

Remembering and Forgetting in Early Second Temple Judah

Edited by
EHUD BEN ZVI and
CHRISTOPH LEVIN

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Mohr Siebeck

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Preface

This volume emerged out of a workshop held at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University (LMU) in Munich from June 27 to July 1, 2011. The workshop was convened by Ben Zvi and Levin and was part of a long-term collaboration between the LMU Munich and the University of Alberta on ancient Israel.

During the workshop, each paper was energetically discussed by the group. We thank all participants for these discussions. We also hope that this volume will serve to continue that conversation.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of the Fritz Thyssen Foundation that made the workshop possible. We also thank various granting agencies and institutions that facilitated the research of many of the participants.

We wish to extend our gratitude towards the editors of this series for accepting the volume for publication. We would like to thank Dr. Henning Ziebritzki, Editorial Director, Theology and Jewish Studies at Mohr Siebeck. We want to express our sincere appreciation for the editorial staff at Mohr Siebeck for their help in preparing this volume, for their professionalism and for the support they have provided us. Finally, we wish to thank Ms. Ellen Sabo and Anna Ammon for editing it.

September, 2012

Ehud Ben Zvi and Christoph Levin

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List of Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABG	Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte
AfOB	Archiv für Orientforschung: Beiheft
AHw	<i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i> . W. von Soden. 3 vols. Wiesbaden, 1965–1981
AJT	<i>Asia Journal of Theology</i>
AnBib	Analecta biblica
ANET	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . Edited by J. B. Pritchard. 3d ed. Princeton, 1969
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOTC	Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
ArOr	<i>Archiv Orientalni</i>
ASA	Association of Social Anthropologists
ASV	American Standard Version
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
BaghF	Baghdader Forschungen. Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Baghdad
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBVO	Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient
BCOT	Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms
BCSMS	<i>Bulletin of the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies</i>
BE	Biblische Enzyklopädie
BEATAJ	Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentums
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BFCT	Beiträge zur Förderung Christlicher Theologie
BHS	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> . Edited by K. Elliger and W. Rudolph. Stuttgart, 1983
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament. Edited by M. Noth and H. W. Wolff
<i>BN</i>	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BThSt	Biblich-theologische Studien
BWA(N)T	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten (und Neuen) Testament
BZAR	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAT	Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament

CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CBR</i>	<i>Christian Brethren review</i>
CDOG	Colloquium der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
ConBOT	Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CThM	Calwer Theologische Monographien
DCLY	Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook
ECC	Eerdmans Critical Commentary
<i>ETHL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses</i>
ETSMS	Evangelical Theological Society Monograph Series
<i>EvTh</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GHAT	Göttinger Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HBS	Herders Biblische Studien
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
<i>HR</i>	<i>History of Religions</i>
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HThKAT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>JANES</i>	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JPSTC	Jewish Publication Society Torah Commentary
JPSV	Jewish Publication Society Version
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
KEHAT	Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament
KHAT	Kurzer Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
KHC	Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament
KJV	King James Version
LAPO	Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible / Old Testament Studies
LOS	London Oriental Series
LSAWS	Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic
NCB	New Century Bible
NEchtB	Neue Echter Bibel
NIV	New International Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version

NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
NWB	Noah Webster Bible
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
ÖBS	Österreichische biblische Studien
OLB	Orte und Landschaften der Bibel
<i>Or</i>	<i>Orientalia</i> (NS)
OTG	Old Testament Guides
OTL	Old Testament Library
PFES	Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society
POT	Princeton Oriental Texts
QD	Quaestiones disputatae
<i>RA</i>	<i>Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale</i>
<i>REJ</i>	<i>Revue des études juives</i>
RIMA	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
RIMB	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Babylonian Periods
SAACT	State Archives of Assyria Cuneiform Texts
SBLABS	Society of Biblical Literature Archaeology and Biblical Studies
SBLAIL	Society of Biblical Literature Ancient Israel and its Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SDPI	Schriften des Deutschen Palästina-Instituts
SHCANE	Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SSN	Studia semitica neerlandica
STAR	Studies in Theology and Religion
<i>SubBi</i>	<i>Subsidia biblica</i>
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Translated by J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, and D. E. Green. 8 vols. Grand Rapids, 1974–2006
<i>THAT</i>	<i>Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i> . Edited by E. Jenni, with assistance from C. Westermann. 2 vols., Stuttgart, 1971–1976
<i>ThWAT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i> . Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Stuttgart, 1970–2000
TOBITH	Topoi Biblischer Theologie / Topics of Biblical Theology
<i>TQ</i>	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>TUAT</i>	<i>Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments</i> . Edited by Otto Kaiser. Gütersloh, 1982–2001
<i>TWOT</i>	<i>Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr. 2 vols. Chicago, 1980
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
VAB	Vorderasiatische Bibliothek
VAS	Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler
<i>VF</i>	<i>Verkündigung und Forschung</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplements

