

SAMSON OLANREWAJU

The Compositional History of the Book of Kings

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An Analysis of the Evaluative Frameworks in
1 Kings 14–2 Kings 25

Mohr Siebeck

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*For my wife, Sungnam,
and our son, Noah*

Preface

This monograph is a slightly revised version of my doctoral dissertation, which was completed under the supervision of Professor Jeremy Hutton at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in spring 2025. While stylistic enhancements and some additions have been incorporated during revision, the central arguments of the original dissertation remain unchanged. I would like to express my appreciation to the editors of the series *Forschungen zum Alten Testament II*, Professors Corinna Körting, Konrad Schmid, Mark S. Smith, and Andrew Teeter, as well as Tobias Stäbler, the Publishing Director for Biblical Studies, Classical Studies, Early Christianity, and Jewish Studies at Mohr Siebeck, for accepting my work into their series.

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Madison, Wisconsin

Samson Olanrewaju

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Abbreviations

BA	Basic Assessment
BP	<i>Bamot</i> Polemic
BP ^E	constituent element of BP
CF	“Comparison with (the king’s) Father”
CF ^E	Constituent element of CF
EBP	“Explication of BP”
EBP ^E	constituent element of EBP
JPM	Jeroboam’s Precedent(s) Motif
KE ⁰	Kings Edition ⁰ (Amaziah’s reign, eighth century BCE)
KE ¹	Kings Edition ¹ (Manasseh’s reign, seventh century BCE)
KE ²	Kings Edition ² (early exilic, sixth century BCE)
KE ³	Kings Edition ³ (late/post-exilic, sixth century BCE and later)
KE ^{3En}	Kings Edition ^{3Enneateuch} (late/post-exilic, sixth century BCE and later)
KE ^{3L}	Kings Edition ^{3Local} (late/post-exilic, sixth century BCE and later)
L _{91–95}	<i>Vetus Latina</i> marginal readings (according to Antonio Moreno Hernández, <i>Glosas marginales de Vetus Latina en las Biblias Vulgatas españolas: 1–2 Reyes</i> . TECC 49. Madrid: CSIC, 1992.)
L ₁₁₅	<i>Vetus Latina</i> witness <i>Palimpsestus Vindobonensis</i>
Lucifer	Lucifer of Cagliari (<i>Vetus Latina</i> witness)
LXX	Septuagint
LXX ^B	Codex <i>Vaticanus</i>
LXX ^L	Lucianic/Antiochian recension of the Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NBA	Negative Basic Assessment
NP ^A	Northern Pattern A
NP ^B	Northern Pattern B
NP ^{Bα}	Northern Pattern Bα
NP ^{Bβ}	Northern Pattern Bβ
NP	Northern Pattern C
NP ^D	Northern Pattern D
PBA	Positive Basic Assessment
Pr	<i>praemittit/praemittunt</i>
R ^A	Redactor ^A (northern author of Northern Pattern A)

R^B	Redactor ^B (= KE ²)
R^C	Redactor ^C (= KE ³)
SP ⁰	Southern Pattern 0
SP0 ^{V1}	Southern Pattern 0 Version 1
SP0 ^{V1.Neg}	Southern Pattern 0 Version.1.Negative
SP0 ^{V1.Pos}	Southern Pattern 0 Version.1.Positive
SP0 ^{V2.Pos}	Southern Pattern 0 Version.2.Positive
SP0 ^{V2.Neg}	Southern Pattern 0 Version.2.Negative
SP0 ^{V3}	Southern Pattern 0 Version 3
SP ¹	Southern Pattern 1
SP ²	Southern Pattern 2
SP ³	Southern Pattern 3
SP ⁴	Southern Pattern 4
WIS	“Walking in the Sin(s) of”
WIS ^E	constituent element of WIS
WIW	“Walking in the Way (of)”
WIW ^E	Constituent element of WIW

Chapter One

Introduction and Methodology

1.1. Previous Models

This study investigates the formation of the book of Kings through redaction-critical analyses of the formal regnal evaluations in 1 Kgs 14–2 Kgs 24*.¹ The research reassesses the three-stage redaction model proposed by Helga Weippert.² Her thesis, which will be detailed shortly, offers an alternative to existing models concerning the formation of Kings, particularly those suggested by Noth, the Göttingen School (Dietrich, Smend, and Veijola), and Cross.

