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**GARY N. KNOPPERS (ED.), CHRONICLES AND THE
CHRONICLER. A RESPONSE TO I. KALIMI, AN
ANCIENT ISRAELITE HISTORIAN: STUDIES IN THE
CHRONICLER, HIS TIME, PLACE, AND WRITING**

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A RESPONSE TO I. KALIMI,
*AN ANCIENT ISRAELITE HISTORIAN: STUDIES IN
THE CHRONICLER, HIS TIME, PLACE, AND
WRITING***

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INTRODUCTION

GARY N. KNOPPERS, GUEST EDITOR
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It is a pleasure for me as a guest editor to introduce the following discussion of Isaac Kalimi's *An Ancient Israelite Historian: Studies in the Chronicler, His Time, Place, and Writing* (Studia Semitica Neerlandica, 46; Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2005). A special session of the Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah section of the November 2004 Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting was dedicated to honoring and evaluating this recently published book. The chair of the Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah section of the Society of Biblical Literature Professor Melody Knowles (of McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago) is to be thanked for all of her work in organizing this special symposium.

At the time of the special session in November 2004, the respondents were working from proofs of the book. Happily, the book appeared in its final published form a few months later, in 2005. I wish to thank each of the respondents: Professor Ehud Ben Zvi of the University of Alberta (Edmonton), Professor Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. of North Park Theological Seminary (Chicago), Professor Ralph W. Klein of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and Professor Mark A. Throntveit of Luther Seminary (St. Paul) for their willingness to publish their responses in the *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*. I also served as one of the respondents and my comments are included below. Finally, I would like to thank Professor Isaac Kalimi of Northwestern University (Evanston) for his extensive commentary on the respondents' comments.

Readers should be aware that the following responses were originally given in an oral setting. As a guest editor, I did not ask the respondents to convert their works into formal reviews. This means that the responses still retain some of the stylistic characteristics of reviews delivered in an originally oral setting. Respondents were allowed to add any footnotes they deemed necessary for readers to understand the flow of their evaluations, but the decision whether to do so was left to the discretion of the individual respondents.

One of the advantages to electronic publication is that it furnishes scholars with the opportunity to expand on certain reflections that they

could only deliver in a partial or summary form within the very limited temporal confines of an academic meeting. In the case of Professor Kalimi, he has been able to convey in much greater detail in the present context of publication in the *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* his reactions to the individual papers than he was able to at the meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in November 2005. In this respect, his extensive response to the respondents is, to no small extent, an essay created for publication in the *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*. His work includes a series of footnotes, helpfully referring readers to the relevant sections of his new book, as well as to his other publications.

I wish to thank the editor of the *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*, Professor Ehud Ben Zvi for his generosity in publishing this collection of reviews and the response to those reviews by Professor Kalimi. Ehud's tireless efforts to promote a productive scholarly dialogue within the guild are to be applauded and commended.

In concluding, I think that I can speak for all of the respondents and for the author as well in saying that we hope that the following discussion will be conducive to further study of the book of Chronicles and its important place within biblical thought.

COMMENTS

EHUD BEN ZVI
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1. INTRODUCTION

Isaac Kalimi has contributed much to the study of Chronicles and to the present awareness of the sophisticated literary craft that characterizes the book. I enjoyed reading this book, and it certainly made me to think about many core matters associated with Chronicles. All in all, this is an excellent volume, and a must read for scholars of Chronicles.

The volume includes two sections of uneven length. The first one deals with the characterization of the Chronicler, his date and his use of paronomasia. In other words, it focuses on the Chronicler. The second section focuses on Jerusalem in the book of Chronicles, and could have been set as an independent monograph. Yet, Jerusalem was the geographical and ideological location of the Chronicler, and as such Jerusalem is part and parcel of Chronicler's world and worldview.

This book consists in the main of revised versions of published material. This observation is not meant in any way to lessen its importance. In fact, a qualitative change occurs when all these originally separate works are put together in one book: links are forged, arguments made in one chapter directly relate to, and very often support others made in other chapters and *vice versa*, a fuller picture of some issues is developed, and the like. The result is that the reader of the book can now understand Kalimi's positions and their implications for the study of Chronicles much better.

2. COMMENTS

I am very thankful to Isaac Kalimi for his work on Chronicler and I think that those who study this book owe him a debt of gratitude. This book is a major achievement. This is also a book that invites a larger conversation. I would like to contribute to it by raising a few issues that seem to me of larger relevance and which may deserve further discussion.

2.1 BETWEEN ACTUAL AND IMPLIED AUTHORS

Kalimi certainly refers to the actual, historical, flesh and blood author of Chronicles. This is his Chronicler. He is certainly not alone in this regard, but he characterizes this author on the basis of the text. For instance, he writes:

... *the main literary nature* of Chronicles is neither midrashic, nor exegetic, nor theologic. Therefore, to label the Chronicler as “Midrashist,” “exegete,” or “theologian,” as some scholars have, is inaccurate (p. 10).

Indeed, a careful study of [the book of] Chronicles reveals that we are dealing with historiography, and so its composer—the Chronicler—should be considered first and foremost as a historian (p. 30).

Kalimi is talking about the flesh and blood, actual author of Chronicles, but is he not referring here to the implied author instead? Does Kalimi assume that whatever one can learn about the implied author directly applies to the actual author? If so, some explanation is warranted. And in any case, why the emphasis on the actual author if most of which one can learn about him actually refers to the implied author? What is at stake?

2.2 ON HISTORIOGRAPHY, ANCIENT HISTORIANS, AND RELIABILITY OF TEXTS AND HISTORICAL SOURCES

Kalimi places much emphasis on the characterization of Chronicles as a historiographical work and on the Chronicler as a historian. Not many scholars today would disagree with him on this regard whether they refer to the actual or implied author of the book by the term the Chronicler. A far more contentious issue, however, is that despite numerous caveats, Kalimi seems to claim that a historian cannot be accurately described as a midrashist or a theologian, in addition to being a historian. I wonder what the meaning of the term accurate might be in this context. To illustrate, a person may be both a biblical scholar and a parent, another may be both a chemist and a violinist, and a third one a sociologist and a politician. In which sense would it be inaccurate to label such people biblical scholar, parent, chemist, violinist, sociologist or politician? Should the term accurate be understood as pointing exclusively to attributes that refer to the totality of a person, and if so which would these be?

Perhaps, accurate inaccurately signifies here that the attribute so characterized is the main and defining one of its bearer. But even if this is the case, certain considerations arise. Certainly historiographical works in the Hebrew Bible could and did include midrashic elements and expressed

theological considerations and worldviews, as the book of Chronicles clearly demonstrates. In fact, in the case of Chronicles all these supposedly separate hats are carefully integrated: The intended readers of the book were asked to construe the implied author of the book as a person interested and conveying theological messages and as an exegete who is advancing the proper meaning of various authoritative texts, and who does so within the frame of a narrative about Israel's past. In fact, all these sharp differentiations between ancient Israelite historian, theologian, exegete, midrashist would not have made much sense within the discourse and world of knowledge of the authorship and primary readership of the book. They are more telling of us than of them.

(It bears noting that given that those who wrote and read constructions of the past in ancient Israel were convinced of the existence of YHWH and of the deity's ability to cause events to happen as well as of its interest in Israel, a history of an ancient Israel in which YHWH would play no role would be from their perspective either obviously false or an expression of a literary/rhetorical stratagem. The same holds true, of course, for other cultures in ancient Near East. But if a narration of past events is likely to relate to the/a deity/deities actions and wills, then these works are likely in one way or another to communicate a theology. One has to keep in mind that rather than historicity in our terms, the crucial concept for a study of mimetic writing in ancient Israel is the concept of perceived referentiality, that is, of whether the past that a text constructed was believed by the target readerships to be a truthful or believable reflection of past events, within their own discourses and their own understandings of truthful and believable.)

I wonder whether Kalimi's strong emphasis on the characterization of the Chronicler as (first and foremost) a historian and of the Chronicler's work as a history is grounded on questions of historicity in our terms, and above all a *residual* sense that whether the book is classified as, or even better, *solely* as history has an impact on its perceived value as a historical source. In fact, he explicitly writes,

The characterization of the Chronicler and his work has direct implications not only for the understanding of the nature of the book and its content but also for the scholar's assessment of the reliability of the information contained within Chronicles and hence for the book's usefulness as a historical source for the history of Israel in the monarchic era (p. 20).

Just because Chronicler is an example of a national¹ history—which it obviously is, it does not follow that it is necessarily a useful source for the history of Israel in the monarchic era. Joshua and Judges belong to the Deuteronomistic collection, which is another national history, but very few contemporary, critical scholars would consider them as useful sources for the historical reconstruction of the periods they portray. Kalimi himself correctly (in my opinion) maintains that:

...[i]t should be emphasized that these features [those that led Kalimi to consider the author of Chronicles a historian and his work late biblical historiography; EBZ] *do not* automatically make the book of Chronicles a reliable historical composition, or its author a “scientific historian,” such as Thucydides Each case should be evaluated in its own merits (pp. 32-33; italics in the original; on Thucydides see below)

... even if one considers the book [i.e., Chronicles] as “bad history” (that is, as presenting inaccurate information), it is still historiographical in intent and literary nature (p. 33).

But if so, I fail to see how the classification of the work as history may serve as a criterion for a scholar’s assessment of the reliability of the information contained within Chronicles and hence for the book’s usefulness as a historical source for the history of Israel in the monarchic era.

The general question of who was a historian in antiquity or even in ancient Israel alone, and to be more precise, what distinguishes an historiographical narrative from a fictional narrative in antiquity (or if one wishes to narrow the topic, the historiographical repertoire of Persian Yehud) is quite complex, and probably it could not have been discussed in full in this monograph. Yet, it is worth noting that Kalimi explicitly states that an ancient historian would have understood himself as “a narrator/storyteller of past events” (p. 31). A number of questions arise if one accepts this self-definition and relates it to the attribute historian in our own terms. For instance, the narrator of Esther or Judith also claims to refer to past events. If self-identification as a narrator of past events qualifies someone as a historian then what about these books? Moreover, why social memories must be told only in narrative style? What about references to a long sequence of the past events in poetic style (Ps 106)? I would suggest and I tend to think that Kalimi would agree that additional

¹ Of course, the term “national” is not used here in relation to the modern or contemporary notion/s of “nation.”

criteria other than the self-perception of the narrator/author as a story teller of past events must be taken into account in any attempt to define the genre “ancient historiographical work.”

It bears noting that the significance of Kalimi’s substantial contributions to the study of the literary techniques at use in *Chronicles* and the point that he makes that the *Chronicler* is a “creative artist with a variegated range of literary and historiographical talents” (p. 36) are by no means restricted to their potential contribution to *Chronicles*’ historical credibility or lack thereof. In fact, I am not sure that they contribute much to that question, beyond the obvious. I am reminded of the recent press release of AP (Nov. 10, 2004, 10:53 P.M. ET) concerning the death of Iris Chang, who wrote about the Japanese occupation of China and of the history of Chinese immigrants in the United States. It read, “[t]he late historian Stephen Ambrose described Chang as ‘may be the best historian we’ve got. She understands that to communicate history, you’ve got to tell the story in an interesting way.’”² Whether we agree with that concept of history or not, certainly in the ancient world, histories were written to be interesting, and used numerous literary devices to achieve that goal. Historians were sophisticated writers. Of course, these considerations bear relevance to discussions about the ways in which the periods, events and characters portrayed in historiographical narratives may or may not be used for historical reconstructions.

It is worth remembering in this regard that Kalimi raises the example of Thucydides as a “scientific historian” (pp. 32-33), whose work serves as a stark contrast to the ways of *Chronicler*. Even if both are historians, the former was a “scientific historian,” the latter, certainly not. Of course, no one would doubt that there are substantial differences between the two. But at the same time, it is worth stressing that the case for Thucydides whom Kalimi and many others portray as a “scientific historian” and therefore implicitly as some kind of *ancient* paragon of historical reliability has become more and more debated. W. R. Connor, for one, writes “[w]e have now almost stopped talking about Thucydides as a ‘scientific historian.’”³ The

² The quotation from S. Ambrose and the entire news release are available online in the archives of media organizations. See, for instance, http://www.usatoday.com/life/people/2004-11-10-chang-obit_x.htm, <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6456679/>

See also <http://faculty.washington.edu/kendo/iris.html>

³ W. R. Connor, “Narrative Discourse in Thucydides,” M. H. Jameson (ed.), *The Greek Historians. Literature and History. Papers Presented to A. E. Raubitschek* (Dept. of

ability of Thucydides' writing to convince many readers—including modern ones—of the veracity of his account is not necessarily related to its higher degree of "historicity." Instead it tends to be explained, at least by some scholars, in terms of narrative features and strategies, use or lack of use of genre conventions and the like.⁴

My point is certainly not to suggest that Kalimi should have devoted a large section of his book to Thucydides, but that some reference to these debates is warranted, for they carry implications for the study of ancient Israelite (Yehudite?) historiography, and directly bear on the issue of the historical reliability—in our sense of the term—of ancient historiographical sources. A passing reference elsewhere in the volume raises similar issues, though this time it relates to a very different corpus of texts and historical circumstance. Kalimi writes in passing,

Indeed, due to the admirable personality of Cyrus on the one hand and the great antagonism that Nabonidus caused on the other, Babylon did not fall in war ... (p. 149).

