

Exclusivity and Inclusivity
in Post-Monarchic Society and Literature:
A Conversation on Dalit Rom-Shiloni's
*Exclusive Inclusivity: Identity Conflicts
between the Exiles and the People Who
Remained (6th–5th Centuries BCE)*

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DALIT ROM-SHILONI'S *EXCLUSIVE
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BCE)* (LHBOTS, 543; LONDON:
BLOOMSBURY, 2014).**

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INTRODUCTION

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For over a decade, Dalit Rom-Shiloni has been at the forefront of research on the social, theological, sociolinguistic, and cultural effects of the Babylonian exiles (597–538 BCE) and its resonances in a variety of biblical texts. The publication of her monograph *Exclusive Inclusivity: Identity Conflicts between the Exiles and the People Who Remained (6th–5th Centuries BCE)* (LHBOTS, 543; London: Bloomsbury, 2014) represents the culmination of her extensive examination of these sources and a synthesis of ideas concerning their implications. Rom-Shiloni's work brings together redaction-critical, linguistic, and social-scientific methods of examination in a way that illuminates corners of the exilic experience that have generally not received the attention they deserve. In particular, she highlights the struggle (or better, struggles) surfacing among the different social groups of the 6th–5th centuries BCE whose sense of group identity was repeatedly challenged during this era by geographic dislocation, economic disruption, and competing claims on traditions and institutions of high antiquity. The greatest conceptual division emerging from this miasma of social and theological confusion and trauma was, as she argued persuasively, the categorizing of populations into two camps: those whose identities were somehow conditioned by geographic exile, and those whose identities were defined by having remained behind in the homeland.

Though one might make the case that the resonances of the Babylonian exile resonates through far more material than what she addresses in her monograph, Rom-Shiloni works through a wide spectrum of materials in the biblical record that most scholars agree have their points of origin in this pivotal era, when the threat of exile was imminent, the reality of exile was present, or when the memory of exile was especially fresh. Rom-Shiloni's monograph works in reverse-temporal order insofar as the ostensible settings of each textual work she examines, beginning with Ezra–Nehemiah (mid-5th century BCE), Zechariah and Haggai (late-6th century BCE), Deutero-Isaiah (latter half of the 6th century BCE), and finally Ezekiel and Jeremiah (early-mid-6th century BCE). Most scholars would allow for the high likelihood that these texts all bear the hallmarks of centuries of transmission and the itinerant accu-

mulation of scribal additions and changes down to the Hellenistic period, yet the consensus is that these texts obtained a substantial (and in some cases, definitive) shape during the periods with which Rom-Shiloni is concerned. As such, they are well suited for the type of investigation she mounts, tracing through-lines of thought deriving from different sociological camps both directly and indirectly attested within these works.

At the 2014 Annual Meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature, Rom-Shiloni's monograph was the subject of a special review session; the panelists included Mark J. Boda, John Kessler, Marvin A. Sweeney, Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, Mark Leuchter and Andrew Mein, with Rom-Shiloni providing a response at the end of the session. The session was less a review of the book and more of an opportunity to suggest how the implications of Rom-Shiloni's work could be profitably applied to new avenues of research in each of the textual works she examines. The essays that follow constitute adapted and expanded versions of each presentation from that session, with a new response from Rom-Shiloni herself. Collectively, they point a productive and fruitful way forward in the study not only of the texts in question but in the linguistic and rhetorical strategies and technologies used to advance different ideologies in Israelite and ancient Jewish antiquity.

RECONSIDERING EXCLUSIVE INCLUSIVITY: PERSPECTIVES FROM ZECHARIAH AND EZRA–NEHEMIAH

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Dalit Rom-Shiloni's recent monograph *Exclusive Inclusivity* represents the best in academic argumentation. She isolates a significant topic in the study of the Hebrew Bible and the ancient communities associated with it, defines her research questions and topic carefully, and articulates a well-defined methodology. She then presents a consistent argument that utilizes this methodology and remains focused on the key research questions, drawing evidence from careful exegesis of the biblical text in conversation with the best in secondary literature. This work is daring, pursuing sociological insights from literary texts over a few centuries of ancient communities and a variety of corpora with their own historical and literary challenges. Because of this there will be plenty of quibbles over the interpretation of this or that passage or the historical location of this or that book or redaction or the sociological developments of this or that period of Jewish history, but a study like this is extremely helpful to provide the socio-literary foundation for macro level observations that challenge and refine earlier works. We are not disappointed since after her careful work in individual texts from various moments in the 6th–5th centuries, Rom-Shiloni concludes with a reflective essay that not only summarizes the results of her careful work, but then provides a mature macro level perspective on developments in identity among Jewish communities.

There is much I have gained from my reading; I am especially drawn to the interconnectivity of the various texts under discussion and the development of tradition for identity formation prompted by the destruction of Jerusalem and exile of its elite. In this review, I will focus on the first half of the volume and Rom-Shiloni's treatment of Zechariah and Ezra–Nehemiah.

ZECHARIAH AND THE HAGGAI–MALACHI CORPUS

Rom-Shiloni works within the traditional critical approach to the book of Zechariah which places Zech 1–8 in closer relationship

with the book of Haggai than with the chapters which in all manuscript traditions are identified with Zech 1–8, that is Zech 9–14. Of course, there are limits to what one can accomplish in a single volume and one might excuse her for focusing her study on the literary corpora that she engaged. But once books like Ezra–Nehemiah are included and especially Isa 56–66, it is difficult to ignore the relevance of Zech 9–14 and Malachi to the discussion.

In the past few decades scholars have argued for greater continuity between the two parts of the book of Zechariah, leveraging traditional critical, intertextual, sociological, redactional, rhetorical, and canonical strategies to argue for cohesion.¹ In my opinion the literary tradition does extend to Haggai, but also includes Zech 9–14 and Malachi. Sensitivity to this broader stream of research highlights literary data that suggest sociological shifts that would be relevant to this study. One can discern a shift from a prophetic tradition that seems to be closely associated with the Repatriated Exilic community led by both Zadokite/Jehozadakian and Davidic/Jehoiachian social streams in Haggai and Zech 1–8 to one that is increasingly estranged from these traditions. This provides further evidence from the period under discussion that shows disconnection between members of the Repatriated Exilic community, although as with Isa 56–66 one cannot determine whether the opposing party is exclusively a group within the Repatriated Exilic Community or a group which lies outside this stream and thus related to those who remained in the land during the Babylonian period, or even a combination of the two. The outside group in view in Zech 9–14 for instance is one that appears to be related to the temple and priestly caste (Zech 7, Zech 11; Malachi), and thus one would think of the Zadokite/Jehozadakian stream, but there are also references to syncretistic practices in Zech 9–14 which may reflect the view of the Zecharian protest group that relationships had been formed between the Zadokite/Jehozadakian stream and even the Davidic/Jehoiachian stream and other groups in the land and empire. What this suggests further is that the reality is that the repatriated community did forge relationships with groups within Yehud which were not as pure in practice as the rhetoric they espouse.

It appears to me that drawing Zech 9–14 and Malachi into this discussion of identity among groups represented by texts like Haggai, Zech 1–8 and Isa 56–66 and even Ezra–Nehemiah would only enrich the discussion and possibly force a refinement of the conclusions.

¹ For a review of scholarship and my own proposal see now M.J. Boda, *Exploring Zechariah*, vol. 1: *The Development of Zechariah and Its Role within the Twelve* (ANEM, 16; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2017).

ZECHARIAH AND OTHER COMMUNITIES IN THE LAND

Further sensitivity to other communities in Zechariah is related to the inclusion of references to “Israel” within the Zecharian tradition: beginning with Zech 1–8 in 8:13 in a passage that most often refers to Jerusalem/Judah, and in 2:1–4 which does refer to the horns which scattered Judah, but also to the horns which scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem (notice 1:12: Jerusalem and the cities of Judah). This becomes important in Zech 9–14 as reference is made to the role that Judah will play with Israel (clearly a northern entity which is positively spun in chs. 9–10, then turning negative in ch. 11 as the covenant is broken, and finally focused on Jerusalem/Judah in chs. 12–14).

Especially since Hans M. Barstad’s volume on *The Myth of the Empty Land* there appears to be a dominant binary within scholarly treatment of the post-destruction status of Jerusalem and Judah: there are materials which create a theological construct called “the empty land” but the historical reality is that there were many people who remained in the land.² However, I do wonder how legitimate this binary is and whether at times scholars are too quick to assign a particular passage or tradition to the purveyors of “the empty land” mythology.

The archaeological evidence from this period does highlight the lack of activity in the region of Jerusalem during the Babylonian period with the focus of settlement on the Benjamin region which seems to have nourished the religious and political life of those who were left behind (Although Barstad speaks of a sizable Judean population, Lipschitz shows strong decrease in population of about 70–90% in Judah, except Benjamin 56.5% and the northern Judean hills at 2%)³. Rom-Shiloni’s focus seems to be on the tradition of “the empty land” as per 2 Chr 36:21, that is, that the whole land lay empty. Of course, key to this is what is defined as “the land.” She discerns this tradition in Zech 1–8, in particular, in Zech 7:7 which refers to Jerusalem and its surrounding cities along with the Negev and Shephelah and 7:14 which refers to “the land” which lay desolated with no one going back and forth. But these references are to the former traditional lands of Judah and this does not preclude the presence of people left behind outside a land defined as Jerusalem and Judean cities/Negev/Shephelah. Now I admit that important to this is one’s understanding of the reference to “Bethel” in 7:2 and the Babylonian names/positions which are mentioned. I do think this refers to inhabitants of Bethel, which fits with the understanding that during the Babylonian period the southern orbit had shifted north into the Benjaminite and southern Ephraimite region,

² H.M. Barstad, *The Myth of the Empty Land: A Study in the History and Archaeology of Judah during the “Exilic” Period* (SO Fasciculi Suppletorii, 28; Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1996).

³ Ibid.; O. Lipschitz, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem: Judah under Babylonian Rule* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 262.

with governors in Samaria controlling most of the former Northern Kingdom.⁴ The use of Babylonian names is reflective of the cultural assimilation of these figures who clearly view themselves as devoted to the Yahwistic cult at Jerusalem. The status of this group is not questioned by the prophet, but rather just its sincerity in religious activity and commitment to the principles of justice. Furthermore, this group from Bethel is identified as “the people of the land” and intimately linked with the priests of the Jerusalemite cult in the prophetic word.

Thus Rom-Shiloni’s statements: “Zech 1–8 makes no mention of any population resident in Yehud prior to the Return” (p. 52); or “This conception of the land as a ‘vacuum’ (commonly called ‘the empty land’)—from the time of the exile to the return—conveniently ignores the ongoing presence of non-exiled Judeans as well as any other peoples. This metaphorical construction, which turns invisible all other occupants of the land” (p. 53), do not seem to take into account the evidence that the epicenter of “those who were left behind” would have been the Benjaminite region anyways which is not technically part of the land considered empty. Thus you can have a group from Bethel that comes and speaks of the past seventy years as they fasted and prayed for Jerusalem, and yet you can speak of the Judean region as empty and desolate.

Not only does there appear to be some admission and invitation to communities who had remained behind after the destruction of Jerusalem, but one should not overlook the fact that while Zechariah emphasizes the Repatriated community, it also points to the illegitimacy of an enduring exilic community which is called to “flee . . . escape” (2:10–11) because a great judgment is coming upon Babylon. This is why the *ephah* can be sent back to Babylon and reinstalled in a temple in ch. 5 because in ch. 6 a great destruction is coming upon the land of the north (6:8). The exiles appearing in 6:9–15 are those who have obeyed and left and now will participate in the new phase. It appears to me that there is some indication of sensitivity to a broader group (Israel), as well as a group which remained in the northern region of Benjamin (the rump of the former kingdom), and there is a delegitimizing of those who would remain in Babylon after Zechariah’s prophecies. While it is true that the exiles are those who are presented in 6:9–15, seen in the appearance of “the exiles” Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah in 6:10 and the reference to “those who are afar off” coming to build the temple in 6:15 (a reference to Zerubbabel and his cohort in my opinion),⁵ it is important to note that these exiles arrive at the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah (6:10), thus someone who was in the land (without reference to his exilic status).

⁴ See a review of scholarship and my own view in M.J. Boda, *The Book of Zechariah* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 432–35.

⁵ See Boda, *The Book of Zechariah*, 380–413.

EZRA–NEHEMIAH

Some may find controversial Rom-Shiloni's use of Ezra–Nehemiah as a source for sociological reflection on this period especially considering the recent work for example of Diana Edelman and Oded Lipschitz.⁶ She appears aware of this challenge as seen in her response to Hugh Williamson's concern that one not use Ezra 3 for "historical reconstruction" because it is a "theological interpretation,"⁷ replying: "Indeed while historical reconstruction is to be avoided here, a sociological perception of the groups involved may still be gathered from the comparison of these passages." And then: "While this comparison highlights the different terminologies used by each of the compositions [Ezra 3/Haggai], the literary similarities and the interpretive motivation may shed light on the perceptions of this event in the eyes of the audience mentioned in Haggai and referred to by Ezra" (p. 78).

This then brings us to one of the key difficulties of using texts for sociological analysis (of course, this calls into question even my own analysis above). There is sociological reality and then there is sociological rhetoric and in the end a study of this nature can only speak about sociological rhetoric. I am left asking for methodological clarification on how to discern the relationship between the rhetoric of the literature and the reality on the ground.

Leaving that methodological and historiographical issue to the side, let me focus on other issues in the treatment of Ezra–Nehemiah. Since the majority of scholars interested in this stream of studies are more diachronically or historically oriented, the reverse chronology of the argument of the book may be slightly unsettling. In some ways this is a creative way to present the material, even though it does raise the specter of anachronistic treatment of material even though we all know full well that Rom-Shiloni's research journey began in the early Babylonian materials of Ezekiel and Jeremiah.⁸

Notwithstanding her opening footnote: "scholars have projected these [Ezra–Nehemiah's] exclusive views backwards and related exclusive perspectives to that same era" (p. 33 n. 1), there is a danger of dealing with Ezra–Nehemiah first since it influences then and whispers, even at times seems to shout into the silence to produce an "implicit argument" or influences one to see in the gaps the "invisibility" of which Rom-Shiloni speaks.

But let me focus on an assumption that appears to me more controversial and for which there was no documentation to back

⁶ D. Edelman, *The Origins of the Second Temple: Persian Imperial Policy and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem* (London: Equinox, 2005), 151–280; Lipschitz, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*, 154–65.

⁷ H.G.M. Williamson, *Ezra–Nehemiah* (WBC, 16; Waco, TX: Word, 1985), 43–45.

⁸ E.g., D. Rom-Shiloni, *God in Times of Destruction and Exiles: Tanakh (Hebrew Bible) Theology* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2009; in Hebrew).

up the treatment of the text. At the outset Rom-Shiloni assumes that Ezra 1:4 treats the Babylonian community as a new “home” community and those who return to the land as periphery, based in particular on the work of Peter R. Bedford and the translation of כָּל־הַנִּשְׁאָר as “anyone who stays behind.”⁹ Of course worthy scholars follow this translation,¹⁰ but most have opposed this translation treating this as a reference to those who had survived the exile and thus simply a repetition of the same people referred to in Ezra 1:3,¹¹ a translation that would seem to fit with the “despoiling” image from the Exodus tradition. The emphasis is on a gathering of the entire community: “all who remained,” and “whoever among you from all his people . . . let him go up.”

There is no reason to adopt Bedford’s view: “Repatriation and temple rebuilding do not denote the end of exile (since as Ezr. i 4–6 infers, not all exiles took advantage of Cyrus’ edict), rather they mark an important, albeit rather halting, beginning to the restoration” (p. 153), or “in Ezra–Nehemiah the community of repatriates is not in a position to develop an identity independent of its parent Diaspora community” (p. 158). I understand Bedford’s view that Ezra–Nehemiah places Babylon as center and Jerusalem as periphery, but books like Esther and Daniel display deep contrasts to Ezra–Nehemiah.¹² Esther and Daniel seem to show little concern for return to the land/Jerusalem as per Daniel’s prayer in Dan 9 which shows concern for but not return to Jerusalem, and Esther which sees little opportunity but to remain in the foreign land and find strategies for survival. In contrast the sub-book of Ezra articulates a twofold agenda from the outset: an agenda motivated by prophetic promise and divine motivation and then articulated in Cyrus’ decree: “Let him go up to Jerusalem . . . and rebuild the house of the Lord” which is precisely what is done in the ensuing chapters. Similarly, the sub-book of Nehemiah begins on the same note and the prayer cites the promise through Moses: “I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause my name to dwell” (1:9). This is precisely the focus of Nehemiah’s mission reaching its climax not in the rebuilding of

⁹ P.R. Bedford, *Temple Restoration in Early Achaemenid Judah* (JSJSup, 65; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2001).

¹⁰ Williamson, *Ezra–Nehemiah*, 14–15.

¹¹ L.W. Batten, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1913), 59; D.J. Clines, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther* (NCB; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans/London: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1984), 38; J. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra–Nehemiah: A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988), 76.

¹² See M.J. Boda, “Identity in Diaspora: Reading Daniel, Ezra–Nehemiah, Esther as Diasporic Narratives,” in S.E. Porter (ed.), *Rejection: God’s Refugees in Biblical and Contemporary Perspective* (McMaster New Testament Studies; Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2015), 1–26.

the wall, but in the gathering of the people cited in the multitude of lists in Neh 7–12.¹³

Another issue that came into view as I read was the attitude of Ezra–Nehemiah to other entities (whether foreign or Jewish). After reviewing the material in Neh 1–13, Rom-Shiloni notes: “The absence of any reference to Judeans or Israelite-Yahwistic communities in the land is noteworthy in a context that intentionally obscures other national identities” (p. 44). Nevertheless, she lists figures like Sanballat (who is linked to the high priestly family in Neh 13:28) and of course Tobiah who clearly has a Yahwistic name. Thus there is admission that there were people who had remained behind who were Yahwistic (and not just foreigners who engaged in Yahwistic practice, but Jews in name), yet are clearly demarcated as foreign. Reference then to at least Tobiah and I would say also Sanballat suggests that there is admission of Yahwistic elements within the land who had or had not separated themselves from foreign entities, thus falling into a third category (cf. Ezra 6:21; Neh 9:2 and 10:11; 13:3).

DIASPORIC STUDIES

Reference is made near the end of this study to the broader field of Diasporic Studies, focusing on that foundational figure William Safran (p. 274).¹⁴ I wondered if more could have been gained from this field of diasporic research. As I reflected on the overall conclusions I could not help but think of some of the anomalies of the identity rhetoric that Rom-Shiloni had highlighted in her study, that is, a migration community that returns to their homeland and makes the claim that they are the purveyors of the original pristine culture. Often one hears of returnees being cajoled for linguistic and cultural syncretism as they reenter the homeland. However, some recent diasporic studies may be helpful for further research on the phenomenon of returning communities, in particular, Juan Flores’ volume *The Diaspora Strikes Back: Caribeño Tales of Learning and Turning*, which focuses on return migration of Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Cubans.¹⁵ Of interest in Flores’ work is the sociological impact on homeland communities of hostland communities returning from a social context of imperial power and wealth (USA). A superb example is the fact that salsa was sent to Puerto Rico from New York City, where it originated from caribeño musical traditions “creolized” in the U.S.

¹³ See M.J. Boda, “Redaction in the Book of Nehemiah: A Fresh Proposal,” in M.J. Boda and P.L. Redditt (eds.), *Unity and Disunity of Ezra–Nehemiah: Redaction, Rhetoric, Reader* (Hebrew Bible Monographs, 17; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2008), 25–54 (53–54).

¹⁴ W. Safran, “Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return,” *Diaspora* 1 (1991), 83–99.

¹⁵ J. Flores, *The Diaspora Strikes Back: Caribeño Tales of Learning and Turning* (Cultural Spaces; New York: Routledge, 2009).

CONCLUSION

Rom-Shiloni's helpful scholarship has reminded us of the challenge of peering into the historical reality of the communities which remained in the land after the fall of Jerusalem. She has provided new models for analyzing this material and especially a new map for the growth of traditions related to identity among the people of God in this key era of Jewish history.

“IS HAGGAI AMONG THE EXCLUSIVISTS?” A RESPONSE TO DALIT ROM-SHILONI’S EXCLUSIVE INCLUSIVITY

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1. INTRODUCTION: ROM-SHILONI’S UNDERSTANDING OF HAGGAI AS AN “EXCLUSIVIST” TEXT

I count it an honour to be invited to participate in this collection of papers, and to respond to Dalit Rom-Shiloni’s recent monograph, specifically as it relates to her treatment of the Book of Haggai. Her volume is an excellent work of scholarship: carefully argued, meticulously researched, and clearly presented. It reflects the author’s deep and sustained investigation into the prophetic and historiographical material of the 6th and 5th c. BCE and the concepts of inclusion and exclusion found within it. She demonstrates an exemplary command of the various biblical texts relating to her topic and of the relevant secondary literature. I am also grateful to Professor Rom-Shiloni for her careful interaction with and appreciation for my own work. In many places we fully agree.

