

JULIA RHYDER

Centralizing the Cult

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Mohr Siebeck

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Julia Rhyder

Centralizing the Cult

The Holiness Legislation in Leviticus 17–26

Mohr Siebeck

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Preface

The present study is a revised version of my PhD dissertation, completed at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Lausanne under the direction of Christophe Nihan. It was conducted as part of the Swiss National Science Foundation Project no. 153029, and examined in June 2018 by a panel consisting of Thomas Römer (chair), Christian Frevel, Sarianna Metso, Christophe Nihan (director), and James W. Watts.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Nihan for his role as my doctoral supervisor. He provided me with an exceptional training environment at Lausanne, which enabled me to gain knowledge and competencies in a variety of new areas. I have benefited greatly from our many discussions over the years, as well as from Prof. Nihan's comments on various drafts of my dissertation. I wish also to express my particular thanks to Prof. Nihan for his assistance during my relocation from Australia to Switzerland with my husband, Timothy Rhyder, and for all that he did to make us feel welcome in Lausanne.

Special thanks are also due to the members of my doctoral panel, who provided me with many valuable comments on various aspects of my research, as well as suggestions for improving the thesis for publication. I am particularly grateful for their willingness to travel to Lausanne for the public defense of my dissertation, which enabled me to benefit from a dynamic, face-to-face discussion. I also wish to thank Konrad Schmid, Mark S. Smith, Hermann Spieckermann, and David Andrew Teeter for accepting the present study into the series *Forschungen zum Alten Testament*.

Several sections of this study were initially presented as papers at various academic meetings. The discussions of ritual and temporal standardization in chapters 4 and 6 were presented in different forms at the graduate student meeting of the Faculties of Theology of Berlin, Göttingen, and Lausanne held in Lausanne in May 2016, at an international conference organized by the Faculty of Theology in Lausanne that same month, and at the European Association of Biblical Studies (EABS) Annual Meeting held in Helsinki in August 2018. The issue of Judean bias in the priestly traditions, addressed in chapter 4, was presented in a different form at an international conference hosted by the Protestant Institute of Theology at Montpellier in December 2018. The discussion of the high priest's vestments in chapter 4 also builds on research undertaken for a coauthored paper (with Christophe Nihan) presented at the EABS

Annual Meeting held in Leuven in July 2016. Certain elements of chapter 5 were presented at an international conference hosted by the Faculty of Arts at the University of Geneva in May 2014, at a colloquium hosted by the Collège de France in May 2018, and at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Denver in November 2018. My research on the 4QReworked Pentateuch C manuscript, presented in chapter 6, was also delivered in a different version at the EABS graduate student meeting held in Leuven in March 2015. Finally, the discussion of the sabbath in chapter 7 was presented in modified form at the graduate student meeting of the Faculties of Theology of Basel, Göttingen, and Lausanne held in Basel in May 2018. I received many valuable comments at these various conferences and workshops, which were of great benefit to the present study.

This book could not have been completed without the support of colleagues, friends, and family members. I revised the manuscript while working as a post-doctoral researcher in a team led by Sonja Ammann at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Basel. I am grateful to Prof. Ammann for her support, advice, and kindness throughout this process, as well as for the friendship of my colleagues Helge Bezold and Stephen Germany at the University of Basel. I am also grateful to the various members of the Biblical Studies Institute at the University of Lausanne for their support during my doctoral studies, especially to my colleagues Anna Angelini, Aurélie Bischofberger, Hervé Gonzalez, Priscille Marshall, and Katharina Pyschny. I wish also to thank Anna Angelini, Mark Brett, Jordan Davis, and Benedikt Hensel for their feedback on drafts of select chapters of the study, Angela Roskop Erisman for her careful copyedit of the manuscript, and Joan Beaumont, Anita Dirnberger, Timothy Rhyder, and Garry Tongs, who provided valuable assistance with matters of indexing and proof reading. Special mention should be made of Rotem Avneri Meir, who proof read the entire manuscript and also assisted me in navigating the Modern Hebrew of certain secondary sources that were important for this study. Any remaining mistakes in the manuscript are my sole responsibility.

This study involved the particular challenge of relocating from Australia to Switzerland. I am grateful to my family and friends in Australia for their support and encouragement during this process. I wish to particularly mention my parents, Joan Beaumont and Oliver Beaumont, my stepmother, Pamela Bowen, and my sisters, Diana Beaumont and Caroline Beaumont, for their continued love and support. My mother, Joan, deserves a particular word of thanks for the model of academic excellence that she has always demonstrated in her work as a historian, and for her encouragement as I pursued my own academic interests. Finally, I am, above all, thankful to my husband, Tim, whose support during the writing of this book has known no limits. I dedicate this study to him with gratitude and affection.

