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Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles—New Insights into the Early History of Samari(t)an–Jewish Relations

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Abstract: This article addresses the way the book of Ezra-Nehemiah on one hand and Chronicles on the other reflect the relationship between Samaria and Judah in the postexilic period. With regard to Ezra-Nehemiah, the focus is placed on Ezra 4:1–5, 6–23, 24, which evokes a particular image of the nature of the relationship between Samaria and Judah within the report of the construction of the temple in Ezra 1–6 that can function paradigmatically for the book as a whole. With regard to Chronicles, the focus lies on the theme of cult centralization, which became established in a particular manner through the reception of earlier tradition. The article concludes that both works, each in its own way, call forth critique of Samaria and the Samaritans in order to establish a separate Judean or Jewish group identity. The critique of the two works is dated to the late fourth or early third centuries BCE. As such, both are reckoned among the first witnesses heralding a *shift* in the perception of Samaria in biblical literature, namely toward a polemical and unequivocally negative perspective attested later in, for example, Josephus.

Keywords: Ezra-Nehemiah; chronicles; cult centralization; early Judaism; Gerizim; Yahwistic diversity

1. Introduction

Biblical traditions and texts do not simply mirror the historical realities of the times of their composition or redactional editing through the medium of the text. They also *create* textual worlds, make fundamental theological choices, draft templates for interpretation of reality, and draw boundaries for political institutions, individuals, ethnicities, and positions bear *reality-defining* influence. A well-established example is the treatment of Samaritans in the Hebrew Bible, as well as in later Jewish–Christian traditions. The texts often evoke a caricature of the Gerizim community, defaming them as a sect and as foreign[1]—a caricature that the Samaritans have also contrived for their Jewish sister community.[2] Recent studies (carried out by Kartveit, Pummer, Knoppers, Heckl, and Hensel) have shown the considerable divergence between the literary presentation of the Samaritans and the actual historical events and religious-sociological reality. From an historical perspective, one can conclude with (Knoppers 2019) concerning the Samarian–Judean relationship, "[M]aterial evidence from the province of Samaria, limited though it is, points to an overlap in cultural tradition with Yehud during the late Persian and early Hellenistic periods. (. . .) From the vantage point of the material remains, there is no clear indication that the two communities [*viz.* the Samarian and the Judean community] were moving in two opposite directions or that the two communities were drifting apart."[3]

In short, Samarian–Judean relations were in fact not marred by bitter conflict but largely consisted of two entities leading a parallel existence.[4] This is especially true for the Persian period, not least because the

1 For a summary of the present state of scholarship, see the very rich contribution by (Beyerle 2019).

2 On this complex problematic, see the excellent collection of various opinions in (Pummer 2016, pp. 9–25; Knoppers 2019, pp. 91–125) (in the chap. "Samaritan Conceptions of Jewish Origins and Jewish Conceptions of Samaritan Origins: Any Common Ground?").

3 Knoppers (2019), p. 88; see also (Knoppers 2010, pp. 159–74).

4 On the current debate on whether or not scholarship should follow or abandon the more common "conflict scenario"of Judean-Samaritan relations in the Post-Exilic, see (Hensel 2019b, pp. 19–42).

two groups of YHWH-worshippers resided in different provinces. The biblical traditions are hardly negative toward Samaria until the Persian period.[5] However, at a certain point the descriptions of Samarian–Judean relations become increasingly negative. In a correction to the reflections in my 2016 monograph, I no longer locate this point first in the third/second century BCE—even though the first extra-biblical evidence begins appearing first in the late second/early first century BCE—but rather in the transition from the late fourth and early third century BCE. This is when one can trace the beginnings of the anti-Samarian polemics in biblical literature.[6] The books of Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles fall into this upheaval in Samarian–Judean relationships, and this article will investigate the textual strategies that depict this relationship.

The book of Ezra-Nehemiah is traditionally placed into the period of conflict (more on this below). The article focuses one such confrontational depiction, Ezra 4:1–24, which portrays the relationship between Samaria and Judah in a paradigmatic manner for the book as a whole. Ezra 4:1–24 belongs to the narrative of the building of the temple in Ezra 1–6.[7] As intimated in Ezra 3:3, the construction of the temple encounters opposition from the neighbors. Scholarship primarily sees historical references to confrontations with the province of Samaria in the early phase of the restoration in the complications surrounding the building of the temple in Ezra 4:1–5 and 4:6–23(24). Ezra 4:1–5 as well as Ezra 4:6, 7–23 are reckoned as the *locus classicus* for reconstructions of Samarian–Judean relations in the postexilic period.[8] Alt's influential thesis of the emancipation of the "sub-province" of Judah from Samaria in the middle of the Persian period is responsible for this view in scholarship. Behind the supposed northern neighbors in Ezra 4, Alt saw frantic attempts by Samarian officials to prevent Judah's aspirations for independence from Samaria.

The depiction of conflict between the Samarians and Judeans is considerably more complex in Chronicles, whose literary origins lie either in the late Persian or the early Hellenistic period.[9] Scholarship from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries saddled Chronicles with a strongly *anti-Samaritan* perspective, for Chronicles was seen as part of th two-part "Chronistic History"(ChrH), along with the book of Ezra-Nehemiah.[10] Noth (in the year 1943) in particular formulated what has become the classic statement of this thesis.[11] He worked under the normal presuppositions of the time that there supposedly was a Samaritan schism in the fourth century BCE. As a result, Noth understood the ChrH as the foundational narrative for the Jerusalem cultic community, which intended to characterize it "as the true successor to the that early legitimate 'Israel.'"

Since the 1960s, however, scholars have viewed Chronicles as a work independent from Ezra-Nehemiah. Important work supporting this argument came from Willi (1972); Williamson (1977); Braun (1977); Japhet (1993, 1997, 2013, 2002–2003). In the course of this new paradigm, the perspective widely accepted today is that Chronicles presents the concept of "all Israel"(Williamson)[12] or "pan-Israel"(Japhet).[13] The contemporary Samaritans are thereby expressly integrated in this "conception of an integral Israel"(Willi),[14] (see especially 1 Chr 1–9,[15] which contrasts with Ezra-Nehemiah). Chronicles accordingly nowhere expresses polemics against

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5 This is one of the distinctive points made by my thesis, see especially (Hensel 2018a, pp. 239–46); for the concessive strategies within the expansions of Deuteronomy, see (Hensel 2019a; Hensel Forthcoming a).

6 For the discussion of the relevant biblical traditions, see (Hensel 2018a, pp. 246–54).

7 On the literary-historical character of the temple restoration narrative, see (Kratz 2000, pp. 54–55; Bedford 2001, pp. 87–111; Heckl 2016a, pp. 32–217; 2018a, pp. 117–22).

8 It is this way in the "classic"monographs on the Samaritans: (Kippenberg 1971, pp. 38–41; Zsengellér 1998, pp. 124–33; Dexinger 1992, pp. 90–94; Böhm 1999, pp. 116–19; Egger 1986, p. 224; Coggins 1976, pp. 215–16; Montgomery 1907, pp. 34–45).

9 For a brief discussion of the dating, see (Nihan 2016), p. 259.

10 The thesis regarding the cohesion between Chr and Ezra/Neh was first advanced by Zunz in 1832 and remained dominant in research for a considerable time (Zunz 1832).

11 Noth (1967), pp. 174–75.

12 Williamson (1977), pp. 98–99, 108–10, 120, 125–31.

13 Japhet (2006), p. 118.

14 Willi (2012), pp. 21–34.

15 For Weingart it is primarily the literary context of 1 Chr 1–9 that lays out the *essential* definition of the twelve-tribe concept of "Israel"for all of Chronicles. According to this definition, the "ten tribes"of Samaria as well as the two southern tribes, meaning Judah and Benjamin, were all essential parts of "Israel,"cf. (Weingart 2014, p. 298).

the YHWH worshipers in the North, but instead establishes an "inclusive view."[16] Scholars have emphasized the Chronicler's almost "missionary"interest in the North, as well as his general openness to northern YHWH worshipers.[17]

I have argued elsewhere in detail the problems with the conjecture of Chronicles'positive integration of Samaria into Israel.[18] My thesis is that although Chronicles differs *markedly* from the depiction of Samaria undertaken by Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles is still quite polemic towards the Samari(t)ans. In this article, I will demonstrate the overall concept of the Samarian–Judean relations in Chronicles in Chronicles'ideological and exclusivist intensification of the depiction of cult centralization. Chronicles develops a contemporary *distinction* with regard to Samaria in the example of cult centralization.[19]

2. Ezra 4 in the Context of the Temple Building Narrative of Ezra 1–6*

2.1. Ezra 4:1–5

Ezra 4:1 mentions the rather unspecific צָרֵי יְהוּדָה וּבִנְיָמִן who initially attempt to contribute to the construction of the temple during the time of Cyrus II. After the rejection of this attempt by the Jerusalem authorities (Ezra 4:2–3), the "adversaries of Judah and Benjamin"then try to stop the construction work of the returnees (בְּנֵי הַגּוֹלָה; v.1) by all means possible (Ezra 4:4–5). Their attempts are successful (v. 5; cf. v. 24). As adversaries, Ezra 4:6–24 mentions a series of Samarian nobles (v. 10), who at a later point in time—in the fifth century BCE under Xerxes I and Artaxerxes I—again take steps in opposition to the Jerusalem construction work.

