Within Hearing Distance? Recent Developments in Pentateuch and Chronicles Research

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ABSTRACT

Biblical scholarship suffers from over–specialisation and over–compartmentalisation. For many decades Pentateuch studies as the "queen" of biblical scholarship have dominated the field, and required high levels of specialisation. Although not as dominant as Pentateuch studies, other areas in OT scholarship have also reverted into sub–guilds of scholars only talking to themselves. Recent developments in Pentateuch studies and studies of Persian period literature (such as Chronicles) have resulted into different sub–guilds coming within hearing distance from one another. This article provides an overview of some of these developments.[1]

A   INTRODUCTION

New focal points emerged in Pentateuch studies during the past decades. Particularly two of these developments create interesting possibilities for interaction with other subfields in biblical scholarship. On the one hand, the extent of the literary work at the beginning of the HB has become a hotly–debated topic again.[2] The debates focus on whether one should assume a Pentateuch, Hexa-

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[1]   This paper was compiled in preparation of the main paper which I delivered at the 2013 IOSOT meeting in Munich. In that paper, titled "From Paraleipomenon to Early Reader: Some Implications of Recent Chronicles Studies for Pentateuchal Criticism," I argued that the book of Chronicles—as one of the earliest receptions of the Pentatech in whichever form—provides a useful cross–checking mechanism for recent Pentateuch theories. I illustrated this by discussing some case studies from Chronicles in order to show their implications for Pentateuch scholarship. The main paper will be published in the conference volume at Brill Publishers during 2014. I hereby would like to give credit to the ProPent conferences which take place in Pretoria on an annual basis, and from which I have benefited much over the past years. The main organiser of ProPent over the past years, prof. Jurie le Roux, has stimulated my thoughts in the direction which I took in the IOSOT paper.

[2]   The question about the extent of the literary works at the beginning of the HB is not new. Already the seminal works by Martin Noth and Gerhard von Rad struggled with the question whether one should assume a Tetrateuch plus Deuteronomistic History (Noth), or rather a Hexateuch in which the promise to the patriarchs finds fulfilment in the book of Joshua (Von Rad). For almost the entire second part of the 20th century these two views stood alongside one another in scholarship, until the debate was reopened in the final decade of the previous century.

teuch or even Henneateuch in the early history of literature formation.[3] On the other hand, a renewed interest in the Persian period emerged in recent Pentateuch scholarship. Whereas earlier Pentateuch studies discussed the formation of the Pentateuch against the background of the monarchic and exilic periods, more recent studies have postulated that the Pentateuch, and particularly its status as Torah, is rather a product of the Persian era.[4] Especially, the theory about the supposed Persian imperial authorization of the Torah received considerable attention in recent years.[5] Whatever position is taken in this debate,

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[3]   See e.g., Erhard Blum, "Pentateuch – Hexateuch – Enneateuch? Oder: Woran Erkennt Man ein Literarisches Werk in der Hebräischen Bibel?," in *Dernières Rédactions du Pentateuque, de l'Hexateuque et de l'Ennéateuque* (ed. Thomas Römer and Konrad Schmid; Leuven: Universitaire Pers Leuven, 2007), 67–97 (also appeared in English: Erhard Blum, "Pentateuch–Hexateuch–Henneateuch? Or: How Can One Recognize a Literary Work in the Hebrew Bible?," in *Pentateuch, Hexateuch, or Enneateuch: Identifying Literary Works in Genesis through Kings* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman; AIL 8; Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 43–71; Konrad Schmid, *Literaturgeschichte des Alten Testaments: Eine Einführung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2008); Konrad Schmid, *Deuteronomy in the Pentateuch, Hexateuch, and the Deuteronomistic History* (FAT 2/56; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012); Thomas B. Dozeman, ed., *Pentateuch, Hexateuch, or Enneateuch: Identifying Literary Works in Genesis through Kings* (AIL 8; Atlanta: SBL, 2011).

[4]   See e.g., Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Was the Pentateuch the Civic and Religious Constitution of the Jewish Ethnos in the Persian Period?," in *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch* (ed. James Watts; Atlanta: SBL, 2001), 41–62; Eckart Otto, "Forschungen zum Nachpriesterschriftlichen Pentateuch," *TRu* 67/2 (2002): 125–155; Jean–Louis Ska, *Introduction to Reading the Pentateuch* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006); Gary N. Knoppers and Bernard M. Levinson, eds., *The Pentateuch as Torah: New Models for Understanding Its Promulgation and Acceptance* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2007); Konrad Schmid, "The Late Persian Formation of the Torah: Observations on Deuteronomy 34," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers and Rainer Albertz; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 237–251; Schmid, *Literaturgeschichte*; Reinhard G. Kratz, "The Pentateuch in Current Research: Consensus and Debate," in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman; trans. A. C. Hagedorn; FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 31–61.

[5]   Peter Frei, "Die Persische Reichsautorisation: Ein Überblick," *ZABR* 1 (1995): 1–35; James W. Watts, ed., *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch* (SBLSymS 17; Atlanta: SBL, 2001); Peter Frei, "Persian Imperial Authorization: A Summary," in *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch* (ed. James W. Watts; SBLSymS 17; Atlanta: SBL, 2001), 5–40; Gary N. Knoppers, "An Achaemenid Imperial Authorization of Torah in Yehud?," in *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch* (ed. James W. Watts; SBLSymS 17; Atlanta: SBL, 2001), 115–135; Anselm C. Hagedorn, "Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch," *BibInt* 13/1 (2005): 67–69.

the Persian period has become the focus for examining the function and rhetorical thrust of the Pentateuch.[6]

