

The Emergence and Disappearance of the Separation between Pentateuch and Deuteronomistic History in Biblical Studies

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The aim of this article is to review the history of scholarship that led to the separation of the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History in biblical studies. While the material presented here is not necessarily new, it may be helpful to provide a close reading of the main arguments in the history of scholarship and to highlight the inner dynamics of the debate. In the 20th century there was one person in particular who influenced the literary evaluation of the relationship between the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History—Martin Noth. When Martin Noth died in 1968, Rudolf Smend wrote in his obituary: “In a broader sense, most present day Old Testament scholars are, to some extent, his students.”¹ Smend is probably correct in this conclusion. It is, however, another question, whether these scholars were right to follow in Noth’s path.

The fact that the quasi-canonical status of Noth’s theory of the Deuteronomistic History continues in Old Testament scholarship into the

¹ Rudolf Smend, “Nachruf auf Martin Noth,” in: *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament II* (ed. M. Noth; ThB 39; Munich: Kaiser, 1969), 114: “in einem weiteren Sinn sind heute die meisten Alttestamentler ein wenig seine Schüler.”

present can be demonstrated by looking at recent introductions to the Old Testament.

For example, in John J. Collins', *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*,² there are four main chapters that organize the Old Testament canon:

Part One: The Torah/Pentateuch

Part Two: The Deuteronomistic History

Part Three: Prophecy

Part Four: The Writings

There is one major difference between the Jewish biblical canon and the structure of this introduction: the books Joshua through Kings are not called the "Former Prophets," according to their canonical designation, but "The Deuteronomistic History," indicating that the influence of Martin Noth's thesis on contemporary biblical scholarship is so strong that his description of the Former Prophets has come to function as a deuterocanonical term for the same text block.

The four-part organization of the Hebrew Bible in Collins' introduction leaves the impression that the Pentateuch must be read as a distinct body of literature from the Deuteronomistic History, in much the same way as it

² Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004, v–vi.

would be separated from the Prophets or the Writings. This approach to the Hebrew canon has hermeneutical implications. For example, Collins is especially skeptical about Erhard Blum's thesis of a D-composition in the Pentateuch because the mention of several sanctuaries in Genesis apparently contradicts the Deuteronomistic ideal of a single central sanctuary in Jerusalem, a point also stressed by Christoph Levin.³ Collins concludes: "It is surely more plausible that the pentateuchal narrative was already established and authoritative before Deuteronomy was added."⁴ My aim is not to pursue this literary argument any further. It is rather to demonstrate that the strict separation between the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History began with Martin Noth and continues to influence contemporary biblical interpretation broadly.

How is this immense influence of Martin Noth's theory to be explained? Before Noth, in the 19th and early 20th century, many scholars reckoned that the Pentateuchal sources J, E, and P extended into Joshua, Judges, Samuel and even Kings.⁵ For example, Carl Cornill, Karl Budde,

³ Christoph Levin, *Der Jahwist* (FRLANT 157; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 430–35.

⁴ 63.

⁵ See Carl H. Cornill, "Ein elohistischer Bericht über die Entstehung des israelitischen Königthums in I Samuelis 1–15 aufgezeigt" *Zeitschrift für kirchliche Wissenschaft und kirchliches Leben* 6 (1885): 113–141; idem, "Noch einmal Sauls Königswahl und Verwerfung," *ZAW* 10 (1890): 96–109; idem, "Zur Quellenkritik der Bücher Samuelis,"

Immanuel Benzinger, Willy Staerk, Rudolf Smend Senior, and Cuthbert A. Simpson all reached this conclusion. JE and P were also clearly present at several points in the book of Joshua for Julius Wellhausen.⁶ What, then, was the strength of Noth's arguments that allowed him to challenge this broad consensus *successfully* and to propose a *strict* division between the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History?

