



# The Samaritan Version of Deuteronomy and the Origin of Deuteronomy

STEFAN SCHORCH

Since 1953, when Albrecht Alt's famous essay "Die Heimat des Deuteronomiums" was published, the question about the historical origin of Deuteronomy became an important issue in the research on the Hebrew Bible.<sup>1</sup> Pointing especially to conceptual parallels between Deuteronomy and the Book of Hosea, Alt argued that Deuteronomy was not composed in Judah or in Jerusalem, but in the North. Although this suggestion has been followed by important experts of Deuteronomy,<sup>2</sup> Alt's theory is today far from being generally accepted among Old Testament scholars. One of the main reasons for this situation seems to be one weak point: Alt's study offers no explanation for how the idea of cult centralization, which is so prominently expressed in Deuteronomy (especially in chapters 12, 14, and 16), fits in the geographical context of Israel. Therefore, this issue seems to be worth reconsideration, and this will be the main focus of the following article.

The idea of cult centralization appears for the first time in Deut 12:5:<sup>3</sup>

You shall seek the place that the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes (המקום אשר יבחר יהוה אלהיכם מכל שבטיכם) as his habitation to put his name there. You shall go there...

This or similar formulae appear in the Book of Deuteronomy no less than 22 times. From the perspective of the received Masoretic text as a whole, the chosen place is clearly identified within the so-called Deute-

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<sup>1</sup> ALT, *Heimat*.

<sup>2</sup> The most important predecessor of Albrecht ALT was Adam C. WELCH, *Code of Deuteronomy*. Among those who found strong Northern traditions in Deuteronomy are especially Gerhard von RAD (see his *Deuteronomium-Studien*, 149, as well as his commentary *Das 5. Buch Mose*, 18), and Moshe WEINFELD, *Deuteronomy 1-11*, 44–57.

<sup>3</sup> The English translation of Biblical passages is generally quoted from the New Revised Standard Version (1989).

ronomistic history. Accordingly, the chosen place is Jerusalem, as expressed in the extant narrative for the first time in 1 Kgs 8:16 (LXX//2 Chr 6:5–6):<sup>4</sup>

Since the day that I brought my people out of the land of Egypt, I have not chosen a city from any of the tribes of Israel (לא בחרתי בעיר מכל שבטי ישראל) in which to build a house, so that my name might be there, and I chose no one as ruler over my people Israel; but I have chosen Jerusalem in order that my name may be there (ואבחר בירושלם להיות שמי שם), and I have chosen David to be over my people Israel.

This verse, together with eight similar references in the Book of Kings, creates a link between the promise יבחר ("he *will* choose") in the text of Deuteronomy and the fulfillment (וַאֲנִי בָחַרְתִּי "and I chose"), which not only entered both Jewish and Christian tradition, but subsequently became widely accepted within critical scholarship. Accordingly, most reconstructions of the literary and religious history of ancient Israel regard the demand for the centralization of worship as originating in Jerusalem, and as referring to Jerusalem from the very beginning.

Regarding the literary history of this link, it seems quite clear that the passages in the Book of Kings are linguistically and contextually dependent on the centralization formula in Deuteronomy and not the reverse, as can be learned especially from the analysis of the Hebrew formula in Deuteronomy לשכן שמו שם "to cause his name to dwell there."<sup>5</sup> Sandra Richter convincingly demonstrated that this Deuteronomistic formula is based on the Akkadian formula *šuma šakānu*, which literally means "to place the name."<sup>6</sup> Without knowledge of its source, the Hebrew translation of this formula in Deuteronomy seems to have been difficult to understand for the contemporary authors and readers of Biblical Hebrew, and it was therefore changed into the more intelligible להיות שמו שם "to be his name there"<sup>7</sup> by the text of the Book of Kings, while the original difficult phrase לשכן שמו שם is totally absent in this composition. Thus, the respective text in the Book of Kings is secondary to that in Deuteronomy.

