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1. Introduction

The origin of exclusive devotion to Yahwe in Israel’s religion has received notable attention in recent scholarly debate. The question is important because demands to worship one God alone later developed into monotheism. Although monotheism may be characterized as its child, ironically the OT itself is not monotheistic. There are passages that have monotheistic traits, but they do not add up to real monotheism. My main interest lies in the position that, at least *prima facie*, seems to predominate in the OT, in passages that attack and criticize other gods. Without denying the existence of other gods, these passages explicitly demand that Israel should worship exclusively Yahwe. This position, which I will call intolerant monolatry, separates Israel’s religion from other religions of the Ancient Near East. The latter may show criticism and sporadic aggression towards other divinities, but only in Israel does this tendency develop into a systematic program to annihilate other gods. The purpose of this study is to examine and depict the origin and context of this peculiar phenomenon. Why and when did Israel’s religion become intolerant towards other gods? I will approach the problem from the perspective of the Deuteronomistic History, the main historical source of Israel’s pre-exilic religion. Since it is often asserted that they contain the earliest demands to worship Yahwe exclusively, the most central intolerance texts in Ex will be included as well. Books of the exilic prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah in particular, may illuminate the problem further, but they will be left for further study. After textual analyses, I will compare the results with relevant archaeological data.

1.1. History of Research

**Origin in the desert.** The origin of exclusivity and intolerance of other gods in Israel’s religion is sought from various periods of Israel’s history. Putting extensive trust in the OT’s own account of Israel’s early history, a notable number of studies imply that Yahwe demanded exclusive devotion in the desert or from “the beginning.” This traditional view is especially reflected in older studies and general introductions to Israel’s religion and history. Some scholars argue that the religion of the patriarchs already shows signs of exclusive worship or that their religion was otherwise monolatrically oriented to one God, El or

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2I will use the initial capital when referring to God of Israel, but otherwise I will use the lower case.

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Yahwe. On the other hand, many scholars find early evidence for exclusive worship in the activity of Moses. Other scholars generally assume that the exclusive worship of one God was a characteristic feature of Israel’s religion from the beginning. For example, concerning the prohibition against worshipping other gods, Clements states “that this obligation had existed from the beginnings of the religion is scarcely provable, but is hardly to be doubted.” According to Mark Smith, adherence to one deity can be already seen in the religion of the Judges. The later concept of covenant would draw on a pre-monarchic covenantal relationship between Yahwe and Israel that bound “Israel to Yahwe as its exclusive deity.” Moreover, many scholars date some of the laws against the worship of other gods to the pre-monarchic or nomadic period.

The desert solutions imply that polytheistic and syncretistic features in Israel’s religion were a secondary development influenced by the Canaanite religion. This influence would have begun only after Israel had entered the land. In other words, foreign and later influence would have corrupted the pure and genuine form of Israel’s original religion. The later development to exclusive monolatry would have been a return to Israel’s original religion.

It is evident that the OT’s own perspective is the main reason for the model’s popularity: It corresponds well with how the OT describes the origin of Israelite religion. In addition, in the background of this model may lie the old theory of Urmonotheism and theories like that of Renan, that desert conditions favor monotheistic or monolatric conceptions. Such theories have faced serious problems. Nomads in the ANE did not live

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4 Thus, for example, Eichrodt 1933, 111; Müller 1980, 125-128; Preuß 1991, 125 and Schreiner 1995, 213-215. Bright (1972, 97-101) assumes that the patron god of the patriarchal religion was worshipped to the practical exclusion of all other gods.

5 Kittel 1929, 41-42. Sellin (1933, 11) suggests that for Moses Yahwe was an intolerant god, although many Israelites continued believing in other gods. Similarly, Albright 1968, 180; Fohrer 1969, 66, 74-75, 166; Bright 1972, 153-154; Ringgren 1982, 31-34 and Tigay 1996, 433-435.

6 In his introduction to Old Testament theology, von Rad (1962, 216-217) suggests that Yahwism claimed exclusivity from the very beginning. Rose (1975, 269) speaks of a relationship of naive exclusivity (naive Ausschließlichkeit) that existed between Yahwe and nomadic Israelites.

7 Clements 1978, 72.

8 Mark Smith 1990, 147, 156.

9 For example, Scharbert (1985, 160, 182-83) suggests that Ex 20:22-23:33 and Ex 34:10-26 are, for the most part, pre-monarchic or early-monarchic at the latest, which, in turn, would suggest that exclusive devotion to Yahwe was an early, pre-monarchic, idea. Halbe (1975, 314-319, 340) dates the core of Ex 34:10-26 to the pre-monarchic era. Without giving a specific date, Schreiner (1995, 234) regards Ex 22:19 as the oldest passage where sacrifices to other gods are forbidden. He states (Schreiner 1995, 214) that the general attitude towards the other gods is negative in all OT books from the DH to the more recent ones.

10 For example, Marti 1906, 30-35 and Bright 1972, 141, 221-24, 281-82.

11 Renan 1958, 147. Thus also Oldenburg 1969, 172-174. At the beginning of the modern era, it was thought that monotheism was the oldest form of religion. See Ström 1994, 233-237.

12 For example, Ludwig (1987, 69) notes that the theory of Urmonotheism cannot be substantiated by history of religions, although many primal and archaic peoples have a conception of a high god who is the creator of the world.
in a vacuum in the desert, but had wide and constant contact with the settled civilizations. Moreover, it is not proven that “the desert is monotheistic.” Many desert religions were polytheistic even in the Semitic realm. The theory of Urmonotheism is difficult to prove, and in any case analogies and arguments from other cultures should be used only with caution.

Less conservative scholars and recent research criticize this traditional model. It has been pointed out that attempts to delve into Israel’s early period in order to reconstruct the contemporary religious situation are dubious, for they are based on historically unreliable and ambiguous documents. Since they often take the OT account at face value without much source criticism, Lang’s characterization of these studies as Wüstenromantik (desert romanticism) is justified. This criticism is particularly severe because the main edition and presumably the skeleton of most OT documents relevant to the question were written down close to the time of the Exile, that is, nearly a millennium later than the period under discussion. Even though it is possible that these sources preserve some old material and ancient traditions, it is questionable that we could reconstruct anything historically reliable from a situation a millennium before the time of actual writing. Later transmitters, editors and collectors of tradition utilized older material with their own aims and purposes in mind. It was not their main intention to preserve the accuracy and intentions of old stories and traditions. Despite the fact that oral traditions were highly respected among ancient peoples, one should be cautious of using traditions that have been transmitted over a millennium. Consequently, the development of exclusivity should first be delineated in the later periods, which offer more reliable data. If they give sufficient reason to suspect earlier influence, we may and should turn to the earlier periods. In other words, methodologically speaking, one should not commence with the desert.

**Monarchic origin.** With growing skepticism towards the ability to trace Israel’s pre-monarchic religion, the newest research has been prone to search for intolerance in the monarchical period. The earliest demands for exclusive worship of Yahwe are seen in the activity of Elijah (especially 1K 18). Although some scholars interpret the conflict between

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13 See, for example, Daum (1985, 30) on Sabaic religion.
14 Soggin (1984, 67) remarks: “(it) ... is a reconstruction which is too reminiscent of the myth of the golden age, of noble and pure origins subsequently followed by decay, to be adequate as a historical explanation of the phenomenon of paganism and syncretism in Israel.” Kaiser (1993, 113) states: “wir besitzen für die vor- und frühgeschichtliche Zeit der Geschichte Israels keine andere Zeugnisse als seine Sagen”. Similarly, Miller-Hayes 1986, 58-60.
16 The dating of central documents for the discussion has been shifting to a later and later period, e.g., the J source of the Pentateuch (see Levin 1993, 430-435).
17 Thus, Hentschel (1984, 109-116; 1985b, 88-89) and Albertz (1994, 89-91). According to the latter, it was a reaction to the state-led syncretism of the Omrides. Although Albertz believes that in the pre-monarchic religion Yahwe had already a special status, he assumes that intolerance and exclusivity crystallized for the first time during the early monarchy as a reaction to an external threat.
Baal and Yahwe during Ahab’s reign as a battle for primacy and not as real attack on all other gods, many also suggest that in the background already lies intrinsic intolerance. Stolz implies that rivalry between Baal and Yahwe in this period reflects the collision of two different social and cultural systems: Baal would represent the Canaanite agricultural realm, whereas Yahwe the Israelite ex-nomadic one. If many scholars still doubt the historical reliability and question the interpretation of the Elijah stories, most regard the activity of Hosea as the terminus ad quo of demands for Yahwe’s exclusive worship. Hosea’s historicity and intolerance is not doubted by many, and the prophet is assumed to have declared war on Baal and other gods. The heritage of these two prophets would then later have been adopted by other prophets, (e.g., Jeremiah) and especially by the dtr movement. The latter would have made systematic demands to worship Yahwe exclusively, which then resulted in religious reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah that ousted other gods from Israel. The historicity of the reforms, especially that of Josiah, is usually accepted. Josiah is the intolerant king par excellence.

The development of exclusivity under Israelite monarchy can be seen from two different perspectives. On the one hand, some scholars suggest that exclusive worship of Yahwe became the rule or norm sometime during the monarchy. The norm was disturbed by

18 Thus, Miller - Hayes (1986, 273). According to Lemche (1988, 160), the religious struggle under the Omrian dynasty was not caused by enmity between Yahwe-religion and the local worship of Baal, but rather by the foreign, Tyrian deity which had attempted to replace the local religion. Similarly, Mark Smith (1990, 15) suggests that the background of the conflict is the threat posed to Yahwe by the Phoenician Baal.


22 For example, Lang 1981, 62-63. According to him, the 9th century conflict between Yahwe and Baal was fought within polytheism. The Yahwe-alone movement then appears during the period between Jehu and the 8th century prophet Hosea.

23 For example, Albertz (1992, 282, 307-321) accepts the historicity of both reforms. The historicity of Hezekiah’s reform as a religious renewal is doubted by more scholars. Thus, e.g., Spieckermann 1982, 120-130, 172ff. Josiah’s reform is generally accepted as a historical event that purified the religion of non-Yahwistic elements. See Donner (1995, 376-378) for example. So also Manfred Weippert (1990, 163-164) who assumes that Josiah’s reform was motivated by Yahwe-alone theology and that the reform was directed at other gods and foreign cults. However, Levin’s (1984, 363) reconstruction of the history writer’s text in 2K 22-23 leaves little space for reforms that would have attacked other gods. Würthwein’s (1984) literary-critical conclusions also reduce the extent of the reforms.
periods of apostasy. This view reflects the OT’s own picture of Israel’s religion. On the other hand, according to some scholars, the pre-exilic religion of Israel did not differ from other religions of the ANE and was generally polytheistic and syncretistic. The demands for exclusivity were put forward by a minority movement whose influence remained relatively small until the late pre-exilic period. It was only during the Exile that this minority view established itself as the official or orthodox religion, with the consequence that this view of pre-exilic history became the official interpretation of the past. Morton Smith and Lang have made the latter view popular with their theory about the Yahwe-alone party. Nevertheless, Manfred Weippert and Lemche also present Israel’s pre-exilic religion along similar lines: The predominant form of religion was polytheism.

Although the monarchy model predominates modern research and is appealing, many points in it are based on not unambiguous sources. Like the desert model, it essentially relies on the OT’s own account of pre-exilic events and development and does not adequately question its reliability and value as historical evidence. Most scholars do acknowledge that the perspective given by the exilic writers may not be a fair one, but the actuality of the described events is unfortunately rarely questioned. It is often implied that one must merely correct the writers’ perspective in order to receive a correct picture of Israel’s past. This is clearly perceivable in the theory of Morton Smith and Lang. As noted above, they suggest that the OT texts were written by a movement that was in the minority during the monarchy and not in the majority. In this respect, the OT view would have to be corrected and reinterpreted. However, their theory does not question the historicity of the events adequately. For example, in support of the Yahwe-alone movement in pre-exilic times, they use several passages in the DH that most likely do not originate from the history writer of...

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24 For example, Tigay (1986, 37-39) regards the monarchical religion as mainly monolatric. The sporadic periods of syncretism and polytheism were restricted to the royal court.

25 This theory is presented in several articles and books: Originally Morton Smith 1971 and following and developing his theory, Lang 1980; 1981; 1983; 1985; 1986. From this theory, it follows that the OT, which represents the party’s point of view, is not a fair representation of the religious situation before the Exile. Morton Smith (1971, 19-20) leaves the door open for the possibility that Israel’s nomadic background would have had an impact on the Yahwe-alone ideology.

26 Lemche 1988, 249-257; Manfred Weippert 1990, 150-152. Also Dever (1994, 111-113, 123) and Mark Smith (1994, 225-227) imply such a development.

27 This stand is particularly noticeable in the Yahwe-alone theory by Morton Smith and Lang. Note, for example, Lang’s (1983, 10) reserved attitude towards literary criticism: “Recent scholarship ... seems to have exaggerated the possibility of establishing the secondary nature of texts ... Generally speaking, I have not found many valuable insights in studies which seem to rely on an almost infallible approach of divide et impera.” Similarly, Morton Smith (1971, 49): “... secure results are hardly to be reached by source analysis of the core Deuteronomy ... we had better be content to take the core as evidence ...” In spite of these assertive statements, I deem that it is simply impossible to reconstruct anything reliable without careful source analysis, however difficult and arduous that might be. If we abandon this task, we might as well abandon talking about Israel’s religion before the post-exilic era, at least when it comes to arguing from the OT.

28 A similar attitude may be perceived in the theories by Manfred Weippert 1990, 150-151 and Dever 1994, 225-227. Even Dever, who criticizes scholars that they rely too much on the textual evidence, is very optimistic that we could use the OT as a historical source just by adjusting the perspective.
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Likewise, many other scholars simply ignore literary and source criticism when they argue about Israel’s religion. It is essential to begin the investigation with a literary and redaction-critical approach: One should first try to date and characterize the intolerance texts and then delineate the development of intolerance in the different textual layers. After this procedure, one may see the development of exclusivity during the time of writing, and only thereafter, one may proceed to the earlier periods. The pre-exilic period cannot be investigated without penetrating the Exile. I will return to this issue later on with methodological questions.

Archaeological Approaches to the Religion of the Monarchy

It is necessary to mention some important archaeological contributions in this context. From the perspective of iconography, Keel and Uehlinger have been able to raise many important points on Israel’s monarchic religion. Their perspective partly supports the Biblical view on late monarchic religious reforms. They have suggested that the decrease and lack of iconography on late monarchic Judean seals may reflect the success of religious reforms as presented in the DH. To a certain degree undermining the basis of the arguments by Keel and Uehlinger, Mettinger has lately shown that aniconism was fairly common in the West Semitic realm and not a unique phenomenon restricted to Israel. He argues that Israelite aniconism as such is not a late innovation, is not the result of theological reflection and “does not constitute one of Israel’s differentia specifica.”

29 Compare the passages with Würthwein’s (1984, 1985) commentary on Kings. For example, Hezekiah’s reform is regarded by Lang (1983, 36) as clear proof for the party’s existence, yet Würthwein (1984, 410-411) attributes the essential verse (2K 18:4) to DtrN or to an even later redactor, thus making its historical value questionable. About Josiah’s reform Würthwein (1976, 421) states: “2Kön 22f. können keinen Anspruch auf geschichtliche Glaubwürdigkeit erheben ...” For more details on intolerance passages in the books of Kings, see chapter 4.1. and 4.2. About the use of Hosea for proving the party’s existence during the eight century, see Nissinen (1991, 166), who criticizes Lang in a footnote: “Problematisch dabei ist, daß der Ursprung der betreffenden Hoseastellen in keiner Weise in Frage gestellt wird ...”

30 Later additions may of course contain historically reliable material, yet in the case of additions to the DH, the historical value must specifically be investigated because of the chronological distance from the additions to the time of description. In addition, the later additions often contain very tendentious material. The later editors usually had a specific message they wanted to convey to the readers.

31 For example, Manfred Weippert 1990, 160-166.

32 Keel - Uehlinger 1992, 410-412, 428-429 and Uehlinger 1993, 278-288. In a later article, Uehlinger (1995, 65-70) has become more careful about using archaeology as support for OT accounts. For example, he states (p.66), “In der Regel sind wir ja gar nicht in der Lage, archäologische Befunde so genau zu datieren, daß wir sie etwa Joschija, aber nicht Jojakim (oder umgekehrt) zuweisen könnten ...”

33 Thus, Mettinger (1995, 191-195) although he also finds archaeological evidence for the religious reforms. According to him, the וָנָד and the massebot fell into disuse during the latter half of the monarchy and this would have been a result of religious reforms, either of Hezekiah or of Josiah. For evaluation and critique on Mettinger’s theory, see Loretz (1994b, 209-223). Justifiably, he (p.
facto aniconism that did not attack iconography. Mettinger links the explicit veto on images in the OT with the Yahwe-alone movement. It is questionable whether the presently available iconographical evidence would be able to prove a veto on images. To assume anything like that would, in practice, require evidence of active destruction of iconography or anti-iconic formulations, similar to what we find in Egypt. So far the only evidence for such an activity in Israel comes from the OT.

Tigay has also made an important archaeological contribution to the discussion. Arguing from the onomastic and other epigraphic evidence, he has suggested that during the monarchy the Israelites in practice worshipped only Yahwe and ignored foreign gods. Much of the polytheism described in the OT would have been sponsored by and largely also restricted to the royal courts of Israel and Judah. He backs up these suggestions by demonstrating that ca. 94% of the PNs in the pre-exilic Israelite epigraphic evidence acknowledge Yahwe as the theophoric element. He also points out that the abundance of Yawistic names notably differs from other nations of the ANE. I will come back to this issue later on in chapter 6.1.

Aharoni has attempted to support the historicity of religious reforms in the late monarchical Judah by archaeological evidence. He suggests that late monarchical evidence from Judah, especially from Beer-sheba, shows violent aggression against cultic installations. It would, according to him, correspond to Hezekiah’s reform. His theory has not received common acceptance, but his countrymen, Yadin and Mazar, have interpreted the evidence as proof for Josiah’s reform. Yadin’s comment on the destruction of the 722 in Beer-sheba reported in 2K 23:8 is illustrative: “This act, the authenticity of which is not doubted by scholars ...” In other words, he postulates 2K 23:8 to be a historical fact and interprets the archaeological evidence accordingly.

219) asks, how is it possible that a people with a basically aniconic religion and culture build a Temple and tolerate it. Loretz (1990, 210-215) assumes that the Temple held a picture of the Israelite deity. Moreover, Loretz (1994b, 219) points out that one should not forget Ashera when discussing iconicity or aniconicity in Israel’s religion.

Mettinger 1995, 196. In this case, the veto on images would be dependent on the general veto on other gods and religious practices. Consequently, the dating of the veto on images would be dependent on the dating of intolerance.

For the anti-iconic tendencies in Egypt, see Mettinger 1995, 49-54, 56.


He excludes El from the ratio due to the fact that this name may either be a general designation of a god or may be the same as Yahwe.

See Tigay 1986, 18, 37-41. Unfortunately, the evidence for Moab, Ammon and Edom is not yet abundant.


Yadin 1976, 5.

See Uehlinger’s (1995, 65) criticism on these archaeological approaches. He notes that the incense altars in Arad were covered or buried so carefully that it hardly fits with the account of 2K 23:8.
Although relating to the post-exilic period, it is necessary to mention a recent article by Stern, who has pointed out that archeological evidence from the Persian period shows a new picture. Whereas several figurines of divinities have been found in other areas of the Palestine, “in areas of the country occupied by the Jews, not a single cultic figurine has been found!” In other words, after the Exile the Israelite/Jewish material remains clearly deviate from the immediate neighbors and the whole Levantine coast. It is therefore reasonable to assume that during the Persian period Israel’s religion had already taken a different track than the other religions of the area. Other gods had disappeared from the central Jewish area. This gives a chronological frame before which the development to intolerance must have begun and developed.

**Exilic origin.** The importance of the Exile for the development of Israel’s religion is generally accepted; the rise of monotheism, at least in some form, is attributed to the Exile. However, only a few scholars regard it as crucial for the development of exclusivity or intolerance. Most scholars imply that the crucial development had already begun before the Exile, while the Exile is regarded only as the final fulfillment.

Nevertheless, Vorländer has suggested that the pre-exilic Yahwe did not demand exclusive devotion. According to him, the development to monotheism was rapid and was caused by foreign influence, especially Persian Zoroastrianism. The crisis of the Exile would have enabled foreign influence to penetrate. He accepts that the pre-exilic religion of Israel was already prone to favor monolatric conceptions, but he also suggests that they did not differ from those of other religions of the area. The crucial development that made Israel’s religion special occurred during the Exile. Unfortunately, Vorländer does not elaborate on the monolatric conceptions and their development, and overemphasizes the monotheism of Deutero-Isaiah. In addition, external influence receives too much attention in comparison with the inner-Israelite development. For example, he more or less ignores the importance of the dtr movement and literature.

The importance of the Exile is also stressed by Lemche, who suggests that Israel’s religion did not differ from those of her neighbors during the monarchy, and that Israel had not acquired her special characteristics before the Exile. However, at the same time he assumes a pre-exilic dtr movement that had already attempted reforms based on exclusive worship of Yahwe. In other words, despite stressing the importance of the Exile he assumes the origin of intolerance to be in the pre-exilic period. The Exile remains only the fulfillment of the pre-exilic pursuits of a minority party.

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44 Stern 1999, 253-255.
45 See, for example, Mark Smith 1990, 155, Albertz 1992, 435-426 or Knauf 1994, 264-265. Mark Smith dates the rise of monotheism to the late monarchy or the Exile.
48 Lemche 1988, 156 (early prophetism), 168-172 (Josiah and the pre-exilic deuteronomists). He comments on p. 256: “All that we can be sure of is that the Israelite conception of Yahweh during the period of the monarchy did not contain features which distinguished his worship from other types of religion in western Asia.” At the same time, he accepts (p. 165) a deuteronomistic
Other Scholarly perspectives. Before proceeding to the methodological questions, it is necessary to present some important scholarly views on the reasons and background of exclusivity in Israel’s religion. I have already referred to the views of Albertz. He has suggested that in the background of Israelite monolatry and exclusivity lies Yahwe’s special relationship to a larger group (Großgruppe). This would have been an extension of the ANE tendency in which individuals form personal relationships with a specific god. Elsewhere, this tendency would have been limited to individuals, but in Israel, for some reason, this relationship developed between a larger group, Israel as a people, and the divinity. He points out that this special relationship as such did not have anything to do with monolatry but that it made possible the later development to a conscious monolatry.

Without explicitly dating the development, Loretz argues that the OT conception of Einzigkeit (singleness) of Yahwe rises from general Levantine conceptions. Using Ugaritic examples, he suggests that the Biblical expressions of Yahwe’s Einzigkeit, especially in the Shema, should be understood against the background of West Semitic conceptions, not against modern concepts of monotheism and polytheism, which hinder the proper understanding of the ancients’ minds. Whereas elsewhere the Einzigkeit would have been restricted to a certain area or realm and been relative, Israel’s religion developed this feature further to an exclusive Einzigkeit. Despite avoiding the modern terms monotheism and polytheism, Loretz accepts that the Israelite Einzigkeit implies many monotheistic aspects. Like Albertz, Loretz emphasizes the importance of Yahwe’s exclusive relationship to Israel as a people for the development of exclusivity.

Lately the assyriologist Parpola has introduced a new theory about the nature of monotheism in Assyrian religion. He suggests that although the Assyrian religion appears on the surface very polytheistic, on a deeper level it is essentially monotheistic. The Assyrian main god Aššur is the only and universal God, who also represents the totality of gods. In other words, Aššur contains all other gods in some way. This theory is important for Israel’s religion because Parpola further suggests that the Israelite religion acknowledges the same basic structure as Assyrian religion. The Hebrew word אלוהים (Elohim) denotes singularity (the one God) and plurality (the totality of gods) at the same time. Accordingly, the problem of the relationship between monotheism and polytheism in Israel’s religion, as well as in Assyrian religion, disappears. In other words, despite polytheistic traits, Israel’s religion was

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He dates the Shema, which he uses as the main witness for his theory, to the exilic or post-exilic times at least when it comes to its present form. According to him, the democratized form (Loretz 1997, 84) cannot be pre-exilic because it implies the absence of monarchy. Nevertheless, he suggests that the origin of the present form is in the pre-exilic cult (p. 83).

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\[52\]

\[53\]
Loretz 1997, 155-156.

\[54\]
Parpola 1997, xxi-xxvi.
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essentially monotheistic during the monarchy. It lies beyond my competence to evaluate the Mesopotamian and late Jewish, Kabbalistic material that Parpola brings in support for his theory. Nevertheless, the Assyrian religious system is not necessarily analogous with Israel’s religion of OT times. There were considerable differences between the Israelite and Mesopotamian culture. The latter was much more international and heterogeneous than the rather secluded and homogeneous Israelite culture. Even the surface level of the religions implies considerable or essential differences between the religions. The West Semitic religions tended to acknowledge less gods than their East Semitic counterparts. The iconographies of the two areas are also very different. The West Semites were more prone to aniconism, whereas anthropomorphic representations were common in Mesopotamia. The West Semitic realm cannot be equated with or seen as an extension to the East Semitic realm. The connection between Israel’s and Assyria’s religions would have to be established by much more evidence from the OT itself or from new archaeological discoveries. The OT examples and passages Parpola presents as evidence for a monotheistic deeper level in Israel’s pre-exilic religion are regrettably scarce. The double use, plural and singular, of the word אלוהים is not enough to establish that the alleged Israelite polytheism was monotheistic on a deeper level. The existence of a divine council in Israel’s religion does not prove that all gods in it were one God. The main problem of Parpola’s theory lies in regarding Israel’s religion as monotheistic and/or polytheistic. The OT is basically neither monotheistic nor polytheistic, although there are traits of both of these positions. The main interest in the OT should be directed to the difference between tolerant and intolerant monolatry. Parpola’s theory does not take into account the intolerant phase of Israel’s religion, which, I deem, was of paramount importance for the development of later monotheism. Parpola’s theory is ill equipped to explain the OT attack on the other gods (ךלולאשhra) Asherah trees and the divine council. Moreover, considerable changes took place in Israel’s religion during

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55 On the iconographical differences between the West Semitic and East Semitic realm, see Mettinger 1995, 39-48, 55-56.
56 1K 22:19-23 does show that Yahwe was surrounded by a heavenly divine council רצפת השמיים but is no proof that this divine council was one god, אלוהים. See Parpola 1997, xxi-xxii. He comments on page xxii: “Interestingly, the relevant imagery is generally not felt to be at variance with the basically monotheistic nature of either religion (Christianity and Judaism), while it is commonly taken as diagnostic of the basically polytheistic nature of Assyrian religion.” However, Old Testament research commonly accepts that the OT contains polytheistic traits. See Day (1994), Mark Smith (1994), Dever (1994) and many more.
57 See below for closer definitions.
58 If it denoted the totality of gods, what is meant by the word אלהים in this context?
59 E.g., Dt 7:5; 12:3; 16:21. The attack on and eventual abolishment of Asherah from Israel’s religion is incomprehensible if it formed the basic structure and nucleus of the whole religion, as implied by Parpola.
60 On the attack on the divine council, see e.g., Dt 4:19; 2K 23:4-5; Parpola (1997, xxvi) suggests that the “bitter attacks of biblical prophets against idolatry and the worship of heavenly bodies and foreign gods” should be seen “as attacks against the nation’s excessive worship of divine powers at the cost of God himself ... and not as attacks against the contemporary concepts of God as such ...” However, the attack on Asherah, allegedly the nucleus of Israel’s pre-exilic religious concepts, and
the Exile, a fact which makes the use of later Jewish texts, Kabbalistic documents for example, as evidence for Israel’s pre-exilic religion problematic. We need much more evidence to bridge the gap between Israelite and Assyrian religion on the one hand and the gap between the later Jewish and pre-exilic Israelite on the other.

1.2. Methodological Questions and Central Concepts

I have already alluded to the fact that source criticism has received less than adequate attention in much of the research in question. Many passages in the DH are used as sources for the reconstruction of exclusivity and intolerance, but their historical value is often left unquestioned and the original time of writing uninvestigated. Such an attitude is hazardous. It is important to establish the nature and original historical context of the text before we can use it as a source for the period it describes. Methodologically, I assume that the OT texts primarily speak to their own time. The motive of writing arises from the writer’s own context. One must therefore understand the authors of the DH and their historical context before we can use the composition as a source for Israel’s pre-exilic history. One must be aware of their theological perspective, their biases and motives. Only after depicting the historical situation in which the authors wrote the text, may we determine the historical value of the source for the period it describes. This is particularly important with theologically loaded texts. Admittedly, it may be that due to this state of affairs, the main contribution of many Biblical texts is what they tell us about their own time rather than what they tell about the time they describe. The ancients were not trying to evaluate history from a critical point of view.

To avoid the hazard of using uncertain sources, a study on Israel’s history must be based on a literary and redaction-critical approach. Without source criticism, any reconstruction of Israel’s religion lies on a vulnerable foundation. I will pursue a comprehensive analysis of the most central texts. Since the law-codes and individual laws are often in research assumed to contain ancient material, the laws in Dt and Ex that prohibit the worship of the other gods will be examined in detail. They also form the legal basis of the attack on the other gods, for many other intolerance passages imply the existence of laws that prohibit their worship. After a detailed analysis on the key texts in Dt and Ex, I will turn to other intolerance passages in the rest of the DH. They will be examined in less detail; in a survey, I will present the results of previous research, with only some new analysis and comment. Previous research with a serious literary-critical perspective has made it increasingly clear that many intolerance passages have to be attributed to the later editors of the DH. With a systematic survey, I will attempt to scan how extensive was their contribution and what remains to the history writer and his sources.

on the divine council would be an attack on the whole concept of God, if one follows Parpola’s theory.
After redaction-critical analyses, I will try to depict how each major literary phase of the DH relates to other gods and Yahwe’s exclusivity. A central task is to determine which redactors and literary layers acknowledged intolerant monolatry. Is there any writer who is unaware of demands to worship only Yahwe? How do the older layers relate to intolerant monolatry and is there a difference between them and the later layers? It is also important to establish the historical context and situation of the relevant literary phases. Having received a picture of each major phase’s attitude towards other gods, one should be able to see the development of intolerance and exclusivity during the time of writing. Major differences between the writers and a notable development inside the DH would have considerable impact on the historical reconstruction of Israel’s religion. In other words, if intolerance is found only in the latest layers of the DH, we should more carefully examine the development of intolerance in this period. On the other hand, if Dt contains pre-dtn texts that acknowledge intolerance or the intolerance passages in Ex are of early origin, the birth and development of intolerance should be sought in an earlier period.

Methodologically, it is important to begin redaction criticism with the latest editors of the DH. One should identify and isolate later redactions in order to reach the older text. Many later editors have left their perspectives on the composition to the extent that themes and motifs of the older text have been marginalized or given a meaning not intended by the original writer. If we are able to isolate the later editing and understand the later editors’ perspectives and motifs, we may also gain a clearer picture of the earlier writers’ texts and motifs.

In redaction criticism, I will assume that the DH from Dt 1 to 2K 25 was originally written by one writer whose text was later edited by successive editors. Although the Göttingen-school originally assumed that there were three main phases in the redaction process — two according to the dual redaction hypothesis — it has become increasingly clear that the redaction history of the DH is more complex. After the original history writer (DtrH), the composition has grown in several stages, perhaps continuously for some centuries. The tripartite division of the text into DtrH, DtrP and DtrN has become difficult to maintain, as the DtrN has proven to be a group of writers. Moreover, newest research has identified more and more post-dtr additions to the DH. The increase in editors has also decreased the difference between the Göttingen-school and the dual redaction hypothesis: Both schools have acknowledged that the DH is the product of more than two or three editors. In addition to the increase in editors, the nomistic contribution to the DH has become more and more prominent. The nomistic texts have grown into a literary tradition with extensive influence throughout the composition. In comparison, the extent of the DtrP

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61 Noth 1943.
63 Smend 1978, 111-125.
64 See Nelson (1981), for example.
65 See Würthwein 1984, 1985; Särkiö 1994, 246-250. Würthwein (1984, 1985) has found several DtrP writers but this theory has not established itself in research.
66 E.g., Knapp 1987, 105-111 (Dt 4:32-40); Särkiö 1994, 242, 249-250 (he calls these additions DtrS < spät, late); Veijola 1996, 252 (Dt 7:7-11).
text has remained limited. This state of affairs may also lead to the decrease in differences between the two schools as the nomistic predominance and the limited extent of DtrP texts emphasize the bipartite nature of the DH.

One can distinguish at least two major nomists that were active throughout the DH. It is a matter of definition how many other writers are called nomistic. There appear to be several casual additions that show nomistic interests and use nomistic vocabulary. Some new nuances and, in some cases, the fact that they are additions to a text of the later main nomist, betray their later origin. Some of the nomistically flavored additions already show Priestly traits. The two major nomists, DtrN₁ and DtrN₂ to use the traditional terminology, are often difficult to distinguish from each other. When the later is editing a text by the earlier, they may be separated by literary-critical means. Otherwise, similar vocabulary and theology make their separation difficult. Nevertheless, especially in Dt, one may note that a later nomist has in some ways a more developed theology. He builds on the elements acknowledged by DtrN₁ but has developed them further. The importance of the law is the main interest of both nomists, but the later nomist has combined his theological elements into a more compact theological program. He has skillfully knitted many elements of his theology around the theme of covenant. Veijola has accordingly named this nomist DtrB (< Bund/תנ"ך). In addition, the same later nomist, at least in Dt, is more prone to refer directly to his historical context than the earlier one. Passages that explicitly mention the Exile and banishment from the land are often his. Another distinguishing feature of the later nomists would naturally be the build-up of nomistic phrases and concepts into one passage. However, in this study I will generally treat the nomists as a group, unless a passage shows a clear difference between the nomists.

In identifying the different editors of the DH, I will rely on the observations and results of the Göttingen-school. For example, it has been established that the importance of the law is a characteristic feature of the nomists. Veijola has shown that the history writer had a positive attitude towards kingship, whereas the nomists were more critical. Further on, he has pointed out several characteristics of a late nomist active in Dt, DtrB. Moreover, Latvus has demonstrated that Yahwe’s anger arising from apostasy is a theme restricted to nomistic passages in the books of Joshua and Judges, and accordingly, he suggests that the

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67 In this sense, the Göttingen -school has become closer to the dual redaction hypothesis.
68 For example, Dt 4:16b-18. The nomistic prohibition against making images has been developed further and is also expressed with Priestly vocabulary.
69 The nomistic texts are often more extensive in Dt than elsewhere. Therefore, it may be easier to distinguish them from each other in Dt than elsewhere.
71 I will rely on the redaction-critical framework of the Göttingen school as represented in the works of Smend, Walter Dietrich, Veijola, Würthwein, Knapp, Särkiö, Latvus and Achenbach.
73 Veijola 1977, 115-122.
theme ought to be ascribed to the nomists. As for the date of writing of the DH editors, it is usually assumed that the history writer finished his composition after the release of Jehojakin in 562 BCE. The nomistic editors are often dated to the late or post-exilic times. Traditionally, it has been assumed that the DH was written in Palestine, but latest research has begun to question this view.

It is hoped that this investigation will shed more light on the date and location of the authors behind the DH.

Redaction-critical approaches are sometimes criticized for arguing in circles. The lateness of a passage is argued on the basis of other passages, in the analyses of which one or another scholar has already used the first passage to argue the other one’s lateness. Admittedly, this danger does exist. Scholars depend on each other’s studies so that it forms a circular argument. Ideally, redaction criticism would be a spiral where scholars slowly reach a clearer picture of the text and learn more about the characteristics of different editors. Despite the lurking hazard, redaction criticism is an essential phase in determining the nature of a Biblical document. Otherwise we would not be able to use a Biblical text as a historical source to the full extent. One must constantly be conscious of the hazards. The analyses of passages and their literary-critical decisions must originate in the analyzed text itself. Grammatical problems and tensions in content have to be the primary reasons for literary-critical decisions. Therefore, literary criticism must precede redaction criticism. In very corrupt texts, which have been edited several times over, literary criticism often fails to show later additions. In such texts redaction-critical observations often influence the analysis too much. A good example is 2K 23. One should not put much weight on the reconstruction or analysis of such passages. A general theory should never lean on too corrupt or heavily edited texts.

Central Concepts: Monolatry, Monotheism and Polytheism

Before proceeding, it must be stressed that the concepts monolatry, monotheism and polytheism are only generalizations. Religious concepts of the ancients cannot be reduced to any modern category. A classification of a religion does not do full justice to its conceptions. In addition, a religion functions on several levels which may differ in many respects from each other. One modern concept may correspond to one level of a religion but differ from another considerably. For example, the state religion may favor very different conceptions from that of the private religion practiced at home. Unfortunately, the OT mainly bears witness to the state religion and the religion of the upper classes, the monarchy and the religious professionals. The same applies to much of the archaeological material as well. For

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75 *Latvus* 1993, 171-72. There may have been some individual references to Yahwe’s anger, yet the anger is otherwise not kindled by apostasy like the anger in the nomistic texts.

example, seals pertain to the upper classes. Despite these reservations, it is reasonable to use the concepts. Remembering that they are generalizations and abstractions, they may be used as tools to learn something more about Israel’s religion. Although ancient conceptions should not be reduced to modern concepts, it does not mean that we should not use modern concepts when they help us learn something new about the theology and history of the ancients. By classifying, it may be possible to differentiate between different phenomena and perceive developments in Israel’s religion.

The concepts monotheism and polytheism are two extreme ends. Although their general definition is commonly accepted, in real religions they are met in various forms. There is no single and pure form of monotheism or polytheism. Pure forms are only theoretical concepts. All ANE religions have features of both monotheism and polytheism. Ideally, and generally speaking, monotheism is the belief in one universal God who has created the world. He is absolutely unique, there is no one like Him, and the divine is conceived to exist only in Him. The existence of other divinities is denied. Many religions that are characterized as monotheistic allow the existence of lesser heavenly beings, like angels, heavenly cherubs, seraphs etc., but this is already a polytheistic feature. These heavenly beings may not receive much or any religious devotion, but they are in many cases vestiges of earlier polytheism or of polytheistic conceptions.

Polytheism, on the other hand, is the belief that the divine lies in the plurality of divinities. In the ideal form, the gods form a pantheon where they are on the same level with each other as if they were of the same race or species. All forms of polytheism show hierarchy among the gods, but the gods are potentially equal. In this sense polytheism is a reflection of human society. In practice, polytheism may not be found in this ideal form at all. There always appear to be a few gods or a god that have risen above the others more than a normal hierarchical difference would allow. In this sense, many polytheistic religions show features of monolatry.

The main subject of this study is monolatry. Monolatry should be distinguished from monotheism and polytheism, but it can also be understood as a stage between the two, for it shares features with them both. The main difference between monotheism and monolatry is the latter’s non-denial of other gods. For the monotheist, other gods do not exist, while for the monolatrist they do. On the other hand, they are similar in conceiving oneness and uniqueness in the divinity. Whereas the oneness of the divinity is exclusive in monotheism, monolatry accepts that the divine may exist in more than one entity. Both acknowledge that there is one god/God who is in some way unique.

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77 Loretz (1997, 156): “Die neuzeitliche Problem- und Frontstellung „Monotheismus-Polytheismus“ erweist sich ... als hinderlich für ein wirkliches Verständnis des Beweisverfahrens der altorientalischen Theologie über die Einzigkeit eines Gottes.” It is true that something may be lost by using modern conceptions, and therefore we should be conscious of not forcing the conceptions.
78 It is not necessarily an evolutionary stage in the sense that polytheism would automatically develop through monolatry to monotheism.
79 Thus, most scholars e.g., Hartmann 1980, 72.
80 ‘Divine’ understood as something transcendental and/or supernatural which receives religious devotion.
Although it accepts plurality in the divine, monolatry may not be equated with polytheism. Monolatry differs from polytheism in its concentration on one god only. Whereas the symbolic system of polytheism conceives the divinity in the multitude of divinities, monolatry has an additional capacity to understand oneness and uniqueness in the divinity. This is seen in the way monolatry raises one god onto a completely different level from other gods. The main god is or defines the oneness and uniqueness, while the others are or define the plurality. There is an intrinsic difference between the one god and the others. Other gods may have a function in the religion but they are not in a position to compete with or challenge the one god because they are on a different level. As already noted, in ideal polytheism all gods are on the same level, like members of the same family or of the same race. In monolatry, the one god is of “another race” than the others. The difference is more than hierarchical. Monolatry may be met in several forms but the background is an intrinsic and essential difference between the one and the plurality. Consequently, the one god plays a prominent role in the religion, while the other divinities are in some way clearly subordinate or marginal. This general background may lead to different forms of monolatry.

Several scholars have shown that ANE polytheistic religions had a tendency towards monolatric conceptions, to favor one god over the others. Whether this always was monolatry in the sense that the one would be intrinsically different from the others remains to be seen. At any rate, calling it the “common theology of the Ancient Near East”, Morton Smith has suggested that ANE religions elevated one god above the others particularly in the personal religion, where an individual had a personal god to whom he remained faithful and whom he exalted above other gods, and especially in devotional life. With several new examples, Loretz has corroborated the exaltation of one god in the Mesopotamian and Egyptian religions. However, he regards it improbable that this phenomenon would be more than rhetoric or a form of speech pertaining to devotional religion inside polytheistic theology. Consequently, this phenomenon should be distinguished from monolatry. A more appropriate term would be henotheism, which is used to designate a form of religion where

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81 As noted above, this does not deny the possibility that the polytheistic gods form a hierarchy.
82 Note that monolatry may be defined in many ways. Some scholars may define as monolatry something that I would call hierarchical polytheism. Moreover, an ancient religion, like any religion, functions on several levels. It was conceived differently by different people. In this sense concepts of religious conceptions are only generalizations and abstractions.
83 See Morton Smith’s (1952) article. With broad textual evidence, he points out that the god who was worshipped was exalted above other gods in the worshipper’s mind. Similarly, Vorländer 1975, 165-67, 302-304 and Hartmann 1980, 65. The latter comments: “Bei der grossen Anzahl der Götter hatte der babylonische Mensch das Bedürfnis, zu einer der Gottheiten in ein besonderes Vertrauens- und Schutzverhältnis zu treten.”
84 Loretz 1997, 141-152.
one god is temporarily elevated above the others in devotional religion. Monolatry would require a more permanent elevation of one god.

More permanence may be met in the religions around Canaan, particularly in Israel, Moab, Ammon and Edom. The evidence for the latter three is still scarce, but it would seem to point to an exceptional concentration on one god. For example, the OT’s conceptions of head gods of other nations imply that each nation had her one specific god. Moreover, the stele of Mesha, mentioning one god, Chemosh, only, may imply that the Moabite religion was centered on one god. Acknowledging that the evidence outside Israel is limited, I assume that some religions of Palestine and the surrounding region, especially areas east of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, developed exceptionally monolatric conceptions. I will return to the archaeological evidence later on. First, it is necessary to examine different forms of monolatry in the OT.

**Tolerant and Intolerant Monolatry**

This study is based on distinguishing two different kinds of monolatry inside the OT. The main or general position in the OT is monolatry that does not criticize or forbid the worship of other divinities. In most of the OT one finds a clearly predominant Yahwe who is the unquestioned God of Israel. He is unique and His position is not challenged in any way. No polemic against other gods can be found however, and some passages reveal that the divine was not limited to Yahwe and that other divinities were accepted up to a certain extent. In any case, they are neither a threat nor a problem to Yahwe. These passages may only be vestiges of a richer realm of the divine that the Israelites worshipped or paid some devotion to. Later editors that had a stricter view on other divinities edited out or omitted some of the embarrassing material. At this point it is only important to notice that there are some passages that extend the Israelite divine beyond Yahwe, without any polemic, and that most of the OT does not attack other gods in any way. I will return to the passages that allude to

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86 *Yusa* 1987, 266-267. The term was originally invented by Max Müller.


88 Some passages in the OT suggest that each nation has her particular god, e.g., Nm 21:29; 1K 11:7, 33; 2K 23:13; Jer 48:13, 46.

89 Note that we know very little about the religions of Moab, Ammon and Canaan proper, all of which would be, most likely, much closer to Israel’s religion in character than Ugaritic or Phoenician ones. As trade centers, Ugarit and Phoenicia were in constant contact with other cultures in contrast with the more secluded regions of Judah, Moab, Israel and Ammon.

90 *Lemaire* (1994, 142-145) has suggested that the religions of Moab, Ammon and Edom were probably monolatric or “quasi-monolatric.”

91 Adopting the terminology from *Gerhardsson* (1986, 15-16), who uses the terms in the NT, *Mettinger* (1995, 17-18, 195, 196) distinguishes two types of attitudes towards iconography in Israel’s religion: *De facto* tradition, which is essentially a tolerant, and programmatic tradition, which is intolerant of images. *De facto* tradition is self evident in the way that iconism is not consciously accepted or rejected. The division of monolatry into two types in not fully analogous with *Mettinger*’s division, however.
the existence of divinity beyond Yahwe later on with the analysis of different religious phenomena. I will interpret this general stand of the OT as tolerant monolatry. Yahwe is unique and clearly above all other gods, but the co-existence of other divinities, at least at some level and to a certain point, is allowed. Tolerant monolatry may criticize other divinities if the primacy of the main God/god is challenged or threatened.

Disturbing this picture, the OT contains some passages that are ferociously and intrinsically intolerant of other gods. The other gods are actively antagonized and attacked with the main aim of hindering the Israelites from worshipping them. These passages, on the one hand, stand out from the OT’s overall tranquil attitude, and on the other hand, often stick out from their contexts. They do not deny the existence of other gods, a feature which separates the stand from monotheism, but polemic against the other gods is forcible and systematic so as to undermine their power and to make them look unappealing and ridiculous. The difference to tolerant monolatry is evident. It is not possible to explain away the difference between these two stands as two aspects of one theology. On the contrary, it seems reasonable to regard them as two distinct religious attitudes with a very different background and theology. Moreover, it is the systematic and programmatic nature of Israelite intolerance that separates Israel’s religion from other ANE religions. Nothing similar has so far been found in the contemporary religions of the ANE. They may have acknowledged sporadic intolerance, yet this appears mainly in devotional language addressed to one particular god, and cannot be described as real intolerance.

With the working hypothesis of separating two kinds of monolatry, I will approach the intolerance passages of the DH and Ex. I will try to see if the working hypothesis receives any support from literary and redaction criticism. Do the intolerance passages belong to any particular writer(s) and are they unknown to another? Can one trace any chronological development between tolerant and intolerant monolatry? This will, it can be hoped, also reveal the historical context of the intolerance in the DH.

In addition to analyzing passages that attack other gods, I will discuss the attack on Asherah, the massebot and other religious phenomena as well. At this point it seems reasonable to assume that the attacks on them are closely related with the general attack on other gods. A general preview of the intolerance passages already shows that these phenomena are often lumped together. It is possible that future research will show this to be an unjustified generalization and will succeed in distinguishing between the nature of attacks on each one of the religious phenomena.

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92 E.g., Hartmann 1980, 56-61 and Loretz 1997, 141-152.
93 Frevel’s (1995) extensive study on Asherah has already shown that Asherah-criticism should be treated separately.
2. Deuteronomy

2.1. Dt 13

13:1 And it shall come to pass, if aBen of Ephraim reside anywhere among the Egyptians, and there shall come into his heart, saying, Let me go and return to my people and kindred.b

13:2 though the land of Egypt be his dwelling place, yet will he come to the land of Israel.c

13:3 And it shall come to pass after that he hath dwelt among the Egyptians, seven years: he shall not see the face of the king of Egypt, neither shall he go into the land of Egypt.d

13:4 And it shall come to pass, when the seven years are expired, that he shall depart from the land which the Lord hath given unto the children of Israel, and return unto the land of Egypt.e

13:5 And it shall come to pass, if he shall go, he shall not come again to see the face of his house, nor the place where his father dwelt, because of the evil which he shall do, having trespassed against the Lord.f

13:6 And it shall come to pass, when he returneth into the land of Egypt, into the land of his nativity, that I will not be merciful unto him; for every evil thing which he did in the land of Egypt, for which he sinned in doing it, giveth me occasion to be angry.g

13:7 And the Lord shall smite him with aconsumption, until there be consumed out of him, because of the evil which he shall do in Egypt, in turning unto other gods.h

13:8 And he will be gathered unto his people, and will be buried in his grave in Egypt, not in Israel.i

13:9 And it shall come to pass, as Pharaoh dieth, that he will say, This is a God of the land of Egypt, which brought out my army out of the land of Egypt.j

13:10 And it shall come to pass, when he dieth, that his people shall not be able to go out of his hand, because of the evil which he is done in Egypt.j

13:11 That they might know that I am the Lord, when I smite Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and his army, and his land, and his people.};
Textual Notes

13:1  a) G (except GB which is probably a later correction towards the MT), S, V and the SP harmonize the text by using the singular to correspond with the immediate context. The plural of the MT is surprising, but similar irregularity disturbs the whole chapter. Other witnesses, G in particular, tend to harmonize this irregularity.

3. a) G shifted the Hebrew נביה into a more appropriate position after לכה, as it is in verses 7 and 14. Admittedly the verb is very loose, coming after the object of the sentence, but therefore from the text-critical perspective probably original (lectio difficilior). Moreover, the G reading is not supported by any other witness.

7. a) G, the SP and the Temple Scroll (11QT 54,19) add “the son of your father”. This may be an addition by a copyist who wanted to complement the list by brothers of both father’s and mother’s sides, although the textual support for the longer reading is strong.

10. The G reading ἀναγγέλλων ἀναγγέλλαις παρὲ αὐτοῖς (= “report about him” or “disclose him”) would seem to fit the context much better than the masoretic ἀνακαλέσαν (v. 14). Furthermore, parallels from Neo-Assyrian vassal treaties (assuming that the chapter was modeled after a vassal treaty, see below) seem to support the G reading. The obligation to report treason is an essential duty vassals owe their lords. For these apparently compelling reasons most scholars have rejected the masoretic reading in favor of the Septuagint. However, against the consensus Levinson has convincingly shown that the MT must be original. His main argument is that all other witnesses deviate from the MT only because they try to avoid the lynch law of the MT. Literally, the MT allows private individuals to execute apostates at once without any judicial process or hearing of witnesses. This was an obvious embarrassment to later writers and translators, and consequently they tried to change the reading. The main proof for the primacy of the MT is that all other textual witnesses disagree with each other to the extent that it is not possible to reconstruct any original text-form to challenge the MT. For example, the G reading, which is usually accepted as the original, is not supported by any other witness. The acceptance of the G reading is based on an incomplete reading of the evidence. In addition, Levinson challenges the alleged evidence from the vassal treaties and asserts that there are cases of rebellion when an immediate execution is necessary. For example, in VTE §12 l. 130-146 all who speak rebellion against the prince must be immediately killed without first reporting the crime. The passage (§10 l. 108-22) usually presented in favor of the G reading deals with general discontent towards the prince, not specific rebellion, and therefore an immediate execution is not necessary. Clearly, Dt 13:7-12 is more related to the case of rebellion than

1Dion, 1991, 153-54.
2Consult Parpola - Watanabe (1988, 33-34, 63-64) for the Neo-Assyrian vassal treaties.
3This view was first elaborated by Budde (1916, 187-197), thereafter supported by most scholars. For renewed evidence for the view, see Dion 1991, 153-155 and Aejmelaeus 1996, 19-21.
to the case of general discontent, and consequently the VTE also supports the MT against G.

16. a) G omits רָדִּיק רוֹנָב, V omits רָדִּיק רוֹנָב and T omits מַרְאֵי רוֹנָב. These variations stem from the plainly loose character of the sentence. מַרְאֵי רוֹנָב is not necessary since all (מַרְאֵי אָשֶׁר-בָּהּ) is to be destroyed anyway, whereas רָדִּיק רוֹנָב is only repeating the method of execution. Consequently, all the corrections (G, V, T) make the sentence terser, and therefore the MT is to be followed as the more difficult (lectio difficilior) and original text.

Introduction

Traditionally it has been assumed that chapters 12-26 form the core-Dt or Dt’s legal corpus. These chapters contain the actual laws of Dt, whereas the chapters that surround this core consist of Moses’s instructions to the Israelites on how to follow the law. It is usually assumed that the core has preserved ancient material, and consequently the laws against other gods in this section are of paramount importance for the search for intolerant monolatry in Israel’s religion. This section surprisingly contains only two passages that attack other gods. The first one is Dt 13. Scholars have traditionally identified early — dtn or pre-dtn — strata in this chapter, but Dion has recently challenged this view. He argues for a dtr origin for all strata. He acknowledges close contacts with the VTE, and consequently dates the earliest sections of the chapter to the time of Josiah. Veijola has argued for a later origin. He suggests that the chapter is thoroughly late deuteronomistic, even late-nomistic (DtrB) in origin. The earliest layer of the chapter would already be familiar with several late passages in Jeremiah that attack false prophets, and this dependence on Jeremiah would then show that Dt 13 is also of late origin. Otto’s recent contributions to the discussion have reversed the tables again. Dt 13 would contain phrases directly adopted from the VTE. Accordingly, the chapter would have to be dated between 672 and 612 BCE. The similarities between Dt 13 and the VTE are commonly accepted in research, but it is debated whether the connection is as direct as Otto suggests. Otto further

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6Dion 1991, 192.
7Dion 1991, 204ff.
9Otto 1996a, 44; 1998, 37: “Vielmehr ist der Grundtext in Dt 13 ... eine direkte Übertragung aus SAA II/6 §10.” His view is, at least partly, based on Steymans (1995, 239-312), who has lately argued that Dt 28 is literarily dependent of the VTE. Otto assumes that the VTE had influenced Dt 13 as well.
10Veijola (1995b, 310), on the other hand, points out that the language of the treaty conventions lived long after the treaties had lost their original political relevance. He refers to Weinfeld’s (1976, 379-414) article.
assumes that the most common intolerance phrases of the DH, namely עבד אלהים אחרים and נֵר אָחָרי אלהי אָחָר, originate from Dt 13:3 and Dt 13:7 respectively. According to him, Dt 13 forms the basis of the later dtr attack on other gods and also, lying in the center of Dt, became the focal point of the book’s later development.

Chapter 13 consists of three laws or cases, 1) vv. 2-6, 2) vv. 7-12 and 3) vv. 13-18, each of which is directed against propagators of other gods in three different situations. The first two laws try to protect the individual from professional religious practitioners and from relatives, whereas the third law discusses a situation where other gods have penetrated an entire community. The first two laws try to prevent a community from falling into apostasy, while the third law deals with a situation where this has already happened.

Context

In its immediate surroundings (Dt 12 and 14), chapter 13 is thematically loose. While chapters 12 and 14-16 relate well with each other in language and content, chapter 13 seems to be a digression from their main theme. Dt 12 deals with the location of the sacrificial cult and with dietary questions — for example, which animals one may eat and where one may slaughter them — fluently complemented by Dt 14 which defines the sacrificially pure and impure animals. In contrast, chapter 13 has nothing to do with sacrificial cult or dietary questions. Moreover, the central leading elements of Dt 12 and 14-16, namely, the formula המָקוֹם אַחֲרֵי יְהוָה and the centralization of the cult and the theme where Yahwe puts His name to dwell in (כִּי יְהוָה מֵעַל בָּהֶן) are completely missing in Dt 13. One receives the impression that Dt 14-16 was meant to continue and develop the content of Dt 12, which makes Dt 13 look like an excursion in a completely new direction. Veijola has argued that Dt 14:3ff. was a later addition to the dietary laws of Dtr 12:15ff., which would place at least Dt 12:29-14:2 at an even later stage in the development of the book. At any rate, it is only the late frames (Dt 12:1, 28; 13:1, 19) and the most recent additions of ch. 12 (vv. 2-3 and 29-31) that vaguely link chapters 12 and 13 together. Although related in content, these additions (12:2-3 and 12:29-31) present a shifted perspective from the one in Dt 13. The

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12 Otto 1996a, 38.
13 Dt 12:28-31 are connected to Dt 13 rather than to Dt 12 and, therefore, for the purpose of this argument, it should be seen as part of chapter 13. These verses belong to the latest layer of Dt 12.
14 E.g., Dt 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26; 14:23, 24, 25; 15:20; 16:2, 6, 7, 11, 15, 16.
15 Or the basic text of these chapters, as it is probable that these chapters also contain later additions.
16 Veijola 1995b, 308.
17 Dion 1991, 156-158. The command to observe Yahwe’s commandments is the general unifying theme.
18 Preuß (1982, 51-52) identifies Dt 12:2-7 with his dtr layers IV and V and Dt 12:29-31 with dtr layer IV; Merendino (1969, 18-26, 40-41) sees the dtr redactor behind Dt 12:2-7 and 12:29-31. Note that vv. 20-27 may be even more recent judging from the Priestly tone and vocabulary. See also chapter 2.8.
2. Deuteronomy

Concern in these additions is the nations of the land, their habits and their religion that many Israelites supposedly seek, while in Dt 13 the threat comes from inside, from Israelite inciters who actively propagate other gods. In conclusion, Dt 13 is an independent and self-sustained unit that has thematically little in common with its current context and that breaks in between two texts that relate well with each other (ch. 12 and 14-16). Since at least parts of both chapters 12 and 14 are commonly accepted to the original Deuteronomium, not even the earliest stratum, the basic text of Dt 13 could have been part of it. If one accepts the suggestion by Veijola that Dt 14:3ff. is an addition to Dt 12:15ff., then the origin of Dt 13 is put back into an even later stage. Moreover, since only the latest redactors of Dt 12 try to approach the theme of Dt 13, it is safe to tentatively propose that Dt 13 belongs to the latest redactional layers of Dt.

Although Otto acknowledges that the basic text of Dt 13 is alien to its present context, he comes to the peculiar conclusion that in the original deuteronomic Dt it was intentional. He uses the fact that Dt 13 is in tension with its context to show that the chapter has its origin outside Dt, namely, in the VTE. The deuteronomic Dt would thus originate from combining Dt 13:2-19* and Dt 28:15*, 20-44, adopted from the VTE, with Dt passages that interpret the Covenant Code. However, if this fusion between the parts inspired by the VTE and the passages that interpret the CC had been a planned one, as Otto seems to assume, one may ask, why did the editor split the connection between Dt 12 and 14-16 in such a violent manner. There seems to be no plan according to which the passages would have been knitted together. On the other hand, such a state of affairs would be a typical result of a later editor’s activity. A later editor may pick up a small detail in the older text and expand it in a completely new direction, regardless of the original text and context. This is the probable course of events in Dt 13. It derives from a later editor who wanted to add important laws in a central position in the legal corpus of Dt. He added it right after the main Dt law, the centralization law, regardless of the consequences to the book’s general composition.

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20 Without the cult centralization laws, it would be questionable whether we could speak of any Urdeuteronomium.
21 Veijola 1995b, 308.
22 Dt 14:3ff. must have been added to Dt 12:15ff. It would make little sense as an addition to any part of Dt 13.
24 Thus also Veijola 1995b, 289-290 and Dion 1991, 156-58. As noted above, usually at least parts of Dt 13 are ascribed to Urdeuteronomium, but its originality in Dt is often assumed a priori.
26 Otto 1996a, 40, 49-51.
Literary Criticism

Especially in earlier research, *Numeruswechsel* was used as a major criterion for identifying the secondary sections of the chapter. Most scholars still recognize redactional strata in the plural sections (vv. 4b-5, 6*, 8), although many also regard the singular sections in vv. 2b-3b and 19 as secondary. Recent research has been more careful about the use of the *Numeruswechsel* as a criterion. Another determinant for identifying the secondary additions has been to compare the three laws with each other. If a section is met in one law and not in the others — and the difference is not content-motivated — the originality of that section must be questioned. Yet, used alone these principles are not adequate. The nature of each section must separately be established on the basis of content and grammar.

**Dt 13:1-6 — Prophets and Dreamers of Dreams**

Verse 1 belongs to Dt’s late frames which strive to knit together the whole composition of Deuteronomy. Similar formulations and general exhortations to follow Yahwe’s commandments, serving as headings to different sections, are met throughout the book. Taken with the fact that these headings are often later additions, the looseness and independence of v. 1 indicate that it is secondary to Dt 13.

The clause beginning with לֵאמֶר in v. 3 does not connect well with the preceding sentence (יָרָא הַמֵּאֲדָר אֵלֶּוהֶם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲםּוֹת אָבֵד אלִיר). Instead of explaining the giving of the signs and wonders — as the present text-form would suggest, but this idea makes little sense — the clause beginning with לֵאמֶר in v. 3b is much better understood with the content of v. 2a. Consequently, the sentence that introduces the miraculous aspect of the prophets (2b-3a) should be seen as a later expansion. With this correction, the connection between the prophets and their statement becomes clearer.

Many scholars see the relative sentences יָשָׁר לַאֲדוֹנֵי and יָשָׁר לַאֲדוֹנֵי in vv. 3, 7 and 14 as late additions because similar phrases otherwise appear in late dtr texts only.

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27 Otto (1998a, 37) ascribes to the original text only vv. 2a, 2aאאאנ, 4a, 6aa, 7aba, 9abג and 10aa. In his reconstruction, these sections are a direct loan from VTE §10.

28 However, Veijola (1995b, 292-293) points out that the later editors of Dt tend to mix the number (*Numeruswechsel*). Consequently, Veijola’s reconstruction leaves much more to the original writer than the reconstructions of most other scholars.

29 Seitz 1971, 151.

30 E.g., Dt 4:2; 5:32; 11:1; 32; 12:1, 28; 13:19.

31 Thus, most scholars, e.g., Preuß 1982, 53; Kaiser 1984, 134; Dion 1991, 192.

32 The same conclusion is made, for example, by Merendino 1969, 62-62; Preuß 1982, 52; Dion 1991, 167-68 and Otto 1996a, 12-13. Veijola (1995b, 292-293) ascribes vv. 2b-3a to the basic layer of the chapter. He points out that the removal of vv. 2b-3a* brings v. 2a too close to vv. 4a and 6aa which also mention the subject, the prophet and the dreamer of dreams. However, this disturbance is much smaller than the sudden digression to the signs and wonders in vv. 2b-3a*.

33 Merendino 1969, 63. Late Dt texts where the formula appears are: Dt 11:28; 28:64; 29:25.
because it is improbable that an inciter would have said anything like that. The first argument is invalid unless we postulate the pre-dtn, dtn or early-dtr character of Dt 13 a priori. Seitz and Otto argue that an inciter would not have used words like , but it is certain that he would not have used words like either. Both expressions stem from the conceptions of a person who is intrinsically against the followers of the gods in question, which means that the whole statement is artificial in any case. Furthermore, it is difficult to fathom a motive for a redactor who systematically added this sentence in three similar places in Dt 13 without adding it elsewhere. Nevertheless, one may see a grammatical difficulty in the change of person from 1. p. plural (לכלו) to 2. p. plural and singular (יידע) and singular (יידע), yet deducing anything from this fact fails to recognize the artificial character of the whole statement. The Numeruswechsel alone is not enough to infer a later addition.

Verse 4b introduces a shift in perspective. It diminishes the threat posed by the inciters and turns attention from apostasy to Yahwe testing the Israelites. For the writer of v. 4b, the threat from the inciters is artificial since everything is under Yahwe’s command: Prophets and dreamers are merely pawns in Yahwe’s plans to try Israel. In contrast, for the writer of the basic text, the inciters’ threat is very real. His main goal is to find out a way to deal with the threat. There is an evident shift of emphasis from the basic text to v. 4b, which, with the support of the Numeruswechsel between verses 4a and 4b, indicates that v. 4b begins a later addition.

Verse 5 is usually attributed to the same redactor as 4b because the phrases in both vv. 4b and 5 are intermingled in many other passages, particularly in the parenetic sections of Dt (ch. 4-11). Furthermore, the use of the plural in both verses in contrast with the singular of the context would seem to strengthen this view. However, concluding that v. 5 is a later expansion causes two difficulties. First, v. 5 is obviously meant to be an antithesis to v. 3b: The inciter exhorts the Israelites to follow other gods: , while the author of v. 5 exhorts the Israelites to follow Yahwe: . The exhortations form a chiasm, by means of which the author wants to give more thrust to his message. In the present context, the antithesis loses its thrust because of the thematical digression in v. 4b, but this was already shown to be a later addition. Verse 5 would fit well after the of v. 4a. This implies that vv. 4b and 5 were written by different writers, v. 4b being later. Second, if both verses 4b and 5 are removed from the basic text, verses 4a and 6 form an awkward repetition that is difficult to explain as a consequence of ring-composition

34 Seitz 1971, 145; Rose 1994, 299; Otto 1996a, 12.
35 The scission of this phrase by Merendino (1969, 63) shows well how he tries to peel out everything that would imply a late origin for the chapter.
36 Both scholars ascribe לכלו אתרי אלהים אתרים to the original text.
37 Here, the Numeruswechsel supports the argument. It should not be used alone to determine literary cracks, especially not in texts like Dt 13 where the number changes irregularly.
38 For example, Veijola (1995b, 293) leaves v. 4b to the original writer of the passage.
40 E.g., Dt 10:12, 20; 11:13, 22.
Intolerant Monolatry in the Deuteronomistic History

by the hypothetical redactor of vv. 4b-5 because omitting from either verse would create difficulties for the understanding of the sentences. Consequently, the original text must have included something between vv. 4a and 6, v. 5 being a better candidate than v. 4b or all of vv. 4b-5.

The strongest argument against v. 5 being part of the basic text is that the other laws in the chapter lack similar exhortations to turn to Yahwe instead of following the inciter. Yet, the other laws do not really have space for such comments. The situation of the third law does not personally threaten the addressee himself, and thus there is no need for instructions on how to react to inciters. The second law, being more related to the first law, does contain a list of instructions on what to do instead of listening to the inciter (v. 9), but in this case the problem of personal relationships complicates the issue, and therefore exhortations not to conceal the relatives and not to have pity on them are more relevant. Moreover, there would have been no reason to repeat the exact content of v. 5 in the other laws. The message that Yahwe ought to be followed instead of the other gods is made clear by presenting it in the first law only. One should also note that the inciter’s exhortation in v. 3 already differs from the ones in vv. 7 and 14. Vv. 7 and 14 use the identical phrase לְהִיאֵי אָדָם אֲחָרִים, while v. 3 has הָלַךְ לְעֶבֶד אַלֶים אֲחָרִים. This diversion in v. 3 is most likely conscious and was written to prepare for the antithesis in v. 5. Both vv. 3 and 5 use the preposition אֲחָרִים, while vv. 7 and 14 do not. Verses 7 and 14 lack the exhortation to follow Yahwe but the inciter’s exhortations in them are not similarly formulated to prepare for the antithesis. In other words, the difference of v. 3 from vv. 7 and 14 may indicate that v. 5 was part of the basic text.

An additional objection for the originality of v. 5 could be that the plural of this verse is in contrast with Dt passages where similar formulations are in the singular. It could be asserted that this is a clear proof that the redactor picked the plural from v. 4b and thus depends on it. However, the plural could have been picked from the object of seduction in verse 3b or even from verse 2 as well. As a consequence, v. 5 is part of the basic text of the chapter. This conclusion deviates from the consensus.

Because the infinitive הָלַךְ is disturbingly far from its main verb, most scholars find later additions in the middle of v. 6. In fact, one must re-read the sentence in order to understand what הָלַךְ refers to. A first reading gives the impossible impression that

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41 For example, the reconstruction by Otto (1996a, 12-13) leaves the beginning of v. 4a hanging loose in a peculiar way. The Hebrew text would necessitate a further reconstruction — one would have to assume an omission of a word, for example, אֲלִרְבָּרִים הַחֲלָל — which is always hazardous and naturally weakens the proposed argument.
42 Dion 1991, 168.
44 Against most scholars. Their main argument is the Numeruswechsel.
45 Against most scholars. For example, Veijola (1995, 291-293) suggests that only the עֶבֶד is a later addition. According to Otto (1996a, 12-13), vv. 4b-5 are a later addition.
Yahwe himself is the inciter. Consequently, the attributes of Yahwe, beginning from אֲלֹהֵי or אֲלֹהָם, are probably an interpolation, but there is no need to see a more extensive later addition in this verse. Merendino and Rose solve the problem by assuming two successive additions, the first starting from אֲלֹהֵי, the second from אֲלֹהָם. This two-additions solution would, however, leave the basic text without a justification for the judgment and therefore, אֲלֹהֵי was most likely part of the original text. Otto cuts off all of 6a-6b from the original text, assuming that this is a later dtr addition. There is, however, little justification for such a scission. The parallel laws acknowledge a similar clause which explains that the inciter wanted to seduce Israelites from Yahwe.

| v. 6 | לָהַרְשֵׁי מֹרֶדֶר, אָשֶׁר צָאִית יְהוָה אֲלֹהֵי לָלבֶת בָּה | לָהַרְשֵׁי מָכָל יְהוָה אֲלֹהֵי | וּרְיָים אֲתָיָשֶׁפְי תְעֵיס לְאֶמֶר |
| v. 11 | לָהַרְשֵׁי מָכָל יְהוָה אֲלֹהֵי | |
| v. 14 | וּרְיָים אֲתָיָשֶׁפְי תְעֵיס לְאֶמֶר |

Since a similar section is found in the other laws, it is likely that אֲלֹהֵי in v. 6 was in the original text. The motivation for Otto’s scission becomes evident when we regard the terminology of this section. It is an attempt to safeguard an early date for Dt 13, whereas the assumed addition would necessitate a later dating. The verse itself does not give sufficient literary-critical evidence for such an extensive scission. Consequently, only the phrase המוציעי אֲתָבָנֵא מִאורֶי מֶצֶרִי בְּדִידֵי אֲלֹהֵי ought to be regarded as a later addition. This addition was possibly influenced by a similar motivation in v. 11.

**Dt 13:7-12 — Inciters Inside the Family**

Scholars seldom dispute the secondary nature of verse 8. Being a very loose comment, it breaks the tone of the chapter by suddenly defining what exactly are the other gods. The setting of this verse is Israel as a nation struggling in the midst of other nations and their frightening gods, while the law otherwise is directed to an individual incited by his relatives.

Verses 10a-11a cause some difficulties. First, the present text disturbingly commands the killing of the inciters two times (in vv. 10aa and 11a), although in different words, whereas the other laws of Dt that demand capital punishment have only one

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48 Merendino (1969, 67, 73) and Rose (1975, 43; 1994, 303) construe the justification for the judgment in the second law as secondary. In my opinion, this is an attempt to cut off expressions that would denote a later date for the earliest layer.
49 Seitz (1971, 151) suggests that if a parallel section is found in the other laws, the section is original. It is improbable that a later editor inserted three similar sections into identical locations in all three laws. Later additions are often more undeliberated.
50 It is seen as secondary by e.g., Buis - Leclercq 1963, 111; Merendino 1969, 67, 73; Seitz 1971, 152; Dion 1991 173-74; Nielsen 1995, 145; Veijola 1995b, 301 and Otto 1996a, 15-16.
51 Dion 1991, 173.
52 Following Levinson’s (1995, 37-63) interpretation and the MT of v. 10aa that it refers to killing the inciters.
command. Second, contrary to what one would assume on the basis of analogy, the closely related first law in Dt 13:2-6 does not detail how the execution is to take place. Third, the allusion to witnesses initiating stoning is an evident echo of the secondary, possibly post-dtr, Dt 17:6-7 which strive to subject the law in Dt 17:2-5 to the process of hearing witnesses. Comparison with Dt 17:5-7 shows that vv. 10a-11a is dependent on the late Dt 17:6-7a.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dt 13</th>
<th>Dt 17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(10) יְהֵ黑白 מַבָּנֵינָהּ מְדָמִית</td>
<td>(5b) יָסְכַלָּהּ מַבָּנֵינָהּ מְדָמִית</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>וַיְרָד מִלָּהּ אַבַּרַחֵהוּ</td>
<td>(6) לֹא יָמָה יִצְעֲלַי מַפּ יָדָיו</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>וַיְסַכַּלָּהּ מַבָּנֵינָהּ מְדָמִית</td>
<td>יִרְאֵהוֹ מַמְגָּלָהּ בְּכָרָשָׁנוּ לֵיהּ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11a)</td>
<td>(7) וַיְרָד מִלָּהּ אַבַּרַחֵהוּ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One may see some overlap between vv. 10a-b and 11a, but this is caused by the addition of Dt 17:6-7a after 17:5b. The command to stone the inciters to death in Dt 17:5b belongs to the earliest layer of Dt 17:2-7. The editor of Dt 13 may have adopted this overlap from Dt 17. Consequently, vv. 10a-11a is most likely a later addition to the basic text of the chapter. It is an attempt to bring the text in harmony with a more proper investigation process and connect it with Dt 17:2-7.

**Dt 13: 13-19 — Inciters in a Town**

As noted above, scholars are less united regarding the redactional character of the third law. This is possibly due to its awkward structure as well as due to the build-up of phrases that appear elsewhere in the OT. Although there is little in vv. 13-16a that can be removed from the text without violating the train of events, many scholars have perceived later additions in these verses. For example, Merendino suggests that v. 13 is not part of the basic text, but an addition influenced by Dt 17:2. This is unlikely, for it is difficult to see how the law could function at all if the case is not introduced by v. 13. The parallel verses in vv. 2 and 7 corroborate that the verse is original.

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54 See the analysis on Dt 17:2-7 in chapter 2.2.
55 See chapter 2.2. for details.
56 With many, for example, Veijola (1995b, 302) and Otto (1996a, 15-17). The latter regards vv. 10ab-11a to be of dtn origin, while v. 10aa would derive from an Assyrian vassal treaty. Verse 11b would, according to Otto, be a later addition from a dtr editor.
57 Thus, Mayes 1979, 235.
58 Otto (1996a, 25) assumes that the whole third law is a later development. According to him, the basic text that was copied from VTE §10 and commented on by dtr ended in v. 12.
59 So Merendino (1969, 69), yet this view is based on the assumption that they are adopted from Dt 17:2-7. See my analysis in chapter 2.2. Nielsen (1995, 144-146) ascribes all of vv. 13-19 to the dtn phase.
The originality of v. 15 is also challenged by many. The verse has an almost word-for-word parallel in Dt 17:4, where the individual is investigated. Grammatically, v. 15 is not impossible in the context, but its removal would make the connection between vv. 14 and 16 clearer. In addition, Veijola points out that an investigation process would not be necessary when a whole town has become apostate. The case is then self-evident. Consequently, v. 15 should be seen as a later addition influenced by Dt 17:4.

