The Radical Nature of "Return" in Zechariah

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> Return to me, says the LORD of Hosts, and I will return to you
> (Zech 1:3).

> Besides functioning to differentiate insiders and outsiders,
> boundaries may also help to strengthen a group's cohesion. By
> demarcating a group's 'place' in the environment, a boundary
> becomes a symbol of the social group and may function to
> reinforce its identity. The act of encircling or linking a cluster
> of residential units gives a settlement a more cohesive, unified
> appearance.[1]

INTRODUCTION

We begin with this proposal: "return" in Zechariah (1–8), an act so
often unfairly burdened with modern theological importance was
rather a defensive, *utopian* strategy. It was one in which a *minority*
community sought to alleviate the dissonance between its relatively
marginal position within the social-political hierarchy of the prov-
ince and its desire for social-political authority.[2] Its practical pur-
pose, in sociological terms, was to create through collective action
clear boundaries between member and non-member (cf. Zech 2:5–

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[1] S. C. Kenzle, "Enclosing Walls in the Northern San Juan: Socio-
physical Boundaries and Defensive Fortifications in the American South-
west," *JFA* 24/2 (1997), 195–210 (200).

[2] In reference to the larger context in which the community found
itself in Yehud, M. Hallaschka, building on the work of J. Nogalski, argues
that while Zech 1–8 reflects multiple redactionary levels, there were two
primary ones: the so-called night visions, or base visions, and the later
"expansive" visions. Nevertheless, he maintains, the visions still reflect the
situation in early Persian Judah (see M. Hallaschka, "From Cores to Cor-
pus: Considering the Formation of Haggai and Zechariah 1–8," in R.
Albertz, J. D. Nogalski, and J. Wöhrle [eds.], *Perspectives on the Formation of
the Book of the Twelve: Methodological Foundations, Redactional Processes, Historical
Insights* [de Gruyter, 2012], 182–85). As most of the biblical texts from that
period testify, that situation was one marked by uncertainty and unfulfilled
desire.

11). That is why the exile factors so prominently in the biblical understanding of return; it represents for the biblical author a paradigmatic event of boundary making—a point that Zech 5:5–11 portrays with its emphasis on the house built in Shinar for "Wickedness," and the boundaries that the house itself demarcates: profanity, disorder, chaos, all regulated through separation. There is a strong attitude of, for lack of a better phrase, ideological imperialism behind the vision in response to the exile. C. Torrey too was suspicious of the relevance of the biblical text's portrayal of the exile and its related traditions and events deeming it "absurd and impossible." He concluded that "[t]he Jews of Jerusalem, at the time of its publication and thereafter, knew that it was 'for edification only,' and gave it no further attention."[3]

The fantastical element is there, one should agree, but the function of the text should not be dismissed as but a mere hyperbolic edification. It, or the ideological tradition it has preserved, served a strategic social and ideological role, one of self-preservation (note, for instance, the punishment of a desolate land in Zech 7:8–14 for rejecting Yahweh's commands).[4] If "return" entailed "benefits," the community claiming those benefits was an immigrating group. It was not one already benefitting from a relationship with the land and the established social-political context. As an immigrating group it had no preexisting cultural anchor within the receiving society (cf. the implication in 2:11–12[5])—an anchor, to be clear, upon which it could secure within the provincial normative its collective identity as a group in authority. The general pattern for immigrant groups in such a position is to focus inwardly, to find collective identity in one's membership within the social group and from the group's established values.[6] But such an inward focus can at best be temporary; the group must eventually be externally

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[3] C. C. Torrey, *The Chronicler's History of Israel: Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah Restored to Its Original Form* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1973), xxvii.

[4] Zech 7:8–14 would be part of what Hallaschka describes as the influence of the penitential prayer tradition in Zechariah, seen in 1:1–6; 7:1–8:23 (see "From Cores to Corpus," 173). He bases his argument on the work of M. J. Boda, "Zechariah: Master Mason or Penitential Prophet?" in R. Albertz and B. Becking (eds.), *Yahwism After the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Era: Papers Read at the First Meeting of the European Association for Biblical Studies, Utrecht, 6–9 August 2000* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2003), 61–67.

[5] The verbs used, "escape," or "slip away," "plunder," as well as the possible grammatical correlation between בבה as in בבת עינו, "apple of his eye," and בבי, "chief of returning exiles" (but only in Ezra 2:11; 8:11; 10:28; Neh 7:16; 10:16), imply destruction and loss but also hope in return as well as a clear indication that the returnees were to be considered as distinct from those who were already in the land.

[6] As noted in the discussion of H. Turjeman, G. Mesch, and G. Fishman, "Social Identity, Identity Formation, and Delinquency," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 49/2–3 (2008), 111–26 (112).

validated—along the lines of, *we "outsiders" recognize you for who you declare yourself to be*—if it seeks a more permanent (beyond gross assimilation) social interaction within the broader cultural world.[7] And at some point, every immigrant group must develop strategies with which to engage its host culture, whether through assimilation or through defensive reaction. Zechariah's community, to be clear, chose the latter (that, after all, is the implication of Yahweh's "selection" in 2:16[8]). It did not attempt to base its identity in Yehud's already existing social-political structures through assimilation—structures maintained by the people already in the land. Nor did it seek to engage in a legitimating manner the "native" institutions and communities on their own grounds, a negligent tendency that would be the implication of the vision of the flying scroll (*of law?*) in 5:1–4, which presupposes certain criteria for membership within those who belong to the land. One might discern the true intent of the author and his community by paying close attention to the ways in which, what I term, the "sacred triad" (return, temple, and crown) is employed literarily—something that we will do from various angles in this work. Put briefly, what Zech 1–8 conveys is the community's reaction strategy, its "our story," the telling of which helped ritualize and preserve the boundaries of collective self-identity. "Thus says the LORD of hosts: I will save my people from the east country and from the west country; and I will bring them to live in Jerusalem. They shall be my people and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness" (8:7–8). Within this larger understanding, what the text portrays as struggle is critically important. It is at the points where struggles occur, points of resistance in pursuit of some dominant and guiding ideal, that one finds continued affirmation of perceived or imposed boundaries.

One of the better methods for exposing these points of tension is through M. Klein's theoretical take on the so-called "death instinct." By exploring some of the different psychological and social anxieties generated from it, she developed several methodo-

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[7] Within sociology this is generally accepted as true. For but one example, J. Alexander (cf. *The Meanings of Social Life: A Cultural Sociology* [Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2003], 28, 67) described the impact of "post-Holocaust morality" as the translation of a single group's experience into something universally meaningful. One of the reasons this occurred, he argues, is that the Jewish community found external support for its identity as a survivor of "evil."

[8] One should also note in light of Klein's theory that what the text describes as a type of divine selection should be first analyzed as a collective projection. Belief in divine selection as a defining ideology represents the projection of collective desire. Consequently, if gods are no more than dominant shared symbols, then divine selection would technically be the collective validating itself while projecting the ideal it hopes it will become. That, for parallel point, would be one reason why gods typically reflect dominant aspects of the cultures that worship them.

logical questions that, through our own translation, should prove helpful in unpacking some of the possible social-political motivations behind the writing of Zechariah: (1) What discernible anxieties are prevalent within Zechariah? (2) Upon what objects does Zechariah project good or bad experiences to alleviate those anxieties? And (3) what actions of resistance, or defensive mechanisms, to threatening experiences are advocated in the hope of alleviating anxiety? Our focus is on the text as an expression of desire and its concomitant concern for a clearer delineation of the surrounding social-political environment influencing its own function.[9] The productive drive of anxiety and its corresponding desire—often expressed in the form of attitudes and behaviors directed away from a source of anxiety—can be summarized in Klein's own words:

> I hold that anxiety arises from the operation of the death instinct within an organism, is felt as fear of annihilation (death) and takes the form of fear of persecution. The fear of the destructive impulse seems to attach itself at once to an object—or rather it is experienced as the fear of an uncontrollable overpowering object.[10]

Our task must be to understand the death instinct as an impulse, the quiddities of desire as a motivation, and the role of the shared object in the preservation of the group.

