Reading the Pentateuch’s Genealogies after the Exile: The Chronicler’s Usage of Genesis 1–11 in Negotiating an All-Israelite Identity

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ABSTRACT
From the first nine chapters of Chronicles it becomes clear that not only Samuel-Kings were used as sources by the Chronicler, but also the Pentateuch. The Chronicler was certainly one of the earliest readers of the Pentateuch (in whatever form) after the exile. The peculiarity of the Chronicler’s version of Israelite history starting with “Adam” has been noted by many scholars. It seems as if the Chronicler particularly found the genealogies in Gen 1–11 useful to legitimize a universal context for negotiating the identity of All-Israel in the late Persian Period. This contribution will examine some of the Chronicler’s genealogies in synoptic comparison with the genealogies of the Urgeschichte in order to determine how and why this exilic literature was used in Chronicles at a later stage in the literary history of the Hebrew Bible, as well as to establish what we can learn about the literary history of the Pentateuch from the Chronicler’s usage.

A INTRODUCTION

Although the Cinderella of biblical scholarship, Chronicles studies, has developed into a blossoming princess in the past few decades, the value of this book for the studying of the literary history of earlier literature has as yet been underestimated. In the historiography debate Chronicles is still being relegated to the status of “tertiary evidence,” that means, it is regarded as a re-interpreta-

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1 This paper was first presented at the ProPent meeting of 2009 organised by Prof. Jurie le Roux of the University of Pretoria. I hereby express my gratitude for the invitation to take part in this annual Pentateuch conference, as well as for the critical engagement with my views of fellow conference participants during the discussion. This contribution already appeared in Norwegian translation in a Festschrift for Magnar Kartveit, cf. Louis C. Jonker, “Kronistens etter-eksilke lesning av Pentateukens genealogier,” in Jerusalem, Samaria og jordens ender: Bibletolkninger tilegnet Magnar Kartveit, 65 år, 7. oktober 2011 (ed. Knut Holter and Jostein Ådna; Trondheim: Tapir Academic Press, 2011), 33-46. I hereby thank the publisher for granting permission to publish the original English version. I also thank my assistant, Helen de Wet, for the formal-technical preparation of the manuscript.

tion of earlier biased biblical literature, and is therefore not attributed any value for the reconstruction of Ancient Israel’s history.3

However, when it comes to the reconstruction of the literary history of earlier biblical material, a strong argument can in my opinion be advanced that the Chronicler is sitting in the front seat. Scholars are generally in agreement that the early versions of the Hebrew Bible texts can teach us a significant amount of their literary history. These versions, such as the early translations, Qumran etcetera, are considered to be in closer temporal proximity, and it is assumed that they might reflect something of the initial stages of the earlier biblical literature.

The same argument can be advanced with reference to Chronicles. The Chronicler (whoever he was, a singular writer, or a collective of some sorts) was one of the earliest readers of the Pentateuch. If one would assume that the final touches to the Pentateuch were made in the late Persian era, the Chronicler’s work (which is normally dated at the end of the Persian era or beginning of the Hellenistic period) originated in close temporal proximity to this monumental literary work. The same holds true for the so-called Deuteronomistic History. The Chronicler made extensive use of this history, taking the courage to adapt, omit and even add to his source materials.

In this contribution I therefore want to address the question: What can the Chronicler’s usage of Pentateuchal material teach us about the literary history of the latter? Let me admit in advance that I am not going to offer bold and final answers to this question! However, through this study I would like to prompt Pentateuch scholars to – at least – consider the question for a moment. The background of this challenge is that the Chronicler’s usage of the Pentateuchal material is often (if not mostly) ignored in Pentateuchal debates.

Before embarking on the venture of this contribution, a methodological remark should be made. One should of course be aware of the following considerata:

(i) The Chronicler often took the freedom to adapt his source materials in order to fit his own ideological plan. One should therefore not assume that the source materials resembled exactly the form they take in Chronicles. The implication for this investigation is then that one should work on both fronts simultaneously, namely to investigate the Chronicler’s own purpose of adapting the source materials on the one hand, but on the other hand to reflect on what this usage of the source materials teach us about the source materials.

