THE HISTORIAN AND THE BIBLE

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF LESTER L. GRABBE

EDITED BY
PHILIP R. DAVIES
DIANA V. EDELMAN

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ABBREVIATIONS

AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research
AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992
ADPV	Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästinavereins
ALASPM	Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palastinas und Mesopotamiens
ANET	*Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Edited by J. B. Pritchard. 3d ed. Princeton, 1969
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AP	Cowley, A. E. *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C*. Oxford, 1923
ARM	*Archives royales de Mari*
ASTI	*Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute*
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
BA	*Biblical Archaeologist*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BEATAJ	Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des Antiken Judentums
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BibSac	*Bibliotheca Sacra*
BKAT	Biblisches Kommentar zum alten Testament
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBOTS	Coniectana Biblica (Old Testament Series)
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
CIS	Copenhagen International Seminar
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
DCH	*Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Edited by D. J. A. Clines. Sheffield, 1993–
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
DtrH	Deuteronomistic History
EHSM	European Seminar on Historical Methodology
ET	English translation
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments

HALOT	Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden, 1994–99
HBS	Herders biblische Studien
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HThKAT	Herders Theologsches Kommentar zum Alten Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
IBHS	*An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. B. K. Waltke and M. O'Connor. Winona Lake, Ind., 1990
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
INJ	*Israel Numismatic Journal*
JANES	*Journal of the American Near Eastern Society*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JJL	*Journal of Jewish Literature*
JNSL	*Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*
JPOS	*Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
JSSEA	*Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities*
JSSS	Journal of Semitic Studies: Supplement Series
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NCB	New Century Bible
NEAEHL	*The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*. Edited by E. Stern. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society/Carta
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NSKAT	Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar, Altes Testament
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OP	Old Persian
OTL	Old Testament Library
PEFQS	*Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*
PEQ	*Palestine Exploration Quarterly*
RLA	*Reallexikon der Assyriologie.* Edited by Erich Ebeling et al. Berlin, 1928–
RSR	*Recherches de Science Religieuse*
RQ	*Revue de Qumrân*
SAAS	State Archives of Assyria Studies
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series

SBLMS	SBL Monograph Series
SBLSS	SBL Symposium Series
SHCANE	Studies in the Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
SJOT	*Scandiinavian Journal of Old Testament*
SR	*Studies in Religion*
SSN	Studia Semitica Neerlandica
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SWBA	The Social World of Biblical Antiquity
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Translated by J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, and D. E. Green. 8 vols. Grand Rapids, 1974–
ThB	Theologische Bücherei
TMSJ	*The Master's Seminary Journal*
UF	*Ugarit-Forschungen*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WDSP	Wadi ed-Daliyeh Samaria Papyri
WO	*Die Welt des Orients*
ZAH	*Zeitschrift für Althebraistik*
ZAR	*Zeitschrit für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZDPF	*Zeitschift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*
ZA	*Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*

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Editors' Preface

No biblical historian (and surely few biblical scholars) can be unfamiliar with the name of Lester Grabbe. He is undoubtedly the most prolific biblical historian of this, or any preceding generation, and this volume in celebration of his 65th birthday focuses on this major aspect of his work. But he has also made contributions to linguistics (his first published book [1977] was on "comparative philology") and later to Hebrew etymology in Philo of Alexandria (1988). He has written Introductions to Leviticus (1993), Ezra–Nehemiah (1998), and the Wisdom of Solomon (1997), as well as studies of Israelite religion and early Judaism (1995, 2000), and edited and contributed volumes on biblical prophecy (2001, 2003, 2004) and on early Judaism (2000). But he is best known for both his histories of Israel, Judah and Judaism and his creation of the European Seminar on Historical Methodology, including his editorship of its numerous volumes—both being too numerous to list!

It was no great challenge to summon contributors to his *Festschrift*. In these pages is an inventory of those who have worked with Lester and learned from him and his work. He has always tried not only to understand and explain how history should be done but to show by example; and his knowledge of primary and secondary source is unsurpassed.

Lester has been blessed (if that is the word) by being born American (and Texan at that!), but having settled and raised his family in England. He has thereby gained a truly trans-Atlantic experience and—more importantly—character. His pragmatism is certainly Anglo-American, as is his suspicion of philosophical method and belief in the past as a reality to be reconstructed. His humour, modesty and dislike of polemic are perhaps English rather than American, but his vowels have remained entirely faithful to his country of birth.

His contribution to biblical scholarship extends beyond his array of publications, however. For many years he was editor of the Book List of the Society for Old Testament Study, and he was elected the Society's President in 2009. He was also one of the co-founders of the European Association of Biblical Studies, and deserves much of the credit for

sustaining it in its early years, serving as President and then Executive Officer. Three co-edited books on prophecy are fruits of his work in the SBL Prophetic Texts and Their Ancient Contexts Group.

Books edited by Lester Grabbe are characterized by careful summaries of their contributions; these (we can testify from personal experience) are circulated to the authors before publication, for Lester cares deeply about such things. His concern for the integrity of the authorial voice accompanies his care for the objectivity of historical facts. If by these virtues he thereby attracts the label of "pre-postmodern," he will happily wear the badge. Readers of his edited volumes can thus confidently scan his Introduction as a preliminary (or substitute) for reading the articles themselves. In this volume, however, we offer the reader no such privilege, both because we doubt we can attain a similar level of objectivity and also because we wish to withhold from the reader any pretext for not savouring a collection of tributes that we trust are worthy of the scholar to whom they are warmly dedicated.

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History and Memory: Some Reflections on the "Memory Debate" in Relation to the Hebrew Bible*

Hans M. Barstad

Memory: A French Legacy

We are constantly reminded that "memory" has become a huge concern in many areas of the wider academy of which biblical studies form a part. An indication of the enormous growth of "memory studies" in a variety of academic disciplines may be gleaned from useful (albeit already outdated) surveys by J. K. Olick and J. Robbins (1998), M. Deutscher (1998), E. Conee (1998), M. G. Cattell and J. J. Climo (2002). For the social sciences, at least, one may get an idea of how fast the field has developed when noting that the entry on "Memory" in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* in 1972 contains no information, only references to "Forgetting" and "Learning."

Compared to the relatively modest interest among biblical researchers for the moment, there are indications that we in the future will experience a similar explosion in the production of literature in relation to the Hebrew Bible as we have already seen in other areas of scholarship. A recent case in point is the fine little book by Philip Davies (2008) that also refers to some of the latest Hebrew Bible "memory" literature.

Even if other aspects of "memory studies" could also have been taken into consideration, it is above all the relationship between memory and history that is my concern in the present context. When dealing with "memory" in the Hebrew Bible, history, in one form or another, lurks always in the background. The apparently most important question, however, is whether "history" can, or should be replaced by "memory." Davies, too, referring to Assmann, seems to want to replace "history"

* It is a great pleasure to offer these thoughts to my friend and colleague Lester Grabbe who has meant so much for an academically sound study of history and the Hebrew Bible.

with "cultural memory" (Davies 2008, 106, 113, 122). However, that history cannot be separated from memory when dealing with texts from the past is (indirectly) demonstrated also by Davies, whose book is full of historiographical reflections (Davies 2008). In my view, Davies' book represents one of the best popular introductions to the history debate within the Hebrew Bible that I have come across, and it should be read by all students who want to orient themselves in this difficult but important area.

As is usual in the humanities and the social sciences when theoretical issues are debated, French insights are present. Among important French "contributors" to the present debate, names such as Henri Bergson, Maurice Halbwachs, Jacques Le Goff, Pierre Nora, Krzysztof Pomian, and Paul Ricœur come to mind. The reason why I mention these names in particular is that all of them are important for discussions concerning the relationship between "memory" and "history." Ricœur's last *opus magnum* (Ricœur 2000) is divided into three separate parts. In the first part, he deals with memory and mnemo-technical phenomena (in a Husserlian meaning of the term), and he comments on history throughout his work. His tri-partite approach shows indeed how intermingled history and memory are.

The historian Pomian represents a somewhat different approach. The main point of his rich article is that history should be independent from memory (Pomian 1998). Another historian, Le Goff has published a collection of essays dealing with a variety of topics in relation to memory, history, and history theory (Le Goff 1988). Yet another historian, Nora, could be designated as a real champion of recent "memory studies." See, for instance, the magnificent seven-volume work edited by him (Nora 1984–92). A most useful discussion of the relationship between history and memory is found in his introduction to the work (1984, XVII–XLII). Here, a strong influence from Halbwachs is present.

Assmann and the Hebrew Bible

A scholar referred to quite frequently in relation to "memory studies" is Jan Assmann, who has written about "memory" in relation to ancient Egypt especially, but also to ancient Israel and Mesopotamia, as well as to other cultures of antiquity (Assmann 1997, 2003, 2007). Since some have claimed that Assmann wants to replace history with memory, it seems worthwhile to take a look at his contribution to this particular field. One should perhaps have suspected that very little could be said about Assmann as an historian of ancient Israel, especially if he has been

associated with a kind of "farewell to history" approach. However, in one of his more influential books, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, Assmann makes a series of remarks of a historiographical nature in relation to the Hebrew Bible, the ancient Near East, and ancient Greece (Assmann 2007). In his treatment of the Hebrew Bible, he reveals an overtly positivistic attitude to history, and, in addition, repeatedly refers to a consensus in biblical scholarship that is not there (Assmann 2007, 196–258). Even in a book like *Moses the Egyptian*, a work that one would not assume from its contents to be "historical" at all, Assmann's positivism in relation to the Hebrew Bible is noticeable. Typically, his heroes in Moses research are all excellent scholars. They would, however, figure among the more positivistically inclined historians of ancient Israel (Assmann 1997, 220).

Judging from what Assmann has written about ancient Israel and Mesopotamia, he definitely does not stand for any "farewell to history." Rather, his work is characterized by a traditional positivistic attitude, ignoring most of the recent history debate. In itself, there may be nothing wrong with that. It is, in fact, what most of us do. However, there is a difference between awareness of one's inherent positivistic ways of thinking, leading to subsequent attempts to get rid of them, and excelling in positivism.

Since Assmann is an Egyptologist, albeit not a historian, he would know very well the difficulties and frustrations, particularly in recent years, of writing on the history of ancient Egypt. Mostly, this has to do with the nature of our sources (Otto 1970). It is understandable, therefore, that the historiography of ancient Egypt lends itself easily to a non-historicist and anti-event approach to history. Following this, it appears that the trend in history writing as far as Egypt is concerned has become more and more anti-positivistic in recent years. This may be seen, for instance, in the works of Colleen Manassa (2003) and Roberto Gozzoli (2006). This could be the reason why Assmann has few followers among Egyptologists working on the history of ancient Egypt. Both Manassa and Gozzoli have references to his work, but not in his capacity as historian. One Egyptologist clearly influenced by Assmann, who wants to replace the study of historical events with "mnemohistory" is Antonio Loprieno (2003).

Assmann claims to be influenced by Maurice Halbwachs, but this is not so easily seen from what he writes. Whereas Halbwachs is strongly anti-positivistic in his views on history, Assmann must be regarded as quite the opposite. Quite unexpectedly, Assmann accuses Halbwachs of having a positivistic view on history, and furthermore claims that this

kind of positivism is long gone as far as modern history writing is concerned. Assmann writes, "Es ist klar, daß Halbwachs hier einen positivistischen Begriff von Geschichte vertritt, von dem die neuere Geschichtswissenschaft längst abgerückt ist." The quotation continues:

> …Jede Geschichtsschreibung ist ihrer Zeit und den Interessen ihrer Schreiber oder deren Auftraggeber verhaftet. Daher würde man die Unterscheidung zwischen ‚Gedächtnis' und ‚Geschichte' (i. S. von Geschichtsschreibung), wie Halbwachs sie zieht, heute nicht mehr aufrecht erhalten und die Geschichtsschreibung vielmehr als eine besondere art des sozialen Gedächtnisses einstufen, wie dies P. Burke, ‚Geschichte als soziales Gedächtnis', in: A. Assmann/D. Harth 1991: 289 ff. vorgeschlagen hat. Damit geht aber eine wichtige Kategorie verloren: die der Identitätsneutralität wissenschaftlicher Geschichtsschreibung. Ganz unbeschadet aller zeit- und interessenbedingten Abhängigkeiten gibt es doch seit Herodot eine Beschäftigung mit der Vergangenheit aus ‚theoretischer Neugierde' und reinem Erkenntnisdrang, die sich deutlich von den Formen von Vergangenheitsbezug unterscheidet, die wir als Erinnerungskultur bezeichnen und die immer auf die Identität der sich erinnernden Gruppe bezogen sind. Im Sinne einer weiter unten eingeführten Unterscheidung gehört wissenschaftliche Geschichtsschreibung zu den Formen einer ‚kalten' Erinnerung (Assmann 2007, 42 n. 23).[1]

In reality, the struggle against positivism has been a major topic in the history debate of recent decades.

Assmann also claims that the dichotomy between memory and history that Halbwachs pointed out is not valid today. Again, he appears to miss the point that these issues have been at the heart of the recent history debate, in which it has frequently been asked: "What can we know about the past, and in what ways, if in any, do we have access to it?"

1. "It is clear that Halbwachs represents a positivistic concept of history here, one from which more recent scholarship has long moved away. All history writing is of its own time and serves the interests of its authors or patrons. Consequently, the distinction between 'memory' and 'history' (in the sense of 'historiography'), as Halbwachs sees it, is now no longer accepted and historiography is classified rather as a particular kind of social memory, as suggested by P. Burke, 'Geschichte als soziales Gedächtnis', in Assmann and Harth (eds.) 1991: 289ff. [Burke 1991]. But in this we lose an important category, that of disinterested critical historiography. Since Herodotus there has been a concern with the past that is free of all dependence on time or partiality, arising from 'theoretical curiosity' and a pure urge for knowledge that is clearly different from the kinds of relationship to the past that we describe as the 'culture of memory' and which are always bound to the identity of the groups that remembers. In terms of a distinction that we shall introduce later, critical historiography belongs with 'cold memory.'"

Finally, we note how Assmann makes some rather bombastic claims about history as a science, the timelessness of history, the engagement with the past as based on theoretical curiosity, and on human inclination to seek knowledge. True, there are immense difficulties involved in the writing of, for instance, Mesopotamian history (Barstad 2008, *passim*). However, when done carefully, it is not an impossible task. One might attempt to explain why history is a more feasible project for Mesopotamia than for Egypt by pointing to the existence of archives (Charpin 2008), but also to a certain pragmatic rationalism that appears to have existed in Mesopotamia (Rochberg 2004).

On the whole, I must confess that I have problems with understanding what Assmann's project is all about. The reason for this may be that "mnemo-history" is not used in any consistent way. I am not claiming that a term like "mnemo-history" or similar terminology cannot be used at all. However, since all history is based on memory, it is confusing and also obscures the already problematic relationship between "memory" and "history."

Maurice Halbwachs

Among the theoreticians whose influence has been felt strongly in recent "memory studies" is the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945). Halbwachs belonged, with Francois Simiand and Marcel Mauss, to the "inner Durkheim circle," and published on a regular basis in *L'Année sociologique* from 1905. His training, however, was also in philosophy and psychology, above all what we may call collective psychology. Halbwachs was also associated with Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre, and belonged to the editorial board of the *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*. However, in this he was not very active.

Halbwachs deals thoroughly with "memory" principally in three different books (Halbwachs 1941, 1952, 1997). For Halbwachs, there exists a strong dichotomy between history and memory. His reflections represent in reality a massive attack on history as he knows it. Not only is history secondary to memory, but it is felt as less interesting, relevant or fascinating—something that concerns us very little. The following quotation illustrates well Halbwachs's views on the relationship between memory and history (here in the sense of "history writing"):

> Certes la muse de l'histoire est Polymnie. L'histoire peut se représenter comme la mémoire universelle du genre humain. Mais il n'y a pas de mémoire universelle. Toute mémoire collective a pour support un groupe limité dans l'espace et dans le temps. On ne peut rassembler en un tableau

> unique la totalité des événements passés qu'à la condition de les détacher de la mémoire de groupes qui en gardaient le souvenir, de couper les attaches par où ils tenaient à la vie psychologiques des milieux sociaux où ils se sont produits, de n'en retenir que le schéma chronologique et spatial. Il ne s'agit plus de les revivre dans leur réalité, mais de les replacer dans les cadres dans lesquels l'histoire dispose les événements, cadres qui restent extérieurs aux groupes eux-mêmes, et de les définir en les opposants les uns aux autres. C'est dire que l'histoire s'intéresse surtout aux différences, et fait abstraction de ressemblances sans lesquelles cependant il n'y aurait pas de mémoires, puisqu'on ne se souvient que des faits qui ont pour trait commun d'appartenir à une même conscience [ou si l'on veut l'histoire s'attache aux ressemblances superficielles et néglige les différences profondes. À cette condition malgré la différance des lieux et de temps elle réduit les événements à des termes apparemment semblable], ce qui lui permet de les relier les uns aux autres, comme des variations sur un ou quelques thèmes. Ainsi seulement, elle réussit à nous donner une vision en raccourci du passé, ramassant en un instant, symbolisant en quelques changements brusques, en quelques démarches des peuples et des individus, de lentes évolutions collectives. C'est de cette façon qu'elle nous en présente une image unique et totale. (Halbwachs 1997, 137)[2]

This text, which is fairly representative of Halbwachs' view of the relationship between collective memory and history, contains many important points that are still valid today. Similar views are found not only in the wider context of the present quotation (Halbwachs 1997, 97–142),

2. "Admittedly, the Muse of history is Polyhymnia. History can present itself as the universal memory of mankind. But there is no universal memory. Every shared memory is held up by a group restricted in space and time. It is only possible to gather together in one single painting all past events if they are removed from the memory of the groups that preserve their recollection, cutting off the ties that keep them to the mental life of the social environments where they were once produced, and to keep only a chronological and spatial outline of them. It is not anymore a case of reliving them in their reality, but to find a new place for them in the contexts in which history disposes the events, contexts that remain external to the groups themselves, and to describe them as opposing each other. This shows that history is interested above all in differences, and disregards similarities without which, however, there would have been no memories since one remembers only events that have as common feature that they belong to a same consciousness [or, if one wants, history attaches itself to shallow similarities, and pays no attention to profound differences. In this situation, despite the difference in places and times, it reduces the events to apparently similar terms] something that permits it to join them, one after another, like variations on one or more themes. Only thus, it succeeds in giving us a view of the past in a nutshell, sweeping up in no time at all, symbolizing in a few abrupt changes, in a few steps of nations and individuals, continuing collective developments. Only in this way is it that it presents us with a unique and complete picture."

but *throughout* Halbwachs' works on memory. Also, in the Preface to *La topographie légendaire* this negative view of history is found programmatically expressed (Halbwachs 1941, 9).

Halbwachs' thoughts represent above all a serious attack on history, based on philosophical arguments. We note how two related issues stand at the centre of his views of history. The first is his marked anti-positivistic attitude. The second is his underlining of questions concerning the nature of past reality. What is the past, and how and to what degree do we have access to it? Both of these concerns have been at the heart of the recent history debate in the Anglo-American and the French intellectual debate (Barstad 2007). It would be appropriate to say that Halbwachs' two major inspirations are Emile Durkheim and Henri Bergson (cf. Ricœur 2000, 30–36), the former ultra-positivist, the latter strongly anti-positivist. Bergson's anti-positivist reflections on time had an enormous influence on the intellectual elite in France (and abroad), not least on writers of fiction. It was above all his distinction between clock time (external time) and experienced time that made a great impression (Bergson 1982). Halbwachs shares this strong influence from Bergson with a string of famous French authors (Claudel, Gide, Proust, Valery) who created a new form of fictional narrative (Paradowski 1999).

How does Halbwachs use memory? Again, this varies considerably. We have to realize that he is really using the term in a multiplicity of ways, including as a synonym for "tradition." This makes it utterly impossible to talk about Halbwachs' view on "memory" in a monolithic way. Some parts of his work on "memory" are very philosophical (as in the quotation above). However, the first part of his early work, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (1925), is a treatise on psychology (Halbwachs 1994). And yet, in the latter part of the same work one finds sociological observations and various historical and cultural traditions quite loosely discussed. Quite often, throughout his work, the "memory" could have been exchanged with "tradition" without any change in meaning. Also fairly constant in Halbwachs' memory work is his programmatic claim that "collective memory" is basically a reconstruction of the past.

Another important issue that cannot be underestimated is the actual importance of individual memory for collective memory, as these two are totally interdependent (e.g. Halbwachs 1997, 51–96). Again, we are dealing with a basic notion in Halbwachs that is found throughout his writings. The absolute dichotomy/discontinuity between memory and history follows as a result of communication gaps between the groups to which we belong, and groups of other times and locations. The groups

that we have access to are contemporary (or from our immediate past). The memories we share are therefore accessible inside us, and not from the outside. When memories are written down, history starts. History, therefore, always comes to us from the outside. This is a very serious attack on history and raises important issues that are still relevant today. If accepted in its more radical from, it would mean the "end of history." In a larger context, it reminds us of the attack on, or rather the lack of any interest in, history within sociology.

Memory and History: Towards a Question

Memory in all its aspects will remain a fascinating and crucial preoccupation for us human beings. However, "memory" is many-faceted and cannot easily be reduced to one formula. To the historians of ancient Israel, a guild to which some of us want to belong, it is above all the relationship between history and memory that should occupy us. "Memory" ("tradition") and "history" are strongly interrelated, but not identical. If we should, only very briefly, try to contrast the two, we could say that history is an attempt to get access to past memory subsequent to the occurrence of the historical event. To the historian, everything one does will be governed by the quest to find out "what really happened." This implies that "history" and "pre-history" cover an immense time span, ranging from "yesterday's news" and stretching towards a past without any real limits. To the historian of ancient Israel the most important periods would be the Levant during the Iron Age, and the Persian Period. More marginally, due to the nature of our sources, the Bronze Age and the Hellenistic era could also be included. If we want to retain the term "history" at all, we cannot refrain from discussing whether or not past events are "true" in a positivistic sense.

On the whole, there can be little doubt that a weakening of the notion of "event" has taken place. This, however, is not a bad thing. The question is how we can best compensate for the loss of our positivistic innocence, and learn to live with our frustrations. The future belongs to true interdisciplinary approaches, something which, unfortunately, is not yet sufficiently developed within biblical studies (Barstad 2007). It is my strong conviction that to give up the history project altogether represents a kind of reductionism that is dangerous to the quality of our scholarly work. History and memory belong together and cannot be separated. It is the task of each and every scholar who wants to engage in memory studies to attempt to work out possible relations between the two.

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Did a Reform like Josiah's Happen?

Niels Peter Lemche

For many years Lester Grabbe has directed a yearly symposium, The European Seminar in Historical Methodology (ESHM). Many were the subjects discussed but in general the members split into two factions, a group still believing that it is possible to write history on the basis of biblical narratives found in the so-called "Deuteronomistic History,"[1] and a more sceptical group very reluctant to follow such a proposal. It is not a surprise that the present writer is a member of the second group.

One volume in the series of books generated by the ESHM, *Good Kings, Bad Kings*, edited by Lester, is devoted to the kingdom of Judah in the seventh century B.C.E. For obvious reasons, King Josiah must stand in the centre of any debate about the fate of Judah at this time, as he is the central figure of the description of this period in 2 Kings. Another reason is the need to preserve an image of a Jewish (or proto-Jewish) community already in existence in Jerusalem before the Babylonian Exile.

Among the studies devoted to Josiah in *Good Kings, Bad Kings* is one by Rainer Albertz, who asks why a reform like Josiah's must have happened (Albertz 2005). Weighing the evidence, Albertz concludes that the reform must have occurred; otherwise it would be difficult to explain the survival of the idea of an Israel in exile, and the restoration of a Jewish society in Yehud in Persian times. Albertz, as expected, produces a solid hypothesis, although the whole idea of something needing to have happened if we are to understand what happened next is rather suspect. Such reasoning was formerly used of the historicity of Moses, and this writer was often met with the argument, and I paraphrase, "If there was no Moses, it would be necessary to invent him." My usual response to

1. "So-called," with the present discussion about the Deuteronomistic History in mind (e.g. Römer 2005). Personally, I tend to agree with John Van Seters (2000) that this supposed document has been "redacted to death."

this line of reasoning is "…and so they did." The same argument might be used in this case: "If there was no reform, it must have been invented—and so they did!"

Today, interest seems to have changed from exclusively historical studies of the past to an interest in the way the past has been constructed at different occasions and by different people. "Cultural memory" seems to be the key term of our time, and everything turns into a matter of cultural memory. Cultural memory is not history—a mistake often made—but rather deals with the way people construct their history. It is a different matter whether or not this construction has much or little to do with what actually happened, something of little interest to students of cultural memory.[2]

Using cultural memory as my approach here, it is possible to make some conclusions relevant to the tradition of Josiah's reform, which might also have some bearing on the question: Must there have been such a reform? Is it unthinkable that the reform was part of an "invented history" (a term borrowed from Liverani [2005][3]) which had the legitimation of the Jewish takeover at a much later date as its aim?

The Two Stories about Josiah's Reform

The Old Testament contains two narratives about King Josiah's reform. The best known can be found in 2 Kgs 22–23, the second in 2 Chr 34–35. Second Kings 22 opens with the usual note about the king, his age at his ascension, his mother's name, and the verdict—in this case absolutely positive, that he was as good as David. The focus is then directed to the repair of the temple and the discovery of the law book which is read by the scribe Shaphan in front of the king, leading to the repentance of the king and Huldah's prophecy that the king shall die in peace and

2. Davies (2008) recently published a very readable book about cultural memory. It is, however, still a study of history rather than of the construction of history, and opens with a series of chapters which could be found in many prolegomena's to Israel's history. Only after having concluded that part of the discussion does Davies turn to historical construction as such. In this way the study of cultural memory will look very much like a renewed study of tradition, not least oral tradition, as found in historical studies of the previous generations.

3. Liverani separates the story of Israel as told by biblical writers from the "real" history of Israel. The biblical story is an "invented history." In an earlier work (Liverani 2004b, esp. 28–29), Liverani has called modern histories of Israel "hyperstories," perpetuating and paraphrasing the biblical narrative; cf. also Liverani 1999. He has also described the tendency of students of ancient history to paraphrase ancient sources uncritically as "laziness."

not see the coming catastrophe planned by the Lord for Jerusalem. Chapter 23 continues the narrative, as the king goes to the temple, where he recites the law book for the whole people. There follows a renewal of the covenant, whereupon the cleansing of the temple can begin. Every heathen symbol is removed from the temple precinct and the quarter of Asherah is emptied. The king destroys the "high places" (*bamoth*) all over Judah. Furthermore, Jeroboam's *bamah* and altar in Bethel are destroyed (but no mentioning of the golden calf there), as are all other *bamoth* in the cities of Samaria. The priests serving at these establishment are slaughtered on their altars. Back in Jerusalem, the king arranges for the celebration of the Passover, a festival not celebrated since the beginning of the time of the kings. This part of the narrative ends with a note praising Josiah but also announcing the pending doom over Jerusalem and Judah. The end of the story about Josiah is short: he travels to Megiddo to meet Pharaoh Necho *en route* for Syria, and is killed by the Egyptians. His corpse is buried in Jerusalem.

Second Chronicles 34–35 follows 2 Kings to such a degree that it would be wise to see 2 Kings as the basic source of the Chronicler's version. However, after a short introduction—shorter than the parallel in 2 Kgs 22:1–2—comes a description of the changes to the religious establishment provoked by the king, as well as their extension as far as Naphthali. The following part of Chronicler's account of Josiah's reign follows the plot in 2 Kings closely: the law book is found and brought to the king, and Huldah announces the fate of the king *and* Jerusalem. After this, the king recites the law in front of the people and cleanses every place where Israelites were living. Following these acts, a Passover is celebrated. The temple cult is regulated, and the sequence of priests on duty is established, with a special emphasis being given to the service of Levite priests. Finally, an extended version follows, one which deals with the *minutiae* of the Passover celebration. At the end of the story we hear that such a Passover had not been celebrated since the days of Solomon. The story of Josiah's death is presented in an extended form, and we hear that Josiah confronts the Egyptians at Megiddo under Pharaoh Necho, in spite of Yahweh's order, given to him by the pharaoh. The king is mortally wounded and brought back and buried in Jerusalem.

It is clear that the Chronicler's version is far from a docile repetition of the version in 2 Kings. The order of events is different: the cleansing of the temple is separated from the discovery of the law book. The role of the Levites is different; the extension of Josiah's activities in the north goes much further, as far as Naphthali, whereas 2 Kings only mentioned the cities of Samaria. The Passover is presented with far more detail than in 2 Kings, although the idea that such a festival had not been celebrated

in the time of the kings is mentioned only at the end, and not, like 2 Kings, at the beginning. Finally, and perhaps most interestingly, the description of Josiah's death is very different from the short note in 2 Kings, and strange information is included here—namely, that it was the Egyptian king who told Josiah of the will of Yahweh.

The Chronicler clearly has a different agenda from his deuteronomistic colleague. His Josiah is not blameless, although he keeps that part of the introductory note. Josiah defies the will of God and is duly punished. We hear echoes of the fate of Ahab's death in 1 Kgs 22: Ahab acts against the warnings provided by the prophet Micha ben Imlah, and is mortally wounded in the battle against the Arameans, hit by an enemy archer. In 2 Chr 35:23 Josiah suffers the same fate; even his last command echoes Ahab's in 1 Kgs 22:34.

Hezekiah's Reform

Although dependent on his *Vorlage*, 2 Kings, the Chronicler's attitude is very different, and for a reason: Josiah is not the great hero of 2 Chronicles; that honour is bestowed on Hezekiah (2 Chr 29–32). The Chronicler's story of Hezekiah and his reign is vastly different from the one found in 2 Kings, with an emphasis on subjects either not recorded by 2 Kings or played down there. In 2 Chronicles, emphasis is placed on two subjects: Hezekiah's reform, including many of the elements also found in the story of Josiah, such as his interest in the Levites, and the service of the priests in the temple. As a matter of fact, Hezekiah begins his reform immediately after his accession (2 Chr 29). The opening concerns the service of the Levite priests, followed up later in 2 Chr 31with an extended account of the reform and the arrangement of the temple. As it stands, the Chronicler's version represents a huge extension of the short notes in 2 Kings about Hezekiah's changes in the temple of Jerusalem, but omits the reference to Moses' copper serpent (2 Kgs 18:4).

The second part of the Chronicler's narrative about Hezekiah concerns the celebration of the Passover (2 Chr 30), a long story that ends with the statement that nothing like it had taken place in Jerusalem since the time of Solomon (2 Chr 30:26). In this celebration all Israel participates, from Beersheba to Dan. In contrast to 2 Kings, the Chronicler is not very interested in the story of Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem and omits large parts of the narrative in 2 Kings.

In 2 Kings, the emphasis is neither on Hezekiah as the reformer nor on his Passover (which is not mentioned at all). The honour of reinstating the celebration belongs to Josiah. The main thrust of the story is on

Hezekiah's dealings with Sennacherib and the Assyrian army and his miraculous salvation. It is clear that the deuteronomistic historiographer has no intention of promoting Hezekiah at the cost of his own hero, Josiah. The only verdict that both narrators really agree on is that Hezekiah was a perfect king, as good as David. However, they also agree that a major reform of the temple and the religious establishment in Jerusalem belonged to the time before the Babylonian Exile.

Why the difference in the Chronicler's account when it is obvious that 2 Kings was a most important source? If the author of 2 Kings relied on historical facts accepted by everyone, the Chronicler would have had to accept and follow his source as authoritative. Chronicler does not, however: he boldly changes a tale about the past. A historian would—or should—have problems with such a procedure. Of course, the old and traditional opinion is that the deuteronomistic version lies closer to the historical truth, but this is part of a circular argument. It is asserted that the original version of the Deuteronomistic History cannot be more than a couple of generations younger than the time of Josiah. It must therefore be more trustworthy as a historical source than Chronicles, which was composed several generations later. Having thus decided that the Deuteronomistic History, or at least its first draft, belongs to the first half of the sixth century B.C.E., the source is then used to cast light on conditions prevailing in the seventh and early six centuries B.C.E. Any historian would agree that if the basic assumption is correct, the conclusion follows.

If, however, the basic assumption is wrong, and a later date for the Kings account should be sought, then we are freer to find reasons for the existence of two diverging versions of the closing years of the kingdom of Judah in Kings and Chronicles. The foundation for the dating of the Deuteronomistic History is fragile. Scholars normally refer to the final note of 2 Kgs 25:27–30, that King Jehoiachin was released from prison when Nebuchadnezzar died, that is, in 562 B.C.E. This can certainly be defined as a *terminus a quo* for the composition of the original Deuteronomistic History. However, we have no *terminus ad quem*, as it is explicitly noted that King Jehoiachin was supplied with rations from the Babylonian court *as long as he lived*, which tells us that he is no longer alive. We do not know when he died. It could have been one year later, or ten, or twenty, making the Deuteronomistic History a work of the middle or late sixth century *at the earliest*. It would be better to say that we have no safe clue as to the date of composition of this "History."

Another consideration is also invoked as evidence of the basic historical value of the story of Josiah in 2 Kings, a quite complicated issue relating to the origins of "Deuteronomism." I have dealt with this

question elsewhere (Lemche forthcoming) and need not repeat the complete argument here. It begins (as does so much) with Albrecht Alt and his study on the *Heimat* of Deuteronomism (Alt 1953–59). Alt linked the origin of Deuteronomism and the production of the original book to the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C.E., and the stream of refugees which he supposed had fled to Jerusalem in the face of the Assyrians. This is, of course, a baseless assertion if no evidence of this movement from the north to the south exists. To be sure, the Old Testament is absolutely silent about it. Indeed, on the contrary, it relates that the population of Samaria was removed to foreign places, to Hala, the river of Habor, and Media; instead of the deported Samaritan population, newcomers were allowed by the Assyrians to settle in Samaria, thus being the ancestors of the later, despised Samaritans.

Textual evidence of the flight of northerners to Judah and Jerusalem is therefore lacking, but the possibility exists that archaeology can provide clues to Israelites arriving in Jerusalem. In a number of publications Finkelstein has argued that the expansion of Jerusalem in Hezekiah's time was a result of the movement of people from Samaria to Jerusalem.[4] The expansion itself is undeniable and conspicuous and it changed the appearance of Jerusalem from a minor town in the hills to a major settlement counting many thousands of people. However, the explanation can be questioned. When Sennacherib laid siege to Jerusalem, he spared the city. There have been many explanations for the leniency he showed towards this city, as if he already knew of its later status as the holy city. Of course, we know that no such consideration would have troubled the Assyrian king who utterly destroyed the Babylon by diverting the course of the River Tigris so that it ran through that holy city. As for Jerusalem, later Jewish tradition regarded its rescue as miraculous and 2 Kings includes an expanded story about this salvation that is totally legendary.[5] A reasonable explanation says that Sennacherib did not need to invest more time in this insignificant area. He had devastated Hezekiah's kingdom from one end to the other and destroyed its most important city, Lachish. Jerusalem was at the end of the line. What the exact reason was is unknown, but my guess is that it was more important to take his soldiers home before the harvest (they were mostly peasants in arms). Sennacherib must have been satisfied with the results of his campaign:

4. Finkelstein 2001. See also his argumentation in favour of the historicity of the biblical accounts of Josiah in Finkelstein and Silberman 2001, 275–92.

5. This does not detract scholars from assuming that these fables include a basic truth. See most recently Evans 2009.

he did not return the next year, which would have been the natural thing for an Assyrian ruler to do if a campaign was not wholly successful (see Lemche 2003).

Now we have an alternative to Finkelstein's explanation of the growth of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the only city left intact in Hezekiah's kingdom and therefore a natural shelter for those of his subjects who had escaped being deported to Assyria but had nevertheless lost their homes. Finkelstein dates the growth to the period after 720 B.C.E. I would like to see confirmed evidence that it is possible to distinguish between an expansion in the period 720–700 and 700–680 B.C.E.

The issue of the origins of Deuteronomism is linked to the problem of the origins of the so-called northern traditions in the Old Testament. Formerly this was explained as the result of the original unity between the north and the south, dating back to David and Solomon and even before. With the Davidic Empire no longer a secure historical datum, no such unity seems a reality, and therefore Alt's hypothesis about the origin of Deuteronomism appears convenient. However, scholars following the lead of Alt may have been too optimistic and one eyed. One of the more exciting parts of the new surveys of Palestine in the sixth century B.C.E. presented by Oded Lipschits in several publications (e.g. Lipschits 2003, 2005), is the demographic differences between the central hills north of Jerusalem and Jerusalem after the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem, as the destruction that almost wiped out civilization in Judah had little effect on life only a few miles north of Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar evidently had no reason to punish the population living to the north of the kingdom of Judah. This means that their tradition may have survived unharmed and merged with Judean tradition at a much later date.[6] We do not need a migration from Samaria to Jerusalem already in the eighth or seventh centuries B.C.E. to explain Deuteronomism and the presence of traditions from the north in the Old Testament. This also means that we do not need a Josianic reform or a Hezekian reform to explain later Judaism.

Hence we may deal with Josiah's reform as part of the foundation myth of the later Jewish people which had its centre in Jerusalem and Judah but also advanced a claim on the rest of the country. From the perspective of cultural memory, Josiah and his reform is an integral part

6. A question worthy of reconsideration in the present debate in Samaritan studies of the relationship between Jerusalem and Samaria in the Persian and Hellenistic periods is: Who left whom? Did the Samari(t)ans break with Jerusalem, or did the Jerusalem religious establishment reject the Samaritans, and steal their tradition? On this question, see Hjelm 2000.

of the image of the past created by deuteronomistic historiographers. It is their proposal, their choice of hero and their choice of the essential, pre-exilic deed that created Judaism. The presence of the alternative to this in Chronicles warns us against presuming that the deuteronomistic version represents historical fact. Evidently the Chronicler was not very happy with the deuteronomistic choice of Josiah as the great reformer. He kept parts of the deuteronomistic account but rewrote it extensively according to his own preference. Among the choices he made was the elevation of Hezekiah to the status of the great reformer of the temple in Jerusalem and its cult. The Chronicler evidently did not feel that the deuteronomistic version was mandatory and therefore wrote his own, making extensive revisions.

All of this speaks against the theory of a historical Josianic reform and in favour of the story of the reform being a part of the deuteronomistic memory of the past. It is perhaps a confirmation of this status of the Josiah tradition that Josiah's reform is neither mentioned nor alluded to anywhere in the book of Jeremiah, although Jeremiah is supposed to have been an eyewitness, given that he is said to have been called to be a prophet in 626 B.C.E. There are almost no references even to Josiah himself in the book of Jeremiah, let alone to an event that is supposed to have taken place, on the biblical chronology, only three years after Jeremiah's career as a prophet started. Perhaps the deuteronomistic collector of the material included in this prophetic book did not (yet) know of the invention of the reform in the Deuteronomistic History, or perhaps he found it counterproductive to the aim of his own book, to show that Jeremiah warned of the cataclysm to come (on Jeremiah and Josiah, see also Carroll 1986, 91–92).

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Text and Archaeology in a Period of Great Decline: The Contribution of the Amarna Letters to the Debate on the Historicity of Nehemiah's Wall

Nadav Na'aman

Nehemiah's Wall in Recent Archaeological Research

There is a huge disciplinary difference between the scientific analysis of textual evidence and the examination of archaeological data. This is why a comparison between the accounts of texts and the results of archaeological excavations is always complicated. The comparison is particularly complicated in periods of decline of urban culture, such as the tenth century and the Persian period. There are no primary written sources for the two periods, and the Bible, the single written text available for comparison with the results of the archaeological excavations, suffers from well-known limitations.

In view of the many problems involved in using the Bible as a historical source, archaeology plays a major role in the study of these periods and in the evaluation of the biblical text. Thus, for example, the archaeological excavations conducted at Jerusalem serve as the key to evaluating the biblical descriptions of the histories of David and Solomon. Many biblical descriptions of their operations in Jerusalem have been dismissed (correctly or incorrectly) as non-historical, because they did not fit the results of the excavations. Similarly, doubts have recently been cast on the authenticity of some descriptions in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, with the claim that they contradict the results of the excavations conducted in the City of David (Finkelstein 2008a, 2008b).

No wall dated to the Persian period, and very few remains from this period, have been found in the many excavations conducted in Jerusalem. Based on this and other negative evidence, Finkelstein (2008a) has rejected the authenticity of the detailed description of Nehemiah's building of a city wall. In his opinion, the maximal size of the Persian

and Early Hellenistic settlement was ca. 20–25 dunams and the estimated population of around 400 to 500 people. The number of sites with archaeological remains in the immediate environs of Jerusalem is very small, and there is a drastic demographic depletion in the area of the province of Yehud in the Persian period (Finkelstein 2008a, 504–7). According to Finkelstein,

> The finds indicate that in the Persian and early Hellenistic periods Jerusalem was a small unfortified village that stretched over an area of c. 20 dunams, with a population of a few hundred people—that is, not much more than 100 adult men. This population—and the depleted population of the Jerusalem countryside in particular and the entire territory of Yehud in general—could not have supported a major reconstruction effort of the ruined Iron II fortifications of the city. (Finkelstein 2008a, 514)

The earliest Second Temple city wall unearthed in the excavations in Jerusalem is dated to the Hasmonean period, and many buildings, as well as substantial quantities of pottery and other artifacts uncovered in the excavations, are also dated to this period. In light of this, Finkelstein (2008a, 510–14) proposes that the description of the building of Nehemiah's wall was written in the second century B.C.E. and was inspired by the construction of the Hasmonean city-wall.

Before discussing the problems involved with the archaeological data presented by Finkelstein, let me briefly present an important written source overlooked by Finkelstein. A letter addressed by Yedaniah, the priests and all the Jews of Elephantine, to Bagavahya, governor of Judah in the year 407 B.C.E., includes the following passage:

> Moreover, before this, at the time that this evil was done to us, a letter we sent to our lord [i.e., Bagavahya], and to Jehohanan the High Priest and his colleagues the priests who are in Jerusalem, and to Avastana the brother of Anani and the nobles of the Jews. A letter they did not send us. (Porten 2003, 128)

The original letter was sent by the community of Elephantine to the heads of the religious and civil institutions of Jerusalem, with the request to intervene on their behalf to the Persian authorities of the "Satrapy Beyond the River" (*eber nāri*). The picture of an established city with its local institutions that emerges from this late fifth-century B.C.E. letter stands in marked contrast to the image of Jerusalem as "a small unfortified village that stretched over an area of c. 20 dunams, with a population of a few hundred people."

The Amarna Letters versus the Archaeological Research

Like the tenth century and the early Persian period, Amarna was also a time of great decline in urban culture. However, unlike the textual situation in the tenth and fifth centuries B.C.E., for the Amarna period we have the evidence of both the archaeological excavations and surveys and of primary written texts. Here the correlation of text and archaeology in a period of great decline can be put to the documentary test, and the conclusions drawn from the comparison might be carefully applied to the other two periods.

In what follows I will examine the evidence of the Amarna letters sent from some important Canaanite cities vis-à-vis the results of archaeological excavations conducted at these sites. Of course, our ability to compare the picture arising from the documents with the one obtained from the archaeological excavations depends to a large extent on the scope of the excavations at these sites. Only major cities which have been excavated extensively can serve as research benchmarks. Other cities, no matter how important, cannot supply the archaeological data necessary for the investigation. In comparing the archaeological finding with the textual evidence I shall confine my remarks to the four available sites in south and central Canaan, two in the highlands (Jerusalem and Shechem), and two in the lowlands (Gezer and Lachish).

I start with Jerusalem. Seven long, detailed letters sent by ʻAbdi-Heba, king of Jerusalem, were found in the Amarna archive (EA 285–291) (for a detailed discussion of the letters, see Na'aman forthcoming, with earlier literature). The letters are of unusual literary quality and diplomatic wit, indicating the presence of a first-rate scribe in the city. The king of Jerusalem sat in a "house"—namely, a palace—and in one of the letters he describes an incident that occurred between him and the Egyptian garrison, apparently counting fifty men, which had been stationed temporarily in the city. High-ranking Egyptian officials visited Jerusalem, and ʻAbdi-Heba sent the pharaoh caravans with tribute and gifts, including slaves of both sexes and a good deal of silver. He was accused by Shuwardata, the king of Gath, of trying to expand into his territory, and was compared to Lab'ayu, the ruler of Shechem, who terrified many Canaanite rulers. ʻAbdi-Heba's principal rival was Milkilu, the king of Gezer, whose kingdom adjoined that of Jerusalem on its western border. The picture arising from the letters suggests a kingdom of substantial strength, with a capital city at its heart, enjoying a solid economy and dominating a territory that spread to the foot of the mountain range.

Reading the documents, one would expect the excavations in Jerusalem to reveal a big, thriving city in the Late Bronze Age, but these expectations were totally dashed (see Na'aman 1996). A big, fortified Canaanite city was in fact discovered at the site, but it dated only to the Middle Bronze III. From the Late Bronze Age were left only some unimpressive walls and not a great amount of pottery vessels, including a few sherds of imports from Cyprus, all of them found in the upper part of the eastern slope of the City of David. So poor was the finding from that period that some scholars doubted the identification of the *Urusalim* mentioned in the Amarna letters with the city of Jerusalem (Franken and Steiner 1992). But of course there is no doubt about it. The discrepancy between the documents and the archaeological finding can mainly be explained by the state of preservation of the settlement strata from the Amarna period, as the city was inhabited continuously through thousands of years. Given that the bedrock at the site is very high and there is little accumulation of strata on top of it, every new settlement damaged the previous strata, especially those from the city's periods of decline. Many of the ancient structures at the site, especially those that were skimpy and fragile to begin with, had disappeared entirely, and only a few poor remnants survived from the Canaanite city that stood on the site during the Late Bronze Age.

The Amarna letters show that Shechem was the most important city in the central hill country, commanding an extensive territory that spread in the east as far as the Jordan River and in the west and north to the foot of the mountain range. Lab'ayu and his sons, the rulers of Shechem, regularly clashed with the nearby lowland rulers, while striking alliances with distant kingdoms and extending their sphere of influence well beyond the mountain boundaries. The rulers of Shechem are mentioned in documents sent by other rulers in the country, and it appears that during the Amarna period Shechem was a strong kingdom with considerable influence over the neighbouring kingdoms (see Finkelstein and Na'aman 2005, with earlier literature).

The documents create the impression that the rulers of Shechem occupied a big flourishing centre from which they launched their campaigns and to which they returned with their booty. Yet the archaeological evidence reveals that the city was essentially a medium-sized royal stronghold built in Middle Bronze III, which also included a splendid temple. It remained largely unchanged in the Late Bronze Age, without any big new structures (for discussions, see Bull 1960; Toombs and Wright 1961, 30–34; Campbell and Ross 1963, 12–18; Wright 1965, 95–101, 123–27; Stager 1999, 228–34; Finkelstein 2006, with earlier literature). The assemblage of pottery and other findings from the site was also

sparse and scattered. It is only the textual evidence which tells us that this site was one of the principal and most influential centres in Canaan in the fourteenth century.

Only some thirty settlements, mostly small and poor, have been found in the surveys conducted in the mountain region between the Jezreel Valley and the Beersheba Valley. If we had to rely exclusively on the archaeological evidence from Shechem and Jerusalem, we would have assumed that Shechem alone had a local ruler, whose territory encompassed the northern part of the hill country, while most of highlands were essentially no-man's-land. The picture of two rulers of city-states, who during the Amarna period wielded considerable influence over developments throughout the country, rests entirely on the Amarna letters and has little support in the archaeological research.

Moving on to the lowlands, the picture is sometimes not unlike that of the mountain region. The Amarna letters show that Gezer was one of the most important kingdoms in Canaan, and that its rulers had leading parts in the conflicts that took place during the Amarna period. Three kings ruled Gezer during this time, of whom the most prominent, Milkilu, formed alliances with rulers in the territory ranging from Pihilu, a kingdom in the northern Gilead, to Gath, a city in the Shephelah to the south of Gezer. Gezer's location on the country's main south-to-north route, and on the main road from the Shephelah to the highlands, gave its rulers a key position in the relationships in the south and middle of Canaan. Moreover, Gezer was not far from Jaffa, one of the centres of Egyptian power in the land. There were also smaller kingdoms in the vicinity of Gezer, which lived in the shadow of their powerful neighbour. The rulers of Gezer paid tribute and sent offerings to Egypt, and a letter sent from Egypt to Milkilu (EA 369) orders him to prepare a gift of forty tall, good-looking women in return for precious metals and valuable artifacts sent him from Egypt (for letter EA 369, see Moran 1992, 366; Na'aman 2002, 77–78). The overall picture arising from the correspondence is of a strong and flourishing kingdom that maintained connections with other city-states near and far.

Gezer was excavated in the early stage of archaeological research, and again in the sixties and seventies of the twentieth century. The excavations unearthed some buildings from the Late Bronze Age, but no monumental structures, in contrast to the big, fortified, thriving city of the Middle Bronze III (for the Late Bronze Age in Gezer, see Dever 1993a, 502–3; 2003, 263–66, with earlier literature). William Dever ascribed the so-called "outer" wall to the Late Bronze Age, and argued that the city was fortified at that time (Dever 1986; 1993b; 2003, 264–66, with earlier literature). Yet this is unlikely, and there can be no doubt that

this wall was built during Iron Age II, while in the Late Bronze Age the city was unfortified (Kempinski 1976, 212–13; Ussishkin 1990, 74–77; Finkelstein 1981; 1994, with earlier literature; Yanai 1994, 283–87). Only a few structures, some burials and pottery, including vessels imported from Egypt and Cyprus, were found. If our knowledge of the place were based entirely on the archaeological finding, we would have concluded that Gezer was, at most, an unimportant city-state, and no-one would have thought that it was one of the principal kingdoms in the array of Canaanite city-states during the Amarna period.

The letters of the three rulers of Lachish are short and do not yield much information. The city is mentioned twice by 'Abdi-Heba, king of Jerusalem. On one occasion Lachish is mentioned side by side with Gezer and Ashkelon, the two most important kingdoms in south Canaan, and another time in reference to the murder of its ruler Zimredda. It has been commonly accepted that during the Late Bronze Age Lachish was the most important city in the southern Shephelah, and one would have expected to find evidence to support it in the extensive excavations conducted at the site.

Yet the excavations have shown that the city's heyday began only in the thirteenth century (Level VI), no doubt under the Egyptian aegis (for the results of the excavations, see Tufnell, Inge and Harding 1940; Tufnell et. al. 1958; Ussishkin 1993, 899–900; Barkay and Ussishkin 2004, 344–51). Findings from the fourteenth century (Level VII) were quite meagre, mainly a modest-sized temple built in the moat of the Middle Bronze fortifications, containing rich offerings to the local deity. However, modest-sized temples are known from large and small cities in Canaan, and do not indicate the political status of the place. In addition, several private structures were found, as were many tombs containing funerary objects, including vessels imported from Cyprus and the Aegean world. The city of Lachish was unwalled throughout the Late Bronze Age, and no public buildings from the time of Amarna have been found. We may state with certainty that, without the historical documentation, scholars would have assumed that Late Bronze Lachish became an important city-state only in the thirteenth century, doubtless under direct Egyptian rule, and that earlier it had been either an unimportant city-state, or a provincial city in the territory of a neighbouring kingdom.

There is a striking discrepancy between the testimony of the Amarna letters concerning Jerusalem, Shechem, Gezer and Lachish, and that of the archaeological excavations conducted at these four sites. To illustrate this we need only ponder what kind of picture the archaeologists would have conceived if the settlement strata and the findings dated to the Amarna period were associated with a time for which we had no written

documentation. In that case the archaeologists would have concluded that in the entire mountain region between the Jezreel Valley and the Beersheba Valley there was only one ruling centre which controlled the northern part of the hill country, with the rest being a kind of no-man's-land. Jerusalem would have been thought of as a village in a sparsely inhabited highland region. Sites such as Gezer and Lachish would have been defined as either unimportant city-states, or as provincial towns in the territories of the neighbouring kingdoms. Some scholars would probably have supposed that at that time the enormous, strong and prosperous kingdom of Hazor ruled over most of the inner regions of Canaan, and that all the thriving cities in this vast area were secondary centres in its territory.