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List of Abbreviations

The titles of biblical books and ancient sources are abbreviated according to *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd ed. (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2014). Unless otherwise stated, all translations of the biblical text and secondary sources in this book are my own.

ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament
AB	Anchor Bible
<i>ABD</i>	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ABS	Archaeology and Biblical Studies
AcBib	Academia Biblica
ADPV	Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins
<i>AHw</i>	<i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i> . Wolfram von Soden. 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965–1981
AIL	Ancient Israel and Its Literature
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
ANE	Ancient Near East
AnOr	Analecta Orientalia
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOS	American Oriental Series
<i>ANET</i>	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . Edited by James B. Pritchard. 3rd ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969
AsJT	Asia Journal of Theology
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
<i>BA</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
<i>BAR</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BARIS	BAR (British Archaeological Reports) International Series
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBET	Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie

<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
<i>BCH</i>	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
BDB	Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
BEATAJ	Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentums
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BGBE	Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese
<i>BHS</i>	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i>
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BibSem	The Biblical Seminar
BJSUCSD	Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California, San Diego
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament
BM	British Museum
<i>BN</i>	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
BWA(N)T	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten (und Neuen) Testament
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZABR	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für altorientalische und bibli- sche Rechtsgeschichte
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wis- senschaft
<i>CAD</i>	<i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> . Chicago, IL: The Oriental In- stitute of the University of Chicago, 1956–2006
CahRB	Cahiers de la Revue biblique
CAP	Cowley, Arthur E. <i>Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Cen- tury B.C.</i> Oxford: Clarendon, 1923
CAT	Commentaire de l’Ancien Testament
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CC	Covenant Code
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
ConBOT	Coniectanea Biblica: Old Testament Series
<i>COS</i>	<i>The Context of Scripture</i> . Edited by William W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–2002
CSHJ	Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism

CUSAS	Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology
D	Deuteronomic Code
DBAT	Dielheimer Blätter zum Alten Testament und seiner Rezeption in der Alten Kirche
<i>DCH</i>	<i>Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i> . Edited by David J. A. Clines. 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 1993–2014
<i>DDD</i>	<i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible</i> . Edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst. Leiden: Brill, 1995. 2nd rev. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DMOA	Documenta et Monumenta Orientis Antiqui
<i>DSD</i>	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
Dtr	Deuteronomistic
EA	El-Amarna tablets. According to the edition of Jørgen A. Knudtzon. <i>Die el-Amarna-Tafeln</i> . Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1908–1915. Repr., Aalen: Zeller, 1964. Continued in Anson F. Rainey, <i>El-Amarna Tablets, 359–379</i> . 2nd rev. ed. Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1978
<i>EBR</i>	<i>Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception</i> . Edited by Hans-Josef Klauck et al. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009–
ETR	Etudes théologiques et religieuses
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FIOTL	Formation and Interpretation of Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>GELS</i>	<i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> . Takamitsu Muraoka. Leuven: Peeters, 2009
GMTR	Guides to the Mesopotamian Textual Record
H	Holiness legislation
<i>HALOT</i>	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HBAl	Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel
HCOT	Historical Commentary on the Old Testament
HCS	Hellenistic Culture and Society
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament

HR	History of Religions
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HThKAT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>IBC</i>	<i>Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
ITC	International Theological Commentary
<i>JA</i>	<i>Journal Asiatique</i>
<i>JAJ</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Judaism</i>
<i>JANESCU</i>	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JESHO</i>	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
<i>JGRChJ</i>	<i>Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism</i>
<i>JHebS</i>	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JNSL</i>	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series</i>
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>KAR</i>	<i>Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts</i> . Edited by Erich Ebeling. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1919–1923
KHAT	Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament
KHC	Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament
<i>KTU</i>	<i>Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit</i> . Edited by Manfred Dietrich, Oswald Loretz, and Joaquín Sanmartín. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2013. 3rd enl. ed. of <i>KTU: The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani, and Other Places</i> . Edited by Manfred Dietrich, Oswald Loretz, and Joaquín Sanmartín. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995