Kalimi here, as many others before him, reflects a pro-Achaemenid version of the events, the character of Cyrus, and an associated denigration of that of Nabonidus. Certainly, there are ancient sources that construed, supported and propagated this image, but does this version reflect the "historical reality" of the events? There are now considerable doubts.⁵ But if Kuhrt is correct, what does this say about the reliability of the information contained in these sources and hence for their usefulness as a historical source for the history of Persia and Babylonia (to paraphrase Kalimi; cf. p. 20)?

In sum, it seems to me that questions concerning historicity, the usefulness of constructions of the pasts in ancient times as historical sources for the circumstances, people, and events that they portray, as well

Classics, Stanford University; Saratoga, CA: ANMA Libri; 1985), 1-17; citation from p. 2.

⁴ See, for instance, both the chapter by W. R. Connors mentioned above and P. Robinson, "Why Do We Believe Thucydides? A Comment on W. R. Connor's 'Narrative Discourse in Thucydides,'" *The Greek Historians*, pp. 19-23. On these matters see also M. Grant, *Greek & Roman Historians: Information and Misinformation* (London & New York: Routledge, 1995), and esp. pp. 34-36. (Collingwood's, well-known critical evaluation of Thucydides' approach is also worth keeping in mind.)

⁵ See A. Kuhrt, "Nabonidus and the Babylonian Priesthood," M. Beard and J. North (eds.), *Pagan Priests. Religion and Power in the Ancient World* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1990), 119-55.

as inherently related issues of genres, literary and rhetorical resources used by ancient historians, and particularly in the case of Chronicles the integrative and interwoven character in which appear in the book what we today may call history, theology, exegesis are all a bit more complex than what seems to transpire in this volume. To be fair, it might be claimed that this book is not particularly suited to address these general questions in a comprehensive manner, but, this said, one cannot but notice that these issues have some bearing on assumptions present in, or claims advanced in the volume. Perhaps Kalimi would be willing to write a new monograph to address these general issues in a comprehensive way. If this is the case, I, for one, would be looking forward to reading it.

2.3 ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF TWO HISTORIES WITHIN THE SAME COMMUNITY

I agree with Kalimi that “the Chronicler’s description of Israelite history in the monarchic era is not intended to replace earlier historical writings” (p. 36), but I would have preferred if he would discuss the implications of the presence and acceptance of *two* different histories within one single community of readers. What was and could be different? What was not and could not be different? What implications about social memory in Yehud can we draw from the fact that two stories of the past, at times contradictory, were held to be simultaneously true. Sure, these are my type of questions, but as conversation partner of Kalimi, I would have liked him to address them. What does he think of these questions?

2.4 ON CHRONICLES AND EZRA-NEHEMIAH

Kalimi maintains that Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah “should be considered as two distinct pieces composed by different authors, the latter having been written prior to the former” (p. 145; see also pp. 54-56). There is no doubt in my mind that Kalimi, and many others, are absolutely correct on the matter of the different authorship, but which book is earlier than the other might be an issue more difficult to adjudicate. It is not only that recent studies have suggested a relatively late (post-Achaemenid) date for Ezra-Nehemiah at least in its final form, but also one of particular textual relations and their significance.

To illustrate, Kalimi noticed elsewhere that there is a clear textual relationship between the prayer of Solomon in Kings, in Second Chronicles,

and that of Nehemiah in the book of Ezra-Nehemiah.⁶ (It is worth stressing that Kalimi does not refer to the book of Nehemiah, or to any of its proposed precursors/sources, but rather to Ezra-Nehemiah, see p. 145 and also pp. 54-56.)

In 1 Kgs 8:52 one reads, **לְהִיּוֹת עֵינֶיךָ פְּתֻחוֹת אֶל־תַּחֲנֹת עַבְדְּךָ** – “Let your eyes be open to the plea of your servant” (NRSV).

In 2 Chr 6:40 **יְהִי־נָא עֵינֶיךָ פְּתֻחוֹת וְאָזְנֶיךָ קְשׁוּבוֹת לְתַפִּלַּת הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה** – “Let your eyes be open and your ears attentive to prayer from this place” (NRSV).

In Neh 1:6,

תְּהִי נָא אָזְנוֹךָ־קְשׁוּבָה וְעֵינֶיךָ פְּתוּחוֹת לִשְׁמַע אֶל־תַּפִּלַּת עַבְדְּךָ – “Let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer of your servant” (NRSV).

In principle, the relation of textual dependence between Chronicles and Nehemiah in this particular case can go either way. One can certainly imagine that the author of Nehemiah attempted to associate his hero to some Solomonic images and used the two texts (Kings and Chronicles) that were available to this writer. Of course, if Chronicles is later than Nehemiah as Kalimi maintains, then the direction of dependence must go the other way. If the latter is the case (that is, the author of Chronicles added Nehemianic characteristics to Solomon that were not present in Kings), then it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Chronicler looked very favorably on the figure of Nehemiah—in fact, it has to be seen as a type of hero for this writers—and, indirectly, on the book of Ezra-Nehemiah. But is this likely? Chronicles clearly advances positions opposite to Ezra-Nehemiah on such a central theme as marriages with non-Israelites.⁷ Kalimi, himself, points at a number of significant ideological differences between the two works.

2.5 ON THE CONCLUSION OF THE BOOK OF CHRONICLES

I agree with Kalimi that the decree of Cyrus is not an addendum to Chronicles; certainly it is not an addendum to the book in present form and with some aspects of his discussion there. I would like to focus on two of

⁶ See I. Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 129-30.

⁷ On Chronicles’s position on “mixed” marriages see G. N. Knoppers, “Intermarriage, Social Complexity and Ethnic Diversity in the Genealogy of Judah,” *JBL* 120 (2001) 15-30; A. Labahn and E. Ben Zvi, “Observations on Women in the Genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1--9,” *Bib* 84 (2003) 457-78.

his claims that could be explored further and consequently modified. According to Kalimi, the very ending of the book

מִי־בָכֶם מִכָּל־עַמּוֹ יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו עִמּוֹ וְיָעֵל “Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him! Let him go up” (NRSV) in 2 Chr 36:23 represents a call for immigration to Judah/Israel. The Chronicler wished to conclude the book with such a call, due to the lack of population in Jerusalem/Yehud in his days. Kalimi also maintains that the last sentence in the version of the decree in Ezra 1:4 with its reference to those who remain behind was not included because “[t]he Chronicler probably considers this [that is, the existence of people who remained in Babylon] as a disgraceful situation, and therefore also an inappropriate conclusion to his work” (p. 153).

To be sure, the idea of full return from exile was a very substantial element in the social and ideological constructions of utopias by the Jerusalemite literati and is reflected in much of the Hebrew Bible. This is certainly the case in prophetic literature. This conceptual element is significantly often related to that of the re-unification of Judah and Israel, often under a Davidide. I have no doubt also that from this perspective the very existence of diaspora, the separation between Judah and Israel, and the lack of a Davidide are a disgrace that at some point in the future will be removed. Chronicles shares with many other texts such a hope.⁸ But the main focus of Chronicles is not on fulfilling utopia or hopes for a far distant future.

Moreover, Jerusalemite readers of the book during the Achaemenid or early Hellenistic period knew all too well that many of Israel did listen to Cyrus’ suggestion and did not immigrate, even if according to the text they certainly could. The ending of the book is both an implied call for immigration and at the same time a strong reminder of a choice that already took place, of a choice that within the Chronicler’s ideology must have been associated with the will of the deity and which was as inexplicable as that of the secession of the kingdom, which is directly grounded in that will. As such, I do not see why the readers of Chronicles would think that people during their days would be influenced by the call of the Chronicler when

⁸ One may note that in 2 Chr 6:36-40 the Israelites, who are taken into captivity and exiled to nearby or faraway lands because of their sins. In exile they repent, pray in the direction of “the land” in general and Jerusalem in particular, and towards or through the Temple. The text concludes with an expression of hope that YHWH will forgive and, one assumes, restore them from exile. The text certainly conveys a sense that being outside “the land” is in itself a punishment,

they rejected that of Cyrus. I tend to think that Chronicles assumes that (a) all Israel will come back one day to Jerusalem/Judah, but (b) human hopes aside, this will happen when YHWH decides that it be so. Till this day, within the discourse of Chronicles and much of the prophetic literature, there is not much real hope for a removal of the disgrace of exile or related disgraces for that matter,

To be sure, Chronicles marginalizes those who remained outside the land, but there is more than a sense of disgrace about their choice. The text communicates a sense of total exclusion from the implied narrative of reconstruction. They are not mentioned as potential donors of goods or the like to be sent for the sake of building the temple. The builders of the temple, the community and above all those who continue to develop the sacral history of Israel are according to Chronicles those in the land. In the large, inner-Yehudite debate about the possible roles of non-Yehudite worshipers of the Israelite deity in Jerusalem/Yehud, the Chronicler stakes a clear position.⁹ In sum, concerning most of these issues, Kalimi is on the right track but in my opinion one is to walk further in that track. I would like to invite him to do so.

3. IN SUM

All in all, and notwithstanding the all-too-expected differences of opinion and approach here and there, I would like to conclude by emphasizing both Kalimi's great contribution to the study of Chronicles through the years and the particular importance of this volume. The fact that the latter raises all these types of issues—and many more—certainly attests to its value. As I conclude these comments, I am looking forward to reading the author's responses. But I am looking forward to more than that. I am looking forward to hearing Kalimi's voice on Chronicles for many years to come, and to keep learning from his contributions.

⁹ I discussed these matters at some length in my chapter, "Ideological Constructions of Non-Yehudite/Peripheral Israel in Achaemenid Yehud: The Case of the Book of Chronicles," originally a paper presented at the 2004 meeting of the European Seminar for Historical Methodology," and forthcoming in a revised version in E. Ben Zvi, *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles* (London: Equinox, forthcoming 2006).

COMMENTS

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What may one say about someone who devotes nearly two decades of his life to the study of Chronicles? Several words come immediately to mind—some complimentary and some not. With this volume, Professor Kalimi—always the eager, diligent miner seeking precious nuggets with his shining scholarly headlamp—displays his most recent discoveries from the rich, complex literary mother lode that is Chronicles. His book presents seven of his earlier studies, in updated and expanded form, and debuts two previously unpublished ones. His purpose is clear: to isolate the most likely date and historical setting of the Chronicler in order to understand more precisely the book's message for that day. To that end, the three chapters of Part I argue for a probable date of composition in the early fourth century B.C.E., identify the Chronicler's setting as Jerusalem, and review his clever use of paronomasia. The final seven chapters of Part II explore the topic of Jerusalem in the Chronistic Writing by comparing Chronicles with other biblical and post-biblical writings. As with my co-respondents, my remarks aim to assess Kalimi's work and to stimulate discussion both of his views and of the Chronicles literature itself. At the very outset of my discussion, I assure the author that I come not to bury him but to appraise him.

There is, indeed, much to praise in this book. The gathering into one place and the revision of articles otherwise scattered in various scholarly venues performs a genuine service. The author's detailed study of the book (for example, his careful analysis of the Chronicler's paronomasia in chapter three), and his comparison of Chronicles with all kinds of ancient sources are especially noteworthy. My one minor quibble with the word-play chapter is Kalimi's narrow definition of paronomasia. He limits it to puns between words with similar roots or consonantal sounds but with differing meanings (p. 67), whereas I prefer a broader definition, one along the lines of Jack Sasson's taxonomy in his article on word play in the Interpreter's

Bible Supplementary Volume. The latter distinguishes between visual and oral wordplay and includes other wordplay phenomena that Kalimi's definition excludes (e.g., assonance, onomatopoeia, etc.). One wonders whether pursuit of "wordplay" in a broad sense—or, at least, one that distinguishes "puns on roots" from "plays on sounds"—might have yielded more raw ore from which to assay additional precious nuggets of paronomasia in Chronicles.

