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Transjordan in Deuteronomy: The Promised Land and the Formation of the Pentateuch

ANGELA ROSKOP ERISMAN
angelaroskop@gmail.com
Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, OH 45220

This article addresses two problems commonly discussed in recent literature on the Pentateuch: the relationship between the Sihon episodes in Numbers and Deuteronomy, and the role of Deuteronomy 34 in the final stages of the Pentateuch's formation. The first section demonstrates that the conquest of Sihon is an addition to Deuteronomy designed to incorporate the Transjordanian plateau into the concept of the promised land, made after Deuteronomy had already been incorporated into the end of the wilderness narrative. The second section demonstrates that the final installment of Moses' death scene in Deut 34:1–6, 8 is also part of this revision and reconsiders its relation to the previous installments in Num 27:12–23 and Deut 32:48–52. In the course of discussing these passages, the article employs concepts from literary and linguistic theory—theme and horizon, accommodation, implied author, conceptual integration (or blending), reference repair—in an effort to reconsider the role of style as a criterion for determining composition history, concluding that it sometimes says more about *how* a revision to the text was made than about *who* made it.

The book of Deuteronomy begins by establishing a setting for Moses' speech on the other side of the Jordan, in the land of Moab. Implicit in this setting is an image of the promised land limited to Cisjordan, one that is evident at many points throughout the book. Deuteronomy 1:6–2:24a leads us to expect a conflict-free trip through Transjordan, which is allotted by YHWH to nations other than Israel. Various passages look forward to the Israelites taking possession of YHWH's gift of land *after* they cross the Jordan (e.g., Deut 7:16–23; 8:7–9; 11:22–25; 12:8–28; 27:1–8; 30:17–18). Deuteronomy 32:49 defines the land Moses views before he dies as Canaan, and Deut 1:6–8 delineates the land of the Canaanites as the hill country of the Amorites and its surrounding areas, namely, the Aravah (east), Shephelah

(southwest), Negev (south), seacoast (west), and Lebanon (north), all of which is west of the Jordan.[1]

Passages that presume this Cisjordan-only concept of the land, as Hans-Christoph Schmitt has noted, stand in tension with other passages in Deuteronomy that *do* incorporate portions of Transjordan.[2] These include the Sihon and Og conquest episodes and related material in Deut 2:24b–3:22, as well as 34:1–3, which incorporates Gilead in the land surveyed by Moses before he dies. In this article, I will explain how these conflicting ideas about what constitutes the land of promise came to be juxtaposed in Deuteronomy.

I. Sihon and Og in Numbers and Deuteronomy

Norbert Lohfink observes that the repetitive character of the type scenes for Edom, Moab, and Ammon in the introduction to Deuteronomy create a rhythm in the text, but "once the basic rhythmic feeling is generated, counter-rhythmic movements" create tension in the narrative.[3] Wolfgang Iser discussed this phenomenon in *The Act of Reading*, where he referred to the rhythm of a text as *theme* and elements that break the rhythm as *horizons*. When we read a text, we establish a theme as we note its dominant or repetitive characteristics; when we encounter a horizon, we must renegotiate our understanding of the theme to account for it.[4] We encounter a horizon in Deut 2:24 when the Israelites are commanded to cross wadi Arnon. The preceding type scene for Ammon leads us to expect the Israelites to enter and pass peacefully through *Ammonite* territory, just as they do for Moab in 2:13 (cf. v. 18) after its type scene.[5] Instead, the Israelites conquer the territory north of the

[1] Richard D. Nelson, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 2, 14. The notion that Canaan does not include Transjordan is consistent with its definition in nonbiblical texts; see Nadav Na'aman, "The Canaanites and Their Land: A Rejoinder," *UF* 26 (1994): 397–418. A number of scholars point out that "hill country of the Amorites" can refer to land in either Cisjordan or Transjordan; see, e.g., Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy* דברים: *The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation* (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 8, 14. In Deut 1:7, however, the land as outlined is west of the Jordan; neither Gilead nor Sihon and Og are mentioned (cf. Deuteronomy 34).

[2] Schmitt, "Dtn 34 als Verbindungsstück zwischen Tetrateuch und Deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk," in *Das Deuteronomium zwischen Pentateuch und Deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk* (ed. Eckart Otto and Reinhard Achenbach; FRLANT 206; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 183–86.

[3] Lohfink, "Darstellungskunst und Theologie in Dtn 1,6–3,29," *Bib* 41 (1960): 129.

[4] Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 95–96.

[5] J. Maxwell Miller, "The Israelite Journey through (Around) Moab and Moabite Toponymy," *JBL* 108 (1989): 583.

Arnon from Sihon, who is not an Ammonite but, as we know from the version of this episode in Num 21:21–35, an *Amorite*.

Elsewhere I have argued that the Sihon episode in Num 21:21–35 is a revision of the text made for the purpose of including Transjordan in Israel's land.[6] That argument is essential for understanding the Sihon episode in Deuteronomy. The text prior to this revision already included Deuteronomy and the Balaam narrative, which had been incorporated into the end of the wilderness narrative by means of the itinerary notices in Num 21:12–13a and 18b–20, respectively. The references to Moab in Num 21:18b–20 and the Balaam narrative set the end of Numbers in the Moabite plateau. Moreover, references to wadis Zered and Arnon in Num 21:12–13a create a link with the setting of the present introduction to Deuteronomy, with its idea that land in Moab is *not* for the Israelites to conquer.

The scribe who sought to include the Transjordanian plateau in the promised land had to make this Moabite territory conquerable. He did that by writing an episode in which Israel conquers this land from an *Amorite* king, since Amorites often function as part of a trope referring to the previous inhabitants of Israel's land, whom it is permissible to conquer.[7] To explain how this otherwise Moabite territory is Amorite, the episode includes a brief account of Sihon's previous conquest of this land from the Moabites, adapting an oracle from Jer 48:45–47 to make Sihon the one who laid waste to Moab; as Manfred Weippert notes, the "statement in Num 21:26 that the *Amorite* Sihon had previously conquered this territory from Moab serves to prevent contradiction" with the idea that Moab is not fair game for Israelite conquest.[8] The episode was integrated into the previously existing text by means of two glosses to the itinerary, in Num 21:11b and 13b, which circumvent the route *into* Moab already present in the text, taking the Israelites *around* Moab into the wilderness, and identify the territory north of the Arnon as Amorite. Finally, the itinerary notice in Num 22:1 serves to reconnect with the Moabite setting of the Balaam narrative. The resulting text is a literary palimpsest, depicted visually in fig. 1.

[6] Angela R. Roskop, *The Wilderness Itineraries: Genre, Geography, and the Growth of Torah* (History, Archaeology, and Culture of the Levant 3; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 204–15.

[7] John Van Seters, "The Terms 'Amorite' and 'Hittite' in the Old Testament," *VT* 22 (1972): 64–81.

[8] Weippert, "The Israelite 'Conquest' and the Evidence from Transjordan," in *Symposia Celebrating the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the American Schools of Oriental Research (1900–1975)* (ed. Frank Moore Cross; Occasional Publications, Zion Research Foundation; Cambridge, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1979), 22. For discussion of Jer 48:45–47, see John Van Seters, "The Conquest of Sihon's Kingdom: A Literary Examination," *JBL* 91 (1972): 192–95.

