What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?

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One Size Does Not Fit All

Observations on the Different Ways That Chronicles Dealt with the Authoritative Literature of Its Time

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Introduction

The present volume evolved out of an EABS research program on Israel and the Production and Reception of Authoritative Books in Judah/Yehud in the Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods.[1] We keep using the term *authoritative* (hereafter, for the sake of simplicity, authoritative), but what do we mean by authoritative in this context? Which essential attributes did the relevant historical communities (or at least, their literati) associate with the books in their repertoire[2] that they considered authoritative? Or to phrase it better perhaps, what functional meaning did the word *authoritative* have in their thinking?

Of course, these questions would be meaningless if the early communities did not have such a concept. To be sure, their discourse did not include a term that can be easily translated as or is closely related to *authoritative* in English. However, historians, particularly historians of intellectual discourse can correctly—and at times should—ascribe concepts to people who may not have a clear, univocal word to express the concepts, even if only for heuristic purposes.[3]

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1. Diana Edelman and I cochair this research program.

2. It should be stressed that "books" per se were not the only authoritative "item" in society. Ideological constructions about, among others, YHWH, Israel, gender roles, social hierarchies, and spatial differentiation (for instance, dealing with cultic installations) were all authoritative in society. In addition, an array of social memories and sites of memory, including authoritative figures of the past were clearly in existence. The focus here on "books" is due to the fact that these ideological constructions and interrelated memories found their way, as expected in a text-centered society, into books. In fact, much of what we intellectual historians can learn about that society is based on the traces of these ideological constructions/memories that were left in books.

3. On the general issues associated with this statement, see G. Prudovsky, "Can We Ascribe to Past Thinkers Concepts They Had No Linguistic Means to Express?" *History and Theory* 36 (1997) 15–31 and bibliography.

There can be no doubt that the literati mentioned above (and to a substantial extent, most likely, the community in which they lived as well) considered some texts to be foundational. These were viewed as "godly" texts or as texts that convey "godly" instructions, which is another way of stating that they were "godly" texts. Their teachings were considered central to what (their ideological concept of) "Israel" was. Some of these texts led to substantial legal exegesis, which is proof positive that they functioned as what we may call *Scripture*.[4] Most of these books, as a whole, shaped a "national" history,[5] which was essential for the construction of a shared social memory of the community and its literati. Without this particular shared memory, the concept of *Israel* as they knew it could not have existed. This memory also provided mental places to visit and remember. Those who read and reread (or were read) the relevant books visited these mental places. Their shared readings, imagination, and mental worlds bound them together and to the ancestors and future descendants with whom they identified and whose experiences, sites, and events they vicariously experienced through the reading of these books. All in all, this repertoire of authoritative books provided the "text" for a community that saw itself as "text-centered."[6] Needless to say, no community can construe itself as "text-centered" if it does not possess a "text" around which to be centered.

Some of the basic traits of the authoritative repertoire of late Yehud are clear. For instance, these were YHWH-centered and Jerusalem-centered

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4. E.g., M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985); for a particular case, see my "Revisiting 'Boiling in Fire' in 2 Chr 35.13 and Related Passover Questions Text, Exegetical Needs, Concerns, and General Implications," in *Biblical Interpretation in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. Isaac Kalimi and Peter J. Haas; LHBOTS 439; London: T. & T. Clark, 2006) 238–50.

5. The term *national* is used in this essay for the sake of simplicity. Obviously it points at an ethno-cultural social group (as imagined by their members) in antiquity. There is no doubt that there were collective sociocultural(/ethnic) identities in antiquity. Those who "belonged" to them identified with them and imagined and re-imagined them; and as they did, they kept setting boundaries around the group and undermining them. This said, these colective social identities are not the "nations" that began to develop in relatively recent history.

6. These texts included not only the pentateuchal books but also the so-called Deuteronomistic History, the prophetic books, Psalms, and wisdom literature, though not necessarily or in all cases *identical* to their (proto-)MT versions or the present versions. It is worth stressing that these texts were authoritative not by themselves but as part of a repertoire of authoritative texts informing each other. For instance, the so-called Deuteronomistic History informed the pentateuchal texts and turned them into Jerusalem/ Jerusalem temple–centered texts. I have written elsewhere about the interrelatedness of this repertoire: "Towards an Integrative Study of the Production of Authoritative Books in Ancient Israel," in *The Production of Prophecy: Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud* (ed. D. V. Edelman and E. Ben Zvi; London: Equinox, 2008) 15–28.

books, written in Hebrew, particularly SBH.[7] These and similar traits contribute to our knowledge of which qualities were preferred and which were not within the set of authoritative books but do not reveal much about what being authoritative may have actually meant within the discourse of late Persian or early Hellenistic Yehud/Judah. In which ways, for instance, were books that were considered authoritative read, studied, interpreted, redacted, emulated, and to be sure, appropriated? For periods later than the period addressed here, the evidence that may be gathered from Josephus[8] and Qumranic texts provides a solid starting point for this type of study. But what about earlier times?

One of the most promising research avenues for answering these questions is to look at the ways in which books composed in and for late Persian or early Hellenistic communities read and used the books that were considered authoritative. Several "late" books in the HB used and evoked books that were authoritative for their intended and primary readerships (e.g., Ezra–Nehemiah, Jonah).[9] However, the book of Chronicles is the most prominent candidate for this type of research since one can trace the way in which it worked with and reworked its sources, which clearly included many texts that were considered authoritative by the community.[10]

The Chronicler was certainly imagined by the implied and primary readerships of the book of Chronicles[11] as one who was aware of the existence and authority that the source texts carried in the community, just

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7. I have written elsewhere about Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH) as a marker of "authoritativeness": "The Communicative Message of Some Linguistic Choices," in *A Palimpsest: Rhetoric, Ideology, Stylistics and Language Relating to Persian Israel* (ed. E. Ben Zvi, D. V. Edelman, and F. Polak; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2009) 269–90.

8. On the way in which Josephus dealt with "the twenty-two books, containing the record of all time, which are rightly trusted" (i.e., his authoritative texts; citation from *Ag. Ap.* 1.38 [trans. J. Barclay; Leiden: Brill, 2007]), see, for instance, L. H. Feldman and G. Hata, eds., *Josephus, the Bible and History* (Leiden: Brill, 1989); L. H. Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation of the Bible* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); idem, *Studies in Josephus' Rewritten Bible* (JSJS; Leiden: Brill, 1998); C. Begg, *Josephus' Account of the Early Divided Monarchy (AJ 8,212–420): Rewriting the Bible* (BETL 108; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 1993); idem, *Josephus' Story of the Later Monarchy: (AJ 9,1–10,185)* (BETL 145; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 2000).

9. To which, one may add Joel and perhaps Ezekiel.

10. Cf. Z. Talshir, "Several Canon-Related Concepts Originating in Chronicles," *ZAW* 111 (2001) 386–403.

11. By "the Chronicler," I refer to the implied author of Chronicles that was construed by the intended and primary readerships of this book. All implied authors are constructed by a community of readers. The latter see them as the "communicators" whose voice they hear as they read the book. To reconstruct the community's or at least the literati's viewpoint on "authoritativeness," one must focus on *their* Chronicler— that is, the implied author of the book that they construed as they read Chronicles.

as the primary readers of Chronicles were. To imagine otherwise, would have been tantamount to setting themselves and the Chronicler outside "Israel" as they understood it. It is in this context that the constant use and reshaping of the existing authoritative texts by the Chronicler becomes so important for research endeavors envisaged in this essay. It is in this context that Chronicles serves as a prominent resource (and likely, the most prominent resource) for reconstructing the "operative" meaning/s that the concept *authoritative* held within the relevant community and its text-centered literati.

