Archival Historiography
in Jewish Antiquity

LAURA CARLSON HASLER

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
Contents

Acknowledgments ix
List of Abbreviations xi

Introduction: Ezra-Nehemiah as Mutilated History and Archival Historiography 1


3. “These Were Their Number”: Citations of Decrees, Letters, and Lists and Their Archival Implications 50

4. Resisting Oblivion: Archival Historiography in the Books of Esther 95

5. Reading Scriptures as Spaces: The Reconstitution of Communities through Archival Historiography 110

Epilogue: Remaking Archives and the “Death” of Spaces 126

Notes 135
Bibliography 193
Author Index 209
Ancient Sources Index 213
Index 217
Introduction
Ezra-Nehemiah as Mutilated History and Archival Historiography

For what else is this collection but a disorder to which habit has accommodated itself to such an extent that it can appear as order?
—Walter Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library," 60

Ezra-Nehemiah has confounded, bored, and irritated generations of readers. To blame are the text's repeated, unceremonious disruptions, chronological incongruities, and protracted citations of lists.1 In his landmark early twentieth-century study, C. C. Torrey referred to the book of Ezra as a "mutilated recension" of antecedent traditions.2 Though many discussions in the world of Ezra-Nehemiah scholarship moved on in the last century, this particular sentiment has endured. These texts are still characterized as "mutilated" and "uninviting," and as composed by unsophisticated writers.3 Some scholars even consider Ezra-Nehemiah unworthy of the label "history" because of the persistent citations that interrupt the narrative prose.4

The consternation to which Ezra-Nehemiah gives rise has not been fully excised by approaches that argue certain thematic unities govern its fractured content.5 Instead of arguing for overarching thematic unity, this study seeks instead to re-wire our expectations for the genre of historiography itself in the Second Temple period. I contend that the disjointed form of Ezra-Nehemiah resembles an archival space as much as it does a cohesive story. This mode of composition, which I term here "archival historiography," bears marked symbolic and functional implications for the worlds within and beyond these texts. Thus, far from being an example of an author's incompetence, the literary form of Ezra-Nehemiah demonstrates the cultural potency of the archive in this period.
Positing a relationship between Ezra-Nehemiah and an archive is not new. Scholars have suggested for decades, at least in passing, that some of the cited documents of Ezra-Nehemiah may have originated in an archive. Some have noted, more obliquely, that the form of Ezra-Nehemiah itself is "archival," but without developing the implications of that term. In what follows, I use the term "archival historiography" not to contend that the component documents of Ezra-Nehemiah stemmed from an actual archive (though some of them may have), but rather to show that the form of their compilation is archival in nature. In other words, the literary structure of Ezra-Nehemiah looks like an archive. At its most basic level, then, the archival historiography that Ezra-Nehemiah demonstrates is a mode of composing history in which cited documents frequently intervene in narratives. This type of historiography is not devoid of story but is a mode of storytelling in which narrative coherence gives way to abrupt and often fragmentary interruptions by other types of texts. In this case, the intervening texts are typical archival documents: decrees, letters, and lists make up over half of Ezra-Nehemiah (by verse count), often with limited or incongruous narrative framing. In what follows, I argue that Ezra-Nehemiah's archival historiography is a form that prioritizes collection over coherence.

Archival historiography is not found exclusively in Ezra-Nehemiah. It would be a mistake, moreover, to put rigid parameters around this category. Chapter 4 illustrates that archival historiography, like most literary forms, is not a fixed genre, but rather can be plotted on a spectrum. In this way, Esther emulates some features of archival historiography—especially in its Greek iterations—while eschewing others. The value of archival historiography as a literary form does not come from definitively cordoning it off from other genres, but in providing fresh matrices for interpreting and evaluating historical accounts that do not conform to "traditional" historiographical modes.

But the inquiry that the term "archival historiography" invites does not end with a reconciled vision of nonlinear forms of biblical narration. Having argued that Ezra-Nehemiah exhibits this historiographical mode, I will address its significance. The question might be simply posed as: "Why archival historiography?" This question is, of course, misleading, because it appears to seek the conscious reasons why an individual might compose a work in this particular way. If interpreted in this way, "why archival historiography?" is a question that is largely outside of our reach. My question instead seeks answers not in the realm of individual cognition but in the field of literary representation and its sociopolitical implications. My task is to delineate commemorative forms and the dynamics of social power at work within them. These commemorative forms, of which the archive is one, manifest social efforts to produce and protect memory, to recollect a community, and to wield social power. The document collection in Ezra-Nehemiah, as both a commemorative technology and a symbolic literary form, is powerful because it is socially useful. In what follows, I trace the contours of both its use and its power.

In this book, I explore the ways in which the archive, and collection in general, are integral components to the narrative of Ezra-Nehemiah. Chapter 1 presents the archive as a critical feature of the ancient Near Eastern political landscape. The need to collect and preserve documents is endemic to many first millennium empires, not only for pragmatic purposes of organizing information, but in order to emblematize cultural power. This ancient symbolism of power through the archive is comparable, though not identical, to contemporary notions of the archive, especially within literary and postcolonial discourses. The point here is not that the communities that produced Ezra-Nehemiah replicated such power on an imperial scale but rather that archives—on a variety of scales and in a range of forms—preserve, and indeed produce, institutional memory and signal cultural vitality.

Chapter 2 conducts a detailed analysis of how the act of collection works within the narrative portions of Ezra-Nehemiah, defining the archive by surveying various types of collections and their use in these texts. Of these, collections of documents are the most potent and politically vexed within the narrative. Archives arise in Ezra-Nehemiah as both formidable and malleable imperial institutions, contributing equally to the obstruction and advancement of Judean hopes. In Ezra-Nehemiah, and in Ezra 4–6 in particular, the imperial archive is a powerful tool that is wielded for and against the Judeans’ recovery efforts. This chapter establishes the archive as a cipher of the text’s complex and competitive relationship with imperial power.

The archival form of Ezra-Nehemiah’s citations emerges in Chapter 3. In this chapter, I review the three major types of cited documents in these texts, arguing that through these citations, Ezra-Nehemiah takes on the look of an archive. This archival form explains the otherwise uneven and disruptive collection of documents that pervade the book. Citation provides a way to assemble an archive made entirely out of text. The phenomenon here, which I have termed "archival historiography," is then compared with the historiographical forms exhibited by the book of Esther in Chapter 4. This comparison, made more complex by Esther’s multiple Greek versions and significant
later additions, shows that Esther approaches Ezra-Nehemiah’s archival form without fully imitating it. This similarity is more apparent in the extant Greek versions of Esther than in the Hebrew text.

Finally, Chapter 5 returns to the question of what may be accomplished by the performance, as it were, of archival historiography. In this chapter I argue that Ezra-Nehemiah’s archival historiography both signals and, by virtue of its collection, performs movement toward sociopolitical recovery after the losses of exile. The narrative of Ezra-Nehemiah deals heavily in loss. Through citation, however, its archival form becomes a dynamic tool in recovery efforts. Reassembling a collection through texts becomes a critical innovation on that path toward re-collecting—and, in some cases, re-creating—memory. In Ezra-Nehemiah, archive becomes the historiographical script that choreographs the recovery of memory and reveals a resuscitated political body after the losses of exile. In this way, the concept of archival historiography enables us to see modes of history writing beyond the binaries of narrative coherence and incoherence. Such alternative frameworks help us see that literary fragmentation can be a marker of collection instead of chaos. Collection is a critical feature of cultural reassembly in the wake of manifold loss and in the long shadow of empire.

A Tear in the Fabric of Time

The Archive in the Ancient Near East and Why It Matters

Collection Is Power: Assurbanipal Remembered in an Alexandrian Era

Even as Alexander was moving onto the landscape of the Babylonian heartland, at least a few scribes in Borsippa were still thinking about Assurbanipal. More than three centuries after this Neo-Assyrian king’s empire had crumbled, his mammoth collection was still considered worth writing about. Two Hellenistic-era stone tablets unearthed in Borsippa ostensibly preserve seventh-century exchanges between Borsippa and Babylonian scribes and Assurbanipal, in which the latter demands that these scribes copy for him “the entire corpus of scribal learning, the craft of Ea and Asallu... the exorcistic corpus, the lamentation corpus, the song corpus, and all the scribal [learning, as much as there is, that is in the] possession of the great lord Marduk, my lord.” On both tablets, this request is embedded in a response letter from the scribes. The Borsippa scribes admit that they do not have the Sumero-Akkadian lexicon that Assurbanipal requested (l. 12–14). Yet these scholars assure Assurbanipal that they have nevertheless worked hard to comply with the remainder of his request. Whether reflecting an authentic exchange or a fabricated one, these tablets weigh in on the central question of this chapter: how do archives reflect and reify cultural power in the ancient Near East?

Modern fascination with Assurbanipal’s Neo-Assyrian collection was generated by the discovery of multiple library sites at Nineveh (now Kouyunjik). In the middle of the nineteenth century, archeologists uncovered some 5,000 tablets inscribed with omens and incantations, alongside more than 6,000 “archival” documents such as royal letters, astrological reports, and administrative lists. These documents date from the end of the eighth century through the reigns of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal (ca. 680–627 BCE). Because some of these texts were intermingled with other textual finds,
5

Reading Scriptures as Spaces

The Reconstitution of Communities through Archival Historiography

Memory floats in the mind, but it is fixed and secured by objects.
—R. Stephen Humphries, “The Destruction of Cultural Memory,” 1

If we concede that forgetting is the normality of personal and cultural life, then remembering is the exception, which... requires special and costly precautions.
—Aleida Assman, “Canon and Archive,” 98

My primary task to this point has been to illuminate the fact that archives are vital cultural symbols that manifest in a literary form.¹ I have argued that collections weave their way consequentially through the narrative of Ezra-Nehemiah, becoming critical—if vexed—objects of political desire; and that the archive, simultaneously, through its many citations, becomes a literary form. Ezra-Nehemiah “houses” documents as much as it narrates their use. In this context, historiography cannot be understood as entirely narrative, and therefore cannot be evaluated according to its expectations.² Archival historiography is the name of this hybrid mode of history writing that blurs the line between story and space.

