

# The Literary Transition in Joshua 23–Judges 2

## Observations and Considerations

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One, if not the, main difference between the various proposals in scholarship for the explanation of the transition between the books of Joshua and Judges is the starting point of the analysis. Do we begin with the external textual evidence, here the textual overlap in Josh 24:28–31 || Judg 2:6–10, and the narrative connections that it shows, or with the conceptual differentiation of the chapters regarding the subject of “Israel, the land and the people” and the relative chronology which follows from this differentiation? After some deliberation, I have decided to begin with the external evidence and to try to bring this into line with the conceptual perspectives. And so, rather than presenting a completed hypothesis, this contribution will offer observations and ask the questions that arose as I went through the text once more. The following remarks make reference to the fundamental suggestions of Noth<sup>1</sup> as well as to the contributions of Blum,<sup>2</sup> Rösel,<sup>3</sup> Becker<sup>4</sup> and Jericke.<sup>5</sup> As far as possible, I abstain from making reference to my own proposal here.<sup>6</sup>

### A. The Text at Hand: Joshua’s Double Death

No matter whether we regard Joshua and Judges as being parts of one literary work (e.g., the Deuteronomistic History, DtrH) or we read the two books as being sequels of two interrelated scrolls in the context of the well-known *historia sacra* of Israel, we encounter a problem in Judg 2:6–10: The section Judg 1:1–2:5 takes place “after the death of Joshua,” an event which is reported in Josh 24:29–30 after two farewell speeches and the dismissal of the people in Josh 24:28, and it is assumed in Judg 1:1. Then, Judg 2:6–10 once

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<sup>1</sup> NOTH, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, 6–9.

<sup>2</sup> BLUM, *Komposition*; IDEM, *Studien*; IDEM, ‘Knoten’ = IDEM, *Textgestalt*, 249–280.

<sup>3</sup> RÖSEL, ‘Überleitungen’, 342–350; IDEM, *Von Josua bis Jojachin*.

<sup>4</sup> BECKER, *Richterzeit*.

<sup>5</sup> JERICKE, ‘Josuas Tod’.

<sup>6</sup> KRATZ, *Composition*, 197–200 = *Komposition*, 204–208; IDEM, ‘Hexateuch’, 299–

again reports Joshua's dismissal of the people as well as his death and burial using *wayyiqtol* forms, i.e., in the usual narrative style.

The problem can be explained in a number of ways. If we approach it from the Pentateuch and are advocates of the Classical or the Neo-Documentary Hypothesis, we would most certainly (have to) conclude a mechanical connection of two formerly independent sources made by an editor who was either unobservant or uninterested in the logic of the narrative: a Joshua-source, which at least would still have to include Judg 1 and perhaps even stretch as far as Judg 2:5, and a Judges-source, which began either in Judg 2:1 or 2:6. As always with the Documentary Hypothesis, the explanation involves a number of gaps that have to be filled by the reader's postulated prior knowledge of the larger narrative context or – which amounts to the same thing – by the reader's own imagination. And, as always, the solution involves a disregard of the narrative and literary connections between textual units, which are distributed over various sources; any gaps produced by this are then filled with the supposed reader's knowledge or imagination.<sup>7</sup> Also speaking against a source-critical solution is the argument, inherent in the system, that “the editor” in the Pentateuch did not usually inform us in duplicate or triplicate of births and/or deaths from his “sources” (J, E, P), but took from one source only, corresponding to the narrative logic. The distribution over various sources therefore does not seem to me to offer an appropriate solution to the problem.

The alternative is to begin by accepting the text as it has been handed down and trying to make sense of it as it is. In my opinion this can only happen if Judg 2:6–10 is read as a flashback in the pluperfect tense to qualify theologically the situation “after the death of Joshua” at the conclusion of the events in Judg 1:1–2:5, and to form a transition to the ups and downs that follow in the era of the Judges. This then reads something along the lines of:

When Joshua had dismissed the people and the children of Israel each received his inheritance, the people served Yhwh, and this continued for as long as Joshua lived and for some time beyond. But when Joshua died and was buried and his generation also passed away, a new generation appeared that did not know Yhwh, etc.

Understanding the narrative forms (*wayyiqtol*) as being in the pluperfect tense is not indicated grammatically (e.g., by an initial *qatal* *וַיָּהֲרֹשֶׁעַ שְׁלַח*), but – especially in a secondary understanding – is not completely excluded either.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> In passing it should be noted that the situation is reminiscent of the Joseph story, which is regarded as independent by arguing that Rachel is already dead in Gen 35:18–20 but presented as being alive in 37:10 (which I believe to be incorrect). See EDE, *Josefs-geschichte*, 26–27 n. 21.

<sup>8</sup> For the grammar, see GESENIUS/KAUTZSCH, *Grammatik*, 329 (111q); WALTKE/O'CONNOR, *Introduction*, 552–553 (33.2.3); JOÜON/MURAOKA, *Grammar*, 390–391

Support for an understanding of Judg 2:6–10 as being in the pluperfect tense is provided by the change of generation, which is reminiscent of Exod 1:6, 8, and extends beyond the death in Josh 24 and Judg 1. Even Josh 24:31 looks temporally beyond Joshua’s death; Judg 2 takes this up in v. 7 and introduces the change of generation in v. 10. The transition of the notice in Josh 24:31, which follows the death of Joshua in Josh 24 (vv. 29–30) before his death in Judg 2:7 (and Josh 24 LXX), could also be related to the change of generation. The events in Judg 1:1–2:5 would then still belong in the time of Joshua’s generation, namely before and after his death, and everything that follows concerns only the next generation.

