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edited by

Mark J. Boda and Lissa M. Wray Beal

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Contents

Introduction vii

Part 1
Prophets and Prophecy in Israelite Historiographic Books

"Face to Face": Moses as Prophet in Exodus 11:1–12:28 3
Bernon Lee

The Shaping of a Prophet: Joshua in the Deuteronomistic History 23
Gordon Oeste

Recycling Heaven's Words: Receiving and Retrieving Divine Revelation in the Historiography of Judges 43
Mark J. Boda

Samuel Agonistes: A Conflicted Prophet's Resistance to God and Contribution to the Failure of Israel's First King . . . 69
J. Richard Middleton

Prophecy as Prediction in Biblical Historiography 93
John Van Seters

Jeroboam and the Prophets in 1 Kings 11–14: Prophetic Word for Two Kingdoms 105
Lissa M. Wray Beal

Presumptuous Prophets Participating in a Deuteronomic Debate 125
K. L. Noll

Prophecy Influencing History: Dialogism in the Chronicler's Ahaz Narrative 143
Paul S. Evans

Chronicles and Its Reshaping of Memories of Monarchic Period Prophets: Some Observations 167
Ehud Ben Zvi

Deus ex Machina and Plot Construction in Ezra 1–6 189
Lisbeth S. Fried

Is the Governor Also among the Prophets? Parsing the Purposes of Jeremiah in the Memory of Nehemiah 209
David Shepherd

The Use and Non-Use of Prophetic Literature in Hellenistic Jewish Historiography 229
Andrew W. Pitts

Part 2
Historiography in Israelite Prophetic Books

The Poetics of History and the Prophecy of Deutero-Isaiah . . . 253
Danielle Duperreault

Personal Missives and National History: The Relationship between Jeremiah 29 and 36. 275
Mark Leuchter

Ezekiel's Perspective of Israel's History: Selective Revisionism? 295
Brian Peterson

The Ordering of the Twelve as Israel's Historiography 315
Grace Ko

The "Exilic" Prophecy of Daniel 7: Does It Reflect Late Pre-Maccabean or Early Hellenistic Historiography? . 333
Ralph J. Korner

(Re)Visionary History: Historiography and Religious Identity in the Animal Apocalypse 355
Colin M. Toffelmire

Index of Authors 375
Index of Scripture 382

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Chronicles and Its Reshaping of Memories of Monarchic Period Prophets: Some Observations

Ehud Ben Zvi

Several important studies on prophets in Chronicles have appeared in recent years.[1] Of course, these studies built on a significant corpus of research that deals directly or indirectly with these matters since the early 1970s.[2] Many issues have figured prominently in this now-substantial corpus. Among them, one may mention: (1) the role and status of historical prophets at the time of the author(s) of Chronicles, including the question of whether ("classical") prophecy had ceased at that time, or even what a statement such as this may mean; (2) Chronicles' representations of prophets as "preachers" and/or "historians"; (3) the sources that the author(s) of Chronicles may have used or purposefully ignored when writing about prophets and prophecy; (4) the question of who is a prophet in Chronicles, and the related issues of "ad hoc" or "temporary" prophets, Levitical singers as prophets, and whether divinely inspired messengers were conceptually understood as "prophets"; (5) prophecy and cult; and (6) the status of prophetic utterances vis à vis Mosaic Torah and the general question of what was authoritative for Chronicles. Every (or almost every) contemporary work on Chronicles and prophets/prophecy has implicitly or explicitly dealt with or assumed a position on these issues.

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[1] E.g., Y. Amit, "The Role of Prophecy and Prophets in the Chronicler's World," in *Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism* (ed. M. H. Floyd and R. D. Haak; OTS 427; London: T. & T. Clark, 2006) 80–101. In fact, this is an updated version of the work by the same title published in *Beth Miqra* 93 (1983) 113–33 [Hebrew], which was overlooked in research, for the most part; P. C. Beentjes, *Tradition and Transformation in the Book of Chronicles* (SSN 52; Leiden: Brill, 2008), esp. pp. 90–98 and 129–39 (pp. 129–39 consist of a revised version of 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; OTS 45; Leiden: Brill, 2001] 45–53); E. S. Gerstenberger, "Prophetie in den Chronikbüchern: Jahwes Wort in zweierlei Gestalt?," in *Schriftprophetie: Festschrift für Jörg Jeremias zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. F. Hartenstein, J. Krispenz, and A. Schart; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2004) 351–67; L. C. Jonker "The Chronicler and the Prophets: Who Were His Authoritative Sources?" in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* (ed. E. Ben Zvi and D. V. Edelman; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011) 145–64; A. Warhurst, "What Was Prophetic for the Chronicler?," in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* (ed. E. Ben Zvi and D. V. Edelman; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011) 165–82.

[2] E.g., T. Willi, *Die Chronik als Auslegung; Untersuchungen zur literarischen Gestaltung der historischen Überlieferung Israels* (FRLANT 106; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972); J. D. Newsome, "Toward a New Understanding of the Chronicler and His Purposes," *JBL* 94 (1975) 201–17; S. Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (BEATAJ 9; 2nd ed.; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1997; first published in Hebrew: Jerusalem: Bialik, 1977); D. L. Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy: Studies in Deutero-prophetic Literature and in Chronicles* (SBLMS 23; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977) 55–96; I. L. Seeligmann, "Die Auffassung von der Prophetie in der Deuteronomistischen und Chronistischen Geschichtsschreibung," *VT* 29 (1978) 254–84; J. P. Weinberg, "Die 'ausser kanonischen Prophezeiungen,'" *Acta Antiqua* 26 (1978) 387–404; R. Micheel, *Die Seher- und Prophetenüberlieferungen in der Chronik* (BBET 18; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1983); S. J. de Vries, "The Forms of Prophetic Address in Chronicles," *HAR* 10 (1986) 15–36; C. T. Begg, "The

This essay is no exception, but its main goal is not to revisit these debates but to explore the issue of Chronicles and prophecy/prophets from a perspective informed by a strong focus on social memory. What did Chronicles, or better, what did the reading and rereading of Chronicles

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Classical Prophets in the Chronistic History," *BZ* 32 (1988) 100–107; idem, "The Chronicler's Non-mention of Elisha," *BN* 45 (1988) 100–107; R. A. Mason, *Preaching the Tradition: Homily and Hermeneutics after the Exile* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); J. Kegler, "Prophetengestalten im Deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk und in den Chronikbüchern: Ein Beitrag zur Kompositions- und Redaktionsgeschichte der Chronikbücher," *ZAW* 105 (1993) 481–97; H. F. van Rooy, "Prophet and Society in the Persian Period according to Chronicles," in *Second Temple Studies*, vol. 2: *Temple Community in the Persian Period* (ed. T. C. Eskenazi and K. H. Richards; JSOTSup 175; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994) 163–79; J. B. Burns, "Is Neco Also among the Prophets?" *Proceedings, Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Society* 14 (1994) 113–22; 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); idem, "Prophets and Prophecy in the Books of Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Historian* (ed. M. P. Graham, K. G. Hoglund, and S. L. McKenzie; JSOTSup 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997) 204–24; P. Höffken, "Der Prophet Jesaja beim Chronisten," *BN* 81 (1996) 82–90; R. W. Klein, "Prophets and Prophecy in the Books of Chronicles," *TBT* 36 (1998) 227–32; G. N. Knoppers, "Review of W. M. Schniedewind, *The Word of God in Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple Period*," *JJS* 49 (1998) 133–35; A. Hanspach *Inspirierte Interpreten: Das Prophetenverständnis der Chronikbücher und sein Ort in der Religion und Literatur zur Zeit des Zweiten Tempels* (Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alte Testament 64; St. Otillien: EOS, 2000). An earlier and foundational work was, of course, G. von Rad ("The Levitical Sermon in I and II Chronicles," in *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* [G. von Rad; Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1966] 267–80); idem, "Die levitische Predigt in den Büchern der Chronik," in *Festschrift für Otto Procksch* (ed. A. Alt; Leipzig: Deichertsche Verlag und Hinrichssche Buchhandlung, 1934) 113–24.