What does the archival form of Ezra-Nehemiah achieve? In previous chapters, I argue that within the stories of Ezra-Nehemiah, archives serve as prostheses of imperial memory, shape policy-making, and effectively produce knowledge.¹ I also contend that, beyond these narratives, the literary form of Ezra-Nehemiah is archival in nature. In the course of these arguments, I suggest that this archival form facilitates the recovery of Judean identity in the shadow of empire. It is this final claim that this chapter aims to develop; that archival literary forms simultaneously emblematize and effect cultural re-collection in the wake of loss.⁴ To do this, I first interrogate the terms loss and recovery, asking how our use of these terms might be amplified (or qualified) by interfacing them with the theoretical matrices of trauma literature, as well as the peril of invoking “recovery” as an analytical category. I then argue that reading Ezra-Nehemiah as a historiographical form that combines story with archival citations makes sense of its fragmentation and reveals its movement toward recovery.

When asking what Ezra-Nehemiah’s form “achieves,” however, the methodological ground we tread begins to change. To talk about a literary form is one thing, to talk about the effects and achievements of that form is quite another, moving us into questions of audience and reception and, perhaps, to the domains of sociology and social psychology.³ But the domain of textual form need not cede ground so quickly, either to other modes of inquiry or, as it often does, to slide into conversations about the intended message of the text.⁶ When we invoke questions of effects, when we ask, “what does it mean that a text was made this way?” (or, more cautiously, “what might it have meant?”), we invite a host of interlocutors to the table: among them historical data, sociological examples, and literary evidence. Still, what we are talking about is still chiefly the interpretation of symbols encased in texts, which is to say, we are talking about the world of representation. Tim Whitmarsh has lucidly articulated this approach this way:

[C]ultural history focuses upon the role of texts and other media not simply as “reflections” of history, but as active participants in the struggle to define and popularize certain perceptions of the current state of that society; upon, that is to say, the role of representation in the dissemination of ideas. “Reality” is to be understood not as a concrete, static “structure” that lies behind representation in literature and other media, but as a collection of ways of perceiving the world. Texts, then, are not second-order “evidence” for a society; they are primarily building-blocks of that society, as it is experienced and understood by its members.⁷

Likewise, in this study, the question is what the literary infrastructure of Ezra-Nehemiah may have communicated to its readers and hearers upon its assembly. In other words, how might Ezra-Nehemiah’s disjointed form have suggested an archive within the cultural imagination of its readers and hearers? Though both multidisciplinary and speculative, as all such interpretive enterprises are, these questions retain a resolutely literary nature. In what

Archival Historiography in Jewish Antiquity. Laura Carlson Hasler; Oxford University Press (2020) © Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780199827292.001.0001
follows, loss, trauma, fragmentation, and recovery are all concepts emanating from—or, perhaps better, disseminated by—the manifold archival representations of Ezra-Nehemiah.

The Archive and the Aesthetics of Loss

What could it mean to suggest that the archival form in Ezra-Nehemiah facilitates recovery? Invoking the term “recovery” invites us to ask: recovery from what? What has been lost? The concept of loss is a fundamental but often shadowy concept in the theorization of the archive. Archives are, after all, built to stave off the loss of knowledge. In Ezra-Nehemiah’s narrative, the archive begins where imperial memory fails. Archives authorize and arbitrate what human cognition cannot. In this way, the archive derives its power, in part, from filling these (individual or communal) cognitive gaps, mitigating against the loss of remembered history.

The question becomes, for Ezra-Nehemiah, what kinds of losses are we talking about? What sorts of losses are being recovered from or protected against? This, of course, can be spun into a strictly historical or material question: One could argue, for example, that Ezra-Nehemiah’s form responds to particular archival losses, perhaps the loss of an actual pre-exilic archive in Judah (in the environs of the temple or otherwise) that was destroyed in the events of 586 BCE. But such assertions would remain hampered by a dearth of material evidence as well as the complications surrounding Ezra-Nehemiah’s own compositional chronology. If, for example, we posit the existence of pre-exilic archives in the environs of Jerusalem, Ezra-Nehemiah’s (likely) finalization in the Hellenistic period dampens arguments that this archival form was composed as a direct response to centuries-old archival losses. Instead, the lateness of these documents invites us to think about loss and recovery as conditions and processes as well as discrete events. They invite us to think of loss both in terms of a series of traumatic events in the sixth century BCE as well as within the ongoing legacy of imperial rule at the hands of other empires. If Ezra-Nehemiah was compiled as Ptolemaic and Seleucid powers vie for Judean territory and level heavy taxation on its inhabitants, we can read these texts as overtly reflecting on the axial memory of exile and return, as well as responding to the persistent struggle to regain cultural footing while remaining at the crossroads of empire.

When viewed this way, we can read loss and the struggle to rebuild as woven into the fiber of Ezra-Nehemiah’s narrative and form. We can also ask: what losses are represented, however obliquely, within the text? Loss and its consequences are imprinted throughout the narrative of Ezra-Nehemiah. The returning community’s lack and loss of political autonomy is signaled at the very first moment of the book when the return is facilitated by the hand of a foreign ruler (Ezra 1:2–4). Though this move is reportedly made at divine behest (1:1), the struggle for self-determination persists throughout Ezra-Nehemiah, from the difficulties in rebuilding the temple in Ezra 4–6 to the dust-up with neighboring bureaucrats in the Nehemiah Memoir (Neh 4). This struggle with loss is perhaps best encapsulated in the culmination of Neh 9’s communal prayer, when the people cry: “We are slaves . . . [Kings] rule over our bodies and our beasts as they please and we are in great distress” (Neh 9:36–37). Liberation has not accompanied the return to the land.

The loss of political autonomy is conjoined with a perceived loss of purity, a concern that is alternately provoked and salved by archival records. The list of returnees in Ezra 2 (and Neh 7) gestures toward this correspondence between lost written records and compromised purity: the lists are briefly interrupted by a note that a contingent of priests was “disqualified from the priesthood” and “forbidden to eat of the holy things” because their genealogical records could not be found (Ezra 2:61–63; Neh 7:64–65). In this case, the only remedy for these lost documents is divination by means of the Urim and Thummim. This anxiety over genealogically-determined purity resurfaces later in Ezra 9–10 and Neh 13, when intermarriage with perceived outsiders is considered to be contaminating by Ezra and Nehemiah. In Ezra’s case, the cleansing (recovery?) process from this genealogical “infection” sparks the production a new written register that is archived, as it were, in Ezra 10:18–43.

From mislaid records to dissipated political autonomy and purity, loss permeates Ezra-Nehemiah. Ezra-Nehemiah is the story of manifold losses and attempts to mitigate them. How and if these stories relate to specific losses sustained in the contexts of Ezra-Nehemiah’s composition is unclear and will likely remain so. The archive constructed by the documents of Ezra-Nehemiah, however, effects an avenue of recovery within a perceived world saturated with loss.
Deliberating Loss and Trauma. Or, Is Ezra-Nehemiah Trauma Literature?

The concepts of loss and recovery have been the theoretical linchpins of trauma studies in literature for the last several decades. Within biblical studies, the use of trauma as a category of analysis has focused on watershed traumatic events, especially the destruction of Jerusalem and Babylonian exile, and resultant literary forms. The acrostic form of Lamentations, for example, has been explained as a rhetorical means to "control and contain and encompass" horrific suffering. The fragmented nature of texts like Jeremiah has also been indexed to its traumatic origins. In view of this, it is worth asking whether and how our interpretation of Ezra-Nehemiah may be enriched and challenged through the matrices of trauma studies. We may ask: Does conveying a constructed world shot through with loss make Ezra-Nehemiah "trauma literature"? To answer this question, we must first consider how cultural loss relates to trauma; second, whether the label of "trauma literature" requires that the literature is composed as a direct response to a verifiable and discrete traumatic event; and third, what is gained by invoking this designation in the first place.

Does all cultural loss count as trauma? The simplest answer to this is: no. Societies are constantly sustaining losses of life, memory, and material. Such losses are often too quotidian and diffuse to constitute trauma. Cultural trauma, as Jeffrey Alexander defines it, occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways.

The cultural losses of Ezra-Nehemiah are varied, as personal as the loss of family members, as material as the loss of buildings and documents, and as abstract as the perceived loss of cultural purity. Yet all these losses may be tethered to the seismic trauma (however temporally remote) of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile. This experience is understood as, in Alexander's language, the "horrendous event" that left indelible marks on the Judeans' collective identity. The losses that pervade Ezra-Nehemiah are represented as the tremors and aftershocks of this momentous trauma.