VWGTh	Veröffentlichungen der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAR	<i>Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZBK	Zürcher Bibelkommentare
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
ZTK	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

Introduction

EHUD BEN ZVI

Constructing and activating memories played an important role in ancient Near Eastern societies, including ancient Israel. Indeed, this holds true of any historical period. We have selected the early Second Temple period for the workshop, because it is often considered to be the foundational period for the development of the books that eventually constituted the Hebrew Bible.¹ These books contain explicit, multiple exhortations to “remember” and refer to spaces, times, items and behaviors meant to “remind” people of particular events (e.g., Exod 12:14; 13:8–10; 28:12; Num 10:10; Josh 4:7; Zech 6:14). Even the deity is often asked to “remember” within the discourse of ancient Israel (e.g., Exod 32:13; Deut 9:27; 2 Kgs 20:3; Neh 5:19; Ps 74:2; 137:7, Lam 5:1; *passim*). But above all, it is the repertoire of authoritative books that evolved during the Persian (and early Hellenistic) period that served to construct a memory of the past that was central for self-identity and social reproduction within the community. Of course, this general social memory was actually an ever shifting array of various social memories.

No workshop (and no volume) can deal with all aspects of social memory in ancient Israel even within a relatively narrow period. Thus the conveners decided to focus the workshop on a particular set of issues, namely processes of “remembering and forgetting” and partial “memory and forgetfulness.” The combination of “remembering” and “forgetting” was particularly stressed at the workshop, because although it is well-known that remembering cannot take place without forgetting and vice-versa, and likewise, that memories construe and advance forgetfulness and vice-versa, studies tend to focus on one or the other.

The workshop was a place to explore the potential contribution of memory studies to historical knowledge about the early Second Temple period in Judah. Memory studies approaches and insights are beginning to make inroads in this regard, but are still “new” to many colleagues, including readers of this volume. The participants in the workshop were encouraged

¹ For obvious reasons we have included also contributions that deal with closely-related periods, such as the so-called “exilic” period.

to walk their *own* journeys in the light of Social Memory studies or at least in the light of considerations about “Remembering and Forgetting” and each took her or his own path.

The result is a volume that represents the attempt by a range of scholars to explore the implications of this new perspective, so that readers will see a variety of results and approaches. Thus, for instance, for some contributors asking questions of remembering and forgetting represents a productive way to further advance more or less “traditional” approaches; for others, however, it offers a way to trailblaze new approaches, and still others stand in the middle. The “rainbow” character of this volume (and the original workshop) is fully intentional and fully consistent with the premise that interaction and conversation among scholars representing a wide variety of approaches and perspectives is one of the most fruitful ways to construe new knowledge in the field.

The volume opens with my own contribution. It is meant to provide a substantive introduction to the potential of approaches informed by Memory Studies for the study of ancient Israel and its social mindscape, as well as to the implications associated with the use of these approaches. Following the section on methodological considerations, readers find some concrete, illustrative explorations of this methodological approach. This section of the essay focuses on how fifteen prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and those evoked in each of the twelve other books) were remembered through the reading and rereading of a collection of prophetic books. The chapter also discusses, among others things, matters of forgetting and counter-factual realities in relation to the prophetic books and the issue of how particular, social-historical locations relate to systems of preferences and dis-preferences for particular mnemonic topoi and narratives, which in turn shaped the memory of the prophets that emerges from reading and rereading prophetic books within a late Persian Yehud context.

Jörg Jeremias contributed the second chapter. He relates remembering and forgetting to categories of “true” and “false” prophecy. He maintains that “[t]he best example of remembering a ‘true’ prophet is the book of Amos, which more than any other prophetic book essentially is an exilic book.”² He discusses, among other texts, Zech 13:2–6, Deut 18:16–19, and texts from the book of Jeremiah. He concludes by stating:

“Remembering” and “forgetting” take on two different aspects when related to “true” and “false” prophecy. On the one hand, “false” prophecy of pre-exilic times was indeed forgotten; only “true” prophecy was remembered in the way the message of Amos was remembered by praising God for his righteousness in bringing judgment upon his people. But on the other hand, structurally “false” prophecy should by no means be forgotten, because it was a danger inherent in all kinds of prophecy. It was the merit of the prophet

² According to Jeremias the book contains also a number of post-exilic additions.

