, *organicist*, *mechanistic*, and *contextual*. A *formist* argument aims at the identification of the unique characteristics of objects inhabiting the historical field. The *formist* considers the explanation complete when a given set of objects is both suitably identified and classified. The *organicist* is more integrative and reductive, depicting the particulars in the historical field as components of synthetic processes. *Organicists* tend to talk about teleological ‘principles’ or ‘ideals.’¹⁴⁰ The *mechanistic* mode of argumentation is similar to the *organicist*, integrative in aim; however, the goal is reductive rather than synthetic. The *mechanist* studies history to discern the universal laws that govern its operations. Written history consequently displays the effects of those laws in narrative form. In the final mode, *contextualist*, the argument is an appeal to real relationship. Historical events are explained by being set in the broader context of their

¹³⁹ White, *Metahistory*, 11.

¹⁴⁰ White suggest that these ‘principles/ideals’ are typically not causal agents “except in historians with a decidedly mystical or theological orientation, in which case they are usually interpreted as manifestations of God’s purpose for His creation.” White, *Metahistory*, 16.

occurrence. Why they occurred as they did is to be explained by the revelation of the specific relationships they bore to other events happening in their circumambient historical space.

White's analysis of the *aesthetic* dimension of history is expressed in the language of *emplotment*, appropriating the term from Paul Ricoeur. White defines emplotment as "[T]he way by which a sequence of events fashioned into a story is gradually revealed to be a story of a particular kind."¹⁴¹ Borrowing from the work of Northrop Frye, White identifies four modes of employment: *romance*, *tragedy*, *comedy*, and *satire*. White acknowledges some room for diversity in the overall scope of historical work; however, a given historian is "forced to emplot" the component parts of his narrative into one "comprehensive or archetypal story form."¹⁴²

In White's estimation, each of the four major plot choices is indicative of the historian's ontological predisposition; how the historian seeks to 'explain' what was 'really happening' within the historical field. For instance, histories emplotted as *romance* are

¹⁴¹ White, *Metahistory*, 7. White admits to borrowing the term emplotment from Paul Ricoeur who coined the term.

¹⁴² White, *Metahistory*, 8.

fundamentally a drama of self-identification, symbolized by the hero's transcendence of the world of experience. Both *comedy* and *tragedy* suggest the possibility of partial liberation from the "fallen" world condition. In *comedy*, there is the hope for the temporary triumph of man with reconciliation symbolized through festive occasions. In *tragedy*, there is no opportunity for festivity, and reconciliation is in the form of man's resignation toward his position of despair.¹⁴³ The final archetype, *satire*, views the possibilities of the other three from an ironic stance. The choice of this strategy suggests the ultimate inadequacy of the visions presented in the other three and "signals a conviction that the world has grown old." Offering additional insight, White proposes that *tragedy* and *satire* suggest that the historian perceives behind the jumbled mess of collected data an "ongoing structure of relationships or an eternal return of the Same in the Different." On the other hand, *romance* and *comedy* stress the emergence of the "new," which may be, in essence changeless, varying only in phenomenal forms.¹⁴⁴

The third significant dimension of history is the 'ideological (moral) implication.'

White equates morality and ideology, defining the latter as "a set of prescriptions for taking

¹⁴³ White, *Metahistory*, 9.

¹⁴⁴ White, *Metahistory*, 7.

a position in the present world of social praxis and acting upon it.”¹⁴⁵ Basing his discussion on approaches to social change originating in the work of Karl Mannheim, White suggests four prominent categories of perceived change in the historical record: *anarchism*, *conservatism*, *liberalism*, and *radicalism*. White’s discussion revolves around the historian’s position toward perfected society or utopia. For the *anarchist*, utopia is in the remote past; however, it is a real possibility of any time, if man will only seize hold of that which constitutes ‘essential humanity.’ In the *conservative* view, utopia exists in the present, and consequently, dominant ideological paradigms are worth defending. Therefore, a *conservative* history would provide a moral apology for the reigning socio-political structure. On the other hand, the *liberal* embraces a teleological approach to utopia. The present must work toward a future utopia, which is the inevitable goal of society if one takes up the cause of morality. Finally, utopia for the *radical* is always imminent; moral social change is imperative.¹⁴⁶

Hayden White’s analysis of a poetics of historiography align with Paul Ricoeur’s thesis of *cultural imagination*. *Cultural imagination* represents a dialectic relationship

¹⁴⁵ White, *Metahistory*, 22.

¹⁴⁶ White, *Metahistory*, 25.

between the social constructs of *ideology* and *utopia*. The two phenomena interact within a dialectical spiral where the former is critiqued and challenged/supported by projections of the latter, and the latter is reined in by the constative nature of the former. The historian emplots his/her data drawn from the field of historical reference in a way that promotes an ideological position. This position is supported through a utopian vision. Only the conservative uses a utopia as a legitimization of the existing social order. All other choices present a challenge in some way.

White's matrix illuminates Hosea's poetics of historiography. The prophet's presentation of history is meant to shatter the existing social order. The application of both utopian and dystopian imagery is both an encouragement and castigation, familiar prophetic tropes employed as an impetus for social change. Building upon White's categories, Hosea operates as a contextualist. There is a cause and effect relationship between past and present reality. Hosea's choice of emplotment reveals his ontological approach to the historical field. He presents Israel's history with Yahweh as both romance and comedy. Romance is a drama of self-identification. The hero, in this case, Yahweh, transcends the world of experience, stepping down into Israel's historical reality as an agent of liberation and supplication in the face of despair. Comedy suggests the possibility of

liberation of the “fallen” world. There is a hope for the temporary triumph of man with reconciliation symbolized through festive occasions. In an ideological/moral perspective, Hosea is an anarchist. Utopia is in the remote past; however, it is a real possibility of any time, if man will only seize hold of that which constitutes ‘essential humanity.’

(3.8) Summary Conclusions

The Hoseanic voice engaged in an ideological critique of what is perceived as a distorted social construct brought about through monumental shifts in socio-economic structures. The deep level sense of ideology as social integration encompasses a broad understanding of identity, which includes concepts of ethnic and concomitant social structures, e.g., religious expression and polity organization. Hosea operates with a specific ideology of Israelite *constitutive social integration*: a people in covenant with Yahweh God as testified through unique salvation history. For Hosea, the ideological presentation of Israel in the Eighth Century B.C.E. expressed through polity structures and the royal cult at Bethel is a distortion. Syncretism, false piety, economic oppression, and geopolitical relationship were all threats to Israelite identity. Hosea manifests a xenophobic criticism of the cult, which

incorporates foreign elements into the Israelite identity. He perceives this dominant (false) ideology as a distortion.

The interplay of prophet/covenant and priest/cult within the Hoseanic voice is complex. On the one hand, Hosea elevates covenant faithfulness over sacrificial praxis; however, the cult is not devoid of purpose. The level of intimacy with ritual practices, priestly obligations, and cultic traditions intimates more than a mere outsider perspective. Innovations to the national cult in Israel, e.g., Bethel, are akin to pledging allegiance to a foreign deity, and rejection of Israel's "first love." However, although certain practices are perceived as threats to Israelite constitutive identity, there is no need to throw out the proverbial baby with the bathwater. For example, the prophet never paints the temple in Jerusalem as illegitimate, although there are countless references to Judah sharing in Ephraim's apostasy.¹⁴⁷ The focus of critique is on the royal investiture of worship praxis, namely at Bethel.

Hosea's criticism, as well as his southern contemporary Amos, of the cult at Bethel, had permanence within Deuteronomism. Although the revolt and ultimate separation of the

¹⁴⁷ Although there are valid arguments for southern scribal glosses, not all references to Judah need be read as Judean in origin. Emmerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*. See the discussion on the monarchy in Chapter 4 below.

Northern Israelite tribal coalition received the sanction of a Shilonite prophet,¹⁴⁸ the subsequent moves to legitimate non-Davidic rule through cultic innovation reversed Yahwistic authorization. The “sins of Jeroboam” became a slogan of the Deuteronomistic reform movement, and perceived causation for Samaria’s ultimate desolation. However, the investiture of syncretistic iconography was only part of the castigation of Jeroboam’s cultic reforms. He is accused of constructing the infamous *bamoth* (high places) and ordaining non-Levitical priests who officiated his manufactured national celebration. The ultimate demise of Bethel is presaged by an unnamed Judean אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים (man of God) who proclaimed ruin upon the altar at Bethel (1Kgs 13:1ff), a prophecy the Deuteronomistic voice(s) understood as fulfilled by means of the Josianic purges (2 Kgs 23:15ff).

In calling people back from non-Israelite social constructs, Hosea draws attention to the constitutive traditions of Israelite corporate identity, interacting with both the ancestor and Exodus-Wilderness traditions. The prophet takes a metahistorical view of these

¹⁴⁸ Ahijah’s central role in the Jeroboam narratives established him as an authoritative figure within Deuteronomism. Although the prophet legitimized the selection of Jeroboam ben Nebat as monarch of ten of the twelve tribes of Israel (1 Kgs 11:26ff), Ahijah also prophesied the death of Jeroboam’s son, end of his dynasty (1 Kgs 14:1-18), and ultimate destruction of the entire nation of Northern Israel (1 Kgs 14:b-16). He was also the author of source material used by the Chronicler(s) regarding the reign of Solomon (2 Chr 9:29). His association with the ancient cult of Shiloh (possibly 1 Kgs 14), furthers the bond between the prophet-priestly circles charged with the maintenance of these traditions and Deuteronomism.

traditions, with a typological approach to past present and future. The failures of the present generation are mere extensions of the apostasy of previous generations. He challenges Israel to contemplate Jacob their progenitor and how best to reflect, and not to reflect, his character. However, there is a future hope based on a return to her “first love.” He encourages covenantal faithfulness by appeals to promises of blessing, warning of the outcomes for disobedience. A true shepherd of Israel will embody and promote the “knowledge of God.” Only through covenantal faithfulness and a pious passion for cultic purity will restore the blessings of Yahweh God.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE HEZEKIAN VOICE

(4.1) Introduction

A phenomenological approach to Deuteronomism does not set out to discern a single “school” or reform group solely representative of deuteronomistic ideals but works toward delineating the *essential structures* of conscious experience within a historical stream of tradition. Although *D* phenomena (Pre-D, Proto-D, Deuteronomic, Deuteronomistic) may manifest differently, the ideal content of genetic texts (voices) is consistently equivalent. Building upon a proposed locus for the emergence of Deuteronomism within northern prophetic/Levitical circles, and universally acknowledged common lexical/thematic subject matter, I began a historical progression of Deuteronomism with the voice of the Israelite prophet Hosea. Evaluation of the cultural imagination (a dialectic between expressions of ideology and utopia) within the Hosianic traditions unveiled a Pre-D voice affirming a constitutive ideology for Israelite corporate identity, an identity fashioned on the social construct covenant. Although multivalent, employed through both marital and geopolitical metaphorical representations, Hosea tied covenantal ideology to the historical memory of

an exodus from slavery in Egypt and its inherently linked wilderness tradition(s).

Embracing this constitutive ideology through singular devotion to Yahweh, promised a state of utopian blessing, e.g., fertility and security. However, covenant disobedience engendered a dystopian existence of famine, war, and subjugation.

In the following treatment, the historical progression will continue by exploring a dialog between northern prophetic ideology and the Judean court in the Late Eighth Century BCE.¹ During this period, a series of military confrontations throughout the Levantine states upset the delicate balance that was (pan)Israelite ancestral identity. Many disenfranchised peoples, including what Rainier Albertz calls the “Hosea group,”² migrated south into the territory of Judah. The fate of the northern tribes appeared to vindicate the message of Hosea and other mono-Yahwistic prophetic voices. Israel had “sowed the wind” and was now “reaping the whirlwind.”

In the wake of continued Neo-Assyrian incursions, Judah faced a political and humanitarian crisis. During the reign of Hezekiah, Jerusalem and the surrounding regions

¹ This is not to suggest that covenant ideology was not promoted in Judah prior to the fall of Samaria. See Cook, *The Social Roots of Biblical Yahwism*.

² Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period, Volume 1: From the Beginnings to the End of the Monarchy* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), 180.

experienced rapid population growth. If the Judean ruling class were to garner the fealty of a growing refugee population, they must appeal to a core understanding of what it “means” to be Israel. Hezekiah needed to bolster a socio-political consensus on concepts of polity and cult as there were competing ideologies in northern and southern societies. For example, political dynasties in Israel regularly suffered the judgment of Yahweh and were prone to upheaval. Conversely, in Judah, there was an emphasis on a unique blessing of the Davidic dynasty as the patron and protectorate of Yahweh’s abode in Jerusalem, the holy city. Those whose ancestors questioned their “portion in David”³ were now asked to recognize a unique relationship between Yahweh and the heir of Jesse’s son.

As an ideology of (re)unification was paramount, the Judean court set out to reimagine a historical period when “all Israel” lived in harmony. The utopia of a Solomonic golden age provided a vision of Israel embodying unity and strength. This era offered a contrast to the dystopian reality of the refugee population. Hezekiah was presented as a new Solomon, a messianic restorer of a unified Israel. However, reclaiming a utopian vision of Yahweh’s blessing, required a compromise, a *grand bargain*. The grand bargain was promoted through emerging literary tradition. Textual evidence points to the beginnings of

³ 2 Sam 20:1; 1 Kgs 12:16 [2 Chr 2:16]

collating a prophetic oeuvre, which included the Hoseanic traditions. The so-called “Men of Hezekiah” were recognized as devotees of wisdom literature, and a pan-Israelite history began to take shape, celebrating the glories of a united monarchy under Solomon.

Paul Ricoeur maintains that no social order operates by force alone; therefore, dominion cannot be framed merely as a causal relation of economic forces. If an ideology has any hope of realization, it must be more than a cunning artifice and have some basis in reality.⁴ Exploring the interplay between two key factors are central: the *claim* by the governing body, and the *belief* in legitimacy conferred by its vassals. Ricoeur posits that ideology, although *constitutive* in its core function, is often employed as a means of “filling the gap” between claim and belief. At this “secondary level” ideology is a tool legitimization, employed when there is not enough belief in the underlying claim alone, bearing a “surplus

⁴ It is imperative to recall Ricoeur’s dissatisfaction with the Marxist bifurcation of imagination from reality. If, as Marx proposes, praxis (what people are and do) and representation (how they appear in their own or other’s imagination) move on different planes, how can the later express the former? In opposition to materialistic Marxist models of power, Ricoeur appeals to the *motivational* model of sociologist Max Weber. Weber employs the German term *Herrschaft*, often translated in English as authority or domination. Ricoeur draws the discussion of Weber’s motivational model primarily from: Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

of meaning.”⁵ This “surplus” is necessary to inspire and reinforce the citizenry; however, it also makes ideology vulnerable to the concealment of illegitimacy.

Bridging the gap between claim and belief, Hezekiah embraced the critiques of northern prophetic voices and enacted far-reaching cultic reforms. This pious act of mono-Yahwism provided the “surplus of meaning” for fidelity to a Davidic king. Royal piety and devotion to Yahweh’s temple offered a devastated populace hope for the future. The vision of a blessed continuous Davidic line presented an alternative to the failed various dynasties of Israel. Consequently, cultic piety, which affirmed the Sinai covenant, provided legitimation for the Davidic covenant; as a result, the two were merged within the matrix of Deuteronomism. Contrasting voices found enough congruence to sing in harmony.

⁵ Ricoeur’s phenomenological “three levels” of ideology are inherent to the definition of ideology used throughout this dissertation: *a constitutive paradigm for social integration utilized to conserve, legitimate, and/or distort socio-political structures*. Primary/core level = conservation(integration); secondary level = legitimation; third/surface level = distortion.

(4.2) Hezekiah in Historical Contexts

Many studies scrutinize the complex relations between the Neo-Assyrian Empire and the regional Levantine states during the Eighth Century BCE.⁶ Making an argument for a Hezekian *grand bargain*, the focus needs only narrowed to evidence of an emerging mixed Israelite population in Jerusalem and the surrounding Judean hill country. I acknowledge differing opinions on the nature of rapid urbanization; however, the accelerated level of expansion cannot be explained by normal demographic or economic growth; neither was it based on a gradual process.⁷

⁶ See Amélie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East c. 3000 - 330 BC*, vol. 1 (London: Routledge, 1995); John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 4th ed. (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2000); Iain Provan, V. Philips Long, and Tremper Longman III, *A Biblical History of Israel* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2003); E Campbell Jr., "A Land Divided: Judah and Israel from the Death of Solomon to the Fall of Samaria," in *The Oxford History of the Biblical World*, ed. Michael D. Coogan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 206–41; Andrew G. Vaughn, *Theology, History, and Archaeology in the Chronicler's Account of Hezekiah*, ASOR/SBL Archeology and Biblical Studies 4 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999); Robert A. Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, VTSup 155 (Leiden: Brill, 2012); Richter, "Eighth Century Issues: The World of Jeroboam II, the Fall of Samaria, and the Reign of Hezekiah"; Kelle and Strawn, "History of Israel 5: Assyrian Period"; Bill T. Arnold, "Hezekiah," *DOTHB*, 407–13.

⁷ Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, "Temple and Dynasty: Hezekiah, the Remaking of Judah and the Rise of the Pan-Israelite Ideology," *JSOT* 30.3 (2006): 259–85; Magen Broshi, "Expansion of Jerusalem in the Reigns of Hezekiah and Manasseh," *IEJ* 24.1 (1974): 21–26.

(4.2.1) Geopolitics

Although a dominant economic and military force for over a century, the Nimshide dynasty fell into disarray upon the death of Jeroboam II. Israel devolved through a series of usurpations and military coups, each with vacillating geopolitical loyalties. The destabilization was exasperated by the western expansion of the Neo-Assyrian Empire under Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 BCE). During the events of the so-called Syro-Ephraimite War,⁸ the remnant of Israel joined Aram-Damascus in an anti-Assyrian alliance. This coalition besieged Jerusalem with the intent of replacing the Davidic king with a compliant puppet. Under Ahaz, Judah, uncharacteristically, established a geopolitical policy independent of Israel appealing to Assyria. Assyria reaffirmed its regional dominance through the siege of Damascus in 733-731 BCE.

Upon the fall of Damascus, Samaria experienced regime change once again retuning Israel to Assyrian vassal status.⁹ This relationship lasted approximately a decade before

⁸ On the biblical and extra-biblical record of the Syro-Ephraimite War see Irvine, *Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraimite Crisis*; Thompson, *Situation and Theology: Old Testament Interpretations the Syro-Ephraimite War*.

⁹ In the aftermath of the Syro-Ephraimite War, Israel suffered Neo-Assyrian deportations. In a weakened state, Hoshea ben Elah organized a successful coop against Pekah ben Remaliah. Once on the throne, Hoshea sends tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III ca. 732 BCE (2 Kgs 15:29-31).

Hoshea ben Elah entered a regional anti-Assyrian coalition prompting Assyrian retaliation and, ultimately, the loss of Israelite self-rule. The timeline of the fall of Samaria is difficult to ascertain;¹⁰ however, whether the city was captured in 722 under Shalmaneser V, or as a part of subsequent campaigns by Sargon II in 720, the outcome is clear. By 720 BCE the remnants of the polity of Israel lost all monikers of independence, becoming the regional Assyrian province of Samerina, and large sections of the populace were deported.¹¹

These events are the backdrop to the ministry of the Eighth-century prophets, notably Hosea.¹² The prophet critiques geopolitical alignments as a challenge of the sovereignty of Yahweh and his sole authority to (reluctantly) establish a king over Israel. Hosea forecasts the outcome of foreign allegiance as a dystopia reality prompted by

¹⁰ Bob Becking, *The Fall of Samaria: An Historical & Archaeological Study*, SHANE 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1992); K. Lawson Younger, "Fall of Samaria in Light of Recent Research," *CBQ* 61 (1999): 61; K. Lawson Younger, "Recent Study on Sargon II, King of Assyria: Implications for Biblical Studies," in *Mesopotamia and the Bible*, ed. Mark W. Chavalas and K. Lawson Younger (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 288–329.

¹¹ Nadav Na'aman and Ran Zadok, "Sargon II's Deportations to Israel and Philistia (716-708 BC)," *JCS* 40 (1988): 36–46; Stephen Stohlman, "The Judean Exile after 701 BCE," in *Scripture in Context II: More Essays on the Comparative Method*, ed. William W. Hallo, James C. Moyer, and Leo G. Purdue (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 147–75; K. Lawson Younger, "The Repopulation of Samaria (2 Kings 17:24, 27–31) in Light of Recent Study," in *The Future of Biblical Archaeology*, ed. James K. Hoffmeier and Alan Millard (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 254–80.

¹² On a historical correlation between the ministry of Hosea and the Syro-Ephraimite War see Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 32–39.

unfaithfulness to the covenant with Yahweh established at Sinai. Isaiah of Jerusalem voices a similar warning to Ahaz in his appeal to “the razor beyond the river.” The Judean court prophet proclaims that alignment with Assyria will only lead to the invasion of Judah (Isaiah 8:5-8); however, hope for Judah still exists in a future messiah from the root of Jesse.¹³

(4.2.2) Rapid Urbanization

By the close of the Eighth Century BCE, the population of Judah had increased three or four times its former size. Territorial expansion swelled from 4 dunams in 11th century BCE, to 130-180 dunams in the Eighth Century, and eventually 500-600 dunams by the Seventh Century.¹⁴ Jerusalem grew to be the largest city in the region, covering an area of 60 hectares with an estimated population of 10-12,000 inhabitants. Israel Finkelstein and Neil

¹³ On messianism in Isaiah 7-9 see Daniel Schibler, “Messianism and Messianic Prophecy in Isaiah 1-12 and 28-33,” in *The Lord’s Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts*, ed. Philip Satterthwaite, Richard Hess, and Gordon Wenham (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 87–104.

¹⁴ Broshi, “Expansion of Jerusalem in the Reigns of Hezekiah and Manasseh.”

Silberman aver, “[T]he assumption that...in a matter of a few decades, the population of Judah doubled would be a modest—and probably underestimated—evaluation.”¹⁵

This population increase was not limited to Jerusalem proper but occurred throughout the surrounding region. The expansion of the number of settlements in the hill country south of Jerusalem from approximately 34 villages in early Iron II to 122 by the Late Eighth Century BCE. During the same period, in the Shephelah, the number increased from 21 settlements to 276. In addition to the upsurge in locations, the population density within each site also increased.¹⁶

There are opposing theories as to the origins of the emergent populace. Finkelstein and Silberman argue that the archeological record of the southernmost regions of Israel, and those surrounding Bethel, suggests significant abandonment. They suggest the vacation of the sites was to avoid deportation through Neo-Assyrian campaigns in the areas. There is also evidence of subsequent non-indigenous peoples relocated into the region.¹⁷ However, not all agree with the refugee argument. Baruch Halpern maintains that

¹⁵ Finkelstein and Silberman, “Temple and Dynasty,” 265.

¹⁶ Finkelstein and Silberman, “Temple and Dynasty,” 267.

¹⁷ Ibid, 277. During the Eighth Century BCE Samaria and areas to the south were an important oil producing region making this an economically advantageous region for Assyria to assert control. The settling

the population increase was a consequence of Hezekiah's military strategy, namely the strengthening of fortifications throughout the region.¹⁸ By directing resources to the strongholds, the rural populace would need to relocate as assets were directed to the outlying garrisons. Contra Halpern, Rob Young avers the archeological evidence implies a "decidedly non-military setting" for the expansion of Jerusalem. For instance, how the so-called "Broad Wall" is built over top of homes indicates domestic development predating the military expansion.¹⁹ Again Finkelstein and Silberman,

[I]n light of the extent of the population growth in this short period, an assumption that up to half of the Judahite population in the late eighth/early seventh century BCE was of North Israelite origin cannot be too far from reality. Likewise, in Jerusalem a substantial proportion of the population—though not necessarily the ruling groups—may well have been ex-Israelite.²⁰

The population increase coincides with an apparent emphasis on public works projects in Jerusalem and the adjacent districts. Under Hezekiah, a system of massive

of foreign deportees would dissuade any kinship ties between the inhabitants and refugee populations interested in revolt.

¹⁸ Baruch Halpern, "Jerusalem and the Lineages in the Seventh Century BCE: Kinship and the Rise of Individual Moral Liability," in *Law and Ideology in Monarchic Israel*, ed. Baruch Halpern and Deborah W. Hobson, JSOTSup 124 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 11–107.

¹⁹ Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, 46.

²⁰ Finkelstein and Silberman, "Temple and Dynasty," 277.

fortifications was constructed around the capitol. There is evidence of two separate bulwarks constructed along the eastern slope of the City of David and an additional seven-meter thick barrier near the Western Hill. The construction of the Siloam Tunnel, leading from the Gihon spring to a pool in the southern tip of the valley between the ridge of the City of David and the Western Hill, improved the city's water system. These capital improvements made water more accessible for the inhabitants of rapidly emerging population districts along the western edges of Jerusalem. Additionally, the presence of elaborate, rock-cut tombs around the city date to this period, suggesting greater social stratification and the emergence of an affluent elite class.²¹

(4.3) Ideological Differences within a Regionally Diverse Population

Based on the nature of the rapid urbanization, considering the likelihood of a strong non-Judean constituency, Hezekiah needed to bolster a socio-political consensus on key elements of corporate identity: foundational narratives, polity preference, and variation in the cult.

²¹ Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, "Temple and Dynasty," 265.

(4.3.1) Ideologies of Corporate Identity

Through a comparative analysis of Eighth Century prophetic traditions, both northern and southern, Kenton Sparks²² argues that different approaches to Israelite identity existed within Israel and Judah during the Neo-Assyrian period.²³ Sparks' vehicle for comparative analysis is the use of ethnicity/identity markers employed by representative prophets: Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah of Jerusalem. Based on his review of Hosea, Sparks argues that northern prophetic notions of Israelite identity were "ethnoreligious," in contrast with a national identity based on polity structure. For the northern contingencies, Israel was defined as a collective body sharing a common history with their national god Yahweh, namely through the Exodus event. This ideology was foundational for Hosea's xenophobic crusade against "foreign" influences in both the cult and crown.

Sparks argues that although the southern prophets like Isaiah and Amos knew of the ethnic sentiments of the north, there was little to no shared expression to Judah. Southern voices expressed interwoven religious, sociological, and polity-based modes of identity,

²² Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*.

²³ Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*, 94–212.

namely the divinely chosen Davidic monarchy.²⁴ Highlighting Eighth Century Isianic traditions, Sparks discerns a focus on two historical narratives: the rise of the Davidic monarchy and allusions to the schism between Judah and northern tribes.²⁵ In Judah, there was a known affiliation with the north based on the historical memory of a united Davidic kingdom and a common Yahwistic religious heritage. The capture of Jerusalem by David and the subsequent dynastic foundation had a similar function as the Exodus/wilderness traditions did for Hosea; however, with differing orientations. The latter points to origins outside of the land and were based on deliverance from oppression, while the former focused on the exploits of a charismatic leader.²⁶ However, both foundational narratives share in an ideal of a past “golden age” of divine blessing and prosperity (wilderness period of Israel’s youth / the formation of a great kingdom).²⁷

²⁴ Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*, 216.

²⁵ Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*, 211. Sparks lists passages where Isaiah alluded to the Davidic traditions: 1:26, 9:6; 28:21 and 29:1, with only 9:6 being of questionable provenance. See 211 n. 237.

²⁶ One could argue that Moses also represented a charismatic leader, although not in the sense of establishment of a royal dynasty.

²⁷ Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*, 211.

(4.3.2) Ideologies of Polity Structures

In his book *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible*, Daniel Fleming argues that the terms “Israel” and “Judah” are not fixed entities but belong to “complex geography of shifting identities.”²⁸ Fleming prefers discussing Israel and Judah as social groups opposed to biblical claims of kinship. He emphasizes variation in polity in opposition to discussions of ethnicity. Fleming argues that in its origins, (pan)Israel was likely a tribal collective who waged war and managed peace under charismatic leadership.²⁹ However, the development of what became the political entities of Judah and (Northern) Israel followed different tracks.³⁰

Fleming lists numerable discernable traits between the two states.³¹ In Judah, there was an exceptional relationship between Yahweh and the Davidic monarchy. Based on this

²⁸ Daniel Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible: History, Politics, and the Reinscribing of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 17. Attempting to discern a historical identity for (Northern) Israel, Fleming recognizes that the received biblical text is essentially a Judean composition and any tradition of (northern) Israelite history must operate from this position.

²⁹ Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible*, 17.

³⁰ Fleming states, “Contrasts between Israel and Judah will then involve at least two major categories. The monarchy itself is central and everything touching kings and kingship, including the kingship of Yahweh, will not look the same through Israelite and Judahite lenses. Then, with the preeminent temple of Yahweh located at Jerusalem, right beside the royal palace, religion and its authorities are bound to be affected by the political frameworks in which they are imbedded.” Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible*, 303.

³¹ Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible*, 25.

unique ideology, royal succession had to be maintained in the face of any challenge. He writes, “Davidic right to rule was somehow intrinsic to the very existence of the realm, and any political novelty had to be accommodated to this starting point.” Davidic rule did suffer some tests, but ultimately the dynastic line was not successfully challenged.³² The political base always succeeded in maintaining hegemony. Fleming states, “The persistence of David’s house in Judah’s monarchy must not be equated with political stability. Rather, it expresses a particular configuration of power, based on royal ideology.”³³

Likewise, any form of collaborative rule in Judah was contained within Jerusalem proper. The constituent parts of Judah have no apparent social or political autonomy; there

³² Although Jeroboam represented a weakness following Solomon’s death, he did not represent a threat to the Davidic throne in Jerusalem. Queen Athaliah, granddaughter of Omri, assumed power after the death of her son Ahaziah. She attempted to usurp the Davidic throne through infanticide (2 Kgs 11). The priests hid Joash until a time he was old enough to represent throne. Amaziah was driven from Jerusalem to Lachish where he was assassinated (2 Kgs 14:17-22); however, Davidic rule was maintained in his son Uzziah. Upon the death of Manasseh, Amon was weak and killed (2 Kgs 19ff), but Judah made sure a Davidide was established on the throne in Josiah. After the death of Josiah foreign nations saw the importance of the house of David and maintained the line (although at times a stretch) until the siege of Jerusalem in 587/586 afterwards Nebuchadnezzar established Gedaliah as governor. Although, hope existed in the form of Jehoiachin residing in Babylon (2 Kgs 25: 27:30).