Does it matter, however, that these texts may not have been written in the direct wake of these events? If Ezra-Nehemiah was composed or compiled well into the Hellenistic period, does that rule out the label of trauma literature? Should the more diffuse and disruptive presence of colonial rule be our traumatic referent? What is critical about the nature of trauma literature, however, is not (or not only) its historical referent but its representation. This is to minimize the role violent events often play as the critical touchstone of trauma literature, but rather to shift focus to the ways such events are literarily reimagined and refracted, often in response to subsequent historical experiences. As Alexander has argued,

First and foremost, we maintain that events do not, in and of themselves, create collective trauma. Events are not inherently traumatic. Trauma is a socially mediated attribution. The attribution may be made in real time, as the event unfolds; it may also be made before the event occurs, as an adumbration, or after the event has concluded, as a post-hoc reconstruction. Sometimes, in fact, events that are deeply traumatizing may not actually have occurred at all; such imagined events, however, can be as traumatizing as events that have actually occurred.

Trauma, as Alexander and others have argued, is not natural. It is a term that does not inhere to any particular event, but is instead constructed through various media and circulated among communities. It is in this way, also, that traumatic memories can be transmitted through generations. Traumatic events—like the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile—can continue to anchor and orient communities centuries after the events take place, especially as they endure imperial governance in other forms. Whether it was written directly after the return or (more likely) generations later, Ezra-Nehemiah recalls and responds to events coded as seismic cultural rupture while undergoing persistent challenges to rebuild. Ezra-Nehemiah is, in this sense, trauma literature.

But the term "trauma literature" can also be deceptive. To say that Ezra-Nehemiah was composed in response to traumatic memories does not mean that its literary features, and its archival form in particular, can be explained through what have become this discourse's typical analytic terms. Fragmented narratives, or other "anti-narrative" modes, for example, are often considered indicators of trauma literature (especially in the cases of direct, individual trauma). But the kind of fragmented narration found in Ezra-Nehemiah cannot be indexed to individual psychosis (in the manner,
would result in the dangerous atomization of scriptural meaning, risking, as Chartier puts it, “obliterating the powerful coherence of the Word of God.” The form and layout of the Bible, Locke worried, would have a deleterious impact on the ways in which it was interpreted. By extension, collections of books, both McKenzie and Chartier contend, also constitute expressive forms. They are symbols of cultural desire, destruction, and failure. The rise of the encyclopedia, argues Chartier, is a manifestation of this desire to gather knowledge, effectively creating a “library without walls.” Mroczek has expanded upon the thinking of both McKenzie and Chartier, to argue that the technology of the scroll and the idea of capacious collections elicted ways of reading and meaning-making that depart from notions of fixed canon and independent author. In these ways, not only does the layout of texts impact their meaning, spaces—their contents, ordering principles, their symbolic and functional utility—can also find expression in texts. This expression, as Mroczek has observed, need not be seen as being in competition with narrative genres of text but in symbiotic relationship with them.

I began this study by arguing that the archive is a vital symbol, employed by empires to facilitate their sprawling bureaucracies and to represent their power. Though demonstrably fallible, the archive derives its power, as Ezra 4–5 illustrates, from the access it seems to offer to the past, to originality, to authentic memory. As an externalized repository of knowledge, the archive thus shapes memory on a collective scale. As Ezra 2:61–63 demonstrates, what cannot be found in the archive cannot be established as fact and cannot be officially known. The archive not only preserves but also produces the knowledge of a group.

Yet the cultural viability and authority that such text collections symbolize are not the sole property of empires. The power of the archive may be adopted by virtually anyone with the ability and inclination to preserve or represent memories through collected texts. The archive, moreover, might be as much a means to staunch hemorrhaging memory as it is to emblazonize vast and untouched authority. The symbolism of the archive can be employed to counter loss, to demonstrate cultural vitality in the shadow of collapsed infrastructures, forgotten lineages, and destroyed texts. The archival form, in this way, may be more rehabilitative than authentic, emblemizing cultural aspiration more than reality. To say that the archive is a vital symbol of cultural power does not mean that it is an authentic reflection of groups’ status, but rather that it is an expression of hope, a means to reroute vulnerability into networks of renewed power. Walter Benjamin once suggested that an individual

Recovery and Recollection: Recovery Through Recollection

Ezra-Nehemiah’s archival form responds to loss by representing and enacting recovery. But to argue that a collection can facilitate recovery in any way, we must address how a collection might operate as an “expressive form.” In Chapter 1, I discuss how the archive works as an externalization of and, effectively, a prosthetic for cultural memory (indeed, on a collective level, perhaps its only physical instantiation). As such, an archive is both a functional technology of memory preservation and a potent symbol of mastery over a certain arena of human knowledge. But what about an archive as a literary form? Can a textual collection, a collection not just full of, but indeed housed within texts, demonstrate comparable dynamics?

The notion that the form of a text—from its rhetorical structure to its visual layout—affects its semantic meaning has been demonstrated by D. F. McKenzie, Roger Chartier, and recently developed by Eva Mroczek. McKenzie and Chartier (the latter drawing on the former’s work) argue that a book is an expressive object. A book’s material form and layout, they argue, are critical, if not wholly determinate, framers of its meaning. Both McKenzie and Chartier illustrate this by invoking the example of John Locke’s concern that the eighteenth century’s new trend of versifying the Bible

for example, of some trauma literatures). Its disjointed form is better understood in terms of its quality as a collection, rather than a product of narratable experiences.

What the designation of trauma literature does do, however, is help us to interpret these texts within the framework of loss and recovery. This framework, moreover, helps rewire our attachment to more (narratologically) coherent historiographical forms. Labeling Ezra-Nehemiah as trauma literature enables us to see that alternative storytelling modes, like archival historiography, might represent a community’s vacillation between loss and recovery more effectively than straight narrative. Reading Ezra-Nehemiah alongside trauma studies helps us create analogues, and to see that the creation of alternative forms of narration in the wake of seismic cultural trauma is not an isolated phenomenon. These forms express a world where the communicative power of narrative coherence is evident but limited, and where preservation—in multiple forms—is instead paramount.
might possibly "live through" his collection; Ezra-Nehemiah's archival form suggests that a society might likewise survive through theirs.  

Survival and recovery through the archival form are not simply expressed through the adoption of a collection's symbolic power. Archival historiography transforms the archive from physical space to text and, thereby, transforms its properties. Counterintuitive though it may be, the conversion of an edifice into a scroll enhances its durability. An archive in text can emblematize power while also evading the advances of a conquering army. It might, through copying and circulation, stall the corrosive march of time. Unlike a building, a scroll can much more easily be hidden, moved, and replicated. An archive housed in texts rather than on shelves is, in this sense, far more difficult to destroy. In this way, the archive is comparable to (though also importantly different from) the idea of scripture being the revived Jerusalem temple after 70 CE. The recovery that Ezra-Nehemiah's archival form expresses is one that does not merely imitate the authority of its edificial counterparts, but transforms it into a medium that is more diffuse, mobile, and therefore resilient.

Using "recovery" as a key term to understand the form of Ezra-Nehemiah carries its own set of interpretive and ethical complications. For recovery does not only imply notions of loss but of regaining agential power: the archival form of Ezra-Nehemiah not only bespeaks loss but also harnesses symbols of cultural power to re-collect and recover. In Chapter 1, the idea that a collection emblematized political potency is demonstrated through its imperial expressions. It stands to reason, perhaps, that a Judean adoption of this trope serves either to collude with or resist imperial power.  

But as Annette Yoshiko Reed and Martha Himmelfarb have pointed out, in the context of the encounter between Judaism and Hellenism more generally, a richer and subtler account is required for describing the (perhaps infinitely) complex modes in which cultures converge. Acknowledging this, and in view of the robust ambivalence with which the narrative of Ezra-Nehemiah relates to the Persian empire—both acknowledging its favors and decrying its excesses—I use the term "recovery" to signify neither outright resistance nor accommodation of imperial influence. The use of archival forms to recuperate in the wake of loss stands apart from the polarities of resistance and accommodation. Recovery, while making use of the imperially inflected form of "archive," is much more about reasserting the vitality of a community rather than subverting the power of the empire. In short, Ezra-Nehemiah makes use of the archive to compete with the empire's power rather than undercut it.

The term recovery, furthermore, may connote sadness over what has been lost, or the correctness of the efforts to recover it. But it need not mean this. One of the most salient critiques of recovery and survival as valorized terms has been offered by Julia Watts Belser. Belser has argued that in narratives of catastrophe, the expectation for survival can perform its own violence. Her work simultaneously seeks "to acknowledge and resist the urgency of [the] desire to wrest some form of survival from the textual remains of brutalized bodies." An interpretive emphasis on survival can build an evaluative infrastructure that honors those who, either by chance or ability, were able to live, recuperate, and endure. "This emphasis can devalue those who are not so fortunate or able. Using the term recovery can perpetuate this same implicit valorization, both of the subjects and the means of recovery. I do not seek to solve this issue here, but name it as one of several muddying factors to this hermeneutical category and reiterate that the concept of recovery is—like the archive itself—ethically ambivalent.

The co-implicated notions of collection and recovery beget further ambivalences, as indicated in Chapter 1, in the realm of interpretation and the formulation of meaning. Recovery, in the wake of this kind of destruction, can never mean the identical replication of what came before. Neither does it signal that recovery is complete. Indeed, for as much as the archive emblematizes power, indicates the possession of knowledge, and expresses resilience, it also brims with chaos and limitation. Assurbanipal's incomplete collections, Ezra-Nehemiah's conflicting archival reports, Persopolis's evident accounting errors, and Elephantine's contextless decree from Darius, reveal the archive as faulty and fragmentary. It is never comprehensive. Its sources are often partial, and sometimes wrong. This is as true of archives within texts as it is of archival rooms: space limits and errors beset both forms.