within the Jerusalem-centered community of the late Persian (or perhaps, early Hellenistic) period, within which the book emerged, contribute to social memory in that community, or at least among its literati, in terms of *their* memories about the prophets of the monarchic period?[3]

I would like to stress that the focus here is not on particular memories about individual prophets but on the image of what a "monarchic-period prophet" looked like[4] and its importance in terms of social memory for the community within which Chronicles emerged.

Chronicles, like any other historiographical or prophetic book within the repertoire of ancient Israel/Yehud, was meant to evoke memory, to bring *particular* figures of the past to the present of the community and to allow members of the latter to shape and vicariously visit specific sites of memory (that is, people, places, events), which were construed through communally (more or less) shared acts of imagination as they read and reread the book. But bringing prophetic personages to the present of the community had to go hand in hand with and, in fact, necessitated at the level of general discourse the existence of a concept (or prototype) of what a "monarchic period prophetic persona" looked like, or, in other words and from a slightly different perspective, of a social memory of what monarchic prophets as a group were about.[5]

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[3] The question whether the book emerged in the late Persian period or early Hellenistic does not have a significant bearing on the observations advanced here. For the sake of convenience, I will continue referring to the era in which the book emerged and in which one is to find its primary readership as "late Persian period," but with an understanding that the early Hellenistic era is also a possibility. In fact, it is worth considering whether strong distinctions between the two are not based on a misguided use of external historical events (as opposed to social developments internal to the relevant society) as a base for historical periodization. After all, how drastic was the change in Judah, its society, and, as appropriate in this essay, its ideological discourse, when Alexander became the "last Achaemenid emperor"? (The characterization of Alexander as the "last Achaemenid" was advanced by P. Briant in 1979 ("Des Achémenides aux rois hellénistiques: Continuités et ruptures," *Rois, tributs et paysans: études sur les formations tributaires du Moyen-Orient ancient* [Annales littéraires de l'Université de Besançon 269 / Centre de recherches d'histoire ancienne 43; Paris: Les Belles lettres, 1982] 291–330) and was accepted by many since then, for example, M. A. Dandamaev, *A Political History of the Achaemenid Empire* (trans. W. J. Vogelsang; Leiden: Brill, 1989) 331.

[4] That is, in more precise terms, the focus is on the socially shared prototype of what a "monarchic period prophet" looked like, or, if one wishes, on the (mental or cognitive) concept associated with "monarchic prophet" within the relevant community.

[5] There is no doubt that memories of particular prophets (for example, Isaiah) contributed to the creation of that prototype, but one has to take into account that these memories are by necessity very individualized, and many features, events, and the like associated with a particular figure are unique to that personage. On some of these

Given the importance of prophecy and prophets in the intellectual discourse of the Yehudite literati, this social memory could not but play an important role and much was at stake in its shaping. The very existence of the corpus of prophetic books, the centrality of figures such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Moses, who is also characterized as a prophet, attests to that matter and so does the prominent role of prophets in both Samuel–Kings and Chronicles.

At this point, it is important to stress that social memory cannot be identified with any book, since it is not a book. Moreover, it cannot be identified with what evolved in the minds of an 'appropriately-socialized' individual as s/he read any single book, even if s/he did so within a socially accepted ideology and mode of reading. Instead, social, comprehensive memory may be understood as a large, integrative system or array of multiple social memories and sites of memories constantly informing each other. This array included memories evoked and relived through multiple readings of multiple books. In each of these readings, the literati could not but bring to bear the social and socially agreed knowledge that they possessed, and in a text-centered community, this implied many authoritative texts, concepts, and images in addition to those explicitly mentioned in the book they were reading. This being so, to understand the ways in which Chronicles contributed to the reshaping of the conceptual range of what a monarchic-period prophet was about, one must deal with the general discourse of the period and with the *Sitz im Diskurs* of Chronicles' images and positions. This is hardly surprising because readings of texts are always advanced within a general social discourse, and it is within that discourse that they are imbued with significance. To be sure, it is the text *as read* by the community that counts toward any reconstruction of the contribution of the book to the community's social memory.

In sum, images of monarchic prophets and prophecies were evoked through reading and rereading the book. These images served as memorials, that is, as sites of memory that existed in the minds of the readers, but which were socially shared. The Chronicler[6] asked his implied and primary (re)readers—hereafter, for the sake of simplicity, target readers or

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matters, from the perspective of the book of Kings, see my "'The Prophets': Generic Prophets and Their Role in the Construction of the Image of the 'Prophets of Old' within the Postmonarchic Readership of the Book of Kings," *ZAW* 116 (2004) 555–67.

[6] By "Chronicler," I mean the implied author of the book as construed by its primary or intended readership; in other words, the communicator or communicative voice they "heard" when they read the book. (Given the gender constructions of the period, this Chronicler was most likely imagined as male.)

target readership—to visit and revisit these sites of memory. The questions at the center of this essay are: What did these visits "do" to and for the community? What difference did these visits, and indirectly the book of Chronicles, make in society in terms of social memory?

The target readers of Chronicles developed and encountered the mentioned sites of memory, that is, textually evoked memorials that in turn embodied, reminded them, and above all drew their attention to particular sets of attributes that the community associated with their implicit concept of "monarchic prophet." As they did so, they had no choice but at times to reinforce and at times to draw attention away from the attributes that were embodied and communicated by other images evoked by different books.

Thus, the approach I am advancing here must take into account the *Sitz im Diskurs* of the readings of the text of Chronicles within its target readership in the late Persian period[7] but also must address the question of mindshare in the historical community, or to be more precise, in the approximation of the historical community that its texts suggests to us.[8] In practical ways, this means that an approach that raises the question of what effect Chronicles had on social memory in the late Persian period should bring up time and again the question of whether and how Chronicles reshaped or rebalanced the relative mindshare of features or common topoi associated with the images of the monarchic prophets.[9]

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[7] The definition of "Chronicler" advanced above is consistent with this approach.