Noth³ argues that an exilic Deuteronomist (Dtr) collated and organized ancient Israelite historiographic materials into the Deuteronomistic History (Dtr) – a document encompassing the books of Jos–Kgs and portions of the book of Deuteronomy.⁴ Dtr’s work explains how the people of Israel and Judah lost their land: The people’s and their leaders’ recurring violations of YHWH’s laws and statutes led to their expulsion from their homeland. To substantiate his interpretation of the land loss, Dtr evaluates the actions of the people of Israel and Judah using *Urdeuteronomium* – the document discovered by Hilkiyah in 2 Kgs 22:8–10 – as the standard for such evaluations. Additionally, Noth contends that Dtr exhibits a consistent interest in chronology due to his persistent effort to establish a definitive history for Israelite kings through regnal formulae and numerical data, which he sourced from other texts or self-generated. According to Noth, this focus on chronology supports the hypothesis that the Deuteronomistic History (Dtr) was compiled by a single editor.⁵

¹ For more detailed descriptions of the debates surrounding the composition of Kings, see Nelson, *The Double Redaction*, 13–28; Provan, *Hezekiah*, 1–31; O’Brien, *The Deuteronomistic History*, 3–22; Knoppers, *Two Nations*, 1:1–51; McKenzie, *The Trouble*, 1–19; Römer and de Pury, “Deuteronomistic,” 24–141; Avioz, “The Book (Part I),” 11–55; idem, “The Book (Part II),” 11–57; Römer, *The So-Called*, 13–43; idem, “Theories,” 98–122; Hutton, *The Transjordanian*, 81–115; Blanco Wißmann, *Er Tat*, 2–14; Thomas, *Hezekiah*, 2–36; Müller, “The Book of Kings,” 83–97.

² Weippert, “Die ‘deuteronomistischen’ Beurteilungen,” 301–339.

³ Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche*, 3–110 (= idem, *The Deuteronomistic History*, 4–99).

⁴ Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History*, 4, 75–77.

⁵ Ibid., 18.

This editor's work, produced shortly after the disaster of 586 BCE,⁶ represents a somber depiction of Israel's unfaithfulness and YHWH's just punishment.⁷

While Dietrich,⁸ Smend,⁹ and Veijola¹⁰ accept Noth's post-586 dating of the Deuteronomistic History, they attribute its composition to multiple redactors rather than Noth's single Dtr. For instance, Dietrich attributes the prophetically-oriented texts in Sam–Kgs to a prophetic redactor, DtrP, who expanded DtrG (= Noth's Dtr). Similarly, Smend, drawing on his analysis of Josh 1:7–9; 13:1bβ–6; 23:1–16; Judg 1:1–2:9; 2:17, 20–21, 23, contends that a nomistic redactor, DtrN, is responsible for sections emphasizing the people's obedience to Mosaic laws within the Deuteronomistic History.

Differently, Cross,¹¹ returning to earlier models proposed by Kuenen¹² and Wellhausen,¹³ argues for two editions of Kings. According to Cross, Jeroboam's sin and the Davidic promise (described in 2 Sam 7) represent the two major themes in the first edition of Kings (Dtr¹).¹⁴ In this edition, the peroration in 2 Kgs 17:1–23 (especially vv. 20–23) represents the climax of the theme of Jeroboam's sin,¹⁵ while the accounts detailing Josiah's reforms in 2 Kgs 22:1–23:25 mark the culmination of theme of the Davidic promise.¹⁶ Additionally, Cross posits that Dtr¹, dated to ca. 620 BCE, was subsequently updated by an exilic editor, Dtr² (= Noth's Dtr),¹⁷ who added minimal modifications to align Dtr¹ with the socio-political situation of the exilic community in 550 BCE.¹⁸ According to Cross, it was Dtr² who ousted Dtr¹'s theme of hope and blamed Manasseh for the fall of Judah (in 586 BCE).¹⁹

Weippert posits that the regnal evaluations in the book of Kings are components of editorial frameworks, and the variations in these evaluations indicate changes in authorship.²⁰ In her model, the regnal evaluations of northern kings from Jehoram ben Ahab through Pekah (and Hosea?) are credited to R¹, a northerner believed to have been active during Hezekiah's reign. R¹ evaluates these northern kings (Jehoram–Pekah) using IN schema,²¹ which includes (1) the

⁶ Ibid., 79.