Interest in the book of Chronicles has also blossomed in the past decades.[7] It is remarkable that the book that was once designated "Paraleipomenon" ("of the omitted things") by the Septuagint translators,[8] and that was devalued in 19th century biblical scholarship as "midrash" of older and more reliable historical books,[9] has now become the study object of a vibrant part of HB scholarship. Whereas the book of Chronicles was studied in an earlier phase merely to glean "the omitted things" from this book in order to append the historical picture we get from the other historical books, the focus in recent studies is much more on the Chronicler's own engagement with his sources and his contribution towards the socio–religious discourse in his own time, most probably towards the end of the Persian era. The primary interest is therefore no longer the positivistic one to establish the "hard facts" of history by means of this book,[10] but rather to determine the rhetorical thrust of this work, which creatively made use of earlier sources within the socio–political and socio–religious conditions in Jerusalem during the late Persian period.[11] Many scholars

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[6] Another issue which is often discussed in relation to the Persian period is the canonisation of the Pentateuch. See e.g. Arie van der Kooij and Karel van der Toorn, eds. *Canonization and Decanonization: Papers Presented to the International Conference of the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (Lisor) Held at Leiden, 9–10 January 1997* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998); Alexander Fantalkin and Oren Tal, "The Canonization of the Pentateuch (Part I): When and Why?," *ZAW* 124/1 (2012): 1–18; Alexander Fantalkin and Oren Tal, "The Canonization of the Pentateuch (Part II): When and Why?," *ZAW* 124/2 (2012): 201–212.

[7] See John W. Kleinig, "Recent Research on Chronicles," *CurBS* 2 (1994): 43–76; Thomas Willi, "Zwei Jahrzehnte Forschung an Chronik und Esra–Nehemia," *TRu* 67/1 (2002): 61–104; Rodney K. Duke, "Recent Research in Chronicles," *CBR* 8/1 (2009): 10–50.

[8] Gary N. Knoppers and Paul B. Harvey, "Omitted and Remaining Matters: On the Names Given to the Book of Chronicles in Antiquity," *JBL* 121/2 (2002): 227–243.

[9] See Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (2nd ed.; Berlin: Reimer, 1883) and Julius Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der Historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (2nd Printing with Supplements; Berlin: Reimer, 1889). See also Martin Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch* (2nd ed.; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1960) who followed Wellhausen in a fairly negative assessment of Chronicles.

[10] See the various contributions in M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund, and Steven L. McKenzie, eds., *The Chronicler as Historian* (JSOTSup 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

[11] See *inter alia* Louis C. Jonker, "Reforming History: The Hermeneutical Significance of the Books of Chronicles," *VT* 57/1 (2007): 21–44.

therefore indicate that the "Cinderella" of biblical scholarship has emerged from her neglected status to become a shining princess.[12]

Given these developments in Chronicles and Pentateuchal scholarship respectively, it leads to the pertinent question whether the benefit of interaction between these two fields of scholarship is sufficiently exploited. This question, which forms the problem statement for my IOSOT main paper, will not be the focus of the present contribution. Here, I will rather provide a short overview of research in these fields over the past decades. The discussion serves as background to the broader discussion.

It is of course impossible to provide exhaustive research overviews of the history of Pentateuchal and Chronicles scholarship within the scope of the present article. Thomas Römer ironically remarks the following at the beginning of one of his essays on the Pentateuch: "Were somebody able to describe in a comprehensive way the present state of the pentateuchal debate in a couple of pages, he should be given an award for scientific conciseness."[13] Like him, I also do not aspire to receive such an award!

I will rather limit my focus here to the two recent debates in Pentateuchal scholarship mentioned above, namely the extent of the literary work and the issue of Persian imperial authorisation of the Torah. These issues hold the potential for (and have already stimulated) some interaction with Second Temple literature in general, and Chronicles in particular.

With reference to Chronicles scholarship I will limit my research overview to different theories on the Chronicler's *Vorlage*, as well as to a relatively new focus in Chronicles research, namely the relationship between historiography and identity negotiation. These scholarly issues may also provide interesting interfaces with the field of Pentateuchal scholarship.

B   RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PENTATEUCH SCHOLARSHIP

It is common knowledge that the classical Documentary Hypothesis of Julius Wellhausen and source criticism as method have come under great pressure in OT scholarship in the second half of the 20th century, to the extent that the editors of a recent volume speak of a "breakdown" in this field.[14] Furthermore, the tradition–historical approach of particularly Martin Noth, in which the relationship between the Tetrateuch and Deuteronomistic History was explained, has

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[12]   The first reference to Chronicles as the former "Cinderella" of biblical scholarship appeared in Kleinig, "Chronicles," 1.

[13]   Thomas Römer, "Extra–Pentateuchal Biblical Evidence for the Existence of a Pentateuch? The Case of the 'Historical Summaries,' Especially in the Psalms," in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman; FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 471.

[14]   Dozeman, *Pentateuch, Hexateuch*, 1.

been emended through different stages until one can also speak of a "break-down" in this area. Newer redaction–historical approaches have shown that the history of formation of the Pentateuch and Joshua–2 Kings cannot and should not be treated independently.[15] This insight, in turn, prompted new questions about the extent of the literary work(s) at the beginning of the HB canon, and about the criteria one should use when distinguishing these literary works from one another.[16]

Konrad Schmid has aptly shown that the state of the discipline during the biggest part of the 20th century was dominated by some sort of a gentle-manly compromise between Martin Noth and Gerhard von Rad and their respective theories of a Tetrateuch plus Deuteronomistic History (Noth), or a Hexateuch (Von Rad), which were in fact incompatible.[17] Schmid concludes: "Recent scholarship . . . has shown that this compromise can no longer be maintained, because it leads to major problems that can no longer be over-looked."[18] The separation of the Tetrateuch (or Pentateuch) and the so–called Deuteronomistic History has therefore become untenable in recent scholarship. Scholars such as John van Seters, Hans Heinrich Schmid and Rolf Rendtorff,[19] and more recently *inter alia* Erhard Blum, Eckart Otto and Konrad Schmid himself,[20] have contributed to the development of alternative theories to explain

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[15] See, e.g. the results summarised in the various contributions in Dozeman, *Pentateuch, Hexateuch*; and Thomas B. Dozeman, ed., *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research* (trans. A. C. Hagedorn; FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

[16] See particularly the debate between Blum, "Woran Erkennt Man?" and Kratz, "The Pentateuch in Current Research."