Jeremiah and of his traditionists to define clear criteria of “true” prophecy, by which prophecy could even enter the realm of revelation in Deut 18. But the danger of “false” prophecy did not end by that, until all “true” prophecy was gathered in the canon around the time of Zech 13.

Sonya Kostamo brings to the forefront a clear case in which “remembering” and “forgetting” are clearly and deeply intertwined. Her contribution focuses on “remembering” and “forgetting” in relation to the construction of memories about interactions between Ahaz and Isaiah and the importance of these memories for shaping images of these two personages. Kostamo’s approach to these matters is strongly influenced by Memory Studies and by related cognitive studies. Among other matters, she proposes mnemonic trajectories linking and separating Isaiah and Ahaz, discusses how and why these trajectories were influenced by the way in which Hezekiah was remembered, and explores ways in which the memories about Ahaz, Hezekiah and Isaiah in the books of Isaiah, Kings and Chronicles interacted with each other within the mnemonic landscape in early Second Temple Judah. In addition, her chapter furthers “a better understanding of the relationship between the collective memory of the early Second Temple period and historiography in the Hebrew Bible,” even if, from the standpoint of only some aspects of the memories of three main sites of memory (Isaiah, Ahaz and Hezekiah).

While Kostamo deals with general memories of the prophet Isaiah (and those with whom the prophet interacted), Friedhelm Hartenstein’s study on Deutero-Isaiah (particularly Isa 43:14–15 and 43:16–21) addresses a very different kind of remembering (and forgetting). Hartenstein advances a fruitful and detailed comparative study of Deutero-Isaianic texts and the *Enuma Elish*. Among his conclusions,

Marduk is “*creator of the people of this land*” or “*of all people*” – not unlike YHWH in Isa 43:21. And, as it is stated in the explanation of the second name, because he created and guides the people “*They shall tell of his ways (alaktu), without forgetting.*” So the final aim of *Enuma Elish* is to *remember Marduk’s ways* as an unequalled warrior and supreme king, and one who establishes watering places and life by keeping Tiamat (and chaos as a whole) subdued. The explanation of the important 49th Neberu-name (probably Jupiter, Marduk’s star, the sign of heavenly order) finally gives a hint that the forces of chaos – even after Tiamat became part of the world’s structure – must be subdued forever: “*he shall keep her life cut short.*” Maybe this opens an even deeper insight into the interpretation of the “*laying down*” of the host in Isa 43:17. It should be understood then in the light of the primeval keeping out of any chaotic force: All actual and possible events of history play within an ordered world from the very beginning. There is no place for chaos outside YHWH’s will (cf. the later creation theology of wisdom like in Ps 104:5–9 or Job 38:8–11).

While *Enuma Elish* is about remembering Marduk’s greatness, Deutero-Isaiah in Isa 43:19 aims at something more: “*YHWH’s new things*” that

can only be perceived when Israel learns *to interrupt remembering and focus on YHWH's imminent works of new creation*. This is described in more detail in the deepest reflection on YHWH's ways in the book of Deutero-Isaiah [in Isa 55:6–11].

Hartenstein's chapter reminds us of the importance of the ancient Near Eastern context in which ancient Israel existed and within which it developed its literature and social memories. It reminds us that social memory involves and requires many types of memories and that some of them help to shape and structure others.

Still in Isaiah and the ancient Near East, Christina Ehring addresses YHWH's Return in Isaiah 40:1–11* and 52:7–10 and as she does so, she deals with matters of pre-exilic, Jerusalemite traditions and ones of Babylonian influence. Ehring studies social memories of past calamities construed and understood in terms of divine exile and of "historical" turning points leading to prosperity construed in terms of divine return and also their interrelations in Mesopotamian traditions and in Second Isaiah. Her essay points, *inter alia*, at remarkable "parallels between this depiction of Marduk's return [from Elam during the time of Nebuchadnezzar I] and that of YHWH's return in Isa 40:1–11* and Isa 52:7–10." She notes in particular (a) the visual perceptibility of the return, (b) the directional movement from the periphery to the centre, (c) the role of the deity as king, (d) the rejoicing witnesses of the deity's return, and (e) the positive consequences of the return for the city and the world. Ehring's essay shows how patterns and topoi shaping and reflected in Mesopotamian memories may have served to shape Israel's memories.