[8] There is no access to the actual community of flesh-and-blood Israelites, but historians can reconstruct "textual communities," which in turn are likely to reflect, even if in very imperfect ways, the actual communities of readers or at the very least their own image of themselves. See L. C. Jonker, "What Constitutes Society? Yehud's Self-Understanding in the Late Persian Era as Reflected in the Books of Chronicles," *JBL* 127 (2008) 703–24; and my own discussions about the partial resemblance between intended and actual readerships in Yehud and the possibility of approximating in some ways ancient readings, for example, "Is the Twelve Hypothesis Likely from an Ancient Readers' Perspective?" in *Two Sides of a Coin: Juxtaposing Views on Interpreting the Book of the Twelve/the Twelve Prophetic Books* (ed. E. Ben Zvi and J. D. Nogalski; Analecta Gorgiana 201; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2009) 47–96, esp. pp. 54–63.

[9] It is worth noting that, unlike some present-day marketing struggles over consumers' mindshare, in which one company may set as its goal to obliterate the mindshare of its competitor, the tendency in Yehud was toward balancing mindshare. Chronicles was not aimed at convincing people that they should not read Kings or Samuel but sought to offer complementary memories that informed and were informed by those evoked by Kings or Samuel. Tendencies toward mainly monochromous memories and ideologies are more likely to develop within sectarian groups defining themselves and their boundaries and struggling against each other than within socially cohesive societies. In the latter, social cohesion is supported by both a centralization of resources and a significant range of allowed variety, which in turn is not seen as "dangerous" due to

A full, comprehensive study of all these features and topoi is beyond the scope of any paper or even of a single monograph. To make the study manageable in the present setting, five issues have been selected. These are central enough, however, to carry, at the least, the potential to make a significant contribution to a better understanding of both social memory within Yehudite Israel and its intellectual discourse and thus to contribute to the intellectual history of the period.

Remembering That Monarchic Prophets Could Also Be Successful in Their Own Times and Its Significance

> אל־תהיו כאבתיכם אשר קראו־אליהם הנביאים הראשנים לאמר כה אמר יהוה
> צבאות שובו נא מדרכיכם הרעים ומעליליכם הרעים ולא שמעו ולא־הקשיבו אלי
> נאם־יהוה:
>
> Do not be like your ancestors, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, "Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Return from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.'" But they did not hear or heed me, says the Lord (Zech 1:4, NRSV).

The prophets of the monarchic past were remembered in Yehud, for the most part, as unsuccessful in their own monarchic historical contexts. This motif, which is explicitly stated in the text cited above (cf. Zech 7:7, 12),[10] played a central role in the construction of "the (generic) prophets" in

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strength of cohesive tendencies. Needless to say, there were not enough literati or social resources in late Persian Jerusalem to allow for the development of sects and their more rigid and antagonistic viewpoints.

[10] J. O'Brien ("Nahum-Habakkuk-Zephaniah: Reading the 'Former Prophets' in the Persian Period," *Int* 61 [2007] 168–83) has maintained that "Hosea–Zephaniah so closely conform to Zechariah's description of the 'former prophets' that these books may have been written or edited as a prelude to Zechariah" (p. 168) and

> [t]he scenario that I have described supports a redactional scheme in which Hosea through Zephaniah were consciously edited as a preface to Zechariah, providing a portrayal of the "former prophets" useful to the writer of Zechariah. . .[w]hile the contrary argument could be made (that Zechariah simply quoted from earlier prophetic books rather than helped create them), this latter scenario would account for neither 1) why the books have been put in this particular order, nor 2) why Zechariah has so many connections with the "happy endings" of the earlier books, which are widely recognized to reflect postexilic sensibilities. (p. 180)

Immaterial of whether one agrees with her redactional proposals or not, the point that Zechariah's description of the "former prophets" is fully consistent with the image that the books associated with prophetic characters ascribed to the monarchic period is certainly well taken and illustrates the point about a shared social memory about these prophets that shaped these books and is reflected in them.

Kings.[11] Most of the memories activated/evoked by the prophetic books whose background is set in the monarchic period contributed to this construction of the past, either explicitly (e.g., Jer 7:25, 25:4, 26:9, 35:15, 44:4) or implicitly because the destruction proclaimed in these books did happen from the perspective of the Persian-period readership.[12]

This social memory of the failed prophets was an integral and ideologically necessary part of a central node of social memories that (1) brought together social memories of exile, justified divine punishment, the correlated sinful character of monarchic Israel and (2) due to its *Sitz im Diskurs*, was strongly informed by widely accepted notions of a deity that warns before punishment and uses prophets as its messengers.[13] This node of related and mutually reinforcing memories and related ideological concepts provided significance to the remembered, central catastrophe and also served clear didactic purposes in Yehud.

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[11] As I discuss in "'The Prophets.'"

[12] There is only one salient exception to this construction of the prophets of old, namely, Isaiah. He was the only major late monarchic period prophetic character who was construed as successful. The positive heightening of the character of Isaiah (and Hezekiah) is related to the significance of the memory of the "salvation" of Jerusalem at the time of Hezekiah, which served as the contrasting site of memory for that of the destruction of Jerusalem at the time of Zedekiah. This contrast of sites of memory plays a very important role in the general metanarrative of the fall of Jerusalem and exile and their ideological/theological significance in Yehud. This issue, however, is beyond the scope of this essay; see my "Malleability and Its Limits: Sennacherib's Campaign against Judah as a Case Study," in *'Bird in a Cage': The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE* (ed. L. L. Grabbe; JSOTSup 363; European Seminar in Historical Methodology 4; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press and Continuum, 2003) 73–105. It goes without saying that this unique characterization of Isaiah raises very interesting questions about the array of memories associated with him in the Persian and Early Hellenistic periods and their relative mindshare (cf. Sir 48:24–25). A good dissertation waits to be written on the matter. A second, and far less salient, exception to the characterization of the monarchic prophets as ineffectual at their time within the corpus of prophetic book is the brief reference to the memory of Micah within the world portrayed in Jer 26:18–19. Significantly, this text is about comparing the Assyrian crisis with the Babylonian and their contrasting outcomes.

[13] Clearly, this is not an innovation of the Chronicler but part and parcel of the discourse of the late Persian period. It is implicitly and explicitly attested in the prophetic books (e.g., Jer 7:25, 25:4, 26:9, 35:15, 44:4; Ezek 3:16–27) and in Kings (e.g., 2 Kgs 17:13). The "principle" is, as most principles in Chronicles, not absolute, as demonstrated, for instance, by the absence of any narrative about warning in the paradigmatic case of Ahaz or in the very first reference to YHWH in Chronicles (1 Chr 2:3). On the principle of warning before punishment in Chronicles, see Japhet, *Ideology*, 176–91. The argument that most "principles" in Chronicles are not absolute is developed in my *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles* (Bible World; London: Equinox, 2006); for a discussion of the account of Ahaz, see pp. 160–73.