[17] See Konrad Schmid, "The Emergence and Disappearance of the Separation Between the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History in Biblical Studies," in Thomas B. Dozeman, ed., *Pentateuch, Hexateuch, or Enneateuch: Identifying Literary Works in Genesis through Kings* (AIL 8; Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 15: "To exaggerate for a moment, please forgive me if I describe the 'separation model' as a success only because of an explicit, but misguided, compromise between Martin Noth and Gerhard von Rad. To be sure, Martin Noth and Gerhard von Rad were among the most talented and gift ed scholars of their time, but it was precisely their high reputation that allow-ed them to establish together—though ironically also to a certain extent *against* each other—a redactional model for the Enneateuch (Genesis–Kings) that was mainly based on a gentleman's agreement rather than on good arguments."

[18] Schmid, "Emergence and Disappearance," 16.

[19] See John van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975); Hans H. Schmid, *Der sogenannte Jahwist* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1976); Rolf Rendtorff, *Das überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch* (vol. 1; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977).

[20] See Erhard Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (Neukirchen–Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984); Erhard Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990); Eckart Otto, *Das Deuteronomium im Pentateuch und Hexateuch: Studien zur Literaturgeschichte von Pentateuch und Hexateuch im*

the extent and formation of the literary work(s) at the beginning of the biblical canon. Various recent volumes and essay collections document this new phase in scholarship.[21] Without attempting to summarise all the main positions and variations that have developed in recent years, the following main insights can be mentioned: firstly, the broader framework of a Henneateuch (stretching from Genesis to 2 Kings) is more appropriate for describing the formation of the literary work(s) at the beginning of the biblical canon. This broader literary framework at least provides a basis for overcoming the untenable separations which previous models suggested. Secondly, within this broader framework various stages of formation and different combinations of materials can be envisioned.[22] Instead of working with well–defined D and P sources like in the classical source critical model, scholars now suggest that these stages of formation could be the result of different phases of deuteronomistic and priestly redactions.[23] Thirdly, one should probably reckon with a "proto–deuteronomistic history" contained in a literary unit in (pre–stages) of Samuel–Kings.[24] Fourthly, the book of Genesis is probably a later addition to an extended version of a deuteronomistic history which stretched from Exodus tot 2 Kings.[25]

Lichte des Deuteronomiumrahmens (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000); Schmid, *Literaturgeschichte*, 2008.

[21]   See *inter alia* Jan–Christian Gertz, Konrad Schmid and Markus Witte, eds., *Abschied vom Jahwisten: Die Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002); Thomas B. Dozeman, *A Farewell to the Yahwist? The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation* (SBLSymS 34; Atlanta: SBL, 2006); Schmid, *Literaturgeschichte*; Dozeman, *Pentateuch, Hexateuch*; Dozeman, *Pentateuch: International Perspectives*; Schmid, *Deuteronomy in the Pentateuch*.

[22]   See e.g. the variations suggested in the following: Reinhard Achenbach, "Pentateuch, Hexateuch und Enneateuch : Eine Verhältnisbestimmung," *ZABR* 11 (2005): 122–154; Thomas Römer, "How Many Books (Teuchs): Pentateuch, Hexateuch, Deuteronomistic History, or Enneateuch?," in *Pentateuch, Hexateuch, or Enneateuch: Identifying Literary Works in Genesis through Kings* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman; AIL 8; Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 25–42; Römer, "Extra–Pentateuchal"; Blum, "How Can One Recognize?"; Erhard Blum, "The Decalogue and the Composition History of the Pentateuch," in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman; trans. A, C. Hagedorn; FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 289–301; Gary N. Knoppers, "Parallel Torahs and Inner–scriptural Interpretation: The Jewish and Samaritan Pentateuchs in Historical Perspective," in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman; trans. A. C. Hagedorn; FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 507–531.

[23]   See particularly the work of Blum, *Die Komposition*; Blum, *Studien zur Komposition*.

[24]   See e.g. Erik Aurelius, *Zukunft jenseits des Gerichts: Eine Redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie zum Enneateuch* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003).

[25]   Erhard Blum, "Die literarische Verbindung von Erzvätern und Exodus: Ein Gespräch mit neueren Endredaktionshypothesen," in *Abschied vom Jahwisten: Die*

And lastly, the formation of a Pentateuch within the broader framework as described above is probably a later phase which is placed in the Persian era.[26]

This brings me then to the second main issue discussed in Pentateuch scholarship, namely the supposed Persian imperial authorisation of the Torah. Of all the different configurations of literary works suggested in the scholarship summarised above, only the Pentateuch is canonically attested. The Pentateuch functions as the first major part of the HB canon, and also has a parallel in the Samaritan Pentateuch tradition.[27] This fact of course poses the critical question to recent Henneateuch theories of how, when and why did the well–attested Pentateuch got separated from the broader literary work? As already indicated above, the response to the question is to assume that the Pentateuch emerged as a separate part of the canon probably in the middle of the Persian era.

Numerous publications of recent years have tackled the problem of how the Pentateuch became the Torah during the postexilic period.[28] Within this debate the theory of a Persian imperial authorisation of the Pentateuch plays a central role. This theory is normally attributed to Peter Frei's work,[29] although Erhard Blum also came to similar conclusions in his research.[30] Frei's theory

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Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion (ed. Jan–Christian Gertz, Konrad Schmid and Markus Witte; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 119–156.

