

Transformations in Deuteronomistic and Biblical Historiography

On »Book-Finding« and other Literary Strategies¹

By Thomas C. Römer

(Université, BFSH 2, CH-1015 Lausanne)

According to biblical tradition there was a united kingdom under David and Solomon. Under their epigons this kingdom splitted up into North and South.

Following Martin Noth's² reign, there existed one whole deuteronomistic history (DH). Under his epigons this history splitted up according to Cross or Smend, which brought forth two important transformations of Noth's original Deuteronomist. In the States the Deuteronomist mainly became josianic and was completed by some exilic additions, in Germany the Dtr. was multiplied by three or more authors and redactors working in the exilic and post-exilic period. The discussion between these two conceptions often came close to a sort of religious war, and only in the last years a few voices arose arguing for a conciliation, as for instance Lohfink's or McKenzie's³. So many histories of research have been written on this topic that I do not intend here to undertake a new one.⁴

We may mention Thompson's critics regarding the idea of dtr. *historiography*⁵. If we take historiography in the Greek sense of »enquiry

¹ Paper read on the SBL Meeting, 1994, Chicago, November 19–22.

² M. Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien. Die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament*, 1967³. Quotations and references will be made on the English translation: *The Deuteronomistic History*, JSOT.S 15, 1991².

³ S. L. McKenzie, *Art. Deuteronomistic History*, ABD 2, 1992, 160–168; N. Lohfink, in: *Die Botschaft und die Boten* (FS H. W. Wolff), 1981, 87–100 = *Studien zum Deuteronomium und zur deuteronomistischen Literatur II*, SBA. AT 12, 1991, 125–142; A. D. H. Mayes, *The Story of Israel Between Settlement and Exile. A Redactional Study of the Deuteronomistic History*, 1983; see also M. O'Brien, *The Deuteronomistic History Hypothesis*, OBO 92, 1989; E. Cortese, in: *Pentateuchal and Deuteronomistic Studies. Papers Read at the XIIIth IOSOT Congress Leuven 1989*, C. Brekelmans & J. Lust ed., 1990, 179–190.

⁴ For recent histories of research cf. H. D. Preuß, *ThR* 58 (1993), 229–264.342–395; G. N. Knoppers, *Two Nations Under God. The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies*, HSM 52, 1994, Vol. I, 1–90.

⁵ T. L. Thompson, *Art. Israelite Historiography*, ABD 3, 206–212.

about historicity of events«, then he is right when he underlines that there is no historiographical project in the Hebrew Bible. Nevertheless, if we hold that the OT intends to offer normative interpretations of Judean and Israelite history and that this fabric of history is understood as an intellectual construct, it seems then justified, with Van Seters and others⁶, to maintain that DH is the first historiography in the Bible. Very recently Westermann has challenged the hypothesis of a *dtr. opus* from Deut to II Reg⁷. This will most probably remain a marginal voice in OT scholarship, since his arguments are mainly based on a quite outdated formcritical method. So, we may still start off with the idea of a DH.

But there is no consensus until now among scholars about this DH date or its aim. Is it optimistic or pessimistic, can we detect there royal ideology and even messianism? Or, is the DH only a statement of a catastrophe? Each of these proposals and possible dates depends on sound arguments, and this very fact may be an indication of chronological and ideological transformations within DH.

Diachronic exegesis has paid too much attention to the »Literarkritik« and not enough to ideological and historical patterns which might help to locate the DH better. Indeed, to locate the first edition of DH under the reign of Josiah is not a bare reformulation of Noth's hypothesis. On the contrary, doing so implies another *dtr.* concept of historiography than what the exilic or postexilic context implies. In the first case we have to do with historiography as propaganda, in the second case with historiography as a »crisis literature«.

1. *Historiography as propaganda*

There may be quite a consensus in critical scholarship about the seventh century B. C. E. as the starting point of deuteronomism. As a matter of fact, we may find reflections of Assyrian culture and literary conventions in the books belonging to DH, especially in Joshua and Kings. The first edition of Jos 1–12 is so clearly related to Assyrian conquest accounts⁸, as to lead to the conclusion that the biblical authors did know them⁹. The story of the battle of Gibeon, for instance, is

⁶ J. Van Seters, *In Search of History. Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History*, 1983, esp. 1–6; see also P. Gibert, *Vérité historique et esprit historien. L'historien biblique de Gédéon face à Hérodote*, 1990, esp. 9–20.

