

Is the Sin of Jehu the Fault of the Deuteronomist?

Hosea 1 and the Deuteronomistic Redaction of the Book of the Four*

Szabolcs-Ferencz Kató | ORCID: 0000-0002-2013-0457

Department of Old Testament and Hebrew Scriptures, Faculty of Theology
and Religion, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa

Department of Old Testament, Protestant Theological Institute
of Cluj-Napoca, Cluj Napoca, Romania

katoszabolcs@proteo.hu

Abstract

In recent years an increasing scepticism has arisen concerning the Deuteronomistic character of the Book of the Four (Hos, Amos, Mic, Zeph). Many themes and motifs have been regarded as “inspired” by or “oriented” towards the Deut and DtrH, but not exclusively Dtr. redaction. Hosea 1*, the beginning of the composition, however, has been neglected in this respect. Unlike 2 Kgs 9–10, which reflects a positive view of Jehu’s fulfilment of Yhwh’s command at Jezreel, Hos 1 condemns him for the blood-guilt at the same place. The discrepancy is often explained through different theological backgrounds. In contrast, this article shows that both thematically (the end of the Jehuites) and in terms of phraseology (“harlotry,” idioms with the noun “blood,” “bow,” symbolic use of the verb “lift up,” nouns belonging to the semantic field of riding), there is a close literary connection between Hos 1* and 2 Kgs 9–10. Thus, for good reasons Hos 1* can be considered Dtr.

Keywords

Hos 1* – Book of the Four – Deuteronomistic redaction – Jehu – Jezreel

In recent years, the theory of the Book of the Four as a literary precursor of the Book of the Twelve has been gaining significant ground in Biblical Scholarship.¹ Since Nogalski's ground-breaking study, the corpus of the books of Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah has been treated as an early building block of the Twelve, and more concretely as a result of Deuteronomistic (Dtr.) editorial work.² However, this latter claim has been criticised even among those scholars who accept the hypothesis of a *Vierprophetenbuch*. A few years later and following in the footsteps of Nogalski, Schart would talk only of a Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic inspired corpus (D-corpus), but not of a distinct Dtr. Redaction.³ Albertz went one step further, claiming that the redaction of the Book of the Four "was generally oriented towards the Dtn and Dtr theology, but this orientation was in no way exclusive."⁴ According to him, the Book of the Four has a lot in common with the Dtr. theology but has other theological nuances as well. Wöhrle even sees a counter-concept to Deuteronomic History (DtrH) in the basic layer of the Four, pointing out, for example, that the cultic reforms are not seen as the result of the faithful religious politics of Hezekiah and Josiah but as carried out by Yhwh himself.⁵ Indeed, if we look for the major themes of the DtrH in Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah, we see similar though somehow different notions.⁶ For example, Bethel and Dan appear as illicit cult places in 1 Kgs 12, but in Hosea, Gilgal and Samaria are mentioned alongside Bethel.⁷ It is no wonder, then, that in a recent study Werse has also denied the exclusively Dtr. character of the Book of the Four and instead sees a layer "employing non-exclusive Deuteronomistic themes, but few with Deuteronomistic language."⁸

Most would agree that the corpus of the Four is somehow related to the DtrH and its theology, but it remains disputed how this relation can be explained. Does the corpus concur with the DtrH in view, is it a supplement to it, or is it

1 Of course, there are scholars who not only reject the idea of a Book of the Four but also do not regard the Book of the Twelve as a coherent literary unit. See, for example, Ben Zvi, "Twelve," 137; idem, *Hosea*, 6–7; Hadjiev, "Zephaniah," 325; Beck, *Tag YHWHs*, 315–318; Vielhauer, "Hosea," 55–56. For further works and discussion on this topic, see Wöhrle, "Book of the Four," 18–19.

2 Nogalski, *Precursors*, passim; Wilson, "Deuteronomist," 74; Schwesig, *Die Rolle*, 1–2; Dietrich, "Israel," 34; Römer, "Deuteronomismus."

3 Schart, *Die Entstehung*, 156–233.

4 Albertz, "Exile," 250.

5 Wöhrle, *Sammlungen*, 384; idem, "No Future," 608–627.

6 Radine, "Deuteronomistic Redaction," 287–302.

7 Of course, Samaria can stand not only for a specific cult place but for the whole land as well. See Kató, *Jhwh*, 100–127.