On the other hand, it is generally acknowledged that Deuteronomy cannot be seen only in connection with the so-called Deuteronomistic history, but has to be taken as a literary composition on its own. Most

<sup>4</sup> According to Sarah Japhet, the text of Chronicles is here preferable to the parallel version in 1 Kgs 8:16, see JAPHET, *Chronicles*, 588.

<sup>5</sup> Deut 12:11; 14:23; 16:2.6.11; 26:2.

<sup>6</sup> RICHTER, *Deuteronomistic History*.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Kgs 8:16; 2 Kgs 23:27.

obviously, therefore, as the Deuteronomistic identification of the chosen place as Jerusalem is realized only outside the limits of the text of Deuteronomy, it cannot be taken for granted as valid for the Book of Deuteronomy itself, but we should look which identification is provided within the literary borders of this literary composition. However, if we confine our search for hints about the identification of the chosen place to the text of Deuteronomy in its present state, the situation is much more complicated. Within these literary limits and generally speaking, two ways for explaining the centralization formula seem possible and have indeed been suggested as explanations:

1.) The centralization formula originally has a distributive meaning, referring to different places, i.e. “wherever the LORD your God will choose to put his name there.”

2.) The centralization formula refers to only one, single place.

The first way, the distributive “wherever,” seems indeed not impossible from the perspective of Hebrew linguistics, although it would imply that the author of Deuteronomy was either not a skilled Hebrew writer or deliberately chose an ambiguous expression, since instead of writing במקום he could have written בכל מקום (“in every place”), thus arriving at a doubtless distributive meaning, as for instance in the altar law of Exod 20:24: שמי את שמי – “in every place where I cause my name to be remembered.” Moreover, looking on the conceptual implications of this understanding, the distributive meaning seems excluded both in terms of space as well as of time. That the formula aims at the synchronic existence of a number of chosen places, as Baruch Halpern suggested,<sup>8</sup> seems to make no sense due to the Deuteronomic concept of secular slaughter and in light of the fact that Deuteronomy presupposes the way to the holy place might be a long one (e.g. Deut 26:1–3). The alternative, i.e. that the author of Deuteronomy might have had in mind several successive chosen places, favored for instance by Gerhard von Rad,<sup>9</sup> seems to be equally difficult due to the Deuteronomic concept that Israel’s entry into the chosen land is the end of wandering and the beginning of a period of general rest.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> HALPERN, Centralization formula.

<sup>9</sup> See RAD, Das 5. Buch Mose, 67.

<sup>10</sup> See Deut 12:10: “When you cross over the Jordan and live in the land that the LORD your God is allotting to you, and when he gives you rest from your enemies all

Therefore, the centralization formula should be taken as referring to only one single place. Regarding the question, to which concrete place the Book of Deuteronomy refers, the text seems to provide a clear identification in 27:4–8, although the Jerusalem-focused exegesis of generations of scholars mostly ignored that the latter text is a clear response to the demand for centralization as expressed in Deut 12.

The relevant passage, focusing on the centralization demand, already starts in Deut 11:31, as the literary structure and a *Qitza*-sign in the Samaritan Pentateuch indicate:<sup>11</sup>

When you cross the Jordan to go in to occupy the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and when you occupy it and live in it, you must diligently observe all the statutes and ordinances that I am setting before you today. These are the statutes and ordinances that you must diligently observe in the land... (Deut 11:31–12:1)

The following passage starts in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural (אָבַדְתֶּם תְּאֵבְדוּן אֶת כָּל (הַמְקוֹמוֹת... "You must demolish completely all the places..." , vv. 2–12), continuing in the singular from v. 13 onwards (הִשָּׁמֵר לְךָ – "Take care..."). Due to the change in number and the presence of several doublets, the text is generally believed to be the result of a diachronic literary development.<sup>12</sup> For our present question, however, the reconstruction of subsequent literary stages within Deut 12 is irrelevant insofar as Deut 27 clearly refers to the text as whole, a conclusion which is based on the observation that Deut 27:6–7 uses the singular, like Deut 12:13–18, but follows the sequence of the plural passage 12:4–7.