It may be appropriate at this point to provide a quick word of clarification regarding certain suppositions behind this work. While this work will talk at length about the correlation between the "death instinct" and utopian aspiration, it does not mean that I perceive the two to be direct equivalents. That utopian thinking does not stem only from groups in a position of social marginality has been well argued already.[11] In Zechariah, utopian thinking

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[9] The present article continues in some regards the argument developed in J. W. Cataldo, "Yahweh's Breast: Klein's Projective Identification Theory as an Understanding for Monotheistic Identity in Haggai," *JHS* 13 (2013), http://www.jhsonline.org/Articles/article_181.pdf. That article argued that Haggai's emphasis upon the Jerusalem temple reflected less any socioeconomic reasoning of the community and more the prophet's concern for the construction of a shared ideal around which his community, which he believed to be under threat of dissolution, could strengthen and preserve its identity. The similarities are intentional as this current article is a "part two" of the discussion begun there. It is the position of this author that theories applied to Haggai must be equally applied to Zechariah as both are traditionally taken to comprise a textual whole.

[10] M. Klein, *Envy and Gratitude, and Other Works, 1946–1963* (New York: Vintage Digital, 2011), 4.

[11] F. Uhlenbruch's work (*The Nowhere Bible: Utopia, Dystopia, Science Fiction* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015]), for instance, is but one of the more recent in a line of scholarly contributions in this area. One should also consider

arises out of a *perceived* position of marginality. The restored society that was hoped for had not yet become manifest. For perhaps a rough analogy, one might see something similar in the rhetoric coming from Media spokespeople affiliated with the Christian Right where some have argued that Christians in the U.S. are now the new recipients of prejudice because their voice in social-political matters is being silenced. Whether that really is the case or not is almost irrelevant to the fact that some groups *believe* themselves to be denied the ability to govern or influence the social-political context. Belief is one of the most powerful ideological motivators. And as Media spokespeople, one would be hard pressed to show that these individuals are at a direct social-economic disadvantage. In rough similarity, the remnant community in Zechariah need not be at an economic disadvantage to feel marginalized in its ability to direct events in or for the social-political context. When we talk therefore about the marginal position of the community in Zechariah, we are referring to its existence outside the central authority of the social-political context. And within that context, we can also accept that various groups competed for authority vis-à-vis the temple, which would have been economically prosperous as an imperial bank.[12]

It may also be helpful to briefly mention the theory on monotheism upon which I am depending, since it provides several suppositions with which I am working. I reject the proposal that monotheism was a stage in some expected evolutionary development. Social evolution does, however, occur *within* groups, but that is not the same thing as a "typological evolution," for lack of a better phrase, as what has been proposed for a historical transformation from polytheism to monotheism. Instead, I accept the proposal that the emergence of monotheism can be better found in situations of conflict, and that a singular deity represents in response the projection of a singular collective ideal—as a stabilized order and collective identity preserved against interruption and corruption—in reaction to other competing ideals and groups vying for authority.[13] Within that framework, what we see in Zech-

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works on apocalypticism, which share some affinities with utopianism, such as that by S. Cook (*Prophecy and Apocalypticism: The Postexilic Social Setting* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995]), which argued, based on R. Wilson's work in *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), cf. 15–16, that apocalypticism may come as much from the center in social-political position as much as from a marginal position.

[12] Cf. L. G. Perdue and W. Carter, *Israel and Empire: A Postcolonial History of Israel and Early Judaism* (New York: T&T Clark, 2015), 119–21. On the temple as a possible bank, see J. Schaper, "The Temple Treasury Committee in the Times of Nehemiah and Ezra," *VT* 47 (1997), 200–6; idem, "The Jerusalem Temple as an Instrument of the Achaemenid Fiscal Administration," *VT* 45 (1995), 528–39.

[13] As argued at length in J. W. Cataldo, *Breaking Monotheism: Yehud and the Material Formation of Monotheistic Identity* (LHBOTS, 565; London:

ariah is not a full-fledged monotheism but one becoming more self-aware, which is why, in part, we can see such varied polarizing responses to the "death instinct" as what the text portrays.[14]

MELANIE KLEIN, THE "DEATH INSTINCT," AND THE DESIRE OF ZECHARIAH

Psychoanalytical studies, including theories in social psychology, the latter in particular which can be applied theoretically on collective and individual levels, have soundly shown us that forces of disruption and change trigger a fundamental desire response—*Live! I want to live!*—in an organism's "death instinct." This instinct is also referred to by some as the "need to survive."[15] In its most basic function, the death instinct reacts in fear to perceived or real aspects of chaos or anomy, irrelevance, pain, and ultimately the loss of life or social consciousness. It facilitates the distinction between categorical pain and pleasure by directing an organism, whether individual or collective in composition, away from those things that might result in, to summarize the previous list of fears, "annihilation" and toward those experiences that alleviate anxiety and bring about pleasure.[16] Yet we should also note that while there are some experiences common to all individuals and collectives—and such experiences tend to be our basest ones—most of our motivations to categorize between pleasure and pain tend to be subjective to the individual or collective.

Our task then is to understand how the death instinct provided for Zechariah a primary motivation behind the unique codification of the social-religious dichotomy between member and

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Bloomsbury, 2012).

[14] On the idea that there were significant areas of tension even within the immigrating Judeans, see Perdue and Carter, *Israel and Empire*, 107–28.

[15] For brief reference, see the works of Klein, *Envy and Gratitude*; G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); J. Lacan, *Écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966); S. Freud and C. J. Hubback, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (Mansfield Center, CT: Martino, 2009). See also for more general examples of social psychological studies, J. A. Howard, "Social Psychology of Identities," *Annual Reviews in Sociology* 26 (2000), 367–93; J. C. Alexander et al. (eds.), *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004); R. Leys, *From Guilt to Shame: Auschwitz and After* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[16] Freud, for example, argued in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, that pleasure, or desire, was found on the path to death. Thus, the death drive was primary over the pleasure principle. Klein's view (as expressed throughout *Envy and Gratitude*) on the death instinct is based in part on Freud's argument for the primacy of the death drive. Lacan (in *Écrits*) agrees with the primacy of the death drive, or instinct, but argues that organisms are not driven towards death by *by* death. See also S. Homer's summary (in *Jacques Lacan* [Routledge Critical Thinkers; London/New York: Routledge, 2005], 89) of this larger discussion.

non-member, and sacred and profane. What we find within the text is the mentality that an anxiety over death—by which we are referring here to the loss of any recognition of the group as an externally legitimated body—could be alleviated by ritualizing behaviors around expectations of divine obedience (and covenantal relationship). Doing that marked out, or so it was thought, the boundaries of a community whose identity was based on Yahweh's authority over "anomy"—this last which was associated with and ritualized in remembrances of exile. Consequently, any subsequent institutional paradigm established within the social-political context (government, cult, etc.) could only be out of necessity based on the fundamental distinction between sacred and profane as the basis for collective identity in the absence of dominant control (in the forms of land and politics) over the province.