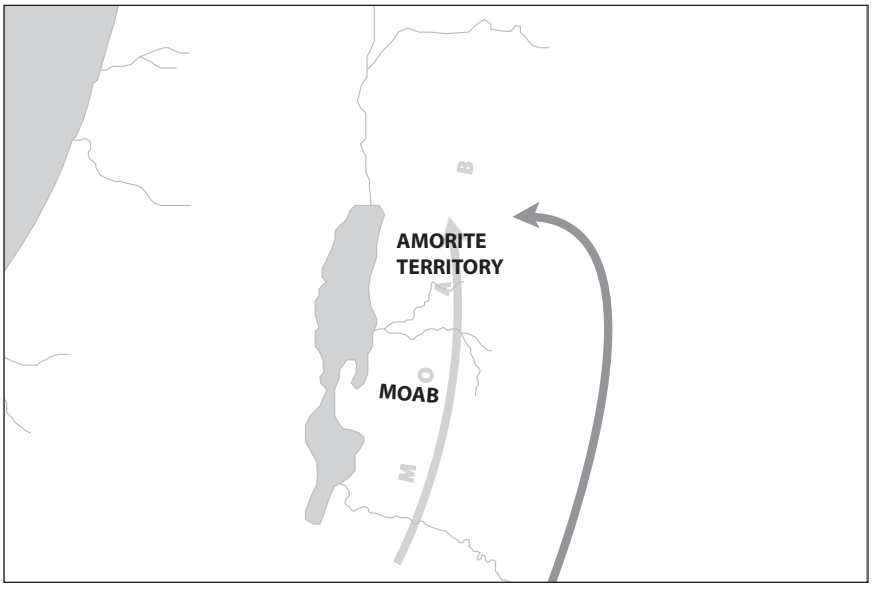

FIGURE 1. The light arrow represents the Israelites' route into Transjordan according to Num 21:12–13a, 18b–20. The route *through* settled territory was overwritten with a route *around* (Num 21:11b and 13b, the conquest of Sihon and Og, and Num 22:1), represented by the dark arrow.

This analysis explains the numerous horizons we encounter as we read Numbers 21 in its current form. The Israelites travel through Transjordan and into Moab (Num 21:12–13a and 18b–20) but seem to be traveling around Moab at the same time (Num 21:11b and 13b). Then they appear to be entering Amorite territory from the east in order to conquer it, although that territory is the same plateau north of the Arnon where they had already arrived in Num 21:18b–20. Finally, the Israelites arrive in Moab a second time in Num 22:1. Efforts to make meaning out of these horizons on a synchronic level run aground on details of the text that are missed or misinterpreted. For example, Christian Frevel has argued that Moab is "spatially present" in Numbers 21 but that the Israelites are not actually camping in Moab because Num 21:20, which contains Moabite place-names, does not match the itinerary notice in Num 22:1.[9] But Num 21:20 simply uses a different convention

[9] Frevel, "Understanding the Pentateuch by Structuring the Desert: Numbers 21 as a Compositional Joint," in *The Land of Israel in Bible, History, and Theology: Studies in Honour of Ed Noort* (ed. Jacques van Ruiten and J. Cornelis de Vos; VTSup 124; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 118. Another recent example is Joel S. Baden, *J, E, and the Redaction of the Pentateuch* (FAT 68; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), who accounts for the different conventions used for the itinerary notices in 21:10–11a (P), 11b–13 (E), and 18b–20 (J) by assigning them to separate sources but assigns the whole of vv. 11b–13 to E (pp. 135–36) despite the blend of routes around and through in these verses. Baden's interpretation of Num 21:22 and Deut 2:24 also incorrectly equates the

for the itinerary genre than Num 22:1, one that has analogues in other ancient Near Eastern cultures, so there is no question that it brings the Israelites into Moab just as Num 22:1 does.[10] We might understand this double arrival in Moab as evidence of diachronic development: when a scribe revises a text, he may seek to accommodate his revision to the text, making the seams disappear.[11] In some instances, such as this double arrival in Moab, seamless accommodation may not have been desirable (if the scribe sought to leave marks of his editorial work) or was not fully possible.[12] Such horizons are places where the narrative does not work optimally and may best be explained as the residue of composition history.[13]

The horizon in Deut 2:24 is not as difficult to navigate as the horizons in Numbers 21 but is still quite noticeable. W. A. Sumner offered one way to negotiate it, pointing out that the expected geographical order of episodes would be Edom, Moab, Sihon, Ammon, and then Og. Sumner proposed that the episodes were arranged ideologically instead of in geographical order, the conflict-free encounters grouped first and then the wars, creating a shift from wilderness to conquest.[14] But the Sihon and Og episodes are a problem even grouped this way because, as George W. Coats points out, they are conquest episodes that take place while the Israelites are still in the wilderness, before they have crossed the Jordan.[15] Instead, we should view this horizon as a sign that the conquest of Sihon was a revision of Deuteronomy, made for the same purpose as that in Numbers. A concept of the promised land with Transjordan in it necessitates a conquest that begins *before* the Israelites cross the Jordan.

The effort to accommodate a new conquest episode to Deuteronomy required a strategy slightly different from that used in Numbers 21. The scribe first made the case that the conquest begins while the Israelites are still east of the Jordan. The very first verse of the Sihon episode has YHWH command Moses to *begin* taking possession of Sihon's land (החל רש, Deut 2:24). This statement occurs out of the

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land of the Amorites with Moab (pp. 136, 138), and he fails to reckon with the difference between them in terms of land and kinship ideology, which is critical for understanding these passages.

[10] Roskop, *Wilderness Itineraries*, 137–39.

[11] "Accommodation" refers to the "presentation of new information in a backgrounded way" so that, although new, its "presence in the text world is presented as an unremarkable fact," and we read the new information as though it naturally belongs there (Paul Werth, *Text Worlds: Representing Conceptual Space in Discourse* [Textual Explorations; New York: Longman, 1999], 280, 56, respectively).

[12] For deliberate marks of editorial work, see Brian Peckham, "Writing and Editing," in *Fortunate the Eyes That See: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday* (ed. Astrid Beck, A. H. Bartelt, P. R. Raabe, and C. A. Franke; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 382–83.

[13] For a more extensive discussion of horizons as potential signs of revision, see Roskop, *Wilderness Itineraries*, 35–39, 208, 213–14.

[14] Sumner, "Israel's Encounters with Edom, Moab, Ammon, Sihon, and Og According to the Deuteronomist," *VT* 18 (1968): 217.

[15] Coats, "Conquest Traditions in the Wilderness Theme," *JBL* 95 (1976): 177–90.

proper plot sequence, since possession of the land should come after Moses has requested passage and Sihon has refused. Instead, it comes first and is resumed in 2:31 at the appropriate point in the narrative. We might take this *Wiederaufnahme* to mean that the intervening verses are an addition to the episode, but the anticipatory character of v. 24 is better viewed as part of the scribe's rhetorical strategy. Marc Zvi Brettler argues that the syntax and vocabulary in v. 31 were picked up from the command to enter the promised land in Deut 1:8 (where the concept of the promised land is limited to Cisjordan) and applied to the conquest of Sihon in Transjordan.[16] One should add that the same applies to v. 24 and that the command החל ("begin") is added in both places. The effect is to extend the concept of the land to include Transjordan and emphasize that the conquest begins *now*, not after the Israelites have crossed the Jordan.[17] The scribe reiterates this point in v. 25, where he states that YHWH will begin to put fear and dread of the Israelites into their enemies היום הזה—"today," *not* later on.