⁷ Ibid., 89.

⁸ Dietrich, *Prophetie*.

⁹ Smend, "Das Gesetz," 494–509 (= idem, "The Law," 95–110).

¹⁰ Veijola, *Die ewige*; idem, *Das Königtum*.

¹¹ Cross, "The Themes," 274–89.

¹² Kuenen, *Historisch-kritisch onderzoek*, 249–82.

¹³ Wellhausen, *Die Composition*, 298–99.

¹⁴ Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 278–85. Originally published as idem, "The Structure," 9–24.

¹⁵ Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 281.

¹⁶ Ibid., 281–83.

¹⁷ Ibid., 289.

¹⁸ Ibid., 288.

¹⁹ Ibid., 285–87.

²⁰ Weippert, "Die 'deuteronomistischen' Beurteilungen," 303.

²¹ Ibid., 318.

expression עשׂה ה' עבני ייִהוּה; (2) an accusation that the kings “did not turn from” (חטאוּ תִּרְבַּע עַבְדֵי ה' מִן הַמֶּלֶךְ) Jeroboam’s sins (described as אֲסֻרֵי מִן הַמֶּלֶךְ); and (3) the relative clause אֲשֶׁר הִחֲסִי אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Additionally, the regnal evaluations of eight Judean kings, Jehoshaphat through Ahaz, are attributed to R^I: Jehoshaphat, Joash, Amaziah, Azariah, and Jotham are evaluated using IS¹ schema, which consists of (1) the expression עשׂה ה' עבני ייִהוּה; (2) a comparison with the preceding king; (3) the expression הִבְמֹתָ לְאֲסֹרֵי; and (4) a statement alleging that the people engaged in cultic activities – expressed with *Piel* forms of the roots חָזַב and קָטַר – on בְּמֹתָ. On the other hand, R^I evaluates Joram and Ahaziah using IS² schema, which comprises (a) the expression הִלַּךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ and either מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל or בֵּית דָּן; and (b) the expression עשׂה ה' עבני ייִהוּה.

Weippert argues that R^I’s edition of Kings, composed after the fall of Samaria in 722/1 BCE, highlights Jeroboam’s sins as the cause for the northern kingdom’s downfall, contrasting it with the southern kingdom, whose deliverance from Assyrian invasion indicates that its citizens are YHWH’s true people. Furthermore, Weippert credits the criticisms of Judahite בְּמֹתָ to R^I, arguing that his hostile attitude towards them was shaped by his familiarity with Hezekiah’s cult reform (2 Kgs 18:4). According to Weippert, despite being a northerner residing in Judah, R^I’s favorable view of the kingdom of Judah and her monarchy is evident in his assessments of Judean kings: he evaluated all Judean kings positively, with the exception of Jehoram and Ahaziah.²²

Subsequently, a later redactor, R^{II}, who was active during Josiah’s reign,²³ supplemented R^I’s materials, contributing the regnal assessments of Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah.²⁴ In Weippert’s model, these southern rulers are evaluated using schema IIS, which consists of (1) the expression עשׂה ה' עבני ייִהוּה; (2) comparisons with David, who is referred to as either “father” (אב) or “servant” (עַבְדֵי); and (3) the expression הִלַּךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ/אֲחֵרִים. Additionally, R^{II} is responsible for the assessments of some northern kings, namely Jeroboam I, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab, and Ahaziah. These northern monarchs are evaluated using schema IIN, which essentially includes the elements in schema IN alongside one or two of the following additional elements: (a) the expression הִלַּךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ; (b) an expanded reference to “Jeroboam’s sins” (חטאוּ תִּרְבַּע עַבְדֵי ה' מִן הַמֶּלֶךְ) that includes either the expression אֲשֶׁר עֲשָׂה ה' or אֲשֶׁר חָטָא; and (c) nominal and verbal forms of the root כָּסַף. Additionally, the expression לְאֲסֹרֵי, which appears in the references to Jeroboam’s sins in R^I’s block, is absent in R^{II}’s materials.

