

## *Chapter 1: Chronicles*

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### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

TODO: Write me.

### 1.2 SITES OF MEMORY IN THE BOOK OF CHRONICLES

We have plenty of language to describe the various processes of individual memory, but one of the main problems we have when talking about social memory and cultural memory is that we lack good language describe the structures and functions of those mnemonic systems at the level of society. As such, memory theorists have adopted a number of analogies and terms to describe how societies remember and how individuals and groups interact with memory at the social level.

It is important to remember that because social memory is a social construct we must not equate the remembered past with the events, experiences, and individuals which informed it. Where one might refer to an individual person having “a memory” of a particular event, there is no central repository—be it material or biological—of social memory.<sup>1</sup> As has been

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1. See especially Jens Brockmeier, “After the Archive: Remapping Memory,” *CP* 16.1 (2010): 5–35 and James V. Wertsch, “Beyond the Archival Model of Memory and the Affordances and Constraints of Narratives,” *CP* 17.1 (2011): 21–29.

noted by numerous memory theorists, “there is no such ‘thing’ and social or collective memory.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, when we talk about social or cultural “memory” we are talking about a complex network of social processes and discourses which make up a society’s understanding of the past.

These social processes and discourses tend to center around particular events, places, people, and ideas which the society has imbued with special mnemonic significance. These clusters of discourse are commonly referred to by memory theorists as “sites” of memory. The term “site of memory” is a translation of the French *lieu de mémoire* was coined by Pierre Nora in the 1970’s and has been adopted and adapted by numerous theorists since then.<sup>3</sup> Although Nora did not clearly define the term, a “site of memory,” as used by Nora, might better be translated as a “place of remembrance,” or a “place where people remember.” For Nora, modern-day “sites” of memory existed “because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real

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2. Ian D. Wilson, *Kingship and Memory in Ancient Judah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 14 citing Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins, “Social Memory Studies: From ‘Collective Memory’ to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices,” *ARS* 24 (1998): 105–40 and James V. Wertsch, “Collective Memory,” in *Memory in Mind and Culture*, ed. Pascal Boyer and James V. Wertsch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 117–37.

3. The term was originally coined by Nora in the work “Mémoire collective,” in *La Nouvelle histoire*, ed. Roger Chartier Jacques Le Goff and Jacques Revel (Paris: Retz, 1978), 398–401, and used subsequently in *Les Lieux de mémoire*, 7 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1984–1992) and “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire,” in “Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory,” *Representations* 26 (1989): 7–24. For a discussion of Nora’s use of the term and its reception, see Andrzej Szpociński, “Sites and Non-Sites of Memory,” in “Special Issue English Edition: Place and Memory,” *TD* 9 (2016): 245–54.

environments of memory.”<sup>4</sup> In other words, because modern historical consciousness, by Nora’s reckoning, has all but eradicated “memory,” the preservation of memory in the modern era has been relegated to particular “sites” of memory—monuments, structures, and practices whose purpose is to perpetuate memory. He writes:

*Lieux de mémoire* are simple and ambiguous, natural and artificial, at once immediately available in concrete sensual experience and susceptible to the most abstract elaboration. Indeed they are *lieux* in three senses of the word—material, symbolic, and functional. Even an apparently purely material site, like an archive, becomes a *lieu de mémoire* only if the imagination invests it with a symbolic aura. A purely functional site, like a classroom manual, a testament, or a veterans’ reunion belong only inasmuch as it is also the object of a ritual. And the observation of a commemorative minute of silence, an extreme example of a strictly symbolic action, serves as a concentrated appeal to memory by literally breaking the temporal continuity.<sup>5</sup>

Sites of memory, therefore, are not entirely abstract and intellectual, but bear on the practice and materiality of a society in addition to having symbolic significance.

Although Nora’s original use of the term tended to focus especially on sites of memory which bear on so-called “great traditions”<sup>6</sup> of political and ideological importance such as national monuments and archives, the modern use of the term tends to be more abstract and to refer to any “place” where memory discourses occur within a society for the purpose of remembering. Such sites of memory may operate within any number of social/cultural spheres

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4. Nora, “Between Memory and History,” 7.

5. Ibid., 18–19.

6. As coined by Redfield in *Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 41–42.

such as national memory (war memorials, national holidays, etc.), religious memory (religious holidays, symbolic ritual acts, etc.), or family memory (traditional foods, birthdays, anniversaries) and may be thought of as distinct, but connected “nodes” of symbolic meaning within a complex network of cultural symbols—what Halbwachs called the “social frameworks of memory.”<sup>7</sup>

Every edge and node within the graph of a society’s collective memory is the product of memory construction. It is an abstraction. In much the same way that historiography offers a schematic narrative of past events which is necessarily selective and intentional about what specific events, people, and ideas are germane to the purpose of the historian, so too social and cultural memory is selective of the particulars which it preserves and constructive in how it presents people, events, and ideas within particular symbolic systems. Thus, sites of memory are social spaces where memory is constructed. For our purposes, and following a number of modern practitioners of memory studies, I will use the term “site” of memory to describe any discrete person, place, practice or idea where such discourses of memory occur.<sup>8</sup>

The Hebrew Bible is replete with sites of memory—ideas, people, places, and practices which have been imbued with significance by numerous societies since antiquity and which form a central component to the identities and self-understanding of (especially) Jews and

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7. Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser, HS (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 38.

8. Within Hebrew Bible studies, see especially the work of Ehud Ben Zvi as well as his student Ian Wilson, esp. Ehud Ben Zvi, “Chronicles and Social Memory,” *ST* 71.1 (2017): 69–90 and Wilson, *Kingship and Memory*, 25–26.