The relation between remembering and forgetting was, of course, known in ancient Israel. One of the biblical texts in which it is clearly expressed is Jer 16:14–15a. Christoph Levin, who organized and hosted the workshop, focuses his contribution on the triad Jer 16:14–15, 31:27–30, and 31:31–34. These texts attest to an "established form: a promise of a future era of salvation that is contrasted with the experience of the present. The contrast between disastrous history and a favourable future is marked in each of the three cases by a particular manner of speech, which is taken up in order to be refuted." Of course, references to a disastrous history involve and require remembering. The same holds true for the proverb about the teeth in Jer 31:29 that are set on edge, "which already indicates the way the crisis was to be surmounted in the context of a theology of history ... [t]he reference to the sour grapes that the fathers have eaten contains in a nutshell the *theologoumenon* about the 'sins of the fathers' which for the following generations became the key to their understanding of history, beginning with Sinai down to Judah's catastrophe."

Remembering is crucial for the community because it helps make sense of its present, plays a crucial role in their theological thinking, and, not surprisingly, also evokes a future in which some form of forgetting will take place. Levin's redactional-critical study of these texts and of "the tradition history of the formula *הַגְּדֵה-יָמַי בְּאֵימִים*" raises, by implication, another significant question: which roles did remembering and forgetting played in the development of redactional, textual trajectories? Memory and redactional studies are not alien to each other.

William Morrow addresses the question of "how earlier prophetic discourse was both remembered and adapted in the Persian era." According to Morrow, "part of the intellectual patrimony of the scribes producing books of prophecy in Yehud was the memory of earlier forms of prophetic speech acts ... [t]hese included both the genres of disputation and the proclamation of salvation." Morrow relates the marginalization or expulsion of lament from liturgical expression with some of the results of recent scholarship on the emergence of prophetic books in Persian-era Yehud. He focuses on Mal 2:17–3:5 and 3:13–21 and concludes that their form represents an "innovative synthesis of the genres of disputation and proclamation of salvation remembered from previous prophetic activity." He then discusses why they were combined in Malachi and concludes that "[b]y synthesizing the genres of disputation and proclamation of salvation in a written form (ספר), as a memorial (זכרון) for the prophetic party's support group (ליראי יהוה), an innovative tool combining the motives of recollection and socialization was created for the community. Among his conclusions,

Malachi 2:17–3:5 and 3:13–21 indicate how earlier prophetic discourse was both remembered and adapted in the Persian era. Their allusions to lament show that communal complaint prayer continued in the early post-exilic period. This liturgical expression fell into abeyance, however, not only because the theological climate was unfavourable, but also because active attempts were made on the part of Yehud's literati to control it and create substitutes for it. ... [T]he innovative combination of disputation and proclamation of salvation in Mal 2:17–3:5 and 3:13–21 provided a way for members of a Second Temple community to find a resonance with their own experiences while socializing them into the scripture writer's worldview.

Morrow's contribution exemplifies how social memory goes together with socialization and *vice versa*.

Kåre Berge draws first the attention of the readers back to methodological considerations about social memory. His own work is informed, among others, by that of Wertsch. The latter appropriately emphasizes the importance of narrative templates over specific narratives for the formation and reproduction of "national mnemonic communities." Berge also notes in this section that

From his studies of the Russian and Georgian war narratives, and other scholars' studies of similar constructs, Wertsch presents a number of characteristics of such narrative templates:

1. A narcissistic ethnocentrism that is characteristic of national narratives.
2. A collapse of temporal and spatial distance, with the tendency to collapse the distinction among several events.
3. A disproportionate mnemonic preoccupation with certain periods of the past to the exclusion of the others.

A brief look at the Israelite ethnic/national myth in the Pentateuch reveals features of each of these categories.

Then Berge focuses on "Pharaoh" as a cipher, code or site of memory within the community of literati in the Persian period and particularly the Pharaoh evoked by the literary contexts of Exodus. He addresses the didactic use of Pharaoh as a memorial figure and then focuses on the educative roles of Exodus related rituals (Pesah, Massot) and the role of Pharaoh in them. He notes that "Pharaoh and the Egyptians appear in the narrative as a means by which 'Israel' as a social entity provides itself with a mythos and ethos" and further that "the ritual of the narrative [can be seen] as a demarcation against the chaos created by Pharaoh's resistance to obey the command of Yahweh." Among his conclusions, "[t]he story of Pharaoh and the plagues appears as a means of moral and religious demarcation and this is also what is commemorated in the Pesach ritual 'for generations.'" Towards the end of his contribution, Berge addresses matters of "refugee identity" and of the "text's special aesthetic and pragmatic effect" and explores this effect through "a combination of aesthetic and ritual theory."