Chronicles is no stranger to any of this. In fact, it reminded its target readers of these notions about YHWH as it asked them to remember multiple past cases that embodied and communicated this set of notions, that is, by creating multiple, appropriate "sites of memory." Moreover, in addition to asking its readers to experience vicariously instances in which prophets were unsuccessful in the past (e.g. 2 Chr 24:19), the Chronicler also and most significantly chose to conclude his key interpretive preface to the narrative that leads up to and includes Jerusalem's destruction and exile, with a heightened note (2 Chr 36:15–16) that reflected and shaped a memory consistent with that in Zech 1:4, namely,

> וישלח יהוה אלהי אבותיהם עליהם ביד מלאכיו השכם ושלוח כי־חמל על־עמו ועל־מעונו: ויהיו מלעבים במלאכי האלהים ובוזים דבריו ומתעתעים בנבאיו עד עלות חמת־יהוה בעמו עד־לאין מרפא:
>
> The LORD, the God of their ancestors, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place;[16] but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD against his people became so great that there was no remedy (2 Chr 36:15–16, NRSV).

It is only expected that widespread memories about prophets being rejected, mocked, and the like would lead to memories of their persecution and even murder at the hands of their enemies. Chronicles, Kings, and the prophetic books, all of which evoke memories about rejected prophets in the monarchic period, shape and communicate a topos of (monarchic period) prophetic martyrology.[14] This topos is reflected also in Neh 9:26, which reminds its readers that their ancestors killed the prophets who had warned them in order to turn them back. In turn, memories of martyrdom make even more memorable (that is, increase the mindshare of) the motif of rejection of the monarchic prophets. In sum, themes both of prophetic lack of success and of persecution are well ingrained in social memories about monarchic Judah and Israel in Yehud and play important roles.[15]

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[14] For Chronicles, see 2 Chr 16:7–10, 24:19–25, and esp. 24:20–22. I discuss the matter in relation to Kings in "'The Prophets.'" See the portrayal of the prophet Jeremiah there. On prophetic martyrology, see also A. Rofé, *The Prophetical Stories: The Narratives about the Prophets in the Hebrew Bible, Their Literary Types and History* (Publications of the Perry Foundation for Biblical Research in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1988) 197–213. The generative power of the topos becomes evident (and the topos even more dominant) in the late Second Temple period, in which even Isaiah (the most "successful" monarchic prophet within the social memory of Yehud) was imagined as suffering martyrdom. It is worth noting that traditions about Isaiah's martyrdom captured the imagination for centuries and had a very long history of reception (for example, note the midrashic characterization of his killer Manasseh as Isaiah's grandson; or the persistent images in medieval Vulgate manuscripts; see R. Bernheimer, "The Martyrdom of Isaiah," *The Art Bulletin* 34 (1952) 19–34.

All this said, it is worth stressing that Chronicles *balances* this construction of the memory of the prophets with a very substantial number of stories about prophets (or prophetic characters) who were successful in the monarchic period, for example, Shemaiah (twice during the days of Rehoboam, see 2 Chr 11:1–4, 12:5–6), Azariah in the days of Asa (2 Chr 15:1–7), Jehoiada in the days of Joash (note that his role is explicitly assigned to prophets in 2 Chr 24:19), the "man of God" in the days of Amaziah (2 Chr 25:7–9), Zechariah in the days of Uzziah (2 Chr 26:5), and Oded in (narratively and ideologically "kingless") northern Israel during the reign of Ahaz (2 Chr 28:8-15). Each of these stories created a particular site or memory for the readers of Chronicles, that is, a kind of memorial that reminded them that monarchic prophets were often successful.

These memorials do not populate the world evoked by Kings or by the prophetic books in the repertoire of Yehud. Had social mindshare on these matters been shaped *only* on the basis of the Deuteronomistic historical collection (hereafter, DH) and the prophetic corpus, the memory of the prophets of the monarchic period would have been very strongly shaped around the topos of the rejected, unsuccessful prophet and its logical counterpart, the usually sinful Israel. Chronicles, however, rebalanced, to the best of its capabilities, the mindshare of such a common topos. It did so not by denying or asking its readers to forget about it—in fact, it actively participated in its promotion—but by setting the topos in proportion. This attitude is typical of Chronicles and is probably necessary for a "national" history that must conform with some set of "facts" about the past that were already agreed on in the community and that can inform and be informed by other constructions of the past in the community, but not replace them.[16]

The ideological and social implications of the mentioned shift in social memory toward which Chronicles led are significant. The shift helped to construe and remember an image of Israel as not necessarily, or not in some essential way, sinful. Remembering monarchic Israel as not necessarily sinful was a consistent, underlying theme in Chronicles.[17]

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[15] A study of the ideological and didactical role of the martyrdom of the pious one/few stands well beyond the scope of this essay. It suffices here to say that, although this motif became central later on, and particularly since the persecutions of Antiochus IV, it did exist before and is well attested in the discourse and repertoire of the community in late Persian Yehud. To a large extent, in all these cases, the "one/few" pious stood for what Israel should have been and should be.

[16] One point I advanced in *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles.*

There was also a practical implicature to Chronicles' tendency to shift the relative balance of mindshare on these issues in the community. As the Chronicler reminded the community of numerous cases of prophets and instances of prophetic preaching and teaching that were successful in their own time, it contributed to expectations about the success of preachers in their own time. As it did so, it conveyed an implied sense of continuity between (the Chronicles' construed) monarchic Israel and the (also construed) late Persian-period community as it should be in the view of the Chronicler.

There is another aspect of this particular tendency to balance social memory in this regard that converged to some extent with the preceding observation. As Chronicles drew, to the best of its capabilities, attention to stories of prophetic success, it drew some attention away from the topoi of prophetic rejection and persecution. The latter, however, was deeply linked in the discourse of the period to the ideological construction of the catastrophe of 586 B.C.E. As a result, Chronicles ended up drawing, indirectly, *some* attention away from the overwhelming focus on the catastrophe itself that would have characterized the social memory of Israel,[18] had social mindshare in late Yehud been shaped *only* by the DH and the prophetic books. This was consistent with the tendency in Chronicles not to deny but to place in proportion the significance of the catastrophe of 586 and "exile." This tendency cannot be discussed here, but it suffices to state that Chronicles conveyed to its target readership that nothing essential changed because of this catastrophe and that, in fact, the latter did not matter much in the long run. After all, nothing changed in terms of YHWH's teachings/torah, Israel's obligation to follow them, the need for godly preachers, the essential character of Israel, the centrality of Jerusalem, or YHWH's ways of governing the world.[19]

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[17] In fact, as I suggested in my previous work ("A House of Treasures: The Account of Amaziah in 2 Chronicles 25—Observations and Implications," *SJOT* 22 [2008] 63–85), the Chronicler raised among its target readership an understanding that Israel, including of course their kings, tend by default to behave properly, that is, to follow YHWH, if the rule of a bad king is removed from upon them. Significantly, kings are more likely to begin their reign piously than impiously till the death of Josiah, at which time YHWH decided that a drastic purge is needed and will be fulfilled. Of course, initially pious kings and the people they lead show such a strong tendency to go astray at some point or another, but the putative default behavior of Israel may explain, or contribute to an explanation for a resetting of the entropic clock after the death, that is, the removal from power of a sinful king whose presence interfered with the "natural" tendency of the Israelites. Thus, as soon as Ahaz dies, the people, who previously followed his paths, recognize that this sinful king does not deserve to be buried with the kings of Israel/Judah (cf. 2 Chr 28:27; cf. 2 Chronicles 29–31 and note the date in 2 Chr 29:3). See also the beginning of the reign of Amaziah in 2 Chronicles 25. When a sinful king rules over Judah, the Judahites (/Israel) tend, however, to sin (see, for instance, 2 Chr 33:1–9).