Christians throughout the world. Take, for example, the Exodus from Egypt. Regardless of the historical reality of such an event, the story of the Exodus as recounted in the Hebrew Bible is the central narrative undergirding the biblical rationale for Israel's possession of the Land. Likewise, the Israelites are told to be kind to strangers and sojourners within their community based on the memory of Israel's enslavement in Egypt. Similarly, the Torah could be understood as a distinct (and particularly potent) site of memory found in the Hebrew Bible; the same goes for the figure of Moses. Each of these sites of memory (the Exodus, Torah, and Moses) are distinct but they also exhibit clear relationships within the network of discourses which are found in the Hebrew Bible. And moreover, each site of memory also relates to and bears distinct significance for the various religious communities which hold the Hebrew Bible as a part of their tradition within their distinct systems of symbolic meaning. Remembering these connections and their culturally defined significance is what cultural memory is all about.

### 1.3 KING DAVID AS A SITE OF MEMORY

It is important to note that although the book of Chronicles is a work of cultural memory, it is unquestionably the case that the figure David was a prominent site of memory for ancient Israel long before the book of Chronicles was written. Chronicles, more so than Samuel-Kings, is characterized in terms of "memory" because it is clear that the Chronicler<sup>9</sup> used

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9. My use of the term "Chronicler" is meant only to reference the author(s) of the book of Chronicles. Although the term is sometimes associated with a particular theory about the composition of Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, I am not using it as such.

Samuel–Kings as a primary source and the differences between the sources and the end-product are demonstrable. In other words, because we know that Chronicles is secondary to Samuel–Kings and we can see where the Chronicler departed from Samuel–Kings, it is easy to characterize those changes as the result of changes in cultural memory. But it is important to remember that even Samuel–Kings is the product of mnemonic construction and the David presented there already functioned as a special site of memory for ancient Israel. In other words, despite the fact that Samuel–Kings functions as a foundational source *for Chronicles*, it should not be treated as if it was the origin of all Davidic traditions.<sup>10</sup>

Even setting aside the biblical material (e.g., Samuel–Kings, Psalms, et al.), it is demonstrably the case that the Davidic *dynasty*—whatever one might think about David as an historical figure—had symbolic meaning in the ancient world which extended beyond the borders of Israel. For example, we know from the Old Aramaic inscription from Tel Dan that the term **בֵּית דָּוִד** “house of David” was used as a dynastic name for the monarchy of the kingdom of Judah in the late ninth or early eighth centuries BCE.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, it has been suggested that the Mesha Stele, too, refers to the “house of David,” although this reading is not

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10. Ida Fröhlich, “The Changing Faces of David in Biblical Historiography. Narrative Patterns in Historiography, Positive and Negative,” in *David in Cultural Memory*, ed. Ida Fröhlich, CBET 93 (Leuven: Peeters, 2019), 65–88.

11. The *editio princeps* were published in two articles: the first find as Avraham Biran and Joseph Naveh, “An Aramaic Stele Fragment from Tel Dan,” *IEJ* 43 (1993): 81–93, and the subsequent fragments as Avraham Biran and Joseph Naveh, “The Tel Dan Inscription: A New Fragment,” *IEJ* 45 (1995): 1–18.

secure.<sup>12</sup> Although such references have traditionally been used to bolster claims of an historical David, for our purposes it suffices to say that around the turn of the eighth century BCE, “David” existed as a meaningful eponymous symbol and site of memory with respect to the monarchy of Judah. Thus, when we turn to the biblical portrayals of the figure David (which, by most accounts were products of later periods of Israelite history than Tel Dan and Mesha), it is important to keep in mind that those portrayals are participating in established discourses about David. This is all the more important when we consider the book of Chronicles which represents some of the latest strata of memory preserved in the Hebrew Bible. Thus when we discuss the figure of David as a site of memory which the book of Chronicles engages with extensively, I want to emphasize that the processes of constructing the remembered figure of David did not begin with the Chronicler just as it did not end with the Chronicler.<sup>13</sup>

Although the particular relationship between the book of Chronicles and the books of Samuel and Kings is a matter of scholarly debate, it is generally agreed that Samuel–Kings forms the basis for much of the Chronicler’s depiction of Israel’s history.<sup>14</sup> A great deal of work

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12. The reading **בֵּית דָּוִד** was proposed by Lemaire, but his reading is not universally accepted. See André Lemaire, “La dynastie davidique (BYT DWD) dans deux inscriptions ouestsémitiques du IXe s. av. J.-C.,” *SEL* 11 (1994): 17–19 and André Lemaire, “‘House of David’ Restored in Moabite Inscription,” *BAR* 20 (1994): 30–37. The Mesha inscription is typically dated to the mid-ninth century BCE and thus would be slightly earlier than the reference in the Tel Dan inscription, if Lemaire is correct.

13. Fröhlich, “Changing Faces of David,” 65–88.

14. The observation was made as early as de Wette in the early nineteenth century in his

has been done analyzing the particular literary relationship between Samuel–Kings and Chronicles and the textual processes involved—e.g., what version(s) of Samuel–Kings the Chronicler may have used, etc.—but thinking in terms of social memory requires us to consider the relationship between the texts in *social* terms. In other words, not just to ask *what* the received traditions about David said, but to consider the *role* and *status* of those traditions and to consider why they were (or were not) significant within a particular social context.

Thus the process of “remembering” David in Chronicles can be viewed from two different angles which map onto the dual valences of the term “remember”: to “recall” and to “commemorate.” On the one hand, the Chronicler “recalls” stories about David which are

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*Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, 2 vols. (Halle: Schimmelpfennig, 1806–1807). More recently, see especially the work of McKenzie *The Chronicler’s Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, HSM 3 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985); Steven L. McKenzie, “The Chronicler as Redactor,” in *The Chronicler As Author: Studies in Text and Texture*, ed. M. Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 263 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 70–90; Gary N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 12 (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 66–71; and Ralph W. Klein, *1 Chronicles: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2006), 30–42 as well as that of David M. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Construction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 74–74. Notable exceptions, however, do exist. See especially the work of A. Graeme Auld, *Kings Without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible’s Kings* (London: T & T Clark, 1994); A. Graeme Auld, “What was the Main Source of the Book of Chronicles?” In *The Chronicler As Author: Studies in Text and Texture*, ed. M. Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 263 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 91–99 and Raymond F. Person, *The Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Chronicles: Scribal Works in an Oral World*, AIL 6 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010).