The following synopsis exhibits the several parallels in structure and wording between Deut 11:31–12:18 and Deut 27:2–7:

	<b>Deut 11:31–12:18</b>	<b>Deut 27</b>	
<b>11:31</b>	When you cross the Jordan (כִּי אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים),  to go in to occupy the land that the LORD your God is giving you...	On the day that you cross over the Jordan (תְּעַבְרִי)  into the land that the LORD your God is giving you...	<b>27:2</b>

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around so that you live in safety". An analysis of the concept of "rest" and its history was provided by RAD, *Es ist noch eine Ruhe*, 101–108.

<sup>11</sup> ROFÉ, *Strata of the Law*, 223.

<sup>12</sup> See ROFÉ, *Strata of the Law*, 221–222.

12:2-3	(demolition of cult places)	–	
12:4-5	...you shall seek the place that the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes as his habitation to put his name there.	So when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I am commanding you today, on Mount Ebal, and you shall cover them with plaster. And you shall build an altar there to the LORD your God, an altar of stones...	27:4- 6a
12:6	There you shall bring your burnt offerings (עלתיכם),	Then offer up burnt offerings on it (והעלית עולת) to the LORD your God,	27:6b
	and your sacrifices (זבחיכם),	make sacrifices of well-being (זבחת שלמים)	27:7
	your tithes and your donations, your votive gifts, your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and flocks.	–	
12:7	And you shall eat (ואכלתם) there in the presence of the LORD your God, you and your households together,	and eat them (ואכלת) there,	
	rejoicing (ושמחתם)...	rejoicing (ושמחת) before the LORD your God...	

The synopsis demonstrates that Deut 27:4–5 indeed identifies the “place that the LORD your God will choose” (Deut 12:5) as the place of the torah-stones and the altar.<sup>13</sup>

We have to realize, however, that the Masoretic reading in Deut 27:4 בַּהַר עֵיבַל “on Mount Ebal” is almost certainly a secondary ideological correction, as opposed to the text-historically original בַּהַר גְּרִיזִים “on Mount Gerizim”, which is preserved in the Samaritan Pentateuch<sup>14</sup> and the Old Latin (*Vetus Latina*).<sup>15</sup> According to the original text of the Book of Deuteronomy, therefore, this altar is to be built on Mount Gerizim, which is the mountain of the blessings according to the framing passages Deut 11:29 and 27:12–13. Having made this observation, we may approach the problem of the context and the aim of this identification.

As a starting point, we should note that the Deuteronomistic designation of Mount Gerizim as the chosen place seems to exclude Jerusalem as the chosen place, since there is only one. Eckart Otto tried to avoid this problem through explaining Deut 27 as a late addition to the text, when Deuteronomy already was part of the Torah and, therefore, the altar on Mount Gerizim could be seen as covered by the altar law of Exod 20:24, allowing for several places.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, Christophe Nihan suggested explaining the altar law of Deut 27 as being composed from the outset with close and specific reference to Exod 20:

[I]n order to preserve the legitimacy of the Jerusalem temple [...] the mention of the Gerizim sanctuary in Deuteronomy 27 was deliberately presented as corresponding to the regulation found in the altar law of Exod 20:24–26 [...] and not to the Deuteronomistic law of centralization in Deuteronomy 12.<sup>17</sup>

Both authors, however, seem to have overlooked that Deut 27 was from the beginning written with reference to the centralization demand of Deut 12, and this latter text, unlike and against Ex 20:24, exhibits the

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<sup>13</sup> Compare ROFÉ, *Strata of the Law*, 225: “Only in Deut. xii and xxvii are places dedicated by the order of the Lord; in all other Biblical passages they are sanctified by His (or His angel’s) epiphany.”

<sup>14</sup> In the Samaritan tradition, although not confined to it, “Har Gerizim” is always written as one word only – הַר גְּרִיזִים, compare PUMMER, APTAPIZIN.

<sup>15</sup> See SCHENKER, *Textgeschichtliches*, 106–107, and compare already TOV, *Textual Criticism*, 95 n. 67.

<sup>16</sup> OTTO, *Deuteronomium*, 230–231. That Deut 27 is a late addition was already Alt’s conviction, see ALT, *Heimat*, 274 n. 1.