³³ Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah’s Bible*, 43–44.

are no references to “tribes” of Judah.³⁴ Any reference to collective leadership, i.e., a large assembly of “elders” such as the *’am ha’ares*,³⁵ is always associated with Jerusalem and never a different region or kinship body. Furthermore, collective terminology such as this only appears in the later monarchy when urbanization necessitated political shifts.³⁶

Unlike Judah, in Israel, the monarchy lacked an ideology of unconditional sanction.³⁷

Ruling dynasties could be deposed, often by military force during periods of weak succession. Fleming argues that this trend testifies to the right of rule by multiple constituents in Israel. Authority was not conceived as in the hands of a single tribal group but represents what he calls “collaborative politics.”³⁸ Power was given to the group who

³⁴ Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah’s Bible*, 25. In Jer 17:26 there is a list of possible Judean regional entities: e.g., the cities of Judah, the places around Jerusalem, the land of Benjamin, the Shephelah, the hill country, and the Negeb.

³⁵ The enigmatic *am h’eret* often appear in the HB/OT during a disputed dynastic succession, always in support of maintaining the Davidic line. See 2 Kgs 11:18 and 2 Kgs 21:24.

³⁶ Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah’s Bible*, 46–47. Fleming notes how also at this time the name “Judah” emerge as a political entity in non-biblical sources suggesting that the shift toward aspects of collective rule coincided with this new designation; however, Jerusalem still is seen as the only legitimate political/sacred center.

³⁷ For list of attributes of the Israelite polity system see, Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah’s Bible*, 26–27.

³⁸ Fleming prefers the terminology “collaborative politics” opposed to “decentralized government” as the latter can bear negative implications. He states: “Where ‘collective’ implies a process and results that serve

could curry the most favor among the whole; who could provide the greatest “surplus of meaning.”

Fleming traces this system of collaborative politics to the earliest biblical traditions (e.g., Judges 5), where Israel, presented as a tribal confederation, came together in times of war and threats of peace. Once established, the monarchy, although understood as a divinely sanctioned institution, maintained the authority to rule through military allegiance. The king was tasked with maintaining the unique markers of Israelite corporate identity. Failure to uphold these duties had implications for all national constituencies. The overthrow of an “anointed” sovereign is always attributed to unfaithfulness to Yahweh, namely through the introduction of “foreign” elements into cultic institutions.

(4.3.3) Ideologies of the Cult

Judean court theology also shaped a distinct Yahweh cult in Jerusalem.³⁹ The establishment of David’s reign instituted an intractable bond to the land grant of Zion, the mountain of

some unity, “collaboration” identifies the only way to achieve results when neither individual authority nor unifying imperative of tradition can be assumed.” Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah’s Bible*, 186.

³⁹ Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, Vol 1, 128–32.

Yahweh. The internment of the Ark of the Covenant, the ancient symbol of Yahweh's presence with Israel, further codified this guarantee. David's heir Solomon built the dwelling place of Yahweh, and henceforth, Davidic kings were the patrons and protectors of the sacred space. On the substantial transformation Davidic land grant ideology had on Israelite religion, Rainer Albertz writes, "Thus it was no longer the liberation of Israel from Egypt but the event that Yahweh had made his abode on Zion, i.e., specifically the bringing of the ark into the Jebusite Solomonic temple, the decisive act of divine salvation, that founded and supported the Israelite state."⁴⁰

Albertz suggests the origins of Judahite cultic ideology stem from a possible blending of traditional (Sinai) Yahwism and remnants of ancient Jebusite worship practice. For example, David established a dual priesthood: Abiathar, an early supporter of David, representing vestiges of the traditional Shilonite cult, and Zadok, a previously unknown figure with presumable ties to the old Jebusite power base. Upon David's death, Solomon consolidated the urban power base, relegating the traditional priesthood to the countryside.⁴¹ Albertz proposes that unconditional divine sanction of the Davidic line

⁴⁰ Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, Vol 1, 136.

⁴¹ Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, Vol 1, 129. The succession of Solomon suggests a power shift in favor of a Jebusite contingency still rooted in Jerusalem. Bathsheba, aligning with the Zadok faction, had possible

shifted Yahweh from a symbol of liberation to the guarantor of state power, “Yahweh religion succumbed to the domination of political power and became an ideology in the strict sense of the word.”⁴²

An ideology of divine mandate was at the heart of the social critiques of the Eighth Century prophets. Prophetic voices such as Hosea call out such Yahwism as a potential distortion of Israelite corporate identity.⁴³ They cautioned that unchecked royal investiture could promote syncretism. The monarch should not dictate cultic activity and was summarily judged when he did so. In the wake of waves of northern refugees, Hezekiah is faced with the return of a “traditional” priesthood bearing customs that subsume monarchical authority to Yahweh instead of equating the two.⁴⁴

ties to the Jerusalem/Jebusite elite. Joab supports Adonijah who represents David’s kinship ties in Hebron (2 Sam 3:4). The enigmatic court prophet Nathan appears only after David is established in Jerusalem (2 Sam 7:1-2). Therefore, the strong association between the Davidic convent and Nathan (2 Sam 7) could suggest an ideology with origins in the Jerusalem court and consequently foreign to the northern prophetic tradition. However, see discussion on Hosea and Davidic hope below.

⁴² Albertz argues “The reason why the official Yahweh religion of the Jerusalem temple shows hardly any awareness of the liberation traditions of the early period is that at the latest from the time of Solomon onwards, former non-Israelites gave it its tone, as priests and theologians,” Albertz, *Israelite Religion, Vol 1*, 129.

⁴³ See Hos 13:9-11.

⁴⁴ The disenfranchisement of the traditional Yahwistic priesthood (Abiathar) resurfaces in the ministry of Hosea, who had possible ties to Levitical groups associated with the old Shilonite traditions. This ideology is later asserted by Jeremiah, who was born into the priestly families of Anathoth (Jer 1:1) the

Whereas in Judah, the cult and crown were intricately tied, in Israel, worship was far less centralized. Administrative centers often relocated with the rise and fall of dynastic houses.⁴⁵ After the great schism under Rehoboam, Jeroboam ben Nebat established his rule at Shechem, a location of socio-religious significance associated with the historic rite of covenant renewal (Josh 24). However, he did not bind worship with the royal residence but endowed (or established) multiple regional sanctuaries: i.e., Shechem, Penuel, Bethel, and Dan (1 Kgs 12:25; Gen 33: 18,20; 32:25-32).

State sponsorship of the cult in the north could have originated as an expression of orthodox Yahwistic piety, celebrating the Israelite god of liberation (e.g., Bethel, Dan); however, (at least in the voices of *D*) worship at the regional centers devolved over time. There is no biblical reference of a royal cult at Tirzah,⁴⁶ but under the house of Omri, the new administrative center of Samaria had infamous cultic activity. Ahab's construction of a temple to Baal in Samaria, in honor of Jezebel, his wife, brought foreign (e.g., Sidonian)

location of Abiathar's exile (2 Kgs 2:26). Jeremiah castigates both an ideology of unconditional Davidic covenant and the inviolability of Zion (Jer 7, 36).

⁴⁵ Fleming argues, "Overall, this geographical pattern suggests a distribution of power and resistance to centralized authority -- not political instability," Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible*, 298.

⁴⁶ Although it is Baasha who established Tizrah as the Israelite capital (1 Kgs 15:21, 33) it appears that Jeroboam had a prior residence there (1 Kgs 14:17).

cult influences into the forefront of the Israelite religion becoming a beacon of state-sponsored syncretism criticized by a phalanx of prophets from Elijah and Elisha in the Ninth Century down to Hosea (Hos 8:5). The militant xenophobic piety of Jehu “cleansed” Yahweh religion of the stain of Ahab, in both north and south,⁴⁷ but wavered after a pledge of fealty to Shalmaneser II.⁴⁸

(4.4) The Hoseanic Voice and Davidic Utopia

Recalling Ricoeur’s dissatisfaction with a bifurcation of imagination from reality, for an ideology to successfully produce a “surplus of meaning,” it must be based on the constitutive understanding of corporate identity. Hezekiah’s ideology of a unified pan-Israelite kingdom under the house of David was not a wholesale Judaic fiction. Although the battle cry of Jeroboam’s rebellion was, “What portion do we have in David?” (1 Kgs

⁴⁷ Jehu’s bloody coup against the Omride dynasty: 2 Kgs 9-10. The purge of the house of Omri extended into Judah with the plot against Queen Athaliah in 2 Kgs 11.

⁴⁸ For discussion on the Black Obelisk see *COS* 2.113F: 269-270.

12:16)⁴⁹, vestiges of northern support run throughout the early David traditions.⁵⁰

Additionally, Hosea's image of a renewed utopia possesses a re-unification component.

Although the northern prophet appears overly critical of the institution of monarchy, there is evidence of a utopian hope built upon Davidic rule.

With 15 direct references, the Book of Hosea contains more mentions to Judah than contemporary southern prophets.⁵¹ Attributing these comments to an "authentically northern" voice is fraught with complication, most scholars recognize a certain level of Judean editing.⁵² However, not all are quick to assume a comprehensive post-Hezekian redaction. For example, Andrew Dearman is persuaded that "[L]ittle or nothing in the book

⁴⁹ All biblical quotation in English are taken from the English Standard Version unless otherwise stated.

⁵⁰ Examples include: The anointing by Samuel (1 Sam 16), the song of David's victories (1 Sam 18:6-7), the support of the old Shilonite priesthood (e.g. Abiathar), and the anointing of David at Hebron by "all Israel" (2 Sam 5).

⁵¹ Hosea contains 15 direct references to Judah by name (1:1, 7; 2:2; 4:15; 5:5, 10, 12, 13, 14; 6:4, 11; 8:14; 10:11; 12:1,3) and one to the Davidic King (3:5). Grace Emmerson classifies the statements into the following categories: judgmental sayings (5:5, 10, 12, 13, 14; 6:4; 8:14; 12:3); salvation sayings (1:7; 2:1-3; 3:5); warning about the nation's present (4:15); reminder of Yahweh's purpose in the past (10:11); and two remaining that are hard to classify (6:11; 12:1). By comparison, Amos, a Judean by birth only mentions Judah 4x (1:1; 2:4, 5; 7:12). See Emmerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*.

⁵² In her intricate critical study, Gale Yee suggests a four stage redaction process: H= historical Hosea; C= a collector dated to the time of Hezekiah's reforms; and R1, R2 which she aligns ideologically with Dtr1 and Dtr2 in the Cross school. Yee, *Composition and Tradition in the Book of Hosea*.

itself requires a date later than the end of the Eighth Century B.C.”⁵³ A. A. Macintosh highlights the evidence of a northern dialect in Hosea, arguing the book was mostly complete by the fall of Samaria, undergoing minimal editing to conform to Judean style and vocabulary.⁵⁴

Grace Emmerson argues that deeming all references to Judah and David in the Book of Hosea as an editorial gloss is too reductionist. In her book, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, Emmerson proposes a set of standards for evaluating Hosianic references to Judah. She bases her criteria on three questions: 1) Is the presumed historical situation within the passage contextually appropriate to the life of a historic Hosea (e.g., the reign of Jeroboam II and subsequent political usurpations, the events of the Syro-Ephraimite War)? 2) Are there apparent dissimilarities in linguistic and stylistic

⁵³ Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, 6. Dearman allows for possible minor elements but no language or historical reference points to a late date. He notes the call for a return is only from Egypt and Assyrian which fits the Eighth Century and the usage of the term for “return” is **יָשָׁב** and not **שׁוּב** which has associations of the return from exilic and postexilic citations.

⁵⁴ A. A. Macintosh, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Hosea*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), lv.

components in the mention of Judah/David? 3) Does the text evidence inconsistencies within the field of theological reflection?⁵⁵

Applying these criteria to the salvation sayings in Hosea, Emmerson discerns evidence of two distinct theologies of restoration. The first, which she deems original to the prophet, emphasizes unmerited salvation initiated by Yahweh. Even though Israel is called “not my people,” Yahweh will entice her back, embracing her children as his own. The second theology, Judean in origin, argues that repentance is a prerequisite to salvation.⁵⁶ Emmerson contends that this latter voice evidences theological reflection over the fall of Samaria and advises cultic reform for the deliverance of Jerusalem.

Turning her focus to Hoseanic judgment sayings, Emmerson also denotes two distinct attitudes toward Judah.⁵⁷ In concert with a theology of repentance, Judean editors castigate a polluted cult and general ethical failures within society. However, references to

⁵⁵ Emmerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, 6–8.

⁵⁶ Emmerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, 54.

⁵⁷ Emmerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, 77. Emmerson states, “...Hosea’s attitude towards Judah cannot be described as essentially negative, nor his attitude towards his own nation as nationalistic; nor are the Judaeans redactors biased in favor of Judah. Rather it is from the latter that far-reaching criticism comes as they strive to preserve the authentic faith in the midst of increasing apathy and corrupt practice.”

Judah deemed authentically Hoseanic castigate hostility between north and south, specifically the events of the Syro-Ephraimite war.⁵⁸ Emerson argues that Hosea detests disunity as the anathema of a shared covenantal commitment to one god. Judah had a positive role in Hosea's thought as "[A] people closely allied to his own, whose religious and political institutions were exempt, as far as Hosea was concerned, from the strictures which he addressed to his people."⁵⁹ Grieving the deterioration and break with authentic Yahwism in the North, Hosea envisioned hope for the continuity of traditional Yahwism in the southern kingdom. Emerson concludes, "Hosea sees a new saving action by which Israel herself will be transformed. It may be that his hopes were centered on Judah in the interim as the preserver of the continuity of the people of God, a viewpoint which history itself validated."⁶⁰

(4.4.1) Hosea 2:1-2[1:10-11]

⁵⁸ H. W. Wolff argues that evidence for reunification in Hosea should be dated before the collapse of Israel. Within the prophet's lifetime, Jerusalem and Samaria were hostile to each other, e.g., during the Syro-Ephraimite crisis (734 BC; c.f. Hos 5:8ff). Wolff states, "As Hosea considered both Jerusalem and Samaria under the wrath of Yahweh (5:14) he also saw the end of their enmity and even their political separation in the time of future salvation." Wolff, *Hosea*, 27.

⁵⁹ Emerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, 94.

⁶⁰ Emerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, 94–95.

Two significant texts highlight where reunification is a central element of Hosea's utopian restoration of Israel. The first is associated with the renewed "Jezreel" (Hos 2:1-2 [1:10-11 Eng]). In Hosea's vision of future redemption, Israel and Judah will be "gathered together." The language in 2:1(1:10), "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea shall not be numbered," echoes the promise to the patriarchs (Gen 22:17; 32:13).⁶¹ In 2:2(1:11), the reunification of polity is envisioned: "And the children of Israel and the children of Judah shall be gathered together (lit. gather themselves together) and appoint for themselves one head."⁶² Although Hosea's views on the institution of the monarchy are ambiguous, his future utopia appears to have a centralized monarchy.⁶³

Dating 2:1-2[1:10-11] is problematic. H. W. Wolff argues that there is enough similarity in context and syntax to assume its originality to the prophet, although he

⁶¹ See also Is 10:22, 1 Kgs 4:20; 5:9 as possible contemporaneous examples of the idiom.

⁶² On the phrase "They shall appoint...a common head" Wolff suggests that the use of the word *rosh* harkens back to the pre-monarchial period. "[T]his is not evidence for messianism in Hosea...The eschatological election of one head lends stability to the eschatological unification; more than this is not said here..." Wolff, *Hosea*, 27.

⁶³ Peter Machinist, "Hosea and the Ambiguity of Kingship in Ancient Israel," in *Constituting the Community: Studies on the Polity of Ancient Israel in Honor of S. Dean McBride Jr* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 153-81.

acknowledges an editorial hand on the entire pericope.⁶⁴ Anderson and Freedman, unconvinced with Wolff's redactional theories, affirm the logical coherence of the location of 2:1-2.⁶⁵ Additionally, Emmerson sees the reference to "The day of Jezreel" as an expression toward unification. She points out how the events of Jehu's coup were not solely on the north, but also Judah. Emmerson argues, "There, the two separate kingdoms were associated in circumstances of violence and crime. In 2:2, a day of triumph is envisaged when they will be associated in a new future as the people of God."⁶⁶

(4.4.2) Hosea 3:5

The image of reunification is further accentuated in Hos 3:5 with the prominence of "David, their king."⁶⁷ Like 2:1-2, the reference to David in 3:5 is often assumed as an exilic gloss, but

⁶⁴ Wolff, *Hosea*, 26. Wolff suggests that these verses originally concluded the sayings of 2:4-25, connecting Jezreel and the reversal of names in 2:23-25, but was moved by the collector of Hosea's saying responsible for editing Chapter 1. In their present location, they serve as an antithesis to the negative names given to Hosea's children.

⁶⁵ Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 199-213.

⁶⁶ Emmerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, 101.

⁶⁷ Dearman suggest that with Hezekiah as the fourth and final name in the superscription, he might be the model for the reference in 3:5. Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, 5. With reference to the phrase "David their king" in 3:5 Dearman suggests the possibility of "a precise setting in the reign of Hezekiah, who sought to recapture the glory years of the united monarchy." Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, 140.

this designation is unnecessary.⁶⁸ Peter Machinist states, “[T]he affirmation of a Davidic king (3:5) could be Hosea’s on the ground that he sees it as the logical replacement for the now hopelessly bankrupt Northern tradition of kings.”⁶⁹ William Schniedewind concurs that an ideology of reunification would be logical in Hosea as it was the Judean court under Hezekiah, who were the likely editors of the tradition. Schniedewind writes, “Northern prophetic texts would have had to be compiled in Hezekiah’s royal court – that is if they were to be preserved at all. Naturally, they were preserved only if they served the interests of the royal library.”⁷⁰

Many arguments against Israelite origin suggest a lack of messianic thought in Hosea’s eschatology.⁷¹ On the contrary, Anderson and Freedman argue that messianism is not inconsistent with the prophet’s views. They acknowledge, “We hardly know enough of Hosea’s political thinking to rule out the restoration of the Davidic kingdom as an

⁶⁸ Emerson, *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, 113.

⁶⁹ Machinist, “Hosea and the Ambiguity of Kingship in Ancient Israel,” 180.

⁷⁰ Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 89.

⁷¹ Mays states, “Hosea’s concentration on the conditions of the wilderness makes an aspiration of the Judahistic messianism unlikely in his eschatology.” Mays, *Hosea*, 60.

eschatological expectation.”⁷² Furthermore, the notion of a Davidic messiah is not out of place in the Eighth Century. The well-known prophecies of Isaiah 7-11 point to hope in the generation after Ahaz, a potential reference to Hezekiah⁷³

(4.5) The Hezekian Utopia

A key device in the propagation of Hezekiah’s *grand bargain* was the emergence of a literary tradition. The reign of Hezekiah is often proposed as a period of noteworthy literary development as political and social change (i.e., urbanization) led to the emergence of a greater scribal culture in Jerusalem. The proposed importation of non-Judean communities also prompted an interest in the preservation of regional/tribal traditions.⁷⁴ Finkelstein and Silberman locate a Davidic *apologia* comprised of the so-called History of David’s Rise (HDR) and the Succession History (SH)⁷⁵ whereas Brian Peckham argues for

⁷² Anderson and Freedman, *Hosea*, 307. Many also point to the comparative language of Jer 30:9 as evidence to a later addition (see Wolff, *Hosea*, 63). However, with the known influence of Hosea on Jeremiah maybe the association should be read as a forward echo instead of later addition to Hosea. Furthermore, the image of breaking the yoke is also found in Isaiah 10:27, contemporary to Hosea, in reference to Assyrian domination.

⁷³ See Schibler, “Isaiah 1-12 and 28-33.”

⁷⁴ Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book*.

⁷⁵ Finkelstein and Silberman, “Temple and Dynasty,” 275ff.

the emergence of a great historical work spanning from Genesis to the Books of Kings (Enneuteuch).⁷⁶ Numerous scholars advocate for the collection of major prophetic works to this period, e.g. Isaiah, Micah, Amos, and Hosea.⁷⁷ The mention of “The Men of Hezekiah” in Proverbs 25:1 suggests interest in the collection of wisdom traditions.⁷⁸ Others proposed literature include legal material such as the Covenant Code⁷⁹ or even priestly material such

⁷⁶ Brian Peckham, *The Composition of the Deuteronomistic History*, HSM 35 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1985); see also *History and Prophecy: The Development of Late Judean Literary Tradition* (New York: Doubleday, 1993). Peckham argues for a double Dtr version of Israel’s history, but within the discussion of a larger Enneuteuch. His proposed Dtr¹, inspired by an earlier work (J), included some legal and annalistic literature significant to the Judean monarchy. There was a subsequent P history that essentially “nationalized” Israelite traditions creating a sense of exclusivity. The so-called E source detailed regional differences between the north and Judah. Dtr² edited all this material in to a “universal history” holding the differing viewpoints in tension with each other.

⁷⁷ Freedman, “Headings in the Books of Eighth-Century Prophets,” 22; Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 84.

⁷⁸ Referencing the “Men of Hezekiah” in Prov 25:1, Schniedewind writes, “The statement that Hezekiah’s men collected these proverbs certainly is not laden with the same ideological implications associated with the proverbs’ attribution with Solomon. Their prestige was derived from their Solomonic attribution, not from Hezekiah’s collecting them.” Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 75. (For examination on Prov 25:1 see discussion on the attribute of Wisdom below.)

⁷⁹ Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into Biblical Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1985).

as the Holiness Code.⁸⁰ Any ideological support for a *grand bargain* would need to balance both an apologia for the Davidic monarchy and the cultic concerns of the “Hosea group.”

(4.5.1) A Hezekian History as Utopian Projection

A chorus of scholars posits a new synchronistic pan-Israelite history with the ideological intention of elevating Hezekiah as a great pious king in the vein of his progenitors, e.g. David and Solomon. The vision of a utopian golden age is reimagined through the recollection of a united monarchy. Annalistic source material from Israel and Judah was synchronized to support the constancy and legitimacy of the Davidic monarchy, whereas dynastic vacillations in the north, and the subsequent fall of Samaria, are blamed on state-sponsored apostasy. Hezekiah embodies royal cultic piety, the drumbeat of judgment against the “high places” culminating in his reforms. His mono-Yahwistic ideology is rewarded by the survival of Jerusalem in the face of Assyrian onslaught, providing further legitimization of Judah as the rightful heir of the covenantal blessings of Yahweh.

⁸⁰ Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

Theories for a Hezekian History (HH) align with arguments delineating the boundaries of an ideological focus of a proposed Deuteronomistic History (DtrH). In his watershed thesis, Martin Noth⁸¹ imaged a literary complex (Deuteronomy-2Kings), composed by an editor/author writing in the Exile. This so-called Deuteronomist (Dtr) compiled and edited an extensive collection of source material with a singular theological focus, e.g. judgment.

An early critic, Gerhard Von Rad⁸² suggested that Noth's emphasis eclipsed the theme of hope and grace manifested in the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and the Davidic monarchy. Von Rad's critique influenced Frank Moore Cross, and subsequent students, to acknowledge ideological diversity/competition within a proposed DtrH.⁸³

⁸¹ Martin Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, vol. 2 of *Schriften Der Königsberger Gelehrten Gesellschaft. Geisteswissenschaftliche Klasse* 18 (Halle M. Niemeyer, 1943). For general literature review on a Deuteronomistic History see Baruch Halpern and André Lemaire, "The Composition of Kings," in *The Books of Kings: Sources, Composition, Historiography, and Reception*, ed. Baruch Halpern and André Lemaire, vol. 129 of *VTSup* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 123–54; Gary Knoppers, "Theories of the Redaction(s) of Kings," in *The Books of Kings: Sources, Composition, Historiography, and Reception*, ed. Baruch Halpern and André Lemaire, vol. 129 of *VTSup* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 69–88; Benjamin D. Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, FAT2 63 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

⁸² Von Rad, *Studies in Deuteronomy*; Gerhard Von Rad, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966).

⁸³ Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973). Cross' students have become collectively referred to as the "Harvard" or "Double redaction" school. See below for representative voices.

Cross saw a dichotomy between the idea of a conditional/unconditional covenant with the House of David. He suggested that the DtrH went through a first edition (Dtr¹) built upon the tension of judgment and grace. This edition knew nothing of the Exile and focused on the judgment of Northern Israel brought on by the “sins of Jeroboam,” lending ideological support for the Josianic reforms. The hope of Israel was in the Judean monarchy and the faithfulness of David, its progenitor. A subsequent second edition (Dtr²), written from the perspective of deportation, focused on the inevitability of the Exile, unmasking any ideology of Zion’s inviolability as distortion. Variation has emerged within the so-called double redaction theory. Friedman,⁸⁴ Nelson,⁸⁵ McKenzie,⁸⁶ and Knoppers,⁸⁷ all modify Cross’ original thesis but, keep the general dual-layer dating schema.

⁸⁴ R. E. Friedman, *The Exile and Biblical Narrative: The Formation of the Deuteronomistic and Priestly Codes*, HSM 22 (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1981).

⁸⁵ R. A. Nelson, *The Double Redaction of The Deuteronomistic History*, JSOTSup 18 (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1981).

⁸⁶ Steven L. McKenzie, *The Trouble with Kings: The Composition of the Books of Kings in the Deuteronomistic History*, VTSup 42 (Leiden: Brill, 1991).

⁸⁷ Gary Knoppers, *Two Nations Under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies, Vol 1, The Reign of Solomon and the Rise of Jeroboam*, HSM 52 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993); Gary Knoppers, *Two Nations Under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies, Vol 2, The Reign of Jeroboam, the Fall of Israel and the Reign of Josiah.*, 2 vols., HSM 53 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994); Gary Knoppers, “Is There a Future for the Deuteronomistic History,” in *The Future of the Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Thomas Römer, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 147 (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 119–34.

Adherents to the so-called Gottingen School,⁸⁸ begin the discussion of a DtrH with Noth's original thesis of a unified exilic voice. These scholars postulate a series of subsequent editors extending deep into the post-exilic period. Various sigla have been developed to denote the ideology behind each redaction. nomistic (DtrN) and prophetic (DtrP) post-exilic ideologies. A weakness of this approach, as pointed out by Baruch Halpern and André Lemaire, is a failure to explain why the various redactors made only minor isolated comments leaving large sections untouched, creating a contradictory field of reference. Furthermore, the methodology and sociological presuppositions of the proposed editors do not conform well to post-exilic Israel.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ The Gottingen School is represented by the work of Rudolf Smend and his students. See Rudolf Smend, "Das Gesetz Und Die Völker: Ein Beitrag Zur Deuteronomischen Redaktions-Geschichte," in *Probleme Biblischer Theologie: Festschrift G. von Rad*, ed. Hans W. Wolff (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1971). [= "The Law and the Nations: A Contribution to Deuteronomistic Tradition History," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*, eds. Gary N. Knoppers and J. Gordon McConville, SBTS 8 (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 95–110.] Also Walter O. Dietrich, *Prophetie Und Geschichte*, FRLANT 108 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972); Timo Veijola, *Die Ewige Dynastie: David Und Die Entstehung Seiner Dynastie Nach Der Deuteronomistischen Darstellung*, Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae 193 (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakademia, 1975); Timo Veijola, *Das Königtum in Der Beurteilung Der Deuteronomistischen Historiographie. Eine Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae 198 (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakademia, 1977).

⁸⁹ Halpern and Lemaire, "The Composition of Kings," 128.

Several scholars have suggested that a pre-Josianic edition is discernable within a proposed DtrH. For example, Anthony Campbell⁹⁰ posits a Ninth Century “prophetic record,” which stretches back to the origins of the monarchy and focuses on prophetic activity up to the Nimshide dynasty. This document experienced a proposed “northern expansion” focused on the sins of Jeroboam and a later “southern” expansion that equated the sins of Jeroboam to generic worship at the “high places” (*bamah*). The focus of this document was to show how the removal of vestiges of Canaanite religion under Hezekiah brought about Jerusalem’s reprieve, whereas the failure to do so was Samaria’s downfall. O’Brien⁹¹ expands on Campbell’s proposition of a “prophetic history” integrating it into the greater redactional makeup of the DtrH. A theorized “southern document” incorporated into the history, not only focused on the pagan cult but represented a comprehensive account from the period of the division of a united Israel to a singular Judean state surviving the events of 701.

⁹⁰ Anthony F. Campbell, *Of Prophets and Kings: A Late Ninth-Century Document (1 Samuel 1-2 Kings 10)*, CBQMS 17 (Washington: Catholic Biblical Association, 1986).

⁹¹ Mark A. O’Brien, *The Deuteronomistic History Hypothesis: A Reassessment*, OBO 92 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989).

André Lemaire proposes that a history of Israelite monarchy emerged through a series of regularly updated blocks often originating within periods of reform. This “rolling corpus” functioned as a training instrument or reference book for scribes based in the Judean scribal royal court. Lemaire argues that what he calls a “proto-deuteronomistic” edition emerged during Hezekiah’s reign covering the history of north and south up to the fall of Samaria, concluding with contemporaneous cultic reforms.⁹²

A concentration on the skeletal structure 1-2 Kings became the foundation for a so-called “triple redaction” theory for a DtrH. Alfred Jepsen⁹³ was the first to look at formal elements within Kings as a moniker for understanding the text’s literary history. Jepsen sought to locate original annalistic source material behind by focusing on attempts within the text to synchronize the reigns of Israel and Judah.

