Stephen D. Campbell

Remembering the Unexperienced

Bonn University Press



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Stephen D. Campbell

Remembering the Unexperienced

Cultural Memory, Canon Consciousness, and the Book of Deuteronomy

With a Preface by Dominik Markl

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For Mary Julia von Blucher Jordan (b. 1921)
and George Royal Jordan (b. 1920 – † 2015)
with deep gratitude

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Preface

The concept of cultural memory, as it was developed by Aleida and Jan Assmann, has played a significant role in Germany's engagement with the history of the Third Reich and the Shoah. Notwithstanding this contemporary political and ethical concern, cultural memory theory helps to understand the "making of memory" far beyond the confines of Germany. While the role of memories in shaping collective identities is a universal of human culture, Jan Assmann identified the Hebrew Bible and, in particular, the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy, as prime examples of the creation of memory. The ritual of the Passover (Exod 12) and the instructions to memorize and display teachings on written monuments, and to transmit them to the next generation (e.g., Deut 6), contributed to the formation and canonization of the Sacred Scriptures of Judaism and Christianity.

Biblical scholars have adopted and further explored Assmann's concept of cultural memory, especially in studies on the motifs of learning and memory in Deuteronomy. Stephen Campbell, however, presents the first monograph to systematically apply this notion to the textual analysis of Deuteronomy, and his selection of key texts as test cases is apt. His notion of "generational compression", in particular, addresses an important strategy of textual pragmatics in Deuteronomy that has not gone unnoticed in previous scholarship but deserves more profound and systematic exploration. The collective "you" by which Moses addresses Israel in the plains of Moab is subtly merged with the preceding generation that experienced the "day of the assembly" at Mount Horeb, and with future generations who will live in the land, go into exile, and are supposed to return from there to the promised land (Deut 30). Moses' teaching of Torah thus becomes a paradigmatic moment "for us and for our children forever" (Deut 29:28). The creation of such a transgenerational and transhistorical collective identity lies at the heart of Judaism and its culture of learning.

Campbell chose to combine his exploration of the construction of cultural memory in Deuteronomy with Brevard Childs' canonical reading. While Assmann employed a perspective from cultural studies, Childs approached the Bible as a corpus of writings received in historically grown and still evolving communities of

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faith. Although Assmann and Childs represent contrasting approaches to the Bible – an 'external' academic approach versus one that explicitly situates itself within a community of faith – their interests converge in some regards. Both take seriously the biblical text's growth and continuous 'life' within receiving communities and, without neglecting the academic quest for the texts' historical development, consider their continuing relevance to receiving communities. Campbell shows, against the background of his careful contextualization of each scholar, that the juxtaposition of Assmann and Childs is a "conversation worth having".

The hermeneutical tension represented by the approaches of Assmann and Childs is productive, especially for biblical scholars who consider themselves as belonging to communities of faith and bearing some responsibility for their community's understanding of Scripture. While Childs appeals to faith-based hermeneutical attitudes, Assmann's 'faith-detached' analysis compliments it with an external point of view. Its strength consists in integrating insights from the social and cultural sciences. Such hermeneutical multi-perspectivity is characteristic of academic approaches to sacred scriptures, since the dangers of fundamentalism are based in simplistic conceptions of truth, and historical truth in particular. Cultural memory is a useful concept to address this issue, since it presupposes a complex relationship between historical reality and its cultural reconstruction, but also takes into consideration the contents of canonical texts and their relevance to recipients.