Lastly, Weippert argues that the regnal evaluations of Judah’s last four kings (Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah) were subsequently

²² Ibid., 321.

²³ Ibid., 332.

²⁴ Ibid., 333.

incorporated into the book of Kings by an exilic redactor, R^{III}, who evaluates these rulers using IIS schema.²⁵ The schema consists of (a) the expression עֲשֵׂה הַיֵּשֶׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה; and (2) a comparison with predecessors using the expression כִּכְלָאֲשֶׁר עֲשָׂה/עָשׂוּ אֲבוֹתָיו (ת).

Weippert's model received a mixed reception. While Barrick,²⁶ Lemaire,²⁷ and Eynikel²⁸ endorsed her thesis with minor modifications, several scholars have challenged the distinctions between her three redactions. We begin with the positive receptions: Barrick incorporates 1 Kgs 15:14a and 2 Kgs 18:4a into Weippert IS schema, contending that Asa's and Hezekiah's regnal accounts are attributable to R^I, who designed v. 4a as the dramatic denouement of the story (concerning Judean *bamot*) introduced in 1 Kgs 15:14a.²⁹

Lemaire³⁰ defends the unity of Weippert's R^I block, arguing that R^I represents an extension of a proto-Deuteronomistic synchronic history of the kings of Judah and Israel that was produced ca. 850 BCE in Judean circles. According to Lemaire, this synchronic history was produced by a Judean author to (a) mark the reconciliation of Israel and Judah (detailed in, e.g., 1 Kgs 22:45) and their political alliance;³¹ and (b) highlight Jehoshaphat's reforms – the complete eradication of זָקָן detailed in 1 Kgs 22:43–47 and the measures attributed to Jehoshaphat in 2 Chron 17–20. Overall, Lemaire argues for the following editions of Sam–Kgs:

1. The Abiatharite account of David, written around 970, probably at the end of David's reign and ending with the crowning of Solomon.
2. The Zadokite (or Nathanite?) edition of the same account, probably written during the first years of Solomon's reign, perhaps around 960.
3. The redaction of the history of Solomon's reign, ending with the divided kingdom, probably written around 920 during the reign of Rehoboam.
4. The redaction/edition comprising the history of the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel until their reconciliation, written around 850, during the reign of Jehoshaphat.
5. The protodeuteronomistic redaction/edition of the history of both kingdoms until the fall of Samaria and Hezekiah's reform, probably written around 710–705.
6. The deuteronomistic redaction/edition linked with Josiah's reform, written around 620–609.
7. The exilic deuteronomistic redaction/edition written around 560.³²

²⁵ Ibid., 323–26.

²⁶ Barrick, "Removal," 257–259.

²⁷ Lemaire, "Vers," 221–36 (= idem, "Toward," 446–61).

²⁸ Eynikel, *The Reform*, 33–121.

²⁹ Barrick, "Removal," 258.

³⁰ Lemaire, "Vers," 227ff.

³¹ Ibid., 230.

³² Lemaire, "Toward," 458.

Thus, in Lemaire's rolling corpus, Noth's Dtr represents the final stage in a series of compositions and redactions spread over several centuries.

Turning to Weippert's opponents, Campbell critiques Weippert's redactional levels, particularly questioning why Weippert's R¹ begins abruptly with Joram in the north and Jehoshaphat in the south.³³ Campbell offers the following alternative model on the development of southern and northern regnal evaluations in the book of Kings: He postulates that the evaluations of Israelite kings derive from a northern document, referred to as Northern Expansion (Pattern A), which commences with Jehu's account and concludes with Hosea's. By starting with Jehu instead of Joram (who is the first entry in Weippert's R¹), Campbell manages to connect the Northern Expansion to another northern document, the Prophet Record (PR), thereby extending the combined documents (Prophetic Record + Northern Expansion) to include the fall of the northern kingdom.³⁴ The Prophet Record (1 Sam 1–2 Kgs 10:28*), as proposed by Campbell, is a pre-Deuteronomistic document detailing the activities of prophetic figures, who served as divine agents tasked with the designation and rejection of kings in ancient Israel.³⁵ According to Campbell, the prophetic speeches in the Prophet Record are marked by key literary patterns: "(1) the tearing away of the kingdom from the present incumbent; (2) the designation of another as king; (3) the statement that evil will be brought upon the present incumbent or his house; (4) the extirpation of the royal house; (5) the cutting off of every male, bond or free; (6) the reference to the fate of the house of Jeroboam; and (7) the fate of those who die in the city or in the country."³⁶