8 Werse, *Book of the Four*, 303.

just influenced by its vocabulary and themes? The easiest way to answer these questions is to look at common themes, motifs, and episodes and compare their ideological backgrounds to see whether they are congruent or not. A good example is the detailed Jehu narrative (2 Kgs 9–10), which recounts the king’s bloody deeds at Jezreel and seems to be referred to in Hos 1. However, so far Hos 1 has played only a marginal role in the research on this question, even though all advocates of the theory of the Four attribute some parts of it to the ground layer of the *Vierprophetenbuch*.⁹ Thus, it is very well suited to a new investigation of this kind. In the following, I will try to define how the Jehu-text of Hosea pertains to the DtrH, showing how the results can lead heuristically to a better understanding of the theology of the Four, often labelled—correctly in my opinion—as Dtr.

1 The Bloodshed of Jezreel in the DtrH and Hos 1

In the DtrH, Jezreel is a place of multiple murders. First, Ahab lets Naboth be killed for his vineyard (1 Kgs 21), and then Elijah predicts the end of the Omrides and their death among others “in the district of Jezreel” (1 Kgs 21:23). This oracle will be fulfilled by Jehu, who murders Joram, Ahaziah, and Jezebel in Jezreel. This act of Jehu is explicitly evaluated as “right in my [Yhwh’s] eyes” and “according to all that was in my [Yhwh’s] heart” (2 Kgs 10:30). But the whole reign of Jehu seems to be supported by Yhwh.¹⁰ He is anointed as king by Elisha after Elijah had already received the word of Yhwh to do so (1 Kgs 19:16). Moreover, he receives a promise from Yhwh that his dynasty will reign for four generations (2 Kgs 10:30). In this story, Jezreel is the place where Jehu shows his commitment to Yhwh. Hosea 1, on the other hand, predicts the fall of Jehu’s dynasty and the destruction of Israel for the blood of Jezreel.¹¹ Here, Jezreel seems to be the site of Israel’s wrongdoings and the source of all that is bad in the kingdom.

To explain the discrepancy between the two evaluations of Jehu and his reign, several suggestions have been put forward. One possibility is that Hos 1:4 refers to acts of the dynasty that are not recorded in Kings.¹² However, this is

9 For a table of the layers of the Four according to different reconstructions, see Wense, *Book of the Four*, 304.

10 For a comprehensive list of these elements, see Robker, “Jehu’s Dynasty,” 315–319.

11 The formulation **וְיָרַעְאֵל עַל-בֵּית יְהוּא** is unique in the HB, but similar constructions indicate that it refers to the punishment of the house of Jehu for the bloodshed of Jezreel. For a lexical analysis of the idiom, see Gaß, “Blutschuld von Jesreel,” 135–142.

12 Dearman, *Hosea*, 94.

pure speculation. Others have tried to find something negative in the politics of Jehu, arguing that the book of Hosea wanted to counterbalance the propaganda of Jehu's dynasty witnessed in 1 Kgs 9–10*,¹³ or that it is criticising the pro-Assyrian policies attested above all in extra-biblical sources.¹⁴ Andersen and Freedman understood the term “house of Jehu” as a phrase for the whole country and they linked the bloodshed at Jezreel to the murder of Naboth by Ahab. The cruelty of Ahab would have become paradigmatic for the Northern Kingdom and, according to Andersen and Freedman, it would also characterise Jehu's dynasty as aggressive and bloodthirsty.¹⁵ Another explanation is offered by Rudnig-Zelt, who wants to explain the condemnation of Jehu through his murders of the Davidides, as described in 1 Kgs 10:11–14.¹⁶ More widespread, however, is the assumption that the book of Hosea has a different view of Jehu's massacre than the DtrH.¹⁷

Most of these theories seek to explain the difference between Hosea and the DtrH in terms of historical rather than literary factors. However, according to recent redaction-critical studies, many themes of individual books of the Twelve occur in other writings of the corpus as well. So, the question arises: are there other passages in the Twelve or the Four that condemn the house of Jehu, pointing to a respective redactional layer?