⁷ C. Westermann, *Die Geschichtsbücher des Alten Testaments. Gab es ein deuteronomistisches Geschichtswerk?*, TB 87, 1994.

⁸ These and other Near Eastern conquest accounts can easily be found in K. L. Younger, Jr., *Ancient Conquest Accounts. A Study in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical History Writings*, JSOT.S 98, 1990.

⁹ See also J. Van Seters, *Search*, 330–331.

certainly based on Sargon's Letter to the God. The intervention of the God Assur in this text has apparently inspired the author of the battle of Gibeon in Jos 10. In both texts the military leader is confronted to a mighty coalition of enemies, which is beaten because of divine support. In both texts the confederation of enemies is pursued over a long distance and the pursuit is combined with a great slaughter. Very similar is the description of the mechanics of divine intervention. In the Sargon-Letter we read: »The rest of the people who fled to save their lives ..., Adad, ..., uttered his loud cry against them; and with the flood cloud and hailstones, he totally annihilated the remainder«; Jos 10,10: »Then during their flight from Israel ... Yhwh hurled stones down on them from the sky, and more of them died from the hailstones than were killed by the swords of the Israelites«¹⁰. There are many more other parallels which cannot be enumerated here; these parallels support the conclusion that most of the stereotyped dtr. »holy war« syntagms derive from conventions of the Near Eastern, especially Assyrian, conquest accounts. So historiography in Jos legitimates Israel's possession of the land (for the first time?) by conquest accounts and Assyrian military ideology, which is absent from popular religion as reflected by the patriarchal narratives. Perhaps Lohfink¹¹ is right when he postulates the conquest stories in Jos to be intended as legitimation of Josiah's politics of expansion. Anyhow the first edition of Jos reveals a triumphant attitude and should be located in the Assyrian period.

Assyrian influence may be detected in Kings. According to Knauf the description of the Solomonic empire in I Reg 1–11 presupposes a well organized state and an infrastructure, that both exist in the Assyrian empire of the VIIth century¹². In this perspective, the Davidic »united kingdom« including Syria, Moab, Ammon and Edom, could be understood as *interpretatio deuteronomistica* of the eastern part of the Assyrian commonwealth. So we have quite enough indices to argue for dtr. (or proto-dtr.?) activity in the time of Josiah to which we may add the optimistic and royalistic (II Sam 7) features in Kings put forward by the Cross school. It is the Assyrian period then that would be the starting point of deuteronomistic literary production. External evidence supports the view that before the VIIth century there was no important intellectual infrastructure in the »kingdom« of Judah¹³. But literary production in the time of Josiah does not necessarily mean an elaboration of a

¹⁰ Both texts are quoted from Younger, 210 and 366.

¹¹ FS Wolff.

¹² E. Axel Knauf, Die Umwelt des Alten Testaments, NSK-AT 29, 1994, 115.

¹³ Cf. D. W. Jamieson-Drake, Scribes and Schools in Monarchic Judah. A Socio-Archaeological Approach, JSOT.S 109, 1991, who points out to the poverty of written documents in the south of Palestine before the VIIIth century B. C. E.

complete dtr. interpretation of history from the Mosaic beginnings until the bitter end. In fact, most of the arguments for a Josianic edition of the DH are to be found in Kings, but this fact can also be interpreted otherwise than by the Cross school. We may assume that there existed several propaganda tracts under Josiah, one proving that Josiah was the *David redivivus*¹⁴ (the book of Kings [plus the ascension of David?]), an other showing that Yhwh is as strong as Assur and that Josiah's military politics are founded in Israel's primary conquest of the land (the book of Joshua [and parts of Deut?]). And there exists another literary production of the Josiah's dtr. propagandists outside of Deut-Reg: that is the first edition of a *vita Mosis* in Ex*; Num*¹⁵. We must remember that Mose's birth story is literally dependant on the legend of Sargon that was very popular in the Neo-Assyrian period¹⁶. And the building activities to which the Hebrews are compelled according to Ex 1, fit easily in the Assyrian politics of construction¹⁷. The first version of the golden calf episode (Ex 32,1–6.15a.19s. 25.30 f.32a.33a.34aα.b) justifies the annihilation of the North and links Moses with Josiah regarding Yahwistic cultic reforms (cf. Ex 32,20 // II Reg 23,6.15)¹⁸.