Additionally, Campbell maintains that the Prophet Record was produced by Elisha's disciples around ninth century BCE, since "[t]he anointing and commissioning of Jehu is the climactic prophetic act in the [Prophet Record], and it is attributed to a member of Elisha's circle."³⁷ The Prophet Record was subsequently combined with the Northern Expansion (Pattern A) during Hezekiah's reign following the collapse of the northern kingdom. Regarding Judean regnal evaluations, Campbell argues that a southern document focusing on southern kings from Rehoboam to Hezekiah was composed independently of Pattern A (Northern Expansion). The Judean document, referred to as Pattern B (Southern Document), was compiled during Manasseh's or Amon's reign "to attribute the woes of Judah to the royal tolerance of the high places, and to point to the success of Hezekiah, who abolished them."³⁸

³³ Campbell, *Of Prophets and Kings*, 141. Similarly, Van Seters, "Histories and Historians," 169 n. 103; idem, *In Search of History*, 316 n. 84.

³⁴ Campbell, *Of Prophets*, 152ff.

³⁵ Ibid., 45.

³⁶ Ibid., 24.

³⁷ Ibid., 106.

³⁸ Ibid., 201.

Nelson³⁹ and Provan⁴⁰ also challenge the distinction between Weippert's R^I and R^{II}. According to Nelson, the variations in the regnal evaluations in 1 Kgs 14–2 Kgs 22 derived from Dtr^I, a pre-exilic Josianic author, who “juggled his stereotyped phrases into a score of different patterns.”⁴¹ However, Nelson concurs with Weippert that the evaluations of Judah's last four kings derived from a single exilic redactor, Dtr² (= Weippert's R^{III}).⁴² In contrast, Provan disputes not only the distinction between Weippert's R^I and R^{II} but also the notion of a common authorship of the regnal evaluations of Judah's last four kings. According to Provan, the judgment formulae in 1 Kgs 15–2 Kgs 15 should be attributed to a single author due to the ideological consistency evident in these texts: The pre-exilic author of the first edition of Kings, which culminates in Hezekiah's account, consistently depicts Judean *bamot* as Yahwistic shrines that should not have existed.⁴³ In Provan's model, this pre-exilic edition of Kings was produced in the early days of Josiah's reign, before Josiah's achievements began to rival those of Hezekiah, who is presented as the hero in the first edition of Kings.⁴⁴ The pre-exilic (Hezekian) edition was subsequently reworked by the exilic author of the *bamot* text in 2 Kgs 17:9–11, who, unlike the pre-exilic author of Kings, views both northern and southern *bamot* as idolatrous shrines.⁴⁵

Halpern and Vanderhooft⁴⁶ credit Weippert's R^I and R^{II} blocks to a single author, arguing that the variations in the regnal evaluations of northern and southern kings up to Hezekiah's account reflect the developmental viewpoint of H(Dtr)hez, whom they regard as the compiler of the first edition of Kings.⁴⁷ For Halpern and Vanderhooft, the first edition of Kings, referred to as Dtr(hez), concludes with Hezekiah's account, as evidenced by (a) the change in the death and burial formula after Hezekiah;⁴⁸ and (b) the omissions of the names of

³⁹ Nelson, *The Double Redaction*, 31–36.

⁴⁰ Provan, *Hezekiah*, 33ff.

⁴¹ Nelson, *The Double Redaction*, 36.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 37–41.

⁴³ Provan, *Hezekiah*, 57–65, esp. 62–65.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 154ff.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 70ff.