2 The Literary Setting of Hos 1

If we read the Book of the Twelve consecutively it is striking that the book of Amos, in the visions, and more specifically in the Amaziah episode (7:9–17), also contains an oracle directed against a Jehuite king, namely Jeroboam II. Schart has drawn attention to a range of shared motifs and formulations of the two pericopes, which he has traced back to the same editorial work.¹⁸ The main similarities are 1. The use of the noun תְּהִלָּה at the beginning of larger units (Hos 1:2; Amos 7:1). 2. The formula לְאֶחָדֵינוּ עוֹד (Hos 1:6; Amos 7:8; 8:2)

13 Irvine, “Threat of Jezreel,” 494–503.

14 Smith, “Sin of Jehu,” 112–130.

15 Andersen and Freedman, *Hosea*, 176–182. Jeremias (*Hosea*, 30–32) takes a similar view, regarding the bloodshed of Jezreel as an introduction to the wider thematic of regicides (7:3–7) that ultimately led to the destruction of the country. Cf. Vielhauer, *Das Werden*, 139–140.

16 Rudnig-Zelt, *Hoseastudien*, 92.

17 Rudolph, *Hosea*, 51; Mays, *Hosea*, 27; Wolff, *Hosea*, 19–20; Macintosh, *Hosea*, 16–18; Ben Zvi, *Hosea*, 47; Gruber, *Hosea*, 93.

18 Schart, *Die Entstehung*, 116–120.

for the idea that Yhwh's mercy is *no longer* available. This formulation hardly fits the beginning of the book of Hosea where there are no other oracles preceding it. 3. נָזַח is used for the promiscuity of Hosea's and Amaziah's wives. 4. Israel is addressed as עַמִּי ("my people"; Amos 7:15), and this status will be revoked by Yhwh (Hos 1:9; Amos 7:8; 8:2). 5. The most important link between the two pericopes is the theme of the house of Jehu and Jeroboam. While Hos 1 predicts the doom of Jehu's dynasty, Amos pronounces the death of a Jehuite king, but both envisage the destruction of the whole country. Based on these observations, Schart argues for a redaction that is responsible for both texts. According to him, this redaction took place in the context of a larger redaction that unified Hosea and Amos during the reign of Josiah, resulting in a book of two prophets (*Zweiprophetenbuch*).¹⁹ Werse, though, argues that the parallels between Hos 1 and Amos' visions and especially the Amaziah episode would "rely on general links that span a wide range of Amos and Hosea pronouncements," and this "does not necessitate editors composing Hos 1:2–9* under the influence of Amos."²⁰ However, the observations of Schart, when read together, seem to speak for such a connection. The common thematic and its similar formulation within such small units cannot be a coincidence.

Thus, Hosea and Amos share an anti-Jehuite attitude. However, while Amos focuses on Jeroboam and pronounces his death, the formulations of Hosea are directed more generally against the dynasty and predict the end, not of a specific king but the whole house of Jehu. Nevertheless, Jeroboam also appears by name in the superscription. Thus, on a literary level, Hos 1 announces the end of the dynasty during the reign of Jeroboam. He is not the last king of the Jehuites, though. His son, Zechariah, ruled as the last member of the house of Jehu for six months (2 Kgs 15:8), before being assassinated by Shallum. By contrast, Jeroboam seems to have had a long reign and died of natural causes (14:23, 29). If Amos indeed predicted the early death of Jeroboam, according to 2 Kgs his oracle remained unfulfilled. The reason for such a historically inaccurate text can only be that the tradition was formed prior to the death of Jeroboam.²¹ On

19 Schart, *Die Entstehung*, 153.

20 Werse, *Book of the Four*, 102.

21 Rottzoll, *Studien*, 253; Schmidt, "Die Amazja-Erzählung"; Hadjiev, *Composition*, 88, 94. Others emphasise the lexical links to the surrounding visions and argue for a literary creation without any historical basis. Word plays such as the following speak for this assumption: אָנָּחִי 7:8–9 / אָנָּחִי 7:14; חָרַב 9:1, 4, 10; לֹא־אִוְסִיף עוֹד 7:8, 13 etc. For more on these word plays, see Utzschneider, "Die Amazjaerzählung"; Schart, *Die Entstehung*, 104–106; Noble, "Amaziah." Such observations may be accurate, but if the story is fictional, one must also address why its content contradicts the preceding verses. Although in v. 9 Amos proclaims the doom of Jeroboam's whole dynasty, in v. 11 he speaks again of the ruling Jeroboam, announcing his violent death. Why does this not fit better in the context of a text written