Diana Edelman also focus on Pesah and Massot, though from a somewhat different perspective. She brings together myth, ritual and memory. She shows how the common myth of the ritual battle preceding the creation of the ordered world is transformed into a myth of YHWH's victory over Pharaoh/watery adversary that leads now to the creation of "Israel," and discusses how this "event" was ritually commemorated. When did this commemoration begin? Which social roles did it serve? How did it relate to other ritual commemorations (e.g., the Festival of Weeks)? Why did this ritual commemoration that emerged in Jerusalem so greatly stress the motif of pilgrimage? Diana Edelman addresses these and related questions. Among her conclusions:

Pesah-massot become a commemorative pilgrimage festival associated with the Exodus ... after the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, when its priesthood was in a position to develop the commemorative ritual that provided a social schema to help structure the cognitive social world of the *golah* and non-*golah* communities ... who celebrated it at the newly rebuilt central temple ... the ritual would have provided a shared abstract symbolic system for the widely dispersed diasporic communities who either observed it at home on the same day throughout the Persian Empire in solidarity with their co-religionists or made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem...

The participants annually repeat a ritual that is concrete and image-provoking, which triggers emotional responses from them and which makes a common experience proximate in a sensory, temporal, and spatial manner that discourages critical thinking... Participation signals a public acceptance of the social schema, where any private “disbelief” is subordinated to the public liturgical performance that creates social solidarity...

The need for a commemorative national festival that provided a sense of common origin and membership in a community established and led directly by Yahweh and his Torah, without recourse to an intermediary human leader, be that a Davidide or an empire ruler, did not arise until the demise of the kingdom of Judah. There was not an authoritative group associated with a centralized temple in the Neo-Babylonian period that could have developed the commemorative annual *hag*. The first opportunity for such a situation arose after the move of the provincial seat from Mizpah to Jerusalem under Artaxerxes I, when the rebuilt temple could become one of two symbolic religious centers for emerging Judaism in addition to serving as a vital instrument in imperial bureaucracy...

Urmass Nõmmik focuses not on ritual commemorations, but rather on a single yet very memorable conversation, namely that of YHWH and Abraham in Gen 18:22b–33. He studies the text, the historical context in which it emerged, the ongoing discussion on righteousness and the righteous at the end of the Persian period. Among his conclusions,

In the post-monarchic era several destinies are discussed at once – the fate of an individual, of a nation, of the congregation of the pious, etc. On the one hand, the destinies of the righteous individuals were handled separately from the wicked individuals who were “pagans” or members of Israel, or sometimes both. On the other hand, a collective of the righteous was also seen as an entity. This was the true congregation of God which should have had a destiny differing from the fate of the larger group of the wicked. Furthermore, like the people of God, Israel, were the light for the world in eschatological understandings, the group of the righteous individuals was the light for the surrounding society. Against this background the question of an influence of the righteous on the destiny of the whole society could be raised. The value of a righteous person or of a group of the righteous could compensate for the wickedness of hundreds of people. It is a further attestation that the righteous having a personal relationship to God have understood themselves as the special “us.” As seen in our dialogue, in the time of the patriarchs, there were only few exemplary individuals not yet constituting a group but grounding the identity for the group in the Second Temple era.

Michael Hundley’s contribution begins with an overview of “the preoccupation with the past in the ancient Near East,” which emphasizes that “one did not often simply remember the past for its own sake; rather, one remembered it so that it could be applied profitably to the present,” that is, every past is a “present past.” He then moves to study “remembering and forgetting” in Priestly texts. He concludes that “the Priestly account is both backward- and forward-looking ... [i]t establishes the greatness of YHWH, his system, and his priesthood in the past, thereby creating an ideal prototype to aspire to and a powerful shared identity for present and future readers ... its primary innovation is cast as a restoration, giving Israel a shared past with powerful present and future implications.” Likewise, “the Priest-

ly texts in the Persian period chose to remember the past in such a way that it convinced the people with powerful rhetoric that the only way forward was back to the beginning, in the form of the cult modeled on the ancient prototype.” Hundley stresses that “the Priestly account gives the Israelites a proud heritage that creates a collective memory, brings solidarity to the group, sets them apart from (and in some ways over) other cultures, offers them hope for the future, and provides a pattern to follow to actualize that hope,” while at the same time elevating the roles of the Aaronids, who, “put themselves forward as the purveyors of an ideal but forgotten past” and are construed as “capable of instituting similar monumental change for the better.”