While the first part of this book establishes its hermeneutical framework, the second turns to textual analysis, where the quality of exegesis is put to the test. Campbell highlights the importance of the generational change narrated by Moses in his opening discourse (esp. Deut 2:14), which sets the scene for Moses' teaching of a new generation that is supposed to overcome the "cultural disaster" of one that is absent. Although Moses declares the Horeb covenant valid for the generation present in Moab (Deut 5:3), he establishes a renewed covenant that includes even those "who are not here with us today" (29:14). Just as God had commanded that his teaching be passed on to subsequent generations at Horeb, Moses does so in Moab (4:10; 31:12). Campbell discusses Deuteronomy as an instance of "mnemotechnics", places "generational compression" in the context of ancient Near Eastern treaties, discusses key passages of this rhetoric, and thus systematizes a set of issues that had hitherto not been seen in their systematic correlation. It is to be hoped, therefore, that *Remembering the Unexperienced: Cultural Memory, Canon Consciousness, and the Book of Deuteronomy* will find interested readers and stimulate further research on topics that it has begun to address in earnest.

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I am very grateful to Dominik Markl, who graciously made many helpful suggestions prior to publication. His knowledge and skill within the field of Deuteronomy studies is undeniable, and his encouragement to publish and willingness to contribute a preface to this book continue to give me confidence in its merits. For a young scholar, this is invaluable.

I wish to thank Professors Ulrich Berges and Martin Ebner – both of the Katholisch-Theologische Fakultät at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn – for accepting the manuscript for inclusion in the series Bonner biblische Beiträge. Likewise, I am thankful to the editors at Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht for agreeing to publish it. It has been a pleasure to work with you. Inclusion in BBB is a distinct honour and a fitting end for this research, which was conducted in part at the University of Bonn and which employs much of what continental thinking has to offer in its theologically oriented approach to Deuteronomy.

I also wish to thank the people of the International Baptist Church of Bonn where I serve as pastor. Not many pastors have the opportunity – much less the desire – to pursue academics. Fewer still have the pleasure of seeing that work in print. The encouragement you give is a testimony to your hunger for the deep things of God.

I must also thank my family, especially my wife Beth. The wind has not always blown us in the direction we hoped or expected, but your deeply theological approach to life has never ceased to amaze and inspire me. The encouragement you give me to press ahead through challenges, setbacks, and even despair has been a blessing.

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Stephen D. Campbell
Bonn, Germany
Whit Monday 2020

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABiG	Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums/ Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
AJS	*AJS Review*
AJSoc	American Journal of Sociology
Akk.	Akkadian
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
ANE	ancient Near East
ANET	*Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament.* Edited by James B. Pritchard. 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton, 1969.
AOTC	Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
ApOTC	Apollos Old Testament Commentary
AT	Author's Translation
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testament
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBET	Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie
BDB	Brown, Francis, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BerOl	Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry
BHHB	Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible
BHQ	*Biblia Hebraica Quinta.* Edited by Adrian Schenker et al. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004–
Bib	*Biblica*
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament
BRPBI	Brill Research Perspectives in Biblical Interpretation
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BThSt	Biblisch-Theologische Studien

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BZAR	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtgeschichte
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für altorientalische Wissenschaft
CAD	*The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.* Chicago: Chicago, 1956–2010
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CC	Continental Commentaries
CD	*Church Dogmatics.* Karl Barth. Translated by T.F. Torrance et al. 4 vols. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1956–1975
CIT	Current Issues in Theology
COS	*The Context of Scripture.* Edited by William W. Hallo. 4 vols. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997–2016
CTM	*Concordia Theological Monthly*
DBI	*Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation.* Edited by R.J. Coggins and J.L. Houlden. London: SCM, 1990
DCH	*Dictionary of Classical Hebrew.* Edited by David J.A. Clines. 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 1993–2014.
DDD	*Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* 2d rev. ed. Edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Peter van der Horst. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1999
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
dt.	deuteronomic (referring to the qualities of the Book of Deuteronomy)
dtr.	deuteronomistic (referring to the editor(s)/redactor(s) of the so-called Deuteronomistic History)
Dtr^G	Deuteronomistic History
EncJud	*Encyclopaedia Judaica.* 2d. ed. 22 vols. Detroit and Jerusalem. 2007
EncJudaism	*The Encyclopaedia of Judaism.* 5 vols. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000–2004
ES	Esarhaddon's Succession Treaties/*Vassel-Treaties of Esarhaddon*
ESV	English Standard Version
EvT	*Evangelische Theologie*
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FB	Forschung zur Bibel
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
GTA	Göttinger theologische Arbeiten
HALOT	*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Ludwig Köhler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited by M. E.J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–1999.
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HBAI	*Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel*
HBM	Hebrew Bible Monographs
HBT	*Horizons in Biblical Theology*
HCOT	Historical Commentary on the Old Testament
HerKor	*Herder Korrespondenz*
Heb.	Hebrew
HThKAT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*

