Deuteronomy was, from its origin in the late Assyrian epoch on, a book that served the aim to define Judah’s identity as intensively as no other book in the Hebrew Bible. In the Neo-Assyrian period of the 7th century B.C.E. the authors of Deuteronomy pursued this aim by stressing the differences between Judah and its God and the Assyrian imperial power and its royal ideology, subversively taking over texts of the Assyrian legitimation of Sargonid rule like the loyalty oath for Esarhaddon in Deut 13* and Deut 28*.\(^1\) The exilic-deuteronomistic Deuteronomy was formed by the Moses-idea, and here again anti-Babylonian attitudes were woven into Deut 1–11 and 29–30, when the deuteronomistic authors attributed functions of a law-giver and military leader of his people to Moses, functions that were typical royal functions and that recalled the Old Babylonian Hammurapi, on the one hand, and the late Babylonian Nabonidus, on the other.

\(^1\) Cf. E. Otto, *Das Deuteronomium. Politische Theologie und Rechtsreform in Juda und Assyrien* (BZAW 284; Berlin – New York, 1999), pp. 15–90. For the reception of Assurbanipal’s coronation hymn in Psalm 72 cf. M. Arneth, “Sonne der Gerechtigkeit”. *Studien zur Solarisierung der Jahwe-Religion im Lichte von Psalm 72* (Wiesbaden, 2000), pp. 54–108. For some theologians it is even today a problem that non-Judean texts were used in the Hebrew Bible, which means that they look at this use with the eyes of the so-called “Religionsgeschichtliche Schule” of the early 20th century. But these processes of subversive receptions were entirely different from that which the exegetes of the Religionsgeschichtliche Schule thought receptions to be. In their eyes receptions happened because Judah did not have the corresponding ideas in her own traditions, so that they had to borrow from Mesopotamia and Egypt. But the texts of the Assyrian royal ideology like the Sargon-legend in Ex 2 or Esarhaddon’s loyalty oath in Deut were subversively used in order to subvert their meaning of legitimation for the Assyrian king and so that YHWH or Moses took over his functions. Nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible can we observe the feeling of Judean authors for their otherness compared to the Assyrian superpower than here in the preexilic Deuteronomy; cf. E. Otto, “Political Theology in Judah and Assyria. The Beginning of the Hebrew Bible as Literature”, *SEA* 65 (2000), pp. 59–76.
This does not mean that the messages of the preexilic-deuteronomic and exilic-deuteronomistic Deuteronomy were overshadowed by the anti-Assyrian and anti-Babylonian motives – not at all. The preexilic Deuteronomy delivered a program of brotherly and sisterly ethics for an ideal “Israel”, a program that was even during the exile thought to be valid for a postexilic period. The deuteronomistic framework in Deut 1–11 and 29–30 also tried to answer important questions: if the exile would be the end of Israel’s history, if the covenant of YHWH with His people would be still valid, if a new history after the exile could fail as the preexilic history (Deut 4; 9–10; 26), and if there would be any justice for the second generation in exile, who were not responsible for the catastrophe of 587/86 B.C.E. (Deut 1–3; 29–30). The literary history of Deuteronomy did not end with its deuteronomistic redaction during the exile. In the postexilic-Achaemenid era Deuteronomy was incorporated in a post-priestly Hexateuch, which was formed out of the deuteronomistic-exilic Deuteronomy, connected with the deuteronomistic book of Joshua from Deut 1 to Josh 23. The authors of the Hexateuch combined this deuteronomistic Deuteronomy, which started the narrative at the mountain of Horeb (Deut 1) and ended with Joshua’s valedictory address (Josh 23), with the priestly source starting with the creation of the world (Gen 1) and ending at Mount Sinai (Ex 29; [Lev 16]). For the authors of the postexilic Hexateuch, who were writing in the period of Nehemiah in the middle of the 5th century B.C.E., it was rather easy to connect P and D, so that they formed a corpus from the creation in Gen 1 to Joshua’s covenant in Josh 24. For these authors the possession of the land was the most decisive gift YHWH had given to His people. This motif forms a framework around the Hexateuch (Gen 15:18; Josh 24:13). The authors of the Hexateuch pursued the ideal of a greater “Israel” including Samaria of the “ten tribes” and thereby took an anti-Nehemianic position. It was not only the inner-Judean debates that were guiding these authors, but also the refutation of imperial ideology of the Persian hegemonial power ruling

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