The next contribution by Hermann-Josef Stipp is about “Remembering Josiah’s Reforms in Kings.” Stipp makes the point that the “remarkable feat of commemorative politics” of “2 Kings – or rather the Deuteronomistic History – [is that it] managed to convince its audience for the most part that Hezekiah’s and Josiah’s reforms were a good idea instead of a way of driving Judah into the abyss”, a position that according to him was shared by “a substantial number” of Judahites after the fall of Jerusalem. This feat is even more remarkable given that “the course of events lent itself much more easily to proving the detractors of the [Josianic] reforms right” than proving that Yhwh was pleased with the Josianic reform. He notes that it is “astounding ... how successfully the Deuteronomists convinced the Judeans that slashing the number of sacrificial sites devoted to Yhwh – as the reforming kings did – was fulfilling Yhwh’s wishes rather than upsetting him.”

It is against this background that Stipp constructs the Dtr History as an exceptionally successful attempt by the deuteronomists to persuade the population of their cause and interpretation of history. To do this, they could not claim that post-Josianic kings abolished his reforms, but they could blame Manasseh for the destruction, and above all they could (and had to) lionize their champion, Josiah. Remembering Josiah as portrayed in 2 Kings was necessary to persuade the population of the correctness of the deuteronomistic program and theology.

Among his conclusions:

... the portrayal of Judah’s last kings in the DtrH illustrates particular modes of remembering – first by writing, then by rewriting literature. Already in Josiah’s days, when the Deuteronomists compiled their work and drew on history to make a case for their cultic ideals, the recent past did not sit comfortably with the propagandistic ends of the editors. Hezekiah’s mixed political balance sheet was a fact, as was the extraordinary length of Manasseh’s reign. At the time, however, the redactors apparently felt that their reading of the past all the same carried enough plausibility to be credible. Given the high hopes attached to the reforms, the deuteronomistic concept of Judah’s cultic history was utilized as a call to tackle the task, and conversely, the hopes attached to the reforms also

colored the deuteronomic concept of history. When this amalgamation was shattered in 587 and another crop of editors revised the work, the discrepancies between what they wanted to demonstrate and the course of events had risen immensely. Caused by the emergence of new and totally unexpected recollections, memories that seemed to embody a solution – Hezekiah’s and Josiah’s reforms – had themselves turned into problems in need of solutions. To make matters worse, the redactors were now working on a document which for whatever reason could neither be discarded, nor manipulated at will. So they had to put up with serious constraints on how the memories could be refashioned. Consequently, the memories were preserved, even though supported by explanations that modern readers may find less than satisfying. When surveying the finished work, one may wonder how it managed to convince at all. In the final analysis, we cannot avoid the conclusion that in the process of remembering there were strategies at work which could move far away from what was written in the text. This is why we should not be too confident in assuring ourselves that we are able to tell how the biblical books were read in Yehud.

Juha Pakkala writes about the “Selective Transmission of the Past in Chronicles: Jehoiada’s Rebellion in 2 Kings 11 and 2 Chronicles 22:10–23:21.” He deals with 2 Chr 22:10–23:21 as an example of the Chronicler’s use of sources. His detailed analysis of 2 Kgs 11 and 2 Chr 22:10–23:21 demonstrates that the Chronicler “had a high regard of 1–2 Kings,” but could rewrite or omit “anything which did not correspond to his own views of the past or conflicted with his theological conceptions.” And yet, “[d]espite considerable freedoms to omit, add, and rewrite, the Chronicler did not invent the past freely. He was evidently convinced that the text in 2 Kgs 11 preserved important and even authoritative information about Jehoiada’s rebellion.” Finally, “(a)lthough the source was assumed to have considerable historical authority, it had to be corrected theologically.” Pakkala’s analysis is important for redactional criticism, but also for studying the development of memories about events and characters as he traces numerous cases of “remembering” or better, “re-remembering” and “forgetting” involved in the constructions of the past generated by Kings and Chronicles.

Zhenhua (Jeremiah) Meng, from Nanjing University, brings a comparative dimension to our volume with his essay “Remembering Ancestors: A Levitical Genealogy in Yehud and the Bohai Gaos Genealogy of Gao Huan.” In particular, he studies how and why the memories of ancestors encoded in the genealogies of the gatekeepers were shaped into their present forms. His analysis of these genealogies and the roles of the gatekeepers leads him to conclude that

... regardless of where the gatekeepers were from or who their ancestors were, associating them with some honorable ancestors serving the temple during the Second Temple Period was important for establishing a memory which showed the continuity of pre- and post-exilic periods and in elevating their status. However, their real origin was neglected

and forgotten. As a result, the gatekeepers' significant role and high status became somewhat historical and therefore, natural and self-evident.