adapted to the frameworks of the Chronicler's social situation. the Chronicler is a product of his time and society and as such inherited sets of traditions about David, the past, and the world more broadly, which color how he understands the history of Israel and David in particular. On the other hand, the composition of the book of Chronicles is itself an act of commemoration which (as we've noted) is a conscious, constructive process. It represents the process of memory encoding and the construction of cultural memory from which future rememberers would draw. As a work literature, it also bears the idiosyncrasies of its author(s), however constrained by their social milieu they may have been. In fact, determining which of these processes best accounts for any particular "innovation" of Chronicles is quite difficult. Was the Chronicler consciously "reshaping" the memory of David? Or was the Chronicler more passively reproducing a composite picture of David that he inherited from his culture? Traditional approaches to the book of Chronicles have tended to attribute a great deal of agency to the Chronicler as an innovator of tradition. But thinking in terms of cultural memory pushes us to consider a fuller picture of how cultural memory is created and calls into question whether every theological or ideological augmentation of the Chronicler should be attributed to his novel understanding of the Israelite past. Such an approach takes into account that textual "sources" are not merely copied and "altered," but are read, internalized, believed, understood, and reasoned about, which is to say, *remembered*.

### 1.3.1 The David of Chronicles

How then was David remembered in Chronicles? This question carries with it the assumption that the author of Chronicles was not simply copying-and-changing Samuel-Kings (or other

traditions), but rather was a product of a *remembering community* and participated in memory discourses at various sites within the cultural memory of Second Temple Judaism. Answering this question requires that we not only consider what sources the Chronicler may have used and how he altered those sources, but also to consider the social frameworks which shaped how those sources were received by the Chronicler and how they affected how the Chronicler presented (or commemorated) his work.

Although the David of Chronicles largely resembles that of the DH (he is recognizably the same figure), his function within the narrative of the book of Chronicles is different than that of the DH and that difference can be seen in how the Chronicler portrays and uses him. In both works David is beloved, but he is noticeably less-flawed in the book of Chronicles. This is not to say that David is treated as entirely faultless in the book of Chronicles, but I think it is fair to say that the overall portrait presented by the Chronicler is more willing to overlook (and literally to omit) some of David's more egregious acts, and to highlight his role as a model King. This positive portrayal of David in Chronicles is well documented and oft-repeated, so it will suffice for me to focus on two of the most significant features of the Chronicler's portrayal of David, specifically, his portrayal as a divinely elected king, and his role in the establishment of the Israelite cult in Jerusalem.<sup>15</sup>

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15. See John Jarick, "Seven Things that the Chronicler Wants You to Remember about King David," in *David in Cultural Memory*, ed. Ida Fröhlich, CBET 93 (Leuven: Peeters, 2019), 115–30; Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009; repr., Sara Japhet; *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought*; trans. Anna Barber; BEATAJ 9 [Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989]), 347–83; Gary N. Knoppers, "Images of David in Early Judaism: David as Repentant Sinner in Chroni-

### *David the Divinely Elected King*

First, as I have just alluded to, in the book of Chronicles, David is portrayed as the quintessential, rightful Israelite ruler, elected by Yahweh (1 Chr 10:14) and anointed by the elders of Israel to lead the people (1 Chr 11:1–3). By comparison to the account in Samuel–Kings, the process by which David becomes the ruler of Israel is somewhat less contentious. The apologetic tone of the HDR narratives is nowhere to be found. The rationale for Saul’s demise is, like in the DH, predicated on his supposed infidelity to Yahweh, with special reference to his consultation with a medium (although, the story is not told in Chronicles), however, the election of David as Saul’s “successor,” as described by the Chronicler, does not include Saul aside from a passing reference to his death and infidelities. David himself offers his version of events in 1 Chr 28:4:

וַיִּבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּי מִכָּל בֵּית-אָבִי לְהִיזֹת לְמֶלֶךְ עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל  
לְעֹזֶלֶם כִּי בִיהוּדָה בָּחַר לְנָגִיד וּבֵית יְהוּדָה בֵּית אָבִי וּבְבִנִי אָבִי בִי רָצָה לְהִמְלִיךְ  
עַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל:<sup>(1 Chr 28:4)</sup>

<sup>(1 Chr 28:4)</sup> Yahweh, the God of Israel chose me from among my father’s whole house to be king over Israel forever. He chose Judah to be a leader and (from) the house of Judah, the house of my father and (from) the house of my father, he took delight in me to make (me) king over all Israel.

Conspicuously absent from the Chronicler’s narrative and David’s summary, are the major conflicts with Saul during David’s rise to power. In fact, if one did not know better, simply removing all references to Saul in Chronicles would not meaningfully change how

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cles,” *Bib* 76.4 (1995): 449–70; Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 47–48; Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 44–48; Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1–9*, 80–85.

David's election is described.<sup>16</sup>

Similarly, the tumult within David's court at the end of his life and the succession of Solomon are omitted by the Chronicler, where 1 Kings begins with a feeble, impotent David and his messy succession by Solomon, 1 Chr 23:1 is content simply to report that:

וַיְדוֹד זָקֵן וְשֹׁבַע יָמִים וַיַּמְלֶךְ אֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה בְּנוֹ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: (1 Chr 23:1)

When David was old and full of days, he made Solomon, his son, king over Israel.

It went so well, in fact, that David saw fit to do it a second time, according to 1 Chr 29:22b–23:

וַיַּמְלִיכוּ שֵׁנִית לְשְׁלֹמֹה בֶן־דָּוִד וַיִּמְשְׁחוּ לַיהוָה לְנָגִיד וּלְצֹדֵק לְכֹהֵן: (1 Chr 29:22b)  
(23) וַיָּשָׁב שְׁלֹמֹה עַל־כִּסֵּא יְהוָה לְמַלְכָּה תַּחַת־דָּוִד אָבִיו וַיַּצְלַח וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֵלָיו  
כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל:

(1 Chr 29:22b) Then they made Solomon, son of David, king a second time and they anointed him by Yahweh as a prince as well as Zadok as a priest. (23) And Solomon sat on the throne of Yahweh as king in place of David, his father. And he prospered and all Israel obeyed him.