I have not mentioned yet the story in II Reg 22–23, nor the book of Deuteronomy. These texts fit better in the first exilic edition of the DH.

2. *Historiography as »crisis literature«*

There is no doubt that the 597/587 events represent the biggest crisis in Old Testament Israel. Social sciences research on the semantics of crisis in the modern societies since the XVIIIth century¹⁹ has brought forward three types of literary attitudes towards a situation of crisis, trying to give meaning to a dark situation. Steil has described these attitudes as those of the »prophet«, the »priest« and the »mandarin«. The »prophet« offers an eschatological interpretation of the crisis, which

¹⁴ A. Laato, *Josiah and David Redivivus: The Historical Josiah and the Messianic Expectations of Exilic and Postexilic Times*, ConBOT 33, 1992.

¹⁵ On this see E. Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, BZAW 189, 1990, 215–218.

¹⁶ See now J. Van Seters, *The Life of Moses. The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus-Numbers*, 1994, 29.

¹⁷ Most of the technical terms in Ex 1 are of Akkadian origin (see the commentaries), there is also a clear relation to Gen 11, which as C. Uehlinger has shown, reflects the situation of the Assyrian empire: *Weltreich und »eine Rede«*. *Eine neue Deutung der sogenannten Turmbauerzählung* (Gen 11,1–9), OBO 101, 1990.

¹⁸ Cf. T. Römer, *Foi & Vie*, CB 31 (1992), 3–14.

¹⁹ See esp. A. Steil, *Krisensemantik. Wissenssoziologische Untersuchungen zu einem Topos moderner Zeiterfahrung*, 1993.

is seen as announcing the advent of a salutary future. The »priest« puts forward a pathological analysis of the crisis and claims for a return to traditional institutions which are legitimated by divine will. The »mandarin« cannot find »direct« meaning in the crisis, so the only possibility left to him is to adopt a more distant attitude and so to objectivize the crisis with its integration into a historiographical project. This model is quite useful for the understanding of the literary mainstreams in OT (post-)exilic literature²⁰. And the best candidate for the »mandarin« response to the exile is the *dtr.* school. The exilic edition of Deut-II Reg may be understood as an attempt of the ancient scribal class to handle the national and theological crisis of 597/587. Noth has claimed that the first edition of DH »saw the divine judgement which was acted out in his account of the external collapse of Israel as a nation as something final and definitive and he expressed no hope for the future«²¹. This position has often been criticized with the argument that one could not understand why somebody or some group would write such a long history without any project for the future²². Considering the above mentioned model concerning the semantics of crisis, such an attitude is easily understandable. The post-587 *Dtrs.* knew that they could not reactivate the former institutions, and they did not share prophetic enthusiasm as expressed for instance by the Second Isaiah. But they did undertake a most important transformation in substituting the »book« to the temple²³ and the prophet.

3. *The case of the »book« as leitmotiv for dtr. historiographical writing*

The opening of the DH is Mose's long testament (Deut 1–30), which contains the *dtn.* law code. At the end of Mose's speech, the discourse is presented seven times as the *spr htwrh* (Deut 17,18; 28,58.61; 29,20; 30,10; 31,24.26)²⁴. And it is the same *spr htwrh* that reappears almost at the end of the history as the impetus of Josiah's reform (II Reg 22,11). On the literary level the first communication of

²⁰ For further details see T. Römer, *L'Ancien Testament, une littérature de crise*, RThPh 127 (1995), 321–338.

²¹ DH, 143.

²² Especially H. W. Wolff, ZAW 73 (1961), 171–186 = *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament*, TB 22, 1973², 308–324.

²³ On this point see F. Smyth-Florentin, in: *Le livre de traverse. De l'exégèse biblique à l'anthropologie*, O. Abel & F. Smyth-Florentin ed., 1992, 15–21.