⁹² André Lemaire, “Vers l’histoire de La Rédaction Des Livres Des Rois,” *ZAW* 98 (1986): 221–36. [= “Toward a Redactional History of the Book of Kings,” in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*, ed. Gary N. Knoppers and J. Gordon McConville, SBTs 8 (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 446–61.

⁹³ Alfred Jepsen, *Die Quellen Des Königsbuches* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1953).

Helga Weippert,⁹⁴ a pioneer of the triple-redaction-theory, examined variations in the so-called regnal formula⁹⁵ discerning evidence of redactional layers within Kings. Looking specifically at the evaluative component (a comparison of one king to an ancestor(s)), Weippert proposed a double pre-exilic redaction (RI, RII) followed by a final exilic edition (RIII).⁹⁶ RI comprised a block extending from Jehoshaphat of Judah and Jehoram of Israel down to Ahaz and Pekah. In each instance, a king is compared to their “father.” She argues that this editor (RI) introduced the theme of judgment on foreign worship practices through the recurrent concern that “the high places did not depart.” Weippert identified RI as a northern Israelite who escaped to Judah and authored their work from an ideology of cult reform, akin to northern prophets like Hosea.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Helga Weippert, “Das Deuteronomistische Geschichtswerk: Sein Ziel Und Ende in Der Neueren Forschung,” *Theol. Rundsch.* 50.3 (1985): 213–49; Helga Weippert, “Die ‘Deuteronomistischen’ Beurteilungen Der Könige von Israel Und Juda Und Das Problem Der Redaktion Der Königsbücher,” *Biblica* 53 (1972): 301–39.

⁹⁵ The regnal formulas are often broken into two framing section. The introductory frame includes a succession notice (name, age, length of rein, location), synchronism between north and south, the mention of the queen mother (unique to Judah) and a judgment formula (general, specific). The concluding frame includes a source citation, supplementary notice, death-burial notice, and succession to the heir.

⁹⁶ For a recent discussion on the impact of Weippert’s contributions see Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, 19–20.

⁹⁷ Weippert labeled RI as Pre-Deuteronomistic arguing that Deuteronomy emerged during the Josianic reforms; however, the editor approximated language and themes through an emphasis on centralization. Consequently, RI was both Pre-Deuteronomic in time and Proto-Deuteronomistic in a literary sense. Thomas

Weippert's subsequent editions generally follow Cross et al. Her RII, authored during Josiah's reign, and enveloped RI by extending the regnal frame back to 1 Kgs 14:21 and forward to 2 Kgs 22:40, including 2 Kgs 16:2b-17:7, concluding at 2 Kgs 23:20. The evaluation changed from an appraisal in light of the previous generation to a direct comparison with David. The edition was in support of Josiah's campaign against foreign influence in the cult. There is less concern with centralization as there is a hope of religious-political upsurge in Judah. RIII, harshly negative in tone, tacked on the concluding judgment of 2 Kgs 23:31-25:30, assessing the final four Judean kings to collective predecessors named only as fathers/father. The pointed condemnation of Jehoahaz in 2 Kgs 23:32 effectively eclipses all positive adulation for either Josiah or Hezekiah. Because of the stark level of negativity, Weippert dates RIII early after the fall of Jerusalem, while the events are still fresh in people's minds. Additional arguments for a Hezekian

criticizes Weippert for a lack of clarification in these distinctions. Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, 20.

history along the line established by Weippert can be found in Barrick⁹⁸, Rösel⁹⁹, and Eynikel.¹⁰⁰

Ian Provan¹⁰¹ also investigated regnal evaluations with interest on the judgment formula of Judean monarchs. Provan deciphers two varied assessments regarding the *bamoth* and the Davidic monarchy in general. Concerning cultic reforms, a first edition focuses on the issue of centralization, whereas a second highlights idolatry in general with no real concern for a centralized cult. Regarding the monarchy, the first edition exalts David as the standard by which all Judean kings are judged; however, the second edition places great emphasis on the law of Moses, which in some ways subsumes the former.

⁹⁸ W. Boyd Barrick, "On the 'Removal of the "High-Places"' in 1 - 2 Kings," *Biblica* 55.2 (1974): 257–59. Barrick modifies Weippert's RI to include regnal formula for both Asa and Hezekiah.

⁹⁹ Hartmut N. Rösel, *Von Josua Bis Jojachin: Untersuchungen Zu Den Deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbüchern Des Alten Testaments*, VTSup 75 (Leiden: Brill, 1999). Rösel also argues for a pre-exilic Deuteronomistic history from Solomon to Hezekiah.

¹⁰⁰ Erik Eynikel, *The Reform of King Josiah and the Composition of the Deuteronomistic History*, OBS 33 (Leiden: Brill, 1996). Eynikel favors a block model dating RI sometime after Hezekiah and RII (=Dtr1) sometime after Josiah. These two editions did not include information outside of Kings. An exilic redactor, RIII(=Dtr2) brought this material together with other "blocks" from the so-called former prophets. Only in this the third stage was any material prior to Solomon incorporated into the whole.

¹⁰¹ Ian Provan, *Hezekiah and the Books of Kings: A Contribution to the Debate about the Composition of the Deuteronomistic History*, BZAW 172 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988).

Provan argues that the first edition culminates in the reign of Hezekiah, who is the champion of removing the high places and bears the likeness of a new David. This version runs through 2 Kgs 18-19, containing some evidence of Zion theology in the story of Jerusalem's salvation during Sennacherib's invasion. However, unlike most proposed Hezekiah focused editions, Provan dates his first edition early in the reign of Josiah, written in opposition to Manasseh. He states, "The first edition of Kings...is "Josianic" only in the sense that it dates from Josiah's reign...With regard to its themes and their climax, it is "Hezekian."¹⁰² Like Cross et al., Provan's dates his second edition into the Exilic period.

Baruch Halpern, in subsequent collaborations with André Lemaire and D. S. Vanderhooft, also suggests a Hezekian history.¹⁰³ Focusing on the so-called Death and Burial Formula (DBF), throughout the regnal formula of Kings,¹⁰⁴ Halpern and Vanderhooft

¹⁰² Provan, *Hezekiah and the Books of Kings*, 172.

¹⁰³ Baruch Halpern, "Sacred History and Ideology: Chronicles' Thematic Structure -- Indications of an Earlier Source," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature: Composition and Redaction of the Biblical Text*, ed. Richard E. Friedman, University of California Publications in Near Eastern Studies 22 (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981); Halpern, "Jerusalem and the Lineages"; Halpern and Lemaire, "The Composition of Kings"; Baruch Halpern and David S. Vanderhooft, "The Editions of Kings in the Seventh-6th Centuries B.C.E.," *Hebr. Union Coll. Annu.* 62 (1991): 179-244.

¹⁰⁴ The so-called Death-Burial Formula (DBF) includes the notice of a king's death, length of reign and description of his burial in some cases noting specific locations.

note a level of consistency in the Judean DBF spanning David to Ahaz. The common thread is that every Davidic king from Rehoboam to Ahaz was buried “with his fathers in the city of David,” whether they had a peaceful death or not.¹⁰⁵ This pattern concludes with Hezekiah, where although there is a death notice (“he slept with his fathers”), there is no mention of internment (2 Kgs 20:21). Continued variation follows as Manasseh and Amon are buried in their personal tombs in Jerusalem outside of the traditional royal cemetery.¹⁰⁶ Josiah was returned to Jerusalem and also interned in “his on tomb” (2 Kgs 23:30).

Halpern and Vanderhoof suggest that further evidence for a Hezekian history occurs in the Queen Mother (QM) notices. In Chronicles, the regnal formulas for Judahite kings contain the QM whenever the corresponding Kings material does. This pattern includes Hezekiah and all previous Davidic kings. However, Kings continues to include the QM notice beyond Hezekiah. This variation proposes a source used by Chronicles other than

¹⁰⁵ Rehoboam would logically be the first who could receive this honor. David had no predecessor. Solomon is said to be buried “in the city of David, his father.” Halpern and Vanderhooft, “The Editions of Kings in the Seventh-6th Centuries B.C.E.,” 192.

¹⁰⁶ Manasseh is said to be buried “in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza” (2 Kgs 21:18) and Amon “buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza” (2Kgs 21:26).

any extant version of Kings. That the variation begins at Hezekiah's reign suggests a common source that ended with his reign.¹⁰⁷

A recent foray into deciphering a Hezekian edition of Kings is the detailed reconstruction of Benjamin Thomas.¹⁰⁸ Thomas argues that approaches to the framework of 1-2 Kings for deciphering an original Deuteronomistic history are methodologically flawed. Instead of looking for structural evidence within the text, he argues for a comparative analysis with other ANE chronographic texts (i.e., king lists, chronicles, royal inscriptions). Thomas's comparison of biblical and extra-biblical regnal formulas provides further evidence for a Hezekiah History (HH) with the intent to legitimate the Judahite royal line by way of a Davidic royal ideology grounded in Jerusalem.¹⁰⁹ Thomas' reconstructed HH begins with Solomon and details the continuation of the Judahite succession in opposition to the demise of Israel. Ascension notices, regnal year total, and geographic filiation (ancestral line) suggest the use of both northern and southern sources to contrast the constancy of Jerusalem and the Davidic royal line with the vacillation of northern dynastic

¹⁰⁷ Halpern and Vanderhooft, "The Editions of Kings in the 7th-6th Centuries B.C.E.," 197.

¹⁰⁸ Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*.

¹⁰⁹ Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, 122.

capitols. The QM notices, absent in northern formulas, provide further evidence of the endurance of Davidic succession and the DBFs show continuity in the south in opposition to the series of military usurpations and dynastic changes in the north. The history culminates with Hezekiah, a pious king who centralized the cult and assured the survival of Jerusalem. Thomas dates the work to the early-mid Seventh century recounting the events of Hezekiah's reign down to the events of 701.¹¹⁰

Another argument for a Hezekian history is in the use of the so-called incomparability formula suggesting an overarching narrative framed by Solomon and Hezekiah.¹¹¹ In 1-2 Kings, three kings are elevated as “greater” than all others: Solomon, Hezekiah, and Josiah. Solomon is commended for his incomparable wisdom. Yahweh, pleased by his request, granted Solomon a “wise and discerning heart” unlike no other. Of Solomon, “None like you has been before you, and none like you shall arise after you” (1 Kgs 3:12). Regarding Hezekiah, the prominent attribute is trust. 2 Kings 18:5-6 states: “He

¹¹⁰ Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, 122.

¹¹¹ Gary Knoppers, “‘There Was None Like Him’: Incomparability in the Books of Kings,” *CBQ* 54 (1992): 411–31. Gary Knoppers suggests that the incomparability formula is not representative of different editorial hands, but a common theme of the final exilic redactor of the DtrH. The intent being a recognition of individual kings based on their unique characteristics: Solomon's wisdom and wealth, Hezekiah's trust, and Josiah's reforms (413). For a criticism of Knoppers position see Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, 346–47.

[Hezekiah] trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel, so that there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor among those before him.” Nearly identical language is employed in the introduction of Josiah: “Before him, there was no king like him who turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might...nor did any arise like him after him” (2 Kgs 23:25a).

However, there are important distinctions between the use of each phrase.

Solomon’s commendation is in the context of a singular attribute (e.g., wisdom); although, the praise for the other two kings, reference covenantal maintenance. Following the description of his reform movement, Hezekiah is said to have “trusted” (בטח) in Yahweh and “clung” (דבק) to him and did not “turn aside” (qal סר), but “kept the commandments (מצות) that the LORD commanded (צוה) Moses,” (2 Kgs 18:6).¹¹² Josiah’s far-reaching cultic purge, along with the reinstatement of the Passover,¹¹³ were in accordance with “the words the law (את־דברי התורה) written in the book (ספר)” found during the temple reforms (2 Kgs

¹¹² In the description of the Fall of Samaria in 2 Kgs 18:9-12, Israel did not “...obey the voice of the LORD their God but transgressed his covenant, even all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded.”

¹¹³ Although not in Kings, Passover as great significance regarding Hezekiah’s reforms. Compare 2 Chr 30:26; 2 Chr 35:18 (2 Kgs 23:22). On observation regarding the depiction of Hezekiah in Chronicles see below.

23:24). The totality of Josiah's reforms is summarized as being "according to the law of Moses (ככל תורת משה)," (2 Kgs 23:24-25). The difference in describing the Mosaic traditions between Hezekiah and Josiah is potential further evidence for separate Hezekian and Josianic histories.

Another significant distinction between the incompatibility formula attributed to Hezekiah and Josiah is the subsequent depiction of Yahweh's favor. Josiah's commendation is followed by a negative evaluation of Judah: "Still the LORD did not turn from the burning of his great wrath..." (2 Kgs 23:26). Although this phrase is a possible exilic interpolation, the logical transition within Josiah's regnal formula (following the standard notice of the extended annals "*The Book of the History of the Kings of Judah*") is still negative in tone. Josiah's military exploits, namely against Pharaoh Necco, are presented as a failure (2 Kgs 23: 28-29). In contrast, Hezekiah's incomparability precedes the statement, "And the LORD was with him; wherever he went out, he prospered" (2Kgs 18:7). This commendation is subsequently followed by a list of Hezekiah's military successes. Benjamin Thomas argues that the uniqueness of Hezekiah's appellation raises him to a level superior to all other "incomparable" kings.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, 336–37.

(4.5.2) Solomon as Utopian Typological Projection ¹¹⁵

Following Thomas and Halpern et al., a proposed Hezekian History (HH) opened by highlighting the glories of a Solomonic empire and concluded with the salvation of Jerusalem.¹¹⁶ A history of “all Israel” framed with the reigns of two great pious kings infers an intentional correlation. Regarding a Hezekian history, Halpern concludes,

[I]t [HH] exalted Solomon, rejected northern independence, and looked forward to a period of expansion, of wealth, or of reconstruction. It viewed the destruction of the north with equanimity – as a chance for the reunification of Israel with the Davidic line. It left its mark on all subsequent Israelite historiography.¹¹⁷

A utopian vision of a Solomonic golden age provided ideological legitimation for the Judean monarchy. Hezekiah is the new Solomon. His actions parallel those of his pious ancestor, restoring Israel’s past glory as a kingdom united.

¹¹⁵ On competing perspectives on the archeological evidence for a historical Solomonic “United Monarchy” see Israel Finkelstein, “A Great United Monarchy? Archaeological and Historical Perspectives,” in *One God, One Cult, One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives*, ed. Reinhard Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann, BZAW 405 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 3–28; Amihai Mazar, “Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative: The Case of the United Monarchy,” in *One God, One Cult, One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives*, ed. Reinhard Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann, BZAW 405 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 29–58.

¹¹⁶ The conclusion of a proposed Hezekian history varies among scholars. I am taking an agnostic position recognizing a consensus position that the ideological trajectory of the such a literary work is ultimately elevation of Hezekiah as the new Solomon and savior of Israel.

¹¹⁷ Halpern, “Sacred History and Ideology,” 52–53.

(4.5.2.1) *Unrivalled Domestic and Military Leadership.* Early annalistic material on the administration of Solomon's kingdom presents a golden age of unified Israel. 1 Kgs 4:1-5:8 (4:1-28 Eng) comprises several administrative lists.¹¹⁸ The assemblage begins with the notation that Solomon was king "over all Israel" (1 Kgs 4:1), followed by a catalog of his various court officials (1 Kgs 4:-6).¹¹⁹ Solomon is presented as a master of statecraft, organizing his kingdom into 12 administrative districts (1 Kgs 4:7-19). The pericope concludes with a summation "Judah and Israel were as many as the sand by the sea."¹²⁰ They ate and drank and were happy" (1 Kgs 4: 20 [5:1]).

Solomon is further hailed as a great military leader and protector of the realm. The record states, "And Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan to Beersheba, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, all the days of Solomon," (1 Kgs 5:9 / 4:29 [Eng]). Solomon's dominion was vast, and his finances were great (1 Kgs 5:1-4 / 4:21-24 [Eng]). He possessed immense military strength: 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots and 12,000

¹¹⁸ For the literary history of the annalistic material in 1 Kgs 4:1-5:8 (4:1-28 Eng) see Mordechai Cogan, *I Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 10 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 215-20.

¹²⁰ Variations of the phrase "like the sand on the sea" is found 13x in the HB: Gen. 32:13; Gen. 41:49; Jos. 11:4; Jdg. 7:12; 1 Sam. 13:5; 2 Sam. 17:11; 1 Ki. 4:20; 1 Ki. 5:9; Isa. 10:22; Isa. 48:19; Hos. 2:1; Hab. 1:9

horsemen (1 Kgs 4: 26-27).¹²¹ He also built the Milo, the wall of Jerusalem, and the cities of Hazor, Meggido, and Gezer. There is further mention of non-descript locations in the wilderness, store cities, military installations (chariots and horseman) and whatever he desired (1 Kgs 9:15-19). There was also a strong navy composed of a fleet of ships both on the red sea (1 Kgs 9:26-28) and the Mediterranean, which returned every three years (1 Kgs 10:22).

Congruent with Solomon, Hezekiah undertook public works projects and evidenced military prowess. The construction of the Siloam Tunnel improved the city's water system (2 Kgs 20:20).¹²² Although there is no explicit reference in the text, a system of massive fortifications was also constructed around Jerusalem as well as a project to refit regional fortifications.¹²³ Hezekiah's incomparable piety led to unrivaled success on the battlefield:

¹²¹ 1 Kgs 10:26 Solomon possessed 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen in the "chariot cities" and "with the king in Jerusalem." He was also a successful "arms dealer," dominating the horse trade in the region (1 Kgs 10:28-29). Intriguing is how these descriptions correlate with the prohibition against horses in the Law of the King in Deut 17.

¹²² For archeological discussion regarding Hezekiah's monumental constructions see Richter, "Eighth Century Issues: The World of Jeroboam II, the Fall of Samaria, and the Reign of Hezekiah," 342-49.

¹²³ On the possible role the cult reforms had in military preparations, Halpern, "Jerusalem and the Lineages."

“The LORD was with him; wherever he went out, he prospered” (2 Kgs 18:7a).¹²⁴ There is also a passing reference to his victories over the Philistines, “as far as Gaza and its territory” (2 Kgs 18:8).¹²⁵ The account of the siege of Jerusalem has a complex literary history;¹²⁶ however, the narrative intends to paint Hezekiah as the leader who withstood the Assyrian onslaught. Through his leadership, Jerusalem was saved, a fate far different than Samaria.

(4.5.2.2) *Unrivaled Wisdom.* In support of a utopian golden age, there is a concerted effort to project Solomon as a source of great wisdom. At Gibeah, Yahweh

¹²⁴ Thomas argues that Hezekiah is the only king who receives unqualified praise, acting ‘in accordance with all that David, his father, had done’ (2 Kgs 18:3). Furthermore, the statement that Yahweh was with him “in all his going out” (2 Kgs 18:7) is unique to Hezekiah. He argues, “Hezekiah is the paragon of Davidic righteousness in that his actions to unify the cultic worship of Yahweh around the temple of Jerusalem may be perceived as a restoration of an earlier Davidic ideal.” Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, 320.

¹²⁵ There is debate over the context of Hezekiah’s military engagement against the Philistine territories. Kelle and Strawn suggest the that Sargon II placed Hezekiah over the Philistine territories because of his loyalty during the Assyrian incursions in 720 BCE. Kelle and Strawn, “History of Israel 5: Assyrian Period,” 470. However, Provan et al. associate the reference in 2 Kgs 18:8 to Hezekiah’s participation in an anti-Assyrian coalition organized upon the death of Sargon II in 705 BCE, prompting retaliation by Sennacherib in 701 BCE. In his preparations for the attack, Hezekiah engaged in preemptive assaults on Philistine territory associated with Gath whose king remained loyal to Assyria. Provan, Long, and Longman, *A Biblical History of Israel*, 273. The latter argument aligns with the mention of a rebellion in the preceding clause.

¹²⁶ For detailed analysis see Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *II Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 11 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1988), 240–44. Detailed analysis of the traditions from the perspective of the identical account in the Book of Isaiah see Christopher Seitz, *Zion’s Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah. A Reassessment of Isaiah 36-39*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991).

commended and blessed him with “a wise and discerning mind” beyond compare (1 Kgs 3:12). The narrative of the two prostitutes provides contextual evidence for Solomon’s jurisprudence. His acumen was legendary throughout “all Israel” who “stood in awe of the king because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice” (1 Kgs 3:28). In 1 Kgs 5:9-14 [4:29-34 Eng], Solomon’s incompatibility is universalized, more significant than all his contemporaries of Egypt and far eastern regions, even the great wisdom figures of history.¹²⁷ The great leaders of the day came to bask in his knowledge. The development of wisdom literature is ascribed to him, 3000 proverbs, and 1005 songs, and his knowledge of flora and fauna was vast.

The idealization of Solomon’s wisdom is evident during Hezekiah’s reign. Proverbs 25:1 states, “These too are proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah transcribed.” This heading introduces a structured section of the Book of Proverbs (25:1-29:27) presented as a compendium to previous collections of Solomonic wisdom traditions.¹²⁸ Thematic and structural agreement leads Michael Fox to suggest a single, or a

¹²⁷ Mentioned include Ethan the Ezharite, Heman, Calcol, Darda, the sons of Mahol.

¹²⁸ Michael Fox suggests that the word “too” denotes awareness of previous sayings introduced in 10:1 giving the image of a rolling corpus. See also 24:23. Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 10-31: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 18B (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009), 776.

unified group of editors, collecting and constructing proverbs according to specific criteria.¹²⁹ Michael Carasik¹³⁰ argues for a strong association between Solomon and Hezekiah implicit throughout the unit; however, he argues the attribution to Hezekiah is akin to a historical superscription in the Psalms. Carasik proceeds to make numerous linguistic and topical links between the sayings about wise kings and recorded events of Hezekiah's reign, although, some of his correlations bear special pleading.¹³¹

(4.5.2.3) *Unrivaled Trust.* Notable associations with Solomon's dedication of the temple are in Hezekiah's response to the siege of Jerusalem.¹³² The Rabshakeh taunts

¹²⁹ Fox notes common elements throughout the collection: a low frequency of sayings including the name Yahweh, a similar poetic structure, and thematic. He divides the material into to sub-collections: Chapter 25-26 and 27-29. Fox notes that similar collections were taking place at roughly the same time throughout the region: the library in Ashur built by Tiglath-Pileser I (1114-1076) and the great library of Nineveh built by Ashurbanipal (668-27) 40 years after Hezekiah's death. Fox, *Proverbs 10-31*, 775-76.

¹³⁰ Michael Carasik, "Who Were the Men 'Men of Hezekiah' (Proverbs XXV 1)?," *VT* 44.3 (1994): 289-300.

¹³¹ For example, the use of the word "trust" in Prov 25:19 parallels its use as a *leitmotif* in the Hezekiah narrative. I another example he connects Prov 25:28 "It is ...the glory of a king or bulb a matter" as an association of Hezekiah's development of Jerusalem water works. Carasik, "Men of Hezekiah," 296.

¹³² For discussion on the overlap between 2 Kings 18:13-20:21 and Isaiah 36:1-39:8 see Françolino J. Gonçalves, "2 Rois 18,13-20,19 Par. Isaïe 36-39: Encore Une Fois, Lequel Des Deux Livres Fut Le Premier?," in *Lectures et Relectures de La Bible: Festschrift P-M Bogaert* (Leuven: Leuven University Press; Peeters, 1999), 27-55; Raymond F. Person, "II Kings 18-20 and Isaiah 36-39: A Text Critical Case Study in the Redaction History of the Book of Isaiah," *ZAW* 111 (1999): 373-79; Bradley Root, "Scribal Error and the Transmission of 2 Kings 18-20 and Isaiah 36-39," in *Sacred History, Sacred Literature: Essays on Ancient Israel, the Bible, and Religion in Honor of R.E. Friedman on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Richard E. Friedman and Shawna Dolansky

Hezekiah asking, “On what do you rest this trust of yours?” (2 Kgs 18:19) This detail is a clear allusion to the description of Hezekiah that he “trusted in the LORD” in an incomparable manner (2 Kgs 18:5). The Assyrian envoy also goads the people not to place their “trust”¹³³ in Hezekiah, specifically his reforms. 2 Kings 18:22 the Rabshakeh states, “But if you say to me, ‘We trust in the LORD our God,’ is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah removed, saying to Judah and Jerusalem, ‘You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem.’”¹³⁴ Hezekiah’s piety is challenged, the efficacy of his cultic reforms questioned.

The Rabshakeh subsequently challenges a Yahweh alone ideology through a competing utopia that was Assyrian vassalship.

[T]hus says the king of Assyria, ‘Make peace with me, and come out to me. Then each one of you will eat of his own vine, and each of his own fig tree and each one of you will drink water from his own cistern, until I come and take you away to a land

(Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 51–60; H. G. M. Williamson, “Hezekiah and Temple,” in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran*, ed. Michael V. Fox (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996).

¹³³ David Bostock, *A Portrayal of Trust: The Theme of Trust in the Hezekiah Narratives* (Bletchley: Paternoster, 2006).

¹³⁴ Scholarship is divided over the authenticity of the quote. Some view the reference to Hezekiah’s reforms as a retrojection of the Josianic reforms into history. However, Young counters that the comment fits securely within the rest of the speech and adheres to the principles of Assyrian propaganda. Furthermore, the events of Hezekiah’s piety were well known a century later (Jer 26:16-19). Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, 104–8.

like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey, that you may live and not die. (2 Kgs 18:31-32a)

This vision of paradise is followed by a foretell of dystopia brought about through defiance.

Jerusalem's attention is called to a list of nations, and consequently their national gods, that

Assyria had defeated. The record culminates regarding Samaria, which would be fresh in

the minds of both a proposed present and an intended literary audience.

Upon receiving a report of the Assyrian taunt, Hezekiah enters the Temple, assuming a position of mourning and contrition. In Hezekiah's petition (2 Kgs 19:14-19 [Isa 37:14 – 20]) there are several similarities with Solomon's prayers at the dedication of the temple (1 Kgs 8:22-53). Hezekiah "spreads out"¹³⁵ before Yahweh, a written account of the Rabshakeh's affront. In Solomon's prayer in 1 Kgs 8, numerous circumstances are listed that the people can make a petition to Yahweh. Military situations are amongst the list. For instance, 1 Kgs 8:33, "When your people Israel are defeated before the enemy because they have sinned against you...." Even more in line with Hezekiah's situation, 1 Kgs 8:37 "If

¹³⁵ In 2 Kgs 8:15 Hazael spreads out the bed cloth over Ben Hadad's face at his death and subsequently becoming king, as Elisha has predicted. The verbal root *prs* is employed 7x in 1-2 Kgs. In all but one instance the word refers to either the wings of the cherubim spreading out over the ark of the covenant (1 Kgs 6:27; 8:7), Solomon's posture before Yahweh (1 Kgs 8:22; 8:54), and the posture of the people seeking Yahweh's favor (1 Kgs 8:38).

there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence or blight or mildew or locust or caterpillar *if the enemy besieges them in the land at their gates*, whatever plague, whatever sickness there is.”

The content of Hezekiah’s prayer also echoes that of Solomon. For example, there are similarities in the opening of both prayers (1 Kgs 8:23, 25; 2 Kgs 19:15). Each supplicant begins, “Oh LORD, God of Israel,” sharing further appellations of the uniqueness of Yahweh and his universal nature. In each, there is a reference to the “heavens and earth.”¹³⁶ Hezekiah’s petition, “Incline your ear, O LORD and hear, open your eyes and see,” (2 Kgs 19:16) parallels the sentiment of Solomon throughout 1 Kgs 8. After every proposed situation for divine petition, Solomon asks Yahweh to “hear in heaven, your dwelling place, and forgive” (1 Kgs 8:30, 32, 34, 36, 39, 43, etc.) Also, Solomon petitions Yahweh to “open his eyes” in 1 Kgs 8:29, 52).

¹³⁶ 1 Kgs 8:23 “Oh LORD, God of Israel, there is no god like you, in heaven above or the earth beneath...” 2 Kgs 19:23 “O LORD, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth.” The designation “The One enthroned upon the cherubim,” is unique to this text, the concurrent Isaiah passage (Is 37:16), 1 Sam 4:4 and 6:2.

(4.6) Hezekiah's Cultic Piety

The strongest association between Solomon and Hezekiah is one of temple piety. The foundations of the temple cult in Jerusalem harkens back to the Solomonic golden age. David's successor was chosen to build Yahweh a "house" (בית) and subsequently, the "house" (בית) of David has continued as its patron. However, at times, Judean kings allowed foreign elements into the cult. In his act of removing the *bamah*, Hezekiah becomes the protector of Yahweh worship from the imposition of foreign deities. Although historical and archeological concerns bear significance, the following discussion will focus on how the phenomena of reform (both physical and literary) helped legitimize a Davidic ideology. Exploration of reform measures will examine the depiction of Hezekiah's reforms in Israel's historical memory. The description of Hezekiah's reforms in Kings is contained to a single verse (2 Kgs 18:4); the content, namely references to removing the *bamoth*, functions as the culmination of a proposed Hezekian history.

(4.6.1) The "Reformation" of Ahaz

Recognizing the state of the Jerusalem cult at the time of Hezekiah's ascendancy is essential to understanding how his reform program aligned with the xenophobic prophetic critique representative of the Hoseanic voice.¹³⁷ The alterations of the Temple by Ahaz, Hezekiah's father, are given more space than the syncretism of any of the other kings of Judah. This emphasis established, within an HH, a present state of cultic decay. Presented as a wholly unfaithful king, Ahaz, said to have walked "in the ways of the kings of Israel" (2 Kgs 16:2-3), embodied the failures of northern leadership. Two core elements of northern critique are emphasized in his alteration to the Temple: the imposition of Canaanite worship practices and entering foreign alliances.