⁴⁶ Halpern and Vanderhooft, “The Editions of Kings,” 179–244.

⁴⁷ Halpern and Vanderhooft (*ibid.*, 179–80 n. 1) utilize the following sigla in their article:

DtrH: the Deuteronomistic History

Dtr(x): the exilic version of the history

Dtr(jos): the Josianic version of the history

Dtr(hez): the Hezekian version of the history

H(Dtr)a: the historian responsible for version *a* [italic in original] (Hezekian or Josianic) of the history

E(Dtr)x: the exilic editor of Dtr(x).

⁴⁸ Alternatively, Camp (*Hiskija*, 293–94) argues that the variations in the burial notices after Hezekiah are due to changes in burial practices. Na'aman (“Was an Early Edition,” 81),

queen-mothers in the book of Chronicles after Hezekiah's entry.⁴⁹ According to Halpern and Vanderhooft, Dtr(hez) was subsequently extended by a Josianic redactor, H(Dtr), whose edition of Kings (Dtr(jos)) concludes with Josiah's narratives. Lastly, an exilic redactor, H(Dtr)x, contributed the accounts of Judah's last four kings.

Like previous critics of Weippert's model, Aurelius⁵⁰ considers the opening entries (Jehoshaphat and Joram ben Ahab) in Weippert's R^I odd. Additionally, Aurelius identifies the following flaws in Weippert's model:⁵¹ (1) While Weippert considered comparison with David characteristic of R^{II}, such comparisons appear in the entries of Amaziah and Ahaz, which Weippert credits to R^I. (2) One of the characteristics of R^{II} is his unqualified praise of Judean kings, yet Asa's evaluation, which Weippert includes in R^{II}'s block, has a qualification in 1 Kgs 15:14a. For Aurelius, this qualification, regardless of its originality or secondarity, undermines the redactional boundary between R^I and R^{II}. (3) The expressions הָלַךְ בְּדָרֶךְ and לֹא אָסַר מֶן, which demarcate R^I and R^{II} blocks, are widespread in both blocks. For instance, R^{II}'s expression הָלַךְ בְּדָרֶךְ occurs alongside R^I's expression לֹא אָסַר מֶן in 1 Kgs 22:43. Similar conflation of supposed R^I and R^{II} phraseologies are attested in 2 Kgs 3:3; 13:2, and v. 11.⁵² (4) Weippert unnecessarily separated regnal evaluations that have explicit historical connections. For instance, the author of Jehoshaphat's evaluation compares him with his father Asa, yet Weippert's model assumes that Asa's entry/account was absent in R^I. (5) R^I's repeated references to the "sin of Jeroboam" lack narrative context in Weippert's model due to the absence of Jeroboam I narratives in R^I. (6) The last four evaluations are not as rigid as Weippert claimed, given the slight variations in the expressions used in them. Due to the aforementioned discrepancies in the distinctions drawn between Weippert's redactional blocks, Aurelius dismisses the idea of multiple authorship of the

rejecting the notion of a pre-Josianic edition of Kings, contends that the burial formulae changed after Hezekiah's account because "the author composed the text not long after the reign of Manasseh and Amon and could state exactly where the Judahite kings were buried, from personal knowledge."

⁴⁹ Cf. Provan, *Hezekiah*, 139–43; Thomas, *Hezekiah*, 78–84. Alternatively, the significance of the omitted names is disputed by McKenzie (*The Trouble*, 117–18 n. 1), who maintains that "[t]he disappearance of the queen mother's name from Chronicles' accession formulas for Judahite kings following Hezekiah, may indicate the availability of different sources for the royal records. Whatever the reason for the change in Chronicles, Kings betrays no editorial change at this point." Similarly, Na'aman, "Death Formulae," 246.

⁵⁰ Aurelius, *Zukunft*, 21–70.

⁵¹ Similar critiques, particularly #1–3, had been raised earlier by Cortese ("Lo schema," 43–49), who argued for the common authorship of the entries attributed to R^I and R^{II} in Weippert's model.

