

JEWISH STUDIES

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Cultural Memory of the Patriarchal Narratives in Genesis

HUANG Wei

Abstract: In modern biblical scholarship, the patriarchal narratives in Genesis are usually viewed as the self-definition of Israelite nation in later period rather than a factual record of the origins of the Israelite nation. Firstly, this paper provides a brief review of the history of scholarship. By doing so, one may find that the patriarchal narratives on the surface are ancient family stories, yet the narratives are in fact consolidating the collective cultural memory of the Israelite nation. Secondly, the paper will examine the cultural memory of ancient Israelites on its neighboring communities against the narratives and the historical background of West Asia. Besides, the composition of this cultural memory is also discussed in this paper.

Key Words: Patriarchal Narratives, Israel, Cultural Memory, Genesis