Chapter 1: Chronicles

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.[1] As has been

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."[2] 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.[3] 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

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."[4] 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.[5]

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"[6] 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

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."[7]

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.[8]

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

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.

1.2.1 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 used 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.

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 בת דוד "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.[9] Likewise, it has been suggested that the Mesha Stele, too, refers to the "house of David," although this reading is not secure.[10] 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 eight century BCE, "David" existed as a meaningful eponymous symbol and site of memory with respect to

9. 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 idem, "The Tel Dan Inscription: A New Fragment," *IEJ* 45 (1995): 1–18.

10. The reading בת דוד 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 idem, "'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.

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 it end with the Chronicler.

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.[11] A great deal of work

11. The observation was made as early as de Wette in the early nineteenth century in his *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);

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.

Take, for example, 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]) which form a core set of narratives for Samuel–Kings, but whose intrigue are essentially absent from the book fo Chronicles.[12] It is

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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 Deuteronomic History and the Book of Chronicles: Scribal Works in an Oral World,* AIL 6 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010).

12. 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. However, 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):

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. Knapp, for example observes that "[i]n some ways, [the Traditions of David's Rise and Reign] is the paradigmatic ancient Near Eastern apology."[13] 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.[14]

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. Of course, we know that for ancient Israel David *did* become known as the legitimate king of Israel and Judah *par excellence*—a figure against whom subsequent kings would be measured. In this way, the construction of the apologist's David was ultimately successful.[15]

355–67; P. Kyle McCarter, "The Apology of David," *JBL* 99.4 (1980): 489–504; idem, *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).

13. Knapp, *Royal Apologetic,* 218.

14. Ibid.

15. It is worth pointing out that such an apologia likely arose in response to accusations of usurpation. Thus, we can imagine that the HDR is representative of the "last word" on the

For all the potency of these stories, one may wonder why they did not make it into the Chronicler's history. That is to say, why remove 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. The discourses that HDR participated in had long been resolved and the Davidic 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. No mess; 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:

וְדָוִיד זָקֵן וְשָׂבַע יָמִים וַיַּמְלֵךְ אֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה בְנוֹ 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:

וַיִּתְחַזֵּק שְׁלֹמֹה בֶּן־דָּוִיד עַל־מַלְכוּתוֹ וַיהוָה אֱלֹהָיו עִמּוֹ וַיְגַדְּלֵהוּ לְמָעְלָה׃ (2 Chr 1:1)

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matter, which was an attempt to suppress alternative voices in the matter which 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, "Come out, come 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" (2 Sam 16:7b).

> 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 it precluded the need for continued apologia. 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.

The David of Chronicles

Historicizing the Chronicler's Memory of David

1.2.2 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 אַזְכִּיר אֶת־שְׁמִי "in every place that I commemorate my name" (Exod 20:24)[16] with that of

16. 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

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

> (Deut 12:5) כִּי אִם־אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִכָּל־שִׁבְטֵיכֶם לָשׂוּם אֶת־
> שְׁמוֹ שָׁם לְשִׁכְנוֹ תִדְרְשׁוּ וּבָאתָ שָׁמָּה: (6) וְהֲבֵאתֶם שָׁמָּה עֹלֹתֵיכֶם וְזִבְחֵיכֶם וְאֵת
> מַעְשְׂרֹתֵיכֶם וְאֵת תְּרוּמַת יֶדְכֶם וְנִדְרֵיכֶם וְנִדְבֹתֵיכֶם וּבְכֹרֹת בְּקַרְכֶם וְצֹאנְכֶם:
>
> (Deut 12:5) 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 (6) and you will bring your burnt offerings there as well as your sacrifices, your tithes and the offerings of your hands, your votive gifts, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your cattle and flocks.

1.2.3 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,

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clause אָבוֹא אֵלֶיךָ וּבֵרַכְתִּיךָ "I will come to you and bless you" and not completing the action of the preceding מִזְבַּח אֲדָמָה תַּעֲשֶׂה־לִּי וְזָבַחְתָּ עָלָיו "you will make an earthen altar for me and make sacrifices upon it." Indeed, the first person form אַזְכִּיר favors the former reading. The Syriac does, however, offer a variant suggesting a possible second person *Vorlage* *תַּזְכִּיר, 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.

"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.[17]

Section Conclusions

17. 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 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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