The identity of the "adversaries"mentioned in Ezra 4:1–5 as well as the historical circumstances of the conflicts and the literary-historical origin of this section are the subject of controversial scholarly debate.[20] Earlier sketches from the middle of the twentieth century considered Ezra 4:1–4a largely authentic reflection of the events of the early postexilic period, that is the sixth or fifth century BCE.[21]

Scholars have suspected that the Samaritans (or proto-Samaritans[22]) are behind these opponents, for they—according to the paradigm of that time[23]—had existed as a separate group since 722 BCE. The opponents at minimum pointed to their deportation to Israel under Esarhaddon (681–669), which alludes to the situation described in 2 Kgs 17:23, 24–41, though in that case under Shalmaneser V.

These propositions were primarily made feasible through Alt's hypothesis[24] that Judah was a sub-province of Samaria in the early postexilic period, and only liberated itself from Samaria in the fifth century BCE. This secession is mirrored in the rejection of the Samarian authorities, who wanted to participate in the building of the temple.[25] Judah intended to protect its cultic autonomy,[26] following the Cyrus Edict, which expressly allowed only the Judeans to build the temple, as strictly as possible.[27] Because Jerusalem depended

16 Weingart (2017), pp. 163–69.
17 So especially (Williamson 1977, pp. 87–140); as well as (Braun 1977, pp. 59–62).
18 See (Hensel 2016, pp. 363–65; 2018c).
19 A general sidenote on the terminology used in this article: In past discussion it has been proven important to use the terms "Jewish," "Jews,"Samaritan,"and "Samaritanism"only in relation to the parting of the ways in the second or first century BCE (see the discussion below, Section 3) when the two groups had developed distinctive group identity markers. Before this time the boundaries between the groups were essentially fluid. This requires more neutral terms—"Samarian,"Judean"or "Samarian/Judean Yahwists."For a discussion of the different terminologies (and their respective problems) see e.g. (Kartveit 2009, p. 10; Knoppers 2013, pp. 14–17; Pummer 2016, pp. 15–25; Hensel 2016, pp. 32–34).
20 For an overview of the history of scholarship on Ezra 4:1–4, see (Edelman 2005, pp. 154–59).
21 Cf., e.g., (Koch 1967, p. 65; Meyer 1896, p. 125).
22 Williamson (1985), p. 53; (Bedford 2001, p. 158; and Delcor 1992, pp. 284–85).
23 This follows an uncritical reading of 2 Kgs 17:24–41 and the paraphrase in Josephus.
24 Cf. (Alt 1964, pp. 316–37, esp. 330–36).
25 Williamson (1985), p. 49; (Blenkinsopp 1988, p. 107).
26 Kippenberg (1971), p. 39; similarly: (Rudolph 1949, pp. 33–35). See also (Coggins 1976, p. 27): "*Our* sympathies naturally go to those whose openness is rejected, but here as elsewhere the Chronicler is stressing that the Jerusalem community alone can be responsible for the restoration of the holy place."
27 Throntveit (1982), pp. 25–26: "The hard-won insight of the exile [. . .] was the recognition that God demanded exclusive worship. [. . .]. Similarly, Cyrus's word was clear: Official permission to rebuild had been given to them alone."

politically on Samaria, the Samarians were, therefore, also interested in all religious-politically events in this city:[28] "if the building of the temple should not run counter to their political interests, then it must remain under their control."[29] In addition to the political interests, it also represented the emergence of a cultic center in the sub-province.[30]

Alt's thesis has become the subject of increasing criticism[31] and currently enjoys little *explicit* support. *Implicitly*, however, Alts'thesis is still effective, for the majority of researchers still describe the Judean–Samarian relations as conflictual throughout the Persian Period. These conflicts resulted mainly from Judah's efforts to gain independence from Samaria.[32] In fact, Alt's hypothesis was based mainly on intuitive guesswork and a peculiar interpretation of certain passages of the book of Ezra-Nehemiah (such as Ezra 4 and Neh 1–6). Recent archaeological discoveries, especially those in Ramat Raḥel indicate the existence of administrative continuity in Judah from the late Iron Age through the Neo-Babylonian and into the Persian period.[33] On the basis of several Yehud stamp impressions from the fifth/fourth century BCE that bear a personal name with the title פחה (governor)[34] and seals bearing the name of the province (יהד; יהוד; יהדה), scholars have concluded that Judah was not annexed by the province of Samaria after the killing of Gedaliah at Mizpah around 581 BCE. On the contrary, Judah and Samaria existed as two autonomous, mutually independent provinces under the Persians.

As a result, present scholarship is more reserved about the historical value of Ezra 4:1–5. Heated discussion is currently taking place on whether Ezra 4:1–4 has the *Samarians* in view at all—in contrast to Ezra 4:6–23, which named them rather directly. The opponents remain unnamed, and v. 4 describes them in noteworthy fashion as עַם־הָאָרֶץ. In other biblical streams of tradition, this term refers to the *Judean* population of the land. According to Grabbe it means in Ezra 4 *the local Judean* population,[35] namely those that remained in the land.[36] Ezra 4:1–5 thus mirrors an *inner-Judean* conflict.[37] It is also argued that Ezra 4:1–5 speaks of two different entities.[38] The group described as "adversaries"promotes Samaria's religious interests. In contrast, the Jewish people of the land in v. 4 delay and disrupt the building of the temple. This results either because

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[28] See still (Dexinger 1992, p. 93).

[29] Dexinger (1992), p. 92 ("[w]enn der Tempelbau ihren politischen Interessen nicht zuwiderlaufen sollte, mußte er unter ihrer Kontrolle bleiben.").

[30] As in, for example, (Donner 1986, p. 447–49).

[31] For criticism, see (Grätz 2004, pp. 266–83; Levin 2012, pp. 7–8; Grabbe 2004, pp. 79–84).

[32] For the recent debate on the so-called "conflict paradigm", see (Hensel 2019b) (with literature discussion).

[33] See (Lipschits et al. 2011, p. 34). On this continuity in Judah/Yehud, see (Vanderhooft and Lipschits 2014, pp. 43–66, esp. 55): "In comparison with the middle decades of the sixth century (i.e., after the collapse of the Judean kingdom), there are only minor changes in Judean material culture at the end of the sixth century BCE, and from the archaeological point of view, the beginning of the so-called 'Post Exilic Period'cannot be isolated as a distinctive horizon within the larger Persian period. Whatever demographic changes may have occurred in Judah after 539 BCE do not register in the archaeological record: settlement patterns do not suddenly alter or reflect anything like a 'return'; the administrative and economic landscapes do not suddenly burgeon; and pottery and other material cultural elements continue their mid-sixth century trajectories [. . .]. There are only small and gradual changes in most aspects of the material culture that slowly brought new shapes and characteristics, which would coalesce in the 'classic'Persian-period features that characterized the second half of the 5th and the early 4th centuries BCE [. . .]."

[34] On the -פחהtitle on the stamp impressions, see (Lipschits and Vanderhooft 2011, pp. 77–80). Compare also the groundbreaking study of Avigad from the 1976 on those bullae: (Avigad 1976).

[35] See (Grabbe 1998, p. 138), who refers in this context to Ezra 9:11–12.

[36] A dissenting opinion is presented by, among others, Bedford, who recognizes the Samarians as the population of the land that resided, however, in northern Judah: (Bedford 2001, p. 108) and often.

[37] Also Blenkinsopp: The expression is seen to refer to the "local population"(Blenkinsopp 1988, p. 108; Coggins 1976, p. 27; Noth 1966, pp. 305–08). According to (Willi 1995, pp. 11–17, 30–333, 67–70) עַם־הָאָרֶץmeans the "resident population and their nobles"("ansässige Bevölkerung und ihre Notablen"; p. 68) in contrast to the Golah also (Böhm 1999, p. 117 n. 533). In the books of Kings, it appears that "the people of the land"concern something of an agricultural aristocracy (2 Kgs 11:14, 18, 20; 21:24; 25:19); also Hag 2:4; Zech 7:5). For discussion of the expression עַם־הָאָרֶץsee (Grabbe 1998, pp. 18, 136–38; Zsengellér 1998, pp. 124–28; Grätz 2013, pp. 76–77); and the pertinent investigations by (Würthwein 1936); as well as (Fried 2006, pp. 123–45); for a bibliographic discussion still see (Oppenheimer 1977, pp. 10–11 n. 37; Margalith 1991, pp. 321–23).

[38] Critical of this, however, was already Gunneweg, who views the groups in v. 1 and v. 4 as identical: "According to the present context, the people of the land can mean none other than the 'adversaries of Judah and Benjamin'"(Gunneweg 1985, p. 80): "Mit dem Volk des Landes können nach dem vorliegenden Zusammenhang keine anderen als eben die 'Feinde Judas und Benjamins'gemeint sein").

they too have requested rights to participate in the building of the temple or because they too are simply grouped with the Samarian population.[39] The theory that the basic historical situation reflected in Ezra 4 is the beginnings of the conflict on a purely political level and should be placed in the fifth century BCE has been incredibly influential (e.g., Kippenberg,[40] Dexinger,[41] Coggins,[42] Böhm,[43] and Kratz[44]).