LD	Lectio Divina
LHBOTS	The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MdB	Le Monde de la Bible
MT	Masoretic Text
MTZ	Münchener theologische Zeitschrift
MUSJ	Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph
NCBC	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
NEchtB	Neue Echter Bibel
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NovT	Novum Testamentum
<i>NRTh</i>	<i>La nouvelle revue théologique</i>
NSKAT	Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar, Altes Testament
<i>Numen</i>	<i>Numen: International Review for the History of Religions</i>
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OCM	Oxford Classical Monographs
Or	Orientalia (NS)
OTG	Old Testament Guides
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTM	Old Testament Message
OTR	Old Testament Readings
OTS	Old Testament Studies
OS	Oudtestamentische Studiën
P	Priestly source
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
<i>Qad</i>	<i>Qadmoniot</i>
<i>QC</i>	<i>Qumran Chronicle</i>
QD	Quaestiones Disputatae
<i>RA</i>	<i>Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RBS	Resources for Biblical Study
<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
<i>RevScRel</i>	<i>Revue des sciences religieuses</i>
<i>RGG</i>	<i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> . Edited by Hans Dieter Betz et al. 4th ed. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998–2007
<i>RTC</i>	<i>Recueil des tablettes chaldéennes</i> . François Thureau-Dangin. Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1903
<i>RTL</i>	<i>Revue théologique de Louvain</i>
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
<i>SAAB</i>	<i>State Archives of Assyria Bulletin</i>
SAACT	State Archives of Assyria Cuneiform Texts

SBAB	Stuttgarter biblische Aufsatzbände
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate Studies
<i>Sem</i>	<i>Semitica</i>
SFSHJ	South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism
SHBC	Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary
SJ	Studia Judaica
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Samaritan Pentateuch
SR	Studies in Religion
SSN	Studia Semitica Neerlandica
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StPohl	Studia Pohl
SWBA	Social World of Biblical Antiquity
<i>TAD</i>	<i>Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt: Newly Copied, Edited, and Translated into Hebrew and English.</i> Bezael Porten and Ada Yardeni. 4 vols. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1986–1999
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament.</i> Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 8 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974–2006
ThT	Theologisch tijdschrift
ThW	Theologische Wissenschaft
TLZ	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
<i>Transeu</i>	<i>Transeuphratène</i>
TRu	Theologische Rundschau
<i>TS</i>	<i>Texts and Studies</i>
TSAJ	Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
UCPNES	University of California Publications, Near Eastern Studies
VF	Verkündigung und Forschung
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
Vulg.	Vulgate
WAW	Writings from the Ancient World
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WC	Westminster Commentaries
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament

<i>WO</i>	<i>Die Welt des Orients</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZA</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
<i>ZABR</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZBK	Zürcher Bibelkommentare
<i>ZDPV</i>	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

Chapter 1

Introduction: The Holiness Legislation and Cultic Centralization

Few issues have attracted more attention in scholarship on the Hebrew Bible than cultic centralization. The topic has generated a wealth of literature from Wilhelm M. L. de Wette's 1805 doctoral thesis, to the seminal 1878 treatise by Julius Wellhausen, until today.¹ Cultic centralization has typically been understood as restriction of the sacrificial cult of the god Yhwh to a very small number of sanctuaries in ancient Israel. By the Hellenistic period at the latest, two main cultic centers are thought to have been operating. For Judeans, the temple in Jerusalem was identified as Yhwh's chosen cultic center. For Samaritans, by contrast, the temple on Mount Gerizim served as the central cultic institution prior to its destruction by John Hyrcanus in the late second century BCE. Scholars do not imagine that these two temples exerted a totalizing cultic monopoly; it is known that a small number of shrines operated in the diaspora, such as the second-century temple at Leontopolis mentioned by Josephus.² However, the majority view is that the number of local Yahwistic shrines radically decreased by the end of the first millennium; by this time, control over the sacrificial cult was largely concentrated in a limited number of temple institutions.

¹ Wilhelm M. L. de Wette, "Dissertatio critica-exegetica qua Deuteronomium a prioribus Pentateuchi libris diversum alius cuiusdam recentioris auctoris opus esse monstratur" (PhD diss., University of Jena, 1805) did not employ the term "centralization." So far as I am aware, the first publication in biblical studies to employ the term "centralization" was J. Orth, "La centralisation du cult du Jéhovah," *NRTh* 4 (1859): 350–60 (see further §3.2.1). Several recent monographs have been devoted to the topic of cultic centralization, or the idea of the "chosen place"; see Eleonore Reuter, *Kultzentralisation. Entstehung und Theologie von Dtn 12*, BBB 87 (Frankfurt am Main: Hain, 1993); Pekka Pitkänen, *Central Sanctuary and Centralization of Worship in Ancient Israel: From the Settlement to the Building of Solomon's Temple* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2003); Melody D. Knowles, *Centrality Practiced: Jerusalem in the Religious Practice of Yehud and the Diaspora in the Persian Period*, ABS 16 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2006); Rannfrid Irene Thelle, *Approaches to the "Chosen Place": Accessing a Biblical Concept*, LHBOTS 564 (London: T&T Clark, 2012); and Jeffrey G. Audirsch, *The Legislative Themes of Centralization: From Mandate to Demise* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014).

² *J.W.* 1.33; 7.426–36; *Ant.* 12.388; 13.62–73, 285. See further §3.1.3.