3 For a discussion of the various perspectives on the historical value of Chronicles, see M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie eds., The Chronicler as Historian (JSOTSup 238; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1997).
One should not assume that the Chronicler necessarily made use of source texts that were exactly the same as the Hebrew texts we are using today—in my case, the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia based on the Codex Leningradensis. In some cases it could well be that the Chronicler made use of a different or earlier form of the source texts. Text-critical studies therefore should form an integral part of any synoptic comparison.

Samuel-Kings were evidently the main sources of the Chronicler. However, the Pentateuch (in whatever form) was also used extensively. Since all references to Pentateuchal material occur in the genealogical introduction to Chronicles (1 Chr 1–9) this study will dwell on these nine chapters. Special attention will be given to the Chronicler’s usage of the so-called Urgeschichte, Gen 1–11.

One should clarify at this point what I mean with the “usage” of earlier source materials. I make the distinction here between the strategy of including an exact or adapted version of the source material into the Chronicler’s text on the one hand and the allusion to earlier textual traditions on the other. Whether earlier material was included or used should be determined on account of clear arguments that would relate the wording of the Chronicler’s text to a source text. This relationship should be clear not only on a word level, but also on the level of more extensive literary units. Even when only a few words of a text (particularly in the case of genealogies) have been taken over, but it is completely clear that the new text follows the literary structure of the older text, direct usage can be assumed. One prominent example will suffice to explain this point: 1 Chr 1:1–4 offers a genealogy consisting of a mere list of names. Although we do not find this exact text in the Pentateuch, it becomes clear that the Chronicler used Gen 5:1–32 since the same names in the same order appear there. Although the majority of the material of Gen 5:1–32 was omitted by the Chronicler and only a few names have been taken over, there is no doubt that he made use of this Pentateuchal genealogy.

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6 An alternative theory could be that both the Pentateuchal material and Chronicles could be traced back to a common source text.
Allusion functions more on a thematic level. Another example will explain this strategy. It is evident in 2 Chr 36:20–21 that the text of Lev 26:34–35, 43 is in the background. The notion of the exile being a time of Sabbath rest and the theme of desolation are clearly taken over from the text in Leviticus. However, in this case there is no direct usage in terms of wording, but rather a thematic allusion to the earlier text.

In the present study my focus will be on those cases where one can argue with a fair amount of certainty that the Pentateuchal texts (in whatever form) were directly used.

B THE TEXTS IN SYNOPTIC COMPARISON

It is abundantly clear from 1 Chr 10 to 2 Chr 36 that the Chronicler made extensive use of the books Samuel and Kings. Another part of the so-called Deuteronomistic history, namely the Levitic city list in Josh 21 features in the Chronicler’s description of these cities in 1 Chr 6.7 The selective usage of the Deuteronomistic material by the Chronicler has led biblical scholars to reflect on which form of the Deuteronomistic history was used/available to the Chronicler. Reading the books of Chronicles has therefore become an important cross-checking exercise for studying the literary formation of the Deuteronomistic history.

Could the same exercise be performed for the Chronicler’s usage of the Pentateuch? The Chronicler’s usage of the Pentateuch is concentrated in the genealogical part, that is, in 1 Chr 1–9, with the last instance already in 8:1. Although the final judgment on this exercise will have to come from the side of Pentateuch specialists (which I am not!), I am of the opinion that this exercise can, at least, serve as another cross-checking mechanism for theories about the pre-life of the Pentateuch.

A synoptic comparison reveals the following with reference to the different sections of the Chronicler’s genealogies:

1 From Adam to Abraham (1 Chronicles 1:1–27)

The first genealogy bridges the period from the first human, Adam to the proto-ancestor of Israel, Abraham. The introduction of the history of Israel according to the Chronicler with an intricately constructed set of genealogies in chs. 1–9 is in itself very interesting. Although the compilation of genealogies was nothing strange in Ancient Mesopotamia and Classical Greece, the introduction of a history with genealogies occurs infrequently, the historiographic work, The

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7 For a synoptic comparison of these texts, see Klein’s discussion in Ralph W. Klein, 1 Chronicles (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 183–93.
Troika authored by Hellanicus, being one example. What is special about the first genealogical list in 1 Chr 1:1–27 is the fact that it starts with the protohuman, Adam. The Deuteronomistic history (whose historical account is broadly followed by the Chronicler) begins with the figure of Moses. The Chronicler, however, situates the history of Israel within the context of the origin of humanity.