While exile represented the annihilation of identity (cf. Zech 8:1–8, 14–15), Zechariah's emphasis on the leadership of Joshua, one that seems to combine religious and political authority, symbolized the articulation of identity based on the community's experience of displacement and its desire for restoration.[17] For Klein, this internal processing, which entails the inward legitimation of identity and its subsequent outward projection for the benefit of external recognition, is fundamental for any act of self-aware consciousness. Such as, *I see myself as a handsome man, and I will employ an overabundance of relevant symbolism to project myself as handsome to you.* But where Klein tends to focus on the individual, broader collective confirmation is attainable through the work of P. Berger, who from a sociological perspective, makes a similar argument that this is the same process by which groups shape social reality.[18] This "reality" is one in which divine order, socially produced and legitimated as superior to any earthly order, is the cornerstone for identity and the normative order in which that identity is situated.[19] But the radical "faith" demanded by that belief creates a situation in which the persecutory fear of dissolution or irrelevance, both of which func-

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[17] M. Moore suggests, in her review of scholarship in the area, that this utopian desire, or emphasis, appears to be one of the roots of Jewish messianism and also a basis for Zechariah's early apocalypses (cf. *Biblical History and Israel's Past* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011], 518). C. Stuhlmueller suggests that where Zerubbabel lost favor in Zechariah, hope for the house of David may have shifted in a priestly direction (see *Rebuilding with Hope* [ITC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988], 79).

[18] P. L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: a Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Penguin Press, 1967), 1.

[19] Regarding the relationship between order and identity, and the corresponding one between disorder and annihilation, see, for example, Howard, "Social Psychology of Identities," 367. See also S. Reicher's discussion (in "The Context of Social Identity: Domination, Resistance, and Change," *Political Psychology* 25/6 [2004], 921–45) of conflict as a driving force behind the solidification of collective identity as an attempt to preserve the group against dissolution.

tion effectively as forms of annihilation with respect to group iden-
tity,[20] drives the formation of a collective identity, just as much as it
does individual identity, by creating within the group a defensive
reaction to anxiety.[21] This may occur along the lines of alleviating
one's anxiety that one may not be one of the "chosen" (such as in
the monotheistic traditions, generally) by projecting fear of rejec-
tion upon someone else, making that person a categorical outsider.

The dark side of any belief in the absolute supremacy or
authority of God is the fear that it may all be a lie. Consequently,
every religious group develops shared symbols upon which hope in
the certainty of God's, or the Divine's, sovereign power may be
cast—thus, the critical function in Christianity of Hell in light of
God's lack of obvious participation within the natural order, and
one might also see a "projected certainty" in Zech 1:1–6 with its
emphasis upon historical events controlled within God's plan.[22]
While applied and kept on the group level, this seems to cor-
respond to Klein's understanding of the function and role of the
ego. She argued that the ego is the mechanism through which good
and bad experiences (corresponding to pleasure and pain) are cate-
gorized, made sense of, and so also plays a primary role in solidi-
fying the foundation for identity. In contrast, it is not, with respect
to a collective, an idea internal to any individual but a shared, sym-

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[20] The dissolution of group identity so that it no longer exists as a
group identity, when the consequence of external forces, is an imaginary,
i.e. not physical, annihilation. Nevertheless, the dissolution of group iden-
tity still generates within the individual a heightened paranoia of persecu-
tory anxiety if the group itself played a fundamental role in qualifying the
individual's external expression of his or her own self-identity.

[21] In his study of ancient Israel, M. Smith (*Palestinian Parties and Politics
That Shaped the Old Testament* [London: SCM, 1987], 63) proposed similarly
that the collective identity of the remnant community was shaped by the
strongly felt need for "defensive structuring."

[22] While recent scholarship has argued that Zech 1:1–6 is a later redac-
tional unit, it can still be accepted that the redaction does not alter the
dominant presupposition of Zechariah that Yahweh is the positive answer
to the chaotic events of exile and return. There mains a thematic con-
sistency between the units and the whole. M. J. Boda (cf. "Hoy, Hoy: The
Prophetic Origins of the Babylonian Tradition in Zechariah 2:10–17," in
M. J. Boda and M. Floyd [eds.], *Tradition in Transition: Haggai and Zechariah
1–8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology* [LHBOTS, 475; London: T&T Clark,
2008], 171–90, esp. 190) makes a similar point in his analysis of thematic
consistency despite different prophetic influences in Zechariah (such as
from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Habakkuk). Boda's argument appreci-
ates proposals such as M. A. Sweeney's, that the smaller prophetic text
was dependent upon the major prophetic traditions, but finds Sweeney's
emphasis upon Isaiah to the expense of Jeremiah and Ezekiel "surprising"
(cf. Boda, ibid., 171 and n. 3; M. A. Sweeney, "Zechariah's Debate with
Isaiah," in M. A. Sweeney and E. Ben Zvi [eds.], *The Changing Face of Form
Criticism for the Twenty-First Century* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 335–
50).

bolic object, material or immaterial, that fulfills a similar function to the ego.[23] It does this by imposing itself upon the same group that has legitimated the object's status as a powerful symbol. In Zech 1–8,[24] one shared symbol or ideal upon which the identity of the remnant community is based is the centrality of Jerusalem as the seat of divine power and order. "Therefore, thus says Yahweh, 'I have returned to Jerusalem. . .' " (Zech 1:16).

Klein argues that this impact is measured through categorization of good and bad experiences, a fundamental basis that has continued to inform recent social-psychological studies.[25] When experiences, good or bad, are major events or reflect the exchange of critical information they are central to a group's dominant discourse, which mediates intersubjective relationships between members and between members and outsiders.[26] Good experiences are distinguishable from bad experiences generally because they are perceived to be central or beneficial to the order of the group.[27] Alternatively, bad experiences—whether in the cognitive, emotional, or motivational spheres—are those that threaten the order central to the individual's or collective's identity. This distinction

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[23] Cf. Klein, *Envy and Gratitude*, 4, 5, 238.

[24] Several have argued that this collection together with Haggai comprises a temple-building text. Cf. C. L. Meyers and E. M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8 (ABD,* 25B; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1987), lxviii; M. J. Boda, "Messengers of Hope in Haggai-Malachi," *JSOT* 32 (2007), 113–31 (116–17). While Zech 3 is formally different from the rest of Zech 1–6, M. Stead offers a convincing argument that its difference lies in authors adoption of the patterning of the divine-council scene in Isa 6 (see *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1–8* [LHBOTS, 506; New York: Bloomsbury, 2009], 46–47). But compare C. Jeremias, *Die Nachtgesichte des Sacharja. Untersuchungen zu ihrer Stellung im Zusammenhang der Visionsberichte im Alten Testament und ze ihrem Bildmaterial* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 201–3.

[25] Experiences define individual and collective identities because they are either internalized or projected as defenses against anxiety (cf. Klein, *Envy and Gratitude*, 6). Consequently, they are categorized according to what impact they have upon the group's identity.

[26] Cf. O. David and D. Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Conception of Collective Identity: The Case of National Identity as an Example," *Personality and Social Pscyochology Review* 13 (2009), 354–79 (372).