As a teacher, I commend Kalimi for using chapter summaries to great effect, teasing out his main points that might otherwise be missed amid the thicket of textual and historical details. I also applaud his methodology of treating Chronicles, not as a free-floating, rootless piece of literature, but as a writing that arose in a setting, gave voice to the writer's passionate beliefs, and addressed an audience—as it still does. Also, the book offers the reader many "ah-ha" moments, that is, memorable, captivating insights. As a "canon critic" myself, I was struck (and even tentatively persuaded) by his suggestion that the rabbis made Chronicles the last book in order to end the canon on a positive, if not "Zionistic," note—a move perhaps aimed at encouraging Jews who had suffered the terrible events of 70 C.E. (pp. 156-57).

Finally, I find the evidence that he marshals (chapter 2) to defend his proposed date for the book in the Persian (as opposed to the Hellenistic) period persuasive. But, if I read him correctly, one important pillar in his argument needs shoring up. Concerning the number of generations after Zerubbabel (1 Chr. 3), Kalimi prefers the Masoretic Text (that is, six generations) over the Septuagint (that is, eleven). But the rationale for that preference is not clear (at least not to me, anyway) and its absence undermines his otherwise persuasive case (pp. 56-59). If I may venture a thought of my own, the proximate location of the LXX translators and the Akabia tomb suggests a possible explanation for the Septuagint's larger number. If the Alexandrian tomb were familiar to the translators, and if they identified Akabia with Akkub of 1 Chronicles 3:24, those assumptions might have led them to extend their list to eleven descendants. If so, that number would say more about the date of LXX Chronicles than it does about the Masoretic Text.

This leads me to move from praise to appraisal—to identify areas worthy of discussion, if not of dispute. Given the limits of space, I limit myself to three items and one wild concluding reflection. The first item concerns Kalimi's definition of Chronicles as historiography—more specifically, late biblical historiography (p. 39; cf. p. 10)—and the Chronicler as an historian. I concur with Kalimi that interpretations of the

Chronicler as midrashist, exegete, and theologian fail to capture fully the heart of the matter—in my view, the question of the book’s genre. I am also in sympathy with his contention that Chronicles “represents the principle of ‘each generation with its own historiography’”—that is, that its message targets “a different time, place and audience” from those of earlier historiographic works (p. 37). Kalimi rightly stresses the Chronicler’s creative use of his varied biblical and Israelite sources, but my question is, what *kind* of historiography does the book present? A brief comparison with Herodotus, a chronological contemporary of the Chronicler, may be helpful here. Herodotus also uses sources, occasionally presenting their differing reports on an incident or differing interpretations, and occasionally voicing his own opinion on the matter. But, unlike the Chronicler’s preoccupation with biblical sources, he draws on both Greek and non-Greek sources, often speaks in the first (not the third) person, and seems not to conflate, alter, or reword them. John Marincola insightfully describes his history as more of a “natural history” than a typical history.

This brief comparison helps us see the nature of the Chronicler’s historiography. With Kalimi, I may reject Van Setters’ characterization of Chronicles as “plagiarism” (p. 36), but I still wonder what genre label describes a “history” whose contents virtually repeat its sources verbatim without admitting it and whose author freely conflates, alters, supplements, and rewrites his sources, again without giving notice. In my view, an apparently unique approach is at work here, one unlike that of Herodotus and ordinary modern history-writing. I am struck by how the Chronicler’s method compares to the phenomenon of “inner-biblical exegesis” and wonder whether one might describe his historiography as inner-biblical exegesis, but one that is exercised on a vast scale. In my view, to describe Chronicles simply as “historiography” seems not to reckon adequately with the book’s literary form—or, at least, that some discussion as to the kind of history present is in order.

The second area for discussion concerns two specific texts that I would read differently from Kalimi. The first is the problematic 1 Chronicles 11:6, whose reworking of 2 Samuel 5:8 Kalimi ably dissects (pp. 95-103). I am less persuaded, however, by his case against the historical reliability of the text (pp. 104-7). The evidence he presents of a contradiction—for example, that Joab already was chief of David’s army (2 Sam. 2 and 3), rather than that he earned the post by conquering Jerusalem (1 Chr 11:6)—in my view may be read differently. In context, the 2 Samuel texts concern David’s army as King of Judah, whereas 1 Chronicles 11:6 follows David’s coronation by all Israel and, hence, concerns the army of

united Israel. The Chronicler's account seems simply to conflate the two phases of 2 Samuel 2 and 5 and seeks—as Kalimi rightly avers—to clarify his obscure *Vorlage* (p. 100). If so, in my view, the claim of contradiction loses some of its force.

Second, in his interpretation of the book's ending (2 Chr 36:22-23), Kalimi argues (convincingly, I think) that the ending is original to the book and comprises a fragmentary form of the Hebrew citation of Cyrus' decree in Ezra 1 (pp. 143-53). A comparison of the two highlights Temple rebuilding as the centerpiece for the Chronicler and his several omissions, especially the closing provision that non-returnees be given supplies for the Temple by their neighbors. Thus, Chronicles ends, not with the "disgraceful" mention of non-returnees (Kalimi's term, p. 153) but with the command, "So, let him go up!" — in Kalimi's view, a possible call for immigration by Jewish communities in Babylon and Egypt. Kalimi regards this ending as "a comforting royal decree from the king of Persia, which enables a new 'exodus' and re-creation of a better future" (p. 155). That the decree fulfills various prophecies gives the call added weight.

Alas, here the proverbial risky limb beckons me to propose an alternative. While Kalimi's view is certainly possible, it strikes me as odd that, to my knowledge, nothing in Chronicles anticipates this immigration theme (certainly not 2 Chr. 30:9 as Kalimi claims [p. 153, n. 40]). The book's stress on proper cultic worship would seem more consistent with a call for diaspora Jews to *worship* in Jerusalem rather than to *emigrate* there. Since the Temple already stood completed, the crux of the matter concerns the use of the Temple as the rationale for return. Is the argument, "The Temple has been rebuilt, so come back here to live?" Or: "The Temple has been rebuilt, so come here to worship?" Certainty eludes us, of course, but for the purpose of discussion I suggest that the concluding "So, let him go up!" marks not a call for immigration but a call for pilgrimage—that is, not to repopulate the Temple-City but to frequent the Temple's courts.

Finally, I offer a wild concluding reflection. Kalimi makes much of the contrast between the Chronicler's "realistic" view of Jerusalem over against the idealistic, utopian, and eschatological view of the prophets and post-biblical writings. But my muse lures me to wonder whether the Chronicler's view is in the end just as idealistic and utopian, albeit in a more subtle way. Are not the David and Jerusalem of his history just as much a fantasy—a city of long ago that no longer exists presided over by a revered king whose dynasty no longer is in power? Is the real question not whether the Chronicler's view is realistic or idealistic but why he thought that that fantasy had the power to inspire hope in his audience?

What may one say about someone who devotes nearly two decades of his life to the study of Chronicles? Several words come immediately to mind—some complimentary and some not. I recall Peter Craigie's comment concerning Mitchell Dahood's now-infamous habit of reading Hebrew as if it were Ugaritic: if only a few of Dahood's comparisons prove true, he said, those few make his efforts worthwhile. The same is true of the Kalimi volume reviewed here: however many of his interpretations one assays as genuine, those surviving nuggets are invaluable. But surely there are many, and even the rest serve us well by stimulating us to join Kalimi in mining that rich theological, historical, and literary mother lode called Chronicles.

COMMENTS

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For more than twenty years Isaac Kalimi has issued a steady stream of publications on Chronicles, including a number of oral presentations in this vibrant section of the SBL. All of us have profited enormously from his Classified Bibliography published almost fifteen years ago. Now he has topped off this record with two monographs: 1. *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*, previously published in earlier, shorter and quite different editions in both German and Hebrew; and 2. the book under review in this session: *An Ancient Israelite Historian. Studies in the Chronicler: His Time, Place and Writing*. I want to congratulate Isaac for his insight and industry and thank him publicly for what we all have learned from him about this fascinating author we call the Chronicler.

The volume to which we are responding consists of nine chapters or essays, seven of which have been published previously, in fact within the last decade in some form, although Kalimi assures us all of these have been expanded, corrected, and brought up to date. He adopts centrist, mainstream positions, widely held by scholars, particularly in North America. He identifies Chronicles as a work distinct from Ezra and Nehemiah, largely free of secondary passages, and dated to the first quarter of the fourth century B.C.E. I would only comment here that some of these conclusions need to be stated with a bit more nuance. His most definitive data for dating Chronicles to the first quarter of the fourth century is the genealogy of the Davidides in 1 Chronicles 3 (pp. 56-59). I wish he had stated more explicitly that a *terminus a quo* is also provided by the completion of the present book of Ezra-Nehemiah, which the Chronicler seems to presuppose in his citation of Ezra 1 in 2 Chr 36:22-23 and in his citation of verses from Nehemiah 11 in 1 Chronicles 9.

Part I of this volume deals with the Chronicler's time and place and the characteristics of his writing; Part II of this volume deals in a variety of

ways with the Chronicler's place, namely, Jerusalem. Each essay is copiously documented with bibliographical references, well-organized, and ends with a clear summary/conclusion. A chapter on the uses of puns or paronomasia expands slightly on his previous publications in this area, but would seem to me more appropriate for his other volume mentioned above that deals with the literary devices utilized by the Chronicler.

The first essay in the volume under review deals with the Chronicler as historian and begins with the following questions every reader faces: "Was [this literary composition] meant to be fiction or history, literary narrative or historical novel, commentary or theology?" (p. 19) A few lines later we are told that the characterization of the Chronicler and his work has direct implications not only for the understanding of the nature of the book and its content but also for the scholar's assessment of the reliability of the information contained within *Chronicles* and hence for the book's usefulness as a historical source for the history of the Israel in the monarchic era.

Kalimi then criticizes three alternate proposals: the Chronicler as midrashist (Julius Wellhausen), the Chronicler as an exegete (Thomas Willi), and the Chronicler as theologian (Peter Ackroyd, Richard Coggins, and William Johnstone). I find myself in substantial agreement with his critique of Wellhausen and Willi, with the following proviso. In arguing against Willi he concludes that the books of Samuel and Kings were by no means canonical for the Chronicler in that the Chronicler did not treat them as immutable, sealed books that one may strive only to explain and comprehend in their given form (p. 25). This definition of canonical strikes me as anachronistic and one-sided. The evidence from Qumran of different versions or editions of books that later were unanimously held to be canonical—Jeremiah comes to mind or even the Palestinian editions of the Pentateuch—suggests that "authoritative"/canonical works may have been treated in a variety of ways and not only as immutable, sealed books. I agree with Kalimi that *Chronicles* is not a commentary on Samuel-Kings and even that the Chronicler presupposed that his audience would be quite familiar with the alternate version in Samuel Kings. Clearly, the Chronicler had a different interpretation of the monarchical period that he wanted to put forth, but it is by no means clear, at least to me, whether the Chronicler thought his work should be read alongside Samuel-Kings or whether he hoped his work would replace it. At some time, we know not when, what most of us call the Deuteronomistic History was identified in Judaism as the "Former Prophets" and surely therefore was not to be replaced.

Toward the end of his critique of the Chronicler as theologian, Kalimi observes: "In other words, as a historian the Chronicler's ideological [or theological] presuppositions guided his historiography" (p. 28). Nevertheless, Kalimi concludes that the main feature of the Chronicler's work is history—not theology—though it is indeed a "sacred history" and not a "secular history." And—again I quote: "Therefore, the Chronicler is primarily a historian rather than a theologian" (p. 29). This conclusion is built in large part on assertion rather than argument, and this leads to the following reflections on Kalimi's own thesis of the Chronicler being a historian.

Kalimi calls attention to certain historiographic features of Chronicles: the author deals with the past, collected material from earlier books and possibly additional sources, selects, evaluates, and interprets these sources and makes connections between them, and his work as a whole is imprinted with a unique historiography. Kalimi goes on to state that the Chronicler understood himself as a narrator or storyteller of past events, that is, in western terminology a "historian." (p. 31). Kalimi considers the author a historian and his work as late biblical historiography. He admits that the features discussed do not automatically make the book of Chronicles a reliable historical composition, or its author a scientific historian such as Thucydides. After dismissing the views of Robert Pfeiffer who considered Chronicles historical fiction, John Jarick who dubs it "fantasy literature," and John Van Seters who labeled it "plagiarism," Kalimi concludes that the Chronicler is a skilled professional historian and Chronicles is an impressive attempt to organize material into a single comprehensive and systematic work. He states that according to our knowledge of the sources, it is the first of its kind in the Second Temple Period (p. 37), but of course the final editing of the Deuteronomistic History may have extended into that period and in any case it would be widely known. Kalimi concludes that Chronicles is neither Midrash nor commentary nor theology and that the Chronicler cannot be considered as a midrashist, commentator, or theologian.