In contrast with the overall theme of the chapter, apostasy, the main concern in vv. 16b-18 is the property of the annihilated inhabitants. The same writer would not have digressed into an entirely new theme in the middle of a law against apostates, and consequently one must assume that this section was added by a redactor. The nature of vv. 16b-18a is disclosed when we discern that these verses are a collection of phrases from three separate passages in Jos 6-8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joshua 6-8</th>
<th>Dt 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:17</td>
<td>וְהוֹדַחְתָּ עַצָּרֵךְ אֶת־כָּלָּאָשְׁרָרְבוֹתָּ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:21</td>
<td>יִזְרוֹמָה אֶת־כָּלָּאָשְׁרָרְבוֹתָּ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:26</td>
<td>וְהָוִדַּחְתָּ אֶת־כָּלָּאָשְׁרָרְבָּ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:24</td>
<td>וְהָוִדַּחְתָּ אֶת־כָּלָּאָשְׁרָרְבָּ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:25</td>
<td>יְשָׂאוּ יְהוֹוָה מַצִּירִים אֵפָא</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:28</td>
<td>בְּנַחְמוֹת</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the almost word-for-word parallels, there must exist a literary relationship between the passages. The direction of influence from Dt 13 to Jos 6-8 is difficult to construe, for the latter is a product of several editorial layers. It would be improbable that the successive redactors of Jos 6-8 used the same few verses of Dt 13 without using the rest of the chapter. In contrast, influence from Jos 6-8 to Dt 13 is easy to fathom because a late redactor, reading Joshua, could have utilized the phrases of all three chapters. The editor evidently consulted passages that dealt with an issue that would arise from the implementation of Dt 13:13-16a. As a result, vv. 16b-18a are a later expansion concerned with a specific theme, the לֵי.
The phrase יִשְׁבַּב יְהוָה מַחְרִירֵךְ אַפּוֹ in v. 18b must also originate from the same redactor for the following reasons: First, nowhere in Dt 13 was Yahwe’s anger aroused before it is suddenly appeased in v. 18b. Something is obviously missing. The most natural explanation would be that a redactor adopted the verse from another passage where the anger was aroused and which he used as a source, namely Jos 7:1. He then forgot that the anger had never been aroused in Dt 13, the passage he edited in the first place. Secondly, Jos 7:26 and Dt 13:18b are the only passages in the DH where Yahwe’s anger is appeased for some reason — otherwise Yahwe’s anger is only aroused — implying a closer literary relationship. Since both phrases are word-for-word identical, dependence seems certain. Thirdly, both verses motivate the same event, not taking from the מַחְרִירֵךְ. This idea occurs only in these two verses in the entire OT. These connections cannot be a coincidence and therefore it is probable that the same writer that wrote vv. 16b-18a with Jos 6-8 in mind is behind יִשְׁבַּב יְהוָה מַחְרִירֵךְ אַפּוֹ as well.

Verse 19 introduces a new theological perspective to the third law, unexpectedly giving an additional condition for Yahwe’s compassion and blessing (v. 18). According to the previous text (vv. 16a and 18b), these benedictions were dependent on executing the apostates, but now obedience to the law becomes the main condition. Consequently, this verse is probably secondary to its context.

**Redaction Criticism: The Later Additions to Dt 13**

**Signs and Wonders — Verses 2b-3a**

The vocabulary in this addition does not help to identify the author. In the dtn/dtr corpus of literature, the word-pair אֲשֶׁר מָמַת, sign and wonder, usually appears in the plural and only once in the singular. Never in the OT does the word pair have the same reference as in Dt 13:2b-3a, as the plural form always refers to Yahwe’s deeds in Egypt, while the singular in

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64 According to Veijola (1995b, 307), it was self-evident for the writer that the worship of other gods would arouse Yahwe’s anger. Consequently, he ascribes v. 18b to the original writer.

65 2K 23:26 has a similar formulation לא אַלּ שָׁבָה יְהוָה מַחְרִירֵךְ אַפּוֹ “Yahwe did not turn away from His anger”. The theme of appeasement is also met in Ex 32:12; Nm 25:4; 32:14 and several times in Jer and later literature.

66 The main problem with this reconstruction is that when יִשְׁבַּב יְהוָה מַחְרִירֵךְ אַפּוֹ is removed, the basic text in the verse (18b) assumes Yahwe to be the subject without the immediately preceding text mentioning Him. One could assume that Yahwe’s name was later omitted by a copyist who observed a disturbing repetition of Yahwe’s name, caused by the addition of v. 18a to a text that already contained Yahwe’s name. Admittedly, this is speculative.

67 Against Veijola (1995b, 307), who assumes that the verse originates from the “Hauptverfasser des Kapitels.”

68 In Dt 4:34; 6:22; 7:19; 26:8; 34:11.

69 In Dt 28:46.
2. Deuteronomy

Dt 28:46, being closest to the sense of Dt 13:2b-3a, refers to curses that will fall on the Israelites if they do not follow Yahwe. Prima facie, it is difficult to understand why the redactor would eke out the inciter’s credibility by giving him enough power to perform signs and wonders. Yet, taken with verse 4b, which is also a secondary addition, the expansion becomes more understandable. Verse 4b implies that Yahwe controls all people, even the followers of other gods. To the writer of v. 4b, the inciters are only Yahwe’s pawns, and hence there is no danger in giving the inciters more credibility. Therefore, it is probable that verses 2b-3a and 4b stem from the same redactor.

Yahwe Testing Israel — Verse 4b

The idea that Yahwe tests (כסות) the Israelites to know (ידעו) their loyalty has close parallels in Ex 16:4, Dt 8:2 and Jdg 2:22; 3:4. These passages can be identified as late additions: Ex 16:4 - late/dtr; Dt 8:2 - Post-dtr; Jdg 2:22 - Post-dtr; Jdg 3:4 - nomistic or later. Furthermore, the command to love Yahwe is a theme that only late-nomistic and post-dtr texts acknowledge. The use of the expression “with all your heart and all your mind” supports the connection to late-nomistic circles. By taking these connections together, it seems certain that verse 4b — and thus also vv. 2b-3a — originate from a very late redactor. The phraseology would seem to point towards late-nomists, but since the nomists saw other nations and their religions in a more threatening light than implied by v. 4b, a later origin may be more likely. Yahwe’s elevated position mirrors the lateness of v. 4b. He can use the prophets of other gods for his own purposes — they are mere pawns in Yahwe’s larger plans. With a similar attitude, Yahwe leaves the other nations in the land in

[^70]: Against Seitz (1971, 151), who assumes that vv. 2b-3a are a pre-dtr section because it uses the word-pair "ואהב והמשמיש" in the singular. He regards vv. 4b-5 as a dtr section. Also against Merendino (1969, 62-63, 71), who suggests that vv. 2b-3a are the chapter’s only late redaction — he identifies these verses with his 4th redaction stratum.

[^71]: Loyalty to following the commandments, loving Yahwe, etc.

[^72]: Maiberger 1983, 141, 202, 225.

[^73]: Veijola 1995a, 154-155. Dt 8:2-6 breaks the connection between vv. 1 and 7 which, according to Veijola, derive from DtrB, a late-nomistic editor of Dt.


[^75]: According to Smend (1978, 116), Jdg 2:22-3:6 is a later addition to the history writers’ older text.


[^77]: בחולם המלך נשמתם. Its different variations may be found in Dt 4:29; 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10.

[^78]: Dt 4 and 30 are commonly acknowledged to be late additions to Dtr. See chapters 2.5. and 2.7. for more.
Jdg 2:22 and 3:4 only to use them to test Israel, not that He could not have wiped them out. The Yahwe of this writer is already the sovereign ruler of the world. The problem of other gods was no longer acute and critical. One may observe a slight development in comparison with the main nomistic texts.

**Who Took You from the Land of Egypt —Verse 6aβ-bα**

By supplying Yahwe’s characteristics with the common המפרשים מכה ומבריח, and with the rarier המפרשים מבריח, the interpolator wanted to tie the chapter more closely with Israel’s history and with Yahwe’s redeeming acts in history. The phrase פדך מבחי עבר, with the verb שסד only in Dt 7:8 and Mi 6:4 and even without the verb שסד only in Dt and in literature dependent on it. With these expressions, the interpolator may have referred to the prologue of the Decalogue (Dt 5:6), a passage that contains very similar formulations.

**Gods of the Surrounding Nations — Verse 8**

The secondary character of this verse is evident. It aims to identify gods referred to in the inciter’s quotation (v. 7) with gods of the surrounding peoples. The phrase ממלכת המים appears — apart from Dt 13:8 — in two OT passages only, viz. Dt 6:14 and Jdg 2:12, both of which are late-dtr additions. Both passages picture a situation in which the conquest of the land had been incomplete and other peoples continued living in the land with the Israelites. This picture was most likely in the mind of the writer who wrote v. 8. This theme, with its implication that the indigenous inhabitants threaten Israel with their religious practices, is important for the nomists, whereas the history writer was convinced that the land had been completely cleared of the Canaanites. Since the exact phrase מקנה הארץ והרתא הארץ is otherwise met in one late-nomistic verse (Dt 28:64), and the general idea in two late-nomistic texts, the late-nomistic origin of v. 8 seems to be the most conceivable alternative.

**חזר — Verses 16b-18ba**

It was a common process in the DH to declare conquered cities as והר, declare them to be utterly destroyed. This was presumably a common practice in the ANE. However, dtr texts have different, partly contradicting, views on the meaning and extent of the והר. Dt 20:13-

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79 Veijola 1993, 63.
81 Dt 28:62-68 is often seen as a later addition to the blessing and curse list. See Steynmans (1995, 381-382) who ascribes these verses to an exilic editor. The direct reference to the Exile in v. 63 and the affinity to Dt 4 in vv. 27-31 validate the late character of Dt 28:64. The phraseology points towards the nomistic circles.
82 The Mesha stele acknowledges such practice after the conquest of foreign cities.
14 orders only men to be killed, but a later editor in Dt 20:15-17 expanded this to include all inhabitants of the city by adding the pretext that this only applies to foreign cities that are in the promised land  The most common practice in the DH was to annihilate all inhabitants, while the possible spoil, the possessions of the inhabitants (the cattle, etc.), were taken as a reward for the conquest. With later additions, the laws became more rigid so that the final text allows nothing to be taken — all had to be destroyed. Jos 6-8 reveal vestiges of this development. In Jos 6 and 8, the Israelites take all possible spoil, killing the inhabitants and all creatures except cattle (6:21; 8:27), while the more recent chapter 7  insists that all remains, including jewelry and clothes — which Achan to his misfortune took — had to be destroyed and burned (7:11, 21). Dt 13:16b-18ba* also represents the end of this development: All must be dedicated and burned in the fire. If we accept the conclusion by Latvus that Jos 7 is of post-dtr origin, we accordingly have to assume the same for these verses since, as noted above, the author is dependent on Jos 6-8.

Although Dt 13 and Jos 7 give only hints about the real intention of such a strict attitude towards booty, we may learn from Dt 7:25-26 that the final motive may have been religious. Verse 25 commands the expensive cultic objects to be burned in the fire so that not even their gold and silver may be saved: They might become a trap later on. This passage also shows phraseological connections to Dt 13:16b-18ba*. With some reservation, I assume that the same editor wrote Dt 13:16b-18ba* and Dt 7:25-26.

If You Listen to the Voice of Yahwe — Verse 19

The phraseology and the overall theme of conditional blessing on the observance of the law leave no doubt that the verse is nomistic. There is evidence of at least one later nomist who built frames for Dt’s laws with exhortations to observe them. These frames try to structure the whole of Dt into a more coherent and consistent unity. They also made bridges between

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83 Dt 20:15-17 is identified as a later addition to Dt 20:10-14 by Merendino 1969, 226ff. Similarly Foresti (1984, 120-123) but he further identifies the author as DtrH.
84 Veijola (1985, 299-303) has argued that Jos 7: 1, 6-26 is a later addition to the passage.
85 Following Ottoson (1991, 26), who finds P language in the chapter, Latvus (1993, 97-100) argues that Jos 7:1, 6-26* is a post-dtr story. However, according to Boiling (1982, 230), the chapter is largely from Dtr 2. Foresti (1984, 127-130) and Veijola (1985, 302-303) ascribe Jos 7:1, 6-26* to a DtrN writer. In their view Jos 7:2-5 is from DtrH.
86 Perhaps some demonic influence was thought to remain in the idols unless they were completely destroyed by burning.
87 Veijola (1996, 253-254) regards Dt 7:25-26 as a post-nomistic redaction, a view which would support common origin with Dt 13:16b-18 since Jos 7 is also most likely post-nomistic.
88 Veijola (1996, 257) characterizes this nomist (DtrB): “Bezeichnend für seine literarische Tätigkeit ist, daß er Kompositionen schafft, die er mit rahmenden und kommentierenden Ergänzungen versieht...” However, as we have already seen, Veijola assumes that the basic text of the chapter derives from this nomist, DtrB.
the often otherwise loose chapters and knit Dt into a more compact unit. The nomists apparently made no exception in Dt 13:1 and 19.

Later Additions — Conclusions

Of the later additions in Dt 13, late-nomistic origin is certain for vv. 1, 8 and 19, whereas vv. 2b-3a, 4b, 10aβ and 16b-18 should be attributed to an even later stage. Since not a single redaction is earlier than late-nomistic, it seems probable that the basic text of this chapter itself is a very late addition to Deuteronomy. Had the basic text of Dt 13 been part of Urdeuteronomium or even pre-dtn as many scholars assume, one would expect, on the basis of analogy with other passages in Dt (for example, ch. 12) and on the basis of the importance and centrality of the theme, several earlier successive layers of comments and interpretative additions. For the final “diagnosis”, we must turn to the basic text itself.

The Basic Text of Dt 13

The conventional view that the basic text of Dt 13 is pre-dtn or dtn is usually based on bracketing off from the basic text phrases and verses that would demand a later dating. This is particularly manifest in phrases like מַזְרֵךְ אַשְׁר עָשָׂה הָוא הָאֱלֹהִים לְלַחֵפָאֵת אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַע because there is no reason, grammatically or contentwise, to remove them. Dion’s view that the basic text is already dtr is, in my opinion, a step in the right direction, yet his redaction criticism stands on the dual redaction hypothesis, according to which he is inclined to attribute the additions to the exilic second redactor and the basic text to the Josianic history writer. I will reevaluate his view and try to determine the relationship of the basic text to other passages in the DH. I will proceed by examining phrases relevant to this task and by trying to uncover and discuss the intentions of the text through these phrases.

For the present study, the most important phrases in the chapter are in the inciters’ exhortations to follow other gods. The inciter’s exhortation in v. 3 contains four elements that are used in intolerance passages: אֱלֹהִים אָחָרִים, אֱלֹהִים, לֹא, and נָעַב. All four elements are fairly common in other intolerance passages throughout the DH, but outside Dt 13:3, all four elements appear together only four times in the DH: Dt 8:19; 17:3; 28:14 and Jdg 2:19. I will deal with Dt 17:3 later on, but of the three remaining passages, all show other nomistic traits and phraseology, and accordingly they have been identified as nomistic or late-dtr. Dt 8:19 contains the standard nomistic warning that if the
Israelites forget Yahwe they will be destroyed.\textsuperscript{[\textcopyright]} Dt 28:13-14 presents the nomistic theme that makes Yahwe’s blessing contingent on the observance of His commandments.\textsuperscript{[\textcopyright]} Jdg 2:19 also contains more nomistic features. The verse adds another common element that is often used in the intolerance passages, namely לָשׁוּתָה. In the following verse, v. 20, Yahwe’s anger is roused, which has been identified as a nomistic idea by Latvus.\textsuperscript{[\textcopyright]} In addition to these evident links to passages that can be identified as nomistic with more ease, the fact that Dt 13 is familiar with four central elements of the most typical intolerance phraseology indicates a late origin. The inciter’s comment is most likely written as an antithesis to the nomistic warning not to walk after the other gods and serve them.\textsuperscript{[\textcopyright]} The other passages that use all four elements corroborate this conclusion.

Dt 13:7 and 13:14 contain only three common elements: לָשׁוּתָה אֲלֵוהִים, and הָלָךְ. The use of these three elements together is met in three further passages, Dt 29:25; Jos 23:16 and 1K 9:6. These passages increase the likelihood that the basic text ofDt 13 is connected to the nomists: The first two can be identified as late-nomistic,\textsuperscript{[\textcopyright]} whereas the third is disputed as to whether it is nomistic or late-nomistic.\textsuperscript{[\textcopyright]} Generally, all the passages that are linked to Dt 13 with these elements either relate to the law in nomistic terms or refer to the Exile.

The nomistic origin is also revealed by the use of several minor words and expressions that are elsewhere used exclusively by nomistic redactors. The root לָשׁוּתָה (vv. 6, 11 and 14) is frequently used in its general sense of banishing or thrusting away from something, but the religious meaning, namely apostasy, is only met, apart from Dt 13:6, 11 and 14, in two nomistic passages, viz. Dt 4:19 and 30:17.\textsuperscript{[\textcopyright]} Veijola has suggested that the verb was adopted from Jer 27:10, 15 where the root in the hiph. is used in the sense “to expel”.\textsuperscript{[\textcopyright]} Since the meaning is different, the link is not very strong. Otto assumes that in the


\textsuperscript{95} According to Steymans (1995, 230, 382), the verse sticks out of its context and is a late redaction to the chapter. Veijola (1996, 257-258) characterizes the theme of making blessing contingent on the observance of Yahwe’s commandments as nomistic or late-nomistic.

\textsuperscript{96} Latvus 1993, 80

\textsuperscript{97} Otto (1998a, 35) suggests that the expression לָשׁוּתָה אֲלֵוהִים אֲלֵוהִים links the chapter further with treaty and loyalty terminology. This may be true, but he fails to see that in the background lies the antithesis that is commonly used in nomistic texts elsewhere in the DH.

\textsuperscript{98} See my analysis in chapter 2.7. for details. Jos 23:16 is a late addition to an already nomistic text. See Latvus 1993, 62.

\textsuperscript{99} See chapter 4.1. for details. For example, Hentschel (1984, 65) regards 1K 9:1-5 as nomistic, while vv. 6-9 would be even more recent.

\textsuperscript{100} For Dt 4:19 see chapter 2.5.; Dt 30:17 presents again the nomistic theme: To follow Yahwe’s road leads to blessing, while departure from it leads to curses and annihilation. A similar meaning, with reference to Jeroboam’s sin, occurs in the Qere of 2K 17:21, which, according to Würthwein (1984, 395), is a DtrH text.

\textsuperscript{101} Veijola 1995b, 299.
background lies erotic language, where the word meant “to seduce.” According to him, this word also links the chapter with treaty ideology, but peculiarly, he cuts off all sections that use this root from the basic text. Nevertheless, the use of this root links the chapter with other nomistic passages.

Similarly, the phrase אָשֶׁר לָא יֶעַבְדוּם (Dt 13:3, 7, 14) in reference to foreign gods is only used in nomistic passages. The intention of this phrase is to contrast Yahwe, who is known through His redeeming acts in Egypt and through His revelation in the desert, with other gods who have done nothing particular to make themselves known to the Israelites.

Verse 5 shows the clearest evidence for nomistic activity. The verse is loaded with nomistic expressions: An exhortation to keep the law (אֶמּורְמָה תַּשְׁמִית), hear His voice (יִשְׁמַח יְהוָה), to walk after Yahwe (אָחָרִי יְהוָה) and to cling onto Him (דְבוּךְ יְהוָה). The concentration of nomistic expressions could indicate that the verse — and therefore also the basic text of Dt 13 — is late-nomistic. The idea that one must cling (דְבוּך) onto Yahwe is met in passages that are otherwise loaded with nomistic terminology, nomistic exhortations to obey Yahwe.

The phrase יַלְדוּ הֲלוֹם אָחָרִי יְהוָה connects the text with a group of nomistic texts with a specific picture. There are two alternatives between which Israel must choose. The texts exhort Israel to walk after Yahwe (אָחָרִי יְהוָה v. 5) or along the road (דַּרְכָּנֵה v. 6), while the danger is that Israel would turn away from it. According to Braulik, the singular דַּרְכָּנֵה, when it refers to the law, nearly always in Dt refers to the Decalogue. The picture that these phrases form was used to emphasize the importance of the Decalogue and especially the first commandment. It may teach us something about nomistic theology. For the nomists, there is only one road that leads to success and prosperity in life and that is keeping Yahwe’s law. Abandoning this road will inevitably lead to all kinds of evil and, in the worst case, to destruction. The nomists were convinced that all reasonable existence is dependent on this matter. Therefore, using words which recalled this picture, the writers of Dt 13 wanted to give the message that the inciters to worship other gods in effect threatened Israel’s whole existence.

102 Otto 1998a, 35.
103 In Dt 11:28; 28:64; 29:25. See chapter 2.7. and 2.8.
104 As we have seen, most scholars bracket off v. 5 from the basic text. For example, Otto 1996a, 25. In my view, this view partly derives from the fact that the verse contains late characteristics. By cutting it from the basic text, one attempts to safeguard an early origin for the chapter.
106 Dt 10:20; 11:22; 30:20; Jos 22:5; 23:8; 2K 18:6. For example, 2K 18:6 almost implies that the expression is a synonym for following His commandments.
107 Braulik 1988, 23. The plural would refer to the whole law. The scholar is not certain about the singular in Dt 11:28 and 31:29, which may also refer to the whole law. According to Veijola (1977, 90), the word דַּרְכָּנֵה, with this meaning or intention, is met outside Dt only in nomistic texts dependent on Dt.
109 E.g., Dt 11:28.
The Basic Text — Conclusions

In addition to the fact that the basic text of the chapter explicitly refers to commandments in v. 5, phraseology and vocabulary in the chapter imply that the writer is a nomist. The phraseology and concepts only become fully comprehensible against the background of other nomistic texts. The picture that lies behind the text is a crossroad where Israel has to choose between Yahwe and other gods. With a typically nomistic expression, v. 5 exhorts Israel’s to choose Yahwe and His law. Many scholars cut off this verse because it is the clearest proof of the chapter’s lateness. A similar tendency by some scholars may be seen in part of v. 6. However, literary-critical arguments for these scissions are limited. Their removal from the basic text is motivated by the desire to find an early core in the chapter. The conclusion that the earliest layer of the chapter is nomistic emphasizes the nomists’ role in the attack on other gods. To further elucidate the origins of nomistic monolatry, it is necessary to investigate the origin of Dt 13 and the underlying thinking, but before turning to these origins it is necessary to consider the outward character of the chapter.

Dt 13 as Law

Being in the law section of Deuteronomy, chapter 13 shows characteristics of one particular type of law often used in the OT. Alt called this law-type casuistic. The most obvious characteristics of this type is that the law is divided into two clearly distinct parts: the introduction (protasis) and the conclusion (apodosis). The introduction presents the case or the crime in the conditional form, often beginning the sentence with the word יְהָא or כָּל and introducing the malefactors in the third person. The apodosis gives general instructions on the countermeasures and the judgment, often specifying the manner of execution. For example, the law in Dt 13:2-6 introduces the malefactors (the prophets and dreamers) and their crime first (vv. 2-4) and then orders actions against them (vv. 5-6). Besides the form, several phrases connect ch. 13 with Dt’s other laws: First, the death sentence is often declared with the verb יָשֶׁר. Second, the motivating בִּנְכָּה הָדוּר מַכְרָב concludes several laws. Third, stoning to death (v. 11) is a common method of execution for the most

110 Dion’s (1991, 192) conclusion that the history writer wrote Dt 13 is a logical conclusion from the assumption that only two dtr redactors worked on Dt. In the light of this analysis, it seems that this basic assumption must be abandoned in Dt 13 because both the basic text of Dt 13 and many of the additions are linked with dtr texts that are later additions to an already dtr text.

111 Moreover, the nomistic traits are not limited to these verses only. The inciter’s sentence in all three laws already implies a nomistic background.

112 See Alt (1953, 285-332) about distinguishing two forms of law, casuistic and apodictic. Although Alt’s theory has been later challenged by many scholars, it is a practical division of the laws. See my analysis on Dt 17:2-7 for more or Sonsino (1992, 252-53) for a summary of criticism.


114 Dt 17:12; 18:20; 22:22; 22:25; 24:7. It is possible that this comment is a later addition to these laws.
serious crimes that Dt lists. Despite these connections to Dt’s laws, Mayes and Seitz suggest that the preaching style or the direct form of address disturbs the connection to other casuistic laws. This observation may be true in comparison with contemporary extra-Biblical laws and with many OT laws but in Dt the direct form of address has permeated most laws that use the casuistic form (ch. 20-24). By outward appearance, Dt 13 cannot easily be distinguished from Dt’s other casuistic laws because many of their external features are present, and the purity, if there ever was such, is commonly disturbed in Dt.

Contentwise, however, Dt 13 does not belong to the same group with other casuistic laws of Dt. Based on the analogies with other Levantine law codes, it is reasonable to assume that most of the casuistic laws met in Dt 20-24 were in actual judicial use at some point in Israel’s history, yet the same is not self-evident of Dt 13 for several reasons. First, the third law in Dt 13 is quite fantastic as a law. It is difficult to fathom that there had been laws to wipe out whole cities on the basis of religious disagreement; the punishment is simply too draconian. It would seem that the writers did not comprehend all the implications of implementing such a law. Moreover, there is no evidence in the OT — nor outside it — of putting such laws into practice, which one would expect particularly in the DH regarding the importance of the issue to some circles. Neither is there any evidence in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah of such a practice, although the problem described in the law most likely arose in the post-exilic period. Secondly, the second law reads like a lynch law, as individuals may proceed with execution immediately after witnessing the crime, without any requirement to prove the case. Had the law been in use, abuse would have followed, as personal enemies could have been murdered with the excuse that they were allegedly inciters to apostasy. Thus, actual judicial use would have rapidly shown the impossibility of Dt 13 as law. Most translators noticed the same difficulty so that they tried to avoid it completely by changing the meaning of v. 10a, as noted above in the textual criticism.

Dt 17:2-7 is another attempt to avert these problems. However, the impossibility

\[\text{Dt 17:5: 22:21; 22:21, 24} \]
\[\text{Mayes 1979, 230; Seitz 1971, 146; Alt 1953, 286-87.} \]
\[\text{Cf. e.g., Ex 21:7-22:16.} \]
\[\text{The fact that Dt was disguised as a speech by Moses to the Israelites has gradually affected and transformed the laws, as the copyists and the redactors have understood it as a speech. Presumably, the laws were originally more neutral and used the third person when presenting the case and giving the judgment.} \]
\[\text{For example, if we compare laws in Dt with the laws in Ex 21-23, the former could be regarded as more corrupt especially when it comes to the form.} \]
\[\text{Thus also Hölischer 1923a, 193. Dion (1991, 204) argues that ‘the burden of proof is on those who dispute the lawmaker’s intention to be taken literally.’ He continues that Josiah’s ruthless desecration of Bethel shows that he was capable of wiping out towns or communities that attempted to return to other gods. However, the historical value of the Bethel story is based on historically questionable verses in 2K 23. See chapter 4.2. Further on, the burden of proof in this case is on both sides since Dt 13 is clearly separated from contemporary laws by its content and in its demands for extraordinarily harsh punishments.} \]
\[\text{Thus, following the MT; see textual criticism.} \]
\[\text{See Levinson 1995, 37-63.} \]
of Dt 13 as a law is explained when we recognize that Dt 13 is only secondarily a law. The original background is in the contemporary political treaties.  

**Contacts with Near Eastern Treaties**

Many scholars have pointed out indisputable parallels between Dt 13 and ANE vassal treaties and loyalty oaths. Especially striking are similarities with Neo-Assyrian treaties. Otto has lately suggested that Dt 13 is directly dependent on Esarhaddon’s Vassal Treaty (VTE) and especially its §10, and therefore, the chapter should be dated between 672 and 612 BCE. One cannot deny that there are many points of contact between the VTE and Dt 13, for example, similar phrases and reminiscent sections:

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123. In spite of these problems, there is no doubt that the authors were serious about putting Dt 13 to use. Furthermore, as noted by Dion (1991, 147-48) and many others, laws like Dt 13 served as a prototype for the mediaeval inquisition, which naturally took all of the OT as God’s word and could thereby justify their acts and methods.

124. See e.g., Weinfeld 1972, 91-100 and Dion 1991, 199-204.

125. Otto 1996a, 32-47; 1998, 37ff. He is inspired by Steynans (1995, 239-312), who has argued that Dt 28:20-44 is literally dependent on the VTE.
Despite these similarities, direct dependence is unlikely because there are also considerable differences between Dt 13 and the VTE. Otto tries to explain away the differences by different factors that would have motivated the deviation of Dt 13 from VTE §10. For example, he explains the difference in the order of inciters — in VTE §10 the relatives come before the religious professionals, while in Dt 13 it is the opposite — by suggesting that in the OT context, religious professionals would have been a more serious threat.

The differences are more extensive, however. VTE §10 does not command an execution; one only has to report the case to the king. An immediate execution is commanded in the other cases of the VTE but not in the one that would have been the direct source. It is also peculiar that if VTE §10 had been the source, why would the writer make two separate cases (Dt 13:2-6 and 13:7-12) from one in the source. §10 also lists the enemies and allies of the king as possible rebels. They are, in fact, the most important source of rebellion in VTE §10 but Dt 13 has no counterpart for this case! Moreover, the central term נַדְרָרָה תֵּלַי-זֶהוּ (8-9) “Do not pity nor spare him, and do not conceal him, but instead, kill him” in Dt 13:6, which, according to Otto, is a loan from §57, is not present in §10. These deviations suggest that, if the VTE had been the source, the editor would have shaped his material with a free hand from different locations in the document. Otto’s assumption that the basic text of

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126 The presented translation is from Parpola-Watanabe 1988, 33-35, 50. See also Parpola-Watanabe for the Akkadian original.


128 Parpola-Watanabe 1988, 33 (lines 112-113).
Dt 13:2-6 is a direct loan (direkte Übertragung) from VTE §10 is not justified by the presented evidence.

One must also point out that there are many points of contact between Dt 13 and other ANE treaties, without anyone — any longer — trying to argue that Dt 13 is directly dependent on them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Ishmeriga Treaty</th>
<th>Dt 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“If in the midst of my country, a city sins, you, people of Ishmeriga, shall intervene, and you shall destroy this city and its men ... as for the cattle and sheep take them for yourselves.”</td>
<td>vv. 16-17: “destroy the people of that city with the edge of the sword ... Dedicate the city for destruction, and all that is in it and its cattle to the edge of the sword.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Sefire Treaty

| Stele III/1: “Anyone who comes to you or to your son or to your descendants or to one of the kings of Arpad and talks against me or my son ... and says bad things about me ... and these words come into your attention, you will give them into my power.” | v. 7: “If your brother, the son of your mother, your son, your daughter, the wife in your bosom or your very close friend secretly entices you saying:” |
| Stele III/9: “If it is a city, you must slay it with the sword” | v. 16: “destroy the people of that city with the edge of the sword” |

As the examples show, there are similarities on the level of phraseology. It is likely that the similarities between the VTE and Dt 13 are due to the fact that Dt 13 is dependent on a vassal treaty, but that it was the VTE now seems unlikely. In fact, the existence of the third case in Dt 13:13-14, 16a shows that the source cannot have been the VTE. My argument runs as follows: Dt 13:13-14, 16a has a parallel in the Ishmeriga Treaty as well as in the Sefire Treaty. Although it is unlikely that they were direct sources for Dt 13, the parallels show that such a section was common in political treaties of the period. A case where a whole town has become rebellious against a king was a typical threat or problem for a ruler, and therefore such a section was common in most ANE treaties and comparable documents. Since 13:13-14, 16a fits so oddly as a law in Dt, it is highly probable that it was formulated based on a political treaty. The parallels in the treaties also imply that Dt 13:13-14, 16a was

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129 Mendenhall (1960, 22-25) assumed that the extant Hittite treaties from the 2nd millennium directly influenced OT’s apodictic laws. This connection was then used to date parts of the Pentateuch to the 2nd millennium.
130 Dion 1991, 201.
131 Pritchard 1969, 225/661.
133 For more parallels see Dion (1991, 198-204) and Weinfeld (1972, 92-100). For Neo-Assyrian parallels see Parpola - Watanabe 1988 (especially the Zakutu Treaty p. 62ff. and Assurbanipal’s Treaty with Babylonian Allies p. 64ff.).
not invented by a later editor as Otto assumes. The section has also no parallel in the OT that might have inspired or influenced it. If Dt 13:13-14, 16a used a treaty as a source — which seems likely — and the VTE does not have such a section, the VTE cannot have been the source. Otto has tried to avoid this problem by cutting off vv. 13-19 altogether from the basic text of Dt 13, but from the perspective of literary criticism this scission is not justified, and considering the parallel in two extant treaties, it is very unlikely.

Considering all the parallels, it is likely that vassal treaties utilized fixed phraseology and contained similar sections from treaty to treaty. The setting and purpose of vassal and succession treaties already makes it probable that the same themes and problems will be discussed in every treaty. For example, the problem of religious professionals or relatives speaking treason against the overlord would have been acute in any ANE context, and consequently, a section warning not to listen to them and disclose them would be expected in most succession and vassal treaties. If the few treaties that have been preserved show such striking parallels, it is evident that political treaties in the ANE preserved their form and language throughout centuries without much change. When political terms and phraseology in a certain context become established, there is little reason to alter them. It seems that Otto’s view is motivated by his desire to date Dt 13 to an early period. The VTE is not the fixed point that would help to date Dt 13 or Urdeuteronomium.

The treaty-form, language and conventions had existed long before and after the Neo-Assyrian era without much change. They persevered persistently even into the Graeco-Roman diplomatic phraseology. The similarity of Dt 13 to Hittite and Aramean treaties shows that the ANE conventions and language had remained relatively constant. They survived the collapses of empires, especially in Mesopotamia where the culture remained East Semitic. They would also have survived the collapse of the Neo-Assyrian empire. If the Hittite treaties, the Old Babylonian Code of Hammurabi, the Ishmeriga Treaty, the Sefire Treaty, the VTE and Dt show such close parallels that their dependence

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135 The VTE is the best preserved vassal treaty from the ANE. Most of the text can be reconstructed because the text has been preserved in several manuscripts of more than 350 fragments. See Parpola - Watanabe 1988, xlviii.
136 About Neo-Assyrian treaty conventions see Parpola - Watanabe 1988, xxxv-xlili. They state: “While all the treaties in the present volume differ somewhat in form and structure from one another, they also display considerable structural and formal similarities. It is easy to see that they consist of a limited number of structural elements, which may not all be obligatory or appear in the same order in every document, but have a well-defined function and are formulated according to well-established conventions.” Their volume contains several treaties from the ninth to the seventh centuries BCE.
137 See Weinfeld (1976, 379-414) on perseverence of diplomatic language in the ANE.
139 Dion 1991, 204; Barré 1992, 656.
140 Weinfeld (1976, 379-414) and following him Veijola 1995b, 310.
141 For example, Dt 28, the VTE and the curse section of the Code of Hammurabi show several parallels, but they do not necessitate direct dependence. The similarities are commonly acknowledged in research. See Tigay 1996, 494-497 for example.
on each other has been discussed in research, it is reasonable to assume that Neo-Assyrian
treaty conventions were adopted by the Neo-Babylonian rulers as well. It is probable that the
petty kingdoms that became independent after the collapse of the Assyrian empire would
have adopted the political language and conventions of the Assyrians. It would not have
been necessary to invent new political conventions, forms and phraseology when the
Assyrians had already perfected them. In addition, since the Assyrians had dominated ANE
politics for such a long period, from the 9th century to the 7th century BCE, their
conventions may have replaced those of many others in the region. Consequently, it is
probable that following the collapse of the Neo-Assyrian empire, Assyrian political
conventions remained the model in the ANE.

It is probable that Judah had to make a political treaty or a loyalty oath with the
kings of Babylon and Persia. After the collapse of the Judean monarchy, the treaty was made
between the king and the Judean governor. In fact, a loyalty oath was sometimes made even
between two individuals — especially between a king and an individual. Although there is
little evidence of their content and terms, the OT alludes to oaths or treaties between
individuals. It seems that treaties and loyalty oaths were made quite frequently to define
different kinds of relationships. Therefore, it is not surprising to find treaty concepts and
ideology in Dt. They could have been adopted from various kinds of contexts, however. It
would be a great coincidence that the best preserved Mesopotamian treaty, the VTE, was
the one that influenced Dt, as suggested by Steymans and Otto. The similarities between Dt
and the VTE may derive from the fact that we simply know the VTE better than any other
treaty. Moreover, the VTE is chronologically relatively close to Dt, while most other treaties
that we possess are older. Unfortunately, no Neo-Babylonian treaty has surfaced so far.

Finally, it is possible that treaty documents were not destroyed after the treaty
became void but were kept in the archives where the scribes could still examine them much
later. It is even likely that one could use a political treaty in a religious context only after
the political situation had become irrelevant. It is difficult to see how an Assyrian treaty could
have been used to define or conceive the relationship between Yahwe and Israel during the
time, or immediately after the time, when the document was used to define a political
relationship. The difficult political connotations would have been too disturbing to utilize
the same treaty — which may have been very repressive — to define Israel’s relationship to
Yahwe. It is probable that the original political context had already been forgotten when the
document was used in a religious context. As a consequence, dating any part of Dt by
affiliation to the treaty-form is dubious. We do not possess the treaty that was used, and
even if we did, it would not necessarily give an exact date for Dt 13.

At any rate, the trunk of the chapter is modeled after a treaty-form, around which the
writer added phrases and expressions from Dt’s laws to disguise it as a typical law. This task

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142 Parpola - Watanabe 1988, xxiv, xxxiii, 72.
143 E.g., Gn 14:13; 21:27; 26:28; 31:44-53. The last passage has also some references to the terms of
the treaty.
144 Against Otto 1996a, 32-47; 1998, 37. As we have seen, he suggests that the document must have
been used before the retreat of Assyria from Judah in 612 BCE.
145 At the most, it would give terminus a quo, but not terminus ad quem.
was not difficult because the conceivable section of vassal treaties that Dt 13 mirrors or utilized, lists the obligations of the vassal in a manner very similar to a law, by first introducing the possible threat or violation of the treaty and then ordering the judgment that the vassal has to implement.

Up to a certain degree, it is possible to separate the trunk that was influenced by vassal treaties from the pieces that are linked to Dt’s laws and both of these from the ideas that spring from the author’s own editing. The phrase בּוֹרֵעָת הָרֶץ מַעַרְבּ and verse 12 may have been adopted from Dt’s laws, whereas the theological comments (vv. 5, 12, 13b, 18b) that correspond to the nomistic theology may be attributed to the author himself. The rest — although strongly modified by the nomist towards religious use — may be regarded as a direct echo of vassal treaties; we can find a parallel part in the treaties for many of the remaining sections. Verses 2a, 7a and 13 correspond with the introduction that presents the threat to the overlord or monarch; verses 4a, 9 and 15 are parallel to the manner in which the vassal must react; and verses 6a, 10a and 16a order the rebels to be executed like in the vassal treaties. It may be concluded that the skeleton of Dt 13 accords with the general structure of one part of the vassal treaties and loyalty oaths, whereas much of the outward structure and appearance comes from Dt’s laws and from the nomist’s theology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Origin of Dt 13</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corresponds to a vassal treaty</td>
<td>Corresponds to Dt’s laws</td>
<td>Writer’s theological interpretation</td>
<td>Later redaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>3b</td>
<td>2b-3a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6a (to ﻮ١)</td>
<td>יִהְדָּה</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a (from ﻮ١)</td>
<td>6a (from ﻮ١)</td>
<td>ﺑﺎ١</td>
<td>6b (to ﺗประต)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>7b</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10aa</td>
<td>11b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (to ﺟﺮ)</td>
<td>13 (from ﺲ١)</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14a</td>
<td></td>
<td>14b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16b-18a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When one acknowledges the tripartite origin of the chapter, some seeming inconsistencies and difficulties that are often interpreted as literary strata may be seen from a new perspective.

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146 Otto’s (1996a, 12-20) separation of the sections that derive from a treaty and the sections that mirror Dt laws may be partly motivated by his desire to convince that the VTE itself is behind the chapter.

147 Compare with the VTE in Parpola - Watanabe 1988, 33-35 (§10-14).
If the trunk or the skeleton comes from a vassal treaty, it naturally means that the basic idea of Dt 13 also existed before the writer adopted it into religious use. The purpose of a vassal treaty was to secure the loyalty of a vassal and make sure that he paid allegiance to one lord only. The main threat to a vassal treaty was that the vassal would follow and pay homage to other lords. Hence, the treaty was written to prevent this from happening by listing in advance different situations that could lead to such development and by giving instructions on how to deal with each case. Dt 13 has taken up this thought, with the difference that Yahwe has replaced the secular ruler and Israel represents the vassal. In the author’s mind, Yahwe’s position as the sole God was threatened by inciters and apostates so that he demanded their elimination. This idea is similar to the concerns of an overlord in relation to his subjects and rivals. In accordance with the vassal treaties’ curse sections, the nomists threatened the Israelites with curses and afflictions if they violated the covenant (ה壊) by serving other gods. Yahwe had dictated the words or the terms of the covenant. Israel has to keep them in return for blessing and all good from Yahwe. In the vassal treaties, the lord promised protection and prosperity on the condition that the vassal kept the treaty. It is apparent that in Dt 13 a political concept was adopted into religious use to define the relationship between Yahwe and Israel.

All in all, Dt 13 corroborates the connection of Dt with contemporary political treaties. Their language and concepts are commonly used in Dt 4, 28 and 29. Especially Dt 28 and 29 show that more than one successive editor was familiar with the treaties. The phraseological connections have shown that in Dt 13 this editor was one of the later editors of the DH. I have assumed a nomistic origin, which corroborates the connection of the nomists to treaty ideology.

### The Historical Context of Dt 13

Postulating that the chapter was implemented as a real law, Dion has attempted to demonstrate a monarchic background and origin for Dt 13. On the basis of judicial vocabulary that Dt 13 uses, Dion tries to date the chapter. He argues that Dt 13 uses provisions — like the manner of execution and the careful scrutiny of rumors — that imply professional judges (שופטים) who appeared under the monarchy. He points out that these judges were replaced during the last decades of monarchic Judah by a group of officials called שרי, and consequently he argues that a monarchic background for Dt 13 is more probable than a post-monarchic. However, this argument stands on a verse that stems from the writer’s attempt to tie the chapter with Dt’s other laws (v. 10b) and on a verse that is a later addition influenced by Dt 17:4 (v. 15). Hence, the apparent judicial conduct in Dt 13 may reflect another historical situation than that of the writer. Dion’s main argument is that only a king devoted to Yahwe could have put the third law into actual use and upheld

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148 Steymans (1995, 239-312) has lately argued for a direct dependence of Dt 28 on the VTE. Veijola (1996) has argued for an entire covenant redactor DtrB who edited Dt with a strongly covenantal perspective.

149 Dion 1991, 194-196.
its implementation. With this idea, he comes to the conclusion that King Josiah’s reign is the period that fits best. Nevertheless, this argumentation fails to understand the artificial character of Dt 13 as a law and the probable political model that influenced it. The third law derives from a political treaty that demanded the destruction of cities that had openly rebelled against the king. Consequently, it is tenuous to argue the historical situation on the basis of who could have put it into practice. In addition to a political background, the demands may mirror the wishes and visions of the writers rather than the historical context. In order to fit the chapter into any specific historical situation, we must find out what lies behind the chapter and what does it assume.

The first law implies that there were religious professionals who represented other gods than Yahwe. Of course, they did not express themselves in the way described by the nomists, but the passage assumes the existence of prophets of other gods, who were opposed to the nomists. Dt 18:20 warns about prophets speaking in the name of other gods, but this appears in a short expansion which is difficult to date with certainty. The book of Jeremiah contains allusions to prophets who speak in the name of Baal, but the link to Dt 13 is not unambiguous. Veijola has suggested that several factors connect Dt 13 with Jer 14:13-16; 23; 27-29 but many of these connections are not very strong. A clear literary dependence cannot be established for most of the passages, although the cumulative evidence from the connections is noteworthy. However, Jer 23:25-27 shows so many direct points of contact — prophets, dreams, lies and enticement to worship other gods — that dependence at some level is likely. In the other passages, in Jer (14:13-16, rest of 23 and 27-29) the connection is already more distant. The main thrust of the criticism against the prophets in Jeremiah is that they speak in the name of Yahwe without Yahwe having sent them. The main criticism in these passages is not that they spoke in the name of other gods. This is evident especially in the narrative sections of the above-mentioned passages. In fact, the idea of speaking in the name of other gods is only met in Jer 23:13-14 and 23:25-27. Nevertheless, Jer 23:13-14 refers to Samaritan prophets who had prophesied in the name of

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150 Dion 1991, 192-196, 204-205. He states that the only alternative for King Josiah’s time is “post-exilic utopian thinking” — referring to Holscher 1923a, 192-93 — since during the Exile there were no kings to implement the law. His dating arises from the double-redaction model and from the idea that only Josiah was pious enough to implement such laws: “law 3 could only have been implemented under a king devoted to YHWH, a situation that would disappear for several centuries after the fall of Jerusalem…” (p. 205). It is hardly necessary to remark that Dion fully trusts the historicity of 2K 22-23.

151 By declaring, “let us follow other gods.”

152 A closer look at Dt 18:20-22 reveals that the main issue, speaking in Yahwe’s name when Yahwe had not spoken, was only later edited with a remark that speaking in other gods’ names was prohibited. Verse 20a-b, where this remark is, suddenly breaks in and disturbs the main issue of the passage. The redactional character of v. 20a-b is confirmed when we discern how it demands the prophets to be killed in contrast with v. 22 which assumes that the prophet is not punished — at least not with a death sentence — by stating that there is no reason to be afraid of him. As a result, it seems that prophets of other gods were not a concern for the dtn or earlier dtr writers but became a concern only later. There is no objection in seeing the same writer behind Dt 13 and Dt 18:20a-b, regarding the scarcity of the theme in Dt.

Baal, while the Jerusalemite prophets were accused of other sins, mainly of moral decay. One receives the impression from this passage that the worship of other gods was a past sin, while contemporary sins were moral. Moreover, the background of the whole prophet-controversy in the book of Jeremiah is that some prophets propagated false policy — at least from Jeremiah’s perspective — backing it with Yahwe’s name. Consequently, the passages in Jeremiah are not an unambiguous background for dating Dt 13. However, if one could establish the nature of the similarity between Jer 23:25-27 and Dt 13:2-6, the dating of Dt 13 would be facilitated.

There are two passages in the DH (1K 18:15-40 and 2K 10:18-28) which attack prophets of other gods. Both are of little help in dating Dt 13. The former passage is controversial for it does not deal with a similar problem and does not share much common vocabulary with Dt 13:2-6. 2K 10:18-28 is a later addition to the DH and the prophets are only cursorily mentioned in a list of different followers of Baal. Neither passage offers a fixed point for dating Dt 13. One has to be content with trying to describe the historical situation that might lie behind the author’s thinking.

Dt 13:2-6 assumes that religious professionals in Israel had a deep religious disagreement about the relation or attitude to other gods. Since the opponents of the writer included religious professionals like prophets and dreamers, there is every reason to suspect that they were not merely private individuals or a popular “sect” but represented a serious religious alternative to Yahwe-alone theology or the nomists.

The possibility of whole cities falling into apostasy — at least in the mind of the author — suggests that large sections of the population were unconverted to Yahwe-alone theology, or that they resisted it. However, Seitz is pressing the evidence too far by concluding that the third law implies an origin in the Northern Kingdom since only there was the Canaanite population large enough that it was reasonable to have such a law. A situation during the exilic Judah or even after the Exile would be more probable than prior to it since Palestine as a whole was then inhabited by alien peoples after mass transportation by the Assyrians and the Babylonians. In this situation, the law could have been intended against communities that worshipped mainly other gods. Moreover, one could imagine that the perspective of the law is that of the Golah-community in Mesopotamia. From such a perspective when the exiles were planning a return, the land would have appeared alien to Yahwe-alone theology. The existence of completely non-Yahwistic cities in Judah would have been an acute problem and Dt 13:13-18 a solution, although a very harsh one.

Veijola’s (1995b, 299) main argument for the direction of influence from Jer to Dt is that the passages in Jer were born in an acute conflict situation, whereas Dt 13:2-6 is more theoretical and thus more developed. We have to wait for more evidence on the relationship of these passages, perhaps a thorough synoptic analysis of them would close the case. It is not impossible that many of the similarities in vocabulary are due to the reminiscent theme. For critique on Veijola’s view, see Otto 1998b, 280-281.

For details see chapter 4.1.

See Würthwein (1994, 132-139) for the problems behind this passage.

Seitz 1971, 146-47.
Although attempts to tie Dt 13 to another text (the VTE or Jer 14, 23, 27-29), with which one could then find a fixed point for the chapter, face problems, a late or post-exilic context is the most fitting one. This is also supported by the chapter’s generally nomistic origin. The exact historical situation would be the return of the exiles and the reestablishment of the Israelite society in Judah. Given the fantastic character of the passage as a law, it would seem that the laws were not tested in an actual situation. The author is writing of a situation he cannot yet fully comprehend because a real use would have revealed the impractical and unrealistic nature of his laws. This suggests that the basic text of the chapter was written before the exiles had begun to reestablish the society in Judah and/or that the author lived in a land distant from the one where the laws were to be implemented. That the writer had no actual situation in mind is also implied by the unspecified view he has of the followers of other gods. On the other hand, in the first and second law he demands only the inciters to be executed, but in the third law (vv. 13-16a) he implies that the whole apostate community must be annihilated. He is not fully consistent on how to deal with the apostates. Consequently, the chapter was possibly written by a person who was envisaging a future society where the supporters of Yahwe-alone theology would rule, but who could not yet fully fathom its materialization. He may have been an idealist who did not realize the evident problems of his vision. Consequently, we should read the chapter as an outburst of anger against apostates and as a vision of a possible Yahwe-alone state in the future. All this indicates that the earliest historical context of Dt 13 — and thus of the nomists who wrote it — is an exilic one when there was already some hope of a return but which had not yet materialized for the writer and his audience.

Conclusions

In contrast to the conventional view, Dt 13 appears to be a very late addition to the book. My results support the strong dtr color of the chapter suggested by Dion and Veijola. The attempts to tie the chapter to Josiah’s time or to the VTE between 672-612 BCE are not convincing. Instead of being by an early dtr writer, the basic text of the chapter was written by a nomistic editor. Later additions, identified as late and post-nomistic, were found in vv. 1, 2b-3a, 4b, 8, 10aβ-11a, 16b-18a and 19. The result that no pre-dtr, pre-nomistic or pre-exilic core was found in the chapter is significant for the search for intolerant monolatry in the DH since this chapter is one of the only intolerance passages in the legal corpus of Dt.

158 This does not preclude the possibility that the vassal or succession treaty that may lie behind the chapter could be much older. In this context, I am only referring to the chapter’s original historical context, not its possible sources’ contexts.

159 Against most, e.g., Dion (1991, 205), but with Hölscher (1923a, 193) who comments: “Dem Gesetzgeber steht hier die spätere jüdische Gemeinde vor Augen, in welcher jede Verehrung anderer Götter schlechterdings als Sakrileg verschrien ist, in welcher jemand also nur ‘heimlich’ hätte wagen können, zum Abfall von Jahwe anzustiften.” It is necessary to note here that for Hölscher the whole Dt is post-exilic.
This outcome suggests that the demand to worship one God only is a much later idea in Dt than is traditionally thought.

The writer of the basic texts used a vassal treaty or a loyalty oath as a model to formulate a law against the followers of other gods. He skillfully combined the treaty with phrases from the older laws of Deuteronomy to disguise it as a proper case law. It is most probable that the law was never applied in reality, yet it reveals something from the writer’s historical context and his visions for the future. There appears to have been a deep religious disagreement in which the supporters of Yahwe-alone theology thought it necessary to attack and annihilate their active opponents in order to gain a dominant position in Israel’s religion. The most appropriate context for Dt 13 would be in the Exile in Mesopotamia prior to the reestablishment of the Israelite society in Judah, or in the early post-exilic period when Judean society was trying to redefine and reestablish its existence in the land.


2.2. Dt 17: 2-7

כרייתא בקrobe בחודה שעריר אשית-יתיה אלحرم נטולクロ
איסאר-אשא איתש אתי-הרי בנינו-יהוד אל-להך ליגיב קירית
יולק-ינכם אלהים ארחין ושתותך-לד
ולששו אל חיות וא-לע-בענן השפם [אשר-לא-חיית]
הלששו וא-לע חיות וא-לע-בענן השפם [אשר-לא-חיית]
והגוי-ך

3. a) The ו (in הלששו) is very problematic and challenged by most other witnesses. Should one understand the ו as a conjunctive which introduces an alternative (translated as “also” or “or”) or as an explanation (א--explicativum, translated “namely”) which would imply that the other gods were defined as astral bodies? The first alternative is hardly possible because the list which the ו would introduce comes too late in the sentence. It is not possible even as a later reedition since, in that case, the redactor would probably have placed it after אלحرم נטולクロ. The second alternative is much more convenient for the understanding of the sentence, yet the looseness of the clause it introduces may still imply that it is a later addition. Many Hebrew manuscripts and most translations — noticing the difficulties in the verse — have tried to correct it by omitting the ו (V, Tms, G), yet they are most likely corrections of the difficult but original MT (lectio difficilior potior).

4. a) G omits the unnecessary יהושע. The preceding יד-הרי already implies a hearing process. It may be that the Hebrew refers to a specific judicial hearing process which had specific and fixed expressions, but, being meaningless in Greek, was shortened by the translator.

5. a-a) This section is entirely missing from the most reliable G manuscripts — some recensions have corrected the Greek text to correspond with the Hebrew — while B and T have omitted varying parts of the section. Since the translations do not have a uniform reading, and it is also not possible to reconstruct any hypothetical original reading to challenge the MT, they must be considered stylistic corrections of the perplexing MT, which repeats the יד-הריバル-שרנה ל-הימים ויד-ל-שם ב-הך וננה

Textual Notes

3. a) The ו of the MT (in הלששו) is very problematic and challenged by most other witnesses. Should one understand the ו as a conjunctive which introduces an alternative (translated as “also” or “or”) or as an explanation (א- explicativum, translated “namely”) which would imply that the other gods were defined as astral bodies? The first alternative is hardly possible because the list which the ו would introduce comes too late in the sentence. It is not possible even as a later reedition since, in that case, the redactor would probably have placed it after אלحرم נטולクロ. The second alternative is much more convenient for the understanding of the sentence, yet the looseness of the clause it introduces may still imply that it is a later addition. Many Hebrew manuscripts and most translations — noticing the difficulties in the verse — have tried to correct it by omitting the ו (V, Tms, G), yet they are most likely corrections of the difficult but original MT (lectio difficilior potior).

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1 Davidson 1896, 184 (remark 1 in §136).
2 Davidson 1896, 185-86.
2. Deuteronomy

witnesses. However, since the present MT is so disturbing, it is not possible to regard it as original. More probably the חטב נין חסן was accidentally repeated at such an early date that it is not attested by extant manuscripts.³

Introduction

Dt 17:2-7 is the second central intolerance passage inside the legal corpus of Deuteronomy. Parts of this passage are often ascribed to the earliest layers of Dt and thus to a very early stage.⁴ This view has been challenged by Gertz, who regards Dt 17:2-7 as a dtr passage that is dependent on Dt 12 and Dt 13. In comparison with Dt 13, it is made more in the form of a law. It demands the systematic execution of all worshippers of other deities.

Literary Criticism

Thematically, Dt 16:21-17:7 is very loose in its present context and does not seem to be connected to the surrounding text. Accordingly, there is a thematical cleft between Dt 16:20 and 21. Dt 16:18-20 gives directions about instating judges as well as direct instructions to the judges, whereas the following verses are laws meant to define the content of acceptable religion. A similar cleft is transparent between Dt 17:7 and 8. The latter verse starts a section that elaborates detailed instructions about the judges’ functions and about procedures in difficult cases. One may easily notice that Dt 17:8-13 is a natural continuation of 16:18-20 where the judges have just been instated. Consequently, Dt 16:18-20 and 17:8-13 were most likely originally together. This result partly corresponds with the prevalent view at the beginning of the twentieth century: It was likewise noticed that Dt 16:20 is, in content, comfortable with Dt 17:8, while both verses have little to do with the intermediate verses.⁵ Yet, it was then assumed that Dt 16:21-17:7 should be relocated to the beginning of Dt 13 because the content of Dt 16:21-17:7 relates better to Dt 12:29-13:19 than to its current context. Later, the Temple Scroll seemingly corroborated this view since it has relocated Dt 17:2-7 with Dt 13.⁶ A thematical affinity is, however, an insufficient justification for this relocation, and accordingly, later scholars have been much more skeptical about this view.⁷ Remembering the mixed or disordered structure of Deuteronomy as a law code, with its continuous topical digressions due to repeated successive additions, the Temple Scroll’s

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³ Thus, most scholars.
⁵ Gertz 1994, 43-52.
⁶ Dillmann 1886, 319; Driver 1902, 201; Budde 1916, 193-196; Steuernagel 1923a, 99-101.
relocation is quite understandable. The rearrangement of the Pentateuchal laws and regulations into compact thematical groups is typical of the Temple Scroll. The most natural explanation for the looseness of Dt 16:21-17:7 is that it is a later addition, perhaps confusing and disturbing in its current context, but not a displaced section caused by a confusion of manuscripts.

Despite the common leading topic inside Dt 16:21-17:7, there are obvious thematical and formal differences. Presented in the form of an apodictic command, Dt 17:1 is concerned about specific cultic practice, while the following verses deal with the religion in general in the casuistic form. Dt 17:2-7 connects thematically with 16:21-22, which prohibits the erection of Asherah trees and massebot ( massebot), although the change from the apodictic law form to the casuistic one disturbs this connection as well. However, regarding other passages in Dt, the attack on idols and the attack on other gods often come together.

Therefore it is safe to conclude that Dt 16:21-17:7 is a collection of laws connected vaguely by a leading theme. They all try to define the limits of proper religion, in contrast with the “secular” (ch. 15; 17:8-21; 19) and cultic (ch. 16-18) laws of the surrounding chapters.

It becomes apparent that Dt 16:21-17:1 was added to the text later than 17:2-7 when we notice how the latter was consciously meant to be right after the law about instating judges. As we will notice later on, the main purpose of Dt 17:2-7 is to bring the laws against apostasy into conformity with a proper judicial process as a correction to the lynch laws in Dt 13:2-6 and 7-12. From that perspective, putting the law right after the passage where the judges have been instated, the authors wanted to emphasize that individuals may not make the judgments without judicial authority as in Dt 13. Judges must give the final judgment. The redactor of 17:2-7 wanted to stress the connection to 16:18-20 by beginning his text with a phrase adopted from 16:18. In addition, he explicitly states in v. 5 that the Israelites must take the criminal into the gate, which is where the judges were seated.

| Dt 16:18 | שמסים ותורת המנה של כל שרה שחרר את הרעה יתאמנה נחל | 11 |
| Dt 17:2 | בי יצאו מבית מבאר לשם שחרר את הרעה יתאמנה נחל | 10 |

For example, in the Decalogue (Ex 20:3-5; Dt 5:7-9); Dt 4:15-19 (in the same order as in Dt 16:21-17:5) and also Ex 34:14-17.

However, Levinson (1997, 109, 121-122) suggests that Dt 17:2-7 is integral to its context. The topos of the passage would be “innovation it makes in legal history: the evidentiary requirement of two witnesses.” He states that “the true topos of the paragraph is not apostasy but the rules of evidence.” This is unlikely, but Levinson’s view is based on his reconstruction of the basic text that also leaves vv. 6-7a to the original writer (p. 118-121). As we will see later on, vv. 6-7a most probably stem from a later writer.

Hölscher (1923a, 197) takes Dt 17:2aβ and באתך שם רך in v. 2aa as a gloss, but there is nothing grammatical to support such view, except from the perspective of his postulation that Dt 17:2-5 was originally in Urdeuteronomium from which it naturally follows that references to a situation where the land had not yet been reached ( ממק נחל) stem from the deuteronomists. Since there are also other reasons for seeing this section as a post-dtn addition, there is no justification for this postulation.
Conceivably added by way of association to the apodictic laws in 16:19-20 and to the thematically close Dt 17:2-7, Dt 16:21-17:1 later broke up this connection. In addition to the thematical and formal connection, there may be a phonetic association between the prohibitions לַעֲבֵר בְּרִית (19) and לַעֲבֵר בְּרִית (21) which caused this insertion. Consequently, Dt 17:2ff. is a later addition to 16:18-20, whereas Dt 16:21-17:1 is a yet further addition.

Merendino clips off the expression לַעֲבֵר בְּרִית in v. 2b mainly for external reasons; Dt 17:2 is the only occurrence of the word בְּרִית inside the legal corpus of Dt, chapters 12-26. Grammatically or contentwise, there is little to support the proposed scission. On the contrary, לַעֲבֵר בְּרִית and its variants with the meaning of forsaking or ignoring the covenant are often found with the idea of following the אלֵהֶים אֲרָבִים. The theme about breaking the covenant by following other gods is very common in the DH or dtr literature. For example, Dt 29:24-25 and Jos 23:16 have a strikingly similar succession of thoughts with equivalent phrases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dt 29:24-25</th>
<th>וָּשָׂחַת לָהֶם</th>
<th>יָעַבְרֶהוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲרָבִים</th>
<th>וָּשָׂחַת לָהֶם</th>
<th>יָעַבְרֶהוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲרָבִים</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dt 17:2-3</td>
<td>יָעַבְרֶהוּ לָרָק</td>
<td>וָּשָׂחַת לָהֶם</td>
<td>יָעַבְרֶהוּ לָרָק</td>
<td>וָּשָׂחַת לָהֶם</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jos 23:16</td>
<td>וָּשָׂחַת לָהֶם</td>
<td>יָעַבְרֶהוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲרָבִים</td>
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<td>יָעַבְרֶהוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲרָבִים</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no reason to remove לַעֲבֵר בְּרִית from the basic text. The removal of Dt 17:2 arises from the attempt to safeguard an early, pre-dtr origin for Dt 17:2-7 since the word בְּרִית is a characteristic feature of a specific group of writers.

As I pointed out in the textual notes, v. 3b is awkwardly connected to the preceding sentence. Accordingly, it is almost universally attributed to a redactor. Besides grammatical difficulties, Dt 17:3 is the only passage where the ubiquitous term אֱלֹהִים אֲרָבִים and the forbidden heavenly divinities appear side by side. In spite of these compelling reasons, the originality of the sentence can be defended by looking at two related verses in Dt, namely 4:19 and 29:25. The former links the astral bodies with phrases that often appear in prohibitions not to break the first commandment. This means that at least the late-nomistic redactor who wrote Dt 4:19 paralleled the אֱלֹהִים אֲרָבִים with the astral bodies. Jer 44:15-17

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12 Hölscher (1923a, 197) also regards these verses as redactional in the text, although for other reasons, namely because they do not take the cult centralization into consideration, which one would expect v. 21 to comment on.
13 Similarly Gertz (1994, 71-72). Levinson (1997, 100-102) makes many of the same observations but regardless of that regards the passage integral to its context.
14 Merendino 1969, 173.
15 As pointed out by Perlitt (1969, 36-37) for example.
16 לא שמעו אלי והייו עלי ולא קרא עלי ושם אלי אראים.
17 Hölscher 1923a, 197; Rose 1975, 46; 1994, 293; Preuß (1982, 54) although with a question mark; Speieckermann 1982, 222 and Gertz 1994, 49. Merendino (1969, 173) regards all of 3aככ (from שָׂחַת לָהֶם) redactional, but this is improbable since שָׂחַת לָהֶם is met in other passages with the verbs and לַעֲבֵר בְּרִית and נָשָׂא often being, like in this verse, slightly loose and the last verb in the list (e.g., Dt 8:19; 11:16; 29:25; Jos 23:16; 2K 21:21).
18 לא שמעו אלי והייו עלי ולא קרא עלי ושם אלי אראים. I will deal with אָשֶׁר לָא רָצוּ יִתְיָה later on.
Intolerant Monolatry in the Deuteronomistic History

supports this conclusion since it defines the אֱלֹהִים, an astral divinity, with מַלְכַּת הַשֵּׁם.

Dt 29:25 could be used against the argument that the clause defines the gods too late in the sentence. This verse defines the gods similarly as Dt 17:13. The definition comes after the main sentence:

| Dt 29:25 | וְיִכְבַּר אֱלֹהִים אֲחֹרִים וּרְשָׁתָהוּ לָהֵם אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר לָאָדָם אֶלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר לָאָדָם. |
| Dt 17:3  | וְיִכְבַּר אֱלֹהִים אֲחֹרִים וּרְשָׁתָהוּ לָהֵם לָשָׁמָשׁ אֲלֵהֶם וֹלֵדַת אֵלָהִים אֲשֶׁר לָאָדָם אֶלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר לָאָדָם. |

Moreover, if understood as a definition of לָהֵם rather than of אֱלֹהִים אֲחֹרִים, its location is even more justified. Understood as an explanation of לָהֵם (following a ר- explicativum), v. 3b is not as obviously a secondary addition as it is usually maintained.

The final relative clause (אֲשֶׁר לָאָדָם) with its sudden first person singular is disturbing, for otherwise the passage does not refer to any speaker. Hence, one must regard the phrase as a gloss[19] that refers to another passage where Moses is the speaker. The first and probably the only alternative would be Dt 4:19 where Moses explicitly prohibits the worship of astral bodies.[20] Since the gloss is dependent on Dt 4:19, a late-nomistic passage[21] it must stem from late-nomistic or even later writers.

Regarding much of v. 2 and all of v. 3 as secondary because of their deuteronomistic vocabulary, Mayes has suggested that the basic text of Dt 17:2-7 did not contain any reference to apostasy, so that before editing, the law served only as an exemplary case to the judges introduced in Dt 16:18.[22] In this case, however, one could get the incomprehensible impression that all רֶמֶשׁ הַשֵּׁם is punishable by death without knowing what is the specific crime. Moreover, v. 4b assumes that the preceding text has just introduced a terrible crime. Otherwise expressions like נֵעָשָׁה הָהַשָּׁמֶשׁ הָהַאֲלֹהִים בֵּית הָיָה, definitely in the basic text, would be unintelligible. Besides, Mayes does not give any contextual or grammatical arguments for his reconstruction, only the argument that the phrases otherwise appear in late texts only. The aim to find an early core in the passage is manifest.

Similarly — arguing from phraseology only — Merendino maintains that v. 4 is secondary because it uses the expression בֵּית הָיָה instead of בֵּית הָאֲלֹהִים as in v. 2 and v. 7.[23] This scission is not necessary when we understand the nature of Dt 17:2-7 as a conscious attempt at creating a casuistic law by adopting phrases from other casuistic laws in Dt. For example, several laws of Dt use the phrase בֵּית הָאֲלֹהִים as an idiomatic conclusion, and therefore it was hardly possible to deviate from it. בֵּית הָאֲלֹהִים may only reveal the original perspective of the author. Besides, בֵּית הָאֲלֹהִים and בֵּית הָיָה are not contradictory enough to qualify for removing all of v. 4 from the basic text as Merendino proposes.

19. Thus also Steuernagel 1923a, 102.
20. Outside these two passages astral worship or astral divinities are not mentioned in Dt. This confirms the connections between these two passages.
21. See chapter 2.5.
22. Mayes 1979, 263, 266.
23. Merendino 1969, 173; Hölscher (1923a, 197) regards נֵעָשָׁה הָהַשָּׁמֶשׁ הָהַאֲלֹהִים as secondary.
It was shown in the textual notes that words אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה in v. 5 are so disturbingly repeated that they cannot be the original reading. One could argue that the repetition would be a ring-composition whereby a redactor added אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה in between the repeated words. However, this is impossible since the text does not define such a place. Consequently, it is more reasonable to assume that the problem is text-critical rather than literary-critical as already hinted in the textual notes section above. One must assume that אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה was accidentally repeated at such an early date that it is not attested by extant Hebrew manuscripts.

Within Dt 17:2-7, verses 6-7 form a separate unit which requires two or three witnesses for the judgment. These verses should be regarded as secondary for no less than five reasons. First, the confirmation of the accusation has already been made in verse 4. The current text-form would imply that the case had to be confirmed twice. In verse 4 the addressee is responsible for investigating the case and making the decision from the available information by his reasoning. The emphasis is on the investigation and evaluation of the evidence by a specific person who was appointed to do that. Conversely, verses 6-7 postulate a more mechanical confirmation process, assuming that two witnesses are automatically enough for a judgment. Second, the suspects have already been sentenced to death by stoning, and are supposed to be dead (דִּמְעָה in v. 5b) before the witnesses have even given the chance to give their testimony in vv. 6-7. Third, both verses 6 and 7 disturbingly repeat the death sentence that has already been described in v. 5: v. 5 דִּמְעָה; v. 6 וּמָתָה; v. 7 מַשָּׁה. Fourth, the executioner in verse 5 is the one who is addressed and who has investigated the case in v. 4, whereas, in obvious contrast, the witnesses initiate the execution in vv. 6-7. Finally, the addressee in vv. 2-5 continually participates in the case, in the investigation, in the judgment, execution etc., while vv. 6-7 are neutral towards the addressee. His participation is not assumed. As a consequence, verses 6-7 are a secondary addition, with the conceivable exception of the concluding remark בְּעֵית הַרְעָה מִקְרוּבָּךְ in v.

24 Thus, for example, Gertz 1994, 51.
26 Merendino (1969, 174) removes את שעשא את הendoza in the basic text by simply stating that “die nachdrückliche Betonung des Sachverhaltes durch den Relativsatz ... verweist auf die Predigt.” But without further arguments, this judgment is too arbitrary.
27 Possibly a judge from Dt 16:18 — or alternatively Israel — on the basis that Dt is a speech to Israel.
28 Merendino (1969, 174) argues that vv. 6 and 7 are successive additions, v. 7 being the first. The difficulty with this view is that v. 7 seems to assume v. 6 for otherwise the witnesses would not be introduced before they must unexpectedly initiate the judgment. Merendino adds that v. 6 is adopted from Dt 19:15, whereas Mayes (1979, 266) opts for the opposite direction of influence. Nonetheless, there is no objection to thinking that one single redactor is behind both Dt 19:15 and 17:6 since the requirement for witnesses represents such a thin layer in Dt and it is doubtful that two successive redactors with this purpose in mind edited Dt 17:6 and 19:5 without introducing the idea elsewhere.
7b. A similar conclusion closes many other laws of similar nature. Furthermore, the use of כֹּל הָעִבָּדָי and נֵסָרָה at the conclusion is essential for the full thrust of the original law because the use of these terms in the protasis anticipates a conclusion where the threatening evil (רָאָה) is removed from the community (מַקְרָבָה).

**Dt 17:2-5, 7b as a Case Law**

Several structural and phraseological elements connect Dt 17:2-5, 7b with the form of OT case law. The protasis, which introduces the case in vv. 2-3 and the apodosis, which states the judgment in verse 5 correspond well with the typical casuistic structure. In the protasis, the introducing particle כֹּל יְהוָה follows by the third person imperfect appears throughout the OT’s case laws. By way of contrast, mıָּצָא begins a case law only in three other cases in Dt, namely in Dt 21:1; 22:22; 24:7. Moreover, the verb is not found with the same function outside these four passages. Consequently, there must exist a dependency.

The impersonal הנשים is also common in case laws yet Dt 17:2-5, 7b is supplemented by the exceptional 재שא. In fact, a woman is otherwise specified as a violator only in laws concerning idolatry (Dt 13:7), marriage and sexual offenses (Dt 22:13-29). Supported by the evidence from Jer 44:15-25, the mentioning of women in Dt 17:2-5, 7b, as well as in Dt 13, conceivably reflects the extensive activity of women in popular or non-official practice of religion.

The taking of the convicted to the gates (אָלֶּשׁ-שִׁבְעָרָם, v. 5) emphasizes the connection to the judges, seated at the town gate (16:18), who are to participate in the investigation and the judgment (v. 4). The author consciously wanted to make this connection clear as noted in the literary criticism. In addition, the mentioning of gates ties the law to several other case laws in Dt (21:19; 22:14, 24) where the convicted are also taken to the gates for execution.

Stoning (שהל typical in Dt, although רָבָה is more common in the rest of the OT) to death is the most common method of execution for the most serious crimes: sexual and

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29 Against many. For example, Gertz (1994, 51-52) and Levinson (1997, 102-103, 107-110) attribute these verses to the original author.
30 For the sake of convenience, following Alt’s (1953, 285-332) definition, although these have been seriously challenged. Sonsino (1992, 253) presents a convenient summary of this criticism. The main flaw was that Alt did not recognize mixed forms. He rather maintained that any deviation from the basic casuistic form was “a secondary variation in which stylistic elements of other forms have crept in.” Sonsino divides the laws into laws in the conditional form and laws in the unconditional form, opening the possibility for much variation inside these forms.
31 Confer with Ex 21:18-22:16; Dt 21; 24.
33 In Dt 21:15, 18, 22; 22:13, 22, 23, 25, 28; 24:1, 5.
34 Jer 44:15 would seem to imply that only women sacrificed to other gods, whereas men only passively consented to this. It is probable that in the official and half-official local religion men were more active that women.
35 In Dt משׁרָבָה usually refers to a town, but in this context one must assume the specific meaning.
religious offenses. In Dt the general heading for laws that suggest stoning as a punishment would be crimes of disobedience since stoning is a punishment only for disobedience towards parents (21:18-21), adultery (22:23-24) and worship of other gods. In effect, the prophets often equate these three crimes when they accuse the Israelites of being disloyal to Yahwe in favor of other gods. They depict apostasy as adultery and disobedience.

In spite of obvious affinities to the form of case law, the second person singular as the addressee disturbs the law throughout. The crime occurs in the gates (of the cities) that Yahwe gives you, it is reported to you, who is also to make the investigation and the execution in your gates. The “ideal” form of case law would be that both the protasis and the apodosis are in the third person, the judgment being either in the active or the passive voice. In ANE laws outside the OT this is the case almost without exception, and even in the OT outside Dt (e.g., Ex 21-22) it is the rule, yet Dt confuses the persons several times (13; 17; 22:23-24, 26). This confusion of persons should be seen as a secondary disturbance arising from Dt being a speech of Moses to the Israelites. It seems fair to assume that the genuine casuistic laws preserved in Dt were originally analogous in form to the ones used by other Near Eastern and OT laws. When inserted in the DH or Dt, many laws lost some of their original purpose as laws and were molded to serve the aims of the whole work. Moreover, Dt has undergone more extensive reworking than other law texts of the OT and other ANE law codes. Notwithstanding, the confusion of persons is more understandable in the laws that have been inserted later, such as Dt 17:2-5, 7b than in the casuistic laws that were in Urdeuteronomium. The later dtr redactors had the whole DH in mind and were thus potentially more inclined to lose sight of the original law form. The direct form of address is typical in the parenetic sections of Dt (ch. 4-11), whereas in the laws of Dt, direct speech breaks the surface only occasionally. Since Dt 17:2-5, 7b is completely permeated by the direct form of address, one may suspect that this law was originally formed in view of the general context of the DH.

This outcome supports the result of the literary criticism that the passage is a later addition in the present context. The fact that this section shows so many points of contact with the most likely older case laws of Dt, particularly in chapters 21-22 and 24, implies that Dt 17:2-5, 7b was fabricated to correspond with a typical casuistic law. To further elucidate

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36 Westbrook 1992, 555.
37 Disobedience towards the husband.
38 Disobedience towards Yahwe.
39 This is particularly evident in the book of Hosea where the worship of other gods is compared with the adultery of Hosea’s wife (Ho 1-2); See also Ez 16:15f; Jer 2:20-25.
40 See, for example, ANE laws edited and translated by Pritchard 1969, 160-198.
41 Many of the case laws in Dt 23-25 do not acknowledge the second person singular as the addressee.
42 Alt 1953, 286-87.
43 Regardless of who is behind the passage, it was added later and cannot thus have been in Urdeuteronomium.
44 The law begins with the expression “in your midst”; the addressee is the one who hears about the case; the addressee is the one to take the violators to the gate and to execute them.
the background of Dt 17:2-5, 7b it is necessary to turn to a related passage, namely to chapter 13.