Noth's argument for the literary identification of the Deuteronomistic History was twofold. First, he explained in his 1938 commentary on Joshua

Königsberger Studien 1 (1887): 25–89; Karl Budde, *Das Buch der Richter* (KHC VII; Freiburg/Leipzig/Tübingen: Mohr, 1897), XII–XV; idem, *Die Bücher Richter und Samuel: Ihre Quellen und ihr Aufbau* (Giessen: Ricker, 1890), 165–66, 268–69; idem, *Die Bücher Samuel*, (KHC VIII; Tübingen/Leipzig: Mohr, 1902), XII–XXI; idem, *Geschichte der althebräischen Litteratur: Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen von Alfred Bertholet* (Leipzig: Amelangs, 1909, 57–59; Immanuel Benzinger, *Jahvist und Elohist in den Königsbüchern* (BWAT 2; Berlin: Kohlhammer, 1921; idem, *Die Bücher der Könige* (KHC IX; Freiburg: Mohr, 1899); Willy Staerk, *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments*, (SG 272; Berlin: unknown, 1918, 11–16; Rudolf Smend, sen., “JE in den geschichtlichen Büchern des AT,” *ZAW* 39 (1921): 181–217; Gustav Hölscher, “Das Buch der Könige, seine Quellen und seine Redaktion,” in *Eucharistérion, Studien zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments* (Ed. H. Schmidt; FRLANT 19; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1923) 158–213; idem, *Geschichtsschreibung in Israel: Untersuchungen zum Jahvisten und Elohisten* (Lund: Gleerup, 1952); idem, *Geschichte der israelitischen und jüdischen Religion* (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1922), 135 n. 1; Otto Eissfeldt, *Die Quellen des Richterbuches in synoptischer Anordnung ins Deutsche übertragen samt einer in Einleitung und Noten gegebenen Begründung* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1925), idem, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament unter Einschluß der Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen sowie der apokryphen und pseudepigraphenartigen Qumran-Schriften: Entstehungsgeschichte des Alten Testaments* (3rd Ed.; NTG; Tübingen: Mohr, 1964, 178–79, 771; Cuthbert A. Simpson, *Composition of the Book of Judges* (Oxford: Blackwell 1957); see the overviews provided by Hölscher, *Geschichtsschreibung*, 7–19; Ernst Jenni, “Zwei Jahrzehnte Forschung an den Büchern Josua bis Könige,” *ThR* 27 (1961): 1–32, 97–146; Georg Fohrer, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (10th Ed.; Heidelberg: Quelle u. Meyer, 1965), 212–57. An early critical assessment of this assumption is provided by Rudolf Kittel, “Die pentateuchischen Urkunden in den Büchern Richter und Samuel,” *TSK* 65 (1892): 44–71.

⁶ Julius Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuch und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (3rd Ed.; Berlin: Reimer, 1899), 116–34.

that the book of Joshua has to be interpreted *without relying on the Documentary Hypothesis* and without presupposing that the traditional sources J, E, and P continue into Joshua.⁷ Strictly speaking, this idea was not original with Noth's, but rather with his "Doktorvater" Albrecht Alt, as Noth indicates himself in the preface to this commentary:⁸

Daß es möglich ist, auf diesem Forschungsgebiet heute weiterzukommen, als es früheren Auslegungen desselben Buches gelingen konnte, beruht in erster Linie auf den dem Josua-Buche gewidmeten, mannigfachen und grundlegenden Arbeiten von Albrecht Alt, mit dem ich auch persönliche viele die Auslegung dieses Buches betreffende Fragen besprechen konnte.⁹

The fact that it is possible for scholarly interpretations of the book of Joshua to be more successful today than was the case earlier should be credited foremost to the numerous and ground-breaking works of Albrecht Alt with whom I was able to discuss many questions concerning the exegesis of this book [sc. Joshua].

⁷ Martin Noth, *Das Buch Josua* (HAT I/7; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1938), VII-VIII.

⁸ On Alt see especially Rudolf Smend, *Deutsche Alttestamentler in drei Jahrhunderten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), 182–207.

⁹ *Ibid.*, V.

Noth relied in particular on a 1936 article by Alt entitled, “Josua.”¹⁰ In this work, Alt determined Joshua 1-11 to be:

eine Reihe von Erzählungen, deren jede ihren Daseinsgrund in sich selbst hat und darum auch dann ihren Sinn nicht verliert, sondern nur noch deutlicher offenbart, wenn man sie aus der uns vorliegenden Verknüpfung mit den anderen herauslöst.¹¹

a series of tales that existed on their own and which do not lose their meaning when they are detached one from another. Rather, they become much clearer when encountered individually.