To achieve this peculiarity, the Chronicler made extensive use of (a selection of) the genealogies in the Urgeschichte. Close study of vv. 1–4 reveals that the same names in the same order were used compared to the genealogy provided in Gen 5:1–32. Although the Chronicler omitted all the detailed age indications and narrative information provided in the Gen 5 account, there is no doubt that this text was used by him. The same linear format (that is, where one representative of each generation forms the progression of the genealogy) was used compared to Gen 5. It is also clear that the same construction (namely ten generations from Adam to Noah, which is most probably a literary creation and not a reflection of reality) was taken over from the Vorlage. This first part ends with the branching out into the three sons of Noah, namely Shem, Ham and Japheth, which also forms the conclusion to the Gen 5 genealogy.

The next part in vv. 5–23 switches over to a segmented format (that is, where two or more children—normally sons—are mentioned per generation, and where one of these sons is selected for the progression to the next generation in the genealogy). In this case, the so-called Table of Nations in Gen 10:1–32 was used and the segmentation was adopted from this genealogy. Verse 1 of the Table of Nations was omitted by the Chronicler, probably in order to avoid the repetition of the names of Noah’s three sons. The reference to the flood in v. 1 was also redundant for the Chronicler’s purpose. Apart from the omission of the narrative information in Gen 10 (vv. 5, 9–12, 18b–21, 30–32), the Chronicler took over the three subsections of the Table of Nations unchanged and presented them in the same order (namely, Japheth, Ham, Shem). One small change, which is probably the result of some scribal error, occurs in 1 Chr 1:17 where the descendants of Shem and Aram were conflated.

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8 See the discussion in the excursus on genealogies offered by Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1–9*, 246–65 (particularly 259–60).
9 This distinction was first made in the seminal work by Robert R. Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World* (Yale Near Eastern Researches 7; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).
The last part of the Chronicler’s first genealogy returns to the linear format in vv. 24–27. Again, like in the first part, only the names are picked out from the fuller account in Gen 11:10–26. And again, like in the first part, ten generations are presented (in the same order than in the Vorlage). It is obvious that the Chronicler, by combining the three genealogies from the Urgeschichte, wanted to focus on the Shemite line that reaches Abraham in v. 27, without ignoring the interrelationship between the postdiluvian descendents of Noah’s three sons.

Since our discussion will return to a more detailed interpretation of the Chronicler’s usage of the Urgeschichte below, we now move on to the following genealogy.

2 Abraham’s Descendants (1 Chronicles 1:28–2:2)

1 Chronicles 1:28 introduces a section which takes the genealogical history from Abraham to Jacob, or rather Israel as he is consistently called by the Chronicler, and his twelve sons. The format is again segmented, but the order of presentation clarifies the line of preference. Ishmael is first introduced (in vv. 29–31). After an insertion about Abraham’s offspring with Keturah (vv. 32–33) the Isaac’s line is presented shortly (v. 34). The fact that Isaac is mentioned after Ishmael places the emphasis on Isaac. The same strategy of presentation is followed in the remainder of the genealogy. The offspring of Esau are presented first (vv. 35–42), and Israel’s sons only follow thereafter (2:1–2) to build the climax of this particular genealogy, and to provide a bridge to the next very extensive genealogy.

One can be fairly sure that the Chronicler used Pentateuchal material again for the construction of this particular genealogy. Two parts of the Pentateuchal patriarchal traditions feature prominently here. For the list of Ishmael’s offspring, the Chronicler probably made use of Gen 25:13b–16a, and for the namelist of Abraham’s children with Keturah Gen 25:1–4 were probably used (although Keturah was changed from a wife to a concubine, and the names of the sons of Dedan were omitted from the Vorlage).

For the genealogy of Esau the Chronicler probably relied selectively on Gen 36. However, one gets the impression from the names and order in Chronicles that this text could have been the Vorlage of the Chronicler. When it comes to the strange name list of Edomite kings and the clans of Edom represented in 1 Chr 1:43–50 and 51b–54 respectively, the impression that Gen 36 was used is confirmed. The Chronicler follows Gen 36:31–39 and 40–43a very closely.

For the bridge verses linking this genealogy to the next, 1 Chr 2:1–2, one of two different Pentateuchal sections (or both) could have been the Vorlage. The same twelve names are mentioned in Gen 35:23–26a and Exod 1:1–
5, although in both these cases Dan follows after Benjamin, whereas the Chronicler mentions Dan before Joseph.