[27] David and Bar-Tal's comments on national identity (ibid., 361), as a collective identity centered around the shared object of the *idea* of an autonomy political body, may help clarify the important, stabilizing role of identity. "[I]dentification with a nation links the individual to a unique culture and language and to a positive reference group that is connected to the past and future. In this way it renders to individual's beliefs and deeds significant historical perspective and gives them a sense that their community has existed before them and will continue to exist after them. In addition, at the same time, affinity to the nation lends a meaning to the social and political order into which individuals are born or live because institutions, laws, norms, and roles derive from the social political definitions of nation-states."

between good and bad experiences, consequently, is the funda-mental basis upon which the distinction between in- and out-groups, as well as their corresponding prejudices, is based.[28]

In their study of prejudice, C. Crandall and A. Eshleman put it this way, "[B]ad people deserve bad treatment."[29] That is, identities, upon which such distinctions are based fundamentally, are con-structed through actions or performances of projection or introjec-tion of bad and good experiences. In this sense, projection and introjection are expressions of an internal desire for uniqueness and distinction in the formation of a collective identity.[30] They are actions that at their most basic level shape the contours of the in-group by imposing upon the social world an elementary and overly dichotomized typology, *I am not you.*

RETURN AS AN ACT OF IDENTITY

Identity is a performance. It is always in motion, constantly adapt-ing to the changing needs of the individual or group.[31] Or, *I'm not the same person today that I was yesterday.* Consequently, collective sta-bility demands a consistent shared object or symbolic ideal upon which the idealized stability of the group may be cast. This may be, for example, the cross for Christians, the Torah for Jews, or the "groin grab" practiced by rappers to evoke sentiments of strength, virility, and confidence. For every collective identity, a shared object—which in psychoanalytic and social senses can be an idea, object, institution, or symbol—presents a consistent and recog-nizable "anchor" against which each new experience may be meas-ured, and also against which the group may set the goals for coor-dinated activity.[32]

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[28] This distinction is a consequence of an instinctual need to create order within the world. David and Bar-Tal (ibid., 363) briefly discuss this point, but see also the larger work of H. Tajfel in *Social Identity and Inter-group Relations* (European Studies in Social Psychology; Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press; Paris: Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1982).

[29] C. S. Crandall and A. Eshleman, "A Justification-Suppression Model of the Expression and Experience of Prejudice," *Psychological Bulletin* 129/3 (2003), 414–46 (428).

[30] David and Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Conception," 363.

[31] David and Bar-Tal (ibid., 363) offer a similar proposal in their dis-cussion of "national space." But this idea is true for a variety of social identity expressions such as gender, as J. Butler argued effectively in *Gen-der Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (Routledge Classics; New York: Routledge, 2006), *passim.*

[32] David and Bar-Tal ("Sociopsychological Conception," 363) write that coordinated collective activity stands on two bases: "One is the ability to set superordinate goals that are shared by the nation's members . . . and the second is the ability to act in ways that allow for the achievement of these goals."

In Zechariah, the ideal of a restored religious-national identity, symbolized by the Jerusalem temple and the leadership of the cult, was the basis against which the experiences of the remnant community were measured and categorized as good or bad (cf. Zech 8:1–17).[33] Moreover, the ideal of a restored social-religious-political body under the authority of Yahweh provided the basis for coordinated activity on the part of the community (cf. 1:16–17; 2:7–9, 10–16).[34] The importance of this "restored body," identifiable by its relation to the temple, is measured in its ability to effectively preserve the community from annihilation, both figurative, in terms of the perseverance of the collective identity, and literal, in terms of the livelihood of the individuals that constitute the body.

And we would do well to briefly remind ourselves that in Zechariah, the events of the exiles were seen as a cause of the anxiety-producing situation, the loss of political authority and control over the land and its surplus. Note for particular example the following passage, which introduces the "positive" side of the experience of exile: the events created space and possibility for restoration, a concept that may be best defined as the "return" of authority and land.

> The made their hearts adamant in order not to hear the law and the words that the LORD of Hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great wrath came from the LORD of Hosts. Just as, when I called, they would not

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[33] Contra W. Beuken (*Haggai-Sacharja 1–8: Studien zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der frühnachexilischen Prophetie* [Assen: Van Gorcum, 1967], 28–35), Stead maintains that there is not sufficient evidence to conclude that Zech 1–8 was not written in the sixth century BCE (*The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1–8*, 55–56). This position is supported by P. Reddit (cf. "The King in Haggai-Zechariah 1–8 and the Book of the Twelve," in M. A. Sweeney and M. H. Floyd [eds.], *Tradition in Transition: Haggai and Zechariah 1–8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology* [LHBOTS, 475; London: T&T Clark, 2008], 57). Yet see the work M. A. Sweeney, which argues that the redactional units of Zechariah cannot be limited to a single community (in *The Twelve Prophets. Vol. 2, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi* [Berit Olam; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2000], *passim*).

[34] It may be safely inferred that the presence of Yahweh "in the midst of the people" makes possible the different promised actions, found through Zech 1–8, on the part of Yahweh. R. Brown's (cf. *Group Processes: Dynamics Within and Between Groups* [Oxford/Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001], 19, 28, 71) definition of coordinated activity as a type of mutual dependence that necessitates a concrete connection among collective members may support this argument that the temple, as a shared symbol in which Yahweh dwelled, offered the concrete connection for the community's mutual dependence. The prophet's emphasis on coordinated action as expressive of collective identity seems to have been conducted in resistance to the prevailing normative order. But note Klein: "[e]xcessive idealization denotes that persecution is the main driving force" (*Envy and Gratitude*, 192).

> hear, so, when they called, I would not hear, says the LORD of Hosts, and I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and a pleasant land was made desolate. (Zech 7:8–14 NRSV)

Return denotes a change of orientation in one's current inter-relational position or interpersonal experience, either of which can be prompted in response to a person or idea as "object" toward which one faces.[35] It means a reparation of relationship to an "other," person or ideal. "The Hebrew concept of repentance is linked to the root *shuv*, which means *turn* and, most often, *return*. The mending of words and of signs and their meanings is a kind of returning. *Teshuvah* is translated as repentance or penitence, but it is not identical to the more familiar Christian concept. Most of all, *teshuvah* signifies a way of return in relationship with God."[36]

Employed heuristically, Klein's theory exposes in Zechariah some of the text's inherent assumptions regarding socially legitimated, or "proper," parameters for identity expression, the intent of which was to solidify collective identity by internalizing positive self-attributes and projecting negative ones upon the "other." The textual emphasis upon material construction as concretization of privatized space suggests that the fear of anomy was ever-present in the collective mind. A translated application of Klein's theory helps show that the emphasis upon the city and temple in Zech 1–8 is less about the city and temple as physical space and object, or physical boundaries, and more about expressed desires for self-preservation—preservation through control of the environment—made in support of an emerging monotheistic identity. The city and its temple represent physically the boundaries that strengthen the internal cohesion of the community.[37] The prophet's vision for restoration was based largely on those actions taken toward social cohesion. Such that the attributes of a restored "state" reflect those that increasingly characterized the community as it defined itself in distinction from other peoples and communities. In addition, the characteristics of the vision itself as well as its formative process are consistent with A. Stein's observation that

> external conflict does increase internal cohesion under certain conditions . . . The external conflict needs to invoke some

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[35] D. Petersen observes similarly in *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), 131.

[36] R. Gibbs, *Why Ethics?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 308.

[37] Kenzle makes a similar point when she writes, "[B]oundaries may also help to strengthen a group's cohesion. By demarcating a group's 'place' in the environment, a boundary becomes a symbol of the social group and may function to reinforce its identity" ("Enclosing Walls," 200).

threat, affect the entire group and all its members equally and indiscriminately, and involve a solution . . ."[38]

"Return" as the prerequisite for restoration was the prophet's solution, and one consistent with the larger prophetic tradition.

Such religious and political boundaries marking the contours of restoration were necessary for social cohesion, according to Zechariah. Collective expression, or strategies, of those contours might be made in a general sociological sense as along the lines of, we are who we are because we are not them. Or in more monotheistic vocabulary, we are who we are because God has chosen us to be separate, distinct from you.[39] The collective, monotheistic identity in Zech 1–8 broadcasted the cultic structure as the model best equipped to preserve order in a "chaotic" world and provide strong social cohesion.[40] In that, Zechariah is clearly drawing upon

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[38] A. A. Stein, "Conflict and Cohesion: A Review of the Literature," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 20 (1976), 143–72 (165).