The castigation of the *bamoth* is central to Eighth Century prophetic concerns. Representing a prophetic tradition extending back into the Ninth Century BCE (i.e. Elijah/Elisha), the "Hosea group" bore a tendency to group most, if not all, presumed syncretism into a category dubbed "Canaanite." The regnal formula of Ahaz is one of two that includes the enigmatic phrase: "And he sacrificed and made offerings on the high

¹³⁷ Hezekiah's reforms could reflect a response to the dystopian imagery in Hosea 10 in which there is mention of altars, standing stones, trust, and discussion about the failures of the monarchy. Hezekiah's reforms could be a picture of the antithesis of this image. There is also a warning against Judah; however, likely an interpolation.

places and on the hills and under every green tree.”¹³⁸ He is also explicitly accused of practicing child sacrifice: “passing his son through the fire.”¹³⁹

During the events of the Syro-Ephraimite War (734-731), Ahaz sought assistance from Tiglath-Pileser III against the Damascus-Samaria coalition.¹⁴⁰ Stripping the Temple and royal treasuries (2 Kgs 16:8), Ahaz sent tribute to Assyria, meeting in Damascus. This pledge of fealty was a possible catalyst for the campaign and subsequent siege against Damascus (733-731).¹⁴¹ Upon his return, Ahaz proposes “reforms” of the Temple cult.

¹³⁸ See 1 Kgs 14:23 (Rehoboam), 2 Kgs 16:4 (Ahaz). For comprehensive analysis of the rhetorical phrase “every high hill...” see William Holladay, “On Every High Hill and Under Every Green Tree,” *VT* 11.2 (1961): 170–76. Holladay notes 16 locations with lexical similarity in the HB, nine deemed (Pre/Proto) Deuteronomistic [Deut 12:2; 1 Kgs 14:23; 2 Kgs 26:4 [2 Chr 28:4]; 2 Kgs 17:10; Jer 2:20 (also 3:6, 13); Hos 4:13]. Of these, Holladay offers a dual trajectory of dependence: Hos 4:13 → Deut 12:2 → Jer 2:20 → 1 Kgs 14:23 + 2 Kgs 17:10 and Hos 4:13 → Deut 12:2 → 2 Kgs 16:4 (2 Chr 28:4). Because of the unique relationship between 1 Kgs 14:23 and 2 Kgs 16:4, arguments of dependence have a significant voice in debates over Deuteronomistic histories.

¹³⁹ On the practice of child sacrifice in ancient Israel see John Day, *Molech: A God of Human Sacrifice in the Old Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); George Heider, “Molech,” *ABD* 4:895–98. See also Edward Noort, “Child Sacrifice in Ancient Israel: The Status Questions,” in *The Strange World of Human Sacrifice*, ed. Jan N Bremmer (Dudley, Mass.: Peeters, 2007). M. Cogan makes a distinction between a Molech divinatory cult which incorporated fire and a separate Canaanite practice of child sacrifice cautioning blending the two. Morton Cogan, *Imperialism and Religion: Assyria, Judah and Israel in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries*, SBLMS 19 (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1974), 77–82.

¹⁴⁰ Irvine, *Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraimite Crisis*; Kelle and Strawn, “History of Israel 5: Assyrian Period,” 467–68; Provan, Long, and Longman, *A Biblical History of Israel*, 270–71.

¹⁴¹ The Chronicler presents Ahaz’s actions as an appeal to Assyrian assistance because of invasions of Edomites and Philistines; however, Tiglath-Pileser III “came against him” instead of strengthening him (2 Chr 28:16-21).

Impressed by the high altar in Damascus, the king sent back plans for its replication in a place of honor, relegating the altar of Yahweh to a lesser position. Although the great bronze altar was not destroyed, it was drastically modified. The great “sea” was taken off the bronze bulls and placed on a stone pedestal.¹⁴² Ahaz continued to use the bronze altar to “inquire of” Yahweh; however, the new altar became the primary place of cult practice (e.g. regular burnt offerings, grain offerings, drink offerings, and peace offerings). There was an additional alteration to the “covered way for the Sabbath.” Although the function of this structure is indistinct, based on the rationale for the alterations (“because of the king of Assyria” (2 Kgs 16:18) a possible change in suzerain loyalty is implied.¹⁴³ According to 2 Chr 28:23-25, Ahaz destroyed all the temple utensils and “shut the doors of the house of the

¹⁴² For description of the “great sea” of Solomon see 1 Kgs 7:23-26. The bronze was likely part of the tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III.

¹⁴³ Marvin Sweeney argues, although unclear of the function, the covered Sabbath walkway from the palace to the Temple likely symbolized the unique relationship between the Davidic king and Yahweh. The covering reflected royal protection. With Assyria as the new suzerain, previous symbols of protection needed removal. Marvin Sweeney, *1 & 2 Kings: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2007), 385.

LORD,” and multiplied the altars in Jerusalem as well as the high places “in every city of Judah.”¹⁴⁴

Ahaz’s changes in the Jerusalem temple have been interpreted as the importation of Assyrian worship; however, this position has challengers.¹⁴⁵ John McKay argues that the biblical description does not align with known Assyrian cultic practices. For instance, Assyria did not offer burnt animal sacrifices.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, the idea that Assyrian gods, (e.g., Assur), supplanted Yahweh, would require a change in priesthood which the text contests. McKay argues the biblical record interprets Ahaz’s apostasy, not as the incorporation of Assyrian deities, but as an homage to Canaanite practices. He suggests that the evidence points to an altar of Syro-Phoenician design.¹⁴⁷ The Chronicler connects the

¹⁴⁴ Regarding the “reforms” of Ahaz, John McKay writes “Such extensive apostasy must somehow be a symptom of the political upheaval of their age.” John W. McKay, *Religion in Judah under the Assyrians, 732-609 BC*, SBT 2nd Series 26 (Naperville, Ill: A. R. Allenson, 1973), 10.

¹⁴⁵ Representative works include Theodor Oestreicher, *Reichstempel Und Ortsheiligtümer in Israel*, BFCT 33 (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1930); E. W. Todd, “The Reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah,” *SJT* 9.3 (1956): 288–93; Harold H. Rowley, *The Faith of Israel: Aspects of Old Testament Thought* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1957); Bright, *A History of Israel*.

¹⁴⁶ McKay, *Religion in Judah under the Assyrians*, 7.

¹⁴⁷ McKay suggests two possible reasons for incorporating Syro-Phoenician worship. First, to strengthen trading links between Judah and Phoenicia. Or, it is possible, that this was part of Assyrian vassalship as the altar in Damascus was the locale of treaty ratification. Bringing the altar to Jerusalem would be a symbolic gesture of fealty; however, it obtained an association with Yahweh. McKay, *Religion in Judah under the Assyrians*, 8.

altar to worship of the gods of Damascus seeking their assistance because they helped Syria, even though at Ahaz's expense (2 Chr 28:23-25).¹⁴⁸

Cogan and Tadmor propose the motivation behind the temple modifications was not syncretistic, but evidence of cultural assimilation. Disagreeing with arguments for Syro-Phoenician origins, they indicate the influence of Aramean aesthetics upon the altar redesign, which had become the fashion in the Assyrian empire at the time.¹⁴⁹ Ahaz's reforms were the "[F]irst wave in the larger movement of acculturation to the practices of the Assyrian empire."¹⁵⁰ However, 2 Kgs 16 presents the act as apostate and, therefore, more than purely aesthetic.

¹⁴⁸ McKay notes that the Chronicler's account here seems illogical as Damascus fell to Assyria and therefore their gods were not victorious. Furthermore, Ahaz would most likely not have taken up the gods of a defeated enemy. However, this should not discredit the historicity of the account. The Chronicler here is possibly drawing on priestly sources and attempting to make a logical conclusion from the fact that Ahaz constructed the altar of Hadad in Damascus not an Assyrian altar. McKay, *Religion in Judah under the Assyrians*, 6.

¹⁴⁹ Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 192–93.

¹⁵⁰ Cogan and Tadmor attribute the discussion of Ahaz's altar, which was "by no means idolatrous or syncretistic," to a priestly source and not a royal chronicle. The original was incorporated by a Deuteronomistic editor to strengthen an indictment against Ahaz. Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 193.

(4.6.2) The “Reformation” of Hezekiah

The historicity of Hezekiah’s cultic reform is a topic of great debate, and a full analysis is beyond the scope of the present study.¹⁵¹ Much of the discussion settles on the interpretation of the archaeological record.¹⁵² As the present goal is an exploration of the expression of Hezekiah’s reign as a utopian ideal, the following discussion will focus on the

¹⁵¹ For full bibliography see Vaughn, *Theology, History, and Archaeology*; Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*. For competing arguments for and against the historicity of cult centralization in Judah see Ze’ev Herzog, “Perspectives on Southern Israel’s Cult Centralization: Arad and Beer-Sheba,” in *One God, One Cult, One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives*, ed. Reinhard Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann, BZAW 405 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 169–200; Juha Pakkala, “Why the Cult Reforms in Judah Probably Did Not Happen,” in *One God, One Cult, One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives*, BZAW 405 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 201–35.

¹⁵² At the heart of the debate are the remains of dismantled cultic sites at Arad, Beersheba, and potential others. For general discussion see Vaughn, *Theology, History, and Archaeology*; Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*.

Arad – Archeologists unearthed a proposed cultic installation comprised of a courtyard and small shrine. The complex was covered in one meter of fill. Controversy surrounds the dating scheme for the stratigraphy. The first excavation reports suggested that the demolition of the altar dated to the reign of Hezekiah and that the cultic complex was decommissioned in toto under Josiah. The Arad team subsequently revised the dating scheme, suggesting that both temple and altar were decommissioned under Hezekiah. However, in the final publication, the dating was again modified. The altar and shrine were still abandoned at the same time, just earlier in the Eighth century. In effect, there was no sanctuary at Arad during the time of Sennacherib’s invasion. Although there has been a level of discontinuity in analysis, the excavators have continued to suggest correlation between their findings and the biblical record of Eighth century cultic reforms. However, their conclusions have met continued criticism.

Beersheba -- At Beer-Sheba a large horned altar was discovered dismantled and apparently repurposed in the repair of an Eighth Century storehouse complex. The original excavation team suggested that this altar once stood within a sanctuary on site; however, no such structure has been found. The destruction of the complex was thought to date to Sennacherib’s invasion in 701 BCE, locating the dismantling and repurpose under Hezekiah.

ideological expression a proposed reform program, as described in the biblical record, would produce.

(4.6.2.1) *Socio-Economic Rational*. There are many theories for the socio-political rationale of Hezekiah's reforms. The closure of rural cultic centers has often been understood as an act of open rebellion, a move to delegitimize the worship of Assyrian deities imposed upon Judah. However, this position has suffered considerable criticism.¹⁵³ Another ideological interpretation of dismantling the localized cultic is to prohibit the imperial army from pillaging wealth and items of sacred import. It was a common practice for victorious armies to take captive cultic icons for the use of imperial propaganda. Protection of the outlying cult centers would engender the loyalty of the populace and at the same time, create greater dependence upon the capital by making it the primary religious center.¹⁵⁴

Baruch Halpern envisions the alteration to the outlying cultic centers as part of a comprehensive defensive strategy. The building of self-contained fortress "nodes" was less

¹⁵³ McKay, *Religion in Judah under the Assyrians*.

¹⁵⁴ Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, 112.

expensive than field tactics.¹⁵⁵ Halpern argues that Hezekiah took three actions to mount his defense.¹⁵⁶ The existing system of forts would need refitting, updating structural resources. The forts also required a new supply system that Halpern attributes to the iconic *lmk* jars.¹⁵⁷ Finally, the relocation and concentration of the rural population into the forts created a needed labor force. However, the consequence of this strategy was conceding the countryside to the enemy, which resulted in the effective disenfranchisement of the rural periphery and traditional socio-economic structures.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Halpern, "Jerusalem and the Lineages," 19.

¹⁵⁶ Halpern, "Jerusalem and the Lineages," 24–26.

¹⁵⁷ Young states that the military usage, at least initially, of the jars is "dubious" and favors evidence of a system of taxation both the rapid expansion of Judah and needing to satisfy the requirements of a vassal state. He views them as evidence that Hezekiah was a skillful leader who invested considerable resources in response to the socio-economic responsibilities of his proliferating domain." Notes that the handles typically bear either the scarab or the sun disk, royal symbols of both Judah and Israel. He suggests that the dual usage reflects Hezekiah's desire to be seen as ruler of a new re-united kingdom, as well as provider for all his peoples. Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, 55–58.

Working with sociological models bearing a cause and effect between population increase and economic build up in pre-agrarian societies, Andrew Vaughn notes the regional distribution of the jars throughout the kingdom. The contents, wine or oil, were not singularly used by the court, but in everyday life. These jars were not used for siege preparation on the eve of Sennacherib's invasion, but the siege preparations likely began years earlier and the buildup included economic and infrastructural reinforcement. Vaughn, *Theology, History, and Archaeology*, 81–167.

¹⁵⁸ Expanding on his model of the socio-economic upheaval of Hezekiah's reforms, with lasting implications on ancient Israelite intellectual discourse, Halpern writes, "Hezekiah's policies created a Judah in which the rural landowners and the clans had been stripped of their power, in which court parties and the standing army were ascendant. The rural priesthood lost direct access to agricultural revenues as the state probably underwent a transition from tax farming through priests and settlement heads to bureaucratic tax

Criticisms have been levied against the fortress refurbishment thesis. Robert Young argues that military preparation would not adequately engender the people. In fact, by decommissioning of the outlying cult, only to move Yahweh into the safety of the capitol, would signal the inability of Israel's patron god to protect his vassals.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, the biblical account presents a picture of cessation, not decommissioning. Hezekiah's actions against the *bamoth* do not appear provisional but undertaken as a deliberate, permanent change. Young suggests that military theories fail to consider the "militant nature" of the reforms and are quick to dismiss the theological implications of the destruction of northern Israel. He states, "What is required, then, is a social setting which is consonant with a radical, dramatic upheaval in the geopolitical landscape of Judah."¹⁶⁰

collection....Not to underrate the staying power of traditional modes of thought, the eighth-century elite, amid a growing accumulation of wealth that made itself felt throughout the country had amassed a welter of fresh doctrine, the intellectual explosion of which expressed itself both in Hezekiah's reform and in the assembly of the first written corpus of classical prophesy." Halpern, "Jerusalem and the Lineages," 59.

¹⁵⁹ Ironically, the Rabshakeh taunts the inhabitants of Jerusalem with this very logic. How can they rely on their god Yahweh when their king withdrew the divine presence into a single location? Centralization is an effectual symbol of divine abandonment (2 Kgs 18:22).

¹⁶⁰ Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, 112. Young states further: "It is furthermore unreasonable to expect such a brilliant statesman as Hezekiah would have gone to such great lengths in preparing the city of Jerusalem for the swell of inhabitants cascading from the north, while neglecting to take necessary measures to ensure the populace a strong religious basis for the de facto center of Yahwistic worship." Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, 116–17.

Alternately, Finkelstein and Silberman argue that Hezekiah's reforms were related to Jerusalem's need to assert legitimacy, and supremacy, over competing cultic centers, namely Bethel, located only 17 km north.¹⁶¹ Estimating that half of the population of Judah in the late Eighth Century was northern Israelite in origin, desire to maintain ideological ties to the royal cultic sites, (e.g., Bethel) would be substantial. Reverence toward Bethel might spread into the greater populace. Moreover, upon the fall of Samaria, Bethel was in the Assyrian province of Samaerina under the direct imperial rule; therefore, pilgrimages between the two territories could divert funds from Judah. Young also entertains a financially driven hypothesis, "The permanent abandonment of other cultic centers of worship could be argued, in addition to all that has been proposed, as a means to ensure that more revenue streamed into the capital city even as the state religion was transformed into a royal cult."¹⁶² The obvious choice was to ban all sanctuaries – the countryside and Bethel alike.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ Finkelstein and Silberman, "Temple and Dynasty," 274–75.

¹⁶² Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, 114.

¹⁶³ Breaking the bonds between northern refugees and Bethel would also find legitimacy through collections of anti-Bethel prophetic traditions (i.e Hosea 10; Amos 3-5).

(4.6.2.2) *The Biblical Record – 2 Kings 18:4*. Details of Hezekiah's reforms in Kings are brief, comprising only one verse, 2 Kgs 18:4. The reforms include three components: the removal¹⁶⁴ of the *bamah*, concomitant destruction of synchronistic practices deemed Canaanite (e.g., *matzabeh* and *asherah*), and specific mention of the destruction of the bronze serpent called the Nehushtan.

[**The Bamoth**¹⁶⁵] As mentioned, the removal of the *bamoth* is the culmination of a proposed Hezekian history. The designation *bmh* (במה) does not appear as a technical expression, but a generic designation representing a ritual center outside of, or adjacent to, a sanctioned religious hub. A *bamah* can be either primitive open-air hilltop locations with cultic accouterments (i.e., altars, standing stones, and Asherah trees), or a constructed raised platform of similar use. Although some *bamah* have historical legitimacy (i.e. the

¹⁶⁴ The *hip'il* of סור is employed for the removal of the high places (2 Kgs 18:4; 18:22; 23:19) whereas noting their continued presence, the negative + *qal* conjugation is formulaic.

¹⁶⁵ For comprehensive discussion and literature review see W. Boyd Barrick, "High Place," *ABD* 3:196–200; J. A. Emmerton, "The Biblical High Place in the Light of Recent Study," *PEQ* 129 (1997): 116–23; Humphrey H. Hardy III and Benjamin D. Thomas, "Another Look at Biblical Hebrew בִּמְה 'High Place,'" *VT* 62 (2012): 175–88; Donna L. Petter, "High Places," *DOTHB*, 413–18; Ziony Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches* (New York: Continuum, 2000).

great *bamah* at Gibeon), the designation becomes a pejorative term by the Eighth Century.¹⁶⁶

Although 1 Kgs 3:2 grants dispensation to Israelite worship at the *bamoth* based on the fact the temple was yet to be built, 1 Kgs 3:3 condemns Solomon for the practice; however, both comments likely reflect secondary annotation. The first mention of “building” *bamoth* is in 1 Kgs 14:23 during the reign of Rehoboam. In the regnal formula for each subsequent Judean king, Dtr bemoans their existence: e.g., Asa (1 Kgs 15:14), Jehoshaphat (1 Kgs 22:44), Jehoash/Joash (2 Kgs 12:4), Amaziah (2 Kgs 14:4), Azariah/Uzziah (2 Kgs 15:4), Jotham (2 Kgs 15:35). After Hezekiah’s death, the *bamoth* were rebuilt by Manasseh (2 Kgs 21:3) only to be subsequently despoiled in Josiah’s “purge” (2 Kgs 23).

¹⁶⁶ Hosea castigated the “high places of Aven” (10:8) in the context of Samaria; however, the language allows for a collective description. Amos castigates the *bamah* of Isaac, in parallel to general “sanctuaries of Israel,” while at Bethel (Amos 7:9,13). Jeremiah uses the term in association to foreign gods, either the generic “baal” or the gods of Moab etc. (7:31; 17:3; 19:5; 32:35; 48:35). Furthermore, *bamah* are mentioned 5x in 2 Kgs 17 regarding the sins of the north, both before and post-Samaria. In Deut, the root בָּמָה is surprisingly never employed in a cultic context. It is found only 2x, once in the Song of Moses (32:13) where Yahweh guided Jacob along the “high places of the land,” and once at the conclusion of Moses’ blessings (33:29) stating that Jeshurun (Israel) will tread “upon the backs (בָּמָה)” of their enemies.

It is ambiguous as to which *bamoth* Hezekiah removed. The association with the stylized D phrase “upon every high hill and under every green tree,” suggest an emphasis on rural sites linked with “alien” worship practices. However, over time, the designation becomes a catchall for local shrines in general, both rural and urban. 2 Chronicles 31:1 presents Hezekiah’s reforms as comprehensive throughout the region. The image in Chronicles is one of collective participation throughout Judah and Benjamin in the destruction of the outlying cult. Even those in Jerusalem for Passover took part in the purge.

[Standing Stones and Asherah] The description of Hezekiah’s reform parrots standardized terminology for Deuteronomic related reforms. Hezekiah smashed (שבר) the standing stones (מצבת) and cut down (כרת) the asherah (אשרה). Parallel object-verb pairs are used in the description of Josiah’s reform (2 Kgs 23:14). Both Deut 7:5 and 12:3 have standardized lists of cultic abominations each with an associated action: tear down altar (נתץ מזבח), smash standing stone (שבר מצבת) and either hew/break (גדע 7:5) or burn (שרף 12:3) asherah (אשרה). The Deuteronomy passages also include the destruction (שרף באש) of idols/carved images (פסיל).

Standing stones were aniconic objects of veneration often located within open-air cultic locations (i. e. *bamah*).¹⁶⁷ As hypostatizations, the objects were intended to invoke the presence of a particular deity or perceive to be imbued with the deity's power.¹⁶⁸ Jacob notably set up a *massebah* at Bethel (Gen 22:18). The Deuteronomic prohibition to destroy the *masseboth* was directed toward accouterments of non-Yahwistic worship, in this case, a reification of the presence and power of generalized Canaanite deities.¹⁶⁹

Asherah were cultic objects associated with the worship of female deities, namely the consort of the Canaanite god Baal. Often a type of tree, or representation thereof, the object established an association with fertility and fecundity.¹⁷⁰ The apprehension against asherah extends beyond use in open-air shrines as the Asherah cult had apparently infiltrated the Jerusalem temple at one time. Asa is recorded as removing an asherah that was established for his mother/grandmother (1 Kgs 15:13).¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁷ Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*, 256–65.

¹⁶⁸ Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*, 257.

¹⁶⁹ Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*, 261.

¹⁷⁰ The relationship between the husband/wife motif and fruitfulness is central to Hosea, e.g., Chapter 2. The prophet castigates his wife for taking up the role of “consort” to a false “baal.”

¹⁷¹ There is confusion whether Maacha daughter of Abishalom is the mother or grandmother of Asa as she is also noted as the mother of Abijam. It is possible that Maacha retained her role of Queen Mother into

[**The Nehushtan**¹⁷²] Although absent in the description of reforms in Chronicles, most scholars accept Hezekiah's destruction of the bronze serpent as an authentic historic reference.¹⁷³ Associated with the wilderness traditions, the *Nehushtan* represented Yahweh's reprieve from divine judgment. Numbers 21:4-9 records one of many "grumbling" episodes. In this instance, Yahweh unleashes a plague of "fiery serpents"¹⁷⁴ upon Israel. Moses was presented with a means of intercession through the construction of a serpent affixed upon a

Asa's reign. 1 Chr 13:2 provides a different name for Abijah's mother (Micaiah) which might offer clarity. The emphasis on the queen mother in the Judean king regnal formulas also begs the question of the reverence of the maternal patriarch in Jerusalem. See also how Saolomon gave his mother a throne 1 Kgs 2:19

¹⁷² For discussion of the nature of the Nehushtan see Karen R. Joines, "The Bronze Serpent in the Israelite Cult," *JBL* 87.3 (1968): 245-56; Saul Oylan, *Asherah and the Cult of Yahweh in Israel*, SBLMS 34 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988); Harold H. Rowley, "Zadok and the Nehushtan," *JBL* 58.2 (1939): 113-41; Kristin A. Swanson, "Hezekiah's Reform and the Bronze Serpent" (PhD diss, Vanderbilt University, 1999). See also Young, *Hezekiah in History and Tradition*, 102.

¹⁷³ Rainer Albertz argues that there is no good rationale for fabrication. Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, Vol 1, 180 n. 151. However, for a skeptical position see Nadav Na'aman, "The Debated Historicity of Hezekiah's Reform in the Light of Historical and Archaeological Research," *ZAW* 107.2 (1995): 179-95.

¹⁷⁴ The term is found in Deut 8:15 and a plural form in Num 21:6. Interesting is the image of the "seraphim" in Isa 6, literally the "burning ones." Keel and Uehlinger note the similar language of seraph in Numbers 21:6-9 is the same language that Isaiah uses for the winged *uraei* in the temple vision. The *uraei* are typically of Egyptian iconography but show up in Judah at the end of Iron IIB as Hezekiah began to favor Egypt over Assyria. Zoologically the *uraei* were winged black neck cobra. Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, trans. Allan W. Mahnke (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 272-74. Is there any connection between the Nehushtan and Isaiah's imagery? Was the Nehushtan seen as a hypostasis of the seraph?

pole, cast out of bronze/copper.¹⁷⁵ Whosoever looked upon the image was summarily saved from the plague. Akin to other notable ancient symbols of Yahweh's presence and protection (e.g., the ark of the covenant), it was deposited in the Jerusalem temple.

There are many theories regarding the origin of the *Nehushtan*. Links between god(s) of healing, fertility, or the underworld have been suggested. Serpent imagery is prevalent throughout the Middle and Late Bronze Age cultic contexts. Consequently, the totem might represent a vestige of the ancient Jebusite cult.¹⁷⁶ A connection to contemporary Egyptian motifs is also possible.¹⁷⁷ Whatever its precise origins, it appears the *Nehushtan* was considered a legitimate element of Yahwistic worship. Keel and Uehlinger state "[Hezekiah's] readiness to stop the use of the copper snake is probably understood as an expression of his thorough aversion to theomorphic images of the deity

¹⁷⁵ There is a notable wordplay between the Hebrew for serpent (*nehash*) and bronze (*nehosheth*). The MT could be read as either "it [The *Nehushtan*] was called" or "he [Hezekiah] called it" *Nehushtan*. Taking the latter reading, the name could represent a pejorative designation.

¹⁷⁶ Albartz argues that the theory of Harold Rowley connecting the *Nehushtan* to the ancient Jebusite cult, although generally rejected, has much to offer. Albartz finds additional evidence for serpent imagery in Davidic cult practice in the reference to the "Serpent's Stone" at En-rogel used by Adonijah in his coup (1 Kgs 1:8). Albartz, *Israelite Religion, Vol 1*, 180 n.151.

¹⁷⁷ There is no conclusive proof if the *Nehushtan* was Canaanite or Egyptian, but the former seems likely as iconographic evidence suggest Hezekiah was favoring Egyptian motifs during this period. Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God*, 272–74.

that were made in the Canaanite tradition.”¹⁷⁸ It is unclear if the image was treated as a non-Yahwistic deity or a hypostatization of the symbolic power of Yahweh, a central concern of Hosea and his contemporaries.¹⁷⁹ The criticism leveled against the Nehushtan is that the people offered incense to it (2 Kgs 18:4). Benjamin Thomas suggests that the termination of this practice is evidence of Hosea’s influence on Hezekiah’s reforms. Throughout Hosea there is condemnation of burning incense before icons, e.g. the calf of Samaria (Hos 2:10; 4:12, 17; 8:4-6, 10:2-5; 11:2; 13:2; 14:9).¹⁸⁰

(4.7) A Hezekian Utopia in Chronicles

To this point, the analysis has explored textual phenomena argued to originate in Hezekiah’s reign. However, it is also germane to briefly examine the image of Hezekiah in

¹⁷⁸ Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God*, 274.

¹⁷⁹ Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, 326. Discussing Eighth Century aniconism, Halpern states, “In each case, the prophet insists that the reality, the organic implementation of the social and emotional homage demanded by the god, not be confused with a representation or symbol of the reality, that the metaphorical expression of god’s power or the worshipper’s devotion not be confused with the actuality it is meant to represent. Both in Amos and in Hosea, therefore, the distinction between true and false worship of YHWH, between real and unreal devotion to the deity, is theologically central.” Halpern, “Brisker Pipes,” 95.

¹⁸⁰ Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, 326. Thomas suggests the condemnation of incense and images is a unique connection between Hosea and the Hezekian reforms.

Chronicles as it represents a historical memory of the king and his reign.¹⁸¹ The amount of treatment in Chronicles, four chapters (2 Chr 29-32), is more than any other monarch outside of David and Solomon. The legacy of Hezekiah projects significant importance. Through consistent admiration, the Chronicler shapes Hezekiah as a second Solomon.¹⁸² Hugh Williamson writes, “Thus in Hezekiah’s recapitulation of Solomon’s achievements it is as though the Chronicler is taking us back prior to the point of division where the one Israel is united around a single temple under the authority of the Davidic king.”¹⁸³

In contrast to the brevity of Kings, the Chronicler details Hezekiah’s reforms over three chapters. The image is one of a comprehensive reorganization to both the Temple and the priesthood. Whereas there is no date referenced in 2 Kgs 18:4, 2 Chr 29 places Hezekiah’s reforms in the first month of the first year of his reign. His piety could not be contained. Hezekiah opens the doors of the Temple, which his father had closed (2 Chr 28:24), establishing his righteousness from the outset of his reign.

¹⁸¹ Baruch Halpern argues that a history developed in Hezekiah’s court is foundational to the Chronicler’s account. Halpern, “Sacred History and Ideology,” 52–53.

¹⁸² See Arnold, “Hezekiah”; Vaughn, *Theology, History, and Archaeology*; H. G. M. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

¹⁸³ H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, NCB (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 351.

A significant aspect of Hezekiah's reforms in Chronicles is the presence of the Levites representing the possible integration of northern or other groups of disenfranchised cultic officaries. However, there is a distinction made between priests and Levites. The Levites are consecrated and tasked with the cleansing of the temple. The priests entered the inner part of the temple bringing out all the "uncleanness." The Levites summarily took the objects to the Kidron valley for desecration and destruction. All the utensils of the Temple, which Ahaz had discarded, were re-consecrated.