It is this either/or conclusion, however, that worries me. Kalimi himself admits that there are midrashic elements in Chronicles and if the Chronicler is not a commentator on Samuel and Kings, he is surely a commentator on the history therein recounted. And why should we make his role as theologian/historian an either/or choice?

The Chronicler does not fit easily into any of our literary categories. Here is my own summary of Chronicles (that is too long to fit on a bumper sticker):

Chronicles is largely a literary narrative about Israel's past, focused primarily on the story of the Davidic line of kings who ruled in Jerusalem and prefaced by a collection of genealogies that links Israel back to the first human and to the ancestral figure of Abraham while sketching out the totality of what might be meant by Israel by recording the genealogies of each of the tribes. The first chapter of 1 Chronicles, excerpted exclusively from Genesis, gives the genealogy from Adam to Abraham, or Adam to Israel if you wish, and portrays Israel against the backdrop of, or in the context of, all the nations of the world. The narrative itself is largely a rewriting of Samuel and Kings, interspersed with major paragraphs of the Chronicler's own composition. The theological agenda of this composition stresses especially the importance and legitimacy of the temple in Jerusalem, its clergy, and its sacrificial rites, also and especially, at least by implication, for the author's own time and audience.

Here ends my summary of Chronicles. I am comfortable with calling that theology or theological history, but I am not comfortable with saying that the Chronicler is a historian and not a theologian. There is a defensiveness about the Chronicler who has to write one of the longest books in the Old Testament in order to uphold the authority of the Jerusalem temple, its clergy, and its sacrificial rites. Hence it is also an apologetic work that implies an awareness that some of his contemporaries were not willing to concede his points about the temple, its clergy, and its rites.

Let us consider briefly in this regard two major units in Chronicles. Second Chronicles 1-9 tells the story of Solomon and his building of the temple, a section in which the Chronicler had very little, if any, additional data, but where he wanted to tell the history differently, for theological reasons. Hence he leaves out the Deuteronomistic Historians's indictment of Solomon from 1 Kings 11, and has Hiram cede cities to Solomon rather than the other way around. In both cases I would classify the Chronicler more as a theologian than as a historian. Or what about the lavish preparations of David for the building of the temple in 1 Chronicles 22 and 28-29, or the seamless transition in power from David to Solomon with no opposing Adonijah or conniving Bathsheba and Nathan in sight? I do not begrudge calling that "history, properly understood," although I think I would call it primarily theological in intent, designed to enhance the roles of David and Solomon as temple founders.

Finally, on this point, I am uneasy about Kalimi's assertion that the characterization of the Chronicler as historian has direct implications for the scholar's assessment of the reliability of the information contained within Chronicles and hence for the book's usefulness as a historical source for the history of Israel in the monarchic period (p. 20). Was this literary

composition meant to be fiction or history? Kalimi asks. History, probably, but some of the Chronicler's information such as the tonnage of David's donation in silver and gold and the numbers used throughout the corpus *are* fiction. Was Chronicles a literary narrative or historical novel? Probably a literary narrative, but this narrative has some qualities in common with the much later genre we call historical novel. Was it commentary or theology? Yes, on theology, and yes on commentary if we mean by that that the Chronicler was commenting on the history presented in Samuel and especially Kings.

On the second half of Kalimi's book, dealing with Jerusalem, I can be much more brief because I am in substantial agreement with most parts of it. Here are a few issues on which I would welcome further research from Isaac Kalimi or collegial conversation with him:

- Why does the Chronicler portray Joab more positively in contrast with Samuel and Kings? Does it have anything to do with the descendants of Joab mentioned in Ezra 2:6//Neh 7:11 and Ezra 8:9? While we might think that these are two different Joabs, the Chronicler may have equated them and therefore felt he needed to enhance the status of Joab.
- I am fascinated by Kalimi's proposal that the positioning of Chronicles as the last book in the Tanakh has to do with the open-ended invitation by Cyrus for Jews to make *aliyah* to Jerusalem, even perhaps after the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E. At the same time I am somewhat skeptical of his view of the final chapter in Kings reporting the "end" of history (p. 154). Kalimi himself argues for the originality of 2 Chr 36:22-23 against a whole host of modern commentators, but he accepts, much too easily in my judgment, that the account of the release and rehabilitation of Jehoiachin is only a secondary afterthought in Kings. Those who argue that the promise to David is a leading *leit motif* in Samuel and Kings see these four verses as reassurance to the reader that the promise to David is still alive. If readers were to follow the Deuteronomist's repeated admonition to return or repent, might God not once more send some kind of deliverer since he still stands behind the promise to David?
- One new essay in this volume, comprising chapter six, discusses "The Eternal City: 'Jerusalem' *versus* 'City of David.'" Kalimi writes that in spite of the Chronicler's admiration for King David, he does not make systematic use of the new name City of David and tried to minimize its appearance (p. 107). The fact remains however that the

Chronicler uses “city of David” nineteen times. Kalimi cites one case in which “the city of David” becomes “the city of Judah” (2 Chr 25:28//2 Kgs 14:20) although I think textual corruption is still a possibility here. In another case, he notes that “the city of David” is replaced by “Jerusalem” (2 Chr 28:27//2 Kgs 16:20), but this is the burial notice of Ahaz, and the Chronicler also adds that “they did not bring Ahaz to the graves of the kings of Israel,” and this addition renders the replacement of “city of David” by “Jerusalem” of little consequence. On two occasions Kalimi claims that the Chronicler drops the name “city of David.” But in one case the Chronicler not only drops the phrase “city of David,” but he incorporates nothing at all from the verse in question (1 Kgs 2:10 David’s burial notice—David is not buried in Chronicles). The other omission (1 Chr 15:25//2 Sam 6:12) might reflect only the Chronicler’s attempt to straighten out the awkward syntax of his *Vorlage*. A literal translation of 2 Sam 6:12 would be: “So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom the city of David with joy.” Most translators, Kalimi included, add the preposition “to” before “the city of David.” Rather than make this addition, the Chronicler omitted the awkward phrase which may have struck the Chronicler as a solecism. In short, the Chronicler’s nineteen uses of “the city of David” in comparison to eighteen in his *Vorlage* hardly seem like an unsystematic use of the expression or minimizing its appearance.

Let me end my response on a different note. The leaders of our SBL section invited this panel to honor Isaac Kalimi for his great accomplishments and to continue the dialogue that Isaac always initiates and invites. I am pleased with this opportunity to enter that dialogue and to give due honor to our author.

COMMENTS

GARY N. KNOPPERS

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Over the past two decades, Isaac Kalimi has been one of the most active and prolific writers on the book of Chronicles within the fields of biblical studies and Jewish studies.¹⁰ Like many recent scholars, Kalimi takes the Chronicler's work to comprise only the book of Chronicles (and not to include Ezra-Nehemiah). In his published works, including his most recent book (here under review), Kalimi defends the proposition that there was only one edition of the Chronicler's work and that the Chronicler was responsible for writing the entire book of Chronicles, including the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9, the lists of 1 Chronicles 23-27, and other disputed sections, such as the decree of Cyrus that rounds out the work (2 Chr 36:22-23). Kalimi argues that Chronicles is a well-planned, well-organized, and coherent historiographic work, even though he acknowledges that the book also contains various inconsistencies, contradictions, misunderstandings, and historical misjudgments due to the particular ways that the Chronicler construed and reworked his sources.¹¹

In this review, I wish to begin by contextualizing the present book within the history of Isaac Kalimi's earlier writings. I will then comment on

¹⁰ In a shorter form, this review was originally presented in an open forum honoring and evaluating Kalimi's book in the Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah section of the annual meeting of the SBL in San Antonio (2004). I would like to thank the chair (Professor Melody Knowles) and the members of the Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah steering committee of the SBL for organizing a very good session dedicated to assessing Isaac Kalimi's latest book. For the sake of adjusting the review to the present context in *JHS*, a few expansions, minor editorial changes, and updates have been made to the essay.

¹¹ See, for instance, his *Zur Geschichtsschreibung des Chronisten: Literarisch-historiographische Abweichungen der Chronik von ihren Paralleltexen in den Samuel-und Königsbüchern* (BZAW 226; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1995) 326-47.

the present work. In the course of this essay, I will also raise some questions for further discussion with respect to each major section of the work. I hope that these questions and suggestions will stimulate further commentary and reflection within the larger context of the field.

As I look at the history of Isaac Kalimi's published works, I see four primary foci. The first is bibliographical. One of the first works I saw published by the author was his *The Books of Chronicles: A Classified Bibliography* (Jerusalem: Simor) published in 1990. This work represents a fine assemblage of studies published on the book of Chronicles dating to medieval and modern times. As I prepared my own commentary on 1 Chronicles,¹² I found this comprehensive bibliography to be a most useful and handy work.

The second focus of the author's research has been on the literary aspects of the Chronicler's writing. This area has been an especially productive part of his research program. One thinks not only of the many articles Kalimi has published on literary topics, but also of two of his books, the first being his *Zur Geschichtsschreibung des Chronisten* (1995), a revision of the author's 1989 dissertation at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The second is his 2000 book written in Hebrew, entitled *The Book of Chronicles: Historical Writing and Literary Devices* (BEL 18; Jerusalem: Bialik Institute), a work that has been translated, revised, expanded, and updated by the author, and published by Eisenbrauns Press as *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005).

Among the topics explored by these two books are the methods employed by the Chronicler to handle older biblical sources including historiographical corrections, additions influenced by other biblical sources, clarifications, deletions, replacement of a given name by an equivalent one, harmonizations, allusions, descriptions of persons, chiasms, repetitive resumptions, "measure for measure" adjustments, *inclusios*, antitheses, comparisons, *Leitworte*, and numerical patterns. As the author states in his preface, "Obviously, this study represents my latest research and opinion on the subject" (*The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, p. xiii).

In many respects, Kalimi's analysis of the Chronicler as an early interpreter and literary writer may be fruitfully compared to other treatments of the Chronicler's exposition and interpretation of older biblical writings, such as the works of Peter Ackroyd, Sara Japhet, Thomas Willi,

¹² Gary N. Knoppers, I *Chronicles 1–9. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 12; New York: Doubleday, 2004); idem, I *Chronicles 10–29. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 12A; New York: Doubleday, 2004).

Hugh Williamson, and Marc Brettler.¹³ The particular strength of Kalimi's study lies in its detailed, meticulous, and systematic analysis of the Chronicler's literary craft in handling his major biblical sources. What some others have taken to be random or odd features of the Chronicler's writing Kalimi has been able to show are an integral part of a larger pattern of interpreting and applying older texts to a new context and literary setting. Kalimi views the Chronicler very much as a creative artist who was equally adept in handling his various *Vorlagen* and in challenging their central contentions, when he wished to do so. It should be noted that although the writer views the Chronicler as a versatile artist, he does not endorse the recent literary-critical trend to read Chronicles on its own terms as a self-contained literary work. On the contrary, he thinks that Chronicles should always be interpreted with a view to antecedent literature, especially literary works that the Chronicler himself employed within his own composition (*An Ancient Israelite Historian*, pp. 37-38). It will be interesting to see how this ongoing debate between those who wish to focus on Chronicles as a literary work unto itself and those, such as Kalimi, who only wish to treat Chronicles in the context of earlier writings will play out in the years ahead.

A third and very productive focus of Kalimi's research has been on the history of interpretation. In this context, one thinks of the many articles the author has published on this subject as well as three recent and current books: *Das Chronikbuch in der jüdischen Tradition von Daniel bis Spinoza* (OUR 91; Oldenburg: BIS Verlag der Universität Oldenburg, 1997), which, unfortunately, I have not seen; his more recent *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversies* (JCH 2; Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2002); and his forthcoming *The Book of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Exegesis: Interpretation, Reception and Impact-History from Earliest Times to the Beginning of Modern Biblical Scholarship* (JSOTSup 415; London and New York: Continuum T. & T. Clark International). This latest writing, which will appear soon (in 2006), may be fruitfully compared to the investigations of those scholars working on the reception history of certain Old Testament

¹³ P. R. Ackroyd, *Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah* (TBC; London: SCM, 1973); idem, "The Chronicler as Exegete," *JSOT* 2 (1977) 2-32; S. Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and its Place in Biblical Thought* (BEATAJ 9; Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1989); T. Willi, *Die Chronik als Auslegung* (FRLANT 106; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972); H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982); M. Z. Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (London: Routledge, 1995).

books in the Christian tradition.¹⁴ In his study, Kalimi sheds new light on the history of Chronicles interpretation from early times until the dawn of critical (biblical) scholarship in the seventeenth century. The author's coverage includes not only translators, exegetes, and theologians, but also literary writers, artists, and philosophers. In this way, the modern reader gains new access to the many diverse contexts within Jewish culture in which the Chronicler's text has been actualized through the ages.