[26] Konrad Schmid indicates: "Die Formulierung der Tora, also die Ausgrenzung und literarische Konstitutierung von Gen–Dtn also einer eigenen Grösse, ist einer der wich-tigsten literaturgeschichtlichen Vorgänge der Perserzeit. . . . Mit ihr entsteht der sach-liche und historische Kern des späteren alttestamentlichen Kanons." See Schmid, *Literaturgeschichte*, 174. Thomas Römer concurs with other scholars in his view that the rise of the Pentateuch should be seen as "a compromise between the Deuteronomistic and Priestly groups in the middle of the Persian period in order to provide an identity to rising Judaism. Cutting off the books of Joshua to Kings reflects the desire both to accept the loss of political autonomy and also to provide a document acceptable to Jews and Samaritans. According to this model, the Pentateuch results from a political and theological will to relegate the books relating to the conquest and the history of the monarchy to a 'secondary status.'" See Römer, "How Many Books [Teuchs]?," 28–29.

[27] Knoppers, "Parallel Torahs."

[28] See e.g. Knoppers and Levinson, *Pentateuch as Torah*. The first essay in this volume that by Konrad Schmid, contains a very elaborate literature list on this issue in his first footnote.

[29] See particularly Frei's original formulation of the theory in Peter Frei and Klaus Koch, *Reichsidee und Reichsorganisation im Perserreich* (OBO 55; Fribourg: Uni-versitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz, 1984), and republished in Peter Frei and Klaus Koch, "Zentralgewalt und Lokalautonomie im achämenidischen Keinasien," *Trans-euphratène* 3 (1990): 157–171. An English summary appeared in Frei, "Persian Impe-rial Authorization."

[30] See Blum, *Studien zur Komposition*, 333–360, as well as Erhard Blum, "Esra, Die Mosethora und die Persische Politik," in *Religion und Religionskontakte im Zeitalter*

boils down to the following: On account of the Persian Empire's fairly tolerant political attitude towards the nations under their imperial rule, it is hypothesised that the central Persian government authorised local political, cultic, religious and economic policies by means of legal documents. On account of some Ancient Near Eastern examples Frei assumes that the Persian imperial court approved and sealed certain local laws and regulations. With reference to Ezra 7:12–26, a text that indicates that Artaxerxes and "his seven counselors" commissioned Ezra to make inquiries about Judah and Jerusalem "according to the law of your God, which is in your hand . . . ." Peter Frei concluded that the Pentateuch might have been an example of such an imperially authorised document.[31]

Erhard Blum approached the matter somewhat differently, but also came to the conclusion that priestly families of Jerusalem and major landowners of Judah were forced by the Persian imperial authority to come up with one document which could serve as community constitution in Judah. These groups each had their own version of the history of origins of Israel, as witnessed in the priestly and deuteronomistic compositions (KP and KD) respectively. The Pentateuch was then a compromise between these two groups, and the two redactional processes resulted into the Pentateuch which was subsequently authorised by the Persian imperial court.

Initial responses strongly criticised this theory. The main opposition – particularly represented by the Iranologist, Josef Wiesehöfer – centred on the fact that there is no evidence that local legal codes were centrally registered and codified as imperial law in the Persian Empire.[32] Konrad Schmid argues that the criticism against the theory focused on a claim which Peter Frei never made, but which was the result of a misreading of Frei's work. Schmid indicates:

> [Frei] was interested in the legal *status* of the local norms authorized by the central administration, not in their central codification and archiving. For Frei, "imperial authorization" refers to a specific quality of the relevant laws, not to a process of establishing a central Persian law out of several local regulations (his emphasis).[33]

Der Achämeniden (ed. Reinhard G. Kratz; Veröffentlichungen der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie 22; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2001), 231–255.

[31]   See Jean–Louis Ska's reading of Ezra 7 in response to Frei's theory in Ska, *Introduction*, 220–222.

[32]   See Josef Wiesehöfer, "'Reichsgesetz' oder 'Einzelfallgerechtigkeit' : Bemerkungen zu Peter Freis These von der Achaimenidischen 'Reichsautorisation,'" *ZABR* 1 (1995): 36–46.

[33]   Konrad Schmid, "The Persian Imperial Authorization as a Historical Problem and as a Biblical Construct: A Plea for Distinctions in the Current Debate," in *The Pentateuch as Torah : New Models for Understanding Its Promulgation and Acceptance*

Schmid therefore indicates:

> Our question cannot be: "Did a Persian Imperial Authorization exist?" but must be, rather: "How can we best describe processes whereby Persian authorities created local autonomy – processes that are only to be expected and that can be substantiated beyond any doubt?" Accordingly, we have to differentiate the issue of the relation between the establishment of the Torah and Persian policy. Here, too, the question is not whether this relation is to be assumed or rejected *as a whole* but *how and in what manner* the Torah is connected to its historical Persian context, and what political forces influenced its creation.[34]

This point of view signifies an attempt to bring greater nuance into the debate.

The greater nuance which came into the discussion during the last decade can particularly be observed in two essay collections, both resulting from panel discussions on this topic at international conferences, namely the volumes edited by James Watts on the one hand, and Gary Knoppers and Bernard Levinson on the other hand.[35] Whereas the Watts volume (published in 2001) contained more voices arguing against the theory of Persian imperial authorisation,[36] the Knoppers–Levinson volume (published in 2007) already brings a re–appreciation of certain aspects of the model. Although the last–mentioned volume does not provide an own conclusion after all the contributions, Rainer Albertz in his very positive review of the book summarises the outcome of the (often contrastive) deliberations in the following three points:

> First, the process of the edition and promulgation of the Pentateuch seems to have come to an end already in the Persian period; since the early Hellenistic period the authority of the Torah was widely accepted . . . Second, the authorization of the Torah cannot sufficiently be explained by an ongoing internal scribal discussion . . . It must have included a public or even an institutional aspect as the biblical tradition and Greek parallels show . . . Third, the promulgation of the Pentateuch probably was a process, in which three dif-

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(ed. Gary N. Knoppers and Bernard M. Levinson; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 29.