However, at one critical point we hold divergent perspectives and it is this matter that I will address in my comments here. Rom-Shiloni argues that the Book of Haggai adopts a “subtly exclusionary strategy”¹ vis-à-vis the non-exiled population. I, on the other hand, see Haggai (both the prophet and the book) as manifesting a “non-exclusionary” perspective, in that no group of Yahwists is singled out for inclusion or exclusion. I wish to stress my terminology here—I choose to employ the term “non-exclusionary” for a very specific reason. The terms “exclusionary” and “inclusionary” (or “exclusivist” or “inclusivist”), as used in Rom-Shiloni’s *Exclusive Inclusivity*, designate the refusal or willingness of an elite—or core—group to exclude or to include outsiders into its ranks.² As I will argue below, I do not see Haggai (either the prophet or the Book) as reasoning within an “in-group” versus “out-group” conceptual

¹ D. Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity: Identity Conflicts between the Exiles and the People Who Remained (6th–5th Centuries BCE)* (LHBOTS, 543; New York/London: T&T Clark, 2013), 74.

² See especially *ibid.*, 19–30.

framework.³ Rather, the book chronicles the prophet's address to all those present in late-sixth-century Yehud, without any reference to one's fate or geographical location during the Babylonian period. I will argue that when the book of Haggai is allowed to speak with its own voice, and is not read in the light of other more polemical texts, its "non-exclusionary" orientation emerges quite clearly.

The core of Rom-Shiloni's argument, as I understand it,⁴ is this: (1) there is no mention of the non-exiled population in the book of Haggai, either among the named characters (Rom-Shiloni regards Haggai as a Returnee, although I do not believe this can be determined with any certainty; the fact that his lineage is left undefined is likely intentional and highly telling, see *infra*), or in the terminology applied to the general populace; (2) this absence of any reference to the non-exiled population is analogous to the portrait of the land as empty or devoid any Israelite population in other historiographic (Ezra–Nehemiah) and prophetic (Zech 1–8) texts, and thus reflects the same attitude—although a non-exiled population was indeed present in the land, its existence is passed over in silence, since, for these authors, this population was placed on the same level as non-Jews;⁵ (3) The non-specific designations for the population at large (e.g., *עם הארץ*; *כל שריית העם*) in Hag 1:12–14 and 2:4 are widely agreed upon self-designations of the Returnees cannot refer to or include the Remainees; this leads to the conclusion that (4) in spite of the absence of any clear words of exclusion, Haggai's message must be understood as exclusively addressed to the community of Returnees. Such an exclusive focus is implicit rather than explicit, but clear nonetheless.

The evidence Rom-Shiloni adduces to support her position moves along two related lines. First, she argues that the outlook of Haggai is similar to that of Zech 1–8, where the non-deported population is disenfranchised by simply ignoring its very existence. This manoeuvre rejects them, not explicitly (as is the case in Ezek 11:14–21; 33:23–29 and Jer 24), but by ignoring their presence in the land. Moreover, just as Zech 1–8 focuses uniquely upon the *golah*, and upon hopes for its return from Babylon, so too in Haggai the addressees consist exclusively of Returnees, who are called upon to rebuild the Jerusalemite temple. This is seen through Haggai's emphasis upon the leading members of the community

³ Indeed, this is what I meant by my earlier statement that the various designations of the people in the Book of Haggai were "inclusive of the entire [Yehudite] community", J. Kessler, *The Book of Haggai: Prophecy and Society in Early Persian Yehud* (VTSup, 91; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 141.

⁴ Indeed, Rom-Shiloni has confirmed, in personal communication, that my summary faithfully reflects her position.

⁵ The literature here is enormous. See especially the recent re-statement of this position and literature survey in H.M. Barstad, "The Myth of the Empty Land," in *idem, History and the Hebrew Bible: Studies in Ancient Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography* (FAT, 61; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 90–117.

(Joshua, Zerubbabel) who are identified as Returnees. Furthermore, she asserts that in Haggai, as in Zechariah, “the Repatriates [are seen] as settlers of an empty land.”⁶ Rom-Shiloni’s second line of argumentation focuses upon the terminology used for the general population. As just noted, she asserts that the terms **כל שרית העם** and **עם הארץ** (1:12,14; 2:4) are technical terms designating the Returnees, and could not have been used in a neutral or inclusive fashion in Haggai.

In this brief discussion I will engage these two lines of argument, and assert that neither is able to support the claim that Haggai manifests an exclusivist outlook. I will subsequently raise further questions regarding the plausibility of Rom-Shiloni’s thesis in the context of the sociological and demographic realities of late-sixth-century Yehud. However, before I do so, I must make a few brief remarks about the literary development and purpose of the book of Haggai. An adequate understanding of its literary origins, form, structure, and purpose are foundational to any discussion of its stance regarding questions of inclusion and exclusion.

2. THE BOOK OF HAGGAI: LITERARY HISTORY, MILIEU OF ORIGIN, AND PURPOSE

Numerous recent approaches see the composition of Haggai as forming, from the outset, a part of a larger composition including Zech 1–8,⁷ or Zech 1–8 and Malachi.⁸ However, along with Mark J. Boda and with certain qualifications Jakob Wöhrle, I view the Book of Haggai (apart from a few later additions) as having attained its present form prior to any major redactional activity linking it to either Zech 1–8, 9–14, or Malachi. Boda argues that four, largely discrete literary units (viz., Hag 1–2; Zech 1–8; Zech 9–14; and Malachi) were subsequently redactionally joined together.⁹ Wöhrle, for his part, sees the formation of Hag 1–2 (both its oracles and chronological framework) as having occurred prior to the redactional activity which linked it to Zech 1–8, forming a Hag–Zech 1–8 corpus. He maintains that Zech 1–8 “corrects” the less nuanced

⁶ Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 98.

⁷ C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8* (AB, 25B; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1987).

⁸ E. Bosshard and R.G. Kratz, “Maleachi im Zwölfprophetenbuch,” *BN* 52 (1990), 27–46; A. Sérandour, “Réflexions à propos d’un livre récent sur Aggée–Zacharie 1–8,” *Transen* 10 (1995), 75–84; idem, “Les récits bibliques de la construction du second temple: leurs enjeux,” *Transen* 11 (1996), 9–32.

⁹ M.J. Boda, “Messengers of Hope in Haggai–Malachi,” *JSOT* 32 (2007), 113–31 (118–19). See also idem, “Haggai: Master Rhetorician,” *TynBul* 51 (2000), 295–304; idem, “Zechariah: Master Mason or Penitential Prophet?” in R. Albertz and B. Becking (eds.), *Yahwism after the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Period* (Studies in Theology and Religion, 5; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2003), 49–69.

concept of repentance found in Haggai, adding to it notions of social justice and the need for ongoing obedience.¹⁰ I have similarly argued that Haggai is a literary unit in its own right (certain minor redactional additions or linking features notwithstanding), standing chronologically prior to Zech 1–8.¹¹ Although the arguments for this position cannot be rehearsed here, suffice it to say that a strong case exists for regarding Haggai as a literary unit with its own distinctive form, outlook and purpose. Accordingly, its perspectives on the social and ideological dynamics in Yehud must be derived from its own voice, rather than from other texts.

Despite well-known disagreements regarding the extent to which the outlook of the “redactional framework” in Haggai can be distinguished from that of the book’s oracular material, virtually all are agreed that the oracles of Haggai have been collected and set into a broader literary whole.¹² The resultant composition is structured in an A/B/A’/B’ fashion with a brief narrative at 1:12–15, connecting the condemnations of 1:2–11 to the expressions of hope and favour in 2:1–9. The “A” sections (1:2–11; 2:15–19) tend to be largely negative in tone (although not without elements of hope and promise, 1:8, 2:18–19) and the “B” sections (2:1–9; 20–23) resplendent with optimism and encouragement.¹³ The work is shaped into the form of a “dramatized prophetic booklet,” whose purpose is to underline the ongoing relevance of the prophetic office and the prophetic word in early Persian Yehud.¹⁴ It begins with a complete stalemate between Yahweh and the community (1:2–11) and culminates in the expectation that very soon the Yehud’s temple (2:6–9) and Davidic governor would be exalted to heights hitherto unknown (2:23). The impasse with which the book opens is created by “this people’s” (הָעָם הַזֶּה 1:2) assertion that it is not the time to come (בּוֹא) and build Yahweh’s house.¹⁵ This stale-

¹⁰ J. Wöhrle, “The Formation and Intention of the Haggai–Zechariah Corpus,” *JHS* 6 (2006), 2–14.

¹¹ See Kessler, *The Book of Haggai*, 31–57; idem, “Tradition, Continuity and Covenant in the Book of Haggai: An Alternative Voice from Early Persian Yehud,” in M.J. Boda and M.H. Floyd (eds.), *Tradition in Transition: Haggai and Zechariah 1–8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology* (LHBOTS, 475; New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 1–39; idem, “Haggai 2:5a: Translation, Significance, Purpose, and Origin,” *Transu* 45 (2014), 69–89.

¹² See the discussion in Kessler, *The Book of Haggai*, 31–39; R.A. Mason, “The Purpose of the ‘Editorial Framework’ of the Book of Haggai,” *VT* 27 (1977), 413–21; Wöhrle, “The Formation and Intention.”

¹³ Thus my proposal in Kessler, *The Book of Haggai*, 247–51, followed most recently in M. Leuenberger, *Haggai* (HThKAT; Freiburg: Herder, 2015), 35–38.

¹⁴ Kessler, *The Book of Haggai*, 243–57.

¹⁵ On this translation see J. Kessler, “‘t (le temps) en Aggée I 2–4: Conflit théologique ou ‘sagesse mondaine’?” *VT* 48 (1998), 555–59. This stands in contrast to the more common (and in my view erroneous) rendering, “The time has not come . . .”

mate, however is broken through the prophetic word, delivered by Haggai, and accompanied by Yahweh's stirring-up of the spirits of leaders and people who come (בוא) and perform the work of rebuilding (1:12–14). The prophetic word once again intervenes to reassure the community when it becomes paralyzed with fear (2:1–5, and possibly 1:12b)¹⁶ and sets before it the assurance of a future filled with divine blessing (2:6–9; 20–23). The book likely stemmed from a prophetic circle closely associated with Haggai, which understood the prophetic office, the Sinai covenant, the temple and its priesthood, and the monarchy to be integral elements of the nation's identity, all of which deserved the people's attention, and all of which Yahweh would restore to their former glory, and beyond.¹⁷ In my view, numerous factors indicate that the book attained its present form (with the possibility of certain later redactional additions, for example 2:5a)¹⁸ sometime before 500.¹⁹ In my opinion, neither the date formulae within the book, nor its contents suggest a later period, and many features within it confirm a late-sixth-century date.²⁰ Thus, the phrase “the remnant of the people” in Haggai (1:12, 14; 2:2), a core element in Rom-Shiloni's argument, should be interpreted within the broader development of the concept of the “remnant” from the 7th to the late-6th c. BCE. The demographic realities of mid- to late-sixth-century Yehud are also highly relevant, and these will be considered below. One final comment is critical here: there is no clear evidence of conflict between the Remainees and the Returnees at this early period. This point is of great significance and will be taken up *infra*.

¹⁶ On this point, see the discussion of the people's fear in Hag 1:12 in E. Assis, “To Build or Not to Build: A Dispute between Haggai and his People (Hag 1),” *ZAW* 119 (2007), 514–27.

¹⁷ See further, J. Kessler, “Curse, Covenant, and Temple in the Book of Haggai,” in R.J. Bautch and G.N. Knoppers (eds.), *Covenant in the Persian Period: From Genesis to Chronicles* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 229–54; idem, “Haggai, Zerubbabel, and the Political Status of Yehud: The Signet Ring in Haggai 2:23,” in M.H. Floyd and R.D. Haak (eds.), *Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism* (LHBOTS, 427; New York/London: T&T Clark, 2006), 102–19; idem, “Tradition, Continuity and Covenant.”

¹⁸ On this see further Kessler, “Haggai 2:5a.”

¹⁹ By contrast, although Wöhrle and Martin Leuenberger attribute much of Haggai to the early Persian Period, they date its more “eschatological” passages (2:6–8; 21b–23a) to the mid- to late-5th c., and see the formulation of the Hag–1 Zech corpus as likely occurring at this time, Leuenberger, *Haggai*, 61–63; J. Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen des Zwölfprophetenbuch: Entstehung und Komposition* (BZAW, 360; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 285–322 (301–2, 309–12, 321).

²⁰ See Kessler, *The Book of Haggai*, 31–57.

3. CHALLENGES TO ROM-SHILONI'S RECONSTRUCTION

Having stated my own working assumptions regarding the Book of Haggai I return now to the two main lines of Rom-Shiloni's argument, noted above. It seems to me that there are significant questions and problems with respect to each of them.

3.1. THE ASSUMPTION THAT HAGGAI, AND ZECH 1–8 SHARE AN IDENTICAL OUTLOOK AND PERSPECTIVE

As we have seen, Rom-Shiloni maintains that, like Zechariah, Haggai is a *golah*-focused text, which, through the trope of the “empty land” excludes any members of the non-exiled population simply by ignoring their existence. Rom-Shiloni and I are in complete agreement that neither Haggai nor Zechariah explicitly names or identifies any group standing in opposition to the intended audience of either the prophet or the book.²¹ Thus, we concur that Hag 2:15–19 is not a rejection of Samaritan aid (*pace* Johann W. Rothstein, Hans W. Wolff and others), and that Hag 1:12–14 does not distinguish two types of Yahwists (some whose spirits are stirred up by Yahweh and rebuild, and others who do not).²² We similarly agree that the term *כל עם הארץ* in Hag 2:4 does not refer to any excluded population as it (or its plural form) does elsewhere.

Our point of disagreement emerges as Rom-Shiloni expresses her conviction that Haggai and Zech 1–8 are of a piece, both manifesting an avowedly “inclusivist-exclusivist” perspective toward the non-deported population. She states, “Haggai does not use (and probably does not know of) Ezra–Nehemiah’s opposition of ‘otherness’. According to that latter opposition the denigrating analogy between Israel and the Canaanite peoples was re-adapted to their current conflict between Repatriates and Those (Judeans) Who Remained in the land. Haggai seems to be closer to Zechariah’s positioning of the Repatriates as settlers of an empty land, a con-

²¹ This of course stands in striking contrast to the situation in Jer 24 and 42–44, Ezek 11:14–21; 33:23–29, Ezra 3:3; 4:1–5; 6:21; 9:1–2; 10:2, 10, and Neh 4; 6; 9:2; 10:30; 13:1–14; 23–31. In these texts the “out group” from which the returnees are distinguished is either named or described. Thus the Book of Ezekiel differentiates the 597 deportees from those who remained in Jerusalem (Ezek 13:23–29; 33:23–29). A similar perspective is adopted in Jer 24 regarding the Eastern Diaspora who receives divine approbation in contrast to all other Judeans, and in Jer 44 which invokes doom on the Egyptian diaspora. On these various and often divergent portraits, see further J. Kessler, “Images of Exile: Representations of the ‘Exile’ and ‘Empty Land’ in Sixth to Fourth Century BCE Yehudite Literature,” in E. Ben Zvi and C. Levin (eds.), *The Concept of Exile in Ancient Israel and its Historical Contexts* (BZAW, 404; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), 309–51. Both Ezra and Nehemiah make similar distinctions, and name the opposing populations: the *עמי הארץ* in Ezra 10:2, 11 and the *עמי הארצות* in Ezra 9:1,2,11; Neh 9:30 and 10:29.

²² *Pace* M.H. Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, part 2 (FOTL, 22; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 276 and numerous others, see *infra*, n. 48.

ception that does not see any others: they are as if transparent, as if invisible.”²³

In the present context I must leave aside the question of whether Rom-Shiloni’s assumption regarding an exclusivist position in Zechariah is indeed accurate. Although I have significant reservations about her approach to that text, I will for the sake of argument, admit such a possibility, but suggest that even if such a perspective were in evidence in Zechariah, there are no grounds for assuming such to be the case in Haggai. Several considerations call into question Rom-Shiloni’s general identification of the perspective of Haggai with that of Zech 1–8. First, as indicated above, I position myself with those who maintain that the book of Haggai attained its distinctive perspective and ideological thrust prior to and apart from its incorporation into a Haggai–Zech 1–8 corpus, a Haggai–Zechariah–Malachi corpus, or the Book of the Twelve as a whole.²⁴ Thus, from the outset, purely on the basis of the literary history of Haggai and Zech 1–8, I see no inherent reason why their outlook should be identical. Second, moving to more general comparisons between these two texts, numerous significant elements differentiate them. These include: (1) differences of form (Zech 1–8 consists of a visionary-oracular complex [1:7–6:15] set within a sermonic frame, [1:1–6; 7:1–8:23] whereas Haggai is configured as a dramatized prophetic booklet); (2) differences of structure (Zech 1–8 features visions and oracles, set in a loosely chiasmic arrangement framed by narration and exhortation, whereas in Haggai the structure is A/B [narrative interlude] A’/B’); and (3) differences of general outlook (in Haggai once the obstacles of resistance [1:2–11] and impurity [2:15–17] are removed, the outlook for the future is highly positive [2:20–23]; in Zechariah optimism is clouded by ongoing moral failure [7:1–14; 8:16]). Numerous other differences could be cited.

Third, and most significant for our purposes here, the two texts display distinct perspectives regarding the twin elements of movement into the land and return from Babylon. These are doubtlessly crucial elements in the Zecharian world,²⁵ but strikingly muted or absent in Haggai. The critical movement in Haggai is thus not from outside the land into it (as in Zech 1–8, esp. 2:10–16 [6–12]; 8:1–8), but from outside of an abandoned Jerusalem “up” to it, to rebuild the Temple.²⁶ At the outset of the book, the people

²³ Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 98.

²⁴ See notes 7 and 8, above.

²⁵ See my discussion in J. Kessler, “Diaspora and Homeland in the Early Achaemenid Period: Community, Geography and Demography in Zechariah 1–8,” in J.L. Berquist (ed.), *Approaching Yehud: New Approaches to the Persian Period* (SemeiaSt, 50; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 137–66.

²⁶ In Hag 1:4, 9 the adjective *חרב* denotes not simply “ruined” but more properly “abandoned” or “forsaken,” cf. Kessler, *The Book of Haggai*, 128–30.

refuse to “come” (אָבֹי, 1:2)²⁷ and rebuild the temple, but, heeding the prophet’s words, they ultimately do so (again אָבֹי, v. 14). Furthermore, on what textual basis, can it be asserted that Haggai “position[s] . . . the Repatriates as settlers of an empty land”? This statement contains two significant problems. The first concerns the assumption that all of Haggai’s hearers are Returnees. To be sure, Zerubbabel and Joshua can be so identified, but no other characters in book can be unequivocally identified as such. Most telling is the fact that no mention is made of the origins of the book’s principal character, Haggai, or of his fate during the Babylonian period. The framers of the book make it impossible to determine whether our prophet was a Remainee or Returnee—surely an astounding omission if debates over inclusion and exclusion were rife in late-sixth-century Yehud.²⁸ The second problem concerns viewing the land as “empty.” Haggai’s preaching is set against the backdrop of a populated Yehud and an abandoned Jerusalemite temple. Thus, in Haggai the land is depicted, not as empty (*pace* Rom-Shiloni), but as supporting a population living in paneled houses and engaged in agricultural pursuits, which have proven to be highly frustrating. Furthermore, to assume, as is commonly done, that the mention of “paneled houses” in Hag 1:4 implies that their owners were Returnees who returned and rebuilt their abandoned dwellings, is just that—an assumption. These houses could have either been (1) left standing after the Babylonian invasions, or (2) rebuilt shortly after the 587 destructions by non-deportees, or (3) reconstructed some time later by those moving back to the Judean heartland from the Benjaminite region. No indication is given of who built these houses, or when.²⁹ One must studiously avoid reading the motifs of returning and rebuilding abandoned sites, a theme found extensively elsewhere (for example, Isa 44:26; 58:12; Jer 30:18; 33:7; Ezek 36:36; Amos 9:14; Ezra 2:1; Neh 7:6) back into Haggai. The point at issue for Haggai is that the community members have homes to live in, but Yahweh, seemingly, does not.³⁰ To argue, as

²⁷ On this translation, see above, n. 15.

²⁸ Indeed, even if, as Rom-Shiloni assumes, the exclusion of the non-exiled population is a *significant* issue in late-sixth-century Yehud, and *implicit* in Haggai, it is nevertheless a stretch to believe that the framers of the book would leave Haggai’s lineage and status as a *golab* member undefined.

²⁹ See, similarly the reflections in H.G.M. Williamson, “Comments on Oded Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*,” *JHS* 7 (2007), 34–39 (36).

³⁰ On the concept of the temple as a divine residence see the excellent essays in M.J. Boda and J.R. Novotny (eds.), *From the Foundations to the Crenellations: Essays on Temple Building in the Ancient Near East and Hebrew Bible* (AOAT, 366; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2010). See also the insightful observations in R.L. Kohn and R. Moore, “Where is God? Divine Presence in the Absence of the Temple,” in S. Malena and D. Miano (eds.), *Milk and Honey: Essays on Ancient Israel and the Bible in Appreciation of the Judaic Studies Program at the University of California, San Diego* (Winona Lake,

Rom-Shiloni does, that the term כל שארית העם in Hag 1:12 is a technical term for the Repatriates (I will return to the use of this term in the next section), and thus the land is understood as having been empty, risks assuming that which one is seeking to demonstrate.