3 Israel’s Descendants (1 Chronicles 2:3–9:1a)

The most extensive and complex genealogy, namely that of the sons of Israel/Jacob, now follows in segmented format after the bridging passage in 2:1–2. The sons of Israel (although then in another order and different combination from 2:1–2 with Ephraim and Manasseh substituting Joseph, and Dan being omitted) are introduced in distinct subsections of the genealogy that extends from 2:3–9:1a, concluding with the remark in 9:1a that “all Israel was enrolled by genealogies.” Some scholars are of the opinion that these subsections are structured in such a way that Judah (in the first position) and Benjamin (in the last position) are highlighted, and that emphasis is also placed on Levi (occupying the middle position in this extensive genealogy).\(^\text{11}\) The other parts of the segmented genealogy include the other tribes (from the Transjordan and the north) into the family of Israel. These aspects of the genealogical construction are certainly quite significant, but our focus in the present discussion is to indicate how the Pentateuch was used here.

Two Pentateuchal sections stand out in a synoptic comparison, namely Gen 46 and Num 26. Although the material was used very selectively and the order of presentation was mostly changed, one could argue fairly confidently that Gen 46:8–25 and Num 26:5–57 (in whatever form) must have been available to the Chronicler. The majority of material included in this extensive genealogy belongs to the Chronicler’s Sondergut, but names taken from these Pentateuchal chapters were employed by the Chronicler in all subsections of the genealogy of Israel’s sons.

Two other Pentateuchal passages feature in this genealogy. In the subsections dealing with Simeon (1 Chr 4:24–43) and Reuben (in 5:1–26) it is obvious that the Chronicler must have had Exod 6:14–15 at his disposal. The parallel between 1 Chr 4:24 and Exod 6:15 (Simeon) might be somewhat precarious, but a comparison between 1 Chr 5:3 and Exod 6:14 reveals an almost exact parallel. Exodus 6 also features in another subsection, namely the very complex genealogy of Levi in 1 Chr 6:1–81 (MT: 5:27–6:66). The fact that verbal similarities exist for the basic structure of the Levite family list, that is, for Levi and each of his three sons, Gershom/n, Kohath and Merari, leaves the impression that at least Exod 6:16–19 must have been available to the Chronicler. These texts also find a parallel in another Pentateuchal text, namely in Num 3. However, there the parallel is limited with only Num 3:17 paralleling 1 Chron 6:1 (MT: 5:27).

4 Jerusalem’s Post-Exilic Inhabitants and Cultic Officials (1 Chron 9:1b–34) and Saul’s Descendants (1 Chron 9:35–44)

The last two sections in the Chronicler’s genealogical introduction to his book contain no references to the Pentateuch. The list in 1 Chr 9:1b–34 contains the names of the post-exilic community and inhabitants of Jerusalem. By including this information in the genealogical introduction the Chronicler created a sense of continuity between the Israel of the past and the post-exilic community in Yehud. The last section (9:35–44) deals again with Saul who was already mentioned in the Benjaminitite genealogy. However, this last section leads over to the narrative section where the history of Saul opens the Chronicler’s account in 1 Chr 10. Although these last two sections of the genealogical introduction are quite significant in Chronicles studies, they can be ignored for the purpose of our discussion here, since no Pentateuchal references occur here. Let me now summarise our observations on the texts:

From the Urgeschichte there is no doubt that the genealogies in Gen 5 and 11:10–26 were used by the Chronicler. Also the Table of Nations (at least the following selection: vv. 2–4, 6–8, 13–18, 22–29) must have been available to the Chronicler. The following list summarizes the other Pentateuchal texts that were—in all probability—used by the Chronicler:

Gen 25:1–3a, 4, 13–16a
Gen 35:23–26
Gen 36:10–13a, 20–28, 31–39, 40b–43a
Gen 46:8–9, 10–13, 17, 21a, 24–25a
Exod 1:1a, 2–4
Exod 6:14a, 15–19
Num 3:17
Num 26:5–6, 12–13, 19–25, 29a, 35a, 38a, 40a, 44–45, 48–49, 57

C DISCUSSION

The question is now whether these references show any patterns. Of course one could argue (according to some theories about the Pentateuchal origin)\(^\text{12}\) that