These matter-of-fact descriptions contrast sharply with the events depicted in 1 Kings: Adonijah's self-exaltation (1 Kgs 1:5–53), David's deathbed speech to Solomon (1 Kgs 2:1–9), Solomon's subsequent conflict with Adonijah over Abishag (1 Kgs 2:13–25), with Joab (1 Kgs 2:28–35), and with Shimei (1 Kgs 2:36–46); all of which culminates with the ominous pronouncement of 1 Kgs 2:46b:

וְהַמְּלָכָה נָכוֹנָה בְּיַד־שְׁלֹמֹה:

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16. This fact raises the question of why the Chronicler *did not* simply omit Saul. I suspect that, although not favored Saul was a useful foil narratively and was a well-enough known figure that omitting him entirely simply did not make sense. Saul was, doubtless, a major figure in the traditions of early Israel.

So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

The contrast between the violent establishment of the kingdom “in the hand of Solomon” and the popular assent of the people to both the reigns of David and Solomon in Chronicles could not be more clear. On the one hand, the accounts of 1 Kings offer narratives which provide *rationale* for the events that take place—everything that David and Solomon do is framed as a sensible response to wrongdoing. The descriptions of Chronicles, on the other hand, are not at all interested in providing such rationales, but rather *assume* the premise of 1 Kings. Instead, Chronicles offers plain, black-and-white, narratives which—by virtue of their declarative rhetoric—help to reinforce the idea that David and his successors were not only elect by Yahweh, but were “good” kings whose reigns were not contested, but were supported by the population at large.

#### *David the Temple-builder (Almost)*

While the portrayal of David as the unquestioned founder of the Israelite monarchy in Chronicles is accomplished primarily through omitting details of David’s faults, the book of Chronicles makes its most significant *positive* contribution to its picture of David by crediting him as the founder of the Jerusalem Temple. David did not build the Temple in Jerusalem, of course, but the picture that the Chronicler paints of how the Jerusalem Temple came about leaves little doubt about whose idea it *really* was, namely, David’s. In the mind of the Chronicler, although Solomon may have been the one to *build* the Temple, David wrote, directed, funded, and produced the project.

In both 2 Sam 7 and 1 Chr 17, David expresses a desire to build a temple for Yahweh and

in both cases is rebuffed by Yahweh through the prophet Nathan. Instead, Nathan tells David that Yahweh would establish David's line through his son, Solomon. Although neither account gives a reason for Yahweh's preference toward Solomon, later in Chronicles, David states that the reason Yahweh passed over him was that David was a man of war, while Solomon would be a man of peace:

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִיד לְשִׁלְמָה בְּנוֹ [בְּנִי] אֲנִי הָיָה עִם־לְבָבִי לְבָנוֹת בַּיִת לַיהוָה  
 אֱלֹהֵי: <sup>(8)</sup> וַיְהִי עָלַי דְּבַר־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר דָּם לָרַב שָׁפַכְתָּ וּמִלְחָמוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת עָשִׂיתָ  
 לֹא־תִבְנֶה בַּיִת לַיהוָה לְשִׁמִּי כִּי דָמִים רַבִּים שָׁפַכְתָּ אֶרְצָה לְפָנָי: <sup>(9)</sup> הִנֵּה־בֵן נוֹלָד לָךְ הוּא  
 יְהִיָּה אִישׁ מְנוּחָה וְהַנְחוּתִי לוֹ מִכָּל־אֹיְבָיו מִסָּבִיב כִּי שִׁלְמָה יְהִיָּה שְׁמוֹ וְשָׁלוֹם  
 וְשָׁקֵט אֶתֶּן עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּיָמָיו:

(1 Chr 22:7) And David said to Solomon, “My son, my heart desired to build a temple for the name of Yahweh, my God <sup>(8)</sup> but the word of Yahweh came to me saying, ‘You have spilled much blood and fought in great battles. You shall not build a temple for my name because you have spilled so much blood on the earth before me. <sup>(9)</sup> Rather, a son will be born to you. He will be a man of rest. And I will give him rest from all his enemies who surround him. Thus, Solomon will be his name and I will give peace and quiet to Israel during his days.”

Here, the point is made particularly explicit through the word-play of “Solomon” (Heb. שְׁלֹמֹה) and “peace” (Heb. שָׁלוֹם) in v. 9.<sup>17</sup>

Despite David's assertion that Solomon be the one who builds the temple, the Chronicler credits David with making all the preparations and providing the bulk of the necessary building supplies for its construction. While Solomon would provide the labor, not

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17. The same logic is echoed in 1 Chr 28:3: וְהָאֱלֹהִים אָמַר לִי לֹא־תִבְנֶה בַּיִת לַיהוָה לְשִׁמִּי כִּי אִישׁ מִלְחָמוֹת אָתָּה וְדָמִים שָׁפַכְתָּ: “But God said to me, ‘You shall not built a house for my name because you are a man of war and had spilled blood.”

only was the *idea* of building the Temple David's, but he financed the operation בְּעָנִי "with great pains" (lit. "in my oppression"; 1 Chr 22:14). This may be contrasted with Samuel–Kings which does not contain any of this material.

### 1.3.2 Historicizing the Chronicler's Memory of David

Historicizing the Chronicler's memory of David's roles as King and cult-founder asks us to account for the similarities and differences between the portrayal of David in Samuel–Kings and Chronicles based on an historical understanding of the social frameworks from which each text emerged. In other words it asks us to utilize what we know historically about the societies which produced these texts to help to explain the similarities and differences between them using the language and theoretical models of social and cultural memory theory.