As the author himself observes, the second part of his research program, the study of the Chronicler's literary craft, is very much related to the third part of his research program, namely the history of interpretation, because many of these exegetical and literary devices employed by the Chronicler anticipate those employed by postbiblical interpreters in Classical Judaism. Kalimi thus belongs to a growing group of scholars, such as Michael Fishbane, James Kugel, and Bernard Levinson, who have been trained in both biblical studies and in Jewish Studies.¹⁵ These scholars have helpfully demonstrated a series of continuities between the literary techniques employed by late biblical authors and those employed in Classical Judaism.

I think that it is fair to say that Kalimi's present work is more historically oriented than most of his earlier works. In this respect, Kalimi's new book opens up a fourth area of research. The work is comprised of nine essays, two of which are new. The rest appear as revised and, in some cases, expanded versions of previously published articles and book chapters. In some respects, one could argue that the present book is really two books in one. "Part One, The Chronicler, His Time, and His Writing" focuses on the historical context of the Chronicler, his time period, and the historical nature of his work.¹⁶ "Part Two, The Chronicler and His Place,"

¹⁴ See, for example, J. F. A. Sawyer, *The Fifth Gospel - Isaiah in the History of Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and Brevard S. Childs, *The Struggle to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004).

¹⁵ M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), J. L. Kugel, "Early Interpretation: The Common Background of Late Forms of Biblical Exegesis," in *Early Biblical Interpretation*, ed. J. L. Kugel and R. A. Greer (Library of Early Christianity 3; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986) 9-106; B. M. Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

¹⁶ In my view, the third chapter in the book, dealing with a literary issue—the "Utilization of the Pun/Paronomasia in the Chronistic Writing" (pp. 67-81)—functions more as a bridge to the second part of the book than as a conclusion to the first section of the work.

by far the larger section of the book, focuses on the status of and emphasis placed on Jerusalem in Chronicles. The volume closes with a bibliography and extensive indices -- biblical sources, ancient biblical versions, Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Dead Sea Scrolls, ancient Near Eastern texts, Greek and Roman authors, Jewish Hellenistic Writings, Rabbinic Literature, Jewish medieval writings, New Testament, early Christian writings, and modern authors.

The first two chapters of Part One deal with the characterization of the Chronicler and his writing, the date of the book and the possible relation of the Chronicler's text to the Elephantine papyri (re. the Davidic genealogy in 1 Chronicles 3), and the El-Ibrahimiya grave inscription. In the latter case, Kalimi wishes to dispute the possibility of a connection between this tomb inscription and the temporal context of the Chronicler's work. Recognizing a number of possibilities, Kalimi dates the Chronicler's work to the last part of the fifth century or the early part of the fourth century B.C.E. (pp. 31, 56-61, 64-65). Like Ackroyd and others, Kalimi thinks that the work evinces no parallels with or influences from Classical or Hellenistic historiography. I wish to return to this issue later. In this first section of the book, the writer defends the notion that Chronicles is a form of history writing, over against the competing views that Chronicles is theology, exegesis, or midrash. Expanding, revising, and elaborating on his earlier chapter dealing with the issue of history writing in the book, *The Chronicler as Historian*, Kalimi defends the proposition that the Chronicler was a historian on a number of different grounds.¹⁷ One is form-critical—the nature of the Chronicler's work as narrating the past. Another is the proposition that the Chronicler sifted, selected from, evaluated, and interpreted earlier biblical sources (pp. 29-32).

I am sympathetic to the view that the Chronicler's work is a form of historical writing, although one that is heavily theological in nature, highly stylized, and deeply indebted to the work of earlier biblical authors, but I think that it would be useful if Kalimi further clarified his argument that the Chronicler historically evaluated his sources. This is especially important in light of the author's assertion that the Chronicler's work is "*primarily*" (p. 9, emphasis of the author) about the Chronicler's own time and message and not about the period of the monarchy.¹⁸ To take one example, in his

¹⁷ I. Kalimi, "Was the Chronicler a Historian?" in *The Chronicler as Historian*, ed. M. P. Graham, K. G. Hoglund, and S. L. McKenzie (JSOTSup 238; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1997) 73-89.

¹⁸ In one context, the author states that "it seems likely that he [the Chronicler]

chapter (7) entitled, “The Twilight of Jerusalem: King Jehoiachin and the Temple’s Vessels in the Deuteronomistic History and Chronistic History,” the author argues that the Chronicler, when faced contradictory assessments of the fate of the temple vessels in Jeremiah and Kings, harmonized the two sources within his own work. This is a creative and intriguing suggestion. If Kalimi is correct, such a reading of the two earlier writings on the Chronicler’s part involved a careful assessment of both works. Is this what Kalimi means by evaluation? Or does he mean something more fundamental? For example, Sara Japhet has argued that the Chronicler consciously avoided including some of the miraculous and sensational stories found in earlier works, such as Samuel-Kings, within his own work.¹⁹ Similarly, she argues that the Chronicler’s work, in contradistinction from the compositional technique employed by the authors of the book of Samuel, generally avoids delving into the personal, private affairs of the major characters he narrates within his work. Such a historiographical stance involves a deliberate sifting and assessment of sources on an author’s part based on a self-conscious determination of what might be properly considered the subject of a national history. Is this the sort of evaluation that Kalimi thinks that the Chronicler undertook or does he mean something else? To this, one may add another question: does the author think that the fact that the Chronicler wrote a historical work placed any constraints on him? That is, are there any limitations on what the author might have said or did not say about the past, given the fact that he chose to write a history, rather than a midrash or a short novel? If so, what might these constraints consist of?

Part Two of Kalimi’s new book, “The Chronicler and His Place: Jerusalem in the Chronistic Writing,” is composed of six chapters, ranging from the view of Jerusalem in the genealogies that open the book to the place of Jerusalem in the decree of Cyrus that ends the book. The connection, I think, between the first part of the book and the second is that because Jerusalem is understood to be the home of the Chronicler, his treatment of Jerusalem relates directly to his own conception of the town

understood himself as a narrator/storyteller of past events, that is, in western terminology, a ‘historian’” (p. 31). This would bring Kalimi’s view close to that of Marc Brettler (*Creation of History*, 12), but in a footnote it seems that the author wishes to distance himself somewhat from this point of view: “There is, however, poetry in the Hebrew Bible that relates the past as well (i.e., Num 21,27-30; Judges 5; Ps 78-79; 106, and maybe also 83)” (p. 31, n. 58).

¹⁹ *Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, 125-49, 428-44, 467-91.

and its value for his people, and is influenced by the circumstances of the town as it existed in his own time. There is much in this section of the book to profit from, both in the detailed comparisons made between the depictions of Jerusalem in Samuel-Kings and those in Chronicles and in the detailed comparisons made between the representation of Jerusalem in Chronicles and the representation of Jerusalem in later Jewish compositions. Kalimi argues, successfully I think, that Jerusalem is pivotal to the Chronicler's presentation of Israel, to his theological orientation, and to his understanding of his own religion. In fact, the writer suggests that the Chronicler may have himself been a temple servant working in Jerusalem.

As a spur to further discussion, allow me to raise some questions. First, a rather fundamental and rudimentary consideration—what does the author think the Chronicler's *Vorlagen* of Samuel and Kings looked like? In some cases, he acknowledges variants from the LXX and the Dead Sea Scrolls that differ from the MT of Samuel-Kings. In other cases, in fact most other cases, he seems to assume that the Chronicler's *Vorlagen* of Samuel and Kings were basically identical to the MT. Two examples will suffice. In his chapter (5) dealing with the capture of Jerusalem in Samuel and Chronicles, he operates from the premise that the Chronicler attempted to reconcile, explain, and smooth out the problems found within his very difficult *Vorlage* (pp. 95-98). This may so, but other scholars, including some commentators on Samuel, such as Hertzberg, McCarter, and Trebolle Barrera, have contended that at least part of the Samuel text is a later addition.²⁰ This would make ascertaining the exact nature of the Chronicler's source text, in this instance, to be a complicated enterprise.

A second example involves the Chronicler's treatment of the Babylonian exile (chapter 7). As Kalimi and others observe, the Chronicler's version of the final years of the Judahite kingdom is much shorter than that found in Kings. Kalimi contends that the Chronicler greatly abridged his *Vorlage* and focused on an issue that was most dear to him—the fate of the temple vessels. Again, this may be so, but other scholars, including Steven McKenzie, Baruch Halpern, and David Vanderhooft, have argued that the Chronicler's *Vorlage* for the final chapters of Kings was shorter than MT Kings and did not contain certain features, such as the names of the

²⁰ H. W. Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964); P. K. McCarter, *II Samuel* (AB 9; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984); J. Trebolle Barrera, *Centena in Libros Samuelis et Regum. Variantes Textuales y Composición literaria en los libros de Samuel y Reyes* (Textos y Estudios "Cardinal Cisneros" 47; Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas Instituto de Filología, 1989).

Judahite queen mothers.²¹ It would be useful and interesting if Kalimi would engage these arguments in some detail.²²

Another question involves the contention that the Chronicler's treatment of Jerusalem is neither visionary nor eschatological in nature. In his chapters, "The Eternal City: 'Jerusalem' *versus* 'City of David'" (chapter 6) and "Jerusalem – The Divine City: The Representation of Jerusalem in Chronicles Compared with Earlier and Later Jewish Compositions" (chapter 8), Kalimi advances the position that the Chronicler espouses a very favorable view of Jerusalem as a city endowed with holiness and spiritual superiority, but studiously avoids developing grand futuristic visions of the city in the manner of some later writers. This seems to me to be near the mark, but I wonder whether describing the Chronicler's depictions of Jerusalem and its temple as essentially "realistic" is the best way to characterize his work (pp. 131-41). Would not a realistic view of Jerusalem involve depicting it as a small town and would not a realistic view of the temple involve depicting it as a small royal chapel? It may be argued that the book of Chronicles contains highly idealized notions of the First Temple. For example, the work depicts immense quantities of materiel, gold, and silver being devoted to the sanctuary by David and representatives of the nation (1 Chr 22:2-5, 14-16; 29:1-9), as well as the presentation of a *tabnît*, along the lines of the tabernacle's *tabnît*, for the future temple planned by David and constructed by Solomon (1 Chr 28:11-19).²³ There are many differences between Chronicles and apocalyptic writings. Nevertheless, could one not say that in some respects the Chronicler projects into the past what other writers project into the future?

Finally, to return to the matter of the Chronicler's context and his times, the author takes issue with my drawing some parallels between the highly-structured system of segmented and multi-linear genealogies found

²¹ S. L. McKenzie, *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History* (HSM 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985); B. Halpern, and D. S. Vanderhooft, "'The Editions of Kings in the 7th-6th Centuries B.C.E.," *HUCA* 62 (1991) 179-244. See also the related article by H. G. M. Williamson, "The Death of Josiah and the Continuing Development of the Deuteronomistic History," *VT* 32 (1982) 242-47.

²² In one footnote, Kalimi acknowledges the opinion of McKenzie (*The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, 186), namely that the Chronicler was working with a different source than MT Kings, and categorizes this view as "an easy solution" (p. 118, n.12).

²³ The importance of 1 Chr 28:11-19 is acknowledged by Kalimi (p. 134), but cited with reference to the temple alone (and not to the Jerusalem of which the temple was a part).

in 1 Chronicles 1-9 and the highly-segmented and multi-linear genealogical works attested in Classical sources.²⁴ He mistakenly asserts that I posit a “genetic relationship between Chronicles and the Hellenic writings” (p. 50). While it is true that I state that “Yehud was initially isolated from western influence,” in the context of my own article I am referring to the late sixth and early-fifth centuries B.C.E., not to the entire postexilic period. It must be acknowledged that Isaac and I seem to have some different assumptions about how the Persian empire functioned in relation to the West, what changes the Persian period brought to the southern Levant, and what kinds of cultural interaction might have taken place during the latter part of this era. Following the work of historians, such as Pierre Briant and Joseph Wiesehöfer, and the work of archaeologists, such as Ephraim Stern, I view late Persian and early Hellenistic times as a period of great flux, an era of significant trade, and the occasion of interaction among a variety of cultures.²⁵ It may be, however, that Kalimi sees this same time in the southern Levant as a period of great cultural isolation.²⁶ If so, this may be another issue worth discussing in the context of the larger field.²⁷

²⁴ G. N. Knoppers, “Greek Historiography and the Chronicler's History: A Reexamination of an Alleged Non-relationship,” *JBL* 122 (2003) 627-50. In his book, Kalimi also makes a series of fruitful comparisons between the work of the Chronicler and the works of Classical historians. In this context, see also his contribution to the present symposium.