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IBHS	*Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax.* Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Int	*Interpretation*
ITC	International Theological Commentary
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JBQ	*Jewish Bible Quarterly*
JBTh	*Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie*
JCS	*Journal of Classical Sociology*
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JTI	*Journal of Theological Interpretation*
JTISup	Journal of Theological Interpretation Supplements
KWS	Klassiker der Wissenssoziologie
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LW	*Luther's Works.* Martin Luther. Translated by Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehman. 55 vols. Philadelphia: Muehlenberg and Fortress, and St. Louis: Concordia, 1955–1986
LXX	Septuagint
MCM	Media and Cultural Memory/Medien und kulterelle Erinnerung
MemStud	*Memory Studies*
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NCBC	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
NCE	*New Catholic Encyclopedia.* Edited by William J. McDonald et al. 15 vols. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967
NIDOTTE	*New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis.* Edited by Willem A. VanGemeren. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997
NIB	*New Interpreter's Bible.* Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994–2004.
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NJPS	New Jewish Publication Society translation of the Tanakh
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NSKAT	Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar Altes Testament
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
ÖBS	Österreichische biblische Studien
ORA	Orientalische Religionen in der Antike/Oriental Religions in Antiquity
OTL	Old Testament Library
OtSt	*Oudtestamentische Studiën*
PoTod	*Poetics Today*
POuT	De Prediking van het Oude Testament
ProEccl	*Pro Ecclesia*
Proof	*Prooftexts: A Journal of Jewish Literary History*
PRSt	*Perspectives in Religious Studies*
PzB	*Protokolle zur Bibel*

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QD	Quaestiones disputatae
RIPBC	Routledge Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Biblical Criticism
R&T	*Religion and Theology*
RL	*La Rivista Liturgica*
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SBAB	Stuttgarter Biblische Aufsatzbände
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SCL	Sather Classical Lectures
SJT	*Scottish Journal of Theology*
SoFo	*Social Forces*
SP	Samaritan Pentateuch
StBibLit	Studies in Biblical Literature
TB	Theologische Bücherei: Neudrucke und Berichte aus dem 20. Jahrhundert
TBN	Themes in Biblical Narrative
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament.* Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck et al. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 16 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–2018
ThTo	*Theology Today*
T^J	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
TLZ	*Theologische Literaturzeitung*
T^N	Targum Neofiti
T^O	Targum Onkelos
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentary
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
UCOP	University of Cambridge Oriental Publications
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSupp	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
Vul	Vulgate
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WD	*Wort und Dienst*
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAR	*Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

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1. Introduction

The catch phrases "social matrix" and "canonical shape" suggest the relationship between social scientific criticism and canonical criticism in Old Testament studies. In particular, I want to stake out the intrinsic compatibility of their collaboration, in order properly to fulfil what each approach hopes to achieve.[1]