Then he offers a cross-textual reading of a similar case in ancient China. He explains why "Gao Huan and his family claimed themselves to be the Gaos of Bohai ... [f]irst, they played important roles in the political life of three dynasties, just as the gatekeepers did in Persian Yehud ... as the most powerful family in the state, they [Gao Huan and his family] would still seek to associate themselves with noble ancestors to let people remember that they were not of unknown origin and did have an honorable past ... [t]his claim would further legitimize their governance."

He then advances a cross-textual hermeneutics that "bears a task similar to comparative literature" and leads to "an enrichment of experience and knowledge through a mutual engagement of the self and the other." Approaching matters from this perspective leads him to conclude that "from the case study of Gao Huan, reasons exist to infer that the real Levites were ready to embrace the gatekeepers as part of their clan because this act would benefit both sides ... Gatekeepers would have notable ancestors, whereas the Levites in turn became more powerful ... [t]he formation of this alliance and the writing of history further enhanced the memory of ancestors."

Judith Gärtner's essay brings us to methodological approaches on cultural memory associated with the concept of "remembered history" advanced by J. and A. Assmann. She is interested in the ways in which "events" are remembered in such a manner that renders them "constitutive for the collective's identity and legitimizes the individual's belonging to that specific community of remembering." Her case study is Ps 78:1–11. Following an analysis of the text and of how it addresses (and construes) remembering and forgetting, she concludes, *inter alia*,

...the worshiper [who reads this text] becomes aware of the paradigmatic significance of these events [i.e., those told with praise in the Psalm] for his or her own time, in order that the individual may be reaffirmed in belonging to the people of God. Thus, the collective perspective of the remembered history in Ps 78 is permeable from the perspective of the individual worshiper. Second, the collective perspective is emphasized by the transposition of the deuteronomic-deuteronomistic ideal of the transmission of tradition spanning three generations within the family to the level of the entire people of God. Third, the representation of forgetting is part of Ps 78's specific theology of memory. The guilt of the ancestor should remain in lively remembrance so that the worshiper is kept from forgetting and therefore kept from abandoning the cultic thanksgiving.

Bob Becking deals with another psalm in which "remembering" and "forgetting" are very salient, namely Ps 137. His approach, however, is not Gärtner's; His contribution is informed, unlike the preceding one, by studies of "topical songs" in which "a reflection on recent political or social events is given in an epic form" and "aim at convincing the audience –

through ways of identification – to share the view on reality depicted in the song.” Significantly, Becking and Gärtner, each on his and her own path, approach matters of identity. Becking advances a detailed annotated translation and a study of the structure and historical contexts of Ps 137. These serve him as departure points for his ensuing study on the Psalm in terms of a construction of exilic identity and from the perspective of a post-exilic community. He discusses four roles that could be played “in and around every hymn or song,” namely the commissioner, the composer, the performer and the hearer as they relate to Ps 137 both in an exilic and in a post-exilic context.

Becking concludes that “Psalm 137 talks about two kinds of remembrance. In its exilic setting, the text displays a dynamic dialectics of the acts of memory and forgetting in which the divine and the human acts are intertwined. The community is urged to not give in and to not forget the good things.” At the same time:

In the first reading (in which the Psalm was composed after the exile) the act of remembrance receives an ideological dimension. The “others” should never forget that they had not been in the pit of the exile. In this context the Psalm functions very much like a topical song. The ballad reflects on recent political events. Psalm 137 contains both narrative and commentary. The anthem aims at convincing its audience to share the view on reality as enveloped in the song – by identification and implicitly making a division between “us” and the “other.” The performance of this song transmits the idea that the *benê golah* are the “holy seed.”

Some final considerations about present readings of the psalm close the chapter.

Reinhard Müller’s contribution is about “forgetting” and in particular YHWH’s forgetting. According Müller, “being ‘forgotten’ by Yahweh is a qualification of human suffering that is in most cases related to the concept of divine kingship. This mental image originates in individual lamentation and plays a considerable role in collective laments that are directly or indirectly related to experiences of the ‘exilic’ period.” He studies semantic and pragmatic meanings of *שכח*, individual and communal laments in which the motif of being forgotten by the divine king occurs, and the ideological and literary topos of the deity who does not forget, which at least on the surface stands in tension with the previous motif. He discerns “a constant sociomorphic meaning,” namely, “If Yahweh is said to ‘forget’ human beings, there is always a deliberate act of excluding them from the divine presence imagined ... [t]his act is recurrently related to the imagery of divine kingship.”