the other hand, according to the superscription, the prophet Hosea was active during the reign of Hezekiah as well, and long survived Jeroboam, who ruled until the mid-8th century. Therefore, he must have witnessed not only the end of the Jehuitedes but also the fall of the last kings and the whole kingdom as well. Why then does the superscription name Jeroboam at all, while ignoring all the other Northern kings? A good answer to this question is that the superscription of the book of Hosea wants to bring Hosea closer to Amos and make their messages look similar.

The same question arises regarding the naming of the house of Jehu as parallel to that of the house of Israel (Hos 1:4). Together with other oracles of Hosea, this parallelism suggests that the Book of Hosea has foreseen the destruction of the whole kingdom and not just the Jehu dynasty. Again, the evidence is best explained with a redactional link with Amos. However, while Amos has an authentic prophetic word against Jeroboam, knowing history, unlike Amos the book of Hosea cannot claim the end of the dynasty during the reign of Jeroboam and must be more general in its formulations, resulting in an oracle against the house of Jehu.

These observations further corroborate Schart's thesis of a common redaction of the two books, with the addition that Hos 1:4 seems to belong to the same redactional layer as the superscription. If we can determine the redactional character of Hos 1:1, we thus also know the redactional character of Hos 1:4—and with it the redactional origin of the Jezreel thematic. Since in the theory of the Four the superscriptions are unanimously seen as the result of the redaction of the Four, Hos 1:4 must also be a product of this overarching editorial process. This Archimedean point helps us to determine more precisely Schart's assessment that Hos 1:2–9 was written in the context of the *Zweiprophetenbuch*. It seems that it was formulated, possibly by using some older traditions, in the process of compiling the Book of the Four.

Based on these observations, we can reconstruct the literary history of Hos 1 as follows: In the theory of the Four, v. 1 belongs unequivocally to the overarching redactional layer. Verse 2a represents presumably the original superscription of Hosea,²² which the redactor preserved after his introductory word. Verse 2b α has the motif of adultery which connects his sentence with the Amaziah story. Verse 2b β , however, speaks figuratively of the adultery and extends it metaphorically to the land itself, as Hos 2 does. Thus, v. 2b β can be regarded as

secondarily to the vision in Amos 7–8? In my view, Schart presents a convincing interpretation in this case too, suggesting that the redactors have „den mündlich vorliegenden Fremdbbericht [dem Kontext] entsprechend reformuliert.“ Schart, *Die Entstehung*, 105.

22 Wolff, *Hosea*, 12; Rudolph, *Hosea*, 37; Jeremias, *Hosea*, 27; Wöhrle, *Sammlungen*, 37.

a secondary gloss inspired by Hos 2.²³ Verses 3–4 lead from the birth and naming of the first child of Hosea to the Jehu-thematic and so must stem from the common redactor of Hosea and Amos. However, in these verses, the redactor seems to reformulate an older text, which involves the marriage of Hosea. This older text apparently was concerned with the Jehu dynasty and the redactor makes it more general through the insertion of v. 5. Verse 6, as we have seen, includes a characteristic formulation from Amos 7:8 and 8:2, which connects the two texts and shows their common roots. The mention of Judah breaks this thread and seems to be secondary in context. However, the redactor of the Four was presumably a Judean scribe, and thus it is no surprise that he inserts themes that were current among his audience. After rephrasing older material, the redactor creates some new text as well, which shows the primacy of Judah over Israel. Verses 8–9 relate again to the themes of marriage and the symbolic names of the children, using common motifs with Amos, which points to a common origin with v. 2bβ, 3–4. Summing up, this redactional analysis suggests that older material is preserved and reformulated in v. 2abβ, 3–4, 6, 8–9, and that the redactor of the Four added v. 1, 5, 7. Whether v. 2bα stems from this redactor or a later redactor is hard to decide.