Noth’s second argument was that Deuteronomistic editorial activity did not take place in Genesis through Numbers. This argument goes beyond the Alt’s influence. Alt never mentions J, E, or P anywhere in his article. Alt himself had something of a forerunner in Hugo Gressmann, who proposed a similar approach to Joshua in his 1914 commentary on Joshua in the *Schriften*

¹⁰ Albrecht Alt, “Josua,” in *Werden und Wesen des Alten Testaments* (ed. Paul Volz et al.; BZAW 66; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1936), 13–29.

¹¹ Noth, *Josua*, 14.

des Alten Testaments.¹² Noth explained the book of Joshua on the foundation received from Gressmann and Alt. He found different individual traditions in the book that were combined by a so-called “collector” (“Sammler”)¹³ whom he identified neither with J nor with E.¹⁴ This was a new idea that went against the position well established since de Wette. Noth stated:

Now the view that Dtr. started with the book of Genesis is obviously mistaken, for it is generally recognised that there is no sign of ‘Deuteronomistic editing’ in Genesis-Numbers.¹⁵

Given that the books Genesis-Numbers show no signs of such an adaptation by Dtr. and that these books, therefore, look completely different from Joshua-Kings, we can only conclude that the books

¹² *Die Anfänge Israels (von 2. Mosis bis Richter und Ruth)* (Vol 1:2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1914).

¹³ Noth, *Josua*, IX–XIII.

¹⁴ Noth, *Josua*, XIII. Alt points to the similar stance of Hugo Gressmann in Gressmann’s commentary of “Joshua” in his *Schriften des Alten Testaments I/2*. Gressmann characterizes the book of Joshua as a “Sammlung von Sagen” (14) but he still recognizes the continuation of the Pentateuchal sources throughout Joshua.

¹⁵ Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (JSOTSup 15; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1981), 12–13 (Original text: “in den Büchern Gen.-Num. fehlt jede Spur einer ‚deuteronomistischen Redaktion‘, wie allgemein anerkannt ist”; Martin Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* [Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1943], 13).

Genesis-Numbers, or at any rate the form of these books that antedated the Priestly work, were no part of Dtr.'s work.¹⁶

Noth, however, also qualified his second argument that Genesis through Numbers lack all forms of Deuteronomistic reworking, adding in a footnote:

Quite rightly, no one has yet, as far as I know, interpreted the occasional passages where the old text is augmented in Deuteronomistic style, e.g. Ex. 23:20ff. and Ex. 34:10ff., as sign of a thorough 'redaction'.¹⁷

With his notion that Genesis through Numbers is completely non-Deuteronomistic and that Joshua through Kings has nothing to do with the sources of the Pentateuch, Noth set the stage for the subsequent interpretation of Genesis through Kings in the 2nd half of the 20th century. Noth was certainly *the* pivotal figure for what might be called "the separation model," which assumes a huge gap between the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History, but he would not have been so successful without the help of others. To over exaggerate for a moment, please forgive me when I describe the "separation model" as a success only because of an explicit, but misguided

¹⁶ Ibid., 13. Original text: „[...] daß die Bücher Gen. -Num. bzw. deren alter, vorpriester-schriftlicher Bestand, nicht mit zu dem Werke von Dtr gehört haben“, Martin Noth, [*Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1943], 13.

¹⁷ Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History*, 103–4 n. 2; original text: *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, 103 n. 1.

compromise between Martin Noth and Gerhard von Rad. To be sure, Martin Noth and Gerhard von Rad belong to the most talented and gifted scholars of their time, but it was particularly their high reputation that allowed them to establish together—but ironically also to a certain extent *against* each other—a redactional model for the Enneateuch (Genesis–Kings) that was mainly based on a gentleman’s agreement rather than on good arguments. What supports this conclusion?

The roots of the scholarly compromise between Noth and von Rad emerged in 1938. This was not only the publication year of Martin Noth’s commentary on Joshua, but also of Gerhard von Rad’s study on the form-critical problem of the Hexateuch.¹⁸ These studies, however, came to *contradictory* results. Von Rad proposed an old Hexateuch, while Noth denied the existence of the Pentateuchal sources in Joshua. Nevertheless, Noth and von Rad ironically succeeded in proposing a harmonizing compromise to Old Testament scholarship that became the standard model. It included the following elements:

¹⁸ Gerhard von Rad, “Das formgeschichtliche Problem des Hexateuchs (1938),” in idem, *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (TB 8; München: Kaiser, 1958), 9–86. English translation: “The Form Critical Problem of the Hexateuch” in *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* (transl. E.W. Trueman Dickens; Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd Ltd., 1966, reprinted: London: SCM Press, 1984), 1-78.

