

ABSTRACT

PROPHETIC REBUKE AND NORTHERN REDACTION:
JUDGES 6:7–10 AS A TEST CASE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE
PROCESSES OF COMPOSITION AND REDACTION IN JUDGES AND
THE DEUTERONOMISTIC HISTORY

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Judges 6:7–10, which tells of an anonymous prophet rebuking Israel for not obeying YHWH, carries with it questions about the composition and redaction of the Former Prophets as a whole, and of the Book of Judges in particular. The classification of this passage as a redactional insertion is widely agreed upon, but the identity of the redactor and of the school to which he belonged is still disputed.

For over half a century, biblical scholars have casually attributed interpolations in the Former Prophets, including Judg 6:7–10, to the Deuteronomistic School. The publication of a small fragment of Judges from Qumran in 1989 (4QJudg^a) diverted the discussion to the realm of textual criticism but did not affect the customary attribution of the passage to a (late) Deuteronomistic, or sometimes post-Deuteronomistic, hand.

In this paper I review the arguments for a Deuteronomistic or post-Deuteronomistic attribution of the passage and highlight their weaknesses. I propose an alternative identification of Judg 6:7–10 as pre-Deuteronomistic. According to this suggestion, the passage belongs to a redactional stratum of a Northern composition that constitutes most of the Book of Judges as well as 1 Samuel 1–12 and influenced both Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic school.