In an attempt to analyze the backgrounds of this text, a short detour shall be taken from the historical question in order to investigate that of the opening narrative in Ezra 1:1–5. For starters, the "enemies of Judah and Benjamin"(Ezra 4:1) in the sense of the logic of the text of Ezra 1–5 are "non-Israelites."It is of decisive importance that the idea of "Israel"is established within this chapter. Exclusively the Golah community (בְּנֵי הַגּוֹלָה; Ezra 4:1; 6:19, 20 and often) returning from the exile is designated as "Israel."[45] For example, the term "Judah"is missing completely in the Hebrew frame of the book section of Ezra 1–6.[46] The "ones returning from the exile,"a theologically loaded term, instead functions as a guiding term. It is consistently equated with the entity "Israel,"and progressively even with "all Israel."[47] The list in Ezra 2 precisely identifies those "who went up from captivity (וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי הַמְּדִינָה הָעֹלִים מִשִּׁבְיֵ הַגּוֹלָה) [. . .] and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah"(וַיָּשׁוּבוּ לִירוּשָׁלַם וִיהוּדָה) (Ezra 2:1) as "all Israel"(כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל) in v. 70 at the end of the list (cf. Ezra 2:2).

The group of "non-Israelites"in Ezra 4 instead stands out in terms of their YHWH belief, even though they are presented as colonists settling by the Assyrians:

Ezra 4:2b

נִבְנֶה עִמָּכֶם
כִּי כָכֶם נִדְרֹושׁ לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם
וְלֹא אֲנַחְנוּ זֹבְחִים מִימֵי אֵסַר חַדֹּן מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר הַמַּעֲלֶה אֹתָנוּ פֹּה[48]

"Let us build with you,
for we worship your God as you do,
and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria who brought us here."

The passage recalls 2 Kgs 17:24–41, though it mentions the Assyrian King Esarhaddon (אֵסַר חַדֹּן; 680–669 BCE) instead of Shalmaneser V (2 Kgs 17:2, 6, 24). Therefore, it is unlikely that Ezra 4:1–4 is directly dependent on 2 Kgs 17:24–41 as is often assumed in scholarship. The references are too general, and 2 Kgs 17:24–41 is a rather late text (late 4th or 3rd century BCE) incorporated into the book of Kings either at the same time as Ezra 4:1–5 or even later.[49] The texts of 2 Kgs 17:24–41 and Ezra 4:1–5 are, however, comparable in terms of their polemics.[50] Both texts identify the YHWH worshippers from the North with *foreign colonists.*

Summarizing the evidence (especially the reference to YHWH worship), Ezra 4:1–5 likely has the YHWH worshippers from Gerizim in view.[51] They are, however, *disqualified* as "foreigners,"that is as "non-Israelites." Seen from the Judean perspective, they are *subtracted* from the entity of "Israel."In addition, the terminology of v. 1 conceives of the Gerizim community as "enemies of Judah and Benjamin"(צָרֵי יְהוּדָה וּבִנְיָמִן). The conceptual pair "Judah and Benjamin"should not be understood in exclusively geographic terms here, but rather in relationship to the community of those who returned from exile to "Judah and Benjamin"(Ezra 1:5, cf. Ezra 4:1), which should be identified as "all Israel"according to the logic of the text. As a result, the Gerizim community in particular appears as Israel's enemy.

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39 For the supporting reasons see (Böhm 1999, p. 117) (and bibliography).
40 Kippenberg (1971), pp. 38–41.
41 Dexinger (1992), pp. 90–94.
42 Coggins (1975), pp. 215–16.
43 Böhm (1999), pp. 117–18.
44 See (Kratz 2013, pp. 244–58).
45 On the term "Israel"in the book of Ezra-Nehemiah, now see (Weingart 2014, pp. 73–83) (and bibliography), which arrives, however, at different conclusions than those presented here.
46 Cf. (Häusl 2012, pp. 101–8).
47 Cf. Ezra 2:2, 59, 70; 3:1; 6:21–22.
48 The MT לא does not necessarily make sense in this context; other text witnesses read לו, which seems to represent the original version. MT's variant could feature a later anti-Samaritan tendency ("We [Samaritans] have *not* been sacrificing to YHWH ["him"] . . . ").
49 On the text-historical aspects in this question, see (Robker Forthcoming).
50 On the anti-Samaritan polemic of 2 Kgs 17:24–41, see (Knoppers 2007; Kartveit 2014; Hensel 2016, pp. 367–89; Weingart 2017, pp. 160–63).
51 See (Heckl 2018a, esp. pp. 128–29).

This "ethnic clarification"is then functionally connected with the building of the temple:

Ezra 4:3

וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם זְרֻבָּבֶל וְיֵשׁוּעַ וּשְׁאָר רָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל
לֹא־לָכֶם וָלָנוּ לִבְנוֹת בַּיִת לֵאלֹהֵינוּ
כִּי אֲנַחְנוּ יַחַד נִבְנֶה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּנוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ כּוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ־פָּרָס׃

"But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of fathers'houses in Israel said to them:
'You have nothing to do with us in building a house to our God;
but we alone will build to YHWH, the God of Israel,
as King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us.'"

The emphasis lies on the fact that the Jerusalem community is alone permitted to build the temple (v. 3b), referring directly to the Cyrus edict in Ezra 1:2–4. It expressly commissions Israel as the people of God to build the Jerusalem temple. In the sense of the concept within the text itself, it concerns the Golah community as the only group authorized to erect a YHWH temple. The demarcation between that "Israel"and the Gerizim community is highlighted through the emphasis on the circumstances under which the "house of the God of Israel"should be built (כִּי אֲנַחְנוּ יַחַד נִבְנֶה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) *alone* (יַחַד; v. 3b) by the "heads of Israel's clans"(v. 3: רָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל).

However, the YHWH worshippers in the North are simultaneously established as *opponents to the restoration of the temple.* After the Samarians'request is rejected (v. 3), they (now described as עַם־הָאָרֶץ; on them see below 1.3) now bring about a shutdown of the building from the days of Cyrus to the reign of Darius I (v. 5) by bribing the Persian officials (v. 4)[52]:

וַיְהִי עַם־הָאָרֶץ מְרַפִּים יְדֵי עַם־יְהוּדָה וּמְבַלֲהִים אוֹתָם לִבְנוֹת׃
וְסֹכְרִים עֲלֵיהֶם יוֹעֲצִים לְהָפֵר עֲצָתָם כָּל־יְמֵי כוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס וְעַד־מַלְכוּת דָּרְיָוֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ־פָּרָס

2.2. Ezra 4:6–24

In the present configuration of the text, Ezra 4:1–5 is continued functionally and chronologically by vv. 6–23, 24. This portion of text contains no less than four[53] denunciatory communications from Samarian nobles (vv. 6, 7, 8, 9–16),[54] which are lodged as an official complaint against the Jerusalem building project at the Persian court. A written statement is only offered beginning in v. 11b (see its introduction in v. 11a: דְּנָה פַּרְשֶׁגֶן אִגַּרְתָּא דִּי שְׁלַחוּ עֲלוֹהִי). The written response presented from Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:17–22) largely corresponds with the complaint. It grants the Samarians'objection, and the building efforts are suspended as a result:[55]

Ezra 4:23

אֱדַיִן מִן־דִּי פַּרְשֶׁגֶן נִשְׁתְּוָנָא דִּי אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׂתְּא מִלְקָא קֳרִי קֳדָם־רְחוּם וְשִׁמְשַׁי סָפְרָא וּכְנָוָתְהוֹן אֲזָלוּ בִבְהִילוּ
לִירוּשְׁלֶם עַל־יְהוּדָיֵא וּבַטְּלוּ הִמּוֹ בְּאֶדְרָע וְחֵיל

"Then, when the copy of King Artaxerxes'letter was read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their associates, they went in haste to the Judeans at Jerusalem and by force and power made them cease."

The letters are introduced as documents: even a copy is said to have existed (v. 11a). Through the change in v. 8 from Hebrew into Aramaic (until Ezra 6:18) and the fact that the composer even underscores this

[52] Edelman sees a direct reference and literary development of Neh 6:10–14 in the bribing of the officials in Ezra 4:5–6, see (Edelman 2005, p. 202).

[53] However, the senders of the letter in v. 8 are partially identical with those in vv. 9–10 such that vv. 8, 9–10 are often described as a double introduction to the same letter; on this see (Böhler 1997, p. 230). The כְּנָמָא ("thus") at the end of v. 8 is then often rendered as "the following content"or something similar (Rudolph 1949, p. 36; Blenkinsopp 1988, p. 109; Böhler 1997, p. 225; Gunneweg 1985, pp. 82, 89). The beginning of the following verse is, however, only interpreted as the beginning of the letter with difficulty, for the following אֱדַיִן ("thereupon, then") never serves as the introduction to a document in the entire known corpus of Aramaic letters; see (Schwiderski 2000, p. 349).

[54] On this see (Schwiderski 2000, esp. pp. 343–51).