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the Pentateuch in its final form was available to the Chronicler, and that the Chronicler merely quoted selectively from certain genealogical sections. However, such a view would presuppose certain opinions on the relative dating of the final form of the Pentateuch and Chronicles. There is a growing consensus among Chronicles scholars that this book originated most probably around the middle of the 4th century B.C.E., that is, the final years of Persian imperial domination. Most Chronicles scholars would not deny that some finishing touches to Chronicles could have taken place in the early Hellenistic era, that is, the period following the conquest of Alexander the Great. However, Chronicles probably reflects the social-political dynamics of the late Persian era. If one assumes that the Chronicler had a fairly final form of the Pentateuch at his disposal, this would presuppose an earlier dating (probably by a century or so) for the finalization of the first books of the Hebrew Bible.

When one considers the whole spectrum of theories about the Pentateuchal formation and finalisation, however, it could be a useful exercise—as a cross-checking mechanism—to determine whether the Chronicler’s later usage of Pentateuchal material reflects anything about the presumed pre-stages of the Pentateuch. The multiplicity of Pentateuchal theories of course complicates this exercise. However, certain patterns emerging from our textual observations might be interesting.

The following table gives an indication of the materials from the Urgeschichte that were used by the Chronicler, and how these materials are categorised by Noth and Westermann.14

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13 For a discussion of the debate about the date of Chronicles, see Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1–9*, 101–117.

There is general agreement among Genesis scholars that the genealogies in Gen 5:1–32 and 11:10–26 should be attributed to the Priestly Writing (P). There are minor differences among scholars on the origin of this material. One small difference is, for example, that Westermann differs from Noth with reference to Gen 5:29 in attributing this verse also to P (like the rest of the genealogy).

The situation is more complicated with regard to the Table of Nations in Gen 10. Scholars agree that this list was composed from different source materials. Although a P version of this list forms the backbone, some non-priestly material was also included by the final redactor. The Chronicler probably quotes from a version of the Table of Nations which already includes both

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pentateuch material</th>
<th>Noth</th>
<th>Westermann</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1–28</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>30–32</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>Gen 10</td>
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<td>2–4</td>
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<td>6–7</td>
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<td>13–18</td>
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<td>22–23</td>
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<td>Gen 11</td>
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<td>10–26</td>
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priestly and non-priestly material, and which therefore reflects a later stage in
the literary history of this specific section.

Let us now consider the materials coming from other parts of the Penta-
tech (with the categorisations of Noth, Westermann and Blum):\(^{18}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pentateuch material</th>
<th>Noth</th>
<th>Westermann</th>
<th>Blum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen 25 1–3a, 4</td>
<td>Sec.</td>
<td>Sec.</td>
<td>P?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13–16a</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gen 35 23–26</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gen 36 10–13a</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20–28</td>
<td>Ext. P</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gen 46 8–13, 17, 21a, 24–25a</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exod 1 1a, 2–4</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exod 6 14a, 15–19</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Num 3 17</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>??</td>
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<tr>
<td>Num 26 5–6, 12–13, 19–25, 29a, 35a, 38a, 40a, 44–45, 48–49, 57</td>
<td>Ext. P</td>
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<td>Ext. P</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It seems that some pattern is emerging here (depending of course on
whose theory of Pentateuchal composition is accepted). From the table it
becomes clear that representatives of different Pentateuchal theories (such as
the theory of a more or less independent P source advocated in classical form
by Martin Noth and approximately followed by Claus Westermann in his Gen-
essis commentary, as well as the theory of a priestly composition advocated by
Erhard Blum) agree that it was mostly materials with a priestly character that
were used by the Chronicler. The disputed verses at the beginning of Gen 25
are seen as secondary additions to the text by Noth and Westermann, but not as
non-priestly material. Other sections are regarded as postpriestly extensions,
but are still priestly in character.

After considering these two tables could one then speak of a priestly
preference by the Chronicler? The composition of the Table of Nations of

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course cautions us not to be too quick to come to such a conclusion. However, it seems at least that there was a very strong tendency with the Chronicler to make use of priestly material.

One should ask why the Chronicler treated the priestly material preferentially. The answer to this question might be very simple, namely, the Chronicler was looking for genealogical material to include as an introduction to his history work, and the priestly writings happened to provide this kind of material. However, we also know of non-priestly genealogical material, such as Gen 4 (the Cain genealogy) that was not included by the Chronicler.