²⁵ P. Briant, *Histoire de l'Empire perse; De Cyrus à Alexandre* (Achaemenid History 10; Paris: Fayard, 1996); J. Wiesehöfer, *Ancient Persia from 550 BC to 650 AD* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996); E. Stern, “Between Persia and Greece: Trade, Administration, and Warfare in the Persian and Hellenistic Periods,” in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, ed. T. E. Levy (London: Leicester University Press, 1995) 432-45; idem, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, vol. II: The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Periods 732 - 332 B.C.E.* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 2001).

²⁶ In the published book he acknowledges, however, “western material influence (such as numismatics, pottery, weights, etc. which could be moved easily by any trader, visitor and so forth)” (p. 50). I should add that the numismatics, seals, glyptics, and bullae that I am thinking of consist not so much of imports (although these exist), but rather of native products whose imagery, motifs, and style betray western influence.

²⁷ As I observe in my commentary (*I Chronicles* 1-9, 101-5), the phenomenon of parallels between some features of the Chronicler's composition and those of some of the Classical writers does not entail that Chronicles is a late work. Many earlier commentators thought that the (putative) lack of such parallels meant that the Chronicler's work had to predate the Macedonian conquest (construed to be the

In sum, there is much to benefit from in this work. Perhaps both the book and the many different reviews written about the book (themselves a tribute to this book and to the broader achievements of Kalimi's career) will stimulate further research on the work of the Chronicler, his literary craft, his many interpretive techniques in handling older works, the larger setting in which this often-neglected ancient writer lived, and the different ways in which his writing was (re)appropriated by later interpreters.

time in which such western influences began to manifest themselves within the history of the southern Levant and hence the time in which literary parallels could originate). But, if significant trade and travel between east and west occurred in the context of the larger Mediterranean world prior to the arrival of Alexander, the time of Alexander cannot be used any longer as a *terminus ante quem* benchmark for the composition of the Chronicler's work. That is, the parallels in certain styles of literary composition cannot be explained simply as a Hellenistic development.

COMMENTS

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Let me begin by thanking the committee for inviting me to be a respondent to Isaac Kalimi's new book on the *Chronicler*. I have enjoyed Isaac's work over the years and also have learned a great deal as many of my unexamined presuppositions regarding these marvelous, if somewhat mysterious books were effectively, if not always efficiently challenged. The collection of much of Isaac's seminal work, in English, under one cover, is surely a matter for rejoicing and I would like to thank Van Gorcum for their decision to do so.

Having served as the book editor of a theological journal for almost fifteen years now (I had no idea it was a life sentence) I have read way too many reviews to be easily swayed by either the overly obsequious or the downright damning responses that seem to typify the genre. I much prefer, though rarely get to see, subtly nuanced assessments such as Moses Hadas provided in a rather cynical review over 40 years ago, and I quote: "This book fills a much-needed gap." Apparently assuming either that the so-called "gap" did not need filling, or that the "gap" was of greater value than the book that filled it!

Thankfully, Kalimi's work on the *Chronicler* does *not* fill a *much-needed* gap in our understanding of these books, but rather provides us with a coherent and judicious investigation of several complex and important issues. His analysis of the importance of Jerusalem for the *Chronicler* is especially rewarding. Also to be welcomed is the wealth of insight from ancient and medieval Jewish sources that enhances his presentation, as well as the reliable guidance through the sometimes perplexing maze of the *Chronicler*'s literary tropes and conventions that he provides. In general, we are led through many of the thorny questions that have bedeviled this material since Ezra the Scribe first looked back on the Books of Chronicles and exclaimed to Nehemiah over a double latte, "Did I really write ... that?"

When one comes last in a panel of respondents, one has the sinking feeling that one's little insights will already have been more eloquently expressed and one's little quibbles with the offering under review will already have been exposed. Nevertheless, one has to speak about that which one knows, and so, I would like to confine my remarks to the first section of Isaac's book, and especially with the characterization of the Chronicler which Kalimi usefully reviews under four major interpretations of the Chronicler as Midrashist, Exegete, Theologian, and Historian, ultimately opting for "Historian" or as Isaac (somewhat facetiously, methinks) suggests, "Chronicler."

1) First of all, Wellhausen, as the arch-Midrashist, is booed and hissed for:

- His intention to (quote) "destroy the credibility of Chronicles as an historical source for pre-exilic Israelite history"
- His support of von Ranke's historicist methodology of depicting how things actually happened using only contemporary documents and apart from interpretation, and
- His alleged anti-Jewish proclivities (pp. 22-23).

Apart from the entirely correct observation that, "our definition and understanding of historiography have changed: 'history' definitely is not only 'facts' and 'documents,' and the task of the historian is not limited to show 'wie es eigentlich gewesen,'" (p. 22), however, these remarks are statements, *ad hominem* assertions. We hear no arguments as to *why* Wellhausen was misguided in his unflattering characterization of the Chronicler, only that Professor Kalimi disagrees. And since the first rule of debate is that assertion demands counter assertion, we can almost hear Wellhausen reply from the grave, "He is, too, a Midrashist!"

2) Secondly, if Wellhausen serves as the foil for Kalimi's dismissal of those who see the Chronicler as a Midrashist, Thomas Willi represents those who see the Chronicler as an Exegete of the presumably canonical texts found in the Pentateuch and Samuel-Kings. Here, I find myself in basic agreement with Isaac, if, as Willi claims, exegesis has to do with the writing of a commentary. Clearly the synoptic portions of the books of Chronicles are not a commentary; whether or not they are exegesis is, however, another matter. Exegesis is not a sermon, but it is desirable for preachers to engage in exegesis. Exegesis is not theology, but it is desirable for theologians to engage in exegesis. If, as Kalimi states, Willi's neglect of the non-synoptic portions of the Chronicler's work tells against Chronicles as a *commentary* (p. 24) what prevents us from making the most of Roddy

Braun's perceptive insight (cited by Kalimi, himself, in the next section, p. 28) that these Chronistic additions themselves "might best be viewed as ... an early example of theological interpretation or the writing of biblical commentary."

3) Thirdly, turning to the Chronicler as Theologian, Kalimi claims that scholars such as Peter Ackroyd, R. J. Coggins, William Johnstone, and Roddy Braun have mistaken sacred history for theology, since "God is always involved in human activity, in the making of history – whether directly or indirectly," (p. 28), and since the Chronicler is thus writing "history" he is therefore "primarily a historian rather than a theologian" (p. 29). Again, no critique of the carefully articulated position of these scholars is offered. More serious, in my opinion, is the somewhat circular nature of the argument, which seems to redefine theology as history and then points to the historical nature of the theology ... now seen to be history. By this line of reasoning, since God is always involved in human activity, by definition, does not *all* human activity become history? I confess that I find this section somewhat confusing.

4) In the final section Kalimi offers five reasons for characterizing the Chronicler as a Historian, that is, one who:

- Deals with the past
- Collects material from earlier sources
- Selects, evaluates, and interprets those sources
- Draws connections between these sources, and
- Has imprinted his work as a whole with a unique historiography (p. 30).

Perhaps Albert Schweitzer's observation about those questing for the so-called historical Jesus ... that the picture of Jesus rendered by the questors says as much about them as it does about the "real" Jesus ... is *apropos* here, as well. Three of the designations (Exegete, Theologian, and Historian), at least in Kalimi's critique of those who have proposed them as characterizing the Chronicler, are rather modern ideological constructs. The Chronicler was neither what we understand a modern exegete, theologian, or historian to be any more than he was a Democrat, Republican, or Green Party member. Proposing modern vocational conceptions as characteristic of the Chronicler's work or activity seems to me to be akin to asking the question, "What would Jesus drive?" interesting, thought-provoking, edifying, perhaps, but essentially conjectural.

And, yet, given our propensity to engage in such anachronistic taxonomies, Kalimi's survey and critique is especially helpful in the discussion of how context influences the interpretation of scripture. The very fact that reputable scholarship has been able to make a case for each of the aforementioned pigeonholes, when coupled with the palpable observation that none of them can adequately account for *all* of the Chronicler's various materials and modes of communication, suggests that the demand or expectation of an exclusive designation be it Theologian, Historian, or what have you contributes to the problem rather than the solution. Perhaps we should break down the interpretive boundaries and assemble a "combinush" of perspectives in our quest to understand the Chronicler and his work.

Since this is precisely what Isaac has done in the rest of his book as he examines the "midrash-esque" phenomenon of the Chronicler's paronomasia, and explores the theological differences between the Chronistic and Deuteronomistic conceptions of Jerusalem while he elucidates the Chronicler's historical relevance, I assume my friend will not take offense at these terse observations.

**HISTORY, HISTORIOGRAPHY,
HISTORICAL EVALUATION, AND CREDIBILITY—
CHRONICLES IN ITS CONTEXT: A RESPONSE TO
REVIEWS OF *AN ANCIENT ISRAELITE
HISTORIAN: STUDIES IN THE CHRONICLER, HIS
TIME, PLACE, AND WRITING***

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1. INTRODUCTORY WORDS

The essay opens with an overall response to all reviewers in general²⁸. Here I will express, expand and sharpen the main features, to cite Johan Wolfgang von Goethe, *die grossen Zügen* (“the big lines”) of some of my views concerning history, historiography, historical evaluation and credibility, the main nature of Chronicles as a whole, its methods, sources / *Vorlage(n)*, place, age and historical context. Furthermore, I will comment on some particular issues (*die kleinen Zügen*) that were raised by colleagues. Finally, it ends with some concluding words.

²⁸ The volume was published in the series: *Studia Semitica Neerlandica*, 46 (Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2005). I would like to thank the chair, Professor Melody Knowles, and the members of the section of Chronicles–Ezra–Nehemiah Steering Committee for honoring me with a magnificent session at the annual meeting of the AAR/SBL in San Antonio (November 21, 2004). My thanks extend further to those colleagues who took the time to review my volume, and for their kind, complimentary words.

2. THE CHRONICLER, HIS WRITING, SOURCES, METHODS, AGE, AND CONTEXT

2.1 PROLOGUE

The volume under review is compiled material from my most recent focus on the fundamental issues of Chronicles, that is, its main genre; the date of its composition; the place of the author - Jerusalem, and the link between these and his writing.

Researching these issues is not just satisfying the intellectual curiosity of the modern reader about one of the largest and most neglected books of the Hebrew Bible. Rather, these are vital issues that have direct implications for understanding the book, its content, its purpose, and credibility as a source for the history of Israel in the monarchic period, as well as for understanding the development of Judaism in the Second Temple era. Let us turn to these points in further detail.

In order to understand any literary composition and fully appreciate its value, the reader must know its precise nature and the author's intention. Was it *in essence* meant to be fiction or history, literary narrative or historical novel, commentary or theological text? One also is required to know as much as possible about the author: his/her personality, place and exact time/period in history prior to studying the composition itself. It is important to read the book within its socio-cultural environment, religious and historical setting.

Unfortunately, this is not the case with this late biblical composition. As is the case with many other biblical writers, the Chronicler²⁹ did not directly volunteer any information about himself, his time, place, and - except in so far as he refers to some supposed earlier writings - his work. He preferred to remain completely anonymous, and did not even provide a basic preface, such as that of some Greek historians, for instance Thucydides (born between 460 - 455 and died ca. 400 B.C.E.): "Thucydides, an Athenian, wrote the history of the war waged by the Peloponnesians and

²⁹ I do not think that "whatever one can learn about the implied author directly applies to the actual author." However, somehow one must refer to the composition's writer. Since in fact we do not know anything about the actual author (see Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 19-20), and since I am of the opinion that the vast majority of Chronicles - if not almost all of it - had been written by one author, it means, the book is largely free of later additions, I chose to name that anonymous author "the Chronicler," as is customary in biblical scholarship.

the Athenians against one another" (*The Peloponnesian War*, I,1). Thus, the modern scholar should carefully study the book and, on the basis of this study, form some necessary conclusions about the writer, his time, place, and historical setting as well as about the main nature of his work and its purpose(s).