²⁴ For »seven« as a literary strategy in Deut see G. Braulik, in: *Ein Gott, eine Offenbarung. Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese, Theologie und Spiritualität* (FS N. Fuglister), 1991, 37–50.

the book by Moses and the rediscovery of the same book by Josiah provide an *inclusio* for the DH. This does not necessarily mean that the first edition of the DH ended with Josiah's reign, as advocated by most scholars from the Cross-school. II Reg 22–23 already announces the exile (especially the Huldah speeches, II Reg 22,16–17), and as Hobbs puts it »the important point about the reign and the reform of Josiah is their failure«²⁵. Indeed, the restoration and the »yahwisation« of the temple was not of much use, because a few decades later it was destroyed. But the discovery of the book offered the possibility to *understand* this destruction and to worship Yhwh without any temple.

Since II Reg 22–23 represent the most discussed chapters of DH²⁶, we will restrict our enquiry to the motive of the book-finding. Hoffmann has convincingly shown that the books of Kings are structured by a pattern of regression and cult reform and that the restoration of the temple in II Reg 22,3–7 depends literally on II Reg 12,10–16²⁷. The notice of the book finding by the priest Hilkiyahou in v. 8 comes quite surprisingly and interrupts the first scene (v. 3–7.9). So, the *Auffindungsbericht* in II Kings 22 may be distinguished with Levin from an *Instandsetzungsbericht*²⁸. Dietrich assumes that v. 8 belongs to the oldest pre-dtr. level (together with v. 10 and 13), Levin, on the other hand ascribes it to a postexilic redactor (together with 22,10.11.13*.16–18.19*.20; 23,1–3)²⁹. The discovery of the law-book distinguishes Josiah's episode from all the other restoration- and reform-reports in DH. This discovery raises a question about the narrative logic of the DH. Should the reader understand that the *spr htwrh* was lost? But such an information is never given in the DH. On the contrary, all the famous speeches by Joshua, Samuel, Solomon which structure the story give the impression that the leaders of Yhwh's people are quoting from Deut and according to II Reg 22,13 the book was known by the »fathers« whose identity is not clearly expressed³⁰. II Reg 23,22 apparently suggests that the book disappeared in the time of the Judges, since this verse states that »such a Passover« – which is ordained in Deut 16 – »had not been performed from the days of the Judges«. This construction may explain

²⁵ T. R. Hobbs, 2Kings, WBC 13, 1985, xxv.

²⁶ Recent surveys of research may be found in G. N. Knoppers, Two Nations, Vol. II, 1994, 121–169; B. Giesemann, ZAW 106 (1994), 223–242.

²⁷ H.-D. Hoffmann, Reform und Reformen: Untersuchungen zu einem Grundthema der deuteronomistischen Geschichtsschreibung, AThANT 66, 1980, esp. 169–270.

²⁸ C. Levin, ZAW 96 (1984), 351–371, 355.

²⁹ W. Dietrich, VT 27 (1977), 13–35; 21; C. Levin, 355.

³⁰ I have argued in *Israels Väter. Untersuchungen zur Väterthematik im Deuteronomium und in der deuteronomistischen Tradition*, OBO 99, 1990, 319, that the »fathers« refer to all disobedient generations since the conquest.

why the message of the book is confirmed by Hulda, a prophetess, who may allude to Deborah, judgeess and the only other prophetess inside the DH³¹. Another confirmation is given by the fact that the law book of Moses, before his discovery in II Reg, is mentioned for the last time in Joshua's final discourse (Jos 23,6)³². This literary strategy intends to show that the »golden age« of the conquest had virtually come back with Josiah; but since Joshua had announced the coming deportation, deportation cannot be prevented. Nevertheless the book is back and helps to live in exile or diaspora.

Scholars have often used II Reg 22 to reconstruct the »historical circumstances« of the Josianic reform. But a positivist historical reading of the book-finding event does not help much to understand the text. Speyer has demonstrated that the motive of book findings in temples or holy places is a quite common literary motive in Antiquity which is mostly used »um einem gerade angefertigten Werk den Schein höheren Alters und großer Heiligkeit zu verleihen«³³. The origin of this motive is probably to be found in the deposit of foundation tablets in Mesopotamian sanctuaries that are often »rediscovered« by later kings undertaking restoration works. The Egyptian variant of this motive occurs for instance in the final rubric of the 64th chapter of the Book of the Dead, which was standardized in the Saite period³⁴. Chapter 64 is presented as having been found in the Sokaris temple and as dating from the very origins of Egypt³⁵. Another parallel stems from the Ptolemaic inscriptions in Denderah; it legitimates the liturgy of the temple by its discovery through Thutmose III³⁶.