<sup>17</sup> NIHAN, *Torah*, 223.

concept of only one legitimate cultic place. Their solution, therefore, is not satisfying.

While these latter suggestions focused on the text and its development, other authors took the historical circumstances as their point of departure. According to Heinz-Josef Fabry, Deut 27:4–8 was inserted by a late Judean author, who aimed for a gesture of national reconciliation with the proto-Samaritans and their cultic places.<sup>18</sup> This theory seems to be excluded by similar reasons like Nihan's and Otto's. Due to its literary connections with Deut 12, Deut 27 does not designate the altar on Mount Gerizim as one possible cultic place *among others*, but as the *one and only* legitimate cultic place, delegitimizing all other cultic places, including Jerusalem. This makes reconciliation a rather improbable motif.

A different attitude was taken by Nadav Na'aman, who regarded the passages relating to Shechem in Deuteronomy (Deut 11:26–30; 27:4–10) and the Book of Joshua (Jos 8:30–35; 24) as the insertion of “a late, possibly Ephraimite scribe who sought to [...] reinforce the idea of Shechem as the chosen place,” after doubts arose whether the first temple of Jerusalem could be the chosen place, following its destruction in 587 BCE.<sup>19</sup> Na'aman's suggestion, however, apart from being rather speculative at several points, like the origin and textual development of Deuteronomy or the intellectual history of Judah, leads to the fundamental problem how a single Ephraimite scribe could expand the general textual tradition with several passages which must have been rather difficult to accept for his Judean colleagues. Moreover, since the transmission of texts in the Ancient Near East generally took place in a collective context, not in an individual one,<sup>20</sup> Na'aman's suggestion seems to overestimate the possible influence of a single scribe. Thus, his suggestion is rather improbable, too, and we will have to look for a different historical setting of Deut 27.

The only context within which the literary ambitions of Deut 27:4–8 are entirely understandable seems to be the cult on Mount Gerizim, with the author of the text being a follower of the Gerizim cult, and one may even be inclined to say: a proto-Samaritan. Thus, if we come back to our initial question regarding the origin of Deuteronomy, the altar law of Deut 27 becomes a new point of departure for approaching this problem and solving it. Against Albrecht Alt, who spoke only of Deut

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<sup>18</sup> FABRY, Altarbau.

<sup>19</sup> NA'AMAN, Law of the Altar, 158.

<sup>20</sup> Compare CARR, Writing.

12–26 when he suggested a Northern origin of Deuteronomy,<sup>21</sup> chapter 27 is obviously of Northern origin, too. And most obviously, the inclusion of this chapter must have occurred before Deuteronomy became accepted in Judah.<sup>22</sup> This occurred most probably during the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE, since at least some of the core ideas of Deuteronomy seem to have been known in Judah in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>23</sup> Given this observation, the most probable explanation for Deuteronomy's southward journey seems to be the Assyrian conquest in the late 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE, when large parts of the Northern elite fled to the South.<sup>24</sup> In an important study of Ancient Hebrew paleography, Johannes Renz demonstrated that after the Assyrian invasion of the North, the Northern writing tradition of Hebrew was continued in Judah.<sup>25</sup> This fact seems to be due to the integration of the Northern scribal elite into the scribal culture of Judah. Therefore, it not only goes without any doubt *that* Deuteronomy entered the literal culture of Judah, but we even know at least one possible way on which Deuteronomy might have travelled from the North to the South.

We may imagine that the strong Deuteronomistic references to the Gerizim cult must have posed a serious challenge to Judeans. Therefore, we will have to answer the question *why and how* Deuteronomy was adopted in the South.

One factor certainly was the integration of Northern scribes within Judean scribal culture already mentioned. Additionally, however, two further points should be reminded:

1.) One of the major issues the Book of Deuteronomy deals with is the composition and publishing of texts, as for instance expressed in the following instance:

You shall write on the stones all the words of this *torah* very clearly. (Deut 27:8)

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<sup>21</sup> See above, note 16.