How can we explain the discrepancy between the documentary and archaeological evidence? Following the utter destruction of the prosperous Middle Bronze III urban culture, the country underwent a serious decline, and this is indicated in the excavations and surveys of the Late Bronze Age I–II. When the urban culture is at a low ebb, structures of lesser strength and quality are built, often on the foundations of solid structures from an earlier time. In multi-strata tells, these poor structures are easily obliterated by later building operations. This is especially true of highland sites, where the bedrock is high and late construction and levelling can remove almost all traces of the earlier buildings and artifacts. Archaeological research can identify the fragmented remains and establish their date and function, but often the erosion and obliteration of much of the evidence by later operations, the fragmented state of preservation of the structures and the dispersal of the artefacts serve to hinder the reconstruction of the ancient reality.

I do not mean to disparage the importance of archaeology, which can shed light not only on aspects of the material culture, but also on other significant areas, such as the economy and society, imports and exports, religion and the cult, among others. But in regard to the political setup in a broader territory, the relative status and power of cities vis-à-vis their neighbours, or their relationship with the dominant political power in the region, archaeology is severely limited. I suggest that exclusive reliance on it can give rise to a distorted picture of the ancient reality. To restate, this is certainly true in reference to such times of decline as the fourteenth century, and this conclusion may well be applied to the central hill country in the tenth century and the Persian period, which were both times of great decline. However, in the absence of primary written sources from these times, and the well-known limitations of the Bible—which is the single written source available for the study of these periods—it cannot be put to the documentary test.

Nehemiah's Wall as a Case Study for the Limitations of the Archaeological Research

What is the probability of discovering parts of Nehemiah's wall in the excavations at Jerusalem? Before discussing this issue I must deal briefly with the problem of the scope of the wall described in Neh 3. Almost all scholars assume that the wall surrounded only the City of David, though a few have argued that it surrounded both the Western Hill and the City of David (for literature, see Ussishkin 2006, 147–48). The latter position was recently defended by Ussishkin (2006), on the basis of the archaeological research of Jerusalem. Underlying his discussion is his assumption that "the corpus of archaeological data should be the starting-point for the study of Jerusalem, its borders, history, and material culture in the biblical period. This source of information should take preference, whenever possible, over the written sources, which are largely biased, incomplete, and open to different interpretations" (Ussishkin 2006, 147–48). The assumption that the archaeological evidence should always take preference to the written text is refuted by the discussion of the Amarna letters versus the archaeological research presented above. Moreover, the artificial contrast posed between the biblical data, which are "open to different interpretations," and the results of archaeological research, is doubtful, as in many cases the archaeological data are also open to different interpretations. Instead, each set of data should be investigated in its own right and their results should be carefully compared and, if possible, integrated.

Ussishkin (2006, 153–59) examined the results of the archaeological excavations conducted along the western slope of the City of David. Since no city wall was discovered there, he concluded that "a city wall was not built along the western slope of the city of David during the First Temple Period" (Ussishkin 2006, 153). Iron Age Jerusalem was fortified for the first time when the wall surrounding the Western Hill was built—namely, in the late eighth century B.C.E. Since there was no Iron Age wall along the western slope of the City of David, and Nehemiah restored the destroyed Iron Age city wall, he concluded that Nehemiah's wall surrounded both the Western Hill and the City of David.

Ussishkin's reconstruction suffers from many flaws. First, no Middle Bronze Age wall was found along the western slope of the city of David. According to his reasoning that "not found" = "never existed," he should have concluded that the Middle Bronze city was left unfortified on the western side of the city. Second, all Syro-Palestinian capital cities and all the major Judahite cities (e.g. Beth-shemesh, Lachish, Tel Beersheba) were fortified during the ninth century B.C.E. The assumption that

Jerusalem alone was left unfortified until the late eighth century B.C.E. is highly unlikely. Third, according to 2 Kgs 14:13, following his victory in the battle of Beth-shemesh, King Joash of Israel conquered Jerusalem, "and he made a breach of four hundred cubits in the wall of Jerusalem, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate." Also, when Rezin, king of Aram, and Pekah ben Remaliah advanced on Jerusalem, "they besieged Ahaz, but they were not able to attack" (2 Kgs 16:5; see Isa 7:1). The two accounts show that Jerusalem was fortified from the early eighth century onwards. Moreover, the Ephraim Gate was located on the western side of the city, so it is clear that a wall was erected there in the early eighth century B.C.E. Fourth, Neh 3:8b reads as follows: "and they left out Jerusalem as far as the broad wall." As noted by Williamson (1985, 205), "Taking the words at face value, the clause will offer further evidence for the view that Nehemiah's wall cut inside part of the pre-exilic city." According to Neh 12:38–39, the second procession marched on the wall, "above the Tower of Ovens to the Broad Wall; and above the Gate of Ephraim." The "Broad Wall" can safely be identified as the "wall outside it," whose construction is attributed to Hezekiah according to 2 Chr 32:5 (Na'aman 2007, 44–45). Thus the description of the building of Nehemiah's wall suggests that the "Broad Wall" surrounding the Western Hill was left out of the fortifications built by Nehemiah.

In sum, Jerusalem was fortified along its western side in the early eighth century, probably earlier, and there is no obstacle to the assumption that Nehemiah's wall surrounded the City of David. The Western Hill remained unfortified and deserted in the Persian and early Hellenistic period, and was first fortified in the Hasmonean period.

Taking into account the relatively small number of people who constructed the City of David's wall, and the short duration of construction (fifty-two days [Neh 6:15]), the wall must have been thin, more an enclosure than a city wall. On three sides it was built on the foundations of the First Temple city wall, so the likelihood of the survival of these upper courses on top of the early wall is nil. I agree with the scholars who—on the basis of the description in the book of Nehemiah—have suggested that on the eastern side Nehemiah deviated from the line of the early wall and constructed a new wall near the easternmost buildings of the city (Williamson 1977, 82; 1985, 200, 208; Blenkinsopp 1989, 231–32, 237; Eshel 2000, 339). This must have been a thin, fragmentary wall, rising on top of a steep slope. Such a thin wall could hardly survive the erosion and extensive building operations conducted on that slope at a later time. Hence a discovery of the enclosure wall built by Nehemiah in the City of David is very unlikely, and it is not surprising that it has not been found.

What conclusions can be drawn from this discussion? In my opinion, the most important lesson learned from the analysis of the Amarna letters is that archaeologists should be much more cautious in drawing conclusions from negative evidence. This is particularly true of the old city of Jerusalem, which was built on terraces and settled for thousands of years, each new city erecting its foundations on the bedrock and destroying what lay underneath. The obvious limitation of archaeology in periods of great decline is bad news for historians and biblical scholars, since on many occasions they are left with only the biblical text, difficult as it is for the historical research. But it is better to continue analyzing this problematic source and extracting the information that it may contain than blindly to trust a discipline that occasionally cannot provide the scientific basis it claims for the historical research.

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Secondary Sources Also Deserve to be Historically Evaluated: The Case of the United Monarchy

Rainer Albertz

In his recent book, *Ancient Israel: What Do We Know and How Do We Know It?* (2007), Lester Grabbe, to whom I wish to convey my warmest greetings with this essay, has drawn a fascinating outline of how a reconstruction of Israel's history from the twelfth to sixth centuries B.C.E., one that fully meets the requirements of strict historical standards, could work. Remembering the heated debate between so-called minimalists and maximalists of recent decades, I very much appreciate this attempt; it is an important step forward. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Lester Grabbe for his constant efforts in bringing both "parties" into a critical dialogue on the panel of the European Seminar in Historical Methodology (ESHM), and his friendly invitation to me to participate. I consider the ESHM to be an important venture, forcing all of us to reconsider the material basis and methodical approach of our historical reconstructions. I hope he will enjoy the present contribution to those discussions.

Remaining Methodological Questions

Grabbe (2007, 3–36) has greatly clarified, probably more than any other historian of ancient Israel, the methodological questions of historiography. I will mention here only the question of the status of sources. Like many others, Grabbe distinguishes fundamentally between primary and secondary sources:

> Primary sources are those contemporary (or nearly so) with the events they describe and usually have some other direct connection (eyewitness report, compilation from eyewitness reports or other good sources, proximity to the events or those involved in the events). Secondary sources are those further removed in time and space from the original events. (Grabbe 2007, 220)

He rightly concludes: "Preference should be given to primary sources… this means archaeology and inscriptions" (2007, 35). As long as suitable sources of this first category are available, I think no one would argue against that general rule. According to Grabbe, the texts of the Hebrew Bible generally belong to the second category:

> The biblical text is almost always a secondary source, written and edited long after the events ostensibly described. In some cases, the text may depend on earlier sources, but these sources were edited and adapted; in any case the source has to be dug out from the present context. (2007, 35)

Grabbe does not wish to attack or vilify the Hebrew Bible by categorizing the biblical texts in such a way (2007, 219). Rather, he opposes a "dogmatic scepticism that continually looks for a way to reject or denigrate the biblical text" (2007, 23), an attitude that Barstad (1998) has called "bibliophobia." In contrast to a strict minimalist view, Grabbe demands:

> The biblical text should always be considered: it is one of the sources for the history of ancient Israel and needs to be treated like any other source, being neither privileged nor rejected a priori, but handled straightforwardly and critically. (2007, 224)

According to Grabbe, "we cannot say that the biblical text is reliable or unreliable, because it all depends on which episode or text one has in mind" (2007, 219). From this insight he derives the methodical demand: "secondary sources normally need some sort of confirmation" (2007, 220). Thus, compared with some radical minimalist positions, Grabbe's methodical approach seems well-balanced and fair.

Yet some serious material and methodological questions remain. First, we must recognize that our primary sources for the pre-exilic history of ancient Israel, despite their theoretical importance, are very limited. This is especially true of the epigraphic material: unfortunately, we have not a single monumental inscription or written document from monarchic archives of Israel and Judah that would allow us to reconstruct the political history of these states. The reasons for this strange situation are not totally clear. On the one hand, they may have to do with the frequency of warfare in that area, which could have damaged many of the potential written or inscribed sources. On the other hand, official documents were mostly written on papyrus in Palestine, a medium that is rarely preserved, given the wet climate. The only two—fragmentary—monumental inscriptions from Palestine that we have come from neighbouring states, the Mesha stele from a king of Moab, and the Tel Dan stele, probably from a king of Aram (Damascus). Together with several Assyrian, and a few

Babylonian, royal inscriptions and chronicles concerning events in Palestine, these are the only epigraphic sources enabling us to control the historical data supplied by the biblical texts; unfortunately, however, these potential sources are restricted to the period from middle of the ninth to the sixth century.

The other kind of primary source, the results of archaeological excavations including stratigraphy, architecture, pottery and other small finds, together with demographic calculations derived from surveys, comprises a huge amount of data, more than from any other place in the ancient Near East. Yet historical conclusions—especially conclusions based on an absence of evidence—are often ambiguous. While Grabbe earlier stressed the significance of "textual material, which provides much of the interpretative framework," stating that "without textual data, the archaeology is much less helpful" (2000, 217), he now grants the archaeological data the highest status of objectivity, because they "actually existed in real life," while "a text always contains human invention, and it is always possible that a text is entirely fantasy" (2007, 10).[1] But if we note the very different interpretations of archaeological results relating to the twelfth to tenth centuries, reported by Grabbe in detail, his earlier opinion seems equally to be justified. Important as such results may be for developments of the *longue* and *moyen durée*, without the interpretative framework of epigraphic material they do not provide the exact historical data necessary for reconstructing the *histoire événementelle*, the political history of Israel and Judah. Thus, for the whole period of about 350 years from the stele of Merneptah (1209/8 B.C.E.), which mentions Israel for the first time, to the Kurkh Monolith of Shalmaneser III (853 B.C.E.), which mentions King Ahab in the battle of Qarqar, we do not have the primary sources that we need in order to control the reliability of the secondary sources in the Bible. Since the biblical texts concerning this earlier period cannot be evaluated by external primary sources, Grabbe, in accordance with his methodological demands, concludes that they cannot be used for historical reconstruction. The outcome of this procedure is demonstrated in his book: despite the many possible suggestions about the early history of ancient Israel that Grabbe discusses in detail, no reliable historical reconstruction from the twelfth to tenth centuries B.C.E. is possible.

1. Thus, Grabbe is now ready to concede archaeology has paramount importance for his historiography: "The importance of archaeology cannot…be overestimated" (2007, 6); "The proper attention to archaeology is vital for any history of ancient Israel, and it is my intention to try to give it the prominence it deserves" (2007, 10).

Can we really be satisfied with such a negative result, which depends merely on a fortuitous lack of all epigraphic inscriptions? As long as this situation is not altered by new findings, should we not make use of the possibilities provided by the Hebrew Bible?

Grabbe sometimes relativize his strict division between primary and secondary sources, as, for example, when he concedes:

> Primary sources are not always trustworthy, and secondary sources may sometimes contain reliable information, and no two sources agree entirely. Thus, the historian has to make a critical investigation of all data, whatever the source. (2007, 220)

I appreciate this statement: it implies that the texts of the Hebrew Bible, despite being classified as "secondary sources," should be historically evaluated. Some may contain reliable historical information, some less, and some none. But, unfortunately, Grabbe is not really interested in developing internal criteria for distinguishing those biblical texts that may contain reliable historical information from those in which no clear external evidence is available. He reckons with the possibility that a biblical text may depend on earlier sources that might be retrieved (2007, 35), but does not offer much by way of examples. The results of literary historical exegesis seem too uncertain to him:

> The complicated history of the biblical text has been partially worked out in the past two centuries, but there is still much unknown and much on which there is disagreement. (2007, 220)

Thus in most cases he prefers to deal with the biblical text (often taken in the singular!) as if all passages stand on the same level. But can that be the solution? The disagreement about the dating and interpretation of biblical texts is no worse than about the interpretation of archaeological data. In the realm of history we can never be absolutely sure. Nevertheless, there are some literary-historical criteria that provide us with a rough guideline for the historical evaluation of biblical texts. First of all, the uniformity or non-uniformity of a given text has to be proven by literary criticism and its units have to be dated: texts that lie closer to the events are normally more reliable. Form-critical classifications are also important: reports often contain more reliable information than narratives, narratives more than sagas and legends, and prophetic accusations more than prophetic announcements. In any case, all texts have to be interpreted against their *Tendenz* or ideology, which also has to be evaluated first. Of course, identical or similar information given by more than one independent biblical source has a higher degree of historical probability. This means that the same literary tools used for the historical

interpretation of the epigraphic material are valid for evaluating the degree of historicity of a biblical text. Because of the longer editorial history of the latter, however—which Grabbe rightly notes—the historical evaluation of biblical texts is more complex and must be handled very carefully.

Grabbe has demonstrated in great detail that there is no reason for mistrusting the historicity of biblical texts in general: he has shown that in many of those cases where we have external evidence from epigraphic sources, the information in biblical texts can be confirmed or brought into a meaningful correlation with such data (2007, 144–49, 163–64, 200, 209–10, 224–25). In other cases where they deviate, the discrepancy often can be explained by the specific ideological interest of the biblical author. The importance of form-critical categories can be demonstrated in the case of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah in 701: the report of this event in 2 Kgs 18:13–16 perfectly accords with Sennacherib's inscription (see Grabbe 2007, 200), while the Isaiah–Hezekiah legend (18:17–19:10, 32*, 36*) disagrees with both, despite including some historical details (but in an inaccurate way). For Sennacherib never besieged Jerusalem, but withdrew from Lachish after Hezekiah paid him a huge tribute.[2] In any event, the Deuteronomistic author concealed Sennacherib's devastation of the Shephelah and the deportation of many of its inhabitants, presumably because he wanted to give a positive judgement on Hezekiah for ideological reasons. So, while it can be legitimately argued that without the Assyrian inscriptions and the archaeological evidence we would not see the overall extent of the catastrophe, nevertheless a sound literary-historical evaluation of the biblical accounts, giving the report priority over the legend, would not deliver entirely misleading results. I ask, therefore: Should we not similarly scrutinize the biblical texts for that period between the twelfth and the tenth centuries when no other written sources are available (especially for the tenth century B.C.E.)?

The Case of the "United Monarchy"

The archaeological results concerning Jerusalem in the tenth and early ninth centuries (Iron IIA) are unfortunately very ambiguous, and Grabbe (2007, 71–73) describes in detail the dispute between archaeologists. On one side (Ussishkin 2003; Finkelstein 2003; Steiner 2003; Lehmann

2. The expression *URU.ḪAL-ṢU.MEŠ* in Sennacherib's inscription does not denote "ramps," as is often suggested (*ANET* 288: "earthwork"), but "forts" which the Assyrian king had built in order to control the access to Jerusalem. So argues, rightly, Mayer (1995, 355–63).

2003; Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2004), Jerusalem was only a minor settlement, a village or possibly a citadel. On the other side (Cahill 2003; Mazar 2007), it was a substantial city, the capital of an emerging state. The uncertainty has to do not only with the heavy destruction Jerusalem suffered during its long history and the severe restrictions to which all excavations in the Old City are subjected under the complicated political and religious regime, but also with the fact that archaeology has not so far found clear answers to substantial material questions. Were the impressive fortifications of the Middle Bronze (IIB) reused in later LB and Iron IIA–B periods, or was Jerusalem an unfortified settlement until the eighth century? What was the date and the purpose of the so-called stepped structure on the south-eastern slope? Was it already built in the tenth century or later? Did it served as a foundation of a monumental building such as a palace, or not? Depending on the answers to these and similar questions, very different reconstructions of the history of the tenth century can be supported.

Weighing up these two alternative reconstructions, Grabbe tends to follow the minimal position. He does not wish to deny that Saul, David and Solomon really existed, but would severely reduce the portrait of a great and renowned Davidic empire drawn by the Hebrew Bible:

> Perhaps a city-state, much like the city-states of Shechem under Lab'aya or of Jerusalem under 'Abdi-Ḫeba, would be feasible… It seems unlikely that David controlled anything beyond a limited territory centred on the southern hill country and Jerusalem. (2007, 121)

Moreover, following Finkelstein and Silberman (2001, 121–45; cf. Finkelstein 2003, 79) and others, Grabbe feels obliged to deny the existence of a "united monarchy" for more general reasons.[3] In his view, the ecological conditions and the economic and demographic development of northern Israel and the southern hill country were so different (2007, 70–71) that a unification of Judah and Israel in one territorial state under David "would have been an unusual development" (2007, 121)—perhaps not impossible, but rather unlikely. According to him, it is much more likely that the first Israelite state would have been established in the ecologically privileged northern area, where the Omride kingdom emerged. Thus he states:

3. The main archaeological argument for a "united monarchy," the similar six-chambered gates in Gezer, Megiddo and Hazor (cf. Mazar 2007, 130–31), is no longer mentioned by Grabbe. This feature has probably lost plausibility for him, since their traditional dating in the tenth century was questioned (cf. Finkelstein 2007, 111–13) in the controversy about the low chronology.

> The first kingdom for which we have solid evidence is the northern kingdom, the state founded by Omri. This fits what we would expect from the *longue durée*; if there was an earlier state, we have no direct information on it except perhaps some memory in the biblical text. This does not mean that nothing existed before Omri in either the north or the south, but what was there was probably not a state as such. (2007, 222–23)

As plausible as this historical reconstruction may be, our limited external sources mean that the problem remains "what to do with the biblical traditions about the rise of the Israelite kingship," as Grabbe puts it (2007, 121). He tries to explain why their authors came to the idea of a "united monarchy": the territory controlled by David "might have overlapped with territory earlier controlled by Saul, which would lead to some of the biblical traditions that made David the usurper and successor of Saul" (2007, 121). But is this a sufficient explanation? There are not just "some traditions," but dozens of texts between 1 Sam 10 and 2 Sam 21 which without exception describe the complicated start of Israel's monarchic history in this way.

There is no space here to discuss all the biblical texts concerning the "united monarchy." I would mention just two pieces of evidence which seem not to be taken sufficiently into consideration by Grabbe. The first is the external evidence of the Tel Dan inscription, which—astonishing enough—Grabbe does not use for his reconstruction of early monarchic history.[4] In line 9 of the inscription occurs the expression *bytdwd*, which in the political context of the inscription can only be rendered "house of David." The element *beit* in this expression can have two meanings, "family/dynasty [of David]" and "state [of David]," just as we find with the expression *bît ḫumri*, "house of Omri," in the Assyrian inscriptions (Weippert 1978), one of the terms denoting the northern kingdom.[5] Thus the Aramaean ruler of the ninth century (probably Hazael) regarded David as the founder of a dynasty and a founder of a state. This evidence not only calls into question all suggestions that Judah did not became a state before the eighth century,[6] but also shows that the political organization

4. See his very restricted reconstruction and cautious interpretation (2007, 129–30). For a more extensive reconstruction and historical interpretation, see Kottsieper 1998.

5. Also in the Hebrew Bible the term בית can denote a nation or a state: 2 Sam 2:4; 12:8; 16:3; 1 Kgs 12:21; 20:31; Isa 8:14; Jer 2:26; 5:11; Hos 1:4; 5:12, 14 etc.

6. This view is also questioned by the discovery of 170 clay bullae from the ninth century by near the Gihon spring, on which see Reich, Shukron and Lernau 2007, 156–57. Together with a large quantity of fish bones in the same area, these bullae verify that Jerusalem was a commercial and administrative centre in the late ninth century at least. The suggestion that this centre emerged only under the

founded by David belonged to the same category as the Omride kingdom, even if it probably represented a less developed form of it.[7] The Tel Dan inscription does not, of course, refer to the "united monarchy," only the kingdom of Judah, but it does not exclude the possibility, since the extent of the "house of David" may have varied.

The second issue I will mention is the biblical traditions about the division of the monarchy, which seem to me overlooked in the present discussion. Relating the end of the Solomonic empire and the foundation of a separate northern kingdom makes sense only if a "united kingdom" had existed. The bulk of the traditions is collected and commented on by the Deuteronomistic historian in 1 Kgs 11–12, and a literary-critical analysis can distinguish four different sources, each with different degrees of historicity:

1. *A report of the rebellion of Jeroboam ben Nebat, an Ephraimite from Zeredah, against King Solomon*. First the rebellion failed; Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam. He had to flee to Egypt, but after Solomon's death he came back to Israel and was crowned as the first king of the northern kingdom (1 Kgs 11:26, 40; 12:2,[8] 20a[9]). This short report could have come from the "Chronicle of the kings of Judah and Israel." From its *Gattung* and its possible origin, it claims a high degree of historicity.[10]

influence of the northern state, whose ally Judah was during the Omride period (Grabbe 2007, 127), is possible, but in no way necessary, and depends on the view that Judah was still much less developed than Israel.

7. Using the categories of Claessen and Skalník (1978)—namely, of an "inchoate early state" in contrast to a "typical early state." I have argued (Albertz 2007, 358–59) that the Omride state should be categorized as a "transitional early state" on the way to a "mature state," a stage reached in the eighth and seventh centuries.

8. That the verse does not really fit the narrative of 1 Kgs 12:1–19 is shown by the fact that it is missing here in the LXX; it comes at the end of ch. 11. In the MT its final clause is aligned to the context. As the deviating text of 2 Chr 10:2 and the LXX and Vulgate show, the verse should run: As Jeroboam ben Nebat heard (that), while he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from Solomon, he *came back from Egypt*. Originally the message heard by Jeroboam was not the assembly in Shechem but the death of Solomon (11:40, now explicitly reported by the Dtr's final clause, v. 43; see the LXX). Furthermore, his return did not originally lead him to the assembly, where he was only secondarily included by DtrH (12:3a, 12, 20*), but somewhere else (according to the LXX in 11:43: "straight to his town in the land of Samaria on the mountain of Ephraim"), from where he had to be called (12:20).

9. Only the words "in the assembly" are a Dtr addition. Whether v. 20b originally belonged to the report is not certain. In any case, it is a doublet to the end of the narrative in v. 19.

10. For more details, see Albertz 1994, 138–43.

2. *The fragment of a narrative about Jeroboam's failed rebellion (1 Kgs 11:27–28)*. Its summary, probably given by the Deuteronomistic historian (v. 27), confirms that Jeroboam raised his hand against King Solomon when the latter was building the Millo. The narrative relates that Solomon had promoted Jeroboam because of his achievements and put him in charge for the labour-gangs of the tribal district of Joseph (v. 28). Unfortunately, the rest of the story is broken off, giving way to the Ahijah story. Although a narrative, the text accords with the report mentioned above. Its contention that the king himself fostered his later enemy runs against a tendency to glorify Solomon and so seems to be trustworthy.
3. *A long historical narrative about the separation of the northern tribes from the Davidic dynasty at the beginning of the reign of Rehoboam (1 Kgs 12:1*, 3b–14, 16, 18–19)*.[11] The negotiations between the northern tribes and Rehoboam concerning the burdens of corvée, in which Jeroboam was originally not included (cf. v. 20) are stylized in a didactic manner and probably did not happen in this way. But the fact that the main reason for the division of the monarchy was a social conflict about compulsory labour accords with the fragmented narrative (11:27–28) and seems to be trustworthy. This is confirmed by the detail of the murder of Adoram, the commander in charge of the labour (v. 18). Since v. 19 characterizes the separation of the northern tribes as a sinful rebellion (פשע) against the Davidic dynasty, the narrative is of Judean origin. As the aetiological motive ("until the present day") at the end shows, it presupposes an interval from the events reported; yet its self-critical intention implies that the problem of the division of monarchy was still present. Thus, it should be assigned to not later than the time of Hezekiah and can claim a kernel of historicity for itself.
4. *The prophetic narrative on how Ahijah from Shiloh anointed Jeroboam king (1 Kgs 11:29–39*)*. The narrative has been heavily reworked by the Deuteronomists (vv. 32–36, 38a, 39); but the underlying plot containing Ahijah's symbolic act of tearing his new cloak in twelve pieces and offering Jeroboam ten of them already presupposes the existence of a "united monarchy." As a prophetic legend, however, its degree of historicity is rather low.

11. Verse 2 originally belonged to the report: vv. 3a, 15 are Dtr additions. Verse 17 is a different interpolation reminiscent of 1 Chr 11:16–17.

> It probably originated as a legitimating story about the beginning of the northern monarchy. Nevertheless, as such it confirms that the "united monarchy" was a concept not only promoted in Judah, but also acknowledged in a foundation story within the northern kingdom.

In contrast to his sources the Deuteronomistic historian presented his own view of the "division of the monarchy." According to him, the main reason for this division was the later apostasy of Solomon, who has been seduced by his foreign wives (1 Kgs 11:1–13; generalized in 12:33). In his view the Judean state survived only because of the divine election of David, which remained valid (11:13). Such a difficult theological construction would have been superfluous had a considerable loss of power for the Davidides not taken place. Thus, even the Deuteronomistic historian, probably in the exilic period, in some way attests the division of the united monarchy.

The critical modern historian may nevertheless raise the objection that the sources intertwined in 1 Kgs 11–12 are not really independent of each other. Apart from the Ahijah legend they could perhaps have come from a similar Judean milieu. There is, however, an independent source which has nothing to do with Deuteronomistic History and its possible sources. It consists in a prophetic oracle in the book of Isaiah:

> Yhwh will bring on you [and your people] and the house of your father a time, the like of which has not been come since the time that Ephraim deviated from Judah [the king of Assur]. (Isa 7:17)[12]

This verse constitutes the final oracle of judgment uttered by Isaiah against Ahab in his activity during the Syro-Ephraimite war (Isa 7:1–17). It is generally acknowledged that the verse belongs to the earliest layer of the book, often called the *Denkschrift* (Isa 6:1–8:19*), which was probably written shortly after the events of 734–32 B.C.E.[13] I have pointed out above that prophetic announcements are obviously not reliable historical sources, because they can turn out to be wrong. Yet, in our case the

12. The passages set in brackets are probably, as their syntactical isolation shows, generalizing and explaining glosses.

13. Cf. Blum 1996/97, 552–57. According to Blum, this *Denkschrift* acquired its final form (including ch. 6) in the second stage of Isaiah's "testament," written at the end of the prophet's life shortly after 701 B.C.E. Liss (2003, 72–92) wants to date Isa 7:1–17 in the time of Josiah, while Becker (1997, 21–60) has even pleaded for post-Dtr dating. Nevertheless, Blum is right to argue that Isa 6–8* contains a vivid dispute with Isaiah's pupils, which cannot have taken place long after the death of the prophet. For the complex structure of the unit, cf. Steck 1982a, 1982b.

reference to the division of the monarchy is a memory used as a comparison for the future. Indeed, the rather surprising comparison with its unusual terminology[14] probably provides the verse with a high degree of historicity. Thus, this prophetic source confirms that even more than two centuries after the event the separation of the northern tribes from the Davidic kings was remembered as a traumatic experience. It was seen as the worst catastrophe that had ever happened in the history of Judah so far. According to this source, the "division of the monarchy" was strongly anchored in the historical memory of Judah in the eighth century; thus it seems very improbable that this event should have been an invention.

There is a second prophetic reference to the united monarchy in a salvation oracle of the book of Ezekiel, probably coming from the late exilic period. According to Ezek 37:15–22, Judah and Israel will be reunited under one king in the future. If v. 22 proposes that Judah and Israel should no longer be two separate nations and should never again split into two kingdoms, the memory of the former division is still present. The use of the verb חצה ("divide"), uncommon in this context, shows that this prophetic announcement depends neither on Isaiah nor the Deuteronomistic historian. This late text reveals that it is impossible to regard the "united monarchy" as merely a projection of an exilic hope into the past. On the contrary, the exilic hope tries to overcome the unhappy experience of a political division that occurred in the past.

Conclusion

A more detailed investigation of the biblical texts reveals that there are no fewer than seven different sources that confirm the "division of the monarchy." At least three of these are independent of each other (the Deuteronomistic historian; Isa 7:17 and Ezek 37:22), and at least two of them, according to their features and content, are furnished with a high degree of reliability (1 Kgs 11:26, 40; 12:2*, 20a; Isa 7:17), while at least three come from the monarchic period (1 Kgs 11:26, 40; 12:2*, 20a; 12:1–19*; Isa 7:17). Naturally, the withdrawal of the northern tribes was remembered more in Judah, because it included here a considerable loss of power (six sources). Yet it was also preserved in the tradition of the northern kingdom (1 Kgs 11:29–39*). Although different in shape and content, each of the sources corroborates the others; there is no

14. In contrast to the pejorative terminology in 1 Kgs 12:19 (פשע ב, "sinned or rebelled against"), the expression used by Isaiah (סור מעל, "deviate from, separate from") lacks any negative assessment.

single source that draws a totally different picture.[15] Assessed with the usual historical criteria, this result should be sufficient to establish the historicity of the division of the monarchy. Therefore, there is also good reason to postulate the existence of the united monarchy, whatever its shape and extent.[16]

I think Grabbe is right in pointing out that we should expect the emergence of statehood first in the more developed areas in the north. However, in accordance with the biblical tradition I think that this happened already with arrival of Saul (1 Sam 9–11). Generally speaking, there is no fundamental doubt that a strong character like David could have been able to turn the normal development in a different direction: after having become the king of Judah he actually usurped the throne of Saul in a bloody civil war and united the three dominions of Judah, Israel and Jerusalem under his rule (2 Sam 2–5). The united monarchy was precarious from its beginnings, as reflected in the stories of the Absalom and Sheba rebellions (2 Sam 16:5–14; 19:9b–41; 19:42–20:22). Nevertheless, it strengthened, or even created, an overall Israelite identity that embraced the north and the south (2 Sam 13:12, 15–19. In spite of the division of the monarchy after Solomon's death, some kind of overall Israelite identity must have survived. This is because it is presupposed by the prophets of the eighth century (cf. Isa 5:7; 8:14; 9:7–20) and it is the prerequisite of the assumptions that thousands of refugees from the north fled to Judah when the Assyrians conquered Samaria (722–720 B.C.E.). It therefore makes sense to assume that the first history of the early monarchy from Saul to Solomon (1 Sam 10–2 Kgs 2*) was composed in the time of Hezekiah (Dietrich 2002, 259–73; Albertz 2009), when a compromise between the competing historical traditions of the inhabitants of Judah and the refugees from the north had to be found.

From these insights I would like to outline the following methodical demands: anyone who denies the historicity of the united monarchy for any reason should be obliged to answer two questions. First, how can the existence of so many biblical sources for the division of the monarchy be

15. This is also true for the shape of the tradition given by Chronicles (1 Chr 10:1–12:4; 13:4–12). This source is here intentionally excluded, because it clearly depends on DtrH and is much later. Its slightly different view of the event is not derived from older traditions, but depends on its dispute with the Samarians of the fourth century B.C.E. See Bae 2005, 67–77.

16. For me, it is important to see that Na'aman (2006, 14–15), although reducing the biblical picture of David's and Solomon's rule considerably, does not deny the existence of a united monarchy.

explained if a united monarchy had never existed? Second, if not during the united monarchy, when should the consciousness of an overall Israelite identity have emerged—a consciousness already testified in the eighth century B.C.E.?[17]

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17. Finkelstein and Silberman (2001, 275–88) regard Josiah's reform as the period that gave birth to such an identity, but that would be rather too late. Moreover, Josiah's interference in northern affairs was according to them rather limited (2001, 347–53); cf. my criticisms in Albertz 2005, 27–32.

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Reiterative Narratives of Exile and Return: Virtual Memories of Abraham in the Persian and Hellenistic Periods

Thomas L. Thompson

Cultural Memories from the Persian and Hellenistic Periods

In his last two books, Philip Davies (2007, 2008) has enthusiastically engaged the work of Jan Assmann (e.g. Assmann 2006), who has introduced Egyptology to the studies of Maurice Halbwachs on the social and cultural dimensions of memory. Davies found Assmann's "cultural memory" particularly useful in a minimalist approach to biblical "history," when that is understood—with Van Seters—"as a means of creating and sustaining identity" (Davies 2008, 49; 2009). Davies, I think, correctly points out that minimalism would identify biblical narratives as fiction and therefore without any necessary relationship to the past historical events that they purportedly recount. He contrasts this to an approach that prefers to speak of these narratives as tradition, understood as implying second-hand historical sources: a position which is close to that adopted by Lester Grabbe (Davies 2008, 148–50 with reference to Grabbe 2007). Davies further marks a distinction among minimalists, pointing out that John Van Seters would place much of the Pentateuch in the so-called exilic period, whereas I have argued that biblical narratives do not reflect particular historical contexts (Davies 2008, 151 with reference to Van Seters 1975 and Thompson 1974; see also Thompson 1978). While Van Seters maintains one tradition of historical-critical scholarship, which goes back at least to Julius Wellhausen and which understands narratives to reflect the period of their composition (Wellhausen 1883, 316), my position would rather lie closer to that of Hugo Gressmann (1910), who maintained, for example, that the narratives about the patriarchs are not rooted in historical memories at all, but are unhistorical constructions, based in folklore and wisdom traditions (Thompson 1978).

While I continue to have doubts about whether the function of biblical narratives is to create and sustain identity—a function which is more appropriately attributable to the reception of biblical narrative and the development of canons—it is this disagreement with Van Seters which encourages me to argue here that, just as the writing of biblically based histories—from Noth and Bright to Provan, Long and Longman—has created virtual histories, so also are biblically based "memories" of the Persian and Hellenistic Periods virtual, dependent not on any real Persian or Hellenistic world of the past we in fact know, but on the biblical tradition itself (see Exum 2000; Thompson 2000, 2003b; Whitelam 2000; Hjelm and Thompson 2002). Rather than potential historical events and contexts, which such "memories" reflect, I am uncertain, together with the whole of the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, that there was anything apart from a literary world of intertextual reference that the narratives have engaged. Can we relate the Abraham stories to a historical context in the Persian and Hellenistic periods of Palestine's past? In fact, is such a context meaning-bearing in any manner that can be relevant for our exegesis? Are we rather not historicizing a context, known to us not from history, but from a biblical discourse based on the literary and mythic tropes of exile and return (see Thompson 1998, 2003a, 2010)? The difference strikes me as important and I offer three examples to make my question clearer.

The Fall of Pride and New Beginnings

The myth of Lucifer and the fallen angels seems clearly echoed in Gen 11's story of the Tower of Babel and functions as the introduction to the Shem–Abram genealogy that opens the patriarchal narratives (Thompson 1999, 2009). The Tower of Babel narrative is marked by allegorical echoes of Jeremiah's closing oracle against Babylon, in which the fall of that city marks Yahweh's victory over Lucifer's assault on heaven and in doing so introduces the inauguration of Jeremiah's new covenant. The city is taken and the land turned to desert, while the people are spread. This inverted exile of Babylon is reused by Genesis to introduce the theme of return in the allegory of Abram's call (Gen 11:1–9; Jer 50:1–51, 58).[1] In Jeremiah's song, when Babylon falls and the people are

1. The implicit understanding of the Tower of Babel story of Gen 11:1–9 that was held in antiquity hardly sees Gen 1–11 as a narrative about the creation of the real world, as suggested in Herbert 2007; see also the response of Strong (2008). Rather, Gen 1–11 is an idealistic construction of its contemporary theology, whose primary function is to introduce the central themes of the Pentateuch.

spread, "the Israelites return home and the Judeans with them" (Jer 50:4). Israel returns to "Bashan and Carmel, in Gilead and in Ephraim," while the Judeans, together with Israel, search for Zion (Jer 50:4–5, 17–19). Just so, in Genesis, Abram comes with his father and brothers to Canaan from Ur, the "city of Chaldea," namely, Babylon, where biblical tradition places the exile from Jerusalem. Abraham, however, is called by Yahweh from Harran, where the Israelites had been exiled according to Samaritan tradition. He comes first to Moreh's oak in Shechem (= Samaria) and, through his chain of stories, wanders ever towards the story of the sacrifice of his son on Jerusalem's Moriah (Gen 11:26–12:3, 6; 15:7; 22:14). The narrative construct of the Bible's never-ending story[2] is essentially reiterated and allegorical, which should bear serious implications for reading and understanding these texts: "That which once was is the same as that which is to come, and that which once happened is the same as that which will happen. There isn't anything new under the sun" (Eccl 1:9). With Qoheleth, one might argue that, after the great flood, the never-ending story of biblical narrative begins with Babylon's fall and the spreading and promise of a new covenant with Abraham and ends with Jerusalem's fall in 2 Kings, with its people's exile, introducing Jeremiah's new covenant within Isaiah's new world.

As a construct of "cultural memory," this allegory on the theme of exile and return is virtual: an intertextual, literary engagement, interpreting the Abraham stories and the exile in a common context with Jeremiah's new covenant. However, whether Abram's journey within Canaan, during which Yahweh guides him from *Moreh* to *Moriah*, might be seen as implying a supersessionist journey of Yahweh himself, from Gerizim to Zion, though the interpretive associations implicit in Ezra's expansive version of the Cyrus decree does seem possible to understand in terms of actual "cultural memory" from the late Persian or early Hellenistic period. Ezra presents the decree as having been commanded by *Yahweh, elohe hashamayim*, that "all should go up to Jerusalem in Judah to build Yahweh of Israel's house; for he is the God who is in Jerusalem" (Ezra 1:3; cf. 2 Chr 36:22–23). Ezra's interpretation of Genesis begs confirmation.

The difference between these two related understandings of Genesis is significant. The one, using Abraham's journey from Ur and Harran as a reiteration of Israel and Judah's return from exile, understood as it is within the common context of a literary discourse shared by Genesis and Jeremiah, identifies the function of the narrative opening the patriarchal

2. For a discussion of biblical narrative as "never-ending story," see Thompson 2005.

stories and provides us with a particular context in literature, one in which we can read the text and critically assess it. I do not think, however, that the recognition of this interrelationship helps us date the text or set it within any specific historical context. Literary themes of exile and return do not render such specific contexts within the Persian or Hellenistic period, because they refer to literary not historical phenomena. The other possible allusion, however—namely, that in Ezra's description of the Cyrus decree—echoing and interpreting Abraham's journey through Genesis as a movement of Yahweh from a Samaritan Moreh to a Jewish Moriah, if identified correctly, is a reference that contextualizes, not Genesis itself but its interpretation in Ezra, within a context of Jewish supersessionism, a context which can reasonably be associated with cultural memories created in the Hasmonean period.

The Stories of Lot and the Three Sisters

I find questions about confirmation and controls particularly important in trying to identify particular allusions and elements within our stories as belonging to historical contexts, which are derived independently of the biblical narrative. Within a discussion of Jan Assmann's "cultural memory," I find the effort to identify "blind motifs," as they have been understood within comparative literature, particularly helpful in identifying literary contexts to which elements in the Abraham stories might allude. For example, in Gen 14, after the rebellion of the kings of the rift valley from the patronage of Chedorlaomer, when Abraham returned from his great victory over the kings of Mesopotamia, the kings of Sodom and Salem meet him. Salem's king, the priest of 'El 'Elyon, blesses Abram and, in return, is given "a tenth of everything." However, without explanation, the generous offer of the king of Sodom, who is willing to give Abram the whole of the victory's booty, excepting only his people, is rejected by Abram outright, so that he should not claim: "I have made Abram rich." The striking similarity of Abram's response to these two kings in Gen 14 to Yahweh's equally unexplained acceptance and rejection of Abel and Cain's offering in their story in Gen 4 is such that we must ask why Salem's blessing is accepted and Sodom's not. Commentaries commonly relate the granting of a tenth of the booty to the priest of Salem as an etiology for tithing; that is, an allusion to Lev 27:30–32, Num 18:21 or Deut 14:22–29, one which seems confirmed by its reiteration in the story of Jacob's vision at Bethel (Gen 28:22). Such an etiology marks the passage as a "cultural memory," and offers us a *post quem* dating, relative to tithing. However, we are not helped in

regard to the otherwise "blind" allusion implied in Abram's refusal of the king of Sodom's friendship, nor in solving the implied riddle posed by the story's reiteration of Abel and Cain's offering, on which the interpretation of the scene as a whole turns.

While the tithing allusion in Gen 14 seems quite acceptable, the "blind motif" seems best resolved in the larger context of the Abraham chain-narrative (see further Thompson 1987, 158–61). The *leitmotif* of this chain is found in Gen 12:3, in which Yahweh promises that he will bless those who bless Abram and curse those who curse him, marking the patriarch as the source of blessing for all the world's peoples. In the very first of the stories in this chain, Abram moves to Egypt because of famine, lies about his relationship to Sarai, and, marrying her to Pharaoh, shockingly abuses his host's hospitality. Yet, "for Sarai's sake," Pharaoh deals well with Abram, who becomes very rich (Gen 12:10–20); so rich that, in the following story, the land cannot hold both his and Lot's wealth together. The wealth of Abram and Lot, which dominates the story of their separation in Gen 13 and opens a variation on the story of Paradise lost—introduced as it is by Lot's choice of the fruitful Jordan Valley, soon to turn to a Dead Sea's sulfurous wasteland—alludes, I think, within the larger context of the story, to the wealth that is given to the three sisters (Samaria, Jerusalem and Sodom) as Yahweh's brides in Ezek 16:10–14, much as the return of Sarai to Abram echoes themes of restoration in Ezekiel and Jeremiah.

I doubt we should understand the wealth of Abram, with George Coats (Coats 1976), as gained through fraud and as foreshadowing of the theme of "plundering Egypt" in the Exodus story (Exod 12:31–36). The theme of returning with wealth has also other alternative forms of reiteration, as in the opening of Ezra, where Cyrus, in his decree, orders that the neighbors of the returning Jews should provide them with silver and gold, with goods and beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem (Ezra 1:4–10). That is to say, such episode-reiteration does not imply that the reiterated episodes bear a common function within their quite different narrative contexts. The fulfillment of Yahweh's promise to such as pharaoh—one of the keys to understanding this very anti-moral tale—is suggested through the reuse of many of the story's motifs at the very end of the patriarchal narratives in the story of Joseph. As Abram before him, Joseph's brothers come to Egypt because of famine, having sold Joseph into slavery in Egypt in the narrative's opening chapter (Gen 37). At the close of their story, having finally discovered that their once hated brother stands now as Egypt's all-powerful vizier, they lie to Joseph and claim a dead father's wish for their

forgiveness. Joseph, however, responds with compassion that, though he recognizes that they had meant to do him evil, God turned it to good—"that many people might be kept alive" (Gen 50:20). As Pharaoh had treated Abram well in Gen 12, God blesses Egypt through Joseph.

With this fulfillment of the promise to the nations in mind as we read Gen 14, we can argue, accordingly, that the blessing of the king of Salem returns blessings to Jerusalem in the course of the larger story, perhaps not so specifically as that which comes to Jerusalem in the story of Solomon's temple or as that which can be seen in Yahweh's protection of Jerusalem in the Hezekiah story. Preferable is the blessing we find given to Jerusalem in Ezek 16:8–14, in which Jerusalem is taken as Yahweh's bride, while Samaria is presented as Jerusalem's older sister and Sodom her younger (Ezek 16:44–50). As the related episode of Sodom's destruction is soon to follow in Gen 19, Abraham can hardly receive a blessing from its king. The motif, however, of Lot's rescue by Abram (Gen 14:16)—reiterated in the rescue of Lot from Yahweh's destruction of Sodom—might then easily be read, with Ezekiel, as return from exile: the whole understood as continuing the theme of Samaria, Sodom and Jerusalem's restoration (Ezek 16:53–55; Deut 30:1–6). Such a reading seems particularly compelling, given the long-recognized, strong echoes of the flood story in the story of Sodom's destruction (Gen 19:12–26), along with its closure on the theme of new beginnings, marked by the birth story of Ammon and Moab (Gen 19:29–38). Such allusions to the theme of return from exile are not so much allusions to an historical return in the Persian or Hellenistic period as they are references to the utopian scene of the restoration of the three sisters under Ezekiel's Jeremiah-like new covenant (Ezek 16:59–63; Jer 31:31–34).

A Divorced Wife is Returned to Her Husband

While the interlocking themes of blessing and destruction, exile and return might support suggestions of a Persian and Hellenistic context for our narratives, the allusions I have identified are essentially intertextual. They are literary and are not to be understood in reference to any real world of the past. My third and final example once more takes up the themes of exile and return through the plot motifs of Yahweh's wife and a child to be born. One element in the story of Abram in Egypt remains problematic; namely, the return of Sarai to her original husband, Abram, as this directly opposes the unique legal prescription of Deuteronomy, whereby it is forbidden that a wife, after a divorce, return to her first husband (Deut 24:1–4). The problem is, if anything, intensified in the

variant story in Gen 20, where, in Gerar, Abraham presents Sarah as his sister to a king, whose righteousness comes to dominate the story. When Yahweh appears to Abimelech in a dream and declares that the king "shall die because he has taken this woman, for she is married," we are told, in an effort to avoid any misunderstanding, that "Abimelech had not come together with her" (Gen 20:3–4). The story thereby comes to turn on a theme that had been opened already in the debate with Abraham over Yahweh's decision to destroy Sodom: Abimelech asks with Job and with Abraham, "Will you really kill men who are innocent" (cf. Gen 18:23 and 20:4)? Calum Carmichael, some 30 years ago, in his comparative study of the law in Deuteronomy forbidding the return of a divorced wife to her husband and these same patriarchal tales, argued convincingly that "the final shape of the narrative in Gen 20 had inspired the formulation of the law," insofar as both the narrative of Gen 20 and the law of Deut 24 react against the situation of Sarai in Egypt in Gen 12, when her new husband, Pharaoh, had fulfilled his union with her (Carmichael 1979, 8–21 [20]).

However, as I argued above, the "lawlessness" of Gen 12 has set a trajectory towards Joseph's speech in Gen 50 and, accordingly, orients the story towards a "cultural memory" of the sons of Israel in Egypt and the Exodus. In a similar way, Gen 20, in accord with Deut 24, presents Sarah's return to Abraham in a movement that is comparable to the allegory we have seen of the return of Jerusalem as Yahweh's bride in Ezek 16 or perhaps, even better, the purchase of the prostitute in Hos 3 as allegory for Israel's broken covenant, exile and return. Genesis 20 can be read as a reiteration or foreshadowing of Yahweh's acceptance of Jerusalem/Israel as his bride, after the exile: overturning the law in Deut 24. The relevance of such prophetic allegories for the story, in spite of the incomparable innocence of both Sarah and Abimelech, seems supported by two further elements in the story of Gen 20. Sending Abraham away, loaded down with gifts, is not merely a reiteration of yet another return from exile scene as the motif suggests in Gen 12. Abimelech tells Sarah that he has given 1000 shekels of silver for her vindication, to establish her righteousness (Gen 20:16)! His ransom for Sarah forces Abraham to re-establish his marriage with Sarah and hold her innocent. Within the Bible's world of allegory, such motifs of ransoming the innocent might be recognized in Boaz's promise to Ruth that he would be her *go'el*, when she lay with him on the threshing floor (Ruth 3:7–13), or perhaps in Job's habitual practice of making sin offerings for his sons in order to atone preemptively for what they might have committed (Job 1:4–5). Even closer to the inter-textual interests of Gen 20 is Isaiah's figure of

Yahweh's servant, Israel, one ransomed by Yahweh, whose crimes are swept away like a cloud and whose sins vanish like a mist (Isa 44:21–22 and passim). As such an innocent Israel's *goʾel*, Yahweh not only erases a guilty past, creating innocence, but, as a sign of this redemption, he forms Israel "from the womb" (Isa 44:24), the Bible's motif *par excellence* of innocence, that has enormous inter-textual potential with Gen 20 (on the figure of the child in the Bible, see Thompson 2006, 67–105). Support for such interpretation can be found in the blind motif, which closes the narrative—namely, the unnecessary plague which Yahweh had sent, as well as the healing of Gerar's women, who, because of Yahweh's plague, had not been able to give birth. Yahweh had closed their wombs—a pivotal allegorical motif of Isaiah's Hezekiah narrative (see Hjelm 2004, 142–47, 160). The plague in Gerar reiterates Isaiah's "day of distress, rebuke and disgrace; children have come to the birth and there is no strength to bring them forth" (Isa 37:3). "Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech and also healed his wife and female slaves that they might bear children, for Yahweh had closed all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Abraham's wife, Sarah" (Gen 20:17–18). Immediately, following the closure of the story in Gerar, Yahweh visits Sarah. All together at once, she conceives and gives birth to Isaac (Gen 21:1–3) to produce our narrative's confirmation for the survival of Jerusalem's remnant.

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Hazor in the Second Half of the Tenth Century B.C.E.: Historiography, Archaeology and History

André Lemaire

For a historian of the ancient Near East, there are three main kinds of evidence: archaeological material remains, contemporaneous epigraphy and literary sources, especially ancient historiography. These three sources are not always at hand. For instance, there is almost no evidence in the ancient historiography about the history of the second millennium B.C.E., meaning that historians have to rely only on archaeology and, more specifically, on epigraphy. Such a situation is well emphasized by D. Charpin regarding the history of the Babylonian king Hammurabi (2003, 15–22).

For the history of Hazor in the second half of the tenth century B.C.E., the historian has to face an opposite situation. There is practically no contemporary inscription with regard to the history of this town and we can only rely upon archaeology and literary sources. Each of these sources presents its own problems and has to be critically interpreted. Actually, each one has to be dealt independently before trying a historical synthesis. After a few remarks about epigraphy, we shall try to deal first with the literary tradition and then with archaeology before proposing a tentative synthesis.

Epigraphy

Tenth-century B.C.E. epigraphy is generally very poor for the whole ancient Near East (Millard 1991, 25–30). It is especially the case for ancient Palestine, where we have only a few graffiti with personal names (Renz 1995, 29–30; Bunimovitz and Lederman 1997, 29; Mazar 2003a, 172–74; Tapy et al. 2006; Finkelstein et al. 2008b; Maeir et al. 2008), sometimes only fragmentary, and the Gezer calendar (Renz 1995, 30–37), which is probably to be identified as Philistine (Lemaire 2000, 247).

At Hazor itself (Yadin et al. 1960, 70–75; 1961, Pl. 357–58; Delavault and Lemaire 1979, 5–11; Naveh 1989), only two letters, GḤ[, incised on the rim of a bowl found in Stratum VI (B 4851), could be very approximately dated ca. 1000 B.C.E. These letters have proved difficult to classify, and have been variously identified as Hebrew, Phoenician or Aramaic. Another small incised inscription of five letters (B 4440), found in stratum IX, is also very difficult to classify and date (ca. 900?). A third incised inscription of six signs (A 382/1), found in stratum VIII, could be Phoenician or Aramaic, again to be very approximately dated ca. 900. Except for the fact that alphabetic script was apparently not unknown in tenth-century B.C.E. Hazor, these small inscriptions do not teach us much about the contemporaneous history of the site or about its inhabitants. It even seems impossible to be precise about their ethnic affiliation since, for instance, though inscription A 382/1 is probably Phoenician, it might be on an imported jar.