[18] Instances of implicit or explicit ideological engagement with the significance of the catastrophe, the use of its memory for didactic purposes and as a framing historical event in historiography attest to the mentioned focus, in addition to any direct or indirect report or image relating to the events themselves, to those that led to them and to their immediate aftermath.

None of these positions are really innovations of the Chronicler. They did exist in one way or another within the general discourse of the period. The Chronicler's effect on the relative mindshare of memories of the monarchic past, however, exemplified a tendency to advance memories consistent with and promoting these positions and with *balancing* other memories that lent themselves to other (seemingly contradictory, but discursively complementary) ideological narratives.

Remembering Also That the Prophets Were Not Necessarily Focused on the Far Future of Their Community and Its Significance

There is no doubt that had the mindshare of the community been shaped by the prophetic books alone, images of monarchic period prophets announcing utopian futures would have played a highly prominent role. To be sure, remembering these announcements played a very substantial role in the creation and social impact of a basic and hopeful meta-narrative that moved from a just punishment in the past to a utopian future. Moreover, because in this meta-narrative YHWH's announcements about Israel's utopian future are set in the period of its extreme sinfulness, it reminded the community that YHWH's great promises for Israel's future are not conditional on their behavior. This memory contributed to a sense of hope and certitude about the future. Utopia will come and cannot but come; the community can be sure of that, because of the dystopian character of the monarchic past.

But Chronicles kept bringing its target readership to other sites of memory. Those embodied in monarchic period prophets whose messages to their addressees were not about some idyllic situation in the far future of their community or Israel in general, but about what they, that is, the addressees should do in their present and the possible implications of their actions for their immediate future. It is not the far future that figures prominently in all these instances but the very near future.

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[19] On the concept of exile in Chronicles, see my "Towards a Sense of Balance: Remembering the Catastrophe of Monarchic Judah/(Ideological) Israel and Exile through Reading Chronicles in late Yehud," in the *Book of Chronicles and Early Second Temple Historiography* [ed. T. F. Williams and P. S. Evans; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, forthcoming]).

By doing so, Chronicles led, to the best of its influence, to a shift in the relative mindshare of memories about the main contents of past prophetic utterances in monarchic Judah, which was shaped in the main by the prophetic books.[20] This shift is consistent with the tendency in Chronicles to raise the prominence of issues such as following YHWH's teachings.[21] Although there is a tendency in Chronicles to portray vignettes of the monarchic past as utopian to some extent, and as veiled models for the future of its community,[22] these are a far cry from images such as those of a world in which "the wolf will live with the lamb" (Isaiah 11), of new heavens and a new earth (Isa 65:17), or of a changed Israel that is reshaped by the deity as unable to sin because it is 'programmed' to follow YHWH (e.g., Deut 30:16; Jer 31:31–34, 32:38–41; Ezek 11:19–20, 36:25–28; cf. Hos 2:21; Jer 24:7), or of a peaceful world in which all the nations will flow to Jerusalem (e.g., Isa 2:2–4, Mic 4:1–4/5) or in which Jerusalem will become the imperial capital (e.g., Isa 60:11–12).

All the utopian futures evoked by prophetic books mentioned in the preceding paragraph involved a drastic transformation of the world in which the primary readers of Chronicles lived.[23] But Chronicles did not ask them to imagine these changes. On the contrary, it tended to reduce the emphasis that the general discourse of the period placed on these memories of a future, utopian transformation. Instead, Chronicles drew attention toward imagining a world better than the present, but not categorically discontinuous with it. The good future world that Chronicles tended to bring to prominence was still a mundane world in which godly speakers are needed and so are authoritative texts. This approach of Chronicles is again consistent with its inclination to reduce attention and soften—though certainly not eliminate—the discursive heights usually associated with the dystopic catastrophe of 586 B.C.E. and its counterpart, the heightened images of "earth shattering" changes in the world as known to the community.

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[20] Of course, the books of Samuel and Kings contain examples of utterances that are not utopian and have immediate significance. Again, Chronicles is clearly not "inventing" the prophet who spoke about matters of immediate significance. Yet, when it comes to mindshare about post-secession prophets in Judah, the prophetic books clearly carried the day, until Chronicles contributed to a partial rebalancing. On Kings, see pp. 179–180 below.

[21] Including, of course, those relevant to proper worship.

[22] See S. J. Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles* (OTS 442; New York: T. & T. Clark, 2007); J. Blenkinsopp, "Ideology and Utopia in 1–2 Chronicles," in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* (ed. E. Ben Zvi and D. V. Edelman; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011) 89–104. Remembering utopian elements as facts in the monarchic past is consistent with the tendencies mentioned in the previous sections concerning remembering monarchic Israel as not necessarily sinful and about the essential continuity of Israel that bridges and reduces the salience of the fall of Jerusalem and its temple and its exile.

[23] One has to keep in mind that the target readership of Chronicles was aware of and most likely read the repertoire of authoritative books of late Persian or early Hellenistic Yehud/Judah.

Kings, like Chronicles, did not draw particular attention to the utopian images of the prophetic books, but unlike Kings, Chronicles did provide many salient memorials (or sites of memory) leading its readers to imagine many particular (post-David/Solomon) Judahite prophetic characters and their speeches.[24] This remark leads us to the next main observation.

Constructing a Temporally and Geographically Additional Distribution of Prophetic Sites of Memory and Its Significance

The book of Kings did not develop a strong mindshare among its target readership for memories of individual prophets in the (separate) Kingdom of Judah from the period it became well established (as a result of the successful secession of the north) to its fall along with that of its capital, Jerusalem.[25] To be sure, generic references to prophets conveyed a general sense that there were always prophets, but the text did not lead to the formation of prominent sites of memory that drew very substantial mindshare. The corpus of prophetic books provided a significant number of central monarchic period characters to remember, but concentrated them around either the late northern Israelite period and its counterpart in Hezekianic Judah (e.g., Hosea, Amos, Micah, Isaiah) or the late Judahite monarchic period or its immediate aftermath (e.g., Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel). As mentioned above, both periods were closely associated with each other, because they provided the framework to understand the catastrophe of exile and draw significance from it.[26]

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[24] The exception in Kings concerns Isaiah.

[25] As mentioned above, the most salient exception for Judah is Isaiah; see also the case of Hulda. It goes without saying that Kings asked its target readership to remember and imagine multiple prophets in the North and construes some of them as very memorable (for example, Elijah and Elisha) but there are no counterparts to them in Judah. This situation may be explained, but *only in part* by the roles assigned to prophets in reports concerning the ascension or rejection (and disposal) of northern dynasties, which for obvious reasons had no counterpart in Judah's historical narrative once the Davidic dynasty is established.