3.2 THE MEANING OF THE TERMS “PEOPLE OF THE LAND” AND “REMNANT” IN HAGGAI

My second reason for hesitation regarding Rom-Shiloni’s thesis concerns her understanding of the terminology used in Haggai for the “people” addressed by the prophet—that is, those first mentioned alongside Zerubbabel and Joshua in 1:2, then subsequently referred to in 1:12–14 and 2:1–4. Rom-Shiloni presents a detailed argument asserting that the terms used in Haggai for the “people” are customary designations for the Returnees, and could never have been understood in any other sense. To make her point she first examines the root שאר as it appears in 1:12, 14 and 2:2–4, and then the expression כל עם הארץ in 2:5. She argues that these terms stand as part of a longer process of community self-definition and concludes:

[I]t is unlikely that Haggai (and Zechariah) would utilize this overloaded terminology in a neutral or inclusive way. Although, indeed the prophet does not refer to the exile or the return, I find his references to the (Repatriate) leaders Zerubbabel and Joshua, together with his insistence on addressing the people as a Remnant, a telling indication of his orientation on questions of group identity. Haggai seems to follow Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah, and be in line with Zechariah—all great advocates of the Babylonian Diasporan community, and upon return, of the Repatriate community back in Yehud.³¹

Before analyzing her discussion of this lexical stock in detail, a broader observation is in order. Essentially Rom-Shiloni makes her point by proceeding from an assessment of the terms כל עם הארץ and שארית העם outside Haggai. She views them as terms inherently carrying specific significations with reference to issues of group identity, referring either to the Remainees or to the Repatriates, depending on the context, but always carrying clear connotations of self-definition, identity, and exclusion. She then approaches the book of Haggai and infers these meanings there. Her statement, “it is unlikely that Haggai (and Zechariah) would utilize this overloaded terminology in a neutral or inclusive way” encapsulates her approach.³²

I would suggest that methodologically, the reverse direction is more appropriate—one ought to begin with Haggai itself as a liter-

IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 133–53.

³¹ Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 91; italics mine.

³² Ibid.

ary unit (see my discussion *supra*) and assess the relevant terms in the context of the phrases in which they are embedded, within the literary flow and structure of the book, as well as in terms of the book's literary history, date and purpose. What is more, consideration must be given to the possibility that the "remnant terminology" in Haggai might indicate an entirely idiosyncratic or independent use of such terminology, or a development of earlier or contemporaneous ideologies of concepts of the remnant, or even an ideological counterpoint to them. Rom-Shiloni's use of the term "overloaded" belies the degree to which her analysis of the terminology rests on prior assumptions. How do we know that the framers of Haggai viewed such language as charged with implications of exclusion and self-definition? Moreover, before inferring influence, the dating of the texts in question must be established and clear lines of influence upon Haggai must be demonstrated. In my view, if one begins with Haggai itself (rather than Ezekiel, Jeremiah, or Isa 40–55), a very different picture emerges from the one Rom-Shiloni presents. Finally, in her study, it is noteworthy that she presupposes that the communities of the 6th–5th c. are divided into *two and only two* mutually antagonistic groups, and that all of the biblical texts of the period belong to one or the other camp.³³ But is this not to put the cart before the horse? Clearly some texts manifest such polarization, but is it methodologically legitimate to assume bipartite intra-communal polemics in all texts?

In the discussion that follows I will argue that, methodologically, even if the terms **שארית** and **עם הארץ** can be used as terms of community self-definition and exclusion elsewhere, in order to demonstrate that they must carry this sense in Haggai, two conditions must be met. First, there must be evidence that in-group versus out-group dynamics are clearly at play elsewhere in the book, and second, that a more likely explanation for their presence in Haggai is not to be found.

Let us then turn to the two expressions Rom-Shiloni asserts smack of exclusivism, the term **שארית** as it appears in 1:12, 14 and 2:2–3,³⁴ and then the expression **עם הארץ** in 2:4. Given that the latter expression is more easily dealt with, I will consider it first, and then devote greater attention to the former.

³³ See esp. *ibid.*, 19–29. In a similar vein, one thinks of Paul D. Hanson's suggestion that sociology of Yehud reflected a polarization between two groups. He states, "In the realm of religious institutions, as in the realm of politics, the polarization tends to develop primarily between two forces," cf. P.D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 212. However, it is hardly self-evident that such is always the case. Rom-Shiloni interacts with Hanson, and at times critiques his characterization of the two groups (*Exclusive Inclusivity*, 129–31) but largely follows his lead in presupposing the existence of two main groups in conflict.

³⁴ On the term **הנשאר** in 2:3, see *infra*.

עם הארץ 3.2.1

Rom-Shiloni distinguishes between two distinct uses of the phrase **עם הארץ** in the literature of the 6th and 5th centuries BCE, both of which derive from the prophet Ezekiel. The first use, she suggests, was positive in nature, and was employed by the “in-group” as a term of self-definition. The latter, by contrast, was exclusionary and used to designate opposing communities as “out-groups.”³⁵ She argues that the term **עם הארץ** in Hag 2:4 reflects this former usage, and asks which group, Returnees or Remainees, is being designated by this phrase. She then goes on to argue, largely on the basis of the genealogies of Zerubbabel and Joshua, that in Haggai the phrase **עם הארץ** is a terminus technicus for the Repatriates (following Ezek 12:19 but in contrast to Ezek 16:3; 22:23–31; Ezra 9:1–2; 10: 2, 11; Neh 9:30; 10:29). She concludes, “Haggai does not use (and probably does not know of) Ezra–Nehemiah’s opposition of ‘otherness.’”³⁶

In contrast to Rom-Shiloni’s position, I maintain that Haggai’s use of the phrase **עם הארץ** is easily explicable apart from any inclusivist/exclusivist ideologies, and is used for a specific reason. Clearly the term’s reference to those who opposed the Returnees’ building efforts in Ezra 4:4 has no relevance in Haggai. The critical issue in Hag 2:4 is whether or not this term designates all of Haggai’s hearers, and what it implies. Numerous scholars opine that the term makes reference to only a part of the Yehudite population. Wolff notes that in the monarchic period this term frequently referred to the Judean landowners and political elite and suggests that this idea is implied in Haggai’s words.³⁷ Francis I. Andersen carries this sense of the term into the late-sixth-century context, arguing that in Haggai it refers to the landowning population.³⁸ Numerous other suggestions, which maintain that the term **עם הארץ** in Hag 2:4 makes reference to a portion, but not all of the Judean population of late-sixth-century Yehud, have been proposed.³⁹ Yet all these suggestions overlook the fact that in the configuration of the book (2:4 is frequently considered to be a redactional assemblage of several of Haggai’s oracles)⁴⁰ nothing appears to differentiate this group as a *dramatis persona* from the **העם שארית** in 1:12,14 and 2:2. Thus Ernest W. Nicholson’s suggestion that at times the term **עם הארץ** refers to all of the population

³⁵ Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 94, 96. She maintains that Ezekiel transformed the term into a derogatory moniker for outsiders.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 98.

³⁷ H.W. Wolff, *Haggai: A Commentary*, trans. M. Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1988), 78.

³⁸ F.I. Andersen, “Who Built the Second Temple?” *ABR* 6 (1958), 1–35 (30–31).

³⁹ For these see Kessler, *The Book of Haggai*, 168.

⁴⁰ See P.R. Ackroyd, “Some Interpretive Glosses in the Book of Haggai,” *JJS* 7 (1956), 163–68 (166–68).

of a given region appears to be borne out in Hag 2:4.⁴¹ In the text's dramatic development the same group whose spirits were divinely stirred now suffer discouragement and require further exhortation. All are called to show courage, not merely certain members within the larger group.

Why, then is this expression employed? Rather than assume that issues of exclusivity are at play, the most likely explanation lies in a broader tendency within Haggai—the book's use of a “hermeneutic of equivalents,” employed to identify the world of its hearers and readers with that of the monarchic Israel of memory and tradition.⁴² Numerous examples of such “functional equivalents” appear in the book. These include the calque of the “traditional introduction” of a prophetic book in 1:1, and the assumption that a prophet's role would involve upbraiding the political and religious leaders and the general populace for their failures (1:3–11; 2:10–14). Especially telling is the subtle substitution of a Persian monarch for a Judean king in the otherwise typical dating formula in 1:1 and elsewhere in the book. Other instances include the use of traditional curse material in 1:3–11, the common deuteronomic idiom **שמע בקול** to describe the people's obedience in 1:12, the use of the Formula of Divine Assistance in 1:13 and 2:4, and that of the Formula of Encouragement in 2:4. The most striking appears in 2:5a, where the Haggai's addresses his hearers as those with whom Yahweh made a promise (or covenant) “when you came out of Egypt.”⁴³ Numerous others could be listed.⁴⁴

Moreover, none of these equivalences is perfectly identical. All are “loose,” yet, taken together, they create implicit links between the province of Yehud, and the Yahwistic Kingdoms of old. The choice of the expression **עם הארץ** is thus easily explained as one further illustration of the book's use of “functional equivalents” to effectively re-create the impression that despite the numerous changes that had occurred since the demise of monarchic Judah, the situation addressed by our prophet was essentially the same as that which confronted his prophetic forbears. These “former prophets” (cf. Zech 1:4) in their own day confronted an obstinate

⁴¹ E.W. Nicholson, “The Meaning of the Expression **עם הארץ** in the Old Testament,” *JJS* 10 (1965), 59–66 (60). Rom-Shiloni (*Exclusive Inclusivity*, 94) also accepts this sense. This stands in contrast to the position held by Lisbeth S. Fried, “The ‘am hā’āreš in Ezra 4:4 and Persian Imperial Administration,” in O. Lipschits and M. Oeming (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 123–45. Fried argues that the term always refers to the landed aristocracy of a given region. Surprisingly, she considers Hag 2:4 to be inconsequential for her argument (128 n. 7).

⁴² Kessler, *The Book of Haggai*, 273.

⁴³ On the numerous textual, translational and literary critical issues in this verse see Kessler, “Haggai 2:5a.”

⁴⁴ See the examples summarized in Kessler, *The Book of Haggai*, 273–74 and elaborated upon throughout the book.

people needing reproof. Now, Haggai played the role of a “traditional” or “typical” Israelite prophet as he assumed the same stance. Such a portrait of Haggai’s role, and especially of his great success, is thus part of the book’s overall goal of demonstrating the ongoing relevance of prophecy in the Persian period. The inhabitants of Yehud, living in sufficiently close proximity to Jerusalem so as to be reasonably expected to participate in the Temple’s reconstruction, and engaged in agricultural and other land-related pursuits, are thus the “functional equivalents” of the landowners of earlier times, the **עם הארץ**. What is more, as will be further discussed infra, on an historical level, in the late 6th c. these would have been both Remainees and Returnees. Nothing in Haggai’s terminology here can be seen to imply any distinction between the two.

3.2.2 כל שארית העם

Rom-Shiloni maintains that the phrase **כל שארית העם** in 1:12, 14 and 2:2⁴⁵ refers exclusively to the Returnees.⁴⁶ In her understanding, Haggai’s words were exclusively addressed to them, and in 1:12, 14, the narrator wishes to underline the fact that they responded *in toto*. She sees no difference in signification between the expression **כל שארית העם** and **העם הזה** (1:2) **העם** (1:12b, 13) and **עם הארץ** (2:4). All are clearly understood designations of the Repatriate community. On this point, Rom-Shiloni’s position is the polar opposite of that of Sara Japhet, who sees the term **שארית** in Haggai as designating the non-deported population.⁴⁷ Other mediating positions exist, and I will discuss these below.

As noted above, both Rom-Shiloni and I agree that the term **כל שארית העם** in 1:12, 14 does not introduce a new *dramatis persona* and thus the “people” (**העם**) of vv. 2 and 13 are the same as the **שארית העם** of vv. 12 and 14. Thus for Rom-Shiloni, the change in terminology has no great significance. In both instances it is only the Returnees who are being addressed. This stands in contrast to two primary lines of interpretation of **שארית** in 1:12, 14. Numerous exegetes, including William J. Dumbrell, Francis S. North, Hinckley

⁴⁵ At 2:2 MT lacks **כל** which is however reflected in the LXX and Syr. It is possible that **כל** was omitted due to haplography passing directly from the **ל** on **אל** to **שארית**. However, it seems more likely that **כל** is included in 1:12, 14 to emphasize the totality of the community’s response, as opposed to 2:2 where it would be superfluous.

⁴⁶ 1:12, 14 are narrative descriptions of the effects of the prophetic word, while 2:2 is part of a prophetic oracle itself. Thus, unless one views 2:2 as redactional, the phrase occurs in both the oracles and redactional frame.

⁴⁷ S. Japhet, “The Concept of the ‘Remnant’ in the Restoration Period: on the Vocabulary of Self-Definition,” in idem, *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Highlands of Judah: Collected Studies in the Restoration Period* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 432–49.

G. Mitchell and Wolff (among many others) suggest that the term שארית here designates the golah members, as opposed to the non-deported population who refused to participate.⁴⁸ Oded Lipschits, who in the main follows Japhet's definition of the term, sees it as referring to the non-deported population, whose help is needed due to the limited abilities and resources of the Returnees.⁴⁹ Thus, on both of these lines of approach two distinct groups are in view in the book's conceptual framework.

In my understanding, however, the term is not a specific designation for either the Returnees or the Remainees, and is introduced in 1:12, 14 and 2:2 for a specific purpose, pace both Rom-Shiloni and Japhet. I suggest that the term שארית in these verses retains and builds upon its basic sense, of "to remain, to be left over, or to escape."⁵⁰ It designates the community in Yehud which, as I will argue below, includes both Remainees and Returnees as the survivors of the larger group of an earlier time, who have escaped the devastation of the larger whole.⁵¹ The presence of כל before שארית העם is highly significant. The fact that the entire population responds to the prophet's preaching serves to underline

⁴⁸ W.J. Dumbrell, "Kingship and Temple in the Post-Exilic Period," *RTR* 37 (1978), 33–42 (39); F.S. North, "Critical Analysis of the Book of Haggai," *ZAW* 68 (1956), 25–46; H.G. Mitchell, J.M. Smith, and J.A. Brewer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah* (ICC; New York: Scribner's Sons, 1912), 54; Wolff, *Haggai*, 51–52. Floyd, *Minor Prophets*, 275–77. Wolff suggests that the Returnees would "most readily have had an ear for the new prophetic word, since they were the group who were more mentally alert and economically more vigorous" (Wolff, *Haggai*, 52). One wonders if such an assertion is truly demonstrable from the data we have at hand. The suggestion that Haggai's call to the Remainees to participate fell upon deaf ears seems highly unusual, especially in light of the traditions in Ezra where the non-golah members seek to participate in the rebuilding efforts, but are rebuffed, and seek to frustrate the project. Moreover, these suggestions imply that Haggai's call to build was *open to all* (pace Rom-Shiloni).

⁴⁹ Japhet, "The Concept of the 'Remnant,'" 433–36; O. Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem: Judah under Babylonian Rule* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 125; S. Japhet, "People and Land in the Restoration Period," in G. Strecker (ed.), *Das Land Israel in biblischer Zeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 103–25.

⁵⁰ See the numerous instances cited in *DCH* 8:220–21, 222–224. Note, for example, Gen 45:7; Isa 37:4; Jer 41:16.

⁵¹ Another but in my opinion less likely explanation, could account for the use of the phrase כל שארית העם in Haggai. The same expression appears in Jer 41:10, 16. There it used for a group of unnamed persons who appear in connection with other, named persons, who are important office bearers in the community. If such were the case כל שארית העם would simply be a way of referring to the population at large. However, as argued above, more seems to be at stake here.

the book's emphasis on Haggai's success, and on the ongoing importance of prophecy.⁵²

What is more, I would argue that the term **שארית** here carries an additional connotation beyond simply that of "survivors," "rest" or "remnant." However, this additional ideology is not acquired due to its "overloaded" associations with group self-definition, but due to its associations within the Twelve and beyond, linking the remnant concept to Yahweh's activity in renewing the people of Israel as a whole⁵³ and the qualities and characteristics of that new people. Put another way, the framers of Haggai are likely giving a signal here, via intertextual allusions generated by the term **שארית**, that Yahweh has renewed his work among his people, and that the people, in turn, have now demonstrated new and desirable qualities through their renewed obedience.

The concept of the **שארית** is an important one in the Book of the Twelve,⁵⁴ and its usage there differs from the overtly exclusionary ideology conveyed in texts such as Jer 24, Ezek 11:14–21; 33:23–29.⁵⁵ These "exclusivistic" texts employ a "skimming and preserving" motif in their conceptualization of the remnant. An elect remnant is "skimmed off" and exiled from Judah, "preserved" in the eastern Diaspora, then subsequently returned to Yehud.⁵⁶ However, in addition to this "skimming and preserving" perspective, other conceptual patterns for understanding the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests and deportations appear in the biblical literature, and present alternative conceptualizations of exile, diaspora,

⁵² Rom-Shiloni does not comment on the role of **כל** in 1:12 and 14. According to her interpretive approach this would have meant that all the Returnees responded to Haggai's words. However, this would seem to imply that Haggai's call to rebuild was open to all (cf. the scholars cited in n. 47). However, it should be noted that the latter implication, while to my mind quite likely, does not follow from the statement that "all the Returnees responded."

⁵³ That is, apart from contexts such as Jer 24 which clearly enfranchise one segment of the community and disqualify all others.

⁵⁴ The term appears in Amos 1:8; 5:15; 9:12; Mic 2:12; 4:7; 5:6–7; 7:18; Zeph 2:7, 9; 3:13; Hag 1:12, 14; 2:2; Zech 8:6, 11–12.

⁵⁵ Japhet rightly notes that the root **שאר** occurs only rarely in *exclusionary* contexts. It appears neither in Jer 24, nor in Ezek 11 or 33 in this sense, see Japhet, "The Concept of the 'Remnant,'" 443. On other distinctly exclusivist texts see further Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 33–47.

⁵⁶ See further J. Kessler, "The Diaspora in Zechariah 1–8 and Ezra–Nehemiah: The Role of History, Social Location, and Tradition in the Formulation of Identity," in G.N. Knoppers and K.A. Ristau (eds.), *Community Identity in Judean Historiography: Biblical and Comparative Perspectives* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 119–45; G.N. Knoppers, "Ethnicity, Genealogy, Geography, and Change: the Judean Communities of Babylon and Jerusalem in the Story of Ezra," in G.N. Knoppers and K.A. Ristau (eds.), *Community Identity in Judean Historiography: Biblical and Comparative Perspectives* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 147–71.

and return, and of their meaning.⁵⁷ Two such additional motifs are those of “scattering and re-gathering”⁵⁸ and “purging and cleansing,”⁵⁹ both of which appear in the Twelve and beyond.⁶⁰ In the latter, the communities of the monarchic period are subjected to purging by the fires of exile (the location of which is less significant than the experience itself). In the former, judgment consists of “scattering” and renewal is effected through “re-gathering.”⁶¹ It is highly important to distinguish the concept of the remnant in the “skimming and preserving” motif from that of the “scattering and gathering” pattern. In the former, the exiles from one specific region are elected by Yahweh, to the exclusion of all others, and restored to the land. There is no sense of a “pan-Israelite” perspective where older fissures are now healed (see further *infra*). In the latter, exiles are re-gathered from all the territories to which they have been banished.⁶² The “scattering and re-gathering” and “purging and cleansing” motifs can be found in Mic 2 and 4, and Zeph 3, two important “remnant passages” within the Twelve. Furthermore, these texts were likely formulated before (or possibly contemporaneous with) the composition of Haggai, and were likely known to its framers.⁶³

⁵⁷ On this see also Kessler, “Images of Exile.”

⁵⁸ On the motif of gathering and scattering, see the numerous examples in the superb study by G. Widengren, “Yahweh’s Gathering of the Dispersed,” in W.B. Barrick and J.R. Spencer (eds.), *In the Shelter of Ebyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in honour of G.W. Ahlström* (JSOTSup, 31; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 227–45. Widengren demonstrates that the scattering and re-gathering of a people was a truly ancient motif, and is found in both Mesopotamian and Israelite literature. This imagery occurs in a large number of texts including among others, Deut 28:64; 30:3; Isa 11:12; 49:5–6. See further *infra* on Mic 2–4 and Zeph 3.

⁵⁹ This motif is common in the HB. Rooted in metallurgy (cf. Ps 12:7[6]; Mal 3:3[2]) it is frequently found in wisdom texts describing the positive effects of suffering upon human character (Prov 3:11–12). It is used in the prophetic literature to describe the restorative effects of the sufferings of exile upon Israel (Isa 48:10; Ezek 22:15).

⁶⁰ Of course these patterns occur outside the Twelve, but space precludes a discussion of these texts here.

⁶¹ Widengren, “Yahweh’s Gathering of the Dispersed,” esp. 240–41.