1) von Rad's contribution to the compromise was the hypothesis of an old Hexateuch. He concluded that an older Hexateuch had once continued into the book of Joshua; however, 2) it was no longer extant in Joshua because it was replaced when combined with the Deuteronomistic History. The omission of the original Hexateuchal sources in Joshua was von Rad's tribute to Noth, and it gave rise to the very well known standard model for the compositional history of Genesis to Kings promulgated in the 2nd half of the 20th century. Recent scholarship, however, shows that this compromise can no longer be maintained because it gives birth major problems that can no longer be overlooked. This model must come to terms with an immense loss of text. It presupposes that the Yahwist's and Elohist's account of the conquest of the land were lost when their works were combined with the Deuteronomistic History.¹⁹ This is not only quite unelegant, but also highly improbable. Why should the redactors of the Old Testament invest so much energy combining and conflating older texts such as in Genesis 6-9 or Exodus 13-14 when they could also just leave out large sections? Yet von Rad gave in to Noth's exclusion of the book of Joshua from the Documentary Hypothesis

¹⁹ Martin Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions* (trans. B.W. Anderson; Scholars Press Reprint 5; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1981), 20;idem, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien: die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1967), 211.

and thus to the destruction of the Hexateuch theory: a Hexateuch without an account of the conquest of the land is no longer a Hexateuch. Von Rad illustrates his compromise with Noth in his *Theology of the Old Testament*:

Because of the thesis of Noth, who completely denies the occurrence of the sources J, E, and P in the Book of Joshua, the literary analysis of this book has again become uncertain. ... So until there is further clarification on this question, we do not take the picture given in the source documents as our starting point, but confine ourselves to drawing upon the older and later literary parts which make it up.²⁰

Noth also compromised his hypothesis of the Deuteronomistic History to incorporate von Rad's research on the Hexateuch. In particular Noth accepted von Rad's model of the very old and stable blueprint of the Hexateuch in the short historical creedal texts. At the beginning of his *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions* from 1948, he maintained:

This basic form [sc. of the Pentateuch] did not finally emerge as the later consequence of a substantive combination and arrangement of *individual* traditions and individual complexes of traditions. Rather, this

²⁰ Gerhard von Rad, *The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions* (vol. 1 of *Old Testament Theology*; trans. D. Stalker; New York: Harper, 1962), 298 n. 4. See already Gerhard von Rad, "Hexateuch oder Pentateuch?" *VF* (1947/1948, appearing 1949/1950): 52-56.

form was already given in the beginning of the history of traditions in a small series of themes essential for the faith of the Israelite tribes. [...] This has been clearly shown by Gerhard von Rad in his important study on the ‘Hexateuch.’²¹

This conclusion is rather surprising since Noth had developed a completely different approach to the composition of the Pentateuch in this book. He proposed a composition that developed from several independent traditions—what he calls “major themes”: “Guidance out of Egypt,” “Guidance into the Arable Land,” “Promise to the Patriarchs,” and so on. But, a peaceful man himself, Noth accepted von Rad’s theory of an old Hexateuch and therefore, he assumed that the independence of the “major themes” of the Pentateuch only belonged to the realm of its probable oral prehistory in premonarchic time. It is almost tragic to read passages like the following from Noth’s commentary on the book of Numbers:

If we were to take the book of Numbers on its own, then we would think not so much of ‘continuing sources’ as of an unsystematic collection of innumerable pieces of very varied content, age and

²¹ Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions* (German Original: 1948), 2. For a recent treatment see Jan Christian Gertz, “Die Stellung des kleinen geschichtlichen Credo in der Redaktionsgeschichte von Deuteronomium und Pentateuch,” in *Liebe und Gebot: Studien zum Deuteronomium* (FRLANT 190; ed. R. Kratz and H. Spieckermann; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 30–45.

character ('Fragment Hypothesis'). [...] It is, therefore, justifiable to approach the book of Numbers with the results of Pentateuchal analysis elsewhere and to expect the continuing Pentateuchal 'sources' here, too, even if, as we have said, the situation in Numbers, of itself does not exactly lead us to these results.²²

Without the compromise with von Rad, Noth probably would have advanced an approach to the composition of the Pentateuch more similar to that of the book of Joshua or the Deuteronomistic History as a whole, rather than to the source model. Then he might even have felt compelled to include the entirety of Genesis through Kings. But there was the compromise to be agreed upon, and in the aftermath of Martin Noth and Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament scholarship chose to remain in that golden cage for about half a century.