James Linville’s chapter attests to a different research agenda and, not surprisingly, approach. His goal is “to think around the edges of Lamentation in terms of the interplay between personal and socially transmitted memories of the fall of Jerusalem and to explore the notion of exilicism.”

Linville's approach is informed by studies by scholars as varied as P. L. Berger and T. Luckmann, P. C. Saltzman, J. Z. Smith, and B. Mack, G. Ebersole, M. Houseman, and F. Landy, as well as by recent scholarship in *Lamentations*. According to Linville "Lamentations offers one set of memories about the fall of Judah that is often inconsistent, shifting and sometimes at odds with other aspects of ancient Judah's symbolic universe and accepted truths." Among his conclusions:

The painful memories contained in *Lamentations* speak of identity, as do many memories. So, to whom then belong these voices of anger and resistance? Perhaps to those who live in defiance of memory, as if to say, we are the people who remember and mourn Jerusalem. To stop is to become the dead left unmourned. And yet they found a way to commune with their god, too, and to rejoice.

The volume opens with a programmatic chapter on social memory, on remembering and forgetting, and concludes with another programmatic chapter. Francis Landy brings the entire volume to a conclusion by drawing attention to that which is not stressed in the opening chapter and thus complementing it and by doing so, re-opens and complements the conversation. Focusing on "poetics" rather than "history" he writes,

For the historian of memory, history is not primarily about facts and data, few and insecure as they may be, but how people internalized and propagated those facts. The historian is thus rather close to the literary critic, attentive to the rhetorical strategies, the tropes and the posited intentions of the communities that created and were created by these texts.

Poetics, as I use it here, is the study of how a term, a theme, a complex, becomes the object of thought and imagination. How did ancient Israelites, and those who composed biblical texts, think about memory? How are words like "memory" and "remember" used in literature, what associations and emotional valences do they carry? How do they interact with other words, and thus become metaphorical? How does memory, for instance of other texts, participate in the creation of poetry? How does a book, like *Qohelet*, in which memory is thematized, comment on others?

Landy provides practical examples showing how an approach that stresses "poetics" differs and supplements the works of historians, such as myself. In addition, he draws attention to the relevance of studies on memory carried out by scholars such as Pascal Boyer, Roy Rappaport, Harvey Whitehouse, and psychoanalytical-oriented biblical scholars (e.g., Ilana Pardes, Danna Fewell and Hugh Pyper). He shows how their research may contribute to a development of "Poetics of Memory in Ancient Israel," which for Landy should address, among others,

- the thematics of memory – when does the Bible talk about memory, and why?
- the slippage between the Bible, as a mnemonic device, and the represented world, with its own, non-literary, systems of memory. A complication is the autonomy and interrelation of the poetics of the text and of the world, e.g., the mnemonic effects of a ritual and an account of the ritual.

- the techniques of memorization of the text, its strategies for self-preservation, as well as those of the scribal community. Under this rubric I would place matters of style, formality, claims to authority, etc.
- the relation between semantic and episodic memory systems, doctrinal and imagistic religion, both in the Bible and the represented world.
- the repertoire of sensory and emotive affects and their correlation with intimate, and frequently pre- or non-verbal experiences, wherewith memories acquire a sense of profundity.
- the interaction between individual and collective memories, especially those of poets and audiences.

Scholarly exchange is at its best when it involves significant diversity, when each individual scholar brings something that is substantially – not just marginally – different from the other. We gathered scholars who work on ancient Israel, but who conduct their research in different academic settings both in terms of geography (this is not only a transatlantic but also a transpacific conversation, as it involves a scholar from China), and also in terms of institutional settings (e.g., faculties of theology, departments of religious studies, departments of history), and thus who interact and teach with colleagues who tend to raise different questions. We purposefully gathered scholars who work within various methodological approaches. Some of the participants define themselves as historians, others as literary critics; some would consider their work to be within the general area of “cultural studies” and others would emphasize their ancient Near East (or in one case, ancient China) expertise. Yet all of them had much to say and contribute on matters of remembering and forgetting in early Second Temple Judah.

A. Remembering and Forgetting in the
Collection of Prophetic Books