**Dt 13 and Dt 17:2-5, 7b**

Inside the legal corpus, Dt 13 and Dt 17:2-5, 7b are the only passages which specifically prohibit the worship of other gods. Indeed, similarities in vocabulary reach a point where one must assume a literary dependence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dt 13</th>
<th>Dt 17:2-7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. הבשת מרחב</td>
<td>2. הבשת מרחב</td>
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<td>2. כל הלוח מוטב</td>
<td>3. כל הלוח פועל</td>
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<td>3. כל הלוחים האחים</td>
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Unfortunately, the direction of influence is difficult to establish on the phraseological basis alone. Most connections are word-for-word identical. We have already seen that Dt 13:15 is a later addition that was influenced by Dt 17:4. Dt 13:10 and 17:7 share a clause (יד תרתי בן ישראל) but this is a later addition to both. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that Dt 13 lacks some central concepts and expressions of Dt 17:2-5: the astral bodies, the expression בירת网红 and the concept והנה. All three are met in late-nomistic passages. As many later nomistic texts show, these elements became fundamental in the late-nomistic attack on the other gods. These observations could suggest that the writer of Dt 17:2-5, 7b was using Dt 13. Further on, the laws in Dt 13 are primarily directed against inciters who lead others into apostasy instead of the more general law against all apostates in Dt 17:2-5, 7b. It is possible to regard Dt 17:2-5, 7b as a later complementary law serving the purpose of covering all cases of apostasy instead of the inciters’ only. The opposite order of insertion would be difficult because Dt 17:2-5, 7b already covers all the cases listed in Dt 13. If seen as later, Dt 13 would confuse and water down the thrust of Dt 17:2-5, 7b by bringing up contradicting directions on how to deal with different cases of apostasy, while Dt 17:2-5, 7b already covers all cases. Moreover, the communal punishment proposed by the third law of Dt 13 (in vv. 13-18) is not perfectly in line with the individual judgment of Dt 17:2-5, 7b. It is easier to think that an individual treatment represents a more developed view. Third, the

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45. The direct dependence of these passages is commonly accepted in research, but its nature is debated.
judicial process in Dt 13 is ambiguous and appears to be different from law to law. The confirmation of the accusation is done in the third law (13-18) only. The first law (2-6) does not define the method of execution, while the methods of the other two laws differ from each other (7-12: stoning; 13-18: sword). Finally, the first two laws seem to allow lynch-law and private execution, in contrast with the compulsory round of investigation for all cases in 17:2-5, 7b. All these arguments seem to suggest that Dt 17:2-5, 7b is younger than Dt 13, but one must mark that Dt 13 deals with cases of inciting to apostasy which could be regarded as an even more acute crime. In this sense, it is possible that both passages derive from the same nomistic author. In either case, the writer of Dt 17:2-5, 7b wanted to improve Dt 13 by making a more general law that would cover all cases of apostasy and that would bring all cases of apostasy to a uniform judicial process.

Central Phrases and Redaction Criticism

To determine the historical context, the thinking of the author and literary connections of Dt 17:2-5, 7b in more detail we must turn to phrases and thought patterns familiar from other passages. First, in comparison with Dt 13, the writer of Dt 17:2-5, 7b has added the thought of paying homage (ודשתהו לדם). The writer has conceivably adopted this phrase from the Decalogue:

| Dt 5:7, 9 | דַּעַת אֲדֹנָיו מִלְּאֶרֶבֶּנָא דַּעְשַׁתָּהוּ לְדָם וֹלַא הַעֹבֶדְתָּהוּ |
| Dt 17:3 | וַרְעֹבֶד אֲדֹנָיו מִלְּעַנְיוּ דְּרָשֵׁתָהוּ לְדָם |

Admittedly, similar phraseology is frequent throughout the deuteronomistic literature, but the first commandment would serve as the best candidate. It may be the source of all other uses of the word in the same sense in the DH. The meaning of וששתהל is adopted from political language, and according to Kreutzer, one concrete use of the word was in court ceremonies for paying homage to superior lords and monarchs by bowing before them. Hence, the use of this politically loaded verb in several nomistic texts that use the idea that apostasy breaks the covenant implies that covenant theology was influenced by political models and ideology.

Dt 17:2 equates ignoring or breaking (דבר) the covenant (דבריה) with breaking the first commandment of the Decalogue. This is in harmony with the thought pattern of a group

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46 So Seitz 1971, 153; Gertz (1994, 45-52); Levinson (1997, 118-123) and Otto 1998a, 47.
47 Thus Veijola (1995b, 309). He comments: “Es ist durchaus logisch und verständlich, daß er in einem späteren Zusammenhang, am Anfang der prozeßrechtlichen Bestimmungen (16,18ff), dasselbe Thema in gewandelter Form wieder aufgreift (17,2-7”).
48 Some of the central phrases and concepts (e.g., the astral bodies) are omitted here since they are discussed in more detail in the other analyses.
49 Kreutzer 1985, 53, 58.
of late texts with the exception that other texts of the pattern additionally refer to Yahweh’s wrath and expulsion from the land. With their reference to the Exile, most of these texts are usually considered exilic. A closer inspection reveals that their main aim is to interpret the past by demonstrating that Israel itself caused its expulsion from the land by worshipping other gods and thus breaking the covenant. Understood against this background, Dt 17:2-5, 7b with its similar vocabulary wants to convey that future existence is also dependent on Israel’s relation to other gods. In the form of a law, it seeks to annihilate all who threaten this future. Therefore, Dt 17:2-5, 7b represents the legal part of the program to abolish the worship of other gods and to instate Yahwe-alonism as the only acceptable form of religion.

Features of the Yahwe-alone theology may be discerned in some of the terms used. The use of words such as שער יהוה, תורגס ויהוה, and תורחוב shows that Dt 17:2-5, 7b is primarily concerned about the integrity of the Israelite society. Rose has investigated the use of term תרדעא in several texts and has come to the conclusion that it primarily refers to what disturbs the integrity of the community. For that reason it must be removed or destroyed, otherwise the existence of the community would be endangered. The use of the term in Dt’s laws reveals what is at issue. For example, the disobedient son (in Dt 21:18-21) is called תרדעא and is to be executed since he questions the most basic structure of authority that keeps the community together, the parental authority. Rüterswörden points out that תרדעא in Dt 17:2-7 primarily refers to judicial relapse. It is failure to comply with Yahwe’s השמש. In comparison with תרדעא, however, the term תורגס has a more cultic intention, meaning “repulsive” or “completely objectionable” that threatens the purity of something. The passage uses both terms. תורגס in v. 4 strengthens the claim of how disgusting the worshipper of other gods is to Yahwe. Unless he is removed, the purity of the Israelite community and Israel’s relationship with Yahwe is threatened. The use of expression שער depicts the same idea more concretely. Verse 2 introduces the factor threatening the purity and integrity of the community which is inside the gates, whereas verse 5 provides the remedy by taking the impure outside the gates. Similarly, in Jos 7:24 the sinners are specifically taken outside the camp — to the valley of Achor — for execution so that they could not defile the rest of the community.

The use of expressions further links the text with late-nomists.

52 Rose 1975, 33-38: “die Integrität Israels als Gemeinschaft ... und הדעא ist, was diese Integrität stört.”
54 For example, in Dt 14:3 it means the food that is unclean for the Israelites; Dt 17:1: sacrificing animals that have a defect; Dt 23:18-19: temple prostitutes. However, most often תורגס is used to denote the idolatrous practices that battle against the purity of the Yahwe cult, e.g., Dt 17:25-26; 12:13; 13:14.
55 These expressions are used in the late-nomistic Dt 4:19, 23; 29:25-26; Jos 23:16.
The Historical Context of Dt 17:2-5, 7b

Since the dtr writers did not usually give direct references to their own time, it is difficult to determine the exact historical context of Dt 17:2-5, 7b. The questions and problems that the writers were facing were situated in the time of Moses in order to give their program more authority and credibility. However, the late or post-exilic period gives the passage a credible context. The writer of Dt 17:2-5, 7b is already making concrete plans for the reestablishment of the Judean society. Judging from its maturity as a law, Dt 17:2-5, 7b was possibly meant to be put into actual judicial use to be implemented in the new state as a general regulation. It is unclear how much the law was in actual use. I will return to this question with the historical reconstruction of the whole intolerant monolatry later on. In any case, with Dt 17:2-7 the author is envisaging a completely homogeneous Yahwe-alone state which tolerates no worshippers of other gods. The law is meant to remove systematically all who endanger the homogeneity of this state. The law also assumes that the legal authorities and the establishment were sympathetic for the Yahwe-alone theology. Opponents would only be a small minority who could be fought by legal means.

Conclusions

The most important result of this analysis was that Dt 17:2-5, 7b is a later addition to its present context (Dt 16:18-20 and Dt 17:8ff.) and that its basic text, the earliest stratum, uses phraseology and vocabulary that otherwise appears in late-nomistic texts. It seems very likely that the passage is late-nomistic. The conclusion that this passage also derives from a relatively late period in Dt’s development is of considerable importance for the origin of intolerant conceptions in Israel’s history. The legal corpus of Dt, chapters 12-26, did not contain passages that attacked other gods before the nomists.

Dt 17:2-5, 7b was written with the intention of making a law that would be applicable for all cases of apostasy and that would present a proper judicial process to judge the malefactors. Adopting much of the terminology and the judicial character from other casuistic laws of Dt, the writer of Dt 17:2-5, 7b wanted to make a general law against all worshippers of other gods. In this sense Dt 17:2-5, 7b is broader in its applicability to an actual judicial use. Dt 17:2-5, 7b was later expanded with a further judicial correction in vv. 6-7a, demanding the hearing of witnesses in each legal case.

Dt 17:2-5, 7b aims at creating a homogeneous society that does not tolerate worshippers of other gods. One may worship and pay devotion only to Yahwe. All who stray must be removed and annihilated. The most appropriate historical context for Dt 17:2-5, 7b is in the reestablishment of the state in Judah when it was necessary to define who was to be included in the new state. With Dt 17:2-5, 7b the nomists sought to ensure that the society would be a purely Yahwistic where worshippers of other gods do not prosper.
2.3. The First Commandment

Introduction

The first commandment of the Decalogue (in Ex 20:3, 5-6a; Dt 5:7, 9-10a) is central for the investigation: Phrases and vocabulary therein recur throughout dtr passages that attack other gods. Particularly common are "አላሹስ እስከ ከከፈተስ ከሥር" and "የትንሦን ከሥር". It may be assumed that the first commandment forms the legal basis for the attack on other gods. It would have influenced many passages with similar phrases and vocabulary, although it is not necessarily the oldest intolerance passage in the DH. Nevertheless, many scholars attribute the first commandment to the early stages of the dtn/dtr tradition. For example, Albertz accredits it to the dtn tradition. Hossfeld ascribes the formulation of the whole Decalogue to an early-dtr author, but he further suggests that the laws had an existence prior to the Decalogue. This corresponds to the traditional view, according to which, the final formulation of the Decalogue stems from circles close to the dtn/dtr group, while much of the content derives from an earlier period. Steuernagel argues that the Decalogue is thoroughly dependent on Dt as a whole. According to Veijola, the Decalogue in Dt was added by a dtr editor, possibly during the late-Exile. He regards the Ex Decalogue to be an earlier text, but a later addition in its context as well.

Meaning

The first commandment (thus consisting of Ex 20:3, 5-6a / Dt 5:7, 9-10a) is plainly and explicitly intolerant of other gods: One may not have other gods. Although one could

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1. The prohibition against making images in Ex 20:4 and Dt 5:8 has been shown to be a later addition, probably stemming from late-dtr nomistic editors. Thus, for example, Levin 1985b, 170 and Veijola 1993, 70. It will thus not be discussed in this investigation.
3. Hossfeld 1982, 281-283. According to him, the earlier forms of the commands in the Decalogue are to be sought from the Privilegrecht Ex 34:12-26 and in the case of the first commandment, for example, in verses like Ex 22:19.
4. Holzinger (1900, 69): strongly dtn'istisch, but "Umbildung einer recht alten Grundlage"; von Rad (1983, 40): older than Dt; Rose (1994, 422): the Decalogue is older than the Exile, but not before the Exile was there essential interest in it. He further suggests that the roots of the first commandment lie in the "graue Vorzeit Israels" (423).
5. Steuernagel 1900, 21. Accordingly, he suggests that the Decalogue stems from the followers of D.
7. However, Loretz (1994a, 495-507) argues that the first commandment was originally aimed at ancestral gods and their statues. On the basis of colometry he constructs the original prohibition:
suggest that the prohibition in some way limits the prohibition in some way. The second part of the command (Ex 20:5 / Dt 5:9) reveals the intention of the first part as well: ואָנָּתַעֲבוּ and לא תֹּתֵשׁ הוהי explicitly and generally prohibit the worship of other gods. Accordingly, the first part should be understood as a general prohibition against having any gods in one's life. Moreover, the jealousy or zeal of Yahwe is best understood in relation to other gods: One of His characteristics is that He is intolerant or zealous towards them: The use of this word not only implies the existence of other gods but also that Yahwe does not accept them in the lives of the Israelites.

**Argumentation**

Because of its centrality, alleged antiquity and explicit intolerance, the exact dating and redactional connections would be crucial to determine. Unfortunately, the first commandment is connected to several major questions which cannot be solved in this context in any great detail: The relation of the first commandment to the rest of the Decalogue; The dating of the whole Decalogue; The position of the Decalogue in the OT; The relation of the two Decalogues (in Ex and in Dt) to each other. For these questions, only a general argumentation can be presented in the following.

The question about which version of the Decalogue — the one in Ex or Dt — is original has played a major role in research. Traditionally, the Exodus version has been.

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According to him, all the rest (לא יוהי לכל ויאָנָּתַעֲבוּ) would be a later development that broke the colometric rules (they break the parallelism and the number of consonants is exceeded by the later alleged development). In my view, this reconstruction is already quite speculative. In addition to colometry, other arguments are needed for such a reconstruction.

8 could be understood so that the physical presence of other gods is forbidden (על= "in/against my face") or it could be understood as referring to the primacy of gods (you shall not have any gods before me, that is, I should be your first god). For different possibilities of interpretation see Simian-Yofre (1989, 629-659). He suggests that the use of על-פי in the first commandment should be interpreted: “in meiner Gegenwart” and “als meine Rivalen”.

9 The root אִנָּתַע (in Hebrew the verb is used in the pi.) means to be jealous, envious or zealous.

10 The OT uses the adjective אִנָּתַע only in few passages (Ex 20:5; 34:14; Dt 4:24; 5:9; 6:15; Jos 24:19) and they always refer to Yahwe, the context being idolatry or the worship of other gods (only in Nah 1:2 it could be suggested that the adjective is not used in relation to other gods or idolatry). It is reasonable to assume that these passages are dependent on the first commandment. The most common uses of the verb אִנָּתַע are: 1) jealousy or envy towards other persons 2) zeal or anger 3) the combination of both, that is, jealous anger. Consequently, the most logical interpretation for the adjective in the first commandment and in passages dependent on it is that Yahwe is jealously angered by the Israelites if they worship other gods: jealousy towards the other gods and anger towards the Israelites. The use of the word without the aspect of jealousy in this context would be unmotivated. The theme of jealousy in the relationship between Yahwe and Israel corresponds well with the idea of Israel being Yahwe’s pride as presented in several prophetic books (especially in Jeremiah and Ezekiel). On the use of אִנָּתַע in the Decalogue similarly Reuter 1993, 53, 58-59.
regarded as earlier,\textsuperscript{11} but Hossfeld and many following him have argued for the primacy of the Dt version.\textsuperscript{12} The fact that the Decalogue is a later addition to both Ex and Dt has complicated argumentation: The Decalogue is at home neither in Ex nor Dt. Therefore the problem has been approached with synoptic comparison of the two versions of the Decalogue text itself. This approach has not brought consensus to scholarship; the priority of both versions have been argued by synoptic comparison.\textsuperscript{13} It seems that the direction of influence has gone in both directions during the development of the text, and perhaps even several times over. In addition, both versions have later been edited in an independent direction.\textsuperscript{14} Both these factors make argumentation on the basis of synoptic comparison hazardous. In spite of this state of affairs, the synoptic comparison has been the main source of argumentation.\textsuperscript{15} However, I deem that the frames surrounding the Decalogue may better indicate primacy.\textsuperscript{16} It can be shown that the frames in Ex (ch. 19 and 20:18-21) precede the addition of the Decalogue.\textsuperscript{17} The removal of the Decalogue does not disturb the development of the narrative in Ex 19-20. The Yahwe-theophany of Ex 19 is most naturally continued in Ex 20:18-20,\textsuperscript{18} and appears to have been originally intended as an introduction to the Book of the Covenant in Ex 21-23.

In Dt, however, the frames (Dt 5:2-4\textsuperscript{a}, 22)\textsuperscript{19} clearly belong to the same redactional layer as the Decalogue. They would make no sense without the Decalogue, and the Decalogue would be in a very awkward position without any frames.\textsuperscript{20} Combined with the

\textsuperscript{11}For example, Bertholet 1899, 22 and Driver 1902, 83-88 but also newer research: Levin 1985b, 165-174; Achenbach 1991, 41-46; Veijola 1993, 14, 61; Nielsen 1995, 72-73.

\textsuperscript{12}Hossfeld 1982, 161-162; Rose 1994, 421-422.

\textsuperscript{13}See e.g., Veijola 1993, 38-39.


\textsuperscript{15}This is unfortunately the case in many central texts. They receive a great amount of attention from later editors and commentators.

\textsuperscript{16}Especially Hossfeld 1982, whose synoptic analysis is very extensive and detailed.

\textsuperscript{17}For example, in the analysis of Hossfeld (1982, 161-163) the frames are taken into consideration after the direction of influence has already been determined and decided by his comprehensive synoptic analysis on the Decalogue itself.

\textsuperscript{18}This observation is widely made and accepted in research.

\textsuperscript{19}For more detailed argumentation see among others Perlitt 1969, 90-92.

\textsuperscript{20}There are several opinions on the question of which verses belong to the first layer. Some scholars remove vv. 2-3 as later, but v. 4 is usually accepted as original, that is, belonging to the same layer as the Decalogue. Dt 5:5 (except לְהָיָה) is probably a further addition since it contradicts v. 4. According to v. 4, Yahwe spoke directly with Israel, but, according to v. 5, Moses functioned as an intermediary. Verse 5 also breaks the connection between v. 4 and לְהָיָה, which now appears in an awkward position. Accordingly, v. 5 is usually seen as a later addition. Thus, for example, Bertholet 1899, 21; Steuernagel 1900, 21 and Puukko 1910, 162. Moreover, Nielsen (1995, 72) ascribes vv. 2, 4 and 22 to the original frames. Achenbach (1991, 31-34) regards v. 5 as secondary, and vv. 2-4 as part of the Grundtext. According to Brekelmans (1985, 165), only v. 4 is the proper introduction to the Decalogue. In addition to a Numeruswechsel, he sees a thematical change between vv. 2-3 and 4.

\textsuperscript{21}Some of the frames can be removed as later additions (at least v. 5 and 23ff.), but without any frames the position of the Decalogue in Dt is incomprehensible. All this does not exclude the
fact that the frames in both Ex and Dt deal with the same theme, namely Yahwe-theophany, thus implying dependence. The most logical conclusion is that the Decalogue was connected to the Yahwe-theophany in Ex. In other words, the idea that the ten commandments were given in a Yahwe-theophany in the midst of wonders on a mountain must be a product of Ex. In the opposite case, that is, if the connection was made in Dt, one would have to assume that the frames of the Decalogue in Dt were first influenced by the general setting of the Covenant Code in Ex, and that only later the Decalogue itself was inserted into the position from where its general setting was adopted in the first place. Although not completely impossible, this alternative would assume a too complicated and thus improbable development. It is reasonable to assume that the connection to Yahwe-theophany was made in Ex, and then influenced by Ex, Dt presents a shortened and slightly altered form of the theophany. This would mean that the Dt version of the Decalogue cannot be earlier than that of Ex.

Two further points connect the Decalogue with Ex. First, the beginning of the Decalogue, the prologue and the first two commandments are presented as Yahwe’s speech to Israel. Yahwe’s direct speech to Israel is a feature known from parts of the Book of the Covenant in Ex 21-23, whereas Dt is presented as Moses’s speech to Israel. The setting of the law-giving in Ex assumes that Yahwe speaks to Moses, which fits well with the beginning of the Decalogue. Secondly, the nature of the Dt version as a quotation of a past event assumes that another version of the Decalogue precedes it. The frames of the Dt version (5:4, רַבּ in v. 5 and v. 22) in particular, which as noted above most likely belong to the same redactional layer as the Decalogue itself, make it clear that the giving of the Decalogue has occurred in the past and what now follows is a repetition and quotation of that. Without the Ex version, the retrospective attitude of these frames in Dt is incomprehensible. This observation corroborates the idea that the Dt version of the Decalogue cannot have preceded or predated the Ex version.

possibility that the Decalogue may have existed without the frames outside Dt, but at least in Dt the Decalogue most probably always had at least some of the frames.

22 Yahwe speaking from the midst of fire with great tumults and wonders.

23 It is also possible that the idea of Yahwe-theophany is a product of the Ex law collection where it functioned as the frames, and that this idea was then adopted to Dt before the Decalogue. Then later, when the Decalogues were added to the front of both collections, the theme became more attached to the Decalogue than to the original context. This development seems to me too complex as well. Moreover, it does not explain why the theophany tradition is so strongly connected to the giving of the Decalogue, for at least in the mind of the dtr writer in Dt, it is specifically the Decalogue that is given in a Yahwe-theophany at the mountain (see Dt 5:4 and chapters 9-10).

24 The speech of Yahwe extends to the first two commandments only. In the rest of the commandments the speaker is switched to a human, for the references to Yahwe are now in the 3.p.sg. (in the 3-5. commandments). This change in person shows that the Decalogue is not homogeneous (see below).

25 For example, Ex 20:24-26 (it is questionable whether this passage was part of the CC before the addition of Decalogue); 21:14; 22:22-24, 26, 30; 23:14-15, 18, 20-24, 27-33.

26 Achenbach (1991, 36) notes: “Die Verfasser von Dtn. 5 stellen ihn (Dekalog) als Zitat vor, wodurch sogleich doch wohl ausgeschlossen ist, daß Dtn. 5 selbst seinen literarischen Entstehungsort bildet.”
However, phrases and vocabulary clearly connect parts of the Decalogue, especially the prologue and the first commandment, with Dt and with the dtn/dtr tradition, while in Ex the Decalogue is alien. This factor would imply that the Decalogue is more at home in Dt than in Ex. The Decalogue has had a considerable impact on the later development of Dt and the DH, but only marginal on Ex.

Consequently, the Decalogue seems to be connected to Ex in some points and to Dt in others. A possible explanation for this apparent ambiguity is that the Decalogue was intended to be placed into both positions from the beginning. The Decalogue would have been composed in view of the setting and context in Ex, but with the composition of Dt in mind. This would imply that one single author is behind both versions of the Decalogue, with which he wanted to bind the Exodus-event to the law of Dt. The theory of one author best explains the bipartite origin of the Decalogue. There is no compelling reason to attribute the two versions to two different writers, which seems to be assumed outright in current research. The tendency to prefer one version over the other arises from the differences between the two versions. However, exact uniformity cannot be expected from one writer. In fact, if it could be established that the same writer or editor is also behind the compilation and final formulation of the Decalogue, it would be even natural to assume a certain freedom and liberty in his attitude towards the text. On the other hand, from a copyist who is quoting an already existing document, especially when it is regarded as central and holy, one expects more accuracy. The main difference between the two versions lies in the fourth commandment concerning the observance of the Sabbath, but it has been shown that this commandment is a late addition to both Ex and Dt, which means that it should be disregarded for the purposes of determining primacy. As for the other differences between the two versions, most may be regarded as later developments (corrections, additions and comments) with no bearing on the question of primacy. The theory of one writer is

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27 The dtn/dtr language of the Decalogue has been widely acknowledged. So, for example, Steuernagel 1900, 21; Holzinger 1900, 69 and Veijola 1993, 62-64, 77, 89. I will come to the specific vocabulary later on.

28 Among many others Levin (1985b, 165-174) who discusses only the possibility of one preceding the other.

29 It is usually assumed that the later editors were very conservative towards the older text. They would have been reluctant to make any alterations to it. As noted by Levin (1985b, 165) this is especially true of the Decalogue which was of great importance. However, as the fourth and the tenth commandments show, considerable alterations were not completely shunned by the editors. One must accept that even the text of the Decalogue was not untouchable by relatively late editors.

30 For example, Veijola 1993, 117-132. Both versions have developed the commandment in considerably different directions. The commandment is justified by very different motifs.

31 Quantitatively, the main bulk of the differences is formed by additions and omissions of the conjunction. Most of them are less important for the question of primacy — against Hossfeld (1982, 161-163) who bases his study largely on these conjunctions — and may have occurred at any stage. The addition of הָיוָתָהוּ in Dt 5:16 is a typical addition in Dt and is most likely a later development. The same could be said of יִשָׂרָאֵל הָיוָתָהוּ in the same verse. It is also quite possible that the original writer added this comment to one version and not to the other. The prolonging of days and well-being in the country are common blessings in Dt and often go hand in hand. The difference between閃 and gives little to determine primacy. Levin (1985b, 171) argues that
supported by a similar location of the Decalogue in both books. Both were placed at the beginning of a central law code: In Ex before the Covenant Code and in Dt at the beginning of the whole Dt law. One may see a similar purpose behind both additions. It was to become a list of the most important laws. Consequently, I assume that both versions stem from the same hand which was influenced by the language of Dt, but adopted the general setting of Yahwe-theophany and the direct speech of Yahwe from Ex. The Decalogue may then be regarded as an attempt to tie the laws of Ex and Dt closer together.

It has proven to be difficult to identify and date the author behind the Decalogue. Various alternatives have been offered for both versions. Before delving deeper into this question, it should be discussed whether the Decalogue had a history prior to its addition to its present location. In the preceding discussion it was already noted that parts of the Decalogue are dependent on the contexts into which they were added. This observation implies that at least parts of the Decalogue (particularly the prologue and the first commandment) were formulated in view of Ex and Dt. This may connote that these parts are not older than the addition of the Decalogue in Ex and Dt. This is most likely true in the case of the prologue (Ex 20:2; Dt 5:6), but many scholars suggest that the first commandment

the use of שָׁורֵא in Ex shows primacy, since the word is used in Jer 7:9 which is, according to his reconstruction, the source of the Decalogues (p. 170). In my view this reconstruction of the development seems rather unlikely. The most substantial difference between the original Decalogue versions is in the last commandment. It is often suggested that Dt has made the original Ex commandment into two commandments (among many others Levin 1985b, 168-169). However, Schumec (1984, 106) and Veijola (1993, 220) have shown that the Ex version originally consisted of two short prohibitions: לא שותה בְּתָ יָד וּלְאָרֶץ (which was then switched to לא שותה בְּתָ יָד וּלְאָרֶץ and לא תָּשֹׁת מִמְּעֵן וְלָא תְּשִׁיֵּת אֶלְּאֵין in Dt. In other words, the verb in one prohibition was changed into another with a very similar intention, the order of the commandments was changed and the series was added (thus Veijola 1993, 220-221). On the other hand, Hossfeld (1982, 87-127) has argued for the opposite direction of development. According to him, the original Dt version contained two prohibitions which were then melted into one in the Ex version. Although there are some weaknesses in his argumentation, the general idea that two prohibitions of Dt were made into one on the basis of close similarity is not impossible. It only necessitates that one is to regard the wife as part of the goods pertaining to a בֵּית. Without trying to judge between these two very possible alternatives, it appears that the primacy of both Ex and Dt versions of the commandment may be reasonably defended, and there is no obvious solution. However, there is amazingly little discussion (concerning this commandment as well as the whole Decalogue) on the possibility of simultaneous emergence. The last commandment (and the forth commandment in particular) shows that the writer(s) took considerable freedom to arrange the material according to his purposes (cf. Levin 1985b, 165, who states that “Ein kanonischer Text ist seinem Wesen nach untastbar ... Dieser für das ganze Alte Testament gültige Grundsatz gilt für einen Text von der Würde des Dekalogs um so mehr.”) He continues that because of this principle, the shortest version is usually original because it was more acceptable to add comments than to change or omit material). In other words, one writer has changed and arranged the last commandment in any case, regardless of which version is original. All the arguments in favor of either the Ex or Dt version of the last commandment assume the principle that either one is original, but there also is the possibility that a later editor changed either version of the last commandment. This alternative is at least as possible as to attribute priority to one over the other. There is no compelling reason not to regard the original Decalogue in both books as a simultaneous addition.
was adopted from another context.\footnote{One often offers Ex 34:14, but this has proven to be improbable, see chapter 3.3.} Admittedly this possibility does exist, but the fact that it is completely presented as Yahwe’s speech to Israel indicates at least a complete reworking\footnote{It is difficult to see another context where such a command had been written in the form of Yahwe’s direct speech to Israel. If one assumed that such a context did exist, one would have to assume that the direct speech of Yahwe to Israel was adopted from this commandment (and the prologue) to the rest of the CC. In view of literary-critical observations on the relationship between the Decalogue and the CC, this alternative is unlikely. The Decalogue is clearly a late addition between Ex 19 and 20:18-20. The third alternative — that the first commandment and the CC both acknowledged Yahwe’s direct speech to Israel — is also rather unlikely regarding the rarity of this concept. Consequently, it is highly probable that the first commandment is formulated for Ex and Dt or that it was completely reworked from its original.} However, if the first commandment was completely reworked from an original, why did the author leave the other commandments untouched? Besides the first two commandments, all commandments are not presented as Yahwe’s speech to Israel, but rather as a man’s speech to Israel or to an individual. It stands to reason that the rest of the commandments were adopted from an earlier context, but the first commandment was created by the author who combined the Decalogue and who also added it to Ex and Dt. The same writer is also behind the prologue.

Taking the result of the previous paragraph, one may now try to identify the author of the prologue and the first commandment. The הבטחנה אלוהים of the prologue is generally attributed to dtu/dtr writers and is met particularly in Dt where it appears 213 times.\footnote{As noted above, the second commandment is a later addition and its form of speech is adopted from the first commandment and the prologue} Similarly, the phrase שמור והשחזר מארץ מברכים is common in Dt, but cannot be accredited to any particular writer. The term הבטחנה ובכרות designating Egypt is known outside the Decalogue only in Dt and in literature dependent on it.\footnote{García López 1978, 41; Veijola 1993, 63.} The phraseology in the prologue is thus at home in Dt. Turning to the first commandment, the verbs השכירה וכרז when referring to the worship of other gods, as well as the common אלוהים שהרמא are very typical terms in the dtr attack on other gods. In the previous chapters we have seen that the nomists in particular are fond of this vocabulary.\footnote{As noted by Veijola 1993, 63.} The הבטחנה אלוהים is met in two passages that can be identified as nomistic, both in Dt (4:24 and 6:14), but they are most likely dependent on the Decalogue. The same can be said of Ex 34:14.\footnote{See chapter 3.3.} The הבטחנה אלוהים is thus of little help in identifying the writer. The theme of loving and hating Yahwe is a nomistic theme (Ex 20:5-6; Dt 5:9-10), but this idea is met in a comment that may be a later addition to the original commandment (Ex 20:5b-6 and Dt 5:9b-10). At least Ex 20:5b-6 and Dt 5:9b-10 are already commenting on the commandment rather than being part of the commandment itself. In a way reminiscent of the parenetic sections of Dt, Ex 20:5b-6 and Dt 5:9b-10 rather attempt to exhort the Israelites to obey the first commandment. On the other hand, if Ex 20:5b-6 and Dt 5:9b-10 were written by the original author of the first commandment the nomistic origin of the first commandment would be promoted. Otherwise vocabulary used in the first commandment
does not bring any conclusive evidence. There are some expressions primarily used by the nomists (קדש שבת, אלהים, עבודה זרה) but definite identification is difficult since it would be easy to argue that the nomistic use of these expressions is dependent on the first commandment. In other words, the first commandment may be earlier than all the nomistic passages that are dependent on it. On the other hand, it is peculiar that the first commandment has influenced only late writers. As seen in the other analyses, passages which use the vocabulary or otherwise depend on the first commandment may be regarded as nomistic or later. If the first commandment had been inserted into Dt much earlier than the nomists, one would expect some pre-nomistic passages, at least in Dt, to refer to it. This not being the case, one may suspect that the first commandment and thus the whole Decalogue is a late comer to Dt. This suggestion is favored by the fact that the covenant at Horeb is not acknowledged in Dt before its late layers. Further on, the author behind the first commandment was evidently preoccupied with attacking other gods, for he formulated the whole commandment and placed it at the very beginning of the Decalogue. Since the attack on other gods has already proven to be a particular concern of the nomists, the connection between this group of writers and the Decalogue is further substantiated.

Conclusion

The phraseology and the preoccupation with the issue of other gods suggest that the first commandment derives from the nomists. A small reservation to this conclusion has to be made, as there is the possibility that an individual author writing prior to any of the known nomists is behind the Decalogue. This is not probable, however. I have also argued that the first commandment is a product dependent on Ex and Dt, both at the same time. The author was probably familiar with Ex and Dt. This fact already implies that the Decalogue as a collection of important commands delivered by Moses is a late product, although it is also

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38 And thus the whole Decalogue following the above argumentation.
39 This is tied to the question whether Dt was already included in the DH from the beginning, or was it inserted later? If Dt was inserted to DH at a late stage, it is understandable that the rest of the original DH does not refer to the first commandment. Therefore, the argument presented above is applicable to Dt alone, unless one accepts that the history writer knew Dt.
40 For example, in Dt 4. See Perlitt 1969, 81. As was observed above, the frames of the Decalogue, where the idea of the covenant at Horeb appears, is tied with the Decalogue itself. Therefore, it is probable that the idea of the covenant at Horeb came into Dt with the insertion of the Decalogue.
probable that some of the individual commands therein are ancient. Nevertheless, the first commandment most likely did not derive from a primitive form from which it would have been adopted to the Decalogue. It was created for the present contexts by the nomists. Consequently, the first commandment cannot be used as proof for intolerant Yahwism in Israel’s pre-exilic religion. It rather witnesses to the importance the theme had in nomistic circles.
2.4. Shema Israel

Introduction

Shema Israel can be characterized as one of the most central texts in Israel’s religion. Inside Deuteronomy the confession is usually ascribed to the earliest layer(s) of the book. It is often implied that it already belonged to the sources of Urdeuteronomium. Although an early dating (pre-dtn/dtn) is commonly accepted in research, the interpretation, proper translation and meaning are widely debated. The main interpretations of the Shema are monolatric, monoyahwistic, and variations of both.

Literary Criticism

Many scholars locate the Shema to the beginning of Urdeuteronomium, perhaps preceded by some verses like Dt 5:1. Moreover, it is presumed that it, possibly including some comments or interpretations in the following verses, was immediately followed by the centralization law in Dt 12. The Shema and the centralization laws would then form an integral unit. This view is tied with the question, how do we understand the whole Shema. Is there a connection in content between the Shema and the centralization of the cult? At any rate, I will follow view that the Shema was immediately followed by Dt 12. The preamble to the laws in Dt 6-11 would then be a later development. As for the immediate context of Dt 6:4, it has been convincingly demonstrated by Veijola that Dt 6:4 was originally continued in

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2 So Puukko 1910, 149, 289; Hölscher 1922, 170; Preuß 1982, 49; Veijola 1992a, 370; for other views see Preuß 1982, 100-101.
3 Preuß 1982, 49-51; for Dt 7-11 see Preuß 1982, 100-103. Many of these chapters can be shown to have a strong dtr flavor, with many demonstrably post-dtr additions. However, there is very little consensus in Dt research as to the status of these chapters. That the Shema was immediately followed by the centralization law in Dt 12 is supported by Veijola 1992a, 370. According to Levin (1996, 117-118), the Shema formed the introduction to the following preamble to the laws in Dt 6-11, although originally, Dt 6:4-5 was followed by Dt 12.
4 Some scholars reject this view. For example, approaching and interpreting the Shema from the perspective of West-Semitic cult traditions, Loretz (1997, 80-81) suggests that the connection between the confession and the centralization laws is not a very strong one.
5 It is also possible that the Shema was one of the earliest additions to Dt. At least much of the preamble to the laws in chapters 6-11 seem to depend on the Shema. Thus, for example, Levin 1996, 117-118. In addition to the Shema, this section is also dependent on the Decalogue, particularly its first commandment. Implicit references to the first commandment are frequent.
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v. 6-9, whereas v. 5 would have been later added by a late deuteronomist with nomistic interests. Hence, Dt 6:4, 6-9* was at some stage construed as a unit. In addition, it has been shown that the reference to a historical setting (ארש אוכל מדדリアル) in v. 6 is a later addition which aims at directing attention to the law that will be given later in Dt.

Although verses 4, 6-9* possibly already formed a compact unit in Urdeuteronomium, there are reasons to believe that v. 4b was originally independent and that it is earlier than the rest of the passage. In other words, it would belong to the sources of Dt. First, v. 4b is discussed in vv. 6-9 as a citation or a text of different status. Like a commentary or explanation, vv. 6-9 look back and give instructions on how to deal with this text. Secondly, there is a change in person from v. 4a to v. 4b and from v. 4b to v. 6. Deviating from the rest of Dt 6, v. 4b uses the 1. person plural. The immediate context is Moses’s direct speech to Israel, whereas in the Shema, Israel confesses its faith to Yahwe in the first person plural. Thirdly, in connection with the previous point, the plural form appears to cause some friction between what the original intention of v. 4b was and what the writer of vv. 6-9 meant. The latter writer intends the confession to be used at home as a personal confession, but this idea does not fit without problems to the plural form which rather assumes a communal setting as its background. Consequently, it seems probable that v. 4b had a history prior to its insertion in Dt. Unlike the first commandment, Dt 6:4 was not formulated for Dt. The writer of vv. 6-9 applied the Shema to a new context, slightly changing its intent.

Interpretation

If its origin independent of the final context in Dt is accepted, the interpretation of Dt 6:4b becomes problematic and speculative. We possess little information about the original use and historical setting of this credo. Argumentation is limited to the very words יְהֹוָה אֲלֹהֵינוּ יְהֹוָה אָבָד. To some extent and with reservation the immediate context in Dt 6:4a, 6-9 may be used as additional evidence to unearth the original intention and historical context. I will begin with v. 4b taken alone.

יְהֹוָה אֲלֹהֵינוּ יְהֹוָה אָבָד has been interpreted and translated in several ways. The problems center around two questions. First, is יְהֹוָה אֲלֹהֵינוּ יְהֹוָה אָבָד to be understood as in apposition to יְהֹוָה, or should the credo be seen as two nominal sentences where יְהֹוָה אֲלֹהֵינוּ would form

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7So, for example, Puukko 1910, 150 and Veijola 1992a, 372-375.
8In the whole Dt, 1. person plural is common only in chapters 1-3.
9Compare, for example, with v. 7 which exhorts the use of the confession when going to bed or when rising up. The singular would fit much better into this context.
10Also Achenbach (1991, 84) has suggested that v. 4b has an independent origin; similarly, Lorentz (1997, 82-83) states that “Dtn 6, 4b ist höchstwahrscheinlich als bereits fertige oder adaptierte Formel in das Deuteronomium übernommen worden und in seiner Urform wohl außerhalb der dtn/dtr Bewegung(en) entstanden.”
one, and יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים the other? The second question is the translation and meaning of the word אֵל. In what way is Yahwe one or single?

Traditionally, and thus reflected in most translations, the Shema is understood as one sentence, יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים being in apposition to יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים. However, a good case has been presented for understanding יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים as two nominal sentences. For example, Veijola argues the case as follows: If there is only one sentence, the repetition of יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים is ungrounded. Two nominal sentences form a parallelism also corresponding to the rules of colometry. Contentwise, the two parallel parts of the credo support each other. On the basis of the Hebrew text alone this interpretation would appear to be well founded. Yet, the main problem of this view lies in the early non-Semitic translations which understand the sentence as one, יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים then being in apposition. Similarly Vulgate: Dominus Deus noster Dominus unus est. From the Greek translation one may deduce that, at least in the third century BCE, the Jewish tradition behind the translation understood the Shema not as two nominal sentences, but as one.

Objections could be raised for the other arguments as well. As for the repetition of יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים, one should observe that in a confessional formula, a repetition is not necessarily a disturbing factor. Quite the contrary, a repetition might add more strength to a confession. Assuming that the Shema was one sentence, without the repetition the confession would be rather blunt: יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים. The same objection could be raised for the argument from colometry and parallelism: The rules of prose or poetry do not necessarily apply to a confessional formula.

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11 For example, KJV: “The Lord our God is one Lord.” The apposition model is supported by several scholars, e.g., Lohfink 1973, 213-214; Rose 1975, 136; Braulik 1985, 119.
13 Except if the translation was “Yahwe, our god, is one Yahwe only”, which he rejects on grounds that the problem of Yahwe’s many representations does not surface in later OT literature at all.
14 Veijola 1992b, 529-531.
15 Semitic translations (Syriac and Aramaic) are of little help, for they have preserved the same grammatical construction. For example, Targum Onkelos has יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים. However, many of the comments in the Targums reveal that they understood the Shema in the monotheistic (or intolerant monolatric) sense. Taken with Mk 12:28-29, 32, it seems reasonable to assume that later Judaism understood the Shema as a monotheistic confession or a confession that excluded other gods. This is, however, not a strong argument for the original meaning because the surrounding text in Dt guides one to read the Shema in this way.
16 One could suggest that tradition will not easily change the understanding of a sentence when it is one of the most central in the OT.
17 According to Veijola (1992b, 531), “Vers 4b mutet wie eine hymnische Bekenntnissaussage an, die streng nach den Prinzipien der Kolometrie … aus zweigleichmäßig aufgebauten Hälften mit der Trennung in der Mitte besteht.” Similarly Loretz (1997, 66-67): “Für das Verständnis von Dtn 6, 4b ist entscheidend, daß eine nach den Gesetzen des parallelismus membrorum formulierte Bekenntnissaussage oder Akklamation vorliegt, die aus zwei gleichmäßig aufgebauten Hälften besteht.” However, if we investigate other similar confessional formulae in the OT, they — often being too short or otherwise undividable into two parts — usually do not follow the rules of colometry. For example, יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים in Dt 4:35, 39 and 1K 8:60; 18:39 or יְהֹוָה אֵל הָאֱלֹהִים in 2S 7:28; 1K 18:37; 2K 19:15; Is 37:16 and Ne 9:7. In Psalms the typical confession consists of one short sentence: you Yahwe are my God
In spite of these problems, the proposed model to divide the Shema into two sentences offers a realistic alternative, as the other alternative faces difficulties of at least similar magnitude. Without yet attempting to judge between the alternatives, one may observe that the way we construe the sentence affects the way we understand and translate the problematic word דם. The most plausible translations of this word are: 1) “one” ⇒ Yahwe is one (monoyahwism) 2) “the only one/einzig” ⇒ Yahwe is the only one (monolatry).

If the Shema consists of two poetically parallel nominal sentences, the second sentence should be understood in relation to its parallel sentence. In this case יָהָוֶה יִקְרָא ייִשְׁרָאֵל would refer to the relationship between Yahwe and Israel, and the most natural translation of the word דם would then be “the only one” (einzig) defining this relationship. Translation “Yahwe is one”, referring to monoyahwism, would make less sense if any parallelism is taken into consideration.

On the other hand, if the Shema is understood as one sentence, the word דם is raised into a more elevated position: The יִקְרָא-ness of Yahwe becomes the focal point of the confession, for the word יִקְרָא defines the meaning of the whole sentence. The comment that Yahwe is our God would only be marginal. The most plausible interpretations would then be: 1) Yahwe, our God, is the only one (einzig) or 2) Yahwe, our God, is one. The first alternative is hampered by the fact that when the Hebrew word דם elsewhere in the OT means “the only one”, this is in some way revealed by the context. In Dt 6:4b this interpretation would depend only on the word דם since the context — now read without the parallel sentence יִקְרָא ייִשְׁרָאֵל — does not support it. Therefore, if the Shema is understood as one sentence, a more likely translation of יִקְרָא would be “one”. Disregarding

(Ps 22:11; 31:15; 63:2; 86:2; 140:7; 143:10). Here the confession is often found in colometric poetry, but the confession itself often stands alone without a parallel line.

For other models and discussion on their problems see Loretz 1995, 246-247 and 1997, 62-68.

Many other possibilities exist: for example, “Yahwe alone” (adverbial), but in this case one would expect the use of the Hebrew יִשְׁמָשִׁים instead of דם. For other translation possibilities see Loretz 1995, 246-247 and 1997, 62-68.

As shown by Veijola 1992b, 532-533.

So, for example, Lohfink 1973, 213-214 and Braulik 1985, 119.

The passages that are presented to support the interpretation of יִקְרָא as “the only one” usually reveal this meaning by the context. The word itself does not mean “the only one”, unless the context offers something to support this meaning: Gn 11:1, 6: the Einzigkeit aspect is made clear by the use of הָיָה rather than by יִקְרָא; Gn 19:9: the emphasis that there was only one is made by the use of the article (יִשְׁמָשִים); Gn 27:38: it is made obvious by the context that he had only one blessing; Ex 12:46: does not emphasize the Einzigkeit of the dream; a better translation or interpretation would be “the same”; Dt 17:6; 19:5: there is no particular emphasis on Einzigkeit; one is used in contrast to two or three witnesses; Is 51:2: the intention is that one had become many; the emphasis is created by the contrast between יִקְרָא and יִשְׁמָשִים; Similarly Ez 33:24; Ece 4:8: יִקְרָא is contrasted to שֵׁם. In some of the passages the Einzigkeit aspect does not appear at all. In the rest of these cases the context reveals the emphasis of the word יִקְרָא or the Einzigkeit is expressed by other words. In the Shema, when understood as one sentence, the context offers nothing to support this interpretation. In the model with two nominal sentences the interpretation is supported by the parallel sentence.
the propositions that the oneness refers to Yahwe’s ontological existence. The most probable interpretation in this case would be the monoyahwistic one. In other words, the Shema would attack plural representations of Yahwe. This could be supported by the inscriptions from Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet ‘Ajrud which imply the existence of many pre-exilic local Yahwes. Moreover, the Shema was originally followed by a law of a similar nature. Consequently, if the Shema is understood as two sentences, the monolatric interpretation is more probable, but if the Shema consists of only one sentence, the monoyahwistic model has more basis.

It is difficult to judge between these alternatives. The following factors support the monoyahwistic interpretation and thus the one-sentence model: 1) The credo was originally followed by Dt 12, which can be interpreted as fighting local Yahwes. 2) Early translations understood the sentence as one sentence and translated the ℡奡 as one (zilla and unus). 3) Translation of the word ℡奡 is more straightforward with the monoyahwistic interpretation. In the monolatric interpretation one needs the support of the parallel line to gain the correct meaning. 4) There are pre-exilic inscriptions which show that there were local manifestations of Yahwe. From the existence of several Yahwes it can easily be deduced that the religious authorities in Jerusalem could have been irritated by them and thus produced a confession like the Shema.

On the other hand, the monolatric interpretation is supported by the following factors: 1) The Shema would correspond to the rules of parallelism and colometry. 2) Understood in the monolatric sense, the Shema is more understandable as a confession. In other confessions of faith, relationship to a divinity is usually in the foreground. The

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23 Although this aspect may have played a larger role in the later use of the Shema, this was hardly the original intention of the confession. The ontological speculation on God’s nature is dependent on Greek philosophy, especially Neo-Platonism.

24 See Preuß 1982, 49-51, 100-103.

25 Note that some scholars (e.g., Veijola 1992b, 530-531 and Loretz 1997, 64) argue that the monoyahwistic interpretation is unrealistic because the problem allegedly did not arise in later OT literature. The cult centralization is nowhere justified by appealing to Yahwe’s oneness. In addition, they point to the fact that this aspect plays no role in the Wirkungsgeschichte of the Shema. However, one could suggest that Dt 12 is implicitly concerned with the problem of many representations of Yahwe. One might further suggest that the idea is not explicitly stated because it was so embarrassing. Why does not the problem then appear in the whole OT when from the perspective of archaeology we know that there were several Yahwe’s? One could also suggest that the problem of several representations of Yahwe was no longer relevant during post-monarchic times — when most of the OT was written — because the Exile wiped out the problem altogether. This would then explain why this interpretation of the Shema plays no role in its Wirkungsgeschichte.

26 See Renz 1995a, 61-64 and 202-211.

27 Loretz 1997, 67:

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declaration that the divinity is in only one location and has only one manifestation is not an ideal content for a confession. 3) The interpretation offered in vv. 4a and 6-9 fits better with monolatry than to monoyahwism. The problem of Yahwe’s cultic manifestations does not concern family life, but is rather a question of religious professionals. 4) The later preamble to the laws in Dt 6-9, which depends on the Shema and which it to some extent interprets and explains, deals with the relationship between Yahwe and Israel, a theme directly related to monolatry. The preamble has little to do with monoyahwism. 5) Although it could be speculated that monoyahwism lies behind the cult centralization in Dt 12, the problem does not explicitly surface anywhere in the OT.

Acknowledging that the question cannot be conclusively answered, the existing evidence seems to tilt slightly towards monolatry. I will proceed with the assumption that the Shema is a monolatric text, and that it is to be translated: “Yahwe is our God, Yahwe is the only one (einzig)”. One may now ask, in what way is Yahwe the only one, einzig. It is not clear against which background one should understand it and what kind of monolatry is implied.

Seen through the final form of the OT or Dt, the Shema could be seen to demand exclusivity: There should be no other gods for Israel except Yahwe. Between the strongly intolerant Dt 4-5 and the preamble to the laws in Dt 6-11, the reader is inclined to read general intolerance into the confession as well. However, unlike the first commandment in Dt 5 or the monotheistic formulations in Dt 4, the Shema does not make any demands on other gods. Explicit intolerance of other gods or exclusivity has to be read into the Shema. The fact that later writers did not use it as such shows that it did not demand exclusivity. The nomistic attack on other gods never refers to the Shema! The first commandment is used instead. For example, in the preamble to the laws in Dt 6-11, the intolerance passages constantly utilize the phrases of the first commandment, while the Shema is ignored. This is despite the fact that these chapters otherwise partly lean on and develop the Shema. There is only one passages in the OT which understood the Shema in a monolatric way, namely Zc 14:9. Zc 14:9a declares that Yahwe will be the king of all the earth (מִלְוָה לְכָל־אֲדָמָה), while the following line in v. 9b states that Yahwe will be הָרֶשֶׁת and His name will be יְהֹוָה. It is reasonable to interpret the verse as declaring Yahwe’s unique kingship. He is the only (einzig) king over all the earth. However, this passage also makes no demands nor reference to other gods. It only states than on one day Yahwe will be the only king over all the earth. In any case, Zc 14 belongs to the later additions to the book and already reflects a considerably late stage in Israel’s religion. It is therefore problematic to use it to interpret the original meaning of the confession. As we have seen, Dt contains many later additions that try to direct the older text towards a more monolatric and monotheistic sense (especially Dt 4). It is evident that some later readers and interpreters understood the Shema exactly in the way the redactors wanted. In this respect it is surprising that the OT contains only one

It would not be impossible that the Shema had a double meaning; so Albertz 1992, 321-322.


In addition, Mk 12:28-29, 32 understands the Shema in the monolatric way.

The statement is made in a nominal sentence like the one in the Shema: יְהֹוָה אֶת־אֶזְרָאִל.
passage that understood the Shema in the monolatric way. Taken with the fact that the nomists do not use it in their attack on other gods, the idea that the Shema demanded the rejection of other gods is improbable.

Against the background of ANE religions one should also note that it is not self-evident that the statement in the Shema should be taken literally. ANE language addressed to a divinity shows that the object of devotion may be and usually is flattered with exaggerated language. Several gods in the ANE are declared to be or defined as unique or the only ones, even in fully polytheistic religions and contexts. This feature is found especially in hymns and prayers devoted to a specific god, a context close to the one of the Shema. For example, Marduk was addressed “the most powerful ... who ... alone is most high” and “he alone is king.” In a hymn to Nanna, it is stated that “thou alone are exalted.” The lunar god Sin is declared to be unique. In a hymn to Bel, it is asked “who, except for you is lord?”, implying that there is no other lord than Bel. Perhaps one of the most noteworthy example of apparent exclusivity comes from a stele erected in honor of Nabu: “O later man trust in Nabu and in no other god.” A very similar text is a song dedicated to Marduk where it is stated: “there is no other god who leads to the right way.” It is improbable that these texts should be interpreted and understood in their literal sense because several gods are addressed in a similar way (in the case of Assyrian kings, even by the same individuals) and because the contexts often clearly reveal that other gods are not abandoned or denied. The most obvious explanation for this apparent inconsistency is that the language is more or less rhetorical. From secular usage, one could point to the

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32 Morton Smith (1952, 138-140) has argued that this is a characteristic feature of ANE religions.
33 Loretz (1997, 143) notes that “In Hymnen, Gebeten, Mythen und theologischen Werken werden in Mesopotamien einzelne Götter als unvergleichlich gepriesen.”
34 See the hymn and prayer texts collected by Pritchard (1969, 365-401, 573-586). In these texts exalting and flattering language abounds.
36 Pritchard 1969, 385-386.
37 Pritchard 1969, 386.
38 Pritchard 1969, 333.
39 “ima amilu arkû ana Nabû natkil ana ili šanima la tatakkil.” This passage is commented on by Hartmann (1980, 68), although he apparently understands the word natkil as G-stem pret. 1.p.pl. (⇒ “we will trust”) instead of N-stem imp. 2.p.sg. The original cuneiform text is found in Rawlinson (1861, 35, table 2, the last sentence of the tablet).
40 In connection with the discussion at the beginning of the 20th century, the pan-Babylonist Alfred Jeremias (1904, 35-43) uses this and several reminiscent passages to argue for monotheistic traits in Mesopotamian religion.
language used by a servant to address his superior. As Morton Smith points out, a peasant may call the chief steward “greatest of the great” without really meaning that. Furthermore, throughout all ages exalting expressions have been used to address kings or high officials, although everyone knows that they are not true. In other words, a god may be described as omnipotent, omniscient or the only real god without that really being meant in the absolute sense. They only express great admiration or devotion to a god. Consequently, if understood against the background of ANE religious language, considerable amount of rhetorics could be read into the Shema. However, the cultural distance to Mesopotamia, from where most of the texts that the scholars refer to stem, may be too great to make far-reaching conclusions about the meaning of an Israelite confession.

Loretz has suggested that the Shema should be understood in relation to Ugaritic religion which is geographically and culturally much closer to the OT than the Mesopotamian religions. He argues that in the Ugaritic religion some gods are asserted to be the only ones (einzig) in certain areas or realms. In one text, Baal is described as the only one who is capable of functioning as a weather god. This text is important because it uses the root ūd in a very similar way to the Shema; it defines the divinity as ūd. Further on, Loretz suggests that El is the only (einziger) father of gods (ab bn il) and men (ab adm), although there are no texts where the word ūd is used in connection with El. Loretz then assumes that the Ugaritic or Canaanite model of argumentation was preserved in Israel’s cult, which he also regards as the Shema’s home ground. Consequently, he comes to the conclusion that the Einzigkeit of the Shema refers to Yahwe’s exclusive position to give Israel the things that life and happiness require and to His exclusive position as the King (as a divinity). In his view, the traditional approach of applying the modern concepts monotheism - polytheism fits oddly with the ANE religious realm: The Einzigkeit of Yahwe as it is presented in the Shema should not be reduced to modern concepts, but treated in its own terms.

The interpretation by Loretz is an important contribution to the discussion. He manages to establish the idea that the Shema contained implicit intolerance. However, his suggestion that the credo stresses that Yahwe is the only God who is in a position to give Israel life and happiness does not rise from the credo itself. Such an idea may be found in the

42 Morton Smith 1952, 139, footnote 12) referring to a text in Pritchard 1969, 408b.
43 The apparent contradiction is discussed by Morton Smith (1952, 139-140) and Hartmann (1980, 56-61).
44 Here we are at the center of the whole problem: When did Israel’s religion deviate from other religions of the area and was there an essential difference between the Canaanite and Mesopotamian religions?
45 KTU 1.4 VII 49b-52a: “aḥdy d ymlk ʾil ṭ l ymr ʾilm w nšm d yšb[’] hmlt arṣ”; Loretz (1997, 57) comments: “Das ugaritische aḥdy besagt eindeutig, daß Baal einzig, exklusiv, also allein oder ausschließlich, unter allen Götteln und Menschen als Wettergott die Fähigkeit besitzt, wirklich das zu leisten, was sowohl die Götter als auch die Menschen von einer an erster Stelle stehenden Gottheit erwarten: die Versorgung der Untergebenen mit allem, was zum glücklichen Leben gehört.”
47 Loretz 1997, 76.
48 Loretz 1997, 156.
preamble to the laws in Dt 6-11, but taken alone, before its insertion into the OT, the Shema does not express such an idea. The emphasis of the Shema is rather on the we aspect (אלוהים). Exactly from this detail we may find the key for understanding the credo properly. In comparison with other ANE confessions of faith, the 1. person plural form is rare, but occasionally turns up in the OT. A reminiscent confessional use of the plural is met in the psalms: אַהֲבָתִי אֵלוהֵי אֲדֹנִי (95:7) and אַהֲבָתִי אֵלוהֵי אֲדֹנִי (105:7), but even there the singular is better represented. It seems reasonable to regard the plural as an important factor and more attention should be directed to it. It does not state that Yahwe is my only God (אלוהי), but our only God (אלוהים). In my view this is a crucial difference. With the plural the Shema emphasizes that Yahwe is the only God that is our God, the only God that is for us, and particularly as a group. This does not necessarily mean that individuals in the group did not have other gods, but as a group they had only one God. The Einzigkeit of Yahwe applies to His being the only one that this group has as a group.

The most natural conclusion is that this group, this we (-), refers to Israel as a whole. Supported by the later introduction in v. 4a (שמוע שראה; Israel as a whole is addressed) and the later preamble to the laws in ch. 6-11 the Shema would then declare the relationship between Yahwe and Israel as exclusive: Israel (we) as a nation or people has only one God, Yahwe, and no other gods are tolerated in this relationship. In other words, Israel has only one national God, Yahwe, and the Israelites renounce all other gods as their national God. In this respect, some degree of intolerance would be expected in any religion of the ANE and elsewhere. It is likely that the primacy of Marduk as the main or state god of Babylon was defended with similar terms of intolerance, although no texts have surfaced so far. The closest parallel for this interpretation comes from Ugarit. Loretz has shown that the Ugaritic divinities may be the only (einzig) to the point of exclusivity in certain fields. His example presents Baal as the only (einzig) god of rain and fertility. From the context of the formulation which expresses the divinity’s Einzigkeit, he deduces its extent. Accordingly, the extent of the Shema should be deduced from the immediate context and it

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50 In the OT as well as outside Israel, individuals commonly address the divinity with the singular. See Vorländer (1975, 37ff.) on these formulations in Mesopotamia and elsewhere in the ANE. In the OT a very common form is אַהֲבָתִי אֵלוהֵי אֲדֹנִי (Ps 22:11; 31:15; 63:2; 86:2; 140:7; 143:10). There are some exceptions, for example, “let us trust in Nabu, and in no other god” See Rawlinson 1861, I 35, 2.
51 E.g., Ps 22:11; 31:15; 63:2; 86:2; 140:7; 143:10.
52 One could suggest that originally this group consisted solely of persons who were specifically devoted to Yahwe. For example, such devotion would be expected from priests and prophets of Yahwe: They would have been dedicated to one god alone. However, this would already move into the sphere of speculation as no context or evidence has remained to bear witness. It is more natural to assume that the credo referred to Israel as a whole already from the “beginning.”
53 Much of which depend on or refer to the Shema. The main theme in these chapters is the relationship between Yahwe and Israel as a nation. It is not an overstatement to say that this is one the main themes of the DH.
54 Loretz 1997, 57-60.
witnesses to an exclusive relationship between Yahwe and the people. The exclusivity of the Shema should not be extended to a wider area.

In this context it must be noted that Israel’s religion developed a special relationship between the divinity and the people. Elsewhere the status of the god as the state god, god of a political unit or a city is emphasized, whereas Yahwe, as it can be deduced from the OT, was very strongly a national God or God of a people, Israel. It is a very complex question, when did Israel’s religion develop the idea of a relationship between the divinity and the people. Partly it is tied to the question of monolatry and intolerance, but it seems that the Shema witnesses to such a relationship.

From what is said, it naturally follows that the Shema is not intolerant of other gods as such. Other gods are not excluded from the lives of the Israelites as long as they do not challenge Yahwe as the God of Israel as a people, as a unit or as the national God of Israel. In a similar manner Baal is defined in KTU 1.4 VII 49b-52a as the only god who is responsible for vegetation. The passage does not define other areas of life, only that of vegetation.

### Historical and Sociological Context

As for the original context of the Shema, many suggestions have been offered. For example, Veijola argues that it stems from the early stages of the dttn/dtr movement which used it as a reform slogan. According to him, the 7th century credo was originally used to propagate the message of the Yahwe-alone movement. Albertz also suggests that the Shema was used as a reform parole, but ascribing double meaning to it (monoyahwistic and monolatric), he dates it to the religious renewal of Josiah’s time. As seen above, Loretz understands the origin of the Shema to be in Israel’s ancient cult which preserved old Syro-Canaanite traditions. From a cultic context it was later adopted to help define Israel’s relationship to her God after the Exile. The present democratized form, as he calls it, derives from the post-

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55 Loretz (1997, 76) extends the exclusivity much wider than the immediate context would allow. He may be influenced by Dt’s preamble to the laws (ch. 6-11), which, however, is of later origin and should not be a primary factor in interpreting Dt 6:4b.

56 See especially Albertz (1994, 88-89) who suggests that the personal relationship of Yahwe to a Großgruppe was the most important factor that separated Israel from the surrounding nations. He further suggests that this was one of the reasons why Israel’s religion developed into monotheism unlike the other nations of the ANE. See also Loretz (1997, 155-157) who points out that this aspect of Israel’s religion did not have parallels in the surrounding world.

57 Veijola 1992b, 540-541. However, there is little evidence to back up this suggestion. If the Shema had been a reform slogan used at the early stages of dttn/dtr movement, one would expect it to surface more than just once in the dttn/dtr literature. Similarly, Levin 1996, 117. He suggests that the background of the credo is the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, after which “das überlebende Juda sich anschickte, die Jahwe-Tradition das zuletzt heftig befehdeten Bruder-Staats im Sinne einer neuen Gesamt-Repräsentation Israels zu integrieren.” This is also rather speculative.

58 Albertz 1992, 321-322. Accordingly, he regards the reform to have had two main targets: the centralization and the purification of the cult.
He rejects the idea that the Shema should be understood against the background of Josiah’s reform, the historicity of which he regards uncertain. Since it is presented in the plural, one may assume that the Shema was originally used in a situation where a group of people gathered together to confess their faith. The most natural alternative would then be some kind of liturgy. It was already pointed out that the credo is connected to some plural confessions encountered in the Psalms: e.g., 95:7 and 105:7. In these examples a liturgical setting is visible at least in Ps 95, particularly in its verses 1-2. Admitting the scarcity of evidence, it is here proposed that Dt 6:4b was originally used as a confession in a communal liturgy. It may have been connected to the state cult where it would have been important to emphasize devotion to the national God. It may be suggested that a confession that emphasizes the we-aspect of Israel could come into question in a situation of national crisis.

Although dating the Shema is difficult, one may assume that it was originally a pre-exilic formulation. The suggestion by Loretz that the final form must be post-exilic is problematic. If one accepts that Urdeuteronomium already acknowledged Dt 6:4, 6-9, the pre-exilic dating of the Shema seems more likely.

### Later development

Verses 6-9 bring another aspect to the confession. With references to home, it could be suggested that these verses are directed at private religion. However, the main intention is rather to stress the continuity of the Shema for future generations. The purpose is to amplify its importance. The writer is leaning on to the already existing confession and stressing its importance for future generations. At the most there may be some incipient tendency to expand the national religion to the area of private religion. He does not elaborate on the meaning of the Shema, nor does he make any explanatory expansions that would guide the reader to understand it in any particular way. The writer of vv. 6-9 clings on to the old meaning of v. 4b without trying to develop it into any direction.

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59 According to Loretz (1997, 84, 114), the present form of the Shema necessitates the collapse of the monarchy: “Die Ausschaltung des Königs im Wortlaut des Schema gibt zu erkennen, daß das Königttum in Jerusalem zur Zeit der Letzgestaltung der Formel die ehemaligen kultischen und staatlichen Funktionen bereits eingebüßt hatte.”

60 Loretz 1997, 84.

61 So also Achenbach 1991, 88-90.

62 Loretz (1997, 113-114) argues that on the basis of the Ugaritic myth one would expect the Shema to read יוהי אלוהים מלך instead of יוהי אלוהים מלך if it was pre-exilic. However, one may ask, why would the existence of monarchy in the pre-exilic period necessitate the use of the word אלהים מלך?

63 Depending, of course, on the dating of Urdeuteronomium. It is usually accepted that it is pre-exilic. On the other hand, Loretz (1997, 80-81) denies the connection between the Shema and Urdeuteronomium. In my opinion, however, it would have been appropriate to begin the law code with a declaration that Yahwe is our only national god.
Conclusions

We have seen that the interpretation of Dt 6:4b is hazardous in several respects. There are many realistic possibilities to understand the credo. One possible interpretation is that the Shema was originally directed against local representations of Yahwe (monoyahwism). Even if one prefers the monolatric meaning, which seems more probable than monoyahwism, several possibilities and uncertainties still remain. Accepting the uncertainties, I assumed and argued that the Shema is most naturally regarded as a confession in which the Israelites confess their faith to their national God. Yahwe is the only (einzig) God that Israel has as a group. He is the God of Israel as a people. In this respect, some degree of intolerance is implied, but it merely extends to Yahwe’s position as Israel’s national God. The credo does witness to a special relationship between Israel and Yahwe. A similar relationship between a god and a people is not met elsewhere in the ANE. However, what is important for the present study, the Shema is indifferent to the existence or worship of other gods outside the issue of Yahwe’s position as the God of Israel as a group. One may infer that the confession facilitated and made possible the later development towards general intolerance, yet there is no evidence in the OT that it was used for that purpose. This fact corroborates that the Shema should clearly be distinguished from the intolerant monolatry we meet in the nomistic texts.
2.5. Dt 4:15-31

Introduction

After guiding Israel to the gates of the promised land, Moses delivered a speech with the intention of explicating the meaning of what happened in the desert. Dt 4 continues the speech begun in Dt 1-3, but diverges thematically and formally from it. Rather than dealing with past history like the previous chapters, ch. 4 is written in the form of a homily that prepares the ground for the giving of the law later on in Dt. Its particular function is to serve as an introduction to the Decalogue in ch. 5 by raising some important themes in advance and presenting them in a specific light so that the reader would understand the following Decalogue from a particular perspective. For example, the monotheistic passage in 4:32-40 guides the reader in reading the first commandment (5:7) and the Shema (6:4) from a monotheistic perspective. In addition, the second commandment (5:8) is given an introductory background and an account of the commandment’s origin in 4:12, 15. Accordingly, most scholars regard this chapter as a later addition to the historical introduction of Dt in ch. 1-3 as well as to the following law.

Not without reason, most scholars question the unity of this chapter. Even marginal reading reveals abrupt changes in style, tone and language, and accordingly it is very difficult to find a consistent line of thought that runs through the chapter. The overall theme is obedience to the law, particularly the second commandment, but continuous digressions make the chapter very difficult reading. In effect, its literary character is so confusing that there is little agreement among scholars on which verses are secondary additions and which pertain to the basic text. Since the chapter is commonly accepted to be a late text, the main

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1 Among other thus Noth 1943, 80-82; Mayes 1979, 148-149; Rofé 1985, 441-442; Knapp 1987, 27-29; Veijola 1996, 258-259.
2 So, for example, Puukko 1910, 132-138; Hölscher 1923a, 167-68; Knapp 1987, 112-13; Weinfeld 1991, 229-30; Veijola 1996, 258-259. Peculiarly, Rofé (1985, 442-443) regards vv. 32-40 as earlier than the rest of the chapter. This is hardly possible.
3 E.g., Steuernagel 1923a, 64-69 and Knapp 1987, 29-42.
4 See Knapp’s (1987, 3-25) history of research and the excellent chart (207-211) for more details. Nevertheless, some scholars have suggested that the chapter is a coherent unit. Explaining away the repetitions and irregular changes of addressee, Weinfeld (1991, 223-229) has attempted to divide the chapter into different liturgical sections. Similarly Braulik 1978, 7-12 and Otto 1996b, 208-209. Braulik approaches the chapter from a rhetorical perspective, arguing that rhetorical techniques cause the apparent inconsistencies and digressions. According to him then, the chapter is a rhetorical masterpiece. Mayes (1979, 149) admits that Dt 4 is a patchwork, but this is because the writer has
interest of the chapter lies in the content and the context of intolerance, especially in Dt 4:15-31. This passage offers interesting details about the background of the phenomenon.

**Literary and Redaction-Critical Observations**

The hand of at least two nomists may be observed in the chapter. Their nomistic character is revealed by constant references to the law. The text emphasizes the importance of keeping it and threatens punishments for ignoring it. Furthermore, vv. 32-40 may be a post-nomistic addition. It shifts the perspective from the law and the Exile (vv. 1-29) to Yahwe and His praise. The explicitly monotheistic formulations in vv. 35 and 39 may indicate a late origin. Of the two nomistic writers, the second one is most interesting contentwise for the present investigation. His text is met at least in vv. 15-20 and vv. 23-31.

5 Dt 4:35, 39 already show monotheistic traits. It is usually accepted that Dt 4:32-40 belong to a post-dtr stage.

6 For the nomistic, late-dtr character of the chapter see Knapp 1987, 112-114 and Veijola 1996, 258-260. Nevertheless, Otto (1996b, 216-222) assumes that the whole chapter (vv. 1-40) is already post-dtr. He appeals to the familiarity with Priestly language, especially in vv. 16b-19a (p. 218). Moreover, he suggests that the chapter avoids the dtr term אֱלֹהִים אֲבָלָה יִשְׂרָאֵל, and therefore derives from a later phrase (p. 202, 206). In my opinion, this argument is insignificant because nomistic language is abundant in the whole chapter. Other terms that the chapter uses in connection with the subject are nomistic. By attributing vv. 32-40 to the same writer as the rest of the chapter, Otto can point out post-dtr traits. However, it is improbable that vv. 32-40 belong to the same writer as the preceding text.

7 So Knapp 1987, 105-111: later than JerD and Deutero-Isaiah; Rose 1994, 491 (layer IV); Nielsen 1995, 63-64: post-exilic.

8 Verses 21-22 most likely derive from the first writer of the chapter. They are a natural sequel to v. 14. Verse 14 ends by reminding the Israelites about the land which they are going to possess followed fluently by vv. 21-22 which give an explanation why Moses cannot accompany them to the land. Neither v. 14 nor vv. 21-22 have much contentwise to do with the intermediate verses. Many scholars see literary fractures inside these verses, but for the purpose of this study it is not necessary to delve deeper into this question. It is only important to notice that vv. 21-22 continue the line of thought of the basic text in vv. 10-14 and that they have little contact with vv. 15-20. This observation confirms that vv. 15-20 were added later by a redactor. Against Knapp (1987, 34-35) who regards vv. 19-28 as einheitlich.

9 There is evidence that the two nomists are intertwined throughout the chapter, but it is unnecessary to deal with every verse in this context. It suffices to observe that a subsequent nomist who built
There is an obvious thematical cleft between verses 14 and 15. The details of giving the Decalogue suddenly change into a prohibition against making idols. The way in which v. 15 is made up almost entirely from phrases and words already used in the preceding verses confirms that the verse is fabricated by a redactor who wanted to tie his expansion to the older text.  

The redactor thus took up the preceding story and led it in a new direction. Whereas the older text deals with the Yahwe-theophany at Horeb, the redactor wants to point out that Yahwe had no form when He descended to Horeb and that therefore Israel should not make an image of Him or of any other divinity.

One could argue with Steuernagel that vv. 13-14 are a later expansion between vv. 12 and 15. The main problem with this view is that were they originally together, vv. 12 and 15 would form an unexplainable repetition. There is no possibility of a ring-composition by a hypothetical redactor of vv. 13-14 because the repetition in v. 15 does not conclude the alleged expansion but comes only after v. 15a, a verse which would be part of the original text. Moreover, without vv. 13-14 the function of the whole passage in vv. 10-12 is peculiar: Yahwe calls the Israelites to the mountain only to prove that they cannot see Him so that Moses can prohibit making images. As a consequence, in contrast with Steuernagel’s suggestion, vv. 13-14 are the natural and original climax of vv. 10-12.

Verses 15-20 contain later additions as well. Several factors challenge the consistency of vv. 15-20. The \( \text{נֶפֶשׁ} \)-clause in v. 19 is too far from its main clause in v. 15 and from its parallel \( \text{נֶפֶשׁ} \)-clause in v. 16a, interrupted by the long list of prohibited images in vv. 16b-18. Attention must also be paid to the awkward \( \text{מְסָלָּה} \) means approximately the same thing as \( \text{מְסָלָּה} \). Since the expression \( \text{מְסָלָּה} \) means \( \text{מְסָלָּה} \) without \( \text{מְסָלָּה} \), there is no reason to hesitate about splitting up these two expressions.  

upon an earlier nomist is particularly interested in the other gods and the Exile. I shall therefore concentrate on his text.

10 Most scholars who accept that the chapter contains redactions find a literary seam between vv. 14 and 15. Thus, among others, Knapp 1987, 35-38; Steuernagel 1923a, 66-67 and Mittmann 1975, 119-120.

11 Verse 12b may derive from the same writer as vv. 15ff. Thus, Veijola (1996, 258-259) for example.

12 Steuernagel 1923a, 66-67.

13 Following Knapp’s (1987, 37-37) argumentation. Weinfeld (1991, 205), who regards no later additions here, is at pains with the awkward construct and explains: “to strengthen the prohibition, the author accumulates a whole series of terms associated with iconolatry ... and forms out of them a chain of synonyms in the construct state.”
The use of the rareםל and תבנית as well as contacts with Priestly texts corroborate the suspicion that vv. 16b-18 stem from another writer than the author of vv. 15-16a and 19. The wordםל is very rare in the OT literature, appearing in two late texts only, namely Ez 8:3, 5 and 2Chr 33:7. The same applies to the wordתבנית, for in the same religious sense it is found only in Ez 8:10, Is 44:13 and Ps 106:20. Without religious connotationsדראדה does appear in the DH, although only in Jos 22:28 and 2K 16:10. In addition, verses 16b-18 have close ties with Priestly texts as the word pairJDSPY is otherwise restricted to Priestly documents. Towards the same direction points the list of creatures which strikingly resembles that of the P creation story (cf. Gn 1:26). The writer obviously had this story in mind when he wrote vv. 16b-18 and there is no reason to doubt that he himself was in close contact with the Priestly circles. Consequently, it seems that a Priestly writer wedged his expansion between the slightly loose nomistic prohibition against making images in vv. 16a and 19. The Priestly writer is not concerned about other gods like the author of vv. 16 and 19, but instead, about making pictures of Yahwe’s creatures. There is an evident shift of emphasis.