There is a need for a kind of sibling essay to this one, but dealing with prophetic memories in the Deuteronomistic Historical and the prophetic collections and their *Sitz im Diskurs.* It is worth stressing that Chronicles emerged later than these two collections, and for a substantial period of time social memory about prophets was shaped, in the main, by these two collections. I plan to write an essay on this in the near future.

Chronicles asked its target readership to remember a significant number of prophets, who are not mentioned elsewhere but who cover precisely the gaps in the geographical or temporal distribution of prophetic images evoked by the other authoritative corpora.[27] In other words, its effect, to the best of its influence, was to rebalance the mindshare of different images of the past in the community and through this rebalancing act to shape a general social memory of the monarchic period in Judah. In this social memory prophets appear as consistent sites of memory throughout the entire temporal and spatial landscape of Judah, as at least the literati in the late Persian period imagined it.[28] This is consistent with two ideological messages that Chronicles frequently communicated to its target readership: (1) Israel could exist without Jerusalem or temple or king, but not without divine instruction or guidance, and (2) the principle of warning mentioned above. Both, within the world construed by Chronicles, required the presence of prophetic voices.

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[26] It is worth noting that, unlike the emphasis on Manasseh as responsible for the Exile in some voices in Kings (see 2 Kgs 24:3), there is no prophetic book allocated to that period. Kings drew attention to Manasseh in its metanarrrative of exile; the prophetic corpus—just as Chronicles—drew attention away from his reign in their own general metanarratives of exile. A full discussion of this matter and its implications is beyond the scope of this essay.

[27] See, for instance, 2 Chr 13:22 (reign of Abijah), 15:8 (reign of Asa), 16:7 (reign of Asa), 19:2 (reign of Jehoshaphat), 20:14 (reign of Jehoshaphat), 20:37 (reign of Jehoshaphat), 24:20 (reign of Joash), 25:7–10 (reign of Amaziah), 28:9 (kingless northern Israel). Jehoiada, the priest, serves the roles often associated with prophets during the reign of Joash, as he directs him to follow in YHWH's ways. After Jehoiada's death, when the king abandons his counsel, prophets are called to bring him and his elite back, though they fail to do so (2 Chr 24:19). (As required by the narrative world, Jehoida is also a kind of kingly figure who restores to Judah the laws and regulations of both Moses and David, reestablishing the temple and the Davidic dynasty). The role of the prophetic voice during the reign of Uzziah is taken up by Azariah, the priest, and the other priests. L. Jonker associates most of these prophets with reports about war or cult. See Jonker, "Refocusing the Battle Accounts of the Kings: Identity Formation in the Books of Chronicles," in *Behutsames Lesen: Alttestamentliche Exegese im Gespräch mit Literaturwissenschaft und Kulturwissenschaften: Festschrift für Christof Hardmeier zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. S. Lubs et al.; Arbeiten zur Bibel und Ihrer Geschichte 28; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2007) 245–74. While this might be true, much of the narrative space of the nonformulaic section of the regnal accounts in Chronicles is devoted to these matters.

[28] Of course, Chronicles also places prophets in periods that in the memory of the community are already populated by prophets, such as the David-Rehoboam period (cf. DH), the Ahabite period (cf. DH), the Hezekian period (cf. DH and the prophetic books), the Josianic period, and the relatively brief account of the three kings leading to the fall of Jerusalem. It is worth noting, however, that at times Chronicles draws

Moreover, by filling the temporal and (theo)polity-bound gaps, Chronicles contributed to balancing mindshare in such a way that resulted in softening of the "heights and valleys" distribution of memorable prophetic figures in the social memory of the community in late Yehud. This in turn was fully consistent with the tendency in Chronicles to soften—though certainly not eliminate—the heights and valleys associated in other literature with the post-Davidic/Solomonic past. After all, for Chronicles, neither exile nor for that matter the reported deeds of Josiah or Hezekiah[29] mattered so much in the long run.[30]

Remembering Also the Wide Range of Potential Intermediaries of Divine Knowledge and of Divine Knowledge and Its Significance

Chronicles also rebalanced the existing memories of the community in terms of who can be intermediaries of the divine for Israel and what they may do. It reminded its target readers that YHWH's intermediaries did not have to be "professional" or "permanent prophets" to fulfill the roles of prophets.[31] It reminded them that these intermediaries may be kings, even

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attention to prophets known from existing sources that fit the period but advances a reconfiguration of the social memory of the community about them. The most obvious example is the case of Elijah and his letter to Jehoram in 2 Chr 21:11–15. In fact, there is hardly any period within the monarchic past to which the readers of Chronicles were not explicitly asked to associate prophetic voices. (Unlike Kings, in which he is never explicitly mentioned, Chronicles draws attention to Jeremiah in the context of the reign of Zedekiah; see 2 Chr 36:12). The most salient exception is the period of Ahaz.

[29] I wrote elsewhere on the account of Josiah in Chronicles. See my "Observations on Josiah's Account in Chronicles and Implications for Reconstructing the World View of the Chronicler," in *Essays on Ancient Israel in Its Near Eastern Context: A Tribute to Nadav Na'aman* (ed. Y. Amit et al.; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006) 89–106.

[30] The same holds true, of course, for the deeds of kings viewed in an extremely negative way, for example, those of Ahaz, who shut the doors of the temple, among his many other acts of impiety.

[31] Y. Amit, among others, maintains that, in Chronicles, "a king, a Levite or any other person, functions as prophet when he utters prophetic statements in the Chronistic sermonizing style" ("The Role of Prophecy and Prophets," 89). The "Chronistic sermonizing style" to which she refers is the style of the "Levitical sermon" as discussed in G. von Rad, "The Levitical Sermon in I and II Chronicles." Contrast Amit's position

a foreign king, priests, or Levites (e.g., 1 Chr 28:19; 2 Chr 20:14–17, 24:20–22, 29:25, 35:20–24, 36:22).[32] It reminded them that monarchic-period prophets may compose and perform cultic music (1 Chr 25:1–8) or laments (2 Chr 35:25). It asked them to keep in mind that these prophets recorded (and interpreted) monarchic history (e.g., 1 Chr 29:30; 2 Chr 9:29, 12:15, 13:22, 23:32, 33:19) and conversely that books consisting of historical (royal) record included prophetic texts (2 Chr 20:34, 32:32, 33:18).[33]

Thus, Chronicles contributed to a reconfiguration of the range of what came to the minds of its target readership when they thought of monarchic-period prophetic personages, that is, it affected the relative mindshare of various prophetic images that existed in the community. Most importantly, it created a conceptual realm that brought together (1) prophecy, in the "narrow" sense, (2) laws and regulations (associated with the intermediary figures Moses or David, who in Chronicles were also considered to be prophetic characters and, accordingly, their inspired words to be some form of prophecy—and *vice versa*),[34] (3) historical writ-

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with Schniedewind's, for whom prophets are *only* those whom Chronicles explicitly designate as such (e.g., W. M. Schniedewind, "Prophets and Prophecy," 214). Suffice to say that at the very least, Chronicles reflected and shaped a conceptual field populated by both "prophets" and prophetic characters who deliver prophecies, even if they are not *explicitly* called prophets. This shared conceptual field strongly associated one image to the other.