The next question we must address is whether the assumed and presented redactional process of Hos 1 has anything to do with the DtrH. This shall be done in the following sections, first focusing on thematic links and then on shared phrasing.

3 Thematic Links

2 Kings 9–10 deals with the reign of Jehu, mostly in a positive manner. In the main part of the narrative, Jehu is the faithful ruler of Israel, who does the bidding of Yhwh. This attitude is rewarded with the promise of a four-generation dynasty (10:30). Of course, the primary message conveyed by this promise is a positive one, but by giving the number of generations the text also implies the end of the dynasty, which will fall after the fourth ruling king. This is confirmed in 2 Kgs 15:12, which quotes the promise of 10:30 after the death of the last Jehuite, Zechariah. So, the promise frames the story of the dynasty and alludes to it right from the beginning to its end.

23 Wöhrlé, *Sammlungen*, 231 n. 13. Cf. Jeremias, *Hosea*, 24.

Thematically, Hos 1* ties in with this issue of the end of the house of Jehu.²⁴ Hosea 1 takes up and begins the story at the point where DtrH finished. This interpretation fits Wöhrle's theory. According to him, the *Vierprophetenbuch* is a supplement to 2 Kgs 17–18, where Yhwh's servants "have testified against Israel and Judah" (17:13), but have been rejected.²⁵ The Book of the Four understands itself in literary terms as the testimony of these rejected prophets. As mentioned above, the formula of Hos 1:6 (לֹא־אִוִּיךָ עוֹד) implies preceding prophecies which are not further presented but must have remained ineffective when Hos 1 had to predict the doom of the kingdom. Like 2 Kgs 17:13, Hos 1 refers to ignored oracles which led to Israel's destruction. In this regard, we can detect a similar concept in Hosea and DtrH.

However, 2 Kgs 9–10 does not speak of Jehu as solely a faithful king; it also calls him a king who "was not careful to follow the law of the Yhwh the God of Israel with all his heart; he did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam" (10:31). This verse is condemnatory of Jehu and even accuses him of the sin which caused the destruction of the Northern Kingdom. Thus, like the books of Hosea and Amos, a layer of the Jehu narrative has a voice that speaks *against* Jehu's dynasty. This evaluation is particularly striking after the promise of Yhwh. Thus, many have explained this shift through redactional work.²⁶ According to these literary-critical studies, the positive image of Jehu goes back to a pre-Dtr. northern source, which later was complemented with the schematic Dtr. evaluation of Israelite kings. Thus, Hos 1 does not contradict the whole Jehu narrative but only its oldest core, while it corresponds to the idea of the Dtr. additions that condemn Jehu and his dynasty.²⁷

24 Hosea and Amos are referring to Jeroboam, whose son ruled as the last member of the dynasty for six months (2 Kgs 15:8), and so was not the actual last king, as mentioned previously. However, this can be explained by the symbolic character of the number four or by the shortness of Zechariah's reign.

25 Wöhrle, *Sammlungen*, 255–274; idem, "No Future," 614–622.

26 Otto, *Jehu*, 114–119; Lamb, *Jehu*, 143; Robker, *Jehu Revolution*, 50; Hasegawa, *Aram*, 87.

27 The Göttinger School on Deuteronomism finds more layers in the Jehu story, and with different intentions. According to respective analyses, the core of the story is a pre-Dtr. report on Jehu's deeds, depicting the king as a cruel usurper. Only the DtrP-layer makes Jehu a servant of God who purifies the cult. 2 Kgs 10:28–31 is evaluated as a younger evaluation of the DtrN, who condemns the Northern king totally. Dietrich, *Prophezie*, 34; Würthwein, *Könige*, 339, 343. Like other scholars, the Göttinger model understands the negative evaluation of Jehu as going back to a Dtr. redactor. To decide whether the texts commending Jehu are the voice of the theological evaluation of a DtrP or part of the original propagandist story would go beyond the scope of this inquiry. But the latter seems to be more likely than the former.