The shift between the two concepts of the promised land is cleverly made in the intervening verses. When Moses requests passage through Sihon's territory in Deut 2:27–29, he points out that the Israelites are not a military threat but simply want to get to the Jordan so they can cross into their own land. In other words, the scribe has Moses presume the ideology characteristic of the bulk of Deuteronomy—that the promised land is west of the Jordan—when he makes his request of Sihon. Sihon's refusal is then used as the pivot on which to make the shift to a land ideology that includes Transjordan. Moses notes in v. 30 that the *present* state of affairs (כיום הזה) when he is giving his speech is that Israel holds this territory as part of its land, and he explains to the Israelites that this is due to Sihon's refusal. Once the ideological shift is made, v. 31 then resumes the command to begin taking possession of the land, and the text moves on to narrate the battle.

The scribe also used key elements of Dtr ideology to legitimize this territory as part of the promised land. Sihon does not refuse Moses' request of his own accord, as is the case in the parallel episode in Numbers (cf. 21:23). Rather, YHWH hardens his heart, an expression that emphasizes YHWH's control over who possesses what land. If YHWH *made* Sihon refuse, then the Israelites gained possession of the land not by means of their own military prowess but because YHWH gave it to them. The conquest is also described as חרם in Deut 2:34, as J. G. McConville notes, to convey that Transjordan "was fully part of the promised land" insofar as the Israelites dealt with it the way all the land they dispossessed was expected to be dealt with according to Deuteronomy 7 and 20.[18]

[16] Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 75.

[17] Zechariah Kallai points out that a "territorial shift" is created in Deuteronomy "that does not accord anymore with the borders of Canaan" ("Conquest and Settlement of Trans-jordan: A Historiographical Study," *ZDPV* 99 [1983]: 112; see also 116–17). Of course, this shift is also made in Numbers, although the concept of the land *as Canaan* is not explicit in Numbers 21.

[18] McConville, *Deuteronomy* (Apollos Old Testament Commentary 5; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 89–90.

Finally, the scribe helped the reader resolve the horizon created as the expected trip through Ammon was preempted by the encounter with Sihon by emphasizing in Deut 2:37 that the Israelites did obey YHWH's command in 2:19 not to provoke the Ammonites. But their obedience does *not* involve passing through peacefully as the rhythm, or theme, of the introduction leads one to expect. It involves merely avoiding Ammonite territory, *which this verse locates by the Jabbok*, as they engage in the conquest of Sihon. In Numbers 21, Moab had to be limited to territory south of the Arnon in order to make room for Sihon's Amorite (i.e., conquerable) territory (see fig. 1).[19] Deuteronomy is more complicated because the plateau north of the Arnon is conceptualized simultaneously as Moabite (the general setting of Deuteronomy), and Ammonite (in the schematized geography used to articulate Dtr land ideology). But it is the Ammonite concept with which the scribe had most to contend, since we are led to expect the Israelites to cross the Arnon in 2:24 and enter *Ammonite* territory. He dealt with it the same way Moab was dealt with in Numbers 21: by pushing it out of the way. Deuteronomy 2:37 locates Ammon *not* on the other side of the Arnon, as vv. 19–24a lead us to expect, but on the northern extremities of Sihon's territory, and this location is reinforced in Deut 3:16 and Josh 12:2, where the Jabbok is clearly identified as the boundary between Sihon and the Ammonites. Again, this creates a literary palimpsest, shown visually in fig. 2.

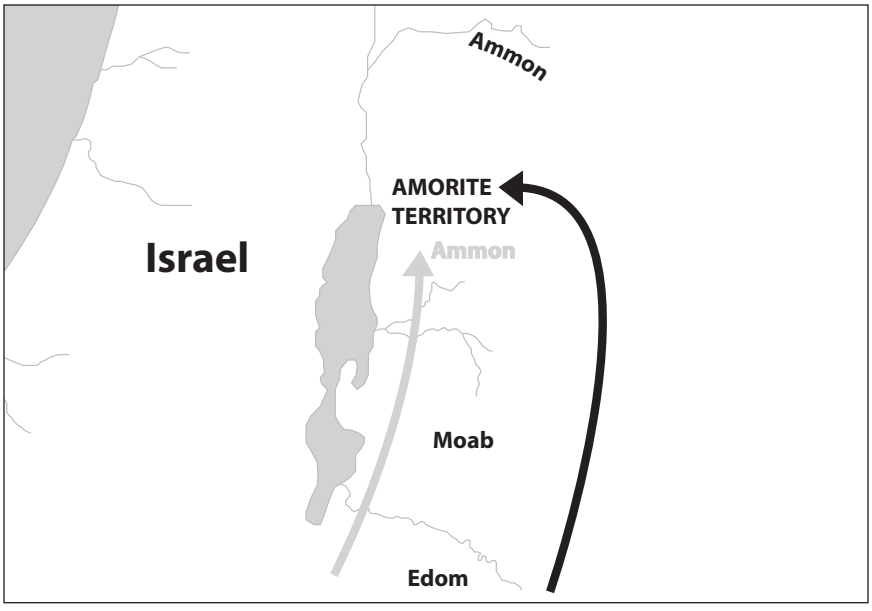

FIGURE 2. The light arrow represents the Israelites' route into Transjordan according to Deut 1:6–2:24a. This route *through* settled territory was overwritten with a route *around* (Deut 2:8b, 24b–37), represented by the dark arrow.

[19] Roskop, *Wilderness Itineraries*, 204–15.

Two texts help us see this move. Deuteronomy 3:11 locates Og's bed in Rabbah of the Ammonites. Rabbah is not near the Jabbok; it is in the middle of the plateau, presumably in territory the Israelites conquered from Sihon under Moses' leadership. Perhaps the scribe had in mind that this territory was Sihon's at one point but became Ammon in a later period (cf. 2 Samuel 10–12; Ezek 25:5).[20] Or perhaps the schematized geography here is obscuring the actual extent of Ammon, which may have extended into the plateau enough to include Rabbah but not all the way down to the Arnon. But the allotment to Gad in Josh 13:24–28 suggests that neither is the case; Josh 13:27 acknowledges that this territory was conquered from Sihon and Og, but v. 25 clearly states that part of it was conquered from the Ammonites, which both contradicts the idea in Numbers and Deuteronomy that it was conquered from Sihon and violates the prohibition in Deut 2:19 against conquering any territory from the Ammonites. This slip makes transparent the strategy for adding the Sihon episode in Deuteronomy 2.[21]

The relationship between the Sihon episodes in Numbers 21 and Deuteronomy 2 is typically construed as one of direct dependence. As John Van Seters states, "the two versions are so close in basic content and wording that either one must depend on the other or both derive from a common literary tradition."[22] Most scholars, like Brettler, understand Deuteronomy 2 as dependent on Numbers 21, although Van Seters argues the opposite.[23] But there is another way to frame the issue. Since the glosses to the Numbers 21 itinerary (vv. 11b, 13b) that incorporated the Sihon episode into Numbers modified the itinerary notices that had already connected Deuteronomy to the end of Numbers (vv. 12–13a), it is clear that Deuteronomy was already part of the continuous narrative when the Sihon episode was added to Numbers. Given that the primary goal of the scribe who added it was to include Transjordan in the promised land, it would have made eminent sense to add a corresponding episode to Moses' review of the wilderness sojourn in Deuteronomy. In fact, there are odd elements of each episode that are best explained with the other

[20] For this type of approach, see J. Simons, "Two Connected Problems Relating to the Israelite Settlement in Transjordan," *PEQ* 79 (1947): 27–39, 87–101.