[39] See also the larger argument on the origin and development of monotheism in Cataldo, *Breaking Monotheism*. While there is some debate concerning the origin of the material that constitutes Zech 1–6, most scholars have tended to accept that the bulk of the "night visions," which comprise chs. 1–6, come either from the pen of the prophet or from the time in which the prophet is thought to have been active (cf. the discussion in Stead, *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1–8*, 43). While some, recently E. J. Tigchelaar, *Prophets of Old and the Day of the End: Zechariah, the Book of Watchers and Apocalyptic* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 16–19; A. S. van der Woude, "Zion as Primeval Stone in Zechariah 3 and 4," in W. Claasen (ed.), *Text and Context: Old Testament and Semitic Studies for F. C. Fenshame* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 237–38, have argued that Zech 3:1–10, for instance, was a later addition to the text, based on its linguistic structure, Stead provides a convincing argument that the formalistic differences were not grossly outside the linguistic style of the author and were, in fact, the adoption of different sources—a point that J. Tollington (*Tradition and Innovation in Haggai and Zechariah 1–8* [LHBOTS, 150; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993], 99) and D. Lipton (*Revisions of the Night: Politics and Promises in the Patriarchal Dreams of Genesis* [LHBOTS, 288; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999], 115–44) support.

[40] Crandall and Eshleman describe this general type of phenomena in the following way, "This anxiety can create cognitive biases, intensify emotion reactions, and enhance the expression of prejudice by creating a negative emotional state that can be attributed to the out-group target" ("Justification-Suppression Model," 413). Klein, to return to our wayward maiden defines this as projection. She writes, "Projection . . . originates from the deflection of the death instinct outwards and in my view it helps the ego overcome anxiety by ridding it of danger and badness. Introjection of the good object is also used by the ego as a defense against anxiety" (*Envy and Gratitude*, 6). If the ego is that which most immediately controls though and behavior within the individual, in terms of a collective, the ego, as trauma psychologist R. Leys has effectively argued (cf. *Trauma: A Genealogy* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000]), can be identified through collective orientation around a shared object or ideal,

the symbolic tradition—one characterized by a strong emphasis upon boundaries articulated in the law—in which one finds works such as Amos and Jeremiah, exhibiting, as M. Stead notes, "an increasing mythologization of [religious] symbol objects and symbolism."[41] By enforcing boundaries between member and non-member the force of social cohesion would, the text implies, both delineate the boundaries of the community's collective identity and create within those boundaries the necessary space for restoration.[42] Because anomy was best represented in the form of exile (cf. Zech 1:5–6)—and the biblical texts treat the exile as a complete destruction of the dominant social-political order in Judah—restoration presupposed the authority of Yahweh as the author of exile who had the power to create law out of anomy. This ability and power, however, required strict boundaries between member and non-member. Yahweh's power in preserving a stabilized world was only as good as the member's commitment to obedience.

Zech 1:3–4 alludes to this importance of boundary distinction in confirmation of divine power as well, which can be summed up as "self-preservation followed by utopian aspiration," when the prophet commands his implied audience to return to Yahweh and not be "like your ancestors." Restoration, in Zechariah, requires an active expression of collective identity, a clear affirmation of community boundaries, that points symbolically to the authority of Yahweh. It was a utopian ideal thought to "fix," through the creative act, the destructive effects of the exiles. In this sense, D. Petersen is correct when he thematically links the command to return in Zech 1:3 with the prophetic admonition in Isa 44:22 and the communal laments in Pss 126:4 and 85:5.[43] His argument that "return" was part of the liturgical language of the exilic and post-exilic periods, however, is correct *if* we add this simple qualification: the "Yahwistic community"[44] was a minority community within the larger social-political context of Yehud. Its "liturgy" was a ritualizing act, a defensive mechanism whose purpose was to establish *and preserve* boundaries of the community's collective identity.

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one that resides at the base of a collective identity and that defines the coordinated actions and experiences of the collective.

[41] As noted by Stead, *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1–8*, 4, 46. See also S. Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 74.

[42] E. Durkheim's articulation of what constitutes a "moral" community—when "moral" refers to those things that preserve the order of a group—is helpful in demonstrating why identity is primary above any collective goal, idealized or real (see *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008], 45–46).

[43] Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 131.

[44] Cf. ibid., 120.

On that last point, the parallel of Zechariah's admonition with that found in the book of Joel is striking.[45] Compare, especially, with Joel 2:12 שבו עדי בכל־לבבכם ובצום ובבכי ובמספד. Here the return must be accompanied by fasting, weeping, and wailing. These actions invoke a ritualization of the return including the attitude and behaviors that must be repeated for the purpose of external recognition. The emphasis is not upon weeping and wailing for the sake of religious contrition but upon what the actions facilitate: legitimating Yahweh as the shared object of desire and the source of collective fulfillment, which is found in the unthreatened stability the community.[46] One weeps and wails because doing so gives one what one wants (cf. Joel 2:23–27)—the very drive behind ritualization generally! The modern parallel, of course, is found in the Catholic practice of confession. One does not go to confession because one particularly enjoys the act of self-exposure itself but for what enduring the act permits: the certainty of salvation.

In our Zechariah-Joel paradigm, weeping and wailing collectively emphasizes in negative the desired order of the community, which the return of Yahweh to the people, as part of restoration, is meant to symbolize (cf. Joel 2:15–17). This collective concern helps answer our second question, from above. Yahweh is the symbolic representation of the ideal social-political normative—a restored "world" in which the community by virtue of its relationship to Yahweh is central among the peoples in the land (cf. Joel 2:27). In Joel 2:19, the consequence of return is material: "I am sending you grain, new wine (תירוש[47]), and fresh oil (יצהר), and you will be satisfied (שבע)." *shb'* can be translated as "satiate" or "satisfy" in the

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[45] J. Kessler suggests that a number of the minor prophets pulled from a common core of motifs surrounding the dissonance between what were present disappointments in reality compared to "grandiose visions of past and future" (cf. "Tradition, Continuity and Covenant in the Book of Haggai: an Alternative Voice from Early Persian Period," in M. A. Sweeney and M. H. Floyd [eds.], *Tradition in Transition: Haggai and Zechariah 1–8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology* [LHBOTS, 475; London: T&T Clark, 2008], 30–33). If that is correct, then the strength of a parallel between Zechariah and Joel would be made stronger. J. Wöhrle argues that Joel was added to the Book of the Twelve, along with Nahum, Haggai, Zechariah, and Deutero-Isaiah during the later Persian Period—a redaction he identifies as Foreign-Nations-Redaction I (see "Joel and the Formation of the Book of the Twelve" *BTB* 40/3 [2010], 127–37 [135]). If Wöhrle is correct, then an analysis of the entire Book of the Twelve as reflecting later Persian Period concerns would be possible. In the very least, his argument would support a comparative analysis between Joel and Zechariah.

[46] As Wörhle describes, the background of Joel was economic distress under the demands of the Persian empire (ibid., 135).