Three potential objections must be addressed before we embark on this enterprise. The first is that, although Chronicles often refers overtly to written works as a rhetorical device to strengthen the case for the validity of its claims, these works not only do not seem to be the authoritative books in the repertoire of the community but also may not have existed at all (e.g., "the records of the prophet Shemaiah and of the seer Iddo," 2 Chr 12:15). This objection does not hold water. To be sure, and unsurprisingly, Chronicles followed the well-attested practice of rhetorical references to written sources in historiographical works.[12] It does not follow this, however, that the Chronicler or the target readership of Chronicles would have failed to consider authoritative the books at the core of the repertoire of the text-centered community in Yehud (e.g., pentateuchal books). Not only would such a position have placed both the Chronicler and the readership outside the community, but Chronicles continually assumes, alludes to, cites, paraphrases, rephrases, (and above all) evokes, informs, and is informed by these authoritative books.[13]

The second potential objection is that Chronicles may reflect the positions of only a (minor?) segment of the literati. Even if this were the case, at least one could say that Chronicles demonstrates how one particular voice (the Chronicler) dealt with authoritative texts. This voice was accepted by at least some significant group in the relevant society. Moreover, since Chronicles was read and reread and eventually transmitted from generation to generation, one can reasonably assume that its voice was within the spectrum of what was accepted by the relevant community/ies. One can reasonably assume that it was included within the works they considered worthy of being read and reread and that reading it was deemed

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12. On these systems of citing written works in ancient historiography, see K. M. Stott, *Why Did They Write This Way? Reflections on References to Written Documents in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Literature* (LHBOTS 492; New York: T. & T. Clark, 2008); see M. Leuchter's review of this book in *JR* 89 (2009) 401–2.

13. One may add also that Chronicles engages in exegetical (including legal exegetical) activities that presuppose a concept of Scripture to be interpreted. For examples, see pp. 26–31 below.

to contribute to "proper" socialization and inner social cohesion, either directly or indirectly. Moreover, it is doubtful that Chronicles reflects only a segment or a minor segment of the late Persian or early Hellenistic group of literati centered around Jerusalem and its own unique discourse. In fact, it is even difficult to imagine multiple separate intellectual discourses at that time, given the small number of literati in Jerusalem.[14]

The third potential objection is methodological. Clearly no analysis of a book can provide *direct* access to modes of reading—either the methods of the readers of Chronicles or the methods that these readers associated with the Chronicler as a reader of their authoritative books.[15] This is true; however, this objection does not address the question of *indirect* (and reconstructed) access to these modes of reading. Given that the implied and primary readers of Chronicles considered the Chronicler a reliable (and "godly") communicator,[16] our analysis of the use and mode of reading authoritative books by the Chronicler can provide us with a good approximation of the community's (or a large segment of the community's) approach to these matters.[17]

In sum, the approach advanced here is heuristically sound for the purpose of exploring these questions: What did *authoritative* mean to the Chronicler? How did the Chronicler read, use, reflect on, and appropriate the authoritative repertoire that existed among the literati? What did the concept of *authoritative book* actually mean within a community of ancient readers in late Persian/early Hellenistic Judah/Yehud, and why did they accept the Chronicler as a reliable, "godly" character?

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14. I discussed these matters in "The Concept of Prophetic Books and Its Historical Setting," in *The Production of Prophecy* (ed. D. V. Edelman and E. Ben Zvi; London: Equinox, 2009) 73–95; idem, "Towards an Integrative Study."

15. The implied author that the intended and primary readerships construed when reading the book; that is, the Chronicler was more likely imagined as male than female, given the predominant distribution of gender roles and occupations in Yehud.

16. If this were not the case, they would have failed to accept Chronicles as book worthy of reading and rereading and as an important source of theological/ideological messages.

17. Given the definition of the Chronicler used here, it is worth noting that one cannot have direct access to the construed implied author of the primary readerships of Chronicles or of any book in ancient Israel, but one may approximate the world of the primary readership and its construction of the implied author by focusing on the intended readership of the book. After all, had there been a large gap separating the intended and primary readerships, the book would not have been accepted initially. For a discussion of the methodological issues at stake, see my "Is the Twelve Hypothesis Likely from an Ancient Reader's Perspective?" in *Two Sides of a Coin: Juxtaposing Views on Interpreting the Book of the Twelve/the Twelve Prophetic Books,* by E. Ben Zvi and J. D. Nogalski (with an introduction by T. C. Römer; Analecta Gorgiana 201; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2009) 47–96, esp. pp. 54–63.

Given that a comprehensive analysis of the myriad of relevant examples within Chronicles that one may bring up is well beyond the scope of this or any chapter, the more practical and heuristically helpful approach is to focus on *general* trends as they apply to three, at least potentially, different types of authoritative texts: (a) narratives, (b) laws, and (c) prophetic texts and psalms literature.[18] In the discussion below, examples will be used only to help us discern and shed light on these trends.

Chronicles and Authoritative Narratives: Observing Some Central Trends

Chronicles deals with, cites, and appropriates numerous texts from Samuel and Kings. These matters have been studied in detail in numerous works. For the present purposes, it suffices to say that Chronicles recognized Kings and Samuel as classical sources that set the pattern for historical writing in the monarchic period and sources that it could not fully compete with or imitate.[19] Chronicles explicitly presents itself as less authoritative than Samuel and Kings (see the use of LBH),[20] takes for granted the basic structure of Samuel–Kings as regnal accounts, and presents itself on many occasions as clearly derivative because it actually "copies" much of their material.

But how did the Chronicler actually deal with the historical narratives in Samuel and Kings, and what can we infer from his dealings with the material from the authoritative books regarding his preferred modes of reading? Very often the Chronicler presents the original text either verba-

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18. It goes without saying that this essay is part of a larger conversation about these matters that has a long history of interpretation and that is partially continued in this volume; and any one volume can only partially continue this conversation. For an important example of another take on these matters, see H. G. M. Williamson, *Studies in Persian Period History and Historiography* (FAT 38; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004) 232–43; see also the important bibliography on these matters mentioned there. In addition, see, I. L. Seeligmann, "ניצני מדרש בספר דברי הימים," *Tarbiz* 49 (1979–80) 14–32; and Talshir, "Several Canon-Related Concepts." Compare with M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985); and W. M. Schniedewind, *The Word of God in Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple Period* (JSOTSup 197; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).

19. See J. Van Seters, "Creative Imitation in the Hebrew Bible," *SR* 29 (2000) 395–409.

20. LBH stands for Late Biblical Hebrew, and SBH is the acronym for Standard Biblical Hebrew. I discussed their communicative messages in the late Persian / early Hellenistic period in "The Communicative Message of Some Linguistic Choices," in *A Palimpsest: Rhetoric, Ideology, Stylistics and Language Relating to Persian Israel* (ed. E. Ben Zvi, D. V. Edelman, and F. Polak; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2009) 269–90.

tim or after shifting its linguistic profile to LBH. This shift conveys both a sense of distancing from the authoritative source using SBH *and* a sense that what is really authoritative is actually *not* dependent on its precise wording. This general attitude toward texts is consistent with the development of multiple versions of biblical texts and the eventual development of manuscripts that completely shift the linguistic character of their original (e.g., 1QIsaᵃ).