2.2 HISTORY, HISTORIOGRAPHY, AND HISTORICAL CREDIBILITY

If past times were neglectful to the Chronicler and his book, since they received relatively only marginal attention,³⁰ modern times are even tougher on them. Indeed, a society that is in awe of science, including "history" as a sort of science, accepts the Chronicler and his composition as everything else but a "real" history. Does this attitude really reflect in fact what we have in front of us in the book of Chronicles? Is really the Chronicler no more than a copyist / plagiarist / fantasist / midrashist / exegete / just another "biblical" theologian, etc. etc.? Or, is he, primarily, a historian with his own logic, legitimate goals and within his historical context as well as within an ancient and "biblical" world?

This volume, along with my other studies on Chronicles, attempts to provide justice to this unique composition and its author. It concludes that the *main* literary nature of Chronicles is neither Midrash nor commentary nor theology. None of these definitions grasps the full picture of the book. Therefore, the Chronicler cannot be considered as a midrashist, exegete or theologian.³¹ He is *first and foremost* a historian and the *major* literary nature of his book, *the book as a whole*, is historiography (or to be more exact, a sacred-didactic historiography, that is, its philosophy of history is, in fact, mainly theological and its purpose is didactical in nature). In any case, the book as a whole cannot be labeled as historical fiction or fantasy literature as some

³⁰ See I. Kalimi, *The Book of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Exegesis: Interpretation, reception and impact-History from earliest times to the Beginning of Modern Biblical Scholarship* (JSOTSup 415; London and New York: Continuum T. & T. Clark International, 2006), forthcoming.

³¹ To be sure, one person could be labeled with various titles. He could be a midrashist, an exegete, a theologian, a historian, and the like. However, my characterization of 'the Chronicler' as a historian is based on the only writing that we have – the book of Chronicles. Once again, in my view, the definition that fully catches the heart of the issue, in one word, is 'historiography' (or, if you wish, a form of historical writing), accordingly the author is, first and foremost, a 'historian.' It is worthwhile to mention that my conclusion: "the Chronicler is primarily a historian rather than a theologian" (p. 29), is based on solid arguments as detailed on pp. 28-29 and note 50.

scholars assert in modern times, without investing any genuine intellectual effort to understand it.

To be sure, this does not mean that there are no fictional elements in Chronicles. Thus, for instance, the tremendous amount of gold that David collected for the Temple building (1 Chr 29,1-9), and the fantastic numbers of Israelite and Judahite armed forces (2 Chr 13,2) are unrealistic. However, this sort of exaggerations easily could be found all over the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Exod 12,37-38), including the early historical books, and in the ancient Near Eastern documentation; for example, the large numbers of the Israelite and Judahite soldiers in 2 Sam 24,9; the enormous richness of Solomon as related in 1 Kgs 9-10; the unreasonable large numbers of the enemy's loss reported in the Assyrian inscriptions,³² and later on, the large numbers given by some of the Hellenistic and Roman historians.³³ There are also some prayers and speeches that the Chronicler ascribed to various kings (and prophets) - as he understood them - rather they took place in reality (at least not in the form and content that they were presented in the book). For example, the speeches and prayer of David (1 Chr 21,7-16; 28,2-10; 29,1-5.10-19); the speech of Abijah (2 Chr 13,4-12); Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20,6-12); and Hezekiah (2 Chr 29,5-11;30,6-9). However, these sorts of fictional elements could easily be found in the books of Samuel and Kings (e.g., the prayer of Hannah, 1 Sam 2,1-10; the testament of David, 1 Kgs

³² For example, according to the Kurkh Monolith-Inscription (lines 96-102) the total loss of the anti-Assyrian coalition in Qarqar was 14,000 soldiers – a large number in any case. However, this number increases in the following years' reports of the same battle: in the Black Obelisk (lines 54-66): 20,500 men; according to the Bull-Inscription from Calah the number is 25,000; and on the statue of Shalmanesser III, king of Assyria from 828 B.C.E., 29,000 men. The Assyrian scribes' attempt, therefore, to glorify the king by exaggerating the enemy's losses. See J.B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (= ANET; 3rd edn. with Supplement; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 279a, 279b; W. W. Hallo et al. (ed.) *The Context of Scripture: Canonical Compositions, Monumental Inscriptions and Archival Documents from the Biblical World* (=COS), II, 261-64 (264).

³³ Thus, for instance, while according to Polybius the loss of Hannibal's army in the Metaurus battle (207 B.C.E.) was about 20,000 men (15.14; see W. R. Paton, *Polybius: The Historian* [London: William Heinemann / New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1925], vol. IV, p. 497); Titus Livius (= Livy; 59 B.C.E. - 17 C.E.) reports an extremely exaggerated number of the loss, namely 56,000 (27.49; see F. G. Moore, *Livy: With an English Translation* [LCL; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press / London: William Heinemann, 1943] vol. VII, 405).

2,2-10; the prayer of Solomon, 1 Kgs 8,12-53), as well as in the works of Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman historiography, such as some speeches in Thucydides,³⁴ Josephus (*Bellum Judaicum* 7,332-388), and 1 Macc (2,48-69). Is there any serious scholar who doubts the main literary feature of these books as historical writing? Of course, there are also several theological elements in the book of Chronicles. But these sorts of elements mainly appear also in Kings (e.g., 1 Kings 8; 2 Kings 17) as well as in various sources from ancient Near Eastern documents, such as the Mesha inscription, the Assyrian royal inscriptions, and the Cyrus Cylinder. No one defines the major literary feature of these materials as theology. Moreover, the Chronicler is not simply a “copyist” or a “plagiarist” as defined by some researchers; one who worked in the method of “cut” and “paste.” These definitions are indeed unjust to the Chronicler. He is rather a creative artist, a historian.³⁵

My definition of the work as a whole “historiography” and its author as “historian,” certainly does not depend on the ‘questions of historicity’ of Chronicles. It also does not depend only on the ‘self-perception of the narrator/author as a story teller of the past events.’ It rather depends on essential additional criteria as they clearly reflect on the book itself: the Chronicler selects material from earlier “biblical” writings, and evaluates them.³⁶ He reorganizes and edits the material in the order, context, and form he finds appropriate. He makes connections between the texts that he collects; stylizes, reshapes, and interprets some of them, as a historian who wishes to make the sources that he used in his book available to his audience.³⁷ The Chronicler also attempts to express his “philosophy” of

³⁴ See *The Peloponnesian War*, I.20-21; I.140; II.35ff.; II.64; III; V.111-118. This feature appears also in the writings of Herodotus, Titus Livius in his History of Rome from its foundation; and many other Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman historians.

³⁵ See I. Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 407-9.

³⁶ On this issue, see in detail, below, in this essay.

³⁷ Indeed, from the canonical perspective, this phenomenon could be named ‘inner-biblical interpretation’ as well. Thus, for example, he replaces an uncommon word with a common one: compare 1 Kgs 9,5: **בְּאִשֶּׁר דְּבַרְתִּי**, with 2 Chr 7,18: **כַּאֲשֶׁר**; 2 Kgs 21,8: **לְהַנִּיד רֶגֶל יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן הָאָדָמָה**, with 2 Chr 33,8: **וְלֹא אִסִּיף לְהַסִּיר אֶת רֶגֶל יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַל הָאָדָמָה**. He paraphrases difficult phrases, such as **וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַעְךָ אֶת קוֹל צַעֲדָה בְּרָאשֵׁי הַבְּכָאִים אוֹ תַחֲרִץ** (2 Sam 5,24), and writes: **וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַעְךָ אֶת קוֹל הַצַּעֲדָה בְּרָאשֵׁי הַבְּכָאִים אוֹ תַצָּא לְמַלְחָמָה** (1 Chr 14,15).

history (or, if you wish, his “theology,” e.g., 2 Chr 13) via the composition and so created a literary work that fits well within late biblical historical writing.³⁸

Now, all of these features *do not* automatically make the book of Chronicles a reliable historical composition overall, or its author a “scientific historian.”³⁹ The *main purpose* of the Chronicler – like many Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman historians in different times and places – was not precise analysis of the “documents” and accurate description of the past events “as they actually happened.” These criteria, which dominate the conceptions of some historians in the past (such as Thucydides and Polybius) and in modern times, were not prioritized by the Chronicler, and it is wrong to judge him according to them. The Chronicler rather uses the early texts/sources to advance his practical, social, political, moral, and religious agenda. He guides his audience by providing “historical” descriptions of national personalities who carefully observed (e.g., David and Solomon) – or did not observe (e.g., Saul) – the Torah’s commandments. As such, these personalities could be set as an example for the Chronicler’s contemporary audience and for future times as well (so, *historia est magistra vitae*).⁴⁰ These kinds of concerns from the side of the Chronicler are not just due to his “theological” concerns and doctrines. He probably uses them to guide his society how to behave and how not to in order to exist, as a small community surrounded by troublesome neighbors. At the same time the Chronicler updates the texts’ language, style, and

Sometimes the Chronicler clarifies his sources by omitting unclear idioms and phrases, in order to make them comprehensible to his audience. Thus, for instance, in the story on the capture of Jerusalem (compare 1 Chr 11,4.6 with 2 Sam 5,6.8). The Chronicler also brings some other texts into harmony with each other in order to ease the mind of his unlearned readers. See Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 154-56.

³⁸ All these criteria are detailed in the volume. See Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 29-39.

³⁹ In order to illustrate my argumentation concerning the quality of the Chronicler as historian, I contrast him with that of Thucydides, for instance. It would be correct to mention in that context also the Greek historian of Rome, Polybius (ca. 200 - ca. 118 B.C.E.), alongside Thucydides. However, this volume is really not the most appropriate platform to discuss the Greek historians and their works, even not within a short section. In my view, it is completely out of place, and certainly there is no need to protest unnecessary erudition.

⁴⁰ See Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 140-58, 310-311, 339-40.

literary forms, as well as alters some of their informative contents and shapes their religious messages.

The plausibility of the book as a source for the pre-exilic period is an entirely different issue from its main literary nature. The reliability problem of Chronicles should not overshadow the evaluation of the work's *main literary nature* as historiography. Even if one considers the book as "poor history" (that is, as presenting inaccurate information), it is still historiographical in intent and literary nature. No one denies that Herodotus has numerous unreliable speeches and stories in his *Historia*, but neither does one deny that his book is a history nor that its author should be considered a historian. Indeed, Herodotus himself stresses: "My obligation is to record what people say, but I am by no means bound to believe it – and that may be taken to apply to this book as a whole" (*Historia*, VII 152).

It is inappropriate to deny the historical credibility of Chronicles as a whole by labeling it as Midrash,⁴¹ commentary, theology, fantasy literature, etc. Since there are a number of reliable historical data relating to the pre-exilic period in the lists and descriptive parts of the book,⁴² each case should

⁴¹ A cautious reading of the volume's first chapter (especially 20-23), furnishes the reader with complete arguments as to why Julius Wellhausen was misguided in his characterization of Chronicles and its author. Briefly, Wellhausen's intention was, first and foremost, to date the Priestly Codex (P) in the post-exilic era, while situating the Deuteronomistic Codex (D) in the monarchic era. Consequently, the books of Samuel and Kings contain earlier sources which are woven together and edited by the Deuteronomist according to the theological lines and spirit of Deuteronomy. The Chronicler, who lived hundreds of years later, used the books of Samuel-Kings as his raw material, worked in a midrashic mode on them according to the dictates of the Priestly Code. While Chronicles represents Judaism and Jews in general, who moved in a midrashic sphere, Samuel-Kings represents, in every sense, the ancient Israelites and their "real/true" continuation, that is, Christianity and Christians.

Regarding Wellhausen's following Ranke's historicist methodology, readers may find that the matter is stressed on page 22, note 17 of the volume. Leopold Ranke with his 54 volumes on a variety of histories (world history, German history, etc.), was considered, already in his lifetime, the greatest historian in Europe. His influence was profound as compared to that of other historians. To cite the British historian, G. P. Gooch, he was "the Goethe of historians and we all are his students."