The fragmentary nature of the archival form thus creates problems for meaning-making in general and for notions of recovery in particular. One of the charges often leveled at Ezra-Nehemiah's literary style is that it is chaotic, ill-sorted, lacking a coherent "center" from which to derive a clear meaning. Chaotic literary forms can be understood to be either liberative or demonic (or both); one reader's emancipatory structure is someone else's semantic anarchy. Psychanalytic perspectives on recovery add further complications for deducing recovery from the chaos of archives. Mieke Bal, for example, argues that the formation of coherent narratives signals integration and healing for trauma victims. With these concerns in view, it is perhaps difficult to see
how recovery might be expressed by the chronically unresolved form of the archive.

But our arena of study is not psychoanalysis but literary and cultural representation. When viewed on these grounds, different semiotic possibilities emerge for the archive and its fragmentary shape. As a material space and as a literary strategy, the archive is a collection and, perhaps inevitably, a place of semantic contestation. As both a collection and as a witness to the function of collections, Ezra-Nehemiah does not solve this apparent confusion: that the collection that is recovered, the collection that in a sense saves, is also relentlessly indeterminate, incoherent, un-narratable. The poetics of the archive confirm the simple fact that cultural processes of recovery and the completion of that recovery are not the same thing. As a technology and as a historiographical form, the archive promises neither purity nor clarity. Yet the fragmented contents of Ezra-Nehemiah's archive do not mitigate its expression of cultural vitality or resilience. As a collection, it exhibits the move—or aspiration—toward recovery: the (re)assembly of knowledge in the wake of loss.

**Beyond Whole: Writing the Future with Fragments**

The fragmentary nature of Ezra-Nehemiah raises larger questions about the nature of completion: not only about the nature of "completed" recovery processes, but of a completed text. Eva Mroczek has productively problematized notions both of canon and completeness vis-à-vis ancient Jewish literature, argument for antique notions of an endlessly expanding corpus of texts. Contrary to modern assumptions about the linear use of scrolls, Mroczek argues that these collections not only often consisted of textual fragments, but also lent themselves to selective, "fragmented" reading.

Yet the metaphor of textual fragmentation did not arise until very recently. Equivalent terms in ancient Greek and Latin refer exclusively to the breaking off or apart of objects like cloth, pottery, and food, but never of texts. Further, as Glenn Most has observed, in Greco-Roman antiquity (and presumably before) "with very few exceptions...we do not find procedures aiming at the systematic collection of fragments or the speculative reconstruction of lost wholes." Most's observations refine our approach to the fragmentary nature of Ezra-Nehemiah in two important ways: First, the metaphor of the fragmented text is a useful anachronism that can mean many things and so requires further elaboration. In this study, calling Ezra-Nehemiah "fragmentary" refers to its abrupt citation practices that give the impression of accumulated, partial documents within the text. Second, Most's comments help to revise seemingly necessary links between fragmentation and completion, a revision that I would like to extend in what follows.

Within the realm of biblical studies, a complete text can mean several things. Concepts like final form and canon formation strive to indicate the historical point when texts achieve more or less stability and are, in this sense, "complete." But the idea of a "completed" or "finished" text (as opposed to a rough-hewn, fragmentary one), can take on aesthetic valences wherein fragmentation signifies absence rather than fullness. In biblical studies, fragmentary forms of biblical narratives tend to be regarded with frustration. As Yi-Jen Lin has observed, "traditional textual critics have sought an overarching narrative of unity and singular origin rather than multiple histories and incongruent, untraceable beginnings." In the eyes of many interpreters, the piecemeal citation and sharp edges of Ezra-Nehemiah's style signal the absence of a competent editor or—by some historical accident—a lack of the requisite time to smooth the story, to re-finish it into a coherent whole before it spawned copies, gaining identity (and, perhaps, fixity) over time. So entrenched are our notions of what a polished work should look like—that, thus, completion as an aesthetic quality, rather than just a historical one—that it may be difficult to read Ezra-Nehemiah as formally complete.

But the link between fragmentation and recovery depends neither on the completion of a literary product, nor of a social process. Rather, Ezra-Nehemiah represents recovery (in medias res, as it were) by the ways fragmentation signals fullness, suggestive of an archive that is full of texts. Mroczek's observation that ancient writers likely thought of texts in terms receptive to "incompleteness, fragmentation, and possibility" is relevant here. Ezra-Nehemiah is, formally, and unmistakably, not one document but many, and this fragmentation reveals an accumulation of texts. Such accumulation gestures toward further growth, rather than completion. It may be suggested that while the literary form of Ezra-Nehemiah yields imperially-inflected archival authority, it may not reflect the empire's totalizing ambitions. We do not catch glimpses of a Judean empire or overt fantasies of a universal archive within Ezra-Nehemiah's structure or story. Still, though perhaps chastened in its ambitions, the archive in Ezra-Nehemiah pushes forward, with recovery at work in the accumulating motion of its form.
Reading Scripture as Space

Ezra-Nehemiah is a core example of archival historiography: a heterogeneous literary collection that represents a space as much as it does a story. The heterogeneous collection that it forms recovers a new kind of archive: one that emblemizes cultural vitality and is less vulnerable to destruction. Ezra-Nehemiah’s archival historiography, in this way, gives expression to what a linear narrative could not. It not only describes but forms a collection, not just narrating but enacting recovery.

But Ezra-Nehemiah is not the only document in Hellenistic Jewish literature that looks like this. Esther—particularly in its Greek iteration—bears elements of archival historiography, with its extended citations of the decrees of Artaxerxes and Mordechai’s Purim letter, for example. Recently, Ingeborg Löwisch has argued persuasively that the genealogies of 1 Chron 1–9 respond to trauma by subverting patrilineal lineages and taking on an archive-like form.52 Genealogies, Löwisch argues, occupy a space between traumatized memory and “full-blown narratives.” Insofar as Löwisch is correct that genealogies sit between traumatic recall and narratives, then the integration of such “archival” lists into narratives is a means to recovery. That is, the integration of a traumatic past into a narrative framework is a way of grafting that past into a recollected future.53 I agree with Löwisch, but also argue that Ezra-Nehemiah does this more extensively, complicating our notions of collection and recovery.

This form is not limited to canonical—or Septuagintal—attestations. Annette Reed has argued for archival logics in the Astronomical Book of 1 Enoch.54 These texts, she argues, reveal collecting impulses, specifically Babylonian astronomical knowledge, that become literarily reframed in the service of Judean paideia.55 Second Maccabees also shows instances of this aesthetic, though with very different content. Its chapter 11 consists of four cited letters, with little narrative framing and with a thin thematic thread linking them. In comparison to all these examples, Ezra-Nehemiah contains the most heterogeneous and extensive collection of documents and is our clearest example of the phenomenon of archival historiography. Even so, these examples demonstrate that this form may be found in various ways throughout Second Temple literature and beyond.56

The growing prevalence of this literary form in the Second Temple period returns us to the question of whether archival historiography should be understood as a distinctly Jewish or Hellenistic literary phenomenon. The argument that “archival thinking” was a particularly Greek sensibility in this period has been made by Tim Whitmarsh, and complicated by Johannes Haubold.57 Whitmarsh argues that an Aristotelian-inspired “archival turn” in fourth-century Athens spurred efforts to “monumentalize” texts in prose.58 This archival thinking is alternately reflected in the ways Herodotus bolsters his authority through his use of sources, and Thucydides’s conception of historiography as the possession of posterity.59 Different as they are, Whitmarsh contends that both Herodotus and Thucydides share an archival logic that recognizes that written texts perform what speech cannot: they can be possessed and can endure through time. Other textual practices like cataloguing, taxonomizing, and meta-discourse on the nature of the text also reveals this archiving impulse.60 In this way, Whitmarsh argues, the library of Alexandria is the natural monumental expression of this archival turn, emblemizing the cultural authority invested in “possess-able” texts.61 Subsequent Roman appropriations of these practices (particularly in the realm of paideia) reinforce the point that archiving is a vital Hellenistic phenomenon.62

Using the example of Berossus, a Babylonian priest and historiographer in the third century BCE, Haubold suggests that the use of archival tropes and logics may be as Mesopotamian as they are Hellenistic.63 Writing Babylonian history in Greek, Berossus presents himself as a “keeper of the archives,” which, he claims, encompass thousands of years of history and which “comprised stories about the sky and the sea, creation and the kings and events of their reigns.”64 In the course of this history, he retells the Enûma Elish saga, emphasizing that the divine provision for the revitalization for human life rested on the rediscovery and disbursement of documents from Sippar.65 These debates of cultural influence and genealogy notwithstanding, in this context, it is beside the point to ask whether Berossus’s archival sensibilities are a distinctly Greek or Mesopotamian phenomena. It is more pertinent that they are linked with cultural vitality, endurance, and even survival.66

It should go without saying that any attempted genealogic map warrants the caveat that “archival thinking” or an “archival turn,” such as it may be understood and identified, does not inevitably manifest particular literary features, archival historiography or otherwise. Esther’s transition from Hebrew (M1) to Greek (LXX), as we have seen, is marked by an amplification of its source texts. Yet, as Matthias Winkler has observed, an analogous transition in the book of Proverbs reveals the near-opposite trajectory: its sources disappear.67 Thus, in addition to the difficulty of tethering certain literary
practices to particular cultures, we may add a caution against expecting formal unanimity even within closely related works. Expecting the formal and cultural heterogeneity of ancient texts may prevent us from reducing texts to singular impulses and conventions.

Consequently, archival historiography must be understood as an essentially hybrid phenomenon that can not be indexed exclusively to any one cultural sphere. Archival historiography can be conceived of as demonstrably Jewish, Hellenistic, Babylonian, Roman, and Persian in terms of its origins, polemical orientations, and sites of replication. Thus, archival historiography, and archival thinking more broadly, cannot be viewed as the sole product of any one of these cultures or empires.