The Chronicler did not address every text and piece of information in Samuel–Kings in the same manner. At times, the Chronicler closely followed the information in the authoritative books. The Chronicler seemed to be keenly aware of the existence of certain core historical facts about the past agreed upon within the community and reflected on in these books. There is no room for malleability regarding these facts (e.g., Solomon not David built the temple; the list of the kings of Judah and how long they reigned).[21]

At times, however, the Chronicler's story clearly diverges from its authoritative sources and the information they provide. Some of these cases may be explained as examples of a malleability of the past that was not perceived as such. In these cases, the Chronicler thought that he was communicating the very meaning of the source text. These instances are particularly helpful to explore some core matters associated with the functional concept of authoritativeness that existed in the community. An illuminating example is the difference between 1 Kgs 8:25 and 2 Chr 6:16. The Kings text reads as follows: רַק אִם־יִשְׁמְרוּ בָנֶיךָ אֶת־דַּרְכָּם לָלֶכֶת לְפָנַי כַּאֲשֶׁר הָלַכְתָּ לְפָנָי, whereas the text in Chronicles has: רַק אִם־יִשְׁמְרוּ בָנֶיךָ אֶת־דַּרְכָּם לָלֶכֶת בְּתוֹרָתִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הָלַכְתָּ לְפָנָי. From the Chronicler's perspective—and from that of the readers of the book who identified with him—to walk before Yʜᴡʜ equals to walk in Yʜᴡʜ's instruction. To be sure, this understanding is part and parcel of the discourse of the Persian period and is not an innovation of the Chronicler, as already demonstrated by 1 Kgs 9:6, which reads אִם־שׁוֹב תְּשֻׁבוּן אַתֶּם וּבְנֵיכֶם מֵאַחֲרַי וְלֹא תִשְׁמְרוּ מִצְוֹתַי חֻקֹּתַי אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לִפְנֵיכֶם.[22] The placement of 'Yʜᴡʜ's Torah' in the expected structural and ideologically laden slot of 'Yʜᴡʜ' appears, of course, in Psalm 119 and may be

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21. See my *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles* (London: Equinox, 2006) 78–99; and "Malleability and Its Limits: Sennacherib's Campaign against Judah as a Case Study," in *'Bird in a Cage': The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 ʙ.ᴄ.ᴇ.* (ed. L. L. Grabbe; JSOTSup 363; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003) 73–105.

22. Compare with my "Are There Any Bridges Out There? How Wide Was the Conceptual Gap between the Deuteronomistic History and Chronicles?" in *Community Identity in Judean Historiography: Biblical and Comparative Perspectives* (ed. G. N. Knoppers and K. A. Ristau; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009) 59–86.

indicative of a kind of Torah-religiosity that existed in the late Persian/
early Hellenistic Period.[23]

Thus, it is no surprise that, for instance, the Chronicler assumed that
Solomon's wisdom was for the sake of keeping Yhwh's *Torah*.[24] In all
these cases, the Chronicler follows the authoritative historical narratives *as
read* by his community, that is, from a *Torah*-centered perspective. Texts
functioned as authoritative only as they were understood through the
prism used by the community. Thus the actual content of the authori-
tative tradition for the community consists *not* of sets of (written) texts
but of readings.[25] In other words, what was really authoritative for the
literati and their Chronicler was the outcome or outcomes of an interac-
tion between an authoritative source text they possessed and the world of
knowledge they used to decode it.[26] The written scroll functioned, then,
not necessarily as "the text" but as a means to develop and shape "the
text," as a means of evoking and recreating its meaning, and as the mate-
rial, symbolic presence of the community rereadings.

Of course not all cases of divergence between Chronicles and its nar-
rative sources involved a malleability of the past that was not perceived as
malleable. It is impossible to assume that the famous omissions in Chron-
icles that served to lionize David and Solomon represented a "reading"
of the relevant texts in Samuel or Kings. Likewise, additions such as the
repentance and reform of Manasseh could not have emerged as the "real"
meaning of the characterization of Manasseh in Kings, and the same holds
true for cases of flat contradictions (compare the characterization of King
Abijah in Kings and Chronicles). As the Chronicler involved himself in
these substantial alterations of some aspects of "historical" knowledge that
existed in his community, he along with the primary and intended read-
ers of the book began to explore and redefine the boundaries of and the
boundaries between the sets of (construed) facts about the past that were

23. See M. Greenberg, "Three Conceptions of the Torah in the Hebrew Scrip-
tures," in *Die Hebräische Bibel und ihre zweifache Nachgeschichte: Festschrift für Rolf
Rendtorff zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. E. Blum, C. Macholz, and E. W. Stegemann;
Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990) 365–78, esp. pp. 76–78.

24. Compare 1 Chr 22:12 with 2 Chr 2:11 (cf. 1 Kgs 8:21; cf. 1 Kgs 3:9, 2 Chr
1:10 and the implicit comparison between Moses and Solomon).

25. See B. Shuter, "Tradition as Rereading," in *Second Thoughts. A Focus on Reread-
ing* (ed. D. Galef; Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998) 74–112. Compare and
partially contrast with the now classic M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient
Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985) passim. See also D. A. Knight, *Rediscovering the Tra-
ditions of Israel* (SBLDS 9; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975).

26. For this reason, I prefer to use *rereadings* rather the more passive term *recep-
tion*, which implies that something is *received*. Of course, the previous examples raise
the issue of what Yhwh's *Torah* was for the Chronicler.

considered malleable and the sets that were considered to be part of a core social memory that was deemed to be "fixed" and, therefore, included nonmalleable "facts" agreed upon by the community. As the Chronicler and his community of readers explored, they could not but reflect and communicate a kind of implied taxonomy used to sort "facts"/memory items.[27]

Of course, even when the Chronicler kept the same "facts," they were (and had to be) emplotted in a new narrative. Narratives provide significance for "facts," both in ancient and in contemporary historiography. By means of sophisticated combinations of additions, omissions, transformations, and implicit or explicit new causal explanations, the Chronicler resignified many of these seemingly nonmalleable "facts."[28] One may conclude therefore that, at least on some level, construed "facts" (i.e., pieces of information) were understood as more authoritative than their very significance, since the facts were not malleable, but their significance was. This ideological attitude led to a mode of reading that focused on "fact" gathering and led to a relatively atomistic approach to the authoritative books. This mode of reading placed special value in these texts as source books rather than as fully developed, didactic, and ideological narratives in their own right.[29]

But this could not have been the only mode of reading in town. Narratives could not be avoided or relegated to being mere holders of "facts." All the implied authors of these narratives and of the books in which they were embedded were imagined as personages that communicated carefully crafted stories. They all used plenty of literary and rhetorical devices and each developed multiple levels of textual coherence within their respective books and narrative literary units. Each of the books that served as sources for Chronicles conveyed a powerful narrative, and so did Chronicles. The community of readers of Chronicles could not have constituted people who did not care about narrative meaning or the ideological significance of "facts." Had this been the case, the book of Chronicles would have been rejected by the community.

The very presence of the Chronicler's "new" narrative brought to the forefront the importance of historical narratives. At the same time, a community that accepts a historical narrative that saliently emplots socially agreed upon, nonmalleable "facts" differently from preexisting narratives must imagine and accept an author/historian who has the right (and need)

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27. Compare Josephus's reworking of biblical texts.
28. See I. Kalimi, *The Reshaping Of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004) for multiple examples.
29. One may say that this is the other side of the same coin that carries nonmalleable (construed) facts. The ancient literati could not have one without the other.

to do this. Of course, by doing so, the community reinforces the value of "facts" per se. Taking this observation along with the one advanced in the preceding paragraph, we see clearly that the community's approach to the respective importance of "facts" and "narrative meanings" was necessarily characterized by a balanced and balancing system of "both-and" rather than by any "either-or" (social and ideological) attitude.