³¹ The role of Hulda may also be described as playing the part of »the double-check on the will of the deity«. According to L. K. Handy, ZAW 106 (1994), 40–53, Hulda's role is an adaptation of omen deities which appear in Babylonian propaganda documents.

³² Jos 24,26 speaks of the *spr turt 'lhym* and belongs to a post-dtr. layer.

³³ W. Speyer, *Bücherfunde in der Glaubenswerbung der Antike. Mit einem Ausblick auf Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, Hyp. 24, 1970; cf. also B. J. Diebner, C. Nauerth, DBAT 18 (1984), 95–118.

³⁴ Cf. P. Barguet, *Le livre des Morts des anciens Egyptiens*, LAPO, 1967, 12–13.

³⁵ This rubric is to be found (with variations) in the long as in the short versions. According to the Papyrus of Nu: »This chapter was found in the city of Khemennu ... under the feet of the god during the reign of His Majesty, the King of the North and the South, Men-kau-Rā ... triumphant, by the royal son Heru-ṯā-ṯā-f, triumphant; he found it when he was journeying about to make an inspection of the temples ... he brought it to the king as a wonderful object when he saw that it was a thing of great mystery, which had never [before] been seen or looked upon. This chapter shall be recited by a man who is ceremonially clean and pure ...« (quoted from E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Dead*, Vol. II, 1956², 221–222. For variants, see 217.221).

³⁶ These parallels are presented and discussed in S. Euringer, BZ 9 (1911), 230–243.337–349; 10 (1912), 13–23.225–237. See also J. Herrmann, ZAW 28 (1908), 291–302.

The discovery-reports are often variations of the following diagram: 1. An important person wants to change or to »restore« important features in society. 2. He is afraid of opposition. 3. He or one of his loyal servants is sent to a holy place. 4. There he discovers a book or written oracles which are of divine origin. 5. This discovery gives divine impulse to the projects of the hero.

Of special interest are Nabonidus' inscriptions, who strived to appear as the discover of numerous documents. All his reports follow the same outline. In the cylinder from Sippar, Nabonidus tells us the following story³⁷: He wanted to rebuild the temple of Ibarra (belonging to Shamash) in Sippar: »(19) a former king (= Nebuchadnezzar) had searched for the ancient foundation-stone without any success. (20) On his own initiative he had built a new temple for Shamash, but it was not built (good enough) for his reign ... (22) the walls sagged and risked a break-down ... (26) I supplicated him (= Shamash), offered him sacrifices and was searching for his decisions. (27) Shamash, the very high Lord, had chosen me from the earliest days on ... (32) I made investigations and gathered the ancients of the town, the Babylonians, the architects, (33) the wise men, ... (34) ... I told them: ›Look for the ancient foundation-stone, (35) take care of the sanctuary of the Judge Shamash ...‹. (36) The erudite persons looked for the ancient stone of foundation, imploring Shamash, my Lord, and praying to the great Gods, (37) they inspected the apartment and the rooms and they saw it. They came to me and told me: (38) ›I have seen the ancient foundation-stone of Naram-Sin, the former king, the real sanctuary of Shamash, the dwelling place of his divinity‹. (39) My heart jubilated and my face was radiant«. The foundation-stone contains the document of the »original temple« and enables Nabonidus to undertake his restoration works.

We may shortly present a Greek tradition, which according to Speyer stems from the IVth century B. C. E., to be found in Pausanias' »Guide to Greece«³⁸ (Book IV, 26): General »Epaminondas was in difficulties about finding a city« since »the Messenians refused to resettle Andania or Oichalia«. His project is confirmed by a night vision. His strategist Epiteles is commanded in a dream to go to Mount Ithome and to rescue an old woman. Epiteles came to the place and there »he found a bronze jar which he took to Epaminondas at once«. He »offered sacrifice and prayed to the vision he had dreamed and opened the jar. Inside

³⁷ Quoted from F. E. Peiser, in: Keilschriftliche Bibliothek. Sammlung von assyrischen und babylonischen Texten in Umschrift und Übersetzung, III/2, E. Schrader ed., 1890, 80–121.108–113.