A question of enduring scholarly interest is how these processes of cultic centralization might have taken root in earlier periods. Biblical researchers have long held that the establishment of the centralized cult was strongly connected to the composition of the Pentateuch. Much of past scholarship focused on the origins of the book of Deuteronomy, particularly on the obligation to perform sociocultic duties at a central מקום 'place'. The first version of this book is classically dated to the reign of the Judean king Josiah (ca. 640–609 BCE). According to the account of 2 Kgs 22–23, Josiah found a ספר התורה 'book of the law' in the temple and used this to justify establishing the temple in Jerusalem as the only sanctuary in Judah. In his thesis, de Wette identified this book of the law with a first version of Deuteronomy, which, he suggested, was written to provide the legislative foundations of Josiah's policies of cultic centralization.³ Today, many scholars would question whether we can draw such a direct link between Deuteronomy and the book of the law mentioned in 2 Kgs 22–23 (see §3.1.1). The date of the core Deuteronomistic Code (Deut 12–26 + 28 [D]) is also a matter of debate, although most scholars would still support a Neo-Assyrian core of the legislation.⁴ However, despite these qualifications, almost all scholars would agree that the composition of Deuteronomy was a watershed in the transition to a centralized cult, insofar as it provided the conceptual underpinning for restricting key sociocultic practices to a central place in ancient Israel.

In this study, I do not deny the importance of Deuteronomy in the history of centralization. However, I query why the strong focus on Deuteronomy in previous research has not been matched by an appropriate interest in how *other* pentateuchal traditions might also have advanced the case for a centralized cult. Most notably, the priestly traditions of the Pentateuch have so far received remarkably few detailed treatments from the perspective of cultic centralization. The prevailing assumption since Wellhausen has been that the priestly traditions inherit Deuteronomy's concept of centralization rather than articulate their own case for how the Israelite cult and community should be unified and centralized (see §3.2.1). They therefore are assumed to have little to contribute to the study of cultic centralization, because they simply tease out the consequences of Deuteronomy's mandate of centralization for the organization of the cult and its associated priestly hierarchies. This view has occasionally faced

³ de Wette, "Dissertatio," 164–65 n. 5.

⁴ On the debates concerning the date of D, see the histories of scholarship offered by Peter Altmann, *Festive Meals in Ancient Israel: Deuteronomy's Identity Politics in Their Ancient Near Eastern Context*, BZAW 424 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 8–36 and Eckart Otto, *Deuteronomium 1–11*, HThKAT (Freiburg: Herder, 2012), 62–230, esp. 146–230. They both confirm the ongoing support that a Neo-Assyrian date of a core version of D continues to enjoy among the majority of researchers. For a noteworthy challenge to this view, in favor of a later date for D, see esp. Juhla Pakkala, "The Date of the Oldest Edition of Deuteronomy," *ZAW* 121 (2009): 388–401.

critique but has so far not been the subject of a dedicated study (see §3.2.2). To rectify this imbalance in the history of research, this book offers a detailed analysis of cultic centralization in one of the key priestly traditions; namely, the Holiness legislation of Lev 17–26 (H).⁵

The Holiness legislation is an excellent entry point for research on centralization and the priestly traditions. As will be discussed in greater detail below, the study of H has been invigorated by the recognition that Lev 17–26 were not transmitted as a discrete legal code but are part of a compositional stratum that supplemented the Priestly narrative of origins (see §2.1). In addition, there is a growing recognition that the scribes who produced H coordinated diverse traditions, including not only the earlier Priestly materials but also D, the Covenant Code of Exod 21–23 (CC), and various prophetic materials when crafting their legal rulings (see §2.2.2). H therefore has a heightened potential to illuminate the ways in which earlier literary materials, especially Deuteronomy, might have been considered determinative in shaping how cult centralization was conceived in the priestly traditions.

The focus on H also has the potential to advance our understanding of the importance of the Persian period (ca. 538–333 BCE) in the emergence of a centralized cult in Yehud and Samaria. While the traditional focus of scholars of centralization has been on the monarchic era, especially in relation to the reign of Josiah in the seventh century BCE, various studies in recent decades have begun to explore processes of cult centralization during the Persian period (see §3.1.4). Yet, despite this growing scholarly interest, studies of centralization in the Persian period have rarely considered the role that the writing of *ritual legislation*, such as that found in H, might have played in negotiating these processes. The date of H has been a matter of debate, but I maintain, with the majority of scholars, that there are strong grounds to situate the composition of Lev 17–26 sometime during the early to mid-Persian period (see §2.2.3). These chapters therefore provide a rich source for exploring the ways in which the promotion of normative ritual practice and its associated priestly hierarchies might have assisted in the concentration of sociocultural power and authority during the Persian period.