[21] Tigay suggests that Josh 13:25 "may reflect the Ammonite claim quoted in Judg. 11:13" (*Deuteronomy*, 350 n. 53). But the land dispute between Jephthah and the Ammonite king is itself built on ambiguities generated by the addition of the Sihon episode to Deuteronomy 2, as I argued in "Let Yahweh Decide, but I Will Persuade: Rhetorical Use of the Wilderness Narrative in Judges 11" (paper presented at The Biblical World and Its Impact: Precept and Praxis, A Symposium Honoring Professor Samuel Greengus, Cincinnati, OH, April 10, 2011).

[22] Van Seters, "Conquest of Sihon's Kingdom," 184. See also Klaas A. D. Smelik, *Converting the Past: Studies in Ancient Israelite and Moabite Historiography* (OtSt 28; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 27–32.

[23] Brettler, *Creation of History*, 71–76; John Van Seters, *The Life of Moses: The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus–Numbers* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 383–404.

episode in view, suggesting that the two episodes are interdependent and have a single implied author.[24]

The basic strategy for accommodating the Sihon episode was the same in Numbers and Deuteronomy: circumvent the route through settled territory and make the text read as though the Israelites approach Sihon with their request for passage from the eastern desert.[25] The case is made more strongly in Numbers 21, as the route through Moab in vv. 12–13a, 18b–20 easily fades into the background and the route *around* (21:11b, 13b; 22:1) dominates the text in its present form. By contrast, the passage *through* Edom and Moab remains dominant in Deuteronomy 2. This route is, however, slightly complicated by ונפן ונעבר דרך מדבר מואב in Deut 2:8b, which suggests that the Israelites are not passing through Moab but going around it in the wilderness.

One way to navigate this horizon is to harmonize the two routes, although such readings tend to gloss over tensions in the narrative and involve problematic readings of details in the text.[26] A second way to navigate it is to understand מדבר מואב in Deut 2:8b as a reference not to the wilderness east of Moab but to the general region east of the Dead Sea, as J. Maxwell Miller has suggested. Then it would not conflict with the "central thrust of the verses that follow," which relate the journey through Moab.[27] There is, however, a third option: ונפן ונעבר דרך מדבר מואב in Deut 2:8b was added as part of the effort to accommodate the Sihon episode to the previously existing text. Like the glosses to the itinerary in Numbers 21 (vv. 11b, 13b), this clause circumvents the route *through* Moab by suggesting that the Israelites are instead moving *around* settled territory. The wilderness setting is reinforced in the Sihon episode itself. Brettler observes that Deut 2:26 uses the same wording as Num 21:21 but, among other differences, gives the wilderness a name.[28] Reinforcing the connection between Deut 2:8b and Num 21:11b, 13b is the fact that

[24] The term "implied author" refers to the author as implicit in the shape of the text; see Wolf Schmid, "Implied Author" (2nd rev. version), in *the living handbook of narratology* (University of Hamburg), online at http://wikis.sub.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/index.php/Implied_Author. *Implied* author is not necessarily the same thing as *actual* author. Whether one, two, or more actual scribes made these revisions (a question that must involve consideration of material and sociological issues relating to scribal practice), they serve a coordinated purpose and, in that sense, speak with a single voice.

[25] Wolfgang Zwickel argues that the route around Edom and Moab belongs to the Dtr base layer and the route through is part of a revision (the opposite of what I argue here), but he fails to see that a route through Transjordan fits with the dominant Dtr land ideology, which has the Israelites pass peacefully through territories allotted to other peoples, while a route around does not ("Der Durchzug der Israeliten durch das Ostjordanland," *UF* 22 [1990]: 475–95).

[26] David A. Glatt-Gilad discusses and refutes a number of such readings ("The Re-Interpretation of the Edomite–Israelite Encounter in Deuteronomy II," *VT* 47 [1997]: 441–55).

[27] Miller, "Israelite Journey," 582.

[28] Brettler, *Creation of History*, 73.

מדבר and מואב occur together only in these verses and in Judg 11:8, which is dependent on them.[29] Thus, although the route through Edom and Moab remains more dominant in Deuteronomy than in Numbers, Deut 2:8 and 26 echo the strategy used to accommodate the Sihon episode to Numbers 21.

An odd element of the Sihon episode in Numbers 21, which is best explained with reference to the version in Deuteronomy 2, is the definition of the Jabbok as the Ammonite boundary in Num 21:24. Van Seters wonders, "Why is there a concern for the border of the Ammonites when they do not come in for any other mention in the whole narrative?"[30] The Jabbok is established as the border of the Ammonites in Deut 2:37, and the reference to this in Num 21:24 is one element of Van Seters's argument that the Sihon episode in Numbers 21 is dependent on the version in Deuteronomy 2. But the connection between the two passages need not mean that the Numbers 21 episode is *later*, just that it has the Deuteronomy 2 version *in view*. The connection between the two can also be understood as part of a coordinated effort to accommodate the conquest episode in both places. This is done with sensitive attention to the different literary context in each case. Deuteronomy 2:37 maintains the command–execution structure of Deuteronomy 2, even as it shifts the geography, since the Israelites avoid Ammonite territory out of obedience to YHWH's command. But in Num 21:24, the reason the Israelites avoid Ammon is simply that the border is too strong, with the implication that they might have conquered more territory if they could have.[31] This is consistent with the immediate context of Numbers 21, which lacks Deuteronomy's idea that YHWH assigns nations their land.[32]

The narration of Israel's conquest of Amorite territory ruled by Sihon in Num 21:21–32 and its recapitulation in Deut 2:24b–37 thus constitute a coordinated effort to revise an already-composite text that includes the end of the wilderness narrative in Numbers and the basic Dtr frame (Deut 1:6–2:24a). This revision is designed to expand the concept of the promised land so that it is no longer limited to Cisjordan but includes the plateau north of the Arnon in Transjordan as well. The conquest of Sihon is followed in Num 21:33–35 and Deut 3:1–7 by the conquest of Og farther north in Bashan, and these passages are already typically thought to

[29] See n. 21 above.

[30] Van Seters, *Life of Moses*, 397.

[31] Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 21–36: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 4B; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 3, 100. See also Kallai ("Conquest and Settlement," 112–13), who notes that the MT reading עז ("strong") is preferable to the LXX reading Ιαζηρ (יעזר, "Jazer"); cf. Num 21:32, where Moses sends spies out from Jazer after they conquered Sihon. In light of what I argue here, the LXX reading might be understood as an effort to harmonize this verse with the later Sihon episode.

[32] Another connection between the two passages is כל־הערים האלה ("all these towns") in Num 21:25, which lacks a referent but assumes the towns that are listed in Deut 2:36 (Van Seters, "Conquest of Sihon's Kingdom," 189).

come from the same author.[33] Deuteronomy 3:8–22 continues with a summary of the extent of seized territory and its allotment, as well as a concern for the role of these already-settled Israelites in the conquest of land across the Jordan. All of this material concerns Israelite settlement in Transjordan and should be understood as related to this effort.

We would typically assign two passages with such stylistic variations as those exhibited by the Sihon episodes in Num 21:21–32 and Deut 2:24b–37 to two different sources or revisions. But once we have seen that these episodes serve the very same literary goal and that each is aware of the other's strategy for revision, we ought to think differently about how the variations between them might be significant for our understanding of composition history. Such variation certainly can and often does suggest the work of different authors. But scribes can also mimic the style of one literary context or another if it serves their goals to do so. In the case of the Sihon episodes, stylistic variations are not significant for distinguishing one compositional layer from another. Rather, they show us something about *how* the scribe made his revisions, accommodating each one to the previously existing text so it reads as much as possible as part of it.