However, the motivation for Israel's destruction is different in Hos 1. In 2 Kgs 9–10, the violent extermination of Ahab's house at Jezreel depicts Jehu as a rising king, and Jezreel is the location of his demonstration of power and has a positive connotation. Here Jehu is a powerful, obedient king, a positive hero of Yhwh. The additions of the Deuteronomist do not invalidate all this but they accuse Jehu of idolatry. By contrast, Hos 1:4 is silent about the sins of Jeroboam and condemns the Jehuistes for the bloodshed at Jezreel. These seem to be three different concepts. However, if we look for the intention that lies behind the Dtr. additions, we can easily define them as an effort to counterbalance the positive image of Jehu at Jezreel. The same is also the point of Hos 1, with the addition that it does not have a positive image of Jehu to compensate, so it can condemn Jehu and his dynasty directly for the bloodshed at Jezreel. Even if the content of the Dtr. criticism is different from that of Hos 1, they share the same intention: accusing a great king who had shown his power at Jezreel. The aim of these accusations is the same in both texts—they want to account for the fall of Israel by way of the wrongdoings of its kings.

A closer look at 2 Kgs 9–10 and Hos 1 shows that these two texts have more commonalities than differences. The intention of the Dtr. redaction of the Jehu narrative demonstrates similar motivations to those behind the Jezreel text in Hosea. More importantly, Hos 1 shares a similar ideological background to the Dtr. redaction of 2 Kgs 9–10 and differs in this way from its pre-Dtr. core. In addition, there are also some more particular links between the DtrH and Hos 1, which we must examine next.

4 Shared Phraseology

In order to determine the relation of the the book of the Four to the DtrH, Wöhrle has detected many catchwords within the investigated corpora by looking for shared phraseology in similar contexts.²⁸ The adoption of his method leads to astonishing results in the case of Hos 1 and 2 Kgs 9–10. The main shared phrases are as follows:

1. “Harlotry” (זְנוּנִים), Hos 1:2; 2 Kgs 9:22. Jehu is justifying his actions and his brutality through the harlotries of Jezebel. According to Kings, Jezebel had promoted the Baal cult in Israel (1 Kgs 18:19; 19:1–2). It is very likely that, with the term “harlotry,” 2 Kgs 9:22 alludes to this syncretic cult of Jezebel. Similarly, Hos 1 is accusing the land of harlotry, while Hos 2 defines this harlotry as the Baal cult.

²⁸ Wöhrle, *Sammlungen*, 255–272; idem, “No Future,” 614–622.

2. “Bow” (קֶשֶׁת), Hos 1:5; 2 Kgs 9:24. Hosea 1:5 represents the destruction of Israel through the image of breaking a bow in the valley of Jezreel. At first sight, the bow is just a metaphor for strength, but we might ask why this particular image is employed. And here it might be noteworthy that in the Jehu narrative the bow has an intrinsic role: Jehu kills Joram at Jezreel with his bow and commands that the corpse be cast “into the property of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite” (2 Kgs 9:24). There is a strong interplay between the bow, Jezreel, and Jehu in the story. When Hos 1 speaks of the breaking bow of Israel at Jezreel and the end of the Jehuites, this recalls the episode of the Jehu narrative which depicts Jehu as a great archer.
3. “Blood” (דָּם), Hos 1:4; 2 Kgs 9:7, 26. In Hos 1:4, Yhwh “will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel” (פָּקְדֹתַי אֶת־דַּמֵי יִזְרְעֵאל). In 2 Kgs 9:7, Yhwh will “avenge the blood of his servants the prophets” (נִקְמַתִּי דָּמֵי עֲבָדַי הַנְּבִיאִים) (נִדְּמֵי כָּל־עֲבָדַי יְהוָה וְהוּא), and in 9:26, Yhwh “has seen the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons” (אֶת־דַּמֵי נָבוֹת וְאֶת־דַּמֵי בָנָיו רָאִיתִי) and will avenge these actions. Both in Hos 1 and the Jehu story, Yhwh’s punishment is motivated by a bloodguilt and is formulated through similar idioms.
4. “To lift up, to cast” (נָשָׂא), Hos 1:6; 2 Kgs 9:25–26, 32. It is not clear what this verb means in Hos 1:6. נָשָׂא has many meanings: “to lift up, to carry away,” with עוֹן “to atone for,” etc. Accordingly, the phrase נָשָׂא אֶשָׂא לָהֶם from Hos 1:6 is interpreted as “I will raise up an enemy against you,” “surely I will in no way forgive them,” “I will uproot them completely,” “I will sweep it [i.e., my compassion, pity] away completely in respect of them.”²⁹ In any case, the formulation is elliptical and has to be completed for it to make sense. Wolff draws attention to the phrase לָתֵת רַחֲמִים לְ (Gen 43:14; Deut 13:18; Jer 42:12); according to him, the sentence in question expresses the opposite of this formula.³⁰ Thus, it would mean: “Yhwh takes the mercy back.” Interestingly, in 2 Kgs 9 the verb נָשָׂא is attested four times (9:25–26, 32): to cast the body of Joram, to lift up the face, to declare an oracle against the house of Ahab. In the context of Hos 1, the episode of Joram’s killing is relevant. His body is lifted and carried to a Jezreelite field, and through this motif, the narrative acquires symbolic overtones: the old dynasty will rot in Jezreel. In Hos 1:6, mercy is lifted up and the new dynasty—according to the superscription and 1:4, the Jehuites—will be exterminated. In both texts, the idea of lifting is signaling the end of a dynasty.