An appeal to a united golden age is evident in Hezekiah's effort to reinstate the celebration of Passover. In 2 Chr 30:1, Hezekiah sends a written invitation to "all Israel and Judah," including the territories of Ephraim and Manasseh to come to Jerusalem for a Passover celebration. In 2 Chr 30:10-11, the king directed couriers into the central tribal regions where the remnants spared Assyrian deportation lived (2 Chr 30:6). He received positive response from portions of Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun, but only a tepid response from Benjamin. The celebration of the Passover is apropos for a message of reunification. In fact, 2 Chr 30:26 associates the grandeur of Hezekiah's Passover to that of the united monarchy, "So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem."

(4.8) Summary Conclusions

Socio-political realities of the Late Eighth Century BCE Levant forced collective Israel into a crisis of corporate identity as military incursions upset the delicate balance of ancestral identity. Many disenfranchised peoples migrated south into the region of Judah, likely taking a nascent form of Deuteronomism with them. With so great an influx of refugees, the ruling class in Judah had to provide a rationale for the fall of Samaria. How could Israel's national god allow this to happen? Will Jerusalem suffer the same fate?

In the face of a new "mixed" populace, and the threat of likely Assyrian wrought devastation, Hezekiah needed to bolster a socio-political consensus. If Jerusalem was to garner the fealty of Northern Israelites, she must appeal to a core understanding of what it "means" to be Israel. The king needs to assuage the concerns of prophetic voices such as Hosea, who, through xenophobic zeal, set out to protect Yahwism from alien intrusion. Two concurrent phenomena were implemented to facilitate a "grand bargain." Out of the Judean court, a literary tradition emerged, including the collecting of wisdom traditions, collation of prophetic oracles, and a synchronistic pan-Israelite history. These texts were supported by concomitant cult reforms with the intent of eradicating all anachronistic vestiges of the Canaanite cult. Hezekiah, the righteous king, was equated with the original

temple patron, his ancestor Solomon. Images of a utopian golden age harkened back to a once-great united monarchy, a time when all Israel lived in blessing upon the root of Jesse.

Although the details of the siege of Jerusalem in the HB/OT has a complicated literary history, the Assyrian campaigns throughout Judah in 701 BCE are well documented outside the biblical traditions. Sennacherib's account details the decimation of the region, destroying 46 strong walled towns, numerous villages and deporting over 200,000 people. Regarding Hezekiah, the Assyrian king famously records how he "shut him up like a caged bird within Jerusalem, his royal city."¹⁸⁴ However these events transpired, unlike most rebellious vassals, Hezekiah remained on the throne, and Jerusalem lived to see another day (which more than Samaria could claim). The survival of Jerusalem would undoubtedly strengthen an argument for Hezekiah's incomparable righteousness, providing even more legitimation for an ideology of the unique divine sanction upon the House of David. As a result, two ideological tenets, the covenant of Sinai and the covenant of Zion, became intertwined within the matrix of Deuteronomism. However, this harmonious relationship was fragile and susceptible to dissonance if one voice accused the other of singing off-key.

¹⁸⁴ *COS* 2.119B:302-3.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DEUTERONOMIC VOICE

(5.1) Introduction

A phenomenological approach to ancient Israelite thought and theology brackets out concerns over definitive *sitz im leben* in favor of analyzing congruent manifestations of belief in practice (orthodoxy/orthopraxis). Through the lens of cultural imagination, Deuteronomism represents a dialectical relationship between ideologies within a field of historical reference. One voice offers a reading of Israel's constitutive narrative traditions as a proposed answer to existential questions of communal identity. Another voice evaluates said proposition and provides critique resulting in either legitimation, a competing "better" vision, or a forewarning of the implications of the proposal.

I will continue to organize the conversation that is Deuteronomism along a dialectic trajectory of historic ancient Israelite religion. After developing an appreciation of the social constructs covenant and law code as manifestations of cultural imagination, I explored how the Hoseanic voice employed the metaphor of covenant in a critique of (northern) Israelite socio-political structures. As a Pre-D voice the prophet elevated the

historical memory of an Exodus event, and concomitant wilderness traditions, as a *constitutive* ideology for (pan)Israelite corporate identity. Support for this ideology was provided through the utopian/dystopian matrix of covenantal blessing/curses. Unfaithful Israel will be stripped naked, but a return to her first love will restore the lushness of Jezreel. Uphold the covenant and live in abundance, reject the obligations, and reap the whirlwind.

The fall of Samaria and concurrent Neo-Assyrian western campaigns caused ripple effects throughout the Levant during the Late Eighth Century BCE. The rapid population increase of Jerusalem and the surrounding regions forced Judah to respond to a new socio-political reality. Urbanization prompted a transition in state organization wresting control of all tribal spheres of influence (i.e., judicial, cultic, financial, security) to centralized governance. However, if disparate factions were to unify around Hezekiah's reform program, Jerusalem had to appeal to a shared core Israelite identity. Subsequently, to bolster a claim for Davidic rule, an oeuvre emerged from the Jerusalem court (i.e., wisdom traditions, collation of prophetic oracles, and a synchronistic pan-Israelite history) envisaging a golden age built upon Solomonic wisdom and cultic piety.

Promoting adherence to the Sinai covenant tradition provided legitimation for an ideology of Davidic exclusivity. However, the Hezekian *grand bargain*, like all ideologies, was prone to distortion and, therefore, needed “reigning in.” The constitutive ideology of covenant implies inherent “conditions,” and the failure to uphold the tenets bears profound ramifications. For representatives of a “Hosea group,” any ideology that elevated an earthly monarch over Yahweh God was incongruent.

I argue that a critique of the monarchical divine mandate undergirds the Deuteronomic voice, namely the Deuteronomic Legal Code (DLC) (Chapters 12-26). Deuteronomic legislation provides support for a program of centralization with the caveat that the governing bodies do not act “like the nations,” but work for and respects the lives and traditions of the broader populace. Centralization represented a seismic sociological shift in the development of the Judean state.¹

Writing on the evolution of agrarian societies, Kenneth Whitelam defines a state as “[A] centralized government which has the power to enforce laws, collect taxes and

¹ See discussion of centralization in Chapter 4 for literature review on arguments for and against evidence of centralization during the Late 8th Century. See essays in Reinhard Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann, eds., *One God, One Cult, One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives*, BZAW 405 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010).

conscript labour (sic) from the many different communities within a defined territorial unit.”² A newly minted centralized bureaucracy takes up the task of maintaining or enforcing relationships between the royal elite at the *center*, and the old tribal power bases on the *periphery*.³ The inevitable tension between these two polities, rural and urban, ancestral and bureaucratic, undergirds the ideology of monarchy as voiced in the Deuteronomic Law of the King (LOTK).

However, competing ideologies do not represent an inherent bifurcation of pro and anti-monarchical positions. Whitlam notes two areas of ideological conflict regarding the emergence of the monarchy in Israel. First, a centripetal restructuring of society shifts away

² Keith W. Whitlam, “Israelite Kingship: The Royal Ideology of Its Opponents,” in *The World of Ancient Israel: Sociological, Anthropological, and Political Perspectives: Essays by Members of the Society for Old Testament Study*, ed. R. E. Clements (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 120.

³ Whitlam, “Israelite Kingship,” 120. The area of *core-periphery* studies emerged from the World Systems Analysis of Immanuel Wallerstien. Although Wallerstien’s theories were developed to describe the emergence of the first modern market economy in the 1600’s, his models have received wide application to ancient societies. The explanation of this multi-state system became a model for the analysis of interactions between *center* and *periphery* bounded territories. *Centers* are defined as political structures which control more developed technological skill and production processes (i.e. forms of labor organization) and possesses a strong state-ideological apparatus to defend its interests. *Peripheries* lack these attributes and are consequently modified to meet external demands for raw materials. For general discussion see M. J. Rowlands, Mogens Trolle Larsen, and Kristian Kristiansen, eds., *Centre and Periphery in the Ancient World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987). For application specific to the Israelite monarchy see Patricia Dutcher-Walls, “The Circumscription of the King: Deuteronomy 17:16-17 in Its Ancient Social Context,” *JBL* 121.4 (2002): 601–16.

from subsistence economic structures. Transition to state-based polity precipitates the exchange of a self-sustaining economy based on tribal allotments for a structured tax system. The emergence of the state also has the potential of instigating conflict among the urban elite who fear the loss of power in the face of an ideology of dynastic succession. Whitlam suggests that either of these power struggles had the potential of revolt when fomented by widespread unrest; however, neither context appears interested in replacing the monarchy with another form of governance.⁴ The monarchy is permissible if it is limited in its control and recognizes the concerns of the greater populace.

Akin to the theory of *cultural imagination*, Whitlam maintains that as early agrarian societies make a shift to monarchical rule, the new ideology received legitimation through a utopian ideal. Although the reality might be great political upheaval, the adoption of the monarchy would institute cosmic harmony as the king played a central role in maintaining earthly harmony. The king was a warrior, guarantor of justice, and priestly functionary, all

⁴ Whitlam, "Israelite Kingship," 121.

of which are limited in the LOTK. Whitlam states, “It was clearly essential to justify the social differentiations of state-society by appeal to a heavenly ideal.”⁵

I propose that the entirety of the DLC lays out a utopian social contract where cultic, economic, and judicial powers are redirected away from the periphery toward the center while ensuring all Israel, a system of *righteous justice* (מִשְׁפָּט־צְדִיקָה).⁶ Historical traditions concerning the rise of the monarchy warn of a dystopian society where Israel has a monarchy buttressed through taxation, conscription, political alliances, and wealth disparity. However, the LOTK provides an “alternate” vision. A proposed Deuteronomic utopia promotes checks against traditional ANE ideology(ies) of kingship. The Deuteronomic voice does not challenge the legitimacy of the institution of monarchy, but for society to function well (utopia/blessings), they hold the king to a different standard. Placing the LOTK at the rhetorical and geographical center of the DLC the king is the effectual centerpiece of a Deuteronomically ordered equitable society laid out in the so-called

⁵ For a detailed discussion on the ideology of the king in the ANE see Bernard Levinson, “The Reconceptualization of Kingship in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History’s Transformation of Torah,” *VT* 51.4 (2001): 511–18; Whitlam, “Israelite Kingship,” 130–136.

⁶ Throughout this chapter I will employ to the phrase *righteous justice* (מִשְׁפָּט־צְדִיקָה) as a theme, leitmotif, and/or title, of a proposed Deuteronomic utopia.

constitutional proposal of Deut 16:18-18:22. The Deuteronomic voice challenges the king to be the embodiment of the ideal Israelite, both subject to and protector of Torah. I argue that this idealized monarchy was built upon a “rational hope and historically conditioned self-reflection;” therefore, in the mind of the Deuteronomic voice, a Torah centered society had the hope of realization in the present.

(5.2) Deuteronomism: Pro/Anti-Monarchy

The proposition that the Deuteronomic LOTK provides qualified support for the monarchy engages a longstanding debate over what constitutes a political ideology within Deuteronomism.⁷ Approaches to monarchy within the broader D-corpus notoriously vacillate. Cultural memories concerning the emergence of the monarchy in Israel (e.g., 1 Sam 7-12), praise and judgment of the institution of kingship within annalistic material, and Deuteronomic legislation each offer variations on polity. A central concern is how do

⁷ For a literature review see Gerald Gerbrandt, *Kingship According to Deuteronomistic History*, SBLDS 87 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 18-36. For an overview of different phenomenological approaches to kingship, both text and material culture, throughout ancient Israel see John Day, “Some Aspects of the Monarchy in Ancient Israel,” in *New Perspectives on Old Testament Prophecy and History: Essays in Honor of Hans M. Barstad* Eds. Rannfrid I. Thelle, Terje Stordalen, and Mervyn E. J. Richardson., ed. Rannfrid Thelle, Terje Stordalen, and Mervyn E. J. Richardson, VTSup 168 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 161–74.

these apparent dissimilarities interact with each other within a proposed larger narrative complex (e.g., Deut-2 Kgs)?

Perceived dissimilarities are typically categorized into either pro- or anti-monarchical traditions. As these traditions are only accessible in a larger Deuteronomistic complex (e.g., sections of 1 Sam 1-12), scholarship often employs the concept of “layers.” Delimitation of pro/anti layers dates back to Julius Wellhausen.⁸ Wellhausen discerned two ideologies within 1 Sam 1-12: a pro-monarchial tradition detailing the coronation of Saul (1 Sam 9:1-10:16; 11:1-15) and anti-monarchical traditions castigating the request for a king (1 Sam 7:2-8:22; 10:17-27; 12:1-25). Based on ideological presuppositions of his time, Wellhausen considered the pro- texts “early” associated with the monarchial period and therefore “early.” The anti- texts were considered “late,” assigned to the post-exilic period which he saw as being subsumed to priestly authority.⁹

⁸ For literature review on the ideological study of Israelite monarchy since Wellhausen see Keith W. Whitlam, “Israelite Kingship: The Royal Ideology of Its Opponents,” in *The World of Ancient Israel: Sociological, Anthropological, and Political Perspectives: Essays by Members of the Society for Old Testament Study*, ed. R. E. Clements (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 119–30 (122-126).

⁹ William Schniedewind points out how Wellhausen’s approach to Israelite monarchy reflected his personal views of the institution of the monarchy. Wellhausen considered Bismarck’s unification of Germany as “[T]he pinnacle of political evolution,” presenting his famous *Prolegomena* on the occasion of the Kaiser’s birthday. William Schniedewind, *Society and the Promise to David: A Reception History of 2 Samuel 7:1-17* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 30. See also Frank Crüsemann, *Der Widerstand Gegen Das*

Wellhausen's dating schema need not be upheld. Through the lens of cultural imagination, both pro- and anti- could, and likely would co-exist. Variations between proposed pro/anti monarchial traditions fit well into the complexities of the socio-political transition from tribal-based society into an early state. Consequently, anti- traditions would represent pre-monarchial/transitional ideologies and pro- ideologies a transitional/monarchial position. Therefore, one could argue the anti- positions are more appropriately "early," whereas the pro-positions would be "late."

In his influential theory of a unified Deuteronomistic History (DtrH), Martin Noth¹⁰ assigned ideological priority to a theoretical editor collating earlier narrative traditions during the exilic period. This representative "Dtr voice" is heard in a series of important speeches (e.g., (Deut 1-4; Josh 23; Jdg 2:11-23; 1 Sam 12; 2 Sam 7; 1 Kgs 8:22-53; 2 Kgs 17:7-23). Highlighting a perceived negative attitude (i.e., 1 Sam 12:12, 19, 20), Noth

Königtum. Die Anti Königliche Texte Des Alten Testementes Und Der Kampf Um Den Frühe Israelitischen Staat (Neukirchener Verlag: Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1978), 6–8.

¹⁰ Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, vol. 2.

labeled Deuteronomistic ideology as anti-monarchical, effectually superseding any pro-monarchical tradition within the source material.¹¹

However, adherents to a double or triple redaction DtrH acknowledge a polyphonic political ideology within Deuteronomism. Double redaction adherents typically argue that a pre-exilic edition (Dtr₁), was anti-monarchical, evidenced in a pervasive judgment upon the monarchy for failure to uphold covenantal obligation. Conversely, a final exilic edition (Dtr₂) reflects a pro-monarchical position demonstrated in the editorial conclusion of 2 Kgs 25:27-30. This optimistic voice looks to the remnant of the Davidic monarchy living in exile as the hope of restoration. Advocates for a triple redaction theory presuppose a pre-Dtr₁ edition, which elevated Hezekiah as a pious Yahwist (see Chapter 4) emphasizing his destruction of the bamah. This edition would be characteristically “pro” monarchy; although, judging both Israelite and Judean kings on covenantal faithfulness.

Gerald Gerbrandt argues for a unified approach towards ideological variations in 1 Sam 7-12.¹² Gerbrandt contends that the description of the rise of the monarchy is a

¹¹ For general literature review on Noth’s thesis and subsequent scholarship on a Deuteronomistic History see Halpern and Lemaire, “The Composition of Kings”; Knoppers, “Theories of the Redaction(s) of Kings”; Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*.

¹² Gerbrandt, *Kingship*. On a unified approach to 1 Sam 8-12 see also Dennis McCarthy, “Inauguration of Monarchy in Israel: A Form-Critical Study of 1 Samuel 8-12*,” *Int* 27.4 (1973): 401–12.

carefully edited unit arguing that dividing the extant DtrH into competing anti/pro-ideologies is a futile exercise as the two have been so integrated they cannot be torn asunder. He states, “The whole of the unit is about the problem of kingship. Through the creative use of older traditions, the Dtr created an account of the rise of kingship, which integrated the new institution into the structure of Israel.”¹³ Consequently, the final edition of the DtrH holds both anti/pro positions in tension leading the reader to make judgment calls.

Approaching *D* as polyphonic, there is no singular *D*-voice when it comes to the monarchy; therefore, the argument over if *D* is pro/anti-monarchy is somewhat mute.¹⁴ One

¹³ Gerbrandt, *Kingship*, 29. Gerbrandt concludes that the DtrH had two positive roles for the king: 1) the king was the official responsible for ensuring covenant obedience, a role Gerbrandt calls the “covenant administrator.” 2) The king to guide the people in trust of Yahweh, the protector of Israel, during time of military crisis. Kings were judged on how well they upheld these roles (190-191).

¹⁴ William Schniedewind avers, “There persists a bipartite source analysis of the rise of the monarchy focusing anti-monarchy and pro-monarchy sources...One of the primary issues in the early formation of the state is the development of a common ideology, which supported the emerging administrative structures against strong and entrenched institutions that were being supplanted. There is little reason to envision an early pro-monarchy source from a late antimonarchy source; both forces must have accompanied the formation of the state.” Schniedewind, *Society and the Promise to David: A Reception History of 2 Samuel 7:1-17*, 30–31. See also Hayim Tadmor, “Traditional Institutions and the Monarchy: Social and Political Tensions in the Time of David,” in *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays, International Symposium for Biblical Studies, Tokyo, 1979* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1982), 239–57.

D-voice might have negative attitudes toward the monarchy, representing vestigial voices of pre-state tribal organization, whereas another *D*-voice might provide strong support for the sovereign by elevating certain kings as paragons on covenant fidelity and cultic purity. Still, other voices might represent qualified, or agnostic opinions of monarchial rule. A qualified monarchial voice differs from either an anti- or pro- voice in that it supports/legitimizes the monarchy, but only a particular (utopian) vision.

(5.3) The Samuel Traditions and the Law of the King

Discerning variations in political ideology within Deuteronomism requires an analysis of shared lexical and thematic content in the request/demand and allowance for the monarchy in both the Samuel traditions (e.g., 1 Sam 8:1-22; 10:17-27; 12:12-25), and the Deuteronomic LOTK (Deut 17: 14-20). There are many lexical/semantic and literary parallels between both texts, each sharing overarching concerns. The details of the parallelism are indicative of a direction of dependency. I suggest that these nuanced parallels, namely through variations of shared lexemes, infer an intended association where the Deuteronomic voice is drawing from the Samuel traditions, softening perceived negative tones into conditional support for the monarchy.

(5.3.1) The Demand/Request for a King

Although there is variation in what prompted the request for a king,¹⁵ a common concern within Deuteronomism is the establishment of an impartial judiciary. The request/demand for a monarchical rule in 1 Sam 8:1-22, highlights a rejection of a hereditary based judiciary for centralized (e.g., non-tribal) justice.¹⁶ In 1 Sam 8:1-3, because of his advanced age, Samuel establishes his sons, Joel and Abijah, as judges (שֹׁפְטִים) over Israel, assigning them to a remote southern outpost in Beersheba.¹⁷ However, their immoral reputation became

¹⁵ The context of the request for a king in 1Sam 8:4-6 and 12:12 differs. The narrative context of 1 Sam 8:4-6 regards the failure of a hereditary based judiciary; however, in 1 Sam 12:12 the request is associated with military concerns, e.g. the Ammonites, although Nahash of the Ammonites is not mentioned in until after Saul's coronation 1 Sam 11:1. Upon defeat of the Ammonites the kingdom is "renewed" at Gilgal. 1 Sam 12 takes up the chronologically/narratively closest rational, e.g., Saul's military victory.

On the meaning of "judge" in the elder's request for a king in 1 Sam 8, Matitahu Tsevat suggests that the semantic range of the word is broader than judicial matters but bear the more general sense to "rule." Tsevat suggests that the word *shpt* 1 Sam 8:20 should be understood as a hendiatrion offering the translation "Our king shall govern us, lead us forth and fight our wars for us." Tsevat states, "This is the nature of the government that the hour requires; the juridical element is totally absent." Matitahu Tsevat, "The Biblical Account of the Foundation of the Monarchy," in *The Meaning of the Book of Job and Other Biblical Studies: Essays on the Literature and Religion of the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1980), 85.

¹⁶ The rejection of Samuel's sons continues a theme of a rejection of hereditary as the sole determination for leadership notably evident in the failure of the sons of Eli associated with the sanctuary at Shiloh. The theme also bears significance in the Gideon/Jerubbaal cycle, Judg 6-9. An emphasis on charismatic selection in the Saul narratives (e.g. 1 Sam 9-10) presents an alternative means of selective

¹⁷ Samuel's own judicial circuit included the population centers of the central highlands, e.g. Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah (1 Sam 7:16). The assignment to the "boondocks," might be based on Samuel's age and inability to travel great distances. However, based on their reputations, their father might have been "turkey-farming" the young men to a location where they could inflict the least amount of damage.

widespread knowledge, enough so, that the tribal elders (זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) gathered at Ramah, bringing their concerns directly to Samuel. The text admonishes the men for taking bribes¹⁸ (יִקְחוּ־שֹׁחַד) and diverting justice (וַיִּטּוּ מִשְׁפָּט), two fundamental threats to an impartial judiciary.

Likewise, the Deuteronomic LOTK institutes the monarchy as a part of a comprehensive “constitutional” echoing the concern for a moral judiciary (Deut 16:18-18:22, see discussion below). In Deuteronomy 16.18, “judges and officials” (שֹׁפְטִים וְשֹׁטְרִים) are to be established over Israel who “will judge the people (in a manner of) righteous justice(מִשְׁפָּט־צֶדֶק).” Prohibitions regarding the nature of this “judging” are presented. Judges are warned about “perverting justice” (לֹא־תִטֶּה מִשְׁפָּט) and forbidden to “take a bribe” (וְלֹא־תִקַּח שֹׁחַד).¹⁹ (see chart 1)

¹⁸ In 1 Sam 8:3 the sons of Samuel are noted as both pursuing בָּצַע and taking שֹׁחַד, words interchangeably translated as “bribe.” The first term is found in the context of the establishment of the judiciary in Ex 18:21 and the second is employed in Deut 16:19 in the same regard.

¹⁹ One noticeable difference between the context of 1 Sam 8:4-6 and Deut 17:14-20 is that the Samuel traditions directly connect the king to the administration of justice; however, although the LOTK places the monarch at the center of the judicial reforms there is no direct reference to his role leading to the assumption that he is stripped of these duties; however, this need not be a necessary assumption as the king is at the center of the LOTK, he is given a significant role in covenant mediation and wisdom based upon knowledge of Torah.

Chart 1: Common lexical elements between 1 Samuel 8:1-3 and Deuteronomy 16:18-19.

1 Sam 8:1 וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר זָקַן שְׁמוּאֵל וַיִּשָּׂם אֶת־בָּנָיו שְׁפָטִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל:

1 Sam 8:3 וְלֹא־הָלְכוּ בָנָיו בְּדַרְכּוֹ וַיֵּטוּ אַחֲרֵי הַבָּצַע וַיִּקְחוּ־שֹׁחַד וַיֵּטוּ מִשְׁפָּט:

Deut 16:18 שְׁפָטִים וְשֹׁטְרִים תִּתֶּן־לָךְ בְּכָל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ לְשִׁבְטֶיךָ

וְשָׁפְטוּ אֶת־הָעָם מִשְׁפָּט־צֶדֶק:

Deut 16:19 לֹא־תִטֶּה מִשְׁפָּט לֹא תִכְיֹר פָּנִים וְלֹא־תִקַּח שֹׁחַד כִּי הַשֹּׁחַד יַעֲוֶה עֵינֵי חֲכָמִים וַיִּסְלֹף דְּבָרֵי

צְדִיקָם:

Deut 16:20 צֶדֶק צֶדֶק תִּרְדּוּף לְמַעַן תַּחֲיֶה וִירִשְׁתָּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ:

There is a notable lexical correlation in the request/demand for a king between 1 Sam 8:5 and Deut 17:14, albeit with an important syntactical variation.²⁰ (see chart 2) Both texts share a unique noun-verb combination, “to set a king over us/me” (שִׁמָּה־לָּנוּ מֶלֶךְ)

²⁰ The temporal location for the request 1 Sam 8:5 is firmly established and provides the primary narrative rationale for the elders' gathering. In Deut 17:14, the request has been subordinated to the head verb of a temporal/conditional clause introducing new casuistic legislation in verse 14, the verbal phrase וְאָמַרְתָּ functioning as a sub-condition to the initial protasis.

/אָשׁימָה עָלַי מֶלֶךְ/;²¹ although, there is a differentiation of the violative in the two passages.

In 1 Sam 8:5, the voice of the elders is framed as an imperative, the implication being that this request is a “demand” urging immediate action.²² The somewhat broad semantic category of “demand” could suggest a request or wish;²³ however, the dissatisfaction lobbied by Samuel against the elders’ petition in 1 Sam 8:6 (also an imperative), combined with the restatement of the request in 8:19-20, betrays a volition far beyond mere “desire.” The people categorically reject Samuel’s warnings over monarchical abuse of power, with an emphatic “no” and reaffirmation of their request.²⁴

There is a subtle, but significant dissimilarity in the petition for the monarchy in Deut 17:14. Following the conditional/temporal clause,²⁵ a cohortative is employed in the

²¹ The request recounted a second time in 1 Sam 8:6 uses the verbal root נָתַן instead of שִׁים as in 8:5, both instances the verb is a masc. sg. imperatives.

²² *GBHS* 3.3.2a

²³ *GBHS* 3.3.2a

²⁴ The emphatic nature of the negative response gains force through the restrictive use of כִּי אֵם which syntactically overturns the material in the preceding clauses *IBHS* 39.3.5d.

²⁵ Although most translations emphasize the temporal aspect of the opening clause in v.14, the pericope must also be syntactically understood within the context of Deuteronomic casuistic legislation. Not denying the temporal nature of the clause, emphasizing the conditional aspect of the clause helps to elucidate the greater syntactic structure of the pericope. The most common means of constructing a condition employs a conditional particle in the protasis. The choice of כִּי suggests that the condition/hypothesis is considered real, bearing a similar force of אִם in a conditional clause but “sometimes with a nuance rather similar to the

appeal in the place of the imperative. In this instance, the cohortative reflects a “wish” and not “resolve.”²⁶ Joüon and Muroka suggest translating the cohortative in 17.14 as “*I would like to put,*” stating, “The violative nuance is sometimes optative: *May I kill!* When the speaker manifests his will in a way which is dependent on someone else's will: *I want to kill (if you allow it)*, the nuance is *I would like to kill, let me kill, allow me to kill.*”²⁷

Consequently, the petition for a monarchical rule in Deut 17:14 is framed as a request, not a demand. The Deuteronomic voice is expressing a want in a manner dependent on someone else's will, the implication being that Yahweh's approval is necessary for this situation.

Chart 2: Common lexical elements between 1 Samuel 8:4 and Deuteronomy 17:14.

1Sam 8:5

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו הִנֵּה אַתָּה זְקֵנָה וּבְנֶיךָ לֹא הָלַכְוּ בְּדַרְכֶּיךָ עֲתָה שִׂימָה לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ לְשִׁפְטָנוּ כְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם:

temporal nuance *in case*,” (JM 167f). Reading the present clause as the protasis of a conditional/temporal construction, the apodosis is not found until the infinitive absolute in v. 15.

²⁶ GBHS 3.3.3b.

²⁷ JM 114c.

Deut 17:14

¹⁴כִּי־תָבֹא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ וַיִּרְשָׁתָהּ וַיֵּשְׁבָתָהּ בָּהּ וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲשִׁימָה עָלַי מֶלֶךְ כְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם

אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹתָי:

The semantic variation highlights further contextual differences in the concern behind the demand/request for the monarchy. In 1 Sam 8, the elders are alarmed over the failed system of judicial selection. Samuel's subsequent criticisms levied against monarchical rule are that a king will fail to bring desired true justice. Instead, he will bring taxation, military conscription, and forced labor. Conversely, in Deut 17, the monarchy is portrayed as an integral part of a system of righteous justice. The king functions as a typological representative for an Israel subordinated to the priests and the Torah. The restrictions placed upon the king, as opposed to warnings, are directed at the king and not the people. Instead of a warning, they are presented to encourage accountability.

There is a deep tone of rejection in 1 Sam 8, of both the present corrupt judicial system, Samuel's authority, and by implication, Yahweh himself (8:7). In the face of this rejection, the allowance of monarchy should not be read as an act of acquiescence.

However, the Deuteronomic voice reframes the request as a desire and the allowance of

monarchy as whole-hearted permission with restrictions.²⁸ I propose that the LOTK has been constructed as casuistic legislation built upon the tradition of the Samuel narrative. The demand of the elders in 1 Sam 8:3 has been softened into a request in Deut 17:14. Consequently, the negative tone of the narrative has been tempered to give the institution of monarchy, and centralization, more legitimacy.

(5.3.2) The מִשְׁפָּט of the King

Additional evidence for the dependence of the LOTK on the rise of the monarchy traditions in 1 Samuel 8-12 is in the parallel usage of the phrase מִשְׁפָּט הַמֶּלֶךְ. In 1 Samuel 8:9-11, Yahweh instructs Samuel to “testify”²⁹ to the מִשְׁפָּט of the king. In response, the prophet delimits a series of warnings of the unforeseen oppression experienced under the monarchy.

