

for instance), that patronage could be construed according to a specific conceptualization of kin, such as—in patriarchal societies—the patriarchal household (Smith 2001, 54–66). In such situations, the governing profile may be “father,” “patriarch,” and/or “ancestor.” In the patriarchal tradition, reflected primarily in Genesis, a similar relationship was established by covenant with Abraham (Gen 12:1–3; 17:1–14; 22:15–18) and affirmed by the males of later generations through circumcision. These texts reflect a specific framing of social circumstances that served certain rhetorical goals. In the exodus tradition, on the other hand, the covenant was established with the people of Israel through Moses (Exod 20:1–23:19) and affirmed through obedience to the Law of Moses. Conceptualizations of divine patronage were cumulative as they accreted to the growing authoritative textual traditions. Thus, in Exod 3:6, editors integrate the two traditions (or affirm that integration) by identifying YHWH at the opening of the exodus tradition as “the deity of your father [*ēlōhē ’ābikā*], the deity of Abraham, the deity of Isaac, the deity of Jacob” (Dozeman 2006, Schmid 2010).

A larger nation would likely construe patronage according to whatever frameworks for authority were most salient among elites, such as the KINGSHIP domain (Handy 1994). In such cases, the profile “king” obtains. The frequent use of the word “lord, master” (*’ādōnāy*), in reference to deities (particularly YHWH) and the root *’bd*, “to serve,” in reference to worship also evokes the SLAVERY domain (Bridge 2013), activating the “master” profile (Exod 4:10; Deut 3:24; 10:12, 20; Josh 5:14). In the case of textual conflation and change, as in the Hebrew Bible, different conceptualizations could be held in tension, achieving salience in different contexts or among different segments of the society. In the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid phases of Deuteronomy, for instance, Assyrian treaty language was combined with the Abrahamic covenant, the Covenant Code, and the concept of “devoted love” in the construction of a more complex framework for Israel’s patron/client relationship with YHWH. This framework included a “suzerain” profile (Deut 13:6–11; 17:14–20; cf. Judg 2:1–2)³⁶ and also embedded the husband/wife metaphor, facilitating a more salient “husband” profile (see Isa 54:5; Ezek 6:8–14; Hos 2:1–20).³⁷

A related but slightly more specialized domain that occurs in some instances is that of NATIONAL DEITY, which reflected the superordinate notion of a patron deity over each nation or people of the earth and their relationships to each other (Block 2000). This framework is put on clearest display in Deut 4:19 and 32:8–9:

³⁶ A suzerain is most commonly conceptualized as a strong sovereign state that exercises some manner of control over the foreign policy of a weaker internally autonomous state that usually pays tribute and offers military aid.

³⁷ On “devoted love,” see MacDonald 2003, 97–123. For a summary of the influence of the Covenant Code and Assyrian treaty formulae, see Levinson and Stackert 2012.