It is fair to say that the separation between the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History has started to disappear in current scholarship. Evidence of the problems in the Noth-von Rad separation model began to appear in the 1970's. First, there were the books by John Van Seters,²³ Hans

²² Martin Noth, *Numbers: A Commentary* (trans. J. Martin; OTL; London: SCM, 1968 [German Original: 1966]), 4–5.

²³ John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).

Heinrich Schmid,²⁴ and Rolf Rendtorff,²⁵ all from the mid-seventies, which in various ways suggested a much closer relationship between the Deuteronomistic History and the Pentateuch than the one proposed by the Noth-von Rad compromise. Van Seters and Schmid dated the Yahwist very close to the Deuteronomist and also detected some theological affinities the two. This was in fact a return to Wellhausen, who already found the Yehowist (that is the combined JE) and the Deuteronomists to be kindred spirits (“Geistesverwandtschaft”). Wellhausen himself even wavered about whether the “D” texts in the Pentateuch (which he acknowledged unlike Noth) should be attributed to the “Yehowist” (JE), who himself was something like a ‘Deuteronomist,’ or whether he should conclude that there was also a “D” redaction of the Pentateuch.

Dessen [sc. des Jehowisten] Geistesverwandtschaft mit dem Deuteronomium tritt wiederum auffallend hervor—wenn nicht ausser ihm noch ein Deuteronomist anzunehmen ist.²⁶

²⁴ Hans Heinrich Schmid, *Der sogenannte Jahwist: Beobachtungen und Fragen zur Pentateuchforschung* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1976).

²⁵ Rolf Rendtorff, *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch* (trans. J. J. Scullion; JSOTSup 89; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990); trans. of *Das überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch* (BZAW 147; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1977).

²⁶ Wellhausen, *Composition*, 94 n. 1.

Again, his strikingly kindred spirit with Deuteronomy appears—unless one should assume that there was another additional Deuteronomist besides him.”

Somewhat different from Van Seters and Schmid, Rendtorff argued for a compositional model of the Pentateuch similar to that of the Deuteronomistic History proposed by Martin Noth. Noth himself might have considered this type of model if he had applied his own methodology more carefully. Rendtorff theorized that there were major text blocks not only in Deuteronomy through Kings but also in Genesis through Deuteronomy that were subsequently linked together by a Deuteronomistic redactional layer. So, the history and the method of composition of the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History were understood to be closer to each other than was the case in the Noth-von Rad compromise.

Subsequent interpreters continued to move away from the synthesis established by Martin Noth and Gerhard von Rad. One example was the introduction to the Old Testament by Rudolf Smend published in 1978.²⁷ This work remained strongly influenced by the compromise of Noth and von Rad,

²⁷ *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments* (ThW 1; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1978).

while also differentiating Noth's Dtr into DtrH, DtrP and DtrN. Smend sympathized with the notion that DtrN could be present in Deuteronomy through Kings, as well as in Pentateuchal texts like Exod 23:20–33; 34:11–16, or Num 33:50–55.²⁸ Hans-Christoph Schmitt also provided an important contribution in the 1980's and 1990's among German speaking scholars that continued to move interpreters away from the Noth-von Rad compromise by advocating for an integral perspective on Genesis through Kings.²⁹ He reckons with a late Deuteronomistic redaction in Genesis through Kings, which represents a mediating perspective between Priestly and Deuteronomistic theology.

²⁸ Smend, *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments*, 115.