However, just because the text (albeit contrary to the usual grammar) can be read as a meaningful unit in this way does not mean that it is also literarily consistent. The cumbersome restatement of Joshua’s death, demonstrating in both cases contact with other book transitions (cf. Deut 34 || Josh 1:1 with Josh 24 || Judg 1:1; and Gen 50:26 || Exod 1:6, 8 with Judg 2:7–10), the differences in the formulation as well as the position at the edges of the books of Joshua and Judges rather suggests that the text has grown literarily. The massive collection of various endings in Josh 11 and 21–24 and of programmatic introductions in Judg 1–3 with their different conceptual profiles points in this direction. Therefore, it is correct to speak of a “compositional knot” (Blum) that must be disentangled.

## B. The Textual Basis: MT and LXX

The complexity of this “compositional knot” is particularly evident in the textual overlaps in Josh 24:28–31 and Judg 2:6–10 at the transition from Josh 24 to Judg 1–2 and their variations. Added to this is the differing textual tradition in the Septuagint, which needs to be taken into account in the tradition-historical reconstruction.<sup>9</sup>

The Masoretic version exhibits significant differences in formulation and a change in the order of the narrative elements:

Josh 24:28 = Judg 2:6 with plus: לרשת את הארץ ... יילכו בני ישראל

Josh 24:31 = Judg 2:7: הגדול אשר ראו/ואשר ידעו; ויעבדו העם/ויעבד ישראל, plus in Judg 2 continuation or supplementation of Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:7 at 2:10 (וגם כל הדור ההוא); re-sumption v. 7 (וגם את המעשה אשר עשה לישראל)

Josh 24:29–30 = Judg 2:8–9 (+10): plus in Josh 24 ויהי אחרי הדברים האלה name of the burial place בתמנת חרס בהר אפרים or בתמנת סרח אשר בהר אפרים

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(118d). According to BLUM, *Komposition*, 55–56 (with n. 60), the supplements in Josh 24–Judg 2:9 are responsible for the grammatical incongruity.

<sup>9</sup> See the synopsis in the contribution by Samuel in this volume (part II, section 1).

Although a comparison of the texts does not lead to a clear result, it does reveal the following trends: 1) The additions in Judg 2:6 seem to suggest the priority of Josh 24:28. 2) The additions in Josh 24:29–30 speak more for the priority of Judg 2:8–9. 3) I am not quite sure about Josh 24:31 and Judg 2:7, 10, but I would tend towards the priority of Judg 2:7–10 over Josh 24:31.<sup>10</sup>

In Josh 24, the Septuagint offers the text of Josh 24 MT but in the order of Judg 2:6–9 and also shows some significant pluses. In Judg 2, the Septuagint corresponds to MT. What follows is the order of Josh 24 in LXX:

Josh 24:28 = Judg 2:6

Josh 24:29 (v. 31 MT) = Judg 2:7, deviating from MT in LXX: εἰδωσαν = “see” (הִרְאָה) and ἐγνώσαν = “recognize” (יָדַע) in Judg 2:7 (as in 2:10 MT and LXX)

Josh 24:30–31 (vv. 29–30 MT) = Judg 2:8–9 + burial of the circumcision knife

Josh 24:32–33 (vv. 32–33 MT) + death and burial of Phinehas, beginning of sin and subjection to Eglon = (Josh 24:28 +) Judg 2:6 + (2:12–14; 3:7 +) 3:12, 14 (cf. CD 5:3–4)

Also in other places in Josh 23–24 the Septuagint sometimes offers a slightly different text (especially Josh 24:5, 17). It seems to me that two things are particularly important for the reconstruction:

1) In Josh 24:28–31 LXX the order does not correspond to Josh 24 MT, but to Judg 2:6–9. Either LXX has preserved an older version here, which was changed secondarily in the MT, or has aligned the text to Judg 2. Since the plus in Josh 24:29 (וַיְהִי אַחֲרַי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה) connects better to Josh 24:28 than 24:31 (v. 29 LXX), I consider the sequence of the text in Josh 24 LXX to be secondary.<sup>11</sup>

2) The additions in Josh 24:31, 33 LXX show a tendency to add information from other contexts, particularly death and burial notices, to the end of Josh 24: circumcision knives from Josh 5; Phinehas from Judg 20:27–28; the subjection to Eglon from Judg 3:12–14 (+ 2:12–14; 3:7). The additions continue what can also be observed in MT: v. 32 Joseph’s bones (according to Gen 33:18–19; 50:25–26; Exod 13:19); v. 33 the death and burial of Eleazar (cf. Exod 6:23; Josh 14:1; 17:4; 19:51; 21:1); vv. 29–31 = Judg 2:7–9. All of this points to the change of generation which is completed in

<sup>10</sup> The textual expansion in Judg 2:7 (הַגְּדוּל) and supplementation around 2:10 suggest the priority of Josh 24:31, although I believe that the terminology “see”/“recognize”, the name “Israel” in Josh 24:31 instead of “the people” and the question of generation, which seems to have no function here, speak more for the priority of Judg 2:7, 10.

<sup>11</sup> In my view, the phrase “to see all the works of Yhwh” (הִרְאָה) in Josh 24:29 LXX also seems to support a secondary alignment with Judg 2:7. Josh 24:31 MT, on the other hand, uses the verb “to know” (יָדַע), as does Judg 2:10, which in turn shows that Josh 24:31 and Judg 2:7, 10 do not lie on the same level. The differentiation of the verbs probably originated in Judg 2:7, 10: v. 7 “to see all the great work of Yhwh”, v. 10 “to know Yhwh and the work that he has done for Israel”.