Finally, reading Ezra-Nehemiah as a resuscitated archival space may ring with parallels to the notion of scripture-as-temple, post 70 CE. Scripture becomes the proxy for the temple when the physical reconstruction of the space was impossible. Though the material realities of the archive (or archives) in the Second Temple period are far murkier than the Second Temple itself, it is possible to make broad comparisons between these textual instantiations of physical spaces. Archival historiography, however, performs its prothetic work through its literary infrastructure and arrangement in a way that the scripture-as-temple metaphor may not.

It may be tempting to make another distinction between temple and archive: the archive, unlike the temple, is not a sacred space. In contemporary discourse, the archive is generally understood to be thoroughly secular. Aleida Assman draws the distinction this way:

As the paradigmatic institution of passive cultural memory, the archive is the opposite of the memorial space of the church: It is the unhallowed bureaucratic space of a clean and neatly organized repository.

But, as discussed in Chapter 1, the distinction between archive and temple, between the bureaucratic and the sacred, was not so easily made in the ancient Near East. The temple in the ancient Near East was a primary site of document collection. Though not a specific locus of ritual, the archive contained knowledge needed to sustain the sacred with records of its rituals and omen, disbursements, and histories. In the realm of historiography, moreover, the category of recovery blurs this distinction. If the archive works toward or represents the revivified social body, its construal in scriptural space is as vital to the sacred as the temple archive was.

In the first pages of his 1988 commentary on Ezra-Nehemiah, Joseph Blenkinsopp remarked that despite the cultural flourishing unfolding in its larger context, Ezra-Nehemiah seems to be "dominated by the narrow concerns of the clerical order which had little interest in the litterae humaniores and the creative activity of the mind." The books, he continues,

even within the confines of the biblical canon . . . might seem to be more of an appendix than an integral and essential component; an afterthought, like the Greek title of Chronicles, "things left over," a filling in the gaps largely with the help of genealogies and interminable lists of names.

Blenkinsopp's comments are by no means out of step with the overarching sentiments—overt and implicit—of contemporary scholars about Ezra-Nehemiah. Many commentators view these texts as an unadorned scrap heap of historiographical dross. My own effort in this project is not to engage in a full-scale recovery project of Ezra-Nehemiah. Readers of Ezra-Nehemiah are as free to disparage the style, content, and theology of these texts as they ever were. My purpose, rather, is to adjust our vision of these texts; and to see them not as a half-hearted attempt at coherent narrative but as up to something else entirely: using citations to construct an archival space as well as a story. If we level stylistic criticism at these books, then, we should be doing so with adequately framed expectations.

Reading Ezra-Nehemiah as a space as well as a story demands that we rewire our expectations for how to read historiography in alternate forms. Ezra-Nehemiah's disjointed narrative and excessive citations may continue to irritate us as modern interpreters. The category of archival historiography, however, seeks to demystify what Ezra-Nehemiah's peculiar form expresses, beyond idealistic or stylistic inferiority. The breakages in its story make room for the construction of more resilient spaces of knowledge and memory preservation. Whether fabricated or authentic, these documented memories, so collected, signal cultural vitality, cohesion, and power. With its citations, Ezra-Nehemiah rebuilds the scaffolding of lost infrastructures of memory. These texts are a "gathering up of the past . . . reshaping it in such a way as to allow for the future." In this way, the archive cannot be divorced from but is integral to the theology staged by these texts. Reading scripture as such an archival gathering space directs our attention beyond the stories told to the documents that structure them. In doing this, we catch glimpses of how Ezra-Nehemiah not only narrates recovery but performs it.
Epilogue

Remaking Archives and the “Death” of Spaces

In an 1812 edition of Britain’s Monthly Magazine, British essayist William Taylor made an ardent case for the authenticity of Genesis’s genealogies. Under the moniker, “An Archaeologist,” Taylor’s claims for the originality of these documents rest, in part, on his depiction of Moses not only as a historian but also as a curator of Israel’s precious documents. Upon their retreat from Egypt, Taylor claims:

[The Israelites] employed Moses as their archivist and recorder; to his custody they delivered what family documents they brought out of Egypt; and any new registers or regulations were progressively super-added by his pen. These documents were carefully placed in the Ark, or portable box of records (Deuteronomy c. xxxi. V. 9) which the Levites carried.¹

Taylor’s assertions about the nature of these documents, the Ark, and indeed what is claimed about them in the passage from Deuteronomy that he cites can all be gainsaid. His remarks, however, articulate a key intuition of my argument in this book: that the merging of the roles of historiographer and archivist produces a remarkable—and in Taylor’s case, an authoritative—type of history-writing.

While Taylor’s contentions lean heavily on a claim about Pentateuchal authorship (Moses as historian and archivist), the aim of the present project is to make a claim for form: that certain genres can model texts after spaces. This is a claim that is at once simple and strange, and the purposes of this chapter is to explain a bit more of what it could mean to recognize spaces in general and archives in particular as present in texts. To do this, I first explore how archives have manifested in other, alternative forms, particularly as metaphors for memory and the imagination. I then explain how archival historiography uniquely adapts spatial features to textual practices toward various ends. Finally, I review how other ancient Jewish texts might be considered spaces, archival and beyond.

The figurative use of archives for memory may be as old as the archive itself. Mary Carruthers traces the archival metaphor as early as fifth-century Athens, though the bulk of her discussion centers on the imaginaries of medieval theologians like Hugh of St. Victor.² Hugh’s treatises on “De arca mystica” advocate for the careful curation of religious knowledge in a mental “storehouse” or “treasury” (thesaurus) for the purposes of cultivating a steadfast spiritual disposition. In his sermon, “De Tribus Maximus Circumstantiis Gestorum,” Hugh supplicates his audience:

Children, knowledge [sapientia] is a treasury [thesaurus] and your heart is its strongbox [arca]. As you study all of knowledge, store up for yourselves good treasures, immortal treasures, incorruptible treasures, which never decay nor lose their look of brightness. In the treasure-house of wisdom are various sorts of wealth, and many filing places in the storehouse of your heart.³

The images of thesaurus and arca are at once stirring and practical, indicating not only the precious—indeed treasured—nature of religious knowledge, but also introducing a means of preserving and protecting it. Hugh’s detailing of the contents of these storehouse rooms offers functional mnemonic devices for the memorization of the contents of Scripture.⁴ In this model, the mental storehouse, like any good archive, organizes knowledge to facilitate future “retrieval” by means of memory. In this case, successful archiving sharpens spiritual acuity in the life of the medieval Christian.⁵

The differences between Hugh’s case for cerebral collection and my case for textual archives are as important as their similarities. Hugh’s model extracts—and even abstracts—both the symbolism and function of collections to chart a path toward spiritual vitality. I likewise argue that the re-semblance of archival patterns at alternative sites also gestures toward a kind of well-being: in this case, the recovery of a fractured community. However, while Hugh’s archive manifests in the realm of individual cognition, the archive of archival historiography surfaces through citation within the form of a text. This difference yields a further distinction between these “displaced” collections: while Hugh builds his collection overtly with descriptions of mental rooms and the theological data stored therein, archival historiography’s archive is at least
Archival historiography’s remaking of space into text performs a particular type of re-presenting, that is, rendering this space literarily present. This genre, in other words, brings the innovations and capacities of an archival space into a compositional register. For the technology of writing itself has always been concerned with the manipulation of time and space, rendering bodies—or, more precisely, voices—present across geographic and temporal distances, even from the dead. It may be said that all genres—indeed all media—are fundamentally about the interplay between the mimetic and adaptation of presence. “The history of media,” as John Durham Peters has succinctly put it, “is the history of the productive impossibility of capturing what exists.” If writing, in general, wrestles with the impossibility of rendering present the absent speaker, historiography also struggles to render present the absent (past) event. The persistent and inevitable failures of writing to call forth both the person and the past continually invite new possibilities for such communication.

There is a sense in which archival historiography is one of these productive failures to represent—or better, to re-present—an entity through the technology of writing. This time, that re-presented entity is not (or not merely) people or events, but an archival space. The incessant collection and organization of documents evoke this presence. But the impossibility of fully representing this archive in text generates new ways of its being present, as well as new ways of history being told. The traditional, monumental archive is one of many structures that are often the property of empires. Archives are built to aid and abet imperial control. As such, however, these structures are always vulnerable to adaptation, sometimes by force. “Towers,” as Peters has said, “invite toppling.”

In this way, archival historiography does not just fail to represent fully the physical space of the archive; it fails productively. The prevailing wisdom of our digital age is that the safety and efficiency of archives corresponds with their reduced monumentality. “Software,” in other words, “is more durable than hardware.” Archival historiography renders the space of the archive “softer,” at once less and more visible, establishing a more mobile and replicable site of document collection and preservation than its more monumental forebears. An archive, textually rendered and narratively organized, is an archive that will travel. Intertwined with text, this archive crosses borders and is no longer tethered to certain cities or sites. The archive—and the social identities that it remembers—is, in this way, perhaps the most successful gesture toward the fantasy of the universal archive. This is an archive

---

Partially submerged, its form often remaining largely unremarked on within the text that manifests it.