Similarly, the new narrative deemphasized the authority of preexisting historical narratives; however, it constantly evoked these narratives for its intended and primary readers, who were well aware not only of Chronicles but also of Kings, Samuel, and the other books.

As the readers read historical narratives, they mentally shaped and revisited sites of memory that were marked in space and time and were shaped around personages and events. The Chronicler advanced a representation of a known past, aimed *not* at replacing it—this would have been impossible—but at informing and being informed by the older and more authoritative version.[30] Chronicles created new events and places of remembrance and invited its readers to keep visiting them through their readings. The ancient community of readers, of course, kept visiting the more traditional sites of memory. But Chronicles provided additional sites, reshaped traditional sites, and provided new paths linking sites (see discussion below).[31] Readers could now visit and revisit them, along with the sites they visited as they read the other historical narratives. The intertwining of all these imaginary visits that balanced and interacted (directly or indirectly) with each other served to reconfigure the social memory of the community. This social memory is neither the Chronistic nor the

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30. See *Jubilees*, for instance.

31. In *some* ways, one may compare *some* aspects of its relationship to its sources with the relationship of the Palestinian targums to the Pentateuch (for instance, explaining, adding information and characters, certainly resignifying, and doing all this while accepting the authority of the source text). There are, however, important differences. It is not only a matter of a heightened sense of linguistic difference (the distance between the Palestinian targums' Aramaic and SBH is far larger than the difference between SBH and LBH) or even of genre (translation versus another writing). The pentateuchal targums reflect readings of the Pentateuch, even if informed by a sea of other literature; Chronicles does not attempt to reflect a reading of the book of Samuel or of Kings—or of the Deuteronomistic historical collection (that is, the so-called Deuteronomistic History) for that matter. To be sure, Chronicles includes numerous direct or indirect references to the Chronicler's reading of particular sections of Kings and Samuel, but it does not represent or attempt to be a particular reading of either one of these books. As opposed to the implied authors of Samuel and Kings, the Chronicler seems to place more attention on particular narratives, reported facts, and the like than on meanings conveyed by the books of Kings or Samuel, respectively, and (each) as a whole, or even meanings of large sections of these books.

Deuteronomistic narrative but what was in the mind of the members of the community that read both of them.[32]

Given some Second Temple understandings of the Pentateuch as Torah, it is worth exploring whether the Chronicler dealt with historical narratives in the Pentateuch in a different, perhaps more-authoritative way than with historical narratives in other books.[33] In other words, did the notion of a Pentateuch affect the Chronicler's approach? And what about the plausible notion of a complementary collection, the Hexateuch?

The answer to these questions is no.[34] To illustrate, both Genesis and 1 Chr 1:1–2:2 serve as an introduction to the "primary history" and to the "chronistic history," respectively, and both move relatively quickly from the universal to the particular, without dissociating the latter from the former. Moreover, the source of this section of Chronicles is Genesis or some book very close to it. In fact, there is no information in this pericope that does not go back to Genesis, directly or indirectly (that is, by means of exegetical information-gathering).[35] Despite all the reliance on information taken from Genesis, no one would claim that 1 Chr 1:1–2:2 is a rewritten Genesis. More importantly, it is difficult to see 1 Chr 1:1–2:2 as a "condensed" Genesis or as a representation of the book of Genesis as a whole. There are substantial differences in genre and in the topics that they cover or evoke.

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32. Social or cultural memory is never coterminus with what is written in a book or a set of books. Books as understood by a community may evoke and shape cultural memory but are not identical to it. Social/cultural memory exists in the minds of people, not in scrolls.

33. See Seeligmann, "ניצני מדרש בספר דברי הימים," but also the position advanced by Talshir, "Several Canon-Related Concepts," esp. pp. 390–94. Compare, though from a very different perspective, S. B. Chapman, *The Law and the Prophets: A Study in Old Testament Formation* (FAT 27; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009).

34. This is a very important conclusion in terms of the ideological discourse of the late Persian / early Hellenistic Periods.

35. 1 Chr 2:1–2 serves both as a heightened conclusion to 1 Chr 1:1–2:2 and an introduction to the next unit, which deals with the genealogies of Israel. On 1 Chr 1:1–1:2 see, for instance, G. N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1–9* (AB 12; New York: Doubleday, 2003) 285–89; W. Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, vol. 1: *1 Chronicles 1–2 Chronicles 9: Israel's Place among the Nations* (JSOTSup 253; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997) 24–40. See also M. Kartveit, "Names and Narratives: The Meaning of Their Combination in 1 Chronicles 1–9," in *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis and Its Language* (ed. M. Bar-Asher et al.; Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007) 59*–80*. It is worth stressing that the source of 1 Chr 1:1–2:2 is Genesis, not J or P. Moreover, studies of the laws assumed in Chronicles suggest that Chronicles' source text was a Pentateuch including the proposed layers/sources labeled J, D, H, and P. For a relevant example of exegetical information-gathering at work, see Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1–9*, 280.

To illustrate the differences, 1 Chr 1:2–2:2 contains no explicit reference to cosmogony, the Garden of Eden story, or the flood story. Given the importance of the Enochic tradition in later periods, it is worth stressing that in 1 Chronicles Enoch neither walks about with the deity nor disappears.[36] Most significantly, 1 Chr 1:2–2:2 contains no explicit reference to YHWH's interaction with any character. This absence does not mean that the Chronicler did not think that YHWH created Adam or the like, nor does it mean that Chronicles was simply the result of an attempt to condense the material in Genesis. Instead, it served to advance an important ideological point and shape cultural memory. It is not by chance that the first explicit report of an interaction between human beings and YHWH in Chronicles appears in the opening verse of the story of Judah/Israel.[37] Moreover, it deals with YHWH's killing of the sinner Er and the precariousness of the line of Judah and David that ensued—it had to be saved by Tamar's actions and, within ancient Israelite discourses, ultimately by YHWH's will. It is worth noting that, from the perspective of the readership, the patriarch Judah evoked the image of and (partially) stood for Judah—the people and country; the latter evoked the image of and (partially) stood for the Yehudite community of Chronicles-readers who identified with monarchic Judah. Moreover, both Judah and Yehud were identified with transtemporal "Israel." The precariousness of the line and its *near* disappearance due to sin prefigured and embodied the history of Israel that ensues in the book and that in its large strokes stood at the center of the social memory and identity of Israel/Yehud.

Returning to the literary unit mentioned above, 1 Chr 1:2–2:2, any ancient reader of this text noted that—unlike the situation in Genesis—in Chronicles, the genealogical line moved directly from Adam to Seth; that is, there was no reference to Cain or Abel. There was also no reference to the matriarchs. None of these omissions can be explained simply in terms of genre constraints or condensing the material since, despite its terse language, 1 Chronicles 1 includes a few interpretive expansions. The reference to "Abram, who is Abraham" in 1 Chr 1:17, for instance, pointed to the obvious from the perspective of the readership; however, it was also clearly evocative of the covenant. In other cases, the Chronicler diverged from the Genesis text in order to present what he believed to be its meaning, even if he did not state the matter explicitly. This seems to be

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36. This is consistent with the position that the very limited reference to Enoch in Genesis reflects a discursive/ideological tendency to dis-prefer or downplay references to him in Genesis rather than merely a (true) reflection of the absence of traditions about him within the social memory of the community.