<sup>22</sup> Compare ROFÉ, *Strata of the Law*, 225: "We can infer that concepts like the central sanctuary for all Israel and dedication by divine word originated in Shechem [...]."

<sup>23</sup> This seems especially true for the tradition related to the so-called Josianic reform as well as for the idea of textualization, which originates in Deuteronomy, see SCHAPER, *Tora als Text*, and, in the same volume, SCHNIEDEWIND, *The textualization of torah*.

<sup>24</sup> Compare ROFÉ, *Strata of the Law*, 225: "the author of Deut. xii 8–12 was either a Shechemite refugee who found asylum at the court of Jerusalem after the Assyrian conquest of Ephraim, or one of his native disciples."

<sup>25</sup> RENZ, *Schrift und Schreibertradition*.



The identification of the writing on the stones as “this *torah*” (הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת) means that the Book of Deuteronomy itself contains a reflection on its textual character.<sup>26</sup> According to Deut 27, the *torah* which was written down by Moses is the very same which the actual reader holds in his hands. Therefore, Deuteronomy’s quest for authority is not voiced by an anonymous author, but by the present reader’s copy itself. It is the authority of the “book within the book”, in Jean-Pierre Sonnet’s famous formulation.<sup>27</sup> As far as we know, this kind of authority claim is an invention of Deuteronomy,<sup>28</sup> and it certainly helped prevent the book from being put aside and forgotten, as well as its acceptance among its new readers.<sup>29</sup>

2.) The transfer of Deuteronomy to the South certainly involved its de-contextualization, i.e. the book was taken out of its original historical, geographical and sociological contexts. This de-contextualization must have meant that the book was open for re-contextualization, i.e. in Judah, Deuteronomy could be and had to be connected to a new setting. Proceeding from this latter general observation, we now have to look for the hermeneutical strategies of connecting Deuteronomy to the new Judean context.

Generally speaking, this new orientation was carried out through joining Deuteronomy with the Books of Samuel and Kings in general, and the centralization formula, with the concepts of Jerusalem being the one chosen place with the Davidic dynasty as its rulers, in particular. Regarding this latter connection, the link is created by the word *ואבחר* “I have chosen” in 1 Kgs 8:16, corresponding to the Deuteronomic formula *יהוה יבחר* “the Lord will choose.”<sup>30</sup>

However, yet another text-critical issue has to be dealt with, as the verbal form in the future *יבחר* is not the only reading, and the Samaritan Pentateuch preserves instead the reading *בחר* “he has chosen.” Regarding these variant readings, a broad scholarly consensus views the Samaritan reading as a late ideological correction from the supposed original reading *יבחר*, serving the needs of the Samaritan community. Most prominently, this judgment entered Emanuel Tov’s important hand-

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<sup>26</sup> See SCHAPER, *Tora als Text*.

<sup>27</sup> SONNET, *Book within the Book*.

<sup>28</sup> See SCHAPER, *Tora als Text*.

<sup>29</sup> Thus, it seems, that the claim of scriptural authority originates in the North of Israel. Jer 8:8 (עַתָּה שָׁקֵר טוֹפְרִים) even demonstrates that some circles in Judah were opposing it, compare SCHNIEDEWIND, *The textualization of torah*.

<sup>30</sup> See above, p. 23–24.

book on the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible as a paradigmatic case of textual correction out of ideological reasons.<sup>31</sup> However, Adrian Schenker has pointed out in two recent articles that the reading בַּחַר is not only found in the Samaritan Pentateuch, but is attested by some Greek Septuagint manuscripts, too, as well as by the Coptic and the Latin secondary translations of the Old Greek text of the Pentateuch.<sup>32</sup> This indicates that the Hebrew Vorlage of the Old Greek translation of Deuteronomy read בַּחַר, and in terms of textual criticism בַּחַר is therefore certainly the original reading, while the Masoretic reading יבַּחַר is secondary, being an ideological and maybe even an anti-Samaritan correction.