²⁹ Hans-Christoph Schmitt, "Die Suche nach der Identität des Jahweglaubens im nachexilischen Israel," in *Theologie in Prophetie und Pentateuch: Gesammelte Schriften* (BZAW 310; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), 255–76; idem, "Das spätdeuteronomistische Geschichtswerk Gen I–2Regum XXV und seine theologische Intention," in *Theologie in Prophetie und Pentateuch*, 277–94; idem, "Die Josephsgeschichte und das Deuteronomistische Geschichtswerk. Genesis 38 und 48–50," in *Theologie in Prophetie und Pentateuch*, 295–308; idem, "Die Erzählung vom Goldenen Kalb Ex. 32* und das Deuteronomistische Geschichtswerk," in *Theologie in Prophetie und Pentateuch*, 311–25; idem, "Das sogenannte jahwistische Privilegrecht in Ex 34,10–28 als Komposition der spätdeuteronomistischen Endredaktion des Pentateuch," in *Abschied vom Jahwisten: Die Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion* (ed. J.C. Gertz, K. Schmid, and M. Witte; BZAW 315; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002), 157–71; idem, "Dtn 34 als Verbindungsstück zwischen Tetrateuch und Deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk," in *Das Deuteronomium zwischen Pentateuch und Deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk* (ed. E. Otto and R. Achenbach; FRLANT 206; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 180–92; idem, *Arbeitsbuch zum Alten Testament: Grundzüge der Geschichte Israels und der alttestamentlichen Schriften* (UTB 2146; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 242–48.

Erhard Blum provided a significant breakthrough beyond the Noth-von Rad compromise in 1984, with his book on the composition of the ancestors' story in Genesis 12–50, and again in his 1990 companion volume on Exodus through Numbers and Deuteronomy.³⁰ He extended and elaborated Rendtorff's view from 1977 that the Pentateuch is basically shaped by Deuteronomistic and Priestly compositional layers. With regard to the Deuteronomistic texts in the Pentateuch, he developed the notion that they were composed within a literary horizon that overarches both the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History.

Vielmehr hatte sich bei Dtn 31,14f.23; 34,10 ergeben ..., dass diese KD-Komponenten als unselbständige Ergänzungen in einen vorgegebenen Zusammenhang eingebettet sind, näherhin in den Zusammenhang des 'deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerks' (im Sinne von M. Noth).³¹

It is apparent in Deut 31,14f.23; 34,10 ... , that these KD-elements are embedded as additions dependent on a larger given textual entity, namely the so called 'Deuteronomistic History' (in the sense of M. Noth).

³⁰ *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1984); *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW 189; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990).

³¹ Blum, *Pentateuch*, 109.

A closer analysis reveals that Blum actually reckons with two Deuteronomists. The first is the Deuteronomist that corresponds with Noth's hypothesis. This author, however, plays a minor role in Blum's research, so minor, in fact, that he is addressed, astonishingly in only one small footnote in the two large books on the Pentateuch:

Die verzweigte Diskussion über eine eventuelle interne Redaktionsgeschichte des 'DtrG' kann und braucht hier nicht aufgenommen zu werden ... Schließlich gelangen auch die diversen post-Nothschen Schichten- und Blockmodelle irgendwann zu einer Größe, die mehr oder weniger mit Noths Geschichtswerk übereinstimmt. Von dieser ist hier die Rede.³²

The complex discussion about the possible internal redaction history of the 'Deuteronomistic History' cannot and needs not be brought up here ... Eventually all the different post-Nothian layers or block models end up with an entity more or less identical to Noth's [Deuteronomistic] history. This is what I mean here.

³² Ibid, 109 n. 35.

There is also a second Deuteronomist that incorporated the traditions from Genesis, or rather—as he corrected himself in 2002—from Exodus to Numbers into a work reaching from Exodus to Kings. Blum writes of this author:

Damit legt sich eine Neubegrenzung der – vorpriesterlichen – ‘D-Komposition’ nahe: Ihr Handlungs- und Darstellungsraum deckt sich mit der Geschichte Moses zwischen Ex 1 und Dtn 34 ... ³³

Therefore, we should reckon with a new framework of the pre-Priestly ‘D-composition.’ Its narration coincides with the Moses story running from Exodus 1 to Deuteronomy 34...

The influential nature of Blum’s position, especially in the extended version from 1990, can be seen by the fact that most English speaking introductions on the Old Testament assume a D- and a P-layer throughout the Pentateuch, seen most clearly in Joseph Blenkinsopp’s introduction into the Pentateuch.³⁴

³³ Erhard Blum, “Die literarische Verbindung von Erzvätern und Exodus: Ein Gespräch mit neueren Endredaktionshypothesen,” in *Abschied vom Jahwisten: Die Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion* (ed. J.C. Gertz, K. Schmid, and M. Witte; BZAW 315; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002), 119–56 (at n. 165).