Eva Mroczek’s more recent case for the re-­visioning of text and canon in Jewish antiquity forms another site of cerebral archiving. Mroczek dismantles concepts of textual fixity, conditioned by anachronistic notions of canon, in this period. In place of canon, she suggests that the archive provides a more “unbounded” model for how Jews in antiquity perceived their literary world. With its instability and infinite capacity, this archival model renders notions of a Bible-centric literary universe (that is, one characterized by a stable and limited collection) unintelligible. Mroczek’s use of the archive works, in several ways, toward a similar end as my own. Among the many implications of Mroczek’s project are to return certain malignantly or marginalized texts to the center of our attention. Like Carruthers, moreover, the archive Mroczek sheds light on is a cognitive one, though Mroczek’s archive has less to do with memory than the imagination (to the extent that those can be divided) and, more precisely, the shared cultural frameworks through which texts are conceived of and interpreted. This ancient imagined archive is also revealed in ancient texts: Jubilees, for example, depicts this heavenly, open-ended, and sometimes fragmentary textual world.

Thus, in Mroczek’s work, “archive” signifies on several, connected levels: archive as both heavenly site and cognitive model. The heavenly archives suggested by Jubilees and Qumran’s collection of psalms correspond to ancient Jewish concepts of evolving, fragmented, and perpetually expanding textual collections.

Carruthers’s and Mroczek’s works reveal the expansive potential of “thinking with the archive” when we approach cognition, authorship, memory, and composition. As discussed in Chapter 1, Mroczek’s work in particular casts a vision of supplanting notions of canon in the study of Jewish antiquity with that of an evolving collection. These archival notions also help articulate important distinctions of how the concept of archive manifests in archival historiography in particular. Archival forms manifest in Ezra-Nehemiah as citation encased in narrative. In this way, it is perhaps not quite right to refer to the archive, as it appears in archival historiography, as a metaphor. My specific claim here is less about how archival spaces might be reconstituted in the mind, so to speak, and more about how an archival space’s structures, purposes, and signification may transition to the page, now arranged not by shelves but by stories. It might be more accurate to say that, in this literary form, the presence of the archive is not so much redescribed as remade.
not universal in the scope of its contents, but in the possibilities of where it may move.  

But is a textual archive truly safer? For all its transportability, a scroll is, of course, more fragile than physical structures. But a mobile document is also a replicable one. Archival historiography produces an archive that will both move and regenerate, features that make it far less vulnerable to the abuses of violence, accident, and time. In this sense, while failing to fully render the archive present, it might be better said that with archival historiography, the archive evolves, becoming a more resilient—and, presumably, more user-friendly—technology in politically tenuous times.

The range of connections that have already been forged between texts and archive reinforces the dynamism and plasticity of this concept in Jewish antiquity and beyond. Mroczek has called for a re-imaging of the ancient Jewish textual world modeled on archival formations. Löwisch invokes archival forms to describe sites for women’s genealogical preservation in 1 Chronicles. Pernille Carstens has argued that the lists of cultic objects of Exod 25 serve as a kind of archive or art collection, one that cultivates “good taste” in its readership. That these invocations of the archive angle toward different ends (dismantling the anachronism of canon, recovering women’s memories, or educating a community, for example) demonstrates the variety of registers on which this concept might resonate with and reframe our interpretive expectations.

Linking space and text is also not limited to the archival spaces. Biblical scholars have recently adopted and adapted the so-called “spatial turn” in the humanities to illuminate analyses of landscape, geography, and narrative space in the Bible. Many of these formulations have focused on more sweeping land- and cityscapes, though there are several notable exceptions. Jeremy Smoak has argued that we ought to read passages like Num 5–10 as a replication of a temple site. His argument is important to highlight in this discussion because it exhibits critical features of the space-to-text phenomenon that have not yet been addressed. The concept of Torah as a proxy for the temple is, of course, an old one. But Smoak does not (or does not merely) argue that Num 5–10, and 6:24–26 in particular, takes the place of a worship space (though that certainly may be an implication of his work). Rather, as Smoak has put it, Num 6:24–26 “preserves spatial memory.” Standing between the Nazirite laws and the instructions on dedication offerings at the altar, the literally jarring priestly blessing in Num 6:24–26 is made lucid when understood as reflecting comparable blessings inscribed within contemporaneous worship spaces. This realization transforms Num 5–10 from a literary “junk room” to a “discursive mapping of temple space” into which the readers are invited to move gradually as they read. This move, Smoak argues, ultimately “recasts authority in the space of a text.”

This remark articulates the intuition at the heart of the metabolization of space into text: it recasts and reformats the symbolic and functional power of spaces. This transformation may not reduce the potency of these spaces, but it does change it. Not only does this textualization transform a space’s relationship to place and time via its mobility and replicability, it also fundamentally changes the nature of access to it. Comparison of literary and spatial access to archives is a discussion made complex by the paucity of our knowledge on either side. The primary danger here may be arguing too strenuously for more democratized access in either form. As discussed in Chapter 1, temple and bureaucratic archives were by no means public. Their textualization, moreover, renders them intelligible and thus accessible ostensibly only to literate individuals. But there are many ways of encountering a text beyond reading it. Seeing writing, having it read aloud, and it indeed simply knowing of the existence of such collections are means by which textualized spaces might communicate, beyond being read. Such considerations admittedly do not resolve this question of access but rather forestall the assumption that textualized spaces were rendered less accessible in antiquity.

There are many ways of configuring the relationship between texts and spaces, and there is complexity endemic to each of these models. Archival historiography is one way of conceiving of this relationship. It is an approach that suggests that the retelling of events and the preservation of data cannot be neatly cordoned off from one another. Ezra–Nehemiah and the Greek iterations of Esther have served as our most prominent examples of this genre but, again, its features many be detected elsewhere: from the genealogies of 1 Chronicles and the implement lists in Exodus, to the “documentarian historiography” of Josephus and Maccabees. Its principles may shed light on curated prophetic collections, like Jeremiah and Isaiah, organized with only intermittent narrative tissue. It may, finally (and regardless of the status of its antecedent documents), lend generic logic to Pentateuchal forms, obliquely confirming William Taylor’s nineteenth-century intuition that its authorship entailed archival work.

This final category—the Pentateuch—deserves additional comment, because its own disjointed form has been the subject of scholarly fascination for
generations, and because of more recent arguments for the historical links between its formation and Ezra’s mission. The differences between Ezra–Nehemiah and the Pentateuch are fairly obvious. It has long been argued that the Pentateuch is entirely the product of discrete documents stitched together, as evidenced by the periodic jaggedness in its storytelling. However, the contents of these documents (chiefly narrative and legal material, intermittent genealogy, virtually no letters) already stand it apart from Ezra–Nehemiah. To these generic differences, we might add the different nature and frequency with which these textual seams appear, so much so that the language of embedded or “cited” document does not adequately describe the Pentateuch’s representation of texts. Finally, the Pentateuch does not appear to share Ezra–Nehemiah’s overt focus on imperial archival institutions. Still, insofar as the Pentateuch can be called a collection of story, law, and genealogy held together with (periodically) unvarnished seams, we may also then plot it on archival historiography’s spectrum. Indeed, Jean Louis Ska has deployed a version of this argument previously, contending that the Pentateuch “contains the official and national archives/library” of the Second Temple community. He suggests further that these documents were collected for the purposes of communal recovery. In view of these arguments, one may choose to make a more robust version of this assertion, amending his statement to claim that Pentateuch does not just contain but in fact is the official or national archive of this community.

Archival historiography blurs the line between historian and archivist and between text and space alike. It is this constitutive “in-betweenness” that accounts for some of the distaste it generates. The complaints against Ezra–Nehemiah may be illustrative of this principle. This text, to sum up its many critics, exposes too much and achieves too little. It contains neither the sweeping rhetoric of the prophets nor the epic feats of the patriarchs. Narratively, it sits suspended between exile and autonomy, historically, among squabbling imperial factions, and generically, between history and collection, its archival “guts” exposed for all to see. This confluence of so-called middles that Ezra–Nehemiah demonstrates through its insistent brand of archival historiography is likely at the root of its modern revilement and neglect.

Despite this multiform status of in-betweenness that archival historiography demonstrates, it is important to note that it is also not an evolutionary way-station between the technology of the archive and the technology of the text. There is no steady developmental line between space and text. They remain, even in this era of digitized and seeming-infinite archives, in a fluid and reflexive relationship, at once competing with, supplementing, and complementing the other. It would be a mistake, therefore, to talk too quickly about the “death” of space in light of this genre that both mimics and flattens it. For in order to be effective, archival historiography simultaneously absorbs spaces and relies on their enduring symbolic power; it reflects and refracts an entity it could never quite replace, and indeed doing so (at least too soon) would compromise the efficacy of its own potent symbolism. The irreducible in-betweenness at the heart of archival historiography should push us to see new interpretive possibilities within complex constellations of texts, spaces, and the societies that build and are built by them.
Notes

Introduction

1. See, by way of comparison, the citation of lists: Ezra 1:9–11; 2 (// Neh 7) : 8:26–27; 10:20–43; Neh 3:2–32; 8:9, 11; 12; the citation of letters and decrees: Ezra 1:1–4; 4:11–16; 4:17–21; 5:6–17; 6:2–5, 6:6–12; 7:11–26; Neh 6. All biblical translations are my own unless otherwise noted.


3. Arnaldo Momigliano has characterized the Ezra memoir especially as "sadly mutilated" (Arnaldo Momigliano, The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography, Sather Classical Lectures 54 [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990], 14). Hugh Williamson has commented that the lists in Ezra 2 and Neh 7 "are among the most uninviting portions of the Bible" (H. G. M. Williamson, Ezra, Nehemiah. Word Biblical Commentary 16 [Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1985], 38). Joseph Blenkinsopp remarks that Ezra–Nehemiah seems to be "dominated by the narrow concerns of the clerical order which had little interest in the litterae humaniores and the creative activity of the mind . . . even within the confines of the biblical canon . . . might seem to be more of an appendix than an integral and essential component; an afterthought, like the Greek title of Chronicles, 'things left over', a filling in the gaps largely with the help of genealogies and interminable lists of names" (Joseph Blenkinsopp, Ezra–Nehemiah: A Commentary [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988], 36).