By adopting this focus, this study offers a more critical conceptualization of the very idea of centralization for the study of the Pentateuch and for the history of ancient Israel. Surprisingly, given the widespread recognition that centralization is an important legislative theme in biblical studies, few attempts have been made to articulate a conceptual framework for understanding the

⁵ The term *Heiligkeitgesetz* was coined by August Klostermann, “Ezechiel und das Heiligkeitgesetz,” in *Der Pentateuch. Beiträge zu seinem Verständnis und seiner Entstehungsgeschichte* (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1893). It reflects the particular interest in holiness which characterizes the laws of Lev 17–26, and especially their focus on the sanctification of the Israelite community; see Lev 19:2; 20:7, 26.

dynamics of this concept. This omission can be attributed at least in part to the tendency of scholars to adopt a fairly wooden understanding of centralization in Deuteronomy – as the concentration of sociocultic practices and resources to a chosen *מקום* – as the core definition of the centralized cult in ancient Israel. However, while the issue of *where* the Israelites worshipped is of undeniable importance, it is too limiting to understand centralization exclusively in terms of the choice of a central place. If we are open to reconceptualizing the term “centralization,” it becomes clear that other factors assisted in normalizing the concentration of resources and power that is inherent in centralization. This study employs the insights of contemporary social theorists about “center” and “centralization” in order to argue that cultic centralization in ancient Israel should not be understood narrowly as a process of limiting certain behaviors to a particular locale. On the contrary, centralization can be reconceptualized as a dynamic and multifaceted network of processes that includes activities such as standardizing ritual practice, restricting cultic authority to a monopolistic priesthood, funneling economic resources to a central sanctuary institution, and reconceptualizing central authority in the wake of the ideological crisis that followed the downfall of the Judean monarchy.

1.1 Methodology

This study employs a range of approaches in its analysis of H and its discourse of centralization. The methodology consists primarily of a detailed analysis of relevant texts of Lev 17–26 using the classical methods of historical-critical exegesis. In addition to philological analysis, particular emphasis is placed on textual criticism; the study thus reviews select evidence of the Reworked Pentateuch manuscripts found at Qumran, especially the lengthy addition to Lev 23:1–24:9 in 4QRP C frg. 23 (4Q365 23). The attention paid to textual criticism stems from the conviction that the transmission of Lev 17–26, as well as that of the texts on which their authors relied, provides valuable insights into how H’s discourse of centralization was understood in antiquity, and how it was developed to serve new discursive aims. When relevant, evidence of the reception of H’s centralizing discourse in Second Temple traditions such as the Temple Scroll will be considered.

The study will also include a literary-critical investigation of the place of Lev 17–26 within priestly tradition. In particular, it will offer a detailed discussion of the likely scope of P at the time H was composed, an issue of particular importance for determining the extent to which H builds on a discourse of centralization already established by P and the extent to which it moves beyond these earlier materials in articulating a new centralizing logic. The analysis of H will also employ source and redaction criticism in order to justify treating the ideas about centralization found in Lev 17–26 as part of an

intentional compositional strategy rather than the haphazard result of multiple literary stages. The issue of texts outside Lev 17–26 that share strong phraseological and thematic correspondences with these chapters – what I refer to as “H-like” materials – will also be addressed when such texts are relevant.

Furthermore, this study will explore H’s reliance on other pentateuchal traditions by means of innerscriptural exegesis. This method, although conceived in different ways by different scholars, will here be treated as the identification of lexical, syntactic, and sequential correspondences between two or more texts, correspondences that might be interpreted as evidence of the reception of one text by the other.⁶ This study will apply rigorous standards when assessing what might constitute a suitably strong correspondence as to warrant postulating that H is dependent on an earlier tradition. These standards will be discussed in particular detail when assessing the degree to which H’s discourse of centralization borrows from D or draws primarily on the earlier P materials.

I also position the analysis of Lev 17–26 within a comparative approach in which H’s discourse of centralization is understood against a broader background of relevant ANE textual sources. This will be particularly relevant when assessing the significance of the absence of a royal figure from P and H, as well as their depictions of the centralized cult; the emphasis in Lev 23 on a fixed calendar for the entire community; and the image in Lev 25 of the land as Yhwh’s estate and the Israelites as his slaves. In addition, the centralizing discourse of Lev 17–26 will be considered in light of historical evidence pertaining to the social, political, economic, and cultic situation of Yehud and Samaria in the Persian period, as well as the Judean diaspora at Elephantine and other locales. For this purpose, I also draw on archaeological, epigraphic, and textual documentation when relevant for illuminating H’s discursive strategies and how these might be situated historically.