No contemporaneous foreign inscription mentions Hazor. The famous Karnak list of Palestinian towns submitted to Pharaoh Shoshenq (Wilson 2005; Moers 2005) apparently does not contain the name of towns situated north of Megiddo. Actually, the archaeological interpretation of this list as a list of destroyed towns seems very doubtful (see also Finkelstein 2003, 79) since political relations with Egypt were not the same in Jerusalem (Lemaire 2009, 172–75) and in Israel (Lemaire 2006a, 1713–14). Anyhow, as for Hazor, the situation is clear: there is no reason to attribute any destruction level of Hazor to Shoshenq.

Literary Tradition

For the second half of the tenth century B.C.E., it seems that three texts of the biblical books of Kings contain some information about Hazor: directly only 1 Kgs 9:15b and, indirectly, 1 Kgs 4:15 and 15:20.

The books of Kings generally belong to the literary genre of historiography, but there is no agreement between scholars about their date and interpretation. Since M. Noth, these books are often considered part of the so-called Deuteronomistic History. However, while Noth (1943) thought of only one redactor, writing about the middle of the sixth century. and using various kinds of sources, many scholars think today that there were several redactions, and ultimately two (one under King Josiah and one during the Exile: Cross 1973, 274–89; Römer 2007; 2008, 102), or three (an earlier one under King Hezekiah: Weippert 1973; Provan 1988; see also Eynikel 1996), without taking into account another one probably at the beginning of the Persian period. I have myself

proposed to understand this book as a kind of textbook used in the royal school of Jerusalem, revised from time to time, with various strata from the tenth century until about 500 B.C.E. (Lemaire 1986).

It is clear that the historical appreciation depends in great part upon the date of the redaction of the texts referring to Hazor in the tenth century. At first sight, if they were written about 500 B.C.E. or during the Exile, or even during the reign of Josiah, their author was far away from the events. The historical value of an originally oral tradition transmitted over three to five centuries would not seem very high! However, even though the last redaction of Kings is probably to be dated at the beginning of the Persian period, it may have used ancient sources or reused earlier strata of the scribal tradition of the book. In this case, the historical appreciation will much depend not only upon the character of the last redaction, but mainly upon the date and character of the used source or earlier stratum (Halpern and Lemaire 2010, 135–37, 152). Actually, for the historical interpretation, there is not much difference whether a verse is considered to be taken from a source or from an earlier stratum of the book. The problem is much more the date and characterization of this source or earlier stratum.

With these general methodological remarks in mind, let us examine the three passages.

First, 1 Kgs 9:15 explicitly mentions Hazor in a list of constructions realized by Solomon with the use of forced labor (*mas*). Verse 15a mentions various constructions in Jerusalem and v. 15b: "Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer." After an insertion about Gezer (vv. 16–17a), this list of towns resumes in vv. 17b–18. As already well noted by Montgomery and Gehman (1951, 206), such "reports of the building, rather rebuilding, of cities are innumerable in the Ass. Inscriptions. Closer to hand are the similar inscriptions from lands contiguous to Palestine. Mesha of Moab in his stele gives a list of some eight cities which 'I built'; the Syrian stele of Zakar (ca. 800 B.C.E.) records building operations in a broken passage. Indeed the present list may well have been taken from a contemporary royal inscription." Actually, it is characteristic enough of memorial inscriptions (Montgomery and Gehman 1951, 206; Gray 1970, 243; Miller 1974; Drinkard 1989, 140; Lemaire 1991a, 146) that emphasize the victories at war and the monumental (re)buildings, especially to glorify kings. However, that does not mean that the list of towns in 1 Kgs 9:15a, 17–18a is necessarily copied from a memorial inscription. Such memorial inscriptions used previous official documents and, as already noted by Noth (1968, 212–13; Würthwein 1985, 110; see also Mulder 1998, 472; Fritz 2006, 303), the list of 1 Kgs 9:15a, 17–18a appears to be

copied from such an official document ("eine amtliche Aufzeichnung"). The insertion regarding Gezer seems to have been added by the author of the "book of the acts of Solomon" (1 Kgs 11:41) that was probably written during the reign of Rehoboam by a previous servant of Solomon (Mowinckel 1963, 7, 12–13; Liver 1967, 101; Lemaire 1995a, 116; Cogan 2001, 92; see also Porten 1967, 113). If that is the case, it is easy to understand that this author could use an official document written during Solomon's reign.

Of course, even though it makes sense, such a history of redaction cannot be proven and is only a working hypothesis, since there is no chance of finding an original tenth-century B.C.E. document written on papyrus or leather. Other interpretations have been presented. However, it is clear, and already emphasized by Noth (1968, 208), that this entire passage does not contain any trace of deuteronomistic redaction and is pre-deuteronomistic; the problem is to fix the approximate dating of this pre-deuteronomistic redaction. For instance, Na'aman agrees that the biblical history of Solomon is "a composite and multi-layered text" (2006, 94) and recently proposed that 9:15, 17b–18 was taken from a source that can be identified with the "book of the acts of Solomon" (2006, 89, 95). For him also, this "book" is a "school text that described Solomon's success in consolidating his kingdom and making it flourish" (2006, 88, see also 82). However, for him, it was apparently written "in Jerusalem in the late eighth century B.C.E." (2006, 116). Actually, this dating seems to be axiomatic, or the result of a kind of circular reasoning, since he declares: "The beginning of historical writing in Judah probably did not antedate the eighth century B.C.E." or "it is widely accepted today that writing for administrative purpose in the tenth century court of Jerusalem was minimal and that the composition of historiographical works began at a much later time" (2006, 103; see also 82). Although he recognizes that "writing began in the court of Jerusalem in the 10th century," for him, "only in the 8th century B.C.E. did writings spread beyond the bounds of the royal and temple court" (2006, 82). For this strict limitation, he refers to the thesis of D. W. Jamieson-Drake (1991). Unfortunately, as I have tried to show elsewhere (1992), the conclusions of Jamieson-Drake are flawed by many mistakes in dealing with the archaeological data. Furthermore, while the main argument of this thesis, a direct and systematical correlation between the use of scripture and the importance of the archaeological data, is indeed an attractive theoretical model, it is much too simplistic and not corresponding to reality. Such a correlation seems somewhat ridiculous to anyone with experience in archaeology and epigraphy. Two examples will

suffice: one in Palestinian archaeology and one in Transjordanian epigraphy. On the one hand, the Early Bronze ruins of Tell Yarmut, which are undoubtedly very impressive, have thus far failed to yield any evidence of the use of script. On the other hand, in Transjordan, while we now know of thousands of Safaitic inscriptions, they are apparently not connected with any known fortified town (Macdonald 2008). When we look at the facts, the argument that writing was limited to the capitals of Israel and Judah during the tenth and ninth centuries B.C.E. seems to contradict the poor epigraphy of this period: so far, we have no inscription from Jerusalem or Samaria and the small inscriptions of this period come from other towns or villages (see above and Lemaire 2007).

Actually, there is no serious reason why historiography could not start in Judah before the eighth century. Na'aman himself recognizes that 1 Kgs 14:25–28, referring to Shoshenq's campaign, depends upon a source (2006, 80), and that "the account of Shishak's campaign in the Book of Kings indicates that there was some kind of scribal activity in the court of Jerusalem in the late 10th century BC…," activity that was probably "not introduced by a petty king like Rehoboam, but rather by one of his ancestors, either David or Solomon" (2006, 81). However, it is difficult not to qualify the kind of scribal activity at the origin of 1 Kgs 14:25–28 as a kind of historiographical work or chronicle, even though it might have been limited to the royal temple and/or the royal palace.

In fact, it is difficult to find any trace of a special interest in Solomon's reign during the late eighth century B.C.E.: kings Ahaz (2 Kgs 16:2) and Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:3) are compared to David but not to Solomon, and there is only some indirect connection between Hezekiah and Solomon in Prov 25:1, where "Proverbs of Solomon" is simply the reused title of 1:1. Furthermore, we have no indication that any city of the list of 1 Kgs 9:15b, 17–18 played a special role during Hezekiah's reign. The dating of the "book of the acts of Solomon" to the late eighth century B.C.E. seems to be based only on the *a priori* idea that it could not have been written in the late tenth century B.C.E., and does not seem to have any positive basis.

However, even if we accept this late dating as a working hypothesis, it would still be possible that the author of the "book of the acts of Solomon" employed the list in an earlier document, one that was about two centuries old. If that were the case, the historical appreciation would practically be the same as in our working hypothesis of a late tenth-century author of the "book of the acts of Solomon." The problem is the dating of the list itself: since it mentions Israelite (Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, Beth-Horon) as well as Judean (Baalath and Tamar) towns, it is

probably connected neither with the Israelite kingdom nor with the Judean one, but has to be dated to the period of the so-called united monarchy.

The text of 1 Kgs 9:19a specifies somewhat the kind of building or rebuilding of these towns. They were "store-cities" (*ʿārēy hammisk^{e}nôt*), "chariot-cities" (*ʿārēy hārekeb*) and "horse-cities" (*ʿārēy happārāšîm*). This explanation and characterization probably does not belong to the original list, but may have been a commentary added by the author of the "book of the acts of Solomon." The phrase *ʿārēy hammisk^{e}nôt* appears only here in the books of Kings and in the parallel text of 2 Chr 8:4, 6, as well as Exod 1:11. The meaning and etymology of *misk^{e}nôt* has been discussed and is not completely clear; nevertheless, the interpretation "supplies, stores" seems very probable. The parallel mention of "chariot-cities" and "horse-cities" appears to refer to garrison-cities (see the possible parallel of the Aramaic inscription of Zakkur B 2) (Montgomery and Gehman 1951, 209). However, after Würthwein (1985, 112), one may emphasize the limited objective of these new towns: they are called neither "cities of fortification" (*ʿārēy mibṣār*) (1 Sam 6:18; 2 Kgs 3:19; 10:2; 17:9; 18:8 etc.) nor "cities of fortification/siege (?) (*ʿārēy māṣôr*)" (Ps 31:22; 2 Chr 8:5; 11:5, 10, 23 etc.). This probably means that they were administrative centres, eventually garrison cities, but not fortified cities able to resist to a siege. One may note that this limitation of 1 Kgs 9:19 disappears in the parallel passage of 2 Chr 8:5 that emphasizes that these new towns were fortified towns.

The building or rebuilding of the towns during Solomon's reign is not dated and the length of the reign of Solomon during forty years (1 Kgs 11:42) might be rounded up. The dates of his reign are therefore approximate: ca. 971/970–931. A dating in the second part of this reign (ca. 950–931) is tentative even though it may seem reasonable because it is likely that Solomon gave priority to the constructions in Jerusalem.

The second passage, 1 Kgs 4:15 does not mention Hazor, but may throw some light on its mention in 1 Kgs 9:15: "Ahimaaz in Naphthali; he also married Basmat daughter of Solomon." The first part of the verse is clearly copied from the list of so-called governors of Solomon, even if these "governors" could have originally been local leaders (for more on this proposal, see Niemann 1993, 27–41, 246–51; 1997, 281–86; 2000, 64–66); the second part of v. 15, the marriage with a daughter of Solomon, is probably an information added by the author of the "book of the acts of Solomon." This addition, however, reveals a way for Solomon to ensure the fidelity of the "governor" of this region (for this kind of political marriage, see Lemaire 2006b). No town is mentioned for

Naphthali in 1 Kgs 4:15, but it is described in Josh 19:32–39, where Hazor is mentioned (v. 36) as one of the nineteen "fortified cities" (*ʿārēy mibṣār*) of this "tribe" (vv. 38–39).

The list of Josh 19:32–39 may go back to an administrative document dating from the reign of Jeroboam II, more or less contemporaneous of the Samaria ostraca; by this time, Hazor appears as a "fortified city." The list of the twelve "governors" used in 1 Kgs 4:7–20 is generally considered to go back to an administrative list from the reign of Solomon (Alt 1913, 1 = 1953, 76; Albright 1925; Noth 1968, 58–62; Gray 1970, 129–30; Mettinger 1971, 111–27; Caquot 1972; Würthwein 1985, 43; Rösel 1986; Fritz 1995; Mulder 1998, 169–86; Kamlah 2001; *pace* Ash 1995).

According to N. Na'aman, this claim "can no longer be upheld" because "claims of extensive writing in the tenth-century court of Jerusalem and of an early development of historiography in Israel have been severely criticized" (2006, 102–3), and he proposes a double origin for this list:

> The author of the original text, who might have worked in Jerusalem in the late eighth century B.C.E., found an old administrative list of twelve names… He reconstructed the twelve districts…according to the reality of his time. The district system he drew probably reflects a combination of the main outlines of the Assyrian province system of his time and the districts of the kingdom of Judah. However…it is possible that the district list was written earlier, during the eighth century B.C.E., when Israel was still an independent kingdom. The text of the district list must have been part of a more comprehensive historiographic composition, probably the work called "the book of the acts of Solomon"… (2006, 116)

While I would agree that the original document has been completed and inserted in the "book of the acts of Solomon" (see also Fritz 1995, 19 n. 2), I have tried to show above that this book was probably written in the late tenth century B.C.E. However, even in the hypothesis that it would be written during the late eighth century, there is no reason why the original document (without the commentary of the author of the "book of the acts of Solomon" and the later additions) did not contain place names connected with personal names. Both categories, for instance, appear on Hebrew ostraca from Jerusalem (Lemaire 1973, 239–44; Renz 1995, 310–11, *pace* Ahituv 2008, 32–33) and Horvat ʿUzza (Ahituv 2008, 106), and more generally in ancient Near Eastern administrative texts (Hess 1997). The indication of place names in a list of personal names does not make it a historiographic composition and there is no difficulty in accepting that an original administrative list indicated a name and one (or several) place names(s). Actually, the eventual reconstruction of

twelve districts from the Assyrian province system does not seem to fit what we know of the Assyrian provinces: for instance, we do not know of any Assyrian province such as Naphthali, Asher, Issachar or Benjamin.

The working hypothesis of an original administrative document from the reign of Solomon seems much more simple and consistent with the later developed biblical text, as well as with what we know of administrative documents. In the probable context of Solomon's reign, the original list may throw some indirect light on Hazor in the tenth century, since the (re)building of Hazor in 1 Kgs 9:15 is presented as that of a store-city playing apparently an administrative role; considering the geographical location of this city (Niemann 1997, 276), one may propose that it was the administrative centre of Naphthali (Wright 1967, 67*). Although this is only a conjecture waiting for confirmation, it makes sense of the actual state of the documentation.

A third passage may throw some indirect light on Hazor during the tenth century, namely, 1 Kgs 15:20:

> Ben-Hadad listened willingly to King Asa and he sent the officers of his soldiers against the cities of Israel, and they struck Iyyon, Dan, Abel-beth-Maacah, and all Kinnereth, the whole land of Naphthali.

This verse is part of the story of the war between the king of Israel, Baasha, and the king of Judah, Asa (vv. 17–22). As already well observed by Noth (1968, 338; see also Würthwein 1985, 188), these verses apparently go back to some annalistic document, and they fit the ancient Near Eastern context (Gray 1970, 351; Lemaire 1995b, 136–41; Parker 1996, 219, 223 n. 19; Lemaire 2007b). Furthermore, this story reveals that, by this time, the king of Jerusalem had to appeal to the king of Aram against the king of Israel, which does not seem *ad majorem regis gloriam* of the Judean king. It seems, therefore, a reliable source (Pitard 1987, 107–9; Dion 1997, 182–83; Lipiński 2000, 372).

The verb used for the action of the Aramean king, *nākāh*, may have the nuances of "attack, defeat, destroy, subdue" (*DCH* 5:685). When used with a town as an object, it may indicate not only that the town has been taken, but also that all its inhabitants were eventually killed (Josh 10:28, 30, 32, 35, 37, 39; 11:12; 19:47; Judg 1:8, 25; 20:37; 1 Sam 22:19; 2 Sam 15:14; 2 Kgs 3:19; 15:16 etc.). Even though Hazor is not explicitly mentioned in this verse, it probably suffered from the invasion of this part of the country. Yet there is no indication that this campaign concerned Israelite cities outside Naphthali. Actually, the historiographic tradition of the books of Kings does not specify the political result of this Aramean campaign. Was it a fierce but short military campaign or was Naphthali later on dominated by Damascus? There is no positive

indication of an Aramean annexation that could have been expressed by the verb *qāṣāh* (see, for instance, 2 Kgs 10:32–33 concerning Hazael in Transjordan), and the use of the verb *nākāh* seems rather to indicate that it was only a short campaign to stop the activity of the Israelite army in the south and oblige it to go northwards (see already Noth 1968, 341).

The date of this military campaign is difficult to specify, but it must correspond to a time when both Baasha and Asa were kings. The chronology followed by the books of Kings for this period is not certain, but the dates of 909–886 for Baasha and 912–871 for Asa are probably not far from the truth. That means that this campaign is probably to be dated ca. 909–886. The books of Chronicles present a more precise date, "the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa" (2 Chr 16:1), but it is very doubtful that the author of this work used independent ancient sources; and this date was probably proposed for theological reasons (Pitard 1987, 109–14).

To sum up: a critical analysis of the earliest biblical historiographic tradition reveals that Hazor was apparently built as a store-city during Solomon's reign, perhaps more precisely ca. 950–931, and may have been destroyed by an Aramean campaign in ca. 909–886.

Archaeological Data

The identification of Hazor with the site of Tell el-Qedah, "some 14 km…north of the Sea of Galilee" (Yadin 1993, 594) is generally accepted and has been confirmed by tablets connecting Hazor and Mari (Horowitz and Wasserman 2000, 2004; Ziegler and Charpin 2004; Horowitz and Oshima 2006). There were archaeological excavations there by Garstang in 1928, by Yadin in 1955–58 and 1968–69 and by Ben-Tor from 1990 onwards, excavations that are still ongoing. Since these excavations are now well known, it is not necessary to deal with all the details; instead, I will concentrate on the main points that concern us here.

For the levels of Iron Age II, both Yadin and Ben-Tor agree in distinguishing four phases: Strata Xb–Xa, IXb–IXa (Ben-Tor and Ben-Ami 1998, 3). Especially in the area A4 (gate and casemate wall), "the latest wall of the architectural unit under discussion (Stratum IXa) is sealed by the walls of the pillared building of Stratum VIII, dated to the second quarter of the ninth century B.C.E." (Ben-Tor and Ben-Ami 1998, 5). As for the historical interpretation, the monumental gate and casemate wall of Stratum Xb were dated to the middle of the tenth century and assigned to the reign of Solomon, taking 1 Kgs 9:15 explicitly as a basis (for instance Yadin 1972, 135), while the larger fortified town of Stratum

VIII was assigned to King Ahab after an apparently violent destruction with "a thick layer of ashes" of Stratum IXa that "may be attributed to the campaign of Ben-Hadad King of Aram in 885 B.C." (Yadin 1972, 143; Ben-Tor and Ben-Ami 1998, 11). As for a precise historical interpretation of the four phases, Yadin found "it futile to speculate on the possible causes responsible for the changes in the various phases where there is no clear archaeological or historical datum" (Yadin 1972, 143 n. 3).

Yadin went a step further in comparing his finds at Hazor with those at Gezer and Megiddo. This led him to propose that the six-chambered gates of Hazor, Gezer and Megiddo, eventually all connected with casemate walls, "all belong to the same period, and were in fact built by Solomon's architects from identical blue-prints, with minor changes in each case made necessary by the terrain" (Yadin 1958, 85–86; see also 1972, 147–64). The last detail of this interpretation, "identical blue-prints," does not seem justified (Milson 1986; Hopkins 1997, 303) and the precise dating of the Megiddo gate is still discussed.

Actually, as is well known now, the general attribution of "massive fortifications" to the tenth century has been questioned during the last twenty years, especially following a paper by G. J. Wightman (1990) proposing a "low chronology." Wightman recognized that "1 Kgs 9:15 was probably drawn directly from annalistic sources" (1990, 18) and that "Solomon attempted to establish a provincial administration at sites like Hazor and Megiddo, and possibly Gezer… The Solomonic period witnessed the emergence of a prosperous state with an efficient administrative system" (Wightman 1990, 19). However, strangely enough, Wightman rejected the existence of Stratum X at Hazor. For him, the "settlement…enclosed casemate wall with its six-chambered gateway" corresponds "approximately to the excavators' Stratum IX" (1990, 11).

The issue of the "low chronology" was taken up later on by Finkelstein, who explored its various aspects across numerous articles (1996, 1998, 1999, 2003, [with Piasetzky] 2007). This "alternative chronology" has been severely criticized and rejected, with nuances express by several archaeologists, especially Mazar (1997, 2003b, 2008), Ben-Tor (2000), Dever (1997) and L. E. Stager (2003) (see also Zarzeki-Peleg 1997; Kletter 2004; Ortiz 2006). I shall not enter here into this general discussion, but will instead emphasize that, during this discussion, two points clearly emerge.

First, for this period (the second half of the tenth and first half of the ninth centuries), pottery dating is generally approximate and very difficult to determine precisely. For instance, according to Mazar (2008, 98)

"the Iron Age IIA, characterized by hand burnished and red-slipped pottery, lasted about 150 years, from the first quarter of the tenth century B.C.E. until close to 840/830 B.C.E., namely until the Aramaean wars following the Omride Dynasty," and Ben-Tor and Ben-Ami emphasized "the difficulty in differentiating between the ceramic assemblages of the tenth and those of the ninth century B.C.E." (1998, 30). Herzog and Singer-Avitz (2004) proposed an interesting distinction between two phases in Iron IIA ceramic horizon; according to Mazar, however, "this point needs further clarification in future research" (Mazar 2008, 100).

Second, one may now refer to C^{14} dating. Yet, it has to be stated that this technique is also approximate and sometimes problematic: both sides think that C^{14} justifies their interpretation and Mazar has noted that "some of the dates measured in the late 1990s from Tel Rehov at the Weizmann Institute were lower by about 50–100 years than those measured at Groningen on the very samples or samples from similar stratigraphic contexts" (2008, 100 n. 15). Actually, there is not such a large difference between the two historical interpretations, only about fifty years between the end of Solomon's reign (ca. 931) and the beginning of Omri's reign alone (ca. 881). For non-specialists in the analysis of C^{14}, this approximation is clear when they see that an analysis of the C^{14} results in the dates "895–805/825–790" for Hazor IX (Finkelstein, Fantalkin, and Piasetzky 2008, 33: Table 2), while, just one page before, Hazor IX is dated "First half of the 9th century" (2008, 32: Table 1). Actually, "the uncertainties in the C^{14} results" are also emphasized by Finkelstein and Piasetzky (2007, 273).

These two considerations reveal that, in the absence of any informative epigraphic material clearly connected with a given level, the historical interpretation of the archaeological data is not certain and must remain a working hypothesis. Furthermore, one has to take seriously into account the fact that each Palestinian city may have had a different story: thus, there is apparently no indication that Hazor had any connection with Shoshenq's expedition. Furthermore, and conversely, there is no indication that the Aramean campaign of 1 Kgs 15:20 extended beyond Naphthali. In these conditions, for that period, the dates of the Hazor strata might not exactly correspond to strata of other Palestinian towns.

Now, as for Hazor, what exactly is the alternative historical interpretation of Finkelstein? According to him, "Hazor X was built by the Omrides as an administrative center," though he notes that "from the pottery perspective, a slightly earlier date, in the very late tenth century B.C.E., cannot be excluded" (Finkelstein 1999, 60). Furthermore, the destruction of Stratum IX should be related to the conquests of Hazael in

northern Israel and Stratum VIII was rebuilt and fortified by Hazael (1999, 61). This interpretation has already been criticized by Ben-Tor (2000) from the point of view of archaeology, and has led Ben-Tor (2000, 14) to make the following conclusion: "Finkelstein's proposed low chronology for the Iron Age in Israel is an interesting and very stimulating working hypothesis. However, it lacks supporting evidence." As he notes (2000, 14), one of the problems of this alternative interpretation is that it relies extensively on the biblical tradition for the ninth century, but rejects it totally for the second half of the tenth. This seems somewhat inconsistent. Actually, the problem is not that the "low chronology" is selective in its use of the biblical tradition: everybody agrees that there are legendary as well as historical materials in the biblical text and that the historian has to be critical. The real problem is that this alternative chronology rejects biblical historiography as critically evaluated to propose an interpretation that has no basis in the actual documentation. As we have seen above, on the one hand there is apparently no serious reason to reject the historical reliability of 1 Kgs 9:15 and 15:20, mentioning explicitly the (re)building of Hazor and giving a probable historical context for its destruction; on the other hand, the rebuilding and fortification of Hazor by Hazael is not mentioned in the actual documentation and does not seem very likely since Hazael's control of Cisjordan was short (ca. 814–804) (Lemaire 1991b, 102, 108). Even if, without the light of a clear inscription, the identification of relevant archaeological level(s) is always a matter of probability, this way of arguing does not seem convincing.

In my view, besides the general but approximate dating of the levels on the basis of the ceramic finds and the results of C^{14} analysis, another aspect may throw some light on the problem of strata identification. As Yadin already saw clearly, "the Solomonic city occupied only the western portion of the Mound" (1972, 140; see also Ben-Tor et al. 1997, 7–10), it having only casemate walls that could be built without too much effort but which were not so strong if attacked by a well-trained army. Furthermore, this modest administrative city was not built to sustain a siege: apparently there was no way to get water from inside. According to Yadin, "The city of Stratum VIII is entirely different from that of Strata X–IX in layout, area, character, public buildings, and installations. It has now become a strong fortified city, with mighty walls, strong citadel, public store-houses and, above all, a huge underground water-system, capable of sustaining the city through a long siege" (Yadin 1972, 165). This double characterization seems to fit well what we know of Solomon on the one hand and the Omride dynasty on the

other. Solomon apparently did not make war and we have seen that 1 Kgs 9:15 probably indicates that the cities that he built were essentially store-cities for administrative purpose. By contrast, Omri was a well-experienced general (1 Kgs 16:16) who subdued the Transjordanian kingdom of Moab (Mesha stele, lines 4–5, 7–8) and Ahab did not hesitate to lead his army as far as Qarqar against Shalmaneser III (Kurkh monolith). That probably means that he was well aware of the military power of Assyria, whose army was already famous for its siege warfare. In this context, it seems easy to understand that Omri/Ahab built the strongly fortified city of Stratum VIII while the Aramean army of Bar-Hadad I apparently had no difficulty in invading Naphthali (1 Kgs 15:20), Solomonic Hazor being unable to oppose any strong resistance.

Finally, even though it is not completely certain, but only a working hypothesis in the actual state of the documentation, there does not seem to be serious reason to reject Yadin's and Ben-Tor's historical interpretation concerning Hazor in the second half of the tenth century B.C.E. One can only emphasize that this interpretation reveals a relatively modest administrative city that would fit well an early state.

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The Chronology of the Biblical Fairy-Tale

Mario Liverani

An Outsider in Biblical Studies

As a historian of the ancient Near East I am an outsider in biblical studies. It is true that ancient Israel was a part of the ancient Near East, but such a peculiar part that the two domains are quite different in methodology, in philological training, in relevant textual corpora, in current debates, in bibliographical control, and much else. When I dared to write a history of Israel, the only positive justification I found was the very fact of being an outsider, in a position to contribute from an external perspective, a more "normal" perspective as compared to the quite unique one traditionally in use in biblical studies. There are so many histories of Israel written by Old Testament scholars that one written by a general historian can surely be accepted. I will try to come closer to the habits and debates of biblical scholars, but readers should try to accept the intrusion of the outsider for what he is—not pretending to evaluate him as one of them.

The Endless Debate on Biblical Chronology

To outsiders, the debate about biblical chronology looks like a never-ending story, and in such cases, epistemology or—if you prefer—common sense suggest that the question has been wrongly put. Once a wrong path has been set and followed for too long, we are unable to get rid of it, even to realize that the direction is wrong, and even less to identify the correct way. We need a moment of rest and reflection.

The good old days are certainly gone forever, when discussing biblical chronology brought about not only historical, but also theological and even cosmological implications: whether the world had really been created in seven days, or rather during geological ages of unimaginable length; whether it had been created in 4004 B.C.E. or rather a little before, in order to better accommodate the great civilizations that Near Eastern archaeology was discovering; whether all the "antediluvian" cultures that

prehistory was discovering could really be compressed between 4004 and 2349—and so on. By now such problems look "antediluvian" in themselves, but the old debates can teach us something about the current ones, slightly less fierce and intolerant than the old ones. While distinct from the cosmogonic material and closer to the historical periods, the location in time of a so-called patriarchal age is no longer for most—yet perhaps not all—of us an issue of scholarly debate. The same applies also to the date of the conquest of Canaan, whose status has shifted from a single event into a complex and diluted process. It applies even to the age of the Judges, now largely recognized as a foundational retrojection of exilic times.

But we still debate, sometimes in heated tones, the chronology of David and Solomon, or better, of their material achievements (the building programmes) and their political achievements (the United Monarchy and its administrative organization). Moreover, in this current debate (as in those of past centuries) lie implications that go beyond pure historical reconstruction, and involve the nature of that "United Monarchy" on whose existence the project of political restoration was predicated at the return from Exile, and eventually, by a domino effect, the entire history of the Jewish people up to the foundation of the modern state of Israel. If we cancel out from chronology and from history the archetypal united monarchy, if pre-exilic history involves only to a couple of minor states within the Syro-Palestinian mosaic, then the involvement of "invention" becomes very extensive indeed.

Archaeological and Biblical Chronology

The peculiar nature of the present debate lies in the difficult relationship, between an archaeological chronology and a text-based (i.e. biblical) chronology, whose mutual interaction seems an obvious and inescapable target. On the one hand, archaeological chronology, more and more firmly based on comparative stratigraphy and radiocarbon dates, pretends to possess a materiality, and therefore a "truth," to which the textual chronology (less physical, less concrete) should adapt itself. But on the other hand, the biblical chronology is endowed with such an authority and such detail to present itself as an irrefutable "datum," a reference point to which the archaeological chronology should be anchored.

To put it briefly and simply, should the archaeological dates of some architectural works or town-planning arrangements be lowered from the tenth to the ninth century, those works cannot be any longer attributed to Solomon, and should be attributed to Omri. And should Solomon remain

devoid of any archaeological record for his works, the relevance and even the historical reality of his reign becomes compromised. The interrelation of a physical but mobile system (the archaeological one, with its high and low options) and an ideological but fixed system (the biblical one) can generate various solutions, with changing attributions and identifications, but one system cannot be changed under the influence of the other. In reading past and present debates, it emerges that while a building can shift from Solomon to Omri, the dates of Solomon and Omri cannot change.

The Biblical "System": Its Formation and Value

But is the biblical system really so fixed, so untouchable? Certainly it pretends to be a coherent system, and a "closed" system at that—based as it is on exact lengths for the individual reigns, and on cross-synchronisms between the two dynasties. At first sight, on an inattentive reading, the system appears self-sufficient and built in such a way to be devoid of inner contradictions. But as is well known, as soon as one tries to put the dates of the two reigns of Judah and Israel in an ordered sequence, one meets several minor and major inner contradictions, building up to what is in fact a pastiche. Since the beginnings of biblical criticism, the procedure has always been to "correct" the contradictory figures (as if they were "mistaken") in order to reach a coherent and non-contradictory outcome. Yet both the assumed original coherence and its imperfect (to say the least) state of preservation can be explained in two contrasting ways.

The explanation that I would define "theological" states that the entire system is, or better was, coherent, true and exact, because it reflects the reality of events. And since some inner contradictions do exist, they are the result of a secondary (human and clumsy) interference, mistakes in literary transmission, corrupting the correct archetype. We have only to correct such minor dysfunctions in order to restore the entire system in its pristine accuracy (like the original manuscript of a literary work). The properly historical explanation is obviously different; it is even the reverse of the theological one. That is, the system in the Bible is the product of human labour, and a rather late work at that, within the Deuteronomistic school (sixth to fourth centuries), and thus more or less distant from the events—almost half a millennium later that the time it attributes to David and Solomon. Its faulty coherence does not result from a progressive degradation of a perfect archetype, but quite the reverse: from a progressive and problematic adjustment, from a rationalizing accommodation of diverse and dispersed data whose value must be

properly evaluated. We could say (and it would not be a paradox) that it is the *contradictions* that are most likely to prove close to reality, since these have escaped the work of systematic organization.

Criticism of Sources, Rather than of the Final Result

Assuming this is the correct procedure—the procedure that historians usually apply to all cases devoid of theological considerations—then we do not have to accept or reject the system, that is, the final result, but to point out and critically analyze its original sources (which are, of course, mostly missing), by investigating which sources were potentially or actually available to the Deuteronomistic redactors, and which working methods were currently in use by the redactors themselves and in their wider cultural environment.

Obviously, the redactors could have had at their disposal firm and detailed data (apart from direct memory) of the more recent period—let us say a century—then they had data more and more questionable as they went back in time, and no data at all on the earlier periods about which they had to make recourse to retrojection and forgery. Take for comparison the final redaction of the Sumerian King List, establishing a sequence since the time of origin (when kingship came down from heaven) to the time of its composition. The early dynasties, although each king has a name and a length of reign, are clearly legendary, and the shift from legendary to reliable information coincides with the beginning of administrative time-keeping procedures: the neo-Sumerian redactors of the List could rely on correct information only for the period when such information did exist and was kept in archives.

As to biblical chronology, while that of the United Monarchy is quite rough (forty years each for David and for Solomon), and clearly belongs to a pre-archival condition, that of the divided and parallel kingdoms appears to enter a properly reliable sequence under Omri (around 885) in Israel, and over one century later (under Jotham, around 750) in Judah. The inner synchronisms between Judah and Israel, which provide the entire system with an appearance of accuracy, do not provide an independent check: they are part and parcel of the very same system that we have to evaluate critically.

"Fairy-tale" Dates: Seven and Forty

After these pedantic and perhaps superfluous premises, let us consider some specific cases. The first one is the presence of narrative and chronographic patterns that we can define as "fairy-tale motifs," since

they occur in fabulous stories, where they clearly do not pretend to any historical value or exactness. We all know that this is the case for seven-year and forty-year periods. Forty years is clearly a round figure, meant to define an entire generation, the length of a full life-span. In other traditions, different round figures can be used (twenty or thirty), but the Deuteronomist opted for the figure forty, which is rather high on a statistical evaluation. The seven-year convention—or rather, the end of a seven year period—is a more fixed literary formulation, well known, for example, from the Ugaritic poems, and is meant to point out a change, the end of a cycle, the beginning of the final arrangement: "for seven years there was such a state of affairs, but in the seventh year finally the situation changed," or "for seven years I had to wait, but in the seventh year I decided to act," and so on. Minor variations are possible, for example, "for six years…but in the seventh…," and instead of years we can have months or days, as in the most famous instance, the biblical tale of creation: for six days God was busy creating the world, but on the seventh day he rested.

When such a motif occurs in a literary text, a fairy tale or a legend, nobody thinks that the figure seven has a precise chronological value: we all understand that this is just an idiom, like forty years. But when the motif occurs in a historical text, it can give rise to a misunderstanding. For sure, its idiom was perfectly clear to the ancient audience, accustomed to its frequent use and to an even more frequent use of number seven as a symbolic figure. Nevertheless, modern scholars have sometimes have regarded the idiom as exact chronological enumeration.

Misunderstandings: Seven as an Exact Number

An instance of such misunderstanding has affected the chronology of the Hittite kingdom. Since the Hittite chancery did not habitually date its administrative documents, and because we have no king lists with years of reign, the Hittite chronology remains rather approximate. As a result, in the chronological tables in modern books on Hittite history we can see that each king receives a rounded up length: five years, or ten, or twenty. There is, however, one exception: Urhi-Teshub, who is always credited with a six- or seven-year reign. The reason is that his successor, the usurper Hattushili III, in relating the events of his ascent to the throne made use of the seventh-year motif: "for six years I tolerated all the hardships of my nephew (Urhi-Teshub), but in the seventh year I decided to rebel…" Here is a literary motif with no chronological value, yet it is commonly mistaken by modern historians as a precise time-span. Another text is pertinent here, namely, the autobiographical inscription

on the statue of King Idrimi of Alalakh, where the seventh-year motif is used twice: once in lines 28-30, "for seven years I resided among the Habiru, but in the seventh year the god Adad turned toward me…," and then in lines 43-46, "for seven years Barattarna, the mighty Hurrian king treated me as an enemy, but in the seventh year I wrote to him…" Some scholars, considering the seven years as a real (and not idiomatic) length of time, have even pretended that the first seven years are the same as the second, which is clearly impossible in the narrative logic. The inscription ends by giving the figure of thirty years as the entire lifespan of Idrimi (his autobiography, although written in the first person, was probably composed by his successor). Clearly the text of the inscription, which we consider "historical" in the sense that it is a valuable mine of historical information, is not at all historical in the sense of following the modern rules of history writing. To be sure, it makes use of literary motifs, and of a fairy-tale convention of recording time.

In other cases the chronological implications are less relevant, yet it remains clear that the literary motif occurs in contexts where we would expect a precise figure. To offer one example: in a letter from the Mari archives (*ARM* I.131), an officer informs the king, "I surrounded that town, I erected siege-towers and battering-rams and on the seventh day I took that town." Similar examples can easily be added: Ahmose I besieged Sharuhen for six years, obviously to take it on the seventh; Shuppiluliuma besieged Carchemish for seven days, taking it on the eighth. These sieges parallel such fictional events as the storming of Jericho by Joshua, and the assault on Pebel's city by Keret in the Ugaritic poetry, both of which took place/ on the seventh day.

The Story of Joash and Athaliah: Which Source?

Several years ago (Liverani 1973) I suggested that the biblical story of Joash and Athaliah makes use of the seventh-year motif, and of the round figure forty. Joash remained hidden in the temple for seven years, but in the seventh year Jehoiada presented him to the guards and then to the people. At the end of the story we are told that Joash's reign lasted forty years. The Deuteronomistic redactor, and nearly all scholars after him, have deduced that the length of Athaliah's regency was seven years, and the length of Joash's reign forty years. The redactors took care in coordinating such data, to the best of their capabilities, inside their global system. And since some contradiction remained, modern scholars have done their best to correct (as little as possible) the seven and the forty years in order to fulfil the work of coherent adjustment that the redactors began more than two millennia earlier.

However, as already said, pedantic but necessary preliminary questions have to be asked: From which source did the Deuteronomistic redactors take this piece of information? Comparison of the Joash story and the Idrimi inscription seems conclusive: the ultimate source must have been an inscription by Joash (or by his successor, in his name), apologetic in character and aiming at legitimating his usurpation, an inscription that told, just like Idrimi, how for seven years Joash remained hidden in the temple (like Idrimi hidden among the refugees), but in the seventh year finally rebelled, took the throne, and then reigned for forty years, that is, for his entire life-span. Certainly there are differences: Idrimi was already an adult who could act by himself, and could really be recognized by the troops and eventually by the populace as the son of the previous king, while Joash was still a small boy, used as an instrument by the real usurper Yehoiada, and could not have been recognized by the guards and people, who had never seen him before. Nevertheless, apart from these and other differences in detail, the literary motif is the same. Personally, while of course we do not have the apologetic inscription of the usurper Joash, I see no problem in thinking that a king of Judah at the end of the ninth century could have erected a monumental inscription long enough to contain similar details—after all, Mesha of Moab had done that half a century before.

But how could the Deuteronomistic redactor have access to such a postulated inscription? The inscription may have remained visible, either on a temple wall, or on a statue or stele of the king, erected by the temple, until the Babylonian destruction in 586. Alternatively, the content of the inscription may have generated a popular tale. In any case, the chronological information, once traced back to its literary (apologetic or celebrative) source, loses its value as an exact number and acquires the value of an idiom of folkloristic or legendary flavour. In practical terms, we do not know how long Athaliah and Joash reigned. Perhaps the distance between idiom and reality is not too significant. Athaliah's regency cannot have been too long, while the forty years credited to Joash could be taken as a statistical over-evaluation of a normal generation that lasted rather less: within the royal dynasties the average length of a reign is shorter than forty years. Although is true that Joash started reigning very young, this is also part of the literary convention.

David and Solomon: Was There Any Source?

A quite similar case is the length of reign of David. In his case, too, the sequence of seven years and forty years might lead us to postulate an apologetic or celebrative source, in which David (or his successor) said

something like "for seven years I was king in Hebron, over the tribe of Judah only…but in the seventh year I conquered Jerusalem and reigned over all of Israel for forty years." A similar case, incidentally, occurs with Omri, who for six years reigned in Tirsah, but in the seventh year built Samaria. However, unlike what we said about a possible Joash inscription, the likelihood of a royal inscription in the kingdom of Judah in the mid-tenth century, an inscription detailed enough to contain such a literary motif, remains rather improbable. In this case I would therefore rather prefer a popular (oral) tale, one eventually inserted into a written narrative such as the "book of the annals of the kings of Judah" that is repeatedly mentioned by the Deuteronomistic redactors.

But the case of David is to be taken together with that of Solomon, who also is credited with a forty-year reign. The presence of another recurrent motif—namely, the building of a temple or palace that his predecessor or predecessors did not have or did not build—leads me to postulate a Solomonic inscription as the origin of the rather legendary narratives about his reign and his achievements. The "book of the acts of Solomon" that dealt "with his deeds and his wisdom" (therefore not an annalistic narrative but a collection of anecdotes) is the obvious candidate. Note that the association of the two kings' names is not obligatory. Solomon could have simply said "my father (or my fathers) did not do what I have done," and eventually, in an effort to indicate the dynasty, the redactor could have identified this "father" with a David that he knew from the expression "house of David."

Is a Lowering of Dates Possible, or is There a Fixed Reference Point?

The repeated recourse to royal inscriptions postulated but obviously lost can give the impression of a feeble way of reasoning. On the contrary, however, the very lack of extant sources in the time of David and Solomon should tell us that the Deuteronomistic redactors could not rely on anything certain, and had to trust the only available chronological information, although of a literary nature, and then fill out the narrative by enlarging the few motifs and rationalizing the entire story. For instance, since Solomon reigned forty years, as long as his father, Solomon *must* have been the last-born son; or, since David did not build the temple, he *must* have been guilty of some sin, and so on. Now, reverting to the chronological problem: we could consider that, if a king reigned a little less than the forty years credited to him by the Deuteronomistic system, the consequences are not too serious, after all. But if we assign an average of between 25 and 30 years (which is statistically more

correct) instead of 40 to each of the three kings we have considered, and we also cancel the seven years of Athaliah (since in the narrative logic these are subsumed inside the 40 years of Joash), we arrive at an overall lowering in the order of half a century, which is not irrelevant at all. The shortening advanced by the proponents of the "low" archaeological chronology is just of this dimensional order. If the biblical chronology can fluctuate by as much as the archaeological one, then the relationships between the two can be faced in terms different from those currently being framed.

But at this point the problem is complicated by an external synchronism. The Palestinian expedition of the pharaoh Sheshonq I, an event that is certainly historical because it is celebrated in a contemporary inscription (on the walls of the Karnak temple), is dated by the Deuteronomistic redactor to the fifth year of Rehoboam. If we keep the synchronism between Sheshonq and Rehoboam as an original and trustworthy datum, the lowering of the biblical chronology would involve a lowering also of the Egyptian chronology, which seems improbable. Note that, if we count the numbers of reigns in Judah, back from the fall of Samaria in the fifth year of Hezekiah, we reach ca. 970 for the beginning of the separate kingdoms, with the date currently adjusted to ca. 930 (forty years later) in order to accommodate the Sheshonq synchronism. However, here too we must ask the usual question: How could the Deuteronomistic redactor know that the Sheshonq raid took place in the fifth year of Rehoboam? He could not know that from the Sheshonq inscription, which never mentions the names of the local rulers, and moreover does not even take the Egyptian army to Jerusalem. Nor could he know from an epigraphic source of Judah, which would hardly celebrate a destruction. An administrative document in the Jerusalem temple archives, safely kept from the tenth to the sixth centuries, seems rather improbable as a direct source. Personally, I think it is less hazardous to consider the synchronism of Sheshonq and Rehoboam not as a primary, original information, but as a secondary effect of the chronological arrangement, in which the Deuteronomistic redactor decided to insert the information of the Sheshonq raid that he knew (directly or indirectly) from the Egyptian monument itself. The monument was visible and would have attracted the interest of the Judean refugees in Egypt or, better, the members of the Judean intelligentsia in contact with their Egyptian colleagues.

Now, if we read the Sheshonq inscription as an original source, forgetting for a moment its coincidence (more or less imperfect) with the biblical narrative, we can freely analyze the picture it provides of Palestine in the late-tenth century. The itinerary of Pharaoh, following

the coastal plain and the major valleys, turns around the separate cores of Judah and of Israel, with no trace of a United Monarchy, but rather of a condition of incipient state formation, perfectly fitting into the archaeological horizon of Iron I Palestine. I cannot develop this point here, but it can be appreciated that different treatments of chronology and synchronisms can generate different historical scenarios.

The Available Sources, Before and After the Exile

Paradoxically enough, the rounded figures of forty years for David and Solomon are not as disruptive for the reliability of the biblical chronology as the 7+40 years of Joash. In fact, the dates for David and Solomon, located as they are at the beginning of the sequence when clearly there was no archival information at all, can easily be left outside a properly chronological arrangement without any major consequence. If we cancel out the United Monarchy, the theological and political consequences are enormous, but not the chronological ones: Sheshonq raided Palestine when the local chiefdoms were in process of developing into proper kingdoms. On the contrary, the dates for Athaliah and Joash, inserted inside a coherent network, synchronizing the Judah and the Israel sequences, cannot be so easily dismissed from a critical appreciation of the entire system. Could we imagine that the biblical redactor had at his disposal a complete and coherent system, built on exact lengths and original synchronisms, and then decided to ruin the entire construct by substituting the correct dates for Athaliah and Joash, including the obviously fairy-tale periods of 7+40 years (something even more obvious to him than to us now)? I do not think we can imagine that. To my mind, the fairy-tale nature of these figures puts in doubt the entire system (or at least its ninth-century part) as being not original, but rather the result of a painful adaptation of various pieces of information of different nature and questionable value.

As already said, we should go back to the possible sources in order to evaluate the final result. Unfortunately, we can do little more than advance some hypotheses about sources available to the Deuteronomistic redactors, distinguishing those available before and after the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation to Babylon. Before that date both celebrative epigraphs and archival documents in the temple and the palace could have been available. But serious doubts can reasonably be maintained about the typology of archival documents containing chronological information. During the Late Bronze period, when cuneiform archives provide a sound picture of the Syro-Palestinian archival habits, we can see that, unlike Mesopotamia at the same time, there was no

dating system at all, no count of regnal years, when judicial documents were dated, as it were, "starting from today and forever," and when administrative texts did not contain any chronological references. During the Iron Age, in the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, administrative ostraca were dated by day, month and year of reign, but they appear ephemeral (the king's name is not mentioned) and were probably destined to be discarded soon, and not to become part of an enduring archive. For later scribes, it was very difficult in such conditions to reconstruct *a posteriori* any reliable chronology. And the celebrative inscriptions made use (as we have seen) of symbolic or rounded figures.

After Jerusalem had been destroyed, chronological information became even more scanty, hardly compensated by access to Egyptian monuments and Babylonian chronicles and archival texts. But the Babylonian (and already the Assyrian) texts are especially useful to us in evaluating the level of historical and chronographic elaboration current in the scribal schools of Mesopotamia. Indeed, it is hard to believe that the Judean scribes in exile could have surpassed that level in any significant way. What I mean is that the Deuteronomistic redactors could not work in a way that was much different from their cultural environment. After all, Babylonia in the sixth century was the centre of the cultural world. We have also to remind ourselves that the Babylonian competence in chronological analysis, already rooted in a long tradition, had been improved around the mid-eighth century in the time of Nabu-nasir (a contemporary of Tiglath-pileser III), who started (according to Greek sources) the daily correlating of astronomical and human events. From such an impressive programme, lasting several centuries, the detailed historical chronicles could derive their data. But we do not have astronomic diaries and chronicles before Nabu-nasir's time.

King-Lists and the Ideology of the Unique Sequence

In order to record their past, Babylonia and Assyria had their lists of kings with the years of reign, and they had such lists because their administrative habits (different from Anatolia and Syria-Palestine) required them. The Mesopotamian scribes could exactly locate in time documents (and consequently events), which bore a date with the year of a given king. In Assyria, where years and documents were dated by eponyms, the scribes had at their disposal also lists of eponyms (*limmu*), year by year. And for periods when year names were in use, they had lists of year names. King lists, eponyms lists, year-name lists, astronomical diaries and chronicles (starting from the mid-eighth century), as well

as celebrative texts in annalistic form—all together provided an exhaustive and detailed database for locating events, calculating time-spans and correlating different dynasties. This afforded a documentary resource much better than that of the contemporary Judean elite in exile.

But we have to note that the possibility of using such a resource remained largely disregarded in the practical activity of the scribes, at least judging from their calculation of past timespans, and the synchronisms between parallel dynasties.

Calculation of Past Timespans

The calculation of historical time-spans is frequent in the royal inscriptions of Assyria and of Babylonia (especially under Nabonidus), in close connection with the histories of buildings. The procedure is well known: mud-brick buildings, especially when only intermittently maintained, tend to fall into ruin and required periodical rebuilding. In order to rebuild a wall (or an entire building) in mud-brick, restoration of the damaged part was not feasible: it was necessary to remove the entire wall down to its foundations, and rebuild it completely. When the foundations were reached, the royal restorer might find foundation inscriptions of the previous restorers, and even of the original builder, to which he would add his own inscription. From the previous inscriptions the restorer could infer the history of the building, and in various cases he relates such a history in his own inscription—for example, "the ancient temple, which Ushpia my forefather had built, became dilapidated and Erishum my forefather rebuilt it. When 159 years had passed, and it again became dilapidated, Shamshi-Adad my forefather rebuilt it. When another 580 years had passed, the temple was destroyed by a fire. I (Shalmaneser I) cleared away the temple down to its foundations, I laid its foundations anew…"

Now, it is a matter of fact that such time distances (*Distanzangaben*, as Assyriologists say) between two restorations, expressed either in exact or in rounded figures, are always too high. For instance, in the above inscription the distance of 580 years between Shamshi-Adad and Shalmaneser is slightly exaggerated (c. 550 would be more realistic), although both kings feature in the same Assyrian king list. In an inscription of Nabonidus, we read that 700 years elapsed from Hammurapi to Burna-Buriash, and this is really too much: 400 years would have been enough. In another inscription Nabonidus says that Naram-Sin of Akkad built the Ebabbar temple in Sippar 3200 years before, instead of 1700! It is evident that the scribes, wishing to estimate the distance between past

kings, consulted the king lists, which contain the length of every reign, but inconveniently omitted to consider the overlapping of dynasties, and so put in sequence certain periods that ought to be put in parallel. This inconvenience is not too serious for the Assyrian king list, since the Assyrian dynasty was more or less continuous, but is very serious for the Babylonian and the Sumerian lists, where parallel dynasties are frequent and overlapping a common problem. Reigns and dynasties arranged always in sequence unavoidably produce exaggerated *Distanzangaben*. An additional inconvenience is that the various manuscripts of the Babylonian lists often contain different figures for the same king, due to scribal mistakes. A careful scribe could compile various lists, or have recourse to more detailed documents, but it seems that nobody took the trouble to do that. The result is that the calculation of distances in past times is not reliable and always exaggerated.

Synchronisms and Interpolations

The problems created here are illustrated by the so-called *Synchronic List* and *Synchronic Chronicle*. Correlating the kings of Babylonia and Assyria is quite similar to correlating the kings of Judah and Israel, and could even have been the model available to the Judean scribes in the Babylonian exile. Now, the quality of such synchronic lists resides entirely in the availability of information. The *Synchronic Chronicle* does not build a true and proper system, but is satisfied with listing the known synchronisms one after the other. The *Synchronistic List*, which aims to build up a complete sequence, is quite detailed and reliable in its final section, especially for the reign of Sennacherib, because the scribe (working under Ashurbanipal, some half a century later), had access to precise information. But the further back in time it goes, the less the reliability. The scribe did not take the trouble to record the lengths of reigns so as to measure by actual years. He simply relied on known synchronisms, attested in chronicles or royal inscriptions, where kings of two dynasties acted together, and then resorted to a quite mechanical and simplistic interpolation. For the period from Tukulti-Ninurta I to Shalmaneser III he correlated each Assyrian king with one or two or three Babylonian kings, depending on the latter's length of reign. For the period before Tukulti-Ninurta I, when information was less satisfactory, he decided to correlate just one king of Babylon with just one of Assyria, with no attention to the length of their reigns, until he arrived at the next known synchronism, and at this point he had to balance the account by correlating the entire set of remaining kings of the one dynasty (Babylonia) with one king remaining in the other (Assyria). In this case, too,

we cannot help thinking that a careful scribe could have reached a better result by measuring year by year instead of a reign by reign, thus avoiding rough simplifications. But the Babylonian scribes, interested in the relationship between Assyria and Babylonia in the recent past, displayed a fair lack of interest in the earlier periods, and were satisfied with highlighting the synchronisms already explicit in existing texts.