[55] The sender and addressees are thereby integrated syntactically into the narrative context such that a demarcation of the actual letter cannot be identified, so it cannot be clarified whether the text cited begins with the addressees or earlier with the designation of the sender; on this see (Schwiderski 2000, p. 351).

change in v. 7b (הַנִּשְׁתְּוָן כְּתוּב אֲרָמִית וּמְתֻרְגָּם אֲרָמִית), it achieves the impression that authentic documents from the Persian chancellery are being cited. As a result of their narrative presentation, these records have long been considered authentic by scholars.[56] Scholarship assumed that the correspondence in Ezra 4:6–23 was to be taken as evidence for Judah's conflict with the province of Samaria at the time of the building of Jerusalem and its wall in the sixth or fifth century BCE. The text offers a clearly anti-*Samarian* perspective.[57]

Schwiderski[58] has convincingly established that the text does not concern historical documents. It has been shown unequivocally that these Aramaic letters do not conform with key points of official style, more precisely with the imperial Aramaic letter form. In addition, the letters omit the constitutive elements necessary for the official character.[59] The documents instead reveal characteristics of the early Hellenistic letter genre. The Artaxerxes letter of Ezra 4:17–22 exhibits elements that clearly match the Greco-Roman type.[60] Therefore, the language of all the "documents"points to the late fourth century BCE *at the earliest*.[61] One can therefore agree with Schwiderski's conclusions: "The so-called letters are in fact fictitious and were created only for a literary context."[62] However, the Hebrew-Aramaic bilingualism allows one to "recognize a sensibility on the part of the redactors or composer for the problem of the 'authenticity,'"[63] for the Persian administration did use Aramaic. The interpolation of "sources"turns out to be (and this is also the case *cum grano salis* for the rest of the sources in the book of Ezra) a skillful *literary stylistic element* in support of the authenticity and therefore the truth of the report.

Aspects of the content similarly point to the conscious literary construction of the events. As Lux convincingly noted, the time of the temple restoration in the Persian period and the delay of the temple construction was caused by *internal* conflicts (see Haggai/Zechariah),[64] not by external factors (like the intervention by the Samarian officials in Ezra 4:6–16, 24). In addition, it appears historically implausible for the Samarians to stop the building of the temple, *despite* its authorization by royal edict (Ezra 1:2–4). Also questionable was the resulting stoppage to have covered the reigns of Cyrus II (559–530 BCE), Cambyses (530–521 BCE),[65] and Darius I (521–486 BCE) because the opponents lodged a formal complaint against Jerusalem's restoration endeavors *first* in the reign of the later king Xerxes I (468–465 BCE) (Ezra 4:6).

What, then, is the intention of the "Samarian episode"in vv. 6–23? The content treats a continuation of themes introduced earlier. On one hand, the negative foil of the denunciating accusatory letters by Judah and Benjamin's enemies (Ezra 4:1–5) portrays the Golah community ("Israel") as loyal subjects that actually act in accordance both with *the will of God* as well as *with the orders of the Persian king*, as Ezra 6:14b highlights:

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[56] Gunneweg presumes here that the "Aramaic sources [underlying the narrative could have contained] various accusations and protests against Jerusalem's reconstruction and restoration plans"["aramäische Quelle eine Aufzählung verschiedener Anklagen und Proteste gegen Wiederaufbau- und Restaurationspläne Jerusalems"]. Through the process of transmission, on the summary notice of v. 7 remained preserved, (Gunneweg 1985, p. 88). Schaper also identifies the collection of documents in Ezra 4 as an "edited collection of Achaemenid documents in Aramaic that should be taken seriously as historical sources"["editierte Sammlung aramäischsprachiger achämenidischer Dokumente, die als historische Quellen ernst zu nehmen"], (Schaper 2000, pp. 49–67).

[57] See, e.g., (Grätz 2013, p. 76).

[58] Schwiderski (2000, pp. 343–51).

[59] The problems with the "letters"have long be known and are often mentioned, see, in addition to (Schwiderski 2000); also (Edelman 2005, pp. 190–201).

[60] On the constitutive elements of the Greco-Roman letter form see (Schwiderski 2000, chap. 5.3); on this also (Blenkinsopp 2010, pp. 150–58).

[61] Schwiderski (2000), p. 381. Edelman places the letters later, that is, in the Seleucid period: (Edelman 2005, p. 203–4).

[62] Schwiderski (2000), p. 381 ("Bei den genannten Schreiben handelt es sich um fiktive Texte, die lediglich für einen literarischen Kontext geschaffen wurden").

[63] Grätz (2004, p. 132) ("eine Sensibilität der Redaktoren oder Verfasser für das Problem der 'Authentizität'[zu] erkennen").

[64] See Lux (2002); (Lux 2005).

[65] The authors of Ezra-Nehemiah do not appear to be familiar with, or instead hide this king. In any case, he is never named.

Ezra 6:14 וְשָׂבֵי יְהוּדָיֵא בָּנִין וּמַצְלְחִין בִּנְבוּאַת חַגַּי נְבִיָּאה וּזְכַרְיָה בַר־עִדּוֹא
וּבְנוֹ וְשַׁכְלִלוּ מִן־טַעַם אֱלָהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִטְּעֵם כּוֹרֶשׁ וְדָרְיָוֶשׁ וְאַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׂתְּא מַלְכָּא פָּרְס

"And the elders of the Judeans built and prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo.
They finished their building by decree of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes king of Persia."

On the other hand, the correspondence fills a gap in the narrative context and explains the delay of the work on the temple, which makes the opponents named in Ezra 4:1–5 responsible and simultaneously deepens the criticism and polemic against the Gerizim community. Within the textual fiction of Ezra 4:1–23, 24, the hostilities by the Samarian YHWH-worshippers mentioned in Ezra 4:1–5 continue throughout the whole restoration period covered by the book of Ezra-Nehemiah, from Cyrus II (see Ezra 4:3b with the allusion to the Cyrus Edict of Ezra 1:3–4) to Artaxerxes I (vv. 7–23). They boycott and disrupt the two restoration projects of the temple and city that are central for Judean identity. The Samarians therefore become exaggerated as the *ultimate opponents* of Judean cultural and religious identity.

The temporal *elongation* of the conflict phase corresponds to the thematic *deepening* and polemic continuation in Ezra 4:6–23. The writers appear as members of one of the many ethnic groups without any relationship to the "Israel"that first came about through the resettlement actions of an Assyrian emperor. The reference to the deportations under the unknown Assyrian King אָסְנַפַּר (v. 10)—Assurbanipal (669–631/627 BCE) is certainly intended[66]—is artificial and results from the intention of the text to portray the Samarians as "foreigners."We are not informed about relocation measures under Assurbanipal. Ezra 4:1–5 envisions a comparable fate for the former Northern Kingdom to that depicted in 2 Kgs 17:1–23, 24–41 (though there it mentions Shalmaneser V, cf. 2 Kgs 17:3, 6, 24). Ezra 4:10 mentions the settlement of colonists בָּקְרְיָה דִּי שָׁמְרָיִן, in Samaria's cities, also comparable to in 2 Kgs 17:24, 29. Direct literary dependence is rather improbable given the polemics against foreign deities in 2 Kgs 17:24–41 that go missing in Ezra 4:10.[67] The parallels between 2 Kgs 17:24–41 and Ezra 4:10 consist, however, in the application of the "foreigner"polemics to Samarian YHWH worshippers, which connects to those in Ezra 4:1–5.

Within the readerly context of Ezra 4:1–5, the impression takes root that postexilic Judah had to resist a constantly growing number of enemies that increased from letter to letter[68] until finally even the "rest of the Transeuphrates"(Ezra 4:10b: וּשְׁאָר עֲבַר־נַהֲרָה) becomes part of the flood of opponents in the world of the text. It is associated with the image of the "storm of the nations,"as was already apparent to Gunneweg,[69] forming the "impression of a 'global'attack against the existence of the newly understood community."[70] The mention of the "people of the land"(עַם־הָאָרֶץ) in Ezra 4:4 also fits this image, where they appear as the adversary to the "people of Judah"(עַם־יְהוּדָה).[71] Through the mention of the biblically well-attested semantic meaning of the construction עַם־הָאָרֶץ as "the population of the land,"it recalls the earlier contrast from the preexilic period of city (Jerusalem) and rural population.[72] Through the identification of this group from v. 4 with the "enemies"in vv. 1–2, and therefore with the Samarians in vv. 6–23, a rather threatening image emerges in which Jerusalem's "enemies"appear to have already reached the city walls.

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66 Which king is meant by אָסְנַפַּר is debated. Assurbanipal is generally suspected behind this name. Because no deportations are attested during his reign, some commentators posit Esarhaddon because of Ezra 4:2 (Winckler 1892, p. 98; Howorth 1893, p. 77; Dozeman 2003, p. 461), Shalmaneser V (Bewer 1922, pp. 51–52; Torrey 1896, p. 170), or Sargon (Marquart 1896, p. 59). It requires occasional specific (at times adventurous) speculations with multiple stages of textual errors in order to explain the apparently corrupt writing of the MT. For discussion, see (Grabbe 2004, p. 289; Edelman 2005, pp. 191–92).

67 Also (Grätz 2009, p. 61).

68 Cf. (Karrer 2001, p. 342). Grätz speaks of a "flood of senders"(Grätz 2009, p. 260): ["Flut an Absendern"]).

69 Cf. (Gunneweg 1985, p. 90; Grätz 2009, p. 260) also follows this observation by Gunneweg.

70 (Schaack 1998, p. 148) ("Eindruck eines 'globalen'Angriffs gegen die Existenz der im Neuanfang begriffenen Gemeinschaft").

71 עַם always appears in the singular in this verse. The contrast was seen very clearly by (Mantel 1970, p. 169); see also (Dexinger 1992, p. 99).

72 This contrast was occasionally seen earlier, cf. (Rudolph 1949, p. 29; Galling 1954, pp. 192–93); Coggins 1975, pp. 24, 66–67); following them also (Zsengellér 1998, pp. 125–26, 133).