4. Lester Grabbe has ventured that, narratologically speaking, the intervention and repetition of lists like Neh 7 (// Ezra 2) are "not ideal" (Lester Grabbe, Ezra–Nehemiah [London; New York: Routledge, 1998], 52). Later, he remarks, regarding the letter of Artaxerxes in Ezra 7: "We know we are not dealing with history but with something else, whether you call it legend, literature, or theology" (Grabbe, Ezra–Nehemiah, 153). See also Sara Japhet who refers to the "apparent[ly] erratic" nature of its composition (Sara Japhet, "Periodization between History and Ideology II: Chronology and Ideology in Ezra–Nehemiah," Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period, ed. O. Lipschits and M. Oeming [Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006], 491). See also Gordon Davies, Ezra and Nehemiah (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1999), xii.


7. Grabbe remarks, for example, about Nehemiah 12: "The fondness for lists in the book reaches a ridiculous point with this chapter... From a literary point of view, it seems to make little sense; however, if one thinks of someone trying to compile an archive, it looks more reasonable" (Grabbe, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 58). He does not develop this point further, however. See also Davies, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, xi. On a similar issue in Esther see Jon Levenson, *Esther: A Commentary* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 12. Karel van der Toorn has referred to the Bible more generally as an archive, while referring to the technology of the scroll in particular as a "storage room" or a deposit box (Karel van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007], 16, 22–23).

8. This point is much akin to what Karel van der Toorn gestures toward in *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible*. "The books of the Bible," he argues, "were not designed to be read as units. They rather compare to archives. A biblical book is often like a box containing heterogeneous materials brought together on the assumption of common authorship, subject matter, or chronology. Whatever literary unity these books possess was imposed by the editors and is, to some extent, artificial. The editors could rearrange, expand, or confine the separate units at their disposal in such a way as to achieve the illusion of a single book with a single message" (van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 16). See also Carol A. Newsom, *The Self as Symbolic Space: Constructing Identity and Community at Qumran* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 36.


10. See Chapter 5 for further discussion.

11. Patrick Hutton has articulated this approach succinctly in discussing Maurice Halbwachs's notions of the historian's mandate vis-à-vis cultural memory: "The historian's task, therefore, is not to resurrect the past by restoring an idea to living memory, as Freud believed, but rather to describe the images in which collective memory once lived" (Patrick H. Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* [Hanover: University of Vermont Press, 1993], 7–8; see also, xxiv, 6).

12. For modern examples of the political ramifications surrounding representations of national memory and the way that discourse suffuses postcolonial literature, see Chapter 5. For ancient examples see especially discussion of Assurbanipal's collection and the library of Alexander in Chapter 1.

Chapter 1


3. BM 45642; Frame and George, "Royal Libraries," 265.


8. Pedersén, *Archives and Libraries*, 164. Assurbanipal’s claims to scribal learning (e.g., that he studied "the entire scribal art") were often included on colophons of documents from his collection (Erich Reiner, *Your Thwart in Places, Your Meaning Rape Cut: Poetry from Babylonian and Assyria* [Ann Arbor: Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies at the University of Michigan, 1985], 24).


10. Frame and George, "Royal Libraries," 266. Being etched on stone hundreds of years after the events described is a strange fate for a letter, even one addressed to a king. Still, scholars like Frame and George have argued for both letters’ authenticity,
36. Compare, for example, MT Esth 2:20 ("Now Esther had not revealed her kindred or other people, as Mordechai had charged her; for Esther obeyed Mordechai just as when she was brought up by him," NRSV) with OGG Esth 2:206 ("But Esther did not reveal her ancestry. For so Mordechaoi had commanded her: to fear God and to do his ordinances, just as when she was with him. So Esther did not change her way of life," NETS translation). On the major differences between the OGG and the AT versions, see Fox, *Redaction*, 130–32.

37. Dorothy prefers the term "section" to "addition" for these texts, because he wants to treat these editions as "integral works in their own right" and not as just piecemeal derivations of MT Esther (Dorothy, *Books of Esther*, 16, 89).


39. While the provenance and sources for the letters (B and E), and the other additions will not form part of our discussion here, it is noteworthy that these letters in the Greek additions bear particular linguistic affinity with those in 3 Maccabees. While the closeness of this affinity has been noted by many scholars, Noah Hacham has argued on the basis of linguistic evidence that Additions B and E show traces of the influence of 3 Maccabees, and thus postdate that text (Noah Hacham, "Third Maccabees and Esther: Parallels, Intertextuality, and Diaspora Identity," *JBL* 126 [2007]: 765–85). See also Carey Moore, "On the Origins of the LXX Additions to the Book of Esther," *JBL* 92 (1973): 382–93.


43. NETS translation here and following.

44. As Fox comments in the context of MT Esther, the letter circulated in Esth 3 is "strictly speaking, not itself a law, but a record of the command to the regional officials who are to inform the populace of its contents" (Fox, *Character*, 54).


46. Cf. Fox, *Redaction*, 136. In noting the differences between the characterization of the king and the dynamics of power, wide large, between the Hebrew and Greek accounts of Esther, Catherine Vialle argues that the Greek version of the Persian king is also more clearly under the power of God (Catharine Vialle, "La problematique du pouvoir dans Esther hébreu (TM) et Esther grec (LXX)," *ZAW* 124 (2012): 568–82. See also Levenson, *Esther*, 113.

47. When taken together, the presence of Additions A–F is generally explained as making the text more pious, in part because the additions include prayers and prophetic dreams. See Wahl, who in arguing that the MT version of Esther is implicitly pious, suggests then that these additions do not change the theology of the text but only make God's hidden presence explicit (Wahl, *Das Buch Esther*, 43–45).


50. Berlin, *Esther*, xxxix–lx. Sara Raup Johnson, writing on 3 Maccabees, has made similar arguments about the role of royal letters and decrees in that context. These documentary materials, she argues, bear the marks of Hellenistic strategies to create verisimilitude (Sara Raup Johnson, *Historical Fictions and Hellenistic Identity: Third Maccabees in Its Cultural Context* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004], 202). For more on the comparison with Hellenistic historiography, see Chapter 3.


52. Fox, *Redaction*, 5.


55. Fox, *Redaction*, 141.


57. The intersecting concepts of text collection and communal recovery are explored more fully in Chapter 5.

58. This stands in contrast with Addition D, which is integrated, if not seamlessly into the body of the narrative, then at least more easily because it is presented as third-person narrative.

Chapter 5


2. Contrary Hans Barstad, who asserts that biblical historiography is (presumably, entirely) narrative (Hans Barstad, *History and the Hebrew Bible* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008], 14), Barstad and I share, however, a definition of narrative, which he draws from Laurence Stone (Laurence Stone, "The Revival of Narrative," *JP* 85 [1979], 3): "Narrative is taken to mean the organization of material in a chronologically sequential order and the focusing of the content into a single coherent story, albeit with subplots" (cited by Barstad, *History*, 16).

9. For discussion of the dating of Ezra-Nehemiah, see Chapters 1 and 3.
10. Seminal works on trauma and trauma literature include Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) and Kai Eriksson, *Everything In Its Path: Destruction of Community in the Buffalo Creek Flood* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976) and *A New Species of Trouble: Explanations in Disaster, Trauma, and Community* (New York: Norton, 1994). One of the persistent questions of trauma theory is how to move trauma from an individual to a collective category, and to avoid the problems of applying categories of individual minds like PTSD to groups, nations, or cultures. Austin Sarat and others describe alternative models of interpreting collective memory and trauma which turn to literature and mass media as the primary units of traumatic representation (Austin Sarat, Nadav Davidovitch, Michal Alberstein, "Trauma and Memory: Between Individual and Collective Experiences," in *Trauma and Memory: Reading, Healing, and Making Law*, eds. A. Sarat, et al. [Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007], 4–16). Such texts and images become the means through which traumatic events and social disruptions that follow are experienced and transmitted (Sarat, Davidovitch, and Alberstein, "Trauma and Memory"); 6; Dolores Hazen and Sonia Baeo-Allué, "Introductio," *The Splintered Glass: Facets of Trauma in the Post-Colony and Beyond*, ed. D. Herrera and S. Baeo-Allué [New York: Rodopi, 2011], x–xii.)
13. This remark comes with full recognition of the many political strategies by which memory—in the form of histories, records, and monuments—may be forcibly obliterated or foreclosed upon for political ends (see additional comment in Chapter 1).
15. This is not to downplay the significant, visceral, and discrete traumas that colonial rule produces. As David Lloyd as argued, "Trauma entails violent intrusion and a sense of utter objectification that annihilates the person as subject or agent. This is no less apt as a description of the effects and mechanisms of colonialization: the overwhelming technological, military and economic power of the colonizer, the violence
and programmatically excessive atrocities committed in the course of putting down resistance to intrusion, the deliberate destruction of the symbolic and practical resources of whole populations" (David Lloyd, "Colonial Trauma/Postcolonial Recovery?" Interventions 2 [2000]: 212–28 at 214).

16. Alexander, "Toward a Theory" 8. "For trauma," Alexander argues, "is not something naturally existing; it is something constructed by society." (Alexander, "Toward a Theory," 2). Alexander argues this in opposition to so-called "lay trauma theory," which presumes that the trauma is naturally occurring, stemming from the events themselves.