The Limits of Ancient Chronography

The reconstruction of past chronology by the Babylonian scribes of the Chaldean dynasty in the sixth century, and also of the Achaemenid dynasty in the fifth and fourth centuries, was hampered by various problems: the availability of documents, ever decreasing as one went further back in time; a rather schematic idea of the past (one dynasty after another, one king parallel to one king); an evident lack of concern for exactitude when dealing with remote periods; and finally a large amount of mental and operative laziness. This last factor could be cancelled out by those acting according to strong political, religious, or juridical motivations, who would consider the reconstruction of past events as vital for the fate of the entire nation—and this was no doubt the case of the Deuteronomistic school. Yet the other factors remain, and I do not see how to ignore them. Put simply, the quality of the Deuteronomistic reconstruction of the past cannot have been much higher than that current in the contemporary Babylonian schools. And the quality and reliability of the latter is such as to warn us against the quality and reliability of the former. In later, Hellenistic times, the procedures could have been notably improved, and the final system (which was presumably accomplished in Hellenistic times) attempted to correlate events by year and not simply by reign. But the scholars of that time no longer had any access to original information, and could only manipulate the data already selected.

Advice to Archaeologists: The "Proto-Historical" Model

At this point, we should follow the procedures in use for the so-called proto-historical periods, those devoid of internal and contemporary written sources. The procedure is to use the properly archaeological instruments (stratigraphy and radiocarbon dates), forgetting for a moment all the rest, in order to obtain a diachronic cultural sequence. Then the sequence can be confronted with the few synchronisms we have in contemporary external sources. In this way we can obtain a scenario of Palestine as it was in Sheshonq times (c. 925 B.C.E.), namely, one of incipient state

formation, with separate nuclei of the later kingdoms of Judah, Israel and Ammon on the hills, and the Egyptians still trying to control the lowlands. In the same way we can construct a second scenario in the time of the battle of Qarqar 853 B.C.E., with Shalmaneser III in Assyria and Ahab in Israel, and the emerging Syro-Palestinian states (led by Damascus) resisting the first wave of Assyrian conquest. A third scenario can be reconstructed in the time of Tiglath-pileser III (around 740 B.C.E.), with Israel at the head but also on the eve of its annexation, and Judah still rather marginalized in the deep south. Yet another one is available in the time of Sennacherib (around 700 B.C.E.), when Judah had become the leading power and Jerusalem the largest city in the part of Palestine still resisting the advance of the Assyrian empire. And, finally, we can reconstruct the scenarios in the time of Josiah (late seventh century) with the collapse of Assyria, and in the time of the final conquest by Nebuchadnezzar (early sixth century).

Only at such a point can we confront scenarios resulting from combining archaeological data with written sources from neighbouring countries with data from the Bible. Contemporary biblical texts are absent not only for the late tenth-century scenario of Sheshonq, but also for the mid-ninth-century scenario of Shalmaneser III, since the stories about Elijah and Elisha cannot be considered contemporary with the events they refer to. It is only in the time of Tiglath-pileser that we can perhaps rely on the earliest contemporary prophetic sources that will become quite relevant in the following phase and finally integrated into a historical narrative with the preliminary stage of the Deuteronomistic work, though not before the reign of Josiah. As for chronology, the comparison of well-dated external sources and archaeological chronology with the biblical chronology should be carried out not in order to check whether the dates are correct or not (jumping immediately to the final result), but in order to check the procedures and the quality of the work done by the Deuteronomistic scholars. The biblical chronology is not only completely fantastic for the periods of the patriarchs, conquest and Judges (for the obvious reason that such periods did not exist), it is also of an artificial and fairy-tale character for the United Monarchy, and indeed for the earliest phases of the divided kingdoms, when archival data did not exist or were not handed down, and later redactors decided to use any kind of available evidence, even the use of fairy-tale motifs in celebrative inscriptions, to supplement the missing data.

Only in the mid-eighth century do we reach a sound correspondence between biblical, archaeological, and Assyro-Babylonian chronologies. At this point we cross the borderline between proto-history and full history with contemporary textual data. We cannot overestimate the

impact made by the major enterprise of recording daily events started by Nabu-nasir around 750 B.C.E., and certainly the mid-eighth century marks an important turning point also in the history of the Levant and of the entire Mediterranean basin. Biblical chronology by its very nature and purpose expresses a viewpoint from which the major historical turning points in a regional context are ignored in favour of strictly local and ideologically relevant events: the building and destruction of the house of God, the beginning and end of the house of David. In terms of regional periodization, however, these are local events, while the mid-eighth-century turning point marks a substantial change in our capability to reconstruct history: before that date we are in a proto-historic condition: only after that date could the ancient scribes reconstruct a reliable chronology, and the modern scribes (we ourselves) reconstruct a reliable history.

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A Contribution to the Intellectual History of Yehud: The Story of Micaiah and Its Function within the Discourse of Persian-Period Literati

Ehud Ben Zvi

Stories carry messages. The more salient or memorable a story is in a particular discourse, the more effective it will convey its message; and, conversely, the more a good story reflects and reflects on fundamental concerns and deeply held worldviews within a group, the more likely that the story will become prominent among its members. Stories, and particularly prominent stories, tend to provide a discursive way to relate to "truths" that are explicitly or, more often, implicitly agreed upon within the group, but whose members find difficult to express or to express sharply by other means. As such, these stories are important tools for historians who wish to reconstruct the worldviews of particular groups in the past.[1] The present study focuses on some aspects of the account of Micaiah, for the sake of shedding light into some features of the worldview of ancient Israel.

The story of Micaiah appears both in 1 Kgs 22 and 2 Chr 18, with very minor textual changes—though, unavoidably, not only within a different *Sitz im Buch*, but within a different *Buch* altogether.[2] It is the only prophetic story about the prophets of the kingdom of Israel that is shared between Kings and Chronicles, and one of the very few prophetic stories that are really shared between the Deuteronomistic historical collection/history and Chronicles.[3] This uncharacteristic pattern of occurrences within ancient Israel's histories already suggests that this story is simply

1. Jonah is an excellent example of a memorable story serving these purposes admirably (see Ben Zvi 2003). It is my contention that the same can be said of the story of Micaiah, the son of Imlah.

2. For a textual comparison of the text of the story in the MT Kings, MT Chronicles, and the LXX versions, see De Vries 1978, 11–24. On the contextual divergence between Kings and Chronicles, see below.

3. For a discussion of some potential reasons for the inclusion of this story in Chronicles, see below. On this matter, see also Rofé 1988, esp. 205.

not one among many others, but one that played some significant role in the memory and ideological discourse of ancient Israel.

The story is certainly at the core of 1 Kgs 22, which in itself is an important section within Kings as it deals with the fall and death of Ahab.[4] The latter is, of course, one of the most prominent northern characters in the book of Kings. Ahab and Jeroboam I are in fact the two northern Israelite kings that take the most "real estate" in the social memory of the literati of ancient Israel. Their actions were considered paradigmatic, and their reconstructed reigns and actions served to shape core myths and communicate central ideological positions in Jerusalem-centered historical narratives.

The story may have had a long redactional history, and may have originally been associated with a king other than Ahab; moreover, it might have found its way into a forerunner of the present book of Kings at a relatively late stage in the redactional process that led to the present book. Notwithstanding the importance of these debates, the present study focuses on the story as presented to the primary readers of the (present compositional form of the) book of Kings (and of Chronicles, of course). If the primary readers of the book of Kings were somewhat similar to the intended readers of the book—which in itself is a most reasonable assumption—then they would have read the story as associated with Ahab (and Jehoshaphat), as explicitly stated in the text, and as an integral part of the book of Kings in general and its extended account of Ahab. For the intended readers of Chronicles the story had to do with Jehoshaphat (and Ahab; see below). Whatever previous stories might have existed about Micaiah, by the Persian period these were superseded by the story advanced in both Kings and Chronicles. Moreover, this is the story that became part of the literati's social memory of, and facts agreed upon, the monarchic past. Studies on the intellectual discourse of and social memory in Yehud, such as this one, must focus on that story, not any possible, though by necessity hypothetical, forerunner.

Within 1 Kgs 22 the story of Micaiah takes more narrative space than the actual report about Ahab's death.[5] The story not only leads to, but provides an interpretative frame for, Ahab's death. It shapes the narrative

4. On these matters, see, among others, De Vries 1978, 4–6, 25–51; Roth 1982; Jones 1984, 2:360–62; Long 1984, 233; Na'aman 1997; Campbell and O'Brien 2000, 25, 405–7, and the bibliography cited in these works. For a less common perspective in these matters, see Auld 2000, 23–24, and for a response to his position, see McKenzie 2004, 305–6.

5. The boundaries of these literary units are porous and can be reconstructed in different ways, but one may say that the story spans from v. 6 (or even v. 3) to 22 and the report of Ahab's death from vv. 29–38.

account of his death in Kings and its representation in the social memory of ancient Israel. These features, of course, made the story memorable.

The story (in both Kings and Chronicles) contains, in addition, numerous additional features that enhance its memorable character. These include, among others, a set of impressive personages and settings, both in earth and in heaven, and including one scene in the heavenly court and another—which serves as its counterpoint—in a major open court meeting on earth. These scenes evoke, among others, images of two great kings on earth, of YHWH, the divine council, hundreds of prophets. The story, in both versions, contains a number of sharp twists and reversals in the plot that accentuate suspense and irony, and keep the attention of the readers by running often against their basic expectations.[6] It carries also numerous visual details meant to engage the imagination of the readers and maintain a hold in their memory, from royal robes to symbolic iron horns. Common popular motifs such as inquiring the deity before battle, reversal of fortunes, the one versus the many, the face-off between the seemingly powerless but pious person and the powerful and sinful man figure prominently in the story. Moreover, the story deals not only with the eventual success of the pious who may observe the heavenly court (see the contrast between Micaiah and Ahab), but also and perhaps far more importantly from the perspective of the readers, with the fate of the struggling pious, who although essentially good, may be temporarily mistaken and misguided (see Jehoshaphat).

The presence of familiar or familiarizing features such as those mentioned above is constantly put in proportion in the story by the presence of de-familiarizing motifs. For instance, rather than bringing forward the image of the lone prophet of YHWH confronting prophets or worshipers of other deities (see Elijah in 1 Kgs 18, which is also set in the reign of Ahab), it brings forward the image of the single godly prophet of YHWH confronting the very same deity's many prophets. Instead of simply narrating a case in which a prophet reveals divine knowledge, it breaks too easy boundaries around what is actually revealed by the deity by projecting a world in which the hidden partially stands for what is actually revealed and what is revealed ends up being partially hidden, at least from the perspective of the characters in the story.

6. "We expect Jehoshaphat to follow the advice of Micaiah; he does not. We expect Micaiah to tell the truth; he does not, at least not at first. We expect Ahab not to press for the truth; he does. We expect Yahweh to tell the truth; he does not" (Robertson 1982, 146; cf. Sternberg 1987, 406–7). To which we may add, among other things, that in the world of this text the secret divine council carries no secrets, whereas the public meeting of the war council does bear them.

Features like those mentioned above substantially contribute to the continuous revisiting of the story and the associated site of memory by the intended and primary readerships of Kings and Chronicles. But there is more. As if there were not enough markers to substantiate the point that the story was written and set to be memorable and, most likely, well remembered, many aspects of this story were strongly connected to other stories within the world of knowledge of the relevant literati. For instance, it partially echoes aspects of (1) the story about Elijah and his confrontation with the prophets of Baal in 1 Kgs 18,[7] (2) the confrontation between Jeremiah and Hananiah in Jer 28, and (3) other instances of images of meetings at heavenly court (e.g. Isa 6 and Job 1–2, which may be later than Kings, but not necessarily than Chronicles).[8] As the story of Micaiah evoked aspects of other stories and vice versa, attention was drawn to both similarities and dissimilarities, and a web of texts informing each other emerged (see Ben Zvi 2009b). This connective character of the story of Micaiah further contributed to its place within the memory of ancient Israel and its repertoire of stories.

Since all the features mentioned above, except the role of the story within Kings, and specifically 1 Kgs 22, apply equally to the story in Chronicles, for the present purposes suffices to note that within Chronicles it is part and parcel of the regnal account of Jehoshaphat's reign (not Ahab's).[9] Thus it is not surprising that it contributes to the characterization of this king who is particularly important in Chronicles, though significantly it makes also a very substantial contribution to the shaping of an underlying, connoted characterization of the House of Ahab in Chronicles as one that exerted some irrational attraction for the Davides,

7. Note the motif of the public prophetic confrontation, of the lone genuine prophet vs. the many (even the numbers given to the many echo each other), and of the endangered life of the prophet which raises the issue of potential martyrology, as well as the obvious association of both prophets (Elijah and Micaiah) with the memory of Ahab. To some extent, one may even consider the presence of Micaiah in this story/memory as a replacement for absence/expected presence of Elijah in the central prophetic story about the death of Ahab. The text, however, is "normalized" as the attention of the readers is brought back to Elijah's words in 1 Kgs 22:38, as the story of Ahab comes to a close (cf. 2 Kgs 21:19). At that time, Elijah's presence in the form of his words comes to the forefront, and, as it does, the figure of Micaiah disappears. There are, of course, additional reasons for the reference to Elijah's words (see 1 Kgs 21:23; 2 Kgs 9:36).

8. Among recent works on the heavenly court (and its secrecy) within an ancient Near Eastern context, see Lenzi 2008 and Kee 2007.

9. For a study of the story in Chronicles that pays close attention to its language and context, see Bergman 2004, 181–98. For studies of the account of Jehoshaphat in Chronicles as a whole, see Dillard 1986; Knoppers 1991; McKenzie 2004.

even among the best of them, as demonstrated by our very story. Since, according to Chronicles, the Davidic kings were never supposed to become allies or partners of the northern kingdom, the very existence of the House of Ahab and its allure brought incommensurable danger to the House of David. From a more general perspective that takes into account the situation of the intended and primary readers, the House of Ahab becomes as a quasi-mythical symbol of the potentially fatal allure of evildoers for true followers of YHWH.[10] Thus the story of Micaiah plays a prominent role in Chronicles as well.

Since the story of story of Micaiah was repeatedly marked to be so salient, and most likely was so salient within the discourse of Yehud, it is reasonable to assume that it served as a very effective conduit for messages to the community/ies of primary readers of Kings and Chronicles. As other highly connected stories that took much "real estate" in the memory of the past held, at least, among the literati in Yehud, it stands to reason that this story was substantially aligned with fundamental concerns and deeply held worldviews within these literati. But if this is so, which "truths" explicitly or implicitly agreed upon among them were effectively touched on and effectively communicated by this popular story? Or, in other words, what may have these literati dealt with and learned about as they imaginatively visited the imagined, socially shared site of memory created by the story and as they observed Micaiah, Jehoshaphat, Ahab and all the other characters in the story, including, of course, YHWH and the divine council?

To be sure, visits to (mental or "real') sites of memory activate and engender social memory, and social memory is about constructing a shared past. Thus the literati could not but learn about the personages that populate their story and their (construed) past, as well as their circumstances. Yet neither Kings nor Chronicles were simply antiquarian; nor were their intended and primary rereaders interested in simply learning and sharing images of the past, for their own sake as it were. Instead, both Kings and Chronicles were didactic histories aimed at teaching ideological/theological lessons, instilling a certain attitude of the mind and socializing the literati and those influenced by them into a particular worldview. Thus the central question returns: What did such a central and significantly remembered story convey to the literati in terms of "truths"?[11]

10. See Ben Zvi 2007. The position of Chronicles on these matters is influenced by the image of the House of Ahab in Kings, on which see Ben Zvi 2009a.

11. These questions, far from being marginal to the task of reconstructing the historical events during the reigns of Ahab and Jehoshaphat, are central not only to studies of the books of Kings and Chronicles, of ancient Israelite historiography and

A good starting point for approaching this matter is the plain observation that Micaiah is characterized by Ahab (and, in fact, presented to the reader for the first time) as a prophet of YHWH who never prophesies anything for Ahab but disaster (1 Kgs 22:8//2 Chr 18:17). This first, salient, and basic presentation of the prophet serves narrative goals: it sets the scene for the central confrontation between two central pairs of characters in the story (Ahab and Micaiah; and Micaiah and the other prophets) and provides the necessary ground for the motif of reversal of fortunes. But this is not all, or even the main issue for the present analysis. Readers were supposed to learn from the experiences of agents populating their historical memory, both their successes and their failures. This didactic aspect is certainly one of the main (systemic or underlying) reasons for asking them to mentally re-visit these sites of memory, and to a large extent for history writing and learning in antiquity. This aspect requires that the reader be aware not only of the eventual decisions of (construed) historical agents, but also the circumstances in which these agents reached their decisions.[12]

This being so, the primary readers of the story cannot but note that Micaiah never prophesied anything for Ahab but disaster, and that at the time of the events Ahab was at the height of his power. Thus, obviously, Micaiah's previous and consistent prophecies of misfortune have not come to pass at that time. If the test for true prophets is that their prophecies come to pass, then from the perspective of Ahab (and Jehoshaphat's as well) Micaiah should have been considered a false prophet at the time when they summoned him, whereas those who prophesied good for Ahab up to this moment should have been considered by them true prophets (cf. Deut 18:22; 1 Sam 3:19; 1 Kgs 8:56; Jer 28:9; Ezek 33:33). Of course, the story clearly shows to the readers, who are all too aware of the eventual fate of Ahab, that fulfillment criteria for truthfulness in prophecy were not only unreliable, but also actually misleading at the time.

But the issue is not left to rest there. Significantly, but not surprisingly in a story full of inversions, the readers were asked to pay attention to the fact that the very same Ahab, and most importantly Micaiah (and likely Jehoshaphat as well), are explicitly described as accepting the very validity of the fulfillment test for prophecy in 1 Kgs 22:27–28//2 Chr 18:26–27, even if they (and Jehoshaphat) seemed to have (correctly)

its social roles in Achaemenid Yehud, but also for the study of the intellectual discourse in Yehud, without which one cannot advance any intellectual history of Yehud.

12. This is at the core of the widespread approach to past events which uses them as a guide for how to behave (or not to behave) in the present.

rejected it up to that point. This sudden shift plays a communicative role in the narrative as it serves to characterize the protagonists in the story as believing, correctly again from the perspective of the readers, that this time a final confrontation is about to take place. But whereas the implied author's knowledge of the end of the story may shape the characterization of its literary personages, it is necessarily hidden from historical agents, including the readers as they run their own lives.[13] This being so, the logic of the story suggests that historical agents cannot know when the principle of fulfillment of prophecy is reliable or dangerously misleading. The principle is thus presented to the readers as both valid and invalid, with no clear way of for them in real life to decide which is which, or more precisely, when which is to be held true or untrue.[14]

One may argue that the story of Micaiah suggests that in such circumstances it is wise for agents to hedge their bets and in any case to exercise caution when opposite prophecies are announced. This is what the narrative seems to suggest. Both Ahab and Jehoshaphat are depicted as having kept Micaiah's prophecy well in their minds, as the story about the disguise during battle indicates. Yet hedging bets is a behavior that implies awareness and knowledge of the impossibility of knowledge on these matters.[15] Moreover, the issue at stake does not actually require multiple or conflicting prophecies. The readers know that no matter what Micaiah would have pronounced, and even without his presence altogether, the prophecies of the 400 would have failed to come true. Whether prophecies are one or many, whether similar or not, the matter raised by the logic of the text concerns the very understanding of prophecy.

13. Historical agents can never know "the end(s)" of the narrative(s) their lives create.

14. One may argue that the intended and primary readers may have imagined that Ahab (and Jehoshaphat) considered that Micaiah's (earlier) prophecies have not come to pass *yet*, but may come true at some point in the future (cf. Isa 30:8), whereas those of other prophets who prophesied success, although they already came true, might end up "untrue," because of some reversal of fate to take place in the future. But of what use for historical agents are prophecies whose value may shift from one extreme to another in a fully unknown temporal scale? To be sure, such prophecies may fulfill rhetorical purposes in stories about the past and may contribute to the shaping of narratives, but are of no use to historical agents in the "real" world. They are of no use to the primary readers of this story either in Chronicles or Kings in terms of their own formation as (historical) agents and as teachers of (historical) agents in their "real" world.

15. Cf. J. L. Crenshaw, who concludes that due to the contradictions associated with prophetic conflict, "the public…found prophecy lacking and turned elsewhere for spiritual direction, namely to apocalyptic and wisdom…" (1971, 111).

But the text does not stop there. The question of prophecy is approached from a second, vivid, attention-getting, complementary and, to a large extent, converging perspective in Micaiah's story. The readers were explicitly asked to construe prophecy as a manifestation of the/a "Empowering Spirit" serving YHWH and therefore as an officer of and in YHWH's heavenly court. The text advances a personification and individualization of that Empowering Spirit (note הרוח in 1 Kgs 22:21/2 Chr 18:20[16]) that makes it comparable to the divinely appointed commissar for examining the loyalty of YHWH's servants referred to as השטן in Job 1–2, while at the same time balancing these features by stressing its ability to morph into (though it would never be fully contained in) a truthful or a misleading spirit in the mouth of prophets, that is, to be manifested among humans as prophecy. Thus the text emphasizes that prophecy truly originating from the divine court may provide both true and false knowledge. Human agents, of course, do not have a clear way to discern, at least in real time, which is which. (Micaiah's reply to Zedakiah [see 1 Kgs 22:24–25//2 Chr 18:23–24] only emphasizes that such is the case by resorting to the principle of future fulfillment).

The text does not stop there either. The readers were also told in the story that the mentioned un-knowability is not grounded in the abilities of the Empowering Spirit who produces prophecy among human prophets, but in YHWH's character. Not only does the deity fully control this Spirit, as well as any of the deity's officers in the divine court, but YHWH can decide and at times actually comes to an operative decision to provide deceitful knowledge to human beings through prophecy for purposes that YHWH might find appropriate.

This image of YHWH was influenced by notions about the power of and the resources lawfully available to the earthly kings, whose courts helped people imagine the heavenly one. Strategic misinformation was an acceptable resort used by kings to achieve their goals. Thus, as one would expect, YHWH—the ultimate king—was imagined as actually commanding or incurring in the use of misinformation not only in Micaiah's story, but also in other texts, such as Gen 18:12–13; Exod 3:22; 1 Sam 16:2 (see Shemesh 2002, esp. 85–87, and bibliography cited there).

Strategic misinformation could be and was often used to cause harm to opponents. Of course, within a non-dualistic worldview such as the one that existed during the Persian period, this is not a real problem since

16. To be sure, the use of the article ה does not necessarily mean that the following noun has to refer to a noun/referent specifically defined in the context (see, for instance, *IBHS* §13.5.1.e). However, if the referent is an officer in the court, then the metaphor leads to individualization. For another position, see Chisholm 1998, 15.

YHWH must be conceived of as the creator of good *and* evil (cf. Isa 45:7), and thus able to create knowledge and mis-knowledge among humans, as well as different impediments to their ability to discern between the two as the deity deems appropriate (Exod 9:12; Isa 6:9–10).[17]

At the same time the image of YHWH creating mis-knowledge is likely to cause some underlying anxieties within the discourse of the literati.[18] Divinely ordained mis-knowledge, or one may say mis-teachings, may take the form of prophetic announcements. Yet there is no reason to stop there. They can certainly take the form of divinely ordained חקים ומשפטים (see Ezek 20:25).

The most damaging potential discursive and ideological anxieties that such an understanding could have caused were easily fenced off by the association of past mis-teachings to either unworthy messengers or, and most importantly, by assuming that strategic mis-information was aimed only at harming the enemies of the king/YHWH. Thus, even if Moses was also construed as a prophet and divine ordained חקים ומשפטים were central to YHWH's *torah*, there was no real danger within the discourse of the text-centered community in Yehud that the *torah* would be considered "mis-information" or bad teachings meant to hurt Israel.

However, concerns about human inability to discern between divine messages or teachings that carried information and those that carried mis-information were more difficult to be fully dismissed when they concerned less foundational matters and characters. Moreover, any easy way of solving matters by simply associating mis-information exclusively with sinful individuals is explicitly undermined by the very story

17. Cf. Crenshaw 1971, 77–90. Crenshaw's characterization of this aspect of YHWH as "demonic" and of הרוח in the story as associated (at that time) with notions of an evil spirit or demon, are problematic within the discourse of Persian period Yehud. The same does not hold true, of course, within other discourses. Indeed, although the text clearly refers to this רוח יהוה (see v. 24 and the general context of the divine court), later exegetes working within very different theological discourses and attentive to the latter's logic concluded that הרוח is either Satan (Mayhue 1993 and previous works mentioned there) or a demon (e.g. Aquinas, S*umma Theologica*, Question 172, article 6; Aquinas attempts to explain away some of the implications of the text than are mentioned above). It is worth noting, however, that a contrary position, namely that הרוח stands for none other than the Angel Michael was also advanced in antiquity (see Isho'dad of Merv [ca. 850], *Books of Sessions* in 1 Kgs 22.20; ET in Conti 2008, 136). R. Y. Kara maintains that he does not know what this רוח is; Rashi associates it with the spirit of Naboth, following *b. Sanh.* 102b, and see also Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, Nezakim 4.13. Again, the reasons for this identification are theological.

18. And, of course, in discourses of later times as well. Already Josephus drops the entire court scene in *Ant*. 8 (see esp. § 406).

of Micaiah, which involved (a) the many prophets who are not characterized as sinful, (b) Jehoshaphat—perhaps a temporally misguided, but not a sinful leader—and in which and not incidentally, (c) Ahab was portrayed much better than his usual image in other texts and in the memory of the literati. The matter is further compounded by the presence and importance in Yehudite ideological discourse of the idea that good characters may be, or even are, likely to be tested by the deity.[19] When does a test become harm, and when is harm a test? How can historical agents go beyond the veil of "unknowability" that may surround divine messages and teachings, whether in the form of oral prophecies or grounded in a "reading" of worldly events as communicative expressions of a divine will and mind?[20] How to deal with these concerns and anxieties?

One way of dealing with these was to explore them from the safe perspective of a very memorable story that comforts its readers by relating, among other things, the fall of the evil king, the triumph of the one over the many, the safe return of a pious, but for once misguided, character (Jehoshaphat), and perhaps even at least a connoted sense of divine willingness to give even a sinner like Ahab one more chance (see Moberley 2003; Hamilton 1994). This story is about YHWH's power, probably YHWH's goodness and about "happy endings." It reinforces traditional beliefs about YHWH's ability to punish evil, destroy villains and overthrow their machinations, just as it unequivocally emphasizes the deity's ability to easily overcome human-made substitutions meant to confuse or derail YHWH's plans.[21]

Yet, at the same time, as in the case of Gen 18 or Jonah,[22] it is precisely because it provided a safe harbor that it allowed the literati to explore

19. I have expanded on this issue in Ben Zvi forthcoming. This image is particularly important in Chronicles, but present in or informing numerous texts as well, including those in the Deuteronomistic History.

20. That is, the basic approach according to which the world and historical (and personal) events/developments/trajectories are a "book" that can be "read" to learn about the deity and the deity's ways. This approach has a very long history in the ancient Near East, including ancient Israel, and beyond.

21. The story about the perceived replacement of Ahab with Jehoshaphat may be (a polemic) play on the theme of a substitute king who takes upon himself the misfortune announced for the king. The story tells the reader that YHWH can easily frustrate any "crafty" design meant to derail YHWH's actions.

22. On Gen 18, see Ben Zvi 1992. The memorable story of Jonah also communicates, at one level, a sense of comfort and "happy endings"—no one dies in this prophetic book, everyone can repent, and Jonah is educated by YHWH. Jonah also provides "safe harbour" that allows it readers to explore "dangerous waters," including those associated with limits to human knowledge and prophecy. Cf. the Micaiah story. (On Jonah, see Ben Zvi 2003.)

such dangerous waters as what is "true" in divine communication, how an historical agent can know, and, perhaps, above all, what "true" may mean in this context. Significantly, the literati, as they reread the story and re-visited this virtual site of memory, encountered again and again a truthful revelation of the events in the heavenly court that can be dismissed on seemingly unassailable logic—given the circumstances—by YHWH's prophets and Jehoshaphat. Moreover, the divinely planned dismissal of such a true image of the events at the council substantially contributes to the achievement of the goal for which a deceitful divine prophecy was created and sent. Thus, as they read the story and visit this site of memory, they noticed that precisely the word of YHWH that carries mis-information does *not* return to the deity empty, but accomplishes that which YHWH has decided, to paraphrase Isa 55:11, and thus fulfills at least one of the tests for truthful prophecy accepted in the discourse of the literati of Yehud.[23] Of course, to stress that test is tantamount to stress the inability of human agents to distinguish in real time between divine mis-information and information, and to underscore the gap between the divine and the human realm and the ability of those in the latter to evaluate the messages that may originate from divine (see Isa 55:8–11).[24]

But how do they know or are even able to explore these matters? By reading authoritative books (such as Kings, Chronicles) and revisiting (virtual) sites of memory both shaped by and reflected in these texts. Of course, books need readers and interpreters, and then comes a book such as Jonah that not only involves itself in meta-prophetic considerations,

23. These considerations along with the characterization of the 400 prophets in the story and the explicit divine origin of their prophecy undermine attempts to frame the story of Micaiah as a confrontation between true and false prophets. Although, as mentioned above, the story evokes other confrontations, it clearly breaks from that model. There are no false prophets/pseudo-prophets in the story. All the prophets here are false to a degree and truthful to a degree—or better, they are true and divinely inspired (and controlled) in their own way. This point contributes much to the very core of the story and its role in ancient Israel. Of course, it is troublesome to decide which of these options is precisely the point (see below). It is possible that the LXX already began to neutralize the issue by moving in the direction of dissociating the 400 from YHWH (see Lenzi 2008, 262 n. 184), a trajectory followed later by Josephus. Compare and contrast the positions advanced concerning this matter with, for instance, Crenshaw 1971; Dafni 2000.

24. Isa 55:8–11 is an important meta-prophetic comment. Rofé notes in relation to the ideology conveyed by this text that "Rather than the Word being fulfilled, it *fulfills*… The true purpose of the Word of God can never be known, as His thoughts are beyond human comprehension, just as the heavens are beyond the earth" (1988, 170 [original emphasis]).

as in the Micaiah story, but also stresses that the limitations on true knowledge that may affect those who "know scripture," that is, the literati. This may lead us away from, but not necessarily beyond the lessons that the literati could have learned from the story of Micaiah, though we have to keep in mind that the primary readers of Chronicles, at least, most likely read Jonah and were aware of Kings, and that late Persian-period readers of Kings were most likely aware of Chronicles and Jonah.

In a nutshell, the position I advance here is that unsolvable issues/problems within a particular worldview often call for narratives that allow those who uphold such a worldview to explore these matters safely and to express and communicate "truths" that are difficult for them to express. Historians whose aim is to understand the worldview held by a particular group may find these (often memorable and popular) stories to be an excellent source for reconstructing which "truths" were difficult to express in that historical discourse, and which unsolvable matters troubled people at the time, as well as their discourse and particularly its inner logic and cohesion, be these matters at the overt or underlying level. The story of Micaiah, along with Jonah and Gen 18, provides a good example. As in the case of the other stories, the point of the Micaiah story was not to provide a definitive, unequivocal answer, but to allow an exploration of matters that troubled the literati and reflected their awareness of systemic limitations to their knowledge. In these cases, stories served simultaneously both to underlie and undermine the shared discourse of a community. Moreover, and most significantly for studies of intellectual history, these stories and particularly Micaiah's deeply and intricately had interwoven underlying with undermining and vice versa. When they seem to underlie this shared discourse, they carry messages that seem to undermine it; and, conversely, as they seem to undermine this discourse, they carry messages that buttress it. Just as in Micaiah's story, the hidden may be revealed, the revealed may be hidden, truth may be deception, deception may be truth, multiple tests for true prophecy are both right and wrong at the same time, reliable and misleading, and the readers, the actual historical agents, remain with no sure anchor, except for an awareness about these matters through their continuous reading of communally shared texts and revisiting of communally shared memories.

It is my pleasure to dedicate this essay to Lester, who has contributed so much to the topic of the Historian and the Bible in general, and to the history of Yehud in particular.

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Of Priests and Prophets and Interpreting the Past: The Egyptian *ḥm-nṯr* and *ḫry-ḥbt* and the Judahite *nābîʾ*

Diana V. Edelman

I dedicate the following study based on ancient Near Eastern analogy to Lester, who has faced many such quandaries in his research as he has struggled, like other historians, to understand the past. I will let him and others judge if the analogy is persuasive or not.

1. *Preliminary Considerations*

Understanding the range of cultic personnel who would have staffed temples in the kingdom of Judah during the Iron II period and the roles they would have played is very difficult, if not impossible. The Hebrew Bible models behaviour and practice that became normative after the kingdom ceased to exist, in a situation where Judeans living in their traditional "home" territory were in a province and were also scattered in diasporic communities within a wider empire. Its authors appear to have drawn on earlier, Iron Age sources for some material, but at the same time wanted to lead their audiences to adopt current beliefs and practices and to reject others that were being replaced. Thus, the past became a means of asserting discontinuity with the present by stressing what forebears had done that they should not have, by contemporary standards. At the same time, current practices could be legitimated by retrojecting them into the past to create an unbroken chain of continuous tradition. Both strategies achieve the same goal: to model correct behaviour and understanding within the contemporary reading and listening community and, likely, within future generations as well.[1]

1. For an illustration of both principles at work simultaneously within a community, see Peel 1984; for the issue of the intended audience of biblical texts, see, for example, Ben Zvi 2004, 2009.

There seems to have been a number of elements of discontinuity between religious belief and cultic practice in temples in Judah in the Iron II period and the temple in Jerusalem after it was rebuilt in the Persian period. A reconceptualization of the deity, from Yahweh Sebaot to Yahweh Elohim, inevitably would have triggered some changes in cultic personnel, rituals, and cultic paraphernalia (Edelman 2009a). A historian should not assume that depictions of such practices that are set in the monarchic era accurately reflect what was the norm for that period; the texts reflect the world view of the time of the authors, not necessarily those of the past as portrayed. This maxim is complicated by our inability to know when various biblical books were written and how extensively they may have been changed over time. Nevertheless, it highlights an important caution about assuming the texts are historically accurate and omitting the necessary methodological step of converting testimony to evidence by critically evaluating testimony offered (see Edelman 1991 [esp. p. 22], 1996).

A final preliminary point to raise concerns the role of analogy in historical recreation. Historians certainly draw on analogies, consciously or unconsciously, as they create interpretative schemes. In the present case, I will be pointing out that two types of cultic functionaries in Egypt, both commonly termed "priests," share similarities with some of the activities ascribed in the biblical texts to "prophets." The southern Levant had been part of the Egyptian empire in the Late Bronze period, with direct control in some sectors lasting into the Middle Iron I period (ca. 1100 B.C.E.). Thus, a case could be made for direct native contact with Egyptian cultic practices, particularly where Egyptians were physically present, and a possible direct adoption or adaptation of local practice in attempts to emulate the ruling elites, which remained the norm during the Iron II period. Such influence returned again briefly in the seventh century, when the Egyptians asserted control in the region again. There is a resurgence of Egyptianizing names in the Jerusalemite priesthood at that time.[2]

However, analogy is never a foolproof means of interpretation. The fact that neighbouring groups did something one way does not mean that all shared this custom. Differences between recognized political and

2. The particular example is Passhur, a priestly son of Immer who was in office at the end of the monarchy (Jer 20:1–6). Another individual who bore this name was the grandson of Hezekiah (Jer 21:9; 38:2), demonstrating its popularity in elite circles. The latter individual might also have been a priest, but equally could have been a lay individual given an Egyptian name to curry favour with the Egyptians who were in power at the time.

cultural entities may be great or small, but they are not easily predicted. Thus, there is no way to convince those who argue Israel and Judah were unique in their religious practices from their early tribal days that it was otherwise, citing analogies from neighbouring cultures. Similarly, those who think that Israel and Judah were very much like their neighbours until the Neo-Babylonian, Persian, and/or Hellenistic period will accept analogies with no hesitation, finding them persuasive. With this conundrum in mind, I will turn now to a consideration of the functions of two classes of Egyptian temple personnel, the *ḥm-nṯr* and the *ḫry-ḥbt*, and note similarities with roles played by the Classical Hebrew *nāḇîʾ*. Recent studies have begun to question whether the category of *nāḇîʾ* as currently constructed in the texts of the Hebrew Bible has resulted from the combining of a number of earlier discrete types of cultic personnel, not all of whom received divine communications while in a state of altered consciousness (Auld 1983; Vawter 1985; Conrad 1997; Edelman 2009b).

2. *The* ḥm-nṯr

In a study of texts relating to the daily temple rituals at Karnak, Abydos, Edfu, Denderah, and Deir el Medineh, J. Gee (2004) was able to distinguish the role of the *ḥm-nṯr* from that of the *wʿb*, a lower class of priest/temple personnel. The latter carried sacred objects, undertook ritual slaughter, cleansed the temple, served as a religious artisan and supervised workmen and lay artisans (Sauneron 2000, 70–71). The former underwent further initiation beyond that of the ordinary *wʿb* that allowed him to enter into the sanctuary proper and the inner shrine that housed the deity's image, while the *wʿb* only officiated outside the temple building proper, in the courtyard area and hypostyle hall. The *ḥm-nṯr* seems to have been responsible for breaking the seal to the inner shrine each morning, having placed the seal the day before. Prostrating upon seeing the deity statue in its boat, he sang a hymn of praise to the god, sometimes while burning incense, and a second hymn to its female counterpart if it were male. Removing the deity statue from its barque, he undressed it, placing it on a mound of sand with its face to the south. He censed it, sprinkled it with water from two types of vessels, and presented it with natron balls and incense balls for purification. Continuing, he fumigated the statue with burning incense, changing the white head cloth called the *nms*, the *sḏw*-cloth and the five cloths in which the deity statue was wrapped daily in the ritual of undoing the white cloth. He anointed it with unguent, painted its eyes with green cosmetics and its eyelids with kohl, and presented the deity with various insignia that

included a sceptre and mace(s). He then censed the statue. This ritual ended with the erasure of footprints from inside the shrine and the closing and rebolting of the doors and placement of the seal (Lloyd, ed., 1998, 215–37; Sauneron 2001, 76–88). Apparently, the changing of clothes only took place once or twice a week, and otherwise four symbolic strips of cloth were offered. In addition to the symbols of office, at festivals the god was adorned with jewels (Sauneron 2001, 84–85). The *ḥm-nṯr* consulted the deity on behalf of the king in a ritual called "seeing god" (Gee 2004, 97, 99). His initiation classified him as a "divine father" who was allowed to see all the forms of the god[3] and he professed in the ritual of "going out to the throne" that he was a *ḥm-nṯr*, the son of a *ḥm-nṯr* (in Greek, "a prophet, the son of a prophet') (Gee 2004, 97).

There are many points of contact between the activities and titles of the *ḥm-nṯr* and the prophetic activities and terminology used in the texts of the Hebrew Bible, which could be seen to suggest that temples and shrines in ancient Judah (and probably Israel) likely had an equivalent class of personnel. Micaiah (1 Kgs 22:19–23), Isaiah, and Ezekiel would represent the same type of specialized cultic specialist who had undergone initiation that allowed them access to the holy of holies in the temple in Jerusalem and other Yahwistic temples throughout the kingdom. Their visions of Yahweh seated on his throne or moving from his throne and out of Jerusalem in a chariot strongly imply that they had direct experience of such a visible representation of Yahweh in the pre-monotheistic, pre-aniconic cult.[4] This in turn raises the interesting possibility that some of the divine pronouncements contained in the prophetic collections attached to Isaiah and Ezekiel may have been the result of their "seeing god," which in some portions of the ritual in Egypt involved the servant taking on the attributes and persona of the deity, becoming his/her literal representative (Gee 2004, 100). It is most unfortunate that we do not know the specific technical means by which the *ḥm-nṯr* consulted the deity in the latter ritual or assumed his persona temporarily.

3. Lloyd, ed., 1998, 3; Gee 2004, 100. For a different view of this term, which sees it as a "prestigious if problematic" group at "the upper reaches of the priestly hierarchy," see Trigger et al., eds., 1993, 307. This comment might allow for them to be part of the upper echelons of the *ḥm-nṯr* class but could also imply they were a separate class altogether. According to Wilkinson (2000, 91), the title *it-nṯr*, "God's father," was originally used "of certain priests of even the highest rank," but in later times usually signified a class between the *ḥm-nṯr* and *wʿb*.

4. Those who have tried to argue for an iconic cultus during the monarchy, based on comparative ancient Near Eastern practice, include Niehr 1997 and Uehlinger, 1997.

3. *The* ḫry-ḥbt

The second class of Egyptian priest of relevance is the *ḫry-ḥbt* or lector priest—literally, "the one in charge of the festival rolls" (Nunn 1996, 98), or "scroll-carrier" (Trigger et al. 1983, 307). These priests wore a distinguishing sash across their chests (Wilkinson 2000, 91). Their base of operations was the House of Life, an institution located in important temple complexes (i.e. eṭ-Ṭud, el-Amarna, Abydos, Edfu,[5] Akhmim, Coptus, Dendera, el-Hiba, Esna, Hermopolis (Magna), Bubastis, Canopus, Horbeit, Philae, Thebes (Luxor); possibly at Elephantine, Hawara, Heliopolis, Sais, Crocodilopolis, Lisht, Memphis, Soknopaiu Nesos, Tebtunis, Thebes Karnak and the Ramesseum) (Nordh 1996, 110), but usually in a separate building or "hall"[6] on the grounds and not in the temple itself. Its primary purpose was an institution for education and research in different disciplines.[7]

The knowledge compiled and taught in the "House of Life" was used for the maintenance and expansion of *Maat* (Nordh 1996, 108), which included the maintenance of the health of the living and the aiding of the dead to affect a safe journey to a new life in the afterworld without interference by elements of Chaos (Gardiner 1938, 164, 168, 178). It housed scrolls with sacred knowledge, including *gnwt*, "chronicles" of the lives of gods and goddesses, writings relating to philosophy, religion, theology, medicine, astronomy, geography, and magic. The Book of Dreams, providing definitive meanings for various images, was kept there for consultation (Nordh 1996, 108; Pinch 1994, 52). It was the place where copies of the book of the Dead were made, where mythic narratives and songs/psalms were composed and collected (Gardiner 1938, 172, 175–76), and where funerary inscriptions for royal and private persons, curse and blessing formulae, and amulet inscriptions were prepared (Nordh 1996, 108). Wording and imagery for monumental texts displayed on temples were also created there (Gardiner 1938, 163). The books were written in hieroglyphs or hieratic (Gardiner 1938, 176). Nordh has

5. See Gardiner 1938, 160–61, 177. According to Nordh (1996, 107), every important temple would have had a House of Life with a library to ensure continuity and renewal in competence and ideology. She thinks that they served as the "control units" in the royal palaces as well as the temples since the king and his family would have required the same ritual care as the gods and because gods may have co-habited with the king in some sort of sanctuary in the palace.

6. For the use of this term in connection with the building, see Nordh 1996, 112–13.

7. Nordh (1996, 107–8) argues convincingly against Gardiner's earlier restriction of it to a scriptorium (Gardiner 1938, 159, 173).

argued that House of Life complexes could contain a library archive (*pr nw šshw*, "house of writings," and *is n šshw*, "chamber of writings," the latter only known to date at Luxor) and that any temple that contained a reference library, *pr mḏꜣt*, located in its main complex where books necessary for the daily cult would have been easily accessed, would also have had a House of Life on the grounds that conceived, controlled, processed, kept, and transmitted the reference works of the temple.[8]

Lector priests were the primary personnel at the House of Life.[9] With their knowledge of the contents of the many papyri stored in chests in the buildings, they recited incantations and spells, performed magic, made medicinal potions, and were sought out as healers independently of conventional doctors (*swnw*) (Gardiner 1938, 173; Nunn 1998, 98–99). They carried scrolls during religious festivals, probably reading from them at set times, and recited set formulae during funeral rites, including the embalming and mummification of the body and its deposition in the burial chamber (Wilkinson 2000, 91; Nordh 1996, 129). With the *sm*-priest, they conducted the *wpt-r* ritual, the "opening of the mouth," in which a deity was invoked to accept a new statue, relief, temple, Apis bull, amulet, or name as a place or form of manifestation on earth (Nordh 1996, 129).

Papyrus Westcar contains a cycle of stories in which three sons of King Khufu entertain their father with stories of the magical deeds of famous lector priests. The deed of the first *ḫry ḥb* has not been preserved, but the second was able to transform a wax crocodile into a live one and back again to a wax model, while the third parted the waters of a lake to retrieve a pendant that had been dropped (Pinch 1994, 51). These three lector priests seem to have attended pharaoh, but most would have been attached to the House of Life at a temple.

Lector priests were not part of the main temple hierarchy, although they were bound to keep the priestly rules of ritual purity since they worked within the temple precincts. Protective inscriptions on tombs show that lector priests were believed to have knowledge of, and the ability to actualize, fatal curses, and some texts state that anyone who

8. Nordh 1996, 110, 116. Gardiner, had pointed out that the *pr mḏꜣt* was a distinctive phenomenon from the House of Life as part of his argument that the latter was a scriptorium, but did not draw the logical link between the two that Nordh has made (Nordh 1996, 173).

9. They were not the only personnel, however; other staff included the *ssh mḏꜣt-nṯr*, "scribe of the sacred book," and the *swnw*, "physician," while the personnel as a whole were called *ṯt pr ꜥnkh*, "staff of the House of Life" or *ṯt pr nt Rꜥ*, "staff of the House of Re," *rkhw kht*, "learned men," or *šshw pr-ꜥnkh*, "scribes of the House of Life" (Nordh 1996, 108, 114).

read books of temple magic without proper authority would suffer the penalty of death (Pinch 1994, 58, 63). Lector priests outside the temples functioned as exorcists by copying down spells against fever, scorpion stings and maladies of every sort. They also created love charms, brought rain via incantation, and divined by water and oil (Sauneron 2001, 163–64).

The ability of lector priests to perform magical deeds brings to mind the reported deeds of the prophets Elijah and Elisha. Elijah was able to create a bottomless jar of meal and cruse of oil (1 Kgs 17:16), revive a dead child (1 Kgs 17:17–23), teleport (1 Kgs 18:12; 2 Kgs 2:16), call down fire from heaven to ignite a water-drenched sacrifice (1 Kgs 18:30–38), and part the River Jordan with his rolled up mantle to expose a dry river bed (2 Kgs 2:8). Elisha, his successor, was also able to part the Jordan river waters using the same mantle (2 Kgs 2:14), sweeten death-causing water (2 Kgs 2:19–22), produce a flow of oil that filled all the vessels that a widow could borrow (2 Kgs 4:2–7), revivify a dead child (2 Kgs 4:18–37), detoxify a pot of noxious stew (2 Kgs 4:39–41), cure leprosy (2 Kgs 5:8–14), make an axe-head float (2 Kgs 6:5–7), and strike an army with blindness (2 Kgs 6:18).

The magic and healing performed by lector priests stemmed from their knowledge of words of power contained in sacred books and proper ritual actions. They can part waters, animate objects, give life to mummies in the next world, and heal. By analogy, the magic performed by Elijah and Elisha may well have been accomplished through the recitation of incantations and words of power that formed part of the traditional Israelite priestly lore that would have been preserved in specialist libraries and scriptoria attached to certain temples. The close association of Elijah and Elisha with Bethel, where there was known to be a royal temple of the kingdom, raises the interesting possibility that within its precincts, besides a temple library, there was a separate royal library and records building as well as a healing facility manned by a specialist line of healing priests, which may have had it own collection of sacred texts, as there had been, for example, at Abydos, Edfu, and el-Amarna.[10]

10. For the latest reassessment of the archaeological finds from the site and the periods of occupation, see Finkelstein and Singer-Avitz 2009. The peak period of prosperity and settlement would seem to have been the Iron IIB period, covering the eighth century B.C.E., during the time the kingdom of Israel still existed. Yet the pottery includes a number of southern forms in addition to northern forms (p. 40), suggesting it might have come under southern political influence at the end of the eighth century, unless one wants to try to argue that they reflect the presence of southern pilgrims at the site who had brought along kraters, storage jars, and a pithos for the purposes of worshipping at the local temple, which I find less convincing.

Elijah's association with the "sons of the prophets" (1 Kgs 20:35; 2 Kgs 2:3, 5, 7, 15) and his characterization as "father" by Elisha in 2 Kgs 3:12 and by the king of Israel in 2 Kgs 6:21 and 13:14 need not force us to associate him instead with the prior category of "servant of god." Both expressions might have been typical of any specialist class of priest. Elijah's performance of healing miracles suggests he was closer in function to the Egyptian lector priest.

4. *Concluding Observations*

This cursory review of texts that allow a reconstruction of the functions of two types of temple personnel in Egypt, the *ḥm-nṯr* and the *ḫry-ḥbt*, has demonstrated that an Egyptian temple required a range of sub-specialists to fulfil the many roles it played in society. Regular activities of the two professions explored included "seeing god," determining the divine will through omens, oracles, and visions, and performing acts of magic, healing, and revivification. These activities overlap with those associated in the biblical texts with the *nāḇîʾ*. In Egypt there was at least one sub-class of "priest" or temple personnel, the *ḫry-ḥbt*, that was responsible for creating and transmitting revealed divine knowledge and words of power.

If one is willing to accept analogy, it could be argued that during the monarchic era Israel and Judah would have had a similar type of functionary, who has subsequently been subsumed under the single heading of *nāḇîʾ*. Particularly in "Deuteronomistic" tradition, the *nāḇîʾ* was seen to be the only legitimate intermediary who could receive and interpret divine communications. Yet even the author or a later editor of 1 Sam 28 was aware there had been three different legitimate ways that divine communication could occur: via dreams, visions, or the Urim and Thummim. In Egypt, these appear to have been the domain of one or more "priestly" classes/types of cultic personnel. It is likely that the same was the case in Israel and Judah as well and that the category of *nāḇîʾ*, even if it might have originally designated a particular type of cultic personnel, was artificially expanded in the literary tradition to include those who would have belonged to other cultic sub-specialities. In the Persian or Hellenistic period, there is a final condemnation of all activities that have been subsumed under the profession of *nāḇîʾ* in Zech 13:2–6 for the future.

As a historian delves into any prophetic book as a potential source for understanding the past, his or her task of converting testimony to evidence will be made even more complicated if the current analogy is accepted as valid. New questions will need to be addressed: if some of the material in the book has likely derived from preserved temple or

court records, were the pronouncements derived from a functionary called a *nāḇîʾ*, who received divine communications while in a ecstatic trance, or from another type of functionary closer to one of the two Egyptian examples? What difference might this make to historical analysis and understanding the purpose of the examples of literary prophecy contained in the major and minor prophetic books?

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Welcome Home

H. G. M. Williamson

According to the narrative in the opening chapters in the book of Ezra, the group or groups of Babylonian exiles who returned to Judah in the early years of Persian rule were opposed more or less from the start by the undefined "people(s) of the land(s)." In Ezra 3:3 they were in a state of fear because of them as early as the time when the altar was first restored, ostensibly in the reign of Cyrus, and in 4:4 they were discouraged from building by them. This led to a delay in the building of the temple until the time of Darius, and even when the project was eventually completed, only those who had "separated themselves from the uncleanness of the Gentiles of the land" (6:21) were permitted to join in the celebrations following the temple dedication.