[34]   Schmid, "The Persian," 27.

[35]   Watts, *Persia and Torah*; Knoppers and Levinson, *Pentateuch as Torah*.

[36]   Hagedorn, "Persia and Torah," 68 states: "All the essays make fairly clear that the evidence available does not support the thesis of P. Frei." He continues, however, to indicate that more nuanced views have also been expressed in the same volume: "At the same time it becomes apparent that we have to assume some Persian influence on local affairs, but it is doubtful that the 'first supranational empire of the Mediterranean' [with reference to Frei's own expression] really interfered in the codification of the Torah."

ferent parties were involved. It can no longer be explained as an internal Judean activity, at least, the proto–Samaritans have to be included . . . Moreover, . . . there must have been an external political force, which insisted on an agreement between the Judeans and the proto–Samaritans. Even if one questions the specific model of a Persian imperial authorization in this connection, one should perhaps think of a specific interest of the Persians in limiting the rivalries between their provinces Judah and Samaria, after these had become the south western borderline to independent Egypt.[37]

Together with this appraisal by Albertz, the weight of the debate is shifting towards a position where it is generally accepted that the promulgation and acceptance of the Pentateuch as Torah happened in the Persian period and was most–probably influenced by some imperial pressure, but that the primary need arose from the Yehudite community itself. Jean–Louis Ska summarises this position as follows:

> The primary purpose of the Pentateuch, for whoever reads it as a whole, is not to regulate life within a province of the Persian Empire but to define the conditions of membership in a specific community called "Israel." . . . The internal justifications are therefore dominant. . . . Instead of letting itself be assimilated or become just another province in the vast Empire, Postexilic Israel wanted to safeguard its identity. Persian politics gave it the opportunity to do this.[38]

With this summary we can now move over to an overview of recent developments in Chronicles scholarship. As indicated in the introduction to this article, the Persian period was formative to both the Pentateuch and Chronicles. Due to this formative nature of the Persian period to both these bodies of literature, a comparative study might bring us to a better understanding of how scholarship on these two corpora can potentially benefit one another.

C   RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHRONICLES SCHOLARSHIP

The blossoming of Chronicles studies is very clearly witnessed in the vast number of publications that appeared in the past two decades, *inter alia* at least twelve commentary volumes or more since 2000.[39] The focus of Chronicles

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[37]   Rainer Albertz, "The Pentateuch as Torah: New Models for Understanding Its Promulgation and Acceptance," *JSJ* 40/3 (2009): 424.

[38]   Ska, *Introduction*, 226.

[39]   See (in chronological order) Steven S. Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles* (IBC; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001); John Jarick, *1 Chronicles* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002); Gary N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (1st ed.; New York: Doubleday, 2003); Gary N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles, 10–29: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (1st ed.; New York: Doubleday, 2004); Steven L. McKenzie, *1 & 2*

scholarship has moved from the days of Hugh Williamson's commentary in the 1980's when proving the distinct authorship of Chronicles *vis–à–vis* Ezra–Nehemiah was a prominent theme, to a phase where the distinct ideology of the book emerged as main interest (particularly through the work of Sarah Japhet).[40] Again, I do not aspire to receive an award for conciseness in summarising all trends in Chronicles scholarship here – the recently published overviews of Thomas Willi and Rodney Duke may be consulted for that.[41] However, I will concentrate on two themes which may prove to be helpful for the present argument.

The first is the debate about the *Vorlage(n)* of Chronicles. It is obvious for any reader of Chronicles that the writer(s) had some form of Samuel–Kings available which was used as major source. This has been the consensus since 19th century scholarship, and until today most comparative studies depart from this presupposition. In the past two decades this consensus view came under scrutiny, particularly sparked off by an alternative view expressed by Graeme Auld.[42] Auld concedes that Chronicles does follow Samuel–Kings in content, but both these works used a common non–Deuteronomistic source text. Auld calls this presumed source text "The Book of Two Houses" (referring to the House of Yahweh and the House of David), and he claims that the common

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Chronicles (AOTC; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004); Pieter B. Dirksen, *1 Chronicles* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005); Ralph W. Klein, *1 Chronicles* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006); John Jarick, *Two Chronicles* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2007); Thomas Willi, *Chronik (1 Chr 1,1–10, 14)* (BKAT 24/1; Berlin: Neukirchener Verlag, 2009); Mark J. Boda, *1–2 Chronicles* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, 2010); Ralph W. Klein, *2 Chronicles: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012); Louis C. Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles* (Understanding the Bible Commentary Series; Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013). See a discussion of further resources for Chronicles studies in Duke, "Chronicles," 36–38.

[40] Hugh G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982); Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary* (London: SCM Press, 1993); Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1997).

[41] For overviews of Chronicles scholarship, see Kleinig, "Chronicles"; Willi, "Zwei Jahrzehnte"; Duke, "Chronicles." The last–mentioned summarises the recent trends as follows in the abstract to his overview: "Most of the trends established by 1993 have continued with more depth and focus, although with a few challenges. These trends include: refining the distinctions between Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemia as coming from separate authors/editors; recognizing the integral role of the genealogies; and examining the literary artistry of the Chronicler. Newer trends include: pursuing the interplay between orality, on the one hand, and textuality and literacy, on the other; and bringing insights from an increasing sociological understanding of the Persian and Hellenistic periods in general. Recent years have also seen a wealth of new commentaries." See Duke, "Chronicles," 10.