³⁸ English translation by P. Levi: Pausanias, Guide to Greece. Volume 2: Southern Greece, 1971, reprint 1979, 162–163.

he found a leaf of tin beaten to extreme fineness and rolled up like a scroll, and inscribed with the mystery of the Great goddesses«. This text had been hidden by the hero Aristomes and certainly confirmed the projects of Epaminondas³⁹.

There is of course no literal relationship with II Reg 22–23. But it is clear that the authors or redactors of II Reg 22–23 resort to the same literary convention⁴⁰ which will become very popular in christianity.

We have already indicated some literary strategies which are linked to the appearance of the book under Josiah and which contribute to the unity of the DH. There is still another function which goes beyond the context of DH. This is the link between II Reg 22–23 and Jer 36. According to Isbell Jer 36 depends on the story of Josiah's reform, while Minette de Tillesse advocates the opposite relationship⁴¹. Perhaps this is a wrong alternative, since it is much more logical to think that both texts emanate from the same dtr. circle and that they are written as two poles corresponding to each other. Both texts deal with the intrusion of a book into the life of a king, in both texts the Shaphan-family (the *heroi eponymoi* of the Dtrs.?) plays a significant role. In both texts the book is read three times a day and the attitudes of the two kings are those of type and anti-type. But the most interesting point is that the two stories defend the following thesis: The book is more important than the prophetic persona. In Jer 36, Jeremiah is absent from the central story. The matter is about obedience to the *dbry hspr* (Jer 36,32). And the oracle of the prophetess Hulda in II Reg 22,16 is above all a confirmation and interpretation of the *dbry hspr*. If the Dtrs. embody a »mandarin« attitude those two stories about the book should be interpreted as an attempt to control the prophetic milieu. Given the fact that the »historical Jeremiah« did not have a dtr. mind, the only solution was to edit a book bearing his name, and to transform the prophet into a dtr. historian⁴². This conforms to the (dtr.?) theory that the Persian period means the end of prophecy⁴³ (cf. Dan 9,24; Bb 12b⁴⁴). From now on the only access to the divine word and the authorized interpretation of history is the *spr htwrh*.

³⁹ See W. Speyer, 68.

⁴⁰ The fact that Josiah's priest does not like Nabonidus find a foundation-stone, but a scroll, is easily explained by the dtr. intention to substitute the book to the temple.

⁴¹ C. T. D. Isbell, JSOT 8 (1978), 33–45; C. Minette de Tillesse, ZAW 105 (1993), 352–376.

⁴² For the redactional problems of Jer see C. R. Seitz, *Theology in Conflict. Reactions to the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah*, BZAW 176, 1989.

⁴³ R. F. Person, *Second Zechariah and the Deuteronomistic School*, JSOTS 167, 1993, 193–199.

⁴⁴ »Since the day the temple was destroyed, the divine inspiration has been taken off from the prophets and was given to the wise men«.

If II Reg 22–23 is to be read as the foundation myth of the dtr. group and as an ideological or theological attempt to have the end of monarchy accepted, then this text can hardly be used for a reconstruction of the historical circumstances, of the so-called Josianic reform. We should follow scholars like Würthwein, Davies and others⁴⁵ and consider II Reg 22–23 above all as a literary and theological construct. This does not mean that no »reform« under Josiah ever existed, we may have even some archaeological support for it⁴⁶, but it is methodological circularity to claim that such a recognition of politics and cultic affairs under Josiah has been caused by the »discovery« of Deuteronomy. It may also be still possible to reconstruct a Josianic *Urdeuteronomium*, even if there is no consensus about this reconstruction in recent attempts. II Reg 22–23 should be dated from the exilic period. If we follow the literary-critical approach as advocated by Levin and others we may even ask ourselves if the *Auffindungsbericht* does not belong to a postexilic dtr. redaction, which brings us to our last point.

4. *The transformation of »exile« into »diaspora«*

The debate about dating the DH is mainly concerned with Josianic or exilic times. The last verses of II Reg 25 seem to indicate that the last important redaction took place in exilic times. But Auld states that »the fact that Kings ends with the fate of Judah's last king tells us no more about the date of composition ... than the fact that the Pentateuch ends with the death of Moses«⁴⁷. The postexilic literary activity in DH may indeed be heavier than generally believed and is confirmed by the results of textcritical work on the DH (as done by Treballe, McKenzie, and others⁴⁸), which shows that the LXX often supposes another *Vorlage* than the MT, and that the pluses in the MT are clearly dtr. in style and thought.