³⁴ *The Pentateuch: an Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (New York : Doubleday, 2000).

In the wake of this overarching D-perspective in Genesis to Kings, it has become more customary to speak of the so-called “Primary History,” a term previously introduced to Old Testament scholarship by David Noel Freedman in 1962.³⁵ This hypothesis could not be further removed from Noth’s classical stance, *which denied any genuine D-texts in Genesis through Numbers*. The separation of the Pentateuch into D and P layers has much more to do with the influence of Rendtorff and Blum than with Noth.

³⁵ Vgl. David N. Freedman, “The Law and the Prophets,” in *Congress Volume, Bonn, 1962* (ed. G.W. Anderson et al.; VTSup 9; Leiden: Brill, 1963), 250–65, especially 251, 254, 257; David N. Freedman and Jeffrey C. Geoghegan, “Martin Noth: Retrospect and Prospect,” in *The History of Israel's Traditions: The Heritage of Martin Noth* (ed. S.L. McKenzie and M.P. Graham; JSOTSup 182; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 129–52, especially 129; Sara Mandell and David N. Freedman, *The Relationship between Herodotus' History and Primary History* (SFSHJ 60; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), ix (see also 85); Paul J. Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History: Profiles of Moses, Joshua, Elijah and Elisha* (JSOTSup 224; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996); Ehud Ben Zvi, “Looking at the Primary (Hi)story and the Prophetic Books as Literary/Theological Units Within the Frame of the Early Second Temple: Some Considerations,” *SJOT* 12 (1998): 26–43 (see 26: »Primary Historical Narrative«); Sara Mandell, “Primary History as a Social Construct of a Privileged Class,” in *Concepts of Class in Ancient Israel* (ed. M.R. Sneed; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 21–35; Anthony Abela, “Is Genesis the Introduction of the Primary History?” in *Studies in the Book of Genesis: Literature, Redaction and History* (ed. A. Wénin; BEThL 155; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001), 397–406; A. Graham Auld, “Counting Sheep, Sins and Sour Grapes: The Primacy of the Primary History?” in *Sense and Sensitivity: Essays on Reading the Bible in Memory of Robert Carroll*, (ed. A. Hunter and P.R. Davies; JSOTSup 348; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 63–72; David N. Freedmann and Brian Kelly, “Who Redacted the Primary History?” in: *Sefer Moshe: The Moshe Weinfeld Jubilee Volume: Studies in the Bible and the Ancient Near East, Qumran, and Post-Biblical Judaism* (ed. C. Cohen, A. Hurvitz, and S. M. Paul; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 39–47; Jan-Wim Wesselius, “The Functions of Lists in Primary History,” in “*Basel und Bibel*”: *Collected Communications to the XVIIth Congress of the International Organization for the study of the Old Testament, 2001* (ed. M. Augustin and H.M. Niemann; BEAT 51; Frankfurt: Lang, 2004), 83–89; Jan-Wim Wesselius, *The Origin of the History of Israel: Herodotus's Histories as Blueprint for the First Books of the Bible* (JSOTSup 345; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002).

The most recent scholarship on the composition of the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets begins from the aforementioned self-correction of Blum, namely that the literary stratum of KD is best restricted to Exodus through Deuteronomy, and therefore does not include Genesis. Blum based this conclusion on two main observations:

First, it is quite obvious, that the “Deuteronomistic” idiom can be found more clearly in Exodus and Numbers than in Genesis.

Second, at least among German speaking scholars, there is a growing sympathy for the theory proposed first by Albert de Pury and Thomas Römer that Genesis and Exodus were not found together in a single literary work before the Priestly Code.

The discussion of these points is now documented in two volumes, *Abschied vom Jahwisten* and *A Farewell to the Yahwist?*³⁶ It is helpful to note that the English title is followed by a question mark in order to indicate that the “Farewell to the Yahwist” is more controversial in American biblical scholarship than in its European counterpart. In the wake of the literary separation of Genesis, on the one hand, and Exodus through Kings, on the

³⁶ Jan Christian Gertz, Konrad Schmid, and Markus Witte, eds., *Abschied vom Jahwisten: Die Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion* (BZAW 315; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002); Thomas B. Dozeman and Konrad Schmid, eds., *A Farewell to the Yahwist? The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation* (SBLSymS 34; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006).

other, it has become necessary to seek new solutions to replace Martin Noth's previous hypothesis of the "Deuteronomistic History."