[42] See his seminal formulation in A. Graeme Auld, *Kings Without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994).

material in Samuel–Kings and Chronicles respectively can be traced back to this book. Both these traditions, Samuel–Kings and Chronicles, made use of this common source, each according to its own ideological presuppositions. Auld illustrates this by showing how Samuel–Kings and Chronicles respectively made different use of the Moses and David traditions included in their common *Vorlage.*

Although Auld found some support for his thesis[43] – most recently in an adapted form in the work of Raymond Person[44] – the majority of Chronicles scholars rather stay with the traditional view that the Chronicler made direct use of Samuel–Kings, and in doing so, adapted, omitted and added to create his own text.[45] However, since the discovery of the Qumran texts we have been cautioned not to over–interpret differences between Samuel–Kings and Chronicles. Particularly in the case of 4QSam[a] scholars have noticed that it often agrees with the material in MT 1 Chronicles and LXX Samuel, against MT Samuel. Chronicles scholars are therefore, particularly with reference to the Chronicler's use of Samuel, alert to the fact that different textual traditions might lurk behind Samuel and Chronicles respectively, and that textual criticism should form an important part of our methodological approach.

Whereas much research energy had been dedicated in recent years to the differences between Chronicles and Samuel–Kings, the latest trend is to reflect on the similarities between these literary traditions again.[46] With Samuel–Kings now generally considered to be the oldest part of the so–called Deuteronomistic History, the relationship of Chronicles to the Deuteronomistic tradition comes under scrutiny again. Gary Knoppers informatively put the following question

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[43]   See e.g., Craig Y. S. Ho, "Conjectures and Refutations: Is 1 Samuel xxxi 1–13 Really the Source of 1 Chronicles x 1–12?," *VT* 45/1 (1995): 82–106; Craig Y. S. Ho, "The Stories of the Family Troubles of Judah and David: A Study of Their Literary Links," *VT* 49/4 (1999): 514–531.

[44]   See e.g., Raymond F. Person, *The Deuteronomic History and the Books of Chronicles: Scribal Works in an Oral World* (Atlanta: SBL, 2010).

[45]   See 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; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 70–90 for a systematic criticism of Auld's position. See also Auld's response in: A. Graeme Auld, "What Was the Main Source of the Books of Chronicles?," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (ed. M. Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie; JSOTSup; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 91–99. For good discussions on this issue, also consult the introductions to the following two recent commentaries: Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 66–71; Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 30–44.

[46]   See e.g., Ehud ben Zvi, "Are There Any Bridges Out There? How Wide Was the Conceptual Gap Between the Deuternomistic History and Chronicles?," in *Community Identity in Judean Historiography* (ed. Gary N. Knoppers and Kenneth A. Ristau; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 59–86.

in his paper at the previous (2010) IOSOT meeting in Helsinki: "Was the Chronicler a Deuteronomist?"[47] When investigating the nature, breadth and longevity of the Deuteronomistic tradition Knoppers asserts the following:

> [T]here seems to be no question that Deuteronomy exerted signifi-cant literary influence in Second Temple times. The question is how? .... In tackling the question of an ongoing Deuteronomistic school in Persian and Hellenistic times, one might enlist the post-monarchic work of Chronicles as a case study. The Chronistic work may be an appropriate test of the Deuteronomistic tradition hypothe-sis, because most agree that cardinal Deuteronomic and Deuterono-mistic tenets were influential in shaping Chronistic theology. Simi-larly, almost all scholars would agree that the work of Samuel–Kings – edited by one or more Deuteronomists – was the main source employed in the composition of the Chronistic version of the monarchic past. In short, some sort of connection clearly exists between Chronicles and Deuteronomistic tradition.[48]

After examining the issue of Deuteronomism in Chronicles Knoppers cautiously comes to the following conclusion:

> The book of Chronicles is only one case and each case must be judged on its own merits, but analysis of this work suggests some caution about positing a continuous, long–enduring Deuteronomistic guild. We have seen that the Chronicler employs his Vorlagen of Samuel–Kings as a base text from which to construct his own dis-tinctive history of the monarchy. On a variety of occasions, he even corrects his Deuteronomistic source toward the standards of Deuter-onomy. Yet, the Chronicler creatively draws from other traditions as well, including the Priestly literature, to complement, correct, and complicate the Deuteronomistic version of the past. . . . It will not do, therefore, to situate Chronicles squarely within an ongoing Deuteronomistic tradition. . . . Rather than thinking of the Chroni-cler as a Deuteronomist, it may be better to think of the Chronicler as an individual author, who self–consciously imitates and revises Deuteronomistic texts as one important means to construct his own literary work.[49]

This view not only focuses our attention on the relationship between Chronicles and the Deuteronomistic tradition, but also on Chronicles' relation-ship to other traditions (particularly the Priestly tradition, which is also repre-sented in the Pentateuch). Before spelling out the significance of this develop-

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[47]   Gary N. Knoppers, "The Relationship of the Deuteronomistic History to Chroni-cles: Was the Chronicler a Deuteronomist?," in *Congress Volume Helsinki 2010* (ed. Martti Nissinen; VTSup; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 307–341.

[48]   Knoppers, "Relationship of the Deuteronomistic History to Chronicles," 308–309.

[49]   Knoppers, "Relationship of the Deuteronomistic History to Chronicles," 331–332.

ment in Chronicles studies for our present argument, we should also dwell on another development of recent years.

A second trend in Chronicles scholarship which should receive our attention here is the increasing employment of sociological models for understanding the ideology of this literature. A subfield in this movement has started focusing on the issue of identity negotiation of the Yehudite community in the Persian period[50] – a direction in Chronicles scholarship to which I have also contributed.[51] Now that Chronicles scholars no longer focus exclusively on the historicity of the materials, the rhetorical dynamics of this ancient historiography within its context of origin receive considerable attention. The relationship between Chronicles and processes of identity negotiation in the Persian period has therefore come under scrutiny in recent publications.[52] Scholars pur-

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[50]   A consensus seems to be growing in Chronicles scholarship that this book's origin should be sought in the late Persian period, probably around the middle of the fourth century B.C.E.. For a discussion of the various views and arguments, see the overview of Duke, "Chronicles," 16–20.