Judg 2:10. The various endings of Josh 24 (vv. 29–33 MT and LXX) therefore have a dual function: like the transition Deut 34 || Josh 1:1, they conclude the era of Joshua and the book of Joshua and, at the same time, like Gen 50 || Exod 1:6, 8, they indicate the epochal and generational changes in Judg 1:1 and 2:10 as well as the continuation of the *historia sacra* of Israel in the book of Judges.<sup>12</sup>

### C. Possible Textual Connections

If we assume that the textual overlaps in Josh 24:28–31 and Judg 2:6–10 are not original, then this would suggest that in Josh 24:32–Judg 2:5 we are dealing with a secondary insertion which entailed a duplication of the notice of the dismissal of the people (Josh 24:28 || Judg 2:6), Joshua's death (Josh 24:29–30 || Judg 2:8–9) and the change of generation (Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:10).<sup>13</sup> Several scenarios are possible as explanations for this insertion, depending on where we see the crucial interface.

The easiest explanation takes the LXX version as the starting point. According to this solution, Judg 2:6–9 is a resumption of Josh 24:28–31 LXX following the insertion of Josh 24:31a, 32–33; Judg 1:1–2:5, whereby this insertion is itself not a unity but has grown, as is obvious from the various additions in Josh 24:31–33 (MT and LXX). However, we are also able to reverse these findings and see in Josh 24:28–31 a secondary prolepsis of Judg 2:6–9, depending on which of the slightly different versions of the text is considered to be original. This produces the following possibilities:

The connection between Josh 24:28–31 LXX + Judg 2:10ff. was broken apart by the insertion of Josh 24:31<sup>a</sup>, 32–33; Judg 1:1–2:5 + the resumption of Josh 24:28–31 in Judg 2:6–9

or

The connection between Josh 24:28–29 LXX (= 24:28, 31 MT) + Judg 2:8–9, 10ff. was broken apart by the insertion of Josh 24:30–33 LXX; Judg 1:1–2:7 with the resumption of Josh 24:28–29 in Judg 2:6–7

or

The connection between Josh 24:27 + Judg 2:6ff. was broken apart by the insertion of Josh 24:31<sup>a</sup>, 32–33; Judg 1:1–2:5 with the secondary prolepsis of Judg 2:6–9 in Josh 24:28–31

The possibility of a resumption of Josh 24:28–31 in Judg 2:6–9 + 10 is particularly attractive, since in Judg 2 we also find the decisive motive for duplicating the narrative elements, the change of generation. However, since the

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<sup>12</sup> On the function of the insertions for the formation of the books see BLUM, *Komposition*, 55–56.

<sup>13</sup> See BLUM, *Komposition*, 53.

text sequence in Josh 24:28–31 LXX is probably not original (see option 2 above), this possibility cannot be substantiated this way.

The version in LXX shows another possible interface in Josh 24:33b, which points to the beginning of the Eglon-Ehud episode in Judg 3:12–14. Rofé has assumed an earlier connection here.<sup>14</sup> As a consequence, the whole complex of Judg 1:1 to 3:11 could be considered to be an insertion. The concerns raised by Schmid regarding Rofé's arguments<sup>15</sup> are not fully convincing: The scheme of judges in Judg 2:6–3:6 could be more recent than the individual framing in 3:7 and 3:12ff.; the connection to Josh 24:33 LXX thus should not be sought in Judg 3:12 but in 3:15. This results in another option:

Josh 24:28–33 LXX + Judg 3:15ff. was later broken apart by the insertion of Judges 1:1–3:11 with Judg 3:12–14 as a resumption.

Nevertheless, it seems to me that Rofé's hypothesis is untenable. As we have seen above (under 2), the addition in v. 33 is in line with a chain of additions in vv. 32–33 MT and vv. 31, 33 LXX, which all conclude the era of Joshua or anticipate the continuation of the narrative. Moreover, the addition in v. 33 LXX draws on specific formulations from Judg 2:12–14 and 3:7 and does not conform to the usual editorial scheme in the book of Judges ("they did evil in the eyes of Yhwh, God was angry and gave them into the hand of NN, they served ..."). Finally, an argument against the originality of v. 33b is the resumption of v. 28 in v. 33 ("And the Israelites went every man to their place and in their city") to facilitate the transition from the voluntary commitment under Joshua and sin after the death of Joshua, Eleazar and Phinehas. Thus, in my opinion, this possibility can be abandoned.

In MT, the situation is slightly more complicated because the textual overlap is accompanied by a change in the sequence of the text (Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:7). The simplest solution is derived from the overlap in Josh 24:28 and Judg 2:6: "And Joshua then dismissed the people to their allotted portions". The formulation in Judg 2:6 shows significant additions in the second half of the verse, which reflect the problem of the occupation of the land in Judg 1 (and also Josh 21:43; 23:5, 9, 13; 24:4, 8, 23–24; Judg 2:21, 23 and elsewhere): "and the Israelites went ... to take possession of the land". If we follow this line of thought, then Josh 24:29–Judg 2:5 with the resumption of Josh 24:28 in Judg 2:6 can be considered as an insertion, and Judg 2:7 would have originally connected to Josh 24:28. This option can be summarized as follows:

Josh 24:28 + Judg 2:7–9 (= Josh 24:28–31 LXX) was broken apart by the insertion of Josh 24:29–30, 31–33; Judg 1:1–2:5 + the resumption of Josh 24:28 in Judg 2:6.

<sup>14</sup> ROFÉ, 'End', 17–36.

<sup>15</sup> SCHMID, *Erzväter*, 218–219; similarly OTTO, *Das Deuteronomium im Pentateuch und Hexateuch*, 231.

External evidence for this is given by LXX, which witnesses this exact sequence. However, the parallels, as we have seen, stretch over the whole section Josh 24:28–31 || Judg 2:6–9, and the position of Josh 24:29 LXX (v. 31 MT) || Judg 2:7 is probably due to a secondary alignment with Judg 2. It is also remarkable that Josh 24 LXX and Judg 2:7 mention Joshua's demise and the generation which survived him *before* his death is reported. After Josh 24 and Judg 1:1 this can be more easily understood in Judg 2:7 than in the immediate connection to Josh 24:28.