II. Deuteronomy 34 and the Death of Moses

The narrative of Moses' death in Deuteronomy 34 plays a central role in recent efforts to identify the latest layers of scribal work in the Torah. Moses' visual tour of the land in vv. 1–4 looks backward to Genesis and, according to Konrad Schmid, serves to create a Pentateuch, "binding together the Torah complex from Genesis to Deuteronomy in a way that can be conceived literarily and theologically."[34] The identification of the land with that promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in v. 4 is the most obvious connection to Genesis, but there are others. Thomas C. Römer and Brettler note that את־כל־הארץ ("the whole land") in Deut 34:1 is an allusion to Gen 13:14–15, where Abraham views את־כל־הארץ in all four cardinal directions.[35] The extent of the land that Abraham sees is not noted, but the patriarchal narratives generally limit the land to Cisjordan: Jacob's prayer upon his return from Paddan-aram identifies the Jordan as the boundary he crossed to leave home (Gen 32:10–11). Genesis 12:5–6 and 17:8 identify the promised land explicitly as the land of Canaan,

[33] E.g., John E. Harvey, *Retelling the Torah: The Deuteronomistic Historian's Use of Tetrateuchal Narratives* (JSOTSup 403; London: T&T Clark, 2004), 20.

[34] K. Schmid, "The Late Persian Formation of the Torah: Observations on Deuteronomy 34," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Rainer Albertz; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 240.

[35] Römer and Brettler, "Deuteronomy 34 and the Case for a Persian Hexateuch," *JBL* 119 (2000): 406.

and this land ideology is even implicit in the itinerary of Abraham's travels.[36] Genesis 13:10–12 relates the split between Abraham, who remains in Canaan, and Lot, who settles in the plain as far as Zoar, and Gen 19:30–38 connects Lot's territory with Moab and Ammon, who are Israel's kin and, in Deuteronomy, receive their own land holdings east of the Jordan.

Moses' visual tour in Deut 34:1–4, however, takes in a greater sweep of territory than Abraham's. This scene is anticipated in Deut 3:23–29, where YHWH commands Moses to look in all four cardinal directions as Abraham does. The list of place-names in Deut 34:1–3 specifies what territory Moses sees when he does this, and the order of names makes a large circle.[37] The tour begins with Gilead, which is elsewhere associated with territory conquered in the Sihon and Og narratives, especially in texts that deal with the allotment of this land (Deut 2:36; 3:8–16; Josh 12:1–6; 13:8–32; 17:1–6; 21:36–37; Num 26:29–30; cf. cities of refuge in Deut 4:41–43 and Josh 20:8; the ambiguous status of Transjordan as part of the land in Numbers 32 and Joshua 22; and Zelophehad's daughters in Num 27:1 and 36:1). It continues west of the Jordan with Dan in the north and moves through various tribal allotments and regions to the Negev in the south. In yet another reference to Genesis, Moses' gaze finally crosses back into Transjordan to see the plain, extending from the valley of Jericho to Zoar, which is the extent of Lot's territory (Gen 13:10–11). Thus, territory in Transjordan that is *outside* the land promised to Abraham in Genesis 13 is now *included in* the promised land that Moses surveys.

The references to the patriarchal narratives in Deut 34:1–4, then, do not principally serve to create a connection to Genesis for the purpose of forming a Pentateuch.[38] They instead serve the much narrower goal of *redefining the promised land* to include territory in Transjordan, the same purpose served by the addition of the Sihon and Og episodes to Deuteronomy's introduction. In fact, Deut 1:6–2:24a is

[36] K. A. Deurloo, "Narrative Geography in the Abraham Cycle," in *In Quest of the Past: Studies on Israelite Religion, Literature, and Prophetism. Papers Read at the Joint British-Dutch Old Testament Conference, Held at Elspeet, 1988* (ed. A. S. van der Woude; OtSt 26; Leiden: Brill, 1990), 48–62.

[37] S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy* (ICC; New York: Scribner, 1916), 420–21. Driver also notes that some of the places listed in the visual tour cannot actually be seen from Mount Nebo, which highlights the purpose of this scene as a vehicle for defining the extent of the land.

[38] The same can be said for arguments that Deuteronomy 34 is part of a Hexateuch redaction (e.g., Reinhard Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Numeribuches im Kontext von Hexateuch und Pentateuch* [Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte 3; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003], 318–20) or an Enneateuch redaction (e.g., Hans-Christoph Schmitt, "Spätdeuteronomistisches Geschichtswerk und Priesterschrift in Deuteronomium 34," in *Textarbeit: Studien zu Texten und ihrer Rezeption aus dem Alten Testament und der Umwelt Israels. Festschrift für Peter Weimar zur Vollendung seines 60. Lebensjahres* [ed. Klaus Kiesow and Thomas Meurer; AOAT 294; Münster: Ugarit, 2003], 407–24).

already connected to Genesis prior to that revision. Israel's kinship with Lot and Esau, discussed in Genesis, forms the basis for the distribution of land to Edom, Moab, and Ammon in Deuteronomy 2. Deuteronomy 1:6–8, like Genesis, defines the land as Canaan and expresses the imperial idea of a boundary extending to the Euphrates, also found in Gen 15:18–21.[39] This Cisjordan-only concept of the land is already identified in Deut 1:6–8 as the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.[40] Because Deut 34:1–4 has a different concept of what constitutes the promised land than 1:6–8, the two references to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob should not be grouped in a single compositional layer; as Suzanne Boorer points out, "the relative levels of texts cannot be determined on the basis of formulaic comparisons alone."[41] References to the patriarchal narratives in Deut 34:1–4 certainly reinforce the connection to Genesis already made, but their immediate purpose relates to articulating a new land ideology.

This purpose is evident in Deut 34:4's citation of לזרעך אתן את־הארץ הזאת ("To your descendants I will give this land") in Gen 12:7. Römer and Brettler note that the citation is slightly rearranged; את־הארץ הזאת is not in the citation itself but is placed at the beginning of YHWH's speech as זאת הארץ ("This is the land").[42]

[39] Reference to the boundary extending to the Euphrates in Deut 1:7 does not compromise this definition of the land as limited to Cisjordan because it simply conveys the extent of an ideal empire just as "Canaan" does; see Lothar Perlitt, *Deuteronomium* (BKAT 5; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990), 48–49. The classic source-critical approach associates the concept of the promised land extending to the Euphrates with specific boundaries that include Transjordan and regards both as Dtr because the texts that advocate these boundaries are found principally in Deuteronomy; see, e.g., Moshe Weinfeld, *The Promise of the Land: The Inheritance of the Land of Canaan by the Israelites* (Taubman Lectures in Jewish Studies; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 52–75. This approach fails adequately to address the *tension* in Deuteronomy between a Cisjordan-only ideology and one that includes Transjordan. There is no direct link between reference to the promised land extending to the Euphrates (an ideological point rather than a geographical one) and specific boundaries that include Transjordan.

[40] Römer argues that the seven references to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in Deuteronomy (including Deut 1:8b) are post–P/post–Dtr glosses designed to connect the patriarchs in Genesis with the אבות in Deuteronomy in order to form a Pentateuch; see Römer, *Israels Väter: Untersuchungen zur Väterthematik im deuteronomium und in der deuteronomistischen Tradition* (OBO 99; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), esp. 196–201, 251–56. While Deut 1:8b *could* be a gloss, there is no grammatical or text-critical reason why it *must* be. Because connection to Genesis is not limited to references to Canaan in Deut 1:7 (cf. Gen 17:8) and the three patriarchs in 1:8b but permeates 1:6–2:24a, it is better to see these elements as part of the Dtr narrative rather than isolated glosses, and a model that involves substantive revision rather than limited editorial work by a redactor seems preferable in this case. My point does not undermine the main thrust of Römer's argument that the אבות were associated with the patriarchs only at a relatively late stage of the Pentateuch's development; it simply involves an alternative model for understanding how the association was made.

