Chapter 1: Chronicles

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Scholars of the Hebrew Bible have long observed that the book of Chronicles is a derivative work of Samuel–Kings reflecting the concerns and religious sensibilities of the late Persian or Early Hellenistic Periods. For example, in his classic work on the history of ancient Israel, Julius Wellhausen begins his treatment of the history of traditions within Judaism with a lengthy discussion of the book of Chronicles. In his treatment of the book, Wellhausen argues that the history of Israel as portrayed in Chronicles differs from that portrayed in Samuel–Kings due to the chronological distance of the works and the intervention of the Priestly Code into the theology of Second Temple Judaism.[1] Chronicles, according to Wellhausen, provides a clear example of the way that ancient Israel's traditions evolved over

1. Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel,* trans. J. Southerland Black and Allan Menzies, ML 6 (New York: Meridian, 1957), 171–72; trans. of *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (Berlin: Reimer, 1883). See also John W. Wright, "From Center to Periphery: 1 Chronicles 23–27 and the Interpretation of Chronicles in the Nineteenth Century," in *Priests, Prophets and Scribes: Essays on the Formation and Heritage of Second Temple Judaism in Honour of Joseph Blenkinsopp,* ed. Eugene Ulrich et al., JSOTSup 149 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 20–42.

time. Just as the legal material of the Hexateuch developed over the centuries, so too the traditions of the historical books were subject to the changing theologies of later centuries. While the particulars of the relationship of Samuel–Kings to Chronicles and the nuances of priestly influences on the Hebrew Bible remain subject to scholarly debate, the broad consensus remains that 1) Chronicles was written sometime in the late Persian or early Hellenistic periods, 2) it heavily utilized Samuel–Kings as a literary source, and 3) it bears an ideological *Tendenz* influenced by (though not identical to) the final layers of the Pentateuch.[2]

The scholarly discourse surrounding the formation of the Hebrew Bible has increasingly turned to memory studies as a robust framework for describing the processes by which the biblical traditions were produced and transmitted.[3] Wellhausen chose to begin his treatment of the history of traditions with Chronicles because of the relative security with which scholars

2. For a thorough and reasonably recent summary of the *status quaestionis*, see Gary N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* AB 12 (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 72–89. See also Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary,* OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1993); idem, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought,* trans. Anna Barber (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009; repr., idem; *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought;* 2nd revised ed.; BEATAJ 9 [Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1997]); Roddy Braun, *1 Chronicles,* WBC 14 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986) and R. J. Coggins, *The First and Second Books of the Chronicles,* CBC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

3. Jacob L. Wright, *David, King of Israel, and Caleb in Biblical Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Joseph Blenkinsopp, *David Remembered: Kingship and National*

are able to date Samuel–Kings and the major Pentateuchal strata vis-à-vis Chronicles. For the very same reason, Chronicles likewise has played an important role in early applications of memory theory within biblical studies.[4] While Chronicles is not the *latest* book in the Hebrew Bible, it is uniquely situated at the end of the traditioning process preserved in the Hebrew Bible. In some ways, therefore, Chronicles gets the last word on a certain set of traditions surrounding the monarchic period, in particular those of David, Solomon, and the kings of

Identity in Ancient Israel (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013); John W. Rogerson, *A Theology of the Old Testament: Cultural Memory, Communication, and Being Human* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 2010); Philip R. Davies, *Memories of Ancient Israel: An Introduction to Biblical History–Ancient and Modern* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2008); Ronald S. Hendel, *Remembering Abraham: Culture, Memory, and History in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Mark S. Smith, "Remembering God: Collective Memory in Israelite Religion," *CBQ* 64.4 (2002): 631–51.

4. Ehud Ben Zvi, "Chronicles and Social Memory," *ST* 71.1 69–90; idem, "Reading Chronicles and Reshaping the Memory of Manasseh," in *Chronicling the Chronicler: The Book of Chronicles and Early Second Temple Historiography,* ed. Paul S. Evans and Tyler F. Williams (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 121–40; idem, "Toward a Sense of Balance: Remembering the Catastrophe of Monarchic Judah / (Ideological) Israel and Exile through Reading Chronicles in Late Yehud," in *Chronicling the Chronicler: The Book of Chronicles and Early Second Temple Historiography,* ed. Paul S. Evans and Tyler F. Williams (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 247–65.