2.3. On the Origins of the Text of Ezra 4:1–24 and a Historical Contextualization

Ezra 4:1–24 is not uniform from a composition-critical point of view. The section of Ezra 4:6–23 disturbs the context, for the backgrounds depicted here diverge both in terms of time and theme from those in Ezra 4:1–5; 4:24; and 5:1–6:18. It no longer concerns the building of the temple under Cyrus II (559–530 BCE) or rather Darius I (521–486 BCE; Ezra 1:1–4:5), but instead a first attempt to build the city and the walls (vv. 12, 13, 16, 21) at the time of the Kings Xerxes I (486–465/4 BCE; Ezra 4:6) and Artaxerxes I (465/4–425 BCE; Ezra 4:7–23). It is already clear for these reasons that Ezra 4:1–5 and 6–23 do not originate from the same hand. As the majority of current scholarship understands, Ezra 4:1–5 represents a literary invention that is placed in front of the already existent text of Ezra 4:6–23 in order to provide a narrative setting for the supposedly official correspondence with the royal house (vv. 6–23).[73] On the other hand, Edelman proposes that the entire textual complex of Ezra 2–6 is completely fictional and is solely fed by biblical sources and themes. She mentions, among others, Haggai–Zech 8; Neh 2; Jeremiah; Deutero-Isaiah; and Ezek 40–48 as sources.[74]

The majority opinion is unconvincing given the above-stated fictional character of vv. 6–23. Neither is Edelman's thesis persuasive, for she adopts a one-stage process of compositional formation for Ezra 4* despite the abovementioned literary breaks. I therefore conjecture that Ezra 4:1–5 and the bridge verse Ezra 4:24 initially supplemented the earlier Persian period's temple chronicle Ezra 5–6*. For these, in turn, comprised a relatively *neutral report* on the restoration process without any recognizable jabs at possible opponents. Bedford gets to the heart of the matter: "Actually, in Ezra 5–6, the Judeans, Tattenai, and Darius know nothing of this injunction. Had it been executed one would expect, in the light of Ezra 3–4, that the Samarians would have brought it to the attention of their Achaemenid Persian overlords when rebuilding recommenced in the reign of Darius."[75] In a second stage, the fictional episode of vv. 1–5 was added, which was then complimented by the —likewise largely fictional—episode of vv. 6–23. This text made explicit the general notion of "Israel' s enemies"in Ezra 4:1–5. The insertion of Ezra 4:6–23 into its context was smoothed out with v. 24 as a redactional bridge,[76] binding the text of vv. 6–23 again with Ezra 4:1–5 and the Aramaic temple construction chronicle of Ezra 5–6. The by this redactional process established genealogical dimension of Cyrus II to Artaxerxes I in Ezra 4 is first surveyed again in Ezra 6:14b (כּוֹרֶשׁ וְדָרְיָוֶשׁ וְאַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׂתְּא מֶלֶךְ פָּרָס). Following Kratz, it is likely that a redactor added the ruler in Ezra 6:14 in view of the insertion of Ezra 4:6–23; it is only in Ezra 6:14 and Ezra 4:7 that the Persian rulers appears in the orthographic variant אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׂתְּא (otherwise אַרְתַּחְשַׁסְתְּא; cf. Ezra 7:11–12). The resulting sequence of rulers, Cyrus II (Ezra 4:3; cf. Ezra 1:3–4)–Darius I (Ezra 1:1–4:5)–Xerxes I (Ezra 4:6)–Artaxerxes I (Ezra 4:7–23)–Darius II (Ezra 4:24) then makes sense. Then the Darius mentioned in Ezra 5–6 under whom the temple should have been reestablished would be Darius II (423–404 BCE; cf. Ezra 4:24) rather than Darius I.[77] This sequence is neither original nor historical, but rather the systematic redactional work that integrates Ezra 4:6–23 into the temple construction report (with Ezra 4:1–5).

The gradual development of the idea of "the Samarian enemy"is directly linked with the successive expansion of the image of the Samarian enemy in Neh 1–6 in the Hellenistic period, which I have described elsewhere.[78] In any case, Tabeel/טָבְאֵל in Ezra 4:7 could concern a literary counterpart to the Aramaic Tobiah/טֹבִיָּה, the Amorite (Neh 2:19 and often), who also operates as a Nehemiah's bitter enemy. I hold that the reworking of Neh 1–6 may have caused the successive interpolations of Ezra 4:1–24* into the context Ezra 1–6*.[79] In other words, both Ezra 4:1–5 as well as Ezra 4:6–23 mirror the historical realities of the late fourth/third centuries BCE. They are, therefore, mirrors of a transition that should be observed in various

[73] See, e.g., (Halpern 1990, p. 104; Donner 1986, pp. 447–48). Similarly, (Coggins 1975, pp. 65–66).
[74] Cf. (Edelman 2005, pp. 162–80).
[75] Bedford (2001), pp. 105–6.
[76] See also (Böhler 1997, pp. 119–25); see also (Bedford 2001, pp. 105–6; Grätz 2013, p. 76; Häusl 2012, p. 106; Kratz 2000, pp. 66–67).
[77] Also (Kratz 2000, p. 59).
[78] Hensel (2016), pp. 314–24; cf. (Grätz 2013).
[79] This has been argued in a similar fashion by (Eskenazi 1988, p. 79).

traditions of biblical literature that mark the deteriorating Judean appraisal of the Samarians, which became increasingly polemic in the case of Ezra-Nehemiah.[80]

3. Chronicles' Exclusive Interpretation of Cult Centralization

This section of the article will focus on this portrayal of the temple with regard to Chronicles' reception of other traditions. Scholars agree that the temple is a much more prominent subject in the rhetoric of Chronicles compared to its portrayal both in the books of Samuel–Kings and in certain pentateuchal traditions from which Chronicles draws its perspective.[81] To start with, it is essential to note the general importance of Jerusalem within Chronicles. As Kartveit describes in a 2016 article, a *threefold* concept of centralization actually obtains throughout the book:[82]

(1) the temple is depicted as the center of Jerusalem,
(2) Jerusalem itself is considered to constitute the center of Israel,
(3) the land is described as the center of the world, especially in the genealogical system.

Given this general worldview, it is quite logical that the book concludes with the first part of the Cyrus Edict to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem (2 Chr 36:22–23). Jonker summarizes, "The Jerusalem temple occupies a central role in the Chronicler's rhetoric."[83] He underlines the general notion of Jerusalem's importance one step further: "the Chronicler's re-interpretations of his *Vorlage* (i.e., Sam–Kgs) (. . .), focused particularly on the centrality of Jerusalem temple and cult. Although only small parts of the book refers (*sic*!) directly to the Second Temple and its community, the Chronicler's reworking of his *Vorlage's* material on the reconstruction and functioning of the Davidic–Solomonic temple reveals much of the discourses of his time."[84] Starting from this observation, the following discussion will describe *three* lines of argumentation that can be identified with regard to the Chronicler's concept of cult centralization. These arguments reveal the Chronicler's concept of demarcating Samarian–Judean relations.

3.1. The Jerusalem Temple as Exclusive Representation of the Maqom

What is most outstanding is the prominent position of the temple in Jerusalem as the only *maqom*, the place of worship in Israel. In emphasizing the role of Jerusalem and the temple, Chronicles clearly adopts the central emphasis on *Jerusalem* in Samuel–2 Kings: Jerusalem is chosen (2 Chr 6:38 // 1 Kgs 8:48). God's name will dwell there (2 Chr 6:34 // 1 Kgs 8:44), and God will put his name there, namely on the house that Solomon builds (2 Chr 33:7 // 2 Kgs 21:7).[85] One mention of the temple is of peculiar interest in this context, for it has no parallel in Kings. In 2 Chr 7:12 it reads:

2 Chr 7:12

וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל־שְׁלֹמֹה בַּלָּיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ
שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־תְּפִלָּתֶךָ
וּבָחַרְתִּי בַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה לִי לְבֵית זָבַח׃

"Then YHWH appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him:
'I have heard your prayer
and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice.'"

The notion that YHWH has "chosen" (בחר) the temple of Jerusalem as YHWH's place (מָקוֹם) is then repeated in 2 Chr 7:16, where the promise of election of the house is combined with the notion that YHWH's name will reside there:

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80 Cf. (Hensel 2019b; Hensel 2018a).
81 See among more recent studies especially (Nihan 2016; Nihan and Gonzalez 2018; Kartveit 2016; Jonker 2016).
82 See (Kartveit 2016, pp. 229–42).
83 Jonker (2016), p. 265.
84 Jonker (2016), pp. 265–66.
85 On the emphasis of Jerusalem in Kings, see (Hensel 2019a, pp. 15–30).

2 Chr 7:16a

וְעַתָּה בָּחַרְתִּי וְהִקְדַּשְׁתִּי אֶת־הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה לִהְיוֹת־שְׁמִי שָׁם עַד־עוֹלָם

"For now I have chosen and consecrated this house
that my name may be there forever."