[41] Boorer, *The Promise of the Land as Oath: A Key to the Formation of the Pentateuch* (BZAW 205; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992), 444.

[42] Römer and Brettler, "Deuteronomy 34," 405–6.

This rearrangement has an important rhetorical purpose: it creates a polemic against the land ideology espoused in Genesis and the basic Dtr introduction to Deuteronomy. את־הארץ הזאת does not have a specific referent in Gen 12:7, although Canaan is clearly in view when we consider the land ideology that permeates the patriarchal narratives. זאת הארץ, fronted in the clause in Deut 34:4, now refers to the geography of the promised land laid out in vv. 1–3, *which includes Transjordan*. Again, the purpose of the citation is not to establish a connection between Deuteronomy and Genesis, which had already been accomplished in a previous version of the text, but to *redefine the land* in a way that reaches all the way back to the first promise. Although YHWH speaks to Moses, Deut 34:4 is double-voiced, and the text also communicates to the reader: Forget what the patriarchal narratives or even Deut 1:6–2:24a said about the extent of the land. *This* is the land that YHWH promised to the patriarchs.[43]

Thus, the Sihon and Og episode in Num 21:21–35 (plus the itinerary notices in 21:11b, 13b and 22:1 that accommodate it to the previously existing narrative), its recapitulation in Deut 2:24b–3:29 (plus Deut 2:8b), and the now-final installment of Moses' death scene in Deuteronomy 34 all serve the same targeted, polemical purpose: they shape the end of the Pentateuch so that this new concept of the promised land dominates the overall picture despite tensions with the concept it was designed to replace, tensions that remain in the narrative and can be observed on close inspection. Because all three of these texts serve the same focused goal, it is likely that they have a single implied author and may even have come from the same scribal hand.

In its definition of the promised land, Deut 34:1–4 trumps the previous installment of Moses' death scene in Deut 32:48–52, where the land Moses views is limited to Canaan as it is in the basic Dtr introduction (Deut 1:6–2:24a) and Genesis. This has significant implications for how we understand Deut 32:48–52. The standard view was offered by Martin Noth, who viewed it as a post-P insertion that served to bridge the installments in Numbers 27 and Deuteronomy 34 when DtrH was connected to the Tetrateuch.[44] Noth's approach has been bolstered by Lothar Perlitt's insight that this and other apparently Priestly passages at the end of Numbers and Deuteronomy are best understood as having been written by a scribe who was

[43] Deuteronomy 34 in the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP) defines the land Moses views as extending from the border of Egypt to the Euphrates. Van Seters argues that the SP is "the more likely text" and corresponds to the way the land is defined elsewhere in his Yahwistic narrative (i.e., Gen 15:18) (*Life of Moses*, 453). But the SP reflects a harmonistic text tradition; see Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2nd rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 86–88, 94–97. The SP of Deut 34:1–4 is easily understood as a harmonistic reading because replacing the geography of these verses in the MT with an imperial concept of the land corrects the text such that it is consistent with the land ideology in Deut 1:6–8.

[44] Noth, *The Chronicler's History* (trans. H. G. M. Williamson; JSOTSup 50; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 121.

familiar with literature from both the Priestly and Deuteronomistic schools because they contain stylistic elements of both.[45] But given that Deut 34:1–4 deliberately changes the concept of the promised land found in Deut 32:48–52, we must rethink the place of this intermediate installment in the composition history of Deuteronomy.

Perlitt's basic insight is simply that a scribe can blend style and ideas from different backgrounds.[46] Deuteronomy 32:48–52 is essentially Dtr in character because it is dominated by Dtr concerns, but the scribe mimicked Priestly style because his goal was to link Deuteronomy to the Priestly literature in Numbers.[47] Perlitt suggests that the scribe responsible for this may be a redactor also responsible for material at the end of Numbers, which often exhibits a similar blend of features, and current scholarship that focuses on isolating late (post-P/post-Dtr) redactional layers is heir to this insight.[48] But blending is merely a technique. It need not be reserved for, let alone taken to be characteristic of, late redactors. In the case of Deut 32:48–52, blending was instead part of the strategy for incorporating Deuteronomy into the end of the wilderness narrative *before Deuteronomy 34 had been written*, and a case can be made that it goes with Deut 1:6–2:24a as part of the basic Dtr frame.

In order to make this case, relationships among the three installments of Moses' death scene must be reconsidered. Uncomfortable with Noth's proposal that P lost its ending (and thus its entry into the land) when DtrH was attached to it, some have concluded that P was not interested in the land and that P ended in the Sinai pericope with the establishment of the cult. This move has been coupled with efforts to expand the amount of material at the end of Numbers attributed to post-P/post-Dtr redactional layers, including the first installment of Moses' death scene in Num 27:12–23, which has typically been attributed to P.[49] Others, such as Norbert Lohfink, uncomfortable with the notion that P's land promise goes unfulfilled, have tried to find its entry into the land in Joshua.[50] Boorer points out that these efforts have been largely unsuccessful, but she suggests that may not matter because Lohfink

[45] Perlitt, "Priesterschrift im Deuteronomium?" in idem, *Deuteronomium-Studien* (FAT 8; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 123–43.

[46] I give this idea some roots in conceptual integration theory and discuss its potential benefits for understanding composition history in *Wilderness Itineraries*, 21–22, 36–39, 204–15.

[47] Perlitt, "Priesterschrift," 131–32.

[48] Ibid., 129.

[49] E.g., Eckart Otto, "The Pentateuch in Synchronical and Diachronical Perspectives: Protorabbinic Scribal Erudition Mediating between Deuteronomy and the Priestly Code," in Otto and Achenbach, *Das Deuteronomium,* 24–25; Horst Seebass, "'Holy' Land in the Old Testament: Numbers and Joshua," *VT* 56 (2006): 100; Christophe Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus* (FAT 25; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007); Achenbach, *Die Vollendung*, 302–34.

[50] Lohfink, *Theology of the Pentateuch: Themes of the Priestly Narrative and Deuteronomy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 141–42, 145–49, 153, 199–201.

describes P's journey to the land as timeless and paradigmatic, especially when read by an exilic generation for whom the promise of land *is* unfulfilled.[51] My own study of the Priestly itinerary notices suggests something similar: they are the result of an effort to emplot the wilderness narrative like an Assyrian annal in order to narrate the triumphal march back to Zion with the cultic equipment envisioned, but not realized, in Isa 52:7–12.[52] Reestablishment of the cult is a primary focus of this vision, but its narrative scope is not limited to the wilderness.