The last episode in Kings which tells of a sort of rehabilitation of king Jehoiachin⁴⁹ fits indeed better into the postexilic than into the exilic

⁴⁵ E. Würthwein, ZThK 73 (1976), 395–423 = Studien zum deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk, BZAW 227, 1994, 188–216; P. R. Davies, In Search of Ancient Israel, JSOT.S 148, 1992, 40–41; G. Minette de Tillesse, 371.

⁴⁶ Cf. for instance M. Rose, Der Ausschließlichkeitsanspruch Jahwes. Deuteronomistische Schultheologie und die Volksfrömmigkeit der späten Königszeit, BWANT 106, 1975. Even if Rose brings too far his interpretation of the archeological data, it is quite clear that the kingdom of Judah became important only in the VIIth century B. C. E.

⁴⁷ A. G. Auld, JSOT 27 (1983), 41–44.

⁴⁸ C. Treballe, BIOSCS 15 (1982), 12–35; S. L. McKenzie, The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History, HSM 33, 1985; R. F. Person, Second Zechariah.

⁴⁹ See on this point E. Zenger, BZ.NF 12 (1968), 16–30.

period. This report shares literary conventions with the stories of Esther and Joseph which Meinhold called »novels of the diaspora«⁵⁰. Yoyakin's fate is similar to that of Mardochai and Joseph. In all three cases an exiled person among others becomes second to the king (II Reg 25,28; Est 10,3; Gen 41,40), and the accession to this new status is symbolized by changing clothes (II Reg 25,29; Est 6,10–11; 8,15; Gen 41,42). These accession stories transform exile into diaspora. The land of deportation changes into a land where the foreigner is welcome. One can live very well outside *eretz yisrael* and manage interesting careers. It is then not so astonishing that the »hope for return« is quite discreet in the DH. It is enough to know how to pray towards the temple (I Reg 8,48).

We may still ask why are there no direct allusions to the Persian period in DH. Probably because the Dtrs. of the postexilic times were quite »modern« historians: if you write a historiography you do not include your own present⁵¹. For the Dtrs., Israel's history ended with exile, which also means that the concept of exile will not allude primarily to a specific historical period.

To sum up let us underline the fact that the literary tactics that were employed by the Dtrs. contributed widely to shape the Jewish identity which emerged in the Persian period: a religion founded on a book and the identification of the »real Israel« with the Babylonian Golah.

Die Debatte um die Datierung der Erstausgabe des DtrG leidet an einer zu starken Polarisierung zwischen der Cross- und Smend-Schule sowie an einer Vernachlässigung soziologischer und ideologiegeschichtlicher Aspekte. Der vorliegende Artikel versucht eine Transformation innerhalb des DtrG nachzuweisen. Propagandaschriften zur Zeit Josias (Reg*, Dtn-Jos*, Ex* und Num*) werden nach der Katastrophe von 597/87 zu einer »distanzierten« Geschichtsschreibung umgebaut. II Reg 22–23, der »Ursprungsmythos« der Deuteronomisten, wird durch einen »Auffindungsbericht« erweitert, der einem verbreiteten literarischen Motiv folgt, welches in II Reg 22 die Ablösung der Autorität des Tempels und der Prophetie durch das »Buch der Torah« legitimiert. Es ergeben sich somit Argumente für eine Redaktion des DtrG in der nachexilischen Zeit, zu welcher auch die Anfügung von II Reg 25,27–30 zu zählen ist.

⁵⁰ A. Meinhold, ZAW 87 (1975), 306–324; ZAW 88 (1976), 72–93. For a postexilic date of the Joseph-Story see also T. Römer, in: *Le livre de traverse*, 73–85; J. A. Soggin, in: *Understanding Poets and Prophets. Essays in Honour of G. W. Anderson*, JSOT.S 152, 1993, 336–349.

⁵¹ See for a similar literary strategy the end of Luke's Acts, and on this topic, P. Davies, *Expository Times* 94 (1983), 334–335.