²⁸ As suggested above, infinitive absolute + *yiqtol* construction at the head of this verse functions as the apodosis of the conditional clause begun in 17:14. The use of the infinitive absolute with a finite verb places emphasis on the modality of the verb and not necessarily the verbal action itself (JM 123d). Waltke and O'Connor suggest that *affirmation* “is the most straightforward role of the infinitive absolute,” and additionally, “this affirmation may form a strong contrast to what proceeds or follows,” (IBHS 35.3.1b). The question of modality is driven by the greater semantic context. The implied modal nuance of permission in שׁוֹם הָשִׁים is based on contrast to לֹא תִכְלֶה later in the verse. Joüon and Muroka suggest a modal nuance of *can/may* (JM 123h). For Deut 17:15 they offer the translation “*you may freely put...*” (JM 113l).

²⁹ The emphatic nature of this command is evidenced through the *hip'il imperfect + infinitive* absolute conjugation of the root עוֹד.

With a literary drumbeat, “He will take, he will take, he will take” all monarchs are indicted over three general categories of criminal abuses: 1) the assemblage of a large professional military through conscription, 2) the development of a large harem of female domestic workers, and 3) the redistribution of wealth from the local populace to the royal treasury. Many of the concerns recounted by 1 Sam 8 are parallel, albeit arguably condensed, in the LOTK. However, what is presented as warnings to the people in 1 Sam 8 are offered as charges to the king in Deut 17.

Multiple interpretations of the word מִשְׁפָּט (*mishpat*) in 1 Sam 8:11 are offered across English translations (NIV, CSB, HCSB = “rights”; NLT, ESV = “way(s)”; NAS = “procedures”; KJV = “manner”; NET = “policies”; CEB = “lawful practices,”). Noting parallels in literature from Ugarit,³⁰ an argument has been levied that the “*mishpat* of the king” refers to the common understanding of how monarchy functioned throughout the ANE. Describing the narrative genre of 1 Sam 8 as a “procedural discourse,” David Tsumura

³⁰ I. Mendelsohn, “Samuel’s Denunciation of Kingship in the Light of the Akkadian Documents from Ugarit,” *BASOR* 143 (1956): 17–22. See also Tomoo Ishida, *The Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel: A Study on the Formation and Development of Royal-Dynastic Ideology*, BZAW 142 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1977), 30.

suggests that the “mishpat” referenced is more akin to a “manual” recounting the rules of monarchical society, which in the present content is presented in a derogatory manner.³¹

Mishpat is also an important term in the story of Saul’s coronation in 1 Sam 10:25. As part of the ceremony, Samuel writes out the “*mishpat* of kingship/the kingdom”³² and places it before Yahweh. The relationship between 8:11 and 10:25 is unclear, with many offering different translations for each passage.³³ For example, P. Kyle McCarter translates 1 Sam 8:11 as “justice of the king” but 10:25 as “the law of the kingdom.”³⁴ The “*mishpat* of kingship” in 10:25 might refer to a long-lost document that proscribed the operation of the kingdom.³⁵ McCarter states, “[I]t seems more likely in the present circumstances [10:25]

³¹ David Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 253–55.

³² There is a minor lexical variation between 1 Sam 8:9, 11 (מִשְׁפָּט הַמֶּלֶךְ) and 1 Sam 10:25 (מִשְׁפָּט הַמְּלָכָה). The former employs the common nominative “king” where the later uses the verbal nominative designating the institution of king-like rule. Sorting out the difference in terms bears more weight on the literary development of the Samuel traditions than on the contextual relationship between both texts and the LOTK.

³³ Baruch Halpern suggests that “[I]t is a likely presupposition that limits are placed, in 1 Sam 10:25, on the powers bestowed on the monarch in 1 Sam 8.11ff, the resolution introducing monarchy into Israel.” Baruch Halpern, *The Constitution of the Monarchy in Israel*, vol. 25 of *HSM* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1981), 224.

³⁴ However, McCarter notes that the LXX favors a parallel translation for both texts. P. Kyle McCarter, *I Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes & Commentary*, AB 8 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980), 193.

³⁵ McCarter, *I Samuel*, 193–94.

that the people are advised of the regulations under which the new kingdom will operate and thus that *mishpat* here means ‘law, ordinance’ or even ‘constitution’ rather than ‘justice’ as in [Chapter] 8.” Tsumura suggests that 10:25 references the “[I]nstitution of the monarchy, that is, the relationship between the king and the people, concerning which both the newly enthroned king and the people must have ‘legal’ agreement.”³⁶ Hertzberg argues that the “written law” in 10:25 was more than merely the warnings detailed 1 Sam 8, noting “We have an example of such a ‘law for the king’ in Deut 17:14ff.”³⁷

A significant concern of the Deuteronomic voice is adherence to *mishpat*³⁸ under a reformed system of both cult and governance, of which the monarchy is an integral part. The king represents a typological Israel subordinated to the priests and the Torah. The

³⁶ Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, 299.

³⁷ Hans W. Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel: A Commentary*, trans. J. S. Bowden, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964), 90.

³⁸ The word is found 37x throughout Deuteronomy and functions as a leitmotif. In multiple instances the word, akin to *Torah*, refers to the contents of the whole of the book (Deut 4:1, 5, 8, 14; 5:1; 6:1; 7:11-12; 8:11). The lexeme (מִשְׁפָּט), “judgement” “legal decision”, or “justice,” bears a strong judicial connotation. Peter Enns, “מִשְׁפָּט,” *NIDOTTE* 2:1142–44.

restrictions placed upon the king are presented to encourage accountability to the Torah.

Unlike 1 Sam 8, rationales are provided as to the benefits of being a righteous king.³⁹

As with the demand/request tradition of 1 Sam 8, the coronation narrative of 1 Sam 10 provides a historical base for a legal scenario allowing for the monarchy. Consequently, I suggest that the LOTK has been composed in such as a mirror of the “*mishpat* of kingship” mentioned in 1 Sam 10:25. Drawing upon the older traditions, which emphasize prophetic sanction of the monarchy, the LOTK presents itself as a coronation ceremony, including a reference to a written document. Under Levitical guidance, the king writes a copy of the Torah, placing it before Yahweh, reflecting the actions of Samuel in 10:25.

(5.4) Centripetal Rhetoric and the Deuteronomistic Legal Code [Deut 12-26]

I argue that through the intentional organization of the Deuteronomistic Legal Code (DLC) (Deut 12-26) (See Appendix 1), the Deuteronomistic voice provides a qualified affirmation of centralization, and subsequently, the monarchy.⁴⁰ The entirety of the DLC is bookended by

³⁹ See discussion on 17:20 below.

⁴⁰ Some question if monarchy should be considered part of the DLC or a separate interpolation. One argument comes from the general lack of mention of the king in the whole of Deuteronomy. Other than the mention of the defeat of foreign kings (Amorite kings Og and Sihon; Pharaoh) the only mention of an Israelite king is in the curse of Deut 28:36: "The LORD will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a

worship at a central sanctuary in both orthodoxy and orthopraxis. Located in the rhetorical past, Deuteronomy Chapter 12 looks forward to a time of settlement in the land, establishing a framework for the organization of a utopian society. Through covenant loyalty, Israel will inherit a land of blessing given to them by Yahweh, a place of rest and safety from enemies (Deut 12: 9-10.) However, to become a utopia, the land needs to be cleansed of its present/former inhabitants, rendered apostate obstacles. All Israel is called upon to join in Yahweh's purge by removing all remnants of abomination.

Beginning in Deuteronomy Chapter 12, a *centripetal rhetorical force* draws the reader towards an ambiguous geographical focal point. Not necessarily the geographical center, but central in focus is "The place Yahweh will choose to place his name there,"⁴¹ where all Israel should gather. No specific location is given, only that it is chosen from all the tribes. The ambiguity proposes a society akin to Thomas Moore's utopia in that it is not

nation that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone," (ESV). Yahweh as divine king, in *Jeshurun*, is mentioned in Deut 33:5. Reinhard Müller, "Israel's King as Primus Inter Pares: The 'Democratic' Re-Conceptualization of Monarchy in Deut 17:14-20.," in *Leadership, Social Memory, and Judean Discourse in the Fifth-Second Centuries BCE.*, ed. Diana V. Edelman and Ehud Ben Zvi, WANEM (Sheffield: Equinox, 2016), 59.

⁴¹ On this phrase see Sandra Richter, *The Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology: Lěšakkēn Šēmō Šām in the Bible*, BZAW 318 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002).

only a “good place” (*eutopia*) but also embodies the idea of “no place” (*outopia*).⁴² This unspecified location must be “sought out” (12:5), a holy pilgrimage. Although, as the DLC proceeds, this journey is not only one of cultic purity but affects all aspects of life as “The Place” is also where Israel seeks social justice. The specific laws, or groupings thereof, follow a trajectory from the periphery, e.g., the local community, to a central cultic/administrative structure. Upon arrival, this rhetorical force subsequently slingshots back out again to concerns for justice at the local level, albeit always with the center in mind. (See Appendix 1)

At the very center of the DLC resides a so-called “constitution” for Israelite society. This pericope, Deut 16:18-18:22, depicts a utopian vision for polity structures built on a foundation of מִשְׁפָּט-צֶדֶק. Focusing on the organization of judicial, cultic, and administrative offices, this section establishes checks on the crown. There are provisions for a central

⁴² Spatial ambiguity is inherent within the concept of utopia. Ricoeur draws on the concept of “no-place” when he says, “The fantasy of an alternative society and its topographical figuration “nowhere” works and is the most formidable contestation of what is. What some, for example, call cultural revolution proceeds from the possible to the real, from fantasy to reality?” Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, 320. Steven Schweitzer highlights this spatial/geographical ambiguity with the caveat that utopia, “[I]s not “no-place” in the sense of being non-existent, but rather ‘the ‘other’ of any place’ which does exist.” Utopias tend to resist “easy representation on a map or straightforward depictions of its detailed social structures...By presenting ideals that avoid simple implementation, utopia is held out as the goal to be continually striven after but never completely reached. Thus, power is indefinitely critiqued a never fully accepted as efficient or satisfactory in its present form(s) and a structure(s).” Schweitzer, “Utopias and Utopian Literary Theory,” 20–21.

repository for legal consultation. Levites and court prophets are also prescribed an advisory role within the royal court. Both officaries function as covenant mediators and guardians of the Torah in the presence of the king.⁴³ Torah, at the center focal point, reigns supreme. A veritable holy of holies effectively governing the DLC in its entirety.

After the regulations for the utopian society (Chapters 19-25), the DLC concludes with a rhetorical return to the topic of worship at “The Place.” There is a vision of peaceful settlement and subjugation of apostate threats. The reader is presented with a liturgical celebration of the initial blessing of Yahweh in this new utopian existence, “a land flowing with milk and honey” (26:15). Israel is called to recount their movement from outside, into the land, completing the geographical advance of beginning in Deut 12. The DLC concludes with an exhortation to maintain all the commandments (חֻקֵּי וּמִצְוֹתַי וּמִשְׁפָּטַי) charged by Yahweh (26:16-17), paired with a word of comfort based upon the unique status between Israel and their God (26:18-19).

⁴³ Levites have an explicit role in Torah mediation and by proximity to the king, the prophets have an implicit role of covenant mediator. See discussion on 16:18-18:22 below.

(5.4.1) The Movement toward the Center

Following the initial call to cultic purity in Chapter 12, the tug to the center begins.

Deuteronomy 12:15-16:17 explores the dialectic tension between the central sanctuary and the local community. As all tithes and offerings are directed away from the periphery to the center, centralization inherently requires a level of delegitimization at the local sanctuaries (12:12-14). The question becomes if centralization is a legitimate form of governance, how does this align with a vision of a land of blessing?

The first concern is dietary restrictions. What is acceptable to eat in the local village, what must go to the center?⁴⁴ Deuteronomy 12:15-28 details the specific issue of meat consumption in the local community. Dietary concerns return in 14:1-21, but with a focus on general restrictions/allowances grouping animals into the categories “clean” and “unclean.” Between these two sections on diet, Deut 12:29-13:18 carries a local focus presenting possible scenarios where Israel might be enticed into apostasy in village life: a false prophet or dreamer of dreams [13:1-5], a close family member (i.e. brother, children, wife) [13:6-11], or general community members who do not reflect and are therefore a

⁴⁴ For detailed analysis on the conceptualization of sacred slaughter in Deuteronomy see Levinson, *Deuteronomy*.

distraction from, prescribed societal norms (worthless fellows)⁴⁵ [13:12-18]. In each of these situations, capital punishment is imposed with justice meted out at the community level.

In Deuteronomy 14:22-15:23, concerns transition to questions of financial responsibility. Again, the focus is on the local level. Deuteronomy 14:22-26 and 15:19-23 organize general instructions on balancing financial responsibility (e.g., the tithe/firstborn) between local and central repositories. These two sections flank the responsibility toward economic justice at the local level. Four categories of individuals are described: Levites [14:27-29], foreign debtors [15:1-6], the “poor”⁴⁶ [15:7-11], and Hebrew debtors in servitude [15:12-18]. The Deuteronomic utopia is one without economic oppression. Those who are without access to territorial allotments, and therefore lack means to be self-sufficient are to be cared for in their local communities.

⁴⁵ Lit. “sons of bellial” (בְּנֵי בִלְעֵל). See Judg 19:22; 20:13; 1 Sam 1:6 (daughter); 1 Sam 2:12; 1 Kgs 21:10, 13; 2 Chr 13:7. The usage of the בִלְעֵל as “worthless” is 26x the OT/HB.

⁴⁶ This category “poor/oppressed” (אֲבִיּוֹן) in Deut Chapter 15 designates fellow Israelites who do not have access to hereditary allotments, possibly tenant farmers, and were consequently in a position of disadvantage in the court system.

Deuteronomy 16 notes a significant transition in geographical focus. 16:1-17 begins a procession to the central sanctuary, initiated in Chapter 12, finding completion in Chapter 26. The unit continues to unpack the tension between the core and periphery. The pilgrimage regulations answer the question, “What must go to the central sanctuary and *when* must it go?” Three times a year, every Israelite male must make the journey to “The Place,” taking the proscribed tithes and offering with them. Three major pilgrimage feasts are detailed: Passover/Unleavened Bread [16:1-8], Pentecost (The Feast of Weeks) [16:9-12], and Succoth (Feast of Booths) [16:13-15]. These instructions embody a rhetorical force drawing the reader to the institutional structures of cult and court, marking a notable shift from individual economic-cultic responsibility to an emphasis on greater socio-political structures.

The centripetal pull of the dialog between center and periphery places the legislation on “officers” at the geographical center of not only the DLC but virtually the whole of Deuteronomy. Deut 16:18-18:22 is often called the “constitution” for a Deuteronomic utopia. A detailed discussion on the pericope will follow below, but within the debate on broader rhetorical geography, 16:18-18:22 becomes the “destination” of the DLC. With the bookends of Chapters 12 and 26, the location of the “higher” court, priestly/prophetic

functionaries, and the monarch represents a geographical triad. “The Place” is the geographical organizing feature of the DLC, beginning, middle, and end.

In Deuteronomy 19, the movement slingshots away from the center and back into life in the periphery. At this point in the DLC, the focus turns to topics of non-cultic legislative concerns. The actual machinations of the cult appear of no interest to the Deuteronomic voice.⁴⁷ Although centralization would inherently prompt reform within the central sanctuary itself, the only cultic concerns in the DLC are in concert with financial obligations. Once at the center, the only concern is on the development of “secular” justice. The establishment of an impartial judiciary institutes both a governing body and a resource for legal precedent and wisdom that both stand over and draws legal concerns to it.

Deuteronomy Chapters 19-25 collect apodictic and casuistic legislation meant to inform judicial decisions at the local level; however, there is still an inherent centripetal

⁴⁷ The Deuteronomic legislation does not provide directives on cultic practice (i.e. specific types of sacrifice, how to perform sacrifice, details of priestly duties). The cultic concerns of the DLC are economic in concern, answering question of what can be kept for personal use, or must be given over to the central sanctuary. Obligations to the central cult are spoken of in generalized terms (i.e. burnt offerings, sacrifices, tithes, firstborn etc.). I acknowledge that the sacred/secular bifurcation is, in general, a false dichotomy in ANE cultures; however, the focus of the DLC is economic and judicial in orientation. The closet instruction on cultic forms is in Chapter 26. Although, even in this instance, the inclusion of the liturgy is more for literary balance than instructional. Just as the Deuteronomic voice is not anti-monarchical, it is also not anti-cult, but represents a different voice than P.

force moving back to the center in situations that cases may be “too difficult” to determine at the local level (17:8ff). The entire section, Deut 19-25, represents an extension of the establishment of the judiciary in 16:18-20. As the DLC unfolds, the location of the judiciary moves farther from the center. The rhetorical/geographical movement is incremental, beginning with corporate concerns. First, in Chapter 19, there is the establishment of regional judiciaries where individuals are held over for prosecution [cites of refuge].⁴⁸ In Chapter 20, there is specific legislation for a military tribunal⁴⁹ representing a communal level without a specified location.

In Chapters 21-25, various legal matters result in justice handed out at the local level. Most circumstances are brought before the elders (21:1-6; 21:19-20; 22:15-18; 25:7-9), at the city gate (21:19; 22:15; 22:24; 25:7). Local leaders were involved in cases specific to familial matters: rebellious son (21:18-21), a bride’s virginity (22:13-21), and levirate

⁴⁸ Designation of cities of refuge are in Deut Chapter 19, Num Chapter 35, and Josh Chapter 20. There are noted similarities and differences in content. In Num Chapter 35 the cities of refuge are associated with Levitical allotments. The Levite might function at the city of refuge in a similar manner as judicial mediator in Deut 21:1-9. Levitical allotments are also connected to the cities of refuge in Josh 20-21. This might appear contradictory to Deut where the Levites have a special status because of their lack of allotment. In Num 35, six cities are designated, three in Canaan and three “on the other side of the Jordan” (35:14); however, in both Josh and Deut only three locations are designated. Deut is unique that no city is named continuing a general spatial ambiguity.

⁴⁹ See discussion below on the relationship between the judiciary in Ex 19 and Deut 1.

marriage (25:5-10). In two instances, there is also mention of judges. 21:1-6 appears to reference the role of local judges in murder cases. 25:1-2 could be either at the local level or, based on the gravity of the punishment, represent the “higher” court (e.g., 17:8-13).⁵⁰ The only reference to the role of Levites in judicial proceedings at the local level is when a crime has been committed equidistant between two communities (21:1-9). The elders, judges, and Levites all participate in these cases. Presumably the judge and Levite function as mediators between the two groups of elders.⁵¹

(5.4.2) The Center [Deut 16:18-18:22]

In Deuteronomy 16:18-18:22, the content of the DLC transitions from cultic and economic tensions between the core and periphery (see above) to a “constitutional proposal”⁵² for an

⁵⁰ It is possible that both situations presume judges from the central court coming to the scene of the crime; however, this might also represent a vestige of an older “circuit court” system, i.e., Samuel (1 Sam 7:15-17).

⁵¹ The inclusion of both court and cultic functionaries represents the presences of both “higher” judicial, and divinatory wisdom. Deut 21:1-9 is the strongest affirmation the Levitical role in judicial matters outside of the establishment of the “higher court” in 17:9-13. The unique relationship between the two units presents 21:1-9 as “case law” for petitions to the central court. However, the relationship could also go the other direction. The establishment of priestly/Levitical judicial authority in 17:9-13 could be a reinterpretation of the law of unsolved murders intervention 21:9-13.

⁵² On the idea of Deuteronomy as the “constitution” of Israel see S. Dean McBride, Jr., “Polity of the Covenant People: The Book of Deuteronomy,” in *Constituting the Community: Studies on the Polity of Ancient Israel in Honor of S. Dean McBride, Jr.*, ed. John T Strong and Steven S Tuell (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005),

idealized Israelite society. Judicial, cultic, and royal court functionaries are all represented, providing a comprehensive vision of centralized rule. The depiction of a balanced government is indicative of the variation in the selection of each office. The people choose the judges (16:18), and the Levites/Priests possess hereditary authority. The prophet is ordained by divine appointment (18:15-16), and the king is a balance of both Israel and Yahweh's prerogative (17:14-15).

The centripetal rhetoric of the DLC continues in microcosm as 16:18-18:22 bears evidence of chiastic organization (See Appendix 2). The LOTK sits enthroned at the center, flanked by regulations regarding the Levitical duties and provision. Moving outward, there are parallel sections regarding the judiciary, i.e., rules on cases of apostasy. Analysis of each section and its relationship to the Deuteronomic utopia follows; however, commentary on the LOTK will be reserved upon the presentation of the overall structure.

17–34; Patrick D. Miller, “Constitution or Instruction? The Purpose of Deuteronomy,” in *Constituting the Community: Studies on the Polity of Ancient Israel in Honor of S. Dean McBride, Jr.*, ed. John T Strong and Steven S Tuell (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 125–41. Additional discussions in Halpern, *The Constitution of the Monarchy in Israel*, vol. 25; Müller, “Israel’s King as Primus Inter Pares”; Richard D. Nelson, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2002), 213.

[16:18-20 + 16:21-17:1] The “constitution” opens with a thesis statement: in the face of centralization, justice must be impartial and not blind.⁵³ This requirement not only governs the establishment of what Nelson calls an “independent judiciary,”⁵⁴ but functions as a leitmotif for the creation of a Deuteronomic political ideology. The establishment of the judiciary has foundations in Mosaic proclamation at Horeb/Sinai (Deut 1:9-18, Ex 18:13-27).⁵⁵ In both the Exodus and Deuteronomistic traditions, Moses establishes a system of judicial leadership; however, the similarities and variations suggest a reorganization within the DLC of a military tribunal into a civil judiciary.⁵⁶

⁵³ The proverbial statement in 16:19 (כִּי הַשֹּׁחַד יַעֲזֹר עֵינֵי חֲכָמִים וְיִסְלֹף דְּבָרֵי צְדִיקִים) echoes Ex. 23:8 (כִּי הַשֹּׁחַד יַעֲזֹר פְּקָחִים וְיִסְלֹף דְּבָרֵי צְדִיקִים) which concludes/governs a section of legal material regarding justice in a court of law. In Deut 10:17 Yahweh himself is embodiment of blind justice in eschewing bribes (לֹא יִקַּח שֹׁחַד).

⁵⁴ Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 217.

⁵⁵ For a discussion on the editorial relationship between these two passages see Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 218.

⁵⁶ In Ex 18:13-27 the judicial system appears organized along military leadership structures. The selection of men of חֵיל connotes those with wealth and military strength. However, these leaders must also be of good character, evidence devotion to Yahweh, and be impervious to bribes. The leaders are appointed as שָׂרִי within a military context, governing common military divisions. They are appointed judges over these divisions, suggesting a stratification of jurisprudence with Moses as the “supreme” judge. These judges were not necessarily tribally affiliated. In Deut 1:9-18 each tribe were to choose leaders who embodied the principles of justice. There are references to two categories, the military leaders (1:13-16) and the “judges” (1:17). It is ambiguous if the two categories have been harmonized or if there are two separate classifications. Von Rad argues the “officers” were “royal officials” who have responsibilities in the military therefore he concludes that the judges mentioned here must also be “royal officials”. He notes a possible association with 2 Chron 19:5-11 and Jehoshaphat’s judicial reorganization. Von Rad, *Deuteronomy*, 114. Nelson suggest the

These opening units move from the court to the cult. Although it is notoriously difficult to understand the interpolation of 16:21-17:1 into the establishment of the judiciary, 16:18-20 and 16:21-17 should be read as two units in tandem with 16:20 functioning as a hinge. After the initial command (you must/may appoint) in 16:18, a series of three apodictic statements concluded by an evidential *נִי* follows in 16:19-20. Similarly, 16:21-17:1 presents a series of three apodictic prohibitions⁵⁷ with an evidential *נִי* after 17.1. Therefore, 16.18-20 is establishing the tone and focus of the entire section with 16.21-17.1 effectively fusing the “new” topic with what has already been discussed, cultic regulation/reformation considering centralization. Consequently, righteous justice may only happen in the presence of righteous cultic practices.

military leaders might be experienced men who are still of age for military action. The elders could be the category of those who have “retired” from old age. Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 217. See also Moshe Greenberg, “Biblical Attitudes Toward Power: Ideal and Reality in Law and Prophets,” in *Religion and Law: Biblical-Judaic and Islamic Perspectives* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 101–12; Jacob Milgrom, “The Ideological Importance of the Office of the Judge in Deuteronomy,” in *Isaac Leo Seeligmann Volume*, ed. Yair Zakovitch and Alexander Rofé, vol. 3 of (Jerusalem: Reubenstein, 1983), 129–39; Moshe Weinfeld, “Judge and Officer in Israel and in the ANE,” *IOS* 7 (1977): 76–80.

⁵⁷ Deuteronomy 16:21-17:2 presents three cultic prohibitions. The first two are standard abominations within orthopraxis, e.g. *asheira* and *standing stone*, with the addition of a prohibition against the sacrifice of defective animals. The “location” of the prohibitions would appear to be at the local level but reflect how concerns at the local level have implications and are reflected in the central sanctuary.

[17:2-7] Cultic concerns are followed by a casuistic legal pronouncement reminiscent of situations highlighted in Deut 13, albeit in condensed form, where a community member entices others to “transgress the covenant.”⁵⁸ The prescribed process of justice is explained. After the incident has been discovered (“it is told to you, and you hear it”), there is to be a thorough inquiry.⁵⁹ The proof is presented at the gate where judgment is pronounced, and the penalty, in this case, capital punishment, is enacted. There must be at least two witnesses to convict.⁶⁰

[17:8-13 / 18:1-8] The movement toward the center continues in the establishment of a higher court system. As in Ex 18 and Deut 1, a bipartite judiciary is established. If a case is particularly vexing,⁶¹ it should be taken to the central court. Taking the place of

⁵⁸ Although common throughout Josh-2 Kgs, this is the only location of the phrase לְעֵבֶר בְּרִית is found in Deuteronomy. Furthermore, mentioned throughout Chapters 4-10, and the concluding material (e.g., the curses of Chapter 28-29, and Moses’ final speech in Chapter 31), 17:2 is the only use of בְּרִית in the DLC.

⁵⁹ The inclusion of the *hip’il infabs* of the root יטב connotes a thorough “well done” process. The relationship between this root and the verb דָּרַשׁ is unique to Deuteronomy, emphasizing the gravity of capital punishment. See Deut 13:15; 17:4; 19:18.

⁶⁰ The law of witnesses is picked up one again in 19:15-21 at the conclusion of the laws of premeditated murder, manslaughter, and the establishment of the cities of refuge, all associated with capital punishment.

⁶¹ The root used in Ex 18:26 (קָשָׁה) connotes the quality of “hardness” as in a hard object or Israel’s “hardheartedness.” However, the root translated “difficult” in Deut 17:8 (פָּלָא) bears the meaning difficult in

Moses (Ex 18:26) are the Levitical priests, and judge (sg), in the office at that time. A

comprehensive list of types of case law is mentioned: homicide (בִּיּוֹדָם לְדָם) legal right (בִּיּוֹדָם)

and assault (בִּיּוֹדָם לְנֶגַע). The verdict from the central court is final and must be

obeyed. Anyone who disrespects the legal authority acts with arrogance. The penalty of

disobedience is capital punishment, another association with the cultic offenses in Deut

13.⁶²

Parallelism in both content and structure between 17:8-13, and 8:1-8 provide evidence for a centripetal structure of 16:18-18:22. These two sections on Levitical function and provision buttress the image of a monarch upon the throne flanked by priestly authority (see discussion on the LOTK below). After the casuistic pronouncement in 17:8, the role of the Levitical priest in the central court is explained. In 17:12, the petitioner is instructed to “Listen to the priest, the one standing to minister in the name of Yahweh your

the sense of “wonderful, to miraculous to comprehend” like the birth of Isaac in Gen 18:14. Ironically, in Deut 30:11, the Mosaic voice says that “This commandment” (הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת) is not too difficult (פֶּלֶא).

⁶² Caution is urged in the importation of the concept of an appellate court. The central court is a place of judicial wisdom for legal matters beyond mere human knowledge and understanding. The inclusion of both Levites and judges could suggest a division of civil courts and cultic inquiries. Before centralization, the tribal judge would go to the priest in the local sanctuary for assistance likely through divination (i.e. Num 5:11-31). However, after the closure of the local cult, the location is centralized. Nelson suggests a division between “*torah*” and “*mishpat*,” the first being a priestly decision and the latter being judicial, although both are seen as equal in authority. Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 222.

God.” Similarly, 18.1-8 details the provisions due to the Levites noting that “[They] (sg) will minister in the name of Yahweh, his God, like all his brothers the Levites, the ones standing there before Yahweh,” (ESV).

Rhetorical parallelism is also evident in the use of motion. 17:8-13 opens with a casuistic clause (if...then) in 17:8, resulting in the individual “coming” (עָלָה) from the local community to the Levite at the central court. However, in 18:1-8, it is Levite who “comes” (בָּיָא) from the village to the central cult. The trajectory toward the center is pervasive. In both instances, as opposed to the pilgrimages in Chapter 16, the movement is by choice. Someone can bring petition to the court on their own volition per their legal rights. Also, as Levites do not have an allotment of their own, they have rights to a portion of the sacrifices at the central sanctuary. Therefore, the Levite may choose to go to the central sanctuary to receive his share. The text does not imply this is a regular or sporadic situation only that the journey is of the Levite’s choice.

[18:9-14] Parallel with the general prohibitions of apostasy in 17:2-7, 18:9-14 focuses on prohibited Canaanite forms of divination. The pericope presents a thorough list of

forbidden means of divination.⁶³ The focus on divination makes for a proper transition to the prophetic office.