29 For a comprehensive survey of the options and arguments, see Macintosh, *Hosea*, 21–22.

30 Wolff, *Hosea*, 7.

5. “Bow, sword, battle, horses, horsemen.” As a list, all these words occur in Hos 1:7. And, except for “battle,” they are all somehow present in the Jehu story. As mentioned above, Jehu executes Joram with his bow (2 Kgs 9:24). In 10:25, Jehu exterminates the servants of Baal with a sword. The horse and the horseman (רֶכֶב סוּס וּפָרָשִׁים) appear in a synonymous idiom in 9:18–19. Furthermore, the story has another interesting element related to the riding of the horse, namely that the narrative thematises how Jehu is driving his chariot. Jehu as a cruel ruler has a style of driving his chariot furiously that is recognisable from a distance (9:20). This recognition anticipates the violent events that will follow. Horse and horseman, and other elements related to horse riding, play an important role in 2 Kgs 9. In Hos 1:7, Yhwh rejects all these elements as a means of delivering Israel. In 2 Kgs 9–10, however, Jehu delivers Israel from the idolatry and tyranny of Ahab’s dynasty by these very means.

To sum up: Hosea 1 shares a number of idioms and images present in the Jehu narrative as well. These phrases one by one may appear too general, but it is striking that beyond the thematic, and in such a tiny unit as Hos 1, one can find so many cross-references to the Jehu story. This is hardly just a coincidence. Rather, cumulatively these elements speak for a conscious literary connection between these two texts.

5 Conclusion

From a close reading of Hos 1, we can find a double anchoring of the text in two directions. First, Hos 1* is oriented, as Scharf has proven, toward the visions of Amos and the Amaziah episode. Scharf dates this redaction to the time of Josiah. According to the main theories concerning the DtrH, a core layer of the writing was finished at this time.³¹ So even if we accept the dating of Scharf, Hos 1* might have known some version of the DtrH. However, the general formulation against the Jehuite dynasty seems to belong to the same layer as the superscription. This latter is clearly a result of the editing of the Four. Therefore, I suggest that Hos 1*, with its relation to Amos, was formulated or revised in the context of the Book of the Four.

Second, Hos 1 displays several similarities with the Jehu narrative (2 Kgs 9–10). They share not only the same thematic—the bloody exterminations at Jezreel—but also many parallel phrasings, motifs, and images. Scholars have

31 For a fresh synopsis of the theories and this basic agreement, see Römer, “Deuteronomistic History,” 307–308, 313–317.

often stated that Hos 1 contradicts the positive image of Jehu in 2 Kings. However, the text of 2 Kings itself is not so univocal and contains stereotypical Dtr. formulations that accuse Jehu of the sin of Jeroboam. This shows that the Deuteronomist wanted to counterbalance the positive view of Jehu. In addition, some keywords seem to link the two texts together: “harlotry,” idioms with the nouns “blood” and “bow,” and nouns belonging to the semantic field of riding, etc. They increase the plausibility of claims on thematic grounds that Hos 1* is orientated toward the DtrH. The redactor of Hos 1* seems to have drawn not only from Amos but 2 Kgs 9–10 as well. More precisely, Hos 1 agrees ideologically with the Dtr. redaction of the Jehu narrative. Thus, we can ask whether the redactor of Hos 1 was a Deuteronomist.