Finally, as already mentioned, my reading of H’s discourse will draw on a range of social science methodologies that can assist us in the task of conceptualizing centralization. Social theories are employed as a supplement to the close reading of Lev 17–26 which is the focus of this book; they are introduced only when their different conceptual lenses enhance our understanding of the issues raised by the text itself. Discourses about centralization are widely recognized to be inherently about power dynamics and the attachment of significance and meaning to sociocultural practices in order to affirm a particular sociopolitical order (see below §1.2.1). The H materials thus share many fundamental similarities to more recent textual and oral traditions in which centralizing values and behaviors are promoted. Hence, it is appropriate to be sensitive to the arguments of many social theorists that discourse in social

⁶ See Michael A. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

domains, including ancient ones, is never value-free, and to integrate such theories of power relations into the study of centralization and H.

These various methodologies and theoretical insights, then, will be combined to provide a multimodal approach to the analysis of the Holiness legislation and its discourse of centralization. The term “multimodal” refers to the decision taken in this study to avoid employing any one of the methodologies described above in isolation, or to confine a particular approach to a specific chapter in the analysis of Lev 17–26 and their literary and historical context. It is only in combination that these methodologies and theories work most effectively to help untangle the complex issues of interpretation inherent in the issue of centralization.

1.2 Key Concepts

Any study of centralization and the pentateuchal traditions immediately encounters the question of definition. This relates, in the first instance, to the scribal and authorial categories that scholars routinely employ. The terms “priestly,” “P,” and “H” are constructs of modern scholarship, and the composition of each raises interpretative issues concerning profile, scope, date, sequence, and intersection with other traditions. These issues will be explored in detail in chapter 2, but some initial words of clarification are in order.

In the analysis that follows, I employ the adjective “priestly” when referring to the texts in Genesis–Numbers that were first identified by Theodor Nöldeke and are still affirmed (with adjustments) by the majority of scholars today as sharing a distinctive stylistic, narrative, and thematic profile that distinguishes them from other materials in these books.⁷ These shared characteristics and concerns suggest that the priestly texts stemmed from closely related traditions that might have originated within a common institutional setting; namely, the priesthood in Jerusalem (see §4.4, §5.4.2, §6.4, §7.3.2). I do not consider all

⁷ Theodor Nöldeke, *Untersuchungen zur Kritik des Alten Testaments* (Kiel: Schwerts'sche Buchhandlung, 1869), 7–93. Nöldeke's list of priestly texts in Genesis–Numbers includes Gen 1:1–2:4; 5:1–29a, 30–32; 6:9–22; 7:6–7, 11, 13–16a, 18–21, 24; 8:1–2a, 3b–5*, 13a, 14–19; 9:1–17, 28–29; 10:1–7*, 20, 22–23*, 31–32; 11:10–27, 31–32; 12:4b–5; 13:6, 11b–12*; 16:1a, 3, 15–16; 17:1–27; 19:29; 21:1b–5; 23:1–20; 25:7–11a, 12–17, 19–20, 26b; 26:34–35; 27:46; 28:1–9; 31:18*; 33:18; 35:6a, 9–13, 15, 22b–29; 36:1–14; 37:1–2; 41:46a; 46:6–7; 47:27b–28; 48:3–6; 49:1a, 28b–33; 50:12–13; Exod 1:1–5, 7, 13–14; 2:23–25; 6:2–15 (16–27), 29–30; 7:1–13, 19–20a*, 22; 8:1–3, 11–15; 9:8–12; 11:9–10; 12:1–23 (24–27), 28, 37a, 40–51; 13:1–2, 20; 14:1–4, 8–9, 10*, 15–18, 21*, 22–23, 26, 27*, 28–29; 15:27; 16; 17:1; 19:2a; 24:15–18b; 25–31; 35–40; Lev 1–27; Num 1:1–10:28; 13:1–17a, 21, 25, 32*; 14:1–10, 26–38; 15; 16:3–11, 16–24, 35; 17–19; 20:6–11, 22–29; 21:10–11; 22:1; 25–27 (28–29); 30–31; 32:2–6*, 16–32; 33:1–49; 34–36. In present research, the issue of priestly materials in Deuteronomy is controversial. See §2.2.2.

the priestly traditions to form part of a single source, redaction, or layer. However, I do subscribe to the majority view that a core set of priestly materials originally circulated as a discrete document, which was only later combined with the non-priestly traditions (see §2.2.2). When I refer specifically to the Priestly document or source, I will employ the uppercase term “Priestly.” The earliest core of this document will be referred to as “Pg” (short for *Priestergrundschrift*). I will generally refrain from entering into the complex debates about the scope of Pg and the thorny issue of how to locate its original ending.⁸ The focus of this study is on the priestly texts that can be said with some confidence to have existed at the time Lev 17–26 were written rather than what might have been the shape of the Priestly narrative at the time of its inception.