Judah.

Although it is broadly agreed upon that Chronicles exhibits a hypertextual relationship to Samuel–Kings, treating Chronicles as an exemplar of Rewritten Bible (Rewritten Bible) is somewhat less common.[5] The ambivalence of scholars towards treating Chronicles as Rewritten Bible is rooted, unsurprisingly, in the confusion surrounding the definition of the term. Knoppers, for example, takes special care to treat the question of whether Chronicles should be understood as Rewritten Bible in the introduction of his commentary and notes, from the very

5. Though, not particularly *un*common. See Jonathan G. Campbell, "Rewritten Bible: A Terminological Reassessment," in *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes,* ed. József Zsengellér, JSJSup 166 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 49–81; Molly M. Zahn, "Rewritten Scripture," in *Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls,* ed. Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 323–36; Moshe J. Bernstein, "Rewritten Bible: A Generic Category Which Has Outlived its Usefulness?" *Text* 22 (2005): 169–96. Alexander considers Chronicles to be a "prototype" of Rewritten Bible, see, Philip S. Alexander, "Retelling the Old Testament," in *It is Written—Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars, SSF,* ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 99–121. I have adopted the terminology of hyper-/hypotext from Genette. In this case, to say that Chronicles is a "hypertext" of Samuel–Kings is to say that it is derivative, but not a commentary on Samuel–Kings. See Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree,* trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 5.

beginning, that he will answer the question based on what he understands to be the essential elements of Rewritten Bible.[6] He writes:

> They [Rewritten Bible] select from, interpret, comment on, and expand portions of a particular biblical book (or group of books), addressing obscurities, contradictions, and other perceived problems with the source text. Rewritten Bible texts normally emulate the form of the source text and follow it sequentially. The major intention of such works seems to be to provide a coherent interpretive reading of the biblical text.[7]

Knoppers observes that, while Chronicles exhibits most of the specific literary moves which Rewritten Bible is known for (expanding, harmonizing, and augmenting its *Vorlage*), the presence of material which is entirely unique to Chronicles cannot be attributed to a purely exegetical or explanatory impulse. In addition to the narrative additions within Chronicles, the genealogies of 1 Chr 1–9 have no corollary in Samuel–Kings, and can hardly be considered a rewritten form of the Pentateuch.[8] Thus, while Knoppers affirms that certain portions of Chronicles "may be profitably compared with a number of rewritten Bible texts,"[9] ultimately he concludes that Chronicles "is more than a paraphrase or literary elaboration of the primary history"[10] and thus Rewritten Bible cannot can account for Chronicles as a whole, instead

6. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1–9,* 129–34.

7. Ibid., 130.

8. Ibid., 132.

9. Ibid., 131.

10. Ibid., 134.

suggesting that it should be treated as its own work.[11]

While Knoppers's assessment is fair given the definition that he supplies for Rewritten Bible, in the preceding chapters of this dissertation, I have argued that similar extra-exegetical qualities exist within the Rewritten Bible corpus which push us to consider the function of Rewritten Bible as more than a method for explaining sacred texts. The rationale for why Rewritten Bible cannot account for the complexity of the whole book of Chronicles, according to Knoppers, is the same basic argument that I have made for why an *exegetically* focused definition of Rewritten Bible is insufficient to account for the complexity of even the literature that scholars *traditionally* consider to be Rewritten Bible. In other words, Knoppers's argument for why Chronicles should not be considered Rewritten Bible is the same essential argument that I am making for Genesis Apocryphon and Jubilees. The same case could just as easily be applied to Josephus's Jewish Antiquities, the Temple Scroll, and others. The difference between my thesis and Knoppers, however, is that where he sees disjunction between Rewritten Bible and Chronicles, I am arguing that all of these texts represent the same fundamental social and cultural processes of memory and that memory theory offers a degree of abstraction for talking about these processes which highlights their similarities.

11. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1–9,* 131–34.

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