[47] In Micah 6:15, the term denotes fertility or a valuable product. Its use in Joel, together with the following יצהר suggests not that the basic requirements of the people will be met but that abundant wealth shall be restored.

pragmatic sense (cf. Pss 37:19; 59:16) or in the fulfillment of desire (Ezek 16:28–29; Jer 50:10; Isa 53:11). Likewise, the command in Zechariah must be read along with the promises in the following three visions: "My cities shall again overflow with prosperity; the LORD will again comfort Zion and choose Jerusalem" (1:17); "[B]ut these artisans[48] have come to terrify them, to strike down the horns of the nations that lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter its people" (1:21 NRSV, 2:4 HB); and the multivalent passage, "And I will be to it, says Yahweh, a wall of fire surrounding it" (2:9). Regarding the horns referred to in 2:1–4, Petersen correctly notes that the horns, regardless of their specific identifications, symbolize as a category nations, an interpretation attested to elsewhere in the Bible (cf. Jer 48:25; Deut 33:17).[49] In addition, 2:2 lists Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem as those having been scattered. All told, this list denotes completeness, from north to south with Jerusalem as the symbolic *axis mundi*.[50] The "artisans" who come are called upon to cut down the nations (horns) that scattered Judah. If these horns represent, on a more literal level, the horned altar then their being cut down, along with their symbolic meanings as foreign nations, turns the certainty of the altar, and the stability that it represents, upon its head.

> With the action of the artisans against the horns, the earth no longer dwells in tranquility. The state of balance that had existed is now distributed by Yahweh, with results that will work themselves out in the ensuing visions. What is important to note is that the action which destroys equilibrium is itself an action of destruction.[51]

Despite his concern for finding purpose in the text, there is something eerily familiar in Petersen's statement, if one is familiar with S. Žižek's work, particularly where Žižek argues that a true revolution must be essentially violent without a predetermined outcome. It must disturb the basic structure of the social-political space with the intent solely of breaking that structure down and waiting to see

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[48] While the NRSV translates חרשים as "blacksmith" the term also denotes workers of wood, stone, and other materials, a point that Petersen also makes (see *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8*, 64).

[49] Ibid., 162–63.

[50] See also ibid., 163. It's interesting to note that the four horns and the three locations may be added up to seven to suggest that the scattering *and the restoring* were acts within a complete process. While this interpretation would be consistent with the argument being made in this article, without strong support for that interpretation one should note the possibility but not build a case on it. If the horns of Zech 2:1–4 are the horns of the altar, then this interpretation may have further support and establish the ritualistic element of the collective response to the restorative promise of Yahweh.

[51] Ibid., 166.

what develops out of the ruins naturally.[52] But Petersen is perhaps too gracious in his assessment of the destructive acts symbolized by the artisans. The understanding of "return" in Joel, and we should include Zechariah here, is caught in a morass of uncertain expectations and desires.[53] Both texts idealize a "golden age" of the past where Yahweh was central. Both also realize that a stabilized society necessitates structural change in the social-political space. And anyone who knows much about the past of Judah knows that both texts convey utopian desires: what they envision *never* existed. Still, their utopianism is shackled to an attitude of restoration in which institutions and structures of the past, from a so-called "Golden Age," are what comprise the constellation of social-political space. We see this, for instance, when Zechariah states, "Yahweh will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem" (2:16). Yet what really must take place if the remnant community is to constitute the core of a "restored Israel" (but really a new social-political body) is a revolution that disrupts the infrastructure and clears the way for a *new* one.[54] That this does not happen in the social-political sphere, that it can only take place as a series of internal events and actions within the *religious* ideology of the community, which produced the strict form of monotheism that is associated with this time,[55] tells us that the community did not have the ability to enact broad social-political change consistent with its vision of restoration. The subsequent response is one with which we have become quite familiar. The community's emphasis upon utopian restoration has been preserved nearly whole cloth in Judaism, and a similar sense of it has been translated into the eschatological Heaven of Christianity and the Paradise of Islam: divine creations of absolute peace and equilibrium, or stability and the fulfillment of desire. Where each of these is nearly identical is in its emphasis upon articulating a normative of what the world should be. According to D. Karp, this tendency is common in utopian thinking:

> The "utopian" mode of thought starts by fleshing out a normative position and uses this position to arrive at prescriptions or conclusions about the descriptive world. When one trans-

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[52] S. Žižek, *In Defense of Lost Causes* (London/New York: Verso, 2008), 151.

[53] See again Kessler's description of the dissonance resulting from the reality of the context and the grandiose vision the community had for it in "Tradition, Continuity," 30–33.

[54] In that sense, Boda's suggestion that Zech 2:12–13 draws upon Ezekelian tradition as a model for a restored society doesn't go far enough ("Hoy, Hoy," 176–78).

[55] The phrase על-אדון כל-הארץ in Zech 4:14 is one example of the growing monotheistic fervor. See also the larger work of Cataldo, *Breaking Monotheism*, which describes the development of strict monotheism in response to an increasingly dissonant social-political context.

lates this mode of thought into political action, one uses one's
agency to (re)design political institutions, or to foster political
events, such that the world is brought more closely into line
with a normative idea about the way the world ought to be.[56]

As a utopian response reflecting the dissonance between reality and
vision, the desire for restoration in Zechariah (and Joel) was more
than a mere recreational expression. Utopian aspirations are often
responses to oppressive situations, whether the oppression is per-
ceived or real.[57] In Kleinian terms, the experience of a "bad situa-
tion" without any perceivable alleviation often results in a group's
(or individual's) projection of desire for one's removal from the
anxiety-producing experience upon a "good object." In Zechariah,
Yahweh is the chief symbolic representation of the good object.[58]
That the focus was upon Yahweh and not anything more tangi-
ble—those things such as land that might be the joy of an aristo-
cratic class—suggests that the authors did not see the community[59]
in a dominant social-political position or having dominant control
over material resources—in other words, as a functioning aristoc-
racy. Anxiety over perceived irrelevance—which may speak to no
more than what the group thought its identity *should* be—and a
noted lack of any possible material response forced the hand of the
authors, who appealed to Yahweh rather than the glory of an
earthly ruler as a unifying symbol and one of power over the
otherwise aggravating context.[60] Relatedly, utopian narratives are
one form of response to a triggered death instinct—whether the
threat is real or imagined—when persecutory fears are emphasized
over the security of any perceived social order or stability.[61] And it

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[56] D. J. Karp, "The Utopia and Reality of Sovereignty: Social Reality,
Normative IR and 'Organized Hypocrisy'," *Review of International Studies* 34
(2008), 313–35 (316).

[57] Cf. F. Ainsa and J. Ferguson, "Utopia, Promised Lands, Immigra-
tion and Exile," *Diogenes* 30/119 (1982), 49–64 (50). Yet if one also
accepts apocalypticism as a form of for utopian thinking, compare Cook's
argument throughout *Prophecy and Apocalypticism.*

[58] Presumably the Jerusalem temple would be also, but the temple is
less a focus in Zechariah than in Haggai. For a corresponding discussion
of the Jerusalem temple as the "good object" in Haggai, see Cataldo,
"Yahweh's Breast."

[59] In all likelihood, the "remnant community" was smaller than the
sum total of people who "returned" from Babylonia, and was undoubt-
edly smaller than those who remained in the land.

[60] Boda's suggestion ("Hoy, Hoy," 176–77) that the difficult phrase
אחר כבוד in Zech 2:12 should be interpreted in light of the Ezekelian
tradition (cf. Ezek 39:21–29) is consistent with a shift to an emphasis
upon cultic authority, symbolized in the authority of Yahweh.

[61] M. Liverani also argues (in *Israel's History and the History of Israel* [Lon-
don/Oakville, CT: Equinox, 2005], 324) that the visions of a restored
society under either a royal option or a priestly option were purely uto-
pian.

is precisely that type of more tangible response as a general pattern that has convinced international relations scholars such as S. Barkin that realism and constructivism (the latter also associated with utopianism and idealism) are compatible worldviews.[62] What that means for us is that if Zechariah represents an idealistic or constructivist (utopian) response to a real, frustrating situation, between an immigrant community and people already in the land, it may well be that the frustration stems from the point at which the idealism of the community breaks down in its compatibility with the reality of the social-political situation in the province.