⁵² Similarly, Van Seters, "Histories and Historians," 169 n. 103; idem, *In Search of History*, 316 n. 84.

regnal assessments in King, assigning all of them to an exilic Deuteronomist (DtrH).⁵³

Blanco Wißmann⁵⁴ also rejects the distinction between Weippert's R^I and R^{II}'s blocks, arguing that the comparisons with David in both blocks cast doubt on her assignment of these passages to multiple redactors.⁵⁵ According to Blanco Wißmann, in the earliest edition of the book of Kings, the comparisons of Judean kings with their fathers highlight the continuity of the Davidic dynasty, contrasting its stability with the instability in the north. Moreover, he posits that the practice of comparing Judean kings with their fathers is rooted in ancient Near Eastern royal ideology rather than the book of Deuteronomy, given that filiation is frequently used to assert royal legitimacy in ancient Near Eastern texts.⁵⁶ Additionally, Blanco Wißmann⁵⁷ contends that the evaluation formulae in the book of Kings are not Deuteronomistic because (1) the positive formula *עשׂה הישר בעיני יהוה* is scarcely found outside of the book of Kings; (2) the use of the negative formula *עשה הרע בעיני יהוה* for the people in the book of Judges likely postdates the attestations of this formula in Kings's regnal evaluations; and (3) the evaluations of kings as "good" or "evil" in the book of Kings reflects a standard ancient Near Eastern royal ideology which is evident in the Phoenician inscriptions of *Yehimilk* and *Yehawmilk*.⁵⁸

Regarding the dating of the book of Kings, Blanco Wißmann dates the first edition of the book of Kings to the Neo-Babylonian period, citing parallels between the book of Kings and Neo-Babylonian literatures. For instance, the presentation and the interpretation of history in the book of Kings parallel the theological assessments of history in sixth-century BCE Neo-Babylonian chronicles, where kings are depicted as instruments of Marduk's wrath.⁵⁹ Furthermore, he maintains that the book of Kings echoes the focus on the uniqueness of *Esagila* found in Neo-Babylonian royal inscriptions and writings.⁶⁰

Thomas⁶¹ postulates that the first edition of Kings, referred to as the Hezekian History (HH), is pre-Deuteronomistic, given that the synchronisms utilized in it parallel the early attestations of such synchronisms in Levantine sources. According to Thomas, the Hezekian History concludes with Hezekiah's glorious reign and the deliverance of Jerusalem. Regarding its structure, Thomas draws a parallel between the Hezekian History and the Uruk Prophecy, arguing that "the Uruk prophecy...shares with the Judahite reigns down to

⁵³ Aurelius, *Zukunft*, 57.

⁵⁴ Blanco Wißmann, *Er Tat*, 31ff.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 54–58.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 49–54.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 42–54.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 215ff.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 222–23.

⁶¹ Thomas, *Hezekiah*.

Hezekiah the use of a climactic evaluative scheme of a series with a repeated negative formula to build up to the good reign that uses the same terminology to construct a positive formula.”⁶² Thus, for Thomas, 2 Kgs 18:1–5* represent the climax of the evaluative framework in the Hezekian History, and the description of Hezekiah’s military accomplishments in vv. 7–11 serves as an introduction to the account of Jerusalem’s deliverance detailed in 18:13–19:9a, 36–37.⁶³

Unlike Blanco Wißmann, who emphasized the influence of Neo-Babylonian Chronicles on the composition of the book of Kings, Thomas argues that the regnal prologues and epilogues in Kings exhibit features that are characteristic of West Semitic kinglists.⁶⁴ Specifically, he⁶⁵ contends that the Tyrian King List provides a better parallel to the book of Kings because “the Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles always insert reports before the regnal year total..., whereas the Book of Kings consistently places the narrated events after the year total, as does the Tyrian King List.”⁶⁶ Thus, for Thomas, the Tyrian King List represents “an independent example of a Levantine king list similar to the basic structure of 1–2 Kgs.”⁶⁷ Furthermore, Thomas⁶⁸ posits that the synchronistic structure of the book of Kings – e.g. the phrase **בשנ** + N(number) + RN-**ל** – derived from the synchronisms in pre-existing Levantine chronographic sources, such as the Samaria ostraca, and Phoenician-Punic royal inscriptions, rather than the book of Deuteronomy. Similarly, he argues that the regnal evaluations in the book of Kings, especially those included in his Hezekiah History (HH), are not of Deuteronomistic or Josianic origin. Instead, he posits that these regnal evaluations emerged from shared traditions found in West Semitic royal epigraphic and chronistic texts.⁶⁹