It may be called into question whether v. 19 is from the same redactor as vv. 15-16a. With the prohibition against worshipping astral bodies, the verse deviates thematically from the concern over the second commandment in vv. 15-16a. Theמ"-clause in v. 19 is grammatically subordinate to its main clause in v. 15, but contentwise it is difficult to see how the prohibition against worshipping astral bodies is based on the fact that Yahwe had no form at the apparition at Horeb. Furthermore, the addressee in v. 19 is singular in contrast with the plural in verses 15-16a. This irregularity is difficult because the singular clause (v. 19) is subordinate to the plural main clause (v. 15). For this reason, many scholars clip off v. 19 as a later expansion to v. 18. Against these admittedly strong arguments, it could be maintained that the Numeruswechsel alone has broken down as a criterion for distinguishing different literary strata. Particularly in the latest parts of dtn/dtr literature, like Dt 4, the

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14 At least Jos 22:28 is a late verse, the surrounding text of which already shows signs of Priestly terminology. See Latvus 1993, 111. 2K 16:10 is probably an older text.

15Knapp 1987, 89. Also Weinfeld (1991, 206) acknowledges that the language in vv. 16b-18 shows characteristics of Priestly literature in contrast with the obviously dtr language of the chapter in general.

16Thus, Knapp 1987, 69-71, 89, 91, and following him, Dohmen 1985, 208 (regardless of year, dependent on Knapp). Against most scholars, e.g., Steuernagel 1923a, 66-67; Noth 1943, 80-81; Preuß 1982, 48-49 and also Mittmann (1975, 119-120), who otherwise divides the chapter into at least 5 different layers.

17Otto (1996b, 218) suggests that also v. 19 is dependent on the P creation story. In fact, he argues that the whole chapter — which he assumes to derive from one author — is dependent on the P redaction of the Pentateuch. It is more probable that the content of v. 19, containing reminiscent terminology, was the point that guided the redactor to use material from the creation story.

18Noth 1943, 80-81; Mittmann 1975, 120; Steuernagel 1923a, 65; Nelson 1981, 90-94; the main argument in these reconstructions is the Numeruswechsel.

19Among others Mayes (1979, 148-149), although here he uses the argument to defend the unity of the whole chapter.
number may change irregularly without any outward reason (cf. D 4:23, 25, 28-30).\textsuperscript{20} Against the apparent illogic between vv. 15-16a and 19, one may assert that it is very difficult to demand complete logical coherence in a text that is written in the homiletic form. Besides, the theme of seeing one’s God is met in vv. 15-16a and 19. The Israelites have not seen their own God Yahwe, but must still worship Him (vv. 15-16a), whereas when they see gods of other peoples they may not worship them (v. 19). However, the most compelling argument for the unity of vv. 15-16a and 19 comes from the Decalogue where both prohibitions, not to make an idol and not to worship other gods, are found side by side. It is hardly possible that the Decalogue did not influence this late writer who is making an introduction to it. As a consequence, with lack of convincing proof for the opposite, v. 19 is an integral part of vv. 15-16a.

Many scholars separate v. 20 as a yet another expansion because of the Numeruswechsel and of the new idea that is introduced\textsuperscript{21} However, v. 20 can be seen as a logical answer to the implicit questions that arise from v. 19: Why is Israel different from other peoples? Why is she prohibited from worshipping the astral bodies, unlike other peoples? Verse 20 gives the answer: Yahwe himself has selected and singled out Israel for special treatment. Israel has seen Yahwe’s acts in Egypt (v. 20), while other peoples have only seen the heavenly bodies (v. 19). Note the contrast formed by the use of ולֵֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽחָֽלֶֽch: לָלֶכֶח (other peoples) and לָלֶכֶח (Israel). There may also be a play of words with the use of SNZ and ZSN: Yahwe has not given the gods to the Israelites, but instead He has taken the Israelites. Without the motive for being different from the others, rendered in v. 20, the command not to worship other gods does not have an adequate basis. The final support for the unity of these verses comes from two related passages, Dt 7:5-6 and 14:1-2, where similarly the command to the Israelites to separate themselves from the customs of the surrounding peoples is motivated by Israel’s special position before Yahwe. As a result, v. 20 was most likely originally part of vv. 15-16a, 19\textsuperscript{22} Here again we see that the Numeruswechsel alone is not a sufficient reason to see literary clefts.\textsuperscript{23}

**Verses 23-31**

Verse 23 completes the argument begun in v. 15 by introducing the idea of covenant. This verse reminds the Israelites that if they are disobedient to the commands set out in vv. 15-16a they will thereby break the whole covenant with Yahwe (ברית יהוה). Otherwise the verse repeats much of what is already said in vv. 15-16a, but coming before the prediction about the Exile (vv. 25-31) it serves another purpose, namely as an introduction to the

\textsuperscript{20} The later redactors of Dt often use and quote earlier passages without regard to the number or addressee. This is the most conceivable reason for their irregular change in some texts.

\textsuperscript{21} Noth 1943, 80-81; Preuß 1982, 48-49 (redaction to v. 18 before v. 19); Mittmann 1975, 120.

\textsuperscript{22} Also, Knapp 1987, 34-38.

\textsuperscript{23} Against Noth (1943, 80-81) and Mittmann (1975, 120).
events that lead to the catastrophe. Although it may be hard to prove conclusively that the same redactor is behind both vv. 15-16a, 19-20 and vv. 23-31, it is also difficult to fathom that two successive writers were so similarly concerned with the worship of idols considering the rarity of the theme in Dt and the similarity of the language in both vv. 15-16a, 19-20 and 23-31. In addition, there is no discernible overlap between the two sections, but instead they complement each other, the first presenting the commandments or the prohibitions and the second giving the historical context where the prohibitions were then broken. Therefore, it is probable that vv. 23-31 are not the work of a later redactor, but of the same writer who wanted to make the breaking of the idol-prohibition one of the main explanations for the Exile.

Content of Dt 4:15-31

For this study, the main interest of Dt 4 lies in the content which may reveal interesting details about the historical context and development of intolerant monolatry. Verses 15-16a point out that Yahwe did not have a form when He spoke to the Israelites and therefore one should not make an image or a picture of Him. The strong emphasis on this point implies that the Israelites in fact did make or had made representations of Him and that it was a problem. One might speculate that the pre-exilic Yahwe may have had an official representation in the Temple and that it was destroyed with the Temple. However, there is little archaeological or textual proof for this view so far. The overall idea that Yahwe had no visible form is a deuteronomistic creation in the OT literature. Several pre-dtr texts make it explicitly clear that Yahwe can be seen, particularly by the most holy people: In Ex 24:10-12

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24 Note how in this section (vv. 23-31) the development begins with the Israelites forgetting the בְּרָאָה וַיָּרֵא הָאֵל in vv. 23-25 and concludes with the promise that Yahwe will not forget the בְּרָאָה (v. 31). Accordingly, the section is a compact unit with one theme and with an undisturbed line of argument.

25 These verses may contain short additions, but they are not very relevant for this study. For example, the phrase אַבֶּר רָאָה הָאֵל אֲלֵיהֶם in v. 23b may be a later gloss, for it looks to the prohibition in retrospect and is out of line with the tone in the rest of the verse. The passage otherwise speaks of the prohibition made in v. 16, but this comment is written from the perspective that the prohibition was made much before — conceivably at Horeb, whereas ch. 4 is situated into Moab. Since the phrase assumes Yahwe to be the speaker in contrast to Moses who is the speaker in ch. 4, it seems that the glossator refers to the second commandment of the Decalogue instead of v. 16. There remain reservations concerning this conclusion, for it is possible that the original writer was constantly thinking about the Decalogue and thus was led astray from the idea of the text he was writing. Thus, Knapp (1987, 79-80) who explains the sudden singular of the phrase from the perspective of the following verse (24). According to Veijola (1996, 259), v. 30 is a later addition.

26 This is implied by Lorez 1994b, 218-219.

27 According to Weinfeld (1972, 198), deuteronomistic: “It appears then that it was the deuteronomic school that first initiated the polemic against the anthropomorphic and corporeal conceptions of the Deity ... these later conceptions are diametrically opposed to the earlier views articulated in JE and P documents.” Although beyond the scope of this analysis, it is possible that the nomists emphasized that Yahwe cannot be seen, and that the dtr history writer only implied it without being explicit.
the elders and leaders watch God in a situation resembling a heavenly banquet in Nm 12:8 Moses sees Yahwe’s form (יווה התמון) with no condemnation of the event in Ez 1:26 the prophet watches God who had a form like a human; in 1K 22:19 — possibly a pre-dtr vestige — the prophet Micah watches Yahwe sitting on His throne. It seems that the deuteronomistic insistence — or nomistic in this case — that Yahwe cannot be seen is inconsistent or even contradictory with what we see in some of the OT’s pre-dtr texts. From this perspective then, the nomistic writer is proposing a limited view of Israel’s religion in comparison with the pre-exilic one. The reason for the limitation may be the above-mentioned destruction of Yahwe’s official representation or the exilic attempt to separate Israel’s religion from other religions, especially those of Mesopotamia which commonly used material representations of divinities.

Verse 19 prohibits the worship of astral divinities. It is a larger question if and how commonly did one worship astral divinities in Israel. This verse implies that it was at least a problem and threat during the Exile. The author wants to convince the reader that astral bodies were allotted to other nations, but prohibited for the Israelites. Their divinity is not denied, only their worship in Israel. This reveals the writer’s intention of making a clear distinction between the Israelites and other peoples. The Israelites must follow other norms than the others. Israel’s religion is explicitly set apart from other religions. The writer is not calling for the general worship of Yahwe among all nations. Quite the opposite, he wants them to continue in their indigenous religions. Only the Israelites should and may worship Yahwe. The difference between the writer and Deutero-Isaiah, who calls for the universal worship of Yahwe, is manifest. In other words, behind the prohibition against worshipping other gods, a nationalistic motif emerges: The Israelites are special and not like other peoples. Verse 20 emphasizes the point: Yahwe has selected Israel from among the nations to be His own special people (יהוה הוא אלוהים יהלל על ישראל). One must also note that the gods of other nations, the astral divinities, are clearly under Yahwe’s power; He had the power to allot them to the nations for worship. This idea reflects strong nationalism, according to which, the gods of other peoples are subordinate to Israel’s national God. Although Yahwe has manifestly risen
above even the main gods of other peoples, the author is not a monotheist. This stand reflects a middle stage in the development where Yahwe rose from a national God of Israel to the single and only God of all nations. In an earlier stage, in tolerant monolatry, Yahwe was above His own Israelite pantheon, whereas in the final stage, in later Judaism, other gods are deprived of their divinity and become angels who serve in Yahwe’s court. There is no divinity outside Yahwe’s realm. In the book of Daniel (10:13; 12:1) each nation has her protective angel, which is obviously a late echo of the view reflected in Dt 4:19, only the gods are changed into angels.

Verse 23 warns that Israel should not ignore or forget the covenant (ברית) that Yahwe made with her. The warning about forgetting the covenant (v. 23) is used only to prepare the reader for the consequences of breaking it; Yahwe’s anger is met in v. 25, whereas the Exile is depicted in vv. 26-28. In other words, the writer uses the term to interpret the broader impact of apostasy on the relationship between Yahwe and Israel on the one hand, and on Israel’s history and future on the other. The text reveals that breaking the second — and implicitly also the first — commandment equals breaking the covenant. The importance of idols and other gods for this writer is evident. One may suspect that these verses refer directly to the Decalogue, for the motif-clause of the first two commandments is repeated in v. 25:

| Dt 5:9 | כי אכד נגודה אלוהים ולא קנה |
| Dt 4:25 | כי הוגה אלוהים... הוה אל קנה |

Verses 25-31 finally reveal the real historical context of the writer and the audience for whom the text was written. Instead of being a text from Moses’s time, the Exile emerges as the actual historical background. The text would be incomprehensible before the Exile. The idea behind verses 25-27 is to explain the reason for the Exile: Why did Yahwe allow the Israelites to be banished from their land? In other words, these verses function as an interpretation of past events. It assures that all was caused by Israel’s actions: She broke the covenant.

Verse 28 evidently describes the situation where the author lived: The Israelites worshipping other gods in a foreign land. It is a problem of the author’s own situation. He wants to convince his contemporaries that these gods are only of wood and stone, and hence not worthy of worship and no comparison to Yahwe.

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32 Dohmen (1985, 206-207) suggests that v. 19 does not imply tolerance of other gods, but quite the opposite, it shows that only Yahwe is a real God while the other gods are only objects that Yahwe has divided to other peoples. However, I would emphasize that other gods are still real divine beings for the writer of this verse.

33 Braulik (1986, 43) argues that already in this passage the heavenly bodies are “den »Engeln« vergleichbar” but this interpretation does not arise from this passage, but from his conviction that Dt 4 is monotheistic (cf. p. 47) on the basis of the monotheistic formulations in Dt 4:32-40. In other words, since Braulik perceives the whole chapter as a unit (einheitlich), he is compelled to interpret every verse according to the view of the last redactor.
2. Deuteronomy

The main message of the text is then finally given in vv. 29-31. The author conveys to the exilic readers or hearers that they will find Yahwe if they only seek Him with full heart and without deceit. The preceding text suggests that an essential prerequisite of this search is the removal and rejection of other gods. One receives the impression that the exilic community outside the land is the main or perhaps even the writer’s only addressee. The text is irrelevant to the Israelites who were not banished from the land. Whether the writer is also an exile cannot be proven on the basis of this text, but at least his perspective suggests that he was.

Conclusions

Dt 4 is commonly accepted as a late text. Nomistic ideas and vocabulary are abundant in the chapter, but some part are often regarded as post-nomistic (e.g., vv. 32-40). For the present investigation, the main interest of the chapter lies in the second nomistic layer which forms the main bulk of vv. 15-31. This text reveals the historical context or background of the author. He is addressing the sermon to the exiles who are faced with questions like: Why did we face the Exile? Was it caused by Yahwe’s weakness? The author wants to project the cause of the Exile on to the Israelites. They themselves have caused it with their actions. One of the author’s main interests is to make a separation between Israel and all other peoples. Israel is Yahwe’s special people and separated from all others (vv. 19-20). Because of her special status she may only worship Yahwe. The author wants to warn about the threat of other gods, the worship of which would blur the distinction between Israel and the other nations. In other words, Yahwe has become a symbol of national distinction. The author strengthens his message by interpreting the Exile to be a result of apostasy. Moreover, it was noted that the author made a clear turn in Israel’s religion in its attitude to watching the divinity. Old vestiges elsewhere in the OT show that the Israelites, at least the elect ones, were able and allowed to watch Yahwe in the past, while the nomists deny and prohibit the possibility.

For the redaction criticism of the whole DH, the passage is important because it explicitly shows the real historical context of the author. By phraseological and thematical contacts, his text can then be found elsewhere in the DH, although otherwise he rarely refers to his own situation so concretely. This passage functions as a chronological fixed point for the nomist. He is explicitly writing after the catastrophe had already occurred.

34 Verses 30-31 may be a later addition, but this is unimportant for the present argumentation, for these verses only corroborate what is already said. Verse 31 reassures the reader that Yahwe will not forget Israel.
2.6. Dt 7:1-6

Context and Literary Critical Observations

Dt 7 belongs to the preamble to the laws in Dt (ch. 6-11), the setting of which is Moses’s speech to the Israelites before they enter the promised land. The speech contains — after several successive expansions — diverse material in, at least to some degree, a confusing order. Most of this material consists of different instructions on how to behave and live in the land. The immediate surroundings of ch. 7 deal with Israel’s relationship with Yahwe: Chapter 6 contains a series of later additions with different interests formed around the Shema Israel in v. 4, whereas in ch. 8 the basic theme is thankfulness to Yahwe for the land, although later editors have also expanded this text in various directions.

Due to redactors’ activity, Dt 7 contains several independent but intermingled themes. The scholarly views on the literary criticism of the chapter differ to a considerable degree. However, it is possible to remove the small theological treatise on Israel’s election in vv. 7-11 from its context without disturbing the story in the rest of the chapter. Dealing with the annihilation of the native inhabitants and thus being thematically close to vv. 1-6, verses 17ff. are often regarded as a direct continuation to the basic text of vv. 1-6, both sections having little to do with the content of vv. 7-16 in which the law and the covenant are at issue. Veijola has suggested that in vv. 7-24, verses 12-16, 20, 22-24 belong to a late nomistic redaction. The main problem is, which verses in v. 1-6 did vv. 17ff. originally follow.

Scholars are divided on the extent of the basic text of vv. 1-6. According to many scholars, it ran from v. 1 until v. 3, while for some v. 3 already begins a later addition.  

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1 For different scholarly reconstructions of the chapter’s redaction process, see Achenbach 1991, 212. He comments on the chapter: “Unklar ist ziemlich alles.”
2 According to Seitz (1971, 74-79) vv. 7-15 are a later addition; Veijola (1996, 252) regards vv. 7-11 as the latest redaction to the chapter. The addition was inspired by v. 6 which was expanded into a small theological treatise on Israel’s election. The lateness of this section is also suggested by the monotheistic formulation in v. 9 which is linked to other late texts, namely Dt 4:32-40 and 8:2-8.
4 Note how v. 16 is an obvious attempt by a redactor to return to the text and the theme from which he departed.
5 Veijola 1996, 250-251. In his reconstruction, also vv. 4-5 belong to the same layer.
6 Thus, Puukko 1910, 151-152; Steuernagel 1923a, 77-78; Mayes 1979, 181; Veijola 1996, 248-250 and Kaiser 1998, 49. All include v. 6 in the basic text as well. So also García López (1982, 443), but in his reconstruction vv. 5-6 were also in the basic text. Only v. 4 would be a later addition.
According to Achenbach, the original text ended in v. 3a. He assumes that all three apodictic laws in vv. 2b-3a must stem from the same writer. The reconstructions that regard vv. 4-5 as an addition and leave the rest to the original author (vv. 1-3, 6) refer to the plural or partly irregular Numeruswechsel in vv. 4-5. The original text would consistently have been in the singular, while the expansion would have been in the plural. It is also pointed out that vv. 2-3 form a list of five similar commands. One may also notice the thematical shift from the problem of contact and intermarriage with the indigenous population (vv. 1-3) to the ferocious attack on foreign cults (vv. 4-5). The prohibition to intermarry in v. 3 is an integral part of the issue that the Israelites should not make a covenant with the indigenous population and that they should in fact annihilate them. Consequently, there is no reason to deviate from the majority view that vv. 1-3 form part of the original layer of the chapter. One exception to this conclusion has to be made: Some scholars assume that the list of nations in Dt 7:1 is a later addition to Dt 7:1-3*. Verse 6 is slightly loose in the passage and is not an essential part of either Dt 7:1-3* or 7:4-5. Nevertheless, scholars are almost unanimous in seeing it as a direct continuation to the commands in v. 2 or v. 3. Verse 6 may be seen as a logical motivation for v. 3: It motivates the separation from the other nations by appealing to Israel’s special status. Therefore, the earliest layer of Dt 7:1-6 may be found in vv. 1-3*, 6.

The author of the addition in vv. 4-5 leans on the earlier text in vv. 1-3*, 6 but develops the passage in another direction. The main interest for him has become the cult and religion of the indigenous population and the threat that it poses to Israel. The whole passage, Dt 7:1-6, is closely linked to two passages in Ex, namely 23:20-33 and 34:11-16. Many scholars assume that the original direction of influence has run from Ex to Dt, especially from Ex 34:11-16 to Dt 7. The main argument for this direction of influence is the minor differences between the texts: Dt 7 shows some development in relation to Ex 34:11-16. The relationship between these passages is a very complex issue that has eluded satisfying solutions, and it is probable that the direction of influence has run in both directions during the development of the passages. However, some factors imply that the direction of influence was originally from Dt to Ex. First, the literary development in Dt 7 implies that the prohibition to intermarry, make a covenant and the command to destroy the indigenous population (v. 1-3) were associated with the command to destroy their cult apparatus (v. 4-5) in Dt 7. In this case it is unlikely that Ex would have combined the same

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7 Thus, Hölscher 1923a, 176; Preuß 1982, 48-49. In their reconstructions, v. 6 also belongs to the basic text.
8 Achenbach 1991, 213-218. According to him, v. 6 was part of this layer.
10 Thus for example, Seitz 1971, 75; García López 1982, 441-442 and Veijola 1996, 248. However, according to Achenbach (1991, 247), there is no basis for removing the list from Dt 7:1.
11 Thus, Hölscher 1923a, 171; Steuernagel 1923a, 77-78; Seitz 1971, 74-76; Mayes 1979, 181-84; Preuß 1982, 49 and Veijola 1996, 248-249; only García López (1977, 439-44) attributes v. 6 to the same writer who wrote v. 5. According to Lohfink (1963, 185-186), v. 6 is an addition to v. 5.
12 For example, Halbe (1975, 108-110, 151-152), and following him, Veijola 1996, 251-253.
13 So Mayes 1979, 181.
ideas in a very similar way independently of Dt. It is more probable that Ex adopted this association from Dt. Second, the basic idea in Dt 7:1-6par assumes the DH as the background. The situation these passages assume as the background is relevant in the book of Joshua: Israel enters the land, which will result in the problem of what to do with the indigenous population. In many other issues as well, the commands and exhortations in Dt (especially Dt 6-11) prepare for the later situation when Israel enters the land. In contrast, the whole problem is still irrelevant in the Sinai narrative in Ex. It seems that the idea in Dt 7:1-5 was formed from the perspective of Dt. Third, the vocabulary in Ex 34:11-16 as well as in the relevant parts of Ex 23:20-33 is thoroughly nomistic or influenced by the nomists (see chapter 3.4.). This implies a closer relationship with Dt and the DH. Moreover, Achenbach's study on the relationship of these passages, as well as other related passages, has shown that Dt 7 lies at the beginning of their literary development. According to him, most of Ex 23:20-33 is later than Dt 7. Moreover, the verses that are relevant for this study — Ex 23:23-24, 31b-33 — are an even later addition to Ex 23:20-33. He comes to a similar conclusion with Ex 34:11-16. It is clearly later.

The Author of Dt 7:1-3*, 6

Dt 7:3 is the only passage in the OT which explicitly prohibits intermarriage with non-Israelites. For example, in Ex 34:16 the possibility of an intermarriage is used to serve the main theme, religious apostasy, but there is no specific and explicit prohibition. Therefore, the few passages in the DH, viz. Jos 23:7, 12-13; Jdg 3:5-6; 1K 11:2, which refer to a such a command must refer to Dt 7:3. These passages contain explicitly nomistic material. Moreover, it has been established that the problem of indigenous population that remained in the land after the conquest is a nomistic idea. Dt 7:1-3* is part of this issue. It deals with the problems that rose after the Israelites were not able to annihilate the indigenous population.

The Author of Dt 7:1-3*, 6

Several factors in these verses imply that the author is a nomist. In the expression מַחְרֵדְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל מָהָרֵדָךָ, draws a picture showing the correct conduct is to follow Yahwe. This comes very close to the nomistic idea of Yahwe's road or way (רָדָד) which in Dt almost

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14 Thus, Achenbach 1991, 287-288. For the individual analyses, see Achenbach 1991, 212-287.
15 Achenbach 1991, 268. He appeals to the fact that instead of Yahwe, who led the Israelites in Dt 7, it is now His angel that leads the Israelites to the land (p. 263).
19 Veijola 1977, 90. Often סֵדֶּרֶת יִהוָּה.
always refers to the Decalogue. In this sense, the word רָדַּד is used several times with the verb רָדַּד. In this context it means to turn away from the road, referring to apostasy. The commandments in v. 5 to battle the foreign cult apparatus are presented with vocabulary often used in the nomistic texts. Further on, Latvus has demonstrated that Yahwe’s anger is a characteristic feature of at least two successive nomistic deuteronomists. Usually — and Dt 7:4-5 is no exception — apostasy kindles Yahwe’s anger (v. 4 נָבָד אָלֹהֵי אָדָם) and leads to Israel’s annihilation (v. 4 הָאָשֶׁר מִשְׁמוֹרָן). The passage shows the anger-pattern in its typical form: Israel forgets Yahwe ⇒ Apostasy ⇒ Yahwe’s anger ⇒ annihilation of Israel. This corroborates the nomistic origin of Dt 7:4-5.

Content

The main interest of the passage lies in its content which reveals some details about the nomistic intolerance of other gods. At issue in Dt 7:1-3*, 6 is Israel’s relationship with the indigenous people of Canaan. By means of strict prohibitions, the writer wants to make a clear separation between Israel and other nations. Mixed marriages and covenants are not allowed. Implicitly, all contact is forbidden. Although projected to the time of Moses, Dt 7:1-3*, 6 is more understandable against the exilic background. The passage makes most sense for an exile or a returnee who is returning or may be able to return to the land in the foreseeable future. It deals with a future problem that will arise when Israel enters the land. Moreover, a monarchic background would also be unlikely. Return to the land and the indigenous population would not have been an acute problem during the monarchy. One must also observe that the prohibition against intermarriage became relevant in post-exilic times as witnessed by the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. There is little reliable evidence that the problem arose before the returnees from the Exile began to settle in the land again. In this situation there were many Israelites who had married foreigners (Ezr 9 and Ne 13:23-27), especially among those who had stayed in the land. For the returning Israelites — who had presumably more success in separating from other nations during the Exile — this would have been intolerable and detestable. This suggests an exilic origin for the prohibition against intermarriage as well. It is a broader question, who was regarded as an Israelite and who was foreigner in the post-exilic period?

The passage also shows a development in attitude towards the other gods. Whereas the earlier nomists deals with the issue of intermarriage and contact with the indigenous population, the later nomist is primarily interested in the destruction of their cult apparatus.

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20 Braulik 1988, 21-23.
21 For example, in Dt 9:21, 16; 11:28; 13:6; 31:9. Usually מִתִּירַד; see Braulik 1988, 22.
22 Latvus 1993, 216-17.
23 Veijola (1996, 250-251) suggests that vv. 4-5 are from the later nomist, whom he calls DtrB.
and gods. This passage would seem to bear witness to an increasing aggression towards the other gods inside the nomistic group.

It is noteworthy that the later nomist is attacking religious phenomena — Asherah and the massebot — that were acceptable and used by the Israelites before the Exile. They are now described as pertaining to the religion of the indigenous population. Moreover, passive rejection of foreign religions was not enough. The nomist demanded active participation in the attack against them. There is no explicit evidence that a physical conflict over religion took place in exilic or post-exilic times, but at least the writer shows readiness for such.

**Conclusions**

The explicitly intolerant part of the passage, Dt 7:4-5, originates from the nomists, but also the earlier layer derives from the same group. Verses 1-3, 6 have a specific message for the writer’s time: He demands separation from the foreign people of the land. This goal is motivated by the assertion that the Israelites are special among all nations. They were selected from among other nations by Yahwe (v. 6). The later nomists in vv. 4-5 adds the religious aspect: For him separation from other peoples went hand in hand with separation from their religion. By rejecting contacts with other people, the Israelites would reject their religions as well. Moreover, the writer demands an active attack on the religions of the indigenous population.
2.7. Dt 29:21-27

Introduction and Context

Dt 29 is often regarded as a late addition to the book. Allusions to the Babylonian Exile (v. 27) and references to the book of the law (v. 20, 26) betray the lateness of this chapter. Moreover, thematical and phraseological contacts with other late sections of Deuteronomy, especially ch. 4, validate the lateness of Dt 29. The relationship between Dt 4 and Dt 29 is a widely discussed theme, but most scholars find the same editors in Dt 4 and Dt 29.

There is no consensus on the literary strata or development of the chapter. Most scholars accept that the chapter consists of more than one layer of text, but their extent, nature and relationship to each other is debated. Many scholars sketch four clear subsections in the chapter: vv. 1-8, 9-14, 15-20 and 21-27. These subsections are held together by a leading element, the ויבש, but they are, at least to some degree, independent. My main interests in Dt 29:21-27 are the content and redactional status, which will hopefully reveal something about the historical background of intolerant monolatry.

Verses 21-27 are not completely consistent. Verse 23a disturbingly repeats the question (أم) of the foreigners in v. 21a. It is a typical redactor’s technique — ring-composition — to repeat the appropriate words to return to the text from which the redactor begins the expansion. In v. 23a the nations as a group (לט-Јאוז) ask, while in v. 21, the future Israelite generations and the foreigner (אֹיִם) are the sentence’s subject. There is a slight shift in perspective. In addition, one may observe a certain increase in the severity of the destruction from v. 21 to v. 23. In v. 21, Yahwe has only afflicted and made the land sick, implying partial destruction, whereas in v. 22, the destruction is complete and likened to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. There are two possibilities to the extent of this redaction. Either only the reference to the mythological cities in vv. 22b-23a or all of vv. 22-23a is secondary. In addition, it is possible that vv. 22a and 23aa were added first and then v. 22b. However, would it have been necessary to repeat the question in v. 23aa if...

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1 Puukko 1910, 216-217; Hölscher 1923a, 223; Mayes 1979, 359 (the second dtr redactor is responsible for the whole chapter); Preuß 1982, 60 (layer IV consisting of several individual additions); Knapp 1987, 128-129 (two late-dtr redactors) and Nielsen 1995, 264-265 (late-dtr).

2 For example, Knapp 1987, 158-163 and Rose 1994, 551. However, according to Otto (1996b, 201-205), all of Dt 4:1-40 derives from one writer, who is later than any of the different writers in Dt 29 and who corrects the views presented in Dt 29.

3 So, for example, Mayes 1979, 359; Preuß 1982, 159; Knapp 1987, 129ff.; Braulik 1992, 211; Nielsen 1995, 263. Rather independent and unrelated to its surrounding context, Dt 29:28 is often regarded as a later addition.

4 Nielsen (1995, 263-264) assumes that the subsections are “ganz selbständig”; Perlitt (1969, 29), criticizing Baltzer’s (1960, 44) view on the chapter, remarks: “Mangel an zielsterbigen Ablauf der Einheit ...”
merely v. 22b was added? The ring-composition implies a larger expansion. The terminology in v. 22a (salt, מלח, and brimstone, נחלה) is also most likely an intentional reference to the cities in v. 22b (cf. Gn 19:23-29). It would seem reasonable that all of vv. 22-23aa originate from the same redactor who wanted to magnify the extent of destruction and parallel the Exile with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

The author of Dt 29:21, 23aβ-27 seems to be one of the main nomists of Dt. Links to the second nomistic layer in Dt 4 imply that we are dealing with the same nomist. Yahwe has selected (יהוה) the Israelites from among the nations in 4:19 and 29:25. Israel has broken or forsaken the covenant by worshipping other gods — 4:23 and 29:24-25. Dt 4:24 and 29:23 refer to the anger or zeal of Yahwe. Moreover, both texts generally deal with the situation in which the Israelites were banished from the land.

A further link to the later nomists may be seen in the evident connection between Dt 29:25-26 and Jos 23:16:

Jos 23:16 has been identified as a later, nomistic, addition to a text that is already nomistic. The theme of forsaking (or ignoring) the covenant (עזב ברית) is also used in other nomistic texts, viz., Dt 4:23; 17:2; 31:16, 20; Jos 23:16; 2K 17:15, 38. The reference to the other gods in 29:25 is very typical of the nomistic texts that attack the other gods. Moreover, as demonstrated by Latvus, the anger of Yahwe kindled by devotion to other gods is a typical theme of the nomistic deuteronomists. Consequently, it seems likely that Dt 29:21-27 was written by a nomistic author, and the close contacts with Jos 23:16 may imply that the nomist is more likely a later one than an earlier one.

**Contacts with Vassal Treaties**

Many scholars regard Dt 29:21-27 as influenced by contemporary political treaties. In fact, the whole section Dt 28-29 is permeated by treaty ideology and terminology. Weinfeld has conveniently collected appropriate passages in the treaties relevant to Dt 29, demonstrating

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5 The word מלח is mentioned in Gn 19:24, which describes the destruction, while מלח is used in reference to Lot’s wife who is turned into a salt statue (Gn 19:26).

6 See chapter 2.5. for details on this layer. In the second half of the chapter, it most likely consists of vv. 15-16a, 19-20, 23-31.

7 Dt 4:23 is a warning not to break or forget the covenant, but the following verses already reveal that the punishment that would ensue from forgetting the covenant has already materialized.

8 Dt 4:24 does not use the typical terminology of Yahwe’s anger, however, but refers to Yahwe’s zeal, which may express the same idea.


11 E.g., Baltzer 1960, 44; Mayes 1979, 358-359.
that there are several points of contact between the treaties and the chapter. In verses 21-27 the most obvious expressions paralleled in the treaties are: Divine wrath ensuing from breaking the treaty (vv. 23 and 26) and the curses, troubles and illnesses that fall on the malefactor’s land (vv. 21 and 24). Nevertheless, the most notable parallel is in Aššurpanipal’s report of a campaign against the Arabs, where, after the king has defeated them, “the inhabitants of Arabia asked each other: ‘On account of what have these calamities befallen Arabia?’ (they answered themselves) ‘Because we did not keep the solemn oaths (sworn by) Ashur, because we offended the friendliness of Aššurpanipal’.”

The setting is very similar to the one in Dt 29:21-24. Without delving deeper into the parallels, we may conclude that vassal treaties also exerted influence on this passage. This conclusion corroborates the observations made already in the preceding analyses that political ideology and language influenced nomistic theology and the development of intolerant monolatry.

Moreover, that also this passage links the term הָרָרָה with themes and concepts of the vassal treaties suggests that the use of the term in nomistic texts should be understood and interpreted against the background of the vassal treaties.

**The Historical Context and Message of Dt 29:21-27**

Instead of taking Dt 29:21-27 as a warning for the future, it is reasonable to assume that it describes a situation that has already occurred. The Exile is treated as the present situation. What one may only suspect on the basis of many nomistic texts is here made almost explicit. For example, the use of the expression וִיהָוֵי in Dt 29:27 leaves little space for speculation that the writer is in the middle of the situation he is describing. The exilic background of the text is corroborated by texts in Jeremiah that show a common pattern with Dt 29:21-27. They all seek to answer the question of why Israel faced the catastrophes.
The answer is because of her apostasy. After the catastrophe, it was natural to ask for reasons. One very plausible answer, stemming from a polytheistic framework, would have been that it was Yahwe’s weakness and Marduk’s greatness that caused Jerusalem’s fall. With passages like Dt 29:21-27, the nomists were trying to convince the Israelites that the polytheistic interpretation was not valid, and that the real reasons should be sought from Israel’s own deeds. In other words, with a theologically loaded interpretation they wanted to revert the blame back on the Israelites in order to protect Yahwe: The Israelites caused the catastrophe with their apostasy. Dt 29:21-27 reveals that in reverting the blame, the nomists utilized the concept of Yahwe’s anger. It was the bridge which connected apostasy to the Exile: Apostasy ignited Yahwe’s anger which in turn caused the Exile. Latvus has suggested that the exilic idea about Yahwe’s anger rises from collective experience that reflects the feelings of the whole nation. Yet, at least when it comes to the nomistic texts, which represent the main bulk of the exilic texts that recognize the idea, this seems improbable when we remember how the anger is roused only by apostasy. If the anger of Yahwe as described in the nomistic texts was a collective experience, one would expect various explanations for it. Since only one explanation is met, it is reasonable to assume that the idea was advocated by a group that wanted to convince the Israelites of one particular interpretation of the past. This passage is also a good example of how the writers saw everything through a theological framework. All blame for the Exile is put onto religious apostasy. For the nomistic writer, the breaking of the covenant, particularly the first commandment, was the one single factor that caused the Exile.

Dt 29:27 implies that the Israelites to whom the writer is addressing the passage live in Exile, not in the land. The writer assumes that all Israelites were banished from the land. One receives the impression that no one remained. The theological interpretation that the writer offers is relevant for an exile. The text tries to explain why they were uprooted from their own land. In contrast, the writer does not have much to offer to an Israelite who still lived in the land.

Although the writer is perhaps exaggerating, his view that all Israel was uprooted shows that he regards real Israel to dwell in the Exile and that the Israelites who remained in the land are unimportant. One may suspect that, in his mind, only the Diaspora Israelites were proper Israelites. This attitude is in harmony with Jer 24 which, in a symbolic dream, pictures the exiled Israelites as good figs and the remnants who stayed in the land as bad figs. The same attitude is revealed later on in the book of Ezra which delineates the time after the exiles return to the land and begin the reconstruction. The exiles take the initiative in all projects and in the cult, while the people of the land are all but ignored. In effect, for

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18 See Thiel 1973, 198-199, 295-300. A similar setting is also found in 1K 9:8-9 which is, according to Würtzheim (1985, 105-106), a DtrN expansion (vv. 6-9) to an already DtrN text (vv. 1-5).
19 Latvus 1993, 181.
20 It may be that many Israelites did interpret the Exile as a demonstration of Yahwe’s anger, but Yahwe’s anger as it is presented in the nomistic texts is probably not the result of collective experience.
the writer of Ezra, the people of the land are defiled, whereas the exiles represent proper Israel.

Conclusions

With the exception of the later addition in verses 22-23aa, Dt 29:21-27 was probably written by a late-nomist to an exilic audience living outside Palestine. The aim of this passage was to convince the reader that the main reason for the past catastrophe and the Israelites’ banishment from the land was their apostasy. This interpretation was an alternative to those interpretations that rose from the polytheistic framework that questioned Yahwe’s power after losing to Marduk. The writer placed the blame for the Exile on the Israelites.

With this passage, the exilic origin of intolerant monolatry is further corroborated. Explicit references to the Exile reveal the correct historical context of this nomistic redactor who, beside this passage, has edited many intolerance passages in the DH. The phraseological and thematical links give a fixed point in history for this nomist.

The passage also reveals that the central ideas of intolerant monolatry, namely the anger of Yahwe as a response to apostasy and the breaking of the covenant with apostasy, have a strong exilic basis and arise from the situation of the Exile. In addition to the use of the word בֵּית, contacts with contemporary vassal treaties confirm that nomistic intolerant monolatry was strongly influenced by political ideology.

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See Ezr 4:1-4; 6:21. It is true that the book of Ezra is a problematic historical source. See Becking (1998, 59-61), for example. It is uncertain which period it describes. However, already the fact that such a perspective was preserved and became authoritative in Ezra implies that a similar attitude became prevalent at some time after or during the Exile.
2.8. Other Intolerance Passages in Deuteronomy

The frames of Dt contain many intolerance passages. Quite a number of them depend on the Decalogue, as determined by similar vocabulary. Moreover, many scholars identify most of them as late additions to the book. In some cases, their lateness is revealed by explicit references to the Exile or allusions to a banishment from the land. Hence, it is not necessary to put much effort into proving their lateness. The main interest of these passages lies in their content which provides many clues about the origin, context and historical background of intolerant monolatry. It will also be shown that most of these intolerance passages come from a similar mold: They use very uniform vocabulary, the same themes recur constantly and the case is presented by similar patterns of argument. Consequently, there is reason to assume that most of them derive from a uniform theology. On the other hand, there are some passages that already show later characteristics.

Dt 4:3 — Walk after Baal

As we have already seen, the whole of chapter 4 is acknowledged as a late text. The surrounding verses use nomistic terminology, especially in vv. 1-2 and 5. Verse 3 itself shows the typical but in this case the object is instead of the usual . The use of the verb in hiph. (to destroy) is also common in intolerance texts that refer to the punishment that follows apostasy.

Dt 6:14-15

Dt 6:14-15 is a warning or command not to worship the deities of the surrounding peoples. It contains typical intolerant vocabulary: . A similar justification

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1 Especially in Dt 4, 29, 30.
3 Otto (1996b, 202) suggests that Dt 4 avoids using the phrase consciousness, and uses this as an argument for regarding Dt 4 as a post-dtr text that is already influenced by Priestly thinking and vocabulary. This may be true for some parts of the chapter, especially Dt 4:16b-18, 32-40, but for the whole chapter such a suggestion is unlikely. Otto's view is problematic because he regards the whole chapter as a unit that contains no later additions. The use of the word instead of is probably caused by the author's will to connect his message with the historical situation he is describing. Usually is used as a general term to denote the other gods as a group.
to strengthen the command — Yahwe is a furious or jealous God — suggests that the
passage is dependent on the first commandment of the Decalogue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Commandment (Dt 5:9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>יָאָבֹד ה' אֲלֵיהָ אָלָּלִים</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dt 6:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>יָאָבֹד ה' אֲלֵיהָ אָלָּלִים</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accordingly, vv. 10-18 are commonly acknowledged to be a late addition to the chapter. Mayes and Rose attribute the passage to the latest redactors of Dt. In the standard nomistic way, v. 15 warns that disobedience to the command will lead to Yahwe’s anger (שַׁמְרֵד אֱלֹהִים) and finally to banishment from the land (הָעֲלוֹת מִן הָאָרֶץ). The Exile looms in the background. Verse 14 shows that in the writer’s historical context, the gods of the surrounding peoples were a particular danger. According to the writer, Israel’s existence and survival in the land is threatened by their gods.

**Dt 7:9**

This passage uses a monotheistic formulation — כִּי יְהֹוהֵי אֲלֵיהָי חֲזָקָו — reminiscent of the ones used in Dt 4:35, 39; 1K 18:37, 39 and 2K 19:15. We have already seen in chapter 2.6 that vv. 7-11 form a coherent and partly independent unit that is a later addition to v. 6, which I have identified as nomistic. Connections to other passages which are later additions to late-nomistic texts show that Dt 7:7-11 is quite late in the development of the book.

**Dt 7:16**

In the analysis of Dt 7:1-6, I have argued that the earliest text of the chapter ran from verses 1-3*, 6 to vv. 17ff. Verses 7-16, which contain different layers, are a later development. Since vv. 1-3, 6 derive from a nomist at the earliest and vv. 17ff. is a later addition to v. 6, all in between must be later. According to Veijola, a later nomist (DtrB) added all of vv. 12-16.8

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4 Thus, e.g., Seitz 1971, 70-74; Mayes 1987, 46, 175, 179; Achenbach 1991, 209; Rose 1994, 445 and Veijola 1996, 244. According to Veijola, nomistic activity may be seen in vv. 14, 15b. For Nielsen (1995, 88-89), vv. 14-19 are a dtr addition to a dtn text in vv. 10-13.
6 Thus Veijola 1996, 252.
7 Seitz 1971, 76.
8 Veijola 1996, 250.
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Dt 7:25-26

This passage is probably a late or post-dtr addition to the chapter. It alludes to cult-objects left over from the annihilated indigenous population. The main interest lies in the idols as objects and in their material aspect, while the gods themselves are attacked in the nomistic theology. Consequently, Dt 7:25-26 is closer to the idol criticism of Deutero-Isaiah than to the nomistic attack on other gods. The lateness of this passage is also suggested by the thematical proximity to the related Jos 7. The idea that the remains of the annihilated population pose a danger seems to be a late theme in the DH.

Dt 8:19

In a compact form Dt 8:19 contains the standard nomistic idea: A warning that if the Israelites forget Yahwe and serve other gods, they will be destroyed. The phrases are very standard and contain no specific details or features not known from other nomistic passages. The verse is often regarded as a late addition.

Dt 11:16-17

Dt 11:16-17 presents a typical nomistic idea as well: A warning that Israel should not let herself be tempted and turn away from Yahwe to worship other gods. The warning is reinforced by a threat that if Israel apostatizes, Yahwe will become angry, curse the land and annihilate Israel. Most of the chapter derives from late editors of Dt.


10 Is 40:19; 41:7; 44:12-20. The material aspect is also emphasized in Jer 10:3-5.

11 The main bulk of Jos 7 is clearly a later addition to the history writer’s text (the historian’s text may be met only in vv. 2-5). Most of it derives from the nomists (thus Peckham 1985, 34; Veijola 1985, 299-305), but the theme of taking from the illicit spoil is met in the later additions (Veijola 1985, 299-305).


Dt 11:27-28

In the blessing-curse scheme of the chapter other gods are the main cause of the curse, while obedience to the law would bring blessing. The passage is evidently nomistic: Obedience to the law is the source of all good, whereas the worship of other gods is the main threat to the law and blessing. The phraseology of the passage reveals a picture of a road (םדר) which is the law and from which one should not turn away (לע) to worship other gods. The same picture is behind many nomistic passages. From this passage one would get the impression that the prohibition against worshipping other gods (the first commandment of the Decalogue) is the only law there is to follow. Everything is dependent on keeping this law. The passage is considered to be late.\(^{14}\)

Dt 12:2-3

This passage is not very disputed. It belongs to the latest layers of the chapter and tries to direct attention to the other gods. In this sense it undermines the chapter’s main theme, the centralization of the cult. It is clearly related to Dt 7:4-5 and should be identified with this nomist.

Dt 12:29-31

These verses are usually associated with Dt 12:2-7. For example, Rose ascribes them both to the same late redactor.\(^{16}\) According to Veijola, these verses belong to the late-nomists (DtrB).\(^{17}\) The passage has the same function as Dt 12:2-7, to direct attention from cult centralization to the problem of other gods.

Dt 28:14

In his recent study, Steynans argues that Dt 28:14 is a later addition to the chapter. It sticks out from its context in content as well as in form. He ascribes the verse to an exilic editor.\(^{18}\)

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\(^{14}\) Seitz (1971, 90): vv. 26-30 are a later addition within the chapter; Achenbach (1991, 392): vv. 2-9, 22-28 belong to a late-dtr layer that uses the plural address; Mayes (1987, 46, 207-208) and Rose (1994, 522) attribute the whole chapter to very late editors. Veijola (1996, 264-265) regards the passage as late-nomistic.

\(^{15}\) So Preuß 1982, 51-52; Rose 1994, 18-19; Veijola 1996, 247. However, according to Nielsen (1995, 136), the passage is early dtr.

\(^{16}\) Rose 1994, 18-19 (Layer IV, which in his scheme is the latest larger layer of Dt); Veijola (1996, 266): late-nomistic (DtrB).

\(^{17}\) Veijola 1996, 270.

In accordance with other nomistic texts, it exhorts the Israelites to keep the commandments and warns them not to turn away (פורד) from them. The terminology is typically nomistic.

**Dt 28:36-37**

Direct reference to the Exile suggests that the passage is late. In fact, without assuming the Exile as an event already occurred, the passage is incomprehensible and irrelevant to the intended audience. Verse 37 describes a situation where Israel has been scattered into the nations. The worship of other gods is expressed with typical phrases known from the late-nomistic Dt 4:28 and Dt 28:64, the context of which is the Exile as well.

| Dt 4:28 | ... דְּבָרָיָּמָּם מַגְּנָה מִזְרוּעָה עַל אָדָם עֵּזְוֹטֵנוֹ ... |
| Dt 28:36b | נַהֲרַךְ לֹא יֵרְדֵּהוּ אֶחָדָּם דְּבָרָיָּמָּם מַגְּנָה מִזְרוּעָה עַל אָדָּם עֵּזְוֹטֵנוֹ |
| Dt 28:64 | דְּבָרָיָּמָּם מַגְּנָה מִזְרוּעָה לֹא יֵרְדֵּהוּ אֶחָדָּם עַל אָדָם עֵּזְוֹטֵנוֹ |

The phrase נַהֲרַךְ לֹא יֵרְדֵּהוּ אֶחָדָּם הָאָדָם הָאָבֹן links Dt 28:36 and Dt 28:64. Although in v. 36 it refers to a foreign people and in v. 64 to their gods, a direct dependence must be assumed. All three passages assume that the Israelites worship other gods — of wood and stone — in the foreign land where they are exiled. The emphasis on the material aspect is reminiscent of Deutero-Isaiah’s attack on idols. Generally, scholars ascribe vv. 36-37 to the exilic editors of Dt. Moreover, it is not impossible that v. 36b is a later addition to the verse.

**Dt 28:64**

The exilic background is evident: Israel has been scattered to the nations where she worships other gods. Direct references to the Exile are known mainly from the latest additions of the DH. Verse 58 expresses the reason for the punishments listed in vv. 59-68: Israel did not follow the law. As we have seen, this is a typically nomistic idea. One may thus assume a nomistic origin. The phraseology points in the same direction. Accordingly, most scholars regard the passage an exilic product.

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20. *Mayes* (1987, 351, 355): vv. 36ff. are a later addition affiliated with Dt 4:28 and Dt 13:6; *Braulik* (1992, 207) suggests that vv. 36ff. are an exilic expansion; *Rose* (1994, 540) points out that in v. 36 other gods are reduced to material objects not unlike in Dt 4:28. According to him (in p. 533), vv. 36-37 belong to the IV layer of Dt. Although ascribing most of Dt 28:20-44 to an Assyrian vassal treaty, *Steymans* (1995, 381-382) regards vv. 36-37 as an exilic addition to the passage.
21. This is, in fact, suggested by the apparatus of the BHS.
22. דְּבָרָיָּמָּם מַגְּנָה מִזְרוּעָה לֹא יֵרְדֵּהוּ אֶחָדָּם הָהָאָדָם הָהָאָבֹן.
23. According to *Seitz* (1972, 302), the surrounding passage belongs to the latest additions of the chapter; for *Mayes* (1987, 349) vv. 58-68 are connected to the latest parts of Dt and other literature in the OT; *Braulik* (1992, 208-210) describes the passage as late; *Rose* (1994, 543) puts the
2. Deuteronomy

Dt 30:17

The alternative sermon (Alternativpredigt) which puts good and evil before Israel dominates the passage (v. 15). Evil and curse will follow if Israel worships other gods (v. 17), while obedience to the law brings good and blessing (v. 16). In the typical nomistic way, future life in the land is conditional on these two factors. Moreover, apostasy is expressed with typically nomistic vocabulary: גמר אלוהים אחים וחברים, נגזר פנים עבר. The word נגזר, used to declare Israel’s annihilation, is also common in the nomistic texts. A late origin of the verse is usually accepted in research.

Dt 31:16-18

In line with other intolerance passages of Dt, this speech of Yahwe to Moses foretells that Israel will whore after the other gods (נזר עבדים), abandon Yahwe (נזר אלהים נזרו) and break the covenant (נזר אלילים נזרו). As a consequence, Yahwe’s anger will be roused (רעה אפי) and various evils will befall Israel. For this writer, apostasy is the main reason for breaking the covenant. The phraseology of the passage differs from the typical nomistic one. Apostasy is expressed with terms unknown in the nomistic texts (especially נזר אלהים נזרו although some affinities with nomistic terminology are apparent).

It is relatively easy to observe that all of Dt 31:16-22 are a later addition to the DH. The history writer prepares the reader for Moses’s death in v. 14 where Moses and Joshua are summoned to the tent of meeting in order for Yahwe to appoint Joshua the new leader of Israel. In the present text-form this theme is interrupted by vv. 16-22, which deal with other issues. The original story then continues in v. 23 where Yahwe finally appoints Joshua. Many scholars point out that vv. 16-22 allude to the Song of Moses, which is

24 von Rad (1983, 132) acknowledges that Dt 30:15-20 are permeated by dtr phraseology; Mayes (1987, 370) suggests that vv. 15-20 are connected to the dtr sections of Dt; Rose (1994, 551, 555-557) attributes the passage to the IV layer of Dt, that is to the writer of Dt 4 and 11, with which Dt 30:15-20 if connected in thought and language.

25 For example, Mayes (1987, 376) states that the language of the passage is most atypical of Deuteronomy, and he therefore pushes the passage to the post-exilic era. The term אלהים נזר is also used in Jos 24:20, the context of which also differs from the typical nomistic texts.

26 Verse 15 may also have been part of the addition.

27 So also Nielsen 1995, 276.

28 Accordingly, many scholars regard the passage as a later addition. So, for example, von Rad 1983, 135-136 and Rose 1994, 559, 561-562.

29 E.g., Mayes 1987, 376 and Braulik 1992, 224.
judged to be a late addition to Dt. Consequently, a similar or later origin must be assumed for Dt 31:16-22.

**Dt 32:12-39**

The song of Moses (Dt 32:1-43) contains a large intolerance section (vv. 12-39) that criticizes Israel for abandoning Yahwe and for worshipping foreign gods. The vocabulary is peculiar to the passage, not met elsewhere, and more abundant than the fixed phrases that we usually meet in the nomistic passages. Unfortunately, there is no scholarly consensus as to the origin of the song. Braulik points out that scholars have attributed the origin of the song to almost every period between the 11th and the 5th centuries. Some scholars date parts of the song to an early period. Regardless of the song’s original time of composition, there seems to be a tendency to regard it to be a late insertion to Dt. Literary-critical observations confirm this suspicion. We have noticed above that Dt 31:16-22 is a later addition that interrupts the history writer’s text. The narrative of v. 14 continues in v. 23 and v. 48ff. Verses in between vv. 14, 23 and 48 are digressions from the narrative. In Dt 31:14 Yahwe announces that Moses will soon die and that he needs a successor. The successor Joshua is then appointed by Yahwe in Dt 31:23. However, in Dt 31:24 Moses begins his speech again and it continues in the form of a song in chapter 32. The location of the speech and the song is peculiar and does not fit with the narrative of Dt 31:14 and 23 where Yahwe gives instructions to Moses on his impending death. It seems most natural that originally this narrative did not continue before Dt 32:48ff. where Yahwe carries on the speech to Moses and commands him to climb Mt. Nebo. Moses’s impending death is the main theme of this passage as well (Dt 32:48-52), while the text in between, viz. 31:24-32:47, develops in another direction.

An exilic background is often assumed for the song’s final form, and accordingly, the content of the song is written as a prophesy of future destruction and mischief. One

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30 See below.

31 For example, Mayes (1987, 376) infers that vv. 16-22 are a post-dtr addition. However, Rose (1994, 559, 561-562) puts these verses to the IV layer of Dt, which he regards as a late dtr editor. According to Nielsen (1995, 276), the passage is completely deuteronomistic.

32 Braulik (1992, 227): “Die Entstehung des Moseliedes wurde schon in fast jeder Periode zwischen dem 11. und 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr. Angesetzt.” For example, Sellin (1925, 161ff.) has dated the composition to the 5th century BCE.


34 It is regarded as a later, exilic, addition to Dt by e.g., Steuernagel 1923a, 31-32, 160-163; Noth 1943, 82; Veijola 1975, 123; Kaiser 1984, 135-136; Mayes 1987, 380 and Rose 1994, 566.

35 Nielsen (1995, 286) considers vv. 48ff a post-dtr, P-text.

36 Mayes (1987, 380): post-dtr; Braulik (1992, 227) suggests that the combination of various elements, vocabulary and ideas from various books of the OT (e.g., Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah etc.) implies an exilic origin for the present form of the song — at the earliest. Rose (1994, 566) implies that the final form is late or post-exilic, although older elements may have been preserved.
receives the impression that the song portrays Israel’s history from the desert until a great
destruction, which however is not specified despite that it is spoken of as if it occurred in the
past. However, the song would function well as an interpretation of a past catastrophe. It
would be an answer to the question of why Israel faced the calamities. Although there are
only scattered traits of nomistic language, the general view of the past shows connections or
dependence on the nomistic ideology: Yahwe has chosen Israel and led her into the desert.
Israel has, however, abandoned Him by worshipping other gods and thus causing His anger.
Consequently, various evils have struck Israel.

Although the song possibly or even probably contains early elements and sections,
one should be skeptical about the possibility of unearthing or isolating them from the present
text-form. Some verses clearly show early traits (e.g., v. 8), but a reasonable reconstruction
of the song’s textual development has not been offered so far. The present state of the text
does not allow one to determine whether any of the intolerance elements derive from earlier
than the post-dtr era. Therefore, the passage should not be used to argue an early origin of
intolerance in Israel’s religion. One may merely conclude that Dt 31:24-32:47 is a late or
post-exilic addition to the narrative of the history writer.

**Conclusions**

The passages that were analyzed in this chapter are mostly undisputed in research; they
belong to the latest layers of Dt. The passages were also surprisingly homogeneous. The
same message recurs with only differences in nuance. The intolerance passages of Dt warn
that when the Israelites enter the land, they may not forget Yahwe by worshipping other
gods. Disobedience to this command will be followed by Yahwe’s anger and various curses,
the most important of which is banishment from the land. Some of the passages directly or
indirectly refer to the Exile and are understandable only in the exilic context. These passages
further link the nomists to the Exile. Moreover, the passages frequently refer to the law,
implying a nomistic origin. Their phraseology and vocabulary is also quite uniform. The
ideas are recurrently expressed with the same phrases. Only some passages (Dt 7:25-26;
31:16-18; 32:12-39) show clearly deviating forms of expression. They were accredited to
post-nomistic writers.
3. Exodus

In addition to the DH, it was necessary to investigate the intolerance passages in Ex 20-23 and 34. On the one hand, these law texts are often seen to contain very ancient material, and on the other hand, many scholars assume that laws in these chapters preserve the older — thus pre-dtn or pre-dtr — form of corresponding laws in Dt.

3.1. Ex 20:22-23

(22) And Yahwe said to Moses thus say to the Israelites: “You have seen that I spoke with you from heaven, (23) (therefore) do not make gods of silver in challenge of me, and gods of gold do not make for yourselves.”

Introduction

The prohibition against making images of gold and silver in Ex 20:22-23 lies at the very beginning of the Covenant Code (Ex 20:22-23:33), a passage usually thought to contain very ancient material. Therefore, Ex 20:22-23 is often used as proof for the early origin of exclusivity in Israel’s religion. With its concrete reference to the materials from which one should not make idols, it allegedly presents a more primitive form of intolerance than what we meet in later texts. In addition, since Ex 20:22-23 immediately precedes an altar law (20:24-26) that does not seem to acknowledge the cult centralization — a deuteronomistic idea — it may be suggested that these laws are connected to each other and are thus both dtn or pre-dtr. For example, Dohmen, connecting the two laws, sees an early pre-dtn core in vv. 23b-24aa. Phillips argues that vv. 22-23 are an Hezekianic attempt to purify Israel’s worship. On the basis of syllabic rhythm, Osumi suggests that vv. 22b-23 form an independent unit that has a pre-history independent of the present context. He considers the possibility that the passage alludes to Is 2:7-8, 20; 31:7, which might then provide its

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1 For example, Scharbert (1985, 160, 182-183) assumes that the passage is pre-monarchic in origin.
2 For example, Albertz 1992, 96-97, 286-287.
3 Dohmen 1985, 176-178. According to him, the dtr writers were the first ones to bring the law in line with the second commandment of the Decalogue.
historical background. An early dating is also evident in some general presentations on Israel’s religion but also in some more specific studies on the origin of exclusivity. For example, Albertz dates the CC and its intolerance laws to the time of Hezekiah’s reform and thus argues for intolerance in the late 8th century BCE. Yet, many scholars have also questioned the early dating of Ex 20:22-23. Earlier research tended to attribute these verses to a redactor. More recently, Nicholson has pointed out that the verses have to be dependent on the preceding Decalogue, which is often thought to be a later addition to the Sinai narrative. He suggests that the verses are deuteronomistic. Similarly, Hossfeld suggested that the verses are dependent on the Decalogue, the addition of which to the Exodus he ascribes to the Priestly editor. Accordingly, he regards Ex 20:22a-β-23 as a Priestly, and thus a post-dtr addition. Studying the structure of the Covenant Code as a whole, Schwienhorst-Schönberger has argued that 20:22b-23 belong to its dtr frames. Otto comes to a similar conclusion by suggesting that vv. 22b-β-23 are connected to Ex 19:4 and Dt 4:36.

Analysis

It appears that the original Hebrew of v. 23a was ambiguous to the G translator because he has replaced the preposition referring to Yahwe with ʾawtāʾ. Already this translation shows that there are linguistic problems in the Hebrew of v. 23. First, the peculiar use of the preposition ḥa with the verb ḫāṣ is rare in the whole OT. This combination is found 25 times, of which most mean “to do something to” or “to do something with” someone. It is also met in apparently fixed expressions such as ʾawtāʾ ṣūla, ḫāṣ malṭēma tal, ḫāṣ ṣūlā. None of these uses are adequately applicable for the present passage. One might appeal to

5 Osumi 1991, 192-195. He thus rejects the late dating which is more or less based on the dependence of the verses on the Decalogue.
7 E.g., Holzinger 1900, 79-80 and also Baentsch (1903, 186), but he suggests that v. 23 had an older form in the E source.
8 Nicholson 1977, 429-430. Schwienhorst-Schönberger (1990, 298-299, 397-400) has similarly opted for dtr origin, at least for the final form of the prohibition (298), in spite of the “gut begründete These von F.L. Hossfeld, daß der Dekalog in Ex 20 von einem priesterlichen Redaktor ... eingefügt worden ist.” (397)
10 Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1990, 298-299, 397.
12 ḫāṣ ṣūla (used in Jer 5:18 Ez 11:13 Zeph 1:18) could be used to understand Ex 20:23. In this expression the preposition refers to the object which one is to turn into ṣūla, that is, one makes ṣūla from the object of the preposition. This interpretation could be supported by Akkadian where the equivalent preposition “itti” is sometimes used (especially with verbs of taking) as meaning “from”. (See von Soden 1995, 206-207.) If one would follow this argument, the verse should be understood as a prohibition against making an image of Yahwe, “do not make an image of gold or silver from/out of me.” This translation would correspond well with the motivation in v. 22 given to the prohibition in v. 23: Since Yahwe spoke from heaven, that is, He is a heavenly God whose image the
the fact that vocalization is a late development and suggest that אָּלָהֵם in fact is the object marker with a suffix (ם). The translation would then be “do not make me into an idol (god) of silver or gold.” The problem with this interpretation is that one would then expect to have the preposition ל before the word אלהים. In addition, this interpretation would function better if the Hebrew word for idol had been מְכַס instead of מְכָס. If Yahwe been the object, the word אלהים would hardly have been used. Hence, other gods must have been meant: One should not make idols, which are in fact other gods. In other words, the word אלהים in Ex 20:23 is probably intentionally used to stress that other gods are only idols. Therefore, although it is not a fully satisfactory solution, it seems best to agree with the usual translation: “beside me”, “against me” or “in challenge of me”, meaning that the issue is over Yahwe’s relationship to the idols.

The difficulties in the verse are not restricted to the preposition. The masoretic half verse marker, atnah, is in a peculiar location. With the current verse division, the first half does not form a complete idea. It is sometimes suggested that the divider should be moved so that the whole verse forms a chiastic structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>original verse division</th>
<th>reconstruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>אל תעשה את אלוהים כף</td>
<td>אל תעשה את אלוהים כף א</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the fact that it abandons the masoretic division, the main problem with this solution is that it prohibits the making of silver idols in challenge of Yahwe and golden idols in any case. In other words, chiastic parallelism is partly handicapped. If the verse was an independent and original creation, one would expect the parallelism to function better; the prepositions should correspond to each other. In any case, the Masoretes did not understand the verse in such a way. However, if on the basis of these problems one clings onto the masoretic division and takes the golden and silver idols together as a single object, one could ask why is the word אלהים repeated? For example, אל תעשה את אלוהים כף וא היה, why would be

Israelites did not see, they should not make an image out of Him. With the usual translation the connection between the motive clause and the prohibition is not so evident: Why should Yahwe’s speaking from heaven necessitate His primacy and prohibit the making of idols of other gods? In spite of these observations, one should incline to the traditional understanding of v. 23, since the expression בַּלָּתֵשׁ מִלְכָּתָּ יָהֶה is usually met with the word בַּל vocalized as an object marker. In many cases one cannot distinguish between the two, but the clear majority of distinguishable cases are for the object marker. Jer 5:18 is the only clear passage where the preposition is used.

13 We would then expect something like בַּלָּתֵשׁ אָתַי מַלְכָּת בַּל אָתַי מַלְכָּת יָהֶה.

14 According to Baentsch (1903, 186-187), any idols, those of Yahwe as well, are meant.

15 Childs 1974, 446; Nicholson 1977, 428 and Hossfeld 1982, 180. The chiastic solution is to some extent supported by the Greek translation: οὐ ποιήσας ἵνα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀρχηγοῦ καὶ θεοῦ χρυσοῦ οὐ ποιήσας ἵνα τοῦ ἵνατος. However, this is mainly due to the fact that there ἴνα is ignored and replaced with ἵνατος. For example, Osumi (1991, 192-193) tries to prove the independence of vv. 22b-23 on the basis of syllable-rhythm.

16 If there was originally a chiastic structure, why would the Masoretes have changed it into something much more complex?
more convenient. In addition, one would be left with the question, why is the verb repeated. The problems in this verse must be explained by other means. A plausible explanation emerges when we understand the nature and intent of the verse as well as its relation to the preceding text.

As a whole, vv. 22-23 are distinctly separated from its immediate context: Verse 22 uses יתיה to refer to Israel’s God whereas vv. 18-21 consistently use אלוהים. Verse 22 uses בָּנִי ישאר for the Israelites in contrast with the שָׁמָּיִם of vv. 18-21. Verse 22 assumes that Yahwe has directly spoken with the Israelites from heaven, while the narrative of the past two chapters suggest that Moses functioned as an intermediary between Yahwe and the Israelites, and that the people at the most only heard the noise from the mountain. The writer of Ex 20:22-23 has another perspective. Moreover, addressing the hearer/reader in the plural, the law in v. 23 differs from the following laws which use the singular. Consequently, vv. 22-23 do not correspond well with their current location. Their exact relation to the context will become evident when we observe how they relate to the preceding Sinai narrative and the Decalogue.

Verse 22 repeats several words from Ex 19:3 and 19:4:

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\text{Ex 19:3} & \text{Ex 19:4} & \text{Ex 20:22} \\
\hline
\text{יְרוּם} & \text{דְּתָנֵר} & \text{יְרוּם} \\
\text{הלֹא מָשָׁה} & \text{לאֹ מֶשָּה} & \text{הלֹא מָשָׁה} \\
\text{אָלֹ-נָבִי} & \text{אָלֹ-נָבִי} & \text{אָלֹ-נָבִי} \\
\text{יְהוָה} & \text{יְהוָה} & \text{יְהוָה} \\
\text{לָבֹנִי יְשָׁרָאָל} & \text{לָבֹנִי יְשָׁרָאָל} & \text{לָבֹנִי יְשָׁרָאָל} \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

In addition, Yahwe speaks in the first person in both passages (משה in 20:22 and יתיה in 19:4). Similarly, v. 23 could be seen to repeat the approximate content, but not the exact form, of two verses from the Decalogue, Ex 20:3 and 4:

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|}
\hline
\text{Ex 20:3-4} & \text{Ex 20:23} \\
\hline
\text{לָא תַעֲשֵׂה} - לָא תַעֲשֵׂה & \text{לָא תַעֲשֵׂה} - לָא תַעֲשֵׂה \\
\text{לָא תַעֲשֵׂה} - לָא תַעֲשֵׂה & \text{לָא תַעֲשֵׂה} - לָא תַעֲשֵׂה \\
\text{לא תַעֲשֵׂה} - לָא תַעֲשֵׂה & \text{לא תַעֲשֵׂה} - לָא תַעֲשֵׂה \\
\text{אלֹ-אָדָם} - אָדָם & \text{אָדָם} - אָדָם \\
\text{אלֹ-אָדָם} - אָדָם & \text{אָדָם} - אָדָם \\
\text{לָא תַעֲשֵׂה} - לָא תַעֲשֵׂה & \text{לָא תַעֲשֵׂה} - לָא תַעֲשֵׂה \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

Although the phraseological connection is not as visible as in v. 22, the content of v. 23 corresponds well to what is said in the first two commandments of the Decalogue, and it is also presented in a similar order. There may be a conscious relationship between the two passages. Since it is hardly possible that the first two commandments of the Decalogue were formed in relation to Ex 20:23, the opposite directions of influence is probable. This would explain the difficulties in v. 23: It is not a free construction, but was formed in relation to the Decalogue. The use of בָּנִי in v. 23 could then be regarded as a reflection of בָּנִי in v. 3, which may help us in understanding the problematic בָּנִי. Both words have the same function of expressing that the other gods or idols are a challenge to Yahwe. Further on, the double use of אָדָם in v. 23 is explained by its correspondence to the words אָדָם and אָדָם in the

\[17\] Compare with similar passages like Dt 4:28; 28:64.

\[18\] The fact that the second commandment is a later addition (see e.g., Levin 1985b, 170 and Veijola 1993, 70-71) already makes it clear what was the direction of influence. Ex 20:22אָבַי-23 seems to know the first two commandments in their final form.
Decalogue. The first אלהים corresponds to the first commandment and the second one to the second commandment. With the double use of the word the writer skillfully linked other gods and idols. This link betrays the writer’s view on other gods: For him they are idols.

As for Ex 20:22 and its relation to Ex 19:3-4, a similar direction of influence is most probable. At least the motivation clause in v. 22b, which has no function without v. 23 and thus cannot have existed before it, must stem from the same or a later stage than the insertion of the Decalogue into the Sinai narrative. It is natural to ascribe all vv. 22a-23 to one writer who, adding the passage, tried to attach it to the previous text by adopting phrases from there. It would be more difficult to believe that many successive writers had the same technique of adopting phrases from the preceding text, especially when the passages they are attaching to are not in the immediate context.

Verse 22a does not necessarily belong to the same layer as the rest of vv. 22-23. It does not repeat any of the preceding text. In fact, if v. 22a is not earlier than the addition of 22a-23, the following laws would be left without an introductory clause. On the other hand, if one removes vv. 22a-23 from the text, vv. 24-26 are a commandment to Moses, not to the Israelites. One solution would be to regard v. 22a as an introduction to Ex 21:1, which would then imply that vv. 24-26 are an even later addition. From the literary-critical perspective, this would seem to be a possible solution, but it is unlikely that vv. 24-26 are such a late addition because they are in contradiction with the deuteronomistic cult centralization. On the other hand, Ex 21:1 was, at least at some point, intended as the introduction to the laws, which then implies that Ex 20:24-26 are indeed a later addition. In this context, however, it suffices to examine Ex 20:22-23 and especially their redactional status.

Redaction Criticism

Verses 22a-23 are an addition preoccupied with the prohibition against making images. We also meet similar additions preoccupied with images elsewhere in the OT, particularly in the DH. For example, there is reason to believe that the second commandment of the Decalogue

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20 It is commonly accepted that the Decalogue was later inserted into the Sinai narrative. Admittedly, one could argue that Ex 19:3-4 were an even later addition to the Sinai narrative, yet it is much easier to assume a single direction of influence than a double one, especially when one cannot find any particular reason why the writer of 19:3-4 would reflect on the following text. In any case, it is always easier to assume that a new addition tries to attach to a preceding text, rather than to a following text.

21 Irrespective of one’s opinion on the question, which verse (20:24; 21:1 or 21:2) v. 22a originally introduced. The question needs not concern us here. Similarly, it is irrelevant to the present investigation whether v. 22a is a later addition to vv. 19-21 or not. The use of different words for God suggests at least that they belong to different layers.
was a late addition. Further on, in Dt 4:15-16a, 19 we meet an expansion with a very similar content as vv. 22ab-23. In all of these three passages the writer tries to bind the first two commandments closely together. In other words, the prohibition against making images is subjected to the command to worship Yahwe alone. Dt 4:15-16a, 19 and Ex 20:22ab-23 are further linked by a very similar motivation for the prohibition; the Israelites did not see Yahwe’s form when He spoke to them. Both the addition of the second commandment to the Decalogue and Dt 4:15-16a, 19 can be identified as nomistic or late-nomistic. However, it appears that in Dt 4:16b-18 a further, probably a Priestly, redactor who was also interested in banning the making of images expanded the text. In contrast with other passages of similar content, the Priestly editor is concerned about the Israelites making an image of any of Yahwe’s creations. The perspective is more on the general prohibition against making images than on the religious threat they would pose. This is shown in the way the redactor lists all possible creatures. The message of the Priestly editor is: Do not make images in any circumstances. In contrast, for the nomistic writer in Dt 4:15-16a and the second commandment the issue is important because the idols are a religious challenge to Yahwe. This is also the main concern of Ex 20:22b-23. The nomistic origin of Ex 20:22ab-23 is further strengthened by its connections to Ex 32 and Dt 9, the latter of which must be regarded as nomistic at its earliest stage. According to Dohmen, Ex 32 is dependent on Dt 9 and 1K 12 when it comes to the prohibition against making idols. In his view, a later dtr redactor brings Ex 32 in line with the attack on idols and the second commandment, although a JE editor already acknowledged the idea of a golden calf. Moreover, Schwienhorst-Schönberger has further shown that Ex 20:22b-23 is connected to Ex 23:13, and that together these two passages frame the CC. Ex 23:13 shows affinity with the nomists: It warns about the (אלהים) and then commands the Israelites to keep (שלם) the laws (משפטים) that Yahwe has given. The latter idea, although often with another object (e.g., מנה) is met frequently in the nomistic texts. Finally one may observe that the idea of Yahwe speaking from heaven is otherwise met in late texts only. Taking the

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22 As many scholars (e.g., Zimmerli 1963, 240-242) have pointed out, the warning not to worship them (אלהים) in Ex 20:5 and Dt 5:9 refers to something plural in the preceding text. Since the mass is in the sg, it is reasonable to assume that the reference is to theJE editor in the first commandment. Therefore, it may be deduced that the prohibition against making idols is a later addition. Thus, Levin 1985b, 170-171 and Veijola 1993, 70-71.

23 See Knapp 1987, 68-73, 113.

24 In Ex 20:22b-23, Yahwe spoke from heaven, whereas in Dt 4:15, He spoke from the midst of the fire.

25 See my analysis in chapter 2.5.


28 Dohmen 1985, 126-127, 144-147.

29 For details on Ex 23:13, see chapter 3.3.

30 E.g., 1K 8:32, 36, 43, 49; see Veijola 1982, 138. In earlier texts, Yahwe lives on Mt. Zion and not in heaven. For example, Is 8:18; Joel 3:17, 21 and 1K 8:27 show that the question was acute and that there had been discussion about it — probably during the Exile.
phraseological contacts, it seems that Ex 20:22aβ-23 is nomistic or even late-nomistic. On the other hand, the emphasis on the other gods’ material aspect could imply that the passage is even later. The late or post-nomistic Dt 7:25-26 is very similar to Ex 20:22aβ-23. In addition, the idol criticism of Deutero-Isaiah is also reminiscent of Ex 20:22aβ-23. We are in the nebulous border-zone between the late-nomists and post-nomists. Such a clear cut division between late- and post-nomists may be artificial. In any case, Ex 20:22-23 cannot be used as proof for early intolerance of other gods.

Interpretation and Conclusions

The fact that a late redactor placed the prohibition against making idols at the very beginning of the CC shows the importance of this issue to him. It emphasizes this point that the same redactor did not add laws concerning other issues in the vicinity. He was preoccupied with this issue.

Although a very short passage, some observations may be made on the writer’s views on the other gods. The use of the word אלוהים, referring to idols, suggests that the writer wishes to put other gods into the level of idols. Accordingly, the author emphasizes their material aspect by using the words כוס and חרב. Other gods are on a different level than Yahwe, who is a heavenly God (מעזרה השמיא דבורא) in v. 22. It is very hard to judge whether the other gods had already ceased to exist in the mind of this writer or whether the material aspect is only rhetorically emphasized to strengthen the prohibition. Many nomistic texts would suggest the latter, but, as noted, it is possible that this passage is already later than the nomists. In any case, the text fits well with the idol criticism we find in Deutero-Isaiah’s text, which similarly stresses the material aspect of the other gods.

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31 This conclusion is in dire contradiction with Hossfeld’s (1982, 284) theory, according to which, the addition of the Decalogue into Ex stems from Priestly editors. Since Ex 20:22aβ-23 is dependent on the Decalogue and if it is nomistic, the Decalogue in Ex could not be later than nomistic. On the other hand, it is not impossible that Ex 20:22aβ-23 is even later than the nomists.