Not surprisingly, this testimony of conflict in Judah from the very first days of Persian rule has been accepted as a reflection of contemporary reality by virtually all textbooks and many other studies of early Persian-period Judah, and it has been interpreted as showing that the conflict was between those who returned from Babylon on the one hand and the Judean population who had never been exiled but who had continued to live in the land on the other. It would be pointless to attempt a full listing here. Some earlier adherents are cited in categories by J. Kessler (2001) and Bedford (2001, 12–20; so far as our particular topic is concerned, there is much in Bedford's monograph which leads in the same direction as the present study); for a couple of more recent writers who represent this perspective, see the work of R. Kessler (2006, 145–48) and Lipschits (2005, xiii). Interestingly, our honorand, in his standard work on the Persian period, agrees in only a more guarded manner. He accepts that there will have been "some friction and occasional quarrels" but not "wholesale antagonism," something which he thinks developed only in the fifth century (Grabbe 2004, 288). My aim in this short contribution is to take his suggestion further by arguing that in fact the consensus disregards other evidence of a contrary nature and, indeed, is historically implausible. The data in Ezra require a different explanation.

The most secure first-hand evidence that we have for the situation immediately consequent upon the first returns, so far as I am aware, is to be found in Haggai and Zech 1–8.[1] I see here no trace of an inner-community division along the lines suggested, and indeed, it is not even clear whether these two prophets should be included among the returning exiles or were rather among those who had remained in the land. Haggai addresses the community as one without distinction, and although he has criticisms to raise, they are not, apparently, determined by this sort of consideration at all (cf. J. Kessler 2002); he is clearly supportive of the returning leadership as represented by Zerubbabel and Joshua, but the implication of his address to the people is that they have been settled in the land for some considerable time. It is surmise on our part that this relates only to the seventeen or eighteen years since the earliest possible return; in principle, it could equally well stretch back further (cf. Japhet 2004). Similarly, while Zechariah is also supportive of the returning leadership and at least shows awareness of the Babylonian community (e.g. 6:9), his focus is very much Jerusalem-centred and the difficult passage at the start of ch. 7 seems to address concerns of the Judean community quite as much as, if not more, than those of the exiles. At any rate, there is certainly no hint of any tension here between the two communities; J. Kessler (2007, 165) has even gone so far as to claim that "Zech 1–8 presents a highly *inclusive, nonpolemical, nonexclusionary* perspective" (his emphasis) with no evidence for the kind of conflict attested in Ezra.

The same general conclusion may be drawn from the earliest section of Trito-Isaiah. Although there is doubt about absolute dates, many scholars regard the central chs. 60–62 as the earliest material, and with good reason (cf. P. A. Smith 1995 for a clear presentation with further references; Blenkinsopp 2003, 54–60). But here once again the community shows no sign of division. In the surrounding chapters, the divisions begin to open up quite sharply, but on the one hand this is probably a reflection of a more developed stage in the history of the community and on the other the division is determined quite self-evidently along lines other than geographical. Whatever we make of Hanson's 1975 theory of disenfranchised Levites, the fact that he sees them carrying a torch for Deutero-Isaiah suggests that they were not originally out of sorts with the

1. I am aware that this has been forcefully challenged by Edelman (2005, 80–150). I remain to be persuaded that her considerably later dating of the two prophets is correct, however, and so I work here with the otherwise standard dates for their work. For a discussion of the dates of Zerubbabel and Joshua in this connection, see Klein 2008.

Babylonian community, since part, at least, of Isa 40–55 must still be understood as addressed to that community whether or not the prophet was physically present there or in Judah (as Barstad 1997 in particular has argued).

This distinction between the nearest historical witnesses we have to the nature of the community early in the Persian period and its representation in the book of Ezra is emphatically underlined precisely by the use of the expression "people of the land" already mentioned in the different sources.

At Hag 2:4 the phrase refers without any doubt to the very community which the prophet is encouraging to engage in the rebuilding: "Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the Lord; take courage O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage all you *people of the land* (עם־הארץ) says the Lord; work, for I am with you…" Here we should note in particular that it is used of the temple builders together with the leaders of the community, who certainly will have been among those who returned from Babylon.

Similarly, in Zech 7:5 we find, "Say to all the *people of the land* (עם־הארץ) and the priests, When you fasted and mourned in the fifth month…" Admittedly, it is not clear (as in principle it is not clear in Haggai) whether the reference is to the returned exiles or to those who had remained in the land, or to the two combined without distinction. What is clear, however, is that here too it is the community focussed on the temple that is addressed, not some alternative hostile element in the population.

These two occurrences of our phrase seem to use it in a way which shows continuity with the pre-exilic usage, though with development beyond it as well. While the precise definition of the phrase for the late monarchical period is unclear and perhaps not wholly consistent (see Nicholson 1965), there would be broad agreement with some such generalized definition as "the Judean landed aristocracy." From their actions as described in such passages as 2 Kgs 11:14, 18–20; 21:24; and 23:30, it is generally thought that they were conservative with regard to the maintenance of the Davidic monarchy, but whether this is sufficient to classify them more narrowly in party terms seems less likely. In Haggai and Zechariah, as we have seen, however, it looks as though the phrase has been broadened in compass to refer generally to the Judean community as a whole. It would seem to be overpressing consistency in an unrealistic manner to insist that the two prophets had only a particular section of the community in mind by their form of address.

The contrast with the uses in Ezra 3:3 and 4:4 is obvious. At 3:3, the phrase is in the plural in both elements (עמי הארצות), whereas in 4:4 it is the more familiar singular form. The relationship between these two verses is not entirely clear. On the one hand, the second might be thought to be picking up the first by way of resumption or summary, in which case the same entity is referred to despite the different form of wording; this was the approach I adopted in an earlier study (e.g. 1985, 43–44, 50), though it has been strongly challenged by others, sometimes with good arguments. At the other extreme, Fried (2006) has argued that the singular form in 4:4 is quite separate from the plural at 3:3 (and elsewhere) and that it is used here "exactly as it is used in the rest of the biblical corpus." She reaches this conclusion by taking v. 4 as the direct summary conclusion of vv. 1–3 and as leading also into the following paragraphs, so that the "people of the land" are "the satrapal officials who administered the government of Beyond the River." They are the same group as those designated in v. 1 as "the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin," though the redactor responsible for the opening verses of the chapter mistakenly thought that they had been brought into the region already by the Assyrian kings. Fried therefore concludes that the phrase is being used in the same way as in the pre-exilic passages in the sense that it still refers to the aristocracy who controlled Judah. The "only" difference is that previously they were Judeans but now they are foreign.

There seem to me to be some questions that might be raised about aspects of Fried's analysis alongside much in her article that is helpful, but this is not the place to develop that. For our present purpose it suffices to observe that even if she were correct, it would still leave the Ezra 4:4 usage in hopeless conflict with that in Haggai and Zechariah (and I cannot see how her attempt to avoid this [p. 128 n. 7] even begins to address the problem). If the phrase means those who control Judah, then they cannot at one and the same time be the community addressed in Haggai and Zechariah and the hostile foreigners in Ezra 4:4.

The plural form in Ezra 3:3 is found also in these books at Neh 9:30 and 10:29 (ET 28), while the similar form עמי־הארץ (i.e. plural in the first element only) occurs at Ezra 10:2, 11; Neh 10:31 (ET 30). It is uncertain whether these distinctions are significant. They also seem to refer to foreigners, though in the case of marriage, where the phrase refers more than once to the foreign wife, it is unclear whether residence outside Judah is also implied; it is possible, but seems unlikely.

The drive in Ezra–Nehemiah to make all the opponents of Judah foreigners is widely, and surely rightly, related to the strong ideology of these books. This has recently been given its most extreme expression in

an article by Janzen (2008, and cf. Bedford 2002) who argues that the books seek to define Israel as exclusively the exiles and their descendants. While there are one or two areas where he is in danger of overplaying his hand (see my response in 2008, 334–36), his main point is well taken. As part of that ideology, of course, the writers here simply ignore the presence of any of impeccable Judean descent who had continued to live in the land during the Neo-Babylonian period. Concerning the number and geographical disposition of such there has been a good deal of lively scholarly debate in recent years (for two conflicting prominent examples, see Lipschits 2005 and Faust 2007), but for our purposes this is immaterial. All scholars accept that there was such a population, be it smaller or larger, and that it is simply unmentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah. Arguably, therefore, not only does Ezra 1–6 differ from Haggai and Zechariah, but also it does not even overtly address the relationships between the different constituent elements in the early Persian period which they seem to presuppose were united. It seems irresponsible to try to read out of this material a historical presentation of this particular topic, given that these books do not recognize what we know independently to have been the historical reality in the first place.

Let us, then, turn to a consideration of some other possible lines of evidence that may help explain the apparent silence about such a dispute in Haggai and Zechariah. First, although we generally draw a sharp socio-economic division between the Babylonian and the Judean communities, in the sense that the former is said to have comprised the wealthy elite and the latter the less privileged rural classes, it is obvious after a moment's reflection that this can only be a very rough and ready guideline. However stratified pre-exilic Judean society may have been, the two groups were not self-contained categories, and links of all sorts between them will inevitably have existed.

Secondly, even more strikingly, we should allow for the probability that families will have been divided by the Babylonian deportations. We have little direct evidence on this, but there is one clear and noteworthy example which deserves mention. According to 2 Kgs 25:25 (and see more fully Jer 40–41) Ishmael son of Nethaniah, who assassinated the first Babylonian-appointed governor of Judah, Gedaliah, was in some way of the royal family—מזרע המלוכה, "of the seed of the kingship," is an unusual way of saying so, but the meaning does not seem to be in doubt. Furthermore, we learn from Jer 41:10 and 43:6 that some of the "daughters of the king" also remained behind in the land. Clearly, Ishmael was not in the closest royal family circle, and the sons of the king, we know, were not treated in the same way as the daughters.

Nevertheless, the evidence shows clearly that the family, construed in its wider sense, was divided. And incidentally, Gedaliah himself is said to have been a descendant of Shaphan, a prominent and well-known Jerusalem bureaucratic family, so again demonstrating that not even all the elite were deported.

Thirdly, we have several converging lines of evidence both from the Bible and elsewhere that, unlike the Assyrians, the Babylonians did not disperse the peoples whom they removed to Babylon but kept them together, so allowing them to retain and even strengthen their sense of national or religious identity. To the biblical and social-historical evidence assembled and developed by D. L. Smith (1989) and Bedford (2001, 46–61), we can now add the impressive new evidence arising from the cuneiform texts from al-Yāhūdu and Našar which are still in the process of publication, but which seem clearly to provide contemporary evidence for gathered communities of Judean exiles (Joannès and Lemaire 1999; Pearce 2006). There will thus have been retained, *inter alia*, a strong and mutually reinforced memory of the homeland and of those there who will have been known well to the exiles.

Fourth, there is some direct evidence, and other more circumstantial evidence, that communication between the two communities was maintained. According to Jer 29, Jeremiah wrote a letter to those who had gone to Babylon in the first deportation. There is nothing in the account to suggest that this was unusual. In addition, there are clear indications in Ezekiel that during this same period news was regularly reaching Ezekiel from Jerusalem. There is no reason to suppose that this need have diminished after the fall of Jerusalem. Against unstated assumptions it needs to be appreciated that travel within an empire along well-established routes was by no means exceptional. A good deal of work has been done on this with regard to the Persian Empire, and although, to the best of my knowledge, this has not been undertaken so extensively for the Neo-Babylonian Empire just before, one might expect that the difference, if any, would be only in degree, not of a different order. What is more, the growth of some of the biblical literature from this period does not seem to divide neatly into Judean or Babylonian groups, so that the likelihood of interchange remains possible (for two overviews of an inevitably complex and extensive discussion, see Albertz 2001 and Lipschits 2005, 272–359; on Jeremiah in particular, see Sharp 2000).

Finally, the period in question lasted only fifty years. Both Hag 2:3 and Ezra 3:12 indicate that there were some alive when the second temple was being rebuilt who had seen the first temple. They would admittedly have been old in terms of life expectancy then, but the fact

that many will have died younger does not prevent the age of seventy being a reasonable expectation for some (cf. Ps 90:10) so that the record here need not necessarily be doubted. If this is true for the start of Darius's reign, then of course it will be all the more so earlier.

Under all these circumstances, the likelihood may be contemplated that the return of some in the first years of Persian rule would not necessarily have been seen as threatening by those in the land, but rather as something that could potentially be welcomed. They would not have arrived as complete strangers but rather as members of a community whose enforced division would have still been a topic of continuing grief. There is no evidence known to me that there were any necessary disputes about land (cf. Ben Zvi 1995), as in any case the numbers involved would have been small enough not to pose difficulty in this regard.[2] Fifty years is not so long that memories of family ties would have been completely forgotten, as events in the modern world have also served to underline.

Returning to Ezra 1–6 with these possibilities in mind, we need to look afresh at what might be the distinction between possible sources that are close to the events being described and the contribution of the later redactor(s). Such an exercise is admittedly open to the accusation that it is unrealistic to seek to draw such a line of demarcation. The final redactor can have shaped all the material in such a manner as to cover his tracks completely, and in any case there can be little certainty about the results of the analysis in the first place.

While I accept these points theoretically, the fact nevertheless remains that Ezra 1–6 is patently a mosaic of sharply differing types of material which have by no means been smoothed into a seamless unity. The suggestion that this is the result of the amalgamation of sources remains by far the most plausible explanation for this, so that it remains at least worth asking our initial question.

From a negative perspective, the material on which the hypothesis of an early clash between returning exiles and those who remained in the land is based is in 3:1–4:5 and 6:21. These are both passages that nearly all commentators would accept are among the last to have been written. Ezra 6:21 is clearly part of the final redactor's concluding description of the Passover following the dedication of the new temple. 6:19–22, the

2. Population estimates are notoriously speculative. However, the best work done on this indicates that the Judean community even after the return was very much smaller than anything that had previously been envisaged (Carter 1999) and, although the data are subject to ongoing review in terms of detail, the general conclusion also puts the question of inter-communal relations in a different light.

last paragraph of the whole of this section of the book, is in Hebrew, following the long section in Aramaic; there is no indication of any underlying written source but rather it has every appearance of being an editorially composed rounding-off of a section. Its portrayal of some "separating themselves" (v. 21) to join the "children of the exile" (בני הגולה, v. 19) is a welcome sign that there was some openness, at least, to movement between groups, but it is nevertheless one of the strongest indications we have in this material that there were two groups in the first place and, moreover, the most natural interpretation of who was involved is that these were residents of the locality who had not been in exile (so too Bedford 2002, 150). This may help us also with the more difficult question of the identification of "the peoples of the lands" in 3:3.

The situation with regard to Ezra 3:1–4:5 is less easily settled as opinions vary more widely; see the excellent survey and discussion by Bedford (2001, 85–181). For present purposes, however, there need be no difficulty in concluding that the present form of the text is very much later than the events being described. In my 1985 commentary, I sought to defend the (maximally conservative) view that there were elements in this passage which seemed to rest on sound historical memory, and I sought to explain how they might have been preserved; for instance, the narrative in 4:1–3 could have been based on one of the two letters whose existence is recorded, but without content being supplied (4:6–7). Even if such speculations be accepted, however, it is clear from the fact that there is use made by way of citation and allusion of other scriptural material, not least the account in Chronicles of the building of Solomon's temple, that the whole passage has been more thoroughly rewritten by the final redactor than other parts of these chapters; the verbal parallels between 3:7 and 2 Chr 2:7–15 (ET 8–16) (and cf. 1 Chr 22:2–4) alone are sufficient to make the point, though the commentaries will reveal several more. The writing thus uses typology to relate the second temple to the first and reveals its relatively late development in consequence.

From the more positive perspective it needs to be emphasized that there is no sign of a division within the community in the materials which may be thought to rest more directly on an earlier written source. Of course there is interchange, some hostile, with imperial officials from outside Judah, but that is not relevant; so far as the temple-building community is concerned, the position seems to be the same as in Haggai and Zech 1–8. And within this source material there is, as I have discussed previously elsewhere, one possible indication of a good integration between the two elements of the population. Ezra 2 purports to be a list of those who returned from Babylon in the reign of Cyrus. Its actual

origin and purpose is less easily discerned, and there are several suggestions. Given some evidence for the relatively early date of the list (see Williamson 1985, 30–31; 2004, 29–32), I am much attracted by the suggestion of Galling (1964, 89–108) that behind the list lies a record of the response of the elders of the Jews to Tattenai's request (Ezra 5:3–4, 9–10) for a list of names of those engaged in the rebuilding. Building on that proposal, Japhet (1983) then went on to suggest that the variations in the way that the families are listed can be explained by the hypothesis that those listed by family will have been those who returned from Babylon, while those listed by place of domicile will be those who had remained in the land throughout the exile. Whether or not Galling's particular proposal is accepted, and regardless of the historical accuracy or otherwise of the numbers involved, the apparent integration of the two elements has been found an attractive interpretation (e.g. Ben Zvi 1995; Dyck 2000; J. Kessler 2006, 109). This has been elaborated upon recently by Knauf (2006, 301–2): "It is tempting to see in the distribution of 'people' verses 'descendants' a stage of the tradition that precedes the attribution of the Golah to all of them—that is, to regard the 'descendants' as returnees and the 'people' as descendants of the left-behinds. This, at least, seems to be the intention of the different designations."

I conclude, therefore, that all the evidence we have from different sources indicates that there was no inner-community conflict in the days of the first return from Babylon. Any suggestion of such comes from a very much later period—no doubt, as Grabbe himself has suggested, as part of the consequence of fifth-century reforms in Judah and the move to denigrate some of the non-Babylonian exiles as "foreigners."[3] The various elements that contributed to this cannot be surveyed here. However, it may be noted as a concluding reflection that this points to the likelihood that the real change in the nature of Judean society came not precisely at the start of the Persian period, as has so long been assumed, but rather somewhat later (cf. Willi 1995). In previous decades, when this whole period was often neglected in scholarly research, the treatment of the Persian period as a single entity was perhaps understandable. In the present context, where it has become the focus of so much new research, the time has come when the truly significant developments that took place within it deserve to be more fully acknowledged.

3. It may be noted that Fried (2007) traces a parallel profound change in attitude towards the *gēr* ("resident alien") from optimism to doubt, fear and hostility during the literature spanning the period of Persian rule.

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"Here is a Man Whose Name is Ṣemaḥ" (Zechariah 6:12)*

Oded Lipschits

Introduction

During the 2008 excavation season at Ramat Raḥel (July–August 2008), a very small, heretofore unknown, type of private stamp impression on a jar handle was discovered. The find itself came as no surprise: to date, over 600 stamp impressions on jar handles from the Late Iron Age and the Persian and Early Hellenistic periods have been unearthed at Ramat Raḥel, making it one of the richest sites in Judah.

Stamped handles discovered at the site include a variety of known types from the late eighth and seventh centuries B.C.E. (such as the *lmlk* and rosette stamp impressions, as well as the so-called private or official[1] stamp impressions), types from the Persian period (such as the different kinds of *yehud* and lion stamp impressions), and types from the early Hellenistic period (such as the late *yehud* and the *yršlm* stamp impressions). Reading the very small stamp impression we found in 2008 was not easy, and after we deciphered it, I was surprised to find that it bore *ṣēmaḥ* as a private name.

In this essay—which I dedicate to Lester L. Grabbe, a good friend and a great scholar, whose imprint on the research of our field has been enormous—I would like to present this stamp impression, and to discuss my understanding of how the personal name *ṣēmaḥ* developed into a messianic title.

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1. On "private" and "official" stamp impression, see Vaughn 1999, 110–17.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

The Stamped Handle

The renewed excavations at Ramat Raḥel began in 2004, and we have now completed six seasons of active digging (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010).[2] The stamp impression on the jar handle was discovered in a level of white crushed limestone that comprises the floor of the courtyard.[3] This floor is part of the second phase of the edifice, dated not earlier than the late seventh century B.C.E. (Lipschits et al. 2009).

A pit with pottery from the end of the seventh or the beginning of the sixth century B.C.E. was found in the same square, sealed by the level of white crushed limestone. Even if this pit is not directly below the floor where the stamped handle under discussion was discovered, it should be understood as being later than the pit. Since the stamped handle probably dates to the late eighth century B.C.E. (Lipschits, Sergi, and Koch 2010, 22–27)—it is classic *lmlk* type pottery, which is now safely dated to the late eighth to early seventh centuries (Ussishkin 2004; Zimhoni 2004)—we may conclude that it was discovered out of its original context.

The stamp was impressed on a large storage jar handle (ca. 35 wide × 16 mm thick) equidistant between the two ridges along the handle. The pottery is pinkish-brown with grey core and many small and some large white inclusions.

Characteristics of the Stamp Impression

The impression is on the upper part of the handle, with the top of the seal facing the left side of the handle. The seal that made the impression was oval, and the impression is deeper on the left, upper and lower right sides, where the bezel of the seal can clearly be seen. The upper right side of the impression is much shallower, and the bezel, as well as the upper part of the *lamed*, are barely visible. The seal itself may have been slightly concave, which would account for the impression being poorly impressed at the centre and the letters, as well as the single field divider in this part, being shallow and faint.

2. The excavation project is directed by Oded Lipschits and Manfred Oeming, under the auspices of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University, and the Theological Seminary (Wissenschaftlich-Theologisches Seminar) and the Faculty for Jewish Studies (Hochschule für jüdische Studien) at Heidelberg University. The staff of the excavations includes Yuval Gadot (field director), Benni Arubas (Architecture), and Liora Freud (Registration). For first summaries of the excavations, see Lipschits et al. 2006a, 2006b, 2010.

3. Area D–6, Square D146, Locus 14012, Registration Number 7125/1.

The preserved dimensions of the stamp impression are 9 mm high and 10 mm thick. There are two inscribed registers with a single field divider between them and a single border line around the entire circumference (where the bezel impression remains). There are four letters in the upper register and five in the lower register; not all of them are complete, but all are legible. The quality of the seal was poor; some letters were not formed in the standard manner, but they are consistent and well organized in terms of space and size.

The four letters in the upper inscribed register are: *lamed*, *tsade*, *mem*, and *ḥet* (לצמח, *lṣmḥ*). Only the upper part of the *lamed* is slightly damaged, but it is entirely legible. The five letters in the lower inscribed register are: *aleph*, *lamed*, *shin*, *mem*, and *ayin* (אלשמע, *ʾlšmʿ*). The first and last letters in both registers touch the border of the stamp impression: the *lamed* on the upper part, the *ḥet* on the upper left side, the *aleph* in two places—the lower part of the vertical downstroke and the right side of the lower oblique strokes, and the lower left side of the *ayin*. The tops of four of the letters of the lower inscribed register touch the single field divider (only the upper part of the *ayin* is a bit lower).

The *mem* in both the upper and lower registers is not standard; its top is formed with a stroke at the far left that is detached from the letter itself. Examples of a similar *mem* appear in two identical stamp impressions, usually read as מנחם / יהובנה; one was excavated at Bet Shemesh (Grant and Wright 1939, 81–82, no. 1263) and the other one at Ramat Raḥel (Aharoni 1956, 145, no. 5103).[4]

The *tsade* seems to be inscribed in reverse. A similar phenomenon was observed in other cases (see, e.g., Avigad and Sass 1997, 251, no. 682 [very different from no. 681]; 256, no. 694 and 695). It may be that in all these cases the *tsade* is an indication of the same (poor quality) craftsmanship, wherein the engraver inscribed one letter, and always the same one, in reverse.

In the lower inscribed register, the *aleph*, which is not standard, is characterized by a long vertical downstroke that reaches the border of the impression. This unusual type of *aleph* is known as late as the late

4. On this stamp impression, cf. Avigad and Sass 1997, 249, no. 677; Barkay 1985, 414, no. 10; Vaughn 1999, 203, nos. 56–57. It is interesting to note that in two other types of stamp impressions on jar handles with the same name, one with two exemplars discovered in Jerusalem and Tel Goded (Avigad and Barkay 2000, 249–50; Bliss 1900, 220–21, no. 6, Pl. 7, 6; Bliss and Macalister 1902, 120, no. 24, Pl. 56, 24), and the other one with eight exemplars discovered in Lachish (4), Gibeon, Ramat Raḥel, Khirbet ʿAbbad and Adulam (Diringer 1953, 341; Pritchard 1959, 28, Fig. 19, 7, Pl. 11, 7; Vaughn 1999, 204, nos. 60, 62), the *mem* is of the more common type.

seventh or early sixth century B.C.E. (see, e.g., Shoham 2000a, 46, bulla 34). The very high oblique strokes of the *aleph* meet well to the left of the downstroke, reaching over the *lamed*, similar to another stamp impression excavated at Ramat Raḥel where the same name *ʾlšmʿ* (אלשמע) appears as well (and see below). Therefore, the stamp impression should be read: *lṣmḥ* / *ʾlšmʿ* (לצמח / אלשמע), and should be interpreted as (belonging to) Ṣemaḥ (son of) ʾElišamaʿ.

The Date of the Stamp Impressions

The script is characteristic of the late eighth to mid-seventh centuries B.C.E., with many parallels in the seal script that is usually dated until the seventh and early sixth centuries. It is difficult to assign a narrower date based on paleography, but the time frame of the "private" stamped jar handles as a phenomenon, and the current jar handle as part of it, can be limited archaeologically to the very late eighth century. From 43 types[5] of "private" stamp impressions on jar handles known to us, 35 types were clearly discovered in destruction levels well dated to 701 B.C.E., and can be dated with high probability to the late eighth century (Lipschits, Sergi, and Koch 2010, 22–27). The remaining eight types were discovered only at sites located in the hill country which continued to exist after 701 B.C.E. with no destruction level. However, five of these eight types containing names (both personal and patronymic) also appear on stamp impressions discovered at Lachish Level III. This may mean that the same person had two different seals that were in use in different geographical locations—but in any case we should date both to the same pre-Sennacherib period.

Only three types of stamp impressions on jar handles (*hwšʿm* / *ḥgy*, *ḥšy* / *ʾlšmʿ*, and the stamp impression discussed here, *lṣmḥ* / *ʾlšmʿ*) with no parallel from Lachish or another site in the Judean Shephelah have been discovered in Jerusalem or at Ramat Raḥel. Yet, since they are only three out of 43 types, we may assume that they should also be dated to the late eighth century B.C.E., and that they survived to be discovered at sites that were not destroyed during the Assyrian campaign in 701 B.C.E. No "private" stamp impressions on jar handles have been discovered in a clear seventh-century archaeological context, and it seems that this

5. The term "type" in relation to stamp impression is used here in order to indicate a specific seal. There can be two or even three types (= seals) bearing the same name, where different indications (e.g. size of the stamp impression, the orientation of the letters, and other characteristics) clearly demonstrate that different seals were used.

phenomenon should be limited to the late eighth century (Lipschits, Sergi, and Koch 2010, 22–27).

We may conclude, then, that at the end of the eighth century B.C.E. a man with the name Ṣemaḥ (son of) ʾElišamaʿ held an administrative position in Judah.

The Name ʾĕlîšāmāʿ

The name *ʾĕlîšāmāʿ* ("God has heard"; cf. Zadok 1988, 23) is well known in both biblical and epigraphic Hebrew texts. In the Bible it occurs 17 times, mainly in post-exilic texts. It is mentioned five times as the name of the chief of Ephraim in the days of Moses (Num 1:10; 2:18; 7:48, 53; 10:22); as a priest in the days of Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 17:8); as one of the offspring of the daughter of Sheshan (1 Chr 2:41); as one of the sons of David (2 Sam 5:16; 1 Chr 3:6, 8; 14:6); as a scribe in the days of Jehoiakim (Jer 36:12, 20, 21); and as the grandfather of Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah (2 Kgs 25:25; Jer 41:1). In this last case, we can note a unique papponymic phenomenon where the two components of the name were inverted: from ישמעאל (*yišmāʿʾēl*) to אל ישמע (*ʾĕlîšāmāʿ*).[6]

The name appears on a stamp impression on jar handle discovered in the City of David, reading: חשי / אלשמ[ע] (*ḥšy* / *ʾlšm*[ʿ] = Ḥushai (son of) ʾElishama[ʿ]) (Shoham 2000b, 82, no. 2). The name appears in the lower inscribed register of a stamp impression on jar handle discovered at Ramat Raḥel (Aharoni 1962, 18–19, Fig. 14, 4; Pl. 6.1, and cf. Vaughn 1999, 202, no. 39). The paleography of this stamp impression is very similar to the new stamp impression from Ramat Raḥel, but the shape of the impression and its size indicate a different seal.[7] The name appears also on bullae from the City of David (Shoham 2000a, 36, 40, 43, 46–47; cf. Avigad and Sass 1997: nos. 447, 588 with an alternative reading), and on numerous unprovenanced seals and bullae located in private collections.

Ṣēmaḥ as a Personal Name

The meaning of *ṣēmaḥ* (צמח) is "branch' or "scion." In epigraphic Hebrew it appears as a personal name only in the stamp impression

6. On the papponymic principle among the ruling families in Judea and Samaria in the Persian period, see Cross 1983, 89–91.

7. A renewed examination of Aharoni's stamp impression has yet to be made, and the above conclusion is based on his report as well as on the excavation's original registrations and photos.

discussed above and once more in Arad inscription number 49 (Aharoni 1981, 80–82, and cf. Ahituv 1992, 91; Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 77–80; Na'aman 2008, 195–96, and n. 81). This inscription was deciphered after combining several fragments of a bowl. There was an inscription inside the bowl (now illegible) and around the outside, probably around the entire circumference, with lines separating various sections of the inscription. It seems, after Aharoni, that the lines on the outside of these bowls were written while the still intact bowls faced downwards. In Aharoni's section 4, line 11, he read [*b*]*n.ṣmḥ*\ ([so]n of ṣemaḥ, 1). From the photo and drawing (Aharoni 1981, 80) it seems that the reading of the name is well established, while the reading of the *nun* in the first word, before the separating dot, is only a reconstruction, as is the word [*b*]*n* ([so]n) (Na'aman 2008, 195–96, and n. 81).

Aharoni interpreted the name *ṣēmaḥ* as a personal name, just as in all the other 15 lines of the inscription on the bowl, where there is either a private name or a name following "son of" (בן) or "sons of" (בני). Dobbs-Allsopp et al. (2005, 79, 617), however, interpreted *ṣēmaḥ* as a hypocoristicon ("scion"), probably abbreviated from *yṣmḥ*-DN or the like. They also claimed that in the Hebrew Bible (Zech 3:6, 8, 12; Isa 4:2; Jer 23:5; 33:15, and see below) *ṣēmaḥ* occurs only as a messianic title, but already Zadok (1988, 77, 282) claimed that its appearance in the Arad ostraca as well as the Neo-Assyrian toponym *Ṣa-ma-ḫi*, *Ṣa-ma-ḫa-a* referring to an important settlement in the eastern Jezirah (Zadok 1982, 171, with further literature) proves that the name was not merely symbolic. To this we may add the name of the Jewish village K^{e}far Ṣemaḥ in the territory of Hippus during the second and third centuries C.E.[8]

Ṣemaḥ between Personal Name and Eschatological Title

The root *ṣ-m-ḥ* appears in the Hebrew Bible 33 times as a verb (mainly in the Qal and Hiphil—15 and 14 times respectively—but also four times in the Piel). Usually the verb is connected to the growth of plants (see, e.g., Gen 2:5, 9; 3:18; 41:6, 23; Exod 10:5; Deut 29:22; Isa 61:11; Ps 104:14), but also to the growth of hair (Lev 13:27; Judg 16:22; 2 Sam 10:5 [= 1 Chr 19:5]; Ezek 16:7). In one case the verb was used to symbolize the healing of the skin (Isa 58:8), in another as a metaphor for the birth (or rebirth) of a child (Job 9:19, and cf. Ben Sira 14:18), and in still another as a metaphor for the birth (or rebirth) of the nation (Isa 44:4).

8. See Avi-Yonah 1976, 73; Reeg 1989, 368, with further literature. See there also on the location of Kefar Ṣemaḥ in the southern part of the Sea of Galilee.

In this symbolic way, too, we find "Truth shall spring out of the earth" (Ps 85:12), "salvation spring up" (Isa 45:8), and, in contrast, "trouble will not sprout from the ground" (Job 5:6). In two cases the verb in the Hiphil was connected to קֶרֶן ("horn"). In Ps 132:17 it seems that the horn is a symbol for the growing power and eternity of the king, while in Ezek 29:21 it symbolizes the growing power (and eternity?) of Israel.

The substantive *ṣēmaḥ* appeared in the Hebrew Bible 12 times, usually in reference to plants, or even in a wider reference to anything that sprouts from and grows on the land (and cf. Gen 19:25; Isa 61:11; Ezek 16:7; Hos 8:7; Ps 65:11 [10]). In Jer 23:5; 33:15–16 and in Zech 3:8; 6:12–13 (and cf. also Isa 4:2) *ṣēmaḥ* became a messianic title, probably as part of a textual and ideological process between the texts.

According to Jer 23:5, the Lord will raise up to David *ṣēmaḥ ṣaddîq* (a righteous branch," or perhaps, after Swetnam (1965, 29–40), and parallel to Ugaritic texts and a fourth- or third-century B.C.E. Phoenician inscription from Lapethos and Idalion in Cyprus: "legitimate scion"), "who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land."[9] According to v. 6, his name will be *yhwh ṣidqēnû* (*yhwh* is our righteousness), with a clear allusion to King Zedekiah by a deliberate reversal of the meaning of his name.[10] In 33:15–16 this oracle is reinterpreted and the name *yhwh ṣidqenû* is transferred to Jerusalem (Thompson 1980, 601).[11] It seems that *ṣēmaḥ ṣaddîq* is the pledge of the nomination of a scion from the Davidic dynasty, and the best parallel for it is *weyaṣa ḥoter miggezaʿ yišāy* ("A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse," Isa 11:1) (Bright 1965, 143). The *ṣēmaḥ* connects to the image of the dynasty as a tree (cf. to Ezek 17:3), and *ṣēmaḥ ṣaddîq* is the legal heir—the one who rightly sits on the throne (Hoffman 2001, 471). We can conclude that the *ṣēmaḥ ṣaddîq* in Jeremiah was a title that developed as a promise

9. On the similar expression *ṣēmaḥ ṣaddîq* in the Phoenician text, see Honeyman 1941; Donner and Röllig 1968, no. 43, 1, 11; Cross 1994, 98–99. These inscriptions can be compared with another Phoenician inscription from Sidon, dated to the fifth century B.C.E. (Donner and Röllig 1968, 16), where the expression *bn ṣdq* was used in connection with the legitimate heir of the dynasty (cf. Meyers and Meyers 1987, 202).

10. On the question of whether or not these two verses are genuine utterances of the prophet, see the review by Lundbom 2004, 170–71, with further literature.

11. Verses 14–16 (within the unit of the four oracles invoking the name of David, vv. 14–26) are missing from the LXX and are usually interpreted by scholars as a late post-exilic addition. See Lust 1994, and, in addition, Ferry 1998; Lundbom 2004, 537. However, the see opposing view of Lundbom 2004, 537–39.

to the future, when the legal heir of Zedekiah—the last king of the Davidic dynasty—will sit on the throne.[12]

The same word was used in Zech 3:8, in a clear connection to Jer 23:5: "I am going to bring my servant, the branch" (כי־הנני מביא את־עבדי צמח). The future Davidic king is the subject of this promise, and he is the *ṣēmaḥ* that "will come up from the stump of Jesse."

It is not clear here if *ṣēmaḥ* is a personal name, a symbolic name, or a title. Contrary to Mitchell (1912, 186–87), Noth (1966, 10), Ohana and Heltzer (1978, 140), Meyers and Meyers (1987, 37), and others, who interpret *ṣēmaḥ* as a symbolic name, Zadok (1988, 77) claimed that *ṣēmaḥ* should be interpreted as a personal and not merely a symbolic name. Lemaire (1977, 210; 1996, after the suggestions of others; see, e.g., Mowinckel 1959, 120, 160) was even more explicit in his statement that both in Zech 3 and 6 *ṣēmaḥ* is a personal name, the Hebrew name of Zerubbabel (but see, however, the claims raised by Rose 2000, 140–41; 2003; Curtis 2006, 144–48, and see below).

Contrary to these suggestions, however, referring to one or two eighth-century B.C.E. epigraphic finds (see above) in order to interpret a biblical text which is late by at least 200 years, is, in my opinion, problematic from the methodological point of view. It would be preferable to assume that there was a textual process that began with the prophecy of Jeremiah (23:5) with its promise of a scion from the Davidic dynasty as *ṣēmaḥ ṣaddîq* (in continuation to the *weyaṣa ḥoter miggezaʿ yišāy* in Isa 11:1). It was understood as a title for the future king, when the legal heir of Zedekiah—the last king of the Davidic line—would sit on the thrown. This very important prophecy set the base for its use as a name for the future Davidic king in Zech 3:8, *ʿabdî ṣēmaḥ*. The use of the term *ṣēmaḥ* applied to the royal heir, in parallel with the identical use of the word in fourth- to third-century Phoenician inscriptions discovered in Cyprus, makes it clear that we are dealing with a *terminus technicus* (Cross 1994, 98).

This title was further developed in Zech 6:12, when it was clearly stated that *ṣēmaḥ* is a personal name: "Here is a man whose name is Branch: for he shall branch out in his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD." The statement הנה איש צמח שמו connects to 3:8 and to Jer 23:5 (and also to 33:15; cf. Mitchell 1912, 186, and 17, 33, and cf. Meyers and Meyers 1987, 371), and was probably connected with the Davidic aspirations of the future royal figure (Rose 2000, 140–41; 2003;

12. Mowinckel (1959, 15–20) assigns these verses, as well as Amos 9; 11, and Mic 5:1 (2) to the post-exilic period, and claims they were dependent on Zech 3:8 and 6:12. See the opposing view of Lundbom 2004, 172.

Curtis 2006, 136), even if in the final, very corrupted and problematic text of Zech 6:9–14, and especially following v. 11, it can be understood as directed towards the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak (Mitchell 1912, 185–86; Meyers and Meyers 1987, 371–72; Blenkinsopp 1988, 238; Redditt 1995, 42, but see, however, the claims of Ackroyd 1968, 196; Petersen 1984, 279–80; Curtis 2006, 144–45).[13]

Summary

The name *ʾĕlišāmaʿ* was well known during the pre- and post-exilic periods. The name *ṣēmaḥ* was a personal name at the end of the eighth century B.C.E., as attested in the inscription on the bowl from Arad and in the stamp impression on the jar handle published in the present study. There is no mention of this name in any biblical text dated to the First Temple period, and it seems that the prophecy of Jeremiah (Jer 23:5), with its promise of a scion from the Davidic dynasty, with the title *ṣēmaḥ ṣaddîq* (in continuation to the *ḥoter miggezaʿ yišāy* in Isa 11:1) as a title that developed as a pledge to the future, when the legal heir of Zedekiah—the last king of the Davidic dynasty—will sit on the thrown, set the base for its use as *ʿabdî ṣēmaḥ* in Zech 3:8, as a title for the future Davidic king. This title was further developed in Zech 6:12, when it was stated that *ṣēmaḥ* is a personal name, but with clear connection to the Davidic aspirations. Afterward, in late second temple Judaism, this title was further developed as a clear Messianic title—and a straight line was crossed from the various texts in Qumran to the setting of the daily ʿAmidah ("Shmoneh Esreh") prayer.

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13. See Albertz's claims (2003, 326 n. 19) against Lemaire's reconstructions (1996, 48–57), based on his interpretation for these verses.

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Drought, Hunger, and Redistribution: A Social Economic Reading of Nehemiah 5

Bob Becking

Drought as Perennial Problem

Humankind has suffered from periods of drought throughout known history. Drought is caused by a decrease of rainfall in a certain area, which itself is caused by fluctuations in climate and weather. An extended period of below-average precipitation can lead to an agricultural drought that seriously affects the crop production of the region under consideration. This, in turn, can threaten the continuity of the community living in that area (see the essays in Glanz, ed., 1987). From the point of view of history and history writing, it is therefore important to see how people react to such a life-threatening event. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries C.E., droughts in India affected the history of the sub-continent. When food prices rose, the rural population suffered a reduced food intake that resulted in a higher death rate and low vitality. People were forced into debt. Due to the interventions of the British administration—who organized food distribution and other forms of help—the drought did not turn into a disaster (Mooley and Pant 1981). These measures were based in noble and humanitarian ideas such as, for example, the need for continuity and the alleviation of poverty, but might also have been steered by imperial interests in the local economy and its fruits for Britain.

More recently, in the Brazilian Amazon, farmers had to cope with changing weather events related to El Niño. The poorest farmers experienced such droughts as a serious threat to their livelihood. Their vulnerability was heightened during these extreme climatic events. They would have benefited from increased availability of better weather forecasting for their own locality and the effects based on their current farming strategies (Mooley and Pant 1981).

In ancient Israel droughts occurred periodically. The Hebrew Bible narrates several stories with drought and famine as the theme (e.g. Gen 12; Ruth 1). During the post-exilic period droughts are suggested by

such texts as Hag 1–2 and Neh 5.[1] It is on this last text—and especially on the way that Nehemiah is said to have reacted to the social problems of his time—that I would like to concentrate in this study. Nehemiah, like Ezra, is not generally known for his social conscience These two post-exilic leaders are often only connected with their harsh and seemingly inhumane solution to the mixed marriage crisis (Blenkinsopp 1988, 60–69; Smith-Christopher 1994; Eskenazi and Judd 1994; Ben Zvi 1995; Grabbe 1998; Carter 1999, 313–17; Olyan 2000: esp. 81–90; Becking 2001; Janzen 2002; Grabbe 2004, 313–17; Hieke 2005, 143–46; Becking 2008). Nehemiah was, nevertheless, involved in other moral and social problems (see below). As will become clear, Nehemiah was confronted with poverty in his days. It is interesting to see how he dealt with that problem. Before concentrating on Nehemiah, I would like to make a few remarks on the moral view(s) on poverty apparent from the Hebrew Bible.

"Poverty" is referred to some 25 times in the Hebrew Bible. What immediately becomes clear is the fact that it is not advertised as an ideal. Within the Hebrew Bible we do not find an aspiration for ascetics or the model of mortification as the outline of the true believer. The authors of the Hebrew Bible face the reality of poverty in clear words:

> Since the poor will never cease to be on the earth, I therefore command you, "Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land." (Deut 15:11)[2]

Poverty, however, is not seen as fate or an inevitable result of the cosmic order. This becomes clear from the presence of the Hebrew verb מוך, "to fall into poverty" (Lev 25:25, 35, 39, 47). This verb implies that poverty is not a natural phenomenon. In the course of history a person, a group, or a people—in whatever circumstances—can fall into a situation of poverty. In the Hebrew Bible, "poverty" is not seen as the result of human transgression. It "happens," as is expressed in the book of Proverbs:

> and poverty will come upon you like a robber,
> and want, like an armed warrior. (Prov 6:11//24:34)[3]

Care for the poor is a characteristic feature of the ethos of the Hebrew Bible. Many texts express this moral point of view and an abundance of

1. I thus disagree with Smith-Christopher (1991), who assumes that the famine referred to in Neh 5 was caused by the introduction of silver coinage in Palestine by the Persian administration. See also Edelman 2005, 341.

2. See Veijola 2004, 310–17; the noun for "poor" here is אביון.

3. See recently Waltke 2004, 326, 337–39; the parallelism with "armed warrior" suggests the translation "robber; vagrant" for מהלך.

literature has been written on this topic (e.g. van Leeuwen 1954; Otto 1994; Rogerson 2004). The theme of "social conscience" is especially present in the books of the prophets. This is not without reason. The prophets in ancient Israel were confronted with greater social changes. During the monarchic period, or in archaeological terms, Iron II, ancient Israelite society gradually changed. This shift was primarily economic. The way of making food, clothes, and utensils gradually developed from a kinship to a tributary system. In other words, local communities in ancient Israel were originally self-sufficient and self-supplying economies: "they raised what they ate and they ate what they raised." Such communities have an inclination to egalitarianism. Too great a difference between the rich and the poor within such a community would be a threat for its cohesion.

Tributary societies are by implication non-egalitarian. A minority has reached a position of dominance—mostly via trade or as a result of disproportionate possession of land—and does not want to lose its dominance. During Iron II, Israel and Judah were confronted firstly with competing powers (Phoenicia and Aram) and later by a powerful and dominant empire (Assyria). This confrontation fuelled the process of change. All these shifts yielded a socially deprived group of poor and the needy. Prophets like Micah, Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah thundered at these changes, since in their view they, and their consequences, were offences against divine justice. Through them the old egalitarian ideal was frustrated (for this historical developments, see, e.g., Coote and Whitelam 1987; Albertz 1992, 245–61; Otto 1994; van der Toorn 1996, 316–17; Lemche 1976; Bendor 1996, 207–83; McNutt 1999).

The prophetic attitude towards poverty in pre-exilic times has been outlined adequately. My question here is whether this mentality survived the exile or was re-applied in a different social and economic context.

The Persian Period

Briefly stated, the Persian period stretches from the radical changes provoked by exile and return, up to the rise of Alexander the Great (for recent surveys, see Carter 1999; Grabbe 2004; Gerstenberger 2005). There is, however, more to be said. At the level of historiography, it should be noted that both ideas—"Exile" and "Return"—as well as the "rise of Alexander the Great," do not function as clear-cut watersheds. History has its tides, but also its undercurrents that are not easily charted. These processes in their entirety make periodizing a difficult job. The return from exile should not be construed as a momentous event, but as a

process within the *longue durée*.[4] The immigration from Babylon in all likelihood was a process lasting a century and a half in which waves of Yehudites moved to the territory around Yehud, mostly for military or economic reasons (e.g. Weinberg 1992; Hoglund 1991; Carter 1999). On the other hand, the military campaigns of Alexander the Great could have been foreseen: his rise did not come out of the blue (Hoglund 1992; Grabbe 1994; Briant 1996: esp. 56–58; Nodet 1997; Carter 1999).

At the level of experienced history—the direct experience of ordinary people—an important shift from the circumstances of Iron Age Judah should be noted (see also: Willi 1995). In the monarchic period, Judah was, despite its vassal relationship with Assyria, an independent nation. At the level of religion, being Judean implied being a Yahwist.[5] Much changed with the rise of the Persian Empire. Yehud became a relatively unimportant part of the satrapy *ebir nāri*, "Beyond the River," Transeuphrates. Yahwism was no longer the religion of the overwhelming majority of the population. All these shifts and changes set Yahwism on the move. It was a cult no longer based on tradition but on conviction and personal choice. These changes provoked traditional Yahwism to an *aggiornamento*. The religion had to appropriate itself in order to cope with the changed and changing context.

About the economic circumstances during the Persian period not much is known (see, however, Kreissig 1973; Schottroff 1982; Grabbe 2004, 194–208). Our poor and insufficient knowledge is mainly due to the fact that in the period under consideration Yehud was populated less densely than during the monarchic period. Moreover, relatively few archaeological remains have been uncovered. The evidence at our disposal nevertheless yields the following picture: the economy was mainly of an agricultural character; some traces of trade are found, indicating the distribution of food; the produce of tilling and herding was destined for the local market; luxury products were quite scarce (see, e.g., Stern 2001, 360–582; Gerstenberger 2005).

A return to the earlier situation might be inferred. Such a conclusion, however, is premature. I do not believe that life in Persian-period Yehud can be pictured as an idyllic community of poor but honest persons. A few threats were on the horizon that disfigure such a romantic portrait:

1. The pre-exilic relations of family, kinship, and clan with their connected social codes had disappeared. The inner-group solidarity, with its sense of corporate identity, had dissolved. This

4. See Becking 2006; on the idea of *longue durée*, see Braudel 1972.

5. Although there existed a variety of Yahwisms; see, e.g., Becking et al., eds., 2001; Dever 2005.

process arose from the fact that land, acres, and vineyards no longer were bound to traditional family possession.[6]

2. Indications exist that during the Persian period "land" no longer was seen as part of a traditional system of kinship values but was only construed as an economic factor.
3. Finally, periods of drought[7] led to crop failure and consequent poverty. In an unsteady economy, crop failure can have a disastrous outcome.

Nehemiah 5:1–13

Ezra and Nehemiah are not well known for their social consciences. Both biblical books have come under moral suspicion for the measures against exogamic marriages narrated in them (Blenkinsopp 1988, 60–69; Smith-Christopher 1994; Eskenazi and Judd 1994; Ben Zvi 1995; Grabbe 1998; Carter 1999, 313–17; Olyan 2000, esp. 81–90; Becking 2001; Janzen 2002; Grabbe 2004, 313–17; Hieke 2005, 143–46; Becking 2008). Ezra dissolves marriages between Yehudites and "strange women," invoking the *torah* by alluding to Deut 7:1–5 but overlooking the calls for solidarity with the widow, the poor, and other deprived groups. In Neh 13 a somewhat similar story is told (see, e.g., Grabbe 1998).

Nehemiah 5 narrates a story of a different moral standard. In the opening section the outcry of—especially women—on their poor status is voiced:

> Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish kin. For there were those who said, "With our sons and our daughters, we are many; we must get grain, so that we may eat and stay alive." There were also those who said, "We are having to pledge our fields, our vineyards, and our houses in order to get grain during the famine." And there were those who said, "We are having to borrow money on our fields and vineyards to pay the king's tax. Now our flesh is the same as that of our kindred; our children are the same as their children; and yet we are forcing our sons and daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have been ravished; we are powerless, and our fields and vineyards now belong to others." (Neh 5:1–5)

It is unclear when this outcry was uttered. The chronology of the narrative suggests a connection with the period after the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. Some scholars challenge this connection, suggesting that the events narrated in Neh 5 are in no way contemporary with the

6. Thus the concept of נחלה faded away.
7. Periods of droughts are reflected in the book of Haggai.

period of the building of the walls, but stem from a much later period in the life of Nehemiah. The final redactor of the book of Nehemiah had, in their view, connected independent narratives for unknown reasons.[8] Williamson has convincingly shown that the literary construction of the book of Nehemiah suggests a time span between the rebuilding of the walls and the incident in Neh 5 (Williamson 1985, 234–35; see also Eskenazi 1988, 77–88; Grabbe 1998, 63–64; Rogerson 2004, 131–32; Schunck 2000–, 146; Edelman 2005, 340–41).

In the first episode (Neh 5:1–5) a threefold complaint is uttered: hunger, poverty, and desperation. These complaints are voiced by different groups, as becomes clear from the repetition of ויש אשר אמרים, "there were some who said" (5:2, 3, 4). It is unclear whether three different social groups should be assumed (as does Kreissig 1973, 78–79; see also Gottwald 1999; Schunck 2000–, 147), or whether we have people in different phases of the process of impoverishment (Kippenberg 1982, 55–62). Moreover, the cause of all this sadness is not narrated, though I assume crop failure as a result of drought. The effect of crop failure is, however, hardened by the local economy. The victims, whom I assume to be from the poorer classes, are caught in a network of obligations. Their reserves are emptied, for they had to sell their plots of land and had mortgaged their fields to pay off existing debts or meet taxes.[9] Loan rates were about 40 to 50 percent a year, as can be deduced from Babylonian and Persian economic inscriptions (see Neufeld 1953–54, 203–4; Gross 1997). Crop failure exacerbated the decline, since the absence of a harvest implies the absence of means to pay off debts. The people are therefore at the threshold of the abyss. The forces of nature and the free market economy have caused a split in society with a bitter and tragic outcome. In order to pay off their duties, these people have to sell themselves or their children as slaves. Their complaint invokes traditional group-internal solidarity, appealing to the principle of non-differentiation, as becomes clear from their language. They consider the "others" as their brothers (5:1) and as people of the same flesh (5:5; Janzen 2002, 93–93). Their compatriots seem to stand without feeling or sympathy at the other side of the divide (see Williamson 1985, 236–39; Halligan 1991; Becker 1998, 62–67; Schunck 2000–, 146–51; Gerstenberger 2005, 95–96; Wright 2004, 180–88). Nehemiah, however, shows empathy based on a deeply felt fury:

8. See, e.g., Batten 1913, 237–44; Becker 1998, 62–67; Bodi 2002; Reinmuth 2002, 129–37. Wright (2004, 163–88) construes Neh 5:1–13 as a part of the final redaction of the book of Nehemiah. According to Wright, this episode is of no historical value at all.