32. *Foreign king*: The text in 2 Chr 35:22 states מפי אלהים, but within the discourse of the target readership of Chronicles, אלהים could only be understood as a reference to Yhwh. Most likely, in response to this understanding, in the text in 1 Esd 1:28, Jeremiah replaces Neco as the intermediary for Yhwh's words.

Note that mediation in the case of 1 Chr 28:19 is through a written text. This is one of the cases in which David is construed as a kind of necessary complement to Moses, given the importance of the temple and temple cult and above all of the divine instructions necessary for establishing and maintaining it. See S. J. de Vries, "Moses and David as Cult Founders in Chronicles," *JBL* 107 (1988) 619–39; and my own discussion of these matters in "One Size Does Not Fit All: Notes on the Different Ways in Which Chronicles Dealt with the Authoritative Literature of Its Time," in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* (ed. E. Ben Zvi and D. V. Edelman; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011) 13–36 .

See also 2 Kgs 23:2 and 2 Chr 34:30 and note the exchange between prophets and Levites.

33. See Blenkinsopp, "Ideology and Utopia"; and S. Schweitzer, "Judging a Book by Its Citations: Authority and the Sources in Chronicles," in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* (ed. E. Ben Zvi and D. V. Edelman; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011) 37–66.

34. See, for instance, 2 Chr 8:14, noting the concluding expression מצות דויד איש־האלהים, and see 2 Chr 30:16. The term איש־האלהים is used in Chronicles for Moses

ings, and (4) cultic poetry or music.[35] In other words, this realm brings together the authoritative repertoire of the community and associated it with prophecy.[36]

Moreover, Chronicles brought together and brought to the attention of the community's present memories about both *written texts* and *oral exhortations*, encouraging the community to follow these texts and what they stood for. Oral exhortations served to provide memorable examples of what following YHWH could mean in practical, historically contingent terms (e.g., 2 Chr 28:9–15). In any event, readers were reminded that both (inspired/authoritative) written and oral texts were necessary in monarchic Israel and, by extension, in post-monarchic Israel.

In other words, Chronicles did far more than simply legitimize its work by suggesting that pious or "ideologically" appropriate historiographical works such as Chronicles have some kind of prophetic authority and that, by extension, so did the readings and interpretations of existing authoritative literature that Chronicles advanced. Of course, Chronicles did so. But, in addition, it shifted the web of images about the past that existed in the community so as to include memories that evoked a conceptual realm of prophecy consistent with a large and varied authoritative corpus of written works (including those containing interpretations/readings of other

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also in 1 Chr 23:14 and for other prophets in 2 Chr 11:2 and 25:9. Significantly, the target readership of Chronicles is asked to evoke a memory of David as a person who, like Moses, knew the distant future (see 1 Chr 16:35). I discussed the matter and its implications elsewhere; see "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.

[35] See Gerstenberger, "Prophetie in den Chronikbüchern"; and Z. Talshir, "Several Canon-Related Concepts Originating in Chronicles," *ZAW* 111 (2001) 386–403.

[36] This is, of course, the beginning of the process that led eventually to the development of an agreed corpus of inspired (i.e., prophetic) writings and eventually to canon(s). See "the law, the prophets, and the rest of the books" in the foreword in Sirach. It is worth stressing that the realm of prophecy in Chronicles included also, as M. Leuchter correctly noted, prophecy as divine דבר, which may "empower history to unfold and direct empires to rise and fall"; M. Leuchter, "Rethinking the 'Jeremiah' Doublet in Ezra–Nehemiah and Chronicles," in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* (ed. E. Ben Zvi and D. V. Edelman; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011) 183–200. This concept of prophecy is not necessarily associated with unitemporality, as a divine word may unfold more than one time and in more than one way. See, for instance, understandings of prophetic portrayals of the "return" (i.e., the removal of "Exile") as something that has already happened, even if partially in Persian times, but at the same time as something to be fulfilled in the future. On these matters, see pp. 184–187 below.

written works, for example, Chronicles) and oral speeches. Each of these references to written or oral texts shaped sites of memory that embodied and communicated what was transmitted through divine intermediation.

The implied conceptualization of this realm of prophecy/authoritative corpus and its retrojection to monarchic Israel is consistent with the sense of continuity between the past brought to the present of the community through the reading of Chronicles and its own present, or what should be, according to Chronicles, its present. But, of course, this must be balanced too. There was no room in the present of the target readers of Chronicles, for instance, for a new Moses or David, for new Mosaic commandments or divine laws identifying the place of the temple or establishing its cult. One may note that despite all its differences (e.g., kings, size of population, and so on), the same holds true for the post-David (or David/Solomon) period portrayed in Chronicles. In any event, the Chronistic prophetic landscape of the post-Davidic/Solomonic, monarchic period, and the memories it evoked were consistent with, and a legitimizing force for a present advocated by Chronicles, that is, for its "down-to-earth" utopia.

Remembering Also That although the Prophets Were Historical Figures Their Words May Be Transhistorical or Multitemporal and Its Significance

Chronicles is a historiographical work. As expected given its literary genre, all its prophetic characters are explicitly anchored to particular historical circumstances. These anchors are crucial to the memory-shaping function of the book. Remembering these characters would not have contributed to the communal memory of any particular set of circumstances, if it were not for these explicit anchors. Moreover, Chronicles often asked its target readership to imagine these prophetic personages as speakers who addressed concrete, particular historical situations in the present of their addressees.[37] In addition, this Chronistic trend is clearly associated with and even required by the general tendency toward drawing attention to the concept of warning before punishment, which is involved in the shaping of multiple sites of memory in the community about people in the monarchic period who were exhorted to turn back from their sinful path.[38]

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[37] Contrast with Amit's assertion that "the prophets of the Deuteronomistic historiography do not react to concrete historical events, ("The Role of Prophecy and Prophets," 88). Amit's statement is a bit too extreme, and she later qualifies it in her essay, but it points at the different balance of attestation of tendencies between Kings and Chronicles.

[38] See Japhet, *Ideology*, 176–91.

These tendencies generated a need for the conceptualization of prophecy as anchored in and contingent to the putative historical circumstances of the conveying prophetic voice. After all, prophetic messages and characters had to be imagined as carrying at least the potential to influence the actions of the remembered historical agents in their own (putative) times.