There might also be a more ideological reason (which will be taken up in a section below in more detail): The Chronicler wanted to merge two traditions in his work, namely the Deuteronomistic tradition (which formed the main source for his historical work) and the priestly tradition. Priestly material from the Pentateuch was then selected in order to achieve this aim.

But could the literary history of the Priestly writing present us with another possible theory of why the Chronicler gave preference to priestly material? Does the pattern we observe in the Chronicler’s usage of Pentateuchal material shed any light on the burning questions about (particularly) the dating and ending of the Priestly Writing?

These questions should rather be left to Pentateuchal specialists to answer. It would be wiser for me—a non-specialist in Pentateuchal matters—to now turn to a discussion of the Chronicler’s intention with the inclusion of these genealogies. In the following section I will dwell particularly on the Chronicler’s usage of the genealogies from the Urgeschichte.

D A CLOSER LOOK AT THE CHRONICLER’S USAGE OF THE URGESCHICHTE

It has already been hinted at above that the inclusion of Priestly genealogies in the Chronicler’s construction might have had an ideological motivation. A thorough analysis of Chronicles reveals that there is a strong tendency in the book to harmonize the Deuteronomistic and Priestly traditions with one another. This can be observed on terminological and thematic levels. For example, the Chronicler’s description of the Passover celebrations of Hezekiah (2 Chr 30) and Josiah (2 Chr 35) reveals that he made a deliberate attempt to reconcile the Priestly and Deuternomic traditions concerning Passover. The indications of the sacrificial animals as well as the method of preparation of the sacrifices show signs of both these traditions.19

19 See my discussion in Louis C. Jonker, Josiah in the Chronicler’s Mirror: Late Stages of the Josiah Reception in II Chr 34f. (TSLKHB 2; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag, 2003), 64–70. Bernd Janowski comes to a similar conclusion: “… der
Chronicles scholars normally relate this harmonization tendency to the Chronicler’s view on the Levites and the priesthood. The Chronicler apparently argued for equity among the different parts of the Second Temple priesthood. Knoppers, for example, indicates: “There is no question that one encounters both pro-Priestly and pro-Levitical passages in Chronicles. Nor is there any doubt that the work draws from Priestly tradition in certain contexts, but from Deuteronomic tradition in others. Rather than an indelible mark of literary disunity, these passages evince the author’s concern to mediate different perspectives within the context of the late Persian or early Hellenistic age.”

For Knoppers and other Chronicles scholars this is an indication of the Chronicler’s “ability to acknowledge and negotiate different ideological perspectives, and his capacity for pursuing his own agenda as he engages in a variety of earlier biblical traditions.”

Could this also be true for the Chronicler’s inclusion of the (mostly) Priestly material from the Pentateuch? Could the tendency we observe on a terminological and thematic level also be observable in the macro-structure of the book? The Chronicler used the Deuteronomistic version of the past (mainly from Samuel-Kings) to present his version of this history (or, to be more specific, of the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Judah). However, this Deuteronomistic version of history was placed in a priestly macro-context by the insertion of mostly priestly material in the genealogical introduction.

What difference does this make to the interpretation of the past? The Deuteronomistic version of the past starts with the conquest of the land with a period of tribal existence following the entering of the land. Thereafter follows the development of the monarchy and its manifestation in the United Israel as well as in the division of the kingdom. This version ends with both kingdoms in exile.

The usage of the Urgeschichte by the Chronicler creates another context for the history of Israel. The Chronicler’s version starts with the proto-human, Adam. With this introduction a universal framework for the understanding of the past is immediately opened. This universal framework does not exclude the family line of Israel. The universal genealogy in fact runs from Adam to Abraham to Israel and his twelve sons. And from there it continues into the post-
exilic community during the Chronicler’s time. But the line of Israel which enters the Chronicler’s own time in 1 Chr 8 is placed within the universal context of humanity.