Desire for a utopian reality and the *idea* of return are inseparable attributes of the monotheistic position in Zechariah. They operate on the basis of exclusion between member and non-member—a basis that becomes foundational for later overly theologized concepts of sacred and profane. The idea of return and its corresponding restoration did not preexist the reality of the community within which the perceived need for restoration developed.[63] Return indeed meant restoration but in response to the anxieties of a seemingly unfriendly context in Yehud. Connecting itself to the god traditionally associated with the land in question, the community projected upon Yahweh, as its shared symbol, the desired normative and equilibrium for an ideal world—its world, a constructed world, a "new Israel," one never before seen.[64] Where sta-

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[62] J. S. Barkin, "Realist Constructivism," *International Studies Review* 5/3 (2003), 325–42.

[63] P. Hanson was close to this conclusion when he wrote, "The visionary impulse giving rise to apocalyptic eschatology tends to be strongest among those embracing the prophetic promise of Yahweh's restoration of the faithful *but at the same time witnessing the political and cultic structures of their nation falling into the hands of adversaries, thereby vitiating the possibility of fulfillment within the existing order of things*" (*The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979], 21, emphasis mine).

[64] P. Berger is correct that true stability is elusive due to the inherently unstable character of culture (see *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* [New York: Anchor Books, 1990], 6). Deleuze and Guattari (*Anti-Oedipus*, 150–51) write similarly that history is a "dynamic and open social reality, in a state of functional disequilibrium, or an oscillating equilibrium, unstable and always compensated, comprising not only institutionalized conflicts but conflicts that generate changes, revolts, ruptures, and scissions." The idea of a truly stable society—i.e., one unaffected by positive and negative change—is utopian. Monotheism develops in part as a response by social-religious collectives to the need to ease the persecutory fear of anomy, which is ever-present in the midst of change. Monotheistic visions of restoration present a reality in which the forces of change are either nonexistent or in which those forces are incapable of threatening the stability of the normative order brought about by the Divine. The ever-present threat of instability in culture produces the need within monotheistic identity for a rigid dichotomy between sacred and profane, good and evil, etc., by establishing rigid boundaries.

bility, perceived or real, alleviated the fear of annihilation or irrelevance, change within the nature of that stability intensified those fears.[65] That is one reason why monotheistic identities in particular respond with a belief that a supernatural force not subservient to the process of change holds the power to prevent or minimize change. With that power it also alleviates the monotheistic group's anxieties over death or dissolution.[66] In monotheism's early stages, a monotheistic group's engagement of the world often entailed a competition over material resources. In later, more "complex," stages monotheistic groups would focus less on material resources directly and find competition more on the symbolic power of theological creed, belief, and the quiddities of revelation as it relates to Truth, morality, and more, as correlative with divine authority over the entire world.[67]

Perhaps with the preceding discussion in mind, one may more readily accept that Zechariah's emphasis upon the sacredness of Yahweh was less about the sacredness of Yahweh and more about the stability of the surrounding material world. The sacred is appealed to, discussed, and projected *in relation to the stability of the community*.[68]

RETURNING TO RESTORATION AS A STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL COHESION

Because the community's desire is for its own social-political (but also religious when the other seemed increasingly remote) prioritization, Zechariah's restoration necessitates a coordinated action against the prevailing social-political normative order.[69] "Return" was the first step in that process. It also demanded ritualizing acts of distinction through repentance and a resistance to the seduction of an assimilated life.[70] As a necessarily parallel act to return—to

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[65] In fact, one can argue that in a general sense change occurs because the material conditions of life are determined by a fundamental contest between life and death (cf. B. J. Price, "Cultural Materialism: A Theoretical Review," *American Antiquity* 47/4 [1982], 709–41 [715]).

[66] This is also consistent with some academic positions regarding general religious thinking. See, for example, Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 46.

[67] Deleuze and Guattari (*Anti-Oedipus*, 27) offer a more extensive argument regarding how acquired desired resources, material and ideological, support the stability of collective identity.

[68] One could also say that the value systems of a religious identity are constructed upon a plausibility structure that supports the religiously legitimated, idealized sense of order, or sacred. For further discussion of what is meant by "plausibility structure," see Berger, *Sacred Canopy*, 45–48.

[69] Note also Berger's observation (ibid., 39) that "to go against the order of society is always to risk plunging into anomy," which also explains the correlative fear of irrelevance when a collective expresses its identity though coordinated action within the social sphere.

[70] Cf. Zech 1:1–6 for which the Deuteronomistic History likely pro-

"face" Yahweh means to turn one's back on the alternative—resistance must be directed against any normative order that does not support the centrality of Yahweh, which was part of the "sin" of the ancestors responsible for the exiles (cf. 1:5, 2:15–16). Moreover, effective resistance is confirmation both of Yahweh's authority and of Yahweh's having chosen the community.[71] Zech 2:15–16 asserts this position in a rather seductive way: when the many nations join themselves to Yahweh (presumably in a vassal-type alliance, an imagery consistent within the imperial context) it would be the normative culture and order of the community—the normative order of a "new Israel"—that is adopted and not the reverse. It was the reverse—interrupting the internal dialectic of identity expression—that resulted in the exiles. This sense of things is confirmed in Zech 8:20–23 in which external peoples are drawn to Yahweh to "seek his favor." And the seductiveness of Yahweh's favor will apparently be addictive (Zech 8:23)[72]:

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בימים ההמה אשר יחזיקו עשרה אנשים מכל לשנות הגוים

והחזיקו בכנף איש יהודי לאמר

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To come full circle, then, in Kleinian terms, the positive experiences and ideas, and their corresponding boundaries, internalized by the community are gloriously confirmed when the surrounding peoples and nations identify the community based primarily on the qualities the community projects for itself. Or to put it in interpersonal terms, *your identity is more certain when I recognize you for who you project yourself to be.*

This narcissistic ego stroking—a characterization relevant especially if "Yahweh" is merely a projection of the community—enjoys, as we mentioned already, material benefit. Zechariah's discussion of gifts that the community brought with itself to Jerusalem (6:10), for example, emphasizes his expectation of a material benefit to restoration.[73] That is, the offering of gifts by the Judeans who remained behind (in Babylonia) supports the idea that Yahweh was with the returning community. In addition, it supports the idea

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vided basis and background.

[71] This is a general sentiment that is not unique to Zechariah. N. Habel shows, for example, that even the identity and authority of Yahweh as ruler were linked to Yahweh's ability to conquer the land and its forces of production (cf. *The Land Is Mine: Six Biblical Land Ideologies* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995], 38).