However, Chronicles reminded the community that, whereas the remembered prophets are each to be associated with a particular temporal and spatial place in the array of shared (construed) pasts of the community, prophetic words may and at times did apply to multiple circumstances, including but certainly not limited to those of the prophetic speaker. Thus, prophets in Chronicles may allude to or use words associated with much later prophets in the corpus of prophetic literature,[39] and conversely, prophetic words that refer to the far future in that corpus may be taken as relevant or even partially fulfilled in the monarchic past, without removing their significance as prophecies for the distant future within the discourse of the community.[40]

Thus, Chronicles contributes to a drive toward both close connection and separation between prophet and prophetic words in social memory. For particular purposes and ideological narratives, the two must be remembered together; but at the same time, the prophetic words could be taken as "floating" textual sites of memory by themselves and, as such, be evoked in multiple contexts, to the point that they may significantly contribute to the shaping of memories of multiple events at different times.[41]

The basic atemporality of the prophetic word, as it becomes a site of memory in and by itself, was necessary for assuming its multitemporality. Again, this is no innovation of Chronicles but a very important feature of the discourse of the period.[42] It is reflected, for instance, in the strong tendency toward dehistoricizing the present in the prophetic writings, particularly in the majority of the 12 prophetic books.[43] Chronicles and these books contributed, even if implicitly, to the development of a community in which evoking prophetic messages did not necessarily evoke temporal constraints and "historical" contingency. This position allowed for the continuous significance of words set in the past, be they reported in the prophetic books, pentateuchal or historical texts or, for that matter, in any book in the authoritative repertoire of the community. This position allowed for the creation of a sea of images and texts that, though set originally in a particular event in the remembered past, were seen as (at least, potentially) relevant and instrumental for multiple or even all times. In other words, it allowed for the social reproduction of a text-centered community.

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[39] E.g. 2 Chr 15:3 (and cf. Hos 3:4), 5 (and cf. Zech 8:10 and Amos 3:9), 6 (and cf. Zech 11:6), 7 (and cf. Jer 31:16 and Zeph 3:16); 2 Chr 16:9 (and cf. Zech 4:10); 20:20 (and cf. Isa 7:9). See P. C. Beentjes, *Tradition and Transformation*, 137–39; Japhet, *Ideology*, 183; Willi, *Auslegung*, 177, 223–29; von Rad, "Levitical Sermon"; Ben Zvi, "Who Knew What."

[40] For instance, and as A. Warhurst has shown, some of the attributes of the ideal king in Isaiah 11 contribute to the characterization of Hezekiah in Chronicles. Thus, "the Chronicler retrojects restoration prospects onto descriptions of past history." See Warhurst, "Chronicler's Use of the Prophets," 181. Needless to say, the portrayal of this (partial) fulfillment was not an implied call to reject the future value of the utopian prophecy in Isaiah 11 or diminish its relative mindshare in the memory of the community. In fact, the opposite is likely to be correct. The allusions to Isaiah 11 likely served to draw the attention to the text and its (now double) message.

[41] This is consistent with the idea of prophecy as a historical force or agent that actually makes things happen in history. See p. 183 n. 37 above; see also Isa 55:10–11.

In addition, it allowed the community in the late Persian period to strengthen its sense of continuity between itself and the past communities of Israel that it remembered, as it imagined a shared set of crucial and defining texts. Within a discourse in which Israel was conceived as a transtemporal entity and at the same time as a text-centered community, one can only expect the development of a tendency to associate at least some level of trans-temporality to Israel's texts. Moreover, within this *Sitz im Diskurs*, a tendency of this sort toward transtemporality is likely to end up evoking some sense of temporal omnipresence concerning the basic sea of texts that define the community or at least to end up creating the conditions in which this sense may have emerged.[44]

To be sure, the concept of atemporal prophetic words uttered by temporally bound prophets carries within itself some degree of tension. This is particularly so because the temporally bound prophets were to be characterized by their prophetic words and remembered as those who uttered them. Tensions like this often carry some degree of generative power within the discourse of the community. In this case, the tension had the potential to generate some instances of partial "leakages" of atemporality from the *prophetic word* to the prophetic figure.[45] These partial leakages allowed for authors, redactors, and interpreters to imagine themselves as taking on, even if partially, the persona of the prophet and shaping prophetic words. This process was central to the development (including redaction) of the prophetic books, but one wonders whether it was not, even if perhaps in a marginal way, at work when the authorship of Chronicles advanced authoritative readings of the divine teachings associated with Moses.[46] One may wonder if the same does not hold true for cases in which prophetic phrases and expressions, or allusions to them, were embedded in the text of Chronicles—even if, and most likely because, these phrases or expressions were known in the community and remembered as associated with acknowledged prophetic voices.

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[42] For instance, and as mentioned above, the image of the "return" as both fulfilled in Persian times and yet not fulfilled. See the case of the utopian world of Isaiah 11, discussed above.

[43] I discussed these matters elsewhere; see my "De-historicizing and Historicizing Tendencies in the Twelve Prophetic Books: A Case Study of the Heuristic Value of a Historically Anchored Systemic Approach to the Corpus of Prophetic Literature," in *Israel's Prophets and Israel's Past: Essays on the Relationship of Prophetic Texts and Israelite History in Honor of John H. Hayes* (ed. B. E. Kelle and M. Moore; (OTS 446; London: T. & T. Clark, 2006) 37–56.

[44] Whether this sense of omnipresence is already active in Chronicles, even if in only a partially and strongly balanced way, or whether this book (among others) prepared the way toward its development cannot be answered in any clear way. See my "Who Knew What?"

To Conclude

This essay explored ways in which Chronicles influenced social memory about prophets and prophecy in the community within which it emerged. Carrying out this exploration required a *Sitz im Diskurs* approach to Chronicles' relevant data, which included numerous, and at times seemingly contradictory, images of prophets and prophecy. This essay has shown that Chronicles contributed, to the extent of its capabilities, to a process of balancing the relative mindshare of different memories and sets of memories about prophets and prophecy in the late Persian (or early Hellenistic) Yehudite community in which its primary readership is located. The cumulative weight of the five central cases studied strongly suggests that Chronicles' tendencies to rebalance mindshare about prophets and prophecy were deeply interwoven with substantial ideological trends that already existed in the discourse of the community but that were well represented and even particularly salient in Chronicles.

The question of how effective was Chronicles vis à vis other authoritative works (e.g., Kings, prophetic books, pentateuchal books) in shaping mindshare in flesh-and-blood, historical communities in the late Persian or early Hellenistic period remains open. In fact, it cannot be answered with any degree of certainty. Moreover, its degree of influence might have changed from time to time and be dependent on particular settings. One should keep in mind that although Chronicles most likely presented itself as "less authoritative" than the texts in the primary history (Genesis–2 Kings),[47] it could have strongly influenced mindshare, if it successfully convinced the community that it was bringing forward the true meaning of these texts or authoritative, complementary viewpoints and memories. In any event, Chronicles was accepted by the community, or at least the Jerusalem-centred literati of Yehud, and was read and reread by them. Such a read and reread book could not but inform, at least to some extent, social memory among its historical readers.[48]

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[45] There is no point in talking about leakage in the other direction. Clearly, there was much room in the discourse of the community for contingent prophetic words, and there was no need of a "leakage" from the image of a contingent prophet to produce this space.

[46] I discussed particular examples and the general issues involved in "One Size Does Not Fit All."

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[47] Chronicles was written in Late Biblical Hebrew. I explore elsewhere the communicative message of Late Biblical Hebrew *vis à vis* Standard Biblical Hebrew; see my "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.

[48] An excellent source for the study of the influence of Chronicles in the shaping of memories of the monarchic period in later periods and communities is I. Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature: A Historical Journey* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), and see also bibliography there.