32 Cf. Dt 4:15-16a, 19, where their existence is acknowledged.
3.2. Exodus 22:19

Whoever sacrifices to the elohim shall be destroyed; (except to Yahwe alone)

Introduction

Ex 22:19 is often regarded as one of the earliest prohibitions against worshipping other gods. Despite obvious problems in interpreting its meaning, the verse is commonly taken to prohibit sacrifices to gods other than Yahwe. For example, Holzinger, although not certain which text-critical reconstruction is correct, argues that the background of the sentence is Yahwism as an exclusive religion. Further on, the verse is usually dated to the pre-exilic era. Regarding it as the oldest explicit commandment intolerant of other gods, Albertz dates the verse to the 8th century. Attributing it to what he calls gottesrechtliche Redaktion, Schwienhorst-Schönberger sees Ex 22:19 as at least pre-deuternomic. Halbe puts the verse into the second expansion layer of the Covenant Code. He regards the layer as early monarchical. Otto attributes v. 19a to a pre-dtr edition of the CC, and v. 19b to a dtr editor.

Textual Notes

In addition to the evident problems in understanding its exact meaning — what exactly is meant by the Elohim? — the verse is difficult from a textual perspective. In the MT and in the Greek translations the latter part of the verse is awkwardly connected to the preceding command. In addition, considerable variations are met among the witnesses:

1 E.g., Hossfeld 1982, 266; Albertz 1992, 97-98; 287 and Schreiner 1995, 234.
2 Holzinger 1900, 91. Similarly Beer - Galling 1939, 116.
3 Albertz 1992, 97-98 (footnote 108, where he dates Ex 34:14 to the following 7th century).
4 Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1990, 284-85. According to him, the verse belongs “in den Raum dieser Nachinterpretation von Ex 34, 15b, 16” (p. 320-321) largely on the basis of affinities between Ex 22:17-18 and 34:15b-16. In my opinion, the affinities are on such a general level [see p. 321-322: in the feminine (22:17) or the sodomy (22:18) would allegedly correspond to הרע after other gods (34:15b) or that the theme of sacrifice, זרעים, is common to both] that the relationship of these passages cannot be established with any reasonable certainty. In any case, Schwienhorst-Schönberger regards Ex 34:14 as older than Ex 22:19a.
5 Halbe 1975, 417-418, 479-482. The older layers of the Covenant Code — as Halbe reconstructs them — did not specifically attack other gods. I deem that Halbe’s argumentation moves on very speculative lines, as he tries to reconstruct the historical context to be in David’s and Solomon’s reigns.
6 Otto 1988, 5; 1996a, 38.
In general, the verse contains two main variants. On the one hand, the SP (as well as $G^b$ etc.) adds after אלוהים. This variant makes it explicitly clear that the Elohim refer to the forbidden other gods. The common phrase אלוהים אדירים is used to make the intention unambiguous. One the other hand, other witnesses specifically note that Yahwe is not included in this prohibition and that He is not one of the אלוהים one may not sacrifice to (v. 19b). This line is followed by the MT, $G^a$ and the Vulgate. In addition, there appear to be some witnesses which follow both variants: $G^b$ etc. and the Targums. However, this solution seems to be secondary since the existence of both variants is superfluous as they compete with each other.

It is clearly a corrupt reading.

The main question is, which of the two main variants — the one offered by the SP or the majority solution — is better, or is there perhaps another solution? It seems obvious that the second part of the verse is a later addition. It is so awkwardly connected to the first part that it hardly derives from the original author. It has the air of an expansion that tries to explain some ambiguity in the older text. It clarifies the meaning of the preceding sentence, which would appear to prohibit all worship of gods, including Yahwe. The same conclusion may be drawn from the other variant as well. The addition of אדירים similarly arises from the

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7 The Greek translations contain many minor variants, which, however, are unimportant for the main question.

8 Thus, Wevers (1977) in the Göttingen edition of the Septuagint.

9 It is not necessary to assume a literary dependence between these witnesses since, in view of the later OT attitude towards other gods, the addition of אדירים is a very natural one. The Palestinian Targums use the word אדירים which corresponds to the Hebrew אלוהים, but in the Aramaic this clarification is superfluous since the Targums have used פתיות, which refers to idols, instead of the more general אלוהים.

10 It seems that the original Greek translation followed the MT — thus, Wevers in the Göttingen edition of the Septuagint; for some of his arguments see Wevers 1990, 351 — in spite of the fact that both major $G$ witnesses, A and B, deviate from it in some details. The addition of סנאטיו in B is most likely influenced by the preceding verse. Its omission from the Old Greek is supported by the majority of witnesses. On the other hand, the סאדו in A is superfluous since it competes with the second half of the verse. Either one of the variants suffices to make the text clear, while the existence of both, as in A, makes it more ambiguous again. Logically, one might deduce that the text of A implies Yahwe to have been one of the סאדו.

11 One of the variants suffices to make the text clear, while the existence of both makes it more ambiguous. The text with both variants implies that Yahwe was one of the אלוהים אדירים.
ambiguous and general use of the word לֶאָלָהָם. The text was corrected to conform with the common לֶאָלָהָם בְּצִיָּֽהוֹן. One could argue that the SP omitted v. 19b intentionally but this is unlikely since it is always hazardous to argue that something in the old text was intentionally omitted. It would lie on the difficult assumption that a Samaritan copyist omitted the half-verse due to its ambiguity, which he then himself corrected by another addition. Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that both variants are later additions arising from the ambiguous content. By adding explanatory words, later copyists and translators wanted to avoid the embarrassment that the command might prohibit sacrifices to Yahwe. In most witnesses the command was harmonized to conform to laws that prohibit the worship of other gods. Therefore, the original text may be unearthed from the elements that are common to all witnesses (לֶאָלָהָם בְּצִיָּֽהוֹן), but which was not preserved as such in any of them. The now emerging text-form opens a variety of possibilities for interpretation.

Analysis

Ex 22:19a is clearly linked with the previous two commands in vv. 17-18. All three commands are short and concise, and use the participle to introduce the malefactor who is presumably sentenced to death. It is generally accepted that these commands are a later — although an early — addition to the older Covenant Code. There is nothing particular to suggest that v. 19a is later or earlier than vv. 17-18, and therefore, the three verses may be treated as a group. They are probably connected to the laws in 21:12-17, which use the participle, and which deliver death sentences as well. However, even if one would make the assumption that Ex 21:12-17 and 22:17-19a stem from the same redactor, there is little to identify him with any known editor(s). The language and theology of the passages are not

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12 Earlier research tended to reconstruct the text after the SP. Thus, e.g., Dillmann 1880, 239; Holzinger 1900, 91 and Baentsch 1903, 201.

13 This conclusion would make the dtr origin of v. 19b highly unlikely — So Otto 1988, 5 and Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1990, 322 — because the argument would lie on the highly improbable assumption that the Samaritan text-tradition deviated from the masoretic one before the dtr redactors.

14 See, for example, the discussion in Lohfink 1982, 193-194 or Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1990, 317.

15 There is the possibility of an omission by homoioteleuton in לֶאָלָהָם בְּצִיָּֽהוֹן. The original text would then have corresponded to the SP. This would then have occurred in such an early stage of the textual development that all other witnesses except the SP followed the omission. Admittedly, this reconstruction is not impossible, but it would rest on the SP alone. Nevertheless, that some ג versions have corrected the text with a ἐπιμολύτς shows that the addition of רָוְזָאָא in the SP was a most natural one.

16 See discussion on the meaning of רָוְזָאָא later on. See also Lohfink 1982.

17 So, for example, Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1990, 284-285 and Halbe 1975, 460-461.

18 See Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1990, 24-28. According to Otto (1988, 32), Ex 22:17-19a are from a later redactor (pre-dtr), who has formed them “als chiasatische Entsprechung” to Ex 21:12-17. He also acknowledges that the laws in 22:17-19a might have a pre-history prior to their location in the CC.
particularly dtn, dtr or Priestly. One should therefore infer that the passages are at least pre-dtr. They are probably even pre-dtn — accepting that Ex 22:17-19a belongs to the same redactional layer as Ex 21:12-17 — for Ex 21:12-17 contains laws that seem to be further developed in Dt. Consequently, the traditional early dating of Ex 22:19 appears to be on fairly solid ground.

In contrast, the almost universal interpretation of the verse as evidently intolerant of other gods is fairly weakly founded. The corrections made by the versions show that the original text is not clear. The command in its original form in v. 19a seems to rule out all sacrifice to gods, including Yahwe. Although the word אָלוֹהִים is open to a variety of interpretations, most scholars, clearly influenced by the final form of the OT and by the later corrections, read the command as if it prohibited sacrifices to the אָלוֹהִים. In addition, although the use of the verb מָתַת is not without problems, it is commonly read to be a synonym for the death penalty. This is despite the fact that in the rest of the OT literature the word never refers to capital punishment in a proper law text. If one, regardless of these

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19 The two passages seem to structure the oldest pieces of the law code, whereas the dtr additions — Ex 20:22-23, 23:13 and possibly 22:20 — frame the whole CC; for details see Schwienhorst-Schönberger’s (1990, 22-37) structural analysis on the CC.

20 Some of the laws in Ex 21:12-17 correspond to laws in Dt. This relation is easier to explain from Ex to Dt than from Ex to Dt since the laws in Ex are more concise and short in relation to those in Dt. For example, Ex 21:17 ⇒ Dt 21:18f: The latter expands the command by explaining some details on the case, for example, the manner of the execution. Similarly, Ex 21:16 ⇒ Dt 24:7: Dt adds some phrases. One could also suggest that Dt 18:10 is a further development of Ex 22:17.

21 Regarding the following argumentation, the exact date of the verse is of no concern for this study.

22 On this issue, see Lohfink’s (1982, 192-213) extensive article.

23 The word is most commonly used in the hiph. (in Ex 22:19a hoph.) in reference to foreign cities that are put under the ban and annihilated. A similar use is known from extra-Biblical texts as well (Mesha-stele). There are three passages that could be used to defend the traditional interpretation of Ex 22:19a: Dt 13:16-18; Lv 27:29 and Ezr 10:8. Like Ex 22:19a, the last two passages present the verb in the hoph., whereas the passage in Dt with its hiph. is more akin to the use of the verb in military contexts. In fact, there is reason to believe that Dt 13:16-18 is influenced by passages of military context (Dt 20 and Jos 6-8) and that the whole text in Dt 13 was not a real law (see chapter 2.1). As for Lv 27:29, there is nothing to suggest that the verb is used as a punishment for a crime.

The preceding text (vv. 22-28) deals with offerings one is to present to Yahwe. Understood against that background, v. 29 would seem to refer to a person who was given to Yahwe as a human sacrifice (not unknown to Israel, cf. Jdg 11:30-40). In v. 28 it is explicitly said that one may מָתַת a person from his property to Yahwe. If one is to reject the idea of human sacrifices to Yahwe in such a late text, there is another possible interpretation. One may understand the use of the root מָתַת as a special dedication to the divinity without any intention to kill (this would then necessitate the positive use of the verb, and would then support a similar interpretation in Ex 22:19, see below). This interpretation would then necessitate seeing v. 29b as a later addition because it specifically states that the person is to be מַזֵּה. This addition could stem from a later redactor who read Lv 27:29a against the background of Ex 22:19. The phrase מַזֵּה could then have been adopted from Ex 22:18. Seeing Lv 27:29b as a later addition would make v. 29a more understandable in its context. Therefore, Lv 27:29 cannot be used to support the interpretation of Ex 22:19. In any case, Lv 27:29 does not use מָתַת as a punishment for a crime. In Ezr 10:8, the punishment is not used against humans, but against property. It should not be used to support the interpretation of מָתַת as a
problems, supposes that the law was intolerant of other gods one has to explain: Why was it put into such a marginal position, coming after laws prohibiting sorcery and sodomy? How can a law of such revolutionary importance be formulated in such ambiguous terms? It should by all means be clear and in a more dominant position. Further on, since the command is presented in such abbreviated terms, it would seem that something self-evident to all readers was originally meant. These observations insist that something else than a revolutionary law prohibiting all sacrifice to other gods was intended.

I will present the most plausible interpretations, although there is the unfortunate possibility that we may never reach the original intent of the verse with any certainty.

1. “He who sacrifices to the gods shall be declared sacred/shall be devoted”

Understanding the verb סנהדר in its positive sense it is possible to take the verse as a command to specifically devote, i.e., declare pure those who sacrifice to gods. With this interpretation the ambiguous use of the word לאזרות would be solved: It refers to all gods. The main problem with this interpretation is its context, namely verses 17-18 which are clear prohibitions threatening with capital punishment. It would be natural to take v. 19a as a law of similar nature. One could suggest that the law was originally in another position and that with a new interpretation it was later inserted after Ex 22:17-18. However, this suggestion is highly speculative and unlikely. The uniform construction and form of the three laws imply a common origin.

death penalty. One must also observe that all three passages are most likely post-exilic (for Dt 13:16-18 see chapter 2.1.), whereas Ex 22:19a is probably very early.

According to Halbe (1975, 416-421), the verse is in the center of the CC, but this opinion arises more from the content of the verse than from structural considerations. Compare with the structural analysis by Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1990, 23-37. Osumi (1991, 219-220) has difficulties in attributing the verse to a specific layer, which shows that the verse can hardly be the center of the CC.

Compare with the position of corresponding laws in the Decalogue or in Dt. The latter was originally led by the idea of cult centralization, and accordingly we may observe a dominance of this idea in the earliest layer of the book. In the Decalogue, the laws of revolutionary importance are naturally at the very beginning of the book.

These problems are more severe for those who date the verse to the time of Hezekiah’s reform, implying a revolution, that is, a transition from some form of polytheism to intolerant monolatry. In that situation, a command to abandon other gods or cease sacrificing to them must be much clearer. Those who prefer an earlier, pre-monarchic, dating can always appeal that the matter was so self-evident to the Israelites that everyone understood what was meant by the command.

The positive meaning of the verb סנהדר is more common in other Semitic languages. For example, in Arabic, the equivalent verb means: 1) to be prohibited, become sacred 2) to pronounce sacred, make sacred. In later Hebrew the root in hiph. is used in the positive sense: to dedicate for priestly or sacred use. See Jastrow s.a., 503.
2. “He who sacrifices to the gods shall devote”

Abandoning the masoretic vocalization and taking the verb וָדַבָּה in the hiph‘i l and in its positive sense, one could propose that the verse commands the worshipper to specifically devote his sacrifices to God. In addition to the deviating context (vv. 17-18), the difficulty lies in the lack of an object. Nevertheless, it could be suggested that the object (a sacrifice) was so evident that it was not necessary to mention it.

3. “A sacrifice to gods shall be devoted/declared sacred”

In other words, “you shall devote/declare sacred sacrifices to gods”. Abandoning the masoretic vocalization of the first word (בָּכַל בֶּן) one might see it as the object of the sentence. The animals to be sacrificed would have been declared sacred before the sacrificial act. Here one could refer to the sacrificial laws of Leviticus (e.g., Lv 1:4; 3:2) where one had to put hands on the head of the animals before sacrifice. The meaning of this ritual is not clear but it seems to sanctify the sacrifice in some way. Among other passages, Lv 6:20 implies that sacrifices are holy or sacred and separated from ordinary foods. It is natural to infer that there were rituals and commands to declare sacrificial foods as holy. Ex 22:19 would not be an impossible candidate, yet the context of the verse remains the main obstacle for this interpretation.

4. “He who sacrifices to the ancestral gods shall be dedicated unto destruction”

Supporting his argument by examples from other ANE religions, Loretz has proposed that the words אלהים in Ex 22:19a may be understood as referring to ancestral gods and their cult figures. Although one can question whether any figures are meant, the general interpretation that the law deals with ancestral gods would make sense in the light of its context: The prohibition is located with laws of equal importance. There are several passages which show that the word אלהים was used to refer to ancestral gods: In 1S 28:13 the dead Samuel is called an אלהים; in Ex 21:6 it is stated that אלהים lives at the door...
One may reason that these are the dead ancestors who continued to live with their families. Moreover, Dt 26:14 shows that there was a practice to feed or sacrifice to the dead. There is reason to suspect that necromancy, correspondence with the dead, was prohibited at some point in Israel’s history, although Ex 22:19 prohibits only sacrifices to them but not communication with them. According to Tropper, the general prohibition against practicing necromancy is an exilic idea. Ex 22:19 might then show an earlier stage in the development of prohibiting all communication with the dead. At this stage only sacrifices would have been made illicit. Admittedly, the dating of Ex 22:19 is a very difficult question.

5. “He who sacrifices to a God/gods shall be dedicated unto destruction”

This interpretation leaves some space for speculation. In addition to the traditional suggestion that it generally prohibits all sacrifices to other gods (intolerance), one could see behind the command an attempt to limit private sacrifices and to leave the sacrificial cult to religious professionals. It would solve the ambiguity that the word is used in such a general sense, that is, including Yahwe: The gods in general are meant. Further on, it is not impossible to see the cult centralization reflected in Dt 12 in the background. Private sacrifices to god(s) were prohibited because the cult had been centralized in Jerusalem. The nonspecific nature of the prohibition — not recalling that sacrifices were, of course, possible in Jerusalem — would be explained by the probable state of affairs that only priests were allowed to sacrifice. However, a general prohibition against sacrifices is of such importance that we are faced with the same problem the traditional interpretation has: Why is it presented in a marginal position and in such short and ambiguous terms? One may compare this law with Urdeuteronomium, where the laws concerning the cult centralization are at the very beginning of the book (ch. 12), where the theme leads the following laws as well, and where the prohibition is unambiguous.

31 In the final text, the word is used with the definite article, but this does not mean that God was meant. It would be incomprehensible, although implied by the MT, to think that God lived at the door. It is not impossible, however, that household gods were kept at the door. This would be another interpretation of the verse.
32 The importance of this passage for interpreting the word was pointed out to me by Veijola.
33 Tropper 1989, 340-342.
34 That is, the law was directed to people in general. It was not necessary to list exceptions, since it would have been self-evident to all that priests in Jerusalem were allowed sacrifice.
35 It is problematic to assume that in the background was a homogeneous society where the prohibition was so self-evident to all that no details were needed and that it was not necessary to stress the issue by putting it into a more prominent position.
6. “He who sacrifices to (other) gods shall be dedicated unto destruction”

In spite of the text-critical correction there is a possibility that the traditional interpretation of the verse is correct. One would then have to read the word אדירים into the verse assuming that it is implied. This ambiguous and general use of the word אלהים is the main obstacle to this interpretation. At any rate, this suggestion is only one of many that are at least as realistic and possible.

Conclusions

All the interpretations have problems, but the variety of possibilities shows that the traditional interpretation is all but self-evident. In fact, propositions 4 and 5 are at least as possible as the traditional interpretation which arises from the monolatric or monotheistic final form of the OT but which is weakly founded. At the present stage of research, proposition 4, Loretz’s theory that the verse refers to ancestral gods, seems to be the most realistic alternative. Propositions 1, 2 and 3 are encumbered by a thematically differing context. These suggestions should, therefore, be regarded as unlikely, unless one could establish an independent origin for them. They would need more support from other passages in the OT. At any rate, in contrast with the near consensus in scholarship, the verse may not be used as proof for intolerance of other gods in an early period. In addition to the severe problem of dating, the verse is too ambiguous to be used in a reconstruction of Israel’s early religion.
3.3. Ex 23:13

| Watch yourself in all that I have said to you. |
| Do not mention the name(s) of other gods. |
| Let it (them) not be heard from your mouth. |

Introduction

Ex 23:13a exhorts Israel to follow the commandments that Yahwe has just given. Verse 13b then commands Israel to shun from even pronouncing the names of other gods. Many scholars regard the verse as a late addition. Hossfeld ascribes the addition to the Priestly editor who — also adding Ex 20:22-23 — wanted to give frames to the Covenant Code. Similarly, Schwienhorst-Schönberger has argued that these verses frame the older law code, although he has opted for late-dtr origin. Dtr origin is also supported by Otto, who suggests that the verse, together with Ex 20:22-23 frames the CC. Pre-dtr origin finds supporters especially in older research, but also recently in Halbe and Albertz, the latter of whom dates the law to Hezekiah’s reform.

Analysis

Verse 13 differs from the rest of the chapter by its plural form of address. The chapter in vv. 1-24 is otherwise thoroughly in the singular. Further on, verses preceding v. 13 present laws on observing the Sabbath, followed, after the excursion in v. 13, by laws on annual festivals. In the middle of laws that deal with the calendar, a prohibition against mentioning the names

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1 G has translated the whole verse in the plural, but this is a natural harmonization of the irregular Numeruswechsel.
2 Earlier research already acknowledged that the verse is a later addition. For example, Dillmann 1880, 245; Holzinger 1900, 96 and Noth 1959, 154.
3 Hossfeld 1982, 184-185.
4 Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1990, 398-400.
5 Otto 1988, 6.
7 Except v. 13bβ which is singular.
8 In addition to v. 13, in all of Ex 23:1-19 the singular form of address is broken only in vv. 9 and 17. Verse 17 refers to the historical setting in the Pentateuch, which then is a clear indication of a later hand. In v. 19 the plural is content-motivated because the law concerns all men of Israel, and thus the plural could not have been avoided.
of other gods is peculiar. In fact, the prohibition differs from all other laws of the CC; the other laws in the code — also those concerning other gods — deal with very concrete and central areas of life, whereas Ex 23:13b is extended to a more personal level. The prohibition is closer to the religious exhortations one finds in Dt than to the otherwise practical laws of the CC. This fact already suggests that v. 13b had a different origin than the laws in the surrounding text. Verse 13a also resembles more of the homiletic exhortations of Dt than the rest of the CC. These exhortations in Dt are often regarded as late frames. For these reasons it may tentatively be assumed that Ex 23:13 is a late addition to the preceding Covenant Code. For further evidence one must turn to redaction-critical considerations.

**Redaction Criticism**

Several indices betray the redactional connections of Ex 23:13. First, the verse seems to be dependent on the addition of the Decalogue into the Sinai narrative. In accordance with the Decalogue, and also with Ex 20:22-23, the phrase אַנְשֵׁה אֶת מִצְחֵי אֶשֶׁר אָרְדָּם אֶלְכְּס in Ex 23:13a assumes that Yahwe has spoken directly with Israel, while in the basic Sinai narrative Moses functioned as the intermediary between Yahwe and Israel. Further on, the prohibition not even to mention the names of other gods assumes that a general prohibition against worshipping other gods was given before. Without a general prohibition, a specific exhortation such as Ex 23:13b would be incomprehensible. In the preceding chapters the first commandment of the Decalogue is the most plausible candidate because it is the only location where the otherwise common expression אַלַּחַם אָוָרִים occurs. The only other conceivable possibilities would be Ex 20:22-23 and 22:19. The latter not only lacks the אַלַּחַם אָוָרִים after but with its similarly concrete perspective, prohibition against sacrificing, it can hardly be taken as a general prohibition on which 23:13b would lean. The same can be said of Ex 20:22-23. Furthermore, on structural grounds Schwienhorst-Schönberger has argued that Ex 20:22-23 and Ex 23:13 both stem from the same late-dtr redactor. Consequently, both passages most likely lean on the first and second commandments of the Decalogue. The connection to the late-deuteronomists is further corroborated by a clear similarity with Jos 23:7, a nomistic text:

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9 Verses 14-19 and 10-12 are often ascribed to different layers, but it is probable that they were together before the addition of v. 13.
10 According to Childs (1974, 483), 23:13b is more of a homiletic gloss than a formal conclusion.
11 Some verses in the following text also assume that Yahwe has spoken with Israel (v. 14, 15, 18, 20, 22, 23 etc.). Especially, vv. 20-33 are usually thought to contain late material that is dependent on the deuteronomists. See Kaiser 1984, 69.
12 Even further, it is not all that clear that Ex 22:19 should be understood as a law against other gods. See chapter 3.2.
13 Schwienhorst-Schönberger (1990, 398-400) suggests that both verses (and Ex 20:20a\b) have the same textstrukturierende Funktion in relation to the older text. Similarly Otto 1988, 6.
Moreover, although appearing in a form not met elsewhere, the phrase הבככ אלוהים אימרה אליכם משמע is reminiscent of the nomistic texts. Dt’s nomistic parenesis is loaded with similar exhortations to obey Yahwe’s commandments. Although Dt usually uses the verb זוהי (pi.) instead of אמר אימרה, it is evident that the אמר אימרה is used in a very similar way. At least some dependence should be assumed. Further on, one might refer to the irregular Numeruswechsel inside the verse (between vv. 13α and 13β). A similar irregularity is met in the latest layers of Dt. Taking all the evidence, one should regard Ex 23:13 as influenced by nomistic terminology.

**Interpretation and Conclusion**

It is sometimes suggested that Ex 23:13 prohibits the worship of other gods in a very concrete form. It is an expansion of the general prohibition against worshipping other gods.

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15 Most commonly the idea is expressed with the verb שמר followed by the object marker/as introducing a noun denoting the commandments. E.g., Dt 6:17; 7:11; 8:1. It may be suggested that the deviating form in Ex 23:13 derives from the fact that here the ממלכ תנה precedes immediately the exhortation, whereas in the parenesis of Dt as elsewhere it refers to a more distant text.

16 It is of course possible that the peculiar singular in v. 13β is a later corruption influenced by the following text which is in the singular as well. It can hardly be taken as a sign of a later addition because v. 13β does not bring any new aspect or new information to the text. It just repeats in other words what is said in v. 13α.

17 This result also puts the Priestly origin of the Decalogue in Ex under pressure. If late-dtr texts lean on the Decalogue, the work cannot be an addition.

18 Like Albertz 1992, 287.
In the background may lie the belief that pronouncing names of other gods has magical effects; pronouncing a divinity’s name summons the divinity in some way. On the other hand, the prohibition may be connected to making oaths in the name of a god or strengthening oaths by a divinity’s name.

Implementing or upholding Ex 23:13 would require considerable religious control. Ex 23:13 would then assume a homogeneous society where other gods have already disappeared or gone underground. Their position is so weak that the writer may even prohibit the use of their names. On the other hand, if Ex 23:13 is read as a religious exhortation, it would reflect the hopes of the writer rather than any real situation. In any case, the verse is yet another *individual* and *separate* addition by a late writer, influenced by or close to the nomists we meet in the DH.

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19 This idea is met in many religions.
20 This interpretation was pointed out to me by Prof. Veijola. The third commandment of the Decalogue (Ex 20:7 / Dt 5:11) may also have referred to strengthening an oath by a divinity’s name (see Hossfeld 1982, 243-247), but, of course, in a completely other sense than in Ex 23:13.
### 3.4. Ex 34:11-16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Textual Content</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>Observe what I command you today, (for I will drive out before you the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>Observe that you will not make a treaty with the inhabitants of the land which you are entering, lest they will become a snare among you.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>Instead, break down their altars, crush their massebah-stones and cut down their Asherah-trees;</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>because, you shall not worship another god, for Yahwe, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>Do not make a treaty with the inhabitants of the land; for when they whore after their gods by sacrificing to them, he will invite you to eat from his sacrifices.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>And when you take from his daughters wives to your sons, and when his daughters will whore after their gods, they will incite your sons to harlot after their gods.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 Influenced by Dt 7:1 and other passages, the SP and G add into the list the seventh nation, the Girgasites. Since the SP and G add this nation to different locations, it is probable that they are independent of each other and thus secondary.

2 Influenced by Dt 7:5, 25; 12:3 the G adds: καὶ τὰ γλυπτὰ τῶν ἱερῶν αὐτῶν κατακαίστε ἐν πυρί.

3 G has changed the singular to ἔσοι τῆς ἑτέρου to accord with the ubiquitous ἄλλοις ἀρχιμένης. Evidently secondary.

4 In addition to taking the foreigner’s daughter, G presents the opposite possibility that the Israelite gives his own daughter to the foreigner’s son as a wife. Both possibilities are listed in D7 7:3, which most likely is the source of the variant. The variants in a, b and c indicate that the parallel passages in Ex and Dt were harmonized still at a very late stage. As these harmonizations may have also occurred at stages not reflected in the textual witnesses, it is very hard to determine the direction of influence between the three parallel passages Ex 23:20-23; 34:11-16 and Dt 7:1-5. Admittedly, this is a larger problem in OT research.
Introduction

For the development of intolerant monolatry, this passage is central because Ex 34:14 presents a unique singular form of the common אֲלֵהִים אָוְרִים אֶל יָהָז. For this reason, the verse has often been regarded as one of the oldest laws that prohibit the worship of other gods. Traditionally, it has been suggested that Ex 34 contains the so-called Cultic Decalogue which predated the Decalogue in Ex 20 and Dt 5. Moreover, in his very influential and comprehensive investigation, Halbe has argued that Ex 34:11b-15a, being part of what he calls Privilegrecht Jahwes, is a unit that stems from pre-monarchic times. Accordingly, Ex 34:14 is perceived as a pre-form of the first commandment (Ex 20:3, 5; Dt 5:7, 9) or at least as pre-dtn/dtr. These early datings have been challenged by Perlitt, who has suggested that the whole of Ex 34 is a deuteronomistic creation at the earliest. Achenbach has pursued this line even further by arguing that the passage is late or post-dtr. Earlier scholarship acknowledged the heavy concentration of dtr traits in vv. 11-16, but v. 14 has usually been regarded as earlier than its immediate context. Accordingly, recognizing that the passage contains deuteronomistic phraseology, Albertz dates Ex 34:14 to the 7th century.

Context of Ex 34:11-16

Ex 34:11-16 follows a text that assumes a considerably late form of the Sinai narrative. Verses 1-10 as a whole acknowledge the Decalogue (Ex 20), the construction of the golden calf (Ex 32) and the breaking of the old tablets (Ex 32). Ex 34:11-16 is followed by

5Holzinger (1900, 117) regards v. 14a as pre-decalogic and ascribes it to the earliest redactors of the Pentateuch. Heinisch (1934, 247) assumes that it is pre-Davidic. Halbe (1975, 506-510) dates 34:11-27 to the pre-monarchic period.
6On Cultic Decalogue see, for example, the discussion in Heinisch 1934, 242-243 or Beer - Galling 1939, 161.
8So Hossfeld 1982, 281-283. He suggests that Ex 34:12-26 was the model of an early form of the Decalogue. Similarly, earlier research tended to find an older form of the Decalogue in these verses. Cf. Puukko (1910, 36-37): “In den Fußtpfen des jugendlichen Goethe wandeln, ist man noch heutzutage geneigt, in den Bundesworten Ex 34:11-26 den älteren Dekalog (und zwar denjenigen vom Jahvisten) zu erblicken.”
9Halbe (1975, 506-510); pre-monarchic.
10Perlitt 1969, 216-228. He dated the whole section Ex 32-34 to Josiah’s time at the latest.
12Thus, e.g., Holzinger 1900, 117; Baentsch 1903, 283 and Beer — Galling 1939, 161. Alt (1953, 317) characterized Ex 34:10-26 as a secondary Mischgebilde.
14The making of new tablets (Ex 34:1, 4) assumes that there were old tablets, which cannot have contained anything else but the Decalogue. New tablets also assume that the old ones were broken, the reason being that Israel sinned against Yahwe by constructing the golden calf. Consequently, at
commandments of varying interest in vv. 17-26. Many of the commandments deal with cultic issues. With the exception of the one in v. 17, all these commands have a counterpart in Ex 23:12-19. Unfortunately, the direction of influence between these two passages cannot be determined with any certainty. Yet, in accordance with vv. 1-10, it is probable that these verses were also formulated in retrospect of the preceding text. In other words, the surrounding context of vv. 11-16 consists mainly of material already presented in the preceding chapters (Ex 20-23, 32). It is reasonable to suspect that the chapter as a whole depends on a late form of the whole Sinai narrative.

**Verse 14 in Ex 34:11-16**

It is often suggested that v. 14 formed the early core of vv. 11-16 around which the passage developed. In light of the Decalogue, where the corresponding laws are closely connected, one may argue that v. 14, (correlates with the first commandment) was originally followed by the prohibition against making images in v. 17 (correlates with the second commandment). In other words, before vv. 11-13 and 15-16 were added, vv. 14 and 17 would have been at the beginning of the Cultic Decalogue. This reconstruction would then correspond to the beginning of the Decalogue in Ex 20 and Dt 5. However, this suggestion is difficult to construe because v. 14 seems to lean on the preceding prohibition against making a covenant with the people of the land and to the command to break down the altars, etc. In the present text-form, v. 14 is subordinated to the preceding theme by the word כֵּן. It is improbable that a later writer would have consciously diminished the

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15 According to Halbe (1975, 447-449), Ex 34 is older than Ex 23, but in my opinion this view is strongly influenced by his overall theory of an old Privilegrecht Jahwes in Ex 34. As such, there is very little in these passages with which we could with any certainty determine the direction of influence. Verse 18 is word for word identical to Ex 23:15 with the exception of דְּבָרָי הָאָרֶץ. Verses 19-20a are contentwise paralleled by Ex 22:28b-29, although Ex 34 expands by presenting the possibility of הָאָרֶץ. This could suggest that Ex 34 is later. Verse 20b is word for word identical to 23:15b. Verse 21a is identical to 23:12a, but 21b is a wholly independent expansion. Yet, also 23:12b expands the Sabbath commandment to another direction (cf. Ex 20:9 which is closer to 23:12b). The evidence is thus ambiguous. Verse 22 presents the same idea as Ex 23:16 but uses more words to explain it. Direction of influence is unclear. Verse 23 is word for word the same as 23:17 except that v. 23 adds at the end בֵּן הָאָרֶץ. An insignificant addition that could have arisen at a very late stage in textual history. Verse 24 is an expansion dependent on v. 23. This could support the lateness of Ex 34 in relation to Ex 23. Yet, considering the ring-composition between 34:23a and 24b it is not impossible that this is a later addition to Ex 34. Verse 25 corresponds contentwise to 23:18. Nothing indicates a later development in either passage. Verse 26 is word for word the same as 23:19. All in all, there is no conclusive proof.

16 Thus, e.g., Beer - Galling, 1959, 161; Noth 1959, 215; Gerstenberg, 1965, 88; also Holzinger (1900, 117) but only v. 14a.
importance of v. 14 by subordinating it to another theme. Such an operation rarely occurs unless a redactor wants to alter the meaning of something offending or embarrassing in the older text. Had v. 14 been an early prohibition against worshipping other gods, the writer of vv. 11-13, 15-16 would hardly have diminished it by turning attention to another theme. Consequently, it is more probable that v. 14 was either written by the same writer that wrote vv. 11-13 or by a later redactor than that it formed the early core of the passage. Regarding the suggestion that v. 14 was a later addition, the peculiar repetition of 

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It could be argued (thus e.g., Holzinger 1900, 117) that the ...v. 14a with יֹּאמַר. Achenbach (1991, 278) concisely states: “V. 14-16 dienen der Ausführung von v. 11-13 und sind schon insofern nicht älter als diese Verse anzusehen.”

If one is to see a ring-composition in the repetition of the phrase, the only possibility would then be that all of vv. 13-14 is a later addition, so that 15b-16 would directly lean on vv. 11-12. This reconstruction could be supported by the content, yet the parallel passages of Ex 34:11-16 show that at least the command to destroy the foreign cult-places and statues is an integral part of the other themes in the passage, cf. Ex 23:23-24; Dt 7:1-5. In light of these parallels, the only possibility for vv. 13-14 to be a later addition would then be to assume that Ex 34:11-12, 15b-16 is the oldest of the three parallel passages and that Ex 34:13-14 was added earlier than the parallel passages used Ex 34. But this suggestion is problematic since Dt 7:1-5 did not adopt v. 14 at all. Hence, the only possibility would be that v. 14 was added later than the use of Ex 34:11-13, 15-16 by Dt 7:1-5, but earlier than its use by Ex 23:23-24, 32-33. This would assume that all three parallel passages stem from different redactional layers, which, considering their uniform interests, is improbable.

He suggests that vv. 11b-15a form a chiastic structure (p. 96-97). Although, one could question whether the motivation clauses in vv. 12b and 14b can be seen as parallel parts of chiasm, and whether the commands in vv. 13-14a are balanced in the way Halbe suggests. Although a command, v. 14a itself is more of a motivation for the commands in v. 13 and carries more weight than the previous commands. It is the motivation for the other commands.

One may, of course, suggest that the exhortation was a later addition influenced by the parallel passages or that Ex 34:10a-11b was added first and the parallel passages then used Ex 34 later. Already the complexity of such development makes it questionable. It would assume several
11a to another writer than vv. 11b-15a. As for vv. 15b-16 being a later addition, Halbe appeals to the change of style: Verses 11-15a are direct commands, whereas 15b-16 present seven paratactically bound verbal clauses. Nevertheless, if vv. 15b-16 are removed from the passage, one is left with an unmotivated double use of פְּרַע הַמַּדְחַה לָשׁוֹטִים חַיִּים. In addition, the contents of vv. 11-15a and 15b-16 are thematically closely connected in the OT. Consequently, with the lack of convincing proof for the opposite, the passage derives from one writer. Consequently the dating and redactional status of v. 14 may be determined with the rest of vv. 11-16.

### Redaction Criticism

There are several reasons to assume that Ex 34:11-16 is dependent on the nomistic texts. First of all, the passage assumes as its historical setting Israel’s entry to the promised land where she comes into contact with the indigenous population. This general setting may be found in Dt and Jos, but particularly Dt’s nomistic introduction to the laws in ch. 4-11 contains similar exhortations and instructions on how to behave in this situation. Ex 34:11-16 would be at home in this section of Dt, but is out of place in the Sinai narrative. Thematically, the nations of the land are not an immediate concern in the desert, geographically and chronologically remote from entering the land. Moreover, Ex 34:11-16 does not correspond with the general tone of other laws in Ex which are not dependent on a specific historical situation. In this respect, Ex 34:11-16 and Ex 23:20-33 are exceptional in all of Ex 20-24; 32-34. The most natural conclusion is that the writer of Ex 34:11-16 is looking from the perspective of Dt’s, mainly nomistic introduction to the laws in ch. 4-11 or that Ex 34:11-16 is directly influenced by Dt 7:1-6. That Ex 34:11-16 is extensively influenced by the nomistic texts of Dt or the nomists is corroborated by phraseological similarities.

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successive redactors interested in the same theme, without them, however, surfacing in the rest of the OT. Moreover, since there is no grammatical or thematical contradiction between 11a and 11b-15a, one should not ascribe it to a later writer.

22 Thus, Halbe (1975, 148): “Im Übergang von v. 15a zu v. 15b-16 liegt unverkennbar ein Einschnitt ... Aus v. 12-15a ... kommt man hier in eine stilistische ganz andere Welt.”

23 Considering the uncertainty over 15b-16, the phraseology therein will not be used to identify the redactional status of v. 14.

24 For the purposes of this study it is only necessary to delineate the position and date of v. 14. Therefore, it is not absolutely necessary to determine whether v. 14 is later than the rest of vv. 11-16 or whether it stems from the same writer, as long as we can establish how old v. 14 at the oldest can be.

25 Only the parallel passage in Ex 23:20-33 is similarly dependent on a historical situation. The argument puts pressure on this passage as well.

26 Dt 4-11 possibly contains some pre-nomistic passages (e.g., Dt 6:4), yet the main bulk stems from the nomists or from later interpreters.

27 The same argument applies to Ex 23:20-33 as well.
Besides Ex 34:11-16, this phrase and its modifications are met elsewhere in the OT only in Dt (19 times). Most of these occurrences appear in clearly nomistic contexts, which often make conditional the future blessing by keeping Yahwe’s law. The phrase connects Ex 34:11 closely with Dt and the nomists. It would be difficult to construe that the nomists adopted the phrase from Ex, when it fits much better in the historical context of Dt, where Moses begins to teach Yahwe’s laws to the Israelites. The reference to the day (היום) betrays that the setting of Ex 34:11-16 is the setting of Dt.

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Besides Ex 34:11-16, this phrase and its modifications appear in seven passages in Dt, at least six out of which are nomistic, while only in three texts elsewhere in the OT, namely Nm 14:24; Ezr 9:11 and Ne 9:24, of which the last two are most likely dependent on the use in Dt. This phrase also connects the passage with Dt and the nomists who edited Dt.

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A reminiscent phrase is met in Dt 4:40; 6:6; 7:11; 8:1; 11; 10:13; 11:13; 13:19; 15:5; 15; 19:9; 27:10; 28:1; 13; 15; 30:2; 8; 11; 16, although these passages often use an object that directly refers to the commandments. Most of the passages follow a constant pattern characteristic of a late-nomistic writer: if you follow the commandments, Yahwe will bless Israel in different areas of life. See Veijola 1996, 257-258. Of the passages, only in Dt 6:6 could the phrase be ascribed to a pre-nomistic layer as there are no nomistic characteristics present. In this case it would be conceivable that this presents the original occurrence of the phrase from where the nomists adopted it for broader use. On the other hand, it is true that the phrase points to a specific day, which then is not perfectly in line with Urdeuteronomium. Whether the phrase is a nomistic addition with which attention was drawn to the historical context or a pre-nomistic (but post-dtn) one, is hard to determine with certainty. The other occurrences favor the former alternative.

With this phrase, the preposition ל is met only in Ex 34:12, but it corresponds well to the more common שמם which usually occurs in its place (e.g., Dt 4:5; 7:1).

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Late-nomistic (DtrB); see Veijola 1996, 250.
8:27. In addition, the verb צִו, in reference to idolatry, is met once in Dt 7:25. All these passages point towards late deuteronomists and late-Exile.

Besides the three parallel passages, Ex 23:20-33; 34:11-16 and Dt 7:1-6, parts of these phrases are met in Dt 12:3 and in two central dtr passages, 2K 18:4 and 23:4-15. In addition, vestiges of these phrases are found in Jdg 6:25-30.

As Halbe has demonstrated, לְאַלַּא מִשְׁתַּחֵהוּ לְאֹתַר — from the root תִּשָּׁחֵהוּ in hipt. or in hišt. — referring to idolatry is closely connected to dtn-dtr literature. Its use corroborates the connection to dtr literature. The deviating singular, לְאַלַּא אֶרֶץ, of the usual לאָלַּא אֶרֶץ has drawn considerable attention in research. Halbe has suggested that the singular would be the original or the ancient form, whereas the plural a later development. Unfortunately, he does not back up his suggestion with proper arguments. One cannot deny that the two forms, singular and plural, are dependent. This is betrayed by the way לאָלַּא אֶרֶץ is used to denote all other gods as a group. There is reason to believe that the dependence between the forms goes through the Decalogue so that either the first commandment was formulated after Ex 34:14 or the opposite.


For example, Veijola (1977, 110) sees the use of the word מצוה as referring to a religious lure as nomistic.

Halbe (1975, 119) asserts that the phrases in v. 13 are pre-dtr; “Daß es deuteronomischer Redaktion zu verdanken wäre, ist ausgeschlossen.” However, since the phrases appear in the most central dtr texts, one should at least examine the possibility.

Jdg 6:25-30 will be discussed separately in chapter 4.1.

Halbe 1975, 120-122. Considering the large number of texts where the verb is used, it is hardly possible to investigate them thoroughly here. One must, however, observe that the late frames of Dt (4:19; 8:19; 11:16; 29:25; 30:17) and the passages in DH where the currently discussed pattern occurs (Jos 23:7, 16; Jdg 2:12, 17, 19) are well represented.


In other words, the other gods are already presented as one group that conflicts with Yahwe. The intention of the word לאָלַּא אֶרֶץ is already broader than the literary meaning.

If the dependence between the phrases לאָלַּא אֶרֶץ and לאָלַּא אֶרֶץ was not through the Decalogue, it would be most certain that Ex 34:14 was later. Otherwise one could not explain why all the later writers adopted the plural if the earliest form was singular. Since he attributes considerable significance on the Privilegrecht in Israel’s religion, this problem would be particularly severe for Halbe: Why would all later writers ignore a form in a document that was central for the religion? The only solution would be to explain that Ex 34:14a was used by the writer of the first commandment, the form of which then became the model for all later writers. In this case, however, one confronts the problem of Ex 34:11-13, 14b-16, which one would have to regard (against Halbe) as later additions since the writer of the first commandment is completely unaware of them.
| Ex 34:14 | לא תשתחו על אדבר צור
      | יכ חיה קרא שם
      | ולא קרא בה
| Ex 20:3 / Dt 5:7 | לא יהיה לך אלים אחרים עלPRE
      | לא תשתחו לך אלו והתבש
      | כי אנכי תיהד אדも多い ולא קרא

There are some arguments for the Decalogue’s primacy. It has been convincingly demonstrated that the prohibition against making idols is a later addition to the Decalogue, while Ex 34 also acknowledges this prohibition (Ex 34:17). Dependence between the passages extends to this command as well, as the order of the commands is also the same (Ex 20:3 ⇒ 4; Ex 34:14 ⇒ 17). From this it follows that there are only limited possibilities for the relationship between the passages. It is easier to fathom that Ex 34 knew the Decalogue in its late form when the command had been added than that the command against making images was inserted into both locations (Ex 20:4/Dt 5:8 and Ex 34:14) independently by a later redactor. It would be difficult to maintain that the original writer of the Decalogue adopted only v. 14 from Ex 34:11-27, ignoring v. 17 completely, and that after him came another redactor who, again influenced by Ex 34, added v. 17 right after the first commandment of the Decalogue. One would have to assume that two successive redactors were influenced by Ex 34:11-27, each picking only one verse from there! Another possibility would be that Ex 34:14 influenced the first commandment of the Decalogue and then a later redactor added the prohibition against making idols into the Decalogue, which then influenced Ex 34. Although conclusive evidence is lacking, the primacy of the Decalogue would clearly offer the easiest development.

Moreover, if one accepts that Ex 34:11-13, 15-16 is part of the same layer as v. 14, it is difficult to understand how the writer of the first commandment was able to cut off the context of the text he was using, and come up with a nicely constructed command that was to become the most important one. It is much easier to explain that a later writer, who looked in retrospect to the Decalogue but was particularly concerned with themes contained in vv. 11-13 and 15-16, wrote all of Ex 34:11-16. He wanted to stress the importance of themes close to him by motivating and supporting them with the first commandment. In

Moreover, one must wonder why the plural is so consistent elsewhere if the oldest form in a central religious document was in the singular.

The connection between Ex 34 and the Decalogue is widely acknowledged among scholars: The text itself makes this connection. At the beginning of the chapter Yahwe promises to write the Decalogue anew. Noth (1959, 215) comments that v. 10a, 11a introduce a series of commandments.

See e.g., Levin 1985b, 170 and Veijola 1993, 70.

This would necessarily imply that the same writer consciously did so. Yet, this is very difficult to believe, when the form of the commands differs considerably.

Ex 20:4: לא תשתחו על פס
Ex 34:17: אל מלאך מלאך לא תמשח על פס.

The latter is most likely written in reference to the calf story where the word מלאך is used. The opposite direction of influence between Ex 32 and Ex 34 is also not impossible.
addition, it is difficult to understand how a command of such importance was originally relativized by a historical situation assumed in vv. 11-13, 15-16.

Further on, if Ex 34:14 offered the original form of the phrase אלהים ארון, why are there no later uses of the singular anywhere in the dtr literature? If Ex 34:14 has been the original form of the prohibition, one would expect the singular to surface at least occasionally. Consequently, Ex 34:14 should be regarded as dependent on the Decalogue.

The phrase is thus closely connected to the Decalogue and the first commandment. As we have already seen, Dt 4 is often regarded as an introduction to the following Decalogue in Dt 5. Similarly, Dt 6:15 motivates two verses that contain phraseology closely related to the first commandment. Both Dt 4:24 and 6:15 are nomistic texts that interpret the Decalogue.

Phraseology in Ex 34:11-16 is clearly reminiscent of the nomistic texts of Dt. Most of the related passages in Dt and elsewhere in the DH can be identified as nomistic expansions. Two conclusions may be drawn from this state of affairs. First, Ex 34:11-16 is undoubtedly written from the perspective of Dt. A writer particularly concerned or well acquainted with Dt is behind the passage. Secondly, the heavy concentration of phraseology met particularly in nomistic texts of Dt indicates nomistic influence or dependence on the nomists. It is therefore untenable to date Ex 34:11-16 prior to the nomists. Such a dating would lie on the highly improbable assumption that this passage has influenced the nomists to adopt basically all its phrases to their own frequent use. It is not imperative to answer here the question of whether the passage should be attributed to post-nomists or nomists. Slightly deviating vocabulary throughout the passage could suggest a later origin. As an example, one should mention the deviating singular אלהים ארון from the common אלהים ארון, and the prohibition against making images in v. 17 which differs from the one in the Decalogue. The strong nomistic flavor of the text would then be explained by the possibility that it was written in relation to the mainly nomistic Dt 7:1-6.

As we have already seen in chapter 2.6., Ex 23:20-33, 34:11-16 and Dt 7:1-6 are closely related. They use similar vocabulary and phraseology to the extent that one must assume a direct dependence. It is not necessary to offer a final solution to the complex relationship of these passages in this context — it has probably gone in both directions

46 So among others Knapp 1987, 80.
47 Halbe’s theory about the Privilegrecht would imply that. In that case one could ask, why did the nomists not adopt almost any phraseology in the rest of the chapter.
48 The nomists in Dt (4:15-16a) use a form known from the Decalogue.
49 Several other late-dtr, nomistic texts are dependent on some of these three passages as well. Jos 23:7, 12-13 and their context shows clear signs of nomistic activity; see Latvus 1993, 63; The same can be said of Jdg 2:2-3 (e.g., Veijola 1977, 59) and Jdg 3:5-6 (see Latvus 1993, 88). 1K 11:2 see Särkiö 1994, 219. Nm 25:1-3 is most likely a post-dtr text. These passages assume that a prohibition or law against making a covenant and intermarriage has been given in the preceding text. It is true that these passages show only vestiges of the pattern, but it is hardly possible to assume that the three passages in the law codes have collected these vestiges from different parts of the DH into a compact and fine pattern. It is much easier to assume that the omissions of the pattern in the other passages derive from the fact that they only casually refer to the commandment, assuming its existence in the preceding text.
during the development of the passages. The evidence is ambiguous and the primacy of each passage may be defended depending on the point of approach, as the variety of scholarly views show. However, of all views, the primacy of Dt 7:1-6 would fit with the above-presented phraseological links which imply an origin in Dt or influence from Dt. The primacy of Dt 7:1-6 has lately been argued by Achenbach. He suggests that Dt 7:1-6 lies in the beginning of the development so that Ex 23:20-33 — at least when it comes to the parallel sections — and Ex 34:11-16 were originally dependent on Dt 7:1-6. Were this the case, Ex 34:11-16 would be dependent on a late-nomistic version of Dt, for, as we have seen, Dt 7:4-5 is late-nomistic. This would then imply a considerably late dating for Ex 34:11-16.

Conclusions

Ex 34:11-16 is entirely a late text, dependent on the nomistic texts of Dt. Slightly deviating vocabulary may imply a later origin. Consequently, Ex 34:14 cannot be used as proof for early, pre-exilic intolerance. The connections to the nomistic group emphasize the nomistic contribution and influence in the rise of intolerance in the OT and Israel’s religion. The context into which the prohibition against worshipping other gods is situated conceivably reflects the historical situation in which the writers lived. This was discussed in more detail with the analysis of Dt 7:1-6 which originated in the same historical context. Chronologically speaking, Ex 34:11-16 cannot be far from Dt 7:1-6.

50 Halbe (1975, 314-315, 506-507) regards Ex 34:11-16 as the earliest text (although he suggests that Ex 23 is not directly dependent on Ex 34); Osumi (1991, 70-77) has argued for the primacy of Ex 23 in relation to Ex 34 (he regards (p. 73) Ex 34:13 and Dt 7:5 as later additions to the context, yet, this assumption is not supported by anything else except the deviating number of the addressee; it is hardly possible to cut this verse from the pattern since it is met in some form in all three passages); Achenbach (1991, 268-269, 277-279) has opted for the primacy of Dt 7:1-5 in relation to the Ex passages; Schmitt (1970, 24) and Seitz (1971, 77-79) have argued for the primacy of Ex 23:20-33.
4. Intolerance passages in the Deuteronomistic History

4.1. Joshua - 2Kings

In this chapter, I will survey the intolerance passages in the rest of the DH. I will make some new analyses when necessary, but this section leans largely on previous research. The main purpose is to compare the results obtained in the preceding chapters with the rest of the DH. How does the development of intolerance in Dt (and Ex) correlate with other books of the DH? Can the intolerance passages be identified as nomistic or later as well? In addition, I will discuss the content of these passages when it is relevant to the historical reconstruction of intolerant monolatry.

Jos 23:7, 16 — The Gods of the Nations

The whole of chapter 23 has been recognized as a later addition to the DH. The immediate context of v. 7 is loaded with expressions often met in other nomistic passages. Verse 6 refers to the book of Moses in the typical nomistic way, whereas v. 8, with its exhortation to cling on to Yahwe, recalls the nomistic exhortations in the parenesis of Dt. At least vv. 6-9a and 11-13 assume that a command or law not to intermarry with the indigenous population of the land is presented somewhere in the existing DH (Dt 7:1-6par). In other words, these sections are dependent on passages that I have already identified as nomistic. Furthermore, much of the chapter assumes an incomplete conquest of the land, a theme attributed to nomistic editors. Verse 16 belongs to the latest additions of the chapter.

The context of the chapter is Israel’s arrival in the land and the problem of dealing with the indigenous population. The message of the chapter is that Israel must separate itself from the other peoples that live in the land, and especially from their religion. Mixing with them would mean departure from Yahwe and His blessing.

2Smend 1971, 501.
3Latvus 1993, 60-67. Jos 23:16 may be connected to DtrB.
Jos 24:2-28 — Remove the Other Gods

It is commonly acknowledged that the origin of this passage is a complex issue and it cannot be dealt with in this context in any detail. It most probably contains more than one layer. Some features imply that the text acknowledges nomistic and other late texts. Three factors in v. 19 link the text with the first commandment (cf. Dt 5:7, 9-10): The prohibition against worshipping other gods, the reference to Yahwe as לֹּא עָשֶׂה שָׁם נִגְדָּל (YPSN) and the idea that Yahwe will not forgive sins. Verse 20 recalls the nomistic idea that if the Israelites forget Yahwe and worship (סָבַל) other gods, they will face catastrophes and finally be annihilated. References to the covenant (ברָית) and the book of law (תּוֹרָה) in vv. 25-26 may also imply dependency on nomistic terminology. Since the phraseology throughout the chapter differs from the nomistic texts, one might suspect post-nomistic influence. Admittedly, the possibility of pre-nomistic or other old vestiges cannot be ruled out. The existence of a holy tree in Yahwe’s sanctuary (v. 26), certainly an abomination for the nomists, would indicate that.

Accepting later redactions, many scholars tend to regard the earliest text as having a pre-dtr origin. For example, O’Brien and Gray hint that the passage preserves old traditions from Shechem, although it would have been inserted into the present context by the same post/late-dtr who also added Dt 11:29-32; 27:1-27; Jos 8:30-35. O’Brien has collected several arguments in favor of a late origin for the final text. Moreover, Levin proposes that the chapter was finalized under the Persian rule. According to him, the basic text of the chapter is dependent on the election of Saul in 1S 10. He then dates this layer to the end of the 6th century, the background being the establishment of the theocracy after the Exile. More recently, Anbar has reconstructed the original text-form and investigated it with a careful analysis of the vocabulary. He comes to the conclusion that the original Jos 24 is exilic or, more probably, a post-exilic text that is connected to other late texts of the DH.

There are many similarities with dtr texts, the style is close to the deuteronomists, but some linguistic traits are no longer dtr. It is probable that Jos 24 is dependent on the deuteronomists, but these special features may imply that we are dealing with an even later text.

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4 For example, Perlitt (1969, 239-284) assumes that Jos 24 is the origin of dtr covenant theology, although he accepts (in p. 241) that Jos 24 “nicht nur keinen erzählerischen Zusammenhang mit seinem Kontext hat, sondern eine literarische Einheit in widerspruchsvoller Isolierung bildet ...” He dates the chapter to the 7th century (276-281). However, he regards vv. 25b-26a as a later addition (265-270). These verses show evident affinity with nomistic terminology.

5 Perlitt (1969, 265-270) considers these verses (25b-26a) a later addition.

6 Noth 1953, 139; Perlitt 1969, 274-276: pre-exilic times; Steuernagel (1923b, 297) suggests that in the background lies an Elohistic narrative.

7 Gray 1986, 5, 52-55.
9 Levin 1985a, 114-119.
10 Anbar 1992, 139-144.
11 Anbar 1992, 88.
The chapter portrays Yahwe as a God who has alone led Israel’s ancestors from Mesopotamia through Egypt to the land and who now demands exclusive devotion. The exclusive devotion is thus justified by Yahwe’s acts in history: Israel has seen Yahwe’s miraculous deeds and power. Israel faces two alternatives, to worship Yahwe or the gods of the Amorites. The chapter acknowledges the existence of other gods and even accepts that the father of Abraham worshipped the gods of the Amorites. The message is that the Israelites, who have witnessed Yahwe’s works in history, must worship Him. Other gods, although they may exist, are alien to Israel and must be rejected.

**Jdg 2:1-3 — The Gods of the Nations**

As many scholars have pointed out, Jdg 2:6-10 repeats what is already written in Jos 24:28-31. This has been interpreted as a ring-composition. In other words, the text in between the two passages would be a later addition to the original DH. Accordingly, Jdg 2:1-5 is often ascribed to nomists, the original text of the history writer continuing in Jdg 2:6ff. In contrast with the history writer’s text, Jdg 2:1-5 assumes that Israel was not able to wipe out the indigenous people of the land. In the DH this theme is met only in the later, mainly nomistic, additions. Two additional indicators in the passage could point towards the nomists: First, the phrase שמיות בקיא ואלהי המרון, referring to Yahwe and His law, often occurs in the nomistic sections of Dt (often יוהי 분ה in JYJ). In Jdg 2:2, the phrase obviously refers to the previously given commandment not to mingle with the inhabitants of the land, namely Dt 7:1-6par. The verse thus depends on this nomistic law. Second, vv. 2-3 seem to assume the nomistic Alternativpredigt, according to which, blessing will follow only if Israel keeps what Yahwe has commanded. Verse 3 describes the negative consequences that follow from disobedience (v. 2).

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15 So, Smend 1971, 506.
15 Admittedly, this phrase is common in other OT literature as well (it is particularly common in Dt and Jer), yet here it evidently refers to Yahwe’s law.
16 As we have seen, it is probable that Dt 7:1-6 is the oldest of the three parallel passages, Ex 23:20-33 (may contain even older material, but when it comes to the parallel sections dependent on Dt 7:1-6) and Ex 34:11-16. See Achenbach (1991, 258-269, 282-283, 287-288) for details.
17 For Alternativpredigt in Jeremiah D, see Thiel 1973, 290-205; in Dt, see Veijola 1996, 244.
Jdg 2:11-23 — To Follow after Other Gods, to Serve Baal and Ashtarte

The repetitions and awkwardly proceeding narrative show that Jdg 2:11-23 has been strongly edited. As a whole, the passage contains several nomistic phrases, yet the earliest layer is often ascribed to the history writer. There exists little consensus as to the extent of the different layers. Whereas usually the text of the history writer is considered to form the main bulk of the passage, Latvus has argued that the history writer’s hand may only be seen in Jdg 2:7-11a, 14b-16a, 18a-b. Accordingly, he ascribes the intolerance in the passage to the nomists. The actual sin that the Israelites have committed is expressed in v. 10: The Israelites were generally disobedient to Yahwe. The punishment is then given in v. 14. The criticism that the Israelites worshipped other gods is a later development. For the history writer the main sin is that the Israelites had forgotten Yahwe’s deeds that He had done for them. Verse 16b-18aa is an addition, as can be seen by the ring-composition that v. 16a and 18aa form. Verse 19 begins a new nomistic addition that disturbs v. 18a-b which functions well as a conclusion to the history writer’s view on the judges. The history writer’s text in the passage is perfectly understandable without the attack on the other gods: After Joshia’s generation died, Israelites forgot Yahwe’s deeds and became disobedient. This caused Yahwe to leave them to other nations, who began oppressing Israel. In v. 16 and 18aa Yahwe then instates judges to protect Israel. In addition to these observations, the apostasy in the passage (vv. 11-14, 17, 19) is expressed with phrases that are typical in other intolerant passages.

Jdg 3:5-8 — The Gods of the Nations

Since it assumes that Israel was not able to destroy the inhabitants of the land, Jdg 3:1-6 originates from a nomist or a writer dependent on the nomists. Despite the short and concise form, vv. 5-6 are directly dependent on the command not to intermingle with the

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18 E.g., Mayes 1985, 32.
19 Among others, Mayes (1985, 32), O’Brien (1989, 82-88) and Gray (1986, 244-246) see an intolerant history writer behind the passage.
20 Latvus 1993, 80.
21 Latvus (1993, 80) speculates if v. 11a should be ascribed to the nomists on the basis on nota accusativi which in the phrase otherwise appears only in nomistic texts. However, he concludes that v. 11a derives from the history writer.
22 ὑπετέχω τῷ Ἰσραήλ ὁ Θεὸς ὁ πάνταν κυβερνῶν ὁ Θεὸς ὁ Θεὸς πάσης ἀνθρώπου ἡμῶν. Ὑπετέχω τῷ Ἰσραήλ.
23 The idea that Yahwe tests Israel through the nations, (vv. 1, 4) whether she obeys the commandments or not, derives from late, possibly post-nomistic, writers. Latvus (1993, 80) has identified this theme in Jdg 2:22 as post-dtr. Similarly, there is reason to believe that the theme in Dt 13:4 is a later gloss, trying to emphasize the power of Yahwe over all events. Yahwe has risen to an almost omnipotent position: The other nations are only puppets in Yahwe’s world (vv. 1, 2, 4). Verses 1-4 should thus be seen as late-dtr at the earliest.
inhabitants of the land, Dt 7:1-3par. Without a concrete command earlier on, Jdg 3:5-6 is incomprehensible for it assumes that the reader knows intermarrying to be forbidden. In view of the conclusion in chapter 2.6. that Dt 7:1-3* is nomistic, Jdg 3:5-6 would also be nomistic at the earliest. These verses are often regarded as nomistic.\footnote{For example, Soggin 1981, 42 and O’Brien 1989, 86-88. However, Gray (1986, 196-197) regards them as early dtr.}

Although the reference to other gods is expressed in terms very reminiscent of the ones met in nomistic texts — forget (שָׁמַע) Yahwe and serve (עָבַד) other gods (here in the plural: אָשֶׁרְתָּם and נָבָלִים) — typically nomistic phraseology is lacking. Accordingly, most scholars ascribe vv. 7-11 to the history writer\footnote{For example, Mayes (1983, 71-72) who suggests that the verses are earlier than 2:11-3:6. According to Gray (1986, 197, 247-248), these verse are adopted from an earlier tradition.} Appealing to a common pattern with demonstrably nomistic texts, Latvus has identified the passage as nomistic\footnote{Latvus 1993, 85-94. He suggests that Jdg 3:7aβ-8aa stems from the nomists. His main argument on the passage lies in the common pattern that Jdg 3:7-11 shares with Jdg 2:11-19 and 10:6-10, two passages which have undergone nomistic reworking.} This view cannot be supported with any concrete literary critical arguments. In Jdg 3:7-8 we have to leave open the possibility that the history writer attacked Baalim and Asherim, but the final judgement has to be left for the general view we receive from the history writer’s text.

**Jdg 5:8 — New Gods**

The phrase יִבְהַר אלהים וּדְרֵשָׁה could be interpreted as reflecting exclusivity in Israel’s early religion. However, since the context offers no support for this interpretation and the passage is quite ambiguous\footnote{Soggin (1981, 86) comments on the passage: “this verse is generally recognized as being corrupt, and it can no longer be restored.”}, it should not be used as proof for early exclusivity. The verse expresses the idea that Yahwe is God of Israel from time immemorial, while other gods are newcomers.

**Jdg 6:10 — Do not Fear Gods of the Amorites**

Regarding the content, vv. 7-10 appear to form a unit. The unmotivated repetition of v. 6b in 7a betrays the fact that this unit is a later addition. Further on, the narrative flows flawlessly from v. 6 to v. 11 and would not be disturbed by the removal of vv. 7-10. Therefore, these verses should be seen as a later addition\footnote{So e.g., Walter Dietrich 1972, 132; Veijola 1977, 43-48; Soggin 1981, 112.}

Clearly nomistic features are missing from vv. 7-10. The phrase שָׁמַע בַּכֹּל לְיִשָּׁרָה, referring to Yahwe and His law, is common in the nomistic sections of Dt (often שָׁמַע בַּכֹּל יִתְבָּרָה), although it is met elsewhere in the OT as well. The reference to the inhabitants of the land that have remained (v. 10) could hint at nomistic origin, but this theme is also ambiguous: Verse 9 may suggest that the Amorites have been wiped out. As a whole, the passage (vv. 6-
10) implies that the problems (v. 6) derive from the fact that Israel has not obeyed Yahwe’s commands (v. 10). One might argue that in the background lies the conditional blessing, a theme often met in the nomistic. Accordingly, several scholars ascribe the passage to late deuteronomists or nomists.

Jdg 6:25-32 — Gideon/Jerubbaal

It is reasonable to consider Jdg 6:25-32 a later addition to its context. Verse 24 is written as a final comment on the origin of the altar in Op rah. After Gideon has build the altar in Op rah (v. 24), Yahwe tells him to destroy Baal’s altar (v. 25) and to build another altar (v. 26). According to the passage, Gideon does all this during the same night (v. 25a). The awkward transition from v. 24 to v. 25 probably indicates that verse 25 begins an expansion attaching to the altar presented in v. 24 but developing the story to another direction. The passage (vv. 25-32) may have been written to explain away the embarrassment that one judge was called Jerubbaal, a name that implies devotion to Baal. The writer wanted to invert all such implications by showing that Jerubbaal was in fact an opponent of Baal not a proponent and that his name derives from his attack on Baal.

As for the redactional status, the passage offers only slight hints. The basic text from which Jdg 6:25-32 expands cannot be identified with any of the acknowledged redactions or writers. The building of an altar outside Jerusalem in v. 24 may imply a pre-dtr stage, but this would only reveal that vv. 25-32 are post pre-dtr, which does not say much. Jdg 6:25-32 itself is an independent unit with limited affinity to other texts. Typically nomistic terminology cannot be found, nor is there anything compelling which would point towards the history writer or the Priestly editors. However, some scholars have identified dtr features in the text. According to Spieckermann, the basic text is pre-dtr, while the redactional parts are dtr. On the other hand, Frevel infers that the passage contains two layers, both of which show dtr features. In addition to early features, Görg finds dtr and post-dtr interest.

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29 Verse 6, which describes the problems, may derive from an earlier writer, but the interpretation (in v. 10) what caused these problems is very reminiscent of nomistic texts.

30 Walter Dietrich 1972, 132; Veijola 1977, 43-48; Nelson (1981, 47-51) ascribes the passage to the second dtr editor; Gray (1986, 283-284) admits that these verses are a late insertion to the Gideon tradition, which he assumes is pre-dtr.

31 As v. 28 shows, the inhabitants of the city notice the destruction of Baal’s altar in the morning.

32 The redactional shift from v. 24 to v. 25 is accepted by some scholars. For example Soggin 1981, 123. Although regarding the chapter from the perspective of Pentateuchal source theory, Nowack (1900, 65) assumes that the basic text of vv. 25-31 derives from different writers than the rest of the chapter.

33 יִרְאוּת (Baal has fought or Baal has striven for justice) or כְּבָר (Baal has become great/powerful).

34 Spieckermann (1982, 205) states that the passage clearly shows dtr features: “Sie ist zwar in ihrer jetzigen Gestalt eindeutig dtr formuliert, aber kein reines Produkt dtr Götterpolemik, sondern unter der Vorgabe älterer Tradition konzipiert.”

Terminology concerning the destruction of the altar and Asherah may hint at a relationship with Ex 34:13 and Dt 7:5. Their breaking is expressed similarly:

| Jdg 6:25 | ונחת המזבח והאשראות וה האלהים של ייחוד | מזבח המזבח והאשראות וה האלהים של ייחוד |
| Jdg 6:28 | כד החטאת והאשראות וה האלהים של ייחוד | כח החטאת והאשראות וה האלהים של ייחוד |
| Jdg 6:30 | וכ חטאת והאשראות וה האלהים של ייחוד | כח החטאת והאשראות וה האלהים של ייחוד |
| Ex 34:13 | כח החטאת והאשראות וה האלהים של ייחוד | כח החטאת והאשראות וה האלהים של ייחוד |

In accordance with many nomistic texts, the destruction of the altar is expressed with the verb נחת and the destruction of Ashera with בירה. Moreover, a passage parallel to Ex 34:13 and Dt 7:5, namely Ex 23:24, uses the verb בירה that is used in Jdg 6:25, although in reference to breaking the gods/idols (לאדים), not the altars. Admitting that the evidence is only slight, it is here cautiously suggested that Jdg 6:25-32 acknowledges Dt 7:5par and is in line with the nomistic aggression against the foreign cult apparatus. Although later editing is not impossible, the verses that are possibly dependent on the nomistic passages are an integral part of the passage and cannot be regarded as later additions. The destruction of Ashera and Baal’s altar form the nucleus of the passage. Consequently, there is some evidence that v. 25-32 is a later addition to the preceding text, and there are some redactional contacts to the nomists. Although nomistic origin is possible, final conclusion about authorship has to be left open at this point.

**Jdg 8:33-34 — Baal Berit**

Although some scholars attribute them to the historian, Veijola has identified these verses as nomistic. Some phraseological and thematical details betray the nomistic origin; the idea of forgetting Yahwe (לך ור את ויהוה) and then following other gods (לך ור את אלים) appears with certain regularity in nomistic passages. Referring to other nomistic texts,

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36 Görg 19xx, 39-40.
37 According to Görg (19xx, 39-40) Gideon’s actions are in line with dtn/dtr ideals, especially Dt 7:5. Görg evidently situates Dt 7:5 to an earlier stage than the late nomists.
38 The passage may contain some internal tensions, as suggested by Spieckermann 1982, 206-207 and Frevel 1995, 145-146: e.g., the role of the father, who first own the altar of Baal (v. 25), but then is represented as a defender of Yahwism (vv. 30-31); the use of the preposition after the verb בירה (in v. 31 כ and in v. 32 כ). The latter problem most likely derives from the fact that v. 32 is a further addition, with the purpose of explaining away the embarrassing name Jerubbbaal.
39 Many scholars see here an intolerant Yahwism at an early stage in Israel’s religion; e.g., Soggin 1981, 127.
40 So Gray 1986, 300 and Mayes 1985, 32. The latter suggests that the reference to Baal and Ashtarte is from the historian, while the gods of other lands are from a later editor.
41 Veijola 1977, 109-110. According to him, vv. 27 and 35 derive from the same redactor as well.
Veijola has suggested that the phrase also implies a nomistic origin.

**Jdg 10:6-16 — Worship of Baal and Ashtarte**

Traditionally only a small core of this passage is accredited to the history writer, while the main bulk is nomistic. The concentration of nomistic phrases shows that the nomists have been active in the passage. It is commonly accepted that the reference to other gods in vv. 6a, 10, 13 and 16 are later additions. Nevertheless, v. 6aa with its reference to Baal and Ashtarte is usually ascribed to the historian. It is very difficult to argue whether the reference belonged to the historian’s original text or not, and here we are at the center of the whole problem; accepting that the phrase stems from the historian, did this formula appear alone as a general statement of Israel’s sins or were the other gods an integral part of it? In addition to the books of 1-2Kings, the same problem is met in Jdg 2:11 and 3:7, which are also disputed and which offer little to solve the issue. There are several passages in Judges and 2Kings that use the phrase alone without any explanatory comments, which then shows that the phrase could easily have stood alone without any explanations: Israel generally did evil in the eyes of Yahwe. Nevertheless, since the text in Jdg 10:6 (as well as Jdg 2:11 and 3:7) offers nothing tangible for literary-critical argumentation, a conclusive judgment cannot be made. At any rate, observing the extensive reworking of the passage v. 6aa should not be used as primary evidence in one way or another.

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42 Veijola 1977, 110.
43 For phraseological affinity with Jdg 6:7-10; 1S 7:3-4; 10:18-19, see Veijola 1977, 43-48.
44 Veijola 1977, 46-47: to the history writer only Jdg 10:6aa (to הָרָע, ṯb, 7b*, 8a*b*; similarly O’Brien 1989, 92-93; he finds traces of the history writer from vv. 6-9 (in 6aa, 7-8*, 9b), but accredits all of vv. 10-16 to the nomists; Mayes (1983, 69) finds the historian only in vv. 6aa, 7-9, other verses would be from dtt: Becker 1990, 210-212: from the historian are vv. 10:6aa, 7ba, 8a, 9b, 10a, while the rest would nomistic or later; Gray (1986, 312): “the pre-Deuteronomistic framework is expanded to Deuteronomistic homily.” Latvus (1993, 89-94) has argued for nomistic origin for the whole passage, but he does not bring very compelling evidence for his view. His main literary-critical argument is that the Ammonites are not mustered before v. 17, whereas v. 9 already presents them as fighting against Judah. However, the verb in v. 17 (עָרָע = cry, call) does not necessarily mean that this was the first time the Ammonites were assembled or called together. It rather conveys that the Ammonite army was called to camp in Gilead. One could even suggest that the verb עָרָע is inadequate to report a beginning of hostilities between the nations. Verses 8-9 would be much more convenient for this purpose. Moreover, Latvus argues that vv. 6-16 break the original connection between vv. 5 and 17: the mustering of the Ammonite armies and the problem of a new judge (vv. 17-18) must be seen against the background of v. 5 where the previous judge has died. However, the connection would not be considerably disturbed by a sentence or two from vv. 6-9.
45 Jdg 3:12; 4:1; 6:1; 13:1.
46 2K 23:32, 37; 24:9, 19.
4. Intolerance Passages in the Deuteronomistic History

1S 7:3-4 — Remove Other Gods

1S 7:3-4 exhorts Israel to turn to Yahwe and abandon other gods. As a reward Yahwe will rescue Israel. This theme recalls of the nomistic Alternativpredigt: The rejection of other gods will be followed by blessing. These verses are a self-sufficient unit not connected to the surrounding context and their removal does not disturb the development of the narrative. Quite the opposite, vv. 5ff. are a direct answer to v. 2, — Israel cries for Yahwe in v. 2, and in v. 5 Samuel assembles Israel at Mispa so that he may pray for them to Yahwe — while vv. 3-4 are a digression which makes a condition: Israel must remove other gods before Samuel will pray to Yahwe. Moreover, the phrase יָשֵׁם appears at the beginning of both vv. 3 and 5, which should be interpreted as a ring-composition. Hence, vv. 3-4 have most likely been added later. Veijola notes that these verses are loaded (überfüllt) with dtr language and that the basic text of the chapter is already dtr. Accordingly, the verse is attributed to late-deuteronomists.\(^{47}\)

1S 8:8 — Worship of Other Gods

This verse appears within a passage that is critical towards kingship (1S 8:6ff.), a theme that has been identified as nomistic.\(^{48}\) The apostasy is expressed with nomistic phraseology: Forget or reject (דּוֹב) Yahwe and serve (עבד) other gods (אלוהים Absolute). Veijola points out that the large number of traditionally dtr terminology betrays the nomistic origin.\(^{49}\)

1S 12:10, 21 — Worship of Baal and Vanity

The whole chapter has been identified as a late addition to the DH.\(^{50}\) The language and content of the passage clearly point towards the nomists or later writers dependent on the nomists.\(^{51}\) Phrases from the nomistic texts of the preceding chapters recur throughout the passage. Nomistic themes are met as well, e.g., Alternativpredigt in vv. 14-15. Nomistic phraseology is most evident in vv. 20-25. As for v. 10, the usual sequence forget (דּוֹב) Yahwe and serve (עבד) other gods (here וַתִּשְׁרָה and בלך מ) indicates a nomistic origin. The idea that Yahwe rescues Israel from the hands of her enemies follows this sequence in several other nomistic texts as well (Jdg 3:9; 8:8). Verse 21 is loose in its context and should be regarded a further and independent addition to the chapter.