[51]   See Louis C. Jonker, "Refocusing the Battle Accounts of the Kings: Identity Formation in the Books of Chronicles," in *Behutsames Lesen : alttestamentliche Exegese im interdisziplinären Methodendiskurs: Christof Hardmeier zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Sylke Lubs et al.; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2007), 245–274; Louis C. Jonker, "The Exile as Sabbath Rest: The Chronicler's Interpretation of the Exile," *OTE* 20/3 (2007): 703–719; Jonker, "Reforming History"; Louis C. Jonker, "Who Constitutes Society? Yehud's Self–Understanding in the Late Persian Era as Reflected in the Books of Chronicles," *JBL* 127/4 (2008): 703–724; Louis C. Jonker, "The Chronicler's Portrayal of Solomon as the King of Peace Within the Context of the International Peace Discourses of the Persian Era," *OTE* 21/3 (2008): 653–669; Louis C. Jonker, "Textual Identities in the Books of Chronicles: The Case of Jehoram's History," in *Community Identity in Judean Historiography* (ed. Gary N. Knoppers and Kenneth A. Ristau; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 197–217; Louis C. Jonker, "David's Officials According to the Chronicler (1 Chronicles 23–27): A Reflection of Second Temple Self–Categorization?," in *Historiography and Identity (Re)formulation in Second Temple Historiographical Literature* (ed. Louis C. Jonker; LHBOTS 534; New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 65–91; Louis C. Jonker, "Revisiting the Saul Narrative in Chronicles: Interacting with the Persian Imperial Context?," *OTE* 23/2 (2010): 283–305; Louis C. Jonker, "The Chronicler Singing Psalms: Revisiting the Chronicler's Psalm in 1 Chronicles 16," in *"My Spirit at Rest in the North Country" (Zechariah 6.8): Collected Communications to the XXth Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament, Helsinki 2010* (ed. H. Michael Niemann and Matthias Augustin; Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011), 115–130; Louis C. Jonker, "Reading the Pentateuch's Genealogies after the Exile: The Chronicler's Usage of Genesis 1–11 in Negotiating an All–Israelite Identity," *OTE* 25/2 (2012): 316–333; Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles.*

[52]   See *inter alia* the various contributions in the following volumes: Gary N. Knoppers and Kenneth A. Ristau., ed. *Community Identity in Judean Historiography* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009); Louis C. Jonker, ed., *Historiography and Identity*

suing this direction normally depart from synoptic comparisons of Chronicles with its *Vorlage* – particularly Samuel–Kings – in order to interpret the changes, omissions and additions which occur in Chronicles. These differences with the *Vorlage* are then often related to processes of identity negotiation.

In my own contributions I focus on describing the relationship between the texts of Chronicles and their presumed socio–historical contexts in order to facilitate an understanding of the identity negotiation processes in which this book engages. In doing so (and following some directions in the field of social–psychology), I find it best to take as point of departure a constructivist understanding of identity in which identity is never understood as something complete, but which is constantly in the process of construction and negotiation. This negotiation always takes place in interaction with the socio–historical context of the time, as well with transmitted traditions of the past. Texts, in interaction with past traditions in new contexts, therefore do not merely offer descriptions of past identities, but are rather dynamically taking part in contemporary processes of identity reformulation and negotiation.[53] When studying the reception of older traditions in literature, particularly in historiographical literature, one can therefore relate the rhetorical thrust of these texts to processes of identity negotiation of the time of origin.

With reference to Chronicles it means that this literature may shed some light on the processes of self–understanding that developed in the Persian period, in interaction with traditions of old, but also fully influenced by the socio–historical circumstances of the time. Various scholars have therefore shown in their work how Chronicles contribute to a very specific understanding of כל־ישראל, the "whole Israel" of the postexilic period. The postexilic phase under Persian imperial rule was a formative period in which the returned community in Jerusalem, together with those who remained in the land, had to reposition and re–invent themselves. The book of Chronicles plays an important role in this context to provide a bridge between the monarchical past and the present under Persian imperial rule.

(Re)formulation in Second Temple Historiographical Literature (LHBOTS 534; New York: T & T Clark, 2010); Louis C. Jonker, ed., *Texts, Contexts and Readings in Postexilic Literature: Explorations into Historiography and Identity Negotiation in Hebrew Bible and Related Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011); Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers and Manfred Oeming, eds., *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011).
[53] See particularly the following publications in which I have set out the theoretical presuppositions of this approach: Jonker, "Textual Identities"; Jonker, "David's Officials."

Another focus from sociological studies which have emerged in recent years is to approach Chronicles as social memory construction. Ehud ben Zvi explains this perspective on ancient texts as follows:

> New (hi)stories develop with new times. They most often do not attempt to obliterate, but to reshape, their primary readership's basic image of their own past, by shifting emphases and evaluations of characters, and/or by creating new points towards which the historical narrative moves. (Hi)stories also serve to reshape social memory, and such memory is more important than simple (hi)story in the life of the community. By social memory I refer here to ideological or discursive events that are considered paradigmatic by a particular social group, and as such provide it with a frame for understanding other events . . . Social memory is quite omnipresent in the discourse of a group, and relates to events whose lasting consequences are conceived as defining for the character of the society that bears such a memory.[54]

Ben Zvi applies this perspective to his reading of Chronicles. He indicates that "the most important social memory in the discourse of post–monarchic Yehud was that associated with the cycle of exile, liberation from Egypt, reception of divine instruction in the wilderness and coming back to the land."[55] However, "Chronicles defamiliarizes the main historical narrative"[56] in order to reframe it into a narrative which focuses on the (second) temple building, with David as legitimising figure. The Chronicler furthermore associates Torah teaching and temple building with one another and in this way also coordinates the figures of Moses and David. Ben Zvi states:

> If the community is ideologically organized around the divine instruction (or torah) and around the temple, Moses and David are to be the central figures of Israel's memory. In this sense, Chronicles complements the memory–creating function of the Pentateuch and does so on the basis of the books of Samuel and Kings . . . while at