As I alluded to above, the portrayal of David as the unquestionably elect ruler of Israel and his succession by Solomon in Chronicles is a conspicuously tidy treatment of the very messy account of the so-called History of David's Rise (HDR) narrative and the dramatic family disputes that preoccupied the latter years of David's reign and those of his son Solomon (the so-called "Succession Narrative" [SN]). While these stories form a core set of narratives for Samuel–Kings, they are almost completely absent from the book of Chronicles.<sup>18</sup>

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18. Although the compositional and redactional history of the Deuteronomistic History is hotly debated—with wildly divergent scholarly opinions—I will take as my point of departure the centrist view of McCarter, Halpern, and specifically Knapp which view the HDR and SN (collectively, the "Court Narrative" [CN] or "Traditions of David's Rise and Reign" [TDRR] *per* Knapp) as royal apologia. I follow Knapp in his view that these traditions do not represent "the residue of a single apologetic composition" (161), but rather a diverse set of traditions. How-

It is widely held that that the HDR and SN should be understood as forms of ancient royal apologia—an effort by the author(s) to legitimize David’s actions which might otherwise have been construed as a usurpation of the divinely elected king, Saul. Andrew Knapp, for example, observes that “[i]n some ways, [the Traditions of David’s Rise and Reign] is the paradigmatic ancient Near Eastern apology.”<sup>19</sup> He elaborates:

The apologist employs nearly every apologetic motif in his effort to legitimize David, including passivity, transcendent non-retaliation, the unworthy predecessor, military prowess, and the entire triad of establishing legitimacy.<sup>20</sup>

Clearly the apologist sought to make a forceful and potent argument in favor of David’s legitimacy. The apologist operated within his social context—using literary devices and forms which were meaningful in his society—and engaged in discourses about David’s legitimacy in an attempt to define David’s rise and reign in a particular (positive) way. As such, it has been argued that this apologetic form suggests that the HDR narratives functioned as a *contemporary* form of apologia,

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ever, because the sources cannot meaningfully be parsed, I will also follow him in “[dealing] with the early narrative traditions in their entirety” (161). See Andrew Knapp, *Royal Apologetic in the Ancient Near East*, WAWSup 4 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2015); P. Kyle McCarter, “‘Plots, True or False’: The Succession Narrative as Court Apologetic,” *Int* 35.4 (1981): 355–67; P. Kyle McCarter, “The Apology of David,” *JBL* 99.4 (1980): 489–504; P. Kyle McCarter, *I Samuel: A New Translation with Translation, Notes, and Commentary*, AB 8 (New York: Doubleday, 1980); Baruch Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001).

19. Knapp, *Royal Apologetic*, 218.

20. *Ibid.*



implying that these narratives originated at-or-around the time of the presumed historical figure.<sup>21</sup> By this reasoning, such an apologia would have arisen in response to accusations of usurpation. Thus, we would imagine that the HDR was representative of the “last word” on the matter or an attempt to suppress alternative voices that questioned the legitimacy of David’s rule, the means by which he gained the throne, and the manner of his succession. These discourses were not entirely suppressed from the Hebrew Bible, as evidenced by the figure Shimei and his condemnation of David as a usurper in 2 Sam 16:7b-8:

וְכֹה־אָמַר שְׁמֵי בִקְלָלוֹ צֵא צֵא אִישׁ הַדָּמִים וְאִישׁ הַבְּלִיעַל׃<sup>(8)</sup> הַשִּׁיב  
עָלֶיךָ יְהוָה כֹּל דָּמֵי בֵית־שָׂאוּל אֲשֶׁר מָלַכְתָּ תַּחְתּוֹ [תַּחְתָּיו] וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת־הַמְּלוּכָה  
בְּיַד אַבְשָׁלוֹם בֶּנְךָ וְהִנֵּךְ בְּרַעְתֶּךָ כִּי אִישׁ דָּמִים אַתָּה׃

(2 Sam 16:7b) Thus Shimei spoke cursing him, “Go out! Go out! Oh man of blood; Oh worthless man! Yahweh has repaid you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you reign. May Yahweh give your kingdom into the hand of Absalom, your son. Look at your evil! Because you are a man of blood.”

Although I am not entirely convinced by this line of reasoning, from the perspective of social memory it is safe to say that at the time of the narrative’s composition, the question of whether David should be remembered as a the leader of a victorious *coup d’état* over Saul, or a reluctant leader divinely chosen by Yahweh was a matter of debate. The complex redactional history of

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21. See especially McCarter, “Plots True or False,” 355–67; McCarter, “The Apology of David,” 489–504; and to a lesser degree Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons*, 75–76. Some clarification is in order here. McCarter et al. are generally talking about where these stories *originated*. They are engaging primarily with minimalist scholars who discount reality of the historical figure of David.

the Deuteronomistic History makes saying anything more specific than this difficult and I am open to the possibility that there could have been other social contexts in which such apologia would be potent, either as the original context of their composition or as a new context for an old set of stories.<sup>22</sup> Whatever the case, we know that for ancient Israel David *did* become known as the legitimate king of Israel and Judah *par excellence* and a figure against whom subsequent kings would be measured. In this way, the construction of the apologist's David was ultimately successful.

For all the potency of these stories, one may wonder why they were not included in the Chronicler's history. That is to say, why omit such persuasive, and effective material? The answer, I think, is quite simple: the Chronicler was operating within a social milieu which not only accepted the legitimacy of David and his heirs, but celebrated them as foundational figures. In other words in the symbolic world of the Chronicler, David was significant *because* he was king and—his legitimacy was assumed and celebrated. In other words, for the Chronicler, remembering David into his social context found particular parts of the received tradition more useful for the set of discourses that he was participating in. The discourses that HDR participated in had been resolved and the Da-

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22. For example, Diana Edelman has suggested that a Saulide–Davidic rivalry could have resurfaced during the early Persian period. See Diana Edelman, “Did Saulide–Davidic Rivalry Resurface in Early Persian Yehud?” In *The Land That I Will Show You: Essays on the History and Archaeology of the Ancient Near East in Honor of J. Maxwell Miller*, ed. J. Andrew Dearman and M. Patrick Graham, JSOTSup 343 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 69–91. Or perhaps the Saul/David struggle could hint at a Benjaminite/Judahite conflict even after the fall of Israel. This is all idle speculation, of course, but I want to allow for the fact that *other* social situations could make these apologetic discourses potent.