1.1. Justification and Scope

How does one attempt to offer a fresh way of framing the interpretation of a biblical text? To be sure, it is best in most cases to start with the accomplishments of others and to move forward where possible and appropriate: to build upon the work of others and endeavour to take the conversation further is the practice of mainstream scholarship. In the case of the present study, I will begin by engaging with German Egyptologist Jan Assmann and American biblical theologian Brevard Childs – both acknowledged giants within their respective fields – before applying relevant insights gained to the book of Deuteronomy. Assmann, professor emeritus at Heidelberg and honorary professor at Konstanz, is still living and shows no signs of slowing down in his scholarly output. His many books that make their way into English translations as well as his own English language publications testify to his great influence both in the English-speaking world and within his native European context where he is a well-known public intellectual. Brevard Childs, although deceased, is one of the figureheads of twentieth century Protestant biblical theology. His influence in arguing for a different-to-the-mainstream approach to interpreting the Bible cannot be disputed, and his corpus still exerts a profound influence on the field of biblical studies, especially in the United States. But how could bringing these two scholars together result in a fruitful discussion?

1 Norman K. Gottwald, "Social Matrix and Canonical Shape," *ThTo* 42 (1985): 307–321 (quote from p. 307).

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In order to answer this question, I will now turn to a 1985 essay, written several years before the wave of the social scientific study of memory appeared on the shores of biblical scholarship. In this essay, titled "Social Matrix and Canonical Shape," Norman Gottwald argues for the theoretical compatibility of social scientific criticism of the Bible and what he called "canonical criticism."[2] Although Childs explicitly preferred the term "canonical approach," it is Childs with whom Gottwald interacts as the representative of the approach he has in mind. Gottwald's insightful essay will serve as the initial occasion for the discussion in the pages below regarding Childs, Assmann, and Deuteronomy.

Without delving too deeply into the details of Gottwald's argument, it is helpful, nonetheless, to keep in mind his conclusion that "canonical criticism is not inconsistent with social scientific criticism, provided that each sees the element of the other that is intrinsic and necessary to its own enterprise."[3] If by "sees" Gottwald simply means "acknowledges," then there is little problem for the present study. But if Gottwald means – as I think he does – that in order to be mutually informing, a canonical approach and a social scientific approach must learn from and endeavour to incorporate the central concerns of the other, then I have no doubt that meeting this condition is one of the chief challenges to be overcome. Yet as Gottwald points out, it is the *results* of a chosen methodology – even one that attempts to bring two approaches into conversation with one another – that must be evaluated. He writes,

> Nevertheless, to carry through a methodology properly, all the way to its limits so that it gives maximal yield, means that a single-mindedness must be applied. This does not mean that the advocate of the method, much less the whole community of scholars and interested people at large, necessarily accepts that this method alone yields truthful and valid results. It only means that the results achieved by this method are significant and must be addressed. The overall significance of such a comprehensive method, and especially its precise relation to other valid methods, is hardly assessable prior to the results of detailed inquiry and certainly not by fiat of single scholars, including those most committed to the new method and those most opposed to it.[4]

Therefore, it is only in retrospect that the reader will be able to discern whether the conversation which follows has yielded a fruitful harvest.

Nevertheless, justification is still required for a discussion, which seeks to carry out a worked example of what Gottwald imagines in his essay. Specifically, why should one consider bringing Brevard Childs's canonical approach into conversation with Jan Assmann's cultural memory approach? And why should this conversation take place in reference to the paraenesis of Deut 4:1–40? The

2 Gottwald, "Social Matrix and Canonical Shape."
3 Gottwald, "Social Matrix and Canonical Shape," 321.
4 Gottwald, "Social Matrix and Canonical Shape," 312–313.

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answer to the first question is that both scholars are highly respected and influential within the academy. Through its reception, it is clear that Childs's scholarship has had an irreversible impact on the field of biblical studies, and Assmann has proven to be an important scholar within an academic context that is increasingly aware of the importance of cultural memory studies. Thus, there is value in exploring ways these two scholars, whose approaches are not normally thought to be compatible, might together effect a fresh reading of the book of Deuteronomy.