\(^{47}\) E.g., Veijola 1977, 30-38 (DtrN) and O’Brien 1989, 106.
\(^{48}\) Veijola 1977, 119-122.
\(^{49}\) Veijola 1977, 57; O’Brien (1989, 112) attributes v. 8 to the third layer of the passage.
\(^{50}\) Veijola 1977, 91-92; O’Brien 1989, 128.
\(^{51}\) Veijola 1977, 83-84.
1S 26:19 — One Cannot Serve Yahwe in a Foreign Land

This verse is not really an intolerance passage in the strict sense. It does not attack other gods but implies that one cannot properly serve Yahwe in a foreign land. This idea may be an ancient one. Yahwe would somehow be bound to His land, Israel. However, the idea is expressed with terminology that is common in the nomistic criticism of other gods: המלך, עבד, אלוהים, אבות. The surrounding text, however, does not show any typically nomistic terminology.

**Summary of Joshua, Judges and the Books of Samuel**

Generally speaking, the intolerance passages in the books of Joshua, Judges and Samuel may be characterized as late. Most passages are naturally disputed in research and many passages are suggested to be early by some scholars. Yet, studies with a more detailed literary- and redaction-critical perspective, especially ones following the Göttingen school, incline to regard most of the passages as late. In many cases, purely literary-critical considerations — ring-composition, grammatical difficulties, thematical disturbances etc. — reveal that the passages are later additions to their contexts (Jos 23; Jdg 2:1-3; 6:7-10; 1S 7:3-4; 12). As for redaction-critical considerations, in several cases it may explicitly be shown that they expand a text composed by the history writer, which then implies that they are late-dtr at the earliest (e.g., Jos 23; Jdg 2:1-3; 6:10; all passages 1-2S). In many texts, phraseology, concepts and themes betray the nomistic origin (Jos 23; Jdg 2; 8:33-34; all passages in 1-2S). Often the intolerance passages are loaded with nomistic terminology (e.g., Jos 23:7; 1S 7:3-4). Jos 24 is an independent unit which is thematically and stylistically connected to the nomists but the terminology is slightly different. Anbar and Levin have attributed the chapter to a very late stage in the development of the DH. Some passages are more problematic. For example, Jdg 6:25-32 is possibly a late addition to the preceding text, but its dating and origin are not self-evident. There are some contacts to other nomistic texts. Jdg 2:11-23 and 10:6-16 are heavily edited by successive redactors, with the consequence that scholarly opinions are widely divided as to the extent of the basic text and the later additions. Not much weight should be put on passages, where the text is too confusing for proper argumentation.\footnote{The criticism of arguing in circles is to some extent justified in cases where one has to appeal to the fact that elsewhere similar texts are later additions. However, one has to also accept that in many texts the later redactors did not leave traces of their activity. A heavy concentration of phraseology that is elsewhere met mainly or only in late additions is a sign of lateness. In addition, the removal of a passage from its context must always be tested with Gegenprobe, that is, that the flow of narrative does not suffer from the removal.} They should not be used for conclusive proof in depicting the development of intolerance. We have also seen that in Jdg 3:5-8 the attack on other gods may have been
in the original text of the history writer. Literary and redaction critical arguments do not give enough support to cut the intolerance from the basic text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passage</th>
<th>literary criticism</th>
<th>redaction criticism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jos 23:7, 16</td>
<td>late addition to the historian’s text</td>
<td>clearly nomistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jos 24:2-28</td>
<td>disputed, an independent unit</td>
<td>disputed; probably late or post-dtr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jdg 2:1-3</td>
<td>late addition to the historian’s text</td>
<td>some nomistic traits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jdg 2:11-23</td>
<td>heavily edited, confusing</td>
<td>several nomistic traits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jdg 3:5-8</td>
<td>vv. 5-6 a later addition; in vv. 7-8 argumentation difficult</td>
<td>vv. 5-6 nomistic, but vv. 7-8 ambiguous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jdg 5:8</td>
<td>ambiguous</td>
<td>ambiguous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jdg 6:10</td>
<td>late addition to its context</td>
<td>ambiguous, most likely late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jdg 6:25-32</td>
<td>probably a late addition to its context</td>
<td>some contacts to nomistic texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jdg 8:33-34</td>
<td>argumentation difficult</td>
<td>nomistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jdg 10:6-16</td>
<td>confusing, many layers</td>
<td>nomistic traits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1S 7:3-4</td>
<td>late addition</td>
<td>nomistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1S 8:8</td>
<td>ambiguous</td>
<td>nomistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1S 12:10, 21</td>
<td>late addition</td>
<td>nomistic, v. 21 may be even later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1S 26:19</td>
<td>ambiguous</td>
<td>probably nomistic</td>
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</table>

All in all, of the 14 passages in the books from Joshua to 2Samuel that could imply intolerance of other gods, five can be shown to be later additions to their contexts with relative certainty. Most of them can further be identified as nomistic or later. Of the remaining passages in which literary-critical argumentation is difficult, at least six show late, often nomistic, traits. Out of the 14 analyzed passages two, Jdg 5:8 and 1S 26:19, may not assume intolerance at all, although 1S 26:19 may be nomistic in any case.

One may observe that in comparison with the DH in general, intolerance passages are very heavily edited and contain several layers. Intolerance of other gods is almost never met in a fluent narrative which is not loaded with later expansions. Of the 12 intolerant passages only Jdg 3:5-8 and 6:25-32 can be characterized as flowing narratives that are not loaded with nomism. In addition, one should note the limited number of intolerance passages in these books. In the book of Joshua only two chapters acknowledge the idea. In 1Samuel, traces of intolerance are met in three passages, whereas in 2Samuel, intolerance does not surface at all. Other gods are thus commonly attacked only in the final chapters of Joshua and in the first half of Judges. Intolerance is not a theme in the main bulk of the DH from Joshua to 2Samuel!

Further on, intolerance passages in Jos, Jdg and in the books of Samuel are in many ways similar. The same phrases are used to express the same ideas, the manner of argumentation being also rather uniform. For example, the idea that Israel has forgotten (תפז / שמה / אל יד) Yahwe and served (ע⚓ / הלך אחרים) other gods is met in Jos 24:16, 20; Jdg 2:11-12; 3:7; 8:33-34; 10:6, 10, 13; 1S 8:8; 12:10, 20-21. With some variation, the same idea is expressed as if it came from the
same mold. Moreover, surprisingly many of the passages are connected to the problem of the other nations that have remained in the land. They have become a religious snare for the Israelites. Yahwe’s anger also recurs relatively often. It results from apostasy and leads to curses and problems. In the background looms the Alternativpredigt of the nomists.
Intolerance in 1-2 Kings

This passage is directed against the בָּהֵמָה, cult-places outside the Temple of Jerusalem, and does not explicitly criticize other gods. Verse 2 shows that in the background of this criticism lies the challenge posed by the בָּהֵמָה to Jerusalem, but not any intrinsic criticism of other gods. Moreover, the criticism on the בָּהֵמָה in v. 3b may be a later addition since vv. 4-5 give the impression that Yahwe was pleased with Solomon’s massive sacrifices at the בָּהֵמָה גִּבּוֹן of Gibeon. In addition, the בָּהֵמָה are criticized twice in this text, in vv. 2 and 3b. One of them is probably a later addition. On the basis of phraseology, Würthwein regards v. 3 as nomistic, whereas he sees v. 2 as a late gloss. Similarly, Särkiö has accredited v. 3 to a nomist, and v. 2 to a later nomist. O’Brien accredits v. 3a to the history writer and vv. 2, 3b to later stages. In any case, the passage does not bear witness to intolerance in Israel’s pre-exilic religion.

יִהוָה הוּא הָאָלָהָם אֶחָי עֵד — 1K 8:60

is a monotheistic formulation in a passage that can be identified as post-dtr or late. The surrounding text shows that the author was familiar with the nomistic theology, but an even later origin is possible. Nelson argues that vv. 59-60 are from a redactor who was active after the second dtr. Similarly, Hölscher and Hentschel opt for a post-dtr redactor. Würthwein suggests that in the background of vv. 59-60 lies the situation of the Diaspora community.

53 Würthwein 1985 28-29. In Hentschel’s (1984, 32-33) view, verse 2 is a late or post-dtr, whereas v. 3 is dtr. The lateness of v. 2 could be implied in the reference to the name of Yahwe dwelling in the temple. However, early layers of Dt 12 (v. 11) also refer to the name of Yahwe, and thus, with the lack of any other late-dtr phraseology, v. 2 could stem from the history writer. On the other hand, v. 2, with its reference to Israelites sacrificing at the בָּהֵמָה, is very loose in its context, especially if one removes v. 3 as a later addition. However, it is not impossible that v. 1 is from a pre-dtr source and that v. 2 is from the history writer. Then v. 3 would be a later nomistic comment on the בָּהֵמָה.


56 Hölscher 1923b, 168; Hetschel (1984, 63) suggests that vv. 54-61 are later than the already nomistic basic text of the speech.

57 Würthwein 1985, 96.


1K 9:4-9 — Other Gods

Verses 7-9 may assume a late form of Dt, for v. 7 is familiar with Dt 28:37 and vv. 8-9 with Dt 29:24-27. Since Dt 29:24-27 can be identified as a nomistic text, it is possible that 1K 9:7-9 look in retrospect to a version of Dt that was already edited by the nomists. Several nomistic features also point to a late origin: Verses 4 and 6 exhort the keeping of the commandments in a similar way found in Dt. Moreover, the language of the whole passage is thoroughly nomistic or dependent on the nomists. Nomistic argumentation is met in the conditional blessing and curse in vv. 6-7. Thus, it is reasonable to suspect that 1K 9:4-9 is dependent on a late form of Dt. Accordingly, the passage is often ascribed to the nomists.

1K 11:2-10 — Other Gods

This passage refers to a previously given command not to intermarry with the inhabitants of the land (v. 2). Therefore, one may assume that 1K 11:2-10 is dependent on Dt 7:1-3par. Otherwise the passage shows little nomistic terminology. Although seeing some vestiges of pre-nomistic origin, Würthwein regards the whole passage as a nomistic construction. According to Särkiö, the main bulk of the passage derives from the nomists, yet he ascribes the building of the שֵׁם הַאֱלֹהִים (šem ha-ēlōhim) for foreign gods to DtrP. In his investigation, only vv. 11:1a and 3a are attributed to the history writer. These sentences contain no reference to other gods.

1K 11:33 — Other Gods

The verse contains several nomistic phrases. The reference to keeping the commandments is presented in a typically nomistic way: Curses will follow because Israel has not kept the commandments. Similarly, the formula forget (שָׁלֹות) Yahwe and follow (here שָׁלֹות) other

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58 Veijola 1977, 48; Würthwein 1985, 103-106; Jones 1984, 209-210; Särkiö 1994, 99-103; Hentschel (1984, 65): vv. 1-5 are nomistic, while vv. 6-9 are even later. For O’Brien, vv. 1-5 are from the history writer and vv. 6-9 from a late-dtr. In any case vv. 4-5 do not contain any criticism on other gods. Appealing to the vocabulary, Hölscher (1923b, 170) ascribes the passage to a late-dtr hand.

59 Würthwein 1985, 131-135: “ein Gebilde von DtrN-Kreisen.” Jepsen (1953, 21) accredits the passage (vv. 1-9) to his RIII, the second redactor of the DH; perceiving from the point of view that Ex 34:11-13 is a very old text, Hentschel (1984, 74) suggests that the problem of intermarriage existed already in the pre-dtr era. Therefore, for him the passage is not necessarily dtr. O’Brien (1989, 160-162) attributes most of the passage to the dtr redactors (from the history writer vv. 2b, 3b, 4, 6). In other words, for O’Brien the history writer is intolerant in this passage. Jones (1984, 232-236) states that the passage is unmistakably deuteronomistic, without specifying, however, which verse derives from which author. Hölscher (1923b, 174-175) argues that the pre-dtr Vorlage acknowledged two themes: the marriage to many women and the building of שֵׁם הַאֱלֹהִים to foreign gods. According to him, the history writer would have written the main bulk of the passage.

4. Intolerance Passages in the Deuteronomistic History

The Deeds of the Kings: 1Kings 12-2Kings 25

The picture received from the early books of the DH is relatively unambiguous. With some exceptions, most intolerance passages from the book of Joshua up to the 11th chapter of 1Kings are often in research accepted as later additions. However, when we turn to the accounts that describe the deeds of individual kings, argumentation becomes more difficult. This is mainly due to the form of the text. Whereas in the earlier books the events are presented in a more narrative form, the deeds of the kings are a collection of short and independent reports — many copied from old annals — augmented by interpretative comments. In a flowing narrative, the later additions stick out from their contexts, while in a text that already consists of separate and short units the later additions are harder to identify. One may also note that many intolerance passages are short sentences only, which means that the identification of their redactional status is hazardous. Accordingly, scholarly views on 1K 12-2K 25 deviate from each other to a wider degree than in the previously discussed books of the DH. We may have to accept the fact that in the books of Kings argumentation — in a way or another — remains more speculative than elsewhere in the DH.

1K 12:28-33 — The Golden Calves

This passage does not contain any typically nomistic phraseology. The event is expressed with terminology unknown from nomistic texts that attack other gods. For example, O’Brien notes that the passage does not contain any clear dtr language. The content of the criticism is also observably different from the nomistic one. Moreover, since the history writer consistently condemns the Israelite kings as evil with the usual explanation that the kings did as Jeroboam did in reference to the calves, it seems difficult not to attribute this passage

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61 Walter Dietrich 1972, 94; Würthwein 1985, 139, 144; Hentschel (1984, 78-79) assumes that the whole passage is strongly edited and suggests that v. 33 is late-dtr/nomistic.
63 Hölscher 1923b, 180; Jepsen 1953, 21.
64 For example, 1K 22:54 is a fully independent verse, but since the surrounding context is not a flowing narrative, argumentation is very difficult. Similarly, 1K 15:12-13.
65 O’Brien 1989, 186-187. He explains this state of affairs as an indication for the so-called Southern document from which much of this passage was adopted. However, most of the language that has been regarded as deuteronomistic is in fact nomistic.
66 It is commonly accepted that the evaluation of the kings “he did evil/good in the eyes of Yahwe” derives from the history writer. However, from the perspective of textual criticism, Person (1993 191-192; 1997, 100-103) has convincingly demonstrated that this phrase in 2K 25 is of late or post-exilic origin. Unfortunately, it is not possible to deal with this novel perspective here.
to the history writer. Without the "sin of Jeroboam", the uniform condemnation of the Israelite kings in the reports about the kings' deeds is incomprehensible. Accordingly, most scholars attribute the events in vv. 26-30 to the history writer. There appears to be some disagreement over vv. 31-32. Würtwein suggests that they derive from the nomists. Similarly, Provan considers them an addition by the later deuteronomists.

The main aim of 1K 12:28-33 is to illustrate the illegitimacy and absurdity of the cult in the Northern Kingdom; Jeroboam makes gods who he then claims to have led Israel out of Egypt. The passage tries to show that the cult of the North is ridiculous and has no divine or legitimate basis: The gods or the calves were made out of gold by Jeroboam. In other words, they are merely man-made objects, invented by Jeroboam. Similarly, the priests he ordained are said to have no priestly lineage (v. 31). The basis of this criticism may be read in v. 27: Jeroboam has consciously seceded from the cult of the Jerusalem Temple, and therefore the cult he established is ridiculed in the DH. There is no reason to assume that criticism of Jeroboam's acts stems from any intrinsic and general intolerance towards other gods or religions. The main intolerance in the passage relates to the challenge to the cult in Jerusalem posed by the cult in the Northern Kingdom. The later interpreters have read or interpreted the passage so that it would criticize the other gods. This development may be seen in the related Ex 32 and Dt 9, which already parallel the making of the calf with the worship of other gods. Moreover, Ex 32 and Dt 9 — at least in their present text-forms — assume that the golden calf was a violation of the decalogic prohibition against making images. According to Särkiö, in its reference to the golden calf, Dt 9 is dependent on Ex 32, which is then dependent on an older tradition, traces of which can be found in 1K 12:25-32.

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67 Würtwein 1985, 161-166; Hentschel (1984, 84-85) attributes vv. 26-29, 30b to the first dtr, and vv. 30a, 31-32 to later deuteronomists. Similarly, Hölscher 1923b, 183.
68 Provan 1988, 78-81. He points out that the Northern Kingdom is never accused of fostering תַּנְאָה. He suggests that the addition extends to 1K 13:33, and that its main purpose was to direct attention from the calves to the תַּנְאָה; likewise Jepsen (1953, 6): 1K 12:31-13:34 is a later expansion. According to Jepsen, the addition is directed at the priests of Bethel, rather than the cult-places.
69 For the purposes of this investigation it is not necessary to discuss whether the calves were in fact worshipped as gods or whether they had another function in the cult (see discussion in Jones 1984, 258-259).
70 The word נְדוֹת (vanity, vapor, breath, emptiness), used later to refer to the calves, also points towards this direction: the gods or calves worshipped in the North are nothing, for they have no divine basis. See 1K 16: 13, 26.
71 Both Ex 32 and Dt 9 contain phraseology that is otherwise used in the attack on other gods, for example, Ex 32:8, 10, 12, 20; Dt 9:16, 18-19, 21. Especially the anger of Yahwe is a recurrent theme in both chapters. The destruction of the calves is also expressed with terminology that is dependent on 2K 23.
72 Dohmen 1985, 127-128, 145-146. According to him, the connection to the prohibition against making images derives from a later dtr editor, who represents the third layer of Ex 32.
73 Ex 32 probably also contains an earlier, pre-dtr, core but its extent is very disputed.
74 Särkiö 1998, 157-158, 163-164. He assumes that 1K 12:25-32 was then later edited by dtr redactors. Dohmen (1985, 126-127, 144-145) argues that the JE editor of Ex 32 acknowledged the idea of a golden calf.
4. Intolerance Passages in the Deuteronomistic History

1K 14:9b — Other Gods and Molten Idols

Hölscher has suggested that the original text of the history writer directly ran from 1K 13:34 to 1K 14:19-20; all in between, 1K 14:1-18, would have been added later. Among others, Walter Dietrich has argued that the context of 1K 14:9 derives from DtrP (vv. 8a, 9b), whereas vv. 8b-9a would be a later addition by DtrN. Verses 8b-9a show clearly late characteristics, whereas the lateness of vv. 8a and 9b is based on the broader context in vv. 7-11. One may question this often accepted reconstruction, as the transition from v. 8a to 9b is not very smooth. One would expect a comment or a sentence in between, for in the proposed basic text the sin is expressed very abruptly. Moreover, the text itself offers little criteria — grammatical or otherwise — to excise vv. 8b-9a from its context. Consequently, one should regard vv. 8-9 as a unit, and therefore, the lateness of v. 9b becomes probable, as v. 9a uses an expression (דַּרְכָּהּ נֶעְשָׂהוּ מְכֹל אֲשֶׁר אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן הָיוֹ) that is understandable only from the point of view of a later editor who perceived the whole DH as an already finished product. The only predecessors Jeroboam had were David and Solomon, both of whom were described as good kings. It would be strange that the original history writer had used such an expression in this context, but from a later redactor who is less conscious of the development of the narrative and of the exact context and position of the comment in the whole work, such an inaccuracy is understandable. Moreover, v. 8b presents nomistic phraseology: נֶעְשָׂה and נָפָר often occur in the nomistic frames of Dt. Consequently, 1K 14:9 probably stems from a late-dtr redactor who already has the whole DH at his disposal and which he is editing. In any case, 1K 14:1-18 is most likely a later addition to the history writer’s text to which v. 9 is probably a further addition.

1K 14:15 — אָשָׁרִים

Several scholars argue for nomistic origin. This view is supported by the direct reference to the Exile — although in this passage the Northern Kingdom is meant — met particularly in

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75 Hölscher 1923b, 183. He further suggests that the passage derives from an early tradition, but that vv. 7-11 are a later addition to it (thus also Jepsen 1953, 6).
76 Walter Dietrich 1972, 53; similarly Würtzwein (1985, 174-175), although only v. 8b from a nomist; without specifying Jones (1984, 269) admits that the passage has been later edited; Hentschel (1984, 91-92): v. 9a: nomistic, v. 9b: DtrP; O’Brien (1989, 189): the reference to other gods is a later addition.
77 Solomon is reported to have married foreign wives but this is in a nomistic expansion.
78 The inaptitude of this phrase is also noted by Jones 1984, 272.
79 Würtzwein 1985, 178; Walter Dietrich 1972, 35-36; Hentschel 1984, 92. O’Brien (1989, 190) acknowledges that the verse is a later addition to an earlier text that is from the history writer. Hölscher (1923b, 184) assumes that it is a late-dtr addition to an older tradition.
the nomistic texts.

Moreover, the theme of Yahwe’s anger and the ensuing curse caused by the worship of other gods is a pattern that Latvus has shown to be nomistic.

1K 14:22-24

These verses contain typical terminology found in intolerance texts. Verses 23-24a list many common targets of religious criticism. The phraseology in v. 23b implies a close relationship with 1K 12:31-13:34, 2K 17 and Jer 2:20. Yahwe’s anger could indicate a nomistic origin. Considering the form of the text in this passage, it is difficult to determine whether the verses are a later addition. Some scholars see vv. 22b-24 as nomistic, a view which could be justified by the heavy concentration of intolerance phrases. Provan ascribes the verses to the second dtr editor who has also worked on 1K 12:31-13-34, 2K 17.

1K 15:12-13

Würthwein accredits these verses to the nomists, but Hentschel and Jones, for example, argue for an earlier origin. Spieckermann suggests that only v. 13a (without the word המזון) is from an earlier source, whereas vv. 12 and 13b would be from a late-dtr writer. He notes that עלאים is a late-dtr term, but, according to Schroer, it derives from the book of Ezekiel, where it is common. The reference to cultic prostitutes in v. 12 is obviously dependent on 1K 14:24, which was already identified as nomistic. Verse 12 may thus be accredited to late redactors. The phraseology in v. 13 shows no nomistic traits, yet v. 13b is probably a reflection of 2K 23:6 as the burning of an Asherah is expressed in a very similar way.

1K 15:13b


Schroer 1987, 418-419.
2K 23:6 must be identified as a later nomistic expansion. Consequently, at least vv. 12, 13b may be regarded as late-dtr. As for v. 13a, it is very difficult to determine whether the history writer was familiar with it or not. Only the word יִשָּׂרָאֵל could indicate that it was added later to v. 12, but with the lack of other criteria, a conclusive judgment cannot be made.

1K 16:13, 26 — הָדָא

According to Würthwein, the word יִשָּׂרָאֵל used in reference to the calves derives from nomistic editing but some scholars argue for an earlier origin. As already noted above, the condemnation of the calves should not be interpreted as intrinsic intolerance of other gods. The word יִשָּׂרָאֵל means emptiness and vanity, which fits well with the message we receive from the Jeroboam-story: The gods made by Jeroboam have no divine basis; they are nothing.

1K 16:31-33 — The Temple and Altar of Baal

The worship of Baal in v. 31b is expressed with nomistic terminology. Würthwein regards vv. 31b-33 as nomistic editing but some scholars argue for an earlier origin. On the other hand, Jones implies that the story itself has a historical basis, although he also acknowledges that the phraseology is clearly deuteronomistic. There is some evidence that a later editor worked on the passage. Verse 33b repeats the content of v. 30b, which could indicate that a redactor is attempting to return to the old text after his expansion. The extent of this expansion remains unclear. It would be highly improbable that all in between had been a later addition (ring-composition), for in this case Jeroboam’s sin would not be reported at all. This is unlikely because otherwise the reports about the kings of the Northern Kingdom almost always refer to this event. At least v. 31a had to have been in the older text. The report about the royal house having had connections with the Phoenicians could derive from the annals. Especially v. 31 contains details that probably are based on old information: The offense committed by Ahab in marrying a daughter of Ithbaal and building an altar to Baal may therefore be a historical event. The main issue in the passage appears to be that Yahwe, the main God of Israel, was replaced with or challenged by another god, Baal. Nevertheless, the phraseology in v. 31b:

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88 See chapter 4.2.
89 Würthwein 1985, 195, 200.
91 Jones (1984, 293) suggests that the word יִשָּׂרָאֵל emphasizes the vanity of foreign gods, but at least in 1K 16 the only possible reference of the word are the golden calves. The point is not the vanity of foreign gods, but the vanity of gods made by Jeroboam.
92 Würthwein 1985, 201-203; Hentschel (1984, 103) and O’Brien (1989, 196-197) assume that already the history writer explicitly referred to Baal worship.
93 Jones 1984, 298-299.
is formulaic and typically nomistic yet that does not rule out the possibility of an earlier layer in the rest of the verse and in vv. 32-33, which show no particularly nomistic or deuteronomistic traits. Admitting that it is difficult to determine whether the passage is late or early in its context, I assume that the formulaic expressions in v. 31b are nomistic, while at least vv. 31ab, 32 may be earlier, they are probably from the history writer. In this case the passage would witness to an aggression against Baal in a pre-nomistic stage. A historical basis for the report that Baal had an influence in the royal house under Ahab and Jezebel cannot be ruled out. The criticism of Baal, however, should be explained as jealousy for Yahwe’s position as Israel’s main God. The king had lifted Baal to the same level as Yahwe, the God of Israel — at least in the eyes of the deuteronomistic historian. This would have been a cause of disturbance for any Israelite who regarded Yahwe as the unquestioned main God of Israel. In this sense, there is some intolerance in the passage, but one should note that it relates to Yahwe primacy. One should not read general intolerance of other gods into this passage. Regardless of the original intent, this passage may have influenced other passages that criticize Baal. In later texts, the criticism is then intrinsically intolerant of Baal and other gods.

E.g., to serve (לָנוּר) and worship (וְהָשָּׁבֶת) Baal; to cause Yahwe’s anger.

Verse 33a is quite loose, since the main message of the previous passage is that Baal was honored in Samaria. It could be an attempt to connect Asherah with Baal, a connection unnatural from the perspective of the history of religions. Admittedly, there is not much literary-critical criteria to determine this. Verse 33b repeats the message of v. 30b and contains the reference to Yahwe’s anger, possibly a nomistic theme. However, there is the possibility that this reference is a later addition since it comes in a very awkward position and disturbs the sentence that continues from וַיְהָיָה לְעֵשָׂה.

For political reasons, the king would have build a temple for Baal in Samaria. Another alternative is that Ahab build a temple for Yahwe in Samaria, for it is nowhere reported that there had been a temple of Yahwe in Samaria. It is improbable that Yahwe did not have a temple in Samaria since the onomasticon and the OT assume that Yahwe had been the main God of the Northern Kingdom as well. The Israelite kings of the North have PNs with Yahwe as the theophoric element. An ANE kingdom without a temple for the main God in the capital would be difficult to fathom. At the most, Baal can have had an ephemeral influence in Israel. Consequently, the original account in the annals may have been that Ahab build a temple for Yahwe. This would have been extremely embarrassing for Jerusalem. The later editors or the history writer would then have changed the report to describe the building of a temple for Baal. This remains, however, completely speculative as there is no textual support. Perhaps in the future some effort could be put into this question.

Lemche (1988, 160) comments that “the religious struggle against the Omride dynasty was not caused by the enmity between Yahwistic religion and the local worship of Ba’al, but rather by the collision between the local religion and the worship of the foreign deity, which had attempted to replace the local religion.”
This passage is widely debated among scholars, with little consensus in sight. Nevertheless, the content shows that either vv. 3-40 or vv. 18-40 are a later addition to the chapter: Verses 1-2 deal with drought and famine in Samaria, thematically not clearly continued before v. 41. In vv. 1-2 it is stated that Yahwe will let it rain, while v. 41 describes its fulfillment. The passage in between develops in an entirely different direction, and seems to have little to do with the rain issue. Only verse 5 alludes to the lack of water, but here the issue is subordinate to the ensuing theme that Ahab will meet Elijah. On the other hand, Keinänen has recently argued that the original water story ran after vv. 2b-3a in vv. 5-8 continuing through vv. 9-11 and 15-17 to v. 41. Verse 2a assumes that Elijah has already met Ahab (וֹאָבָא אֵלֶיהִים הַאֲדָמָא), whereas in vv. 3-15 Ahab is still seeking for Elijah (v. 10). Verse 2a would continue smoothly in v. 41.

In addition, in v. 41 Elijah suddenly speaks to Ahab about the water issue, whereas in the preceding verses the addressee has been the people and the servants of Elijah, the issue being the prophets of Baal. The dialogue between Ahab and Elijah is comprehensible against the background portrayed in vv. 1-2. In this case, vv. 3-40 would be a later addition to an earlier text. On the other hand, v. 17 has brought Ahab and the prophet together so that v. 40 could continue from v. 17, as proposed by Keinänen. In either case, vv. 18-40 are a later addition to the original passage.

Although they are of main interest for this investigation, vv. 18-40 do not reveal their redactional connections very easily. In addition, it is quite certain that these verses contain later additions as well. At any rate, v. 18 may be familiar with nomistic thinking: To forget the commandments of Yahwe ((stock אָבָא מָמְצָא וְהוָא) and follow after the Baalim (ואָבָא מַדְלְלֵיס). Dependence on the nomists could also be assumed in the allusion to the Alternativpredigt in v. 21, although this connection is rather weak. The terminology and phraseology is not fully nomistic, although familiarity with the nomistic texts is probable. However, it seems certain that vv. 17-20 derive from another writer than that of the following narrative in vv. 21ff. In the sacrifice-narrative itself, the strongest terminological indicator for a late origin is the monotheistic formulation in vv. 37,
Elsewhere in the DH, similar formulations occur in the late, post-dtr additions, e.g., Dt 4:35, 39; 7:9 and 1K 8:60. Although the question is complicated by the probability that these verses also contain more than one layer of text, it is usually accepted that the monotheistic formulations belonged to the basic text of the sacrifice-narrative. Beck has recently argued that the basic narrative in vv. 21-40 is post-exilic in origin and dependent on prophetical and dtr theology. He is skeptical of the idea that the story is based on an older tradition. In addition, Keinänen has argued that the rain/drought-issue, which is clearly earlier than vv. 18-40, derives from a later deuteronomist. This would also imply that vv. 18-40 are late-dtr at the earliest. According to Keinänen, the earlier layer that deals with the conflict between Yahwe and Baal is post-dtr. Würthwein assumes that 1K 18:21-39 is related to late-dtr texts and is therefore also late-dtr. As a consequence, it now seems likely that Elijah’s conflict with Baal at Carmel is a late idea. Contrary to the findings of many earlier studies, the passage cannot be used as evidence for the intolerance of other gods in an early period.

1K 21:26 — גָּלֶלִים

According to many scholars, this verse originates from late-dtr or other late editors. Its lateness is indicated by the lack of contact to its immediate context: Verses 22-24 present a gloomy prophesy on Ahab’s family, but the reaction of Ahab is not given before v. 27. This connection is disturbingly broken by vv. 25-26. Since the earlier vv. 22-24 and 27-29 can be identified as late additions to the DH, vv. 25-26 must be ascribed to an even later stage. The apostasy is expressed with the typical הָּלָם אֱלֹהִים, yet instead of the common הָּלָם אֱלֹהִים the word הָּלָם אֱלֹהִים is used to denote other gods. This deviation may imply a post-nomistic origin. As we have already seen, the word probably derives from Ezekiel.

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104 Admittedly, without a detailed analysis the probable existence of several layers in the passage makes argumentation hazardous. According to Würthwein (1994, 136, 138-139), these phrases show that we are dealing with a late-dtr author, at the earliest.
105 For the late origin of Dt 4:32-40, see Knapp 1987, 106-110. According to Veijola (1996, 252), Dt 7:7-11 is a later addition to a passage that is late-nomistic (DtrB). For 1K 8:60 see above.
106 See Beck 1999, 72, 80-87. In his reconstruction, the original text is found in vv. 21-30, 33-35a, 36aa, 37, 38aa, 39-40.
107 Beck 1999, 72, 80-87, 122.
108 Keinänen (1997, 259) terms this later deuteronomist as DtrP. According to Beck (1999, 71-72, 106-116, 122), the drought-issue is pre-exilic in origin.
110 Würthwein 1994, 137-139.
111 Hölscher 1923b, 196 (vv. 25-26 are a separate addition to the context); Würthwein 1985, 252; Hentschel 1984, 128 and Bohlen 1978, 318-319.
112 See e.g., Walter Dietrich 1972, 50-51.
113 Schroer 1987, 418-419.
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1K 22:54 — The Worship of Baal

Because of the nature of the text, it is very difficult to determine whether the verse is a late addition or not. In any case, it contains formulaic expressions reminiscent of nomistic terminology. The sin is expressed with terminology used very often by the nomists: serve (違う) and worship (ודשתהו) other gods (Baal), and provoke Yahwe to anger (המיעס).

2K 1:1-8 — Elijah and the Baal-Zebub of Ekron

In this passage, Elijah condemns Ahaziah for consulting Baal-Zebub of Ekron. Elijah’s main criticism is that the Israelite king ignores Yahwe, the God of Israel — “is there no God in Israel because you consult Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?” (v. 3). The main point is evident, the king is replacing Yahwe with a foreign god. In this sense, the passage is in line with 1K 16: 30-31ab, 32, which condemns Ahab for allowing Baal to challenge Yahwe as the main God of Israel. Thematically then, the passage is in accordance with the history writer’s perspective we meet in 1K 16: 30-31ab, 32. It seems evident that the passage is not connected to the dtr or nomistic editors; the passage does not use any typical phases or vocabulary that would connect it with nomistic circles. The passage has another origin. Consequently, Beck has argued that 2K 1:2, 5-8 derives from a pre-dtr source, but Würthwein assumes the passage to be post-dtr in origin. Beck’s argument for a pre-dtr origin is that the demands for a relationship between Yahwe and Israel are pre-dtr. He then alludes to Hosea. In my view, this link and argument is rather weak. The question may have to be left open, but thematically it would be possible that the passage was already in the history writer’s text. The writer — and in the narrative, Elijah — criticizes the king for ignoring Yahwe, the God of Israel, in favor of Baal-Zebub.

2K 3:2b — The Statue of Baal Is Removed

According to Würthwein, the removal of מזבח בגילה in 2K 3:2b is a nomistic idea, but Hentschel and O’Brien attribute it to the history writer. There is some reason to believe that v. 2b is part of the history writer’s original text. Verse 3 very probably also derives from the history writer, for Jeroboam’s sin is otherwise constantly reported in connection with the

114 Würthwein 1985, 265.
115 Beck 1999, 143-149. Noth (1943, 125) assumed that vv. 2-17aa originally formed a separate story that was not connected to Ahaziah.
117 Beck 1999, 146: “Weiter muß beachtet werden, daß die Einforderung der Beziehung Israels zu Jahwe bereits vor-dtr. belegt ist, etwa beim Propheten Hosea (z. B. Hos 4,1.6.12; 7,1; 9,3; 11,1). Somit dürfte ein vor-dtr. Ursprung der Erzählung wahrscheinlich sein.”
118 Würthwein 1985, 279.
Israelite kings. Verse 3 begins with a пр that assumes the following sentence reports something that is in some way contrary to what is stated in the previous text. Since v. 3 reports that the king had sinned, one expects to find something positive from the previous text. The only conceivable possibility would then be v. 2b, with its reference to removing the מזבח. The word пр cannot be removed from v. 3 since the following sentence presents an inverted word order, the verb being at the end, which assumes an emphasis at the beginning of the sentence, which would be incomprehensible if v. 3 would attach directly to v. 2аа. The emphasis would make no sense in that reconstruction. Consequently, one must assume that v. 2 derives from the basic text of the chapter, and that the historian regarded the removal of Baal’s מזבח a good thing. The only other possibility would be that a later redactor had replaced a text or completely reformulated the sentences, an assumption that is always questionable if one can otherwise reach a reasonable solution. As for the phraseology, not much can be said. The verb סר is often used by the nomists when objects of other gods are removed, whereas the historian uses it to remove the בם. The nomists have most likely adopted the verb in this sense from the history writer.

The verse clearly refers to 1K 16:31-33, in which Ahab has taken measures to instate the worship of Baal in Samaria. Strangely, 2K 3:2b assumes that Ahab had erected a מזבח to Baal, but this is not reported in 1K 16:31-33. One may also ask, why did he leave the Temple and the altar standing, only destroying the מזבח, if he was opposed to Baal? In any case, 2K 3:2 should be understood in relation to the measures taken by Ahab to instate Baal worship in Samaria. In this verse then, the history writer criticizes jeopardizing Yahwe’s position in the Northern Kingdom.

2K 5:15, 17 — There is no Other God but Yahwe

According to Würthwein, the whole passage (vv. 15-27) probably stems from post-dtr writers, the background being the exilic problem of how one can worship Yahwe outside the land. Jones suggests that vv. 15-19a are a later expansion concerned with the theme that there is no God but Yahwe.

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120 Verse 2аа goes with v. 2b in any case. Without the other, neither would make sense.
121 Note that this verb is important for the nomists in another sense as well. It is used to denote departure (סר) from Yahwe’s road (דרי) or His commandments.
122 Regardless of whether one views the passage as a historical or a literary creation, the problem remains.
123 So Würthwein (1985, 297-298, 301-303). On the other hand, Hentschel (1985a, 23) suggests that the confession itself in v. 17 can be pre-exilic.
124 Jones 1984, 412-413.
4. Intolerance Passages in the Deuteronomistic History

2K 10:18-29 — Jehu’s Reform and Attack on Baal in Israel

There is reason to believe that the whole passage in vv. 18-28 is a later addition to the DH. Verse 17 and v. 30 both deal with the extermination of Ahab’s family. Verse 30 continues from the content of v. 17 as if nothing was in between. In fact, vv. 30ff. entirely ignore the events described in vv. 18-28. Moreover, the content of v. 29 is disturbingly repeated in v. 31. Therefore, it can be assumed that v. 29 is a redactor’s attempt to return to the original text. Since v. 31 can derive from the historian at the earliest, the basic story of vv. 18-29 derives from a later writer. Some scholars find late-dtr traits in the passage, although they are neither abundant nor clear.

2K 11:18 — The Destruction of Baal’s Temple in Judah

Verse 18a has been regarded as nomistic or late-dtr by Würthwein and Spieckermann, and generally late (post history writer) by many. The terminology pertaining to the breaking of the altars and statues of Baal is reminiscent of what we find in the nomistic exhortations in Ex 34:13; Dt 7:5 and 12:3 to attack foreign cults: 니חק אלוהים. The direction of influence is difficult to determine because the textual overlapping extends to individual words only. One may suspect that the destruction of Baal’s temple in Judah is closely related to or dependent on 2K 10:18-29, which describe how Baal’s temple was destroyed in Israel. This is implied by the fact that there is no report of Baal’s temple being built in Jerusalem. Moreover, Veijola has suggested that 2K 11:12 was originally followed by v. 18b, the connection of which was broken by two later additions, vv. 13-16 and vv. 17-18a. The latter addition, which reports the destruction of Baal’s temple, is closely related to the nomistic 2K 23:1-3.

References:

125 Against Hölscher (1923b, 196), for example, who assumes that 2K 10:30-31 is a later addition.
126 Reference to Yahwe’s law could point towards the nomists, yet the particular interest in Jeroboam’s sin could be ascribed to the historian.
127 Würthwein (1985, 340-343) divides the text between DtrP and DtrN. However, according to Beck (1999, 199-207), the passage has a pre-dtr core that was mainly edited by the history writer.
128 Minokami (1989, 96-98) assumes that vv.18-27 are pre-dtr. His general dating is based on his assumption that since v. 28 from DtrH and is dependent on vv. 18-27, the passage must be pre-dtr. This is unlikely, however. He fails to notice that the whole passage is a thematical digression from the history writer’s narrative.
130 See Veijola 1979, 98-104. Thus also Spieckermann 1982, 177-179.
2K 16:3-4 — Burn Sons in the Fire and Sacrifice at the VYOD

These verses are seen as a nomistic or a late-dtr addition to an earlier text by the history writer. The theme of burning sons in the fire is suggested to be late. For example, O’Brien argues that all other references to this sin are later additions. Provan on the other hand suggests that vv. 3b-4 are from a secondary editor because the phraseology therein is paralleled by other secondary passages (1K 14:22-24 and 2K 17:7-17). The allusion to the VYOD is expressed with language familiar from other passages that criticize these cultic places yet the subject of the verbs in this verse is the king, while usually it is the people that is accused of sacrificing at the VYOD. Moreover, the content of v. 4b in reference and association to the VYOD is otherwise unknown from the DH, but often used in Jeremiah (e.g., 2:20). Consequently, I assume that at least vv. 3b-4 are a text postdating the historian. The author of this addition was possibly familiar with a late form of Jeremiah.

2K 17:7-20, 24-41 — The Destruction of the Northern Kingdom

According to Würthwein and Hentschel, the passage contains several layers from several nomists and post-deuteronomists. Nelson suggests that all of vv. 7-20 derive from the second dtr redactor. Likewise, Hölscher infers that from vv. 7-23 only vv. 21-23 are from the original editor. Walter Dietrich and, following him, Jones attribute much of the passage to the history writer (vv. 7-11, 20). The latter view is unlikely, for vv. 7-19 do not mention the sin of Jeroboam at all, the main theme for the historian concerning the Northern Kingdom. It is reasonable to assume that the sin of Jeroboam is mentioned as the primary sin that caused Israel’s destruction. Since this does not appear before v. 21, one should
assume that all in between is a later addition. Many of the sins listed in vv. 7-20 are ones that Israel has never been accused of before. Many of these sins are in fact Judah’s sins that are now projected on to Israel as well. Consequently, it seems that the original text by the historian ran from v. 6 to v. 21. The only sin of Israel would then have been that of Jeroboam. This passage shows that the most central texts in the DH have been heavily and extensively edited, and that the oldest text forms only a marginal proportion of the final text.

2K 18:4 — Hezekiah’s Reform

As the various solutions show, literary-critical argumentation in this important verse is extremely difficult. According to Würthwein, this verse derives from a late or post-dtr stage. Many scholars, however, accredit the verse as a whole — or most of the verse — to the history writer. Provan suggests that the main issues in this passage are the何必 and the centralization of the cult, while the other issues in v. 4aβ — Asherah and the何必 — are from a later editor. Verse 4aβ may reflect the nomistic exhortation to destroy the foreign cult apparatus:何必 and何必 use terminology that is common in the nomistic texts. However, v. 4b contains no dtr language, and is thus often considered pre-dtr. The verb何必 (pi.) is otherwise used in the whole DH only twice, in Dt 1:44 (hiph.) and Dt 9:21 (qal.). The latter refers to the destruction of the golden calf, while the former has a military context (crushing the enemy). The bronze snake that is referred to is evidently the one Moses makes in Nm 21:9:

| Nm 21:9 |何必何必何必何必 |
| 2K 18:4b |何必何必何必何必 |

Such a similarity between the sentences probable implies a dependence between the passages, in which case Nm 21:9 would most likely be older than 2K 18:4. This would then imply that the author of 2K 18:4b is already familiar with the Tetrateuch, in other words, he is probably a considerably late author. Moreover, it is reasonable to assume that the perfect

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139 There is a possibility that v. 22 is a further addition, since it refers to all the sins of Jeroboam assuming then perhaps the addition of 1K 12:31ff.
140 This state of affairs puts pressure on the other central texts in the DH, Josiah’s reform in particular.
141 Würthwein 1985 406, 411-412.
142 Hentschel 1985a, 85; Jones 1984, 559-561; Spieckermann (1982, 170-173): v. 4a, bβ is from the history writer, while 4aβ, bγ derive from an older source.
143 Provan 1988, 85-86, 88. According to him, the expansion has the intention of associating the何必 with idolatry. He appeals to linguistic affinities with other later expansions (1K 14:22-24 and 2K 17:7-17) as well as to the use of verbs (instead of the typical cons. imperfect met in other similar passages, v. 18aβ uses the perfect).
144 E.g., Dt 7:1-6par. See chapter 2.6.
form of the verb נחב (pi.) in 2K 18:4b is dependent on the previous two verbs in v. 4a, for all three present a uniform use of the verb in the perfect, which deviates from the consec. imperfect which is otherwise used in similar locations. Accordingly, I assume that only v. 4aa was part of the historian’s text: He attacks the מashi only, while a later writer has added the attack on the cult objects. It is possible that v. 4b derives from an even later editor than the already nomistic v. 4a. It is probable that the מלכ as a cult object has a historical basis in the pre-exilic Israelite religion, but the currently available material is too scarce to make far-reaching conclusions on its function and importance. Nm 21:9 seems to imply that healing powers were attributed to it. It also seems evident that the object had been connected with Moses. However, it is difficult to determine if the report that the Israelites burnt sacrifices to this object has historical basis, or if the report should be regarded as part of the nomistic attack on all suspicious cult-objects.

2K 19:15-19 — You Alone, Yahwe are God

The אוה הוא האלהים להודך is reminiscent of the post-nomistic Dt 4:35, 39; 7:9; 1K 8:60; 18:37, 39. Verses 15 and 19 assume that Yahwe is already the Lord of all nations (למלך), who has created the heavens and the earth. Verse 19 declares that all nations should recognize Yahwe’s sovereignty, which is already closer to Deutero-Isaiah’s perspective than the intolerant monolatry we usually meet in the DH. Moreover, ידידים טב עת טוב in v. 18 is similar to the late-nomistic Dt 4:28 (ידידים טוב עת טוב) and 28:36, 64 (ידידים טובים ... עת טוב). Despite these contacts with late texts, many scholars see the passage as deuteronomistic. O’Brien regards vv. 15-19 as a later addition to the historian’s text. According to Hölscher, vv. 15ff. is later than Deutero-Isaiah. This seems probable.

2K 21:3-9, 21 — Manasseh’s Sins

This passage contains several expansions from different redactors. There is little room for literary-critical argumentation, as the lack of scholarly consensus shows. Würthwein has argued that verses 3-9, 21 derive from DtrP and the nomists. However, many scholars also

146 Speckermann has argued that since the snake is attributed to Moses himself, it is likely that the report is pre-dtr. He suggests that the history writer would not have attributed the snake to Moses. In addition to the probability that the report is more recent than the history writer, it only assumes that the Israelites began to misuse the object. There is no criticism of Moses.
147 Würthwein 1984, 425-429; history writer; Jones (1984, 577) notes that the confession in v. 19 is frequently used in the exilic period, and that it is especially found in the book of Ezekiel.
149 Hölscher 1923b, 187.
150 Würthwein 1985, 439-441.
find an intolerant history writer in this passage. The status of this complex passage depends on Josiah’s reform because much of it is formed in relation to it: Manasseh is the ultimately evil king, whereas Josiah is the ideal king. Josiah reverses the development that Manasseh promoted in 2K 21. The interpretation of this passage is thus dependent on the interpretation of 2K 22-23.

Conclusions

In the case of many analyzed intolerance passages, there exists some consensus that they are late — mostly late-dtr — additions to the books of Kings. However, a large number of passages are also disputed, with little convincing proof one way or another. This state of affairs partly arises from the nature of the text, which means that the scholars’ preconceptions influence the analyses more than elsewhere in the DH. There is a general tendency that towards the end of 2Kings more scholars tend to see an intolerant history writer. Nevertheless, as noted in connection with some passages (1K 16:31-33; 2K1:1-8; 2K 3:2), the history writer may have renounced Baal. These passages show no explicit signs of nomistic or later reworking and differ from the typically nomistic criticism of other gods. Although being very short reports, which makes argumentation difficult, it seems possible that the history writer criticized the worship of Baal in the Northern Kingdom. It is noteworthy that all these passages criticize Ahab’s family of replacing Yahwe, the national God, with Baal and allowing Phoenician influence in Samaria.

151 Jepsen 1953, 25 (the original writer in vv. 3 and 5; he ascribes the rest to a later redactor); Nelson 1981, 65-67; Spieckermann 1982, 160-170; Jones 1984, 594; Hentschel 1985a, 101-102;
152 See chapter 4.2.
153 A text that is in a confusing state does not influence the conceptions of a scholar as much as a text that more clearly shows traits of the textual development. In the latter case, it is much easier to observe when the text is forced into a theory, whereas in the former case a text can but into many kinds of molds.

The reform of Josiah is a notoriously difficult problem. Scholarly views on the literary history and development of the passage vary to a considerable degree. Some scholars — e.g., Spieckermann — leave considerably much to the original editor, whereas some studies can be characterized as minimalistic — e.g., Levin and Niehr. The evident lack of consensus is due to heavy editing by several successive redactors and the form of the text that leaves little space for proper argumentation. The text, particularly chapter 23, consists of short independent reports of different reformatory measures, presented in a rather confusing order. As a consequence, later additions are difficult to isolate from the original text and to separate from each other. In a flowing narrative, later additions clearly stick out from the context, but when the whole text consists of successive redactions, argumentation remains much more speculative. Consequently, the scholars’ preconceptions may have more influence on the analysis than elsewhere in the DH. Acknowledging the difficulties, I will attempt to isolate the later additions from the history writer’s text. Where argumentation is possible, it is naturally offered. Removing later additions, we should be able to recover a comprehensible text by the history writer. In any case, a text that is in such a condition as 2K 23 should not be used as a cornerstone for any general views on the DH or to build a theory on. At the most, 2K 23 can be used as a supplement for a view or theory that is based on other passages in the DH. As already noted, I will primarily concentrate on trying to recover the text of the historian and distinguish his text from the later additions. I will not put much effort into separating the later additions from each other, although it is evident that the passage contains several layers of text. The sources of the historian — the text from the assumed annals — will be isolated from the history writer only when the text manifestly differs from the historian’s narrative.

1 Although he also finds many later additions, Spieckermann (1982, 153-160, 423-429) assumes that the central reformatory measures were already present in the pre-dtr source.
3 The text of the history writer is of main interest here, although it is to be expected that the passage also contains vestiges from older annals.
4 For example, the reconstruction of Israel’s history and of DH by Spieckermann (1982, 195-199) leans heavily on Josiah’s reform.
Analysis

It is commonly accepted that 2K 22:1-2 derive from the history writer and are modeled after reports taken from the annals. The same probably applies to 2K 22:3-7 as well, although some scholars suggest that vv. 3-7 were formulated after a very similar passage in 2K 12:5-16 and that its introduction into the present context was to prepare ground for finding the book of law in vv. 8-11. The main problem with this view is that the two stories in 2K 22 — in vv. 3-7 on the one hand and in vv. 8-11 on the other — are not bound together with the smoothness that one would expect if they were written by one author. Verses 3-7 do not prepare for the following story. These verses perfectly function alone without the following story. The main issue of verses 3-7 is the Temple and its restoration. In vv. 3-7, Josiah is represented as a good king due to his concern over the Temple, whereas in vv. 8-11 attention is on the book. There is a shift in subject and theme. Moreover, there is a disturbing formal cleft between vv. 7 and 8. Verses 4-7 are written as a command of the king to Shaphan, but v. 8 suddenly jumps to another setting, in which Hilkijah, the high priest, is the speaker. In addition, v. 9 has the appearance of a later addition that attempts to attach to the older text, for it unnecessarily repeats phrases from the preceding verses 4-7. The probable motivation of v. 9 is to bind the finding of the book to the preceding Temple restoration-passage. With a reference to the king’s earlier command in vv. 4-5, v. 9 prepares the king for the upcoming message in v. 10 that a book has been found in the Temple. Consequently, one should attribute vv. 3-7 and 8-11 to different writers, so that vv. 8-11 are a later addition to the preceding text. It is improbable that vv. 3-7 and 8-11 were originally construed as a unit, for then one would expect the passages to correspond to each other more smoothly. The possibility that vv. 3-7 would generally derive from a report in the annals and vv. 8-11 from the history writer is quite small. Having the freedom to use his sources for his main interests and themes, one would expect the history writer to integrate his sources to his composition with more smoothness. Moreover, we have already seen several times that the history writer had considerable interest in the Temple, which makes it probable that vv. 3-7 are his main interest in this passage as well. The position of this report in the beginning of Josiah’s reign corroborates this conclusion. In contrast, vv. 8-11 draw attention away from the repair of Temple and, in fact, make it subordinate to the finding of the book. Consequently, it is probable that the history writer used a report in the annals in writing vv. 3-7, whereas vv. 8-11 are from a later redactor. This view is also supported by the use of the construct ספרא המקרא, the occurrences of which elsewhere are in the late —

5 According to Veijola (1975, 141-142; 1977, 119-120), the nomists made King David the ideal king. This would then imply that the reference to David derives from the nomists. Literary-critical argumentation is very difficult, however.
6 Spieckermann 1982, 153-154. According to him, vv. 2 and 6 were written by the history writer, but the text otherwise derives from an older source.
7 E.g., Walter Dietrich 1977, 18-22.
8 Against Spieckermann (1982, 48-54, 153-154), for example. He assumes that vv. 8-11 derive from pre-dtr sources as well.
often nomistic — additions to Dt and Joshua. The importance of the law to the nomists would already suggest that the story in vv. 8-11 stems from the nomists rather than from the history writer who otherwise shows very little interest in the law of Moses. The frequent use of the term ספד התמיד in Dt and the correspondence in content suggest that the book of law refers to Dt.

2K 22:12-20 is an independent unit, without which the surrounding narrative would function without problems. Thematically, chapter 23 continues from 2K 22:11 without disturbance. After the book has been found, the Israelites are gathered to make a covenant with Yahwe, according to the principles of the book (23:1-3). In fact, the perspective of vv. 12-20 is already the destruction of the Judaean state, whereas the surrounding passages look towards restoration, repentance and reform. The fact that 23:1-3 does not refer to the destruction referred to in the preceding verses in any way implies that 22:12-20 is a later addition. Several scholars attribute most of this passage to a later redactor(s). The passage leans on vv. 8-11, which are, as we have seen, an addition later than the historian. Moreover, vv. 12-20 contain some characteristics which are mainly met in the nomistic

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9 The passages in Dt (28:58, 61; 29:21; 30:10; 31:26) are all commonly accepted as late-dtr additions to the book. On Dt 28 see e.g., Mayes 1979, 357 or Steynans (1995, 382). On Dt 29-31, see analyses in chapter 2.7. and 2.8. Nomistic terminology abounds in these passages. Jos 1:8 is in an observably late addition: vv. 7a and 9a form a ring-composition. Moreover, the passage contains phraseology common in the nomistic additions to Dt: a warning not to turn right or left from the law of Yahwe, which then ensures blessing. As for Jos 8:31, 34 see Herzberg 1985, 61-64. He suggests that these verses are in a late passage that is dependent on Dt 27. For the nomistic origin of Jos 23:6, see Latvus 1993, 58-59, 66. Jos 24:26 is most likely a post-dtr verse, see chapter 4.1. In addition, there are several texts in later literature (1-2Chr and Nehemiah) which use the term. Spieckermann (1982, 52) admits the late origin of other passages that use the term but regardless argues for its earlier origin in 2K 22.

10 According to Levin (1984, 369), the finding of the book belongs to the most recent layer(s) of 2K 22-23.

11 Veijola (1979, 98) alludes to a sequence which contained three parts: First, the law (2K 22); second, covenant or a commitment to follow the law (2K 23:1-3); and third, measures to execute the law (reform in 2K 23:4ff.). He points out that a similar sequence appears in Ex 24:7-8.

12 The finding of the book causes Josiah to repent and makes the nation repent as well.

13 In fact, the content of 2K 22:12-20 would seem to make the whole covenant in 23:1-3 futile because it predicts destruction for the whole nation. (2K 22:20 promises Josiah a peaceful end, which is slightly in contradiction with 2K 23:29-30, however.) With 2K 22:12-20, one could question the motivation of the whole passage 2K 23:1-3. One must note that this argumentation does not refer to the historicity of either passage, but only to their internal settings in relation to each other, that is, what each passage assumes and what is its assumed context. From the perspective of internal tension, the reconstruction by Spieckermann (1982, 46-79), which assumes the basic setting of each individual passage in 2K 22 and 2K 23:1-3 as original, is incomprehensible.


15 Verses 12-20 explicitly refer to the finding of the book and in fact the whole passage is incomprehensible without vv. 8-11.
additions of the DH. Consequently, 2K 22:12-20 was not part of the historian’s original text. The probability that 23:1-3 look over 2K 22:12-20 to 2K 22:8-11, already a later addition to the history writer’s text, suggests that 2K 22:12-20 derives from a rather late stage in the passage’s development.

2K 23:1-3 is clearly dependent on the finding the book in vv. 8-11, which then implies that these verses are nomistic or later. This passage contains nomistic terminology (particularly in v. 3) and assumes a setting where the whole nation enters the covenant according to the principles of the law, which is likewise familiar from late additions to the DH. These verses are not from the historian but probably from the nomists.

Since it is now probable that all of 2K 22:8-23:3 is a later addition to the history writer’s text, one should consider the possibility that 23:4a originally followed 22:7. This view is supported by a thematical continuity; in contrast to the text in between, both 22:4-7 and 23:4a deal with reconstructing or reforming the Temple in one way or another. In 22:4-7, the Temple structures are repaired, while in 23:4a the cult-objects not pertaining to Yahwe’s cult are removed. In addition, both are commands of the king to perform these measures. However, the first passage is presented as a direct speech by the king in the 2. p. pl., while the latter passage is in the 3. p. pl. This may imply a redactional shift so that 23:4f. is a later addition to 22:4-7. One should also note that in 23:4 the command is expanded. 22:4-7 is a command to Hilkijah, while 23:4 is directed to secondary priests and doorkeepers as well. Moreover, in 22:3-4 the king sends the message through Shaphan, while in 23:4 Shaphan plays no role. Consequently, it is likely that 23:4ff. is a later addition that was originally preceded by 22:1-7. This conclusion puts the different layers of 2K 22:8-23:3 even further in the chapter’s development.

One could propose that the mentioning of Baal, Asherah and the host of heaven connects the text with the nomists, in whose attacks each one of them is a common target. Baal and Asherah are occasionally mentioned together (e.g., Jdg 3:7; 1K 16:32-33), but all three concepts are otherwise met in only passage only (2K 17:16). Most commonly, however, all three appear alone. One receives the impression that otherwise three independently criticized illegitimate concepts have been heaped together in 2K 23:4a. If 2K 23:4a had been an old passage, it would be strange that the later attack on other gods did not adopt their “union”, except in one passage only, 2K 17:16. On the other hand, a development into the opposite direction is conceivable. An editor, being familiar with all three concepts and the attack on them, would easily have combined an attack on them in such a central passage as 2K 23. One must also note that the “union” of the three is quite

16 Verse 17: forget (לשתי) Yahwe in favor of other gods (אלים אלהים אֲדֹנָי), which then causes the anger of Yahwe. Admittedly this passage uses the verb רָעָל to express the apostasy, which is not particularly common in the nomistic texts. In addition, v. 13 is reminiscent of the nomistic warnings about being disobedient to the law of Moses. Such warnings are met particularly in Dt.

17 Jones (1984, 614) states that this passage is “thoroughly deuteronomistic.”

18 The closest examples would be Jos 8:33-35 and Jos 24:1, 25-27. Notably both passages use the rare term יָשָׁר, and both may be regarded as late additions.

19 Thus Levin 1984, 355-356.

20 These arguments are from Levin 1984, 355-356.
artificial from the perspective of the history of ANE religions. In addition to the unnatural union between Baal and Asherah, neither of them was particularly connected to astral worship. Consequently, it seems probable that 23:4a does not belong to the earliest texts that attack other gods.

As for v. 4b, the sudden personal involvement of the king in the events betrays its later origin. It is hardly in line with the preceding text that the king himself burns the objects and brings their ashes to Beth-El. The unexpected digression from the Temple to Beth-El already suggests a different origin for v. 4a and v. 4b. Therefore, v. 4b most likely derives from a later writer than that of v. 4a.

One might see a thematical shift between vv. 4 and 5. Is difficult to see, where did the history writer’s text originally continue. Würthwein has proposed that v. 5 is a later (post-dtr) addition, for it breaks the connection between vv. 4 and 6, which both describe how Yahwe’s Temple is purified of alien objects. On the other hand, partly because of the deviating term for local priests — here חניני instead of קָדִישִׁים — Spieckermann assumes that v. 5 belongs to the history writer’s old sources. However, if we accept the evaluation of Uehlinger that the קָדִישִׁים were primarily understood as priests of astral divinities, then the connection between v. 4a and v. 5 becomes more understandable. This would then imply that v. 5 is dependent on v. 4a and is thus later than the history writer. On the other hand, the peculiar וַיִּשַׁל הָיוּ is formally and thematically difficult. It unexpectedly uses the cons. perfect, where one would expect a cons. imperfect. Moreover, it suddenly assumes the king to be an active executor of the reform, while in v. 4 the king gave orders to the priests to remove the objects from the Temple. This may imply that v. 5 is a later addition to v. 4a, but this issue may have to be left open.

Verses 6-7 contain terminology that is often used in the attack on forbidden religious practices. Literary-critical argumentation is extremely difficult as both verses describe an independent reformatory measure executed by Josiah. After all of 2K 22:8-23:5 has been identified as a later addition to the history writer’s text, the question is, where did his text continue. Since literary-critical methods are rather toothless on these verses, one should resort to comparison with other passages that describe the events during a king’s reign. In

21 See chapter 8.2, for details.
22 Although Spieckermann (1982, 83) suggests that only the taking of ashes to Beth-El is later.
23 Würthwein 1984, 456-457; he also uses the uncommon use of perf. cop. as an argument for the late origin of this verse.
25 Uehlinger 1995, 77-79. According to Levin (1984, 360), קָדִישִׁים are the same people as the קָדִישִׁים. Uehlinger (1995, 77-79) regards it as possible that the reference to קָדִישִׁים reflects pre-exilic conditions, in which astral divinities had a considerable influence in the Levantine religions.
26 The content of v. 5 also corroborates the connection of the קָדִישִׁים with astral divinities.
27 Verses 5a and 5b do not run very smoothly. Verse 5b is obviously a late addition. It comes too late in the sentence and is not in harmony with v. 5a. Already the long and disorganized list suggests that a later writer who wanted to list all possible evil divinities is behind the addition. The main interest for the writer in v. 5a is the fate of the קָדִישִׁים, while for the redactor behind v. 5b the main interest lies in the divinities to whom one sacrificed at these cultic places.
view of the rest of Kings, it would seem clear that the history writer was particularly interested in the הבמות, while texts with Asherah and the temple prostitutes may be identified as later additions. Moreover, v. 6 is hardly in harmony with 2K 22:1-7. 2K 23:6 is a ferocious outburst of anger against Asherah, as the king suddenly brings the object to the valley of Kidron and crushes it to pieces. Verse 7 is most likely dependent on v. 6, as it continues the attack on Asherah. With reservations and acknowledging the limited amount of argumentation, I assume that the text of the history writer originally proceeded from 2K 22:4-7 to 23:8, while all in between derives from later editors. With this reconstruction, the הבמות rise into a more prominent position in the passage, but this only corresponds with other passages in 1K 12-2K 21.

The position of v. 8b is difficult to determine. The sudden change from the general abolishment of the הבמות in Judah and the bringing of the הבמות-priests to a very detailed description of the הבמות locale in Jerusalem is surprising. In addition, v. 9 is obviously meant to be a direct comment on 8aa, now separated by v. 8ab which does not deal with priests but with the destruction of the הבמות. This could suggest that v. 9 originally followed v. 8aa or 8a, with the purpose of explaining the fate of the הבמות-priests in Jerusalem. In spite of these considerations, one should regard v. 9 itself as a late addition to the text, for it refers to later events after the reform had been fully executed in contrast with the other described events in the surrounding verses which have a more immediate effect. Thus, v. 9 is not in harmony with the rest of the narrative. One could defend the originality of v. 8b by appealing to its similarity to verses that are commonly acknowledged as early, namely vv. 11-12: Both specify areas in Jerusalem unknown from the rest of the OT. This argument would be more defensible if v. 8b and vv. 11-12 were originally together. Since v. 9 has been identified as a later addition, the connection between v. 8b and vv. 11-12 is still disturbed by v. 10. Without any compelling arguments that might arise from the passage itself, Würthwein

28 Most passages that mention Asherah may be identified as nomistic. The אדרת, the exact meaning of which is debated, are mentioned in 1K 14:24 and 15:12a, which can be identified as later additions into their contexts. See chapter 4.2. for separate analyses.

29 Verses 6-7 do not contain any terminology with which we could identify them with any redactional layer. The theme of burning, crushing and putting to ashes forbidden cultic objects (particularly the golden calf) is known from nomistic sections of Dt and from Ex 32. It is not possible to deal with the relation of these passages in this context.

30 The verb-forms in v. 8a does not necessarily imply a personal involvement of the king: רבח hiph; אימל pi. In this sense, v. 8a fits better after 22:4-7, while the reformatory measures in 23:5-7 assume a direct participation of the king. However, the הבת qal. in v. 8b assumes that the king himself destroyed the הבמות.


32 Accordingly, Würthwein (1984, 458-459) regards 8b as a late, post-dtr addition. In both cases he appeals to the perf. cop. that allegedly betrays a late origin. The use of perf. cop. as an argument for later addition runs into difficulties, especially in v. 15, as Würthwein’s (1984, 453, 460) complex reconstruction shows.

33 Being a secondary addition, the slightly delayed comment of v. 9 is not fully disturbing. It comes after all the measures against the הבמות have been described.
suggests that this verse is a later addition. On the other hand, Spieckermann has opted for pre-dtr origin and suggested that the verse has influenced later dtr passages that criticize the burning of sons in the fire. The context of the verse offers no compelling arguments to favor either origin. Without any connections to the surrounding text, the verse is an independent unit, which could indicate a later origin, but considering the nature of the whole reform-narrative — which lists different events — this argument is not very strong. One could also appeal to the fact that vv. 8b and 11-12 are restricted to the city itself, while v. 10 deals with events outside it. Acknowledging the weaknesses of finding compelling evidence, I suggest that all of v. 8, a text formulated by the historian, was originally continued in vv. 11-12. Formally v. 8b fits well with vv. 11-12: These verses describe in detail different locations in Jerusalem from where alien objects are being removed. Verses 9 and 10 would then be later additions.

Verse 12b is probably a late addition as well: The king’s sudden sprint outside the city to bring ashes to Kidron valley is not in harmony with the rest of the text. Moreover, the reference to ashes or dust of the altar does not fit well with v. 12a. In v. 12a the altar is only pulled down or broken down (מחית), but not burned (שרד) or ground (กระบ) to ashes (תלפ). The redactor behind v. 12b did not pay attention to minor details, but only wanted to show the fervor of the king in executing the reform. He is evidently remembering 2K 23:6 where the offending cult-objects are burned, and forgot that this was not done to the altars.

Verse 13 is dependent on 1K 11:5, 7, which have been identified as nomistic. The verse is, in any case, unnecessary in the chapter because the removal of the הבתים in Judah has already been described in vv. 5 and 8. Verse 14 strongly recalls the nomistic commands in Ex 23:24; 34:13 and Dt 7:4-5 to attack foreign cults. The later origin of both vv. 13 and 14 is further corroborated by the good correspondence between vv. 12a and 15. Both deal with removing altars and both are expressed with very similar vocabulary.

34 Würthwein 1984, 459.
35 Spieckermann 1982, 101-104. He states: “Wenn im RB [=Reformbericht] die Liquidierung eines bestimmten Kultes nicht fehlen darf, dann ist es der des Kinderopfers, das wegen seiner Grausamkeit und (zumindest literarischen) Häufung gegen Ende der ... judäischen Monarchie ... unbedingt in den josianischen Reformkatalog gehört und auch erwartungsgemäß in 2Kön 23, 10 erscheint.” The cruelty or frequency of the phenomenon says nothing of its age. He further suggests that other passages that refer to burning sons in the fire are dependent on 2K 23:10. Spieckermann convincingly demonstrates that the related passages in Jer are dependent on 2K 23:10 (p. 102-103), yet the relation between 2K 21:6, 2K 16:3 and 2K 23:10 remains open (p. 104, 165-166). His suggestion that the two other passages in 2Kings are to be understood as excerpts from 2K 23:10 cannot be defended by any arguments. However, he uses this suggestion to defend the early origin (pre-dtr) of the verse in chapter 23.

36 Regarding the state of the text, 2K 23:10 cannot be used as proof for dating the phenomenon that it describes. Other passages, where argumentation in one way or another is possible must be used for this task.
37 According to Levin (1984,362-363), v. 8a was originally followed by v. 25a. However, Uehlinger (1995, 74-77, 79-80) assumes that vv. 11-12 contain details — astral worship— that may correspond with archaeological evidence from the 8th and 7th century BCE.
Verse 15 is evidently formulated in accordance with v. 12a, but vv. 13-14 disturb this connection in the present text-form. It seems thus reasonable to assume that v. 15 has earlier followed immediately after v. 12a. Contentwise, v. 15 could correlate with the history writer’s text elsewhere, yet some features suggest that it is a late addition, although an earlier one than vv. 13-14. The repetition of words points towards a redactor who wants to attach his text to the earlier text. In addition, the word יָרָד is often used by redactors to begin an expansion. Moreover, the awkward sentence and the unnecessary repetition of words inside v. 15 also raise questions. One could understand v. 15b so that the באם and the altar were identical. The writer has then later noticed this problem and clarified that both the באם and the altar were destroyed. In other words, it appears that the redactor was at pains to associate the destruction of an altar and a באם at Beth-El. One receives the impression that the redactor adopted the destruction of an altar from v. 12a by also repeating such a destruction at Beth-El, although he initially only wanted to report the destruction of a באם at Beth-El. One could also ask if the digression to Beth-El is in line with the other reformatory acts that were restricted to Judah. As a consequence, I assume that v. 15a was a later addition to v. 12a. Verses 13-14 are then an even later addition.

Verse 15b has the appearance of an addition to v. 15a. The verse could have been adopted from the v. 6 — which is already a late addition — for almost every word in v. 15b also appears in v. 6. Already the burning the באם to ashes — or grinding to ashes (לַכֵּר לֶפֶס) — raises questions. This theme is most likely adopted from the burning of an Asherah, to which it fits considerably better. Burning and grinding a statue or a wooden object is understandable, but burning and grinding a cult-place is not. The fact that Asherah is mentioned in v. 15b as well points towards a direction of influence from v. 6 to v. 15b. The author of this verse attempts to show the fervor of the king to execute the reform.

Since verses 16-18, 20 are dependent on and refer to late-dtr additions elsewhere in the DH (mainly in 1K 13), they cannot derive from the historian. Accordingly, these verses are commonly accepted as late-dtr. The purpose of these verses is to show the fulfillment of prophesy. In any case, this section does not have the same tone as the rest of the reform. As for v. 19, its position is not fully clear. It could be suggested that it originally followed right after v. 15a, thus being an earlier addition than vv. 16-18, 20. This would form a feasible development of events: In v. 15a the באם at Beth-El are destroyed, while v. 19 continues to the other towns of the ex-Northern Kingdom. However, some details in v. 19

38 Würthwein (1984, 460) suggests that v. 15 is a late-nomistic addition to the already nomistic v. 13. He also appeals to the use of יָרָד at the beginning of v. 15.
39 The sentence “... אֲשֶׁר בֵּית הֲמָה אָשֶׁר אָשֶׁר עֻשֶּׂה יַעֲשֶׂה יָרָד”
40 It is not absolutely clear what a באם is, but it is commonly assumed that a cultic place in an elevated location, such as a hill or an artificial elevation was meant. If this were the case, its burning and grinding to ashes would at least be questionable.
point towards the same origin as its immediate surroundings. The verse uses the form which in the rest of the DH is met only in 1K 13:32, exactly the passage referred to by v. 20. The similarity implies a dependence between the passages. The most natural explanation is that v. 19 derives from the same late/post-dtr who formulated vv. 16-18 and 20. Late-dtr origin is also implied by the reference to Yahwe’s anger.

Since they are dependent on the finding of the book, vv. 21-24 are nomistic at the earliest. Verses 25-26 contain phrases and themes that are otherwise met in nomistic texts; the king turning to Yahwe with all his heart, soul and power is reminiscent of the nomistic addition in Dt 6:5. The reference to the law of Moses already points to writers who were particularly interested in the law. The anger of Yahwe in v. 26 can also be used as support for nomistic origin. Although none of these points alone compels to assume a nomistic origin, their concentration into one passage is a strong indicator. The sudden judgment in v. 27 is comprehensible only after Yahwe’s anger has been aroused in v. 26. Therefore, v. 27 should be seen as nomistic as well.

There is no reason to doubt that vv. 28-30 would not belong to the text edited by the history writer. The phrases met in v. 28 are common in his other passages, while vv. 29-30 are most likely formulated after the annals. Based on the preceding argumentation, the history writer’s text in 2K 22-23 runs as follows:

**The Reconstructed History Writer’s Text**

[Text in Hebrew characters]

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42 The singular is also very rare, for it is used only in 1K 12:31 and 2K 17:29, 31 (in addition to Jer 26:18 and Mi 3:12).

43 See Veijola 1992a, 370-375.
Translation of the Reconstructed Text

(22:1) Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for thirty one years. His mother’s name was Jedidah, daughter of Alijah from Boscath. (2) He did what is good in the eyes of Yahwe, he walked in all the ways of David, his father, not turning aside to the right or to the left. (3) In the eighteenth year of his reign, King Josiah sent the scribe Shaphan, son of Azalijah, son of Meshullam to Yahwe’s Temple, commanding: (4) “Go up to Hilkijah the high priest, and he will pour out the silver that has been brought into Yahwe’s Temple, for the doorkeepers have collected it from the people. (5) And they shall give the silver to the supervisors of the work in Yahwe’s Temple, who then shall hire workers to repair the Temple: artificers, builders and masons. (6) They shall also buy timber and hewn stones to repair the Temple. (7) They need not account for the silver that is given to them, for they are trustworthy.”
(8) He (then) brought out all priests from Judaean towns, from Geba to Beer-sheba, and desecrated the high places where the priests had burned incense. He broke down the gate-high places at the entrance to the Gate of Joshua, a high official of the city. They were at the left when one enters the city. (11) He also removed from the entrance to Yahwe’s Temple the horses made by the kings of Judah in honor of the Sun. They were in the court-house near the room belonging to an officer called Nathan Melek. (12) Then he broke down the altars that the kings of Judah had built on the roof near the upper chamber of Ahaz, and the altars that Manasseh had built in the two courts of Yahwe’s Temple.
(28) As to the other events during Josiah’s reign, all that he did, are they not written in the annals of the Judaean kings. (29) In his days Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria. Then King Josiah rose against him, but when the pharaoh saw him in Megiddo he killed him. (30) Josiah’s servants brought his body in a chariot from Megiddo to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own grave. Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz, son of Josiah and anointed him to be the king in place of his father.