vidic dynasty was thoroughly legitimate in the mind of the Chronicler. As such, it was sufficient for the Chronicler to simply recount the death of Saul—which David had no part in—and the subsequent anointing of David. From the perspective of the Chronicler it was a thoroughly unremarkable transfer of power. Similarly, the Chronicler makes no mention of the difficult power struggles that occurred near the end of David’s life between him and his sons. Instead, it sufficed for the Chronicler to state:

וַדָּוִד זָקֵן וְשָׁבַע יָמִים וַיִּמְלֹךְ אֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה בְּנוֹ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: (1 Chr 23:1)

When David was old and full of days, he made Solomon, his son, king over Israel

The struggle between Solomon and Adonijah following David’s death is likewise omitted. Instead, opening verse of 2 Chronicles reads simply:

וַיִּתְחַזַּק שְׁלֹמֹה בֶן־דָּוִד עַל־מַלְכוּתוֹ וַיהוָה אֱלֹהָיו עִמּוֹ וַיִּגְדֵּלְהוּ לְמַעַלָּה: (2 Chr 1:1)

Solomon, the son of David, established himself in his kingdom, and Yahweh his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.

It seems, therefore, that the DH was so successful in its apologetic that the memory constructed by its rhetoric precluded the need for continued apologia in the work of the Chronicler. The Chronicler had no need to “legitimize” the *fact* of the Davidic dynasty, but instead would focus his attention on defining the *significance* of that dynasty for his own readers in a dramatically different social setting.

Instead of these questions of legitimacy, what seems more important to the Chronicler are questions revolving around David’s role in cultic activity before Solomon’s temple. Despite the fact that David is viewed by the Chronicler as a central figure in the establishment of the cult, it is con-

spicuous that David is not the one to build the temple to Yahweh. In particular we can see how the rationale for explaining why David *did not* build a temple for Yahweh may have developed through the influence of other traditions. As early as 1 Kings 5:15 Solomon explains that the reason his father, David, was unable to build the Temple was due to the persistence of David's many enemies:

אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֶת־דָּוִד אָבִי כִי לֹא יָכַל לִבְנוֹת בַּיִת לַשֵּׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו מִפְּנֵי הַמְּלָחָמָה  
אֲשֶׁר סָבְבוּ עַד תַּת־יְהוָה אֹתָם תַּחַת כַּפּוֹת רַגְלָו [רַגְלָיו:]

You knew David, my father; that he was not able to build a house for the name of Yahweh, his God, on account of the war which surrounded him until Yahweh put them beneath the soles of his feet.

It is important to note that the rationale here is not that David divinely prohibited from building the temple, but that the presence of his enemies *prevented* him from building the temple. In fact, this statement is inconsistent with the description of David in 2 Sam 7:1, which explicitly states that it was after Yahweh had given David rest from his enemies that David first considered building a temple for the deity:

וַיְהִי כִּי־יָשָׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּבֵיתוֹ וַיְהוֶה הַנִּיח־לוֹ מִסָּבִיב מִכָּל־אִיְבָיו: <sup>(2)</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר  
הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־נָתָן הַנָּבִיא רְאֵה נָא אֲנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּבֵית אֲרָזִים וְאֶרֶז הָאֱלֹהִים יֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ  
הַיְרִיעָה:

<sup>(2 Sam 7:1)</sup> It came about that when the king was sitting in his house—Yahweh having given him rest all around from all his enemies— <sup>(2)</sup> the king said to Nathan the prophet, “Look! I am sitting in a house of cedar but the ark of God is sitting in the midst of curtains!”

Rather conspicuously, however, the parallel account in 1 Chr 17:1 omits that David had been given rest:

וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר יָשָׁב דָּוִד בְּבֵיתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־נָתָן הַנָּבִיא הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב  
בְּבֵית הָאֲרָזִים וְאֶרֶז בְּרִית־יְהוָה תַּחַת יְרִיעוֹת:

(1 Chr 17:1) Now, when David was sitting in his house, David spoke to Nathan the prophet, “I am sitting in a house of cedar but the ark of the covenant of Yahweh is under curtains!”

One obvious way to explain this difference is to attribute the omission to the Chronicler’s desire for narrative consistency and to assert that it was not until the reign of Solomon that “peace and quiet” would be achieved in Israel. Indeed, this ultimately is the position of the Chronicler, which he makes explicit in 1 Chr 22:7 (above).

While Japhet and others finds this omission consistent with the Chronicler’s broader methodology and ideological project,<sup>23</sup> there is some debate about whether the reference to Yahweh giving rest to David was original to 2 Samuel or whether it was a late Deuteronomistic addition.<sup>24</sup> As a result, there is also some question whether it was a part of the *Vorlage* of the Chronicler at all and therefore whether the minus in 1 Chr 17 should be attributed to the Chronicler. McKenzie in particular goes so far as to say that this was a late Deuteronomistic addition to 2 Samuel and argues that the phrase simply was not a part of the *Vorlage* from which the Chronicler drew.<sup>25</sup> Even allowing for the possibility that this aside was not a part of the Chronicler’s *Vorlage*, however, there remain at least two related questions to be answered:

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23. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 328.

24. McCarter states confidently that this is an addition to the MT, despite the fact that all known witnesses include the phrase. See P. Kyle McCarter, *II Samuel: A New Translation with Translation, Notes, and Commentary*, AB 9 (New York: Doubleday, 1984), 191.

25. McKenzie, *The Chronicler’s Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, 63. Knoppers does not make a strong recommendation either way, but makes it a point to include haplography as a possible explanation of the omission. See Gary N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10–29: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 13 (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 666.

1) What prompted the supposed insertion into 2 Sam 7, and 2) how did David's *preoccupation* with his enemies turn into a divine *disqualifier*.