The importance of these two verses lies in their peculiar combination of the terms בחר and מָקוֹם, for neither are used in this combination in Chronicler's *Vorlage*, the book of Samuel–Kings. In Samuel–Kings, only the *city* of Jerusalem and the Davidic dynasty are chosen,[86] not the temple mount, the *maqom*, itself. The general theme of cult centralization is of course present there and indicates the special character of Jerusalem's temple, but the *election of the temple's location is never explicitly* mentioned.[87] On the other hand, the assertion that YHWH has "chosen"the "place"to put his name is unmistakably reminiscent of the language of cult centralization in Deuteronomy, which has recently been pointed out by Nihan.[88] The book of Deuteronomy focuses strongly on cult centralization. In its core text and presumably oldest layer in Deut 12:13–19 vv. 13–14a read:

Deut 12:13–14a

הִשָּׁמֶר לְךָ פֶּן־תַּעֲלֶה עֹלֹתֶיךָ בְּכָל־מָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶה׃
כִּי אִם־בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה

"Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings at any place that you see,
but at the place that YHWH will choose."

This assertion is echoed (in three slightly modified versions[89]) twenty-one times in the so-called centralization formula[90] within the book of Deuteronomy with the same peculiar combination of the terms of בחר and מָקוֹם.

Here in 2 Chr 7, however, Chronicles *combines* two concepts of centralization that are quite different, thereby changing or *re-writing* the tradition: While the (Judean) Deuteronomistic history (Josh–2 Kigs) focusses on Jerusalem as the chosen city, Deuteronomy features the election of the one *maqom*. However, this one *maqom* is neither mentioned nor named in Deuteronomy.[91] Even if the origins of the first edition of Deuteronomy are plausible within Judean contexts (which I think it is; Deuteronomy is not a northern text[92]), it does not promote an *exclusively Judahite perspective*. There are many questions in need of discussion here—especially regarding the historicity of the presumed cultic reforms in the late monarchic era and the relationship between Deuteronomy and the so-called Deuteronomistic History (Joshua, Samuel, and Kings) to which Deuteronomy later was subsequently linked and which features a significantly Jerusalem-centered perspective on cultic affairs.[93] Despite many open questions, I propose that Deut 12:13–19 already demonstrates a certain awareness of or willingness to integrate Samarian interests within the idea of centralization that might have developed in the late monarchic or early exilic period.[94] In this sense, Jerusalem is a *possible*, albeit *non-exclusive* representation of the *maqom* in Deuteronomy.

Be this as it may, Chronicles dismisses the *concessive concept* of Deuteronomy by terminologically combining the election (בחר) of Jerusalem in Samuel–Kings with the election of the one *maqom* in

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86 See, e.g., 1 Kgs 14:21; cf. Ps 78:68.

87 I stress this very important observation in a recent article, see (Hensel 2019a); see also (Nihan 2016, pp. 260–67, 275–82) for similar observation on how Chronicles refer to its *Vorlage* in Samuel–Kings.

88 Nihan (2016), pp. 267–75.

89 On the cult centralization formula and its variations within Deuteronomy, see (Kartveit 2015).

90 Deut 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26; 14:23, 24, 25; 15:20; 16:2, 6, 7, 11, 15, 16; 17:8, 10; 18:6; 26:2; 31:11.

91 The general notion that the central place in Deuteronomy is unnamed and therefore is unnecessarily identified with Mount Zion/Jerusalem has been legitimately stressed in the last couple of years, e.g., (Nihan 2016, pp. 254–45; Müller 2016, pp. 197–98; Hagedorn 2005, pp. 88–211; Hensel 2016, pp. 176–83; Hensel 2019a). THIS INTERPRETATION IS MUCH OLDER–SEE E.G. HALPERN

92 On my critique of such theories proposed by Rofé, Weinfeld, Schorch, and others see (Hensel 2019a, pp. 23–25).

93 On the first edition of Deuteronomy see (Achenbach 2018). I addressed the whole discussion in a recent article, see (Hensel 2019a).

94 The most common dating is into the late monarchic period. This is mainly the case because of the historical connection of Ur-Deuteronomy's core Deut 12* (and related texts) with Josiah's cultic reform in the late monarchic era of Judah (cf. 2 Kgs 22–23*), which was originally proposed by de Wette already in the nineteenth century and had major impact on critical research of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (the impact of this theory on recent research is beyond the scope of this article, but see the very detailed discussions provided by (Pietsch 2013, pp. 1–23, 160–430; Otto 2016, pp. 1188–91); for the debate about the historicity of Josiah's reform see e.g., (Uehlinger 2007, pp. 297–316)). Some newer approaches opt for a neo-Babylonian or early-Persian dating, see e.g., (Kratz 2010, p. 121) and Pakkala's works (e.g., (Pakkala 2012, pp. 133–162)).

Deuteronomy in 2 Chr 7:12. The temple of Jerusalem is presented as the *only legitimate representation* of this *maqom*. This exclusivist concept of centralization is one of the Chronicler's main additions or twists to its portrayal of centralization. One may add 2 Chr 6:5–6 to the discussion:

"Since the day that I brought my people out of the land of Egypt,

(5) I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house (לֹא־בָחַרְתִּי בְּעִיר מִכֹּל שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לִבְנוֹת בַּיִת),

that my name might be there,

and I chose no man as prince over my people Israel;

(6) but I have chosen Jerusalem that my name may be there (וָאֶבְחַר בִּירוּשָׁלַם לִהְיוֹת שְׁמִי שָׁם),

and I have chosen David to be over my people Israel."

The phrase "chosen from any of the tribes of Israel"in v. 5, which according to Chronicles is a *negligible category* of election, explicitly refers to Deut 12:14: The *maqom* has been chosen by YHWH "in one of your tribes"(בְּאַחַד שְׁבָטֶיךָ). Within the context of Deuteronomy, this phrase again hints to the concessive nature of the text: this "one tribe"might be the obvious tribe of Judah. However, it could also be interpreted as the tribe of Manasseh or Ephraim, which stand *pars pro toto* for the North, for Samaria (the juxtaposition of the one tribe of Judah and the one tribe of Manasseh/Ephraim is explicitly mentioned in Ps 78:67b–68). Chronicles dismisses this category. Jerusalem *is* the chosen city, but it is *not* among the city of the tribes: Jerusalem becomes a category *sui generis* in quality. When the Temple Mount in 2 Chr 3:1 is related the Mount Moriah, where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22), it suggests that YHWH's election of Jerusalem's central site even goes back before the time of monarchy. Furthermore, 1 Chr 28:19 indicates that the plans for this temple came from YHWH's hand, giving the Jerusalem temple its own unique quality.

Nihan's abovementioned article points out another concept of centralization purposely referred to in Chronicles. Especially within the description of the construction of the temple in 2 Chr 3–4, which selectively follows 1 Kgs 6–7, the Chronicler's additions are informed by the account of the building of the tabernacle in Exod 25–31 and 35–40. Nihan basically concludes that the description of the temple of Jerusalem emphasizes general *continuity* between the two institutions. This is important insofar as the Priestly concept of centralization with its "portable sanctuary"("tent of meeting," אהל מועד) effectively promotes a significantly less centralized view of the Israelite cult than Deuteronomy, which—depending on its presupposed historical setting—either legitimizes the multiplicity of Yahwistic shrines within the land[95] or purposely avoids identifying this sanctuary with a specific site.[96] *However*, this view is definitely rejected by the concept in Chronicles. By combining the Chronicler's interpretation of Deut 12 (the only legitimate representation of the *maqom* is in Jerusalem) with the Priestly concept of אהל מועד, he combines and *alters* two important, *yet different* pentateuchal centralization models and pinpoints them to the temple in Jerusalem, the center of Israel and the world.

Furthermore, the Chronicler not only stresses the election of the temple by YHWH, but also the election of its builder. In 1 Chr 28:5–6:10; 29:1, YHWH chooses (בחר) Solomon to build the temple. This motif likewise has no parallel in the respective sections in Kings or Deuteronomy. The motif ultimately results in the authorization and legitimation of the Davidic (=Judean) line in cultic question and interpretations. This ideological statement in Chronicles is contrasted with its portrayal of the Northern monarchy: the account of separation into the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms rephrases 1 Kgs 12:1–24 in 2 Chr 10:1–11:4. There are various small differences,[97] but the lack of the report on the installation of Jeroboam I as king is the most significant. No king was ever installed in the North in the Chronicler's presentation of Israel's history.[98] Its history is therefore characterized by continuous *rebellion* against the house of David. By stating that the North was an illicit political entity, it rules out other possible candidates as caretakers for the central place.[99]

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[95] See (Diebner 1991).

[96] See (Douglas 1999, pp. 90–98); see also (Nihan 2016, pp. 256–58) for the discussion.

[97] Cf. (Kartveit 2016, pp. 237–41).

[98] On this, see also (Japhet 2002–2003, pp. 41–44).

[99] Cf. also (Knoppers 2013, p. 74; 1990, pp. 423–40; 1993, pp. 411–31).

The reinterpretation of the pentateuchal traditions and the sections from Samuel–Kings definitively close all doors for the concessive strategies documented within the Pentateuch,[100] thereby denying all legitimacy to the Samarian sanctuary (or other possible sites).

3.2. Judean Orthopraxy

This leads to the second observation: orthopraxy in cultic questions and cultic observance is in Judean hands. In other words, the politically illicit North is complemented by its cultic equivalent.[101] Second Chronicles 13 presents an evaluation of the Southern and the Northern cults in the form of a speech by Abijah immediately after the separation into the two kingdoms (vv. 4–12). Judah's orthopraxy serves as a positive counterpart to the North, something presented in the clear contrast between "you"(v. 8b) and "we, however" (v. 10). This antithesis reappears in v. 11b:

2 Chr 13:11b

כִּי־שֹׁמְרִים אֲנַחְנוּ אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְאַתֶּם עֲזַבְתֶּם אֹתוֹ

"for we keep the charge of YHWH, our God
but you have forsaken him."