37. The first occurrence of YHWH in Chronicles is in 1 Chr 2:3, וַיְהִי עֵר בְּכוֹר יְהוּדָה רַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַיְמִיתֵהוּ.

the case in the added reference to Keturah as a concubine of Abraham (in contrast to Gen 25:1) and to the removal of their children from the list of Abraham's sons.[38] The same holds true for the replacement of וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת אַלּוּפֵי עֵשָׂו לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם לִמְקֹמֹתָם בִּשְׁמֹתָם אַלּוּף in Gen 36:40 with וַיָּמָת הֲדָד וַיִּהְיוּ אַלּוּפֵי אֱדוֹם אַלּוּף in 1 Chr 1:51.[39]

Thus 1 Chr 1:1–2:2 suggests a Chronicler who used Genesis as a source for discrete fact-gathering rather than as a source in which the focus of socially accepted authority is on the plot. To be sure, at times the Chronicler clearly understood the information contextually, and by communicating this understanding to the readers implicitly emphasized the importance of contextual reading. At the same time, the Chronicler largely placed the Genesis narrative and its meanings in perspective by replacing them with his own narrative in the book of Chronicles. Although some facts gathered from or represented in Genesis were authoritative, their emplotment and Genesis' implicit or explicit causality were not necessarily authoritative for the Chronicler. The Chronicler's approach seemed to be the same whether his narrative sources were included in the Pentateuch (or Hexateuch) or were (only) part and parcel of the so-called Deuteronomistic History.

A final but crucial observation for this section: given the preceding considerations about "facts" and especially the omissions in 1 Chr 1:2–2:2, it is not surprising that Chronicles presents itself as an *explicit, segmented* "national" historical narrative.[40] It omits central historical, formative narratives that were well-known by the intended readers of the book, such as the cosmogony, the patriarchal stories, the narratives about the exodus and the stay in the wilderness, the communication of the Torah to Moses, the conquest of land in Joshua, and stories of judges and pre-Davidic leaders. All these omissions were not meant to deny that these events were part

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38. See Gen 25:5–6, 9 and the long tradition focusing on the two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. The Chronicler seems to have used this information to reinterpret Gen 25:1. The Chronicler seems to understand Keturah's sons as her (rather than Abraham's) sons; also notice יָלְדָה in 1 Chr 1:32 and contrast this with יָלְדָה לוֹ in 2 Chr 2:4, where the sons belong to Judah's line.

39. On the surface, the addition of וַיָּמָת הֲדָד only completes the pattern וַיִּמְלֹךְ . . . וַיָּמָת that characterizes the list of Edomite kings in Gen 36:31–40. After all, the Chronicler knew that Hadar/Hadad died, even if Genesis leaves his death unmentioned, perhaps because he is the last member of the list and no successor is mentioned and thus the pattern וַיָּמָת . . . וַיִּמְלֹךְ could not be continued. But 1 Chr 1:51 also explicitly conveys the sense that, following the death of Hadad, Edom had only chieftains, not kings. Since Hadad is more or less contemporaneous with David (see Johnstone, *1 Chronicles 1–2 Chronicles 9*, 34–35), this represents the Chronicler's understanding of the meaning of Gen 36:31.

40. Compare Ezra, which is a clear example of a segmented historical narrative with very large gaps. Compare the cultural memory about the old prophets that jumps from people working in Hezekiah's era to people in the Josianic and destruction period.

of Israel's past or to suggest that they were unimportant (for example, the Torah given to Moses); instead, they point to an attempt to effect a partial reconfiguration of social memory by reconfiguring the paths that connected virtual sites of memory for ideological purposes. One may easily note, for instance, the obvious teleology of these memory paths: they lead quickly and directly to David and the temple and then, slowly, through a meandering monarchic history, to Cyrus and the temple. YHWH's Torah and the question of its observance or lack thereof, stand large and make sense of the entire path. Within this strong teleology, there is no room for detours concerning the leadership of Moses, Joshua, any of the judges (including Samuel), northern kings (unless they directly engaged with Judah), or any other non-Davidic leader (for example, Gedaliah) for that matter. As mentioned above, Chronicles not only provided additional sites of memory or reshaped existing sites but also and most importantly provided new paths that connected and bound together sites of memory. As it did this, it contributed to a reconfiguration of the social memory of the community that imbued sites with a new or special significance as stops in a long path.[41]

Chronicles and Laws in Authoritative Books: Observing Some Central Trends

The book of Chronicles is not a law book but a historical narrative, and as such, it tends to refer to particular occasions on which this or that law was followed. The result is that at times it is difficult to decide categorically whether the Chronicler constructed and communicated an image of the past in which the reported procedures were to be understood as at least partially contingent on the particular conditions at the time of the event portrayed in the book rather than as reflecting a categorical law. Notwithstanding this caveat, some general trends concerning the Chronicler's approach to authoritative law texts can be explored.

Chronicles is a Torah-centered text, but it also concentrates a great deal of text on kings and the temple. In fact, for the most part, it is structured around the periods of each king. The temple, which plays a central role in Chronicles, is presented as being established and maintained by the king. Proper worship in the temple is his responsibility. Given that Chronicles is to a large extent a monarchy-oriented book, it cannot avoid the crucial differences between its narratives about laws and temple and the pentateuchal laws. The office of the Israelite (never mind, Davidic) king is not mentioned in the Pentateuch, except for a brief note permitting the in-

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41. Of course, this was balanced and informed by—but also actively informing—other constructions evoked and developed in and by other historiographical narratives.

stitution. The relevant note (Deut 17:14–20) fails to construe the king as an essential office and strongly restricts it.[42] Similarly, Jerusalem plays a central role in Chronicles. However, there is no pentateuchal law that refers to it.

One of the purposes of the historical narratives both in Chronicles and in the so-called Deuteronomistic History is to bridge this gap by creating a context that informs the reading of the pentateuchal laws so that they become consistent with core tenets of the community such as the centrality of Jerusalem, its temple, Judah, and the associated Davidic Dynasty, and conversely so that the concepts of Jerusalem, Judah, and the temple held by the community become supported and intertwined with Moses/YHWH's Torah. To a large extent, the Chronicler resignified the Pentateuch as a Jerusalemite-centered Torah, which was the only way in which it could have been authoritative in Yehud.[43] Thus, the historical narrative of Chronicles becomes, as it were, Torah while at the same time clearly claiming that it is not.

Chronicles communicates and embodies Torah, without claiming to be Torah, in another complementary manner. Often it referred to laws written in the book of the Torah. One of the most obvious examples is 2 Chr 25:4, which reflects on Deut 24:16 and, significantly, slightly reformulates it (compare with the *Kethiv* of 2 Kgs 14:6 but not its *Qere*).[44] It is worth stressing that it is the law *as understood* by the Chronicler that has priority over the exact wording of Deuteronomy. Another well-known case appears in 2 Chr 35:25.[45] Here the Chronicler presents what for him is the real meaning of Exod 12:9 and Deut 16:7. His approach to X-ב in וַיְבַשְּׁלוּ הַפֶּסַח בָּאֵשׁ, is that X stood for the single and only acceptable agent involved in cooking the Passover meat. To arrive at this meaning, the Chronicler

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42. See G.N. Knoppers, "Rethinking the Relationship between Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History: The Case of Kings," *CBQ* 63 (2001) 393–415.