With all the other possible connections we have to expect further intervention. If we begin with the overlap of the notice of Joshua's death in Josh 24:29–30 || Judg 2:8–9, this would result in an original connection of Judg 2:10ff. or 2:11ff. to Josh 24:28 + 29–30, or Josh 24:28 + Judg 2:8–9. The insertion included Josh 24:31–Judg 2:7(–10), with Joshua's death in Josh 24:29–30 as a secondary prolepsis of Judg 2:8–9, or with Judg 2:8–9 as a resumption of Josh 24:29–30. It is difficult to say which of the two notices of Joshua's death is original. In Judg 2 it stands alone, surrounded by the change of generation in vv. 7 and 10. In Josh 24:29–30 it is connected to the previous narrative of the people's dismissal through a transition (ויהי אחרֵי הדברים והאלה) and supplemented in v. 29 by a relative particle, which might suggest that it is an addition here and original in Judg 2:8–9. With this solution, however, we would have to expect that the overlaps in Josh 24:28, 31 || Judg 2:6, 7 came about in the course of the intervention or even later. In addition, it is inconceivable that the change of generation in Judg 2:10 would take no note of the previous generation of Joshua in Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:7, to which *גם* makes specific reference. Consequently, Judg 2:10 cannot be part of an original connection in Josh 24:28 + 29–30 || Judg 2:8–9. Since the insertion in Judges 1:1–2:5 depends on the change of generation in 2:7, 10, I can see only the following possibility:

Josh 24:28 + 29–30 || Judg 2:8–9 was broken apart by the duplication of the notice of Joshua's death and the insertion of Judg 1:1–2:5 + 6 + 7, 10, followed by further supplements in Josh 24:31, 32–33 (MT and LXX).

The next possible interface, Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:7, also cannot be explained without assuming additional editing. A direct connection of Judg 2:8ff. to Josh 24:28–31 (with Judg 2:6, 7 as a resumption of Josh 24:28, 31 after the insertion of Judg 1:1–2:5) is not possible, since the second notice of Joshua's death cannot immediately follow Josh 24:28–31. Consequently, one must either expect an addition of Josh 24:29–30 during the intervention in Judg 1:1–2:7, which would be tantamount to a variant of the possibility of an interface at Josh 24:28 || Judg 2:6 + 7ff. as discussed above, i.e., Josh 24:28, 31 || Judg 2:6, 7 (= Josh 24:28–29 LXX) + Judg 2:8ff. Or Judg 2:8–9 was supplemented together with Judg 2:6, 7 during the intervention, which would suggest a resumption of Josh 24:28–31 in Judg 2:6–9 + 10 or a secondary prolep-

sis in Josh 24:28–31. Both variants already came up on the basis of the text sequence of Josh 24:28–31 LXX, which may, however, be secondary and therefore cannot serve as evidence. This scenario can be summarized as follows:

Josh 24:28, 31 (= 24:28–29 LXX) + Judg 2:8–9, 10ff. was broken apart by the insertion of Josh 24:29–30, 32–33; Judg 1:1–2:5 + the resumption of Josh 24:28, 31 in Judg 2:6, 7

*or*

Josh 24:28–31 + Judg 2:(10)11ff. was broken apart by the insertion of Josh 24:31a, 32–33; Judg 1:1–2:5 + the resumption of Josh 24:28–31 in Judg 2:6–9 + 10

*or*

Josh 24:27 + Judg 2:6 ff. was broken apart by the insertion of Josh 24:31a, 32–33; Judg 1:1–2:5, with a secondary prolepsis of Judg 2:6–9 in Josh 24:28–31.

Taking all this into account, I see four options where intervention in the text may have been carried out:

- a) between Josh 24:28 and Judg 2:7ff. with the prolepsis of Judg 2:7–9 in Josh 24:29–31 and the resumption of Josh 24:28 in Judg 2:6,
- b) between Josh 24:28 and Josh 24:29–30 || Judg 2:8–9 with the duplication of the notice of Joshua's death and the resumption of Josh 24:28 in Judg 2:6 as well as supplementation of Judg 2:7, 10 (subsequently duplicated in Josh 24:31, v. 29 LXX),
- c) between Josh 24:28, 31 (= 24:28–29 LXX) and Judg 2:8ff. with the prolepsis of the notice of Joshua's death in Josh 24:29–30 (vv. 30–31 LXX) and the resumption of Josh 24:28, 31 in Judg 2:6–7, or
- d) following Josh 24:28–31 (MT or LXX) with a resumption in Judg 2:6–9 + 10, or after Josh 24:27 with a secondary prolepsis of Judg 2:6–9 in Josh 24:28–31.

If we take the text-critical evidence into consideration, which suggests that priority should be given to Josh 24:28 for the dismissal of the people and to Judg 2:8–9 for the announcement of Joshua's death, then only options a) to c) remain as possibilities. Depending on how we decide the issue of the change of generation in Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:7, 10, the possibilities are reduced to a) and b) if we give priority to Judg 2:7, 10, and to option c) if we favor Josh 24:31. If we take Joshua's death as a starting point, then only possibility b) remains.

It is difficult to say which of the various options is the most likely, since these depend on other factors, not least on whether we have to (or want to) reckon with more than one editorial revision. The following observations seem to me to be crucial in reaching a decision:

A simple comparison of the text does not help. The fine variations in formulation that can be found both in MT and in LXX allow certain trends to come to light but do not lead to a conclusive result (see above under 2).