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[54]   Ehud ben Zvi, "The Book of Chronicles: Another Look," *SR* 31/3–4 (2002): 271–272. See also Ehud ben Zvi, "On Social Memory and Identity Formation in Late Persian Yehud: A Historian's Viewpoint with a Focus on Prophetic Literature, Chronicles and the Deuteronomistic Historical Collection," in *Texts, Contexts and Readings in Postexilic Literature: Explorations into Historiography and Identity Negotiation in Hebrew Bible and Related Texts* (ed. Louis C. Jonker; FAT 2/53; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 95–148. See also Hans M. Barstad, "History and Memory: Some Reflections on the 'Memory Debate' in Relation to the Hebrew Bible," in *The Historian and the Bible: Essays in Honour of Lester L. Grabbe* (ed. Philip R. Davies and Diana V. Edelman; London: Continuum, 2010), 1–10.

[55]   Ben Zvi, "Book of Chronicles," 272.

[56]   Ben Zvi, "Book of Chronicles," 272.

the same time keeping a balance between legitimizing similitude and ideological innovation.[57]

Although it is clear that there are different emphases in social–psychological approaches towards identity negotiation as witnessed in Chronicles and social memory approaches, the common denominator is that these approaches both emphasise the rhetorical function of Chronicles in contributing to social processes of redefinition in postexilic Israel. Chronicles is therefore not primarily studied with an interest in the formation of this text, but rather with an interest in how the reception and reframing of older historiographical traditions in Chronicles contributed towards social processes of redefinition in Persian period Yehud.

This concludes our brief overview of recent trends in Pentateuchal and Chronicles scholarship. An appraisal of these developments would be in order to conclude this contribution.

D   APPRAISAL

It has become clear from the overview above that developments in Pentateuchal and Chronicles research have moved much nearer to one another in past years. I do not want to create the impression that there were no attempts in the past to bring these two fields into interaction – to the contrary, as I will show below. However, recent developments in these fields emphasise the pertinence of and the scientific need for relating these two scholarly discourses with one another, to the benefit of both. I will explain this point by concentrating on two points which emerged from the above research overview.

Firstly, both Pentateuchal and Chronicles studies have developed a renewed focus on the so–called Deuteromistic History. The relationship of the Tetrateuch and/or Pentateuch with the materials contained in Joshua – 2 Kings, and the role of Deuteronomistic and Priestly compositors in shaping the canonical writings that we know, are important issues that potentially contribute to a better understanding of the formation of this literature. The interest in the relationship with the so–called Deuteronomistic History in Pentateuchal scholarship is therefore mainly from the side of the *production* of these texts. Chronicles research has equally developed renewed interest in the development of the Deuteronomistic History, but then rather for understanding its *reception* in Chronicles better. Questions such as the following drive our research in Chronicles: what were the *Vorlagen* used by the Chronicler? How did the Chronicler use these sources? How did the socio–historical circumstances during the late Persian period impact on his understanding of these sources? What ideological or rhetorical purpose did the Chronicler serve with his use of these sources? Studies approaching the matter from the production side in Penta-

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[57]   Ben Zvi, "Book of Chronicles," 273.

teuchal research, as well as from the early reception side in Chronicles research, can mutually enrich our scholarship.

Secondly, we have seen that there is a great awareness in both Pentateuchal and Chronicles studies of the formative role that the Persian period played in the formation of this literature, and its early reception. The latest state of the debate about the Persian imperial authorisation of the Torah indicates that – although a very formal codification and archiving process should most probably not be seen behind the Torah gaining authority in the postexilic community – the conditions during Persian imperial rule nevertheless created the fertile ground for the emergence of the Torah as authoritative. In this respect, it is worth repeating at length Jean–Louis Ska's conclusion on the matter of Persian imperial authorisation:

> The real motives leading to the redaction of the Pentateuch are to be looked for within Israel – more precisely, in Jerusalem and in the province of Judah (Yehud), at the time of the reforms introduced by Ezra and Nehemiah (or Nehemiah and Ezra). One fundamental argument confirms this view. The primary purpose of the Pentateuch, for whoever reads it as a whole, is not to regulate life within a province of the Persian Empire but to define the conditions of membership in a specific community called "Israel." There are two primary conditions: blood ties and a "social contract." The blood ties are established by genealogies and, thus, by the book of Genesis. The members of Israel are descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The "social contract" is the Covenant, with all the rights and duties, both religious and civil, that it entails. The internal justifications are therefore dominant. The purpose of the texts . . . is to present the importance of ties to the past. This is why three codes are used to demonstrate the judicial continuity between Preexilic Israel and Postexilic Israel. For the same reason, the cultic and civil legislation is situated in the past, at the time of the wanderings in the wilderness, long before the Conquest of the land or the Monarchy. Instead of letting itself be assimilated or become just another province in the vast Empire, Postexilic Israel wanted to safeguard its identity. Persian politics gave it the opportunity to do this.[58]

Ska's view, which is representative of the move in Pentateuchal scholarship, can clearly be related to the trend in Chronicles scholarship where the quest is exactly the same. How did the Chronicler, in the late Persian period, make use of earlier traditions in order to contribute towards the negotiation of a new identity for the postexilic community? It seems that an interest in the negotiation of identity in the Persian era as reflected in the formation of the Pentateuch, as well as in the reception of these traditions in Chronicles, creates

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[58]   Ska, *Introduction*, 225–226.

exiting possibilities for interaction between current Pentateuchal and Chronicles scholarship.

E   CONCLUSION

Have Pentateuchal scholarship and Chronicles studies come within hearing distance from one another in recent years? The above overview has illustrated that this is indeed the case. The respective developments in these fields create valuable opportunities to break out of the confines of the own sub–guild. Whether there is also the will to interact with one another in conferences and publications remains to be seen, however.

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