To answer the first question, numerous scholars have observed the clear connection between this reference to finding “rest” with Deuteronomy 12:10–11, which establishes a timeline for the construction of a permanent cultic site in Yahweh's chosen locale:

וַעֲבַרְתֶּם אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן וְיִשְׁבַּתֶּם בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מְנַחֵל אֶתְכֶם (Deut 12:10)  
וְהָיָה לָכֶם מְקַל־אִיְיָכֶם מִסָּבִיב וְיִשְׁבַּתֶּם־בְּטָח: <sup>(11)</sup> וְהָיָה הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה  
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בּוֹ לְשֹׁכֵן שְׁמוֹ שָׁמָּה תָבִיאוּ אֶת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם עוֹלֹתֵיכֶם  
וְזִבְחֵיכֶם מַעֲשֵׂי־רֵאשִׁיתֵיכֶם וְתִרְמַת יֶדְכֶם וְכָל מִבְּחַר נְדָרֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּדְּרוּ לַיהוָה:

(Deut 12:10) And you will cross over the Jordan and settle in the land that Yahweh your God is giving to you. And he will give you rest from all your enemies around (you) and you will live safely. <sup>(11)</sup> Then the place at which Yahweh your God will establish his name will be (the place) that you will bring everything that I command you—your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, tithes, the contributions of your hand, and all your finest votive offerings that you might vow to Yahweh.

According to this passage, it is only after the Israelites completely conquer the land and find “rest” will the central cultic site be established. As a matter of inner-biblical interpretation, it makes sense that some late redactor of 2 Sam 7 might note that David sought to build the temple only after “rest” had been established and simply did not take into account the rationale given by Solomon in 1 Kings 5:15.

Such editorial or redactional changes may be subsumed under the rubric of memory insofar as such changes come about in order to align one mnemonic node within a the broader framework of memory. In other words, we can account for this textual change by positing that the redactor's understanding of *when* the temple could be built was informed by the tradition of

Deut 12:10–11 (or one like it). Thus, when the redactor read about David’s attempt to build a temple, he interpreted David’s actions based on this other knowledge. Although it would be easy enough to circumvent the issue by noting that David is *rebuffed* by Yahweh and that the temple is ultimately built by Solomon, doing so leaves David somewhat vulnerable to critique. If the redactor thought David to have access to the “Torah” one must suppose that David either did not know Deut 12, did not care about Deut 12, or that (as the redactor concluded) “rest” *had in fact* come about in Israel. As a way to rationalize the apparent contradiction with the fact that David engages in battle in the very next chapter, one might imagine the Chronicler speculating that David only *thought* that he had vanquished all his enemies or that there was “rest,” but that it was short-lived. If instead we locate the change at the pen of the Chronicler, the argument may be, in effect, reversed. By prioritizing the idea that “rest” would not be established in Israel until the reign of Solomon, the Chronicler is able to categorically dismiss the notion that David had already accomplished the task in 1 Chr 17. In fact, the two ideas are not mutually exclusive. The inclusion of 2 Sam 7:1b may have been both a late editorial addition *and* a part of the Chronicler’s *Vorlage*. In either case we can see the received tradition being adapted and fitted into a related, but distinct system of knowledge—social memory. The redactional process is—like rewriting—a process of memory.

The second question—how David’s *preoccupation* with his enemies turned into a divine *disqualifier*—is a more difficult question to address. The transition from the practical exigency of “not having time to build the temple” to the ideological position that David was disqualified from building the temple based on his bloody past cannot be attributed to the same kinds of

simple redactional processes as above. Accounting for such a fundamental reimagining of circumstances under which the temple would be built requires us to consider not simply *what* was remembered but *how* and *why* it was remembered.

Knoppers notes that there are essentially three explanations for the Chronicler's disqualification of David. First, it could be that the Chronicler viewed David as ritually unclean from his bloodshed. This position, supported by Rudolph,<sup>26</sup> presumes that warfare disqualifies David from participating in cultic activities. As Knoppers points out, however, there is no indication within the Hebrew Bible that this was the case, and moreover, David *does* participate in other forms of cultic activity.<sup>27</sup> Second, David's bloodshed could be understood as an "ethical lapse," i.e., that David bore guilt because for some wrong act, such as murder.<sup>28</sup> Yet, within chronicles, David is never described as incurring blood-guilt. The accusations of being a "man of blood" are made by Shimei in 2 Sam 16:8. The great faults of David known from Samuel-Kings (such as the death of Uriah) are not present in Chronicles.<sup>29</sup> Finally, a number of

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26. Wilhelm Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, HAT 21 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1955), 151.

27. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10–29*, 772.

28. This position is advocated by Piet B. Dirksen, "Why Was David Disqualified as Temple Builder? The Meaning of 1 Chronicles 22:8," *JOT* 70 (1996): 51–56 and Brian E. Kelly, "David's Disqualification in 1 Chronicles 22:8: A Response to Piet B. Dirksen," *JOT* 80 (1998): 51–56. See also Roddy Braun, "Solomon, the Chosen Temple Builder: The Significance of 1 Chronicles 22, 28, and 29 for the Theology of Chronicles," *JBL* 95.4 (1976): 581–90.

29. The one possible exception is when David takes a census and many people die as a result (1 Chr 21:1–13). However, as Knoppers notes, we would more likely expect some kind of "national consequence" (as we see with the census) if this were the case. For the Chronicler, David's prohibition from building the temple is "personal in nature." See Knoppers, *1 Chronicles*



scholars have suggested that it was David's martial activities that made him unfit—the Temple is place of peace, while David is a man of war.<sup>30</sup> This interpretation has the advantage of taking the Chronicler's explanation in the most plain sense possible. But, here again, there is insufficient textual support in the rest of the Hebrew Bible, which does not associate warfare with the shedding of innocent blood, and nowhere in Chronicles is David accused of such. At the very least, this interpretation aligns most closely with the explicit connection between David and his military campaigns (i.e., not a ceremonial or ethical, shortcoming), and indeed, it is the rationale given in antiquity by Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities* 7.337).<sup>31</sup> Knoppers adopts a modified version of this last position and implies that it was the sheer volume of blood that David spilled which ultimately disqualified him, drawing on Pentateuchal notions that "blood belongs to God."<sup>32</sup> From my perspective, none of these explanations are particularly satisfying.