The growing research on the literary development of the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets as an Enneateuch has most recently been gathered in a 2006 volume entitled *The Deuteronomistic Histories*.³⁷ It is not possible to summarize this publication, since the different contributions do not propose a new consensus. But this much can be seen: there seems to be some sympathy for speaking of "Deuteronomistic Histories" in the plural instead of in the singular. Some of the contributors are ready to recognize an old or original "Deuteronomistic History," located in the books of Samuel and Kings, and to identify subsequent editions of later "Deuteronomistic Histories." Examples of the different renditions of "Deuteronomistic Histories" include a version that may have extended from Exodus through Kings. Such a version of the "Deuteronomistic History" may eventually also have included Genesis, when the Moses story in Exodus-Joshua was later combined with the story of the ancestors in Genesis 12-50. The research on the "Deuteronomistic Histories" is ongoing and open to revision. Yet the hypothesis of multiple

³⁷ Markus Witte, Konrad Schmid, Doris Prechel, and Jan Christian Gertz, eds., *Die deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerke: Redaktions- und religionsgeschichtliche Perspektiven zur "Deuteronomismus"-Diskussion in Tora und Vorderen Propheten* (BZAW 365, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006).

“Deuteronomistic Histories” reaches back to the famous double theme of the “Deuteronomistic History” identified by Frank Moore Cross. He too argued that the dynastic promise to David (2 Sam 7) and the sin of Jeroboam (1 Kings 12) only extend through the books of Samuel to Kings, creating an early “Deuteronomistic History.” This early Deuteronomistic History is not present in Deuteronomy, Joshua, or Judges.³⁸ The same process of composition could account for much larger blocks of literature in the Enneateuch. The late Deuteronomistic reception of the sin of Jeroboam in Exodus 32 could point to a “Deuteronomistic” History” that starts in Exodus rather than in Deuteronomy. And finally, there are also Deuteronomistic texts in Genesis that exhibit distinctive features such as Abraham’s obedience to the Torah. This distinctive theme may point to a still later stage of Deuteronomistic reflection and composition as Erik Aurelius has proposed.³⁹

The reexamination of the Noth-von Rad compromise approach to the composition of the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets extends beyond the newer attempts to differentiate Deuteronomistic layers in Genesis through Kings. It also requires a reevaluation of Priestly texts in Genesis through

³⁸ Frank Moore Cross, “The Themes of the Book of Kings and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History,” in *Caananite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 274–89.

³⁹ Erik Aurelius, *Zukunft jenseits des Gerichts: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie zum Enneateuch* (BZAW 319; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003).

Kings. In the framework of the traditional Documentary Hypothesis, P was something like a proto-Pentateuch, beginning in Genesis 1 and ending in Deuteronomy 34. Today, there is a growing awareness that, 1) P probably did not covering the full range of the Pentateuch;⁴⁰ and 2) that there are redactional texts in Joshua through Kings that are clearly inspired by P but not necessarily part of a Priestly composition,⁴¹ e.g. in Joshua 13-21⁴² or in 1 Kings 8. So, not only the D texts, but also the P texts are relevant for any critical evaluation of the literary the entanglement of the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History. What emerges throughout the range of current approaches to the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets is the disappearance of the “separation model” between the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History. We probably also will have to overcome the separation between the historical and the prophetic books (Latter Prophets) because Genesis through Kings is a theologically open-ended unit: it ends with the loss of the land leaving the question of Israel’s future unanswered. Readers are apparently supposed to read on, but this is another chapter.

⁴⁰ See Lothar Perlitt, “Priesterschrift im Deuteronomium?” *ZAW* 100 Suppl. (1988): 65–87; Thomas Pola, *Die ursprüngliche Priesterschrift: Beobachtungen zur Literarkritik und Traditionsgeschichte von P^s* (WMANT 70; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1995); Eckart Otto, “Forschungen zur Priesterschrift,” *TR* 62 (1997), 1–50.

⁴¹ See Eep Talstra, *Solomon's Prayer. Synchrony and Diachrony in the Composition of I Kings 8,14–61* (CBET 3; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1993).

⁴² Enzo Cortese, *Josua 13–21: Ein priesterschriftlicher Abschnitt im Deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk* (OBO 94; Fribourg: Universitätsverlag, 1990).