As to the second question, the text was first chosen for heuristic reasons, with the presumption that it would prove fruitful for such a discussion. In addition to the fact that neither Assmann nor Childs has offered any extensive treatments of this text, it is both theologically rich and helpfully situated within a book well-known for its theme of remembrance. Deuteronomy 4 is an important text for the further reason that it articulates a theological understanding that is, in many ways, characteristic of Deuteronomy as a whole.[5] In the end, however, the reader must judge whether or not the selection of this text helps or hinders the aims of the discussion.

Another benefit of selecting Deut 4:1–40 is that there is a growing interest in reading the Deuteronomistic History (Dtr^G) as cultural memory. Forget has recently argued that,

> The "Deuteronomistic History" is an interesting quilt of the weaving of cultural memory. This historiographical corpus gives evidence of the processes of cultural memory and demonstrates the causes and implications of the choices of such a selective remembering. The monotheistic discourse interwoven in this corpus gives witness to the political and religious workings of building and protecting a distinct people among the ANE. Biblical Israel was self-defined by its tradents; the scribes. The workings of a select few has become the utopian and official version of Israel's past. Mnemonic formulae such as "until this day" are but one example of anchoring threads used as memorial purposes, as teaching opportunities and as important prompts of connective memory.[6]

If I may be allowed to take Forget's quilt imagery further, I would say that, although the Dtr^G – not to mention Genesis through Numbers – is comprised of different pieces of material, it remains one quilt, used by families, individuals,

5 Recently, many scholars have considered the monotheistic claims of Deut 4:32–40 to be the only ones in Deuteronomy and, therefore, not characteristic of the rest of the book. See, for example, Dominik Markl, "The Babylonian Exile as the Birth Trauma of Monotheism," *Biblica* 101 (2020): 1–25. Whether or not this claim is true on historical grounds is different than the question of whether this is true from a canonical perspective. For example, from a canonical reading Deut 4:32–40 might well influence a reader to understand Deut 5:7 (the first commandment of the Decalogue) or Deut 6:4 (the Shma) as deeply monotheistic.

6 Gaétane-Diane Forget, "Navigating 'Deuteronomistic History' as Cultural Memory," *R&T* 17 (2010), 10.

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and communities as a quilt, rather than deconstructed and investigated for its compositional features. For members and participants in communities of biblical faith, this imagery of a quilt is suggestive of the Bible's "received form," inherited as authoritative and known in contemporary parlance as "Scripture."[7] This, then, is the direction in which the discussion moves: a cultural memory study of the world within the text of the biblical canon's received form for the sake of the faithful.[8] But in order for the discussion to proceed, several key terms must be defined.

1.2. Key Terms

As with any study, it is helpful to define some key terms at the outset in order to forestall, as much as possible, any unnecessary misunderstanding. I will begin by addressing the terms culture, memory, and canon before turning to a term that will become the major theme of the final chapters.[9]

1.2.1. Culture, Memory, and Canon

Over the last few decades, there has been a growing consensus that culture is intricately related to memory. In fact, in a 2008 essay on "Canon and Archive," Aleida Assmann describes culture as the memory of a society that is transmitted through symbol rather than genetics.[10] This means that culture encompasses the intellectual, artistic, and creative achievements of a community.[11] Because the

7 Good reasons for the use of the term Scripture – as well the approach to biblical studies indicative of reading the Bible as "Scripture" – have been given lucid articulation in R.W.L. Moberly, "Theological Approaches to the Old Testament," in *The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Companion* (ed. by John Barton; Princeton: Princeton, 2016): 480–506 (esp., 483–497).

8 "The world within the text" is not meant to deny that there exists more than one form of the biblical canon, but rather to point up the aim of allowing the text of Scripture to speak on its own terms. This methodological decision will be given a thicker definition in Chapters 2–4 through the discussions of Assmann and Childs.

9 For a comprehensive literature review of Deuteronomy scholarship, see Eckart Otto, *Deuteronomium* (4 vols.; HThKAT; Freiburg: Herder, 2012–2017), 27–282. Otto's review begins in 1670 and includes a vast bibliography (op. cit., 27–61).