In v. 9, before the transgressions of the North, it is explained that they have turned from YHWH and have become apostates.

2 Chr 13:9

הֲלֹא הִדַּחְתֶּם אֶת־כֹּהֲנֵי יְהוָה אֶת־בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן וְהַלְוִיִּם
וַתַּעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם כֹּהֲנִים כְּעַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת
כָּל־הַבָּא לְמַלֵּא יָדוֹ בְּפַר בֶּן־בָּקָר וְאֵילִם שִׁבְעָה וְהָיָה כֹהֵן לְלֹא אֱלֹהִים׃ ס

"Have you not driven out the priests of YHWH, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites,
and made priests for yourselves like the peoples of other lands?
Whoever comes for ordination with a young bull or seven rams becomes a priest of what are not gods."

This verse stresses the crucial flaw of the Northern people and cult: their priesthood is both *non-Aaronide* and comprises only laypeople—meaning non-Levites—who have not been ordained in accordance with the Torah. Abijah's whole speech revolves around the Northerners' wrongdoings in worship and at the wrong place, but no location is mentioned in the whole paragraph. The reader would expect to hear the location of Bethel in this context, the place connected with all Northern deviations from orthopraxy in the rest of Chronicles and its *Vorlage* in Kings (cf 1 Kgs 12). This *gap* may have been chosen deliberately to allow for the contemporary focus of this very episode: Mount Gerizim and the supposed lay cult of the Samarian worshippers in the postexilic period. Mount Gerizim could not be mentioned explicitly because it would not fit the historical fiction of Chronicles in which the North is completely obliterated after 722 BCE (which in itself has of course a distinctly anti-Samaritan touch). The illicit priesthood of Mount Gerizim *in this way* underlines—once again—that Jerusalem is the only possible candidate for the central sanctuary of "Israel."

3.3. Cult Centraliziation as Conditio sine qua non for the Description of Israel

The *ultimate criterion* of orthopraxis in "Israel"is the *unconditional recognition* of Jerusalem's cultic monopoly. The worshippers in the North can only ever participate in the "Israelite"cult if they turn to the only legitimate center of power and culture, namely the YHWH temple in Jerusalem. They must humble themselves and convert. The expectation was that the North not only support the Jerusalem with its taxes, but also make a financial contribution to maintaining the temple in Jerusalem. In contrast to a certain trend in research stressing the openness towards the North in Chronicles, the book of Chronicles promotes a strongly *anti-Samaritan attitude*. Scholars like Japhet or Williamson are absolutely right in stating that Chronicles has a broad concept of Israel (the twelve tribes of Israel; see above). However, the ultimate *conditio sine qua non* for participating in this "Israel"is recognition of the Jerusalem sanctuary. The expectation is that the North

[100] On the concessive nature of the different pentateuchal traditions of the Persian period the (Hensel Forthcoming a). (research overview).

[101] See (Hensel 2018c, pp. 38–46) for more details.

makes a financial contribution to maintaining the temple in Jerusalem (cf. 2 Chr 31:2–8); and that they must actively turn towards Jerusalem by "humbling themselves" [נִכָּנְעוּ; 2 Chr 30:11[102]]). Whoever does not fulfill this criterion does not fully belong to Israel. But turning *to* Jerusalem and by this act turning *away* from Mount Gerizim was simply impossible for the Samarian worshippers, as Mount Gerizim was part of their religious identity. One must note the fact that the Samarians had had their own cultic center—and most likely the more important YHWH cultic center[103]—on Mount Gerizim since the fifth century.

The author of Chronicles must have been aware of this historical context and also that Samarians where referring to themselves as "Israelites" in this period.[104] Unlike the book of Ezra-Nehemiah, which denies the status "Israel" to all individuals except those coming back to Jerusalem from the exile, Chronicles superficially envisions a concept of Pan-Israel that *potentially* includes Samaria. This refers back to the Samarian self-definition as "Israel" but *effectively* denies them the status of Israelite, for the Samarians would never prefer Jerusalem to Mount Gerizim.

3.4. The Historical Realities behind Chronicles

Two crucial conclusions can be drawn from the concept of cult centralization in the book of Chronicles. *First*, Chronicles reframes different pentateuchal centralization traditions in its interpretation of Samuel–Kings *in favor of an exclusive understanding* of an Israelite cult of Judean provenance. Second, the development of the central role of Jerusalem, its temple, and its priesthood reflects a *polemic depiction* of the neighboring Samarian cult (no chosen place, no chosen builder, and not even a legitimate monarchy, therefore no legitimate cult). Why does the book of Chronicles feature this unique portrayal of centralization? First of all, the polemic presentation of the North during the late monarchic period is an indication of the context in which the authors of the Chronicles were writing. As Knoppers states, "The northern-southern interaction depicted during the late monarchy may have clear resonances of the writer's own context in the late Achaemenid or early Hellenistic period. His allusions of religious life in the former northern kingdom shed light on his own thinking about the conditions of the provinces of Yehud and Samaria in his own time."[105]

In addition to this basic observation, more recent approaches to this topic assume that Chronicles is aware of the various "other Yahwisms" and "Yahwistic temples" (like Elephantine, Mount Gerizim, Leontopolis, and Idumea to name the prominent candidates[106]). This unique portrayal of the temple leads some scholars to the conclusion that the position of the temple must have been *contested* during the Chronicler's time. Jonker, for example, summarizes, "[the] Chronicler's intention clearly was, to establish Jerusalem as the centre of Yahwism amidst a situation of a diversity of the Yahwistic and non-Yahwistic sanctuaries."[107] While I fully agree with the historical notion of Yahwistic diversity,[108] I would slightly modify Jonker's observation. Yahwistic diversity was a phenomenon throughout the entire Persian *and* Hellenistic periods. Mount Gerizim was erected no later than the fifth century. Biblical traditions of the early Persian period seem to attest no polemics towards Mount Gerizim (hence the idea of a common Samarian–Judean Pentateuch[109]). This means that Chronicles—stemming already from a later period (fourth or third century BCE)—is no literary reflection of a situation of rivaling sanctuaries. It is instead a witness to a shift in the *perception* of Mount Gerizim and in this way creates a new "reality" for Samarian–Judean relations. As I have argued elsewhere, it is the

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[102] On the expression and its meaning in the context of Chronicles, see (Kartveit 2016, p. 239).

[103] Hensel (2018a, esp. pp. 254–57).

[104] The Samaritans referred to themselves as "Israelites" (cf the Delos inscriptions, third/second century BCE; (Kartveit 2009, pp. 216–35)). This perception is confirmed by the literary sources dated to the *pre*-Hasmonean period and of *non-Samaritan* origin, cf. 2 Macc 5:22–23; 6:1–2 (Pummer 1982, pp. 238–40; Pummer 2016, pp. 47–73); and Sir 50:25–26/Hebrew version (see (Schorch 2013, pp. 136–37)).

[106] See (Grabbe 2010; Hensel Forthcoming b) for an overview on Yahwistic communities outside Judah.

[107] Jonker (2016), p. 260 (unfolding his argument on pp. 255–60).

[108] See my forthcoming article "Yahwistic Diversity and the Hebrew Bible" on this topic.

[109] I have drawn up my own thesis concerning the development of the Pentateuch from Samarian–Judean co-production (preliminary thoughts in (Hensel 2016, pp. 170–94)) in (Hensel Forthcoming a) (with literature and discussion of recent research, e.g., Römer, Nihan, Pummer, Knoppers, Diebner).

shift during the fourth and the third centuries BCE when the perception of Mount Gerizim and the Samarians *turned increasingly negative* in various biblical traditions.[110] This also fits the above-noted negative shift within the redactional activity of the book of Ezra-Nehemiah (see Section 1). Within this timeframe, the idea of cult centralization became a *marker of distinction* between Samaria and Judea—at least in the Judean view on display in Chronicles and Ezra/Nehemiah.

4. Between Continuity and Separation: On Ideological Hermeneutics in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles

It has been demonstrated that both Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles attempted—and this is quite typical for this period of Israel's history[111]—to develop a conceptualization of an "Israelite identity."Their descriptions of themselves also took place as part of the internal group *separation,* that is, from the Samarian sister community. Two textual strategies deserve special focus with regard to the way in which Judean scribal culture in Ezra-Nehemiah as well as in Chronicles oscillates between two poles with regard to the relationship with Samaria. There is the construction of unbroken continuity for the in-group as well as increased *exclusivity* and *separation* in relation to the sister community in Samaria.

In the case of the *book of Ezra-Nehemiah,* this is portrayed as follows: Ezra-Nehemiah unfolds its core strategy as the building of postexilic Judean identity.[112] It aims for a religious, cultic, political, as well as genealogical *continuity* with the previous monarchic period. The rebuilt Jerusalem temple is granted legitimate dignity through the continuity of its *place* (Ezra 3:3, 6, 7) and its *cultic instruments* (Ezra 1:7–11; 6:5). This temple is depicted as *the only one* commanded to be built both by God (Ezra 1:2, 7; 5:1; 6:14) and the Persian emperor (Ezra 6:14). Additionally, the gift of the Torah is exclusively tied to the Aaronide priest and Judean scribe Ezra (Ezra 7:1–6), who brings the Torah back "from the exile"(Ezra 7:6, cf. vv. 12–26).[113] By tracing Ezra' s genealogy back to the high priest Aaron (Ezra 7:1–6), this concept achieves *unbroken* and exclusive continuity for the Torah as well as for the Judean Torah community envisioned by Ezra-Nehemiah.[114] Furthermore, the exodus tradition is applied as a typology for this idea of Israel[115] in order to show continuity to the Israel of old and to construct a "history of salvation"[116] leading exclusively to the Golah community in Jerusalem. As was shown recently by Bortz, the lists of returnees in Ezra 2/Neh 7 seem reminiscent of the book of Numbers, which would imply that the Ezra-Nehemiah group strongly defines its identity in terms of the Israel of old.[117] The continuity of Israel is presented in an exclusivist manner: only the returnees in the lists of Ezra 2/Neh 7 are designated as "all Israel"(Ezra 2:2, 59, 70; 3:1; 6:21–22;[118] cf. כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל in Ezra 2:70).