What we *can*

The reason an explanation is so difficult to come up with, ultimately, is that the Chronicler makes a claim about David which does not seem to have any basis in other related material.

The assumption of all these approaches has been that the Chronicler—with his disinct  

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10–29, 772–73.

30. See especially Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 396–97 and Steven L. McKenzie, "Why Didn't David Build the Temple? The History of a Biblical Tradition," in *Worship and the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honor of John T. Willis*, ed. M. Patrick Graham, R. R. Marrs, and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 284 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 204–24.

31. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10–29*, 773.

32. *Ibid.*, 774.

theological *Tendenz*—sought to rationalize the fact that Solomon, and not David, built the temple. As Japhet writes:

The portrayal of David as *the* greatest of Israel's kings and the object of future hopes, the establishment of the Temple as the centre of Israel's religious experience, and the inalienable bond between the house of David and the city of Jerusalem with its temple—all these had become theological cornerstones. The irrefutable fact that the Temple was built by Solomon rather than David did not cease to challenge theological thinking and demand explanation.<sup>33</sup>

But,

Regardless of which specific process is in play here (I do not think we have enough data to argue one way or the other) what is important is that both of these processes adapt and fit received knowledge into a broader system of knowledge—social memory—and that these processes can be reasoned about *historically*.

TODO: Something about how all of this is historicizing. I need to be explicit about this.

#### 1.4 THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE AS A SITE OF MEMORY

Another potent site of memory in Chronicles is the temple in Jerusalem. As with David, the memory of the Temple in Chronicles is not entirely novel. Already in the book of Deuteronomy the mythology surrounding the divine selection of Jerusalem and the uniquely ordained site of the Solomonic temple had been well-established. This development is easily seen by contrasting the ways that the Covenant Code of Exod 20 in which Yahweh seems to command (or, at the very least not *prohibit*) the Israelites to establish cult sites בְּכָל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֶזְכֹּר

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33. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 396.

אֶת־שְׁמִי “in every place that I commemorate my name” (Exod 20:24)<sup>34</sup> with that of

Deuteronomy, in which Yahweh commands the Israelites to destroy all cult sites within the land and furthermore that:

כִּי אִם־אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִכָּל־שְׁבִטֵיכֶם לָשׂוּם אֶת־  
שְׁמוֹ שָׁם לְשִׁכְנוֹ תִּדְרָשׁוּ וּבֵאתָ שָׁמָּה: <sup>(6)</sup> וְהִבֵּאתֶם שָׁמָּה עֹלֹתֵיכֶם וְזִבְחֵיכֶם וְאֵת  
מַעֲשֵׂרֵיכֶם וְאֵת תְּרוֹמַת יָדְכֶם וְנִדְרֵיכֶם וְנִדְבָתֵיכֶם וּבְכֹרֹת בְּקָרְכֶם וְצֹאנְכֶם:

(Deut 12:5) But you shall seek the place that Yahweh your God will choose from among all your tribes as his dwelling to put his name there. You shall go there <sup>(6)</sup> and you will bring your burnt offerings there as well as your sacrifices, your tithes and the offerings of your hands, your votive gifts,

34. It is hard not to speculate that a number of the textual variants in this verse are due to the implication that Yahweh could be commemorate his name in multiple places, compared to its counterpart in Deut 12:5. This discomfort is illustrated in Samaritan Pentateuch’s omission of כל with a result that מָקוֹם is conceptually singular (in *the* place), while LXX, Syriac, and the Targums all support the reading “in every place.” The Niqqudim make it a point to separate the ideas, emphasizing that the clause בְּכָל־הַמָּקוֹם “in every place” modifies only the following clause אָבוֹא אֵלֶיךָ וּבֵרַכְתִּיךָ “I will come to you and bless you” and not completing the action of the preceding מִזְבֵּחַ אֲדָמָה תַעֲשֶׂה־לִּי וְזִבַּחְתָּ עָלָיו “you will make an earthen altar for me and make sacrifices upon it.” Indeed, the first person form אֲזִכִּיר favors the former reading. The Syriac does, however, offer a variant suggesting a possible second person *Vorlage* \*תִּזְכִּיר, which I find intriguing, “in every place that *you* commemorate my name, I will come....” Another explanation for the grammar is to read the imperfect form אָבוֹא as a volitive “[in order that] I might come to you and bless you,” though one would expect a ו. I admit that all of these options are tenuous, and it may be that the grammar is unremarkable. Even so, Exod 20 seems to presuppose that Yahweh could or would cause his name to be commemorated in more than one place. And, at least for the author of Deut 12, this seemed ambiguous enough that he felt the need to forcefully clarify his position.

your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your cattle and flocks.

### 1.5 MAGNETISM AND CONVERGENCE OF MNEMONIC SITES

Although both David and the Temple maybe thought of as discrete sites of memory, it is important to remember that they participate in a *network* of symbolic social meaning. Thus, “discrete” here does not mean “isolated.” Moreover, not all sites of memory carry the same weight of significance within a particular symbolic system. In other words, not all sites of memory are created equal; David is a much more prominent and potent node within the social memory of ancient Israel than was Shimei, his critic. Though they participate within the same discursive space—even in the Bible—David is a more significant symbol. Likewise the Temple’s symbolic significance far outweighs that of the bāmôt, despite the fact that—functionally—their social function was similar.

But, what do we mean by “significance”? One way to think about a symbol’s significance within a social space is by considering not the “size” of the node (whatever that might mean), but by how “connected” the node is within the social network. More highly-connected sites of memory—those which for one reason or another have been connected to many other such sites within the social memory—may be viewed as more “significant,” while sites with fewer connections are comparatively less significant with respect to social and cultural memory.<sup>35</sup>

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35. Of course, when I say that a king is more “significant” than, say, a peasant, I am making an assessment of the social impact of the individual on the society broadly and not making a

## 1.6 CONCLUSIONS

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judgment of the intrinsic value or importance of the individual. Moreover, I am not saying that such significance ought to guide the historian. This is merely meant as a description of this particular social phenomenon.

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