17. On the transmissibility of trauma, see studies particularly pertaining to the "inherited" trauma of children and grandchildren of Holocaust victims (see, for example Sigrid Weigel, "Generation" as a Symbolic Form: On the Genealogical Discourse of Memory since 1945, GR 77 [2002], 264–77). A related—but not identical—concept that extends beyond the communication of trauma through immediate family systems is what Marianne Hirsch describes as "postmemory," particularly in reference to Holocaust survivors: the "inter- and trans-generational act of transfer and the resonant aftereffects of trauma," (Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," PT 29 [2008]: 106). The "post" in this designation "signifies more than a temporal delay and more than a location in an aftermath" (Hirsch, "Generation," 106). The "post," she argues, helps to make sense of the deferred, delayed grappling with colonial legacies as well as their profound and lingering entanglement in present memory and representation. To inherit these memories, even generations after the traumatic event, "is to be shaped, however indirectly, by traumatic events that still defy narrative reconstruction and exceed comprehension" (Hirsch, "Generation," 107; see also Abigail Ward, "Introduction," Postcolonial Traumas: Memory, Narrative, Resistance, ed. A. Ward [London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015], 7). On the blurred line between acute and chronic trauma, see Erikson, New Species of Trouble, 20–22.

18. None of these remarks about the lack of coherence of Ezra-Nehemiah are meant to claim that these narratives are wholly unintelligible or non-linear, demonstrated by the fact that the stories about (and perhaps "by") Ezra and Nehemiah are studied as discrete "memoirs." Yet even these narratives, as explored in Chapter 3, are subject to the incursion of documents (cf. Ezra 10; Neh 3). The point here is that the overall form of Ezra-Nehemiah, while containing sections of continuous narrative, is fragmented through citation.


23. Locke complains that versification represents "a dangerous Change in the publisching of those holy Books . . . He need but be furnished with Verses of Sacred Scripture, containing Words and Expressions that are but flexible . . . and his System that has appropriated them to the Orthodoxie of this Church, makes them immediately strong and irrefragable Arguments for his Opinion. This is the Benefit of loose sentences, and Scripture crumbled into Verses, which quickly turn into independent Aphorisms" (cited in Chartier, Order of Books, 12; see also McKenzie, Bibliography, 46–47).

24. McKenzie, Bibliography, 54, 63–65; Chartier, Order of Books, 63.


28. See Assman, who argues: "in their primary function, [archives] served the ruling class with the necessary information to build up provisions for the future through stockpiling. They also served as tools for the symbolic legitimation of power and to discipline the population. . . . Archives always belonged to institutions of power: the church, the state, the police, the law, etc. Without extended archives of data, there is no state bureaucracy, no strategy to organize the future and no control over the past. Archives of data prove important tools for political power (Herrschaftswissen)" (A. Assman, "Canon and Archive," 102).


30. Benjamin contends "ownership is the most intimate relationship that one can have to objects. Not that they come alive in him; it is he who lives in them. So I have erected one of his dwellings, with books as the building stones, before you, and now he is going to disappear inside, as is only fitting" (Walter Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library: A Talk about Book Collecting," in Illuminations, trans. H. Zohn; ed. H. Arendt [New York: Schocken Books, 1968], 67).


33. See also König and Whitmarsh, "Ordering Knowledge," 38.

35. Belser, Rabbinic Tales of Destruction, 118.

36. David Lloyd also points to the potential hazards of collective “recovery” as prescribed by public mourning practices in present-day Ireland. Lloyd problematizes a notion of recovery that conspires with “therapeutic modernity” to forget past pain in order to become “fully formed subjects” (Lloyd, “Colonial Trauma,” 222). Lloyd prefers language of survival rather than recovery (“Colonial Trauma,” 227). Lloyd’s ethical appraisal of “recovery” has informed my own notion of recovery (discussed later in this chapter), though his preference for “survival” is still answerable to Belser’s critique. For more on the political complications of post-traumatic national recovery, see Neil J. Smelser, “Psychological Trauma and Cultural Trauma,” in Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity, by J. Alexander et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 49–50; Akiko Hashimoto, Long Defeat: Cultural Trauma, Memory, and Identity in Japan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 5, 120–23. For discussion of archival destruction, see Chapter 1.

37. As Hindy Najman argues in her analysis of 4 Ezra, the continuation of revelation in the wake of trauma must always factor in the ways these processes are transformed by destruction (Hindy Najman, Losing the Temple and Recovering the Future: An Analysis of 4 Ezra [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014], 1–25). There is vitality and even recovery expressed in these revelatory encounters, but there is never a reversion to a pre-disaster visionary outlook.

38. These examples are described in Chapter 1.


42. Mroczek, “Thinking Digitally,” 251. See also Mroczek, Literary Imagination, 115–21.


45. Most, “Fragments,” 372.

46. Hindy Najman’s formulation of “ethical reading” addresses manifold significations of the fragment in biblical studies, including how the fragment invites a response from the reader (Hindy Najman, “Ethical Reading: The Transformation of the Text and the Self,” JTS 68 [2017]: 507–29).

47. Philosophical and literary fascination with the concept of “the fragment” was a hallmark of 18th- and 19th-century German romanticism, notably in the work of Friedrich Schlegel. Schlegel’s use of and ruminations on the form of the fragment includes comments on our instinctive—sometimes artifice-making—drive toward unity in our aesthetic objects. He writes: “Many works that are extolled for their beautiful continuity have less unity than a colorful heap of ideas that aim at one aim, animated solely by the spirit of one spirit… On the other hand, many a product whose coherence is never doubted is, as the artist well knows, not a work, but rather only a fragment, one or several, raw material, sketch. But the drive toward unity is so strong in human beings that at the point of creation the originator himself often adds on to what he cannot fully complete or unify, often very sensibly and yet in a way that is completely unnatural. The worst thing about this is that the things that one uses to drape over the already existing genuine pieces in order to create the illusion of unity are nothing but dyed rags. And if these pieces are skillfully and deceptively costumed and are veiled with understanding, then it is even worse. Then even the chosen are initially deceived…” (Friedrich Schlegel, “The Fragmentary Imperative,” in Theory as Practice: A Critical Anthology of Early German Romantic Writings, ed. J. Schulte-Sasse et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 317–18).


49. See Introduction.

50. Mroczek, Literary Imagination, 13, italics mine.


56. On Josephus’s manifold use of citations in his historiography (especially in AJ), see Ryan Olson, Tragedy, Authority, and Trickery: The Poetics of Embedded Letters in Josephus (Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies; Cambridge, Mass.: Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2010); Eusebius’s prolific use of citations in his Ecclesiastical History (fourth century CE), has garnered criticism similar to that leveled at Ezra–Nehemiah’s “disjointed” historiographic style by Arnoldo Momigliano. Momigliano argues that what Eusebius is doing was “not history” (Arnaldo Momigliano, Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977), 115). For Whittmarsh’s take on the Roman consumption of Hellenistic archival thinking, see his chapter, “Reading from the Archive: Roman Greece,” in Ancient Greek Literature, 139–58.

5. Carruthers, Book of Memory, 222.
7. Mroczek, Literary Imagination, 121.
8. Mroczek, Literary Imagination, 7–10, 184–89.
15. See discussion in Chapter 1.
17. Peters, Marvelous Clouds, 32–33. See also Peter's of the comparison between the "monumental" Egyptian structures versus the portability of Israelite media in the Exodus narrative in 287–88. Mroczek also invokes metaphors of "software" versus "hardware" in reference to the mental sites of data organization and valuation (Eva Mroczek, "Thinking Digitally about the Dead Sea Scrolls: Book History Before and Beyond the Book" BH 14 [2011]: 241–69 at 262).
18. It is fruitful in to see the concept of archival historiography as contributing to conversations in the study of religion and space. Though many of these conversations engage larger expanses (e.g., how the role of migration, pilgrimage, and the nation-state shape the identity of the religious subject, or how imagined cosmologies are mimicked in religious thought and behavior), the conversion, as it were, from space to text that archival historiography performs likewise permits the crossing of geographic boundaries as well as the transgression of the imagined boundary between the archival room and the page. For more on this discussion, see John Corrigan, "Religion and Space," in The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives, ed. B. Warf and S. Arias (London; New York: Routledge, 2009), 157–72, esp. 157–63, 172.
19. In her survey of the range of ways citation can function and signify, Claudette Sartillot illuminates the German term, Geflügelte Worte, meaning "familiar quotation," or "household word." Such quotations, Sartillot argues, "would then be..."
winged words" words that have wings—and therefore can easily cross borders, transport themselves (and us) from one place to another." (Claudette Sarriloi, Citation and Modernity: Derrida, Joyce, and Brecht [Norman, Ok.; London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993], 23).


31. Mandell and Smoak, "Reading Beyond Literacy," 81–82.


34. This last feature in no way forms a requirement for the category of "archival historiography," but is part of what makes Ezra-Nehemiah a particularly apt example of the genre.


37. Peters remarks that, "[t]he things in the middle, like spines and bowls, often get demeaned, but they too deserve their place in our analysis" (Peters, Marvelous Clouds, 50).


39. Parallels can be drawn here with Mroczek's claim that maintaining a "linear, evolutionary history of writing, reading, and textual transmission is an untenable proposition" (Mroczek, "Thinking Digitally," 244).

40. This comment extrapolates from Roland Barthes' famous claim: "... writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin. Writing is the neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing" (Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in Image, Music, Text: Essays Selected and Translated by Stephen Heath [New York: Hill & Wang, 1977], 142).