Nevertheless, the Judean readership seems to have had no difficulty seeing a reference to Jerusalem even in the original and uncorrected בַּחַר; that is, before the text was deliberately changed into יבַּחַר. This can be learned from Neh 1:8–9:<sup>33</sup>

Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples; but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are under the farthest skies, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place at which I have chosen to establish my name' (הַמֶּלֶךְ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּחַר, תִּי לְשֶׁכֶן) (אֱתֵשׂ מִי שָׁמַיִם)

This free paraphrase of Deut 30:1–4 and the centralization formula clearly contextualizes the latter within the life time of Moses and links it to Jerusalem. It presupposes, therefore, that the election of Jerusalem already happened before Moses, implying a concept of Jerusalem's pre-destination as the chosen place. This view probably draws on old local traditions according to which Jerusalem was the seat of El, the highest God, and of the heavenly assembly of the Gods.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the concept of Jerusalem's pre-destination as the chosen place seems to have provided the first possibility for understanding Deuteronomy as referring to Jerusalem, even before the change from בַּחַר to יבַּחַר was carried out.

However, the concept of Jerusalem's predestination is the basis for only one of the literary strategies which have been applied in the con-

<sup>31</sup> TOV, *Textual Criticism*, 94–95.

<sup>32</sup> See SCHENKER, *Textgeschichtliches*, 113–116, and SCHENKER, *Le Seigneur*.

<sup>33</sup> Compare SCHENKER, *Textgeschichtliches*, 115.

<sup>34</sup> Compare Ps 48:3, where Mount Zion is equated with *Tzafon*, the Northern seat of the assembly of the Gods: "beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King." – יִפְּהַ נֹרְמָן שׁוֹשׁ קְלִיפָּאָרְ, זְהַרְצַ יוֹד, קַתִּי צְפוֹקֵר, ית – מְלֹךְ, ב

text of the Judean re-reading of Deuteronomy. Yet a second strategy is attested, proceeding from the concept of the succession of several chosen places. This view is clearly expressed in Ps 78:60–68:

[60] He abandoned his dwelling at Shiloh, the tent where he dwelt among mortals [...] [67] He rejected the tent of Joseph, he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim; [68] but he chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion, which he loves. (וַיִּבַח אֱת־שֵׁבֶט יְהוּדָה אֶת־תְּהֵרָ צִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר אָהָב.)

According to this view, there already were chosen places before Jerusalem was chosen, but their election faded away. For 2 Kgs 23:27 and Jer 7:14.16 the concept of succession even opens up the possibility that the election of Jerusalem disappear, too. Thus, just as the other places before, Jerusalem may lose its special status as the chosen place:

The LORD said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel; and I will reject this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there (וַיִּמְאַס־תִּי אֶת־הָעִיר הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר־בָּחַרְתִּי וַיִּמְאַס־תִּי אֶת־הַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר־בָּחַרְתִּי וַיִּמְאַס־תִּי אֶת־הַיְהוָה שְׁמִי שָׁם (2 Kgs 23:27))

Following this succession theory, Judeans could accept that Mount Gerizim was one of the chosen places of the past, while Jerusalem was the chosen place of the present and the future.

That these Judean re-readings of Deuteronomy had some textual difficulties, both in the original text of the centralization formula, which contained the reading “the place which the LORD has chosen” (הַמְּקוֹם (אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר יְהוָה), and in the localization of the altar at Mount Gerizim (Deut 27:4), was, it seems, only realized in the late Second temple period, within the context of a changing scribal culture which shifted its attention from the textual deep-structure to the textual surface, and in connection with an ongoing discussion about the exact determination of the chosen place.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, there is enough evidence preserved to date the textual corrections from יבחר to בחר in the centralization formula, and from הר עיבל to הר גריזים in Deut 27:4, which was carried out in the textual tradition which was the historical basis for the Masoretic text.