⁶² This distinction is not always noted. For example, Japhet appears to assimilate the identification of the Babylonian exiles in Jer 24 with texts such as Isa 11:11–16, which speak of the remnant in terms of exiles scattered in a variety of regions, including Egypt. See Japhet, “The Concept of the ‘Remnant,’” 443. However, this Egyptian community is excluded in Jer 24 and 44:12, 14, 28, both frequently seen as part of a Dtr re-working of the book. By contrast, Rom-Shiloni (*Exclusive Inclusivity*, 108–11) acknowledges that certain texts, such as Isa 43:5–6; 49:12, Zech 8:7 contain the motif of the exiles’ deliverance from regions at the four points of the compass, and thus reflect a broader vision of diaspora and return than is found elsewhere.

⁶³ For these passages as antecedent to Haggai see the majority of com-

In Micah, the theme of gathering the scattered ones (2:12–13) opens the first of the book's oracles of salvation.⁶⁴ This passage is generally seen as closely linked to 4:6–7. Both passages contain the term שארית and both describe a glorious post-catastrophe situation.⁶⁵ In 4:6–7 the re-gathered ones become a remnant. Prior to such a transformation, they were merely those who “limped” and “strayed” (Heb. עצל and נדח), that is those whom Yahweh himself had “afflicted” (רעע). Subsequently, however, Yahweh himself transforms them into a remnant.⁶⁶ As Delbert R. Hillers notes, the description of the remnant here appears to include all who had been engulfed by the catastrophes of the past.⁶⁷ Such a pattern is echoed in Hag 1:12–14 where Yahweh stirs up of the hearts of “this people,” moving them to obedience. Only then are they described by the term שארית.

A second important remnant context is Zeph 3:11–13, immediately preceding Haggai in the Twelve. Here, the remnant are those who are left after the proud and arrogant have been extirpated. This is a classic example of the “purging and cleansing” motif alluded to above. Yahweh states that he will remove (אסיר) “your proud and arrogant ones” ([עליזי גאותך]) likely the rich and upper classes) purging them away, leaving (שאר) only a humble and lowly people (עם עני ודל וחסו). These ones, who now constitute the remnant (שארית), will be characterized by righteous deeds and pure speech (3:13) and take refuge in Yahweh's name (וחסו בשם יהוה) (3:12). Moreover, the remnant concept in Zeph 3 evokes a “pan-Israelite” view of the nation and its restoration.⁶⁸

mentators. For all these texts as part of the literary output of post-monarchic Yehud see E. Ben Zvi, “The Urban Centre of Jerusalem and the Development of the Literature of the Hebrew Bible,” in W.E. Aufrecht, N.A. Mirau, and S.W. Gauley (eds.), *Urbanism in Antiquity: From Mesopotamia to Crete* (JSOTSup, 244; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1997), 194–209.

⁶⁴ I am reading 2:12–13 as an oracle of hope, following Rashi, and the majority of modern commentators, rather than an oracle of doom (so Kimchi, and a minority of moderns). See further W. McKane, *The Book of Micah* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 87–94.

⁶⁵ See D.R. Hillers, *Micah* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 38–39. On the interpretation and dating of these passages see McKane, *The Book of Micah*, 87–94, 127–134.

⁶⁶ Heb. לשארית שים.

⁶⁷ Hillers (*Micah*, 54) appropriately comments, “The people . . . not separate groups, but the whole, is wounded, strayed, and removed far away. Yahweh himself is the one who has done this harm to them. But he will gather them together and make of them a ‘remnant’, that is a group of survivors who carry the hope of continued and renewed life in them.” See also, on the theme of the reunification of all the dispersed ones of Israel, F.I. Andersen and D.N. Freedman, *Micah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 24E; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 337–39.

⁶⁸ Ehud Ben Zvi states that Zeph 3:13 clearly refers to “the humble and poor people that will be in Jerusalem. Thus Israel there is obviously not the Northern Kingdom, but a religious, ideological concept that

It is highly significant that in both these texts, that which is most important is not the geographical location of this remnant community. In Mic 2:12 and 4:7 they are gathered from undisclosed locations (and the implication seems to be from not one but many places) and led to Jerusalem. Furthermore, in Mic 5:6–7 [7–8], the “remnant of Israel” is “in the midst of” many peoples/nations (בְּקִרְבַּ עַמִּים רַבִּים) and “among the nations” (בְּגוֹיִם). In Zeph 3:10 the faithful are seen as present in the most remote parts of the ancient world, while in 3:12–13 they are clearly in Jerusalem. It is most significant that these passages foreground the nature and character of the remnant, and Yahweh’s activity on their behalf, rather than any geographical and exclusionary issues. In a sense, all who have experienced the sufferings of foreign invasion and conquest are “exiles” whose tribulations are an essential part of Yahweh’s work or forgiveness and renewal.⁶⁹

Put another way, since Yahweh’s renewal will extend to all Israel, and passage through the fires of exile is the sine qua non of participation in Yahweh’s purposes for his people, all must of necessity be seen as exiles, whether they in fact left the land or not. Moreover, it is highly probable that the framers of Haggai would have been aware of these sections of Micah and Zephaniah (perhaps as a part of the Book of the Four [Rainer Albertz], or as creations of contemporary Yehudite literati [Ehud Ben Zvi]).⁷⁰ Those responsible for the book likely employed the term שְׂאִרִית as a means of indicating that, in light of Yahweh’s activity and the people’s responsiveness, the community in Yehud was to be identi-

includes both the children of the North and those of the South.” E. Ben Zvi, *A Historical-Critical Study of the Book of Zephaniah* (BZAW, 198; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992), 234. Floyd (*Minor Prophets*, 235) similarly concludes, “The creation of a ‘humble and lowly’ remnant through the purgation of the ‘proud and haughty’ from Yahweh’s ‘holy mountain’ recalls the punishment directed against the temple and court establishment in 1:4b and 1:8–9. The whole notion of the remnant is extended by referring it to ‘Israel’ (v. 13) indicating that the new existence of Yahweh’s people will not be any mere reconstitution of the state of Judah but rather a recreation in some new form of the ancient entity that predated the separation of the northern from the southern kingdom.”

⁶⁹ See A. Lo, “Remnant Motif in Amos, Micah and Zephaniah,” in J.A. Grant, A. Lo, and G.J. Wenham (eds.), *A God of Faithfulness: Essays in Honour of J. Gordon McConville on his 60th Birthday* (LHBOTS, 538, New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 130–48. In this excellent study, Alison Lo insightfully notes the themes of “the totality and inescapability of judgment” and of “God’s transformation of the remnant.” Geography and exclusivity are simply not at issue.

⁷⁰ R. Albertz, “Exile as Purification: Reconstructing the ‘Book of the Four,’” in P.L. Redditt and A. Scharf (eds.), *Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve* (BZAW, 325; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2003), 232–51; Ben Zvi, “The Urban Centre of Jerusalem”; E. Ben Zvi and J.D. Nogalski, *Two Sides of a Coin: Juxtaposing Views on Interpreting the Book of the Twelve/the Twelve Prophetic Books* (Analecta Gorgiana, 201; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2009).

fied with the remnant which Mic 2 and 4 foresaw, and for which Zeph 3 hoped.⁷¹ Furthermore, more broadly in the Twelve, the remnant texts do not focus on exclusion or inclusion based on one's location during the Babylonian period. Rather in the Twelve, future hope is shaped around a fragmentation/reunion theme. Restoration begins with the healing of the fragmentation of the Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom as all Israel unites around Jerusalem and its Davidic ruler (Amos 9:11–12; Hos 3:5; Mic 5:2–5). It culminates with the re-gathering of all Israel into one (Mic 2:12; Zeph 3:20; Zech 8:7). The issue is not so much where one has been (although it must be acknowledged that exile from the land is presupposed in many texts, sometimes to Babylon, but sometimes to places left undefined as in Zech 8:7) but the removal of Yahweh's judgment, and the hope for re-gathering, healing and restoration, at Yahweh's hand.

3.3 THE DEMOGRAPHIC REALITIES OF LATE-SIXTH-CENTURY YEHUD

A third area of hesitation regarding the treatment of Haggai in *Exclusive Inclusivity* concerns how an exclusivist reading of the book relates to the historical realia of late-sixth-century Yehud. Our knowledge of the demographic situation in Yehud at that time has expanded rapidly in recent years.⁷² Many now affirm that although the urban centre of Jerusalem and several other military sites were devastated and remained largely uninhabited in the wake of the Babylonian invasions, a significant rural population was left in place in close proximity to Jerusalem, both to the north and south.⁷³ The

⁷¹ James D. Nogalski (*Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve* [BZAW, 217; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1993], 235) insightfully observes, "The literary adaptation of Zeph 3:18–20 deliberately prepares the reader for the message of Haggai." In my opinion, the term שְׂאֲרִיית must be read in precisely this light.

⁷² See especially the excellent surveys in O. Lipschits, "Shedding New Light on the Dark Years of the 'Exilic Period': New Studies, Further Elucidation and Some Questions Regarding the Archaeology of Judah as an Empty Land," in B.E. Kelle, F.R. Ames, and J.L. Wright (eds.), *Interpreting Exile: Displacement and Deportation in Biblical and Modern Contexts* (AIL, 10; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 57–90; P. van der Veen, "Sixth-Century Issues: the Fall of Jerusalem, the Exile, and the Return," in B.T. Arnold and R.S. Hess (eds.), *Ancient Israel's History: an Introduction to Issues and Sources* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 383–405.

⁷³ See especially Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*, 79–84; idem, "Shedding New Light," 66–78. The non-exiled population was concentrated in the Benjaminite territory to the north/northeast and at Ramat Rahel and the Rephaim Valley to the south. Lipschits ("Shedding New Light," 73) states, "After the destruction of Jerusalem and the other major main urban and military Judahite centers by the Babylonians at the beginning of the sixth century BCE . . . [the non-deported population] contin-

emergence of Persian rule over the region initially had little effect on this general picture. During the late-6th and early-5th c., the number of Returnees was limited, and the population of Jerusalem remained small. Lipschits has suggested that in the very early Persian period, the initial re-settlement of Jerusalem involved only a small group comprising “the new leadership of the province, the priests and office-holders who were connected with the functioning of the temple.”⁷⁴ What is more, as the 6th c. drew to a close, there is some evidence of movement from the Benjaminite territory back toward the regions around Jerusalem.⁷⁵ Thus, in the late-6th c. the population of Yehud itself consisted of Remanees in the regions surrounding Jerusalem and the Benjaminite territory (regions whose existence had continued much as it had before 587),⁷⁶ with the further addition of some Returnees in Jerusalem (and perhaps some other regions). As stated above, there is no evidence for any conflict between these groups, despite living virtually *côte-à-côte* (especially in the area of Ramat Raḥel).⁷⁷ Furthermore, despite the absence of a reconstructed temple, the practice of some form of cultic activity at Jerusalem seems likely.⁷⁸ If so, dur-

ued to live in close proximity to the north and south of Jerusalem, continued to maintain a rural economy, continued to pay taxes in wine and oil . . . The administrative center at Ramat Raḥel continued to function as the collection center of the taxes . . . even when the capital of the newly established province of Yehud moved to Tell en-Naṣbeh (Mizpah), which served as the *bīrah* for 141 years, from 586 BCE . . . until the time of Nehemiah (445 BCE)”.

⁷⁴ Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*, 125.

⁷⁵ O. Lipschits, “The History of the Benjamin Region under Babylonian Rule,” *TA* 26 (1999), 155–90 (182–85). Lipschits states, “[B]y a gradual process, starting from the end of the sixth century, and reaching its peak in the fifth and fourth centuries, a marked demographic decline occurred in the Benjamin region, which may be estimated at over fifty percent. Part of the inhabitants of the territory apparently moved to Jerusalem” (185).

⁷⁶ See, however, the opposing position in A. Faust, *Judah in the neo-Babylonian Period: The Archaeology of Desolation* (ABS, 18; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012).

⁷⁷ See especially P.R. Bedford, *Temple Restoration in Early Achaemenid Judah* (JSJSup, 65; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2001), 157–58, 179–80; Williamson, “Comments on Oded Lipschits”; and Lipschits’ revised view in O. Lipschits, “The Babylonian Period in Judah: In Search of the Half Full Cup,” *JHS* 7 (2007), 40–49 (48).

⁷⁸ The evidence is very scant (for example Jer 41:5), but it would seem likely that some form of observance continued, see Douglas R. Jones, “The Cessation of Sacrifice after the Destruction of the Temple in 586 BC,” *JTS* NS 14 (1963), 12–31; J.A. Middlemas, *The Troubles of Templeless Judah* (Oxford Theological Monographs; Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); idem, *The Templeless Age: An Introduction to the History, Literature, and Theology of the “Exile,”* 1st ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2007). Lipschits (*The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*, 112–18

ing this period members of both communities would likely have participated in it, unless, of course the Returnees actively barred the Remainees from accessing the site. However, there is no solid evidence of any such prohibition.⁷⁹ What is more, the use of the term **הנשאֵר** in Hag 2:3 invokes the remembrances of anyone still alive who had seen the temple in its earlier glory.⁸⁰ No sense of exile, return or exclusivity can legitimately be implied through the use of the term here. In sum, given such demographic conditions, it seems to me to be beyond question that, had Haggai (the prophet or the book) wished to exclude the non-exiled population this would have to have been done in the strongest terms possible, leaving no room for any ambiguity. But this is certainly not the case. By contrast, the book has a “pan-Yehud” dimension to it. This is most evident in having the prophet address the province’s governor by his official title “governor of Yehud” (Hag 1:1, 14; 2:2, 21). It is almost universally admitted that the capital of Yehud remained at Mizpah until the mid-5th c.,⁸¹ and that the Benjaminite region (among other regions in Yehud) was home to a large Remanee population.⁸² Clearly Haggai calls Zerubbabel, the political leader of Yehud, whose primary responsibilities would have involved Mizpah and its environs, to take responsibility for the Temple’s reconstruction (Hag 1:1 etc.). It seems to strain against all historical probability to assume that the prophet’s call to Yehud’s governor to actively promote the rebuilding of the Temple at the same time required him to exclude most of the population of his primary centre of activity (Mizpah) as well as the bulk of the rest of the province. The same may be said of Haggai’s appeal to Yehud’s major priestly authority (Hag 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 4, 11–13). Only the rarely-followed hypothesis of Joel P. Weinberg and Daniel L. Smith[-Christopher], according to which the community over which Zerubbabel and Joshua presided consisted of a series of non-contiguous enclaves of Returnees,⁸³ could make it possible for Haggai’s words (or the

[117]) sees only “limited ritual activity” of a non-sacrificial nature as having taken place under Babylonian rule.

⁷⁹ Arguments for intra-communal conflict over access to the site of the former temple at this early period based on Isa 63:18 seem unconvincing.

⁸⁰ This is, of course, a representation which occurs within the dramatic flow of the book. I cannot enter into a discussion of its historical probability here. Williamson sees Ezra 3 as having been based on Hag 2, cf. H.G.M. Williamson, *Ezra–Nehemiah* (WBC, 16; Waco, TX: Word, 1985), 48–49.

⁸¹ O. Lipschits, “Achaemenid Imperial Policy, Settlement Processes in Palestine, and the Status of Jerusalem in the Middle of the Fifth Century BCE,” in O. Lipschits and M. Oeming (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 19–52.

⁸² Lipschits, “Shedding New Light,” esp. 73–78.

⁸³ D.L. Smith, *The Religion of the Landless* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); J.P. Weinberg, “Zentral-und Partikulargewalt im

book's intent) to be seen as addressing only a portion of the Yehudite population.

One further element, pointed out years ago by Martin Noth, and again more recently by Hugh Williamson should be mentioned here.⁸⁴ It concerns the selective nature of the Babylonian deportations (i.e., some members of certain families were taken, while others were left), and the relatively short interval between the exile and return. Both authors suggest that to suppose that at a remove of only a few years, and given the likelihood that separated family members would be re-united, it is highly improbable that violent and malevolent relations would exist between the members of these divided families and communities.⁸⁵ Williamson observes, "Perhaps we should be thinking rather of welcome-home parties between families long divided but not necessarily, therefore, forgotten."⁸⁶

4. CONCLUSIONS

It cannot be doubted that numerous texts in the HB reflect a positive view of the diaspora and a negative one of those who remained. Rom-Shiloni documents these instances in detail. Yet the polemical nature of some texts should not be inferred in all. As we have seen, numerous texts lack this polemical tone, and portray all Israel as exiles, and all as returnees.⁸⁷ It would thus be erroneous to assume that all the literature of the 7th to 4th centuries must reflect the perspective of either one or another of two mutually antagonistic groups. Rather, we should presuppose a diversity of perspectives on inclusion and exclusion in this literature of this period. Such ideological diversity is one of the hallmarks of the HB.⁸⁸ The

achämenidischen Reich," *Klio* 59 (1977), 25–43. See further the discussion in Kessler, *The Book of Haggai*, 77–78.

⁸⁴ M. Noth, "La catastrophe de Jérusalem en l'an 587 avant Jésus-Christ et sa signification pour Israël," *RHPR* 33 (1953), 81–102 (98–102); Williamson, "Comments on Oded Lipschits," 36–39.

⁸⁵ Of course, Rom-Shiloni is correct to observe that profound animus does exist in Jer 24, Ezek 11 and 33, and elsewhere. However, the spirit of these texts should not be imported into Haggai without firm evidence. There is furthermore some indication that some of the ideology in Ezekiel is the product of a highly isolated community. On this see L.E. Pearce, "Continuity and Normality in Sources Relating to the Judean Exile," *HBAI* 3 (2014), 163–84.

⁸⁶ Williamson, "Comments on Oded Lipschits," 39.

⁸⁷ This is most easily seen in texts employing the "scattering and gathering" motif, described above, cf. Is 11:12; 49:5; Jer 40:12; Mic 2:12; 4:6.

⁸⁸ On theological and ideological diversity as an over-arching characteristic of the HB see J.A. Sanders, "Adaptable for Life: The Nature and Function of Canon," in F.M. Cross, W.E. Lemke, and P.D. Miller (eds.), *Magnalia Dei, the Mighty Acts of God: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), 531–

Book of Haggai is a case in point; its focus is on Yehud, and the community dwelling there, whether Remainees or Returnees, Governor, Priests, and general population. All have neglected the Temple, and all are taken to task by our prophet. And, in contrast to the resistance with which so much prophetic preaching was met in earlier days (cf. Zech 1:1–6), now, through Yahweh's initiative, in a time of restoration and renewal under Persian rule, Haggai's words were received and acted upon by the whole community, without any trace of division or exclusion.⁸⁹

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⁸⁹ Special thanks are due to Ms Mari Leesment for her assistance in the preparation of this article for publication.

EXPANDING THE BOUNDARIES OF DALIT ROM-SHILONI'S EXCLUSIVE INCLUSIVITY

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I would like to begin by thanking Professor Dalit Rom-Shiloni for a very stimulating and important book. She has taken up a key question in the study of the Persian-period Jewish community in Jerusalem and Judah, viz., the tension between those who returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian exile beginning in the late-6th century BCE and beyond and those who remained in the land. Recent scholarship has correctly argued that those returning exiles did not come home to an empty land, but returned to find the land populated by the descendants of those who survived the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and Judah.¹ But those who returned from exile saw themselves as the true “holy seed” of Israel (Ezra 9:2; cf. Isa 6:13) who viewed those who had remained behind as apostates who adopted the foreign worship practices of the nations with whom they had assimilated.

Rom-Shiloni attempts to trace this process back from the usual focus on Nehemiah and Ezra, who are so often pilloried in modern biblical scholarship as religious chauvinists who sought to exclude all but their own narrowly defined group from YHWH's covenant with Israel. Employing a combination of redaction-critical and sociological perspectives, among others, she attempts to trace the roots of this view back to the Zadokite priest and prophet, Ezekiel, with appropriate references to the Elide priest and prophet, Jeremiah, and the redactors who shaped and transmitted their books.

In critiquing Rom-Shiloni's work, I am not so much interested in overturning her thesis or challenging the argumentation of her work. Instead, I am interested in pushing her observations back even further into the very origins of David-Zion theology as represented by the prophet Isaiah ben Amoz and the eighth- and seventh-century traditions of his book. First Isaiah holds that Jerusalem

¹ See H.M. Barstad, *The Myth of the Empty Land: A Study in the History and Archaeology of Judah during the “Exilic” Period* (SO Fasciculi Suppletorii, 28; Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1996).

and the House of David function as the holy center of Judah/Israel and creation at large, and the account of Hezekiah's and Jerusalem's survival during Sennacherib's siege reinforces that view and entails that Jerusalem and the House of David would form the remnant that would play a key role in restoring Judah and Israel as YHWH's holy people in the midst of the nations.² Later figures treated by Rom-Shiloni interacted with the Isaiah tradition and developed it into their own Jerusalem-centric views of the Babylonian exiles who formed the basis of Rom-Shiloni's so-called Repatriate community.