[72] Emphasizing the desperate dependency of other peoples upon the authority and favor of Yahweh is likely meant to legitimate the centrality of the community. Of course, this was not the actual state of affairs but a constructive, utopian argument. *When we're kings, the world will be thus. . .*

[73] And there is certainly a parallel, albeit rough since the Babylonian Jewish community would be identified as Egyptians, there with the Exodus tradition (cf. Exod 12:35–36). If the parallel works, it may need only do so on the level of arguing that obedience to Yahweh entails a material benefit.

that Yahweh's presence would result in material gain.[74] In this sense, restoration is for the prophet the ultimate defense against anxiety, or anomy. Restoration idealizes the creation of a new social-political order under the authority of Yahweh and the remnant community as his representatives. Restoration is the ultimate introjection of the symbolic value of Yahweh as the international, social-political authority. And introjection of the "good object," according to Klein, is a primary defense against anxiety.[75]

Within the framework of Zechariah's emphasis upon restoration, under the process of return the (re)establishment of the priesthood would correlate with the establishment of the new civil and religious authority of the State, the new "Israel" (cf. Zech 6:9–15).[76] The community, which seems to be represented by the figure of the high priest in Zech 6:9–15, especially in the absence of any identifiable "secular" political figure, would take on an authorial role in shaping the new social-political normative.[77] "Here is a man whose name is Branch: for he shall branch out in his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD. It is he that shall build the temple of the LORD; he shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. There shall be a priest by his throne, with peaceful understanding between the two of them." (Zech 6:12–13 NRSV). Such a constructive, and seemingly utopian, state of affairs, however, never happened.[78] This portion of Zechariah is better understood as written to illustrate a *desired* direction or ideal that the author maintained for the community.[79] And if Zechariah was a

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[74] See also R. J. Coggins, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 8.

[75] Klein, *Envy and Gratitude*, 6. Moreover, "anxiety is aroused by the danger which threatens the organism from the death instinct" (28).

[76] Cf. Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8*, 335–36; J. W. Cataldo, *A Theocratic Yehud? Issues of Government in Yehud* (LHBOTS, 498; London: T&T Clark, 2009), 95–101. For further contextual discussion, see Cook, *Prophecy and Apocalypticism*, 123–25.

[77] Sweeney (*The Twelve Prophets*, 629, 634, 665), for instance, maintains that Zechariah shifted its focus from Zerubbabel to Joshua, following the pattern of kingship as portrayed in the final form of Isaiah.

[78] See the discussions in Cook, *Prophecy and Apocalypticism*, 131–33; O. Margalith, "The Political Background of Zerubbabel's Mission and the Samaritan Schism," *VT* 41/3 (1991), 312–23. While Margalith does not focus on Zechariah directly, he does argue against portrayals of a Zadokite Yahwistic dominated context social-political context. See also R. P. Carroll, "Ancient Israelite Prophecy and Dissonance Theory," *Numen* 24 (1977), 135–51 (146); Cook, *Prophecy and Apocalypticism*, 123–65. But compare E. H. Merrill, *An Exegetical Commentary: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 138.

[79] Cf. the discussion in Cataldo, *Theocratic Yehud*, 99–101. See also Perdue and Carter, *Israel and Empire*, 120, who argues that Zechariah was affiliated with the prophetic group (in contrast to the Zadokite group, the apocalyptic seers, and others) that incited political resistance.

Zadokite supporter,[80] completing the Jerusalem temple, together with the prophecy regarding a possible diarchy between Joshua and Zerubbabel, would certainly reflect an attempt to secure priestly authority in a "restored nation."[81] In fact, the author's, or redactor's, inclusion of priestly authority in ch. 6, although somewhat tempered by the continued hope in a Davidide ruler (cf. Zech 3, which gives way to a focus on diarchy in Zech 4), suggests an expectation that the political and religious authorities must work cooperatively to lead the process of restoration.[82] That presentation was convincing enough for some scholars to conclude that a diarchy did in fact exist.[83] Yet apart from the biblical text, there is no evidence for it, and the text of Zechariah makes better sense not as historical description but as ideological aspiration, where the existence of the priesthood heightened anticipation for a political ruler representative of the community.[84] Understood through our working theory, Zechariah's vision of divine authority, seemingly manifest through priestly authority and Davidic rule,[85] would legitimate the religious-cultural community's political actions within the umbrella of the authority of Yahweh. The Jerusalem temple as a shared object, in this instance, would take on the role of a "good object" in its representation of the correlative relationship between Yahweh's authority and the collective identity of the people (cf. Zech 1:16; 6:12–15; 8:9–13).[86] And the coordinated actions of the

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[80] Cf. Cook, *Prophecy and Apocalypticism*, 123. See also J. Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten übersetzt und erklärt*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Reimer, 1898), 185.

[81] Note also A. R. Petterson (*Behold Your King: The Hope for the House of David in the Book of Zechariah* [LHBOTS, 513; London: T&T Clark, 2009]), who argues that Zechariah does not combine the role of priest and king. He maintains that "the restoration of the priesthood heightens the expectation for a coming king . . ." (62).

[82] See also ibid., 62, who argues that Zech 3 describes Joshua as being groomed for the "privilege that the priesthood and high priest enjoyed before the exile, of exercising judicial responsibility, administering the cult, and having the special privilege of access to Yahweh's presence."

[83] Cf. J. Weinberg, *The citizen-temple community*, trans. D. L. Smith-Christopher (JSOTSup, 151; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 109–10; M. H. Floyd, *Minor Prophets: Part 2* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 384; Perdue and Carter, *Israel and Empire*, 119–20.

[84] See again Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 62.

[85] There is still much debate regarding a correct interpretation of Zech 6:9–14 and the possible "coronation of the Branch." See, for example, J. C. VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests After the Exile* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 38; L. S. Fried, *The Priest and the Great King: Temple-Palace Relations in the Persian Empire* (Biblical and Judaic Studies; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 204–5; Carroll, "Ancient Israelite Prophecy and Dissonance Theory," 146; B. Oded, "Where Is the 'Myth of the Empty Land' to Be Found? History Versus Myth," in O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 62.

[86] Regarding the role of the object in object-relations of this fashion,

community—the patterns for which construct distributed relation-ships in support of the community—seem to confirm this.[87] Yet coordinated actions, and in this the community's divine law (such as what is discussed in Ezra-Nehemiah) assumes a critical role, must be measured by how they support the stability of the com-munity. The emphasis upon self-identification through a religious law, which supports the authority of Yahweh through legalized obedience, created for the community a codified, always stable boundary between the chaos of irrelevance and the ordered stabil-ity of the community's collective identity.[88] In other words, good actions and experiences are those that defend the community against persecutory anxiety, while bad actions and experiences are those that break down defenses against anxiety and cast the com-munity into possible annihilation.[89] The law articulated those boundaries.

Thus, the paradigmatic movement for coordinated action began with return: "return to me, says Yahweh of hosts, and I will return to you . . ." (1:3, but see also the larger context of vv.1–6). The necessity of return was produced by the loss of an identity legitimated, in glorious circular fashion, in the authority of Yahweh. Returning not only "restored" the community's collective identity (cf. 8:1–8), and so also reasserted Yahweh's authority, it entailed material benefit (cf. 1:17; 8:12).[90] In contrast, anomy was the conse-quence of rejecting and turning away from Yahweh (cf. 7:8–14; 8:14–15). Without Yahweh, the land became desolate (cf. 7:14) and the city of Jerusalem a place of chaos (cf. 2:8–9). The people of Judah became a "curse among the nations" (cf. 8:13), which was a consequence of Yahweh's withheld blessing because of the peo-ple's turning away. The radical nature of return is its absolute inver-sion of that curse. And the dirty secret of return is that it was never really a return but the formation of a new social-political identity.

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see Klein, *Envy and Gratitude*, 4.

[87] Berger's theory on externalization, objectivation, and internalization (see *Sacred Canopy*, 4) speaks to the same sociological process of collective knowledge (which Durkheim identifies as the collective consciousness in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, *passim*). See also K. Mannheim's dis-cussion of a similar idea in *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1936), 6.

[88] See also Liverani, *Israel's History and the History of Israel*, 344.

[89] Cf. Klein, *Envy and Gratitude*, 179, 190, in which she discusses reac-tion to annihilation as the "primordial" act of living organisms.

[90] The concept of return in this circumstance should not be confused with returning to a previous state of the past (as also noted by Oded, "Where Is the 'Myth of the Empty Land' to Be Found?" 62).