Conclusions

Although the present state of the text is difficult, in several verses the presented solution can be defended by literary-critical methods. Moreover, the text emerged without any scissions of individual words and small parts of sentences. Many scholars have reached such unlikely reconstructions, but one must ask whether they are in any way arguable or realistic in a text which is in such a confusing condition as 2K 23.

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44 Particularly that of Spieckermann 1982, 425-429. The reconstruction by Würthwein (1984, 452-454) is more moderate, yet he also seems to be able to cut considerably many words and sub-sentences as later additions and glosses. I do not deny the possibility that the text could have developed in this way, but in that case it would be very difficult for modern scholars to reconstruct it.
In 2K 22:1-23:30 the history writer shows his interest in the Temple. Most of the original passage and Josiah’s reform seem to center around the Temple. He portrays Josiah as the good king who wants to repair Yahwe’s Temple. In addition, the good king is presented as the reformer who abolished all cultic centers (מִזְבָּחִים) that competed with the Temple. These same concerns are met in the historian’s other texts: This passage now corroborates his interest in the Temple.

Formally, the reconstructed text is a concise list of different measures commanded and executed by the king. They are begun in the Temple, which is repaired, followed by the removal of illegal cultic centers (the מִזְבָּחִים), first in Judah, then in the surroundings of Jerusalem and finally in Jerusalem itself. After dealing with the מִזְבָּחִים, offending objects are removed from different parts of Jerusalem. The development of events seems to be guided by the principle of importance — Temple (2K 22:3-7; 23:4a) ⇒ מִזְבָּחִים (23:8) ⇒ other violations (2K 23:11-12a) — but everything seems to center around the Temple. The writer was angered by the violation of Yahwe’s Temple (23:4a, 11-12a) and the competition posed to it by the מִזְבָּחִים. Based on the above presented reconstruction, the whole reformation thus receives aspects that were marginalized by the later — mainly nomistic — additions. The attack on the other gods has later buried the fact that the Temple is the leading theme and motif of the writer.

Although with a slightly different perspective, Uehlinger (1995, 80) also points out that the reformatory measures center around the Temple.
5. Some Religious Phenomena Reevaluated

In this chapter I will examine some of the religious phenomena condemned by the nomists. The identification of the texts as nomistic has been made in the previous chapters. I will now compare the nomistic attitude towards these phenomena with attitudes met in some pre-nomistic texts. I will concentrate on the textual evidence in this chapter, whereas the following chapter will bring up relevant archaeological evidence. My intention is not to offer a comprehensive analysis of the presented religious phenomena, but to demonstrate the development of attitudes towards them.

The Massebah — מַסָּבָה

Deriving from the root נָצַב meaning “to stand” or “to take a stand”, the word מַסָּבָה is often taken to mean a pillar or a standing stone which has cultic purposes. The word may be used in a non-religious sense as well: In Gn 31:51-52 it denotes a stone statue which marks a covenant between Jacob and Laban; in Is 6:13 it is a tree stump; in Ez 26:11 it refers to architectural pillars; in 2S 18:18 massebah is a memorial stone which Absalom puts up in memory of himself since he had no offspring; finally, in Gn 35:9-15 Jacob erects one on Rachel’s grave. Most commonly, however, massebah is used in the religious sense.

The nomists attack the massebot in several texts and explicitly prohibit their erection (Dt 16:22). Depicting them as pertaining to the Canaanite cult apparatus, the nomists command the Israelites to destroy them. However, several older passages reveal that the massebot were an integral part of Israelite religion before the Exile. In fact, they may have been used in Yahwe’s cult as well. In Gn 28:18-22 and 35:14 Jacob erects a massebah at Beth-El to mark the place of Yahwe’s theophany. This story was probably an etiology that explained and legitimized the religious use of a massebah at Beth-El. Another positive religious use of the massebah is met in Ex 24:4. Here Moses erects 12 massebot — one for

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1 One may suspect that the massebah referred to in Gn 35:9-15 had a religious use. It may have marked the presence of an important ancestor that was worshipped. See Loretz 1989, 243-244.
2 Graesser (1983, 296-307) differentiates four different functions for the massebot: memorial, legal, commemorative and cultic. As Mettinger (1995, 32-33) points out, an originally non-cultic use “may easily develop into a cultic one.”
3 For example, in Ex 23:24; 34:13; Dt 7:5; 12:3.
4 Dt 16:22 is a later addition than the addition of Dt 17:2-5, 7b. See chapter 2.2. for details.
5 The same event is referred to in Gn 31:13.
6 There appears to be two traditions of the events. They most likely derive from different authors of the Pentateuch: E and J respectively.
each tribe — around an altar. The exact function of the stones is unclear, but their religious function is evident. They may have represented the presence of Israel’s 12 ancestors at the cult-place. Some kind of ancestor worship may be suspected. Furthermore, Ho 3:4 reveals that the lack of a massebah was a catastrophe for Israel. In importance it is compared to the sacrificial cult and monarchy! Although it is evident that only vestiges of the older, positive use of the massebah have survived the later editors’ hands, these passages already imply that the massebot were an accepted and even integral part of Israelite religion. Consequently, from the textual perspective, the nomistic view that the phenomenon was Canaanite and foreign is unjustified.

Host of Heaven and the Divine Council

The worship of the host of heaven ( massebot) was condemned in some of the analyzed nomistic texts (Dt 4:19; 17:3, etc.). They appear beside Elohim and רצופים. In Dt 4:19, the massebot defines either the רצופים or all three. However, since in Dt 17:3 and 2K 23:5 the massebot is presented as an alternative to the sun and the moon, the passages now lacking the term massebots, it seems reasonable to assume that the term in these texts referred to stars and planets. The main interest in this analysis is to observe the change in attitude towards the massebot. As already noted, the nomists prohibit and condemn their worship, but there appears to be a text, clearly a vestige, that shows a positive religious use of the term, namely 1K 22:19. In a vision, Micah the prophet watches Yahwe sitting on His heavenly throne surrounded by the massebot, who stand (עם) beside Him (לעופי). No sense of condemnation can be detected. The term is taken in a positive and religious sense and evidently refers to divine creatures integral to Yahwe’s cult and Israel’s religion.

A similar setting or scene is assumed by the divine council or assembly (דוד-אָלף), which is a common ANE concept. The OT contains only vestiges of this assembly (e.g., Job 1:6; Zc 3:1-5; Ps 82:1; 89:7-8), but combined with allusions in the later Jewish and Christian literature, and with analogies in the Ugaritic religion, one may infer that it played an

7 According to Loretz (1989, 243-246; 1990, 126-127) the massebot were connected to ancestor worship.
8 For the archaeological evidence, see chapter 6.4.
9 Taken with the theory that Yahwe was symbolized or represented by the sun (see chapter 6.3. later on), the idea that He was surrounded by the massebots as stars is befitting.
10 Spieckermann (1982, 223) acknowledges that 1K 22:19 reflects a pre-dtr use of the term.
11 The Ugaritic uses terms such as phr kkbm, dr il or dr bn il to denote the divine assembly. See Loretz (1990, 60) and Parker (1996, 1500-1502) for more details.
12 We may observe vestiges of this council in the book of Revelation and in many Inter-Testamental, non-canonical books, only the gods have been diminished to serving angels, yet still retaining many characteristics of the polytheistic gods. For example, in Rev 8:6-9:21 each angel has his own realm of power as in the polytheistic system. The angel in Rev 10:1-7 is depicted with divine characteristics. One may discern similar features throughout the book of Enoch as the angels take an active part in administering heaven. For the birth of angelology in Jewish apocalyptic, see also Russell (1964, 240-244).
important role in Israel’s pre-exilic religion. In the clearly polytheistic religions of the ANE, the assembly was the main theater where gods interacted with each other. We may suspect something similar in Israel’s religion, but with some special features. The above-presented vestiges assume a council of gods completely dominated by Yahwe or El. The other divinities have a very low profile, their names are not mentioned and they seem to be clearly subordinate to Yahwe. They are treated as an undifferentiated group that has little independent and active function. Some passages call them בני אלהים, בני אלהי or בני אלהים terms which could denote some kind of subordination or lesser status. On the other hand, the term may be an idiomatic one that is used to refer to all gods.

The older use of the concept is blurred by the OT’s later editors who may have removed names of other gods from the passages and belittled their importance in relation to Yahwe. On the other hand, the vestiges may give a fair conception of the divine council in pre-exilic Israel. Yahwe dominates the divine more than most other main gods of the ANE. Other gods are clearly on a lower level than Yahwe. It would fit well with the picture one receives from the OT and the archaeological data.

At any rate, in the use of theဟָלָם one may observe a religious phenomenon that was an integral part of the Israelite religion before the nomists, but which was

13 Barker (1987, 83, 128, 142-154) develops the idea further by suggesting that the council was consulted by seers and other holy men in heavenly visions where one stood face-to-face with the gods and angels ( אלהים) led by Yahwe Sabaoth (גַּּבַּר בָּאָשׁוֹת) from the root BA. According to Barker, the deuteronomists then attacked this central aspect of Israelite religion and censored most of the original material referring to it in order to abolish its meaning from Israel’s religion. She continues that regarding the importance of the phenomenon in the Israelite religion, it was not possible to deny it completely, but it was easier to identify it with other prohibited religious phenomena and to insist that they belonged to other peoples, not to Israel.

14 The Ugaritic divine council seems to have been dominated by El — see Loretz 1990, 57 — although not as clearly as the Israelite divine council by Yahwe.

15 Job 1:6 mentions לשון but here the term, which means adversary, has probably not yet become a name.

16 In Job 1:6 has an active part in the scene, yet the passage may not be a fair representative of the pre-exilic assembly. Although it may contain ancient material, the book of Job is commonly accepted as a late composition. Moreover, the passage in Job is written to serve the general idea of testing Job rather than reflecting the original operation of the council.

17 In Gn 6:2, 4; Dt 32:8-9, 43; Ps 29:1; 89:7.

18 Tigay 1996, 514-515. However, in the Ugaritic texts the term bn il(m) is used to denote the generality of gods. The subordination is a generic one to El. In the OT vestiges the term most likely does not denote generic relationship.

19 On the one hand, if later editors edited the passages with the intention of removing objectionable details from them, why would they have allowed the passages to remain in the first place? This would suggest that the passages were not edited with the intention of removing embarrassing details, which would then imply that the passages show a typical use of the council before the Exile. However, one may also argue that the passages that were left are only vestiges that were the least objectionable of all passages that referred to the divine council. The passages that contained more embarrassing details were completely removed. This could then imply that the vestiges would not give a fair picture of Israel’s pre-exilic heavenly council. It appears to be very difficult to argue one way or another.
condemned by the exilic group. Despite passages like Dt 4:19 where the opposite is asserted, there is no reason to regard the נֵבָאָה הַשָּׁמְשִׁים as an originally foreign element in Israel’s religion. Although the nomists do not explicitly criticize or attack the divine council, it is reasonable to assume that they did not approve of its use in Israel’s religion.

After the nomists, the host of heaven as well as the sun and the moon had completely lost their importance in Israel’s official religion. The Priestly creation story implicitly emphasizes that all heavenly bodies are created by the monotheistic God and that they do not have any other function but to mark time, days and years (Gn 1:14). It may be a reminder to people who still assigned divine functions to them that the writer specifically mentions their “secular” function. The host of heaven, also created by God, is reduced to a simple נֵבָאָה. Only much later in canonical literature, namely in Dn 8:10-11, the term נֵבָאָה הַשָּׁמְשִׁים regains some of its original meaning, which implies that some circles continuously upheld the religious importance of the host of heaven. A similar development may be assumed for the heavenly assembly. It basically vanishes in the post-exilic OT but surprisingly surfaces again in the apocryphal and Qumranic literature. Old divinities have now become angels. For example, in the Qumranic Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, Yahwe sits on the throne, while other heavenly beings, especially angels, serve and worship Him. They are now completely subordinate to Yahwe. It seems that Yahwe’s position is further elevated from the one in the old Israelite heavenly assembly, but the basic structures of the ANE heavenly assembly are still visible. Despite the nomistic attack on much of the old Israelite religion, its many features were preserved outside Israel’s official religion.

Sacred Trees

Sacred trees are a complex issue intertwined with the question about Asherah’s identity and character. Several nomistic passages condemn the cultic use of sacred trees and Asherah-trees. Dt 16:21 explicitly prohibits the erection of an Asherah or any tree beside Yahwe’s altar. I will not discuss other meanings of Asherah in this context, it is only necessary to observe that Dt 16:21 identifies Asherah as a tree. The condemnation of sacred trees and

20 The use of the verb מָשָׁל in this connection may be an echo of the older divine character of the heavenly bodies.
21 According to Spieckermann (1982, 224), the dropping of the second part of the term indicates Yahwe’s rise to the status of creator.
22 See for example the well preserved sixth and seventh songs of the composition.
23 נֵבָאָה לְאָשֶרֶת מַלְשֵׁנֹת אֲשֶׁר חָכָם יִזָּהֵר
24 The OT would seem to support at least three different interpretations: 1) Goddess (e.g., 1K 15:13; 18:19; 2K 21:7; 23:4) 2) Living tree (Dt 16:21) although the exact meaning is debated. See Steuernagel (1923a, 78) and Lemaire (1977, 604-607). However, Day (1992, 486) contends this by pointing out that the majority of the texts suggests that Asherah was man-made. He justifiably asserts that Dt 16:21 where Asherah is described as נַעַשׁ may refer to a piece of wood, instead of referring to a living tree. Nevertheless, the word נַעַשׁ that is used in Dt 16:21 for setting up an Asherah most likely presumes that a living tree was meant. This word is used for planting trees or other living plants, 3) Wooden object erected by man. The majority of dtr texts favor this
Asherah trees is a common motif in the nomistic attack on the allegedly Canaanite cult apparatus. However, several evidently old texts show that trees had an important role in the older Israelite religion. Their use is especially common in the patriarchal stories: In Gn 21:33 Abraham plants a tamarisk ( אשא) tree and prays to Yahwe El Olam (יהוה אל עולם) beside it. A religious function of the tree is evident; the prayer and the planting of the tree would not otherwise be connected in such a way. A tamarisk tree is also mentioned in 1S 31:13 where Saul and his sons are buried under such a tree. It seems to have been a common practice to bury people under trees during some period, for in Gn 35:8 Deborah is similarly buried under a terebinth tree ( אלון). The tree is then called the tree of crying ( אלון הכוה). A terebinth tree is also mentioned in Jos 24:26 which explicitly states that it was located inside Yahwe’s sanctuary. Moreover, a tree may be a place of divine theophany ( אלהי in Jdg 6:11, 19). It marks a holy place, where the divine can be communed with. These few examples already show that Israel did not differ from the general ANE conception of regarding some trees as particularly sacred. They were an important feature of Israel’s pre-exilic religion. A contrast with Dt 16:21 is manifest, although in the strict sense the passage merely prohibits the planting of Asherah trees in the proximity of Yahwe’s altar. It may be debated whether Dt 16:21 is a nomistic text, but many other distinctly nomistic passages show the nomists’ hostile attitude. The explicit prohibitions and the hostility implies that the Israelites had used trees in their religion, but vestiges like Jos 24:26 confirm the suspicion. According to Lemaire, the OT does not call the sacred trees worshipped by the patriarchs Asherah-trees because they were later condemned. Summa summarum, sacred trees had a role in Israel’s pre-exilic religion, but were condemned by the nomists. This observation corroborates the conclusions obtained with the host of heaven and the massebot.

**Formless God**

As we have seen, Dt 4:15-16a states that Yahwe had no form when He spoke to the Israelites. It is asserted that Yahwe’s form cannot be seen (Ex 20:18, Dt 4:11-12). The overall idea that Yahwe had no visible anthropomorphic form is a deuteronomistic creation interpretation including Dt 7:5 as becomes evident from the use of verb ידך meaning “to hew down”. See Day (1991, 483-85) for this interpretation. In effect, there is no objection to seeing all uses of the word as correct. Asherah being a goddess, could naturally have a symbolic representation in the form of a tree and a wooden object erected in her honor. Frevel (1995, 924) has argued for the double meaning of the word in Israel’s religion. Asherah was a goddess but also an object. For more discussion on Asherah, see chapters 6.1-6.4.

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25 E.g., Dt 7:5 and 12:3. Dt 16:21 prohibits Asherah as well as other trees.
26 ידך אב אב ל ULONG וש מרה עולם אשא במקרא יהוה
27 But this is in contradiction with Jos 24:26, for example.
28 E.g., Dt 7:5; 12:3.
29 *Lemaire* 1977, 605.
in the OT literature. Several pre-dtr texts make it explicitly clear that Yahwe can be seen, particularly by the most holy people: In Ex 24:10-12, the elders and leaders watch God in a situation resembling a heavenly banquet. Moses saw Yahwe’s form (המען יahu) in Nm 12:8, with no condemnation of the event. Ezekiel watches God who had a form like a human (Ez 1:26). In a probable pre-dtr vestige in 1K 22:19, Micah, the Prophet watches Yahwe sitting on His throne. It seems that the deuteronomistic, or possibly nomistic insistence, that Yahwe cannot be seen was inconsistent or even contradictory with what we see in some of the OT’s pre-dtr texts. The later writers have again taken the religion in a more limited direction from what we meet in the pre-exilic sources.

Conclusions

All in all, one receives the impression that the nomists condemned and attacked several religious phenomena that were commonly practiced in the pre-exilic religion. They appear to have been integral to the older religion, and therefore, the nomistic view that the practices are Canaanite and essentially foreign is not justified. Something else lies behind their claim. At this point one must note that the nomists introduced a clear shift in Israel’s religion by rejecting many of its old practices and features. Nevertheless, one may suspect that the history writer already made some restrictions on the Israelite religion. As we have observed in the previous chapters, the history writer wanted to restrict the sacrificial cult to Jerusalem,

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30 According to Weinfeld (1972, 198), deuteronomic: “It appears then that it was the deuteronomic school that first initiated the polemic against the anthropomorphic and corporeal conceptions of the Deity ... these later conceptions are diametrically opposed to the earlier views articulated in JE and P documents.” Although beyond the scope of this analysis, it is possible that the nomists emphasized that Yahwe cannot be seen, and that the earlier dtr writers only implied it without being explicit.

31 Barker (1987, 26, 146-47) has suggested that seeing God was an essential part of Israel’s older religion. The deuteronomistic zeal to prove that Yahwe had no form implies that there was some controversy over the issue and that there had to be supporters of the opposite view. Loretz (1990, 210-215; 1994b, 218-219) implies that Yahwe’s cult-image could be seen in the Temple, but with its destruction in 587 BCE, such a possibility was vehemently denied. See also Dietrich - Loretz 1992, 115-117.
a clear limitation in comparison with the earlier practice. The history writer may also have
acknowledged the idea that Yahwe cannot be seen, but whether this is connected to the
destruction of Yahwe’s cult-image — if there was one — would require an additional study.
Nevertheless, we have seen that the nomists introduce a comprehensive and dramatic change
in Israel’s religion.
6. Archaeological Evidence

In the last decades, the contribution of archaeology has become increasingly important in the discussion about Israel’s pre-exilic religion. In the past, archaeological evidence has often been belittled or ignored, yet with mounting findings from excavations, this attitude has become less reasonable. Using this archaeological material, I will attempt to sketch some features of Israel’s pre-exilic religion so far as it is relevant to the present subject. I will try to see how the text of the DH corresponds with the archaeological data. Do these sources correlate with or contradict each other? How realistic is the picture of the DH on Israel’s pre-exilic religion from the perspective of archaeology? It is not possible here to delve deep into the details of evidence, and thus this section will partly lean on other studies. I will deal with four areas of archaeological evidence: the onomasticon, inscriptions, iconography and artifacts.

6.1. Onomastic Evidence

The onomastic evidence has been comprehensively researched by Tigay. Studying the personal names (PN) on seals and other inscriptions from the last two pre-exilic centuries, he has irrefutably demonstrated that Israelite names notably often contained Yahwe as the theophoric element. The only two gods that receive any significant representation in the Israelite PNs are Yahwe and El. Ignoring the names that contain no divine element and that contain the element El, he has shown that in about 95 percent of Israelite names Yahwe is the theophoric element in the investigated material, all other gods appear only a few times, whereas Yahwe is met in 557 names. Peculiarly, Baal, the main target of nomistic criticism, is met only in 6 names, 5 of which are from the Samaritan ostraca, material from one

1 Pre-exilic meaning pre-587 BCE. In this chapter Israel is used to denote both kingdoms during the whole period of the monarchy until the destruction of the Judean state. In other words, the term Israel is used to denote the Judean state even after the destruction of Israel proper in 722 BCE. The same applies to the term Israelite which refers to both Judeans and Israelites, unless it is specifically mentioned that the Northern Kingdom is referred to.


3 He disregards El names on the basis that there is no way of telling to which deity this element refers; see Tigay 1987, 162. However, one could even justify counting El with Yahwe since in the 8th to 6th centuries Yahwe and El were most likely identified as one God.

4 Tigay (1986, 75-81) lists several names of uncertain reading or interpretation that could increase the amount of non-Yahwistic names. Even taking all these into account would not tilt the general conclusion that Yahwe clearly dominates the PNs.

5 The names in the Samaritan ostraca are: ‘bb’l, b’l’, b’lzkr, b’lm’ny, and mryb’l. Some names appear in many ostraca.
location during a limited period — the first half of the 8th century. Outside these ostraca, Baal is thus found only once. Most of the non-Yahwistic names of deities are ones that are not met in the OT at all. For example, the most common one, Horus (7 times), is unknown in the OT.

Before making conclusions from this state of affairs, it must be stressed that seals, the main source for the Israelite onomasticon, stem from the upper classes of society. Therefore, it may not give a comprehensive picture of Israel’s religion, but may only reflect the religion of the state, and of the upper classes and the elite. In addition, it is not all that clear that PNs give a correct picture of the practiced religion.

In spite of these reservations, some conclusions may be made. The Israelite evidence distinctly deviates from other regions of the ANE, where the main god is usually met in about 15-20% of the names, others distributed to a variety of gods. The situation in Judah is matched only in Ammon where El appears as the theophoric element in many PNs. Consequently, from the perspective of the onomasticon, pre-exilic Israel — and presumably also Ammon — would appear very monolatric in comparison with other regions of the ANE. Keeping the above-mentioned reservations in mind, the onomasticon seems to imply a highly Yahwe-centered religion in the Israelite heartland during the pre-exilic (pre-587 BCE) centuries.

Another conclusion from this evidence is that it puts the OT picture of Israel’s pre-exilic religion in a strange light. There is no onomastic evidence for goddesses like Ashtart or Asherah, nor is the frequency of Baal in any way noteworthy enough to justify the

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6 Renz (1995b, 62) lists two Baalistic names from 8th century Tell Ġemmā (b’l’ and b’lšm’). Tigay disregards these PNs, for the site is located south of Gaza and thus probably beyond the Israelite realm. Moreover, the site was an Assyrian military and administrative center in the 8th century, which makes the PNs irrelevant to Israelite evidence.

7 ’nyb’l (Baal has answered) written in Judean letters was found in Mešād Ḥaššavyāhů, which is located on the Palestinian coast between Jaffa and Asdod, far from the Israelite heartland. However, Aḥaroni (1982, 270-271) suggests that this site was a Judean fort during the 7th century, possibly after the Josianic expansion of Judah. According to him, a Hebrew ostracon found at the site proves that it was under Judean control. This interpretation is not without problems. It is not commonly accepted that Judah controlled areas along the Palestinian coast during the late monarchy.

8 See Tigay 1986, 66-68. Other names of divinities unknown in the OT are e.g., Bes, Isis, Qaus. They may appear in some individual personal names mentioned in the OT, but they are unknown as specific names of divinities that the Israelites would have worshipped. Two gods, Min and Gad, are mentioned in one individual passage, Is 65:11.


10 For a list of Ammonite PN in the archaeological material, see Jackson 1983, 509-517; Hübner 1992, 125-129. Strangely, the Ammonite chief god Milkom seems to play a minor role in the onomasticon. Most likely El and Milkom were identified in this period. One must note, however, that most of the Ammonite seals, the main source of the Ammonite onomasticon, stem from the black market and not from legal excavations. The possibility of frauds is thus regrettably high.

11 The material from Moab and Edom is still very scanty. Being geographically and politically similar to Judah, Ammon and Israel, they could show similar evidence.

12 The complete lack of PNs with Asherah as a theophoric element suggests that Asherah was, at least not widely, worshipped as a goddess.
impression one receives from the DH that in pre-exilic Israel Baal-worship was the rule rather than exception (e.g., 2K 17:16; 21:3; 23:4). Only in the 8th century in Samaria do we find evidence for Baal-worship. From the DH one receives the notion that particularly the upper classes and the state religion were prone to turn to other gods. Since the onomasticon mainly represents this level of religion, the contrast between the onomasticon and the view of Israel’s history presented in the DH is manifest.  

13 This could correlate with the OT reports about Phoenician influence during Ahab’s reign (ca. 871-852 BCE) and about the existence of Baal’s temple in Samaria (1K 16:21-32 and 2K 10:18-28), although the ostraca come from the 8th century BCE. This contradicts the OT report that Jehu abolished Baal worship in the Northern Kingdom during his reign in 842-814 BCE. In other words, according to the OT, Baal was popular in Samaria during the 9th century, but no longer during the 8th century. The Samaritan Baalistic ostraca come from the 8th century, while no Baalistic PN has surfaced from the 9th century. More evidence and investigation is needed to gain a clearer picture of the course of events.

14 Tigay (1987, 178-180) assumes that this contradiction derives from the exaggeration of the prophets and history writers. In the case of Manasseh, polytheism would have been the king’s idiosyncrasy, while most of the upper class would have rejected the introduced polytheism. In his view, the later historiographers would have expanded the guilt of individuals into the guilt of the whole populace. Moreover, he states that some of the ire may have been directed at the cult of spirits and demons.
6.2. Inscriptions

The picture received from the onomasticon is supported by pre-exilic inscriptions. Yahwe is in the foreground and is presented as the clearly dominant divinity. In most inscriptions that refer to a divinity, He appears alone, the evidence for other gods being scanty and not unambiguous. Baal is mentioned on one inscription from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud, while Asherah is found on several ones.

Arad and Lachish letters

There is a set of Arad and Lachish letters, which contain a blessing or greeting only in the name of Yahwe. These letters show that no other god had reached a level to be presented on the same level with Yahwe. However, with the exception of one 8th century letter from Arad, the letters stem from the last decades of Judean kingdom, and therefore reflect the religious situation of a rather limited period. Moreover, the letters may contain official formulae pertaining to state correspondence, in which case they would reflect only of the state religion. At the most, the letters may be used as evidence for the religion practiced by the upper classes. Here are few examples, the others are similar in content and form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arad (8):40</th>
<th>...&gt;Your sons Gemaryahu and Nehemiyahu send greetings to Malkiyahu: I bless you through Yahwe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad (6):18</td>
<td>To my master Eliyashib: Let Yahwe take care (lit. ask) of your well being. And now, give to Shemariyahu ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lak (6):1.2</td>
<td>To my master Ja’osh: May Yahwe let my master hear news of peace ... Let Yahwe put my master into a primary position ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lak (6):1.5</td>
<td>May Yahwe let my master hear the news of peace and the good news ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Texts from Renz 1995a, 147-148, 383, 387 (Arad) and 411-440 (Lachish). The reconstructed Hebrew text is from Renz, the translation is mine.

2 Codes from Renz 1995a. The first number in brackets refers to the century and the second is the index number. The letters are abbreviations of find locations.
Khirbet Bet Lei

The sole worship of Yahwe is also attested in the 7th century cave inscription from Khirbet Bet Lei in Judah. Although the exact reading is unclear, the inscription declares Yahwe’s power and position as God of the land (כָּל הָאָרֶץ) and of Jerusalem:

יְהוָה אֲלֹהֵי כָּלָה אָרֶץ וּרְחוֹד לָאֵלָהָי לִרְשָׁלוֹם

Yahwe is God of all the land, the mountains of Judah belong to God of Jerusalem

Many of the letters are debated and there are several scratches which are disputed as to whether they are letters or not. The exact reading is thus unclear and many interpretations are technically defensible, yet contentwise the reconstruction by Lemaire, Renz, Naveh and Manfred Weippert seems the most probable one. At any rate, for the purposes of this analysis it is necessary to discern that Yahwe is the only God who is mentioned and that He rules alone without partners and co-rulers. The author of the inscription is very difficult to determine, but the ability to write is a skill restricted to the upper classes (priests or scribes). The text probably witnesses to a corresponding level of religion.

3 For dating, see Renz 1995a, 245.
4 The interpretation by Cross (1970, 299-306) that there was an additional word (ם) before the beginning of the sentence has generally been rejected by other scholars. Cross’s reading of אָרֶץ at the beginning influences his whole understanding of the sentence:

אבל יְהוָה אֲלֹהֵי אָרֶץ וּרְחוֹד לָאֵלָהָי לִרְשָׁלוֹם

Mittmann (1989, 20-22) has proposed:

יְהוָה אֲלֹהֵי כָּלָה אָרֶץ וּרְחוֹד לָאֵלָהָי לִרְשָׁלוֹם

However, Mittmann’s suggestion is problematic because it is improbable that there had been a change from the 3.person to the 2.person in relation to speaking about Yahwe. In addition, Renz (1995a, 245) notes that the phonetic writing (יְהוָה) of the personal pronoun would have been exceptional in pre-exilic times.

5 Following Renz’s (1995a, 246) reconstruction of the Hebrew text. For possible other readings of this quite unclear and fragmentary text, see Renz 1995a, 245. The other texts from this cave are even more fragmentary, but no other god appears in the readable parts. For these fragmentary texts, see Särköö’s (1997, 39-60) new reconstructions.

6 It is probable that the land of Judah is meant since the following clause refers to the mountains of Judah. A universal reference, כָּל הָאָרֶץ referring to the whole earth, would not fit into a context that is nationalistic in tone. Both God of Jerusalem and hills of Judah are clearly tied to the national religion of Judah. Moreover, it would be in disharmony with the parallel: יְהוָה אֲלֹהֵי שׁאָלְמוֹ. Mittmann (1989, 26) and Särköö (1997, 41-42) have proposed that the שׁאָלְמוֹ refers to the whole world. A reference to the whole world, however, is not impossible as similar declarations are met in the OT as well as in other religions of the ANE, but this is unlikely in this context.

7 Renz 1995a, 245-246; Manfred Weippert 1964, 161-164; Naveh 1963, 74-92; Lemaire 1976, 557-568. Naveh reads an additional יְהוָה יְדִידֵי, but this is not crucial for the interpretation of the text.
Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet ‘Ajrud

In addition to the inscriptions that bear witness to Yahwism in pre-exilic Judah, there are texts that recognize Baal and Asherah. First, there are two closely related 9th century wall inscriptions from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud that mention El, Yahwe, Baal and Asherah. The texts are very fragmentary, and the exact contexts are irrecoverable, but it may be established that the deities mentioned belonged to the same religious symbol system. Although they are both written in a Phoenician script, the mentioning of Yahwe implies a connection with Israel. However, since Kuntillet ‘Ajrud lies on the periphery of Judah and the content of these texts is not supported by other inscriptions from a more central location, it would be hazardous to make conclusions about Israel’s religion as a whole. These texts rather witness to mixed religious conceptions (syncretism?) in a desert post for caravans. The location at the crossing point of trade routes is such that could easily have fostered the mixing of religious traditions. Moreover, there is still the fact that the texts are written in a Phoenician script rather than Hebrew. At the present stage of research, it may only be established that Baal and Asherah are mentioned in the same texts as Yahwe in a distant desert location on the fringes of Judah.

|KAgr (9):6| בך ימשרבדו | ... | יאשלה | ...[ ... יאשלה]
|Blessed are their days and let them be abundant | ... may Yahwe be good | They give to | Asherah |

|KAgr (9):7| יברו הזὃ | ... | יכוה | ...[ יכוה]
|in the theophany of El the mountains melted | ... | יכוה | ...[ יכוה]

8 The context is too fragmentary to ascertain whether Asherah was construed as a goddess or a cult symbol. Moreover, there has been discussion as to whether the name Baal is always to be understood as a god of that name, but in this context there is no compelling reason to suggest that Baal was not understood as a divinity.


10 Lemaire (1981, 25-32) and Renz (1995a, 48-50) have suggested that the Kuntillet ‘Ajrud had been a school as well as a desert way station. This suggestion sounds very odd in the face of the location. A school distant from major settlements in a peripheral location would be unlikely. For arguments against this suggestion see Hadley 1993, 125.

11 Renz 1995a, 57-58. The reconstructed Hebrew text is from Renz, the translation is mine.

12 In the presently extant context makes more sense than , yet this is almost impossible to determine since the extant text is very short.

13 Note that the plural is here marked with a mater lectionis. The use of matres lectiones in a text written in Phoenician script is strange, for Phoenician remained strictly consonantal, while Aramaic and Hebrew introduced and adopted their use. See Cross-Freedmann 1952, 19-20, 57-59.

14 Renz 1995a, 59.

Secondly, there are the famous inscriptions from Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet ‘Ajrud that bless in the name of Yahwe and His Asherah. It is debated whether these texts understand Asherah as a goddess or as an object pertaining to Yahwe’s cult. Some features in these inscriptions imply that Asherah was subordinate to Yahwe and that she possibly did not possess an independent position as a divinity: First, Asherah is stated to be Yahwe’s by a suffix (לַאֲשֵׁרָתָּה). A divinity with a full status would not be referred to as belonging to another deity. Some kind of dependence must be assumed. Secondly, the masc.sg. suffix in connection with Asherah (לַאֲשֵׁרָתָּה) also suggests that Asherah was not construed as a goddess. As is often pointed out in research, personal names in Biblical Hebrew do not take suffixes, which would imply that Asherah in these texts did not refer to a person. However, this rule may not have been fixed because in the Ugaritic texts some divinities receive the suffix. Thirdly, the verbs in KAg (9):9 and KAg (9):10 would appear to be masc. singular. It is not impossible that in pre-exilic orthography the vav was omitted as a mater lectionis for a final long u but for example, in the other texts from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud the final long u in the 3.person plural is marked with the vav (KAg (9):6). If it is then accepted that the verbs in KAg (9):9 are singular, it would imply that Yahwe was understood as the only real subject and that Asherah did not have real position as a subject or a goddess in these texts.

16 No mater lectionis despite the long u in the plural, but the omission is most likely caused by the nun paragogicum.
17 Some caution has to be applied for using texts from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud in the reconstruction of Israel’s pre-exilic religion as the location is not in the Judaean heartland. However, since texts with very similar content were found in Khirbet el-Qom their application is more certain than that of the above-presented texts from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud (KAg (9):6-7). Furthermore, KAg (9):8-9 refer directly to the Yahwe of Samaria, implying a connection to the Israelite heartland. Moreover, these texts are not written in Phoenician script like the other texts from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud.
19 Among others, the same observation is made by Tigay 1986, 30 and Keel - Uehlinger 1992, 272.
20 Hebrew began using matres lectiones in the 9th century, but their use was very irregular. See Cross - Freedman 1952, 57-59.
21 YD and YPV. Admittedly KAg (9):7 has an apparent plural without the vav (וֹסָמ), but this case is blurred by the final nun paragogicum.
22 Renz 1995a, 61.
We have already seen that the OT evidence for Asherah is ambiguous. Most passages assume that Asherah was merely a wooden object or tree related to a forbidden cult while some passages imply that Asherah is a deity with an independent divine status. The latter group is in the minority and some of the passages may be later glosses and even mistakes. Although the idea that Asherah was an object seems to predominate, it cannot be ruled out that Asherah was also understood as a goddess. For example, Frevel has argued for the double meaning of the word in Israel’s religion. In view of the Ugaritic myths where Asherah is clearly a divinity, and the OT where Asherah is predominantly a cult-object, one may sketch a gradual development from a divinity to a cult symbol. The inscriptions from

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23 Renz 1995a, 62-63.
24 Renz 1995a, 63-64.
25 Renz 1995a, 202-211.
26 E.g., Dt 16:21; Jdg 6:25-26. Both passages imply that an Asherah can be cut down like a tree. According to Jdg 6:25-26, an Asherah can be used as firewood.
27 This is certainly to be suspected in 1K 18:19, as Asherah is not mentioned elsewhere in the text. This passage clearly shows the attempt to tie Asherah with Baal. The only passages that could refer to a goddess are 2K 21:7 and 2K 23:4, 7. Wyatt (1996, 190) suggests that 2K 21:7 “should perhaps be harmonized with v. 3, which simply alludes to the sacred pole.” The only passage that refers to a goddess with certainty is 2K 23:4, as v. 7 of the chapter may refer to hangings for the sacred pole. So Wyatt 1996, 190. Jdg 3:7 is probably to be corrected from "Asherah" to "Asherah" (thus some Mss, V and S). The normal plural of "Asherah" is "Asherim". See Wyatt 1996, 189. As we have seen in chapter 4.2, 2K 23:4 is a late addition to the history writer’s text. The verse lumps Ashera with other forbidden divinities and practices.
28 Dietrich - Loretz (1992, 105-106) assume that the Israelite Ashera was understood as a goddess. According to them (p. 106-110), she was represented by an anthropomorphic figure.
29 Frevel 1995, 924.
Kuntillet ‘Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qom primarily understood Asherah as an object pertaining to Yahwe’s cult, but it is possible that a divinity was meant, at least on some level, or that a divinity was understood to lie in the background of the cult symbol. In any case, Asherah’s position is clearly inferior to her position in the Ugaritic myths where she is undoubtedly a divinity and enjoys prominence among other gods.

Another conclusion that can be made from these inscriptions is that during this period (9th to 8th centuries), Asherah seems to have been part of the Yahwe-cult, which conflicts with many passages in the DH, according to which Asherah had been close to Baal or otherwise related to the Baal-cult. Some Biblical editors evidently wanted to make a connection between Baal and Asherah, but this connection is obscure from the perspective of archaeology as well as from the perspective of the history of religions. In the Ugaritic myths, Baal and Anat were connected, whereas Asherah was El’s consort. If El and Yahwe were identified with each other in Israel, the connection between Yahwe and Asherah is most natural. The nomists keep silent about the fact that Asherah was connected to Yahwe, trying to emphasize the unnatural connection to Baal. Further on, the nomistic claim that Asherah was inherently a foreign element in Israel’s religion seems now unlikely. Consequently, the suspicion that the nomistic conception of Israel’s pre-exilic religion is strongly colored receives further substance.

One may observe that the inscriptions that mention Asherah are formally similar to the letters from Arad and Lachish; both sets of documents contain blessings and greetings in the name of a divinity. However, the later letters from Arad and Lachish do not mention Asherah beside Yahwe like the earlier ones from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qom. One could propose that by the time of the Arad and Lachish letters, in the last decades of Judah, Asherah had disappeared from the conventional or official blessing formula, which could then imply a certain development in Asherah’s position in Israel’s religion. The earlier, popular Asherah would have become obsolete during the 7th century. Unfortunately, the inscriptive material is still chronologically and geographically too scattered to make far-reaching conclusions. The 7th and 6th century evidence is not yet comprehensive enough to establish Asherah’s disappearance or any development. Moreover, can we conclude from the Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet ‘Ajrud inscriptions that Asherah was such an essential part of the Yahwe cult in the 9th and 8th centuries that her absence in later texts implies a development in the religion? Most of the letters that mention Asherah come from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud which is a peripheral location that may not give a balanced picture of blessing.

30 So e.g., Hadley 1994, 253-256. It is beyond this analysis to investigate whether Asherah was always regarded as less than a goddess by the Israelites. It is only necessary to observe that the archaeological material does not bear witness to a goddess who had a comparable position beside Yahwe.


32 Loretz 1990, 75-76, 83-85.

33 This connection is not hampered by the fact that by the 9th to 7th centuries the Israelite Asherah had possible lost much of her identity as a goddess.

34 See Ex 34:12-13; Dt 7:1-5.

35 Thus, Uehlinger 1995, 68.
formulae in pre-exilic Israel. More inscriptive material must surface before making far-reaching conclusions.

Conclusions

The pre-exilic inscriptions do not mention a multitude of gods beside Yahwe. Only Asherah receives enough evidence to suggest that she had an established position in Israel’s pre-exilic religion. However, this evidence extends to the 9th and 8th centuries only and assumes that Asherah was more a cult-object pertaining to Yahwe’s cult than an individual goddess who would have had an individual cult. Nevertheless, some divinity may be ascribed to her as well. As for Baal, the evidence comes from a peripheral location in an early period — 9th century. On the basis of currently available inscriptions, it cannot be established that Baal had a meaningful position in Israel’s pre-exilic religion. It must be stressed that inscriptions have not surfaced in any abundance to form a clear and comprehensive picture. The possibility of chance giving a distorted view is still regrettably high.
6.3. Iconography

Quantitatively, the main source of iconography found in the archaeological material of Palestine are the seals and seal impressions. They are complemented by iconography found on walls, caves, artifacts and ostraca. The interpretation of iconographic material is not unambiguous, for usually the pictures are not accompanied by texts that would explain the content or subject that is presented. However, much can be deduced from this material as it is reasonable to assume that pictured themes often reflect contemporary religious ideas and religion. Further on, connections between the iconographic repertoires of different areas can be shown, which then may imply religious influence, dependence or difference. In addition, chronological developments within the iconography of an area may reflect developments in the religion as well.

In 1992, Keel and Uehlinger published a famous and influential study on the iconography of seals, seal impressions and other archaeological remains of Palestine. Dividing the material into chronological periods, they have been able to sketch the special characteristics of each period and the development from one period to another. In addition, individual areas inside Palestine appear to have had peculiar features that separated them from the others. With this material, they introduce several interesting new perspectives on Israel’s pre-exilic religion. It is necessary to present the outlines of their study relating to the period from the 10th century to the Judaean Exile.

Iron Age II B (925-700 BCE)

During this period, the solar symbolism of Egyptian origin is well represented in the Palestinian iconography, particularly on seals. The clearest representation of this is a disc with two wings closely recalling the symbol of the Egyptian solar god. In Judah, the winged solar disc often occurs on official stamps — particularly on the so-called “lmlk stamps” — but rarely on private seals. Another very common theme, connected to solar symbolism as well, is the uraeus, which is a cobra-like creature with wings. The four-winged uraeus is a motif almost exclusively found in Judah, whereas the two-winged version is also

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1 Keel - Uehlinger 1992.
2 The time of the Exile would be extremely interesting, but unfortunately the evidence from exilic Judah is very scarce. As for the whole of Palestine, the exilic period is marked by “zunehmende Internationalisierung und Aufsplitterung der Kulturkontakte.” See Keel - Uehlinger 1992, 467-469.
4 Solar symbolism was very common throughout the ANE, but its Palestinian representations show affinities with the Egyptian forms rather than with the Mesopotamian ones.
5 The disc is also met without wings and with four wings.
found elsewhere in Syro-Palestine. Reminiscent of the uraeus is the winged beetle, often carrying a separate solar disc. Contrary to the uraeus, the beetle with four wings is met throughout Palestine. Further on, the lord-of-the-animals motif appears relatively often. This consists of an anthropomorphic figure surrounded by two animals, of which the ostrich is the most common one in central Palestine. Whereas the ostrich is found in the areas of both Northern and Southern Israelite kingdoms, other animals, particularly the ibex and the lion, are more often represented in the North. Related to the lord-of-the-animals motif is the animals feeding from a tree motif. Keel and Uehlinger interpret the tree as Asherah. As for Asherah as a goddess, there is no representation of an anthropomorphic goddess in this period. This fact is in harmony with the contemporary inscriptions from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qom which show that Asherah was a cultic object or otherwise clearly subordinate to Yahwe.

Accepting that the iconographic repertoire reflects contemporary religious ideas, it would seem that the OT is generally ignorant of them. When it describes the mid-monarchic religion — or any other period — the DH shows no trace of the different animals met in the iconography, e.g., beetle, ibex, fish, etc. Similarly, the OT gives scarcely a hint of the lord-of-the-animals or animals feeding from a tree motifs. Although one could interpret the tree as Asherah, the OT does not connect any animals with the tree cult. Curiously, the calf, which one would expect on account of 1K 12:28-30 to be the main symbol, particularly in the Northern Kingdom, does not surface on the Hebrew seals of this period except on one single one from the 9th century. At first impression, the solar imagery would also seem to be alien in the OT regarding the scarcity of texts referring to solar worship, but Keel and Uehlinger have presented a theory which suggests that Yahwe had adopted features of an old Jerusalemite solar god whom He replaced. Although the OT passages used in support of this theory are neither unambiguous nor abundant, the iconographic evidence is strong.

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8 The lion usually appears alone, whereas the ibex is met alone as well as with the lord-of-the-animals motif.
9 A similar theme is widely found in Mesopotamia.
11 For a more systematic and comprehensive listing of different themes met on the Hebrew seals, see Sass 1993, 205-240.
12 Knauf (1994, 241-242) finds some traces of this motif in Gn 49:25 and Ps 68:15. He connects the motif with El Shadday.
13 The tree or a tree of life does appear in the OT, but there is no reference to any animals connected to its cult. It is not even clear that the holy tree in the OT is the same religious concept as the tree presented on the iconography, although it is quite probable that there is a connection.
14 This fact is all the more surprising because bovines are otherwise fairly common in the West Semitic realm as noted by Sass 1993, 225.
15 The clearest examples are Ez 8:16; 2K 23:11.
17 It is reasonable to assume that the later OT authors would have been prone to suppress the connection between Yahwe and the sun.
Several symbols (uraeus, beetle, solar disc and rosette) pertaining to a solar god elsewhere in the ANE (especially in Egypt) have been adopted into a wider use in Israel and Judah. If only one solar symbol had been used, it could be regarded as a trend or foreign influence without any religious significance, but when several were commonly used, such a possibility is unlikely. Consequently, at the present state of research, the suggestion that the Israelite main God had adopted solar elements, or was even regarded as a solar god, seems convincing. Although solar symbolism plays a major role in the Israelite and Judaean iconography of this period, it receives only a marginal one in the OT. The nomists do prohibit the worship of the sun, but this occurs in the fixed criticism that straps together all astral divinities. There is no hint in these texts that the sun had been such an important symbol, perhaps the main divinity and that it in fact could have been identified with Yahwe.

One point of contact between the OT depicting this period and the archaeological material is the uraeus, which may perhaps be identified with the seraphim of the OT. But again, they play only a minor role in the OT in view of what one would expect on the basis of iconography.

The evidence is very open to interpretations on the question whether other gods than Yahwe are represented in the iconographic repertoire of this period. Whether the lord-of-the-animals is a divinity is unclear as there are no texts in the OT to support any view. In the animals feeding from a tree motif, the tree could be interpreted as Asherah, but the extant iconography does not support the idea that she was a goddess. The most notable feature of the iconography of this period is the significant representation of solar symbolism. If it is accepted that Yahwe is represented in this symbolism, His dominance and sole position in Israel’s religion is further substantiated.

Iron Age II C (700-600 BCE)

During Iron Age IIC, solar representations of Egyptian origin disappear or become notably rare in comparison with the previous era. The general tendency in Palestine seems to be that motifs connected with the sun and many other old motifs are replaced by nocturnal astral themes of Aramean origin. The development is most likely a result of general Aramean influence in Palestine rather than of any Assyrian coercion. This is implied by the lack, or

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18 It is not clear whether the rosette is also to be regarded as a solar symbol. In any case, the rosette is often met in Judah and Palestine.
19 E.g., Dt 4:19; 17:3.
20 On the other hand, if one accepts the theory about Yahwe’s solar origin, one could suggest that the later writers would most likely want to be silent about Yahwe’s past.
21 The passages that refer to the seraphim are Is 6:2, 6; 14:29 and 30:6. The snake that Moses made can also be interpreted as a seraph, see Nm 21:8:
22 Summary of this period in Keel - Uehlinger 1992, 422-429.
marginal presence, of identifiable Assyrian gods in the Palestinian iconography of this era. Of the specific astral symbols, the sun disc is now replaced by the moon sickle, originally the symbol of the moon god Sin of Haran. A common motif is the moon god sitting on a throne and sometimes riding in a boat. According to Keel and Uehlinger, this god could have been identified with El in Palestine. Seals and seals impressions bearing symbolism of the lunar god are also found in Judah, but, according to Sass, this motif is exceedingly rare in comparison with other contemporary regions of the area. The same applies to other astral symbols that are common in the general area of Syro-Palestine, but very rare on Judaean seals. In accordance, reflecting a certain kind of conservatism, solar symbolism persisted longer in Judah than elsewhere in the region. The same symbols that were met during Iron IIB are still met in Iron IIC Judah. Further on, different kinds of anthropomorphic figures, which are in this period more common in Syro-Palestine, are found only on individual Judaean seals and seal impressions.

However, the most notable characteristic of Israelite iconography, especially towards the end of the 7th century, is the aniconicity. The private seals, seal impressions and jar handles found in Judah are mainly without any pictures. The pictorial representations of the previous eras are replaced by texts, which now take most of the space on seals. The letters are at most accompanied by lines and/or very marginal ornamentations. Particularly striking is this tendency on seal impressions or bullae from two archives that can be dated to the last decades of pre-exilic Judah with considerable certainty. Keel and Uehlinger suggest that this phenomenon reflects early-dtr religious ideas in the second half of the 7th century. In a separate study, Uehlinger further developed his theory that the aniconic tendency partly stems from an image ban in effect in late 7th century Judah.

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25 Keel - Uehlinger 1992, 353-355. They hint that Israelite Yahwe, identified with El, also received features from a lunar god in this period.
26 Sass 1993, 238.
27 Sass 1993, 238.
29 Most of the evidence comes from seal impressions and jar handles. There is reason to suspect that two-sided seals were also used, where one side consisted of a text only and the other side of a picture only. The seal impressions were from the text side only. However, the two-sided seals constituted only a marginal proportion of the seals.
30 The so-called burnt archive — the original location of which is uncertain as the bullae were discovered in an illegal excavation — was published by Avigad 1986. The other set of bullae comes from an official excavation in the City of David in Jerusalem, and is published in various publications. The dating of these archives is facilitated by the fact that several bullae derive from seals owned by persons known from the Hebrew Bible.
32 Uehlinger 1993, 278-288. Although he accepts other reasons to be in the background, he argues that the particularly strict aniconicity stems from an image ban, also witnessed in the OT (e.g., Dt 4:15-19; 5:8 etc.). He has later — Uehlinger 1995, 66-67 — taken a more careful approach to aniconicity on the Israelite seals.
Nevertheless, several considerations suggest that the interpretation of the aniconic tendency is ambiguous and that more clarification is needed before making conclusions. First, the lack of something is difficult to use as proof for something. In the presented material, there is no positive proof for any religious reforms or movements. At the most, one can say that the lack of iconography would not contradict religious reforms or movements in this period if they had taken place. Secondly, the OT does not ban pictures in general, but only pictorial representations of the divinity. Therefore, the disappearance of most pictures on seals cannot fully be explained by the Biblical or dtr attack on images. Other reasons have to lie in the background. Thirdly, when we observe the 9th to 7th century seals and seal impressions from Ammon, notable number of aniconic ones are found as well. The tendency in Ammon may not be as consistent as in Judah, but before making any conclusions about religious reforms or movements in Judah it should be explained as well. In addition, the Ammonite seals can be dated only very approximately, which means that the seals in Ammon could hide a very similar phenomenon as the Judaean ones. It is not impossible that most of the aniconic Ammonite seals stem from the late 7th century and the iconic ones from the 8th century. In this respect, we have to wait for more Ammonite and Israelite seals to surface. Fourthly, in connection with the previous point, there appears to be a general tendency to avoid anthropomorphic representations of a deity throughout the West Semitic realm in comparison with the Mesopotamian, East Semitic realm. Mettinger has argued that the Israeliite aniconism is not a new and late innovation, does not result from a theological reflection and “does not constitute one of Israel’s differentia specifica.” Against the background of Mettinger’s theory, one cannot automatically deduce a religious reform from the lack of iconography in the late monarchic Judean seals. Fifthly, the spread of literacy in the 7th century could have inspired a mode or trend for almost fully epigraphic seals. The emphasis on text on a seal could be a sign of education. Admittedly, this explanation does not explain why the spread of literacy inspired such a mode only in Judah — and perhaps in Ammon. Sixthly, if the lack of images was connected to a religious movement or a reform, how could one explain that the loss of images is so comprehensive, especially in the two archives from the last decades of Judah. It is questionable that a ban or

33 A good example of hasty conclusions on the basis of too early evaluation is that of Aharoni (1982, 233-234), who argued for religious reforms on the basis of the destroyed altars in Beer-sheba and elsewhere. It has later become evident that the material, the destruction of the altars, had been too hastily dated and interpreted. See Uehlinger (1995, 64-65), for example.

34 The dtr attack on pictorial representations of the divinity (e.g., Dt 4:15-16a, 19) is later followed by a more general ban on pictures (Dt 4:16b-18), but presumably this ban concerns only the cultic use of pictures.


36 About 30 % of the Ammonite seals from the 8th and 7th centuries are aniconic, which is a notable difference from the common tendency of the ANE; Hübner 1993, 134-135.

37 Ornan 1993, 71. He suggests that this inclination is most conspicuously manifested in the Aramean, Ammonite, Moabite and Hebrew seals. Mettinger (1994, 1996) has suggested that this tendency was common in the whole West Semitic realm.


39 This explanation is in fact presented by Uehlinger 1993, 284.
law to prohibit images could have influenced the seals of private individuals so completely. This is problematic since many of the OT’s authors claim that the Israelites continued to worship idols until the final days of Judah, which was also the reason for the Exile. The reforms are not supposed to have succeeded.

As a consequence, at the present stage of research the lack of images cannot be used as an argument in favor of a Yahwe-alone movement or religious reforms in 7th century Judah. More evidence has to surface before one can make conclusions about the lack of iconography on late 7th century Judaean seals and bullae.

The astral symbolism found in the material may correspond to the nomistic attack on the heavenly host. However, again here we have the strange contradiction that astral symbolism is rare in Judah, while elsewhere in the Levant it was common. On the official or private seals from Judah there is hardly any evidence that the heavenly host was worshipped during the 7th century. This is a peculiar contradiction to the account of the DH which tells us that Manasseh, who reigned for 55 years — that is, more than half of the 7th century — was particularly prone to worship astral deities (2K 21:3, 5) The currently available archaeological material offers no support for the Biblical view that Judah had followed the contemporary trend of ANE religions to astralize the religious symbol system.

On the basis of the ornamentation found on the Judean seals one could suggest that the Temple had become more important than before. As noted above, the religious symbols of the previous eras are sometimes switched to slight ornamentations, some of which might be associated with the Temple. For example, the pomegranate is a motif met on 7th century seals and Solomon’s Temple alike. Likewise, a palmette or capital met on the seals could represent pillars of the Temple, but admittedly this connection is not unambiguous.

40 The DH does not give much evidence about the religious situation during the reign of the last Judean kings after Josiah, but the impression one receives from the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel is that the Israelites were idolatrous until the final days of the state and after it. This picture is, of course, in contradiction with the archaeological material. It emphasizes the contradiction we already have between the DH and the archaeological material.

41 According to the DH, astral symbols would have remained at the center of Israel’s religion, at the Temple, until the time of Josiah.

42 One could suggest that the worship of other gods, and in this case the worship of the astral divinities, was the king’s idiosyncrasy (thus Tigay 1987, 179), but it is hardly realistic regarding the long reign of the king (55 years). Had the king in fact taken the measures described in 2K 21 (e.g., built in the area of Yahwe’s Temple altars to the heavenly host) and worshipped other divinities to the extent implied by the chapter, it would be unfathomable that the upper classes or the official religion could have practiced another kind of religion as assumed by Tigay. Moreover, assuming that the measures described in 2K 21 took place, if the upper classes and the Judaean society as a whole had rejected the king’s measures as apostasy, it would be difficult to explain why the king stayed in power for 55 years. Consequently, it is more reasonable to assume that the Biblical account of Manasseh’s apostasy and worship of astral divinities is an exaggeration. Something else may be in the background than the king’s idiosyncrasy.

43 For seals, see Sass 1993, 210-211. Solomon’s Temple is described in 1K 7:18, for example.

44 Keel - Uehlinger 1992, 413-414.
Ta’anach Cult Stand

Because of the religious importance of its iconography, the cult stand from Ta’anach must be treated separately. Lapp, the excavator of Ta’anach, dates the stand to the 10th century, a period when the town was probably within the Northern kingdom. The stand presents four scenes: 1) A bovine or an equine carrying a sun-disc with wings. 2) A tree flanked by two ibex and by two lions. 3) Two sphinxes flanking an empty opening. 4) A naked woman flanked by two lions. The second and the fourth scene seem to be connected. Many scholars assume that since both are flanked by lions, the actual scenes also present the same figure or theme. Bringing iconographic as well as scriptural evidence, Hestrin has shown that a tree and a goddess were occasionally connected or identified in ANE religions: A 13th century ewer from Lachish appears to call a holy tree ‘elat, thus directly referring to a goddess. In Egypt the goddess Hathor was sometimes portrayed as a figure with a half-tree, half-anthropomorphic body. Although the identification of the two themes on the Ta’anach cult stand is not without problems, it seems to be a possible alternative. Moreover, the tree is justifiably identified with Asherah, for the OT support for Asherah as a tree is relatively strong. From this it follows that the cultic stand would seem to show an anthropomorphic representation of Asherah. We would then possess clear proof that during the early monarchy the Israelite Asherah was both a goddess and a tree. It must be emphasized that many uncertainties lie in this argumentation, but at present it would seem the most probable explanation of the second and fourth themes.

The interpretation of the first and the third scenes is more problematic. It seems clear that the first scene represents the sun god riding on an animal, but it is debated whether it is a bovine or an equine. Taylor has argued for the latter because of the prominent hooves and tail that would fit oddly with a bovine. In relation to other iconography in the area, the equine is more justified. Horse carrying a sun disc above the head is a common theme on clay figurines found in Palestine. If Ta’anach was an Israelite town, it would seem most likely that the divinity represented by the sun on the first scene is Yahwe or El. The suggestion by Hestrin that the divinity in the scene is Baal is not convincing. She argues that the sun was usually the supreme god in ANE religions and since Baal was the supreme god

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45 Lapp 1969, 42-44.
46 This is implied by 1K 4:12.
47 By oral communication Prof. Harviainen expressed the possibility that there may have been — at least as folk-etymology — a connection between God El, his wife as a femaleṯ[N] and a terebinth treeṯ[N].
49 So Taylor 1993, 24-37.
51 See Holland 1977, 125, 138-150. Such a figurine has been found in a cave in Jerusalem, for example.
52 Or possibly both, if they were already identified as one divinity.
of the Canaanites, it is Baal who is represented. As for the third scene, by analogy with the second and the fourth scenes, one could suggest that it similarly shows the same figure or divinity as the first scene. Consequently, Mettinger and Taylor have proposed that Yahwe is represented as an invisible or aniconic deity. Hestrin has suggested that there was a statue of a divinity inside the stand that could be peeked at through the opening, but there is no proof for this view. Intended aniconicity seems more likely. Consequently, a probable interpretation of the first and third scenes is that they represent Yahwe and/or El as the solar and aniconic God, both at the same time.

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53 So Hestrin 1987a, 75. However, Baal was not necessarily the supreme god of the Canaanites. We do not have much information on the subject, but El would be a better candidate on the basis of Ugaritic and Biblical material.


55 Hestrin 1987a, 71.
6.4. Figurines, Massebot and Other Religious Artifacts

Holladay has presented a theory according to which pre-exilic religious artifacts from Israel may be divided into two distinct groups according to their location. In the one hand, there is a set of artifacts found in sanctuaries at various sites in the areas of both Israelite kingdoms. These artifacts represent the officially controlled state religion, for the locations of the sanctuaries are in clearly visible places in close proximity to official or public buildings, implying an association with the ruling authority. The artifacts in these sanctuaries often include altars, cult stands, lamps and incense bowls. In addition, a variety of vessels connected with eating and drinking appear in considerable numbers. Massebot have also been found in some sanctuaries, but the evidence is not comprehensive. The clearest examples derive from the Bronze Age — Hazor, Gezer and Shechem — but some are argued to be monarchic Israelite or Judean, for example, the one in Arad’s sanctuary. All these items presumably reflect the officially controlled sacrificial cult. A notable feature of most artifacts from these sanctuaries is that they are almost completely aniconic.

On the other hand, there are religious objects found in domestic buildings in towns and extramural locations near towns. They differ considerably from artifacts found in sanctuaries. Because of their locations and the difference to the artifacts in the sanctuaries, Holladay interprets them as reflecting popular religion. They contain a large number of figurines of women, horses with riders, birds and other animals. In contrast with the sanctuaries, cult stands and altars play no role. Since vessels for eating and drinking are also found in these sites, it is possible that a cultic meal of some kind was consumed at these locations. That would then be outside the official sacrificial cult. However, the existence of vessels does not prove that they were used for cultic purposes, and therefore, we may have to wait for more evidence.

In relation to the OT or the DH in particular, some observations can be made from this material. The DH mainly deals with the official religion (the primary religious concerns are the Temple, local sanctuaries which are prohibited, and the religion of the king and the royal house), whereas popular religion is rarely touched on directly. The criticism in the DH that Israel had apostatized from the correct faith is primarily directed at the kings who are

1 Holladay 1987.
2 E.g., Dan, Beer-sheba, Arad, Lachish.
3 Holladay 1987, 281.
4 See Graesser 1972, 48-56; on Arad, see Aharoni 1968, 18-19.
5 This corresponds with Mettinger’s (1995) theory that aniconism was a common tendency in West Semitic religions.
6 Passages written from the perspective of the cult centralization do assert that it is the people who sacrifice at the Ṭēnir, yet the main target of this criticism is evidently the official local cult that competed with the Temple.
said to have forsaken Yahwe and at the Temple cult which the nomists presented as a den of idolatry. Although direct evidence from the Temple is not available, the local sanctuaries presumably reflect official religion. Nothing can be found in them that wars with Biblical laws or prohibitions. The extant sanctuaries cannot substantiate the accusation of the DH that the official religion had been particularly idolatric and inclined towards the other gods. No figures or idols that could be interpreted as other divinities have been found. In fact, the sanctuaries are quite simplistic and, as noted above, aniconic. The OT passages which claim that the cult at the was syncretistic and idolatrous are particularly put into a strange light. The only OT law these local sanctuaries seem to have conflicted with is the cult centralization. Unfortunately, it has proven to be difficult to give an exact dating to the sanctuaries as well as to the law in Dt 12. In any case, the picture of Israel’s religion presented in the nomistic form of the DH is further undermined.

Pillar Figurines

The small pillar-figurines representing a naked anthropomorphic figure found in large numbers in Judah have aroused wide discussion in research for a century. Not before the last decades, however, have systematic investigations appeared. Kletter has recently presented an excellent typology of this material, and introduced new perspectives for interpreting it. He has shown that the figurines, a typical phenomenon of the 8th and 7th centuries, were found in all kinds of locations within towns (private homes, streets, etc.), but not in places

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7 Idolatry now understood in the sense of the later OT writers. It could be suggested that the DH’s attack on other gods and the claim that Israel had departed from Yahwe was in fact directed at the popular religion, but this is strongly against the clear intention of the texts. In addition, the content of the popular cult is still not clear and is open for interpretations.

8 Although the more often refer to the open cult-places than to the sanctuaries in the towns, there are some passages (e.g., 1K 3:4) where a cult-place within a town was meant. Moreover, some passages (1K 3:4; 11:7-8; 13:33; 2K 21:3) show that the were an institution protected by the monarch. In some passages the criticism is aimed at the local worship.

9 E.g., 1K 11:7; 14:23; 2K 21:3; 23:5, 13. The proposal by Provan (1988, 90) that these passages are later and war with the original intention of DH is corroborated. (Although, according to Provan, the original DH extended to 2K 18 only, while 2K 19-25 would have been a later addition.) See chapters 4.1. and 4.2. for the passages.

10 The archaeological material is not yet conclusive or clear enough for dating or ascertaining the chronological extent of the local sanctuaries. The sanctuary in Lachish was in use at least until 701 BCE, which is thus after Hezekiah’s alleged reform that should have removed the local sanctuaries in Judah. Moreover, there is also the problem of whether Hezekiah had political or religious control over Lachish during this period. For the archaeological data, see Ussishkin 1982, 84-85, 107.

11 On the other hand, the existence of local sanctuaries corroborates the history writer’s view that the kings allowed the Israelites to worship at the .

12 The first of which was by Holland 1975.
that may be interpreted as cultic centers or sanctuaries. Hence, it may be deduced that the figurines were a phenomenon of the non-official, popular religion. Holladay argued that they were part of a tolerated non-conformist cult, but the characterization as non-conformist is an unfortunate one. There is little in the existing material to suggest that they were in some kind of non-conformity with the official cult. They just represent different levels of religion. Their abundance throughout towns implies that they were perfectly accepted and part of the normal practice of religion, although they were not used in the official cult.

Moreover, there is no evidence for the sometimes presented view that the figurines were deliberately broken. Kletter has demonstrated that the breakage patterns in the figurines show no signs of violent intentional destruction, but comply with breakage patterns that result from accidental and unintentional falls. Furthermore, the breakage patterns on Judean figurines does not differ from the ones on figurines found in other regions of the Levant. As a consequence, the fact that most Judean figurines were found broken does not give reason to suspect any religious reforms and aggression against cultic objects in pre-exilic Judah. They were more likely broken by natural causes such as wear, fires, accidental falls and general destruction of cities and buildings.

In accordance with the general tendency in present research, Kletter has proposed that the figurines perhaps represent Asherah. The support for this view is not very strong and usually runs as follows: According to the OT, Asherah was an important goddess in pre-exilic Judah. The figurines appear in large numbers. The figurines must represent an important goddess. Therefore, the pillar figurines most likely represent the goddess Asherah. Many uncertainties and hazards lie in this argumentation, however. First, it is not self-evident that the figurines represent goddesses, as it is often assumed in research. There is no scriptural reference to Judean or Israelite fertility goddesses that would have been made in the form of small clay figurines. Some of these figurines carry a drum in their hands. It is evident that they represent women, perhaps carrying out some cultic activities,
and not divinities. This at least shows that there was a practice of making clay figurines that represented humans. Black-Green note on the Mesopotamian evidence that human figurines normally represented worshippers. They further point out that the Mesopotamian naked female figurines never wear the horned cap of the divinity, and therefore are clearly distinct from the manifest representations of a divinity. As a consequence, interpreting all anthropomorphic figurines as divinities is hazardous.

Secondly, as we have already seen, it is not clear that Asherah was understood as an important goddess in pre-exilic Judah. She was certainly important as a cult symbol pertaining to Yahwe’s cult, but that she would have been important as an independent goddess is not evident. The onomasticon did not present a single name that contained Asherah as a theophoric element. There are casual hints in the DH that the royal house may have worshipped Asherah as a goddess, but they are later additions to the original composition. In any case, these passages refer to the official religion, whereas the figurines are a phenomenon of the private or popular religion. One link between Asherah and the naked female figure may be made through the Ta’anach cult stand, where the naked woman and the tree (very likely representing Asherah) appear in similar scenes. This connection is not self-evident and is based on an object dated two centuries prior to the appearance of the Judean pillar figurines. Moreover, judging from the careful work, the cult stand most likely represents official religion, while the figurines are a phenomenon of the popular religion. Direct conclusions cannot thus be drawn. Nevertheless, it may also be pointed out that in the ANE religions in general, Asherah was construed as a goddess of fertility and eroticism as well as a mother goddess. Hence, the connection between Asherah and the figurines, which clearly emphasize the fertility aspect, could be argued. Some reservation must be used, however, as we know very little about the Israelite Asherah and her aspects.

As a conclusion, it may be said that the pillar figurines may represent Asherah, but positive proof is still vague. There is no compelling necessity to see any divinity behind these figurines. They may have guaranteed or symbolized fertility at home without representing a specific goddess. We have little information on whether they were sacred or not and whether they had any cultic function.

The nomistic attack on idols and its connection to the pillar figurines must be discussed briefly. There are several factors which imply that these figurines were at least not

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20 Black - Green 1992, 81-82, 144. In Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian art there is a representation of a frontally standing naked female with a horned cap, but she has other features of a divinity as well, e.g., wings, and is therefore evidently to be distinguished from the naked female figurines. Black - Green (1992, 144) identify this winged and horned figure with Īštar. Some scholars suggest that the unhorned figurines represent Īštar as well.

21 1K 15:13; 2K 21:7; 23:4, 7.

22 Dietrich - Loretz (1992, 106-110) assume that Asherah was represented as an anthropomorphic figure and that she was an important part of Israel’s pre-exilic religion.

23 For more details, see above.

24 Lapp 1969, 42-44.


26 Maier 1986, 193; Loretz 1990, 83-84.
the main target of the attack, if at all. First, the figurines are made out of clay which does not fit with the vocabulary of the nomistic attack on idols. The main word used for idols \(\text{NUR}\) implies that the idols were hewn out of stone or carved out of wood. Later, the word came to be used as a more general term referring to idols of metal as well, but the word probably does not refer to clay figurines. The main intention of the idol criticism may have been idols of wood, stone and metal, but not clay. Secondly, the figurines were used in popular religion, while the nomistic aggression is clearly directed at sanctuaries and other official and half-official cult-places.\(^{27}\) There is no explicit aggression towards popular religion in the DH. Thirdly, in the nomistic attack on the other gods, there is no allusion to any fertility aspect of the prohibited religion. Fertility symbols do not seem to have been their target.\(^{28}\) This appears strange in the light of the abundance of the figurines. One may conclude that these figurines were not of any concern in the dtr attack on the other gods. On the other hand, this is not surprising because the figurines are a phenomenon of the 8th and 7th centuries, while the nomists are usually dated to the 6th century at the earliest.

### Bovines

As noted above in connection with iconography of Iron IIB, bulls and calves should have been a major theme, especially in the Northern Kingdom, but iconographic discoveries failed to confirm this. Bovines were an almost non-existent theme on seals. Bovine artifacts are represented in the area of the two Israelite kingdoms, but not in a way that would match the expectations one has on the basis of the DH.

The most important single example is a bronze bull from a site near the town of Dothan in the North. The bull is dated to the 12-11th centuries and was found on top of a hill. \(\text{Mazar}\) has characterized the site as a \(\text{JOD}\) but this has been criticized by \(\text{Coogan}\).\(^{30}\) Be that as it may, judging from the careful workmanship of the item, its cultic purpose or use is likely. Moreover, a similar bull was found in Hazor in the holy of holies of a shrine, thus implying cultic use of such items. Due to the descriptions in the books of Joshua and Judges, \(\text{Mazar}\) has assumed that the site was Israelite, but this assumption is not unproblematic at all, for the descriptions are based on an idealistic view of Israel’s area. \(\text{Ahlström}\) suggests that the site belonged to a group of immigrants from the north, but this view is largely based on the type of bull the object represents — the so-called Zebu bull, originally coming from the Indian subcontinent — which was supposedly unknown in Canaan during this time.\(^{32}\)

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27 Other words may have been used for idols, but this, as the most common one, possibly betrays the original intention.

28 E.g., Ex 34:13; Dt 7:4-5.

29 By arguing that some of the figurines carry a cake as if bringing an offering, \(\text{Schroer}\) (1987, 273-281) has tried to connect the pillar figurines with the Queen of Heaven. She then refers to Jer 44:19 which describes Israelite women making cakes for the Queen of Heaven.

30 \(\text{Mazar}\) 1983, 40.

31 \(\text{Coogan}\) 1987, 6-7.

32 \(\text{Ahlström}\) 1990, 77-81
However, we have very little information on different bull species in the IA ANE. This evidence may not be enough to assume that the site was non-Canaanite or non-Israelite. Consequently, the bull of Dothan shows that cult-images of bulls had religious functions in the 12-11th century Canaan. It is difficult to determine whether the site was Canaanite or Israelite, but on the other hand, one may ask whether such a distinction is reasonable during this period. It remains open whether the bull is connected to the calves (בָּשָׂל) of Jeroboam. The Dothan bull appears to be an adult, while the word בֵּית refers to a young bovine. As for the bronze bull found in Hazor, many of the same problems remain. The bull is dated to an even earlier period and the site is further away from the Israelite heartland. It can be said that this bull confirms the importance of bulls in the late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Canaanite religion. However, their connection to Israel or Jeroboam remains open and is no way obvious.

Bovine figurines made out of clay have been found in some numbers in Palestine. However, most of these stem from Judah — especially Jerusalem — and are particularly a phenomenon of Iron Age IIC when the Northern Kingdom had already ceased to exist. In other words, their appearance does not meet the expectations one would have on the basis of the DH: Jeroboam’s calf (1K 12:28-31) does not find support in archaeology. However, there may exist a connection between the bovine figures and the iconography of Solomon’s Temple where bovines play a small role. It must also be observed that bulls are not very prominent among the clay figurines. Horses, horses with riders and female pillar figurines are by far more common.

**Massebot**

Archaeology has confirmed that massebot or standing stones were commonly used in Syro-Palestine. I have already treated the phenomenon from a textual perspective. Vestiges in the OT imply that they had non-cultic as well as cultic functions in pre-nomistic Israel. Accordingly, massebot have been found at sites that were unquestionably occupied by the Israelites. For example, at Arad a massebah was found in a sanctuary that was used during

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33. For example, Ahlström (1984, 10) argues that there was no distinction. According to him, Israel is a political unit that emerged from the common cultural inheritance of the Canaanites.
34. See Holland (1977, 125-127), for example.
35. For example, solid hand-modeled bovinae — type F in Holland 1977, 125-127 — are met in significant numbers only in Jerusalem (32) and Tell Ḥemmeh (75). Tell Ḥemmeh lies on the Philistine coast, near Gaza.
36. E.g., 1K 7:29, 44. Here the word used is בָּשָׂל, which is a general term designating cattle. The most suitable Hebrew word for a bull would be בֵּית.
Intolerant Monolatry in the Deuteronomistic History

Two massebot were even found in pre-exilic Jerusalem. The massebah appears to have been a common cult-object in Israel throughout Iron Age I and II.

Many scholars also assume that the massebot fell into disuse during the second half of the monarchy, but the evidence is still open for many interpretations. To support any religious reforms in pre-exilic Judah, one would need unambiguous evidence from sites that were Judean during her last century. A possible massebah ban motivated by a reform would have extended to Judah only, which in the final century was often not much larger than the immediate surroundings of Jerusalem. Only Jerusalem, Arad and Lachish of the masseba sites would then be relevant. However, the date of the destruction of the Arad sanctuary is debated. Ussishkin denies that the destruction would have had anything to do with religious reforms of Josiah or Hezekiah. Moreover, the main massebah site at Lachish was already destroyed in the 10th century by Pharaoh Sheshonq I. A similar problem hampers the use of the Jerusalem massebot as evidence for reforms. They were found in a stratum that is earlier than Hezekiah and Josiah and they were not destroyed, which already contradicts the Biblical account.

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39 See, for example, Graesser 1972, 52-53 and Kenyon 1985, 278-279. Mettinger (1995, 149) states on the massebot at Arad: “the cult at Iron Age Arad attests, beyond a reasonable doubt, to the important role of massebot at the official level of religion.”

40 Kenyon 1985, 295.


42 So Mettinger (1995, 167) and many other scholars. Mettinger ponders whether this was a result of Josiah’s or Hezekiah’s reform. However, considering the closeness of Josiah to the Exile, it is difficult to determine whether this disuse was a result of the Exile or reforms. Josiah’s reform is separated from the Exile by a few decades only, which in archaeology is a short a period to distinguish. The evidence could be interpreted to witness to the beginning of the Exile as well.