[18:14-22] Reading 18:14-22 parallel with 16:18-17:1 is admittedly tenuous (see comments on the outline in Appendix 1). However, there are repeated themes and syntactical similarities within 16:21-17:1 and an extended section, 18:9-22, which suggests editorial intent. Notably, both units share thematic and lexical/syntactical content with Deuteronomy 12:29-13:18. Furthermore, these are the only two legal texts in the HB/OT dedicated to the prophetic office. Therefore, it is logical that one time, the two existed in tandem. The return to establishing a functionary's "office" in 18:15ff could provide further evidence for structural parallelism with the introduction of the more extensive section in 16:18-20 and the appointment of judges and officers.

Nelson delimits three concerns addressed through the legislation on the prophetic office in 18:14-22. First, this material provides an etiology. As Deuteronomy is rhetorically located on the plains of Moab, the question of Moses' successor is at the forefront. Also,

⁶³ The standard list of forbidden means of divination begins with the ubiquitous "passing the child through the fire" (also Deut 12:31). See Day, *Molech: A God of Human Sacrifice in the Old Testament*; Noort, "Child Sacrifice in Ancient Israel: The Status Questions." This was a unique concern with Deuteronomism as two Judean kings are accused of the activity during the 8th - 7th Century BCE (Ahaz, 2 Kgs 16:3 and Manasseh, 2 Kgs 21:6).

the prophetic office needed to be given a level of legitimacy as there were competing forms of divination, as noted above. The “Mosaic” prophet was a true mediator of Yahweh.⁶⁴

The second concern is one of prophetic obedience. There are many similarities between the prophet and the king, elevating the former to a level similar to the latter. Like the king, the prophetic office was requested by the people, and, like the king, the prophet will be chosen by Yahweh. Additionally, like the king, the prophet was to be a fellow Israelite. Therefore, as a covenant mediator, whereas the king is a mediator of the Torah, the word of the prophet is the word of God if it is proved true.

The third concern is a test for false prophets. Prophets were important functionaries in royal courts throughout the ANE. Based on the proximity of the section to the LOTK, the description is likely that of a court prophet. There is also competition between court prophets and those in the periphery.⁶⁵ The DtrH emphasizes the function of the prophet as an advisor and check upon the king (i.e., Samuel/Saul, Nathan/David, etc.). Jefferey Tigay states, “To Deuteronomy, the prophet is the most important and authoritative leader. In

⁶⁴ Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 234.

⁶⁵ Jeremiah is a notable example of ideological conflict between “inside” and “outside” prophetic voices as he is a perpetual harbinger of dystopia contra to the Zion theology coming from the Jerusalem court (i.e., Jer 23:9-40).

contrast to the king, whose power it limits, Deuteronomy strengthens the authority of the prophet.”⁶⁶ However, akin to the king, the prophet is also subservient to the word of Yahweh and Torah.

(5.5) The Law of the King [Deut 17:14-20] ⁶⁷

Located at the geographical, and arguably ideological center, the LOTK (Deut 17:14-20) is the effectual “linchpin” of the Deuteronomic utopia. A despotic top-down monarchical rule, “like the nations,” is forbidden.⁶⁸ The king represents an idealized Israelite, a selfless proponent of impartial justice for all his kinsmen. He is someone who willingly subjects himself to the teaching and study of the Torah. Although there is an earthly throne, Yahweh still reigns supreme in Israel.

⁶⁶ Jeffrey Tigay, *Deuteronomy = [Devarim]: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 172.

⁶⁷ For literature review on the LOTK Müller, “Israel’s King as Primus Inter Pares.” Also F. Garcia Lopez, “Le Roi d’Israel: Dt 17, 14-20,” in *Das Deuteronomium: Entstehung, Gestalt, Und Botschaft*, ed. Norbert Lohfink (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1985).

⁶⁸ The irony of the LOTK is that the request is inherently contra the vision of Deuteronomy as it is essentially a request to continue in the ways of those Yahweh deemed abhorrent. The request for the monarchy is to be “like the nations,” i.e., the ones being expelled. A purge of remnants of Canaanite society is a core tenet of centralization (Deut 12).

(5.5.1) Literary Analysis

Deliberations on the literary development of the LOTK shape the understanding of its location within, and influence upon, the ideology of the greater DLC. These debates also influence how one dates, and consequently understands a Deuteronomic utopian vision.

Although there are valid arguments for coherency within 17:14-20⁶⁹, recent scholarship on the LOTK promotes a developmental reading of incremental additions and layers. Taking a phenomenological approach to Deuteronomism, I will bracket out an attempt to discern redactional layers within the LOTK, affirming its coherence is both 17:14-20, and the greater DLC.

F. Garcia Lopez suggests that pinpointing the *sitz im leben* of the LOTK in all its literary layers depends on the answer to two questions.⁷⁰ The first question asks if the law is ideal and theoretical or if it is practical and rational in design. These two options appear to be binary opposites; however, operating from a definition of utopia as *an inventive*

⁶⁹ See Müller, "Israel's King as Primus Inter Pares," 60 n. 17.

⁷⁰ Lopez, "Le Roi d'Israel: Dt 17, 14-20," 297.

discourse on social structures based upon rational hope and historically conditioned self-reflection within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation offer mediation of idealism and reasonable historical possibilities.

Lopez's second question focuses on the nature of monarchical selection. What model does the law presuppose: charismatic selection, traditionally aligned with traditions recounting the origins of the monarchy or an emphasis on dynastic succession in line with the Judean focus on maintaining the Davidic line. Again, bifurcation is unnecessary. Within the Deuteronomic voice, both human and divine selection operate in tandem. Furthermore, I argue that the integration of ideologies of charismatic and dynastic rule can be viewed as a component of a Hezekian "grand bargain" which I argue is an ideological concomitant to the DLC.

Redactional analysis of the LOTK has origins in Wellhausen's bifurcation of pro/anti monarchical traditions.⁷¹ As Wellhausen's dating scheme assigned any perceived anti-monarchical tradition an Exilic/Post-Exilic date, he argued that the LOTK, which

⁷¹ For discussion of the historical approaches to the text see: F. Garcia Lopez, "Le roi d'Israel: Dt 17, 14-20" p. 277-297 in *Das Deuteronomium: Entstehung, Gestalt, und Botschaft* edited by Norbert Lohfink (Leuven University Press: 1985); also Müller, "Israel's King as Primus Inter Pares."

presumably restricted the monarchy, was an addition to Deuteronomic legislation from a time when the monarchy was not. Challenges to Wellhausen's argument for interpolation, have not always denied his dating scheme. For example, Hölscher argued that the LOTK is integral to the DLC, and consequently, a central tenet of his own utopian construing of Deuteronomy. However, Hölscher avers that the Deuteronomic vision stems from an Exilic/Post-Exilic ideology, a time where there was no king in Judah.⁷² Consequently, the Deuteronomic voice presents a retrograde vision for a perfected society that never existed, nor is there real hope of its "restoration."

Regarding the LOTK, Richard Nelson acknowledges, "Here, the flavor of utopian idealism is strong."⁷³ However, this portrait of an ideal polity need not be from a time when the monarchy was not. If one were looking to restore power, would they limit it so much? Nelson suggests, "Yet the text shows no concern about whether there will be a king again but rather seeks to limit an office all too prone to despotism."⁷⁴ Returning to the working

⁷² Hölscher, "Komposition and Ursprung Des Deuteronomiums." For an early criticism of Hölscher see Lewis Bayles Paton, "The Problem of Deuteronomy: A Symposium Part B, The Case for the Post-Exilic Origin of Deuteronomy," *JBL* 47.3 (1928): 322–57.

⁷³ Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 222. Nelson notes how as the ideal Israelite the king is upholding the general commands of covenantal loyalty in Deut 6:4-9 and 11:18:21.

⁷⁴ Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 223.

definition of utopia as *an inventive discourse on social-political structures based upon a rational hope and historically conditioned self-reflection*, the prospect of an ideal monarchy makes logical sense from a perspective of experiencing the negative realities of the monarchy and presenting a “passion for the possible.”

(5.4.2) Textual Analysis

The following analysis of Deut 17:14-20 will proceed with verse by verse observation and commentary.

[17:14] The desire and request for a king are situated in the literary past, creating a rhetorical assumption that the legislation existed prior to the establishment of any Israelite monarchy, Davidic, or otherwise. As all of Deuteronomy is presented in the Mosiac “voice,”⁷⁵ the monarchy is provided legitimation through the proclamation of the preeminent mouthpiece of Yahweh God. Bracketing out intertextual concern between Deut 17:14-20 and 1 Sam 7-12 (see above), in its current context, the monarchy is anticipated. Introduced with temporal clause “when you enter into the land” (כִּי־תָבֹא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ),

⁷⁵ For a heuristic discussion of Deuteronomy as the “voice” of Moses, Arnold, “Ipissima Vox.”

promotes a rhetorical coherence with other sections of Deuteronomy, both within and outside of the DLC (i.e., 6:10; 7:1; 11:29; and 18:9). According to the Deuteronomic voice, the monarchy has always been an element of Israelite society. Moshe Weinfeld concurs, “[I]t seems that the Deuteronomist could not conceive of the implementation of the moral law...in the absence of the monarchy.”⁷⁶

[17:15] Another significant rhetorical echo between the LOTK and the greater DLC is the emphasis on divine selection. Nine of the ten instances of the “divine selection formula” (“which/who Yahweh your God will choose” (אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ)) within Deuteronomy, refer to “The Place” (12:18, 21; 14:24, 25; 16:6, 7, 11; 17:8; 26:2). However, in 17:15, the same phrase is employed regarding the king.⁷⁷ This unique connection suggests intentional parallelism between both the central sanctuary and the royal court.

The mechanism of the divine selection of the king is ambiguous; however, a close association with the prophetic office lends support to prophetic sanction, a pattern found throughout the Deuteronomistic narrative traditions, (i.e., Samuel -- Saul, David, Nathan --

⁷⁶ Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, 170.

⁷⁷ The exact phrase אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ is located 5x in Deuteronomy (12:18; 14:25; 16:7; 17:8; 17:15). The proximity between 17:8 and 15 further emphasizes the corresponding nature of both king and “The Place.”

Solomon), Ahijah--Jeroboam, Elisha—Jehu). The institution of the monarchy and the prophetic office are uniquely tied both rhetorically and contextually, 17:14 and 18:9 sharing parallel temporal clauses (see above) in the context of the establishment of both offices.⁷⁸

Also, out of the offices listed in Deut 16:18-18:22, only the king and prophet are established by divine selection and a petition from the people.⁷⁹

To curb the rise of a monarchy “like the nations,” a restriction is placed upon the selection of a king, the people cannot elevate a “foreigner” as their ruler.⁸⁰ To be an ideal Israelite, the king must be a “brother.”⁸¹ The prohibition against foreign rule is often taken

⁷⁸ Although the prophetic office is established in 18:15, 18:9 introduces the false divination that the prophet represents as a contrast. In a similar way, 17:14 set up the request of the monarchy in the context of potential detractors, e.g., a king “like the nations.”

⁷⁹ Both judges and officers are appointed by the people (16:18) and the Levite, bearing authority by patrimony, comes to the central sanctuary by choice (18:6). The institution of the monarchy and the prophetic office are prompted by Israel’s request. For the former, it is upon entry into the land (17:14); however, the latter request is prior to settlement stemming from Horeb (18:15-16).

⁸⁰ David Daube, “One from among Your Brethren You Shall Set over You,” *JBL* 90 (1971): 480–81; Ernest W. Nicholson, “Do Not Dare to Set a Foreign King over You’: The King in Deuteronomy and ‘The Great King,’” *ZAW* 118 (2006): 45–62. Daube connects the prohibition to the story of Abimelech who was the first to attempt to establish himself as king. Abimelech was half Canaanite. Nicholson argues the prohibition refers to the Assyrian overloads.

⁸¹ The second half of v. 15 bears a chiasmic structure which, much like the overall structure of 16:18-18:22, has the king as the central focus:

From the midst of your brothers
 You may set (שִׁים) over you
 A king
 You may not set (לֹא תָשִׁים) over you
 A foreigner, someone who is not your brother

as an interpolation. For example, Lopez locates the prohibition concerning non-Israelite rulers into the exile, where xenophobia is presumed to be at its highest level.⁸² However, this need not be the case as the prophetic traditions, represented by the Hoseanic voice, bore a similar level of xenophobia (see Chapters 3 and 4).

Another argument for redactional layering is an apparent tension between charismatic and dynastic selection within the section of a king. However, as with efforts to “compromise” divergent soci-political ideologies between (northern) Israelite and Judahite monarchical rule (see Chapter 4), charismatic selection and dynastic rule need not conflict. Taking into consideration difference in terms in Deut 17:15, Yahweh “chooses” (בָּחַר) where the people “set up” (שִׁים) and “establish” (נָתַן) a king. The authorization of the king is still Yahweh’s (charismatic), even if the act of coronation is in the hands of the people, a balanced process is intertwined in the earliest traditions of the rise of the monarchy, i.e., Saul (1 Sam 9, 10).⁸³

[17:16-17] A series of three prohibitions are placed directly upon the monarch, rhetorically connected with the shared proscription “to not amass a large amount.”⁸⁴ The

⁸² Lopez, “Le Roi d’Israel: Dt 17, 14-20,” 295. The concern for native rule need not be located into the exile. The northern prophets exhibit a level of xenophobia in relationship to the cult, which the king would have great influence over.

⁸³ Each time there is prophetic sanction of a king, there is also mention of human affirmation, i.e., David at Hebron, Jeroboam, Jehu.

⁸⁴ Each of the three commands includes the unique phrase: לֹא יִרְבֶּה־לּוֹ. See Ex 30:16 for a similar form.

first concern is the abuse of military power.⁸⁵ Centralization has societal implications beyond financial redistribution. A monarchy could develop a robust professional military, usurping the authority of previous tribal militias. A central concern about monarchy in the Samuel traditions is forced conscription and the redistribution of wealth for an imperial military (1 Sam 8:11-12).

In 17:16, the prohibition against a professional military is tied to the historical relationship between Israel and Egypt. The concern over the procurement of horses from Egypt is cryptic. The intent might be to limit underlying economic transactions with Egypt, or a strong prohibition against trading Israelite mercenaries for Egyptian horses (see 1 Kgs 10:28).⁸⁶ The identification of the concurrent quotation (“You must never return that way again”), is fraught with difficulty. It could represent an echo of the curse of a reversal of the Exodus in Deut 28:68.⁸⁷ Other suggestions proposed are Hosea 11:5 and Ex 14:13.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ The military limitations could function as counter to an ideology of divine mandate and king as hypostatization of the divine warrior. Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 224.

⁸⁶ Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 224; Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 167; Von Rad, *Deuteronomy*, 119.

⁸⁷ “And the LORD will bring you back in ships to Egypt, a journey that I promised that you should never make again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer.” Deut 28:68 (ESV) On discussion of relationship between Deut 17:16 and 28:68 see David J. Reimer, “Concerning Return to Egypt: Deuteronomy 17:16 and 28:68 Reconsidered,” in *Studies in the Pentateuch*, ed. John A. Emmerton (Leiden: Brill, 1990).

⁸⁸ Müller, “Israel’s King as Primus Inter Pares,” 62 n. 30. Müller suggests Hos 8:13; 9:3 as possible influence. He also notes a connection to Ex 13:17 and Deut 28:68.

The second and third prohibitions restrict the hubris of the king, especially concerning the perceptions of the outside world. Restrictions upon the monarchy's development of a large harem⁸⁹ echo the concerns against entering political affiliations.⁹⁰ The Deuteronomic rationale for this restriction is a concern that these marriages would prompt apostasy. The implication being, political alliances can be a detraction from the king's obligations to the covenant by entering into treaties with other nations and, consequently, their gods. In the present context, the prohibition could relate to human trafficking, similar to the concern for trading people to Egypt for horses. The ban against amassing wealth could further connect to the issue of royal marriages as both the exchange of daughters/wives and money are a part of foreign alliances. The disparity of wealth between the palace and the local populace also represents fear of high taxation (1 Sam 8:14-17) and general ramifications of switching from subsistence to centralized economy.

⁸⁹ The Deuteronomy text only mentions wives and no other domestic roles within the palace as 1 Sam 8. John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 292.

⁹⁰ Nelson points out that the language is not "foreign" wives but simply "wives." This could suggest reference to domestic political alliances. The greater number of political marriages the greater influence those families would have within the kingdom. Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 224.

[17:18-19] In Deut 17:18, there are rhetorical shifts in command, e.g., from negative (do not do this) to positive (do this). After denoting the restriction upon the monarchy, the king is commanded to write for himself a copy of the Torah. 17:18-19 envisions the moment of the king's ascension and possible coronation ceremony.⁹¹ The shift in tone and content has led to arguments that verses 18-19 represent an interpolation. There are strong arguments for this position.⁹² Also, there is a natural transition from the end of 17:17 to the beginning of verse 20. Considering the strong connection between 17:15-17 and 1 Sam 8, there is no mention of the king either reading or writing a copy of the Torah in the Samuel traditions. In 1 Sam 10, it is the prophet (Samuel) who reads. Based upon the argument that the LOTK represents a repurposing of these earlier, the inclusion 17:18-19 could represent the merging of Samuel's warning in 1 Sam 8 and the coronation ceremony

⁹¹ The temporal usage of the *kaf* preposition places emphasis on the immediate time prior to an event allowing a translation "immediately upon enthronement." *IBHS* 36.2.2*b*. This might suggest writing as a part of an enthronement ritual. See, Gerbrandt, *Kingship*, 190.

⁹² Müller, "Israel's King as Primus Inter Pares," 60 n.17,18. There is an assumption that the temporal setting has changed between the "restrictions" placed upon the king envisioning a time already being on the throne and now, the image of writing the Torah is before the king assumes the throne. However, arguing that v. 18-19 have been added to an older tradition does not detract from a Deuteronomic ideology of the monarchy. If the LOTK represents a reworking of traditions associated with the "mishpat of the king" mentioned in 1 Sam 10:25, the emphasis on the king's subjugation to Torah is integral to the centralized organization of the D law code.

in 1 Sam 10. Assuming that the emphasis on writing is an addition to a Proto-Deuteronomic tradition,⁹³ the focus of the king's subjugation to Torah becomes the focal point to a proposed centripetal pattern of the DLC.

[17:20] Deuteronomy 17:20 concludes the LOTK with a series of benefits for following Deuteronomic conditions. Both the prohibitions in 17:16-17 and the command in 17:18 are provided with a rationale, connected to an emphasis on honoring kinship ties in 17:15. The king's subjects are his brothers, and their justice must be his central concern. This justice is upheld on the foundation of Torah, and taking up the posture of a pupil will keep the king from "turning aside" (סור) from the commandment, either "to the right or left" (יָמִין וּשְׂמָאוֹל).⁹⁴ The final blessing in 17:20b is the assurance of dynastic rule; however, this is contingent on the upholding the covenantal obligation laid out above. The associated "curse" (utopia/dystopia) against the failure of the monarchy to champion the covenant is a loss of rule (see Deut 28:36).

⁹³ See discussion on "*mishpat of the king*" above.

⁹⁴ Although used in geographical descriptions the phrase "to the right or to the left" in relation to the law is found in Deut 17:20, Josh 1:7; 23:6, and 2 Kgs 22:2 (2 Chron 34:2). The last is a direct reference to Josiah which suggest a rhetorical relationship between the account of Josiah and the Law of the King. The phrase is also found Deut 5:32; 17:11, 28:14 in relation to the commandments, words, statutes.

Spoken by Moses on the plains of Moab allows for the LOTK to be a standard of judgment for all pan-Israelite kings, past, and present. Similarly, the command to read and write the Torah applies to all kings in perpetuity. As the idealized Israelite, the king is a student of Torah under priestly tutelage. The act of writing shows education beyond mere hearing and memorization, and the command to make a copy assumes an authoritative source.⁹⁵ The phrase “this Torah” is significant within the overall structure of Deuteronomy found in Deut 1:5 at the beginning of the first speech of Moses and again in 4:8, introducing the second speech of Moses. It is found multiple times in the final chapter of the book;⁹⁶ however, this is the only location within the DLC (Chapters 12-26). Consequently, the authority of “this Torah” over the king, marks the absolute center of the book.

⁹⁵ Nelson states, “In calling itself a ‘book,’ Deuteronomy sees itself as a self-contained unity. It has become a protocanonical book, a reforming and controlling agent safeguarded by priestly oversight. If one thinks in political terms, Deuteronomy claims a constitutional status as a written legal document, to which even the king is subject.” Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 225.

⁹⁶ Deut 27:3,8,26; 28:58,61; 29:28; 31:9, 11, 12, 24; 32:46

(5.6) Summary Conclusions

As a constitutive paradigm for social integration, an ideology of centralized monarchical rule is an inherent element of a matrix of Deuteronomism. However, a unified voice on the subject is elusive at best. Approaching Deuteronomism as polyphonic, there is no singular *D*-voice when it comes to the monarchy, which in turn makes arguments whether Deuteronomism is pro-/anti-monarchy unfruitful. One *D*-voice might have negative attitudes toward the monarchy, representing vestigial voices of pre-state tribal organization, whereas another *D*-voice might provide strong support for the monarchy by elevating certain kings as paragons on covenant fidelity and cultic purity. Still, other voices might represent qualified, or agnostic opinions of monarchical rule.⁹⁷

For a seismic cultural upheaval, the likes of centralization to find general acceptance, the paradigm shift needed to find legitimation for allegiance from peripheral groups due to lose power. A grand-bargain was struck between non-Judean and Judean elements through

⁹⁷ Alexander Rofé's comments on the development of monarchical ideology are insightful for the present discussion. On the balance of monarchical ideology between a northern refugee population and the Judean court Rofé states, "Thus, in succeeding generations, the descendants of these refugees became devotees of the Davidic dynasty and exponents of the chosen status of Jerusalem. The transition was gradual, as can be seen from the law of the king, in Deut 17:14-20, which deals with the monarchy in fairly lukewarm terms, viewing it (pejoratively) as an imitation of the nations, limiting it, and warning about its injustices." Alexander Rofé, *Deuteronomy: Issues and Interpretations* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), 8.

the utopian projection of a bygone golden age of unified pan-Israel under a righteous king.

This image found support in the collection of traditions into a so-called Hezekian History.

However, another utopian vision emerged in support of centralization. This program looked

beyond the restoration of a golden age to an idealized vision handed down prior to

settlement in the Promised Land. On the plains of Moab, the ideal covenant mediator

directed Israel on how to construct a utopian society within “the land of milk and honey.”

This vision called all Israel to a common bond, sharing a central sanctuary. This pivotal

location reflects not only cultic piety, but also economic, judicial, and political structures

constructed upon the foundation of righteous justice (*מִשְׁפָּט־צֶדֶק*). A centripetal rhetorical

force is implied as the DLC begins and ends at the central sanctuary drawing the reader to

“the place” from both ends.

At the center of Deuteronomy resides the charter for a utopian government. The organization of representative voices from major power bases (judiciary, cult, king, and charismatic counselor), some facing possible disenfranchisement, find harmony in a power-sharing constitution. Drawing on the pre-state traditions, the LOTK provides provisional support for monarchical rule. In the LOTK, the Deuteronomic voice softens the demand for the monarchy, reversing the dystopian image of the king “like the nations” into a utopian

mirror image of how an ideal Israelite king should look. This vision has the king residing in the center of all Israel, the ideal typological Israelite, submitting to the authority of the Torah.

Hayden White's analysis of historical emplotment is illuminating on the choice of the Deuteronomic voice to locate the utopian charge in the distant past.⁹⁸ White categorizes *moral/ideological* implications for "prescriptions for social praxis" based on the historical location of an ideal utopian society. For the Deuteronomic voice, the utopian vision was proclaimed before any social contracts within the Promised Land; however, the command has yet to find true fulfillment. Unlike the *anarchist* voice that calls society back to an idealized nascent form (Hosea), or a *conservative* who draws attention to all that is good in the present (Hezekiah), the Deuteronomic voice is that of a *radical*. Utopia is always imminent, always an option. Unlike the *anarchist* who wants to tear systems down or the *conservative* that looks to bolster systems in place, the *radical* calls the current system to an imperative of moral, social change. There is a rational hope for a better present reality if

⁹⁸ White, *Metahistory*, 22–25. For a full presentation of White's theories of historical emplotment see the excursus in Chapter 3.

only the members of society turn away from falsehoods and embrace a system that equitable. The goal is love for Yahweh and respect for a neighbor.

This portrait of an ideal polity need not be a retrograde vision from a time when the monarchy was not. The LOTK does not look to restore power that has been lost but limit the king from amassing too much of it. The prospect of an ideal monarchy makes logical sense from a perspective of experiencing the negative realities of the monarchy and presenting a “passion for the possible.”

(5.7) Chapter Appendices

Appendix 1: Rhetorical Geography of the Deuteronomic Legal Code (Chapters 12-26)

[12:1-14] Establishing the significance of the Central Sanctuary (*core*)

[12:15-16:17] Dialectic between *core* and *periphery*

Dietary restrictions: [12:15-28; 14:1-21] Focus on the local level.

What is acceptable to eat in the periphery? What must go to the center?

[12:15-28] Allowances regarding sacrificial foods (e.g., meat)

[12:29-13:18] (Interpolation) Threats of apostasy at the *local level*.

[14:1-21] General dietary restrictions (clean vs. unclean animals)

Financial concerns: [14:22-15:23] Geographical focus is on the local level.

What can be kept in the periphery? What must go to the center?

[14:22-26] General instructions on the relationship between individual

finances and the central sanctuary: Tithe/Firstborn

[14:27-15:18] Instructions on financial responsibility at the *local level*

Levites (14:27-29), Debtors (15:1-6), The Poor (15:7-11),

Those in Servitude (5:12-18)

[15:19-23] General instructions on the relationship between individual

finances and the central sanctuary:

Pilgrimages: [16:1-17] Geographical focus is on the center.

What must go to the center? When must it go?

Bring your tithes/firstborn three times a year: Passover [16:1-8],

Weeks [16:9-12], Booths [16:13-15]

[16:18-18:22] Judicial and Administrative Officials (See Chart 2)

The Judicial System: [16:18-17:13] Geographic focus is moving toward

the center

Administrative officers: [17:14-18:22] The Center

[19:1-25:19] Explication of the Legal Code: Case Law in the Periphery

Corporate concerns: [19:1-20:20] Geographical focus regional/tribal level.

[19:1-13(14)] Cities of refuge -- regional judicial system

[19:15-21] General laws of innocence/guilt

[20:1-20] Laws concerning warfare-- collective/tribal concern

Case law handled at the local level: [21:1-25:19] Geographical focus is the

local level with the option of taking a case to the center.

[26:1-15(16-19)] Liturgy at the central sanctuary

Appendix 2: Rhetorical Geography of Deuteronomy 16:18-18:22

A) [16:18-20] Institution of the judiciary

Focus on both general and specific concerns at the local level.

B) [16:21-17:7] Discussion of what constitutes a capital offense in cultic situations.

Focus is on the local level with a strong connection to case law Chapter 13.

C) [17:8-13] An upper-level judiciary: Levitical priests and the judge

Movement from the local level to the central sanctuary

D) [17: 14-20] The Law of the King

Location is center/palace (“when he sits on the throne”).

C') [18:1-8] Provisions for the Levites: Levite traveling to the central

sanctuary

Movement is from the local toward the center:

B') [18:9-14] Abominable divinatory practices.

Location is not explicit, but the implication is within the local populace based on a strong association with the case-law of Chapter 13 (See B above).

A', B', C' or D) [18:15-22] The institution of approved divinatory office: Prophet.

This section could represent A', B', C', or even a D level structure.

If 18:9-14 and 18:15-22 are considered one section, the institution of the prophetic office continues to parallel B [16:21-17:7]. From a geographical perspective, the implied location is ambiguous, which could assume a multi-layered sphere of influence. If the prophet is understood as a royal counselor, then the location could be aligned with either the Levites (C, C') or the king himself (D).

A') [19:1-25:19] Although expanding the limits of 16:18-18:22, this large section of general legislation could parallel the establishment of the judiciary in 16:18-20. The geographical location is at the local level with an implicit understanding of moving toward the center, if necessary.

SUMMARIES AND FURTHER DISCUSSIONS

Bernard Levinson's affirmation, "Central to Deuteronomy is the question of hermeneutics,"¹ has been the catalyst for this dissertation. Levinson opined the failure of previous/current hermeneutical models for providing an adequate description of the skill of the Deuteronomic scribes, what he deems "legal revision." He argues that scribal circles behind Deuteronomic legislation engaged in the process of "justification of innovation,"² in the wake of shifts toward a centralized polity and cult. Levinson makes the bold claim, "In its hermeneutics of innovation, *Deuteronomy is more radical than most contemporary hermeneutical theory.*"³

I affirm Levinson's lamentation over the lack of heuristic models for exploring the complex nature of Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic scribal culture. However, I propose that Levinson's definition of "contemporary hermeneutical theory" and "philosophical hermeneutics" needs updating to include the work of Paul Ricoeur. Ricoeur's hermeneutic

¹ Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 4.

² Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 4.

³ Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 17. Italics added for emphasis.

phenomenology (e.g., the pattern of detour and return, threefold mimesis, and his theory of cultural imagination) provides an empirical model for appreciating ancient scribal practices within natural hermeneutical processes. The voices of Deuteronomism (Pre-, Proto-, Deuteronomic, Deuteronomistic) need not be labeled impious or disingenuous in their efforts, but merely texts in ideological dialogue.