43. For example, the Chronicler identifies the place of Isaac's sacrifice with the location of the temple in Jerusalem, something that is not stated in Genesis. Also, where does the Pentateuch state that the Passover must be sacrificed in Jerusalem? Of course, nowhere, but any reading of the Pentateuch that would not have assumed this to be the case would not have been included in the Jerusalemite-centered Torah of Yehud.

The Chronicler represents the literati for whom following the Torah was essential but who could have imagined themselves as Torah followers without a drastic resignification of the authoritative, pentateuchal texts and laws they shared with YHWH's worshipers in Samaria. Conversely, they could have accepted the authoritativeness of these texts or their being Torah without their Jerusalem-centered resignification.

44. 2 Chr 25:4: כַּכָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה בְּסֵפֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה . . . לֹא־יָמוּתוּ אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים וּבָנִים לֹא־יוּמְתוּ עַל־אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים וּבָנִים לֹא־יוּמְתוּ Deut 24:16: לֹא־יָמוּתוּ אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים כִּי אִישׁ בְּחֶטְאוֹ יָמוּתוּ עַל־אָבוֹת אִישׁ בְּחֶטְאוֹ יוּמָתוּ. See S. Japhet, *I and II Chronicles* (OTL; Louisville; Westminster/John Knox, 1993) 861.

45. See my "Revisiting 'Boiling in Fire'" and bibliography.

uses exegetical techniques comparable to techniques used in later times,[46] which involve a close reading leading to restrictions in the applicability of certain rules[47] and expanding conceptual meanings through abstraction and comparison.[48] One may infer from this case that the Chronicler regarded the texts in Exod 12:9 and Deut 16:7 to be authoritative but also thought that their true meaning could not emerge by examining the meaning in a way informed *only* and *separately* by the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy, respectively. Instead, the truly authoritative meaning was to be recovered through an exegetical process informed by both texts and by particular exegetical techniques.[49] This approach to sources involved rejecting readings of books as literary units that bear their respective meanings in and by themselves. The main *content and meaning of the transmitted and operative tradition is thus dissociated from the text itself as presented to the originally intended readership of each of these authoritative books.*[50]

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46. A point made in relation to this and other texts by Seeligmann (see "ניצני מדרש בספר דברי הימים").

47. Compare אִישׁ שֶׂה לְבֵית אָבֹת שֶׂה לַבָּיִת, a lamb for each ancestral house, a lamb for each household in Exod 12:3; and see *Mekilta*, Pisha [בא], chap. 3.50–51 (J. Z. Lauterbach edition, 26).

48. Compare with the the development of the אהל 'tent' as pointing to any human dwelling, particularly a house, as attested for instance in the LXX and the *Temple Scroll* (cf. Num 19:14–15, LXX Num 19:14, and the legislation in 11QT^a XLIX 5–L 3). In both instances, the process of logical abstraction includes the selection of a particular attribute (in these cases, a closed space for human abode; cooking by engulfing the meat with a hot "substance") of the original concept (such as a tent, boiling) and the development of this concept so as to include other instances of that attribute (for example, houses, boiling in fire). On this matter and the later abstract conceptualization of אהל in the Mishnah, see J. L. Rubbenstein, "On Some Abstract Concepts in Rabbinic Literature," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 4 (1997) 33–73 (esp. pp. 34–40). One may also compare the case here with the development of the concept "pit" to encompass any "obstacle"; and even with R. Aqiba's statement in *m. Pesaḥ.* 7:1.

49. The examples can easily be multiplied. For instance, the Chronicler exegetically expands the grounds for celebrating Passover in the second month and compare Num 9:10–11 with 2 Chr 30:3 (away from home becomes away from Jerusalem; uncleanness of the officiating priests is probably seen as a *qal-wahomer* of the uncleanness of a prospective Israelite; of course, there is no pentateuchal way of explaining the role of the king in 30:2 and see below).

There is no clear pentateuchal equivalent to the sin offering portrayed in 2 Chr 29:21 (וַיָּבִיאוּ פָרִים־שִׁבְעָה וְאֵילִים שִׁבְעָה וּכְבָשִׂים שִׁבְעָה וּצְפִירֵי עִזִּים שִׁבְעָה לְחַטָּאת עַל־הַמַּמְלָכָה וְעַל־הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וְעַל־יְהוּדָה) or for Passover sacrifice in 2 Chr 35:11–12, despite the reference to כַּכָּתוּב בְּסֵפֶר מֹשֶׁה. But the latter actually meant 'as written in Scripture'—that is, as understood by the community to be written (even if only implicitly) in Scripture.

50. However, one must note that this position is balanced by the Chronicler's own insistence in his own narrative, and within the general discourse of the community by the explicit markers of textual coherence in all these books. Again, this is a position

When it comes to the Pentateuch's authoritative laws about kings and Levites, two central groups in Chronicles, the book must face the substantial hurdles of omission and "seemingly" implied contradictions in the case of kings, and "seemingly" explicit contradictions[51] and occasional omissions in the case of the Levites. Issues that arose concerning the roles of kings were resolved through the examples of David and Solomon, a process that created a kind of template that then applied, even though with much flexibility, to the construction of the pious attitudes of kings.[52] At times, this process involved conceptual reformulation, such as in the case of the king's obligation to provide for the burnt offerings (see 2 Chr 31:3; and compare 1 Chr 29:1–5),[53] or the reference to "the tax levied by Moses, the servant of the LORD, on the congregation of Israel for the tent of the covenant," the enforcement of which was now under the jurisdiction of the king in 2 Chr 24:6.[54]

In the case of the Levites, the basis for the exegetical approach involved a very expansive understanding of Num 16:9, which states the Levites' duty to serve the community (in worship/sacrifice) and a reconceptualization of the key term עבודה.[55] To be sure, from our perspective, the Chronicler's construction of the Levites' role would stand for what we

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of "both–and"—which at times emphasizes one side of the equation and at times the other. See above.

51. For instance, compare 1 Chr 23:32, which assigns משמרת הקדש ('keeping watch over the sanctuary') to the Levites, with Num 18:5, which assigns it to the priests.

52. For instance, the portrayal of Hezekiah's Passover is influenced by the portrayal of Solomon's dedication of the temple. On Hezekiah and Solomon, see, for instance, H. G. M. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) 119–25; J. R. Shaver, *Torah and the Chronicler's History Work* (BJS 196; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989) 112–13; M. A. Throntveit, "The Relationship of Hezekiah to David and Solomon in the Books of Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein* (ed. M. P. Graham, S. L. McKenzie, and G. N. Knoppers; JSOTSup 371; London: T. & T. Clark, 2003) 105–121.

53. The Pentateuch nowhere states anything that can directly lead to "the contribution of the king from his own possessions was for the burnt offerings: the burnt offerings of morning and evening, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, the new moons, and the appointed festivals, as it is written in the law of the LORD" (2 Chr 31:3). The actions of Hezekiah are understandable in light of David's and Solomon's, which can only be understood through an exegetical process by which the king is identified with the נשיא in Ezek 45:17 and then uses this נשיא as an interpretive key for Numbers 7.

54. On this tax and the process of biblical interpretation reflected in Chronicles, see W. M. Schniedewind, "The Chronicler as an Interpreter of Scripture," in *The Chronicles as a Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein* (ed. M. P. Graham, S. L. McKenzie, and G. N. Knoppers; JSOTSup 371; London: T. & T. Clark, 2003) 158–80 (esp. p. 168) and bibliography.