As mentioned above, the Old Greek translation of Deuteronomy, dating to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE, exhibits the unchanged text of Deuteronomy, i.e. the verbal form in the perfect “he has chosen” in the centralization formula, and the reading Gerizim in Deut 27:4. The halachic text

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<sup>35</sup> See below.

from Qumran 4QMMT, dating to the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, still attests the centralization formula with the perfect reading בחר:

[...] – “For Jerusalem is the holy camp. It is the place that He chose from all the tribes of [Israel ...]”<sup>36</sup>

The Temple scroll, on the other hand, dating to the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, contains the verb in the future:

– “You are to eat those before Me annually in the place that I shall choose.” (11Q19 52:9)

– “and rejoice before Me in the place that I will choose to establish My name” (11Q19 52:16)

– “in the place where I shall choose to establish My name” (11Q19 56:5)

– “to the place where I will choose to establish My name” (11Q19 60:13–14)

Thus, the textual change from “he has chosen” (בחר) to “he will chose” (יבחר) seems to have taken place in the period between 4QMMT and the Temple Scroll, i.e. around the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE.

Yet a further question should be considered: If the verb בחר was left unchanged until the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, why was it corrected into יבחר in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE?

A number of textual witnesses attest that in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, under the rule of the Hasmoneans, the location of the chosen place became an important question. On the one hand side, the exact halachic status of Jerusalem seems to have needed clarification. Thus, 4QMMT shows that discussions about the status of Jerusalem took place in the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, proceeding from certain textual tensions between the centralization formula in Deuteronomy and the reference to the centralization formula in the Book of Kings. The centralization formula speaks about a place for making offerings, namely a sanctuary, but Jerusalem is a city. Therefore, the question yet to be answered was that of the exact relation between sanctuary and city. The oldest evidence that this question became an issue can already be detected in

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<sup>36</sup> 4Q394 f8 iv:9–11; compare KRATZ, The place which He has chosen, 72–73.

Chronicles. According to 2 Chr 3:1, for instance, the chosen place appears to be not Jerusalem in general, but rather specifically the place where the temple is to be built, i.e. Mount Moriya and the threshing floor of Arauna:

Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had designated, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

However, in spite of instances like this, Chronicles exhibits no systematic tendency to deal with that question. In 4QMMT, conversely, the exact location of the chosen place became an explicit issue: 4QMMT solves the problem by declaring both the temple as well as the city of Jerusalem as chosen, holy places, but attributing to the temple a higher measure of sanctity than to the city.<sup>37</sup> Thus, 4QMMT clearly shows that an increasing interest in the exegesis of the centralization law and the location of the chosen place was at stake.

On the other hand, the attitude towards the proto-Samaritan Gerizim-followers changed dramatically for the worse, reaching its peak with John Hyrcanus' destruction of the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim (128 BCE) and the city of Shechem (106 BCE).<sup>38</sup> Thus, the textual changes from *בָּהָר* to *יְבֵהָר* in the centralization formula and from "Gerizim" to "Ebal" in Deut 27:4 seem to have taken place within the contexts of an intensified exegetical interest in the centralization formula and the total delegitimation of Mount Gerizim and the proto-Samaritan claims of its sanctity.

Like the Jews, the (proto-)Samaritans, too, introduced some textual interpolations in order to strengthen their position. The most substantial of them is the addition of the passage concerning the veneration of Mount Gerizim after the Ten Commandments.<sup>39</sup>

We may conclude, therefore, as follows: "Die Heimat des Deuteronomiums" seems to have been the Northern Kingdom, as was already suggested by Albrecht Alt, although Alt didn't realize Deuteronomy's focus on Mount Gerizim. In spite of this focus, however, Deuteronomy was adopted in the South, too, where it arrived most probably through the hands of refugees who fled from the North after the Assyrian conquest. The fact that Deuteronomy was understood as the textual proof for the geographical and historical claims of both the followers of

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<sup>37</sup> Compare KRATZ, The place which He has chosen.

<sup>38</sup> See SCHORCH, La formation, 5–10.

<sup>39</sup> See DEXINGER, Garizimgebot.

Mount Gerizim and Mount Zion seems to have been one of the major factors which made Deuteronomy one of the most read Hebrew books in the Hellenistic and Roman age, a fact which is at least suggested by the number of manuscripts of the different literary compositions preserved in the Judean desert.

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