Thus, even if the Priestly wilderness narrative is a paradigmatic vision for the future, we should still expect a dénouement in which the Israelites enter the land, and Boorer leaves unanswered the question of where we might find it in P. Careful attention to geography can help. Deuteronomy and Joshua depict the Israelites' entry into the land from the east after they cross the Jordan. As I argued in *The Wilderness Itineraries*, however, some material at the end of Numbers depicts entry into the land *from the south*. The miniature battle scene in Num 21:1–3—a natural conclusion to the annals-inspired itinerary notices that structure the Priestly wilderness narrative—has the Israelites move into Canaan, having come from Kadesh through Mount Hor (Num 20:1, 22). A journey into the Negev region from Kadesh implies a journey north into Canaan from the south. The itinerary notice in Num 14:25 already has the Israelites moving south away from Kadesh, but this is a revision that facilitated the addition of Joshua and its conquest from the east as a new ending to the wilderness narrative.[53] We therefore do not have to look for P in Joshua in order to find evidence of Priestly interest in the land or assume, as Noth did, that its ending must have been truncated. This entry into the land from the south was *rewritten* and replaced with the now-dominant entry from the east when Joshua and Deuteronomy were incorporated into the wilderness narrative.

While it is beyond the scope of this article to interact fully with studies that attribute Num 27:12–23 to post-P/post-Dtr redaction, it is worth pointing out that this installment of Moses' death scene is also set south of the land. Verse 12 sets the scene at an unspecified mountain in the Abarim range. Our knowledge of where the Abarim range is located is fuzzy, but the oracle in Jer 22:18–30 provides some focus. It depicts a lament over Jehoiakim's exile coming from *every side* of Israel. The sides are specified by the mountain ranges of Lebanon, Bashan, and Abarim. Since Lebanon is to the north and Bashan to the east, Abarim is best understood as *south* of the land.[54] Noth and scholars such as Jean-Louis Ska are therefore correct

[51] Boorer, "The Envisioning of the Land in the Priestly Material: Fulfilled Promise or Future Hope?" in *Pentateuch, Hexateuch, or Enneateuch? Identifying Literary Works in Genesis through Kings* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman, Thomas Römer, and Konrad Schmid; Ancient Israel and Its Literature 8; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 113–24.

[52] Roskop, *Wilderness Itineraries*, 136–84.

[53] Ibid., 193–203.

[54] Ibid., 272–74. Because עברים appears independently in Jer 22:18–30, Otto's argument that the name was invented expressly for use in Deut 32:48–52 and was later used in Num 27:13

that at least a basic version of this scene constitutes the end of the Priestly wilderness narrative.[55] The revisions that accommodated Deuteronomy, Joshua, and post-P material at the end of Numbers now obscure what was once the ending of P, but it is not altogether gone, and Moses' death scene in Numbers 27 appears to be part of it by virtue of a geographical setting that is at odds with much of the rest of the Hexateuch.[56]

The task of incorporating Deuteronomy into the end of the wilderness narrative would have made it necessary to relocate Moses' death scene not only in terms of its position in the literature but also in terms of its geography, since this final scene had to be set in Moab. In order to accomplish this, Deut 32:49 repeats עלה אל־הר העברים הזה ("Ascend this mountain of the Abarim") from Num 27:12, but the otherwise unspecified mountain in the Abarim range is identified as הר־נבו אשר בארץ מואב אשר על־פני ירחו ("Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab facing Jericho") in order to give the scene an appropriate setting for its new literary context.[57] This blended reference in Deut 32:49 created a contradiction, since Mount Nebo, which is east of the land in Moab, is not really in the Abarim range, which is south of the land. In fact, the scribe who later added Deut 34:1–4 repaired this problematic reference and rightly situated Nebo in the Pisgah range (v. 1).[58] But the reference to הר העברים הזה in Deut 32:49, even if not appropriate for the new setting, is nonetheless important because it serves another of the scribe's goals: to blend Deuteronomy into the wilderness narrative by helping the reader make the connection back to the scene in Numbers and read Deut 32:48–52 as though it were a natural continuation.

A shift in land ideology is evident also in Deut 32:48–52. The Dtr scribe quoted וראה את־הארץ אשר נתתי לבני ישראל ("View the land which I am giving to the Israelites") nearly verbatim from Num 27:12, where the extent of the land is not defined at all. Again, quotation helps this new installment of Moses' death scene read as a continuation of the one in Numbers despite the changes. In order to define the land, the scribe added כנען between את־הארץ and אשר. This is clearly the same concept of the land that we find throughout the front piece of the Dtr frame in 1:6–2:24a as well as in Genesis. Mount Nebo is explicitly located *in Moab*, with the

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is implausible (*Das Deuteronomium im Pentateuch und Hexateuch: Studien zur Literaturgeschichte von Pentateuch und Hexateuch im Lichte des Deuteronomiumrahmens* [FAT 30; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000], 225).

[55] Noth, *Chronicler's History*, 129–32, 145; Jean-Louis Ska, *Introduction to Reading the Pentateuch* (trans. Pascale Dominique; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 146–53.

[56] As David M. Carr notes, "one thing the current discussion about the 'end of P' may suggest is that the end of an original P document may not be well preserved" by tradents who appropriated them (*The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011], 112).

[57] Roskop, *Wilderness Itineraries*, 272–74.

[58] On reference repair, see Herbert H. Clark, *Using Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 284–85.

Israelites still *outside* the promised land. The scribe also created a connection to the land promises in Genesis by adding לאחזה, which specifies the nature of the land gift in order to echo its character as an אחזת עולם in Gen 17:8. Thus, Deut 1:6–2:24a and 32:48–52 together provide a frame for Deuteronomy that advocates a single view of what constitutes the promised land, a view shared with the patriarchal promises.

The priestly motive for the death of Moses in Num 27:12–14 is retained also in Deut 32:51 in order to maintain consistency with the Priestly narrative, but it is adapted so that it complements the way the scribe has presented the motive in Deut 1:6–2:24a. As with everything else in this wilderness retrospective, the Dtr scribe changed the motive for Moses' death in order to illustrate his point about the importance of obedience to the law.[59] The Israelites in the spies episode become the paradigm of disobedience, while Moses is presented as a leader whose job it is to provide the model for obedience. The fact that the *Israelites* are blamed here for Moses' failure to enter the land is often taken as a statement of Moses' innocence.[60] But a look at how the motive is dealt with at the other end of the frame in Deut 32:48–52 suggests otherwise. Deuteronomy 32:51 is not quite a repeat of Num 27:14. Moses' sin in both cases is the failure to uphold YHWH's sanctity in the Numbers 20 rock/water incident. But in Num 27:14, it is cast as a general matter of rebellion (אשר מריתם פי) like the bulk of the wilderness complaint episodes, while in Deut 32:51, the word מעלתם is chosen instead of מריתם, and it is twice emphasized that Moses committed his sin *in the presence of the Israelites*. Although מעל and מרה are generally synonyms, מעל has a more specific meaning that involves violating sacred obligations—that is, failing to obey the law.[61] Deuteronomy 32:51 is thus more specific about the motive for Moses' death than Num 27:14. His public failure to set a good example of obedience is tantamount to dereliction of duty, and this motive, while it uses priestly material in order to maintain the strong connection to Numbers 27, enhances the Dtr message about obedience in Deut 1:6–2:24a. The Dtr scribe's treatment of the motive for Moses' death speaks to his effort to both convey his own ideology and help the entire book of Deuteronomy read as part and parcel of the wilderness narrative.

Moses' death scene in Num 27:12–23 (or a basic version of it) is thus a remnant of the end of the Priestly wilderness narrative, and the scribe responsible for incorporating Deuteronomy into this narrative repeated it in Deut 32:48–52, giving it a Dtr spin. The scene was repeated yet again by the scribe responsible for the now-final installment of Moses' death scene in Deuteronomy 34. We finally get the notice of Moses' death in Deut 34:5–6, 8, which appears to have been moved here from

[59] Lohfink, "Darstellungskunst," 107–14, 128; see also J. G. Millar, "Living at the Place of Decision: Time and Place in the Framework of Deuteronomy," in idem and J. G. McConville, *Time and Place in Deuteronomy* (JSOTSup 179; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 15–88.