This question is hard to answer with an unequivocal yes or no. According to more recent scholarship, one can detect Dtr. passages, additions, and redactions from the Torah³² through the Prophets to the Chronicles.³³ When considering such a large-scale literary activity, it is difficult to argue for a *single* group at a specific time and place. Who, then, is the Deuteronomist? Who are the Deuteronomists? Scholars of the Twelve disagree on this issue, and thus also on the basic character of the Four. Werse, who denies the ideological background of Deut and DtrH for the composition of the four books, acknowledges Dtr. redaction only in places where four criteria are met: 1. lexical and ideological proximity to Deut and DtrH 2. The Dtr. language must have the same compositional implications as those of Deut and DtrH. 3. The Dtr. theme must be presented with Dtr. vocabulary. 4. The Dtr. language cannot be mixed with other non-Dtr. vocabulary.³⁴ According to this definition of Dtr. redaction, Hos 1 is certainly not Dtr. But how, then, is one to account for its lexical and thematic proximity to 2 Kgs 9–10? Here the definition of Werse falls short.

Römer has proposed that in the pre-exilic period instead of a single DtrH, there was a Dtr. library comprised of the scrolls of the Torah and the so-called historical books, which were edited and elaborated at least three times prior to the Persian period.³⁵ This proposal has the advantage of explaining the similarities between the books without excluding the specific literary character of each.³⁶ Was the compiler of Hos 1 such a redactor? He was surely familiar

32 Following the analysis of Blum, Exod–Deut is often labelled as a *Deuteronomistic Composition*. Artus, “Pentateuch,” 28.

33 See the survey of Wilson, “Deuteronomist,” 70–78.

34 Werse, *Book of the Four*, 29–33.

35 Römer, “Deuteronomistic History,” 312–317.

36 According to Römer, however, the loose collection of the pre-exilic library was edited into a more coherent history during the exile, in the period when presumably the Book of the Four was edited as well. Nonetheless, for our discussion is not the dating of Römer

with 2 Kgs 9–10 and had woven many hidden references to it into his text. Ideologically, he intended to explain the destruction of Israel, like the DtrH, through the sins of its kings. But there are also differences. In the case of Hos 1*, the main reason is not idolatry, as in 2 Kgs 10:31, but violence and murder. Nevertheless, idolatry, or more precisely the Baal cult, also plays a major role in other chapters of Hosea (e.g., Hos 2). The redactor tells not the same story as the DtrH, but what he is presenting does not contradict it and at many points agrees with it. So, I would categorise this form of redaction as Dtr. in the sense of Wöhrle, as a supplement to the DtrH. While this redactor was the same as the one who arranged the material in Amos 7–8, this claim is also possibly true for the whole composition of the Four. In this regard, further investigation is needed. In any case, in the future, more attention will have to be paid to the unequivocally Dtr. glosses, passages, and texts of the DtrH, and these will need to be differentiated from the pre-Dtr. material within them. In our particular case, Jehu is a powerful king in the oldest layer of 2 Kgs 9–10, but a sinful ruler according to the Dtr. redaction of the story. In Hos 1, he is also accused of bloody deeds, but even here this sin can be regarded as the result of an ideology committed to explaining the downfall of Israel. Accordingly, this sin of Jehu is nothing other than the “fault of the Deuteronomist.”³⁷

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that is relevant but his attempt to define the Deuteronomist, even if he reckons in the exilic-postexilic period with a more established Dtr. school.

37 As remarked in n. 27, the Göttinger School identifies a DtrN redactor at work in 2 Kgs 10: 28–31. This assumed redaction is characterised by a strong orientation to the Dtr. law. Würthwein, *Könige*, 499. Strikingly, the formulations and their implications presented in section 4 (Shared phraseology) occur frequently in Deuteronomy: blood (Deut 19:10, 13; 21:7 etc.), horses as symbols of military power (Deut 11:4; 17:16 etc.), and harlotry as a symbol of idolatry (31:16). According to this model, the Dtr. redactor of the Four is close to the theology of DtrN.

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