Rom-Shiloni proposes a reversed sequence analysis that begins with the latest literature and moves back to earlier literature in an attempt to reconstruct the roots of the exclusivist viewpoint evident among the returning exiles. She therefore begins with Ezra–Nehemiah, which recounts the return of the Repatriate community to return to Jerusalem to restore the sacred worship of YHWH in the recently rebuilt Jerusalem Temple. She notes especially the Passover celebration recounted in Ezra 6:19–22 which emphasizes the role played by the returning exiles as well as those who had separated themselves from the impurity of the nations of the land to seek YHWH, G-d of Israel. Rom-Shiloni is surely correct to employ her reversed sequence analysis and to point to the Repatriate community as a group that saw itself as the so-called “holy seed.” But she misses the Isaian significance of this terminology. The reference to the “holy seed” is drawn from Isa 6:13, which was employed in the prophet's vocation account to designate the so-called remnant of Israel that would survive YHWH's attempt to ensure the punishment of Israel by rendering the people blind, deaf, and dumb, so that they might witness the true identity of YHWH as the true G-d of all creation and the nations as well as the redeemer of Israel who would exercise sovereignty over creation from Zion. Indeed, Klaus Koch, in a 1974 article,³ noted this citation as well as the references to the New Exodus language of the book of Isaiah in Ezra 9 to posit that Ezra was not a simple legalist, but a theologian and exegete whose program of restoration was inspired in part by the Prophets, particularly his reading of the book of Isaiah. In short, Koch argued that the book of Ezra presented a theologically-reflective reading of elements from the book of Isaiah as important foundations for Ezra's own program for return and restoration, i.e., Ezra's return is presented as fulfillment of the Book of Isaiah as well as element of the Pentateuch.

Rom-Shiloni's analysis of Haggai and Zech 1–8 likewise needs to take account of their dependence on Isaiah. Her analysis of Haggai correctly argues that Haggai addresses the Repatriate community and not the people of the land in the prophet's efforts to

² See, e.g., J.D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Winston, 1985).

³ “Ezra and the Origins of Judaism,” *JSS* 19 (1974), 173–97.

stimulate the rebuilding of the ruined Temple. She maintains that Zech 1–8 displays a universal tendency in calling for the nations to join Jews in seeking YHWH in Zech 8:20–23, although she recognizes a differentiation between the Repatriate Jewish community and the nations before YHWH. Nevertheless, she does not fully recognize the relationship with the book of Isaiah in each of these prophets.⁴ Haggai’s call for the rebuilding of the Temple anticipates YHWH’s overthrow of the kingdom of the nations, apparently a reference to the Persian monarchy, and the restoration of Zerubabel ben Shealtiel as YHWH’s signet or king in Hag 2:2–24. Such a view of the restored monarchy is entirely in keeping with Isaiah’s views of establishment of righteous Davidic kingship in Isa 9:1–6; 11:1–16; and 32:1–8. Although she recognizes the dependence of Zech 8:20–23 on the two iterations of the famous “swords into plowshares” passage in Isa 2:2–4 and 4:1–5 in which the nations make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to learn Torah from YHWH, she does not recognize the differing contexts in which these passages appear. Isa 2:2–4 appears in a context in Isa 2 and beyond in which both the nations and Israel suffer divine punishment before both recognize YHWH, whereas Mic 4:1–5 appears in a context in Mic 4–5 in which a Davidic Messiah will arise to punish the nations that oppress Israel.⁵ Indeed, such a perspective marks the differences in the interpretation of this passage throughout the Book of the Twelve; even in Zechariah, Zech 8:20–23 plays a role in introducing the so-called Proto-Apocalyptic segment in Zech 9–14, which culminates in the nations’ recognition of YHWH at Zion following their defeat by YHWH and YHWH’s Davidic monarch. In the end, both Haggai and Zech 1–8/9–14 challenge First Isaiah’s view of divine punishment meted out by YHWH to both Israel and the nations to call instead for the Davidic-led defeat of the nations that oppress Israel so that they might recognize YHWH’s sovereignty.

In her treatment of exilic Isaiah, Rom-Shiloni is correct to argue that Second Isaiah addresses the so-called Repatriate community in an effort to convince them to return to Jerusalem from Babylonian exile. But she misses an important debate between Haggai and Zechariah on the one hand and Isaiah on the other. Whereas Haggai and Zechariah call for violent confrontation with the nations and their defeat to win the restoration of the House of David and world-wide recognition of YHWH, exilic Isaiah (see Isa 44:28; 45:1) anticipates that Jews will submit to the Persian empire in keeping with the will of YHWH and that the nations of the world will cooperate in restoring Jews to Jerusalem. Second Isaiah’s view conditions First Isaiah’s view of such matters, viz., instead of

⁴ See my commentaries on Haggai and Zechariah in *The Twelve Prophets*, 2 vol. (Berit Olam; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000).

⁵ M.A. Sweeney, “Micah’s Debate with Isaiah,” in idem, *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (FAT, 45; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 210–21.

a restored Davidic monarchy, Second Isaiah calls for the recognition of Cyrus as YHWH's messiah and a revamped Davidic covenant in which the people of Israel at large are granted the eternal Davidic covenant.⁶ The intertextual juxtaposition of Deutero- and First Isaiah entails that Deutero-Isaiah's view defines the view of the book at large. Furthermore, the agendas of the exilic editions of Isaiah are in keeping with that of Ezra–Nehemiah, viz., submission to the Persians by the Repatriate Jewish community is in keeping with the will of YHWH. Violent resistance to Persia and other nations as articulated by Haggai and Zechariah is not.

In her analysis of Ezekiel, Rom-Shiloni correctly points to Ezekiel's understanding of exile and restoration as a warrant for the focus on the Babylonian exiles as the future for a restored Israel, as indicated for example in Ezek 11 where the survivors of Jerusalem are portrayed as those who will provide the basis for the returning community. Her arguments for editorial additions that posit a more inclusive viewpoint, however, are less convincing, as she seems to misgauge the role played by this Repatriate community in restoring the people at large in Ezek 16:59–63.⁷ As in Ezra–Nehemiah, the older and younger sisters mentioned here would indicate those mentioned earlier in Ezra who separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to seek YHWH. Likewise, the images of restoration in Ezek 34–39 portend purification of the land from the dead and the restoration of Joseph/Israel and Judah to prepare for the restoration of the Holy Temple in Ezek 40–48. She also deftly works through the convoluted redaction history of Jeremiah in an effort to argue that the book of Jeremiah ultimately envisions the return of the Babylonian community to restore Jerusalem.

But two dimensions of this discussion need to be addressed. The first is the respective priestly identities of Ezekiel and Jeremiah. Ezekiel is a Zadokite priest who served in the Jerusalem Temple and represents the priestly counterpart to the royalist Isaiah in articulating Davidic-Zion theology; whereas Isaiah focuses on the Davidic King, Ezekiel focuses on Zion as the site of the holy Temple. With the key priests of the Jerusalem Temple exiled—himself included—Ezekiel views the Temple as corrupted and in need of purging, and therefore posits that those exiled, including the Zadokite priests, the king, and other principles would become the basis for restoration, whereas those left behind would be considered inadequate to ensure the sanctity of the holy Temple. Jeremiah is an Elide priest, descended from Abiathar, who was expelled by Solomon from Jerusalem to Anathoth, and who in turn was descended from the Elide line originally based in Shiloh. As an

⁶ See now, M.A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 40–66* (FOTL; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016); cf. idem, *Isaiah 1–39, with an Introduction to Prophetic Literature* (FOTL, 16; Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1996).

⁷ Cf. M.A. Sweeney, *Reading Ezekiel: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Reading the Old Testament; Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2013).

outsider to Jerusalem, the Zadokites, including Ezekiel, would hardly consider him as an adequate priest to serve in the Jerusalem Temple. It is at this point that one sees the Zadokite Ezekiel in agreement with his older predecessor Isaiah, viz., Jerusalem is the key to the restoration of Israel. Isaiah anticipated a remnant based in Jerusalem that would serve this role; Ezekiel sees that remnant as the elites of Jerusalem who were carried off into Babylonian exile.

But why should an Elide priest like Jeremiah, who himself was exiled to Egypt, view the Babylon exile as the source for Jerusalem's restoration? Here, Rom-Shiloni misses Jeremiah's political viewpoint favoring Babylon. Jeremiah apparently came to Jerusalem during Josiah's reform and as redaction-critical study demonstrates, supported Josiah's early reform efforts and saw him as the righteous monarch promised by Isaiah. Josiah was an ally of Babylon, and Jeremiah apparently functioned as part of a pro-Babylonian party in Jerusalem, led by the ben Shaphan family, which supported Josiah throughout his reign.⁸ But with the early death of Josiah in 609 BCE at the hands of the Egyptians and the replacement of Josiah's pro-Babylonian son, Jehoahaz, with his older pro-Egyptian half-brother, Jehoiakim, Jeremiah and his tradents had to rethink his views of Jerusalem's future. In the end, the Babylonians pushed out the Egyptians and demonstrated their power over Jerusalem. Jeremiah urged submission to Babylon as the more powerful nation, but the pro-Egyptian Jehoiakim saw things, and as a result of his revolt against Nebuchadnezzar in 598, and again by his brother Zedekiah in 588, Jerusalem's fate was sealed. Jeremiah and his book were left to conclude that Isaiah's prophecies of punishment against Israel would be applied to Judah as well, and that the impending restoration first articulated by Isaiah would have to wait.

In the end, Rom-Shiloni has produced an important and stimulating study. She is correct to point to Ezekiel as a key figure in defining the exclusivist character of the Repatriate Jewish community, but her analysis needs to be extended to account for the role that the Davidic-Zion tradition, especially as articulated throughout the Book of Isaiah, including First Isaiah as well as Exilic Isaiah, plays in influencing Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Ezra–Nehemiah in developing this view.

⁸ See M.A. Sweeney, *King Josiah of Judah: The Lost Messiah of Israel* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); J. Wilcoxon, "The Political Background of Jeremiah's Temple Sermon," in A.L. Merrill and T.W. Overholt (eds.), *Scripture in History and Theology: Essays in Honor of J. Coert Rylaarsdam* (Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1977), 151–66.

**REVIEW OF DALIT ROM-SHILONI,
*EXCLUSIVE INCLUSIVITY: IDENTITY
CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE EXILES AND
THE PEOPLE WHO REMAINED (6TH–5TH
CENTURIES BCE)* (LHBOTS, 543;
LONDON: BLOOMSBURY, 2013)**

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Dalit Rom-Shiloni's *Exclusive Inclusivity* is a well-researched and thought-provoking book which proposes a conflict between the exiles and those who had remained in the land. The current review will focus on the section of her book which deals with the book of Isaiah.

Rom-Shiloni's standpoint vis-à-vis the geographical discontinuity and authorial continuity in Isa 40–66 is largely in line with mainstream Israeli scholarship. She divides the text into two major sections: a Babylonian section comprising of chapters 40–48 and a Judahite section comprising of chapters 49–66. Rom-Shiloni further maintains that there is authorial as well as thematic continuity within all 27 chapters. Moreover, Rom-Shiloni challenges the views of, for example, Menahem Haran¹ and Shalom M. Paul² who see a widening of the audience upon the arrival of Deutero-Isaiah in Judah, reflected in the material in Isa 49 and onwards, to encompass not only the returning exiles but also the people who had remained in the land. Instead, Rom-Shiloni argues that *all* of Isa 40–66 addresses the *same* community, namely the exiles from Babylon. The prophet, upon arrival in Judah, first ignored the people living there (Isa 40–48) and then denied them the right to belong to both God and the land (Isa 49–66) unless they adopt his and his followers' specific theological perspective.

In this review, I wish to pose two questions:

¹ M. Haran, "The Literary Structure and Chronological Framework of the Prophecies in Is. XL–XLVIII," *Congress Volume, Bonn 1962* (VTSup, 9, Leiden: Brill, 1963), 148–55.

² S.M. Paul, *Isaiah 40–66: Translation and Commentary* (ECC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 6–7.

1. Can the claim that the people who remained in the land do not have a voice in Isa 40–66 really be upheld?
2. Can the claim that the protagonist in Isa 56–66 represents the Babylonian Repatriates be upheld?

In short, can Rom-Shiloni's claim that Isa 40–66 is the work of the Babylonian Exiles and Repatriates (p. 135) be sustained?

Although Rom-Shiloni mentions briefly the possibility that Isa 40–66 is the product of the people who had remained in the land, as advocated by Hans M. Barstad³ and more recently also by myself,⁴ her refutation is on the brief side: "Barstad did not take into consideration socio-psychological arguments concerning inter-group relations, and therefore he missed the rhetorical strategies and themes in the book that clearly suggest its Babylonian origin and its continuous thematic Babylonian orientation upon return." Yet, in her book, Rom-Shiloni fails to interact with and respond to Barstad's claim that very little in Isa 40–55 actually betrays a Babylonian origin and a Babylonian orientation. As her work stands, it is fair to say that it rests upon the *assumption* (as Rom-Shiloni herself states on p. 104) that Isa 40–66 shows a Babylonian orientation. Her arguments follow on from and are congruent with this assumption. My counter-argument is that this assumption is never really verified or even argued for.

Rom-Shiloni notes that the audience is throughout Isa 40–66 called "my people," "my servant Jacob/Israel," and "my chosen one." For Rom-Shiloni, this is a sign of *continuity* and *entirety*: the exiles are the whole people and they—and only they—are the descendants of pre-exilic Israel. I agree with the evidence albeit not with the interpretation: the audience is affirmed as God's chosen people. The question is, of course, which audience? Rom-Shiloni continues by highlighting that Jerusalem is depicted as empty and claims that this polemic effectively ignores the existence of the people who remained in the land (pp. 104–6). Again, I find myself not only disagreeing with the textual evidence but also the Rom-

³ H.M. Barstad, "Lebte Deuterocesaja in Judäa?" *NTT* 83 (1982), 77–87; idem, "On the So-Called Babylonian Influence in Second Isaiah," *JSOT* 2 (1987), 90–110; idem, "On the History and Archaeology of Judah During the Exilic Period," *OLP* 19 (1988), 25–36; idem, *A Way in the Wilderness: The "Second Exodus" in the Message of Second Isaiah* (JSS Monograph, 12; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989); idem, "Akkanian 'Loanwords' in Isaiah 40–55 and the Question of the Babylonian Origin of Deutero-Isaiah," in A. Tångberg (ed.), *Text and Theology, Studies in Honour of Professor Dr. Theol. Magne Sæbø, Presented on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (Oslo: Verbum, 1994), 36–48; idem, *The Myth of the Empty Land: A Study in the History and Archaeology of Judah during the "Exilic" Period* (SO Fasciculi Suppletorii, 28; Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1996); idem, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Book of Isaiah: "Exilic" Judah and the Provenance of Isaiah 40–55* (Oslo: Novus, 1997).

⁴ L.-S. Tiemeyer, *For the Comfort of Zion: The Geographical and Theological Location of Isaiah 40–55* (VTSup, 139; Leiden: Brill, 2011).

Shiloni's claim of an empty-land-rhetoric in Isa 40–66. On the contrary, to quote the opening statement in Isa 40:1–2aa: “Comfort, comfort my people, says your God; speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her.” These verses clearly suggest that (1) Jerusalem is populated and (2) that the population of Jerusalem is identical with “God’s people.” Later on in the same passage, Isa 40:9–11 describes how God is returning to Judah with good news (v. 9). The most straight-forward understanding of the target audience of passage must truly be to identify them with the earthly population of Jerusalem, i.e., the people who had remained in the land. The very fact that Jerusalem is personified in Isa 40–55 does not speak against an identification of the city with its population, as we can see in, for example, Isa 1:21–26 and Lam 1. The same situation can be found in Isa 52:9 where the ruins of Jerusalem are supposed to break forth in joy because God has comforted “his people.” Again, this verse is, in my view, best understood as a reference to the impending joy of the Judahite population of Jerusalem, living in the midst of its ruin, when they realize that God has saved the city. Isa 51:16, 22 are further evidence of the equation of “God’s people” and the city of Jerusalem.

Rom-Shiloni further argues that the language in Isa 49:14–26 and 54:1–10 effectively silences any claim to the land which the Judahites might have raised (p. 107). The text depicts a situation where only the Repatriates and the empty city exist: Jerusalem is feeling forsaken by God (Isa 49:14), desolate and destroyed (Isa 49:19, consciously picking up the language of Lamentations) and expressing her sense of barrenness and estrangement (Isa 49:21, גלה; 54:1–10); whereby God promises her that her children will return to her (Isa 49:22–26). In my view, this highly poetic language does not deny the existence of the people living in the midst of the ruins of Jerusalem. Rather, it is the prophet’s response to the laments, found in Lamentations, to the despair and sense of abandonment of the people left in the land. The continuation in Isa 54:11–17, for example, effectively challenged Jerusalem’s claim that she is barren as it speaks about God’s care for her sons (v. 13). The Hebrew of verse 15 (הן גור יגור) is furthermore better understood to be derived from the root גור (“to dread”),⁵ with the result that nothing in the pericope speaks about the ingathering of exiles.

The same rhetoric appears in Isa 60:15 where Jerusalem is described as “forsaken and hated” as well as desolate (עזובה ושנואה) (ואין עובר). This passage is actually a case in point: despite its likely early Persian date (rather than Neo-Babylonian)—when we must presume that at least some exiles had returned to Judah, Jerusalem is *still* described as forsaken and desolate. This, in turn, suggests that descriptions of desolation and abandonment are part of a plea

⁵ J. Goldingay and D. Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, vol 2 (ICC; London: T&T Clark, 2006), 358–59.

to God to have compassion on his city rather than as a sign of disregard for its human population.

Likewise, statements such as that in Isa 44:26 that the city will again be populated and that the cities of Judah shall be built up (האמר לירושלם תושב ולערי יהודה תבנינה) should, in my view, not be taken as a silencing of the population of Judah but instead as an encouragement to those living there that new and better times will soon come: God will return to his land and, as a result, its population will once again live in places teeming with life and prosperity. Pertinently, texts such as Isa 40:9–11; 50:7–10; 51:3 (and the very difficult 41:27) speak of God's return but are notably silent about any return of the exiles (*contra* Rom-Shiloni, p. 107).

Rom-Shiloni also suggests that the exilic community has usurped the names “Zion” and “Jerusalem,” as well as the other two terms “Jacob” and “Israel” (pp. 111–18) as part of the re-identification of the “In-Group.” In support, she refers to Isa 52:1–2, 8–10 (cf. 45:13; 51:16; 61:1–11) which form a direct command to Zion-Jerusalem. Jerusalem in Isa 52:2 is described as “captive” (שביה בת ציון). This brings to the forefront the word שבי, “captive.” Can one be captive in one's own city or does one *have to be* a repatriate in order to qualify as שבי? As above, I maintain that the solution to the problem lies in the interaction between Isa 40–55 and Lamentations. Isa 54:1–2 is likely to allude back to Lamentations, as indicted by the veiled reference to “rape” in verse 1b (Lam 5:11, cf. also the preceding 51:23). Reading through Lamentations, we find that the *ketib* of Lam 2:14 speaks of Jerusalem's captivity (שביתך). As it is reasonably clear that Lamentations speaks on behalf of and also describes the community who remained in the land, we must conclude that the term שבי has wider connotations than just “exile.” Furthermore, as there is no evidence that neither community—the Babylonian and the Judahite alike—were “captives” in the sense that they spent time in dungeons and the like, yet this is exactly the impression that the rest of Isa 52:2 conjures up. In view of the likely metaphoric language of the verse as a whole, it is reasonable to assume that the term שבי is also used metaphorically. Looking at the issue from the opposite angle, Isa 40–66 employs the root גלה when it wishes to refer to the Diaspora community, as we can see in Isa 45:13 (גלותי).

In contrast to the silencing of the Judahite perspective in Isa 40–48, Rom-Shiloni finally postulates that especially Isa 57–59 and 65–66 alludes to open confrontation between the returning exiles and the indigenous Judahites. Following especially the views of Brooks Schramm,⁶ she associates the Isaianic author and his followers with the exilic community whilst identifying their opponents with the people who had remained in the land.

⁶ B. Schramm, *The Opponents of Third Isaiah: Reconstructing the Cultic History of the Restoration* (JSOTSup, 193; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995).

I am again not convinced by these two identifications. In fact, I would rather turn the situation up-side-down. Chapters 56:9–59:21 and 65:1–66:24 clearly voice the opinion of a downtrodden group of people who are suffering by the hands of their rulers. Their antagonists are people in leadership positions (Isa 56:9–12), they are rich (Isa 58), and they are in charge of the temple sacrificial cult (Isa 65:3–5; 66:1–6). These passages together paint a picture of “The Other” as a group of people with economic and cultic power over others, and who neglect their duties towards their community and towards God. This, in turn, suggests that “The Others” in Isa 56–66 constitute the central political, economic, and religious leadership in *Yehud*, i.e., the returning exiles!⁷

To conclude, Rom-Shiloni’s book has challenged me to reconsider my own views on the geographical location of Isa 40–66. It has, however, not changed my mind. I hope that we can continue our disagreement in an amicable and fruitful manner also in the future!

⁷ L.-S. Tiemeyer, “Hope and Disappointment: The Judahite Critique of the Exilic Leadership in Isaiah 56–66,” in R.I. Thelle, T. Stordalen, and M.E. Richardson (eds.), *New Perspectives on Old Testament Prophecy and History. Essays in Honour of Hans M. Barstad* (VTSup, 168; Leiden: Brill, 2015), 57–73.