43 Ussishkin 1988, 156.

44 See Kenyon 1985, 295.

45 For example, Hezekiah (2K 18:4) is reported to have()? the massebot. The same word is used for Josiah’s actions (2K 23:14). If we try to find evidence for their reforms, we would have to find massebot that were deliberately hacked into pieces.
6.5. Conclusions

In many respects, the archaeological material offers a considerably different picture of Israel’s pre-exilic religion than the final form of the DH. The religion appears more centered on Yahwe than what one could reason on the basis of the DH. One cannot find evidence of syncretism or other gods in abundance to justify the view of the final DH that the religion of the pre-exilic Israel and Judah was constantly recurrent apostasy. Quite the contrary, particularly the onomasticon, inscriptions and the 7th century iconography are in evident contradiction with it. Baal, the main target of nomistic criticism, is not found except on one inscription in a distant desert post, Kuntillet ‘Ajrud. Considering the above-mentioned problems, the inscription should not be used to make conclusions about Israel’s religion. The onomasticon confirms the marginal importance of Baal in Israel’s pre-exilic religion. Only one set of ostraca from Samaria acknowledge Baal. Likewise, the archaeological material does not confirm the conviction of the DH that calves had been the most prominent theme in the religion of the Northern Kingdom. The bovines that are met do not match the expectations of the DH; the two pre-monarchic bulls are found in sites that may or may not be Israelite, while clay bovine figurines surface in Judah and mainly after the destruction of the Northern Kingdom. They are not met in the period or location one would expect, i.e., in monarchic Israel between 900 and 700 BCE. Moreover, astral symbolism implied by passages in 2Kings does not surface in 7th century Judah. Peculiarly, nocturnal astral themes are common throughout the Levant in this period, but rare in Judah. This is a clear contradiction with the nomistic claim that altars had been erected in honor of the heavenly host, and that Manasseh, who had reigned most of the 7th century, had worshipped astral divinities. On the other hand, there are several themes which are almost or completely absent in the DH — and the OT — but appear to be common in the archaeological material. The lord-of-the-animals motif and different animals (ibex, beetle, fish) are not met in any religious function in the OT. Horses, seraphim and sun symbolism, all major themes in the archaeological material, receive only allusions in the DH and the OT. From these allusions, one could not deduce their real importance in the pre-exilic religion.

It can generally be said that the archaeological material considerably deviates from the expectations that arise on the basis of the DH. This calls into question the whole view of the final DH on Israel’s pre-exilic religion. One receives the general impression that the writers of the DH are not aware of the religious situation of pre-exilic Judah and Israel. Some of the disharmony between archaeology and the Biblical text may be lifted by considering the intolerance passages later additions, as I have suggested in the previous chapters. From the archaeological view, the nomistic view on syncretism and the abundance of foreign cults and gods is unrealistic, at least when it refers to the pre-exilic religion. The pre-nomistic DH, with its silence on the other gods, corresponds better with the archaeological material, although some discrepancies still remain, for example, the lack of calves. Although Jeroboam’s calves are an important theme for the history writer, calves do not surface in the iconography of the Northern Kingdom.
The archaeological material also supplements or turns attention to certain areas of religion. The iconography clearly shows interest in solar symbolism. In future research, more attention must be directed to the OT passages that refer to Yahwe’s solar features or to solar worship. It has also been established that there existed a clear bipartite division in the pre-exilic religion. On the one hand, there are official sanctuaries which are centered on altars at prominent sites in towns, and on the other hand, there are artifacts that pertain to the private practice of religion. The DH in particular usually refers to and is concerned about the official religion. It is silent about the popular or private religion.

The archaeological evidence also confirms some views of the DH. Asherah appears to have been important in the pre-exilic religion. Inscriptions and the iconography show that she was a central part of the practiced official religion. Contrary to the DH, however, she appears to have been part of Yahwe’s cult and related to Yahwe rather than to Baal. This fact shows that the DH gives a slanted picture of Israel’s pre-exilic religion. As for Asherah being a goddess, there is little evidence outside the small clay figurines of naked women which are often interpreted as Asherim. This interpretation seems unlikely, however. The existence of massebot in some Biblical towns confirms their importance in the Israelite and Canaanite religion. Some of the towns were clearly Israelite during the period when the massebot were used.

The archaeological evidence is still scarce and in many respects unclear. Only the onomasticon seems to bear conclusive evidence which is not likely to change with new discoveries; the material is already abundant and the possibility of chance distorting the picture is therefore minimal. The other areas are much more uncertain and depend on sparse finds. Consequently, the evidence has to be used with some caution.

\footnote{Cf. Jdg 3:7; 2K 17:16; 23:4.}
7. Repercussions of Literary and Redaction Criticism

Literary and redaction criticism were able to demonstrate that intolerance of other gods is a preoccupation of the later editors of the DH, whereas the original edition of the composition is generally not interested in the problem. In most analyzed passages, literary-critical considerations showed that intolerance is a later addition to the older text. Intolerance is often a short interpolation that sticks out from the context, but which has begun to dominate the composition. Moreover, the older text usually becomes clearer and more understandable when we isolate these additions from it. We are then better able to see the original motifs and themes of the DH. The history writer’s criticism of the 

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is a good example. The later editors had blurred the original intention of the history writer’s criticism of these cult places.

After isolating the intolerance passages from the older text by literary criticism, the texts were submitted to redaction criticism. In most cases, phraseology, terminology, themes and context revealed that the intolerance passages are closely related to passages that past research has already determined to be nomistic. The intolerance passages often show a build-up of nomistic characteristics. Most of the intolerance passages are also as if they came from the same mold. They repeat the same phrases, themes and patterns of argumentation. For example, the anger of Yahwe is a common companion to these passages. In addition, there are some post-nomistic additions that attack the other gods. They are partly influenced by nomistic phraseology and theology, but they also show some special characteristics.

The conclusion that intolerance is a late development in the DH contradicts the conventional view on many of the central intolerance passages. The law texts of Ex and Dt in particular are usually assumed to be earlier. For example, most scholars find a pre-dtn or dtn core in Dt 13 and Dt 17:2-7. Some scholars maintain a pre-nomistic origin for these texts by removing all phrases that would indicate later dating, without the text itself showing any signs of inconsistency, however. The laws of Ex that prohibit the worship of the other gods are usually considered to be even earlier, but it has been demonstrated that these passages are also late additions, dependent on the nomists of the DH. This study has shown that the early dating of intolerance passages in the DH and in the law texts of Ex cannot be maintained. Pre-nomistic or pre-nomistically influenced layers of the DH and Ex 20:22-23:33; 34:11-16 did not attack the other gods. Systematic literary and redaction-critical analysis undermines such views.

2 This stand is most apparent in the analyses by Merendino (1969, 66-71, 172-174), Rose (1975, 45-47; 1994, 296-308) and Otto (1996a, 25), which assume a pre-dtn or dtn early core in Dt 13 and 17:2-7.
These conclusions have considerable repercussions on the way we understand the DH of the history writer and Urdeuteronomium, as well as the relationships between different writers of the DH, especially that of the nomists in relation to their predecessors. Since the DH is the main source of Israel’s pre-exilic religion, we have to reevaluate the evolution of Israel’s religion as well.

### 7.1. Nomists and the History Writer

With most intolerance passages now demonstrably nomistic, there remains no evidence that the history writer attacked other divinities as such. In effect, he shows very little interest in the other gods, in the positive or negative sense. There are two passages, 1K 16:31ab, 32 and 2K 3:2b, in which the history writer is critical of Baal, but the background of these passages essentially differs from the nomistic intolerance that is found elsewhere. 1K 16:31ab, 32 and 2K 3:2b imply a situation in which Baal has become a challenge to Yahwe’s primacy and Yahwe as God of Israel — Baal has a Temple in Samaria. However, the original historical background of this development may have been political. The house of Omri, especially under Ahab, would have allowed Baalistic influence in Samaria because of political connections to Phoenicia. In view of the archaeological evidence and the fact that Ahab’s son had a Yahwistic name (Ahaziah), it seems that Baal’s influence was not very deep or long-lasting. Moreover, the history writer may have exaggerated Baal’s influence in the Northern Kingdom. His negative attitude towards the North may have motivated him to emphasize that the cult in the North was foreign, it was connected to Baal. In this sense, one could even question the historicity of Baal’s Temple in Samaria. The history writer does not allude to Yahwe’s Temple in Samaria, but this is peculiar because, if Baal had a Temple in Samaria, one would expect that Yahwe had a Temple there as well. In any case, there is no reason to assume that the history writer criticized Baal because he was intrinsically intolerant of other gods. Baal is simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. He has challenged Yahwe’s primacy. Otherwise, other gods simply appear to have been irrelevant to the historian. There is no explicit intolerance of other gods, although, implicitly, Yahwe is the only main God of Israel, the only God that Israel has as a people, as a group. There is nothing to suggest that the history writer did not allow other divinities as long as they did not challenge Yahwe and His position as God of Israel. When it comes to the issue of primacy, the history writer probably did not have much tolerance for other gods.

Yahwe plays a prominent role in the history writer’s composition. The pre-nomistic DH could be characterized as a history of Israel’s relationship with Yahwe, Israel’s history develops through her relationship to her main divinity. Yahwe is behind or influences most events that the history writer describes. Israel’s fate depends largely on her behavior towards Yahwe, on whether she obeys Him or not. Disobedience leads to problems, while obedience to blessing and success. However, the worship of the other gods was not a criterion for the history writer to evaluate the past or Israel’s relationship with Yahwe. The nomists

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3 Nath (1943, 101) already noted that this is a major theme in the DH.
introduce this criterion and make it the most important one. The older criteria are partly buried under the nomistic criterion. Only after we isolate the nomistic passages from the composition, we may see the older criteria more clearly, although they are not explicit or specific in the way the nomistic criterion is. The history writer generally expects obedience to Yahwe, while the nomists emphasize obedience to Yahwe’s law and to the prohibition against worshipping other gods in particular. Nevertheless, the nomists build on the history writer’s conception of Israel’s history as developing according to Israel’s behavior in relation to Yahwe.

From beneath the nomistic cloud, we may find many of the history writer’s interests and motifs that had receded into the background in the final composition. We receive a clearer picture of his theology. In addition to Israel’s relationship with Yahwe, the Temple and the centralization of the cult — in the form of *VYOD*-criticism — were prominent in the history writer’s composition. The writer evidently had a positive attitude towards the Temple and was critical of the *bamah*. Both issues were important for him, but the nomists marginalized them with their own interests and motifs, namely with the law and the attack on the other gods. This development may be seen in the way the *bamah* are treated. For the historian, the overall existence of the *bamah* is of importance. In the background lies the idea that they violate the centralization of the cult and compete with the Temple, but the history writer does not comment on the *content* of the *bamah*-cult. He either takes it for granted that the cult practiced at the *bamah* pertains to Yahwe, or the question is insignificant. A contrast with the nomists is evident, for their main interest is precisely the content. The idea that the local shrines are idolatrous places of worship derives from the nomists. Moreover, the sin of Jeroboam receives more attention in the pre-nomistic DH. For the history writer, it had been the main reason why the Northern Kingdom was destroyed. Every king in the Northern Kingdom is criticized for repeating Jeroboam’s sin. We may now clearly see that this motif is also connected to the importance of the Temple. According to the history writer, Jeroboam’s golden calves were intentionally constructed to challenge the Temple in Jerusalem.

Since many of the theologically-loaded texts have now been identified as nomistic, the history writer’s theological profile becomes less prominent. Although the Temple and the

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4 *Noth* (1943, 104-106) assumed that the deuteronomistic writer had a positive attitude towards the Temple, but negative towards the cult. When we now separate or isolate the nomistic additions from the original DH, this contradiction is lifted. The history writer is not particularly negative towards the cult, whereas the nomists criticize the cult when it is idolatric.

5 According to *Provan* (1988, 90), the original writer of 1K 3-2K 18 viewed the *bamah* as Yahwistic shrines. Passages which regard the *bamah* as idolatrous places of worship derive from secondary editing (e.g., 1K 14:22-24; 2K 17:7aβ-17; see *Provan* 1988, 76-77). In my opinion, the secondary editing should be identified as nomistic. He further argues that after 2K 18, the original writer — according to him, different from the one in 1K 3-2K 18 — regarded the *bamah* as syncretistic. In this matter, *Provan’s* view is problematic because the end of 2Kings contains very controversial and ambiguous passages, such as 2K 22-23, on which it is difficult to base a theory. Because much of the end of 2Kings, namely chapters 24-25, is completely silent about the *bamah*, *Provan’s* theory unfortunately relies heavily on the difficult 2K 22-23. The strongest part of his theory is 2K 21 (see *Provan* 1988, 145-147).
centralization are important, his composition is not a theological program in the manner the nomistic texts are. For example, it is difficult to determine whether his interest in the Temple derives from his interest in rebuilding it. His interest more probably derives from the importance of the Temple in the pre-exilic theology. It had been the center of the old religion. The history writer’s perspective is still so strongly pre-exilic that the Temple remains his main interest even after it had been destroyed. He had not yet found out a way to deal with the fact that there was no longer a Temple. In other words, he had not yet reflected upon his experiences to the extent that he could come up with a new theology to replace the old one. Consequently, he is writing his interpretation and understanding of past events in the light of the old theology, but he is not consciously and actively trying to convince the reader of his view. This is also implied by the fact that it is difficult to comprehend what his message for the future is, or if he even has one. Although not completely unbiased, his view is more neutral in this sense than that of the nomists.

One consequence of the now evident difference between the nomists and the history writer is that the traditionally assumed continuity in the deuteronomistic tradition becomes less manifest. When comparing the main interests of both phases in this tradition, the history writer’s and that of the nomists, their unity is not as self-evident as is usually assumed. One has to assume a considerable development between them, that is, inside the dtr tradition. This conclusion may be partly due to the theme and perspective of my investigation; when it comes to the other gods, the Temple and the GOD, the history writer’s view clearly differs from that of the nomists. It may be that the contrast is not as prominent from other perspectives, although there are also other themes where the nomists have introduced a clear shift in opinion in relation to the older text. For example, the attitude of different editors on kingship differs considerably. It is the task of further studies to elaborate on their differences and similarities, but at this point it seems reasonable to assume that there are tensions inside the dtr tradition. Future research must pay more attention to the factors or features that led us to call the history writer and the nomists different phases of the same school or tradition.

7.2. Nomists and Dt/Dtn

It is commonly accepted that the centralization of the cult was the main theme of Urdeuteronomium. Many also assume that the earliest layers of Dt already attacked the other gods, but since this now seems improbable, cult centralization rises into an even more prominent position in the composition. In the final Dt, the nomistic attack on the other gods partly replaced the cult centralization in importance. For example, the insertion of the Decalogue in Dt 5 by the nomists directed attention away from the centralization.

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6See Walter Dietrich 1972, 172. According to Noth (1943, 107-109), the deuteronomist thought that everything had come to an end with the destruction of the Temple and the monarchy. There would be no hope and no future. Noth alludes to some passages in Dt that are oriented towards the future, but they are later additions, according to him.

7Veijola 1977, 115-122.
Furthermore, the mainly nomistic preamble to the laws in Dt 6-11 contains many passages that deal with the problem of the other gods, but never alludes to the cult centralization. In other words, the development is very similar to the one in the DH. The nomistic additions began to dominate the composition.

The Shema was part of the original Dt. Together with the centralization law, the Shema gives an idea of the original Dt’s religious perspectives. It shows that Yahwe had been in a prominent position. Yahwe was unique, exceptional and the only one (einzig), but originally this related to Yahwe’s position as God of the nation or of the Israelites as a group. The confession and confessors express their devotion to Israel’s national God, who in this respect was unique and the only one. It implies some intolerance relating to His primacy or position as the national God, but it should not be interpreted as general intolerance of the other gods in Israel’s religion. One may expect similar confessions to the main god to have existed in the other religions of the ANE as well, although the Israelite religion may have had a stronger emphasis on the relationship between the divinity and the people as a group, as suggested by Albertz. In Ugarit, we find a text that declares Baal to be unique and exceptional, but the immediate context shows that the exclusivity that the text implies is restricted to one realm or area only. Similarly, the implied exclusivity in the Shema should not be extended beyond what it allows. Despite later interpretations, general intolerance should not be read into it.

The idea of cult centralization implies limitation of Israel’s religion. It tries to bring the cult into one location without explicitly interfering with the content. Centralization would naturally enable better control over the development of Israel’s religion, but the pre-nomistic Dt does not seem to be interested in changing or limiting anything except the location of sacrifice. Had it been a problem or a motivation to centralize, one would expect the centralization laws of Dt 12 to refer to the content of the cult as well. Nevertheless, Dt 12 seems to imply that the cult pertains to Yahwe. There is nothing to indicate anything else.

Although it did not display intolerance towards the other gods, the cult centralization probably enabled and facilitated the later development into intolerant monolatry. With the official cult in the hands of a limited number of individuals in Jerusalem, it was easier to supervise and control the religion than before. The main problem is that it is not certain whether there was a conscious cult centralization before the destruction of the Temple. There may have been a circumstantial and factual cult centralization as the Judean state had diminished into a mini-state consisting of the surroundings of Jerusalem only, but it is not certain that it was consciously advocated. In this connection, it is important to note that the themes in Urdeuteronomium as well as in the assumed dtn additions to Dt should be distinguished from the ones in the nomistic additions. The nomists have developed the book in a considerably new direction. There is a similar cleft or shift between the dtn layers and the nomists as with the history writer and the nomists. One should also note that without the

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8 See Albertz 1994, 88-89.
9 As shown by Loretz (1997, 57-60). He extends the exclusivity of the Shema into a wider sphere than what the immediate context in Dt would imply (p. 76). For more details, see chapter 2.4.
10 As it is usually acknowledged in research, references to idolatry in Dt 12:2-3, 29-31 are later additions. See chapter 2.8. for more.
nomistic additions, the history writer’s text and the pre-nomistic Dt become thematically very close to each other. The importance of the יהוה-criticism in the DH and the dominant position of the cult centralization in the DH give the impression that the two compositions are either dependent on each other or otherwise closely related.

7.3. Turning Point in the Exile — the Nomists

When it comes to the attitude towards the other gods, the nomistic layers in both Dt and the rest of the DH represent a significant turning point. This fact should be seen as a reflection of Israel’s history and religion: It faced a turning point in the Exile. This does not mean that the pre-nomistic DH and the pre-nomistic Dt are necessarily pre-exilic. They just represent and reflect pre-exilic conceptions and religion. Although the original version of the DH is most likely an exilic product, the catastrophe had not yet made a strong impact on its religious and other conceptions. As we have seen, the Temple and the monarchy are still pivotal themes for the history writer.

His text may be the beginning of the self-evaluation process, but far-reaching conclusions are apparently not made prior to the nomists. The nomists, on the other hand, represent a tradition that assumes a reevaluation of the past. They have already thought out a solution and a way out of the catastrophe. Their attitude towards the Temple and the monarchy shows that they have abandoned conceptions that were central to the pre-exilic religion. Neither monarchy nor the Temple are any longer pivotal. The turning point that Israel’s religion met in the Exile is now evident in the internal development of the DH. When the cleft is acknowledged, the DH offers considerable additional help for depicting the currents and developments in Israel’s religion during the Exile. One the one hand, the pre-nomistic DH and Dt help us to understand Israel’s pre-exilic religion and conceptions. On the other hand, the nomists represent a tradition that, from the Exile onwards, came to have considerable influence on Israel’s religion. Unfortunately, the use of the pre-nomistic DH and Dt for pre-exilic religion is slightly hampered by the probability that the later editors not only made additions but also deleted embarrassing material. Although the evidence is undermined by probable omissions, there are vestiges which bear witness to Israel’s earlier, pre-exilic religion.

The nomists are easier to interpret, for their perspective has remained very dominant in the final DH. Contrary to the history writer’s view, the main pre-exilic institutions, the monarchy and the Temple, have receded into the background. The catastrophe and a fairly developed reevaluation of the past is in the background of the nomistic thinking. The new perspective is most tangibly seen in the attitude towards the other gods. The silence on the

11 The fact that the monarchy plays only a very small part in Dt — the kingship is treated only in Dt 17:14-20 — could imply that the main editor of this book had already drawn some conclusions about the destruction of the state and the abolishment of the monarchy.
other gods in the older layers is changed into ardent aggression towards them. The other gods are lumped under the general title אלהים אחרים and prohibited to the Israelites. The nomists demand that the Israelites worship Yahwe alone. Not only did the nomists demand the rejection of other gods, but several religious practices and conceptions had to go as well. They are described as the abominations of other nations.

A closer look at the condemned practices revealed that the issue had not been as simple as the nomists presented it. Many religious items, practices and conceptions that the nomists rejected as foreign had been definitely Israelite before the Exile. This is suggested by archaeology as well as older texts of the OT. The latter often take a positive attitude towards what the nomists term illegitimate and foreign. For example, the massebot were an inherent part of Israel’s religion prior to the Exile but were then later condemned by the nomists. For the earlier writers, it was not a problem to write about Moses or Jacob erecting a massebah, but for the nomists, it would have been an abomination. As we have seen, a similar development took place with massebot, sacred trees and Asherah. Already the nomistic condemnation of Israel’s entire history as “constantly recurrent national apostasy” indicates that the pre-exilic Israelites interpreted their religion in a very different manner than the nomists. Judging from the nomistic viewpoint, the Israelites were constantly at war with the demands of their own religion. This bizarre and unique idea in the world of religions implies that the pre-exilic people had another view of the demands of Israel’s religion. Moreover, the supporters of the Yahwe-alone theology appear to have been in the minority during the Exile, facing a majority that had allegedly abandoned the correct faith. Several nomistic passages demand that all of Israel had to return to Yahwe, implying an apostasy on a grand scale. Instead of taking these accounts at face value, it is reasonable to see here a contradiction between the old religious system and the religious conceptions arising from the nomistic reinterpretation of Israel’s religion. That all of Israel, save some individuals, had abandoned the correct faith is a very peculiar idea. As a consequence, the nomists represent a reforming or even revolutionary movement in Israel’s religion. They brought a considerable change in relation to the older layers of Dt and the DH. The nomists have a radical view of the older religion.

Admittedly, this might sound like argumentum e silentio, yet it is a very strong one since it is hardly possible that the dtn or pre-dtn — or even DtrH if he has edited the book — writers would have been completely silent on such a crucial matter which affects the whole religion. With the present scarce amount of source material on pre-exilic and exilic history, it is next to impossible to delineate the period without arguing from silence at some points. It is a philosophical question, what is foreign and what is not, and in many cases it is just a question of perspective. In this case, however, one must ask whether the nomistic perspective is justified. If a practice has been an inherent part of a people’s religion for centuries, it is problematic to term it foreign. From such a perspective, most features in all cultures would be foreign. It is rare that a culture would develop a feature without outside influence. Consequently, it is reasonable to regard the nomistic perspective as very biased.

Shown in Dt 4:23-31; 29:21-27, for example. The excellent term “constantly recurrent national apostasy” is from Morton Smith 1971, 47.

For example, Dt 4:23-31; 30:1-10. Dt 30:1-10 may be later than the already late-nomistic Dt 29:21-27.
As we have seen, the nomists did not introduce a change in the realm of religion only. The change in attitude towards the kingship assumes a considerably developed reinterpretation of one’s own tradition and past. It is reasonable to assume that the nomists were no longer anticipating the reestablishment of the monarchy. Whether their more passive attitude towards the Temple indicates a similar opinion on the future of this pre-exilic institution remains to be researched. There is little to indicate that they were prepared for it to be rebuilt. There is no explicit attack on the Temple; they just let it slowly recede into the background. The occasional Temple-criticism we meet in the DH pertains to the Temple harboring foreign cults and other gods. The nomists do not attack the institution itself. Therefore, one cannot infer that the nomists would have been against rebuilding it. It appears as if the question was irrelevant to them. In any case, they were well equipped to survive without it. For them, the law, at least partly, replaced the Temple.

The nomists elevated the law to the center of Israel’s religion. In addition to, or instead of, worshipping Yahwe in the Temple through the cult, Yahwe may be worshipped in the heart by keeping the law. The importance of keeping the law is stressed throughout nomistic texts. Blessing and curse are often made contingent on keeping the law. The first commandment of the Decalogue stands out as the most important law. This becomes apparent in the heavy emphasis it receives. Many nomistic texts have the single purpose of stressing the importance of following only Yahwe and abandoning the other gods. One often gets the impression that future, present and past are interpreted from the perspective of whether Israel worships Yahwe exclusively or not. For example, blessing and curse are dependent on this point so that Yahwe gives rain and crops only if the Israelites devote themselves to Him exclusively. Similarly, they are allowed to remain in the land only if they do not follow other gods. In many nomistic passages, the sole reason for the Exile was that Israel had broken the covenant by committing apostasy. The first commandment and Israel’s relation to it was the main principle for explaining the past. It surpassed all other areas of the law.

The idea of the covenant (הברך) between Yahwe and Israel plays a prominent role in the nomistic composition. Veijola has pointed out that this idea is not fully developed until one of the later nomists. For this nomist, the Israelites had made a covenant with Yahwe, which meant that they were committed to be loyal to Him as their only God. We have seen that many nomistic texts were influenced by political treaties. The nomists had adopted covenant or treaty ideology into religious use. There is a striking similarity between the nomistic conception of the relationship between Yahwe and Israel on the one hand, and the

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17 However, Veijola (1975, 142) suggests that they still had hopes for the reestablishment of the Davidic dynasty.
19 Dt 11:13-16.
20 E.g., Dt 6:15; 7:4; 11:17.
21 For example, Dt 4:23-28 and 29:21-27.
22 Veijola 1996, 244-247 (DtrB). Many of the elements may be traced back to the earlier nomists. For example, traces of the Alternativpredigt may already be seen in the earlier layers.
relationship between the lord and the vassal in the political treaties of the ANE on the other. Both relationships are jealously protected with threats of horrendous punishment for disobedience. Most importantly, the vassal treaties’ primary idea, exclusive devotion to one lord only, is exactly the same as that of intolerant monolatry: The overlords are represented by Yahwe and the vassal by Israel. Political treaties seem to have had considerable impact on nomistic intolerant monolatry.

Another important tool for advancing the rejection of the old religious system was the concept of Yahwe’s anger, which the nomists claimed to have been aroused by departure from the exclusive worship of Yahwe. Understandably, it was natural for the ancients to ask for theological reasons for the catastrophe since they thought, much more than modern people do, that behind every phenomenon was a divine motive. From the contemporary perspective, it was possible and logical to interpret the Exile as a demonstration of displeasure on behalf of the divine, as an outburst of Yahwe’s anger. Divine anger is a common motif in the ANE. However, before the nomists, Yahwe’s anger is used only occasionally in the DH — or the whole OT for that matter — and even then, it is not roused by apostasy as in the nomistic texts. This implies that the nomists introduced this interpretation for Yahwe’s anger into wider use in Israel’s religion. In the nomistic texts, Yahwe’s anger is exclusively kindled by apostasy. Furthermore, the consequence of the anger is constant: Banishment from the land. In other words, one may discern a rather rigid pattern that most nomistic texts follow: Apostasy ⇒ Yahwe’s anger ⇒ Banishment from the land. The programmatic nature and rigidity of the pattern implies that it was used to serve a specific purpose. The message of the anger passages is that Israel’s past religious conduct and practices must be rejected and condemned because they caused or led to the Exile. In other words, the concept of Yahwe’s anger served as an explanation of the past from the perspective of the Yahwe-alone theology to convince the Israelites that in the future they may not worship the other gods because of the terrible consequences it would have.

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23 Latvus 1993, 179-180. Pre-nomistic passages in DH e.g., 2S 24:1; 1K 16:26; 1K 22:54 (reference to apostasy is a DtrN expansion, see Würthwein 1984, 265). The anger of a divinity is often met in Mesopotamia. In addition, the Moabite Mesha Stele refers to the anger of Chemosh, the god of Moab.

24 E.g., Dt 4:26-27; 8:19-20; 11:16-17; 29:21-27.

25 In addition, the rigidity of the scheme and formulaic nature of the expressions imply that this interpretation did not arise from the collective experience of the whole Israelite community, as proposed by Latvus (1993, 181, 217), but from the theology of a group who wanted to propagate it to all Israelites. The general feeling of divine anger may have been a collective experience, but the interpretation is most likely nomistic.

26 It is also possible that Yahwe’s anger was used to divert the blame for the Exile from Yahwe to the Israelites, for it is probable that Yahwe himself was accused of causing the catastrophe, at least in some circles, which in turn would have caused defensive measures from Yahwe’s supporters.
7.4. Post-Nomistic Intolerance

We have seen that there were some intolerance passages that differ from the nomistic attack on the other gods. They are clearly dependent on the nomists but have already developed some new nuances. In addition, the terminology and phraseology of these passages is different. One of the most prominent features of many post-nomistic intolerance passages is the emphasis on the material aspect of the other gods. They hint that the other gods are merely material objects (e.g., Ex 20:22-23; Dt 7:25-26; 1K 21:26). In this sense, these passages are close to the idol criticism of Deutero-Isaiah, although the late-nomistic circles may also have acknowledged the problem of idols. With the prohibition against making images, the second commandment may represent an earlier stage of the later sharpening criticism against idols. At this stage, it is difficult to determine if there is a closer relationship with Deutero-Isaiah or if these post-nomistic passages instead arise out of the nomistic prohibition against making images. Some of these passages use the word הַלּוֹאָלִים, which was probably adopted from Ezekiel. This word also emphasizes the material aspect of the other gods.

Another important feature of post-nomistic intolerance is the conviction that the other gods are no gods at all. Whereas the nomists still ascribe some divinity to the other gods, some post-nomistic passages have developed monotheistic traits, denying the possibility that other gods exist. At least on the surface level, there is no evidence that these passages are dependent on Deutero-Isaiah’s monotheistic features. The denial of other gods’ existence has apparently developed inside the DH independent of Deutero-Isaiah. In any case, these monotheistic features in the DH already represent a later stage than the nomistic intolerance.

7.5. Intolerance in Ex 20-23; 34

The analyzed intolerance passages in Exodus showed considerable similarities with the nomistic intolerance passages of the DH. The Ex passages use very similar phrases and vocabulary to the nomists. Moreover, one cannot find any notable differences in perspective. In fact, at least the Decalogue in Ex 20; Ex 23:13 and Ex 34:11-16 would be quite at home with the general setting of Dt. These affinities open the possibility that the same nomists that edited the DH were also active in Ex. They would then have edited a larger work than just the traditional DH. On the other hand, one cannot rule out the possibility that a later redactor, strongly influenced by the nomists of the DH, edited Ex into line with the DH and Dt. Of the analyzed Ex passages, Ex 20:22-23 may then be post-nomistic in the sense that it already shows some similarities with the idol criticism of Deutero-Isaiah and with the post-nomistic additions of the DH. Ex 22:19 may be pre-nomistic but this verse may not have been intolerant of other gods in the first place. It may have prohibited sacrifices to dead gods.

27 E.g., Dt 4:35, 39; Dt 7:9; 1K 8:60; 1K 18:37,39; 2K 19:15-19.
ancestors. The main contribution of the Ex analyses was that there are no early — pre-nomistic — laws that prohibit the worship of other gods.
8. Mononlatry in Israel’s Religion

The following reconstruction of Israel’s religion is based on the shift or change that we have seen to have taken place inside the DH and Dt. They will be the main sources for the historical reconstruction, although archaeological evidence will also have its place. I have consciously, and also because of lack of space, left out the rest of Biblical literature, so the presented picture of Israel’s religion lies heavily on the DH. However, I have postulated that any development inside the most important historical source of the OT would reflect and reveal any development that takes place in Israel’s religion in the respective era. Considerable differences between the authors of the DH reflect currents and developments in Israel’s religion and history during the time of writing. As we have already noted, the earlier authors of the DH and Dt bear witness to earlier conceptions, while the nomists reflect the revolution that Israel’s religion faced during the Exile. To a certain extent, any reconstruction of Israel’s religion is speculative; we simply lack enough building blocks. We have to fill the gaps with what we consider to be the most probable development.

8.1. Pre-monarchic Religion

Many older studies described the so-called religion of the patriarchs in detail, yet with only a limited amount of available evidence, such reconstructions remain highly speculative. We know very little about Israel’s pre-monarchic religion. The evidence is embedded in legends and myths that are historically ambiguous and edited several times over. This is not to deny that the OT contains material that reflects ancient conceptions and religion. The difficulty is in identifying and separating them from later and historically problematic material. One could sketch Israel’s nomadic religion on the basis of comparative material from other regions of the ANE, but this would be hazardous because it is not incontrovertible that Israel’s religion is of nomadic origin.

More probably, Israel’s pre-exilic religion is a combination of elements from several sources: 1) Canaanite religion, 2) Religion of southern nomadic or semi-nomadic groups, 3) Aramean nomadic or semi-nomadic religion, 4) Religion of refugees.

1 Although one could sketch features of a Semitic nomadic religion, conclusions and arguments rising out of comparative material are always problematic.
2 The importance of Canaanite religions on Israel’s religion may not be underestimated. For example, El — who presumably later merged with Yahwe — and Asherah whom we meet in the OT are none other than the Canaanite main gods.
3 Yahwe is said to come from Seir (Dt 33:2) and Teman (Zc 9:14; Hb 3:3), both of which are locations in the southern part or south of Edom, in the Arabian Desert. A number of texts suggest that Yahwe was originally worshipped in southern Edom and Midian. Moreover, many of the Moses-legends are strongly tied with Sinai, probably a Midianite region. For details and arguments for the origin of Yahwe in the south, see van der Toorn 1996, 1714.
and other Semitic groups from Egypt, Mesopotamian religions, Phoenician religion, and Egyptian religion. Moreover, it is difficult to talk about Israel’s religion, or Israel for that matter, before the united monarchy. Many elements in Israel’s later religion have an older origin, but not before the establishment of the Israelite states, and especially the Temple, do they effectively merge into one religion that one may call Israelite. At the most, it is possible to talk about different sources that contributed to Israel’s religion during the monarchy. Even this remains very difficult because the evidence is ambiguous and scarce. When we examine Israel’s religion during the monarchy we are on a more solid ground.

8.2. Religion during the Monarchy

During the monarchy, Israel shared many religious practices and conceptions with the surrounding world, especially with the Levantine coast. This is not surprising, for Israel did not live or develop in a vacuum but in constant contact and communication with her neighbors. El and Asherah are found in Israel and Syria alike. Ancestors, sacred trees and massebot were revered throughout the ANE. Archaeological evidence as well as vestiges in the OT show that Israel’s religion did not differ from other ANE religions in this respect. However, some features of Israel’s religion may already have been exceptional at this stage. Israel’s religion was possibly more conservative than most other religions of the area. This is suggested by the limited number of Israelite divinities in comparison with most of the ANE. For example, Ugaritic and Mesopotamian religions had many deities, while we know only a few from Israel. Israel’s religion was presumably more conservative and reluctant to adopt new divinities than most other ANE religions. A certain conservatism may also be implied by the slow adoption of an iconographic repertoire of religious nature. While

4The OT reports that Jacob was a wandering Aramean (Dt 26:5) and that Abraham originated in Mesopotamia (Gn 11:31) may be vestiges of Aramean origins.

5Regarding its importance in the OT, the idea that the Israelites came from Egypt cannot be without any historical basis. It is reasonable to assume that some Israelite groups, or people that were later called Israelites, were workers or slaves in Egypt. It is also probable that their religion differed from that of other groups that later made up Israel and that their religion contributed to Israel’s later religion. This is not to say that their religion was necessarily Egyptian.

6The cultural and religious influence of Mesopotamia on all surrounding areas was constant throughout Israel’s pre-exilic history.

7It is a matter of definition, whether the Phoenician religion is distinguished from the Canaanite one or not. The Phoenician religion probably rose from the older Canaanite religion but developed its own special features later. However, the influence of Phoenician religion on Israel is different from that of Canaanite. Whereas Canaanite influence is probably internal, Phoenician is external. That is to say, the origin of Israel’s pre-exilic religion is partly based on the Canaanite religion, while the Phoenician religion exerted its influence after the basis of Israel’s pre-exilic religion had been laid.

8Egyptian religious influence is particularly seen in the religious iconography. For example, the solar symbolism of Egyptian origin is common on the pre-exilic Israelite seals. Regarding the geographical proximity and Egypt’s cultural importance, it is reasonable to assume that the influence could have been much more extensive.

other areas of Syro-Palestine adopted new ideas and motifs relatively fast, Judah seems to have retained older motifs longer. The tendency is particularly evident in the 8th and 7th century astral symbolism of Aramean origin, which spread in all of Syro-Palestine but did not affect Judean iconography.

A possible reason for conservatism may have been Judah’s secluded and peripheral location away from the main trade routes and centers of political power. There are some indications that other secluded and peripheral regions of the Levant, especially Edom, Ammon and Moab, had been similarly conservative, but so far our knowledge about them is too limited to draw any far-reaching conclusions. We know much more about the religions of rich, cosmopolitan and multicultural states in the centers of power — Mesopotamian and Egyptian empires and cultures, for example — and at the junctions of major trade routes — Ugarit and Phoenicia. It could be more fruitful to compare Israel with the similarly homogeneous cultures of her eastern neighbors than with the heterogeneous ones. The fact that we have much more evidence from the latter kinds, may distort the picture and overemphasize Israel’s uniqueness.

In addition to and possibly in connection with conservatism, Israel’s religion was more centered on her main God than other religions of the area. In the archaeological material as well as in the pre-nomistic DH, there is notably little evidence for other gods. In accordance with other ANE religions, Israel has one state or main God, but in contrast, there is not much evidence that Israel had a real pantheon in the way most other ANE religions had. This contrast is most evident between Israel and Ugarit or Israel and Mesopotamia. Ugarit and the Mesopotamian religions in general developed wide pantheons where gods had specific areas of life allotted to them. The divine was differentiated. It seems that Yahwe was responsible for many areas of life that would have been divided among several gods elsewhere. Yahwe was the savior God, the national God, the creator God, God of the royal house and God who brings or guarantees fertility. He is a combination of an active executive God and a passive ruler who has the final authority. Yahwe also functioned on exceptionally many levels of society. In addition to being the official state God in Jerusalem, He was evidently worshipped at the local level throughout both Israelite states. He was God of Israel as a people (Dt 6:4b) and the national God, as shown by the DH and the pre-exilic letters from Arad and Lachish, for example, but the onomasticon suggests that He was also the personal God of the majority. Although the

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10 For details, see chapter 6.3. A conservative tendency may also be observed in the development of Israelite alphabets. See Naveh 1982, 99.

11 Conservatism is an obvious feature of secluded and remote cultures. Israel’s or Judah’s religion in particular presumably became more conservative as it gradually diminished into a mini-state in the Judean hills. To turn inwards is a means of protecting one’s own culture in times pressure from the outside.

12 For example, Ammon, Edom and Moab. Their religions seem to have had only a small number of deities. Lemaire (1994, 142-145) suggests that the religions of Ammon, Moab and Edom may have been monolatric.

13 For the different functions of different gods in Ugarit, see Loretz 1990, 56-94. See von Soden (1985, 169-174) for Mesopotamia.

14 For example, the Ugaritic Baal was an executive god, while El was the passive ruler who has the final authority.
onomasticon may not give a balanced picture of all population layers, it is evident that in this respect the Israelite evidence clearly deviates from most other regions of the ANE. Israel’s pre-exilic religion was more centered on one God.

The polytheistic gods were usually related to each other through family ties, and they had consorts and children, but in Israel there is little evidence for a divine family. Apart from the receding Asherah, who had been El’s consort, Yahwe was a lone God. In comparison, Marduk, for example, had a son and a consort even in the heyday of his power when his cult had monolatric tendencies. This reveals a special feature in Israel’s monarchic religion. It was not structured to favor a multitude of divinities, although it did not systematically rule them out. The symbolic system of Israel’s pre-exilic religion functioned better with one divinity than most religions of the ANE. It was typical in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Ugarit that the divine was construed in many gods who together formed the symbolic system of the divine. Yahwe was an absolute monarch, without equals.

Nevertheless, there is no reason to assume that His worship had been exclusive in the sense that other gods had been excluded from Israel. The only exclusivity that should be assumed is His position as Israel’s main God. His superiority and uniqueness was exclusive. No other god would have been allowed to rise to the same level. In this sense Israel’s religion was monolatric, but the monolatry was tolerant since beyond the question of Yahwe’s supremacy, other gods were tolerated. Evidence for other gods is not very abundant, however.

El is met several times especially in the older texts of the OT. He was the main god of the Canaanites but was worshipped in a much wider area as well. The Ugaritic El had already lost some status and power to Baal, but nevertheless He was the main god, creator of the world and progenitor of the other gods. Despite the fact that there is little evidence of El in Canaan proper, it seems likely that the El we meet in the OT is the Canaanite El. Israel would have inherited this god from the Canaanites. There are some texts which may distinguish between Yahwe and El (e.g., Dt 32:8-9), but in the most of the OT they were the

15 Texts from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qom could suggest that Asherah had been Yahwe’s consort, but this was a receding feature in their relationship, possibly a vanishing heritage from Yahwe’s merger with El. I have assumed that towards the end of the monarchy, Asherah became an object related to Yahwe’s cult and lost her status as an independent divinity.

16 Abusch 1996, 1020.

17 See Loretz (1996, 66-73) or Herman (1996, 528-532) for details and the passages.

18 For example, we meet El in Mari. The Hittite divinity Elquinirsela evidently derives from the Semitic ‘El gone ‘ares, El the creator of the world.

19 It is possible that in Ugarit he was not the progenitor of Baal, who had come to the pantheon at a later stage. See Loretz 1990, 74.

20 From personal names and the El-Amarna correspondence, we may gather that El was the main god of Canaan.

21 It is a matter of debate, whether Israelites and Canaanites should be distinguished from each other or not, and if so, from which period onwards. At least partially, the Israelites derive from the Canaanites.
same God. In other words, Yahwe and El would have merged relatively early. There is no indication that they had ever competed with each other. The probable course of development is that El and Yahwe were originally worshipped as the main God by two different population groups and that when they merged into one, their main gods also merged. El was the god of a Canaanite group and Yahwe that of a group from the south. Differences in character may have facilitated their peaceful merger. The new God, Yahwe-El, then took the characters of both. The merger may also have contributed to the deity’s dominant position later on. With their complementary characters, Yahwe-El, once merged, was able to satisfy more comprehensive needs and execute more functions than other single deities. He became to dominate the divine with less and less need for other divinities. This development may have contributed to the special structure of Israel’s religion to construe the divine in fewer divinities.

In the Ugaritic texts, Asherah is the consort of El. Although it is probable that the Israelite Asherah derives from the Canaanite divinity, it is not certain that she was still construed as a divinity during the Israelite monarchy. Some OT passages may be interpreted as implying Asherah to be an independent divinity, but in the majority of passages Asherah is clearly a cult symbol. We have seen that the archaeological evidence generally supports the OT picture. The Asherah of the ostraca is more likely a cult symbol subordinate to Yahwe and part of Yahwe’s cult than a fully independent divinity. Moreover, unlike most divinities in the ANE, there are no Israelite PNs with Asherah as the theophoric element. The most probable interpretation of the evidence is that Asherah was an old divinity who was gradually losing her status as an independent divinity. Her divinity was probably still acknowledged during the monarchy but was bound to Yahwe’s cult to the extent that she did not have functions beyond it. There is very little evidence for a separate cult of Asherah.

Surprisingly, Baal plays a much more marginal role in Israel’s pre-exilic religion than what one would expect on the basis of the OT’s final form. When the nomistic ire is removed, Baal almost vanishes from the DH: Only a few passages may refer to Baal. His

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22 The original text of Dt 32:8-9 implies that Elyon and Yahwe are separate. Elyon (or El Elyon, see Gn 14:18-20; Ps 78:35) is the supreme god who has the power to allot Israel to Yahwe as His nation. The passage assumes that Elyon is above all nations and is the main god of all nations. This passage is probably a vestige from a time when the merger of El (Elyon) and Yahwe had not yet taken place.

23 Thus, for example, Day 1994, 182. According to van der Toorn (1996, 1724), the smooth identification of El as Yahwe was based on El’s decay. He assumes that El is not criticized in the OT because El’s career as living god had ended. Dietrich - Loretz (1992, 154-157) assume that Yahwe adopted El’s functions and position.

24 There were possibly several tribes or groups that worshipped El and several that worshipped Yahwe, but this is irrelevant for the argument.

25 On the southern origin of Yahwe and His merger with El, see van der Toorn 1996, 1714-1725.

26 It is often suggested that Yahwe was a god of the Baal type, an active executive divinity, while El was an old receding divinity who did not take part in everyday affairs.

27 E.g., 2K 23:4, 7, but they are later additions to the chapter and, therefore, bear witness to considerably late conceptions. See chapter 4.2.

28 Thus, for example, Mark Smith 1994, 198-206.
absence or rarity in the archaeological material backs up the observation. It seems that Baal was not identified as an Israelite deity during the monarchy. He was acknowledged and venerated throughout the Levant, but the Israelite evidence is unambiguous. It is possible that he had an influence on the official religion of the Northern Kingdom, but it would have been restricted to a short period under Ahab. Even then, the background may have been political: Ahab married a Phoenician princess. The only evidence we have for Baal, the Samaritan ostraca and few Biblical references (1K 16:28-31), does not add up to Baal’s long-term importance in Israel. There is even less evidence for Judean Baal.

Why did the nomists then exaggerate Baal’s importance? One explanation could be that Baal had become more important during the Exile. Israelites had mixed with or come into close contact with other populations of the Levant, among whom Baal had been more important. It is also possible that the forced mass deportations and general movement of people due to the unstable situation of the 6th century brought Baal worshipping tribes and peoples closer to the Israelite population still living in Judah. They may have introduced Baal into wider popularity among the Israelites. Moreover, with the collapse of the Judean state and the annexation of Judah into the Babylonian empire, foreign influence had more favorable conditions than before. Neither the state nor the official religion had means to resist the influx of foreign influence — they had been wiped out. The threat of Baal may have been especially acute in Palestine, while the exiles in Mesopotamia were more successful in protecting their separate identity. From the exilic perspective, Baal would have appeared to be commonly worshipped in Palestine and was therefore seen as a threat to Yahwe. It was not important whether Baal had been important in pre-exilic Israel or not. The nomists felt he was a real threat to Yahwe in their own historical context. In other words, the importance of Baal may be a projection of a later, exilic situation onto the pre-exilic period. The problem may have become very acute when the exiles were planning a return but saw in the land a population that did not shun Baal-worship.

Another explanation for Baal’s importance in the final DH is a development inside the composition. As we have seen, there are some passages in the books of 1-2 Kings that refer to Baal and his cult in the Northern Kingdom. Regardless of whether 1K 16:31ab, 32 is based on historical events or not, the history writer’s text seems to have acknowledged that Baal had an influence in the North. A similar reference to Baal is found in the history writer’s 2K 3:2b. I have suggested that these passages are not intrinsically intolerant of Baal as such. For the history writer, Baal is simply in the wrong place and tries to replace Yahwe as God of Israel. The later writers or editors, particularly the nomists, would have noticed these references and developed them into an all out attack against Baal. The polemics would gradually have grown so that in the end Baal receives attention that is quite unrealistic in view of other, particularly archaeological, evidence. A brief period of Baal’s influence in the

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29 We have several references to Baal in the nomistic texts, but this phenomenon has another background. See below.
30 See Jer 12:16 which explicitly asserts that the surrounding nations had taught Israel to worship Baal. The text is of exilic origin and possibly reflects an exilic development.
31 This is largely due to the development in Israel’s religion that took place, especially among the exiles.
Northern Kingdom during Ahab’s reign would have been exaggerated into a constant influence from Moses (Dt 4:3) to Josiah (2K 23:4) in both kingdoms.

Although Yahwe is the only major divinity that receives more than marginal attention in pre-exilic Israel, lesser divinities or divine powers played an important role. We have seen that the Israelites worshipped their ancestors. The OT passages that refer to ancestor worship are negative but it seems to have been a common practice. This is not surprising since we find ancestor worship throughout the ANE. Ancestors represented a divine and transcendent power for the ancient Israelite. Moreover, there is wide evidence for the veneration of massebot and teraphim. It is probable that they were both connected to ancestor worship but in any case, they represent the divine or transcendent, possibly some kinds of lesser divinities. Lesser divinities are also assumed by the concept of the divine council, of which there are some vestiges in the OT. The divine council consisted of Yahwe or El as its ruler and of a number of lesser divinities, who are nowhere in the OT mentioned by name. The concept़ — possibly connected to the divine council — seems to assume that the heavenly bodies are divine. The use of the term implies that astral worship was not unknown in Israel. Especially important is its positive use in 1K 22:19, where the वीर्य represents the divine powers around Yahwe’s throne in heaven. Nevertheless, the Israelite divine council and िन्य — are clearly dominated by Yahwe or El. On this point, Israel’s religion differs from most religions of the ANE, where there is more than one major player or divinity — in Ugarit, for example.

The silence of the OT on death and the sea may imply that these areas were outside Yahwe’s realm of power. There is not much evidence that Mot (death) or Yam (sea) had been worshipped in Israel, but since the Israelites were not a sea-faring nation, the absence of Yam is not surprising. On the other hand, the absence of Mot, as well as the general silence on the realm of death, certainly is. It is likely that the OT silence on death is due to the fact that the realm was not in Yahwe’s jurisdiction, and consequently the later compilers of the OT material were reluctant to include material related to it. As we have seen, the realm of death received more attention in the pre-exilic religion than what can be gathered

32 And El, but He should be identified with Yahwe.
33 Chapter 5. See also Loretz 1990, 125-143.
34 Dt 26:14; 1S 28. The earliest prohibition may be Ex 22:19. It uses the term आलिहा. For details, see Loretz 1994a, 498-507.
35 For example, the dead Samuel is termed आलिहा when the necromancer of Ein Dor summons him.
36 On teraphim (पैयम) as ancestral gods or dead ancestors, see Loretz 1990, 128-134; 1992, 155, 167-168. According to him (1992, 154-155), the Biblical word आलिहा is derogatory and derives from the dtm/dtr circles. The original form is पैयम, which we find in the Ugaritic texts. For the close relationship between massebot and dead ancestors, see Loretz 1989, 241-246; 1990, 126-127.
37 It is unclear whether they are anonymous only because the OT contains too few vestiges of them or because they were always anonymous. The latter would fit better the overall picture on Israel’s religion we at present possess.
38 The Canaanite (Ugaritic) Mot and Yam are only conjectural. With regrettably little evidence, the Israelite divinities of death and sea, if there were any, may or may not have been called by the same names. There are some vestiges of a mythological battle between Yahwe and the Sea (Leviathan — Is 27:1). See Loretz 1990, 92-93.
from the OT. Although it is probable that some divinity was ascribed to Mot in Israel, it is unlikely that he was regarded as a deity who was worshipped.

8.3. Josiah’s reform

Josiah’s reform is a notoriously difficult issue. I have presented a reconstruction of the history writer’s original text in 2K 22-23, admitting the hazards related to any reconstruction of the passage. The main result of the reconstruction was that the Temple was an important, even predominant, motif in the original text. The history writer acknowledged the attack on the tablets and the restoration of Yahwe’s Temple, while the explicit attack on the other gods derives from the nomists at the earliest. However, I did not attempt a further reconstruction of the text that might derive from annals. Literary-critical tools for separating the history writer’s text from that of the annals are limited. The main question is, did the annals acknowledge the attack on the tablets and the restoration of Yahwe’s Temple, or were these themes made up by the history writer? Of the passage describing the reform itself, 2K 23:4-24, it is often suggested that vv. 8b and 11 contain some material from the annals because they differ from the rest of the passage in giving detailed information on locations in Jerusalem. The verses also differ from the typical phraseology of the DH. The reform had to have at least a small historical core around which the story later developed. Without any events or measures that could later be interpreted as a reform, the build-up of the passage into the most central text of the DH describing such an event is improbable, if not incomprehensible. A historical core, although later completely reinterpreted, is necessary. It is thus reasonable to assume that Josiah took some measures to reorganize Yahwe’s cult in Jerusalem. Therefore, 2K 23:8b, 11 may be based on historical events. It is sometimes suggested that the measures were motivated by the desire to purify Israel’s cult from Assyrian enforced or influenced traits in Israel’s religion. As the Assyrian empire collapsed during Josiah’s reign, it would have been an appropriate time for such an action. However, there is little in the passage or in the rest of the DH to imply Assyrian religious influence or enforcement. Quite the contrary, it is repeatedly stated that Judean kings were responsible for installing the offending structures. Since there is no explicit evidence to back up the

39 The archaeological material has so far brought up little evidence for Mot, yet considering the nature of the god, this is understandable. It is unlikely that we would find many PNs with Mot as the theophoric element.
41 See the argumentation in chapter 4.2. On these verses, similarly Würthwein 1984, 454-466. On the other hand, Spieckermann (1982, 79-120) ascribes much more of the passage to the pre-dtr sources.
42 Or a core which was reported in the annals. Annals as the source does not guarantee historical accuracy but is probably closer to historical events than the history writer’s text.
43 Spieckermann (1982, 369-372) has argued for the Assyrian enforcement, while Cogan (1974, 112-115) has argued for the opposite.
44 It is true that the Judean kings may have been mentioned to serve the later writers’ purpose of showing that they were responsible for the Exile. One could then argue that Assyrian influence was later buried under this motive.
Assyria hypothesis, such assumptions remain speculative. A more plausible solution may be found in Judah’s political situation. By the time of Josiah, Judah had diminished into a mini-state consisting of Jerusalem and its surroundings. In such a situation, a cult centralization is understandable. Moreover, the collapse of the Assyrian empire during Josiah’s reign may have given more room for political and religious changes that were not possible during the period of vassalage. Moreover, there was a power vacuum in Syro-Palestine after the collapse of Assyria and before the rise of Babylon. Kings and governors throughout the Levantine coast had to establish and consolidate their political power. This situation must have caused general instability in the region. Militarily and politically weak, Judah’s national identity, political existence and independence were threatened or at least had to be protected. Jerusalem had to tie the Israelites closer to Jerusalem and prevent them from aligning themselves with other political centers. A very efficient method of tying them to Jerusalem would have been through the cult. By centralizing and forbidding the Israelites from sacrificing locally, the authorities in Jerusalem would have been able to control the Israelite population in an efficient way. Furthermore, it is often suggested that Josiah succeeded in extending Judah’s borders during this period. If this is historically accurate, a centralization would also have been an efficient tool for tying the newly conquered areas to Jerusalem. The restoration of the Temple (2K 22:4-7) may have a similar background. The Assyrian retreat may have ignited a national revitalization so that there was more interest in national symbols such as the Temple. The restoration would also have served the interests of the cult centralization by making the Temple more prestigious and appealing.

From the religious perspective, the reduction of Judah into a mini-state during the 7th century may have partly isolated the Jerusalemite cult of Yahwe from Yahwe’s cult elsewhere in Canaan. The religious authorities in Jerusalem would not have had control over Yahwe’s cult elsewhere as their authority was not backed up by political power. In other words, Yahwe’s cult outside Judah’s political borders would have had more liberty to develop into an independent direction. Alarmed by this development, the religious authorities in Jerusalem may have had an interest in centralizing the cult and prohibiting all local sacrifice (Dt 12:13-14).

Unfortunately, direct and positive evidence for cult centralization under Josiah is scarce. We are confined to historically problematic sources. Most of the above-presented view is merely a possible course of events that would fit the small pieces of information we have available. All in all, there is some degree of justification in assuming a reorganization of the cult under Josiah, although we can only speculate about the background and motives of such a development. The fact that the history writer interpreted the event as a reform to abolish the ויתול could indicate that Josiah’s actions were directed at raising the Temple’s importance and diminishing that of other sanctuaries. If 2K 23:8b is regarded as a piece from the annals, this interpretation is strengthened. In fact, the origin of cult centralization prior to the Exile is more understandable than during the Exile. After the Temple was destroyed, the

45 The Egyptian especially had interest in reestablishing their power in Syro-Palestine, but this seems to have failed. For the general instability in the Levant during this period, see Donner 1995, 371-374.
46 For example, Donner 1995, 379-380.
main question was probably whether to rebuild it or not, while the problem of local sanctuaries would have been secondary. As a consequence, cult centralization in some form probably originates from the time of Josiah. It was then later adopted by the history writer, who made it one of the main issues of his composition. The relationship between Dt and Josiah’s cult reform is a complex issue, but it is not unreasonable to assume that if there was a conscious cult reform under Josiah, there probably were texts or rules to regulate it. An early form of Dt is the best candidate. Unfortunately, it is difficult to judge whether the centralization was merely circumstantial and undeliberated or a conscious attempt to regulate Israel’s religion. It is difficult to back any hypothesis with real evidence. At the most, one may assume that some measures were taken to reorganize Israel’s cult under Josiah.

Regarding the pre-nomistic Dt and the DH, there is no obvious link between the cult centralization and the later intolerance of other gods. Indirectly, however, the cult centralization facilitated the later prohibition of other gods by centralizing religious authority in the hands of a few individuals in Jerusalem. When the authority of local priests and other local religious professionals was undermined, it was easier to control and direct the religion from the center. The centralization was more or less irrelevant during the Exile because the Temple was destroyed, but if there was a centralization during Josiah’s reign there would have been enough time before the Temple’s destruction to raise its value in the minds of the Israelites. Later, the Israelites would then have been oriented towards a more centralized religion. Local forms of religion would have had less chance of developing in an independent direction. In this way then, the possible cult centralization under Josiah, conscious or unconscious, contributed to the later development of intolerant monolatry.

8.4. The Exile

The Exile kindled a sequence of events that led Israel’s religion to a permanently separate direction from the other ANE religions. The loss of the state, the abolishment of the monarchy and the destruction of the Temple eliminated the main pillars of Judean identity. The evident result was a complete disorientation and identity crisis. In such situations, reevaluations in many fields of society are bound to arise. This was particularly true of Israel’s religion since the destruction of the Temple, conceivably the nucleus of Israel’s pre-exilic religion, made the proper practice of the old religion impossible. The catastrophe generated probably several, possibly competing, reinterpretations on Israel’s religion. The evident shift in perspective inside the DH reflects the reinterpretation process. The two main phases of the DH, the history writer and the nomists, illustrate the turn that

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47 Crisis situations in which the whole society is in transformation, like Judah in the sixth century, enable new conceptions and interpretations to arise and prevail over the old ones. Stable and normal conditions are resistant to any comprehensive changes in the basic conceptions on religion or on any other field. Similarly, after the destruction of the second Temple, the Jewish religion had to go through a considerable self-evaluation and reinterpretation process.
Intolerant Monolatry in the Deuteronomistic History

took place in Israel’s religion during the Exile. Despite the likelihood that he wrote after the catastrophe had already occurred, the history writer largely represents pre-exilic conceptions. His text derives from the beginning of the reevaluation process. Far-reaching conclusions have not yet been made. He has not made an extensive reinterpretation of the past, nor does he yet have a clear picture of the future. He is still collecting the pieces and trying to understand what went wrong. As we have seen, his pre-exilic perspective is revealed in the importance of the Temple and the monarchy. Although destroyed in the catastrophe, they are still his primary criteria for evaluating and conceiving the past. Eventually, however, the old conceptions had to go.

Enter the nomists. They had developed a new theology, a way out of the crisis, and left behind much of the old, pre-exilic, theology. We have already seen the main features and characteristics of this theology. It centers around the law, with a heavy emphasis on the prohibition against worshipping the other gods. Having a concise and clear interpretation on what had happened and why, they portrayed a clear vision for the future. Promising a new beginning and return to the land, they began to preach to the disoriented and uprooted exiles. Although the authors situate the texts in the Moabite desert when Moses brought the Israelites to the borders of the land, several nomistic passages disclose that the exiles were the real audience. Some passages directly refer to the Exile. These passages can be used as the fixed point to date the nomists to this period. By phraseological and thematical links, we can then locate the entire redactional stratum to the Exile, at least chronologically, but possibly also geographically. One of the nomists’ main themes is that the Israelites enter the land, an idea that is less relevant to a person already living in the land. The nomistic texts have a strongly exilic perspective. Although the nomists’ real audience were clearly the Diaspora Israelites rather than the Israelites who remained in the land, most scholars assume that the deuteronomists still lived in Palestine. In view of the general perspective of the nomistic texts, it seems likely that their authors were in the Diaspora.

The history writer and the nomists are not the only writers behind the DH. Although there is evidence for redactions of prophetic interests (DtrP), their existence does not disturb the main argument. To my mind, the main problem with the prophetic redaction is that it cannot be found throughout the DH. There are some intolerance passages which some scholars attribute to the DtrP writer(s), but since they are, in my opinion, uncertain, and can be identified as nomistic as well, I am reluctant at this point to decide DtrP’s possible attitude towards other gods. In any case, the DtrP texts, at least when they come to the other gods, do not constitute a very broad basis to work on.

Several passages generally refer to the giving of the land (e.g., Dt 6:17-19; 11:22-25), but Dt 4:23-29 and 29:27 betray the real historical context.

For example, Jepsen 1953, 96-97 and Veijola 1982, 199-200, 209-210. Veijola (1982, 199-200, 209-210) implies that the nomist is so well acquainted with Bethelian cultic activity (in Jdg 2:1-5 and 20:18-21:4) that he was from the region himself. However, passages referring to this activity are limited to few chapters in Judges, while passages that refer to the Exile or speak to the exiles can be found throughout the DH. Whether this discrepancy is due to different layers or not remains to be seen. Admittedly, there is a special link between the nomists and Bethel.

Nielsen (1995, 7) asserts that nothing in the redaction process of Dt speaks for a Mesopotamian origin.
Not only did the nomists promise a return, their vision went farther. They had a vision of a state or society that would be established in the land after the Exile. This vision was an answer to concrete needs in the late-exilic context because the structures of a reestablished state had to be created and defined anew. As many circumstances had changed, return to the pre-exilic state would have been difficult. The monarchy was abolished and the population was scattered into various countries, partly intermixing with the local populations there. At the same time, new peoples had immigrated to Palestine. It was necessary to define who was an Israelite and who was not. Who would be accepted into the reestablished state? And, what would the state be like?

The nomists had a clear vision. The new state would be a homogeneous Yahwe-alone society, inhabited by the Israelites who worshipped Yahwe exclusively and followed Moses’s law.\(^52\) Purely ancestral and ethnic considerations were evidently not sufficient for the nomists. Exclusive devotion to Yahwe and adherence to His law were crucial. Relationship to Yahwe defined who belonged to the nation more than before. It is true that Yahwe was already an important uniting factor of the Israelites before the Exile, but the catastrophe annihilated other important structures that previously upheld and defined Judah’s identity: The monarchy, Temple and state. Yahwe’s importance in preserving the identity was thereby emphasized, but it may not have sufficed had it not been for the nomists. They developed Yahwe’s importance further and made His exclusive worship the crucial factor. It became the *conditio sine qua non* of an Israelite.

The nomistic definition of an Israelite definitely left out many people that were descendants of Judeans and Israelites. With the turbulent times of the Exile — mass deportations, conquests, wars, etc. — many Israelites both in the land and in the Diaspora were brought into close contact with other peoples with the consequences of wider foreign influence and intermarriage. In addition, since explicit exclusivity was a new idea, it is evident that there were many Israelites who had difficulties in accepting this development outright. Many probably still had a more liberal attitude towards the other gods and kept their old practices and beliefs. Regardless of ethnic origin, they would have been barred from post-exilic Israelite society planned by the nomists because they continued to practice what had now become illegitimate. If we accept that the nomists were active in Mesopotamia, it would mean that the Israelites who remained in the land would have been less affected by their message.\(^53\) This appears to have happened. In the book of Ezra,\(^54\) the returning Diaspora community represents the pure Israelites who have distanced themselves from the other nations and their practices, while the Israelites who remained in the land have become mixed and defiled. Although the historical context cannot be established with certainty, it is

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\(^{52}\) E.g., Dt 13 and Dt 17:1-5.

\(^{53}\) *Lemche* (1988, 222) also suggests that the development in the official religion during the Exile had not much “to offer for those of the Jewish population who had remained behind in Palestine.”

\(^{54}\) The problems concerning the historical trustworthiness of Ezra are acknowledged in research. See *Becking* (1998, 59-61), for example. However, the book of Ezra shows that the *perspective* presented in the book became important in later Judaism. It may be that the book represents the view of one form of Judaism only — see *Becking* 1998, 53 — although one that became central or the majority view later on.
reasonable to assume that the book of Ezra generally reflects post-exilic conditions. According to Ezr 4:2-4, the inhabitants of the land did worship Yahwe but were still unacceptable to Israel’s new post-exilic society, presumably because they also worshipped other gods. The attitude of the returnees seems to be that they represent proper or real Israel. In Ezr 6:20-22, the exiles are accepted to the sacrificial feast, while only those of the inhabitants of the land who had completely separated themselves from the customs of other people were accepted. In other words, regardless of ancestry, people who did not follow Yahwe in a way specified by the religious authorities, were excluded from the new community. One could understand Ezr 6:21 to imply that originally non-Israelites were accepted to Israel’s new society, if they followed Yahwe as their exclusive deity. The context of Ezr 9:4 deals with intermarriage with the population of the land. It assumes that only the returnees from the Exile ($\overline{\text{JNYIJ}}$) were in danger, as if the Israelites who had remained in the land did not count as Israel at all. At any rate, the general impression one receives from the book of Ezra is that the post-exilic community was dominated by Diaspora Israelites who had returned, whereas the Judeans who had remained in the land would largely have fallen out. The development may not have been as simple as assumed by Ezra, but at least it implies that the exiles were the main force in post-exilic Judah.

The nomists intended to protect Israel’s purity by separation. This motif may be seen in many elements of their theology. For example, the nomists do not deny the existence of other divinities. Quite the contrary, the nomists imply their existence. The point is that there is only one God for Israel, while the other gods are for the other nations who may freely continue to worship them. In other words, the nomists assume that the other gods are inherently foreign. Behind this idea lies Israel’s separation from all other peoples. The other gods must be rejected because they blur the difference between Israel and the other nations. The others were even encouraged to continue in their indigenous religions, as implied by the idea that each nation has her own specific gods given by Yahwe (Dt 4:19 and 29:25). The nomistic criticism is thus fundamentally different from the one by Deutero-Isaiah, who ridicules and rebukes the other gods, deprives them of their power and claims that they are mere material objects (e.g., Is 44:6-20). Although not exactly an internationalist, Deutero-Isaiah is much more open to the possibility that the other nations could worship Yahwe as well (e.g., Is 45:20-23; 49:6; 51:4). The nomists did not primarily criticize the essence of other religions. They certainly assumed the supremacy of Yahwe and probably doubted the power of other divinities, but they did not push this line very far because it would have ended in the difficult conclusion that other nations must also worship Yahwe. This is what the nomists wanted to avoid. Their criticism of the other gods is, at least partially, motivated

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55 The book of Ezra must be dated to a significantly later period (around the year 400 BCE at the earliest, thus Smend 1978, 225-226).
56 Becking (1998, 45) hints that some of the ones who returned from the Diaspora may not have been descendants of pre-exilic Israelites.
57 This depends on the interpretation of יִרְמֹל בֶּן יְשֵׁרָאֵל ... וְיִכָּבֵל מְשָׁמָה וְנִרְבָּהָם.
58 In the book of Jeremiah (e.g., ch. 24), one also finds the concept that the exiles are proper and holy Israelites, while the people that remained in the land are sinners.
by nationalistic aspirations. Religious goals are linked with nationalistic considerations, and vice versa.

The nomists protected the purity of Israelite society by laws that would annihilate all dissenters who followed or enticed others to follow other gods. Laws to prohibit intermarriage with other peoples served the same purpose. Intermarriages with foreigners would have endangered the homogeneity and continuity of the envisaged state by introducing foreign beliefs and practices. The religious motif of the prohibitions is evident. Some passages even call for open hostility towards the foreign cults. One should destroy the abominable cult apparatus of Canaan’s indigenous population. The fact that the passages explicitly prohibit contact with the people of Canaan shows the writers’ primary concern and probable context of writing. They are worried about the indigenous population of Canaan, while Mesopotamian or other distant religions do not appear to be a problem. Consequently, their context of writing may be a situation in which they are waiting for a return to the land in the near future. They deal with problems that would come up when the Diaspora Israelites returned to the land. The perspective of the main nomistic layers fits well with the late exilic situation outside the land. There was already some hope for a return, but it had not yet begun on a grand scale.

Due to the lack of historically reliable documents from centuries immediately following the Exile, it is unclear how well the nomistic program succeeded in the period immediately following the Exile. The OT, especially the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, give some hints, although they both derive from a much later period. We have already seen that the returning exiles came to dominate the post-exilic Israelite community. Corresponding with the nomistic ideal, the law had become very central. A nomistically motivated separation from other nations and their cults had become the norm. Moreover, Ezr 9:1-2 and Ne 13:23-30 show that intermarriage was a difficult problem after the Exile and that it was largely solved along nomistic guidelines. At least these passages would imply that the nomists were able to spread their message during the Exile. The exiles seem to have been prone to accept their new theology.

In the long run, the nomistic theology was even a greater success. The law became a central factor in Israel’s religion and exclusive devotion to Yahwe the norm. The battle for

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59 The prime examples are Dt 13 and 17:2-5. The, at least to some degree, utopian character of Dt 13 implies that the laws were not tried in an actual situation. Especially, the third law in Dt 13 (vv. 13-18), with a demand to annihilate whole communities because of apostasy, is rather to be understood as an outburst of zeal against apostates, not as a law to be put into practice. Dt 17:2-5 is already more realistic and assumes more deliberation.

60 Ex 34:11-16; Dt 7:3-4.

61 Ex 34:16; Dt 7:4.


63 See, Ezr 3:2; 7:6, 10, 25.

64 For the destruction of any foreign cult apparatus demanded in Dt 7:5 and 12:2-3 for example, there is little evidence. It is possible that the returning exiles annihilated unused altars and massebot pertaining to older and foreign cults, but neither the OT nor the archaeological evidence can confirm this. An attack on a cult apparatus that was still in use would necessitate a conflict situation or a war, but there is little to support that.
normative religion was in all likelihood a long one. There probably remained many Israelites who were reluctant to reject old beliefs and practices, but gradually they receded onto the fringes of the religion and society. Official religion did not tolerate them, and therefore, there also remains little evidence of them. Only vestiges may be found in the Hebrew pseudepigrapha of the Second Temple period. Many of these texts take a more liberal attitude towards other divinities and common ANE religious beliefs. Moreover, the Elephantine papyri show that at least outside the land it was possible for Israelites to worship other gods beside Yahwe, although in this case one should assume a later and separate development that was perhaps influenced by the Egyptian context rather than that the Elephantine community would represent religious practices of the pre-exilic period. In any case, the official religion of the Second Temple period became strictly monolatric and then monotheistic.

The importance of the law was challenged by the reconstruction and reestablishment of the Temple. The nomists may not have been fully prepared for a new Temple, for it partially blurred the nomistic ideal of the law’s dominance and primacy in Israel’s religion. Therefore, it seems probable that the reestablishment of the Temple was advocated by another movement or tradition than the nomists. There were evidently several, partly competing, views on the Temple during the Exile and it seems that some tension between the law and the Temple remained in the Second Temple period. Some groups emphasized the Temple, while others the law. This division may be reflected in the later Jewish parties, the Sadducees and the Pharisees. The tension lasted until the destruction of the Second Temple, when the law finally received the dominance the nomists intended it to have in Israel’s religion.

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65. They have a more colorful picture of the divine. Yahwe is always the main God but He shares the divine with lesser divinities. Such an attitude may be found as late as Qumran. The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice is a good example how the sect accepted several אלים. They do not compete with Yahwe, but their divinity has not been completely denied either. From the pseudepigrapha one should mention Enoch. The divine is presented as much more complex than what one would gather from the OT.
9. Summary

The task of this study was to examine intolerant monolatry in Israel’s religion. What was the background and historical context of this phenomenon? Where did it come from? A fundamental assumption in my approach was that there were two kinds of monolatry in the DH, intolerant and tolerant. This distinction proved to be a fruitful approach. The literary criticism demonstrated that most intolerance passages are later additions to their contexts. Furthermore, redaction-critical considerations suggested that most of these additions derive from the nomists. These exilic writers were the first ones in the DH who attacked the other gods. The nomistic contribution to the intolerance of the DH is considerable, as only a small number of the intolerance passages are other than nomistic. Even these post-nomistic additions are clearly dependent on or influenced by the nomistic intolerance. The older layers of the DH, Dt and Ex 20-23; 34 did not attack the other gods. This conclusion is especially important for Dt 13 and Dt 17:2-7, which are usually thought to be among the earliest passages in the DH that prohibited the worship of the other gods. They appeared to be nomistic, possibly even late-nomistic. A similar conclusion was reached in the analyzed Ex passages. The intolerance laws of Ex are dependent on the nomists of the DH. Intolerant monolatry is a late idea in the DH. It is a revolutionary development, the progression of which we may see inside the DH. This conclusion has considerable repercussions on the way we perceive the development of intolerance in Israel’s religion. Assuming that any development inside the OT’s most important historical source reflects the main developments and currents in Israel’s history and religion during the time of writing, it seems reasonable to assume that intolerant monolatry and the explicit demand to worship Yahwe exclusively are late ideas that first appeared during the Exile. Yahwe had already been in a dominant position prior to the Exile, but His worship had not been exclusive in the sense that the other gods had been prohibited. At least, there is no evidence that this was demanded. The only exclusivity that there may have been in Israel’s religion pertains to Yahwe’s primacy, but this should be distinguished from the nomistic all out attack on all other gods. The background of the nomistic intolerance is the exilic situation in which Israel’s old religion and society had collapsed and the Israelites whole existence as a people was threatened. To protect the Israelites’ identity, the nomists wanted to make a clear separation between the Israelites and the other nations. Intolerance of other gods was an essential part of their program to save Israel’s identity. In this sense, it was also a vision for the future. The nomistic theology was particularly applicable in the new society the nomists were planning in the land after the Exile. It would have been a homogeneous Yahwe-alone society that did not tolerate worshippers of other gods and was based on the strict observance of Moses’s law. One does not have to assume external influence on the birth and development of intolerant monolatry in Israel. It is mainly an internal development, the reasons of which can be found in the exilic context.
## Abbreviations:


### Other abbreviations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANE</td>
<td>Ancient Near East</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>editio Bombergiana</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Covenant Code or Book of the Covenant (Ex 20:24-23:33)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DH</td>
<td>the Deuteronomistic History</td>
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<tr>
<td>dtn</td>
<td>deuteronomistic</td>
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<td>DtrB</td>
<td>a late nomistic covenant redactor (B &lt; Bund, ברית)</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>the Septuagint</td>
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<td>HBS</td>
<td>Herders biblische Studien</td>
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<tr>
<td>IA</td>
<td>Iron Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeruswechsel</td>
<td>(&lt; Germ.) change of speaker or addressee between plural and singular</td>
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<tr>
<td>par</td>
<td>parallel passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PN</td>
<td>personal name</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAA</td>
<td>State Archives of Assyria</td>
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<td>S</td>
<td>the Syriac version of the OT, Peshitta</td>
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<td>SP</td>
<td>the Samaritan Pentateuch</td>
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<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>targum</td>
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<td>V</td>
<td>the Vulgate</td>
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<td>VTE</td>
<td>Vassal Treaty of Esarhaddon</td>
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<td>Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte</td>
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### Abbreviations of Biblical Books:

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<td>Ezra</td>
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