9. On taxes, see Williamson 1985, 238; Heltzer 2008, 161–72.

> I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these complaints. After thinking it over, I brought charges against the nobles and the officials; I said to them, "You are all taking interest from your own people." And I called a great assembly to deal with them, and said to them, "As far as we were able, we have bought back our Jewish kindred who had been sold to other nations; but now you are selling your own kin, who must then be bought back by us!" They were silent, and could not find a word to say. So I said, "The thing that you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God, to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies? Moreover, I and my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Let us stop this taking of interest. Restore to them, this very day, their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and the interest on money, grain, wine, and oil that you have been exacting from them." Then they said, "We will restore everything and demand nothing more from them. We will do as you say." And I called the priests, and made them take an oath to do as they had promised. I also shook out the fold of my garment and said, "So may God shake out everyone from house and from property who does not perform this promise. Thus may they be shaken out and emptied." And all the assembly said, "Amen," and praised Yhwh. And the people did as they had promised. (Neh 5:6–13)

Nehemiah shows compassion, and anger takes possession of him. Nevertheless, he is not caught by his emotions, but proposes concrete measures: "Nehemiah carried a general amnesty for enslaved debtors and an annulment of every mortgage on land" (Lemche 1976, 53). Against the grain of the dominant worldview, he proposes a set of measures that economically can be labelled as "redistribution." Redistribution is one of the three major economic activities: exchange, gratuity, and redistribution. These three mechanism are characteristic of all economic systems, although cultural differences, moral codes, and historical circumstances yield differences in the mixture from time to time. The essential point of redistribution is that possessions, income, wealth, and risks are distributed over all the members of a society. A good example is the system of income tax by which collective goods and services are made available for a society in its entirety. Those who pay more are not by implication those who profit more. Of the three basic mechanisms mentioned, redistribution is constantly at risk especially from individualistic tendencies in neo-conservative economies, since the connection between "offer" and "profit" is not directly tangible. Why should one pay for health insurance when never ill? The behaviour of the "freeloader," who does not paying tax or insurance, is always in mind. The precedence of individual profit over collective well-being is a serious threat for any community that wants to survive, hence redistribution is dependent on the good will of the members of a society. It is interesting to see that so-called prophetic voices are warning societies of the outcome of a

merciless individualistic mechanism even today. It is the task of politics to safeguard the existing mechanisms of redistribution in order to protect civilians against the side effects of a free market economy (on redistribution, see, e.g., Uusitalo 1985; Tullock 1997).

Nehemiah proposes a redistribution of goods in order that the society in Yehud in its entirety can face the future.

שמטה, *"Remission"*

Nehemiah's reaction on the outcry of his desperate compatriots is not only steered by his anger or his—albeit intuitive—insights in the economic mechanisms of his day. He also appropriates the long-standing moral traditions of ancient Israel and Judah to the circumstances of Persian-period Yehud. According to the Deuteronomic code:

> Every seventh year you shall grant a remission of debts. And this is the manner of the remission: every creditor shall remit the claim that is held against a neighbor, not exacting it of a neighbor who is a member of the community, because Yhwh's remission has been proclaimed. Of a foreigner you may exact it, but you must remit your claim on whatever any member of your community owes you. There will, however, be no one in need among you, because Yhwh is sure to bless you in the land that Yhwh your God is giving you as a possession to occupy, if only you will obey Yhwh your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today. When Yhwh your God has blessed you, as he promised you, you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you. (Deut 15:1–6)

This religiously motivated order formalizes, in the pre-exilic era of king Josiah,[10] a custom that has deep roots in the history of Israel as a community. The authors of Deuteronomy reformulate stipulations already given in the so-called Book of the Covenant:

> For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard. (Exod 23:10–11)

10. I here follow the traditional dating of Deuteronomy in the age of Josiah (630 B.C.E.), that construes the book of Deuteronomy as about the document found in the temple as mentioned in 2 Kgs 23. See Vriezen and van der Woude 2005, 119–28, 252–64, and, for a different view, Otto 2006, who construes Deuteronomy as a post-exilic text.

As an answer to the social-economic shifts in Iron Age Judah and Israel, the traditional obligation to have the fields rest every seventh year has been appropriated and reformulated by the authors of Deuteronomy into an instruction to remit the debts of the poor in order for them to have a new chance in life (Lemche 1976; Albertz 1992; Otto 1994, 249–56; Dietrich 2002, 184–93). This שמטה (*šᵉmiṭṭā*, "remission') is intended to function as an instrument of redistribution. The noun is derived from a verb that connotes an act of loosening. The Israelites were summoned to have their claims "loosened" so that their compatriots could continue their lives without the millstone of debt around their necks. The institution of the *šᵉmiṭṭā* is a sufficient means to avert too high a degree of social differentiation in society. The fact that the prophet Jeremiah, living shortly after the reform of King Josiah, broke several times into fury, rebuking the Israelites for not living after the social code of Yahwism, can be construed as an indication that the local elite did not really want to implement this system of redistribution.[11] The lure of individualism and the conduct of a freeloader were an open option for the privileged in Judah.

Nehemiah 5 is not the only post-exilic text that takes the institution of *šᵉmiṭṭā* as a norm for social conduct in the Persian period. Leviticus 25, part of the Priestly source/redaction, institutes the Jubilee: after a period of fifty years a redistribution of the social and economic relations brings economic relations back into balance:

> In this year of jubilee you shall return, every one of you, to your property. When you make a sale to your neighbour or buy from your neighbour, you shall not cheat one another. When you buy from your neighbour, you shall pay only for the number of years since the jubilee; the seller shall charge you only for the remaining crop years. If the years are more, you shall increase the price, and if the years are fewer, you shall diminish the price; for it is a certain number of harvests that are being sold to you. You shall not cheat one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am Yhwh your God. (Lev 25:13–17)

The Jubilee in Lev 25 is prompted by the concept of internal group solidarity, which sustains the idea that all Israel once was an egalitarian society. A second motivation could be called the concept of "social memory," in which the Exodus is an invented tradition formative for the identity of Israel. The social memory of the "event" (on this concept see especially Assmann 1999) is basic for the self-understanding of Israel, even in the Persian period, of a period during which the Israelites were

11. Jer 34:8–22; from the abundance of literature on that pericope, I refer to two recent commentaries: Lundbom 2004, 547–68; Fischer 2005, 242–61.

slaves and the deliverance from slavery by the mighty hand of Yhwh is used to restrain the population of Yehud from bringing their compatriots into slavery. Both elements are also present in the following passage:

> If any of your kin fall into difficulty and become dependent on you, you shall support them; they shall live with you as though resident aliens. Do not take interest in advance or otherwise make a profit from them, but fear your God; let them live with you. You shall not lend them your money at interest taken in advance, or provide them food at a profit. I am Yhwh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, to be your God. (Lev 25:35–38)

These and other texts (e.g. Isa 61:1–2; Hag 1; with Gerstenberger 2005, 96–97) show that Nehemiah did not stand alone in his view of social justice in the Persian period.

Conclusion

Not only before, but also after the exile, the concept of social consciousness was present in ancient Israel. The case of Neh 5 shows once more (Becking 2001) that the Persian period cannot be seen as the age of legalism and inward-looking forms of religion (see especially von Rad 1969, 98–105, 214–15).

It is interesting to note that the reconstruction of Jerusalem after the exile, as depicted in the book of Nehemiah, was not only concerned with rebuilding the temple and the city walls. Adequate social mechanisms too were part of the reconstruction. Poverty and excessive differences in wealth are, to Nehemiah, not destined by fate or human failure, but by economic realities in need of being stripped of their sharp and bitter effects. Only along these lines will there be a future for Israel/Yehud (see also Eskenazi 1988; Otto 1994, 255–56; Grabbe 1998, 173–79).

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Footnotes to the Rescript of Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:11–26)

Joseph Blenkinsopp

It is a pleasure to honour a good friend and colleague, and to do so by adding a few footnotes to an important issue in Second Temple studies to which he has contributed on more than one occasion. In his essay "Reconstructing history from the Book of Ezra" (Grabbe 1991), Lester Grabbe was beginning to question the consensus about the basic authenticity of the rescript of Artaxerxes—the first of that name according to most scholars—permitting Ezra and his supporters to "go up" to Judah with rich gifts for the temple and mandating him to investigate the practice and observance of law in the Transeuphratene satrapy. In the following year, in the first volume of his Judaism from Cyrus to Herod (Grabbe 1992, 32–36), he gave more attention to problems with the authenticity thesis, including orthography typical of the Graeco-Roman period, and concluded by stating the need for a new and thorough review of the issue. Two years further on, it was time to focus on discrepancies between the terms of the edict and the account of Ezra's actual activities as recorded in the so-called Ezra Memoir in which the edict is embedded. In this piece (Grabbe 1994) he also pointed out the almost complete absence of comparative material; especially since the authenticity of both the Gadatas edict and the letter of Xerxes to Pausanias cited by Thucydides (I, 129) was suspect. His most thorough investigation to date, to my knowledge, is a paper read at a conference in July 2003 in Heidelberg on "Judah and the Judaeans in the Achaemenid Period" and published three years later (Grabbe 2006). This study surveyed all seven texts (decrees and letters) in Ezra presented as authentic copies of documents from and to the imperial Achaemenid court.[1] The objections to the claim of authenticity, still perhaps a majority opinion among commentators, were marshalled: standard literary Aramaic orthography; epistolary

1. Comparative material for epistolary formulas is taken from Schwiderski 2000.

formulary uncharacteristic of the Achaemenid period; prevalence of Jewish theological and cultic references; and general implausibilities, especially the amount of precious metal, beyond dreams of avarice, bestowed on the Jerusalem temple by the imperial and satrapal courts. He concluded that among the seven putative documents surveyed, only the letter of Tattenai to Darius (Ezra 5:7–17) had a better claim than the Artaxerxes rescript to at least a substratum of authenticity, but he clearly did not think any of them contributed much to our knowledge of Judaism in the mid-fifth century B.C.E.

Grabbe's growing scepticism about the authenticity of the rescript has a long and sometimes colourful history behind it. One of the earliest sceptics was Ernest Renan, author of the famous—or infamous—*Vie de Jésus* (Renan 1893, 96–106). Renan suggested that the Ezra figure was a fictitious creation of priests who wanted to counter the preponderance and prestige of the layman Nehemiah, an opinion which may have been influenced by the author's experience as a seminarian at Saint Sulpice. Three years later Eduard Meyer published his *Die Entstehung des Judentums*, the principal thesis of which was that the emergence of Judaism came about as a direct effect of Persian imperial intervention (Meyer 1896). Fundamental to this thesis was the conviction of the essential authenticity of the documents cited in Ezra. In the following year Wellhausen published his review of *Die Entstehung* in the scholarly journal of the University of Göttingen (Wellhausen 1897).[2] The quite extraordinary venom and sarcasm of Wellhausen's reaction to Meyer's monograph was no doubt due in part to his suspicion that Meyer's thesis was directed against his (Wellhausen's) tendency to ignore data external to the analysis of the biblical texts. Wellhausen did not think much of Meyer's scholarship. He is (he noted) in the habit of proclaiming *ex cathedra* things he has just learned himself; we did not need him to tell us that without Cyrus and Artaxerxes the restoration and reformation of Judaism would not have happened since we can find it for ourselves in the biblical texts; and (warming to his task) Meyer would be well advised to leave the writing of history to others. Wellhausen also hinted darkly at plagiarism of his own work in Meyer's monograph.

In his reply added as an appendix to later printings of *Die Entstehung*, Meyer began by foreswearing polemics. Nevertheless, he continued in the same heated vein as his adversary. He reiterated the case for authenticity, including appeal to the Gadatas inscription from Lydia, now

2. Since this journal may be hard to find, a full account of the debate is provided in Kratz (2004, 6–22).

widely considered to be a Hellenistic forgery,[3] and the presence of Persian loan words in the decrees which he took to indicate Old Persian as the original language. This last point was easily, and typically, disposed of by Wellhausen, who replied that, in that case, the book of Daniel must also have been written in Old Persian. It will not be necessary to comment in detail on Weber's rebuttal of Wellhausen's objections. He concluded by complaining that he was in a no-win situation. If he contradicted his opponent he was guilty of lèse-majesté; if he agreed with him he was a plagiarist. Ultimately, Weber stated he would continue to write as often as he thought fit; Wellhausen did not have to read any of it. This clash of titans thus ended without having contributed much to the debate, apart from confirming the importance of the rescript and the other putative documents in Ezra for understanding the origins of Judaism.

A more persuasive, or at least a more influential, case for inauthenticity was made by two Harvard scholars a generation apart, Charles Cutler Torrey and Robert H. Pfeiffer. Torrey, who wrote with a wit and grace unusual both then and now in biblical scholarship, carried the already well-established idea of the Ezra narrative, including the rescript, the work of the author of Chronicles, a step further by arguing that the Ezra story, unlike the Nehemiah Memoir, is a pure fiction. This was in keeping with his view of the Chronicler as "by taste and gift a novelist" (Torrey 1970, 250–51). About three decades later Pfeiffer commented on the Jewish terminology in the rescript which, he maintained, cannot be explained as a revision by a Jewish scribe, or on the assumption that Ezra or another co-religionist had a hand in its composition or, much less (this against Meyer), as reproducing the language of Ezra's petition (Ezra 7:6). The powers given to Ezra, surpassing by far those given Nehemiah as governor, are simply incredible, especially since they give him jurisdiction over the entire satrapy, not just its Jewish population (Ezra 7:25). Equally incredible is the profligate generosity of the Persian authorities towards the Jerusalem temple and its personnel. Pfeiffer concluded by stating that, if the rescript is a Jewish forgery, it casts serious doubt on the entire first-person Ezra narrative of which it is an integral part (Pfeiffer 1952, 825–27).

It would be tedious to take the reader through the later history of the debate which, in any case, has been competently covered in recent years by historians of the period, including Professor Grabbe. One variant, which stands the most familiar approach to the issue on its head, nevertheless deserves mention. In the course of strenuously promoting the

3. The most recent case against authenticity is that of Pierre Briant (1999). Briant thus reversed the opinion he expressed in his *Histoire* (Briant 1996, 507–9).

chronological priority of Ezra over Nehemiah, Ulrich Kellermann found that only the rescript and the list of bullion brought to the temple by Ezra (Ezra 8:26–27) can be considered authentic. The rest of the Ezra narrative was worked up as a kind of midrash on the rescript, the end-result filled out by a *listenfreudig* scribe of the Hasmonaean period. The intent of the author, none other than the Chronicler, was to present the priest Ezra as a counterpart to Nehemiah the layman. The midrash idea was later taken up by W. Th. in der Smitten, but has not enjoyed much success in the scholarly guild, and for good reason (Kellermann 1968; more briefly 1967, 56–60; in der Smitten 1973, 6–66). More recently, in a detailed analysis of the Ezra story, Reinhard Kratz whittled down Ezra 7–10 to an extremely small narrative core consisting in the rescript within the rescript, or more precisely the core of this rescript in Ezra 7:21–22 addressed to the treasurers in the Transeuphratene satrapy. The rest is legendary accretion paralleling the account of the building of the temple in Ezra 5–6 and the Nehemiah Memoir which the editor of the Ezra material had before him (Kratz 2005, 49–86, esp. 73–76). Kratz's attention to the detail of the account is commendable, but the choice of the decree to the satrapal treasurers as an irreducible authentic minimum seems far from inevitable, if not arbitrary. In the first place, it contains the same characteristically Jewish terminology as the rest of the rescript, even in the two verses which Kratz assigns to the core. It also strains credulity that Artaxerxes would command the satrapal treasurers to hand over 100 talents of silver bullion (about three and a quarter tonnes) for a temple in a minor province of the empire, especially when we recall that the annual tribute from the entire satrapy, including the wealthy Phoenician cities, Cyprus and Syria amounted to no more than 350 silver talents (Herodotus 3.91).

In his contributions to discussion about the rescript, Lester Grabbe has provided a fairly comprehensive list of objections to the thesis of authenticity. However, I think it may be possible to make out an even stronger case, though without entertaining any illusions about foreclosing debate. I noted earlier that, *pace* Meyer, the occasional Old Persian word, or an expression reflecting Achaemenid usage, does not necessarily indicate authenticity, much less suggest a translation from Old Persian into Aramaic.[4] That a Jewish author writing in the late Achaemenid or early

4. The words and expressions in question are פרשגן (7:11; also 4:11, 23; 5:6; Esth 3:14) > OP *pati-çagna*; נשתון (7:11; also 4:7) > OP *ništāvan*; מלך מלכיא (7:12) cf. Akk. *šar šarrāni*, OP *xšāyaθiya xšāyaθiy*; *dātā'* (7:12, 14, 25–26); גמיר (? 7:12); אספרנא (7:17; also 7:21; 5:8; 6:12–13) > OP *usprna*. The reference to the king's seven counselors (שבעת יעטהי, 7:14–15; also Esth 1:14), a reference which seemed

Hellenistic period could make use of such expressions to give the work in hand a semblance of authenticity is evident from the book of Esther. At any rate, the following notes on the rescript, verse by verse, are intended as no more than addenda to Grabbe's observations. They deal exclusively with the language used in the edict.[5]

> v. 11: Use of traditional Jewish words for law in the combination דברים, מצות, חקים rather than דתא (as in v. 12) is implausible in an imperial edict; the combination of מצות and חקים appears occasionally in Nehemiah (1:7; 9:13–14; 10:30), but is otherwise rare.
>
> v. 13: מתנדב: the language of "volunteering" (also 7:15–16) is characteristic of and almost exclusive to Chronicles (1 Chr 29:5, 6, 9, 14, 17; 2 Chr 17:6) and Ezra–Nehemiah (Ezra 1:6; 2:68; 3:5; Neh 11:2); the only exceptions occur in the Song of Deborah (Judg 5:2,9).
>
> v. 13: The threefold grouping of Israel–priests–Levites, and especially the technical use of "Israel" for laity, common in Chronicles (1 Chr 9:2; 2 Chr 7:6; 19:8; 35:18) and Ezra–Nehemiah (Ezra 9:1; 10:5, 25; Neh 11:3). The latter in particular has no place in an imperial rescript.
>
> v. 14: The same can be said for "Judah and Jerusalem," characteristic of Chronicles (25 times) and infrequent elsewhere.
>
> v. 15: "the God of Israel" (אלה ישׂראל) is implausible as against "the God of Heaven," "the God who is in Jerusalem." In the Elephantine papyri the Jewish residents are יהדיא, never ישׂראל or בני ישׂראל. The latter is an inner-Jewish self-designation.
>
> v. 17: The list of sacrificial animals to be purchased—steers, rams, lambs (אמרין, דכרין, תרין)—is identical with the list in the Darius rescript (Ezra 6:9) and is standard in Chronicles (1 Chr 29:21; 2 Chr 29:21, 32; also Ezra 8:35). Especially significant is inclusion of their corresponding cereal and drink offerings, cf. Num 15:1–16.
>
> v. 18: "To you and to your brothers" (עליך ועל־אחיך): a common designation among Jews, but not when Jews are addressed in an imperial edict; contrast AP 21:1–2:11, where the term אח is used only between Jews, with AP 30:1, 4, 18, 22, where the term בנתא (colleague) occurs in a letter to the governor of Judah with reference to the priest Jedoniah's associates.
>
> vv. 21–24: As I noted earlier, the language in the decree to the satrapal treasurers is not essentially different from the language used elsewhere in the rescript (*pace* in der Smitten 1973:19; Kratz 2005, 76–77. It runs parallel with the language of the reply of Darius to Tattenai in which the same sacrificial animals and the same commodities to be made available

to be confirmed by allusions to seven *dikastai* in Herodotus 3.31, 71, 83–84 and to seven *aristoi* in Xenophon, *Anabasis* I 6.4–5, has been questioned by Briant (1996, 1, 140–42).

5. See Grätz 2004a, 63–214 for a recent detailed study of the language of the rescript. Grätz's placing of the rescript in the context of Hellenistic politics raises issues which cannot be taken up here; see also Grätz 2004b.

(wheat, wine, oil, salt) are mentioned, with insistence that they be handed over "without delay" (אספרנא). In both decrees the sacrifices are for the benefit of the royal family in Susa. The reason given for subsidizing the cult, to deflect the wrath (קצף) of the God of Heaven (v. 23), is also reminiscent of the edict of Darius (Ezra 6:10) and reflects the Chronicler's theme of the divine wrath (קצף) incurred for cultic transgressions (2 Chr 19:2, 10; 24:18; 29:8).

v. 25: Compare חכמת אלהך די־בידך ('the wisdom of your God with which you are entrusted') with דת אלהך די־בידך ('the law of your God with which you are entrusted," v. 14)—precisely corresponding to the Deuteronomic equivalence between law and wisdom (Deut 4:6).

v. 26: Compare "the law of your God and the law of the king," probably to be understood as two distinct jurisdictions, compare 1 Chr 26:32 (David appoints officials to administer laws governing דבר האלהים and דבר המלך) and 2 Chr 19:11 (the distinction between דבר יהוה and דבר המלך during Jehoshaphat's reign).

This preponderance of language peculiar to Jewish cultic and legal activities, including language of a technical nature, must be set alongside the implausibilities long familiar to students of the rescript; in particular, the extent of Ezra's jurisdiction and mandate and the improbably vast subsidies to the temple in particular (7:15–22; also 8:25–27). The conclusion is unavoidable that, if Ezra's mission is historical, and if it was officially authorized, which is entirely plausible, the authorization cannot very well have been issued in the terms used in the document before us. Meyer's objection that the edict was composed to reflect Ezra's request (7:6) cannot explain the extent to which the edict has been judaized. Moreover, it is simply incredible that a Persian monarch, with or without his seven counselors, would have signed off on a rescript composed by a Jewish subject granting him powers equal or superior to those of a satrap and disbursing resources of such magnitude. With such a hypothesis we are in the fantasy world of the book of Esther, in which individual subjects can persuade a different Persian monarch to write edicts, couched in the numerous languages in use throughout the empire, permitting the extermination of entire populations (Esth 3:12–15; 8:9–10).

This having been said, the issue which now confronts us is the function of this judaized rescript in the Ezra story as a whole. This is evidently too large a task to be adequately undertaken here; what follows is no more than the outline of one way of addressing the issue. The story has three parts:

1. Ezra's account of his relocation from Babylon to Judah, together with a group of co-religionists, in order to renew the temple cult (Ezra 7:1–8:36); a first-person account with a third-person introduction and conclusion (7:1–10; 8:35–36). This introduction

(7:1–10) is clearly not of a piece. The genealogical descent of Ezra as priest (7:1–5) has been taken from the official genealogy in 1 Chr 5:27–41, necessitating a resumptive reference to "this Ezra" in v. 6. The list of those who accompanied him, including Levites (7:6), must be a later insertion since it contradicts the notice that Levites were absent from Ezra's immigrant group (8:15–19). Ezra is presented first as priest, indeed as of the high-priestly line, and then as law scribe (7:6, 10), indicating a conflation of the two goals of the mission according to the rescript. Ezra's prayer following the rescript, however, thanks God for the benevolence of the Persian monarchy towards the temple and for permission to go to Jerusalem, but says nothing about law enforcement (7:27–28).

2. Ezra's participation in the public reading and explanation of the law, concluding with the celebration of Sukkoth, all in third-person narrative (Neh 7:72–8:18).
3. The account of the intermarriage crisis, a conflation of first-person (Ezra 9:1–15) and third-person narrative (10:1–44).

As the principal actor, Ezra is described in the rescript as both priest and scribe (Ezra 7:11, 12, 21),[6] and otherwise in the surrounding narrative as either one or the other. The dual function is therefore explicit only in the introduction (7:1–10) and the rescript. It seems that the narrative has been put together to combine two quite different and *mutually incompatible* functions. The mission to see to the administration and enforcement of the laws is of a kind assigned to one person of high rank, not to the leader of a miscellaneous group of emigrants. The parallel instances which come to mind are the mission of the Egyptian collaborator Udjahorresnet under Darius I, and that of the Milesian Histiaeus, Darius I's Ionian expert (Herodotus 5.106–8; 6.1–5). Moreover, there is no precedent for the function of priest-scribe. The סופר was either the humble scrivener with the tools of his trade (writing case, stylus, etc.) familiar from Near Eastern iconography,[7] or a personal amanuensis, such as Baruch with Jeremiah (Jer 36:32), or a high-status state official, of a type attested throughout the history of Judah.[8] We hear of law scribes for

6. Elsewhere only in the textually dubious Neh 8:9, reflecting the desire to bring the two protagonists together at a late stage in the formation of the book, and Neh 12:36, probably added to bring Ezra into the solemn dedication of the wall.

7. Ezek 9:2–3; 1 Chr 2:55 mentions guilds or "families" (משפחות) of scribes.

8. 2 Sam 8:17; 20:25; 1 Kgs 4:3; 2 Kgs 12:11, etc. Shaphan during the reign of Josiah is perhaps the best known (2 Kgs 22; Jer 36:10).

the first time in Jeremiah's complaint about the false pen of the scribes who have turned the law into a lie, presumably by their legal interpretations (Jer 8:8), but they are clearly distinguished from priests. According to Deuteronomic theory, the law was the province of the levitical priests (Deut 17:18; 31:9–13), but they are never called scribes. According to the Chronicler (2 Chr 34:13), some Levites served as scribes during Josiah's reign, and we know that at a later time Levites were heavily involved in scribal activities. But, to repeat, Ezra as priest-scribe is a unique phenomenon.[9]

The conclusion suggests itself that the rescript, whether an entirely Jewish creation or a thoroughly rewritten imperial authorization for travel from Babylon to Judah, now no longer available, was intended to provide post-factum legitimacy for the activities of Ezra and his group as described in the Ezra story. These activities appear to have had two goals: first, control of the temple and its considerable assets, implying a considerable degree of civic control including כרת, exclusion from the community and confiscation of property to the temple (Ezra 10:8); second, power to enforce the laws, in the case of the marriage crisis a restrictive and by no means self-evident interpretation of law.[10] The rescript could have been interpreted as legitimating both these goals, which in addition are encapsulated in the dual role of the principal beneficiary. Common to both goals, finally, was the objective of forming a ritually self-segregating, quasi-sectarian community within the province of Judah, beginning with the attempted solution to the problem of intermarriage narrated in Ezra 9–10. We can be sure that no Persian monarch would have authorized such a measure, calculated as it was to alienate the lay and priestly aristocracy and stir up a hornet's nest in a sensitive part of the empire. This circumstance may help to explain why the Ezra story comes to a sudden, shuddering halt (Ezra 10:44) and had so little effect on later developments.

9. H. H. Schaeder argued that Ezra's title, ספר, connoted his official position in the Persian bureaucracy, something like High Commissioner for Jewish Affairs in the Transeuphratene Satrapy, and כהן was the role acknowledged in the Jewish community, an opinion no longer in favour (Schaeder 1930, 48).

10. Shecaniah, a leader of the golah group, insisted that the policy of coercive divorce be implemented according to the law, but also according to the advice of Ezra and his supporters, those who trembled at God's command, which can be interpreted to mean according to their interpretation (Ezra 10:3).

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Aspects of Samaria's Religious Culture During the Early Hellenistic Period*

Gary N. Knoppers

In the first volume of his extensive study, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, Grabbe (2004, 17) comments that a number of peculiar problems confront the would-be historian in attempting to write about the Persian period. Among these are the survival of few primary (contemporary) documents, the types of extant written sources, large gaps in the available sources, and the fact that most narrative descriptions written about this era in antiquity are late works in Greek or Latin, presenting events from a Hellenic or Roman perspective. When he later turns to discussing the history of one of Judah's neighbors, Samaria, during the Achaemenid era, Grabbe (2004, 155) describes our present knowledge as "skimpy." One might add that scholarly reconstructions have been hampered by an over-reliance on late Judean biblical texts, most of which are polemical in tone, and the testimony of Josephus (Edelman 2005, 66–67). Happily, as Grabbe (2004, 155–59) himself notes, recent discoveries have begun to change this picture. The publication of the Samaria papyri and seal impressions (Cross 1974, 1985; Leith 1997; Gropp 2001; Dušek 2007a), the publication and analysis of hundreds of Samarian coins (Mildenberg 1996, 1998; Meshorer and Qedar 1999), and the partial publication of the Mt. Gerizim excavations (Magen 2000, 2007; Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004) have enhanced our knowledge and complicated older reconstructions of the religious history of the region of Samaria during the Achaemenid and Hellenistic eras.

My essay deals with some aspects of Samaria's religious culture as reflected in the hundreds of short (fragmentary) inscriptions from Mt.

* I first came to know Lester Grabbe in the context of SBL meetings in which he was a frequent participant in sessions dealing with Judah in Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman times. Through his many books and even more articles, he has advanced our knowledge of the issues and problems in reconstructing these formative eras. It is a pleasure to dedicate this essay in his honor.

Gerizim written in Lapidary Aramaic, the so-called Proto-Jewish script, and the Neo-Hebrew script. The Mt. Gerizim inscriptions written in the Samaritan script may be left out of this discussion as these texts date to the late antique and medieval periods. Given space constraints, my study will focus on the composition of proper names within the available epigraphic sources. At the outset, some caution must be exercised in dealing with onomastic evidence so as not to draw far-reaching and detailed conclusions about the history and culture of a particular area (Grabbe 1992, 2000; Edelman 1995a, 1995b; Macdonald 1999; Becking 2002). There are limits to how much information about ethnicity or religious affiliation can be derived from the make-up of proper names. To take one example, the element בעל can function in a proper name as a theonym or as an appellative. In the former case, the term can refer to a particular deity, the Canaanite god Haddad or Haddu; but, in the latter case, בעל can function as an epithet for a variety of ancient Near Eastern deities (Mulder 1975, 182–85), including Yhwh.[1] To take a second example, in dealing with the onomastic evidence stemming from the Neo-Babylonian, Achaemenid, and Hellenistic periods, one has to account for the phenomenon of double (or second) names. Double names are cases in which a person may carry a second name with no relationship to that person's own ethnic background (Zadok 1988, 12–13; Dandamaev 2004). The use of double names may be subject to several different explanations within the larger international context of various ethnic groups coexisting during the postmonarchic era. But, in any case, the very phenomenon of second names augurs against assuming that those bearing foreign names had somehow abandoned their traditional gods or ethnic backgrounds. In short, the linguistic and religious features of personal names may be used in some cases to provide some indication of their bearers' identities (Tigay 1986, 1987; Layton 1990; Beaulieu, forthcoming), but one must be careful to recognize the limitations of the evidence available to us. If the names appear with patronyms, affiliations, titles, or place-names, that information may be very useful as a control in contextualizing the possible significance of such anthroponyms. In any case, one has to deal

1. An example from the Samaria papyri is bʿlytwn, "Baʿal has given" (WDSP 12.4, 5). A much-discussed case in biblical literature is the name of one of Saul's sons: אִישׁ בֹּשֶׁת, "Ishbosheth" (MT 2 Sam 2:8), or אֶשְׁבַּעַל, "Ishbaal" (LXX 2 Kgdms 2:8; MT 1 Chr 8:33; McCarter 1984, 85–87). Cf. 1 Chr 12:6, בְּעַלְיָה, "Yhwh is (my) lord" (one of David's warriors). It is interesting that בעל appears as a proper name and that the בעל element appears in a variety of personal names in Chronicles, by all accounts a post-exilic work. Not all of these personal names are reproduced from the Chronicler's *Vorlagen* (Knoppers 2004b, 521, 562).

with the evidence that is available to us, recognizing its limitations and cultural context(s).

Some issues of script nomenclature: what Cross (1961, 136–53) and others have called the paleo-Hebrew script, the imitation (or continuation) of the old Hebrew script, Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania (2004, 30–35) call the Neo-Hebrew script. What Cross and others have called Proto-Hasmonean script, the Mt. Gerizim epigraphers call Proto-Jewish. For the sake of the convenience of readers, I will follow the nomenclature used in the Mt. Gerizim publications. The so-called Proto-Jewish (a.k.a. Proto-Hasmonean) script was once thought to be a distinctive local development from the standard Aramaic cursive of the late Persian empire (Cross 1961; Naveh 1971). But, given the appearance of the same script in the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions, the script should be renamed. Indeed, the question may be raised whether this script is unique to Yehud and Samaria (Dušek 2007b).

1. *Proper Names in the Mt. Gerizim Inscriptions*

In looking at the composition of Samarian proper names in the Hellenistic period, the recently published inscriptions discovered at Mt. Gerizim are of considerable help. The approximately 400 fragmentary inscriptions unearthed over the course of the recent excavations on Mt. Gerizim represent a most welcome epigraphic discovery (Naveh and Magen 1997; Naveh 1998; Magen 2000, 2007; Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004). The inscriptions are written in Lapidary Aramaic, Proto-Jewish, Neo-Hebrew, and Samaritan scripts. The discovery of a large number of inscriptions in the so-called Proto-Jewish script is especially notable. Most of the inscriptions from Mt. Gerizim are dated to the third and second centuries B.C.E.[2]

Unfortunately, most of the inscriptions, whatever their exact dates, were not found *in situ*, but were found scattered in various areas around the site (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 14, 30, 271–72). Almost all of the inscriptions are of a votive or dedicatory character. It should be noted that many of the texts written in Aramaic (Lapidary Aramaic and Proto-Jewish) script and Neo-Hebrew script were discovered in and around the area of the sacred precinct. Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania

2. The epigraphers leave open the possibility that at least some of the texts—those written in Lapidary Aramaic script—may have been written in the late Persian period (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 14, 41). If my assumption that these texts date to the third and second centuries B.C.E. proves to be mistaken, it would not materially affect the conclusions reached below.

(2004, 13–14) hypothesize that the votives were inscribed on already extant stones embedded in walls surrounding or leading up to the temple. After the temple was destroyed, many of the stones upon which the votive texts were inscribed were reused in later building phases.

In what follows, I wish to discuss not only certain aspects of the inscriptions written in Lapidary Aramaic, but also some of the Proto-Jewish and Neo-Hebrew inscriptions. It must be remembered that although these texts date to the Hellenistic era, they provide a glimpse into the *longue durée* of the Mt. Gerizim site. They either presuppose the existence of a Yahwistic temple or make explicit references to this shrine. As such, the inscriptions may provide us with insight into the character of the developing Samarian community and its reception of the Mt. Gerizim sanctuary. Since epigraphic evidence from this general area dating to the third and second centuries is not abundant, the texts provide welcome light on an obscure era.

It may be appropriate to begin with a very brief discussion of some personal names among the inscriptions before we move on to discuss inscriptions involving the temple and its religious affairs. As is the case with the Samaria papyri and the Samarian numismatic remains, one finds a variety of personal names of a Yahwistic character, such as Delaiah (דליה), Hananiah (חנניה) and/or Honiah ([ח]נין), Jehonathan (יהונתן), Jehoseph (יהוסף; cf. Ps 81:6), Joseph (יוסף), Shemaiah (שמעיה), as well as common names, such as Elnatan (אלנתן), Ephraim (אפרים), Zabdi (זבדי), Haggai (חגי), Jacob (יעקבע), and Simeon (שמעון).[3] Less common names include Abishag ([אב]שג) and Shobai (שבי; cf. שבי; Avigad and Sass 1997, 71 [no. 63]; Ezra 2:53). In a northern context, it is not surprising to find personal names such as Ephraim, Jacob, and Joseph. Yet, one also finds [י]הוד, "Yehud" (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 81; no. 43 [Proto-Jewish script]) and [י]הודה, "Judah" (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 84–85; no. 49 [Proto-Jewish script]) among the anthroponyms at Mt. Gerizim. If there was a long history of intense rivalry and ongoing enmity between the Jerusalem and Mt. Gerizim communities, it would be less likely that one would find individuals named Judah and Yehud making dedications at the Mt. Gerizim shrine.[4]

3. Perhaps the name Ṭabya (Lapidary Aramaic script; Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 172–73 [no. 200]) should be added to this list, although *ṭby'* normally means "deer" in Aramaic. The excavators believe, however, that the fragmentary *ṭby'* may be short for *ṭbyh* (or *ṭbyhw*). Ṭabya was a common Samaritan name in several periods.

4. Alternatively, it is not out of the realm of possibility that the dedicator mentioned in the inscription was from Judah or Benjamin. Note, for example, the use of

Also of interest is the threefold occurrence of the personal name Miriam (מרים) among the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions. In the Hebrew scriptures, the name occurs prominently as the nomenclature for the sister of Moses, one of the leaders of the exodus generation (Exod 15:20; Num 12:1–15; 20:1; 26:59; Deut 24:9; Mic 6:4; 1 Chr 5:29). The name appears only once elsewhere, as the proper name of a descendant of Judah (1 Chr 4:17; Knoppers 2004a, 350). The name is thus far unattested, to my knowledge, on any Israelite or Judahite inscriptions, seals, or bullae.[5] On two of the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions, Miriam appears as the name of a donor. In one case, an inscription written in Lapidary Aramaic script, a certain Miriam makes an unspecified offering (הקרבת) on behalf of herself (על־נפשו) and on behalf of her sons (ועל־בניה; Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 61 no. 17).[6] In another case, Miriam appears as one of a number of benefactors (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 63–64 no. 20 [Lapidary Aramaic script]).[7] In the third case, an inscription in Proto-Jewish script, the context (…מרימ) is too fragmentary to reach any larger conclusions (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 182 no. 213). Miriam is thus only one of several names found among the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions that are reminiscent of the appellatives given to prominent figures in the people's classical past. Some recall the time of the Ancestors (e.g. Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim, Judah, Levi), while others recall major figures associated with the times of Exodus, Sinai, and the emergence in the land (e.g. Amram, Eleazar, Miriam, Phinehas).

Judah (יהודה) as the personal name of a Benjaminite individual in the postexilic age (Neh 11:9; cf. 1 Chr 9:7 Hodaviah [הודויה]; Knoppers 2000, 2004a, 495). Judah could also have been the name of a Levite (e.g. Ezra 3:9; 10:23; Neh 12:8 [MT]) or of a priest (e.g. Neh 12:34, 36).

5. The name becomes very common, however, in the latter part of the Second Temple period (Ilan 1989, 191–97).

6. Since Miriam appears as the donor and no husband is mentioned, Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania (2004, 61) assume that she was widowed or divorced. This is quite possible, but the overall situation may be somewhat complex. In most cases, as Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania (2004, 20) point out, a husband/father makes an offering on behalf of himself and his family. But there are also a few instances of joint husband–wife dedications (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 49–50 no. 1; 87–88 no. 54). Moreover, in a few cases, a wife makes a dedication herself (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 62 no. 18; 62–63 no. 19 [see below]). In these instances, the inscription acknowledges a marital attachment or identification for the woman in question, but the woman is in reality the only benefactor.

7. Without any statement of filial relations or marital attachments (see previous note).

As with the names found among the Samaria papyri, there are some foreign names in the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions, for example, בג[והי], "Bagohi" (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 70–71; no. 27 [Lapidary Aramaic]). Interestingly, but not too surprisingly given the long history of the Mt. Gerizim sacred precinct in the Persian, Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine eras, about one-fifth of the total proper names attested are Greek names.[8] In summary, when surveying the Mt. Gerizim onomasticon with the early Hellenistic period in view, one is struck by three things: (1) the number of common Yahwistic proper names; (2) the number of archaizing personal names, that is, names that recall the names of male and female figures associated with Israel's ancient past; and (3) the number of common Hebrew names.

2. *The Mt. Gerizim Inscriptions and the Mt. Gerizim Temple*

The names found in the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions may be approached from another vantage point. It may be useful to pay some attention to the relevance of the inscriptions for our understanding of the sanctuary and its religious context. To begin with, one inscription written in Lapidary Aramaic mentions "bulls (פרין) in all…[sacrifi]ced in the house of sacrifice (בית דבחא)" (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 171–72 [no. 199]; Becking 2007). The reference to a "house of sacrifice" is especially intriguing, because the same expression (in Hebrew) is used by the deity in the book of Chronicles to refer to his election (בחר) of the temple in Jerusalem (בית זבח; 2 Chr 7:12). Other inscriptions contain formulae, such as "before God/the Lord in this place," or simply "before God" or "before the Lord" (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 18–19, 140–46 [nos. 149–55]). Based on biblical and extrabiblical parallels, such phraseology almost always suggests the context of a sacred precinct.

One of the inscriptions written in paleo-Hebrew (or Neo-Hebrew) script contains the Tetragrammaton, apparently as part of the phrase "[the house of] Yhwh" (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 254–55 [no. 383]). The use of the Tetragrammaton is, however, relatively rare and is not found among the extant Proto-Jewish inscriptions (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 22–23). The common terms for the divine are Elaha, "God" (אלהא) and "the Lord" (אדני). For example, an inscription in Proto-Jewish script reads, in part, "[that which] Joseph [son of…] offered [for] his [w]ife and for his sons before the L[ord in the temple]" (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 141–42 [no. 150]).

8. Given their number, along with the different scripts represented, these names deserve a separate study.

Some inscriptions contain the titles of a priest (כהן or כהנא) or priests (כהנים; כהניא), who served as religious specialists at the Mt. Gerizim shrine.[9] One should mention, in this context, the appearance of some Levitical and priestly names found in the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions, such as Levi (לוי), a personal name that is found on two different inscriptions (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 89 [no. 56; Lapidary Aramaic script]; 147–48 [no. 156; Proto-Jewish script]). It should be pointed out, however, that unlike the situation with the references to the priests as a group (כהניא; כהנים), there are no attested references to the Levites as a group (e.g. הלוים, לוים). Among the priestly names attested in the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions are Amram (עמרם), the name of the father of Moses in biblical tradition (Exod 6:18, 20; Num 3:19; 26:58; 1 Chr 5:28; 6:3; 23:12; 24:20; cf. Ezra 10:34; Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 140–41 [no. 149; Proto-Jewish script]) and Eleazar (אלעזר), the name of the son of Aaron (Exod 6:23; Josh 24:33; Judg 20:28; Ezra 7:5; 1 Chr 5:29; 6:35; 24:1–6). The name Eleazar is found on two separate inscriptions (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 49–50 [no. 1; Lapidary Aramaic script]; 73 [no. 32; Lapidary Aramaic script]), as well as on one square-shaped object, possibly a late seal (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 260 [no. 390; Neo-Hebrew script]).[10] Another common priestly name found among the inscriptions is Phinehas (פינחס), the son of Eleazar in biblical tradition (Exod 6:25; Num 25:7, 11; 31:6; Josh 22:13, 30–32; 24:33; Judg 20:28; Ps 106:30; Ezra 7:5; 8:2; 1 Chr 5:30; 6:35; 9:20; 24:1; Sir 45:23; 50:24).[11] The name Phinehas is found on five different inscriptions (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 67–68 [no. 24; Lapidary Aramaic script]; 68 [no. 25; Proto-Jewish script]; 91–92 [no. 61; Proto-Jewish script]; 255 [no. 384; Neo-Hebrew script]; 258–59 [no. 389; Neo-Hebrew script]). The repeated appearance of the name in Neo-Hebrew (or paleo-Hebrew) script may be important insofar as this script seems to have been favored (although not exclusively so) in some sacerdotal dedications (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 257).

9. Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 67–68 (no. 24; Lapidary Aramaic); 68 (no. 25; Proto-Jewish); 253–54 (no. 382; Neo-Hebrew), 257–59 (nos. 388–389; Neo-Hebrew). Actually, no. 389 is written in a mixed script (Proto-Jewish and Neo-Hebrew; Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 40).

10. A priest by the name of Eleazar ben Phinehas is attested in the times of Samuel (1 Sam 7:1) and Ezra (8:33; cf. Neh 12:42). But Eleazar is not exclusively a priestly name. Eleazar appears as the personal name of one of David's warriors (2 Sam 23:29//1 Chr 11:12; 27:24 [LXX]; Knoppers 2004b, 537, 548) and as the name of a layperson in the time of Ezra (10:25).

11. As the priestly son of Eli, see 1 Sam 1:3; 2:34; 4:4, 11, 17, 19; 14:3.

My argument is that not all of these figures with traditional Levitical and priestly names actually served as cultic functionaries or priests at Mt. Gerizim. The fragmentary evidence does not permit such a sweeping conclusion. Nevertheless, a few of the inscriptions do mention such sacerdotal personnel, along with their personal names, as the source of the relevant dedications.[12] In other words, it is clear that priests were among those who made dedications at the shrine. It is also interesting that many of these priestly names replicate priestly names associated with Israel's ancient past. Perhaps some of the other dedicatory inscriptions included additional priestly names along with priestly titles, but the evidence is too partial to know for sure.

c. *Biblical Names, Samarian Names, and Judean Names*

In their studies of the epigraphic remains from northern Israel, both Lemaire (1977, 226–27; 2001) and Zadok (1998, 785) observe that the percentage of Yahwistic names attested from the fifth and fourth centuries in epigraphic sources (Samaria papyri, Samarian coins) is much higher than the percentage of Yahwistic names attested from the ninth-eighth centuries in epigraphic sources (the Samaria ostraca and various seal impressions).[13] It might be tempting to draw similar contrasts between the fifth and fourth centuries and the third and second centuries. Based on such a broad comparison, one could leap to the conclusion that the Samarian community became more conservative during the Hellenistic era. Such a conclusion about a major onomastic shift would be potentially misleading, however. The names available from the Persian period derive from commercial, administrative, and political contexts, whereas the names available from the Hellenistic period largely derive from a cultic setting at a different geographic location. It is not surprising that a good number of the appellations in the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions are priestly or Levitical in nature, whereas such appellations are rare, if non-existent, among the Samaria papyri and the Samarian coins.[14] If one examines, for the sake of comparison, the anthroponyms found within

12. Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 67–68 (no. 24; Phinehas); 68 (no. 25; [Phine]has); 258–59 (no. 389; son of Phinehas).

13. Admittedly, the evidence available from the ninth and eighth centuries B.C.E. is quite limited.

14. A (Yahwistic) priestly name is attested on one Judean coin stemming from the fourth century, *ywḥnn hkwhn*, "Joḥanan the priest" (Barag 1986–87; Meshorer 2001, 14 [no. 20]). At least some of the names appearing on Samarian coins could be those of priests (Mor 2005); however, the matter remains uncertain because the coins do not label them as such.

the lists in Ezra–Nehemiah, one discovers that the lists of priests and Levites contain more Yahwistic names than those pertaining to other groups.[15] Similarly, the fact that the Samarian coins and papyri contain a fair number of Persian and Babylonian names is understandable, given the nature of the documentation and the larger imperial, diplomatic, and commercial setting within which the capital of Samaria functioned. Indeed, one cannot presume that all of the names in the Samaria papyri (mostly slave sales and slave dockets) are those of Samarians (Zsengellér 1996; Eshel 1997). Similarly, some allowance has to be made, for example, for the appearance of regional satraps on Samarian coins (Mildenberg 1996; Meshorer and Qedar 1999, 2002). One has to situate, as best one can, each onomasticon within its own particular geographic, social, and historical setting.

It may be more prudent to maintain that the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions provide evidence of some continuity within the history of the Yahwistic community in Samaria. As in Judah, the elite was populated largely by Yahwists, but each of these communities had its own particular history and character. It hardly seems likely that Yahwism in Samaria was a late arrival or that Yahwistic Samarians were a late breakaway group from Judah. Similarly, it is not particularly helpful to view the Yahwists in Judah as completely dominated by or particularly beholden to the Yahwistic Samarians, even though Samaria appears to have been larger and more populous than was Yehud (Knoppers 2005, 2006). Each of these provinces had its own particular cultic emphases and traits.

Analysis of the proper names may bear this out. Certain names appearing in the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions are rare in Judean biblical literature, except as anthroponyms of traditional northern figures.[16] The name of one of the dedicators in the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions, Ephraim, appears regularly in biblical literature as the son of the patriarch Joseph, the

15. Indeed, the number of Yahwistic personal names in the list is not large (Ezra 2:1–70//Neh 7:6–72). This is true of the Israelites, that is, the laity (Ezra 2:2–35// Neh 7:7–38; cf. Ezra 2:59–60//Neh 7:61–62), and even more so of the gatekeepers (Ezra 2:42//Neh 7:45), temple servants (נתינים; Ezra 2:43–54//Neh 7:46–56), and the sons of Solomon's servants (Ezra 2:55–57//Neh 7:57–59). There are more Yahwistic names as a percentage of the whole in the list of the returnees with Ezra (Ezra 8:1–14, 18–19). Weinberg (1992, 80–91) provocatively argues that neither the נתינים nor the sons of Solomon's servants were part of the temple personnel in either pre-exilic or post-exilic times, but the literary contexts in Ezra–Nehemiah suggest otherwise (Blenkinsopp 1988, 86–91).

16. The same holds true for the appellative Jeroboam, which is attested on five fourth-century Samarian coin types, the most for any personal name (Meshorer and Qedar 1999, 24–25). Given that this was the name of two of the northern kingdom's most famous monarchs, its reuse in the late Persian period is significant.

eponymous ancestor of the Ephraimites, the tribe bearing this appellation, the hill country associated with Ephraim, and a synonym of the northern kingdom itself.[17] The association of Ephraim with the tribe of Ephraim or with northern Israel continues in the early Second Temple period (e.g. Zech 9:10, 11; 10:7; 1 Chr 9:3; 2 Chr 25:10; 28:7). But the name of Ephraim does not appear in the genealogies and lists of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah as the proper name of any individuals from Judah, Benjamin, or Levi. The name does not appear as a personal name, to my knowledge, in any Judean extrabiblical inscriptions dating to the Iron age, the Persian period, or the early Hellenistic period.

Similar things may be said of the name Joseph. The name appears in biblical literature as the son of Jacob and Rachel, the name of a tribe, a synonym of northern Israel, and the name of the northern kingdom.[18] But the name Joseph only rarely appears in exilic or postexilic Judean literature as the proper name of a layperson (Ezra 10:42) or a priest (Neh 12:14). The personal name does not appear, to my knowledge, in any Judean extra-biblical inscriptions dating to the Iron Age, the Persian period, and the early Hellenistic period. The situation is quite different with the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions. Within the Mt. Gerizim texts, the personal name Joseph (יוסף), or more often Jehoseph (יהוסף), appears in six different contexts.[19] Joseph becomes, however, a very common proper name both in Syro-Palestine and in the diaspora during late Hellenistic and Roman times.

The situation is somewhat more complicated with another famous biblical figure, Jacob. This name also appears in the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions as one of two brothers, sons of Simeon (בני שׁעון), making an offering.[20] In biblical literature, Jacob functions as a patriarchal name, a synonym for the people of Israel, and a synonym for northern Israel.

17. *HALOT* 80b–81a. The name also appears in a few texts in a locution identifying the northern gate of Jerusalem (שׁער אפרים; 2 Kgs 14:13; Neh 8:16; 12:39; 2 Chr 25:23).

18. *HALOT* 396b (יהוסף); 403a (יוסף).

19. On the spelling of Joseph (יוסף) in Proto-Jewish script, see Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 141–42 [no. 150]). The spelling יהוסף is more common in the Mt. Gerizim texts: Lapidary Aramaic script (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 63–64 [no. 20.2]); Proto-Jewish script (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 86–87 [no. 52]); Proto-Jewish script (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 87, a partial reconstruction, סף[יהו] [no. 53]); Proto-Jewish script (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 138–40 [no. 148.2]); Proto-Jewish script (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 176–77 [no. 203.1]).

20. The name appears in proto-Jewish script with plene spelling (יעקוב; Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 65–66 [no. 22.1]).

There has been considerable discussion about the usage of this name, like that of Israel, in some prophetic passages to refer to some portion of the people as a whole or to some portion thereof (*HALOT* 422a-b). In some texts in Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah, the term may designate Judah or a particular group within Judah, such as the Babylonian deportees (Rost 1937; Williamson 1989; Zobel 1990; Blenkinsopp 2002, 2003; Albertz 2003, 376–403; Kratz 2006). In one passage in Lamentations (2:2), the phrase the "settlements of Jacob" parallels the "fortresses of the daughter of Judah."[21] Nevertheless, the new usage does not signal an unequivocal shift in meaning, because there are other passages in Second and Third Isaiah in which the name Jacob still relates to the people as a whole (Knoppers, forthcoming).

Apart from its use to signal a patriarch or a collective ethnicity bearing his name, the appellation Jacob is used relatively infrequently in what is traditionally considered to be Persian- or early Hellenistic-period Judean literature.[22] The name does not appear as a personal name in any of the lists and genealogies in Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, with one possible exception.[23] The name Jacob seems to be unattested in extra-biblical Judean inscriptions dating to the Iron and Persian ages, including the Elephantine papyri. The name does appear, however, in the later Wadi Murabba'at documents, the Masada ostraca, a variety of ossuaries, and a number of other Jewish texts (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania 2004, 66). Indeed, during late Hellenistic and Roman times, Jacob becomes a common Judean proper name.

In short, the appearance of certain personal names, such as Jeroboam, Ephraim, Jacob, and Joseph on inscriptions from Samaria does not seem to be accidental. The redeployment of such names suggests that at least some residents of Samaria identified with earlier figures in the history of northern Israel. The Samarians have often been viewed as a schismatic sect, but it must be recognized that the Samarians had their own particular historical traits and traditions (Macchi 1994; Hjelm 2000,

21. The specification is significant in light of the earlier usage in Ps 79:6–7 and the reuse of that imagery in Jer 10:25.