1.2. Methodology

In the following chapters, I defend Weippert’s methodology concerning the redaction-critical significance of the variations in the regnal evaluations found in the book of Kings. However, the model obtained using this methodology differs from hers. The chapters are organized into two related parts: Chapters 2–4 address the regnal evaluations of Judean kings found in 1 Kgs 14–2 Kgs 24*, while Chapters 5–6 focus on their Israelite counterparts. Specifically,

⁶² Ibid., 138.

⁶³ Ibid., 319–52.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 51.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 75–76.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 53–54.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 53.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 69–77.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 124–77.

Chapter 2 aims to identify the *Grundformen* underlying the southern evaluative frameworks in 1 Kgs 14:22–2 Kgs 18:16*. Chapter 3 examines the *bamot* texts found in 1 Kgs 14–2 Kgs 18:8*, arguing that the narrative arc concerning Judean idolatrous *bamot*, which commenced in 1 Kgs 14:22b–24*, culminates in 2 Kgs 18:4a*. Chapter 4 offers a detailed analysis of 2 Kgs 21:2–16, along with examinations of the regnal evaluations of Manasseh’s successors and the anomalous assessment of Abijam/Abijah. The discussion of the compositional history of vv. 2–16 in this chapter is particularly pivotal to the dating of vv. 20–22* and 22:2* (especially the comparison with David in 2 Kgs 22:2bα), as both passages presuppose at least some portions of 21:2–16*.

Chapter 5 focuses on the evaluations of northern kings, arguing for the existence of three major evaluative frameworks (Pattern A, Pattern B, and Pattern C) based on the variations in the wordings and attestations of Jeroboam’s precedents in these northern entries: Pattern A, which lacks references to Jeroboam’s precedents, represents a phase prior to the emergence of the Jeroboam traditions detailed in 1 Kgs 12:26–13:34*. Pattern B, wherein Jeroboam’s precedent is described as a “way” (דֶּרֶךְ), presupposes a version of 12:26–13:34* produced within pro-Josianic circles. Pattern C, whose depiction of Jeroboam’s precedents as “sins” (חַטָּאוֹת) allude to the taumorphic images mentioned in 12:28–33*, represents a later amplification of the anti-Jeroboam traditions introduced by pro-Josianic circles. Given that Chapter 5 primarily addresses the distinctions between the patterns in these northern frameworks, the source- and redaction-critical analysis of 12:26–13:34* in Chapter 6 will clarify the relationships between southern and northern evaluative frameworks.

Drawing on the analyses detailed in the preceding chapters, Chapter 7 proposes the following compositional history for the book of Kings: The earliest edition of the book of Kings, referred to as Kings Edition⁰ (KE⁰), was a pre-exilic Judean document chronicling the reigns of Judean kings from Rehoboam through Jehoash ben Ahaziah. The regnal evaluations of Ahab (1 Kgs 16:30) and Jehoram (2 Kgs 3:2*) are considered parts of Kings Edition⁰, as the accounts of these northern kings provide the narrative context for the events surrounding the rise of Jehoash ben Ahaziah. The *terminus a quo* for Kings Edition⁰ is Amaziah’s reign, since the assessment of Jehoash (2 Kgs 12:3a*) presupposes his death.

Kings Edition⁰, which was probably commissioned by Amaziah’s court in the eighth century, was subsequently updated with the accounts and evaluations of Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, resulting in what I designate as Kings Edition¹ (KE¹). Kings Edition¹, which was likely produced during Manasseh’s reign in the seventh century, maintained a Judah-centric focus similar to its predecessor (KE⁰), focusing primarily on documenting the reigns of Jehoash ben Ahaziah’s successors rather than creating synchronized lists of Judean and Israelite rulers. Such synchronisms were incorporated in a later exilic edition of Kings, Kings Edition² (KE²).