If we follow the logic of the narrative, then only Joshua's death (Josh 24:29–30 || Judg 2:8–9) could have been the starting point of literary development, enriched by other elements in one or more steps: the dismissal of the people after the farewell discourses in Josh 23–24 (Josh 24:28 || Judg 2:6); the change of generation (Josh 24:31 or v. 29 LXX || Judg 2:7, 10 and Judg 1:1); additional death and burial announcements, as well as the anticipation of Judg 3:12–14 in Josh 24:32–33 (MT and LXX).

Since the intervention in Judg 1:1–2:5 presupposes the people's dismissal and Joshua's death (Judg 1:1) and also relies on the change of generation (see above under 1), the duplication of the narrative elements is connected to this intervention. The news about the people's dismissal (Josh 24:28 || Judg 2:6) and Joshua's death (Josh 24:29–30 || Judg 2:8–9) must have already existed in the text and been duplicated during the intervention, i.e., anticipated in Josh 24 or resumed in Judg 2. This differs from the change of generation in Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:7, 10, which was either also anticipated and duplicated in the course of the intervention or inserted at that time (in Judg 2:7, 10) and duplicated later (in Josh 24:31, v. 29 LXX with further supplementation in vv. 31–33).

After taking all this into consideration, I see the following development, which suggests possibility b) as being the most likely, whereby the various literary processes do not all occur on the same level:

- 1) Joshua's death and burial (Josh 24:29–30 || Judg 2:8–9) at the transition from Joshua to Judges, determining which texts preceded and followed this transition depends on the analysis of the broader context (Josh 11; 21; 23–24 and Judg 2–3)
- 2) Joshua's farewell speech(es) in Josh 23–24 + the people's dismissal in Josh 24:28 + Joshua's death and burial (Josh 24:29–30 || Judg 2:8–9) + Judg 2:11ff.
- 3) The change of generation after Joshua's farewell speeches, death and burial in Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:7–10 to mark the change of epoch
- 4) The insertion of Judg 1:1–2:5 "after Joshua's death" between Josh 24:28, 29–30 and Judg 2:8–9, with the resumption of Josh 24:28 in Judg 2:6 (cf. Deut 34 || Josh 1:1) and the duplication or insertion of the change of generation in Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:7, 10 (cf. Gen 50 || Exod 1:6, 8)
- 5) Further supplementation to indicate the change of epoch in Josh 24:31a, 32–33 (MT and LXX)

#### D. The Insertion of Judg 1:1–2:5

Usually the insertion in Judg 1:1–2:5 is regarded as a single block. However, conceptual and terminological differences here also suggest diachronic differentiation.<sup>16</sup> Judges 1:1–36 and 2:1–5 deal in very different ways with the other peoples in the land (in particular the Canaanites): Judg 1 begins imme-

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<sup>16</sup> See RAKE, *Juda*.

diately in the situation “after Joshua’s death” and stresses that Yhwh (still) fights on the side of Judah and the other tribes.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, the chapter reports the successes (conquest, corvée) but notes that the Canaanites could not be driven out of all places (לֹא לְהוֹרִישׁ). Judg 2:1–5 begins with the exodus and makes Yhwh responsible for not having expelled the other peoples (לֹא אֲגַרֵּשׁ) as his punishment for his people entering into a covenant with the other peoples and worshiping their gods.

In my opinion, it is not possible to say that the passage Judg 2:1–5 has nothing to do with Judg 1 and fits badly at its location. On the contrary, Judg 2:1–5 can be read as a simple theological explanation and interpretation of the situation in Judg 1: The non-dispossession and the corvée duty of the peoples appear to be a prerequisite for the covenant with the peoples; it is not the tribes of Israel, but Yhwh himself who lets the other peoples remain in the land as a “pitfall”, as preparation for the ups and downs in the era of Judges.

Nevertheless, the two passages are unlikely to come from the same hand. The relative chronology, however, is difficult to determine, since there is no clear narrative or literary evidence to decide whether Judg 2:1–5 was conceived as a continuation of Judg 1 or Judg 1 as an introduction to Judg 2:1–5. Even the broader literary horizon of the two passages and their narrative connections do not provide any help. While it is clear that Judg 1 marks the beginning of the book of Judges, Judg 2:1–5 is dependent on a literary pre-context and refers back to Joshua (esp. Josh 23) and Exodus (esp. Exod 23:20ff.). However, it is not immediately clear whether the reference in Judg 2:1–5 is an intratextual one or (as with Judg 1:1) more likely an intertextual one, in other words, a reference to another text in the same literary work or an external reference to the preceding *historia sacra* of Israel. In light of this, it is not possible to decide whether Judg 2:1–5 presupposes just Judg 1 or the entire narrative in Exod–Josh as its literary pre-context.

The deciding factor for me is given by the immediate connections in the text. It is clear that Judg 1 presupposes Josh 24:29–30 (with its resumption in Judg 2:8–9) and presumably also Josh 24:31 (with its resumption in Judg 2:7). Judges 2:1–5, however, cannot easily be connected directly to Josh 24:29–31 (with its repetition in Judg 2:7–9!), but much more likely to the dismissal of the people in Josh 24:28, which is taken up again in Judg 2:6 (here with יִרְשׁוּ as in Josh 23:13 and Judg 2:21, 23 etc.) and is either continued in Judg 2:7ff. or 2:8–9 – depending on where we place the change of generation on the basis of literary-historical criteria (Judg 2:7, 10), which competes with the explanation given in Judg 2:1–5 on the issue of continuing sin. For this reason, I find the theory of Noth and Blum to be very appealing, whereby Judg 2:1–5 is an older insertion written between Josh 23–24 and

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<sup>17</sup> Benjamin, the house of Joseph, Manasseh, Ephraim, Zebulun, Asher, Naftali and Dan are mentioned.