Use of the term “P” is limited in this study to the Priestly source materials in the books of Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus that are presupposed in Lev 17–26 (see §2.2.2). Other scholars have defined P in different ways and may question my comparatively limited focus on Numbers. However, I argue that the vast majority of the priestly texts in Numbers can be reasonably assumed to postdate the composition of Lev 17–26 and are therefore unlikely to have informed the legislation within these chapters (see §2.2.2). Selected priestly traditions in Numbers (e.g., Num 1–10; 28–29) are of interest in this study primarily for the evidence they provide as to how the priestly logic of centralization developed in later materials. The same pertains to other texts, such as Exod 6:13–27 and Lev 10, that likely postdated the composition of Lev 17–26.

I use the term “H” (the common shorthand for “Holiness legislation”) only when referring to Lev 17–26. When discussing texts outside these chapters that share with them strong linguistic, stylistic, and thematic parallels, I adopt the term “H-like.” This term leaves open the possibility that, although these texts evince a strong dependence on Lev 17–26, they might not have stemmed from precisely the same compositional stage as the core H materials (see §2.2.2). Although Lev 17–26 do contain late additions and supplements, as well as traces of earlier source materials, they are characterized by a high degree of structural integrity, thematic coherence, and linguistic distinctiveness that justifies treating them as a discrete subsection of legislative materials, with the descriptor H (see §2.2.1).

Beyond these matters of terminology, a second problem besets the study of centralization; namely, what is meant by the term “centralization” and how might it be applied to the study of ancient texts such as the pentateuchal traditions. In the case of Deuteronomy, the concept of the chosen *מקום* is an important anchor for the study of its centralizing discourse. However, for the priestly traditions – including Lev 17–26, the subject of this study – there is no comparable term or expression that so distinctly frames its centralizing discourse. This absence adds a further layer of complexity to the consideration of

⁸ On these debates, see §2.2.2.

which legislative themes within these materials might shed light on their discourse of centralization.

Social theories developed by scholars in other disciplines are thus particularly valuable in framing this study of centralization and H. Such theory should not be employed in a procrustean fashion to impose externally generated conclusions upon the text. The text must determine the utility of theoretical insights, rather than the reverse. However, used with appropriate care, social theories can provide a necessary and illuminating conceptual framework for a more nuanced and multidimensional understanding of centralization, and especially the critical relationship between textual discourses and historical processes of centralization. I therefore turn now to a description of how social theories shape my understanding of the key terms and concepts that will inform the analysis that follows; namely, centralization, center and periphery, discourse, and social memory.

1.2.1 Centralization

“Centralization” can be defined as simply the process of bringing activities together but, as social theorists have argued, these processes are rarely without some political and ideological underpinning. Centralization is therefore better understood as the structuring of power relations and social processes so that authority, decision making, and material resources are concentrated rather than dispersed.⁹ Inherent in the process of centralization is the “progressive subordination” to central loci of power.¹⁰ Such subordination, of course, is rarely, if ever, absolute. The manner and extent to which power is concentrated or dispersed within a given group or society is always a matter of contestation and fluctuation; even if a center attains control over certain procedures or resources, control does not always entail monopolistic action. Centralization involves “a variety of mechanisms of control.”¹¹ Some of these may even

⁹ Royston Greenwood and C. R. (Bob) Hinings, “Centralization Revisited,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (1976): 151; Joseph Rogers Hollingsworth and Robert Hanenman, *Centralization and Power in Social Service Delivery Systems: The Cases of England, Wales, and the United States*, International Series in Social Welfare 3 (Boston, MA: Kluwer-Nijhoff, 1984), 8; and Vivien Ann Schmidt, *Democratizing France: The Political and Administrative History of Decentralization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 12.

¹⁰ Humberto González Chávez, “The Centralization of Education in Mexico: Subordination and Autonomy,” in *State and Society: The Emergence and Development of Social Hierarchy and Political Centralization*, ed. John Gledhill, Barbara Bender, and Mogens Trolle Larsen; trans. Victoria Forbes Adam; *One World Archaeology* 4 (London: Routledge, 2005), 316.

¹¹ Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*, The Wilder House Series in Politics, History, and Culture (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 231.

concede a degree of autonomy to peripheral groups in order to ensure long-term compliance with central authority. Overlapping processes of centralization and decentralization can simultaneously cohabit within different sectors of society.¹²

Archaeologists and historians have taken particular interest in the connection between centralization and processes of state formation, including in ancient Israel.¹³ The emergence of the state is widely understood as characterized by the organization of populations into consolidated territories and the integration of military, economic, and bureaucratic powers into a central government. Such processes typically produce or consolidate new centralized institutions and, with them, new elites who control these institutions and the procedures of governance. However, processes of state formation are far from linear or monolithic; many states remain tolerant of regional diversity and discretion or may place little emphasis on the need for central powers to exert control over the whole population. Nevertheless, the political and economic benefits that centralization can bestow through processes such as taxation or military service

¹² Alberto Diaz-Cayeros, *Federalism, Fiscal Authority, and Centralization in Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 10 n. 9.