[60] E.g., Lohfink, "Darstellungskunst," 113.

[61] *HALOT,* 1:612–13, s.v. מעל.

Deuteronomy 32, because Moses' burial *in the land of Moab* fits the geography of that passage, not Deut 34:1–4, where this territory is construed as Israelite (formerly Amorite), and because the statement in 34:5 that Moses died by the command of YHWH goes with 32:50, where Moses is commanded to die. The death notice has been updated to fit the present effort, since Deut 34:6 locates his grave somewhere in the area of Beth-peor, a place-name that appears only in texts related to the Transjordan revision: here and in Deut 3:29, as well as in the allotment to Reuben in Transjordan (Josh 13:20), which is clearly dependent on the Sihon and Og episodes.[62] Finally, the scribe blended it with the end of the Priestly wilderness narrative by applying the thirty-day mourning period for Aaron in Num 20:29 to Moses as well in Deut 34:8.

Deuteronomy 34:1–6, 8 thus rounds off a fairly extensive set of revisions focused on providing a new frame for Deuteronomy, one that espouses a larger vision of the promised land than the previous frame.[63] One issue the scribe created when he included Transjordan in Moses' visual tour in Deut 34:1–4 is that Moses is now standing *inside* the promised land, not looking in from outside, as is the case in Numbers 27 and Deuteronomy 32.[64] It is clear that the scribe was sensitive to this issue because he made a small but significant change in vocabulary in order to address it. Deuteronomy 32:52, as well as the end of the spies episode in Deut 1:37–40, emphasizes that Moses will not get to *enter* (בוא) *the land*. Deuteronomy 34:4, on the other hand, imitates the syntax of 32:52 but emphasizes that Moses will not get to *cross* (עבר) *the Jordan*. The anticipation of Moses' death in Deut 3:21–29 contains the same expression. Prohibiting Moses from entering (בוא) the land would be meaningless if he is already standing in it, but prohibiting him from crossing (עבר) the Jordan both retains the idea that Moses will not get to enter Cisjordan and accommodates his presence in the Transjordanian extension of the promised land.[65] Such subtleties, along with the ability to blend material from different backgrounds and show sensitivity to different literary contexts while doing so, features

[62] Philipp Stoellger, "Deuteronomium 34 ohne Priesterschrift," *ZAW* 105 (1993): 34–35.

[63] Deuteronomy 34:7 is probably a later addition. K. Schmid is right to see a connection between this statement about Moses' vigor at age 120 and the limit on human life span laid out in Gen 6:1–4 ("Late Persian Formation," 247–50). But Gen 6:1–4 implies that humans will *get old* and die no later than 120, a concept that is employed already in Deut 31:2a. Deuteronomy 34:7 picks up on this connection with Genesis and alters the concept by emphasizing that, although Moses died at 120, he showed *no signs of old age*. This change fits with the glorification of Moses in vv. 10–12, which are typically viewed as a later effort to separate Deuteronomy from the book of Joshua.

[64] Schmitt, "Dtn 34 als Verbindungsstück," 183.

[65] Use of עבר here has the added advantage of being yet another allusion to Genesis (12:6, where Abram crosses into the land), as noted by Römer, *Israels Väter*, 255. In addition to mentioning the Sihon and Og episodes, Deut 31:2b–6 also emphasizes that Moses will not cross (עבר) the Jordan but Joshua will, and these verses should be understood as part of this new frame for Deuteronomy.

that I have illustrated throughout this article, speak poignantly to the skill and cleverness of the scribes responsible for shaping this literature.

III. Conclusions

Perlitt's basic insight about how a scribe can mimic and blend multiple styles means that we must think differently about how we assign material to one compositional layer versus another. Style is certainly an important factor. But considered in isolation from other features of a text's shape, it can lead us astray; as Reinhard Kratz has noted, "we have to supplement the linguistic investigation with other interpretive criteria," especially if we wish to understand texts that contain a stylistic blend.[66] Geography is crucial for understanding the texts I have discussed here, although it has been frequently overlooked in favor of attention to stylistic traits.[67] Ideology and literary goals are also important. Schmitt, who noted the tension between these two concepts of the promised land, suggested a "late Deuteronomistic notion of Transjordan as part of the promised land."[68] But can we really call this expanded vision "Deuteronomistic" when the Dtr frame of Deuteronomy contains the very concept of the land this revision sought to change? We must also consider that use of style(s) may sometimes say more about the strategy for writing a text than what compositional layer it belongs to, as is the case for the Sihon episodes and the installment of Moses' death scene in Deut 32:48–52. Rather than evaluate a text primarily on the basis of style, we may be better positioned to study *all* the features of a text (style included), determine what the author's literary goals were, and consider how these features served those goals. Prematurely identifying a text as Priestly, Deuteronomistic, or a late redaction may prevent us from adequately engaging these questions.

We finish reading the book of Deuteronomy in its present form—indeed, the entire Pentateuch—with a vision of the land including the Transjordanian plateau. Why was this vision juxtaposed with the ideology it sought to alter? In various studies on biblical law, Bernard M. Levinson has emphasized the need to grasp the

[66] Reinhard G. Kratz, "The Pentateuch in Current Research: Consensus and Debate," in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid, and Benjamin Schwartz; FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 49.

[67] Geography is itself sometimes mistakenly viewed as a stylistic trait. For example, the concept of Canaan as the promised land is commonly understood as a characteristic feature of P (e.g., Sean E. McEvenue, *The Narrative Style of the Priestly Writer* [AnBib 50; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971], 119–20). Given the fact that both Priestly and non-Priestly texts in Genesis espouse this Cisjordan-only land ideology and that it is adopted in the Dtr frame of Deuteronomy, it is better viewed as a commonly shared concept of the land that crops up in a variety of literatures. A text that refers to the land as Canaan may be Priestly, but that needs to be established on other grounds.

[68] Schmitt, "Dtn 34 als Verbindungsstück," 183–86; quotation from 186.

exegetical nature of the Pentateuch's composition history if we want to understand its unique literary character. Pentateuchal redactors are really authors, whose techniques anticipate the rewritten Bible phenomenon evident in texts like the *Temple Scroll*. Rather than finding independent expression, their revisions are juxtaposed with received tradition in order to provide a new interpretive context and claim authority by interacting with it while expanding, updating, and sometimes subverting it.[69] The revision I have isolated here does exactly this, updating Numbers and Deuteronomy to assert that a vision of the promised land limited to Cisjordan is not expansive enough.[70] Levinson's observations on the hermeneutics of biblical law thus apply equally to biblical narrative. The juxtaposition of the two land ideologies in Deuteronomy is not the result of a compiler fusing independent documents but reflects a deliberate effort to influence how readers relate to the received tradition by creatively and substantively reworking it.

[69] E.g., Levinson, "The Manumission of Hermeneutics: The Slave Laws of the Pentateuch as a Challenge to Contemporary Pentateuchal Theory," in *Congress Volume: Leiden 2004* (ed. A. Lemaire; VTSup 109; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 281–324; and idem, "The Right Chorale: From the Poetics to the Hermeneutics of the Hebrew Bible," in idem, *"The Right Chorale": Studies in Biblical Law and Interpretation* (FAT 54; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 7–39.

[70] An adequate, nonspeculative effort to address the historical and social factors that might have motivated scribes to make this revision must involve detailed consideration of history and historiography related to Transjordan and must be saved for another context.