The closing section of Chronicles confirms this interpretation of the book. The last two verses (2 Chr 36:22–23) introduce Cyrus, the Persian king in a prophet-like manner: “Thus says Cyrus, the king of Persia: The Lord has told me ….” (own translation). The Chronicler’s version of history does not end in exile, but rather opens new perspectives on the post-exilic reality of Persian domination. The universal framework provided by the Urgeschichte genealogies in the introduction finds its continuation in this last passage where the reader of the Chronicler’s history breaks out of the confinement of an inner-Israelite understanding. The “All Israel” of the Chronicler is a community which certainly stands in continuity with the past, but is firmly situated in the socio-political context of his own time.

E “PENTATEUCH AND EXILE” COMPARED TO “CHRONICLES AND EXILE”

In a recent article Pamela Scalise distinguishes eight different understandings of what “exile” could mean in the OT:

(i) Exile as part of the canonical story of the Hebrew Bible;
(ii) Exile as seventy years;
(iii) The exile of the temple vessels;
(iv) Exile before and after “the Exile”;
(v) Exile as ideology;
(vi) Exile as a desirable identity;
(vii) Exile as condition of marginality;
(viii) “Exile” as a theological identity.

With this distinction in mind one could reflect on which view on “Exile” can be found in the Pentateuch and Chronicles respectively. Although one may assume (on account of the various scholarly theories about dating) that the Pentateuch as well as the so-called Deuteronomistic History were finalised in the post-exilic era, I would like to argue that an “exile after the exile” or an “exilic identity” is still reflected in these literary constructions. If the pending

conquest of the land is considered to be a metaphor for an envisioned return to
the land after the Babylonian exile, the desert existence could equally be seen
as a metaphor for the exile itself. The final construction of the Pentateuch
leaves the reader in the desert. The desert existence is certainly the place which
reveals Yahweh’s will for his people (Sinai), and it is certainly this existence
that creates the expectation and hope of the occupation of the promised land.
But the Pentateuch ends in the desert with Moses dying in Transjordan.

The Deuteronomistic History (in its final construction) starts with the
conquest of the land, but the initial expectations accompanying this conquest
and the Davidic-Solomonic kingship gradually fade until the narrative leads the
reader into the Babylonian exilic existence, with no indication of liberation.

On account of these macro-thematic lines in both the Pentateuch and the
Deuteronomistic History I want to argue that the post-exilic communities
finalising these literary constructions worked from a mindset which was still
captivated by the exilic experience. Although the liberation from Babylonian
captivity has already taken place, both these literary constructions still grapple
with this experience.

Chronicles is different! We have already seen above that the Chronicler,
with the inclusion of the mostly priestly genealogies from the Pentateuch, and
with the addition of the ending with Cyrus speaking on behalf of God, has cre-
ated a universalistic context for understanding the history of Israel. This history
is in continuity with the past, but simultaneously breaks out of the confines of
the past.

It should be noted that the Chronicler skips over the desert existence in
his reconstruction of history. Although Moses, Aaron and their descendants are
mentioned in the genealogies, and although genealogical material was taken
over from the census list in Num 26, the Chronicler’s genealogical introduction
which summarises the Pentateuchal traditions (the priestly material in particu-
lar) does not reflect the existence in the desert.

Could this be another indication that the mindset of the Chronicler was
not an “exilic” one? The Chronicler is not primarily reflecting on the past in
order to establish what went wrong so that Israel landed up in exile. He is
rather reflecting on how Israel’s past would situate the people in a new dispen-
sation—a dispensation which became a reality because they were liberated
from exilic bondage by the Persians.
Could one perhaps say that the Chronicler led both the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History “out of exile” into a new existence which necessitated a renegotiation of their self-understanding?  

**CONCLUSION**

In this contribution I offered a detailed analysis of the Chronicler’s usage of Pentateuchal material as well as an interpretation of the universalistic framework created by the Chronicler with his inclusion of the priestly genealogies from the *Urgeschichte*. In doing so I posed certain questions from the Chronicler’s side to those scholars studying the literary history and composition of the Pentateuch. Should anybody still consider to ignore the Chronicler’s material, let me conclude then with a quote from St. Jerome:

> The book of things omitted or epitome of the old dispensation is of such importance and value that without it any one who should claim to himself a knowledge of the scriptures [or, of the Pentateuch, for that matter—L.C.J.] would make himself a laughing stock in his own eyes.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


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23 I hereby acknowledge the interesting contribution of Eckart Otto in our discussion at the mentioned conference. According to Otto, the Pentateuch has already led P and D out of exile, and the Chronicler is continuing this trend.


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