10 Aleida Assmann, "Canon and Archive," in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (MCM 8; ed. by Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 97.

11 For the semantic challenges of the English "culture" and German "Kultur" see, Dietrich Harth, "The Invention of Cultural Memory" in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (MCM 8; ed. by Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 87.

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elements that make up culture are passed down, each generation can build upon what it inherits than start afresh. As Assmann articulates it,

> "Cultures create a contract between the living, the dead, and the not yet living. In recalling, iterating, reading, commenting, criticizing, [and] discussing what was deposited in the remote or recent past, humans participate in extended horizons of meaning-production."[12]

Culture and memory, however, are not so closely associated as to make the term cultural memory a tautology, for cultural memory also includes that which is forgotten (through active destruction or passive neglect) as well as that which is remembered (through active canonisation or through passive archiving).[13]

Within this broad sociological sense of cultural memory that includes both remembering and forgetting, "canon" relates to the formalised and standardised elements of society. These elements include literary classics, religious texts, rituals, myths, places, and even individuals. Through an active selection and canonising process as well as an ongoing re-affirmation of these elements, a level of value is ascribed to these sites of memory which is not ascribed to other aspects of the collective identity. This evaluative selection is the reason that certain artists's works are displayed prominently in the grand rooms of national art museums (culturally, they are the canonical artists and/or works of art), while other art is archived in museum storage rooms.

This cultural illustration helps one understand the sociological importance of the biblical canon; these texts were chosen and not others. In this sense the biblical canon is a significant site of cultural memory for communities of faith for whom the Bible is authoritative. Yet Childs's canonical approach both complements and complicates this sociological account of canon;[14] indeed, Childs is less than favourable regarding the ability of sociological approaches to address the subject matter of the biblical canon.[15] Instead, for Childs the biblical canon is received by and for the church in faith and responsiveness to these texts's thoroughgoing witness to God, regardless of the biblical authors's initial re-

12 Assmann, "Canon and Archive," 97.

13 Assmann, "Canon and Archive," 97–99. Assmann here leaves out the role that unconscious repression might play in forgetting.

14 This brief description of these two approaches to canon nicely illustrates that part of the difference between Assmann and Childs is that one addresses the Bible in an emic manner (i. e., from inside a particular tradition), whilst the other addresses it in an etic manner (i. e., from outside that tradition). See the discussion in Mark G. Brett, *Biblical Criticism in Crisis? The Impact of the Canonical Approach on Old Testament Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1991), 15–18.

15 Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (London: SCM, 1992), 22–25.

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ception in their context of origin.[16] For Childs, the biblical canon is not only a sociological phenomenon, or a shaping force for communal identity, but is primarily a collection of authoritative writings (not the events behind them) that together witness to God, who is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and who continues to speak to his church today.

However, the questions still remain: what canon, whose culture, and what does it mean to remember? Although these terms will be given fuller definition by Jan Assmann and Brevard Childs in Chapters 2–4, some preliminary comments are in order. First, I come to the present study as a Protestant, evangelical Christian. This means that the canon I have received is a Christian canon and not a Jewish one, a Protestant one and not a Catholic one; but reading the Old Testament (known alternatively as Hebrew Bible or Tanakh) with care and sensitivity as a testimony to Jesus Christ also means reading it as a distinct witness, the witness of the people of Israel to the God of Israel. A balance must be struck, therefore, in order not to flatten this witness. At the same time, however, I affirm with Moberly and others that without proper care it is possible for one's faith to adversely skew – or even manipulate – one's reading of the biblical text.[17] Without any doubt, therefore, the academic discipline of biblical studies requires engagement with the same text from different perspectives and in conversation with other academic disciplines; this is exactly what the reader will find in the pages that follow.