22. The name does not appear in Joel, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Ezra–Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah. In contrast, Judah, for instance, does appear as a personal name (e.g. Neh 11:9; 12:8, 34, 36). In Chronicles the name Jacob is very rare, appearing only in two quotations from the Psalms (1 Chr 16:13, 17). The Chronicler consistently employs Israel, rather than Jacob (Danell 1946; Japhet 1989; Williamson 1977; Willi 1995).

23. In the Simeonite lineages (1 Chr 4:36), a person with the name Jaʿaqobah (יעקבה) appears (with a hypocoristic ending; Noth 1928, 27–28, 38, 197 [no. 699]; Zadok 1988, 154–56).

2004; Faü and Crown 2001; Knoppers 2004c, 2005, 2006). Approaching the Samarians as Judeans under a different name is too simplistic.

Nevertheless, it must also be said that the evidence from the papyri, coins, and inscriptions suggests many lines of continuity between Samaria and Yehud in Persian and Hellenistic times. Even as some members in each community may have been emphasizing distinctions between the two groups, the material evidence indicates that the two adjacent provinces possessed many common traits. The overlap in Yahwistic names and in Hebrew names is particularly noteworthy. The reuse of traditional Levitical and priestly names, such as Levi, Amram, Phinehas, and Eleazar, demonstrates that the Samarians, like the Judeans, construed their identity, at least in part, by recourse to traditions about and figures drawn from Israel's classical past. The avoidance of the use of the Tetragrammaton in the third-to-second century B.C.E. Mt. Gerizim dedicatory inscriptions, especially those written in the proto-Jewish script, is striking. The preference for the use of "God" (אלהא) or the "Lord" (אדני) over the use of יהוה is important, because the same preference as a religious phenomenon to protect the sanctity of the personal name of the God of Israel occurs in the development of early Judaism.

Such parallels between the two communities are all the more interesting, because other material evidence from the province of Samaria, limited though it is, points to an overlap in cultural tradition with Yehud during the late Persian and early Hellenistic periods (Leith 2000; Knoppers 2006). The epigraphic (onomastic) evidence from Mt. Gerizim, dating mostly to the third and second centuries B.C.E., shows that the religious overlap between the Samarians and the Judeans was as strong, if not stronger, in the Hellenistic period as it was in the Persian period. From the vantage point of the material remains, there is no clear indication that the two communities were moving in two opposite directions or that the two communities were drifting far apart.[24]

Conclusions

The available material evidence underscores some strong similarities between the elites of both the Samarians and the Judeans, even as other evidence (chiefly literary) suggests that some members of communities advanced competing claims about upholding the heritage of Israel's ancient institutions. Paradoxically, the recourse to traditional writings, the means to distinguish a particular heritage (e.g. through the reuse of particular names), and the means to honor the deity both groups

24. For a somewhat different perspective, see Becking 2007.

worshiped (whether at Mt. Gerizim, Jerusalem, or another shrine; Lemaire 2004) were implemented in similar ways.[25] Doing justice to the history of Samaria and Judah entails acknowledging this paradox in the history of Samarian–Judean relations.

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25. In particular, I am referring to the books that constitute the Pentateuch, but not to the Prophets or the Writings (Ben Zvi 1995; Pummer 2007). Indeed, in later tradition, the Samaritans viewed themselves as protectors of the Torah over against the beliefs found in the (Judean) prophetic works (Mikolášek 1995).

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Biblical References to Judean Settlement in Eretz Israel (and Beyond) in the Late Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods

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The approach to the historical problem addressed in this contribution is, as always, "from history to interpretation." Judean settlement outside the borders of Yehud is well attested from the second century onwards. It must have started in the late Persian period. Then one might find biblical references to it, given that the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E. were the period of highest productivity in the generation of biblical literature (see Davies 1992, 94–133; 1998, 74–88).

Jewish Settlement in Galilee and Other Places Outside Yehud

From the fourth century B.C.E. onwards, a significant Judean population is attested for Idumea (Grabbe 2004, 165; Porten and Yardeni 2006, 457–88). In addition, from the second century B.C.E. onwards a Judean (or now Jewish[1]) population is found in the Galilee and northern Transjordan. In central and southern Transjordan, Peraea, Moab and Nabatean Arabia, Jewish landlords prospered until the second Jewish War, as amply attested in the archives of Babatha (Lewis, ed., 1989, 3–5, 22–26) and Salome Koimase (Oudshoorn 2007).

Where did these Judean/Jewish settlers come from? Galilee and Gilead had been, at various times between the tenth and the eighth centuries, parts of Israel, not Judah. Texts from these areas are Aramaic and Canaanite (Phoenician and Israelite), partially in clusters and partially in curious mixtures. The same stratum at Tell Deir ʻAlla (Succot)

1. In this contribution, "Judah" is restricted to the Iron Age Kingdom, whereas the landscape and the province are called "Judea," its Persian-period population "Judeans" (and the people of Samaria, "Samarians"). Only with the Hellenistic schism from the third century B.C.E. onwards did Judeans become "Jews," and Samarians "Samaritans."

contains the pre-Aramaic "Book of Bileam" and an Ancient Aramaic אבן שרעא, "(weight-)stone of the gate." Less than 3 km away, and 200–300 years later, somebody addressed his brother at Tell el-Mazâr in fluent Canaanite[2] (not Phoenician). The ethnic mixture in the Galilee is already addressed in the Hebrew designation גליל הגוים, "circle of peoples" (Isa 8:23).[3] When and how this area acquired the substantial Jewish population attested by the middle of the second century, when Judas Maccabee hurried to its rescue, and in the first half of the first century C.E., as attested by the synoptic gospels, is the question.

Judean, later Jewish, migration to, and agricultural colonization of, unsettled areas in Galilee, northern Transjordan, Idumea and the Nabatean realm seems to have started in the fourth century B.C.E., at a time when Judea was by no means overcrowded (around 400 B.C.E. the current estimate is 30,000 inhabitants). It seems, though, as if the more fertile land along Judea's western border were disputed, at least coveted by Judea's western neighbours:

> Now the people of Gath, who were born in the land, killed them, because they came down to raid their cattle,[4]

states 1 Chr 7:21 on the fate of some Ephraimites,[5] who were avenged by Benjaminites:

> …and Beriah and Shema (they were heads of ancestral houses of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who put to flight the inhabitants of Gath)… (1 Chr 8:13)

"Collective memory," that is, reminiscences found in Chronicles and not construed from previous biblical literature, most probably pertains to the Persian period (Chronicles is supposed to have been written in the early Hellenistic period; Grabbe 2004, 98–99). S. Japhet (2002) claims monarchic-period referents for the episodes in 1 Chr 4–5, which will be discussed below. At least the term "Hagrites" for the Arabian enemies of Reuben, Gad and Half-Manasseh in 1 Chr 5:10, 19–20 must represent a Persian-period "update," for "Hagar" was the Achaemenids' designation

2. Mazar Ostracon 3; cf. Teixidor and Yassine 1986, 48–49.

3. Isa 9:1–6 is now mostly, and convincingly, connected with the accession of the child-king Josiah. The preceding verse 8:23 is an enigma which tells us that what once was the country of Zebulon and Naphtali is now called "Galilee of the Nations." The expression of some hope of Judean redemption of this faraway country (as seen from Jerusalem) best fits the period discussed in the present study.

4. All biblical translations, unless otherwise stated, are from the NRSV.

5. Or Judean returnees to Mount Ephraim?

for North and East Arabia in their hieroglyphic inscriptions (see Roaf 1974). In addition, the theory of northern Transjordan's attribution to Gad and Half-Manasseh, presupposed by Chronicles, is a theoretical construct from the Persian period with no resemblance to previous reality (Wüst 1975; Knauf 2008, 126–35). In any case, the reminiscences selected and mobilized were undoubtedly those which were meaningful in Judea's social world in the Persian and early Hellenistic periods.

First Chronicles 7:21 brings two texts to the reader's mind which might actually be no more than 100 years older:[6]

> The seventh lot came out for the tribe of Dan, according to its families. The territory of its inheritance included Zorah…Shaalabbin, Aijalon… When the territory of the Danites was lost to them, the Danites went up and fought against Leshem, and after capturing it and putting it to the sword, they took possession of it and settled in it, calling Leshem, Dan, after their ancestor Dan. This is the inheritance of the tribe of Dan, according to their families—these towns with their villages. (Josh 19:40–48)

> The Amorites pressed the Danites back into the hill country; they did not allow them to come down to the plain. The Amorites continued to live in Har-heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, but the hand of the house of Joseph rested heavily on them (cf. 1 Chron 7:21), and they became subject to forced labour. (Judg 1:34–35)

When the first returnees arrived, prime agricultural land in the province of Yehud was already in firm hands (mostly Benjaminite). In addition, Judean traders could not invest their gains in grounded property within the province of Judea due to the biblical law of the inalienability of agricultural land. The colonization which started in the fourth century resulted from two different needs: the desire to make investments in large estates by the capital owning class one the one hand, and the wish for economic independence of younger sons of smallholders. Latifundistas preferably went outside the Promised Land, as in Nabatea and central Transjordan. This category is represented by the Tobiads of Iraq el-Amir, Babatha's family, and probably the priestly family of Bene Hezir (Knauf 2009a). Job of the Septuagint, residing between Idemea and Arabia, is another example, if a purely literary one. Idumea falls inside the borders of Num 34:1–12 and Josh 13–21, so the law that Israel must keep "in the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has given you to occupy" (Deut 12.1) applies to Idumea as well, forbidding the formation of grounded property to the detriment of smallholders. Note, however, that the Torah and Joshua contain no fewer than six different blueprints concerning the

6. Cf., for Josh 18:2–19:48, Knauf 2008, 155–68; and for Judg 1:17–21, Gross 2009, 116, 877–85.

borders of the Promised Land, from "Yehud Only" (which would leave Idumea out) to "From the Nile to the Euphrates" (Knauf 2008, 10–12). Quite contrary to the motifs of the "capitalists," younger sons and daughters of smallholders might have found it wise to look for a living in a less crowded corner of Eretz Israel when their father were succeeded by their eldest brother; and these, it seems, took the Torah with them from the very beginning.

Be Fruitful, Multiply, and Fill the Land— Over the Hills and Far Away

In Josh 14–17, the land is attributed to Caleb, Judah, and the House of Joseph, that is, to Persian-period Israel. In Josh 18:1, Yhwh's terrestrial dwelling comes to "a place of his rest" (Isa 66:1). Now, and quite surprisingly for a reader who knows that the "Land of Israel" need not necessarily extend "from Dan to Beersheba," the process of land attribution to the tribes starts all over again:

> There remained among the Israelites seven tribes whose inheritance had not yet been apportioned. So Joshua said to the Israelites, "How long will you be slack in going in and taking possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has given you? Provide three men from each tribe, and I will send them out that they may begin to go throughout the land, writing a description of it with a view to their inheritances. Then come back to me. They shall divide it into seven portions, Judah continuing in its territory on the south, and the house of Joseph in their territory on the north. You shall describe the land in seven divisions and bring the description here to me; and I will cast lots for you here before the LORD our God. So the men started on their way; and Joshua charged those who went to write the description of the land, saying, "Go throughout the land and write a description of it, and come back to me; and I will cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh." So the men went and traversed the land and set down in a book a description of it by towns in seven divisions; then they came back to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh, and Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD; and there Joshua apportioned the land to the Israelites, to each a portion. (Josh 18:2–10)

From a Persian-period point of view, land titles are handed out here *in partibus infidelium*. Leaving Benjamin aside, which was actually already represented in Josh 15–16 by the gap between Judah and Ephraim, and Simeon, whose territory has previously been attributed to Judah, the five remaining tribes are the ancient tribes of Galilee. In Josh 13–19, these and the Transjordanian tribes are structurally set apart from (Idumea), Judea and Samaria:

Joshua	*Promised land not yet settled in the Persian period*	*Promised land settled in the Persian period*
[13:1–6	Philistia and Lebanon: not yet conquered]	
13:7–32	Transjordan: Ruben, Gad, and Half Manasseh	
14:1–5	*Introduction to the distribution of the land*	
14:6–15		Caleb (Idumea)
15		Judah (Yehud)
16–17		House of Joseph (Samaria)
18:1 18:2–10	*First conclusion of the distribution of the land* *Introduction to the distribution of the land to the "seven" remaining tribes*	
18:11–28		[Benjamin: see Judah]
19:1–9		[Simeon: see Judah]
19:10–16	Zebulon	
19:17–23	Issachar	
19:24–31	Asher	
19:32–39	Naphtali	
19:40–48	[Dan: see Judg 17–18]	
19:49–51	*Second conclusion of the distribution of the land*	
20–21	*Cities of refuge and levitical cities*	
21:43–45	*Third conclusion of the distribution of the land, and fourth conclusion of the book of Joshua*	

Joshua's question in 18:3—"How long will you be slack about going in and taking possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has given you?"—does not have a referent in the book. According to the narrative, the land distribution "to all Israel" is still going on. Nobody has yet taken possession of anything. In 22:1–6, the Transjordanians are sent home, which might implicitly also be assumed of all the other tribes, who should have moved to their newly acquired property before Joshua summons them again in 23:1. On the canonical level, "going and taking possession" has to wait until Judg 1. If Josh 18:3 is so obviously not addressed to the Israelites in the book, it is probably addressed to the Israelites/Judeans in the Persian period. Joshua 18:2–19:48 is a Persian-period programme for the Judean settlement of the Galilee. In the fourth century, Joshua was not yet public reading. The book's audience was constituted by the scribes of the Temple school and, presumably, their pupils, the sons of the priests and the aristocracy.

The settlement envisaged is not a breathless run to the best claims by everybody on their own. Instead, it is a carefully organized communal

undertaking with prospecting before the wagon train starts. The "Danites" of Judg 17–18 organize the prospecting on their own. With regard to its audience, Josh 18:2–10 suggests that the Second Temple bureaucracy might have offered a helping hand to people willing to leave Judea. Prosperous Judean/Jewish settlements in Galilee were good for the Temple, too, by means of the tithes to be expected from the settlers in the future.[7]

The distinction in Josh 13–19 between Israel's actual land and the "land to be regained" is also expressed, by different though similar means, by the structure of 1 Chr 2:3–9:1:

1 Chronicles	*Israel's land now*	*Israel's past and future land*
2:3–4:23	Judah and Caleb (Judea and Idumea)	
4:24–43	Simeon (Idumea and beyond)	
5:1–10		Reuben (Moab north of the Arnon)
5:11–17		Gad (Gilead and Bashan)
5:18–22	*Intermezzo: War of Reuben, Gad and Half-Manasseh against the Hagarites*	
5:23–26		Half-Manasseh (Golan)
5:27–6:66	*The Levites and their cities*	
7:1–5		Issachar (Galilee)
7:6–12	[Benjamin]	
7:13		Naphthali (Galilee)
7:14–19, 29	[Manasseh (Samaria)]	
7:20–28	[Ephraim (Samaria)]	
7:30–40		Asher (Galilee)
8:1–40	Benjamin (Judea)	
9:1	*Conclusion: "All Israel" genealogy*	

Reading the Hebrew Bible, whether for historical or literary interests, requires a sense of geography, a feeling for the lie of the land. In 1 Chr 2–8, Samaria-and-Galilee-Israel is bracketed by Judea-Israel (Judah

7. Cf. Tob 1:6–8; this book might have been the first biblical book written in Galilee in the early second century B.C.E. (Knauf 2009b, 6–8). One might ask how many of the "god-fearing" Samarian Israelites figuring in Chronicles (2 Chr 30:1, 10–11, 18; 31:1; 34:9) represent Judean residents of late Persian/early Hellenistic Galilee (and Samaria). 2 Chr 34:9 might, however, allude to the fact that the Gerizim Temple was as "Josianic," Torah-bound, as was the Temple of Jerusalem.

and Benjamin).[8] This constellation mirrors the residents from Samarian-Israelite tribes in Chronicles' Judea (1 Chr 9:3; 2 Chr 15:9). Samaria-Israel is also "Israel," but Judea-Israel includes "all Israel." The Transjordanian tribes are set apart from Judea, Samaria and Galilee by the pan-Israelite Levites.

The Galilean tribes frame the Samarians and are curiously reduced: Dan[9] and Zebulon[10] are missing, Naphtali[11] is covered by one verse and Issachar[12] by five, whereas Benjamin receives six verses, Manasseh seven and Ephraim eight. But then, it is the concluding Galilean tribe of Asher ("Good luck!") which tops the list with eleven verses. The preponderance of Asher might be read as an indication that Israelite Galilee had to decline in order that the new Judean Galilee might prosper.[13] Otherwise, the Judean colonialization of Galilee is not—or no longer?—addressed by Chronicles, as opposed to Judean colonization of the Golan and Bashan (cf. 1 Chr 2:21–23; see also below).

Far from the Temple, but Not Out of Hearing Distance of Torah

Psalm 42 is the lament of a Judean settler near the springs of Banyas on his inability to visit the Jerusalem Temple (Ps 42:5, 7–8). As the programmatic opening of the second book of the Psalter, it should have been composed in the late fourth or third centuries B.C.E. In the second century, the pilgrimage from Galilee to Jerusalem was firmly established,

8. The double occurrence of Benjamin, in the Judean bracket (8:1–40) and within Samaria-Israel (7:6–12), might reflect its history as the Israelite tribe that became Judean in the second half of the seventh century, and its double allegiance to Judea (politically) and Samaria (culturally) in the sixth century.

9. Of six references in Chronicles, four refer to the city, one to the son of Jacob, and one to the "Danite woman" (2 Chr 2:13) imported from Exod 31:6; 35:34; 38:23 (Japhet 2002 *ad loc*.).

10. Zebulun is otherwise mentioned as son of Jacob (1 Chr 2:1), provider of levitical cities (1 Chr 6:48, 62), in the story of David's rise (1 Chr 12:34, 41) and state (1 Chr 27:19), and then only, and quite negatively, in the context of Hezekiah's passover (2 Chr 30:10–11, 18). At all "positive" occurrences, Zebulun is acting or dealt with in parallel with Naphtali.

11. Up to David, Naphtali otherwise always co-occurs with Zebulun. After David, there is only reference to its destruction by Ben-Hadad (2 Chr 16:4), and its "ruins" visited by Josiah's messengers (2 Chr 34:6).

12. Issachar is otherwise found in the same contexts as Zebulun; the same holds true for Asher. The geography and theology of 1 Chr 2–9 differs considerably from its narrative continuation.

13. Galilee is conspicuously absent in 2 Chr 34:9 (covered by "all the remnant of Israel").

as attested by both Tob 1:4–8 and the "Songs of Ascents" (Pss 120–134) from the Psalter's fifth book, which cannot have been completed long before 100 B.C.E.[14]

Early settlers might have missed the Temple, but in all probability they still had the Torah read to them. From the point of view of economic geography, the list of "levitical cities" in Josh 21:3–42 and 1 Chr 6:39–66 (the only part of Joshua which Chronicles regarded as relevant enough to be included in its historical account) looks very curious. For people in the service of the Temple at Jerusalem, a fairly equal distribution over the whole territory of *Eretz Israel* according to Josh 13–19 appears most inconvenient. But Chronicles has another task in stock for the Levites in addition to Temple service:

> In the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. With them were the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah; and with these Levites, the priests Elishama and Jehoram. They taught in Judah, having the book of the law of the LORD with them; they went around through all the cities of Judah and taught among the people. (2 Chr 17:7–9)

In Chronicles' fictitious account of Jehoshaphat's reign, the task of teaching Torah is committed to flying columns of priests, Levites, and state officials. This may reflect a social reality in early fourth-century Yehud, when not every town had yet received a copy of the Torah, and qualified teaching staff might still have been constricted to Jerusalem. Teaching Torah is also the main task of the "court of appeal" constituted from priests and Levites in 2 Chr 19:8–11. In addition, Levites collect the temple taxes (2 Chr 24:5; 34:9) and help heads of households with insufficient legal/cultic education with the slaughter of the Pesach lamb (30:17). In brief, some of the Levites were scribes and officials (סופרים ושׁוטרים, 34:13).

One might get the impression that Yehud invented ecclesiastical bureaucracy. Whoever wanted to be included in the nation had to present written evidence of his ancestry (Ezra 2:62 = Neh 7:64). In 1 Chr 9:22;

14. Dating the books of the Psalter is loaded with many uncertainties. All that seems to be agreed upon is that we read them in the sequence of their finalization. Book I (Pss 3–41) is probably contemporary with Chronicles, made up of collections from the Persian period. When the Qumran community separated from Jerusalem (ca. 150 B.C.E.?), the Psalter comprised Books I–III (Pss 2–89), as evidenced by 11QPs. The final redaction of the canonical book, which only retouched Pss 1–2 and 146–150, can be dated to the reign of Salome Alexandra, Jannai's widow (76–67 B.C.E.) (cf. Knauf 2009c).

2 Chr 12:15; 31:16–19, but especially in 1 Chr 2–8, this practice is projected back onto the Israelite and Judean monarchies:

> And they kept a genealogical record (והתיחשם להם, Simeon, 1 Chr 4:33). All of these were enrolled (כלם התיחשו) by genealogies in the days of King Jotham of Judah, and in the days of King Jeroboam[15] of Israel. (Gad, or Reuben[16] and Gad). (5:17)
>
> Their kindred belonging to all the families of Issachar were in all eighty-seven thousand mighty warriors, enrolled by genealogy (התיחשם לכל). (7:5)
>
> The sons of Bela: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri, five, heads of ancestral houses, mighty warriors; and their enrollment by genealogies was twenty-two thousand thirty-four. ([מספר] והתיחשם, Benjamin/Bela). (7:7)
>
> …and their enrollment by genealogies, according to their generations, as heads of their ancestral houses, mighty warriors, was twenty thousand two hundred. (והתיחשם לתלדותם, Benjamin/Becher). (7:7)
>
> All of these were men of Asher, heads of ancestral houses, select mighty warriors, chief of the princes. Their number enrolled by genealogies, for service in war[17] (והתיחשם בצבא במלחמה), was twenty-six thousand men. (7:40)
>
> So all Israel was enrolled by genealogies (וכל ישראל התיחשו); and these are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel[18]… (9:1)

15. "Jotham" because of 2 Chr 27:5; according to Japhet (2002, 341), "Jeroboam" is the only reference to Jeroboam ben Nimshi in Chronicles (otherwise, only Jeroboam ben Nebat is mentioned). Did Chronicles know or guess that the town lists of the Galilean tribes in Josh 19 were probably produced by the administration of Jeroboam II?

16. Of the two genealogical notes on Reuben, 1 Chr 5:1 refers to Gen 35:33; 46:8–9; 49:3; Exod 6:14; Num 1:20; 26:5–6, and harmonizes Gen 49:3–4 with Gen 48:5 (Japhet 2002 a*d loc.*). In 5:7 the subject of בהתיחש לתלדותם is missing.

17. As haphazard *ad hoc* mobilization orders from the last days of the kingdom of Judah demonstrate (lists of personal names without numbers [and commodities attached], such as Arad 39, together with [x ה]ומכין 50 מערד, Arad 24.12), mobilization by the military authorities led to enrolment on the clan or settlement level. The notion of royal military rolls is anachronistic.

18. The royal Israelite annals could have fed into the biblical tradition only insofar as they might have been distributed, under the Omride and Nimshide kings, to Jerusalem. Chronicles probably indicates, by this inference, that in Yehud the genealogies were kept in the "Nehemiah Foundation Library," as mentioned in 2 Macc 2:13–15.

In spite of the summary statement in 9:1, genealogies are only explicitly given for those Israelite tribes which became Judean, or for Judean claims in Idumea, Arabia, Northern Transjordan and Galilee, constituting ancient Israelite slots and land-rights, very much like the *cadastre* initiated by Joshua in Josh 18:4–6, for later Judean use.

The list of "levitical cities" in Josh 21 reads, on this background, like a blueprint for an all-Israelite education system: where to establish central schools, or *schuls*. How much of this grandiose vision became a reality in the course of the fourth and third centuries must remain an open question—not much, in all probability, but most likely more than nothing. Joshua was composed at the Jerusalem Temple school in the Persian period, and not taught or read at any other place, so an active involvement of Temple authorities in the settling of Galilee is likely. They could have send Torah teachers, and received their taxes (or fees) in return. Levites might have been more available, and more willing, than priests (cf. 2 Chr 15:3; 29:34: "for the Levites were more conscientious than the priests"), who seem to have preferred rural investments closer to Jerusalem, at least before the destruction of the Second Temple.[19] At least one Levite from the Korahite singers' clan or guild is attested for northern Galilee in the late Persian or early Hellenistic period by Ps 42 (Barbiero 2005; Gosse 2000). Regardless of whether a Korahite here laments his fate, which had led him into the *partes infidelium*, or a Jerusalemite singer only imagined the situation of a colleague "far from Jerusalem," the social reality of Levites residing in Galilee who were acquainted with the Torah is attested in both cases. For intimate knowledge of the Torah was as much required from those who composed the Psalms as it is now from those who read them.

Golan and Bashan

Chronicles' relative neglect of Galilee could suggest that its Judean/Jewish settlement was well under way in the third century, and that the "Judean Colonial Office" now set eyes on Northern Transjordan, Golan and Bashan, which feature prominently in 1 Chr 5:1–26, and elsewhere:

> Afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir father of Gilead, whom he married when he was sixty years old; and she bore him Segub; and Segub became the father of Jair,[20] who had twenty-three towns in

19. See the case of the Bene Hezir mentioned earlier (and cf. Knauf 2009a).

20. Jaïr's genealogical derivation from Judah is possible, because the "villages of Jaïr" already had two family trees: founded by a son of Manasseh in Num 32:39–42, or by the 30 sons of "judge" (chieftain) Jaïr in Judg 10:4.

> the land of Gilead. But Geshur and Aram took from them Havvoth-jair, Kenath and its villages, sixty towns. All these were descendants of Machir, father of Gilead. (1 Chr 2:21–23)

"Kenath" is now Qanawât in the Hauran (Chronicles' "Gilead" lies north of the ʿAjlûn). What had been taken from a descendant of Judah by force, still is Judah's by right: "Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved" (Ps 80:19 [MT 20]). "Genealogical registration" (להתיחש) is only mentioned for Benjamin, Simeon and the Transjordanian tribes. Their exile, narrated at the end of their story, left orphaned slots waiting for another "Israel" to settle them. To the Transjordanians, 26 verses are dedicated, more than twice the amount attributed to the "largest" (in number of verses) Cisjordanian tribe, Asher.

In Josh 19:6–7, 27–40, the Levitical clans of Gershon and Merari receive their towns both from Galilean and Transjordanian tribes. In 1 Macc 5:9–54, "Gilead" (the Hauran) receives much more attention than Galilee; Gilead is covered in 5:9–13, 24–54 (26 verses), and rescued by the book's hero, Judas Maccabee, with 8,000 soldiers. Galilee receives five verses (5:14–15, 21–23) and is left to Judah's youngest brother, Simeon, with 3,000 men. The narrative is heavily soaked with biblical paraphrase. Bringing Israel home from among the nations (cf. Isa 43:6; 60:4, 9) is definitely a messianic act, and thus makes the text a good piece of pro-Hasmonean propaganda, but the total evacuation of Galilee would hardly have been in the interest of the Temple's economic basis. In addition, Judas Aristobulus' annexation of Galilee in 104/3 B.C.E. would have hardly been feasible without a demographic basis. Given that the enemies of the Jews, as far as they can be identified by names, are the cities on the coast and in the Hauran, it stands to reason that the Jews rescued in 1 Macc 5 were merchants and artisans from these cities, not agricultural settlers in the countryside (which should have had little to fear in a countryside still rich in empty space).

Joshua 18:2–21:43 and 1 Chr 2–8 might share the strategic insight that Galilee is best defended on the Golan. The two texts could, on the other hand, have various kinds of "colonialization" in mind. Joshua thinks of the re-cultivation of former "land of Israel" fallen waste, as indicated by 17:14–18, where "the land of the Rephaim" (17:15) again implies (northern) Transjordan (cf. Deut 2:9–11, 19–20; 3:13):

> The tribe of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance, since we are a numerous people, whom all along the LORD has blessed?" And Joshua said to them, "If you are a numerous people, go up to the forest, and clear ground there for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill

> country of Ephraim is too narrow for you." The tribe of Joseph said, "The hill country is not enough for us; yet all the Canaanites who live in the plain have chariots of iron, both those in Beth-shean and its villages and those in the Valley of Jezreel." Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh, "You are indeed a numerous people, and have great power; you shall not have one lot only, but the hill country shall be yours, for though it is a forest, you shall clear it and possess it to its farthest borders; for you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are strong."

The archeo-zoological evidence shows that there was not much reforestation in Galilee and Samaria in the Late Bronze Age, but a massive recovery of woodland after the Assyrian conquest (Knauf 2003). Joshua could not have given his advice to Israelites in the Iron I period, but quite well to the Judeans and Samarians of the fifth and fourth centuries.

Whereas the call to settle Galilee and Bashan is addressed to younger sons of small to medium family holdings in Joshua, Chronicles refers to long-distance traders and latifundists in the guise of its Transjordanian tribes. Long-distance traders are the social groups envisaged by the liturgy of Ps 107:1–32 and were then, presumably, not totally absent from post-exilic Jerusalem. But inside Yehud, they could not invest their profits from trade in rural estates, which in antiquity was the only long-term security in which people could invest. In addition, traders in cereals would profit greatly if they were also (partially) the producers. This would also increase their credit rating.[21] Bashan (Hauran), mentioned in Chronicles (and 1 Macc 5) under the name of "Gilead," was an attractive region for this kind of "settlement activity," the founding of trading colonies in towns with good connections to Damascus, Phoenicia and Arabia, and large reserves of fertile soil in their environs.[22]

The inventory of metaphors available to Chronicles in referring to contemporary activities (and interests) under the guise of "pre-monarchic Israel" was provided by the literary iconography of Genesis–Judges and Job. Property was to be expressed in terms of cattle (cf. Gen 12:16; 24:35; Job 1:3; 42:12)—which has led the anthropologically innocent among biblical scholars to find traces of nomadism here! In fact, the

21. On grain merchants as landlords, and the economic and social mechanisms of running large estates in the ancient and not so ancient Near East, Philippe Guillaume delivered a memorable presentation at the 2009 EABS Meeting in Lincoln, UK, which should shortly be available in print.

22. From 1855 to 1861, the Prussian consul J. G. Wetzstein at Damascus became the landlord of a village in the Hauran. His accounts show quite well the risks (he made a huge loss at the end) as well as the possible profits of "landlordism"; cf. Huhn 1989, 245–322.

biblical Abraham and Job are cattle- (and goat-) barons from the (Assyrian to) Persian period(s); what did Job do with 500 yoke of bulls, if not plough an immense estate?[23] According to later Jewish, Christian and Muslim tradition, Job was an inhabitant of the Hauran, too (Schmitt 1985):

> …and Bela son of Azaz, son of Shema, son of Joel, who lived in Aroer, as far as Nebo and Baal-meon. He also lived to the east as far as the beginning of the desert this side of the Euphrates, because their cattle (מקניהם) had multiplied[24] in the land of Gilead. (1 Chr 5:8–9)

> They [Reuben, Gad and Half-Manasseh] captured their [the Hagrites'] livestock: fifty thousand of their camels, two hundred fifty thousand sheep, two thousand donkeys, and one hundred thousand captives. (1 Chr 5:21)

The fringe "of the desert this side of the Euphrates" leads again to the Hauran and its geographical connection, established already by Ashurbanipal in the account of his "Arabian wars" (Borger 1996, 60–61; 247 [Prism A VIII 73–119]), to Babylonia via Tadmor/Palmyra, whose rise to prominence must have commenced no later then the fourth century B.C.E. (so Gawlikowski 1992, 137 on the basis of 2 Chr 8:4 and 1 Kgs 9:18 [Qere]). Jews and (Proto-)Nabatean Arabs were not so much warring tribes as competitors in the same business.

Idumea and Arabia

The Judeans who are attested in Idumea from the fourth and third centuries might be perceived as descendants of ancestors who did not leave the Hebron hills when the Edomites took them over in 597 (or 586, at the latest), as opposed to those of their congeners who brought the Abraham tradition in 597 to Jerusalem, and in 586 to Bethel (Knauf 2006, 322–23). The Simeon section of 1 Chr 4 indicates, though, that Idumea attracted Judean/Jewish investments in grounded property as much as, if not even more than, the Bashan. Large feudal estates were created in Idumea by the Persian administration (which, after 332 B.C.E., were up to the taking), as the the town lists of Simeon in 1 Chr 4:28–33 and Josh 19:2–8 show:

23. Abraham had at least one cow and one bull (cf. Gen 18:7), so he ploughed, too.

24. Which was numerous from the very beginning (Num 32:1).

> They lived in Beer-sheba, Moladah, Hazar-shual, Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri, and Shaaraim. These were their towns until David became king. And their villages were Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan, five towns, along with all their villages that were around these towns as far as Baal.[25] These were their settlements. And they kept a genealogical record. (1 Chr 4:28–33)

> It had for its inheritance Beer-sheba, Sheba, Moladah, Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem, Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah, Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhen—thirteen towns with their villages; Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan—four towns with their villages; together with all the villages all around these towns as far as Baalath-beer, Ramah of the Negeb. This was the inheritance of the tribe of Simeon according to its families. (Josh 19:2–8)

Beth-marcaboth and Hazar-susim/Hazar-Susah indicate by their names that they were large (*bît merkabti*, "chariot-fief") and middle-scale (*bît sûsi*, "horseman-fief") military establishments.[26]

"Simeon," like the Transjordanian tribes in the Hauran, expands to the disadvantage of Arabian neighbours:

> They journeyed to the entrance of Gedor, to the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks, where they found rich, good pasture, and the land was very broad, quiet, and peaceful; for the former inhabitants there belonged to Ham. These, registered by name, came in the days of King Hezekiah of Judah, and attacked their tents and the Meunim who were found there, and exterminated them to this day, and settled in their place, because there was pasture there for their flocks. (1 Chr 4:39–41)

The text is a geographic conundrum with, at least, two solutions indicated by the Kethib, מעינים, "Minaeans," and the Qere, מעונים, "Maonites."[27] There is a Judean-Idumean Maon south of Hebron, on the border of the hills and the plain (Josh 15:55; 1 Sam 23:24–25; 25:2; 1 Chr 2:45). In this region, Judas Maccabee might have fought the "Beonites" (1 Macc 5:4), thus continuing the work of Chronicles' "Simeonites." The problem is that no eastern part of a valley that might lead to Judean Gedor (Josh

25. Baalath-beer might appear as Beth-biri in Chronicles. Its "abbreviation" to "Baal" might suggest to the reader that Simeon extended now as far as Baal-zaphon, next to the Egyptian border.

26. The smallest military holding was the *bît qashti*, "bowman's fief"; cf. Wiesehöfer 1996, 62, 65, 93. It is unlikely that a "chariot estate" in Idumea really had to furnish a chariot (probably several horsemen instead).

27. "Meʿunî" is the regular generic adjective to "Maʿôn," and has nothing to do with the Muʿnayya mentioned by Tiglath-pileser III (= "the people of Maʿn"), *pace* Japhet 2002, 147 and Ephʿal 1982, 91.

15:58; 1 Chr 4:4, 18), between Hebron and Jerusalem on the other, western slope of the watershed, can in any way be connected with the Idumean Maon. But there is a Transjordanian Gedor (possibly indicated by 1 Chr 12:8), modern *es-Salt*, to the East of which one encounters the Ammonites, or the environs of the Persian city of Rabbat-Ammon. Minaean traders, according to the marriage records with foreign women, kept at their capital in South Arabia, had a colony there (Knauf 1989, 106, 157). In this case, the "Simeonites" went to Transjordan, looking for trade rather than "pasture." The "Minaeans" are clearly indicated as non-indigenous, but they might have helped to declare the "natives" as sons of Ham. In Gen 10:7, the South Arabians (to which Minaeans do not yet belong)[28] are derived from Cush, son of Ham. Hamites had the advantage that the "Simeonites" could fight them (cf. Gen 9:20–27) and take their land (or other possessions), whereas Ammonites (Deut 2:19), Moabites (Deut 2:9) and Edomites (Deut 2:2–6) were protected.

A Minaean trading colony, with which the "Simeonites" competed, might lead to yet another place: Petra of the Nabateans, where the Minaeans brought the incense in the third century B.C.E. To find Petra in the text, one has only to translate the definite article of "the valley" into Arabic: הגיא = אלגיא, *ʾel-Jiʾ* (today *Wadi Musa*), the town at the gateway to the sacred (and later also royal) valley of Petra.[29] Gedor "walls, place of walls" is left without a referent in this reading (but there is no lack of wall-like rock-formations below Petra, inside Petra and above Petra).

"Simeon," it seems, covers in the colonial perspective of 1 Chr 2–8 not only Idumea, but also Nabatea, in an inversion of Strabo's later view that the Idumeans were emigrants from Nabatea.[30] If this impression is fed by only two-thirds of the possible geographic interpretations of 1 Chr 4:39–41, the matter is clearly expressed in the following verses:

> And some of them, five hundred men of the Simeonites, went to Mount Seir, having as their leaders Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, sons of Ishi; they destroyed the remnant of the Amalekites that had escaped, and they have lived there to this day. (1 Chr 4:42–43)

28. From the eighth to fifth centuries, South Arabia was dominated by the Sabaeans. The Minaeans controlled the incense trade from the fourth to the second century.

29. Where Strabo also encountered Jews; for Jews in the Nabatean realm, see further Healey 1993, 97.

30. They were, in fact, Edomites pushed west by the Kedarites after 552 B.C.E., but already by the fourth century they were in the process of linguistic Arabization, as the ostraca show.

"Seir" belongs to Edom; luckily, the "Simeonites" encountered Amalekites there, whom they were supposed not to tolerate (Exod 17:14–16; Num 24:20; Deut 25:19). Insofar as the southern part of previous Seir, the small plateau and steep precipice of *esh-Sharâ*, might have already been addressed by הגיא = אלגיא, *el-Jî*, "Seir" here could refer to the mountains of *el-Jibâl*, the Gobolitis of Josephus, where, according to "Gebal" in Ps 83:8, Amalek might be sought.

Moab south of the Arnon river seems to have fallen to the Nabateans as early as the third century B.C.E. Migration to Moab is, in addition to the book of Ruth, also attested in 1 Chr 2–8:

> …and Jokim, and the men of Cozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who married into Moab but returned to Lehem[31]… (1 Chr 4:22)

> …And Shaharaim had sons in the country of Moab after he had sent away his wives Hushim and Baara. (1 Chr 8:8)

The Kerak plateau was ideal for large-scale agro-business and was not too far from Jerusalem; no wonder it attracted the Bene Hezir as well as Babatha's family.

Conflict and Violence

Conflicts between settlers and "natives," as narrated by 1 Chr 4:39–43; 5:10, 18–22, but also in Judg 17–18 and 1 Macc 5, have been read primarily as expression of economic competition. In the latter part of the second century B.C.E. and into the first, with the consolidation of the Hasmonean kingdom, this evolved into a power struggle, that is, with the Ituraeans—the tribe of Yetur—for the domination of Galilee. That a Bedouin tribe on the rise to political power, as the Ituraeans (like the Nabataeans) then were, could have a try at Galilee presupposes a relatively low density of settlement even around the turn from the second to the first century (cf. for the fourth to third centuries, Judg 18:7). Small-scale agricultural settlers supposedly took possession of their new ground quite peacefully. And yet, in opposition to "myths of an empty land" ancient and modern, one must be aware that, at least for the past 15,000 years (after the first humans had reached Tierra de Fuego), no place on earth suitable for human presence has been completely free of it. In the Near East, uncultivated fertile land has always attracted people who preferred the amenities of non-sedentary life (a relatively low amount of

31. Hebrew: "and Yashuvi Lehem"; NRSV presupposes וישובו. The verses end with והדברים עתיקים, "now the records are ancient"—a little polemic against the book of Ruth, which the scribes knew as a contemporary composition?

labour hours per week, about 20) to the harshness of mistress agriculture (up to 80 labour hours per week). In the case of large estates, the probability of conflicts with some kind of prior inhabitants increased disproportionately.

That the "language of violence" in Chronicles follows the model of Num 20–Judg 18 does not imply that Judean and Jewish settlement activities beyond Judea in the fourth and third centuries were wholly without conflict and violence, nor did the rhetorical nature of the violence in these chapters—camouflaging, but also discussing and finally solving conflicts of the fifth century between Samarians, Benjaminites and Judeans—preclude readers of the canonical text from enacting it, with 1 Macc 13:43–48 as first recorded instance.

As in Joshua (Knauf 2008, 117), the language of violence keeps its ambiguity in Chronicles as well. The report that the Simeonites "destroyed the remnant of the Amalekites" on Mount Seir (1 Chr 4:43) contains a very clear message concerning contemporary Arabs: they, like the Nabateans, are no Amalekites: the Amalekites are a closed chapter of history. With the Nabataeans we can live in peace; what Judean landowning families subsequently did, regardless of the state of relations between Judean and Nabataean kings, until the Bar Kochba war, put an end to their kind of diaspora existence, too.

In Conclusion

Reading biblical texts in the light of history does not produce new data and does not lead to anything unexpected. That Jewish settlement in Galilee and the Nabataean realm, at present not attested before the second and first centuries B.C.E., did in fact start in the fourth and third centuries borders on the trivial, since any natural process—and human society and its changes are not exempt from nature—starts quite a while before it becomes visible to the naked eye or is represented in that small and haphazard collection of data that the historians call their "sources." On the other hand, reading biblical books and chapters such as Josh 13–21, Chronicles, 1 Maccabees and Psalms "historically," as witnesses to mental, social and economic trends in the society which produced them, rather than trying to "verify" the mythic past which they narrate, lends to these writings, which were either largely ignored or abused[32] by writers of Israel's history, a certain charm.

32. By (mis)taking their narrative chronology at face value, and "synchronizing" it with our political chronologies.

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The Hebrew Canon and the Origins of Judaism

Philip R. Davies

Lester Grabbe has a special interest in the origins and history of Judaism as well as in ancient Israel and Judah, and in what follows I offer a few thoughts on the relationship between the Bible and Judaism.

Did Judaism create its scriptures or did the scriptures create Judaism? Obviously, neither of these crude alternatives is true, but the question can provoke us to analyze what we mean by "Judaism" and its "scriptures" (or even "its canon"). Neither "canon" nor "Bible" is of course neither a Hebrew word nor a Jewish concept. But the process of composing, copying and preserving texts is well-known and attested among ancient scribal communities, and the formation of a "canon" is simply a part of this process, by which certain texts are recognized as cultural significant and/or educationally useful. Hence, among the scribal communities of Persian and Hellenistic Judah writings were produced, edited and copied, forming an ongoing literary canon (Davies 1998). But if the production of a canon is a natural and normal process, there are several unique features about the Judean scribal collection, especially the size of the scribal community, the intensity of effort—especially the relatively large extent of redactional activity—and the ideological rather than aesthetic agenda that seems to have played a major part, especially with regard to the legitimation of Judah rather than Samaria as "Israel" (and Jerusalem as the sole seat of Yahweh; only the Pentateuch, shared with Samaria, is largely free of this ideological programme).

But it is certainly wrong to speak of "*a* canon" before the moment of fixation, for this fixation created a single canon from the existing collections. Ben Sira, for example, the best representative known to us of the scribal establishment, does not refer to a single set of scriptures, but portrays the scribe as devoted first to the law, then to wisdom, prophecies, sayings of the famous, parables and proverbs (38:34–39:3). In speaking of Nehemiah's library, 2 Macc 2:13 refers to "books about the kings and prophets, and the writings of David, and letters of kings about votive offerings," while the Qumran Halakhic Letter (e.g. 4Q397, frags. 14–21,

lines 10–12) speaks of "the book [*singular*] of Moses," "books of the prophets" and "chronicles of each generation." "Law" and "prophets" is a common expression. Whether even in the first century C.E., in the New Testament, this has become a term for the fixed canon is uncertain (contra several scholars, especially Barton 1986). By the end of the fourth century B.C.E. the Mosaic canon of Torah may have been fixed, but even Ben Sira (24:23) still speaks of "the book of the covenant of the Most High God, the law that Moses commanded us," perhaps indicating Deuteronomy and not a Pentateuch.

The transformation of this open and flexible set of Judean scribal canonical collections into a fixed body of Jewish scripture is also a process that is neither natural nor normal. When and how did it take place? Two recent books and one essay on the topic have pointed to the Hasmonean era (Davies 1998; van der Kooij 2003; Carr 2005). From these authors a number of different reasons have been proposed. I pointed to a number of these: an increasing literacy beyond the priestly-scribal circle, occasioned by changes in social stratification; developments in ethnic identity provoked by the creation of Hellenistic kingdoms in the Near East; the personalization or interiorization of the cult of Yahweh by individual or sectarian behaviour (the Qumran sect[s], the *maskilim*, the *ḥaverim*); and especially the establishment of an independent Judean kingdom that expanded its borders dramatically. This last development was achieved by a dynasty that began as a champion of an independent Judean culture but was caught, after its initial success, between competing groups. The essential reason for ascribing the creation of a fixed and "public" canon, however, is that there was no agent other than the Hasmonean dynasty with either the motive or the authority to take this step. Furthermore, the evidence of the Qumran manuscripts and of Josephus suggests that this process took place between the second century B.C.E. and the first century C.E.

I further suggested that the Hasmoneans promoted a Judean educational system to counteract Greek educational institutions. Carr has developed this considerably, laying overwhelming emphasis on the scribal canon as an educational tool that under the Hasmoneans became a system of wider instruction. Specifically, he concludes that

> the emergent Jewish Scriptures…originated as a hybrid, indigenous response of Judean royal-temple elites to Greek textuality and education. More specifically, the Jewish Bible, so clearly established in the first century CE, originated in the second century BCE as a purportedly pre-Hellenistic deposit of sacred Hebrew texts, a deposit initially standing opposed to and distinguished from the corpus of Greek educational texts. (Carr 2005, 253)

Carr refers to what he calls the "enculturation function" (2005, 269) of the scriptures under the Hasmoneans, supported by the temple but spreading more widely.

Van de Kooij (2003) makes two additional points in support of the production of a fixed canon under the Hasmoneans. First, he contrasts the writings of Ben Sira with the prologue added by his grandson, suggesting a crucial difference in the status of the literature that Ben Sira himself studied. He argues that while Ben Sira claims to have studied many books in order to be able to produce his own, his grandson suggests rather that this was a study of a particular collection of "books of the ancestors" with a threefold structure and a fixed content. According to van der Kooij, the Hasmonean politics that intervened between author and translator "had to do not only with the restoration of the cult in Jerusalem and the rededication of the temple, but also with the ancestral books that were kept in the temple" (2003, 37). He continues: "Thus, the identity crisis in the first half of the second century B.C.E. can be regarded as a crucial moment in this history of the canonical process."

In a rather idiosyncratic book, van der Toorn (2003) also characterizes the fixing of the canon as the transformation of a temple library into a public resource. Van der Toorn suggests that while a temple library no doubt existed, it will have contained more than the books subsequently canonized and that between a scribal library and a public canon lies a large difference; there can, accordingly, have been no automatic or natural transformation of one into the other. Likewise, he denies (against Carr) that the scribal library consisted only of the scribal educational curriculum. His view is that under Ezra the five books of Torah were codified, becoming in effect canonical in the process: then he points to the growth during the third century (the Ptolemaic era) of a class of "literate laymen" (2003, 252), for whom the temple scribes created an edition of Prophets, Psalms and Proverbs. With all these collections, the scribes produced a "national library," though not a closed canon. The closure was achieved by a consensus of Pharisaic scholars (2003, 261). Unfortunately, van der Toorn does not provide argumentation for these highly problematic assertions.[1]

1. The attribution of the Torah to Ezra does not account for its canonization among the Samari(t)ans, to whom the books of Ezra and Nehemiah seem inimical—and this quite apart from questions of the historical reliability of these books; the "Pharisaic scholars" remain a shadowy entity in the period before the rabbis and van der Toorn has ignored the extensive debate in recent years about the status and role of Pharisees in this period by, among others, Morton Smith, E. P. Sanders, Jacob

These studies as a whole show agreement on a number of issues, but no clear consensus on the details. They all conclude that the scribal community or communities of Judah had their own canon or canons, that these canons were probably represented in scrolls deposited in the temple library or libraries, that their contents (or some of them) played a role in the scribal educational curriculum, and that developments in the Hellenistic period led to what we might loosely call the "publication" of all or part of these scribal canons beyond the scribal circle itself.

I believe it is possible to sharpen these broad agreements into a more detailed hypothesis, but to do so we must underline some relevant observations. First, the translation of the books of the Judean scribal canon into Greek may be a symptom of this broadening of access beyond Judah itself, yet there is no evidence of a fixed Greek canon—though the evidence of the *Letter of Aristeas* and the writings of Philo may suggest that the Torah itself had a special place among other Jewish writings as a fixed Mosaic canon. The arrangement of books in the Christian codices suggests that the canonical divisions of Prophets and Writings were not strictly observed, and we find that different arrangement was made among these, namely, historical and sapiential (or poetical). Indeed, the Jewish canon in Greek remained open, with the addition of further writings (such as the books of Maccabees and the Wisdom of Solomon).

Within the Palestinian populations that were to become, under the Hasmoneans, "Jewish," more than one literary canon existed. An Aramaic canon probably included a set of diaspora stories that were to become a Daniel cycle (in some form and without retroversion into Hebrew: see 4QPrNab), the books of Enoch and other works such as Tobit and even Ahiqar (who is of course mentioned in Tobit); further Aramaic writings found at Qumran may have been canonical beyond the Qumran circles, including Aramaic versions of Job and Leviticus. There are also of course the Samaritan scriptures. It is frequently asserted that "the Samaritan canon" contains only the Torah, or that this is their only biblical canon. But the Samaritans have not only the five books of Moses, but also their Chronicles, written in Aramaic or Arabic; arguably different canons. The Samaritan writings are not Jewish, while the Aramaic literary canon, though including Jewish writings, was broadly shared with other groups in Palestine, and it may well have included a number of Mesopotamian writings translated from Akkadian. The "biblical" or "Masoretic" canon we are discussing is therefore to be carefully distinguished from other literary canons of the time. It is in

Neusner, Steve Mason and Shaye Cohen. See (with bibliography) Neusner and Chilton 2007.

Hebrew; it is specifically *Judean/Jewish*; and it was closed. Some, but not all, of these features are shared with other canons. Why closed? Why Hebrew? And why "Jewish"—moreover, in a *religious* sense?

Each of these features is sufficiently remarkable to require some explanation, and in the manner of Ockham, preferably by a single hypothesis. Let us begin with the use of "Judaism" as the normal (Greek or Latin) word for the religion or culture or philosophy of what Hebrew and some Aramaic speakers would call "Israel"—the use of "Jew" to mean more than "Judean" and to refer to an adherent of the cult of Yahweh. This is in fact not a difficult question to answer, at least in the strict sense. During the Persian period, the populations of the separate provinces of Samaria and Judah each worshipped Yahweh, the "god of Israel," and from about 400 B.C.E., this cult was centred—perhaps not exclusively—on the two temples at Jerusalem and Gerizim. Over the following centuries these cults, with their shared books of Torah, grew apart. For while the Pentateuch represents a nation embracing both, most of the other books in the Judean scriptures express hostility to Samaria: the kingdom of Israel is regarded as totally sinful and either lost in exile (Kings) or legitimate only if subordinated to Jerusalem (Chronicles). Thus, the portrait of enmity to Samaria in the books of Ezra–Nehemiah seems to be problematic. The current consensus of research is that there was no split between Jerusalem and Gerizim until the fourth century at the earliest, and probably later. We can therefore concur with the conclusion that the codification or canonization of the Torah was to a large extent necessitated by its being shared by two cults and their communities: thereafter unilateral changes would presumably have been acceptable (until the rift: small changes between the Jewish and Samaritan texts are, of course, evident, probably from this later period).[2]

The rift between Jerusalem and Gerizim reached its climax in the destruction of the Gerizim temple by the Judean king Hyrcanus in the late second century B.C.E. Whatever its religious motives,[3] this act was part of a policy that politically unified the populations of most of Palestine outside those areas that were politically and/or culturally Greek. While the cult of Yahweh had been widely known and observed beyond

2. The possibility of two slightly different "editions" of the Books of Moses, each reflecting the priority of its own centralized sanctuary, should perhaps be allowed for the period before the separation of the two cults.