**GROUP IDENTITY AND SCRIBAL
TRADITION IN JEREMIAH: A DIALOGUE
WITH DALIT ROM-SHILONI'S *EXCLUSIVE
INCLUSIVITY****

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It is becoming increasingly clear, especially to scholars who have embraced social-scientific methodology, that the book of Jeremiah preserves a diversity of voices. These voices fall into the bipartite categories that Dalit Rom-Shiloni discusses in her book *Exclusive Inclusivity*, that is, a conflict of worldviews representing a *golah* or exilic orientation on one end and, on the other, a perspective rooted in homeland experience. In my earlier work into the book of Jeremiah, I focused attention more on the exilic ideology than the homelander ideology; in a detailed footnote toward the outset of the Jeremiah chapter in her book, Rom-Shiloni observes that I emphasized scribal polemics rather than identity formation as the motivation for what we encounter in the portions of the book that emphasize exile.¹ To this I plead *Mea Culpa*, as the emphasis of my study was on scribal practice/methods and the evidence for this in key parts of the Jeremiah tradition. I am still of the opinion that the overriding ideology of the book of Jeremiah reflects the experience and value system of exilic scribes—in particular, scribes of a Levite-Deuteronomistic variety—but there is indeed much more room to see in the book of Jeremiah relics of the Homelander voices as Rom-Shiloni has identified them.²

In the brief discussion that follows, however, I would like to propose a few qualifications regarding the exilic/homeland dynamic in Jeremiah that speaks to some unique features of the book's discourse within the more general categories of exil-

* D. Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity: Identity Conflicts between the Exiles and the People Who Remained (6th–5th Centuries BCE)* (LHBOTS, 543; New York/London: T&T Clark, 2013).

¹ *Ibid.*, 199 n. 5.

² On the Levite orientation of the redactors of the book of Jeremiah, see M. Leuchter, *The Polemics of Exile in Jeremiah 26–45* (New York/Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 105–7, 156–65.

ic/homeland tensions Rom-Shiloni addresses in her book. While I agree with Rom-Shiloni that elements of exclusive exilic identity parameters can be found in the Jeremiah materials, it seems to me that most of these materials occupy a position that is less extreme than what Ezekiel—for Rom-Shiloni, the fountainhead of exilic ideology—advocates.³ As the pro-exilic passages in Jeremiah suggest, the exilic Jeremiah tradents adopted some aspects of Ezekiel's in-group ideology: the shift in cosmic worldview favoring the geographic space of Mesopotamia,⁴ the repudiation of the Jerusalem cult active down to 587 BCE,⁵ the adoption of quasi-apocalyptic imagery in oracles addressing Babylon,⁶ and perhaps even the shaping of the prophet's laments possess points of contact with the Ezekiel tradition.⁷ Even if the historical Ezekiel was affected by what was known of Jeremiah's ministry in his own day,⁸ the literary production of the book of Jeremiah among exilic scribes shows signs of influence emanating from the Ezekiel tradition, at least the version of that tradition that was developing among Ezekiel's supporters and audiences.

Nevertheless, the watershed nature of the 597 exile must factor into our unpacking of information in the Jeremiah tradition that might resonate at a frequency similar to that of Ezekiel, for these frequencies are not only literary accretions but signs of social interaction and attempts to address cultural stigmas. The Jeremiah tradents who forged a version of the book bearing that prophet's name were in the precarious position of being "Johnny-Come-Latelies", and were most certainly not welcomed into the ranks of Ezekiel's group, the "Jehoiachin" exiles of 597. Ezek 14:21–22 makes clear that any Judahite arriving in Mesopotamia following the events of 587/586 are to be avoided, chided, and condemned because they remain separate from the select in-group who had been brought to Mesopotamia ten years earlier. The Jeremiah tradents (and people like them) were effectively relegated to being homelander in exile, and Ezekiel's book makes no real attempt to present the prophet as interested in any inclusive ethos, going so far as to deny Judahite ethnicity itself to them and other recent exiles to Babylon.⁹

³ On Ezekiel as the originator of the exilic/golah ideology, see Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 139.

⁴ On this topic see especially K. Schmid, "Nebuchadnezzar, the End of Davidic Rule, and the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah," in M.J. Boda et al. (eds.), *The Prophets Speak on Forced Migration* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2015), 63–76. Konrad Schmid views this as a Persian-period textual feature, a position that is open to debate.

⁵ Jer 7:3–8:2; 34:8–22.

⁶ Jer 50–51; see further below for more on this oracular unit.

⁷ Compare Jer 15:16 and Ezek 2:9–3:1.

⁸ This topic was broached several years ago by William L. Holladay, "Had Ezekiel Known Jeremiah Personally?" *CBQ* 63 (2001), 31–34.

⁹ Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 156–85.

If this was the condition facing newcomers such as the Jeremiah tradents upon their arrival in Babylon, we should ask *why* the homeland ideology is used the way it is in the book of Jeremiah. Rom-Shiloni identifies the redactional layers that show how the homeland discourse was subsumed within the pro-exilic compositional blocks. But why not eradicate the homeland ideology or tradition altogether, or roundly condemn it as Ezekiel does?

Brian Peckham noted several decades ago that it is not uncommon for biblical redactors to actually highlight the diachrony of the sources they use to build larger texts; the semiotic significance of what they produce as builders of text is derived substantially from the transformative power of the written enterprise and the redaction of source material into a new form and context.¹⁰ I would go further and suggest that this was not simply a literary phenomenon but a rhetorical/ideological one as well. That is, scribes steeped in a particular ethos but embracing another might be inclined to draw attention to the former even as they seek a place for it in the latter. This, in part, constituted an attempt to legitimize their own scribal ideology and craft as a basis for inclusion within a group. Being a scribe, after all, was not simply a profession but a matter of social, sacral, and even lineage status (see, e.g., 1 Chr 2:55). Scribal traditions were fostered within kinship units and, at least in some traditions, connected to spaces of geomythic significance.¹¹ Scribal function was a matter of identity as much as any other factor or force, and it is unlikely that the Jeremiah tradents were willing to shed this dimension of their own self-definition in attempting to enter the ranks of another group.

To put the matter differently, the scribes who redacted the Jeremiah tradition in exile may have utilized the homeland sources in order to demonstrate how scribalism provided the means to transition or redefine the boundaries of identity. What was once a homeland tradition was now comfortably seated in an exilic work because scribes were empowered to facilitate this transition and hermeneutically elucidate what was consistent between these otherwise discordant ideologies and worldviews. This fits in well with the trend within the book of Jeremiah, which is full of red flags that identify, even celebrate, the scribal mechanisms through

¹⁰ B. Peckham, "Writing and Editing," in A.B. Beck et al. (eds.), *Fortunate the Eyes That See: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 364–83 (368–69, 382).

¹¹ The recent study by S.D. McBride, "Jeremiah and the Levitical Priests of Anathoth," in J.J. Ahn and S.L. Cook (eds.), *Thus Says the Lord. Essays on the Former and Latter Prophets in Honor of Robert R. Wilson* (LHBOTS, 502; New York: T&T Clark, 2009) 179–96, is especially significant here, as Samuel D. McBride makes a very strong case that Jeremiah and the Shaphanide scribes were part of the same kinship group, the Levite clan of Meshullam based at Anathoth.

which it was wrought.¹² What this means is that the different valences of group identity preserved in the book of Jeremiah are presented as accessible only through the work of scribal groups who have inherited the sources, who were empowered to orchestrate them into material form, and who were capable of doing so in a way that turned the book of Jeremiah into a comprehensive literary trove that *deliberately* countenanced divergent attitudes.

Such a scribal enterprise seems to me to be well suited for identity formation in the exilic period. In the absence of a central sanctuary that anchored the economy, preserved traditions of the ancestors, served as space for the conveying of prophetic oracles, and functioned as the center for composing, compiling and teaching law, scribal documents could step into the breach. Texts became surrogate sanctuaries by providing access to the features of earlier culture, and thus became the basis for governing what concepts, forms of expressions, and interpretations of history comprised group identity. We see this same phenomenon much later with the formation of the Mishnah,¹³ and in more temporally proximate works such as the Book of the Twelve and the Book of Psalms.¹⁴ These are not exilic works, of course, but the former emerged after the loss of the Second Temple and latter were constructed as challenges to the *status quo* of the Aaronide temple cult.¹⁵ These point to a tradition where texts could form alternatives, parallels, or replacements to sanctuaries like the Jerusalem temple and the social and intellectual institutions fostered therein.

In a recent essay, in fact, I have argued that the point of origin for such a view of texts is actually a text currently preserved in the Jeremiah corpus.¹⁶ Seraiah's Colophon (Jer 51:59–64a) and the anti-Babylon oracle to which it was appended was originally part of a textual rite—the submerging of the oracle/colophon in the

¹² I expand upon this in much greater detail in my article “The Medium and the Message, or What is ‘Deuteronomistic’ about the Book of Jeremiah?” *ZAW* 126 (2014), 208–27.

¹³ I.R. Zvi, *The Mishnaic Sotah Ritual* (JSJSup; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 144–54.

¹⁴ Both the Book of the Twelve and Psalter open with wisdom “entry texts” that parallel the use of wisdom discourses as entry rites into sanctuary spaces; see K. Dell, “‘I will solve my riddle to the music of the lyre’ (Psalm xlix 4 [5]): A cultic setting for wisdom psalms?” *VT* 54 (2004), 445–458 (455).

¹⁵ I explore this more thoroughly in my essay, “Hosea’s Exodus Mythology and the Book of the Twelve,” in L.-S. Tiemeyer (ed.), *Priests and Cults in the Book of the Twelve* (ANEM, 14; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2016), 31–49.

¹⁶ M. Leuchter, “Sacred Space and Communal Legitimacy in Exile: The Contribution of Seraiah’s Colophon (Jer 51:59–64a),” in M.J. Boda et al. (eds.), *The Prophets Speak on Forced Migration* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2015), 77–99.

Euphrates river—that transformed the Euphrates into a cosmic boundary marker and claimed Mesopotamia as YHWH’s own domain. Ezekiel’s own attitude and geomythic priorities was connected to this particular rite, making the Euphrates and its tributaries geographic bases for his brand of prophecy and sacral instruction. This further licensed the Judahite exiles taken captive in 597 as uniquely connected to YHWH in a way that disadvantaged those remaining in Jerusalem.¹⁷ To combat this, the Jeremiah tradents also “submerged” a copy of the oracle/colophon within the book of Jeremiah, making their own scribal product the new boundary marker, and making YHWH’s domain not strictly a geographic matter but one rooted in text production. The book of Jeremiah thus becomes a sort of sanctuary where the deity could be encountered, his presence and power infused into each word on the scroll replacing the older traditions where the divine *kaḇod* filled the inner sanctum of the Jerusalem temple.¹⁸ This also follows what we encounter throughout the all-important narrative in Jer 36, where the writing of a prophetic scroll transfers the world-making divine word in the prophet’s mouth (Deut 18:18; Jer 1:9) onto the written scroll (Jer 36:4, 17–18, 32).

If a book of Jeremiah containing both homeland and exilic worldviews took on such a role, we should therefore consider another aspect of sanctuary function in monarchic and even pre-monarchic era Israel, namely, that sanctuaries bound different kinship groups together through common ritual settings and a shared priestly faculty. The book—as a surrogate sanctuary—and the scribes—as surrogate priests—bring these communities together under the hermeneutical rubric of the *divre yirmeyahu* that both open and close the book (Jer 1:1//51:64b) in a manner recalling how different lineages were united through the institution of the Jerusalem temple and its cult. (In making this point, I hasten to add that I still think this *inclusio* was formed by exilic scribes who reshaped the proto-MT sequence of the book.¹⁹) The scribes behind the book of Jeremiah thereby establish “continuity” on a level even beyond what we encounter in Ezekiel’s oracles. The Jeremiah tradents creation of a textual sanctuary trumped Ezekiel’s voice of a “priest out of place” (if I may use Baruch J. Schwartz’s phrase),²⁰ that is, a priest operating without a sanctuary at all. The self-reflexive textuality of the book of Jeremiah stresses this, perhaps as a way to diminish the rhetorical viability of Ezekiel’s

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 85–94.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 94–95.

¹⁹ Leuchter, *The Polemics of Exile*, 142–44, 152, 162.

²⁰ B.J. Schwartz, “A Priest Out of Place: Reconsidering Ezekiel’s Place in the History of the Israelite Priesthood,” in S.L. Cook and C.L. Patton (eds.), *Ezekiel’s Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 61–71.

oracles which favor oral modalities of teaching and never call attention to their textuality—despite their clear literary sophistication.

Now of course, the trope of the rejected “homelander” could and did remain, but it no longer pertained to those who arrived in Babylon after 586 BCE. The book of Jeremiah was arranged in such a way as to demonstrate the equivalency of both the Jehoiachin exiles and those who arrived after Jerusalem’s destruction, with derision reserved for the homelander who shanghaied Jeremiah to Egypt and lost their status as Judahites in so doing.²¹ In fact, one might push further with Rom-Shiloni’s methodology and suggest that the post-586 Jeremiah authors “flipped the script”—they annexed and forged continuity not only with the hoary national traditions of old but also with the identity parameters of the Jehoiachin exiles represented by Ezekiel. I would like to examine an assortment of related passages that Rom-Shiloni has analyzed that show some traces of this process. These passages are Jer 24, the vision of the good/bad figs; Jer 29:16–20, the redactional intrusion into an earlier collection of oracles; and finally, Jer 40:9–10, the account of Gedaliah’s command to the Mizpah community to recommence in agrarian routine and to gather “summer fruit”. In an earlier study, I had argued that Gedaliah’s command was a sort of application of various Jeremianic statements in a practical manner, especially the command to gather “summer fruit”—which, as some scholars have argued, included figs.²² Gedaliah is presented as implementing the ideological dimensions of Jer 24, extending the idea of “good figs” to the people under his charge.

Rom-Shiloni has made a good case that in its current form, Jer 24 is probably a post-Jeremianic composition.²³ But this need not preclude the existence of a tradition of Jeremiah using the “figs” metaphor during his ministry. Rather, and especially in light of work on scribal culture and methods conducted in recent years, the use of this trope/motif in both an oracle and in a narrative suggest the oral preservation, and indeed modulation, of a remembered discourse.²⁴ Memory, after all, is a central feature of scribal function even when scribes had ready access to textual resources, and it is through the vehicle of scribal mnemonics that slight variations in terminology emerge as the substance of well-established teachings are preserved and transmitted.²⁵ *Qal wahômer*, how much more is

²¹ Leuchter, *Polemics of Exile*, 135–36.

²² *Ibid.*, 121.

²³ Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 233–37.

²⁴ For an overview of these processes, see D.M. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 13–101. Rom-Shiloni entertains a similar perspective on the “secondary adaptation” of Jeremian language in Jer 24 (*Exclusive Inclusivity*, 235 n. 106).

²⁵ D.M. Carr, “Orality, Textuality and Memory: The State of Biblical Studies,” in B.B. Schmidt (ed.), *Contextualizing Israel’s Sacred Writings: Ancient Literacy, Orality and Literary Production* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2015), 151–73.

memory an important vehicle for the transmission of such discourses when support groups and audiences were dislodged from more secure geographical moorings. Gedaliah's command and the oracle/vision in Jer 24 represent different memories attesting to this, applying it to different historical contexts and literary genres but drawing from an extant and common curricular tradition that the authors of Jer 40:9–10 already knew. In the Gedaliah case, the teaching is applied to the account of a post-586 residence in the land presented as legitimate; in the case of Jer 24, the trope is applied to an earlier setting by a much later tradent, but one who was aware that the trope's Jeremianic origin carried sacral force even in an era that saw a return to the very place that was the cause of original contention.

If the foregoing suggestion is accepted, then it affects how we may understand the purpose and function of Jer 29:16–20, where the “figs” motif—this time, “bad figs”—appears. The collection of texts into which these verses have been redacted (Jer 27–29) was preserved from quite early on by the Jehoiachin group as a sort of prophetic charter for their legitimacy.²⁶ The obviously secondary nature of Jer 29:16–20 identifies it as part of a redactional recasting of this charter material, and it is important to note that the language running through these verses is fairly stereotyped: they contain terms and phrases that we find throughout other parts of the book of Jeremiah.²⁷ In this case, we should ask why the “figs” motif, and other remembered staples of Jeremiah's teaching, have been placed into these verses and consequently redacted into the “charter” material in Jer 29.

In light of my earlier comments, I would suggest that this is part of the scribal attempt to annex the identity tradition of the Jehoiachin group by drawing from a motif or discourse associated with the prophet (the “figs”) that was well-remembered by that group. But by using terms that we find *throughout* the book of Jeremiah, these scribes hybridize the Jehoiachin group's ideology, making it part of a broader stream of ideas and discourses that originated not strictly with the captives of 597 BCE but with at least some of the supporters of Jeremiah who still lived in the land down to 586 BCE. Exclusivity and continuity, then, are equally affected by this literary maneuver—not rejected, but adjusted through their (re-)textualization, rendering the scribal craft as a gate through which boundaries and standards of identity could be accessed. And this, I might add, establishes some precedent for the later post-exilic additions to the book that attempt to do the same.

²⁶ See W.L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 137–39; B.D. Sommer, “New Light on the Composition of Jeremiah,” *CBQ* 61 (1999), 665–66.

²⁷ See the discussion of these verses by W.M. Schniedewind, *How The Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 156–57.

To conclude, I hope that my comments here have demonstrated just how useful and insightful I find Rom-Shiloni's treatment of Jeremiah. Her study of the text's growth reveals additional dimensions and broader implications that will be required reading for researchers who wish to approach the issue of identity formation—not only in the 6th–5th centuries as she has discussed, but in earlier and later periods as well. It is the sign of enduring worth when a scholarly proposal leaves room for additional avenues of inquiry within a given conceptual framework, and Rom-Shiloni's monograph accomplishes this admirably.

EZEKIEL IN EXCLUSIVE INCLUSIVITY

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The book of Ezekiel is in many ways the keystone of Dalit Rom-Shiloni's work in *Exclusive Inclusivity*.¹ Her aim is an ambitious one: to make sense of Persian period conflicts between those who returned from Babylonian and those whose ancestors had remained in the land, by tracing the development of "Babylonian exilic ideologies" over the 150 or so years following the fall of Jerusalem. Ezekiel takes pride of place, since this prophet offers Rom-Shiloni her earliest evidence for an exclusive exilic ideology that employs the strategies of "continuity," "entirety," and "annexation" to establish the Jehoiachin exiles as the only true continuation of the pre-exilic community. Not only is he the first to delegitimize the inhabitants of the land as foreign and idolatrous, but he also offers the earliest example of the "myth of the empty land" after the total annihilation of Jerusalem and its inhabitants.

Whether or not Rom-Shiloni's broader argument about the development of exclusive ideologies throughout the longer period is found compelling, her work on Ezekiel certainly engages with one of the long-standing conundrums of Ezekiel scholarship. Why, if the book is addressed to exiles in Babylonia, does it have so much to say about Jerusalem? This is the question that in the 1930s provoked Volkmar Hertrich, Alfred Bertholet and others to place all or part of the prophet's ministry in Jerusalem, and it is also behind Charles C. Torrey's view of the book as a late pseudepigraphon, as well as more recent work such as the redaction-critical theory of Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann.²

¹ D. Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity: Identity Conflicts between the Exiles and the People Who Remained (6th–5th Centuries BCE)* (LHBOTS, 543; New York/London: T&T Clark, 2013).

² V. Hertrich, *Ezechielprobleme* (BZAW, 61; Giessen: Töpelmann, 1932); A. Bertholet (with K. Galling), *Hesekiel* (HAT, 13; Tübingen: Mohr, 1936); C.C. Torrey, *Pseudo-Ezekiel and the Original Prophecy* (YOSR, 18; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930; repr., New York: Ktav, 1970); K.-F. Pohlmann, *Das Buch des Propheten Hesekiel: Kapitel 1–19* (ATD, 22; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996); idem (with T.A. Rudnig), *Das Buch des Propheten Hesekiel: Kapitel 20–48* (ATD, 22; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001).

Recent scholarship (at least outside the German-speaking world) has tended to resolve the problem by emphasizing the unity of the communities in Judah and Babylonia. Despite Ezekiel's obvious dislike for Zedekiah's establishment, the prophet's exilic audience is made up of displaced Jerusalemites, who retain a deep existential interest in the homeland and who, crucially, continue to identify with it.³ If the exiles are to be included within the view of Jerusalem, then they themselves become the target of the anti-Jerusalem invective, which might be seen as a kind of extended call to repent.

Rom-Shiloni's work challenges this initial identification of Jerusalem and exile, which is so often taken for granted within scholarly discussion. The people who remain in Jerusalem are of so much interest because they are a bad example, who now exemplify what Israel is *not*, and who will no longer have any part in Israel's future. Rom-Shiloni makes this case especially in regard to two passages that address the question "who inherits?" (11:14–21; 33:23–29). In both cases the inhabitants of Judah attempt to disinherit the exiles by claiming that only those still in the land are the heirs of the divine promise to possess it (11:15; 33:24). Ezekiel's response is unequivocal. In 33:23–29 he asserts that those who remain are so wicked that YHWH will utterly destroy them, leaving the land "a desolation and a waste." In 11:14–21 the exiles may be far from the land but retain a relationship with God and will be restored to the land to live in obedience. Through arguments like these Ezekiel becomes "the voice of extreme exclusivity, the voice that declares the Jehoiachin exiles to be the prestigious, one-and-only legitimate community of Judeans."⁴

I find Rom-Shiloni's arguments in favour of this sense of extreme exclusivity rather persuasive. They become yet more interesting and challenging when we pay attention to the book's general polemic against Jerusalem. Thomas Renz, in his influential study of Ezekiel's rhetoric, puts a common view succinctly: "First, the readers are identified with the Jerusalemites as part of a long history or rebellion against Yhwh," but "Secondly, the readers are brought into a process of dissociating themselves from Jerusalem while at the same time realizing their own rebelliousness."⁵ However, if the readers are not to identify with Jerusalem in any way, this also puts

³ So, e.g. M. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 22; Garden City, NY: Doubleday); cf. also the discussion in P.M. Joyce, *Ezekiel: A Commentary* (LHBOTS, 482; New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 3–6, and my own comments in *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 41–50.