Secondly, knowing which culture is in view will be essential for understanding the study that follows, for a great deal depends on whether the reader has in mind the "historical" communities behind the text, the Israel depicted within the world of the text, or contemporary communities in front of the text. Although I speak from the context of American (specifically the U.S.A.) Protestantism, I am aware that this is not the only community that has inherited and reads as Scripture the text known to me as the Old Testament. Indeed, throughout this study, my use of the terms "culture" and "community" (they are related but not interchangeable terms) vary in their referents. In most cases, what I have in mind is the community of Israel depicted within the biblical text and those communities (both ancient and modern) that have received that text and its witness as authoritative. As will become clear in Chapter 7, I believe that my own Christian community has much to learn both from the witness of Scripture and from the ongoing testimony of Jewish communities.

16 For example, the prophet Jeremiah was not received in his own day, but the book of prophecy that bears his name has been accepted as an authoritative witness to the words and works of God.

17 R.W.L. Moberly, "How May We Speak of God? A Reconsideration of the Nature of Biblical Theology," *TynBul* 53 (2002), 179–183.

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Finally, the term remembering in the present study entails more than the recalling of learned knowledge.[18] My usage of and interaction with "remembering" is closer to the German lexeme *Gedächtnis*, which "stands for the capacity to store not just what is learned but also sensory impressions and 'mental processes,' which can then at an opportune moment be allowed to 'enter one's consciousness' again."[19] This understanding of what it means to remember Horeb will be essential in the study that follows.

1.2.2. Generational Compression

Another term that needs a preliminary discussion here is "generational compression." With the use of this idiom I mean a rhetorical device by which the imagined audience is addressed as though it has had the experiences of a previous generation *or* that it will have the experiences of a future generation for the illocutionary purpose of pressuring that audience to respond in faith to the works of God which it has not – or will not – directly experience(d). In the case of Deut 4:1–40, specifically, I will argue for the following: 1) the deliberate rhetorical anachronism of placing the generation born in the wilderness in the position of its parents who stood at Sinai (esp., verses 9–19), and 2) the rhetorical prochronism of placing that same generation in the place of its descendants in exile and return from exile (verses 25–31). Importantly, this fluidity of address occurs within literary units (the book of Deuteronomy, the Pentateuch, the Hexateuch, the Dtr^{G}, etc.) in which it is essential that Moses's imagined audience on the plains of Moab is not the Exodus generation but is instead a new generation. Therefore, the word "compression" is used, as it allows that generation to have its own identity within time and space while simultaneously being rhetorically pressed into the experiences of its parents at Horeb or its descendants in exile.

Although this rhetorical observation is not new, generational compression remains a helpful articulation of this rhetoric in Deuteronomy 4 for at least two reasons. First, this term helps one distinguish the rhetoric and its possible desired effect from the phenomenon of the so-called *Generationswechsel* alone.[20] Secondly, addressing the text on the level of rhetoric enables the reader to explore the ongoing impact of the chosen text in its received form as opposed to the alter-

18 This is only one of the many ways of understanding "memory." The inaugural issue of the journal *Memory Studies* helps to illustrate the plurality of formulations. Henry L. Roediger, III and James V. Wertsch, "Creating a new discipline of memory studies," *MemStud* 1 (2008): 9–22.

19 Harth, "The Invention of Cultural Memory," 87.

20 Johannes Taschner, "Die Bedeutung des Generationswechsels für den Geschichtsrückblick im Dtn 1–3," *WD* 26 (2001): 61–72.