3. S. Schwartz (1993) has argued that Hyrcanus' act was a response to the Hellenization of the Gerizim cult and in support of Samarians who resisted it. He argues that Jewish–Samaritan relations remained cordial until the first century C.E., despite Samaritan resentment that the Gerizim temple was not restored to them.

Judah, and possibly some organized colonization of neighbouring areas by Judeans had taken place (see the essay in the present volume by Axel Knauf), it was now the Judean version, centred on Jerusalem, that became the standard version of the cult. "Judaism" enlarged its definition to signify this cult (and its underlying culture), rather than to signify Judeans. On the one hand, "Judaism" became a religion or a philosophy; on the other hand, "Jews" were also an *ethnos*, a nation with a king (Herod was more than the king of *Judah*: he was—at least in his own eyes—king of this empire-wide *ethnos*) and a homeland, at the centre of which was its great temple (the double definition of Judaism as an ethnicity and a religion has, of course, remained ever since).

It is therefore not surprising that we now see the emergence of the word "Judaism," first encountered in our sources in 2 Maccabees:

> …and the appearances that came from heaven to those who fought bravely for Judaism (ιουδαισμος), so that though few in number they seized the whole land and pursued the barbarian hordes. (2:21)

> In former times, when there was no mingling with the Gentiles, he [Razis] had been accused of Judaism, and he had most zealously risked body and life for Judaism. (14:38)

Hence, by the end of the second century B.C.E. "Judaism" was in currency as the name for what we now call the religion of not only Judah but most of Palestine. Since the term "Jew," ιουδαιος, quickly came to designate any adherent of this religion, the Samaritans, as a result, were to be viewed as either a Jewish sect or a related cult. And "Judaism" became the culture and the religion of Palestine, more or less.

But as I have already hinted, the population now embraced within the enlarged Jewish kingdom already had not just a cultural identity but a name—"Hebrews," *ʿibrim*, drawn from the territory known as "Beyond the River," *ʿabar nahara*. This population was Aramaic-speaking (it was the home of the language), circumcised and largely monotheistic. These "Hebrews" were, even before the Hasmonean period, drawn into the orbit of the cults centred in Gerizim and Jerusalem. Jonah uses "Hebrew" as his own ethnic designation (1:9), as does Saul of Tarsus ("a Hebrew of Hebrews," Phil 3:5) and the figure of Abraham was developed, within Samaria and Judah, as an ancestor of this wider "proto-Judaic" community, given its own, wider "promised land" that extended over the region of "across the river" (Gen 15:18). The pre-Hasmonean extension of what would come to be called "Judaism" to this wider area is also reflected in Ezra 7:25:

> And you, Ezra, according to the God-given wisdom you possess, appoint magistrates and judges who may judge all the people in the province Beyond the River who know the laws of your God; and you shall teach those who do not know them.[4]

The Hasmoneans were therefore making a political reality from what was already to a large extent culturally unified. The Hasmonean kingdom formally incorporated these "Hebrews" as "Jews" just as the book of Genesis embraced them as part of Israel's larger family.

The extent of the transformation is easily misjudged. On the one hand, it was hardly a case of "forcible conversion," given the degree of cultural approximation that had already taken place. But on the other hand, it presented a challenge to those Judeans who insisted on a more exclusive definition of "Israel" that was confined to Judah (such as we find reflected in the books of Kings, Ezra and Nehemiah). Although it has long been customary to speak of the "Hellenistic crisis" of the 160s B.C.E. and the subsequent victory of the so-called traditionalist Maccabees, it is unlikely that under the label of "traditionalist" we can define any single or coherent position. It may, indeed, be easier to understand the values of the so-called "Hellenizers" than those of their opponents, among whom the family of Mattathias was only a leading element. The ensuing Hasmonean dynasty was left, in effect, with the task of defining what it was that the "traditionalists" (perhaps adopting, among others, the name *hasidim?*) had actually stood for in their resistance to the Seleucids. This much was entailed in the leadership of a now independent Judean/Jewish state. According to Josephus's account of the dynasty, echoed in some rabbinic allusions, the Pharisees and Sadducees both competed for Hasmonean patronage, while other groups, especially those behind the production of the Qumran scrolls, were apparently unsuccessful to the point of secession or banishment from the Temple and, subsequently, in some cases, from the remainder of Jewish society. Whatever the root causes of Jewish sectarianism, the Hasmonean success probably furnished an immediate reason.

According to the best estimates, the population of Judah in the third and early second centuries B.C.E. was no more than 150,000, within a Palestinian population of perhaps a million.[5] At the core of Judean society was a literate elite, almost entirely confined to Jerusalem and

4. See also Jer 34:9, which, in equating "Hebrew" and "Judean," reflects the merging of "Hebrew" and "Jewish" identities. Jer 34:9 therefore should, like the book of Ezra, probably be dated to the late Persian or Hellenistic periods.

5. See Schwartz 2001, 10; for the statistical calculation, see p. 10 n. 14, with bibliography cited there.

numbering hundreds rather than thousands. Only among these would the notion of a Hebrew literary canon have any meaning. But by the first century about half of the Palestinian population was now formally Jewish. Of these, the number for whom a Hebrew literary canon would have any relevance would include the Samarian elite, for some of whom much of the contents of the largely anti-Samarian Judean canon were unacceptable, though perhaps some (as Schwartz suggested) might have been sympathetic to what they saw as a more "traditional" form of their culture.

The Hellenization (or lack of it) within Judah, as well as the reaction to it, has, I believe, been overemphasized. I favour the view held by the majority at present, that Judah did experience Hellenization and also that it was relatively uncontroversial. The Hasmoneans themselves managed a degree of accommodation to Greek customs while promoting a vigorously independent Jewish state and flourishing temple cult (beyond Palestine, Judaism certainly encountered little difficulty in accommodating to Greek and Roman cultural norms in various ways). The problem perhaps lay elsewhere, in internal disputes about the nature of the true "Judaism." Such an issue has little to do with Hellenism, except that some forms of Judaism adopted various Hellenistic features. More serious was the problem of non-Hellenized Judaisms. An explosion in the nominally Jewish population of the Hasmonean state made worse what had already emerged as a problem for the Hasmoneans and their former allies in the wars against the Seleucid kings. Writings that have usually been understood as having an anti-Hellenistic argument, such as *Jubilees* and the Qumran Scrolls, do not represent any antagonism to Hellenism—at least, we find no explicit criticism of it. Rather, they are concerned with what they regard as the purity of a religion that apparently combined both Mosaic Torah and Enochic mythology, and their targets are Jews who are regarded as impure through improper Torah observance.[6] The Qumran manuscripts do not, admittedly, remark that the perceived widespread impurity and laxity were the result of the increase in Jewish population, but such an increase will certainly have made the matter more critical: but it is possible that the term *gerim* was used by their authors to designate these "new Jews." The writer of *Jubilees* (like the majority of Qumran authors, who wrote in Hebrew as a

6. For a detailed analysis (though not in all respects a convincing conclusion) of these different components, see Boccaccini 1998. If the "Halakhic Letter" (4QMMT) was indeed sent to a Hasmonean ruler (which is probable, though not undisputed), it provides evidence of the writers' attempts, like the Pharisees and Sadducees, to exert their influence over the emerging definition of Judaism.

sign of adherence to Jewish orthodoxy) seeks to conform the patriarchs, and especially Abraham, the father of this larger "Hebrew" population, to a narrower definition of a Torah-observing Jew. He thus seems more clearly to have as a target not Hellenistic customs but a dissolution of what was regarded as Judaism through the incorporation (including especially intermarriage) of populations that were not in their view "Israelite" and did not properly understand or observe its practices: in other words, for the writer of *Jubilees*, "Hebrews" were *not* "Jews" until or unless they were fully observant of the Torah in the manner of the "real" Jews as defined by the writer.[7]

It seems likely that the canon emerged, or was published, in this context as one of a number of instruments for the dissemination and definition of what was "Judaism" and what was not—or at least what was *acceptable* Judaism. Hasmonean influence on what became the "official" canon of Judaism can be detected in a number of its features.

We may begin by noting that the chronological system running from Genesis to Kings was created at this stage. On the chronology in the Masoretic (Judean) Hebrew text (which differs in the Samaritan and Greek versions), the Exodus takes place 2,666 years after Creation (two thirds of a total of 4,000), and the destruction of the First Temple in 3576. Allowing 50 years for the Exile, we arrive in the 4000th year at 163 B.C.E. Allowing for a 70-year exile, however, we arrive at 183, and dating the Second Temple 20 years after the edict of Cyrus gives a date even earlier. However, given the unlikelihood of a precise knowledge of chronology in this era, we should not expect to find arithmetical accuracy, and an approximate coincidence with the rise of the Hasmoneans is sufficient.[8] This "Hasmonean" chronology is reinforced by a number of similar calendrical schemes in writings of this period, as part of the suddenly fashionable sub-genre of "historical apocalypses" that, both pro- and anti-Hasmonean, argued about whether the dynasty heralded the fulfilment of divine promises recorded in the scriptures or a different kind of eschaton in which the wicked (including the rulers) would suffer their deserved punishment.

The book of Daniel, by general consent created in the second century B.C.E. from an originally Aramaic cycle, was almost certainly included in

7. According to Mendels (1992, 44–45), the writer of *Jubilees* was especially concerned with the incorporation of Edom/Idumea into the body of "Israel."

8. The figures are as follows: Flood—1656 (after Creation); Abraham's birth—1946/8 AM; Exodus—2666 AM; First Temple built—3146 AM; First Temple destroyed—3576 AM; Edict of Cyrus *or* Second Temple built—3626 AM (allowing 50 years from the destruction of the First Temple; 3646 if 70 years allowed).

the canon with the blessing, if not the prompting, of the Hasmoneans. New sections were added to the tales, in Hebrew, and the opening chapter also translated into Hebrew, so that the book could be suitable for inclusion in a Hebrew canon. Its prediction of an imminent "fourth kingdom" was understood to point to the Hasmoneans and was changed only after the demise of the dynasty.

Other works that seem to have been included to the new canon include Qoheleth, Ruth and Esther, all among the miscellaneous category of "Writings": it remains uncertain whether these formed part of the former scribal canon—they are works that seem to appeal to a wider reading audience and thus presuppose the kind of readership for which the new canon was intended. Some of these writings may, like Daniel, have carried an obvious political subtext. Nehemiah, as temple restorer, city-builder, governor and founder of the national library (2 Macc 1; 2:13) was an ideal Hasmonean model. Ruth claims that the model king David himself was of partly Moabite descent, challenging those who resented the wider ethnic spread of "Judaism." Indeed, several of the Psalms can be plausibly dated to the Hasmonean era (the Qumran manuscripts suggest a fluid Davidic canon) and the close connection of the figure of David with the cult was a further reinforcement of the Hasmonean adoption of both royal and priestly offices. It seems not unlikely that Hasmonean claims to a Davidic heritage (the Hasmonean kingdom at its largest extent was not much different from the territory said to be ruled by David and Solomon) were, like the calendrical apocalypses mentioned earlier, turned against the Hasmoneans by their opponents and provoking hopes of a future, legitimate ruler who would, unlike the Hasmoneans, actually overcome the Romans. In general, it can be claimed that the entire canon supplied a considerable degree of ideological justification for the dynasty, from the ancestry and land-promise to Abraham, the stories of a previous mighty Judean empire and the prophetic promises of blessing for "Israel" after its long history of reverses and of divine disfavour. It cannot be argued plausibly that most of these writings *emanate*d from the Hasmonean period (though considerable editing may have occurred), though it seems reasonable to suggest that the Judean Hebrew canon was meant to define the newly independent and enlarged "Israel" in ways that suited the Hasmoneans' own image; its creation was therefore by no means an innocent venture. The first book of Maccabees, clearly a Hasmonean propaganda document, and presenting the family of Mattathias in the guise of biblical judges and in terms redolent of biblical language, illustrates just how the dynasty and its supporters exploited the scriptures that it was now encouraging its subject to discover.

Van der Kooij's suggestion (see above) that the Hasmonean refounding of the temple library prompted the creation of an official canon is highly plausible in this context, though in my view more was at stake than merely the re-establishment of a library. The Hasmoneans regarded themselves not only as the restorers of an ancient nation and guardians of its culture, but even viewed themselves as being the fulfilment of its scriptures, just like the writers of the Scrolls (as, for example, the *pesharim* and the *Damascus Document* demonstrate) and, later, the followers of Jesus. It is in this sense that the "publication" of a canon defined and created "Judaism" (as opposed to the pre-Hasmonean cult[s] of Yahweh in Judah, Samaria and in places beyond their borders).

An important aspect of this canon is *linguistic*. If the publication of an account of the history, constitutions and culture of the "new Jews" is to be compared with similar responses to Hellenism in the Near East, it is in this respect anomalous. Manetho, Philo of Byblos and Berossus all wrote in Greek, while their Jewish counterpart, Flavius Josephus, wrote for quite other, specific reasons, though his *Antiquities* was no doubt partly inspired by these other works. The Hasmonean canon was not, as many Jewish writers represented it, for the good of humankind as a whole or of non-Jewish interest, but for entirely internal purposes, and obviously intended to promote knowledge of Hebrew, the "national" language. Of course, when translated into Greek, it fulfilled very well the purposes of the other Hellenistic historiographies. Yet Greek was not its original language.

It was long the scholarly consensus that the language of Judah in the Second Temple period was Aramaic, while written Hebrew continued only in a specific form known as Late Biblical Hebrew, represented mainly by the books of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther and Qoheleth, developing further into Mishnaic Hebrew. However, recent arguments about the dating of other biblical books (in particular the comprehensive analysis by Young, Rezetko and Ehrensvard 2008) and, more importantly, the evidence of Ben Sira and of the Qumran Scrolls, suggest that Hebrew remained a spoken language in Judah, possibly in more than one dialect. There is evidence that the Hasmoneans wished to promote the use of the ancestral Judean language of Hebrew within their kingdom. Their coins even demonstrate an interest in the archaic script (a practice reflected also in some Qumran biblical manuscripts). The first book of Maccabees—as mentioned earlier—was probably written in Hebrew, while 2 Maccabees contains several allusions to the use of Hebrew by devout Jews (τῇ πατρίῳ φωνη, 7:8, 21, 27; 12:37; 15:29). The learning and reading of Hebrew, it seems, was necessary or at least highly

recommended, in order for someone to be an exemplary educated Jew of the kind that the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the *ḥaverim*, the Essenes and those communities behind the Qumran scrolls (if these are not Essenes or even a certain kind of Sadducee) all claimed to be.

The question of linguistic competence in second- to first-century B.C.E. Judah entails consideration also of the degree of knowledge by most Jews of the contents of their scriptures. On this issue there are two opposing schools of thought. The assumption of the majority scholarly opinion is that such knowledge was widespread throughout the late Second Temple period. The other school of thought maintains that most of our evidence for knowledge of the scriptures comes from the literate themselves—the temple and palace scribes of the Persian and Hellenistic era and the rabbis—and does not tell us how far such knowledge spread beyond the elite. This is an important issue, and at its centre is the question of whether the Hebrew canon did in fact ever become anything more than a learned preoccupation, whether its contents were to any meaningful extent disseminated in such a way that rural artisans like Jesus of Nazareth and his followers would have been familiar with it at first hand. How would this have been achieved in a society that was largely illiterate? We know rather little of this, but the essays in Horbury's *Hebrew Study from Ezra to Ben Yehuda* cover the Second Temple period and beyond and offer several suggestions (which there is no space to discuss). Additionally, the reading of Torah may have been undertaken in non-Temple liturgical contexts such as the synagogue, though the existence of such institutions—and their practices—is meagrely attested in Palestine until before the first century C.E. Almost certainly the scriptures were better known in the Greek world, where literacy rates were higher and where these writings were more important in maintaining Jewish identity and cementing Jewish society than in Judah itself, where the Temple cult, and the Temple economy, permeated nearly every aspect of life.

It seems to me that the question of how well or widely the contents of the Hebrew canon were known remains open. I mentioned earlier the probable existence of an Aramaic canon. What Boccaccini calls "Enochic Judaism," with its fallen angels and demons and speculation about the end of the world (what some scholars loosely call "apocalyptic"), was arguably more influential on the writings of the New Testament than the Hebrew canon was. Such elements are significantly absent from the Hebrew canon. The suggestion would seem worth exploring that writings in Aramaic were always better known than those in Hebrew (and this partly explains the production of Aramaic paraphrases such as the

Genesis Apocryphon), even before the introduction of Aramaic translation into the Torah reading cycle of the synagogue.

The suggestion that we owe the "Hebrew Bible"—and its survival—to the Hasmoneans may answer several questions, but it also opens others. The success of the proposed Hasmonean initiative may not, in fact, have extended much beyond the end of the dynasty. But even if such an attempt at "enculturating" (to use the favourite term of Carr 2005) the members of the "new Judaism" and at the same time consolidating the leadership of the priest-kings was only partially successful (and was ultimately attained only in various "rabbinic" forms), the creation of both "Judaism" and the provision of a set of scriptures were arguably aspects of one and the same initiative.

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What Makes a Text Historical? Assumptions behind the Classification of Some Dead Sea Scrolls

George J. Brooke

1. *Introduction*

A series of fragmentary manuscripts from Qumran's Cave 4 has been designated with the label *Historical Text*, sometimes so it seems for want of anything better. But what caused the scholars assigned those compositions to label them in that way? The purpose of this essay in honour of one of the leading historians of the Second Temple period is to explore and expose some of the assumptions behind the classification of some Dead Sea Scrolls as *Historical Texts*. This study is concerned more with genre than with the usefulness of these particular very fragmentary manuscripts for the construction of late Second Temple history.

2. *The Manuscripts*

The label "Historical Text" has been given to the following seven fragmentary manuscripts.

4Q248	Historical Text A (Broshi and Eshel 2000)
4Q578	Historical Text B (Puech 1998)
4Q331	papHistorical Text C (Fitzmyer 2000a)
4Q332	Historical Text D (Fitzmyer 2000b)
4Q333	Historical Text E (Fitzmyer 2000c)
4Q468e	Historical Text F (Broshi 2000)
4Q468f	Historical Text G (Lange 2000)

The use of capital/upper case letters to designate each manuscript indicates that they are all considered to be separate compositions without any overlap with one another. A few words on the content of each set of fragments will be in order.

a. *4Q248 Historical Text A (Broshi and Eshel 2000)*
A single fragment with parts of ten lines of writing, penned in an early Herodian formal hand, has been assigned to 4Q248. Before the publication of its principal edition it had been labelled "Acts of a Greek King" or "Pseudo-History," but the principal editors suggest that it "is a genuine historical composition which is part of an apocalyptic work" (Broshi and Eshel 2000, 192). Line 2 contains mention of Egypt and Greece, line 4 talks of a siege, line 6 describes someone coming to Egypt to sell its land, line 7 mentions the Temple City, line 8 talks of the overthrow of other nations and a return to Egypt, and the content of lines 9 and 10 seems to describe what will happen after the disempowerment of the "holy people," perhaps a return of the children of Israel. Broshi and Eshel suggest that it is most likely that it is Antiochus IV Epiphanes who lies behind the descriptions in the fragment. D. R. Schwartz (2001, 45–56) has agreed but offered an alternative interpretation of the details, giving priority to some of the features of 2 Maccabees and reading 4Q248 against that information. Preferring to retain 1 Maccabees as the principal comparative source, H. Eshel (2008, 14–18) has also agreed both with the general and with the detailed identifications of the principal editors and has elaborated upon them; for him, 4Q248 is a remnant of an apocalyptic work.

While the overall identification of the allusions in 4Q248 with the activities of Antiochus IV is very plausible, the fragmentary character of the data leaves many questions incapable of resolution. Whatever the case, it does seem secure to assert that the tenor of the contents of the fragment changes in lines 9–10: "and when the shattering of the power of the ho[ly] people [comes to an end]/[then shall] all these things [be fulfilled.] The children of[Israel] shall repent[" (Broshi and Eshel 2000, 197). The phraseology in lines 9–10a is restored by the editors from Dan 12:7. The descriptions of events in those two lines as in the future means that what is represented in the fragment as a whole is not a straightforward recitation of events from the past. Indeed, Broshi and Eshel have recognized this clearly and start their commentary on the fragment with the astute comment that "4Q248 is a remnant of a larger composition, which resembles Daniel 11" (2000, 197). 4Q248 lines 9–10 represent the shift from events described under the guise of *vaticinium ex eventu* to predictive prophecy. It is well known that in Dan 11, vv. 21–39 correspond with what can be reconstructed from other sources about the times of Antiochus IV, but vv. 40–45 are predictive of events that never took place. It has even been argued that the author of the *War Rule* knew that Dan 11:40–45 was unfulfilled and deliberately used those verses at the

start of the composition (Flusser 2007, 140–58). Broshi and Eshel (2000, 199) have proposed that the first five lines of 4Q248 are "virtually a pastiche of these Danielic verses" (i.e. Dan 11:21–39). Just as the move in Dan 11 from known history to unfulfilled prediction has enabled scholars to date the book of Daniel after 165 B.C.E., so the similar shift in 4Q248 encourages the principal editors to date its composition to shortly after Antiochus' second invasion of Egypt in 168 B.C.E. On that basis they conclude that "the last editor of the book of Daniel took the phrase found in Dan 12:7 from 4QHistorical Text A" (Broshi and Eshel 2000, 199).

While many scholars have discerned all kinds of historical details lying behind large sections of the book of Daniel, few nowadays would assert that its overall genre was history, in either an ancient or a modern sense. Whatever the case may be concerning the identification of events in the first few lines of the extant fragment of 4Q248, the overall text does indeed seem to belong closely to the kind of writing exemplified in Dan 11–12. It seems to be an apocalyptic text of some kind. If the fragment's principal editors are correct, it might even be a source for the phraseology of Dan 12:7.

All this implies that 4Q248 should be understood, directly or indirectly, as apocalyptic source material for the book of Daniel. In terms of its literary associations, it is closest to other compositions which now survive in the Qumran collection and which seem to lie behind the book of Daniel. These include 4Q242 (Prayer of Nabonidus), 4Q243–245 (Pseudo-Daniel), and 4Q246 (Apocryphon of Daniel). In the *Preliminary Concordance* (Brown et al. 1988) 4Q248 was designated as Pseudo-History. One wonders whether the fact that it is in Hebrew rather than Aramaic has caused it to lose its close association with the other Danielic traditions and to become more overtly "historical." In terms of its survival and inclusion in the Qumran collection, it is further evidence for the ongoing influence of the book of Daniel and its literary forebears in the ideological background of the Qumran community and its parent movement. That influence has to be expressed with nuance, since the apocalyptic worldview of Daniel (see Collins 2005) was combined with several other matters, not least Deuteronomistic covenantal theology. Overall, rather than assigning 4Q248 the somewhat ambiguous designation "Historical Text," it would be better labelled as an apocalypse associated with Daniel literature.

b. *4Q578 Historical Text B (Puech 1998)*

J. Starcky had put together several fragments on the same museum plate with the inventory number 320. É. Puech, with considerable skill, has

distinguished the fragments from one another and provided more or less satisfactory identifications for them. One fragment of four lines, with remnants of a final *nun* in a fifth written supralinearly, contains the name *ptlmys*, once in full, and twice partially. The fragment contains little else other than a possible reading of *bnw*, "his son," in line 3. Puech affirms that the understanding of the complete example of the name in line 2 must remain ambiguous: it could be the name of a Ptolemy or the place-name Ptolemais given to Acre in 261 B.C.E. by Ptolemy II.

Puech (1998, 207–8) appropriately considers three options for the suitable generic classification of the fragment. In the first place he is inclined to rule out that the fragment, with its repetition of the proper name three times, is a scribal exercise, because in his opinion it is unlikely that a scribal exercise would contain a supralinear correction or addition. Secondly, he wonders whether the fragment could have contained a list of a genealogical kind. The possible reading of *bnw*, "his son," in line 3 might encourage this understanding. But Puech's preference is to suggest that the fragment belongs to a document "de type historique."

From dating 4Q578 paleographically to the second half of the second century B.C.E., Puech excludes from consideration references to Ptolemais or to any Ptolemy after about 130 B.C.E. Although all his comments are offered with qualification and great caution, Puech (1998, 207) looks to the middle of the second century to offer a plausible explanation for the references in this small fragment.

> Parmi les événements qui ont pu et dû intéresser au premier plan les members de la Communauté du vivant de la première generation qumranienne et touchant aux premières décennies de la fondation, de 152 à 130 environ, on doit envisager ceux qui so sont produits sous le Prêtre Impie Jonathan (voir 4Q523) et sous Simon son frère. L'on sait par ailleurs l'animosité don't ils furent l'objet de la part du mouvement essénien.

Puech goes through various events as represented in 1 Macc 10–13 in which either Ptolemais or a Ptolemy is mentioned. If the final supralinear *nun* might belong to Jonathan (or even to Simon, Tryphon, Beth-Shan or Sidon), then there are multiple circumstances in the third quarter of the second century B.C.E. which might be reflected in 4Q578. For Puech, attention to those historical circumstances is most likely, given the probable importance of such events for the beginning of the "Essene community."

Puech's task is difficult, but the range and content of his comments disclose his assumptions and predispositions with regard to the consensus about the historical background of the origins of the sectarian

movement reflected in the sectarian scrolls. For Puech, as for many others, that movement is both Essene and based at Qumran from the middle of the second century B.C.E. While both elements may require some nuance, namely, that Essenism was a diverse phenomenon from the outset and that Qumran was possibly not occupied until a generation later, the historical reconstruction offers a context for making some kind of sense of the few words extant in the small fragment of 4Q578 and as such also provide a generic tag.

However, although there are a few references to actual historical figures and events in some of the sectarian compositions found in the Qumran library, the absence from that library of what can be clearly labelled in Jewish or Hellenistic terms as history, must suggest that more caution is required before history in any strictly defined contemporary form is found in the collection. Too little survives of 4Q578 to award it a generic label: "historical text" may be entirely misleading.

c. *4Q331 papHistorical Text C (Fitzmyer 2000a)*

Ten small fragments, in Hasmonean script, are assigned to this manuscript. Joseph Fitzmyer, its principal editor, has noted how its designation has changed over the years: J. T. Milik (1957, 25) associated it with the *mishmarot* texts (4Q320, 4Q321, etc.); Stephen Reed catalogued it first as "papEssene chronicle[a]" (1992, 28) and then as "papHistorical Work[a]" (1993, 78; 1994, 98). Fitzmyer (2000a, 275) has noted that the title given to 4Q331–333 is derived from the catalogue list originally published by Emanuel Tov (1992, 99) where the three manuscripts are labelled "Historical Work," as in Reed's 1993 list. That designation was used again by Emanuel Tov and Stephen Pfann in the catalogues accompanying the Dead Sea Scroll microfiches (1993, 40; 1995, 40). In the principal edition the title is adjusted to "Historical Text." Fitzmyer has also pointed out that the decision by Shemaryahu Talmon (2001, 12–13) to distinguish 4Q331–333 from the *mishmarot* texts proper because they do not mention the priestly courses in the same way caused their separate publication. One suspects that it was this distinction that provoked the renaming of the three fragmentary manuscripts as "chronicle" or as "historical text." Such a suspicion is confirmed by the way these fragments are referred to by Jonathan Ben-Dov and Stéphane Saulnier (2008, 133) as "historical texts with mishmarot notations," and the conclusion offered that these historical texts should be separated from the calendrical texts on both material and contextual grounds. Although the fragmentary character of 4Q331–333 prevents one from being certain

that there was a single, coherent, "annalistic calendar" in several copies (Wise 1994, 221), nevertheless it would seem that the alignment of events and people with priestly courses, as part of a dating system, must indicate the priority being given to the courses in presenting the people and events schematically, rather than that such information about the priestly courses is offered in an arbitrary way in a composition that otherwise deserves the generic label "history": "These compositions are characterized by using the priestly rosters as a calendrical element in order to indicate when certain historical events happened" (García Martínez 1998, 201).

Indeed Fitzmyer (2000a, 275) has declared straightforwardly that "'Historical Text' is used as a title for these fragments because they mention names of rulers in the Hasmonaean dynasty associated with events in ancient Judaea, e.g. Hyrcanus and Salome Alexandra." On that basis Fitzmyer juxtaposes the manuscript with 4Q448 (4QApocryphal Psalm and Prayer), which mentions a king Jonathan, though 4Q448 has never been entitled a "historical text." From these statements it is clear on what grounds this highly fragmentary manuscript has been entitled "historical," but one can still enquire whether that is adequate justification for such a generic classification.

In the most substantial fragment two proper names are preserved, Yoḥanan and Shelamzion (Salome). Fitzmyer takes the first to be a reference to John Hyrcanus I and the second to refer to Salome Alexandra; Atkinson (2007, 132–33) agrees, while Eshel (2008, 137) is uncertain about the identification of Yoḥanan. In addition, in the same fragment the term "priest" is preserved. Little is legible in the other papyrus fragments associated with this manuscript, though in fragment 5 it is highly likely that [Yeḥez]kel is to be restored. This is the name of one of the priestly courses (1 Chr 24:16). Which way round should the text be read? As a list of historical figures who happen to be juxtaposed with some mention of priests and their courses or as a list of priestly courses whose rota of duty is used as the device to chronicle some key people and events? Kenneth Atkinson (2007, 128) supports Michael Wise and insists that the mention of the priestly courses means that this fragmentary manuscript should "be viewed as calendrical works that likely belonged to one or more Mishmarot documents." But the truth of the matter is more honestly expressed by Eshel (2008, 136): they "mention the priestly courses and some historical events. These scrolls are extremely fragmentary and it is impossible to ascertain their precise intent or purpose"; later (2008, 142) he sides with those who see in 4Q331 some kind

of annal, designating all three fragmentary sets of remains as *Annalistic Texts*.

In the contribution on "Shelamzion Alexandra" to the *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Tal Ilan (2000, 873) describes how the references to her are to be found in Cave 4 Calendrical Document C[a] (4Q322) and C[e] (4Q324b), but this is clearly a double error, confusing the *mishmarot* designation of the *Preliminary Concordance* (Brown et al. 1988) with the designation *Calendrical Document* and then assigning the wrong Cave 4 manuscript numbers in the light of that mis-designation. Given all the lists of manuscripts that had been published well before the appearance of the *Encyclopedia*, it is surprising that this was not corrected. What it indicates, however, is the reluctance of scholars like Ilan to move the fragmentary occurrences of historical names into compositions for which their presence becomes constitutive.

It is well known that priests produce lists. While agreeing with Eshel's caution, stated above, it is most likely that 4Q331 is indeed some kind of annal, even an annalistic calendar, as Michael Wise proposed. To say more is difficult, though building on the suggestions of Wise and others, Kenneth Atkinson (2007, 125) has proposed that 4Q331, 4Q332, 4Q333 and 4Q468e are all copies of "portentous calendars" written to commemorate the downfall of their Hasmonean adversaries.

In this discussion of genre it is necessary to discern what might be put simplistically as a difference between primary and secondary data. The designation of 4Q331 as "Historical" seems most likely based on the presence of two names that can be reasonably securely identified with actual figures of the late second of early first centuries B.C.E. This approach is to align a text like that contained on 4Q331 with a coin, seal or some other artefact that might contain the name of an historical personage. Such artefacts are usually contemporary with those named, even if they survive after their demise. But for those who analyse texts and attempt to give them names according to generic categories, "historical" is a genre label that defines secondary data, namely, how particular authors have constructed one or more figure or event, usually of the past, for their own purposes, purposes which can fall within a broad range, though based on a modern appreciation of the function of historiography in the ancient and classical worlds, of which Jewish historiography was a part.

The debate about the suitable designation of a composition such as 4Q331 should not be determined solely by its references to known historical figures. The debate should concern whether or not what can be discerned in 4Q331 as a literary whole seems to reflect some kind of

historiographical genre. In other words, from a maximalist perspective the genre issue is whether annals or annalistic calendars are some kind of history writing, in a full sense; Wise has argued strongly, using Cicero, that these kinds of chronicles are the kinds of written materials that "precede history" (1994, 221). From a minimalist perspective the lack of enough information for the modern reader to be certain about the genre of 4Q331 at least leaves the designation of the composition as historical without adequate warrant.

d. *4Q332 Historical Text D (Fitzmyer 2000b)*

The story of the naming of 4Q332 (Fitzmyer 2000b, 281) is very similar to that of 4Q331. Tov's 1992 list seems to have been pivotal in causing Reed to adjust his designation. The three small fragments assigned to this manuscript are inscribed in an early Herodian hand. In fragment 1, line 2, and in fragment 3, line 3, in contexts outlining various dates, mention is made of Jedaiah, a common priestly name but here one of the priestly courses (1 Chr 24:7). Just possibly there is a reference to either *gw*]*ʾym* or *kty*]*ʾym* in line 4; Fitzmyer (2000b, 283) marginally prefers the latter, a preference that also informs his restoration in fragment 3, line 2: *rʾš hkt*]*yʾym hrg š*[("the leader of the Kitt]im killed S["). In fragment 2, lines 2–3 contain various dating formulae which the author seems concerned to align with one another. In the other extant phrases there are mentions of Arabs (probably in line 1), Salome Alexandra (line 4) and a rebellious Hyrcanus (line 6) whom Fitzmyer (2000b, 285), following Wise (1994, 210–11), identifies with Hyrcanus II.

As with 4Q331, the composition seems to be written from a priestly calendrical perspective, a perspective that does not have any identifiable sectarian elements to it. It is difficult to explain the juxtaposition of historical figures and events with the priestly courses on any other ground. It is hard not to agree with Wise (2003, 72) that 4Q332 "was a calendrical work incorporating references to selected historical events." Furthermore, the description of Hyrcanus as involved in rebelling encourages the view that the priestly author supported Aristobulus in the civil strife of the 60s B.C.E., so that whatever people and events are being aligned with the run of things in the Temple are not presented in an entirely neutral fashion—which goes against the impression that "the preserved fragments offer no value judgments concerning the events mentioned" (García Martínez 1998, 201). As to conclusions about the genre of 4Q332, no more can be stated than has already been said in relation to 4Q331.

e. *4Q333 Historical Text E (Fitzmyer 2000c)*
As with the naming of 4Q331 and 4Q332, the same story applies to 4Q333. To 4Q333 are assigned two small fragments of skin that contain writing in a "semi-formal Herodian hand" (Fitzmyer 2000c, 287). Fragment 1 contains the small remains of the end of eight lines, in four of which there seems to be reference to the priestly courses, as in 4Q331 and 4Q332, but this time with reference to Jahezkel (1 Chr 24:16) and Gamul (1 Chr 24:17); in lines 4 and 7 the phrase *hrg ʾmlyws* ("Aemilius killed") is extant twice. In fragment 2 all that survives reads *ʾyš yhwdy* ("a Jewish man"). It is widely agreed that the historical reference is to the massacre of one or more people by M. Aemilius Scaurus, quaestor under Pompey. From 65–61 B.C.E. he was the proquaestor of Syria and was put in charge of Syria and Judea by Pompey. Though Josephus does not explicitly link Scaurus with the aftermath of the fall of Jerusalem in 63 B.C.E., Scaurus seems to have become embroiled in the civil strife between Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, the details of which have been much discussed (e.g. Wise 1994, 211–18; Schwartz 2000, 9–10; Atkinson 2007, 138–42; Eshel 2008, 138–42). Important for our purposes is that once again events are related in relation to the service of the priestly courses, implying that these fragments are part of a composition like that to be found in 4Q331 and 4Q332. Of 4Q333 Atkinson (2007, 128–29) concludes that it "should also be viewed as part of a Mishmarot composition similar to 4QMishmarot D in which the author chose to document and commemorate events, including the use of double dates, with reference to the priestly courses." 4Q331, 4Q332, and 4Q333 may all contain historical information, but they are all annalistic texts. The same comments on genre as have been made for 4Q331 and 4Q332 apply to 4Q333.

f. *4Q468e Historical Text F (Broshi 2000)*
To 4Q468e is assigned a single small fragment in a mixed semi-cursive script with parts of three lines extant, in only two of which are there legible words. Line 2 reads: *h*]*rwg ʾt rwb hgbr*[*ym* ("ki]lling the multitude of me[n"); line 3 reads:]*pwtlʾys whnpš ʾšr* .[The interpretation of the line is disputed. In a preliminary publication Broshi (1998) proposed that the Hebrew should be translated as ("]Potlais and the people that ["). He understood the proper name as a Hellenized form of the Hebrew Putiel (cf. Exod 6:25) and he proposed that the Potlais mentioned in the text could be the same figure as the Ptollas of Josephus' *Ant*. 17.219, a courtier and friend of the tetrarch Archelaus; he further wondered whether the fragment alluded to the massacre of protesters in the temple perpetrated by Archelaus in 4 B.C.E. That preliminary study provoked

three responses, by W. Horbury (1999), D. Schwartz (1999), and J. Strugnell (1999), all of which suggested that the name should be read as Peitholaus and the text understood as a reference to the activities of a Jewish general of that name active in the middle of the first century B.C.E. Peitholaus first supported the Romans in punishing the rebels behind Aristobulus, then he changed sides, ending up himself being executed by the Romans (Josephus, *War* 1.162–63, 172, 180; *Ant*. 14.84–85, 93–95, 120). In the principal edition, Broshi (2000) seems to have been unable to take account of these suggestions and repeated his earlier identification. Several scholars have supported Horbury, Schwartz and Strugnell (e.g. Wise 2003, 79–80; Atkinson 2007, 143; Eshel 2008, 142–44).

Whatever the identification of the figure concerned, Broshi (2000, 408–9) has offered some helpful and detailed thoughts on the genre of 4Q468e by comparing it with the other known texts that contain proper names of historical figures. On the basis of the few words that survive he has declared boldly (2000, 409) that "4Q468e is certainly not a history book, in the style of the Maccabees. It is unlikely that the Qumran 'libraries' would have included such a work among their books which were exclusively of a religious nature. It may seem that the fragment belongs to the genre of calendars recording disastrous days, which can be called 'portentous calendars'." Atkinson (2007, 148) has agreed with this generic label: "portentous calendar." Eshel has preferred to align 4Q468e with 4Q331–333 as all copies of the same *Annalistic Text*. Although 4Q468e seems to deal with disastrous events, Broshi is inclined to associate the composition with *Megillat Taʿanit*, a calendrical list of positive historical events from the Hasmonean and Roman periods in month order from Nisan to Adar, events whose commemoration was not to be linked to public fasting. In her detailed treatment of that composition V. Noam (2003, 340) has concluded not unsuitably that the text "does not belong to the genre of historical writing," whatever she might mean by the generic term. If the comparison with 4Q331–333 and 4Q468e is worth anything, the same would seem to be the case: they are not historical writing but probably some kind of calendrical or annalistic compositions. There is no corroborative evidence to identify it as part of a pesher as Strugnell wondered (1999, 137).

g. *4Q468f Historical Text G (Lange 2000)*

In current lists of manuscripts from the Qumran caves the last to be assigned a title with "Historical" in it is 4Q468f. This consists of one fragment with the ends of six lines preserved, probably from the bottom

of a column. In the *Preliminary Concordance* (e.g. Brown et al. 1988, 2.562) this fragment is labelled as "pshist A," "Pseudo-Historical Text A"; in Tov's (1992, 102) list it is not differentiated, but described as part of an "Apocryphon?" The extant phrases of the fragment include "the sons of Gilead," "the land," "Edom" (or "Adam'), and "seven." Lange (2000, 412) takes forward the original designation of the fragment and suggests on the basis of such content that "4Q468f preserves the remnants of a historical text." Such a suggestion is surely no more than a shot in the dark.

Apart from the numeral "seven," the collocation of the vocabulary in this fragment is best aligned either with Ps 60:9–11 (repeated in Ps 108:9–11) or with Amos 1:3–8 (Gilead in the first oracle; Edom in the second) and 1:11–13 (Edom in the fourth oracle; Gilead in the fifth). It is with poetry and prophetic oracles that the text is most likely to find generic resonance, not historical writing of any kind. This is borne out by the fact that of the two other occurrences of Gilead in the non-biblical scrolls found in the Qumran caves, one is in the poorly preserved 4Q171, fragment 13, which contains an interpretation of either Ps 60:8–9 or Ps 108:8–9 (the other is in the representation of Deut 2:36 in 4Q364 24a-c, 12, which is akin to a scriptural citation). Here again, the occurrence of a proper name has caused a modern scholar to make a generic suggestion that is highly unlikely. Proper names, whether of places or people, can be used in almost any genre. What is all the more surprising is that Lange in his principal edition of 4Q468f has made no reference to the other uses of Gilead in the non-scriptural scrolls.

As for reading *ʾdm* as "Edom" rather than "Adam" or "man," while the context might suggest this, all the other certain occurrences of Edom in the non-scriptural scrolls are written *plene* as *ʾdwm*, making it possible that there is a reference to Adam here. If so, then the other occurrences of Adam in the non-scriptural scrolls from the Qumran collection would indicate that a non-historical context would be preferable for understanding 4Q468f. In fact, it is worth noting that, of the few certain occurrences of Adam, one is in 4Q171 (1+3–4 iii 2), in the same composition where Gilead is interpreted in some way. Again, Lange makes no reference to this possible collocation.

Overall, it would seem that "Historical Text" is a thoroughly inappropriate and misleading designation for this small fragment. Two place names have prompted a generic label that says more about the assumptions of the editors than about the text, and the move from pseudo-history to "historical" reveals much.

3. *Historiography in the Qumran Manuscripts*

a. *Types of Historiography in the Dead Sea Scrolls*

The problematic nature of the use of *Historical Text* as a genre label for these few small fragments can be brought into focus even more clearly. A first task is to outline and describe the various types of historiography that do actually occur in slightly more extensive forms among the scrolls.

It is intriguing to note that of all the scriptural books that are preserved in the Qumran collection, apart from 1–2 Samuel, the historical books proper, Joshua, Judges, 1–2 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles, Ezra–Nehemiah, are the least well represented. What has survived of the books of Samuel might indicate that few grand conclusions should be drawn from this paucity of evidence, not least since it could be partly the result of accident. Nevertheless, the quotation and allusion to these historical works in the sectarian literature is also rather limited. For example, for the *Damascus Document* J. G. Campbell (1995, 179–82) notes nothing from those works that make up the so-called "Deuteronomistic History" and only a handful of references to Ezra 9, Neh 7, 9 and 10 and 2 Chr 36. All those works were evidently known, but they do not form a significant part of the ideology of the sectarian movement, the remnants of whose manuscript collection were found in the eleven caves. There may be a variety of reasons for this, among which might be the Hasmonean interest in some of those works, particularly Chronicles, for their own ideological purposes (Brooke 2007b).

As in their scriptures, so in the Qumran library there are many compositions with elements that might be defined as historical or historiographical, but "not a single one of the thousands of Qumran fragments detached from hundreds of manuscripts can be classified as historical" (Vermes 2005, 29). In the *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* there is no article on history-writing or historiography. Nobody would deny that there is some historical data to be gleaned from both the sectarian and non-sectarian compositions found in the Qumran caves, but the general consensus is that there are no remains in the caves that merit the generic label *History* in either the classical or modern senses. The historiography to be found in the scrolls is rich and varied (Brooke 2007a): references to Israel's past, often with a view to its use in the construction of sectarian identity, occur in many genres such as exhortations, hymns, and legal texts. In *pesher* the unfulfilled past revelation is interpreted atomistically to address and describe the present, usually in a veiled and ambiguous way. In several genres history is presented in a periodized form: *Ages of Creation* offers such divine ordering in one way, *11QMelchizedek* refers

to it in another, *Jubilees* writes it into the tradition in yet another way. In those compositions there is the implication that things are reaching a climax of some sort. In addition there are various lists: genealogies of various kinds, lists of false prophets, annalistic texts. Historiography in the Qumran collection is of a sort other than works like 1 Maccabees or the military and political histories of Greco-Roman writers, including Josephus.

b. *"Historical" because They May Be of Use to Modern Historians*

It seems as if several, if not all, of the seven fragmentary compositions considered briefly above have been labelled as "historical" because they are considered as possibly of use to modern historians. There has been much debate, especially in relation to the so-called history of Israel, about what constitutes responsible history writing. Among the elements of responsibility are the careful and sensitive handling of source materials, which in the first place should be understood, so far as is possible, in their own terms, whether they are part of someone's Bible or materials such as the writings of Josephus (Grabbe 2000, 120–28). As Rendtorff (2000, 206) has stressed for the Old Testament, "Der Text selbst ist mehr und vor allem etwas anderes als eine Quelle historischer Informationen."

Lester Grabbe has written much of a pragmatic kind about how in particular the history of the Second Temple period can be written. "But when all is said and done, most historians have a positivistic goal: they are trying to get at the question of 'what actually happened' and do not regard that as an absurd goal. They are trying to reconstruct a particular historical entity, whether of the recent or remote past. For most historians, this is what 'doing history' is about" (Grabbe 1997, 19–20). This definition of the task of the historian allows us to see that for the most part those fragments from the Qumran Caves that have been labelled as "historical" have been given their designation largely because they are seen to be useful to the historian or the historical interests of the Qumran scholar. The fragmentary compositions are not being taken seriously on their own terms.

It is from that historian's perspective, the desire to describe "what actually happened," that several scholars have used these texts. For example, Michael Wise (2003, 65–81) lists in chronological order the 31 items from all the compositions that mention a recognizable place, person or process, from the high priesthood of Onias III in 174 B.C.E. (4Q245 I.9) to the plunder of Jerusalem in 37 B.C.E. (1QpHab IX.4–7). Some of Wise's historical identifications may be challenged, but he is clearly referring to a wide range of compositions of various genres. Or

again, Geza Vermes, who has had a very longstanding interest (e.g. 1953, 5–29) in the history of the Qumran community and of Jewish history in the three centuries before the fall of the temple, has offered (2007) a survey of all the proper names in the compositions found in the Qumran caves to show that the parameters of the construction of a history of the Qumran community fall within the second and first centuries B.C.E. Yet again, Kenneth Atkinson (2007, 145–47) has listed all the non-biblical proper names in the Qumran texts to argue somewhat arbitrarily that "the formative years of the Qumran community should be situated approximately from 76 B.C.E. to ca. 51 B.C.E." In most detail Hanan Eshel (2008) has considered all the historical allusions in the sectarian and non-sectarian compositions found in the Qumran caves.

From this perspective the compositions from the Qumran caves that have been labelled as "Historical" fall into three categories. In the first place there are some compositions, like 4Q248 and 4Q321–333, whose content may genuinely assist with the better understanding of the history of the period. Though there is still a large amount of creative imagination that is required from the scholar, it is possible to use such texts to contribute to a better sketch of various historical circumstances. In a second sub-group can be put fragments, like 4Q578, that may well contain the name of a historical person or place but which remain highly ambiguous. The use of such material for historical reconstruction depends upon its juxtaposition with other source materials; it is those other materials that permit the modern reader to resolve some of the ambiguity present in the data. 4Q578 is an example of this kind of ambiguous fragment; having dated it paleographically, Puech resolves its ambiguity by setting it alongside the broader context of Essenism in the second century B.C.E. That contextual juxtaposition may itself be open to challenge, but it is a possible though subjective framework offered by one interpreter. In a third group are those compositions in which there may well be a proper name of a place or person, but that name or place cannot be given a historical context with any certainty at all. 4Q468f is an example of such a fragment. Its own internal juxtaposition of the ambiguous *ʾdm* with Gilead encourages a particular, though far from certain, interpretation of *ʾdm* as Edom; beyond that the best comparative texts are in the Psalms and the prophets. This fragment does not contain historical information and is of no direct use to the historian, though it may indicate what poetic or prophetic traditions remained of concern to those who penned the fragment, or who copied or owned it.

c. *Not "Historical" because They are Akin to Ancient Historiography*
When one looks briefly at the Jewish literature of the late Second Temple period that has been considered under the label of historiography, compositions from the Qumran library, whether sectarian or not, are largely absent. For example, the revised edition of Schürer's *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (Schürer 1986, 180–86), for literature composed in Hebrew or Aramaic, has listed under "Historiography" 1 Maccabees, the history of John Hyrcanus, and the work of Josephus, though it is also suggested (1986, 186) that there are four types of Jewish historical document in this period: genealogies, *Megillat Ta<anit*, *pesharim*, and *m. Aboth* 1. For literature composed in Greek the same compendium avoids the label "historiography" and speaks sweepingly of "prose literature about the past" (1986, 505–58: Demetrius, Eupolemus, 2 Maccabees, Joseph and Aseneth, *Testament of Job*, etc.), some of which might more closely resemble some forms of Greco-Roman historiography than others. Developing and summarizing earlier work (1984, 157–232), under the title of "Jewish Historiography" H. Attridge (1986, 311–43) included fragmentary Greco-Jewish historians, the Maccabean histories, Philo and Josephus. In Nicklesburg's 2005 survey of *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah* the system of classification is both historical and literary, but there is not even an entry for "history" or "historiography" in the extensive index.

Since so much in the Qumran literary collection is related in one way or another to scriptural and other authoritative materials, it is not surprising that the problems that scholars have addressed for several generations in relation to the historical purposes of scriptural texts should persist in the literature from the Qumran caves. In considering the views of E. Bikerman and A. Momigliano on why most of late Second Temple and early rabbinic Judaism is ahistorical, Vermes (2005, 29) has concluded that "Qumran historiography…constitutes a transitional phase from a prophetic presentation of events to a quasi-prophetic exegesis of biblical texts in the form of the Dead Sea *pesher* literature. For those 'historians', the true meaning of the occurrences of their time was to be sought in the mysterious significance, revealed by God to the Teacher of Righteousness, of divinely inspired predictions uttered in the past."

In addition, it is clear that many significant studies on ancient history-writing or on the historiography of antiquity have had as their primary focus Greco-Roman sources which have had their own distinctive cultural agenda, whether as histories proper or as biographies. Several scholars of the Hebrew Bible have taken these Greco-Roman historians seriously, particularly in a new wave of discussion over the last thirty

years or more; scholars of Josephus have also occupied themselves with suitable comparative texts; and New Testament scholars have also been interested in the same classical writers in their attempts at defining the Gospels and Acts.

In the opening of his work Herodotus has provided what has become a standard definition of history writing: "I, Herodotus of Halicarnassus, am here setting forth my history, that time may not draw the color from what man has brought into being, nor those great and wonderful deeds, manifested by both Greeks and barbarians, fail of their report, and, together with all this, the reason why they fought one another" (Grene 1987, 33). Lucian (second century C.E.) has also played a significant part in generic definition through his treatise *How to Write History*. W. C. van Unnik (1979) summarized Lucian's work in a list of ten "standard rules" for the writing of "hellenistic historiography," which may be summarized as follows: (1) noble subject; (2) public benefit; (3) lack of bias/partisanship; (4) fitting beginning and end; (5) collection of material; (6) selection and variety; (7) disposition and order; (8) vividness of narration; (9) topographical details; and (10) speeches suitable to speaker and occasion. Although there may be some considerable irony in Lucian's presentation (cf. Alexander 2007, 288), a "noble subject" in Greek and Roman antiquity "was one that allowed the historian to deal with the public lives and vicissitudes of states and peoples on the grand scale" (Alexander 2007, 289), and history was largely political history, especially the description of war.

Though the Qumran community and the wider movement of which it was a part may have been interested in the construction of a quasi-historical rhetorical polemic against their enemies (Atkinson 2004), it was not concerned with the writing of history that might emulate the ideals of Herodotus or accord with the prescriptions of Lucian. As has been noted above, its concerns are largely exegetical and chronistically schematic: they are theological and eschatological concerns, rather than concerns that are expressed in the causal explanations of the narratives of political and military history.

4. *Conclusion*

In considering the seven fragmentary manuscripts that have been labelled as *Historical Text* this brief analysis has attempted to discover why such a label was thought appropriate in each case and to expose some of the assumptions behind such generic description. It can be recognized fairly easily that any use of the label *Historical Text* that might imply that these

fragments contained parts of histories akin to other Jewish or non-Jewish histories of the period is indeed unwarranted. The modern yearning to know what happened in Judea in the two or three centuries before the Roman destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. must not lead to a distortion of the data or emasculation of the evidence. Fortunately, there are sound and reliable historians like Lester Grabbe to guide us all in the suitable historical reading of the remains.

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