⁴ Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 196; for Rom-Shiloni, Ezekiel's editors soften the approach in chs. 34–37, which imagine a wider restoration than just the Jehoiachin exiles, but nevertheless assume that Israel will reoccupy an empty land.

⁵ T. Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel* (VTSup, 76; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 93.

the second part of such a rhetorical process into question, with some potentially interesting exegetical consequences.

Here I should like to offer a couple of examples, which take Rom-Shiloni's discussion of Ezek 16 as a starting point. In the first place, she emphasizes Ezekiel's statement of Jerusalem's Canaanite origins in ch. 16 as part of a strategy of redefining those who remain as foreign, and we should perhaps be on the lookout for further examples of this kind. There may well be more to be said about the way that not only Canaan but also Egypt forms part of Ezekiel's strategy of "othering" Jerusalem, explicitly in 17, 20, and 23, and implicitly in the temple vision of ch. 8, not to mention the Oracles against the Nations.

The possibility that Ezekiel's extended metaphors contain no "you are the man!" moment for his immediate audience is also deserving of further consideration. I am struck, for example, that commentators on Ezek 16 and 23 from right across the theological/critical spectrum tend to take it for granted that the polemic is aimed at shaming Ezekiel's own audience of exiles.⁶ For conservatives like Daniel I. Block this is a powerful and appropriate use of theological rhetoric, whereas for feminists like Fokkelen van Dijk Hemmes, the imagery runs the danger of encouraging the audience to identify with the wrong character: the "androcentric-pornographic" character of Ezek 23 "offers the male audience a possibility of escape: the escape of an identification with the revengeful husband, or, more modestly, with the righteous men who, near the end of the text, are summoned to pass judgement upon the adulterous women (v. 45)."⁷ But if Rom-Shiloni is right, this "escape route" is exactly what the prophet intends, and the last thing Ezekiel wants is for his audience to identify with Jerusalem. The shock value of the oracles is more straightforwardly designed to horrify and disgust, and the reader expected to identify with the outraged husband rather than the apostate wife.

On the whole, I find Rom-Shiloni's basic orientation towards the book quite persuasive. But there are areas where she may need to strengthen her argument. Again considerations of space allow only a couple of points. In general terms, she is right to see the Jehoiachin exiles as the primary community to be restored within Ezekiel. She does require a redaction critical solution to account for the wider scope of restoration in much of 34–37, but even in these

⁶ To offer a few examples, D.I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 459–522; C.L. Patton, "Should Our Sister be Treated Like a Whore?: A Response to Feminist Critiques of Ezekiel 23," in M.S. Odell and J.T. Strong (eds.), *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives* (SymS, 9; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 221–38 (237–38); F. van Dijk Hemmes, "The Metaphorization of Woman in Prophetic Speech," *VT* 43 (1993), 162–70; R.J. Weems, *Battered Love: Marriage, Sex and Violence in the Hebrew Prophets* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1995), 62–67.

⁷ van Dijk Hemmes, "The Metaphorization," 169.

chapters there is little interest in those who have not been scattered. However, we may question just how much of a privilege such restoration might be even for the Jehoiachin exiles.⁸ By contrast with Jer 24, Ezekiel offers no black and white categorization: “exiles good, Jerusalem bad.” Ezekiel’s view of human nature is too bleak for this and this tends to lessen the moral distinction, at least, between the two communities: in his commissioning not only is the prophet’s audience defined quite broadly as “the children of Israel, a rebellious nation” but they are clearly identified with their Jerusalemite forebears: “they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day” (2:3). The prophet severely criticizes the exiles themselves for “taking their idols into their hearts” (14:6), and there is also in a number of restoration passages the language of a restoration to shame and self-loathing (20:43, 36:31–32), which is rather similar to that used of the escapees from the “mountains of Israel” in 6:9. Rom-Shiloni does recognize that “Ezekiel does not consider his fellow exiles obedient or virtuous either,” but in making such a sharp distinction between the two communities she runs the risk of underplaying such elements of continuity as are there to be found.⁹

The book is also not as consistent in its use of terminology as Rom-Shiloni might like: in particular the term **בית ישראל** “house of Israel” is a rather slippery one: certainly it most often refers to the community surrounding Ezekiel in exile (e.g., 11:14; 14:1–11) or to the community to be restored (36:22; 37:11).¹⁰ However, in a number of cases the term is directed towards the community back in Jerusalem (e.g., 6:11; 8:6, 10–12, 11:5 cf. also **בני ישראל** in 6:5, 35:5): it is the “house of Israel” that commits all the abominations in the temple, and this does not sit easily with the idea that the term “house of Israel” is a specific designation for the privileged community of exiles. The distinction seems at times, then, to be rather more blurred than Rom-Shiloni implies, and this calls for further explanation: why does Ezekiel’s rhetoric work in seemingly contradictory ways, at some points seeking to bring exile and Jerusalem closer together, at other times further apart? Rom-Shiloni certainly recognizes the complexity of the problem in the way that she does reckon with a later redactional blurring of the relationship between the Jehoiachin exiles and other “Israelite” communities in the restoration oracles. However, if the blurring runs more deeply through the book than she acknowledges, she may require either a more thoroughgoing redaction-critical approach or a more nuanced reading of the ideology.

⁸ Cf. B.J. Schwartz, “Ezekiel’s Dim View of Israel’s Restoration,” in M.S. Odell and J.T. Strong (eds.), *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives* (SymS, 9; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 43–67.

⁹ Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 184.

¹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 141–42.

From the perspective of Ezekiel scholarship, Rom-Shiloni's work is a great gift. She effectively combines detailed textual analysis with a complex social-psychological model to make the case that Ezekiel is the originator of the exclusive ideology that was so influential in the shaping of ancient Jewish identity. Even within the relatively brief scope of a single chapter, her discussion of the prophet contains an extremely stimulating set of proposals, which should cause us to question a number of prevailing assumptions about the way the book works. *Exclusive Inclusivity* is therefore essential reading for anyone interested in making sense of Ezekiel within the context of the Babylonian exile and beyond.

EXCLUSIVE INCLUSIVITY,
**THE TRANSPARENT AND THE INVISIBLE:
A RESPONSE**

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This paper is the written version of my response as presented at the close of the review session held by the section, “Literature and History of the Persian Period” in the SBL Annual Meeting at San Diego, 2014 (slightly revised and updated). This session was a great source of excitement for me. I want to thank the co-chairs, Mark Leuchter and Anselm Hagedorn, for dedicating a session to my book, and for calling together this remarkable team to review my work. It has been a special privilege to be critiqued by each one of my esteemed colleagues, who over the years have become friends. In modern Hebrew we have a saying, *אהבה שאינה מקלקלת את השורה*,¹ which I will paraphrase for our scholarly context as, “Friendship does not have to spoil critical effort.” This is what I felt when reading through the various assessments; I have greatly appreciated the analytical capability in the work of each and every one of the reviewers, and their additional inspiring thoughts based on their own research. So, many thanks to John Kessler, for his references to Haggai; to Mark J. Boda for his complementary comments on Zechariah, Malachi, and Ezra–Nehemiah; to Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, for her different reading of Isa 40–66, to Marvin A. Sweeney for drawing connections to Isaiah son of Amoz and the Isaiah corpus in general; to Mark Leuchter, who contributed his expertise on Jeremiah in addition to his role as chair of the session, and now as editor of this *JHS* issue; and to Andrew Mein, for his perspective on Ezekiel and much beyond—it was Andrew’s initial encouragement that caused me to write this monograph in the first place.² Not least am I grateful to the editors of *JHS*, Christophe

¹ The modern Hebrew saying is based on midrash Gen. Rab., Wayyērā’, 55:8: *אהבה מקלקלת את השורה*; in this context, the lesson is that love should not make a person deviate from the right, the true, road.

² Additional and special thanks are due to Dr. Ruth Clements, for her editorial work on the manuscript of the book and on this paper. As ever, Ruth has been my first critical reader, and I am grateful for that.

Nihan and Anna Angelini, for finding this scholarly discussion suitable for this journal.

In my response, I want first to highlight issues that to a certain point we agree upon, those points that the readers did find persuasive in *Exclusive Inclusivity: Identity Conflicts between the Exiles and the People Who Remained (6th–5th centuries BCE)*. But these same issues cause us to focus on areas where disagreements reside; thus, in the subsequent comments I devote my attention to some of the major points of criticism raised by the panel.

I. PERSIAN PERIOD STRUGGLES, DO THEY HAVE A PAST?

All of the panelists share an understanding of the importance of internal Judean struggles over group identity for various fields of research within the study of Hebrew Bible (HB) literature of the early Persian period—its history, its sociology, and most of all its theology and ideology.

One of the major goals of this monograph was to study the ideological arguments behind the major issues pertaining to national identity and intergroup relationships as they developed over a period of circa 150 years, an era that runs through both the Neo-Babylonian and the Persian periods and thus calls forth questions of continuity and change. This interest in ideological arguments was motivated by basically the question we scholars face time and again: Was there anything new in those struggles of Persian period Yehud, anything that had no roots in earlier developments? Or to be more specific, did the Persian period conflicts (whether we presume them to have emerged as early as the late-6th century, or only later, by the mid-5th century BCE), which are said to have taken shape through the encounters of the Babylonian Repatriates with Those who had Remained in what became Achaemenid Yehud, burst out of the blue?

I took my point of departure from the early-sixth-century sources (the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel), in which one may discern expressions on both sides of the debate (with full-fledged counter-argumentation), the voices of the Exiles and the voices of Those Who had Remained in Judah. Yet, both books reflect the already unmistakable dominance of Babylonian exilic ideologies. Broadening the scope of this topic with respect to time, places, and literary compositions, and studying it from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives, led me to explore the relationship(s) between the early polemics of the Neo-Babylonian period and the much-studied and better-known phases of internal Judean polemics in Yehud of the early Persian period. Those later struggles characterize the book of Ezra–Nehemiah, and to a different extent also appear in the prophetic collections of Isa 40–66, Haggai, and Zechariah (1–8).

Scholarship on this later period (from the end of the 6th down to the 5th or even the 4th century) has found trends of exclusivity

to be customary of the Babylonian Repatriates, with a clearly articulated and extreme position held by Ezra–Nehemiah. The customary historical reconstruction suggests that these elitist and hostile attitudes of the Babylonian Repatriate community towards Those Who had Remained, denigrated as “the peoples of the lands,” emerged for the first time in Yehud, either upon the return of the various exilic groups within what is called “the Restoration period” (539 BCE and on), or possibly only from the mid-5th century BCE, with the emigrations of Ezra and Nehemiah to Yehud. Scholars, mostly historians and archaeologists, have searched for the *realia* behind this rhetoric of hostility, and look for groups of foreign nationals said to be settled in Yehud at the time. Haggai and Zechariah, on the other hand, have often been held to be inclusivists, who either as Repatriates (Zechariah), or possibly as part of the community of Those who had Remained (Haggai), addressed a now unified community of “the Remnant of Israel” in Persian Yehud (see the comments of Kessler in this issue). Accordingly, the references to this internal struggle in Jeremiah and Ezekiel were understood as recognizable markers of late insertions, reflecting Persian period interpolations in line with the extremist positions of Ezra–Nehemiah, and obviously not contextualized in the early exilic period. A good example of such an argument may be seen in Robert P. Carroll’s discussion of “the myth of the empty land,” which he saw as a late polemical tactic, retrojected back by later redactors to the time even *before* the destruction of Jerusalem.³

Thus, the goal of this study was to examine these internal polemics, challenging the standard arguments concerning the identity of each group—giving room to the realization that the early Neo-Babylonian struggles over group-identity issues *differ* from those of the Persian period, and thus are best conceptualized as independent of them. Hence, references to such struggles are *not* later retrojections into Ezekiel or added only during the redaction of Jeremiah.

Furthermore, the realization that internal Judean identity conflicts developed in both earlier and later phases, raised questions like: Were the internal Judean conflicts in the Neo-Babylonian and early Persian periods completely separate struggles? Or, do they represent a continuing conflict that evolved over time? If so, would it then be possible to distinguish currents of interchange between the two groups over time, and of more interest, trajectories of developing thought within each of the groups on its own? Were there diverse approaches within each group, or was each “side” developing a somewhat unified ideology of exclusivity? I was curious to see whether there were any kind of connections across the two groups between the distinctive appearances of these inter-

³ R.P. Carroll, “The Myth of the Empty Land,” *Semeia* 59 (1992), 79–93. Carroll’s article had a great impact on scholarship thereafter, but this is beyond the scope of the present response.

nal struggles—connections of continuity, of reversal, or of alternative perceptions.

The study emphasized that (a) the externally imposed split represented by the compulsory dislocation of part of the community *immediately* created a crisis of group identity for each segment of the divided Judean communities. Thus, physical division led to socio-ideological division as well, whereby each community established clear and exclusive barriers between itself as the in-group and its sister community as the out-group. (b) I argue that Ezekiel, at the very first wave of deportation to Babylon (597 BCE) was a key figure in constructing an extreme separatist ideology for the Exiles; this ideology set the terms for subsequent authors coming from the Babylonian context, first the Exiles themselves and then the Repatriates, down to Ezra–Nehemiah. (c) Furthermore, while it is plausible to assume, and is even established by archaeological (epigraphical) findings, that Yahwists (former Israelites and Judahites) settled in different parts of the Neo-Babylonian and then Persian empires, our HB literary sources largely focus on the Babylonian-Judahite trajectory. These literary compositions focus on only one intergroup dichotomy—that between the Babylonian deportees and Those Who had Remained in the Land. (d) All HB Babylonian exilic sources are interested in what was happening in Judah/Yehud, both prior to and following its destruction, and they forecast the people's return to the Land. Quite surprisingly, the literature presumed to have been written in Babylon rarely if ever gives attention to the “proximate others” of the deportees; that is, the groups comprising Babylonian society, with whom the Exiles now had to establish social relationships. The Exiles define their categories of “otherness” solely over against what had happened/was happening in Judah/Yehud. I therefore considered this interest to be a central ideological tendency, “Land orientation,” found throughout the Babylonian exilic sources.

As stated in the introduction to the book, my study was deliberately limited to specific literary sources for this time period, and indeed I am happy to embrace the distinction Boda suggested between *realia* and rhetoric, or in his words, between “sociological reality” and “sociological rhetoric.” I fully agree with Boda's recognition that “in the end a study of this nature can only speak about ‘sociological rhetoric’—and in fact, in this study, I *intentionally* limited myself to the discernment of the rhetorical situations inscribed in these texts and the conceptual world views they reflect. Hence, to briefly respond to Boda's request for methodological clarifications on “how to discern the relationship between the rhetoric of the literature and the reality on the ground,” I frankly (and unfortunately), do not think that the *realia* behind the rhetoric are fully traceable. Nevertheless, ideologies are always contextualized in specific circumstances, and therefore none of us can really avoid such circumstantial reconstructions, even if they may be traced in but a limited fashion.

Given this caution, I do note that (e) one of the intriguing observations that emerged from the study was the recognition that the Judean communities in both locations during the Neo-Babylonian period, and the two Yahwistic communities that resided side by side in Persian Yehud, *maintained* mutually antagonistic attitudes toward one another.

In this context, I want to challenge Kessler's observations on aspects of *realia*, and particularly his suggestion that Ezekiel should be marginalized as reflecting but "a rural milieu outside of Nippur"; and that the views in the book of Jeremiah and in Ezra represent merely "the Babylonian *golah* elite, rather than the population at large."⁴ Kessler has found support for an inclusive view of the period in the demographic realities of Yehud in the late-6th century as learned from archaeology. In response, I would call attention to the general methodological problem with archaeological/cultural material data, which in principle is inadequate to answer questions of intergroup identity and relationships. The extrabiblical evidence for *all* Judean communities during this period is still very sparse, and we are therefore left with the biblical literature as our major source to gain a better window (definitely not an ideal one, though) onto some of the societal dynamics of this time.⁵

Almost the entire extant corpus of HB literature dating from the Neo-Babylonian and the Persian periods stems from or is authorized by Babylonian Exiles or Repatriates, advancing Babylonian exilic exclusivist ideologies; these ideologies were carried back to the homeland by the Repatriates, where they were once again reformulated for new circumstances; and yet, as far as I can tell, they sustained exclusivist perspectives. This is a conclusion one

⁴ These statements were part of Kessler's oral presentation at the session; see in this issue, above, Kessler, notes 48 and 85.

⁵ Recent excavations (by Oded Lipschits in Ramat Raḥel) have added valuable new information to the previous evidence of mostly archaeological surveys. On the problem of the archaeological evidences at hand and its interpretation, see Lipschits' discussion of the demographic evidence, in O. Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem: Judah under Babylonian Rule* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 185–271; and see G.N. Knoppers' review on this very point, "The Demise of Jerusalem, the De-urbanization of Judah, and the Ascent of Benjamin: Reflections on Oded Lipschits' *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem*," *JHS* 7 (2007), 18–27. Similar problems have recently arisen with the publication of the Al-Yahudu documents, which again add invaluable information about Babylonian Judeans in the Nippur area, but still leave many questions unanswered—mostly on the social context of these administrative documents; see L.E. Pearce and C. Wunsch, *Documents of Judean Exiles and West Semites in Babylonia in the Collection of David Sofer* (CUSAS, 28; Bethesda, MD: CDL, 2014); L.E. Pearce, "Continuity and Normality in Sources Relating to the Judean Exile," *HBAI* 3 (2014), 163–84; and see D. Rom-Shiloni, "The Untold Stories: Al-Yahudu and/or versus Hebrew Bible Babylonian Compositions," *WO* 47 (2017), 124–34.

may soundly reach through a study of the rhetoric from Ezekiel and Jeremiah forward. I have suggested that these exclusivist tendencies appear, even if only implicitly, in the avoidance of any reference to Those Who had Remained in the prophetic compositions of Deutero-Isaiah and Zech 1–8 (and also implicitly in Haggai, and see below). These same tendencies are also behind the silencing of the actual voices of Those Who had Remained; direct evidence of such perspectives is relatively hard to find beyond the early-sixth-century sources.

II. A REVERSED “ORDERLY HISTORY”

By charting a path in reversed chronological order, I was able to present the entire spectrum of Judahite identity conflicts. This methodological tactic—which I am happy was appreciated by some of the reviewers (Sweeney), though criticized by others (Boda, Kessler)—enabled me to reconstruct an “orderly history” of the polemic between the Babylonian Exiles and Those Who had Remained, from the time of the Jehoiachin exile to the early years of Persian Yehud.

Three short points of clarification regarding this “orderly history”:

(a) Drawing the lines of such a history requires some measure of simplification (hopefully not over-simplification). I was very keen to follow the sources themselves, even when (as just mentioned), they project only binary relationships between Babylonian deportees and remainees within Judah, and hardly anything else.⁶

(b) An “orderly history” of these conflicts does not mean that all the sources reflect a uniform exclusivist position, not at all—the texts exhibit, over time, diverse perspectives on exclusivity among the Babylonian Exiles themselves and their Repatriate successors (this is also sociologically plausible). I tried to highlight these differences among the sources. To mention two examples here: (1) The two oppositions of the Persian period present an important difference concerning the state of the land between prophetic presentations in Second Isaiah, Zechariah (and only implicitly Haggai) over-against the historiography of Ezra–Nehemiah; the former portray the land as empty and desolate, while the latter argues for foreign residents within, but no Judeans/Yahwist in the Land. (2) The three terms, *עם הארץ*, *עם שארית העם*, *כל הנשאר*, *העם הנשאר*

⁶ Deutero-Isaiah predicts that the dispersed will be gathered from afar, crossing mountains, deserts, and passing through flowing waters; see Isa 42:13–17; 43:16–21; 60:4. These passages, nevertheless, still point to the north or the east, thus to Babylon, as the point of departure; the destination is, of course, the Land of Israel. Seldom is there a reference to gathering the people “from the ends of the earth,” or from its four corners, see Isa 43:5–6; 49:12; and see the discussion in Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 108–11.

(discussed in chapter four of the book), were used as relative terms with different applications, by different groups over time.⁷

Finally, (c) the construction of this “orderly history” allowed me to show that, with the exception of Judean sources stemming from the very earliest stage, all our sources exhibit Babylonian exilic ideologies that share the same exclusivist point of departure, which may be traced back to Ezekiel. As highlighted by Mein, I argued that Ezekiel constructed an extreme, exclusivist ideology, using legitimizing and de-legitimizing arguments of *continuity*, *entirety*, and the *annexation* of historical and national traditions to establish the position of the Jehoiachin Exiles as the sole people of God. Ezekiel introduced the opposition between the Exiles and Those Who had Remained; and this opposition sustained the passage of time into the Persian period in both prophetic and historiographical sources.