55. The basic meaning of the term shifts from "physical labor relating to the sanctuary" in P to "temple service" in Chronicles, except in direct quotations from P. See J. Milgrom, *Studies in Cultic Theology and Terminology* (Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity 36; Leiden: Brill, 1983) 18–46.

would call innovation or perhaps innovative utopian thinking, depending on one's approach to Chronicles and the historical role of the Levites in Yehud; but most significantly, in Chronicles, the Levites are construed in such a way that they "personify both the (transtemporal) Torah and the (transtemporal) sanctuary."[56]

At times, probably when faced with contradictions between some of the authoritative text and the practice of the day (just as in later exegetical literature), the Chronicler resorted to and implied a principle of temporally related validity.[57] To illustrate: pentateuchal prescriptions such as a minimum age of 30 for a Levite to be counted in a census (Num 4:3), which was at odds with actual practice (see Ezra 3:8), could remain authoritative but have no operational relevance to the book's community of readers. The principle here is that a law of this sort was understood to be contingent on certain chores of the Levites—carrying the sanctuary and all its vessels. Once there was no need for these chores, David appropriately reduced the age to 20 (1 Chr 23:24–27), which seems to be the implied standard age for assuming full adult responsibilities in Chronicles.[58] In other words, David is characterized as the person who could, should, and did decide which authoritative laws are operative in the present (and future) and which are not.

This construction of David is consistent with another main theme in Chronicles that directly relates to the questions of how to deal with authoritative texts and which texts they are: according to Chronicles, the temple is to be governed by both YHWH's laws as given to Moses and the instructions given to David.[59] The symbiosis of the two sources and, in practical terms, the position that both sources complement and cohere with each other are central issues for Chronicles. The most obvious ex-

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56. See T. Willi, "Israel's Holiness: Some Observations on the 'Clerical Nature' of 1 Chronicles 6," in *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis and Its Language* (ed. M. Bar-Asher et al.; Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007) 165*–76* (citation from p. 175*).

57. This principle is clearly attested in later literature. See, for instance, *Mekilta*, Pisha [בא], chap. 1.43–57 (J. Z. Lauterbach edition, 4–5).

58. It is worth stressing that in Chronicles Josiah begins his cultic reform/purge just as he reaches age 20 and therefore fully responsible for his actions. In other words, as soon as he became an adult, he took action. If as a pious king he had done so, he would have immediately borne responsibility for continuation of the practices described in 2 Chr 34:3–7 (contrast the description in 2 Kings 22–23, which was not accepted by the Chronicler; compare the characterization of Hezekiah in 2 Chr 29:3 ["in the first . . . in the first . . ."]). On 1 Chr 23:24–27 see, among others, Schniedewind, "The Chronicler as an Interpreter of Scripture," 175.

59. See S. J. De Vries, "Moses and David as Cult Founders in Chronicles," *JBL* 107 (1988) 619–39.

amples of this position are 1 Chr 28:11–19, with its explicit conclusion in v. 19; and 2 Chr 23:18;[60] but see also 2 Chr 8:14.[61]

The above-mentioned characterization of David is expanded to include the prophets in 2 Chr 29:25, which explains to the readers that the (authoritative) "commandment of David and of Gad the king's seer and of the prophet Nathan" was from YHWH through his prophets. The text associates David and prophecy, and both with lawgiving, and indirectly with Moses. But it does not give the same authority to Hezekiah. The time for the revelation of the authoritative laws is over after David and the establishment of the temple. Hezekiah, who reestablishes it (a situation that prefigures Yehud), must follow the existing laws, not create new ones.

In all these accounts, the Chronicler's approach is clearly a precursor to the concept of written and oral Torah and the idea that the meaning of the former is to be found in terms of the latter. His approach involves valorization but also appropriation, through interpretation, of texts. It often involves an atemporal and noncontextual mode of reading, but at times also a clearly contextual approach to particular texts within a book.[62] As in many cases in the later oral Torah, one can safely assume that the Chronicler's understanding and reconfiguration of the authoritative laws often did not *originate* in a careful study of these laws but in his ideological positions and in the operative laws of his time. Of course, to be legitimate, they needed to be included in or be coherent with the authoritative law. New regulations had to be found in the written authoritative texts. In numerous cultures that present themselves as text-centered, this role falls on the exegetes of "Scripture." The Chronicler's community surely saw itself as a "text-centered" community, and the Chronicler certainly was such an "exegete of Scripture," which is essentially—and not accidentally—the way in which the highly educated literati who comprised the actual authorship and primary and intended readerships of the book saw themselves as well. In fact, the Chronicler presented himself as an ideal image/projection of the literati: knowledgable about history, tradition, and law, he provides his community with vital information about Torah and the ways in which it should implemented, according to YHWH's will. Living within their time of discourse—long after the time of Moses and David and after the completion of at least most of the Pentateuch—the literati could only present themselves as interpreters of preexisting laws. However, their interpreta-

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60. וַיַּשֶׁם יְהוֹיָדָע פְּקֻדֹּת בֵּית יְהוָה בְּיַד הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם אֲשֶׁר חָלַק דָּוִיד עַל־בֵּית יְהוָה לְהַעֲלוֹת עֹלוֹת יְהוָה כַּכָּתוּב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְשִׁיר עַל יְדֵי דָוִיד.

61. Hezekiah, when restoring the temple, is also construed as a conduit for the commandments of YHWH in 2 Chr 29:25, though in a relatively minor way.

62. Cf. G. N. Knoppers, "Hierodules, Priests, or Janitors? The Levites in Chronicles and the History of the Israelite Priesthood," *JBL* 118 (1999) 49–72.

tion was crucial for the legitimacy of the centrality of Jerusalem, its temple, and the services carried out there and for the perceived ability to avoid the increase of uncleanness, with all its implications.[63]

Chronicles and Prophetic Literature and Psalms: Observing Central Trends

I discussed elsewhere some aspects of the ways in which the Chronicler deals with these texts.[64] It suffices for the present purposes to note that Chronicles includes citations from and allusions to prophetic literature and the Psalms. In no case does Chronicles turn to the formula כתוב, so widely used for laws, in reference to these texts. Williamson learns from this observation that "the writings of the prophets were not to be put on a level with the law so far as religious practice was concerned; but as a resource for broader theological awareness, it appears that the prophets had already attained preeminence."[65]

In a somewhat similar vein, A. Berlin, following Japhet, notes that "the Chronicler cites known psalms only when they are recited in connection with the Ark or the Temple, in connection with the levitical hymnology." She explains this situation not only as a reflection of a current use of psalms in the cult, but also in ideological terms: "in the Chronicler's view the levitical hymnology was divinely ordained, whereas the personal prayers of kings and other individuals are not."[66] It is sometimes in prayers or speeches of the kings and prophets that one finds references or allusions to the prophetic books (e.g., in Azariah's speech: 2 Chr 15:3 [cf. Hos 3:4], 5 [cf. Zech 8:10, Amos 3:9], 6 (cf. Zech 11:6), 7 [cf. Jer 31:16, Zeph 3:16]; in Hanani's speech; in King Jeoshaphat's prayer: 2 Chr 16:9 (cf. Zech 4:10); 20:20 (cf. Isa 7:9).[67]

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63. Notice that, after the restoration of the temple, Hezekiah performs an atonement ritual for all Israel (2 Chr 29:23–24); cf. Milgrom, "Hezekiah's Sacrifices."