Judg 2:8–9 before Joshua’s death.<sup>18</sup> The connection to Josh 23–24 is indicated both conceptually and terminologically (see שׁג־ in Josh 24:12, 18); the geography (Gilgal-Bochim) fits the narrative situation in the book of Joshua perfectly (see Josh 4:19; 10:43; however, Shechem in Josh 24 is an exception).

With regard to the concrete literary connections, these depend to a certain extent on the analysis of Josh 23–24. If, like Noth, we assume that both discourses already existed,<sup>19</sup> this would suggest a connection to Josh 24:28, as we have shown above. The situation is quite different if, like Blum, we want to connect Judg 2:1–5 to one of the preceding endings in the book of Joshua (Josh 23, or perhaps also 21:43–45; 11:16–23 or the whole of Josh 1–12).<sup>20</sup> In this case, Judg 2:6–10, 11ff. must be regarded either as the older, genuine continuation of the book of Joshua, which was duplicated secondarily in Josh 24:28–31 with the insertion of Josh 24 and Judg 1 in total,<sup>21</sup> or partly (2:6, 7, 10) as more recent, which is not impossible, of course, but does complicate matters. Moreover, without the connection to Josh 24:28, the question of the relative chronology of Judg 1 and 2:1–5 is left open once again.

### E. The Broader Context: Josh 23–24 and Judg 2:11–3:6

The “compositional knot” in the transition from Joshua to Judges is not only limited to Josh 24:28–Judg 2:10, but also applies to the wider context, i.e., the farewell speeches in Josh 23–24, which are concluded in Josh 24:28 (resumed in Judg 2:6), and the scheme of judges in Judg 2:11–3:6, which follows Joshua’s death and the change of generation and in 3:7 merges with the individual framework of the book of Judges. I cannot provide a complete analysis of this context here, but can only raise a few questions and discuss various options. These observations are based on the various beginnings and endings in the second part of the book of Joshua (Josh 11:16, 23; 13:1; 21:43–45; 22:1; 23:1–2; 24:1, 28–31) and its continuation in the book of Judges (1:1; 2:1ff.; 2:6–10; 2:11ff.).

Both of the farewell discourses in Josh 23–24 seem to be secondary with regard to the earlier endings in Joshua, which are 1) Josh 11:16–23 (to be precise: 11:16aa<sup>1</sup>, 23b), which – together with the list of conquered kings which follows and is perhaps a later addition – concludes Josh 1–12 and 2) Josh 21:43–45, which – along with a later chapter on the Transjordanian

<sup>18</sup> NOTH, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, 8–9; BLUM, ‘Knoten’, 256–262.

<sup>19</sup> NOTH, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, 8–9, leaves open whether Josh 24 and Judg 2:1–5 were inserted simultaneously or in succession.

<sup>20</sup> BLUM, ‘Knoten’, 256ff., 262ff.

<sup>21</sup> See above under 3, option d.

tribes in Josh 22 – concludes the section on the distribution of land in Josh 13–22. It is commonly believed that Joshua’s death in Josh 24:29–30 || Judg 2:8–9 and the following narrative in the book of Judges were originally connected to one of these two older endings in the book of Joshua.

As a consequence, everything else in Josh 23:1–Judg 2:6, 7, 10 has been supplemented gradually into this context. We need not deal any further here with the question of whether the intervention was attached to the first ending in Josh 11:16, 23 (+ Josh 12) or the second in Josh 21:43–45 (+ Josh 22). This depends on the assessment of the textual overlap in Josh 13:1a || 23:1b.<sup>22</sup> What is interesting for the transition from Joshua to Judges, however, is the question of the relative chronology of the insertions in Josh 23–Judg 2.

The problem is that all the texts more or less revolve around the same theme, namely, “serving Yhwh”. For this reason, internal differentiation is not so easy. After some indecision, Noth apparently let himself be guided by the sequence of texts and eventually saw a progressive development in concentric circles from the outside inwards:

- 1) Josh 1–12 + Josh 23 + Judg 2:6ff.
- 2) Josh 24:1–28 + Judg 2:1–5
- 3) Josh 24:29–33 + Judg 1

Noth did not discuss the interface of Josh 24:28–31 || Judg 2:6–10 any further but – as a result of his redaction-historical hypothesis concerning Josh 23–Judges 2 – implicitly regarded it as a secondary prolepsis and not as a resumption.

A more complex picture emerges when we consider a significant conceptual difference, which allows us to divide the texts in question into two groups: 1) a discourse on the contrast between Yhwh and other gods (those of the fathers beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt or of the peoples in the land); and 2) a discourse on other peoples (in the land or on the periphery) and the complete conquest of the country. The first group clearly includes Josh 24 and Judg 2:6–10 with 2:11–19 (and 3:7ff.) as a continuation. In this group, the people’s dismissal in Josh 24:28 || Judg 2:6 is connected to the change of generation in Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:7, 10, which explains the transition from the people’s commitment under Joshua to the sin of the next generation. The second group includes the exhortation in Josh 23, the appearance of the angel in Judg 2:1–5, who explains the reason for the people’s sin, as well as the supplement to the judges scheme in Judg 2:20–3:6. Judges 1 is located between these two groups and differentiates between conquered and unconquered areas but does not address the issue of “serving Yhwh” (as such or in

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<sup>22</sup> In agreement with NOTH, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, 45–46, I think that the connection of Josh 13:1a = 23:1b to Josh 11–12 is primary and the insertion of 13:1b–23:1a with the resumption of 13:1a in 23:1b is secondary with respect to Josh 23–24.

conjunction with the other peoples). Thematically, Judg 1 is more closely related to the second group (Josh 23; Judg 2:1–5), while in terms of narrative logic it presupposes Josh 24 and Joshua's death (Judg 1:1).