Retracing Our Steps

I began this dissertation, laying out a theoretical framework for appropriating Paul Ricoeur's thesis of *cultural imagination* as a conceptual model for scribal innovation. Through a representative literature review on approaches to ideology and utopia in HB/OT scholarship, with a specific focus on Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic literary traditions, I exposed a continued need for methodological clarity. Highlighting the benefit of Ricoeur's appraisal of the dialectical relationship between the social constructs of utopia and ideology, I introduced working definitions of essential concepts. Starting with cultural imagination, I provided communication of Ricoeur's thesis, *an expression of a dialectical relationship between the phenomena of ideology and utopia within the rhetoric of social action where*

one assesses the validity of the other within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation.

Applications of the term *ideology* throughout both scholarly discourse and otherwise, are diverse. Proposals range from a pejorative “unmasking” of the “silencing” of oppressed voices, to broadly defined “worldview” definitions. Building upon Ricoeur’s phenomenological regression from Marx’s “surface level” understanding of ideology as distortion, continuing through Max Weber’s theory of legitimation, and ultimately Clifford Geertz’s anthropological model of integration, I offered a working definition of ideology as, *a constitutive paradigm for social integration utilized to conserve, legitimate, or distort socio-political structures within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation.*⁴

In opposition to discussing utopia as purely a literary genre, Ricoeur speaks of a utopian “mode” or rhetorical intention. This symbolic discourse promotes an “imaginary”

⁴ I acknowledge the complicated nature of this definition. A simplified version of my definition of ideology would be “*a constitutive paradigm for social integration.*” The remaining part of the definition acknowledges the inherent multivalent function of ideology. The broad nature of the definition might appear akin to “worldview” but I argue it is not. Two individuals, or groups of individuals, can share a worldview in the sense of paradigms for prime reality, the nature of humanity, etc., but not share preferred paradigms for social integration. For example, broadly defined “evangelical” communities, while holding congruent worldviews on the nature of God, embody divergent paradigms for communal integration. Just like in ancient Israel, disparate groups of mono-Yahwists could be considered as sharing a worldview but have different opinions on valid models for social integration, i.e. pro/anti monarchy. Just because you wanted a king “like the nations,” did not necessarily mean you wanted to live as a “Canaanite.”

vision of a different form of society, promoting a change in the existing social order.

Imagination in this mode is constitutive in an *inventive* manner where ideology constructs identity by *integrative* means. Ricoeur levies three “components” to utopia: self-reflection, historical conditioning, and fantasy/illusion, which he differentiates from Freudian concepts of delusion. Building upon Ricoeur’s three layers, I put forth a working definition of utopia as, *inventive discourse on social structures based upon a rational hope and historically conditioned self-reflection within hermeneutical processes of narrative identity formation.*

In Chapter 2, I explored the roots of Deuteronomism as cultural imagination through an appeal to the metaphor of covenant and the corresponding social construct of a legal code. I argued that both covenant and law code represent a dialog between competing ideologies. A proposed shared set of obligations is supported by a utopian vision (blessings), whereas a competing ideology is challenged by presenting it as a potential dystopia (curses). In arguments for maintaining suzerain-vassal relationships, or blueprints for a just and equitable society, utopia’s objective is to *inspire a society into corporate transformation*; whereas, dystopias intend to *castigate a society into corporate repentance*. In essence, dystopia is a warning where utopia acts as positive motivation.

Advocating for a phenomenological approach, I argue that hermeneutical reconstructions of *Deuteronomism* must not be isolated to the Book of Deuteronomy, or the merely the Deuteronomistic Legal Code (DLC). I aver that the Deuteronomistic process of scribal revision is best contemplated within a broader stream of shared tradition and intentionality. Broadly defined, *D* phenomena represent innately connected social discourse upon corporate constative and integrative experiences within a historical field of reference. Although phenomena may vary (i.e., prophetic oracles, court histories, legal codes, programs for cultic purity), the intention is always equivalent, a mediation on the existential mystery that is Israel.

By taking up a phenomenological approach, I have bracketed out specific attempts at defining the “elusive Deuteronomists” within a singular historical reconstruction. However, I do not deny the efficacy of historical criticism. In the course of this dissertation, I have engaged in constructing an ideological progression, arguing Deuteronomism represents a historical dialectic where successive/concurrent discernable voices interact within a stream of ideological competition, each voice providing competing visions of the best version of Israel.

In Chapter 3, I began the progressive historical analysis of Deuteronomism with proposed ideological roots in northern priestly-prophetic circles. I explored the Hosianic traditions as a representative voice, upholding covenantal obligations as essential to Israelite constitutive identity. For a Pre-D ideology, cultic syncretism and reliance upon geopolitical alliances are considered anathema. The prophet encourages Israel to recall the time of their youth when Yahweh God found them in the wilderness as a helpless child. By restoring covenant faithfulness, renewal of that relationship is a future reality. Unfaithful Israel will be stripped naked, but a return to her first love will restore the lushness of Jezreel.

In Chapter 4, I argued that significant socio-political challenges throughout the Levant during the Late Eighth Century engendered ideological dialog about the organization of both polity and cult. The Judean court had to present valid legitimation for a program of monumental shifts from decentralized tribal structures to monarchical government. In the face of rapid urbanization brought on by an influx of “Northern” Israelite, Jerusalem needed to engender fealty as the promoter and protector of constitutive Israelite traditions. A “grand bargain” was struck between the Pre-D concerns of covenantal faithfulness and xenophobia and ideology of Davidic sanction through the depiction of a utopian united monarchy ruled by a wise and pious king. Elevating Hezekiah as the new

Solomon was an attempt to “fill the gap” between the claim of and belief in the house of David.

In chapter 5, I explored the Deuteronomistic Legal Code (DLC) as a utopian vision projected as a potential challenge to images of a centralized society failing to uphold righteous justice (מִשְׁפָּט־צֶדֶק). I argued that centralization is not only an inherent Deuteronomistic ideological tenet but functions as an organizing assumption of the DLC. The rhetorical geography of Deuteronomy 12-26 produces a centripetal force that draws the reader from the periphery to the center and back out again. I highlighted the role of the LOTK as a central tenet of the Deuteronomistic vision. Through the reinterpretation of traditions on the rise of the monarchy (e.g., 1 Sam 8,10), the LOTK provided a qualified acceptance of the monarchy as an assumed office within Israelite society. The king is the ideal type for Israel, meditating on Torah as a student of Levitical tutelage.

Future Directions

Approaching Deuteronomism as polyphonic acknowledges that there is no singular *D*-voice, but a phenomenological chorus. In the course of a progressive historical analysis, I have explored representative Pre-D (Hosea), Proto-D (a Hezekian History), and Deuteronomistic

(DLC) voices; however, this progression leaves a space for the analysis of Deuteronomistic ideolog(ies)/utopia(s). In common parlance, the term *Deuteronomistic* refers to non-legal writing built upon or bearing a genetic relationship to, the ideology, and concurrent utopian vision, of the Book of Deuteronomy, or the DLC specifically.⁵ However, quantifying this relationship is complicated. Is there a singular Deuteronomistic voice, or does the designation represent a harmonization within a larger choir?

Rainer Albertz argues that there are several groups who, based on congruent style and content, can be labeled “Deuteronomistic.”⁶ Although bearing shared intentionality, mediation of the unique relationship between Israel and Yahweh God, there is evident variation in socio-political ideologies between concerned parties. Consequently, Albertz argues that there is no “pure” *Deuteronomistic* literature establishing a norm or standard for all others to organize their ideological constructs.⁷ I have argued that Deuteronomy, the DLC specifically, represents a *dialectic* between D (Pre-, Proto-, Deuteronomic) voices, in a

⁵ Coggins, “What Does ‘Deuteronomistic’ Mean?”

⁶ Rainer Albertz, “Deuteronomistic History and Heritage of the Prophets,” in *Congress Volume Helsinki 2010*, ed. Martti Nissinen, vol. 148 of *VTSup* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 348.

⁷ Albertz, “Deuteronomistic History and Heritage of the Prophets,” 362.

sense that it is a wholly formed “new” text. However, the DtrH, in whatever redactional approach, is inherently *dialogical*. Multiple positions exist in a perpetual state of tension, various voices, varying visions.

Although this topic is too complex to cover in the present dissertation, I want to highlight future areas where this discussion can continue. For example, analysis of a Hezekian History (HH) and the DLC/LOTK as undertaken in this dissertation only begins to explore ideological diversity, and concurrent utopian/dystopian visions, within a larger DtrH (Josh-2 Kgs). For Martin Noth, a singular Dtr collected and organized pan-Israelite traditions using an *Ur-Deuteronomium* document as a type of “cipher.” However, as Noth’s theory attracted challenges, and a DtrH was divided into multiple redactions, and editions, the relationship between D and Dtr became less clear.

Pushing back against the idea of Deuteronomic encryption of a DtrH, Gary Knoppers⁸ and Bernard Levinson⁹ both argue that the Deuteronomic and Deuteronomistic voice(s) do not share ideological views, namely on the monarchy. Both Knoppers and

⁸ Gary N. Knoppers, “Rethinking the Relationship between Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History: The Case of Kings,” *CBQ* 63.3 (2001): 393–416.

⁹ Levinson, “The Reconceptualization of Kingship.”

Levinson acknowledge that Dtr uses a Deuteronomic source as a guide, but not a cipher. They point to the relationship between the LOTK and depictions of the monarchy throughout DtrH as evidence. I have explored how both pro/anti-monarchical ideologies exist side by side without resolution in important sections of DtrH (i.e., the Samuel traditions), and how these traditions are reflected in the LOTK. However, Knoppers and Levinson highlight a perceived tension between the LOTK and the evaluation of the monarchy throughout 1-2 Kgs. On the one hand, there is notable evidence for Deuteronomic influence in the castigation of Solomon in 1 Kgs 11,¹⁰ but conversely, the monarchy is often afforded responsibilities that appear beyond the confines of Deuteronomic legislation.

Both Knoppers and Levinson argue that the DtrH gives the king roles not sanctioned by the LOTK. Levinson views the monarchy as “optional” for the Deuteronomic voice reading the LOTK as stripping the monarch of all judicial and cultic authority.¹¹ Knoppers

¹⁰ See 11:2 and Deut 17:17. Although 1 Kgs 11:2 presents a command as if a quotation, it is not a direct association with the LOTK. The LOTK does not specify “foreign” wives. Furthermore, the LOTK does not specify syncretism.

¹¹ Levinson states, “Deuteronomy submits a *utopian* manifesto for the constitutional monarchy that sharply delimits the power of the king. The Deuteronomic Torah establishes itself as sole sovereign authority, and thus in effect usurps the traditional authority of the monarch.” He continues: “This *utopian* delineation of royal power never passed from constitutional vision into historical implementation: so radical a departure from precedent was it that the Deuteronomistic Historian, precisely while seeming to implement

concurs, arguing that the monarchy is not “mandated” as the other so-called constitutional officials.¹² Yet, there are multiple instances within the DtrH where the king exhibits a priestly role, officiating the cult and reading the Torah.¹³

The positions of Knoppers and Levinson, and others in this vein, often converge around an argument from absence.¹⁴ The relationship between Torah and King in the LOTK is vague. The requirement is to meditate/write a copy under the direction of the Levites. This decree does not explicitly preclude public reading; only that interpretation must be subordinate to the Levitical review. Furthermore, there needs to be a distinction between “mandate” and assumption.¹⁵ Reading the LOTK as elevating the king as an ideal

deuteronomic law, pointedly reversed the deuteronomic program and restored the monarch all that Deuteronomy had withheld.” Levinson, “The Reconceptualization of Kingship,” 511–12.

¹² Knoppers, “Rethinking,” 398.

¹³ For example, In the LOTK the Torah is in the hands of the priests/Levites who are the keepers and instructors and are the ones called to read the law which is contradicted in DtrH as kings like Josiah make public reading from Torah. Knoppers, “Rethinking,” 399–400.

¹⁴ The argument that the LOTK functions as the center point of the DLC emphasizes the king as the ideal Israelite responsible for maintaining an embodiment of *righteous justice*. For example, because there is no direct mention of the king’s role in legal matters does not necessarily mean he is not tasked with upholding the law, in fact the emphasis on Torah might suggest the opposite.

¹⁵ The only office with a “command/mandate” are the judges and officers in 16:18. The Levites/priests are assumed, although given a place of honor in the new system. The prophet is also not “mandated”. There is an understanding of a prophetic “office(?)” within the culture (just as there is an implicit understanding of

type for all Israel, the monarch is held responsible for ensuring both cultic purity, as well as judicial righteousness.

These arguments besides, Knoppers' and Levinson's arguments are relevant as there are notable differences in ideological emphasis between D and Dtr.¹⁶ For example, the (re)organization of the judiciary, a central tenet to the Deuteronomic utopia, is all but absent in DtrH. Although there are hints of judicial awareness peppered throughout, there is a general lack of interest in the judicial system in 1-2 Kings.¹⁷ There are also different emphases between D and Dtr on cultic matters. For example, the issue of the *bamah*. A primary concern of HH is the continued presence of *bamah*, and in subsequent editions, there is reference to the *bamah* being rebuilt (2 Kgs 21:3). The concerns of cultic reform

the cultural reality of kingship). Chapter 13 distinguishes between "good" prophets and "bad" prophets in the local level. Chapter 18 again the assumption again is redeeming a cultural institution. Note the similarity between the discussion of prophet in 18 and the king in 17. [E.g. grammar in 17:14 and 18:8, the request 17:14 and 18:16 and the relationship to "brothers" in 17:15 and 18:18.] The allowance of the king in 17:15 is emphatic in construction. Does this suggest optionality.

¹⁶ Knoppers acknowledges the alternative reading of a restrictive approach. "Once could argue that the law of the king, brief in length and selective in its coverage, leaves the king with considerable legal room to maneuver. Conceivably, for example, the monarch could have some administrative responsibilities, even though no such duties are outlined in the text." Knoppers, "Rethinking," 403.

¹⁷ Solomon is hailed regarding his wisdom in disputes (2 Kgs 3). One outlier would be in 2 Kgs 14:6, upon the assignation of his father Joash, Amaziah struck down his father's assassins; however, he did not punish their children based on the "book of the Torah of Moses." This legal prescription is found in Deut 24:16. Outside of Kings, there is a passing reference in 2 Chron 19:4-11 to the judicial reform of Jehoshaphat.

align with the “purge” mandated by the DLC, sharing multiple lexemes; however, the emphasis on the *bamah* is notably absent throughout the Book of Deuteronomy, the word *בָּמָה* found only twice. In Deut 32:13 the term is a poetic reference to Yahweh empowering Jacob’s ability to transverse over difficult terrain (high hills/ mountains), and in 33:29, the term is employed as a metaphor for the “backs” of Yahweh’s enemies.

The question becomes, are any layers of DtrH (HH, Dtr₁, Dtr₂, or possible later voices) explicitly Deuteronomic? Knoppers and Levinson both suggest not. Knoppers acknowledges shared affirmation of centralization and emphasis on a just and equitable society; however, “[T]he Deuteronomist is also an independent author, writing later than the authors of Proto-Deuteronomy, is free to select from, adapt, supplement, and reverse his source.”¹⁸ Levinson avers that the “radical” Deuteronomic reform program was “abrogated” by the Dtr. Claiming to promote the reform program, Dtr rejected limits placed upon the monarchy. Levinson writes,

Idealism thus clashed with idealism. The utopian elevation of Deuteronomic Torah to sovereign power encountered the renewed utopian hopes pinned onto the Davidic dynasty by the Deuteronomistic Historian, whose charter for a political community conforming to Torah departed from Torah in order to reinvigorate the monarchy.¹⁹

¹⁸ Knoppers, “Rethinking,” 413.

¹⁹ Levinson, “The Reconceptualization of Kingship,” 534.

The relationship between D and Dtr betrays the complicated internal power struggles within the Judean court in the Seventh Century BCE. As Benjamin Thomas writes,

Not all of the later developing ideas under Deuteronomy's influence should be regarded as having taken place in a vacuum. Ideas grow under discursive pressures and through social conflict. Deuteronomistic ideas had points of disagreement within the formation and growth of its circles as well as points of agreement with non-Deuteronomistic texts.²⁰

With a focus on developing a phenomenology of Deuteronomism, I have eschewed interest in designating a singular historical location for Deuteronomism; however, future analysis on Deuteronomistic ideology as manifest in literary traditions would require such discussions.²¹

²⁰ Thomas, *Hezekiah and the Compositional History of the Book of Kings*, 40.

²¹ The following quote is enlightening to the present discussion, and therefore, I will cite it at length. "Diachronic reconstructions of the Deuteronomistic movement, however, must continue to be judged speculative, but historical-critical scholarship allows evangelicals to see how Deuteronomy underwent on-going re-contextualization to serve as a dialogue partner with Deuteronomistic literature, which did not assume its final form until the post-exilic period. It remains notoriously difficult to prove the direction of literary dependence between a passage in Deuteronomy and a related Deuteronomistic text, but the fact that scholars can offer such proposals at all underscores the fact of close lexical correspondence between Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic literature. The debate over whether a passage in Deuteronomy or the Deuteronomistic literature was first misses the point; the bigger payoff here is the recognition that the voice of Moses continues to speak dynamically through both traditum and traditio." Ansberry and Hwang, "No Covenant Before Exile?," 93.

Upon the death of Hezekiah, the cultic piety component of the “grand bargain” eroded. Many cultic reforms were rolled back, namely the restoration of the infamous *bamah* (2 Kgs 21:3ff). For the Dtr voice(s), Manasseh sealed Jerusalem’s fortunes (2 Kgs 21:10-15) through the wholehearted embracement of “Canaanite” practices. Judah had sown the wind and would now reap the whirlwind. However, his five-decade reign brought geopolitical stability to the kingdom through the role of a compliant Assyrian vassal. His death created a power vacuum as his heir apparent, Amnon, quickly fell out of favor with influential elements within his own court.

This coup was quickly stamped out by the enigmatic *am ha’eret*. This influential consortium, wielding considerable military and political sway, established a child prince upon the throne under the tutelage of remnants of earlier reform programs.²² As an adult, Josiah instituted a vast cultic purge in both the temple as throughout Judah and the surrounding regions parroting the Deuteronomic charge (Deut 12:1-2). As this catharsis

²² Parallels between the details of the coronation of Joash/Jehoash suggest a priestly tutelage akin to that under Jehoiada (2 Kgs 11-12; 2 Chron 23-24). In 2 Kgs 11:18 the “people of the land” are mentioned as central characters in the support of the boy king. In 2 Chron 23:1, the first group mentioned in support of the coup are the military leaders.

reverted the Yahweh cult to the reforms of Hezekiah, and beyond, the king, his mentors, and devotees, represent the “children” and “grandchildren,” of the “grand bargain.”

The death of Josiah sent shockwaves throughout the religio-political structures in Judah. With the untimely demise of their figurehead, a fissure formed in the Deuteronomistic reform party.²³ Competing ideologies, namely on foreign policy, emerged, threatening to dismantle the utopian vision of Deuteronomism.²⁴ The *am ha'aretz* once again anointed a young king to maintain power. Forgoing legitimate right of succession, they elevated the fourth in line to the throne, Jehoahaz (Shallum).²⁵ Jehoahaz's reign was short-lived as, on his return from Megiddo Pharaoh Necco deported him to Egypt, establishing the second son Josiah, Jehoiakim (Eliakim) as a puppet ruler. As empires and allegiances waxed and waned, decades later, Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin²⁶ back to Babylon with a “first wave” of Judean deportations in 597 BCE and

²³ On the collapse of the Deuteronomistic reform movement after the death of Josiah, see Albertz, *Israelite Religion, Vol 1*, 231–42.

²⁴ On determining a social location of the Dtrs in the Book of Jeremiah see Andrew Dearman, “My Servants the Scribes: Composition and Context in Jeremiah 36,” *JBL* 103.3 (1990): 403–21.

²⁵ 1 Chron 3:15 lists the sons of Josiah in the following order: Johanan, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah, Shallum.

²⁶ Johoiachin had been a Babylonian vassal for three years, but rebelled (2 Kgs 24:1). According to Dtr, these actions opened the door to raiding bands of regional powers (Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites and

established the third son of Josiah, Zedekiah (Mattaniah) as a suppliant. However, caught between pro and anti-Babylonian elements within his court, this too was a relationship destined to fail. Although Zedekiah was the last Davidic king to sit on the throne in Jerusalem, Jehoiachin's presence in Babylon was a source of hope for the restoration of power.

Amid this turbulent time emerged a new voice. In the Jeremiah traditions, one hears an echo of prophetic critique. Of the clans of Anathoth, and an apparent devotee of Hosea,²⁷ Jeremiah resonances the Pre-D priest-prophet call to return to a Sinai covenantal ideology. In times of questioned identity, Judah must remember what constitutes Israel as the special possession of Yahweh God. Once again, the people are faced with the choice between blessings or curses, utopia or dystopia, life or death.

For Jeremiah, Deuteronomism is under threat of devolving into distortion and schizophrenia. Ricoeur acknowledges that any constitutive ideology bears the potential of

Ammonites). However, these incursions are also understood as proclaimed by prophetic warning and attributed to the sins of Manasseh (2 Kgs 24:3-4).

²⁷ For an introduction and literature review on the relationship between Hosea and Jeremiah see J. Jeremias, "The Hosea Tradition and the Book of Jeremiah," *Old Testam. Essays* 7 (1994): 21-38; Hetty Lalleman- de Winkel, *Jeremiah in Prophetic Tradition: An Examination of the Book of Jeremiah in the Light of Israel's Prophetic Traditions*, Contributions to Biblical Exegesis & Theology 26 (Leuven: Peeters, 2000).

corruption. By overextending the gap between claim and belief, attempts at legitimization that distort core ideal social constructs, and/or defy historically conditioned sensitivities, are vulnerable to concealment of illegitimacy. For Jeremiah, the merging of Davidic sanction and cultic piety was starting to strain credulity. These two tenets began to coalesce under Hezekiah and were a central inspiration behind the Josiaic reform movement; however, temple piety was devolving into an ideology of Zion inviolability.

Jeremiah sees this as a significant distortion and preaches a disassociation between blessing and mere presence (Jer 7 and 26). As “the place” in the DLC is both “good place” (*eutopia*) and “no place” (*outopia*), the temple in Jerusalem is not necessary for the utopian equation. In his attack on the efficacy of the Temple, and by extension its Davidic patrons, Jeremiah takes a Deuteronomic purge a step further than either Hezekian or Josianic reforms. He not only empties the temple of hypostatic worship but suggests the temple itself is an empty vessel, or at the very least cracked.²⁸

²⁸ For an insightful discussion of the importance of Jeremiah on the development of Deuteronomism see Halpern, “Brisker Pipes,” 98–103.

Applications

The preceding discussion has implications far beyond creating models for the development of Ancient Israelite theology. Societal shifts often force the hand of reflection and prompt a “justification of innovation.” Change prompts the question; how do we process “what just happened” within the parameters we understand to be constitutive to our corporate/individual identity? In each generation there are competing proposals for the “better/best” answer to the existential question, what does it mean to be Israel. During the Eighth Century BCE, the Levant faced seismic geopolitical upheaval on a level not experienced since the collapse of the great city-states three to four centuries prior. A people, Israel, who emerged from the ashes of the Late Bronze Age, were confronted with an existential crisis. The social constructs that had served well in the past were revisited; a literary tradition emerged. Legal codes were reworked to maintain the principles behind the law within new social realities. However, these “new” social constructs, although reflecting a different moment, still mediated their constitutive experience.

However, the significance of the dialog that is Deuteronomism extends far beyond the fall of Jerusalem. Since Wellhausen, fundamental tenets within the Book of Deuteronomy have been recognized as a theological watershed, demarcating a putative

division between religious epochs, that of ancient Israel, and the emergence of Judaism.²⁹

The influence of Deuteronomy, both its cultic ideology and utopian social vision, has persisted as the “linchpin” of HB/OT studies throughout the twentieth century, with wide-ranging implications. However, Moshe Weinfeld suggests that the historical impact of Deuteronomism, most notably the phenomenon of cult centralization, extends its reach far beyond Israelite religion into monotheism as a whole. He states,

It was the law of centralization which caused the liquidation of provincial cult and with the destruction of the Temple [in 70 AD], sacrifices vanished because of the limitations of cult to one place. Instead of sacrifice came synagogue and church based on Book and Prayer. Deuteronomy has thus acquired great significance for the history of world religions.³⁰

The hermeneutical processes inherent within Deuteronomism, apply to confessional communities throughout time. Paul Ricoeur argues that the relationship between *Erklärung* (*explanation*) and *Verstehen* (*understanding*), begins with a moment of critical reflection on the meaning of symbolic structures. Textual engagement prompts, forces one, to

²⁹ Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (6th ed., 1878; repr., Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001).

³⁰ Moshe Weinfeld, "The Emergence of the Deuteronomic Movement: The Historical Antecedents," in *Das Deuteronomium: Entstehung, Gestalt und Botschaft* (ed. Norbert Lohfink; BETL 68; Leuven, Netherlands: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1985), 76-98 [97-98].

appropriate new perceptions of identity, both corporate and individual. By assuming a position of distancing from a “text,” a richer version of identity emerges; however, this “new” identity is still historically conditioned by the “text.” When applying the dual operation of *detour and return* to the biblical text, or any sacred text, critical interpretation, using historical-critical methodologies and philology is essential; however, there is also a relationship with source traditions based on personal experiences that cannot be denied or dismissed as disingenuous.

Paul Ricoeur’s representation of the *critical arc* presents a heuristic model when engaging with the synchronic/diachronic methodological dichotomy at the heart of Levinson’s critical project. For example, one begins with an inherently synchronic “naïve understanding” of a text as it exists in its canonical form. However, to arrive at a place of genuine *understanding (truth)*, one must take up a critical position of *explanation (method)* toward both the text and self. However, the *critical arc* does not leave the reader in a position of “suspicion,” but in fact should prompt a return to the text with a more profound appropriation. One might argue that the return position is the same location as the beginning, as genuine *understanding* is always from the final form of the text.

The *narrative arc*, central to Paul Ricoeur's discourse on the correlation between history and experienced time, explores the interrelationship between text and action, how one collates experience into the formation of narrative identity. The *prefigured* is the received tradition, the symbolic networks in which action takes place. *Configuration* functions as the "*detour*" within the *narrative arc*. The process of reshaping received texts to align with the author(s) ideology. The moment of *configuration* represents the application of narrative techniques akin to critical methodologies that are a part of *distanciation*. The moment of *return* is when the *configured* text becomes appropriated by a new audience resulting in *refiguration*.

The journey of *detour* and *return* has profound implications beyond mere exegetical appropriation. Ricoeur sees the movement of ideological critique and identity construction as more than a critical hermeneutic but bearing ethical and moral implications. Within the critical arc is the tension between conviction and critique. Evaluations are made of one's historical field of reference. The narrative arc, aligning with his threefold mimesis journeys along a trajectory of the reception of *ethical aims* (prefiguration) the development of *moral norms* (configuration) to the application of practical wisdom (refiguration). Boyd Blundell explains how the telling and retelling of constitutive narratives bears weight on ethical life,

We each have a life story that we tell to ourselves and others, retelling it as new facts come to light, or new avenues of interpretation are opened. We take the events that occur in our lives and narrate them into our life story, making ethical decisions in part based on how we perceive the logic of that story. We also have recourse to the critical arc when we pause to reflect on whether the story of our life and the patterns of behavior it engenders are coherent. We pass through the detour of analysis in order to re-enter our daily living with a deeper and richer involvement.³¹

The “ethical life” is fundamental to the appropriation of a phenomenological approach to Deuteronomism. The Deuteronomic voice begins with the “ethical aims” of prophetic, narrative, and Proto/Pre-D legal traditions, identifying the moral norms within the received texts, to argue for practical wisdom within a changing context. The movement is one of distancing from tradition to critique of the validity of ideological assertions. The result of ideological criticism (the return) is an affirmation and/or challenge. Subsequently, differences between the D and Dtr voice(s) derives in how Dtr stands at a critical distance from D. Dtr analyzes the ethical aims of D, developing moral norms upon which to “judge” history, ultimately presenting figures who embody practical wisdom, e.g., righteous and unrighteous rulers.

Furthermore, the thesis of cultural imagination is heuristic for an appreciation of canon as a constitutive rule for confessional communities. The base function of canon is

³¹ Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy*, 3.

identity formation, individual and corporate, and canon is polyphonic by nature. They are many “voices” in Scripture, often held in tension, complementary not contradicting. This chorus creates a dialog for a “rule” of ecclesia. Throughout Scripture, as in Deuteronomy, we find a dialog between two existential questions. The first is about identity, “Who is Israel (The Church)?” and the corresponding one is about praxis or mission “What does Israel (the Kingdom of God) look like?” Through the lens of cultural imagination, orthodoxy and orthopraxis keep each other in check. When answers to the first question become too dogmatic, or potentially distortive, exploration of the second presents a challenge to “radical transformation.” However, when utopias begin to drift, incorporating manifestations of “idolatry” and forsaking principles of “holiness,” the first question reigns us in, back to the core of our faith.³² I suggest that this cycle is the essence of reformation. As a “prophet” of the spirit of Deuteronomism, Paul Ricoeur calls us to take up this charge:

The situation in which language today finds itself comprises this double possibility, this double solicitation in urgency: on the one hand, purify discourse of its excrescences, liquidate the idols, go from drunkenness to sobriety, realize our state of poverty once and for all; on the one hand, use the most in “nihilistic,” destructive, iconoclastic movement so as to *let speak* what once, what each time, was *said*, when meaning appeared anew, when meaning was at its fullest. Hermeneutics seems to me to be animated by this double motivation: willingness to suspect, willingness to listen; vow of rigor, vow of obedience. In our time we have not finished doing away

³² A prime example of this process in practice is in the Jerusalem Council detailed Acts 15.

with *idols* and we have barely begun to listen to *symbols*. It may be that this situation, in its apparent distress, is instructive: it may be that extreme iconoclasm belongs to the restoration of meaning.”³³

³³ Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy*, 27.

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