¹³ The literature on centralization and state formation is vast; see, with further studies, Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, trans. Ephraim Fischhoff et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); David Nugent, "Building the State, Making the Nation: The Bases and Limits of State Centralization in 'Modern' Peru," *American Anthropologist* 96, no. 2 (1994): 333–69; Marcella Frangipane, "The Development of Administration from Collective to Centralized Economies in the Mesopotamian World," in *Cultural Evolution: Contemporary Viewpoints*, ed. Gary M. Feinman and Linda Manzanilla (New York, NY: Kluwer Academic, 2000), 215–32; Frangipane, "Centralization Processes in Greater Mesopotamia: Uruk 'Expansion' as the Climax of Systemic Interactions among Areas of the Greater Mesopotamian Region," in *Uruk Mesopotamia and Its Neighbors: Cross-Cultural Interactions in the Era of State Formation*, Advanced Seminar (Oxford: School of American Research, 2001), 307–48; John Gledhill, Barbara Bender, and Mogens Trolle Larsen, eds., *State and Society: The Emergence and Development of Social Hierarchy and Political Centralization*; *One World Archaeology* 4 (London: Routledge, 2005); Michael Mann, *A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760*, vol. 1 of *The Sources of Social Power*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); and Scott F. Abramson, "The Economic Origins of the Territorial State," *International Organization* 71, no. 1 (2017): 97–130. On state formation in ancient Israel, see, among others, Frank S. Frick, *The Formation of the State in Ancient Israel: A Survey of Models and Theories*, SWBA 4 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1985); John S. Holladay, "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah: Political and Economic Centralization in the Iron IIA–B (ca. 1000–750 BCE)," in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, ed. Thomas Evan Levy (London: Leicester University Press, 1998), 368–98; Daniel M. Master, "State Formation Theory and the Kingdom of Ancient Israel," *JNES* 60, no. 2 (2001): 117–31; and Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, "Temple and Dynasty: Hezekiah, the Remaking of Judah and the Rise of the Pan-Israelite Ideology," *JOSOT* 30, no. 3 (2006): 259–85.

mean that it is a strategy employed by a great variety of states to consolidate power and resources.

The interest of other social scientists in centralization, meanwhile, has commonly been at the substate level. This interest ranges from the study of systems that are small – such as the family, the business, or communities – to larger organizational structures, including the welfare state. The focus of these studies, which need not be rehearsed in detail here, has reflected the disciplinary interests of scholars; economists, for example, are concerned with the causes and impact of the centralization of economic resources, political scientists with the political concentration of power, and sociologists with the inequalities associated with particular forms of centralization. All, however, recognize that centralization as a process is rarely, if ever, value-free or dissociated from power structures.

One of the strategies employed in centralization, one that we will encounter often in this study focused on the centralization of cultic practice, is standardization. Like “centralization,” “standardization” can be defined with a limited technical meaning, as the process of implementing and developing technical standards that maximize compatibility, interoperability, safety, repeatability, or quality. But standardization also has associations with societal control and power dynamics. Standardization is by nature inimical to diversity – that is, it reduces individual discretion in favor of conformity. Hence, as the Flemish sociologist Mark Elchardus puts it, processes of standardization “are always closely related to issues of inequality and power,” because they aim to produce “a standard by which people can be compared, discriminated, classified in a hierarchical way.”¹⁴ Pierre Bourdieu, using elements of Marxist sociology, also notes the extent to which issues of diversity and standardization are intertwined with issues of power, inequality, and class.¹⁵ He focuses on the centralizing effect of standardization when used to define official forms of knowledge or customs – in the specific case of his research, the establishment of a “standard” French language (see further §4.4.2). By setting sociocultural standards that align with particular sets of expertise, cultural elites reinforce their privileged position within society, while marginalizing those who operate according to different norms or customs.

Standardization, then, is much more than a technical process. As later chapters in this study will show, it can also be a device for developing norms and scripts which regulate behavior within a community for which the standardized

¹⁴ Mark Elchardus, “Diversity and Standardization: Concepts, Issues, and Approaches,” in *Diversity, Standardization, and Social Transformation: Gender, Ethnicity, and Inequality in Europe*, ed. Max Koch, Lesley McMillan, and Bram Peper (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 19.

¹⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, trans. Gino Raymon and Matthew Adamson (Oxford: Polity, 1991).

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