III. THE SCOPE OF THE CORPUS FOR BABYLONIAN EXILIC IDEOLOGIES

Two notes of appreciation to Sweeney and to Boda, who “caught me out,” so to speak, on two shortcomings of my study. Sweeney did accept Ezekiel as a “key figure,” in the development of exclusivist ideology, but he insisted on the importance of the influence of Isaiah son of Amoz and the Davidic-Zion tradition on the sixth–fifth-century literature: on Ezra (e.g., in the notion of “holy seed”; cf. Isa 6:13 and Ezra 9:22), as also on Haggai and Zech 8:20–23. Sweeney puts forward some important insights into the conflicts between Haggai–Zechariah and Deutero-Isaiah over the issues of relations to foreigners, and yet another polemic over the acceptance or rejection of the Persian regime, stemming from Deutero-Isaiah and addressed against Ezra–Nehemiah. I am grateful for these valuable extensions of my framework. Although the aspect of conflict with the Persian rulers was technically outside of the scope of my own study, Sweeney’s remarks suggest one of the

⁷ Without going into detail, I want to very briefly speak to Kessler’s discussion (see above, and in earlier studies) of the conception of the remnant in Haggai and generally in the Twelve. I would accentuate this term’s relative meaning even in these contexts, and emphasize the fact that the value of this term had gone several transformations (see notes 9 and 10, below), which I saw to be illustrated in Kessler’s wide-ranging presentation. Kessler recognized that in references to the remnant, exile is presupposed and themes of election and preservation also play central roles. I would further differentiate the use of *שארית* in contexts of confronting Israel among the nations (as in Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah) from its usage in internal contexts, where I consider it to be a term of group identity definition (as in Haggai, and Zechariah, and likewise in Jeremiah and Ezekiel). Therefore, I would still concur that rhetorics of inclusivity in the editorial layers of the Twelve (presumably stemming from the Babylonian Exiles-Repatriates), might implicitly presume an exclusive argument of *entirety* that encompasses only these Babylonian-Repatriates.

avenues through which the issues raised in my book could enrich the discussion of other topics central to Persian period historiography.

Boda challenged me on my neglect of Zech 9–14 and Malachi. It is true that my decision to delimit the corpus was due, on the practical side, to the limits of time and space. At the stage of basic research for the present study, I allowed myself this “shortcut” because, as far as I could perceive, neither of these two prophetic collections are concerned with internal struggles over Judean identity. Conflicts in these two books focus on other topics and antagonists: Malachi is occupied with disputes among priestly circles; Deutero-Zechariah, with disputes against other nations as well as other prophets. I decided that attention to these two compilations would have distracted me from my focus on the primary internal conflict under discussion, and would have not served this study properly. I appreciate Boda’s comments, and think it would certainly be in place to broaden the perspective and integrate these other conflicts that appear to have taken place in Yehud in this dramatic period of the early Persian era.

Tiemeyer’s study of Isa 40–66 has been a very instructive study for me;⁸ as she concluded in her review, I am sure we will be able to “continue our disagreement in an amicable and fruitful manner also in the future!” Tiemeyer has located in Isa 40–55 voices of Those Who had Remained; she considers Isa 56:9–59:21 and 65–66 to represent the voice of “a downtrodden group of people who are suffering by the hands of their rulers,” who are “the central political, economic, and religious leadership of Yehud, i.e., the returning exiles!” In her book, she also designated Isa 40–55, as well as 56:9–59:21 and 65–66, as Judahite traditions (i.e., of Judeans who remained in the land and never deported), to be distinguished from the Ezra–Nehemiah tradition, which “concerns the *golah* community.” For the sake of clarity at this stage, we agree that all these authors are already settled in Yehud at the various times of writing; thus their differences are no longer a matter of geography, but rather of sociology (i.e., of sociological origins, which might give rise to socio-economic distinctions). Tiemeyer further supported the proposal of a Judahite context by noting the close connections between Isa 40–55 and Lamentations; and the positive attitude in these chapters towards the return of the Babylonian Exiles suggests to her an inclusive Judahite willingness to accept the returnees and join forces towards the restoration of the Land.

We are indeed very far apart in our conclusions on this point, and I have tried to suggest that one possible reason might be our methodological points of departure. In trying to explain my own, I want to tie in also my long and friendly disagreement with Kessler

⁸ L.-S. Tiemeyer, *For the Comfort of Zion: The Geographical and Theological Location of Isaiah 40–55* (VTSup, 139; Leiden: Brill, 2011).

on the issue of whether or not Haggai should be seen as inclusivist. Kessler rightly notes (as Sara Japhet and others have also pointed out) that Haggai speaks against “no others”; thus, he places Haggai in the inclusivist camp. I might also adduce at this point Boda’s short remarks in his response here on the inclusive perspectives in Zechariah. Hence, I will try to frame this methodological response as broadly as possible.

In the sources studied in this book, a clear difference may indeed be seen between Ezekiel, Jeremiah in its two strands, and Ezra–Nehemiah, on the one hand, and Isa 40–66, Haggai, and Zech 1–8 on the other. Utilizing strategies of division and drawing distinctions between one’s own group and other groups, all “speakers” (authors, other voices) base the exclusive status of their communities on three arguments: *continuity*, *entirety*, and the *annexation* of historical-national traditions. In different ways, they make the argument that *we* (and no other group) are *the* people, the *entire* people; and that only *we* inherit and embody the shared traditions of our communal past. In the first group of books (Ezekiel, Jeremiah in its two strands, and Ezra–Nehemiah), these arguments of exclusivity are marshaled to construct both sides of the process of group identity formation, shaping both the self-legitimizing claims of the in-group and the delegitimizing arguments directed against those designated as the out-group. On the axis of time, these exclusive arguments re-inscribe the past, shape the present, and envision the future of each of the opposing communities. Hence, the first set of sources—Ezekiel, Jeremiah in its two strands, and Ezra–Nehemiah—express the explicit antagonism of “us versus them”; they build borders of *division*, of “otherness,” to separate their in-group(s) from an illegitimate out-group. The second set—Isa 40–66, Haggai, and Zech 1–8—uses a different tactic, which I argue is no less exclusive, but which concentrates on the in-group alone. As expressed in Isa 40–66 and Zech 1–8, one of the features of this rhetoric is presenting the land as empty; empty, that is, of any other possible Yahwistic residents/communities. Although there are no explicit “others” battled here, these three prophetic collections do use argumentative strategies of *continuity*, *entirety*, and *annexation* of national traditions to consolidate their own group identity. Their arguments reinforce the identity of the community from the inside by ignoring outsiders—such “others” simply do not exist. This identity-building strategy, therefore, is almost as exclusive as the first.

I recognize that my study of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, as well as Ezra–Nehemiah, has honed my awareness of such exclusivist strategies and perspectives, even where they are less explicit and at times only implicit. But, conscious of the danger that such an awareness might become a presupposition (as stated by Kessler, the danger “to assume that which one is seeking to demonstrate”), I studied Isa 40–66, Zech 1–8 and Haggai with careful attention to literary-rhetorical clues. A brief look at some of the main points

from my analysis of Haggai will demonstrate how I arrived at the conclusion that all these prophets addressed the same community of Babylonian Exiles and then Repatriates, whom they accepted as the sole and the entire people of God.

The indications of exclusivism in the book of Haggai, though meager, may be seen most obviously in the book's references to the (Repatriate) leaders Zerubbabel and Joshua, together with the insistence on addressing the people as the Remnant (Hag 1:12, 14; 2:2 and 3). Indeed, I take the references to the remnant as subjective and relative terms, used by both communities to each argue for its exclusive *continuity* (see other references to the Babylonian Exiles/Repatriates in Isa 46:3; Zech 8:6, 11, 12). As mentioned above, I take these addresses as a telling indication of the book's orientation on questions of group identity, and on its arguing that the remnant is the community of the Repatriates.⁹ In addition, there are four contexts in which Haggai uses the rhetorical strategies of *entirety* and *continuity*, which reinforce a picture of an exclusive community: (a) Accumulation of several communal designations that refer to his hearers as the entire people (כל הגוי הזה, העם) כל עם הארץ מי בכם הנשאר, כל עם הארץ (Hag 1–2); Haggai's particular terminology for his group as עם הארץ כל עם (Hag 2:1–5; as also Zech 7:5) refers to the in-group and in this follows Ezekiel (עם הארץ, cf. Ezek 12:19), and differs from the utilizations in Ezra–Nehemiah, that delegitimize the out-group community of Those Who had Remained (as in Ezra 10:2, 11; 9:1, 2; Neh 9:30; 10:29).¹⁰ (b) Haggai's attitude towards Zerubbabel (Hag 2:20–23), which counters Jeremiah's stance vis-à-vis the line of Jehoiachin, but accords with that of Ezekiel (as in Ezek 17); (c) Haggai's conception of his prophetic role which enhances the distinction from Jeremiah; and in this approach to Jeremiah, Haggai differs from Zechariah.¹¹ Furthermore, (d) the connection between Hag 2:1–9 and Ezra 3:8–13 establishes a further indication that Haggai's audience is the entire community of Repatriates. Haggai also uses

⁹ In fact, over the 6th–5th centuries this conception has transformed according to the relationships of core-periphery, see Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 87–89.

¹⁰ I appreciate Kessler's detailed discussion of the terms עם הארץ and כל שארית העם in Haggai (see his review paper above). Kessler understood the usage of שארית העם as referring to all communities, all accepted as "survivors of the larger group of an earlier time, who have escaped the devastation of the larger whole" (p. 25). But, I do not see how Kessler's suggestion that the two phrases, עם הארץ and כל שארית העם, refer to all those engaged in agriculture in Yehud, be they from Those Who had Remained or Returnees (p. 24), may be taken as more substantial than my cautious assumption that Haggai carries forward the earlier, exclusive use of those terms.

¹¹ See Rom-Shiloni, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 76; and compare to J. Kessler, *The Book of Haggai: Prophecy and Society in Early Persian Yehud* (VTSup, 91; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 277–78.

annexation of past traditions, calling on the elders to “Remember!” the First Temple; and, by evoking the first covenant, he puts forward the Exodus as the model for the present (2:4–5). Hence, merely by utilizing these three strategies, without specifying an out-group in any way, Haggai articulates his own view of an exclusive (Repatriate) community. In all these, Haggai seems to follow Ezekiel, and Deutero-Isaiah, and to be in line with Zechariah—great advocates of the Babylonian Diaspora community and, upon their return, of the Repatriate community back in Yehud.

It is quite remarkable, and I believe both Kessler and I realized this a few years ago already, that we both read the same text in two opposite ways.¹² The ambiguity of the book is certainly related in part due to the lack of any expression of opposition to an out-group community in Haggai, to the usage of those ambiguous terms referring to the people as remnant, and also to the very vague social picture we may get from this short prophetic collection. Yet, in the lack of his personal kinship background, I do not see any positive argument to count Haggai as of Those Who had Remained. It appears that the major divide between Kessler and myself is that Kessler does not think that by the end of the 6th century this conflict was at all present. *Exclusive Inclusivity* was indeed aimed at substantiating that this conflict continued to be central to the Judean communities in Judah and primarily among the Babylonian Exiles and then the Repatriates over approximately 150 years, down to the early Restoration period.

IV. OPEN QUESTIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

With the special gratitude I felt reading the six reviews, I would like now to briefly discuss some of the questions raised by the reviewers and still left open for further research, on Jeremiah, on Ezekiel, and finally, on the corpus as a whole.

¹² On the methodological steps we each take, I accept Kessler’s criticism over my problematic grouping of Haggai and Zechariah, based on the book’s close connections to Zech 1–8. Kessler accentuated the many differences between the two prophets (and their books), which, of course, are valid distinctions. Therefore, I found myself returning to Kessler’s explanation on the usage of “functional equivalents” in Haggai based on Zechariah’s notion of the “former prophets” (Zech 1:4), that is on the assumed wish (shared by both books) to portray Haggai (as also Zechariah) as a “traditional” or “typical” Israelite prophet. In this very important aspect of the two books, Kessler has assumed that the books share the same rhetorical stance and usage as part of each book’s overall goal of “demonstrating the ongoing relevance of prophecy in the Persian period” (Kessler’s review, above, p. 24). I cannot agree more with this latter observation, and thus again raise the possibility that Haggai and Zechariah also share a similar group-identity orientation.

(1) Jeremiah: Leuchter offered an interesting observation on the book of Jeremiah, particularly on the scribal activity of the Jeremiah tradents who arrived in Babylon with the 587/586 deportation. He argued that those exilic scribes were influenced by Ezekiel; and yet they presumably did not absorb that prophet's extreme exclusivist perspective. For Leuchter, this is a sign of a different and more moderate approach among exilic scribes, which he defined as "exclusivity and continuity." On the side of those Jeremiah exilic scribes, this would have entailed adjustments to the developing ideology of the Jehoiachin Exiles which would have mitigated *against* the extremist rejection of the 597 Exiles and the scribes.

Leuchter's observation may add the missing link to which I referred in discussing the disjunction between Ezekiel's extreme exclusivist position, favoring the Jehoiachin Exiles, in difference from the redactional layers in Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah. These Babylonian voices (of prophets and redactors) address the Babylonian Exiles as a united group, indifferent to their time of deportation. Leuchter's suggestion for the study of the book of Jeremiah is intriguing, and certainly deserves further research.¹³ Could we substantiate the idea that as early as the arrival in Babylon of the 587/586 deportees, this more inclusive attitude stemmed from and developed among Jeremiah tradents/scribes?

(2) Ezekiel: I am delighted that Mein found "compelling" my suggestion that Ezekiel was the original constructor of the Babylonian exilic ideologies, and my work on Ezekiel "rather persuasive." Mein took my distinctions and pushed them further with other examples from Ezekiel, arguing that the strategy of defining as "foreign" Those Who had Remained might also operate in "Ezekiel's strategy of 'othering' Jerusalem," presented explicitly in Ezek 17, 20, 23, and implicitly in ch. 8.¹⁴

Mein further challenged me by arguing aptly that the picture in Ezekiel is not as clean as I tend to present. We agree that the prophet does not consider his Babylonian addressees to be righteous in themselves, and further concur about the importance of this observation. Mein's comment on the less consistent usage of **בית ישראל** throughout the book indeed deserves further study, and the suggestion that this usage might reflect either a less clear-cut terminological distinction, or more profound editorial work in the book, certainly requires further thought.¹⁵

¹³ I will not delve any deeper on Leuchter's suggestion to read Jer 24 and 29:16–20 with Jer 40:9–10. I did not find the suggestion that the figs are a unifying motif in those three passages convincing.

¹⁴ Mein points out that this same strategy of "othering" operates also in prophecies against the nations in Ezekiel, see Mein, above.

¹⁵ Yet, it deserves mention that out of the eighty-three occurrences of **בית ישראל** in Ezekiel, only seven seem to refer to the residents of Jerusalem (Ezek 6:11; 8: 6, 10, 11, 12; 11:5; 12:10); and six are ambiguous (4:4–5;

(3) Jeremiah and/versus Ezekiel: Sweeney called upon me to consider the different priestly backgrounds of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. This is plainly an important point, although I am still not certain of all of its implications for the study of Jeremiah.¹⁶ In my study of group-identity and exclusivity issues, I did not see indications of difference in priestly backgrounds reflected. But I thank Sweeney for raising this point as an important direction for further study.¹⁷

As I read the reviews, additional questions have arisen for me on the tensions between our literary sources and social reality, and I set them out here. Following Boda and Tiemeyer, what is the place that national and group identity issues capture among other points of conflict within Persian period biblical compositions? Where, indeed, should we locate Trito-Isaiah, Zech 9–14, and Malachi in sociological and ideological terms?

All the reviews clarified for me that there is still a lot to be done on the topic of Babylonian exilic ideologies. To specify some of the questions: What may additionally be said about the effect of the successive deportations on Babylonian exilic ideologies? What was the contribution of the Exiles of 586 to the construction of these ideologies? Were they accepted/included into the *golah* community by the Jehoiachin Exiles (in contradistinction to Ezekiel's expectations)? Did they (or others after them) develop a more inclusive Babylonian ideology (such as we presumably find in Deutero-Isaiah), that operated with conceptions of "exclusivity and continuity" (following Leuchter)?

9:9, along with *בית יהודה*; in 20:13 retrojecting to the past; 22:18–19; 35:15; 37:16); the other seventy occurrences clearly refer to the Babylonian Exiles.

¹⁶ It is certainly a challenging assignment to consider Jeremiah's references to priestly traditions and to try to locate his knowledge and perceptions in relation to Ezekiel and to priestly and Holiness Legislation pentateuchal materials. I have been giving these questions attention in several recent publications. See: D. Rom-Shiloni, "Ezekiel and Jeremiah: What Might Stand Behind the Silence?" *HBAI* 2 (2012), 203–30; idem, "How can you say, 'I am not defiled . . .?'" (Jeremiah 2:20–25): Allusions to Priestly Legal Traditions in the Poetry of Jeremiah," *JBL* 133 (2014), 757–75; idem, "On the Day I Freed Them from the Land of Egypt: A Non-Deuteronomistic Phrase within Jeremiah's Covenant Conception," *VT* 65 (2015), 621–47; idem, "Compositional Harmonization: Priestly and Deuteronomistic References in Jeremiah: An Earlier Stage of a Recognized Interpretive Technique," in J.C. Gertz et al. (eds.), *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America* (FAT, 111; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 913–42; idem, "The Forest and the Trees: The Place of Pentateuchal Materials in Prophecy as of the Late Seventh/Early Sixth Century BCE," in L.C. Jonker et al. (eds.), *Congress Volume Stellenbosch 2016* (VTSup 177; Leiden: Brill, 2017), 56–92.

¹⁷ On Jeremiah's political stance towards Babylon I am afraid I see things differently than Sweeney, and again this debate is beyond the scope of this discussion.

These questions and possibly many more require further study, and I am happy to note them here in the hope of inspiring others to address these fascinating topics.

V. A FINAL NOTE ON INCLUSIVITY AND EXCLUSIVITY

The hesitations raised by several of the reviewers concerning the plausibility of maintaining exclusivist perspectives in Yehud during the Restoration period are to at least a certain extent influenced by the modern western notion that exclusivist perspectives are not societally productive, and not socially “nice.” But, as with many other matters, I am afraid that these questions of plausibility are tricky; what might seem implausible or unlikely to us might have seemed quite normal (and normative) to the communities that produced our biblical writings.

I would like to broaden this point to explore a question that bothered me from very early on in my study: Why would each of these groups, led by prophets of God (Ezekiel for the Jehoiachin Exiles; Jeremiah for Those who had Remained; and then Deutero-Isaiah, Haggai, and Zechariah for the Repatriates), have chosen to re-establish their identities in such exclusivist ways? Since they had been divided by a *human* emperor, King Nebuchadrezzar II, and were forced by him either to walk all the way to Babylon or stay in their homeland, how did they lose their unifying sense of community? Subsequently, when those who had been forced away came back from exile, why could not the divided community regain their sense of unity as a people? Having been working on these texts for about a decade, I must confess that I have no good enough answer(s) to these questions. From my modern Jewish perspective, this was clearly an unnecessary separation, a terrible internal conflict; a very sorrowful era in Jewish history. The profound difference between what appears in HB texts and twentieth- and twenty-first-century conceptions of what is called “Israel and Diaspora relationships” caused me to open my scholarly study with a family story. As I explicitly noted (in the Preface), there is nothing special about this personal history—on the contrary, this is the story of many thousands of Jewish families worldwide during the twentieth century. The one common denominator Jews currently share, whether they live in Israel or in the Diaspora is the sense that we are one nation, united by history, religion, the Tanakh, the long history of Jewish literature, and the Hebrew language. We can disagree on most of our very basic conceptions (not to mention on political issues. . .), but we do recognize the fact that “we are kinsmen” אֲנָשִׁים אַחִים אֲנַחְנוּ (Gen 13:8).

Throughout this study I was intrigued by these recognizable differences between the ideas expressed in the ancient texts and our modern perceptions of Jewish identity; and with that I allowed myself to do what I love most, to enjoy the ancient texts, to let them speak and themselves reveal the components by which each of the compositions studied have framed their group identity. I am

thus afraid that our modern, liberal, inclusive tendencies may skew our “objective” perspectives on our texts. Nothing in these sixth–fifth-centuries BCE struggles, as represented in our texts, was in line with a twenty-first-century conception of social necessity or logic.

The most likely suggestion I have as to the motivation for these exclusive tendencies, whether explicitly expressed or implicit, is the constant ideological necessity to reformulate the common traditional conceptions of Land and of exile, of the covenant with God, and of the national heritage, in response to the catastrophic loss of Land and Temple, and the newly diverse social conditions faced by the two surviving, separated Judean communities. Under the dramatic circumstances of the 6th–5th centuries BCE, each of these two Judean communities had to establish with certainty, in the face of potential theological arguments to the contrary, the identity of its own community as the people of God, the sole inheritors of that privileged relationship and the history of the people of Israel.