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native approach of using the *Generationswechsel* as literary- or redaction-critical data in the same way that scholars have used Deuteronomy's *Numeruswechsel*.[21]

Instead of taking the diachronic approach, the engagement with Brevard Childs and Jan Assmann will point towards creatively engaging with the world within the text.[22] This approach will focus attention on the ongoing impact of Moses's rhetoric on those in front of the text, who continue to read the Bible as Scripture rather than placing attention on the ancient audience alone. Although there is a growing interest in addressing Deut 4:1–40 on the level of rhetoric,[23] and much has been done by way of addressing this rhetoric's role in teaching future generations of ancient Israel,[24] what has remained largely unaddressed is the role that this rhetoric plays in cultural formation, including ritual performance and covenant theology.[25] Several years ago, Jon Levenson offered an excellent theological treatment of the historical prologue in ANE treaty texts that provided an

21 See, primarily, Thomas Römer, *Israels Väter: Untersuchungen zur Väterthematik im Deuteronomium und in der deuteronomistischen Tradition* (OBO 99; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990); and Norbert Lohfink, *Die Väter Israels im Deuteronomium: Mit einer Stellungnahme von Thomas Römer* (OBO 111; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag and Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1991). Eckart Otto has recently attempted to move this discussion in a theological direction with interests similar to Brevard Childs's. Idem, *Deuteronomium*, 557–558; and idem, "Tora für eine neue Generation in Dtn. 4: Die hermeneutische Theologie des Numeruswechsels in Deuteronomium 4,1–40," in *Deuteronomium – Tora für eine neue Generation* (BZAR 17; ed. by Georg Fischer et al.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011), 108–111.

22 Within the historical-critical scholarship on Deuteronomy, the two most influential voices have been Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (6th ed.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1905); and Martin Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch: Die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im alten Testament* (Darmstadt: WBG, 1957). For an explanation of why current scholarship has moved beyond these seminal works, see Eckart Otto, "The Integration of the Post-Exilic Book of Deuteronomy into the Post-Priestly Pentateuch," in *The Post-Priestly Pentateuch: New Perspectives on its Redactional Development and Theological Profiles* (FAT 101; ed. by Federico Giuntoli and Konrad Schmid; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 332–335.

23 See, for example, the published dissertations of Dietrich Knapp, *Deuteronomium 4: Literarische Analyse und theologische Interpretation* (GTA 35; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985); Georg Braulik, *Die Mittel Deuteronomischer Rhetorik: Erhoben aus Deuteronomium 4,1–40* (AnBib 68; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1978); and Jerry Hwang, *The Rhetoric of Remembrance: An Investigation of the "Fathers" in Deuteronomy* (SIPHRUT 8; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012).

24 For example, Karin Finsterbusch, *Weisung für Israel: Studien zu religiösen Lehren und Lernen im Deuteronomium und in seinem Umfeld* (FAT 44; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005); eadem, "Die kollektive Identität und die Kinder: Bemerkungen zu einem Programm im Buch Deuteronomium," in *Gottes Kinder* (JBTh 17; ed. by Martin Ebner et al.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2002): 99–120; and Barat Ellman, *Memory and Covenant: The Role of Israel's and God's Memory in Sustaining the Deuteronomic and Priestly Covenants* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 75–104.

25 Barat Ellman has explored the relationship between memory and covenant in her literary-critical study *Memory and Covenant*.

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incisive discussion of the cultural and ritual impact of the view of history evidenced in those portions of covenant texts.[26] It is in this direction that the present discussion goes – towards understanding the actualising effect the rhetoric of generational compression in Deut 4:1–40 has on later generations.

This book, therefore, consists of two major parts. Part I is titled, "A Theoretical Framework for Interpretation" and consists of three chapters. The purpose of these chapters is both to introduce Assmann and Childs to the reader and to allow these two scholars to shape my interpretive framework for exegesis. Upon thus establishing a framework for interpretation, the focus in Part II (titled, "A Mnemo-Canonical Framework and Theological Interpretation") turns to the task of exegesis. Again, this portion of the argument consists of three chapters, and I argue that bringing the cultural memory concerns of Jan Assmann and the canonical approach of Brevard Childs to bear on the text of Deut 4:1–40 opens up fresh vistas for discussions regarding the communal, trans-generational nature of covenant.

26 Jon D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (New York: Harper Collins, 1985), 36–42 and 80–86.

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