The emphasis on continuity is closely linked to the focus of the book of Ezra-Nehemiah, which is primarily concerned with the political and religious reformulation of the former kingdom of Judah.[119] The global political framework is now defined by the authorities, so Ezra-Nehemiah must focus its attention on internal matters. It concerns the sanctuary in Jerusalem (Ezra 1–6), the definition of the (cultic) community (e.g., Ezra 2;[120] 9–10;[121] Neh 7; 8–13[122]), the reconstruction of Jerusalem's city wall (Neh 1–6[123]), and finally, also the establishment

[110] Hensel (2019b); (Hensel 2018a, pp. 246–54).
[111] Häusl (2018); (Grohmann 2017; Ben Zvi and Edelman 2015); on the final redactions of the Pentateuch in this period see (Bührer 2019); or of the Hexateuch see Germany (2018).
[112] See especially (Heckl 2016a) (see already the title: "Neuanfang und Kontinuität"); and also (Hensel 2016, pp. 332–43, 391–99).
[113] On this, see (Becking 2001, 273–86).
[114] Cf. (Heckl 2018a, p. 123; Hensel 2016, pp. 304–06).
[115] The fact that various exodus motifs are attributed to the Golah community in Jerusalem has often been noticed; this is especially true for Ezra 1–3; see (Bänzinger 2014, pp. 125–50, esp. 126–38), for a review of current research; many of the basic insights in this matter go back to (Blenkinsopp 1989, pp. 26–36).
[116] Williamson (2007), pp. 160–61.
[117] Bortz (2018, esp. 184–223).
[118] For a detailed discussion of the Golah-centered description of Israel, see (Hensel 2016, pp. 290–92, 332–43) (with bibliography); cf. (Weingart 2014, pp. 73–83).
[119] Cf. (Laird 2016).
[120] Cf. (Bortz 2018).
[121] Cf. (Grätz 2013; Becking 2001).
[122] Cf. (Becking 2011).
[123] See (Heckl 2018c).

of the written tradition of the Torah (Ezra 7; Neh 8[124]). Continuity with an idealized "then"is sought in the Jerusalem community's attempt at self-definition and its attempt to define separating identity markers.

A closer look now shows that this self-discovery is accompanied by the process of distinction from the Samarian community. This is concretized in Ezra 4 by stressing the genealogical discontinuity of the YHWH worshippers from the North (Ezra 4:2). They are depicted as non-Israelites in contrast to "Judah and Benjamin" (Ezra 4:1). The continuation in Ezra 4:6–24 even depicts them as "Israel's enemies"(Ezra 4:1; "storm of the nations"), described as foreigners. The established cultic continuity of the Jerusalem sanctuary is thereby formulated in exclusivist terms, which certainly cannot be the case for Gerizim.[125]

Broadening the perspective from the necessarily narrow focus of the article to the entirety of the book of Ezra-Nehemiah, one also finds comparable textual strategies in other, formerly independent literary precursors of the book of Ezra-Nehemiah. Significant work along these lines includes the recent publications by Knoppers, Heckl, and Hensel.[126] In short, one can surmise that the authoritative handling of the Torah, which was placed exclusively in the hands of the Judean Aaronide Ezra, intends the care, transmission, and interpretation of these texts to be bound exclusively to the Jerusalem community.[127] These functions are not entrusted them to others—one could have the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch in mind. Differentiation from "others" apparently belongs to self-discovery. In correction of the position presented in my monograph on Samaria and Judah, I have now argued that "Israel's self-definition"belongs to the *actual text-pragmatic focus*. Furthermore, Heckl's conclusion that the book of Ezra-Nehemiah is "a programmatic text in the conflict between Jerusalem and Samaria"[128] is only correct to a certain degree. It is true that Ezra-Nehemiah draws up a "polemic of boundary drawing"[129] against the Gerizim community; the ideological demarcation with respect to Samaria is meaningful in the context of the book. But this *differentiation* is only cast as an "ideological shadow"of the Jerusalem version of Israel's self-definition and is not the sole and primary focus of the book.

Comparable mechanisms are at work in *Chronicles*. Their own political and cultic continuity, as well as orthodoxy, are forcefully emphasized. In contrast, the ethnic, political, and cultic discontinuity of contemporary Samaria with the former kingdom of Israel after 722 BCE is consistently highlighted. Furthermore, the Chronicler's *Jerusalem-exclusive interpretation* of the Pentateuch is one step towards the parting of the ways of the two textual traditions that result in the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Masoretic Text. This key strategy of Chronicles combines a generally *exclusive continuity* between the tabernacle and the Jerusalem temple (Nihan) and the general dimension of anti-Samaritan polemics within Chronicles that consequently diminishes Samaria's status as a legitimate variant of "Israel."

5. From Literature to "Reality": Defining "Israel"

In conclusion, the religious-sociological and cultural differences between Judah and Samaria are in no way as distinct as their mirroring in biblical literature may lead one to suspect. The differences between Judah and Samaria, between "Jewish"and "Samaritan"are initially *artificial* and *internal to the literature*. Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah are textbook examples for this. The temple of the Samarians was elevated quite suddenly as the crystalizing point for extensive criticism from the opposing side. In Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, the Samarians became "non-Israelites"(Chronicles) or "foreigners"(Ezra-Nehemiah) by means of a process I would call "literary othering."[130] In a recent piece, Beyerle arrived at the broad idea of the "Intolerance in Early Judaism"(Beyerle 2019). He comes to a comparable conclusion: "Intolerance and toleration both operate

[124] On Ezra 7/Neh 8, see (Hensel 2016, pp. 302–43; Heckl 2016a, pp. 218–89).
[125] See also (Heckl 2013). In his view, the temple building narrative has "in mind the denial of the legitimacy of the temple on Mount Gerizim."(p. 73).
[126] See (Knoppers 2013, 2019) (both monographs with references to his impressive earlier work on the Samaritans and Ezra-Nehemiah); (Heckl 2013; 2016a; 2016b; 2018a, pp. 115–32; 2018c; Hensel 2014; 2015; 2016, pp. 283–366, esp. 363–65; 2018a, pp. 246–47).
[127] Hensel (2016), p. 305.
[128] Heckl (2018a), p. 128; in more detail (Heckl 2016a, pp. 381–87).
[129] Hensel (2016), p. 332 ("Polemik der Grenzziehung").
[130] On the term, see (Hensel 2014, pp. 489–92; 2016, pp. 396–406).

on the basis of differences and the concept of 'othering.' The Samaritan paradigm demonstrates how literary constructions could lead to differences that did not necessarily reflect the historical reality."[131]

Only beginning in the fourth/third century BCE does the incipient literary polemic lead to the formation of the group-specific identity markers. This is traditionally characterized as the Judean–Samarian "schism" and placed in the second and first centuries BCE.[132] By this time, both communities develop group-specific markers such as their own versions of the Torah (Masoretic Text and Samaritan Pentateuch), their own characteristic scripts, and distinctive oral traditions,[133] etc. These signify the parting of the ways between Judeans and Samarians. One should speak from this moment on of "Judaism" and "Jews" on the one hand, and of "Samaritanism" and "Samaritans" on the other—and not before.[134]

Understanding the *hermeneutics* of self-definition on the one hand, and demarcation and othering on the other, which are reflected in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles as two outstanding examples for the period of the formation of early Judaism, should "inspire" scholars—as Beyerle pointed out—"to rethink terminologies and criteria for making distinctions as to what is 'foreign' or 'genuine,' what is '*Umwelt*' or 'Israel.'"[135]

In light of the observations of this article, the conclusions also show the importance of Samarian participation in the socio-cultural, theological, literary, and religious-historical developments that led to the formation of Judaism until the late second/early first century BCE. One can hope for further studies that address detailed questions concerning Samarian influence.[136]

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131 Beyerle (2019), p. 147.
132 See (Knoppers 2013, pp. 217–39; 2019, pp. 177–91; Pummer 2016, pp. 9–25).
133 Schorch (2013), pp. 135–49; (Boccaccini 2002).
134 See also (Cohen 1999).
135 Beyerle (2019), p. 135.
136 In recent years, scholarship has, however, experienced a considerable increase in detailed studies. For the theological and literary-historical aspects of a "general case history" for the Old Testament, see (Heckl 2018b; Hensle 2018b); for literary-historical aspects (especially redactions of the Pentateuch and Hexateuch), see (Schmid 2018; Rhyder 2019; Römer 2018; Hensel Forthcoming a); as well as the detailed studies (Hensel et al. Forthcoming) in the forthcoming volume *Yahwistic Diversity and the Hebrew Bible*.

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