64. See my "Who Knew What? The Construction of the Monarchic Past in Chronicles and Implications for the Intellectual Setting of Chronicles," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century* B.C.E. (ed. O. Lipschits, G. N. Knoppers, and R. Albertz; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007) 349–60.

65. Williamson, *Studies in Persian Period History and Historiography*, 242–43; citation from p. 243.

66. A. Berlin, "Psalms in the Book of Chronicles," in *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis and Its Language* (ed. M. Bar-Asher et al.; Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007) 21*–36* (citation from p. 29*)

67. S. Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (2nd rev. ed.; BEATAJ 9; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1997) 183; and in particular P. Beentjes, "Prophets in the Book of Chronicles," in *The Elusive Prophet: The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary Character and Anonymous Artist* (ed. J. C. de Moor; OtSt 45; Leiden: Brill, 2001) 45–53.

Berlin notes that "almost all the psalmic quotations and the psalmic refrains in Chronicles come from Books 4 and 5 of Psalms . . . (the exception being Psalm 39)," and one may note that the range of allusions to prophetic texts does not cover all of these books. However, it is difficult to learn anything from these data about the status of the texts that are not alluded to, especially since there is *no* reason to assume that the Chronicler was under any obligation to allude to every single text or book that was considered authoritative.

Instead, much about the mode of reading these texts (both psalmic and prophetic) can be learned from these allusions. The prophetic texts mentioned above are all taken out of their original context and placed in times that precede the putative time of the prophetic character with whom the prophetic book is associated. The words have life in themselves, as it were, and may apply to future and past events, even if in a way that was unknown to the speakers. Prophetic foreknowledge of the future is also associated with David and the Levites (see 1 Chr 16:35, "Save us, O God of our salvation, and *gather and rescue us from among the nations*," which is incongruent with the conditions at the time of the celebration of the placement of the Ark in the tent that David had pitched for it). David leaves, as it were, his own time and thinks about and shares his words with those who will live centuries later. The words themselves become atemporal and as such they become a binding force linking David and the community at the time of the Chronicler.[68]

This atemporal and acontextual mode of reading texts included—and to a large extent led to—the position that past authoritative speakers could not know the full spectrum of meaning carried by the words that they spoke, and only later readers of books written by late Persian–period literati (and potentially in other periods, as well) would have access to the other portions of this spectrum of meaning that were unavailable to the speakers. This mode of reading already present in Chronicles allowed and encouraged the development of a sense of multi-temporality for prophetic words and, by doing so, opened the door for developments that would become central to the interpretation of prophetic literature in the late Second Temple period and thereafter. We must keep in mind that this mode of reading involved rejecting the particular historical circumstances in

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There is also a reference to the book that "the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz wrote" (2 Chr 26:22) and another to the "vision of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel" (2 Chr 32:32). In both cases, the Chronicler refers to these texts as sources from which to learn about things that he does not relate to the readers. Setting aside the problem of these citations in Chronicles, one finds it difficult to see them as direct references to the present book of Isaiah.

68. See my "Who Knew What?"

which words were uttered as being the main interpretive keys to the meaning of texts. This is exactly what is implied when, for instance, Chronicles communicates that certain laws are temporally bound.[69]

There is one reference in Chronicles to a prophetic text that is not an allusion, nor does it fit the pattern of those now-anonymized prophetic texts. This reference is important to our present discussion for other reasons and again places some previous observations in perspective.

There is an explicit reference to Jeremiah in 2 Chr 36:21–22 that illustrates another, though related side of the Chronicler's approach to authoritative prophetic literature. The Chronicler characterized the time between the destruction of the Jerusalem temple and YHWH's action to stir up the spirit of Cyrus to bring about the rebuilding of the temple by (a) using language that is reminiscent of Lev 26:34–35, 43 (cf. 2 Chr 36:21) and (b) referring explicitly to Jeremiah (compare 2 Chr 36:21–22 with Jer 25:11–12, 29:10). Thus the Chronicler legitimized the prophetic text by pointing out its fulfillment and, conversely, legitimized the rebuilt temple and Cyrus by associating them with an authoritative book. He closely linked the Jeremiah text to the Leviticus text, and by doing so created a sense of harmony and coherence between sources that were authoritative for the Chronicler and for the community within which and for whom he wrote. As he did this, he resignified the relevant texts in Leviticus and Jeremiah and created a text and meaning that was clearly different from the source texts.[70] Similar processes led to the reformulation of legal pentateuchal traditions, but here only one text is pentateuchal. This example suggests that hierarchical boundaries separating prophetic and pentateuchal literature, if they existed, were porous, at least outside explicitly legal texts, and see the previous discussion on the pentateuchal narratives.

In Sum

The preceding observations indicate that Chronicles is an excellent source for reconstructing modes of reading authoritative texts and reconstructing the range of operative meanings that this authority may have signified for the late Persian or early Hellenistic literati centered around Jerusalem. Chronicles dealt in *many* different ways with the literature held to be authoritative by its implied author and its intended and primary rereaderships. The intended readers and the literati who were the primary readers of Chronicles construed the implied author of this book—that

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69. Similarly, the Chronicler could underscore co-textual meanings as well as readings in which the surroundings of a particular passage in a book carry no weight at all.

70. See Knoppers, "Hierodules, Priests, or Janitors?" esp. pp. 68–72. Knoppers discusses possible Ezekielian influences.

is, the Chronicler—as a person who presented himself as an authoritative "exegete of Scripture" and, as such, a kind of ideal member of the literati group. The Chronicler as the actual literati of the period thought themselves bound by authoritative pentateuchal laws and by other authoritative texts that reflected and shaped their memories and religious outlook. This understanding led them to deal in various ways with their authoritative literature. Certainly, *one size (and one approach) did not fit all.*

In most cases, the Chronicler's approach involved in some way or another a substantial act of resignifying the authoritative corpus so it would fit his own ideological setting. At times, this resignifying contradicted either the plain language of a text or its basic ideological assumptions (for example, the role of kings in Deuteronomy). At the same time, and precisely because of this approach to such texts as "Scripture," the Chronicler strongly communicated a sense that these texts were and would remain "eternally" authoritative for his group and for Israel—whether they involved laws or not.[71]

To maintain the same sense of "eternal" authority for the received texts, the Chronicler might emphasize the temporal contingency of some claims advanced in certain texts (especially some pentateuchal laws) but might also stress atemporal and acontextual modes of reading. Similarly, the Chronicler might underscore co-textual meanings but also readings for which the surroundings of a particular text carried no weight at all. The Chronicler was neither confused nor confusing but consistently conveyed a sense of "both–and" rather than "either–or" in approaching matters of historical contingency, historical sources, modes of reading, accepted memories, and the like. It was a balanced approach that negated the absolute validity of single approaches, either methodological or ideological.[72] This balanced approach was characteristic of the discourse of Persian Yehud (including the prophetic books) and allowed the Chronicler to voice a narrative that served well to inform and be informed by all the other historical narratives, known laws, and prophetic texts. In the process, it contributed a great deal to the reconfiguration of the inclusive social memory of the community and what it understood to be Torah.

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71. Cf. B. M. Levinson, "The Human Voice in Divine Revelation: The Problem of Authority in Biblical Law," in *Innovation in Religious Traditions: Essays in the Interpretation of Religious Change* (ed. M. A. Williams, C. Cox, and M. S. Jaffee; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992) 35–71.

72. Of course, within the limits imposed by the ideological discourse shared by the community.