If we link Noth's hypothesis with conceptual differentiation, this results in the following relative chronology of additions to the text: first the texts of the second group (Josh 23; Judg 2:1–5; 2:19ff.), followed by the first group (Josh 24 and Judg 2:6, 7, 10?) and finally Judg 1. This corresponds approximately to the model recently proposed by Blum:<sup>23</sup>

- 1) Josh 1–12\* + 13–21\* + Judg 2:8ff.\*, 12ff.\* (the completed settlement)
- 2) Josh 23 and Judg 2:6–10 and 2:20ff. (the unconquered periphery)
- 3) Judg 2:1–5 (*mal'ak* revision)
- 4) Josh 24 (Hexateuch)
- 5) Josh 1 (the unconquered heartland)
- 6) Further additions

As I see it, the main difficulty of this reconstruction lies in the explanation of Judg 2:6–10. Since the parallel in Josh 24:28–31 is located on a later stage (4), the hypothesis must function in the area of Judg 2:6–10 (on stage 2) with quite a few asterisks, i.e., with vague assumptions without any textual basis. Even if simply comparing the wording of the parallels does not get us very far, it still seems to make sense to me to begin with the textual overlap and not to leave its evaluation implicit or open. After all, certain indications have emerged in favor of the priority of the death and burial announcements in Judg 2:8–9 and, according to the same criteria, for the priority of the people's dismissal in Josh 24:28.

With regard to the change of generation, the question is what provoked it or to what does it refer: an admonition or exhortation that expects a cause for idolatry with the other nations (Josh 23), or rather a review of God's works, which are enumerated in Josh 24 and mentioned specifically in Josh 24:31 || Judg 2:7, 10, as well as a voluntary commitment of the people (Josh 24:14ff.), which justifies the positive assessment of Joshua's generation? According to Blum, the change of generation already existed in the basic version (Judg 2:8ff.\*), i.e., before or during the insertion of Josh 23 in stage 2 (Judg 2:6–10) and prior to stage 3, i.e., the insertion of Judg 2:1–5. In this case, the positive report about Joshua's generation in particular hangs in the air prior to the insertion of Josh 24.

Following Blum's model, the positioning of Judg 2:1–5 between Josh 23 on the one hand and the dismissal of the people in Judg 2:6\* on the other is also unclear. What is the narrative connection to Josh 23, and why is the people's dismissal delayed, even though Joshua plays no role in 2:1–5? The consequence of the late introduction of Josh 24 is that Judg 2:1–5, which was

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<sup>23</sup> BLUM, 'Knoten', developing his view presented in IDEM, *Komposition*, 45–61; IDEM, *Studien*, 363–369; see also pp. 221–240 in the present volume.

originally formulated as a continuation of Josh 23, is abruptly separated from its context and – prior to the insertion of Judg 1 – unexpectedly comes to stand as the opening of the book of Judges. The dismissal of the people in Judg 2:6\* thus completely loses its reference point (in Josh 23 or 24) without it being compensated for in some way.

Finally, the conceptual criterion as such poses problems. The sequence of Josh 23 (other peoples) and Josh 24 (other gods) does not agree with the relative chronology of the judges scheme in Judg 2:11–3:6. Here, the basic text in 2:11ff. deals with other gods, while the additions in 2:20ff. deal with other peoples. The conceptual criterion for textual development is also somewhat ambiguous in another respect. According to the basic text in Josh 1–21 and Judg 2:6ff. the settlement of the country is completed, while according to Josh 23 and Judg 2:1–5 it is partial; according to Josh 24 it is again completed, but partial according to Judg 1. It is of course possible that the pendulum swung back and forth, and after the problem of the other nations and the partial settlement, the problem of the other alien gods is taken up once more in a fully conquered country, especially as the emphasis in Josh 24 is on a historical retrospective and the gods of the fathers in Mesopotamia and Egypt. But the scene, a situation of decision, in Josh 24:14–28, mediated by the change of generation in Judg 2:7, 10, fits much better with the basic text of Judg 2:11–19 and the individual framings in Judg 3:7ff. than with the discourse on the other peoples, which Josh 23 and Judg 2:1–5 (the latter being more of a reaction to Josh 24:1–5) open for the future generation. In contrast, Judg 1 connects better conceptually to Josh 23 and Judg 2:1–5 than to Josh 24. Thus, it is not easy to convert this back-and-forth into a relative chronology.

Taking all of this into account, the relative chronology proposed by Blum and based in particular on conceptual features raises questions in terms of the literary narrative as well as the concepts. If, as an experiment, we reverse the relationship and envisage the priority of Josh 24 over Josh 23, then, in my opinion, conceptual differentiation agrees more easily and more convincingly with the literary evidence and the narrative connections of the text at the interface between Josh 24:28–31 || Judg 2:6–9. The development would be as follows:

- 1) Josh 11:16, 23 (or 21:43–45) + Judg 2:8f., 11ff.
- 2) Josh 24:1–28 + Judg 2:7, 10
- 3) Josh 23 and Judg 2:1–5 + 6 (resumption of Josh 24:28)
- 4) Prolepsis of Judg 2:7–9 in Josh 24:29–31 + Judg 1
- 5) Further additions in Josh 24:31–33 MT and LXX

Objections to this reconstruction can be made on the grounds that Josh 24 constitutes a book conclusion – according to Blum, Otto and others, the conclusion of a Hexateuch, which no longer has a direct narrative connection to Judg 2. In fact, Josh 24 (with its historical retrospective, the writing of “all

these things” in a “Book of the Torah of God” and especially the death of Joshua and the other death and burial notices in Josh 24:32–33) does indeed mark the conclusion of a book, just as Judg 1 marks the beginning of a book.<sup>24</sup> Both chapters have a double function, namely, separating as well as connecting. Through intertextual references, they place the “book” that they conclude or open in the wider context and course of the *historia sacra* of Israel, yet without producing a direct, work-immanent (or intratextual) narrative connection.<sup>25</sup> But does this necessarily rule out the possibility that Josh 24 entered the text before Josh 23, which could more easily explain the textual overlap in Josh 24:28–31 and Judg 2:6–10?

Perhaps the literary-historical differentiation of Josh 23–24 itself offers a solution here. I have deliberately not discussed this possibility before, but in my opinion there is enough evidence for it. Various proposals have been made in previous scholarship, which should be considered. No matter where we want Joshua’s discourse to start, whether in Josh 23:1–3<sup>26</sup> or in Josh 24:1–2,<sup>27</sup> a number of scholars see the core in the commitment of Joshua and the people in Josh 24:14–28. This core was subsequently elaborated in Josh 23–24.<sup>28</sup> If this is the case, then the core of Josh 24 – as the first stage of expansion between Josh 11 (or 21) and Judges 2:8–9, 11ff. – could easily connect with the continuation in Judg 2:7ff. (including the change of generation in 2:7, 10), followed by further literary development.

Only with this literary differentiation and with the basic text of Josh 23–24 (in particular the core in Josh 24:14–18) as a point of departure for the subsequent development of the text, the assumptions of Noth and Blum would be confirmed that first the problem of the other peoples in the secondary parts of Josh 23 and Judg 2:1–5 entered the text, and finally the book’s seams in the secondary parts of Josh 24 and Judg 1. It seems that both phases are in search of a response to the concept of partial settlement. Joshua 23 and 24 were related to each other by appropriate additions that point in the same direction. These additions say that Yhwh has kept his promise completely (thus in Josh 23 following 21:43–45) and throughout history from the ancestors through to Joshua (thus in Josh 24:1–13), while the completed settlement is dependent not only on a non-alliance with other peoples but also on rejecting all alien gods (those of the ancestors as well as those of the land) and, in this sense,

<sup>24</sup> BLUM, *Komposition*, 55–56; IDEM, ‘Knoten’, 273–275.

<sup>25</sup> See Josh 24:14ff. with regard to the time in the land that follows, esp. v. 15 with regard to Judg 6:10; Josh 24:31 with regard to Judg 2:7ff.; Josh 24:33 LXX with regard to Judg 3:12ff; Judg 1:1 with a review of Josh 24, etc.

<sup>26</sup> KRATZ, *Komposition*, 198–200 (= *Komposition*, 206–207); AURELIUS, *Zukunft*, 172–173; IDEM, ‘Entstehung’.

<sup>27</sup> MÜLLER, *Königtum*, 214–236.

<sup>28</sup> For an analysis of this passage, see LEVIN, *Verheißung*, 114–115; MÜLLER, *Königtum*, 221–224.

dependent on the obligation in Josh 24:14ff. (cf. Josh 23:15–16; 24:19–20). For Joshua's generation, Judg 1 mediates between the commitment made in Josh 24 and the partial settlement in Judg 2:1–5. The chapter reports (particularly for Judah) on the success of the settlement but also adds the historical presuppositions for the alliances, which are named in Judg 2:1–5 as being the reason for the continued existence of other peoples and the continuing danger of idolatry. Concerning the relative chronology, I suspect that initially Josh 23–24 (still in combination with Josh 24:28 + Judg 2) was expanded and then the seams of the two books in Josh 24:29–31 and Judg 1 were added. The scheme of development would therefore need to be modified as follows:

- 1) Josh 11:16, 23 (or 21:43–45) + Judg 2:8–9, 11ff.
- 2) Josh (23–)24\* with its core in 24:14–28\* + Judg 2:7, 10
- 3) Josh 23 and Judg 2:1–5 + 6 (with an anticipation of 2:6 in Josh 24:28)
- 4) Josh 23–24 (additions), prolepsis of Judg 2:7–9 in Josh 24:29–31 + Judg 1
- 5) Further additions in Josh 24:31–33 MT and LXX

## F. Conclusions

If we place the various proposals for disentangling the “compositional knot” in Josh 23–Judg 2 side by side, the differences are not overly great. Basically, there is consensus both on the conceptual differentiation as well on the importance of narrative connections, and to a large extent also on the relative chronology of the passages. The differences arise mainly from the importance we attribute to the textual relationships in Josh 24:28–31 and Judg 2:6–10 and whether we explain the narrative connections and the relative chronology on the basis of the textual relationships or the conceptual differentiation. If we stick to the conceptual profiles, leaving the textual relationships in Josh 24 || Judg 2 vague, we are free to treat the blocks Josh 23, Josh 24, Judg 1 and Judg 2:1–5 as literary units and classify them according to thematic criteria. If, on the other hand, we take the textual relationships in Josh 24 || Judg 1 into consideration, then, particularly with Josh 24, the conceptual profile as a concluding text conflicts with its literary connection with Judg 2. A solution to this dilemma could be to differentiate diachronically not only within Josh 24:28–33 (MT and LXX) and Judg 2:6–10 and between Judg 1 and 2:1–5 but also in Josh 23–24 itself. Thus, it makes sense to assume an intermediate stage before the successive insertion of Josh 23, Judg 2:1–5, Josh 24 and Judg 1. During this stage, initially a more basic version of Josh 24 was connected to Judges 2:7ff. and then to Judg 2:1ff. before the text in Josh 24 was reshaped as the conclusion of the book of Joshua (or a kind of “Hexateuch” within the course of the *historia sacra* of Israel from Genesis to Kings) and Judg 1 was created as the beginning of the book of Judges.