⁴² Thus, for example, in 2 Chr 32,30 which is testimony from Siloam's tunnel and inscription as well; large parts of 1 Chr 12,1-41 most likely based on existing list[s].

be evaluated very carefully on its own merit and context, based on the best knowledge and deep analyses of the related biblical and extra-biblical materials. However, while other definitions of Chronicles negate automatically *any* historical reliability of it, my definition, though *not* classifying the book automatically as a reliable historical composition, leaves ample space for case-by-case examination in order to conclude whether or not any reliable information can be found there.⁴³

2.3 EVALUATION OF SOURCES

As a historian, the Chronicler evaluates his sources. The following examples clarify this feature:

(1) As the Chronicler read his source in 1 Sam 31, he probably asked himself why was Saul removed from the Israelite kingship after a short term, and he (and his sons) killed on the battlefield? Thus, he evaluated the acts of Saul on the one hand and his removal and tragic death on the other. Based on his understanding of the previous texts in Samuel and according to his world-view prism (or, if you wish, 'philosophy of history,' which was surely theological in nature - reward and punishment criteria), he added a short conclusion to his source: "So Saul died for his betrayal; he betrayed the Lord by not carrying out His word and also by inquiring of a ghost and seeking its guidance. While not seeking guidance from the Lord; therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse" (1 Chr 10,13-14).⁴⁴ Regardless of the statement "*Saul inquired of the Lord*, but the Lord did not reply to him..." (1 Sam 28,6; see also verse 15), the Chronicler writes that Saul *did not seek* "guidance from the Lord." For him, if the Lord did not answer Saul, it means, in fact, that Saul did not in truth inquire of the Lord, since "the Lord is near to all who call on Him / *to all who call on him in truth*" (Ps 145,18).⁴⁵

(2) The Chronicler read his source, "and they (= the Philistines) left their images there, and David and his men bore them away" (2 Sam 5,21). For him, it is impossible (or, if you want, historically incorrect) that David, God's chosen king (2 Sam 5,2 // 1 Chr 11,2; 1 Chr 28,4 – an "addition") and the father and founder of the Israelite's kingdom, did not know the

⁴³ See Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 32-33.

⁴⁴ On these verses in Chronicles, see Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*, 139-40, 209-210, 339.

⁴⁵ For this concept of the Chronicler, see 1 Chr 28,9; 2 Chr 15,2; and the detailed discussion by Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*, 327-29.

Torah's law: "Burn the graven images of their gods with fire; do not covet the silver and gold that is on them or take it for yourself" (Deut 7,5; 12,3). For the Chronicler, it is also impossible that David knew the law and preferred to ignore it because of his greed for booty. Thus, the Chronicler altered his source and wrote how David acted according to his historical assessment of the great Israelite personality: "and they left their gods there; and David commanded: let them be burned with fire" (1 Chr 14,12). In other words, David knew the law and acted accordingly.⁴⁶

(3) The Chronicler read his source concerning the towns that Solomon gave to Hiram in exchange for the goods that the latter supplied him, for the building of the Temple and the palace (1 Kgs 9,10-13). He asked himself whether it was probable that Solomon, the richest Israelite king ever,⁴⁷ the one who was promised by the Lord "I have also given you that which you have not asked, *both riches, and honor; so that there shall not be any among the kings like you all your days*" (1 Kgs 3,13), was indeed unable to pay for goods that he purchased from Hiram? Is it possible that the Lord's chosen king, Solomon,⁴⁸ transferred part of the Lord's Promised Land to a foreign ruler for goods and woods? For the Chronicler the answer to these questions was definitely negative. For him, the possibility that the Lord did not fulfill his promise to Solomon, or at least not fully, was unlikely. Thus, he questioned the likelihood of such information in Kings and rejected it absolutely. Accordingly, the Chronicler turned the whole story upside down, and wrote: "And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, during which Solomon had built the house of the Lord, and his own house that *the towns which Hiram had gave to Solomon, Solomon built them, and made the people of Israel live there*" (2 Chr 8,1-2).⁴⁹

⁴⁶ See in detail, Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*, 154-56.

⁴⁷ See 2 Chr 8,17-18 // 1 Kgs 9,26-28; 2 Chr 9,9-11.17-21 // 1 Kgs 10,10-12.18-22.

⁴⁸ See 1 Chr 28,5-6 (verse 6 alludes to Nathan Prophecy in 1 Chr 17,11-13 // 2 Sam 7,12-14); 29,1 – "additions." Here the Chronicler probably based his statement on 1 Kgs 2,15b: "I (= Adonijah) should reign; but the kingdom is turned about, and has become my brother's (= Solomon's); for it was his from the Lord." Since King Solomon was chosen by the Lord to succeed his father and to build the Temple, it excludes the probability of the opposing story in 1 Kgs 1-2. Who would oppose someone chosen by the Lord himself? Thus, the Chronicler omits that story altogether.

⁴⁹ See on this issue see in detail, Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 40-42.

The approach exemplified here presents the Chronicler in a very different and much more positive light: he did not falsify events. Rather, he evaluated them from a different perspective, a perspective with its own self-logic and set of justifications. Again, it does not mean that we, the modern historians, must accept the ways of the Chronicler and credit them with any reliability.

2.4 COMPOSING A HISTORY: THE DIALECTIC BETWEEN THE PRESENT AND THE PAST

Writing a history – any history – does not just mean a description of past events, institutions, personalities, etc. Rather, it means also reviewing the past within the specific context of the author's time, place, social, religious, cultural, and political circumstances. Thus, the 'past' never comes to be just a 'past,' and in fact it is never dead; rather, it continues to be shaped and reshaped depending on a historian's place, time, and conditions.

Several chapters of the volume under review strive to demonstrate that the Chronicler was conditioned by his time, place, and historical contexts. As such – and no one can ignore these – the Chronicler selects from the earlier sources texts, and topics about Israel's past that are related to his own agenda and audience. He evaluates those texts and topics, telling the past from his own socio-historical context and norms, literary and religious standards and concerns. In other words, Chronicles primarily represents the views of its author about the past in such a manner as to make it applicable to his time and generation, rather than accurately representing the times and generations spoken about, that is, the monarchic period.

Indeed, the message of the Chronicler was definitely different from that of the earlier biblical-historical works and was directed to a different time, place, and audience. It was attuned to contemporary, local, and new historical circumstances. Therefore, the Chronicler's work should be valued as a significant contribution to the dialectic between the historian of the Second Temple era and the pre-exilic period, via telling the history of Israel, especially the time of kings. Such a dialectic brings with it an evaluation of Israelite history from the perspective of a historian working in the Second Commonwealth era. The following examples illustrate my point

(1) The Chronicler centers his writing on the tribe of Judah and the history of the Davidic dynasty, paying particular attention to Jerusalem, the Jerusalem Temple, and its services and service-givers. Presumably, the Chronicler's focus on these issues stems from the actual functions that these served in his own time. In other words, he attempts to enhance the holiness and superiority of his own contemporary Temple (and it is

reasonable to assume that he was one of the Temple staff), and his own place – Jerusalem, and his own Judahite community in *Yebud Medinta* and its leaders – the High Priest and the Davidic descendant – Anani. The Chronicler describes the high priesthood in the Kingdom of Judah, as the institution was reflected in his own time in *Yebud Medinta*.⁵⁰

(2) The Chronicler describes Jerusalem as the place where David and his sons lived, almost uninterruptedly, since the capture of the city by David until, presumably, the Chronicler's own time in the Persian period (1 Chr 3,24). It seems that the Chronicler's main purpose was to depict Jerusalem as the ultimate and almost continual residential city of David's descendants. Furthermore, he uses the post-exilic list of Jerusalem's inhabitants in Nehemiah 11 as the "climax" of his work's genealogical and ethnographical introduction (1 Chr 1-9), even though the list breaks off at the genealogy of Saul's house (1 Chr 8,29-38) and the tragic death of Saul and his sons (1 Chr 10 // 1 Sam 31). The picture that emerges from 1 Chronicles 9 is that Jerusalem was inhabited *willingly* by all Israel. The city was the center of the whole nation, of the northern as well as of the southern tribes. Moreover, through many changes in the text of Samuel and a unique description of the capture of the city, the Chronicler attempts, most probably, to enhance the reputation of his contemporary unpopulated provincial town of Jerusalem (Neh 11,3-19 // 1 Chr 9,2-17) and make it appealing as a desirable national center for potential inhabitants. In other words, the Chronicler probably attempts to encourage contemporary inhabitants of *Yebud Medinta* as well as Jews from the Diaspora (especially the Egyptian and Babylonian *gola*) to move to Jerusalem and live in the city continually, while showing how important the city is and that the descendants of the only lawful chosen dynasty were and actually are (Anani who was mentioned at the seventh place in 1 Chr 3,24 and in the Elephantine papyri) almost always as its constant residents. Let us not forget that just several years earlier Nehemiah forced some provincial Jews to reside in the depopulated city of Jerusalem.⁵¹

(3) The Chronicler attempts through various literary efforts to enhance the great sanctity of the Temple, its site, vessels, and servants presumably in order to highlight the holiness as well as the significance of his own contemporary small, poorly built and furnished Temple. He relates the Temple site to the binding of Isaac (*Aqedah*, Gen 22), which is not mentioned in the parallel text in the book of Kings. The clear references to

⁵⁰ See Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 140-42, 182-85.

⁵¹ See Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 85-108, 125-41.

the stories of the *Aqedah*, the census, and Araunah's threshing floor (2 Sam 24) were, probably, intended to endow Zerubbabel's Temple with a special degree of sanctity as it fell short of Solomon's Temple in size, wealth, and ritual accessories. Moreover, in all probability it also contains a hidden polemic against the Samaritan sacred place on Mount Gerizim concerning the chosen and most holy ritual place.

(4) In contrast to his *Vorlage*, the Deuteronomistic history (2 Kgs 24,8-17), the Chronicler stresses that Nebuchadnezzar had removed the vessels in the time of Jehoiachin and that they had not been physically violated. He also highlights that the sacred vessels were in Babylon awaiting the time when God would give attention to them and bring them back. These things happened, indeed, when Sheshbazzar led the returning exiles to Zion and brought with him "the vessels of the house of the Lord which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem" (Ezra 1,7; see also 5,13-15; 6,5). In other words, the Chronicler would like to express that the vessels of Zerubbabel's Temple, that is, the Chronicler's own contemporary Temple, are the same as that of Solomon's Temple. This is a clear dispute with those that negate and disrespect the Zerubbabel's poor Temple as expressed in the book of Haggai and in other Second Temple writings.⁵²

(5) The Chronicler judges the historical personalities of the monarchic era, such as David and Solomon, and their acts as though the Deuteronomistic and the Priestly Codices existed in those past times as they existed in his own time, that is, in the Persian age (end of the 5th – the first quarter of the 4th century B.C.E.).⁵³

(6) The Chronicler omits the last part of Cyrus' edict. He chooses to close his composition with a call for immigration to the Land of Israel, *ויעל* "so let him go up." This closing seems to be a practical 'Zionistic' encouragement of immigration from the existing Jewish communities of the *gola* to *Yehud Medinta*.⁵⁴

⁵² The preservation of the vessels in Babylon, stressed by the Chronicler and Ezra (1-6), may be contrasted with traditions in Jewish and in Samaritan literature, which claim that some of the furnishings of the sanctuary, including the vessels, had been hidden in the earth until the eschatological time when the cultic service would be re-performed. See Kalimi, *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy*, 9-32 esp. 25-31; idem, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 122.

⁵³ See the examples detailed by Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 142-147, 149-156. See also example 2 in the following section here.

⁵⁴ See Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 152-155. There are several other examples that support my perspective, see Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 140-158, 182-185, 279-280, 289-290, 312 note 38, 314 note 44; idem, "The

All in all, according to our knowledge of the sources, Chronicles is the first work of its kind in the mid-Second Temple period.⁵⁵ This work seems to have been greatly needed by its generation, considering the social, religious, linguistic, and literary norms that had developed especially since the composition of Samuel and Kings many generations previously. Accordingly, Chronicles and the Chronicler represent the principle of ‘each generation with its own historiography and historian.’ Since *veritas filia temporis*,⁵⁶ Chronicles is the “right” composition, “the true one,” for its time, place, and audience.

2.5 IS CHRONICLES INTENDED TO REPLACE THE EARLIER HISTORICAL WRITINGS?

Chronicles is not intended to replace the earlier historical writings, Samuel-Kings, as assumed, for example, by Carl Steuernagel (1869-1958). Probably, it was intended to be read alongside them. In fact, one cannot understand Chronicles without at least some familiarity with Samuel-Kings. The Chronicler assumed that his audience knew all these books. Therefore, in many cases he just alludes to them (i.e., 1 Chr 10,13-14 alludes to 1 Sam 13-15; 28; 2 Chr 3,1 alludes to Gen 22 and 2 Sam 24).⁵⁷ Just as the Chronicler read Samuel-Kings against the background of the entire Torah, and his starting point was that all the great figures of the Israelite nation knew all the Torah and kept its commandments,⁵⁸ so he wrote his book against the background of Samuel-Kings, while considering that his work

Land / Mount Moriah, and the Site of the Jerusalem Temple in Biblical Historical Writing,” *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy: Studies in Scriptures in the Shadow of Internal and External Controversies* (JCH, 2; Assen, Royal Van Gorcum, 2002), 9-32 esp. 25-31. See also idem, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, especially chapters 4-9 (85-157).

⁵⁵ I hold to the opinion of the double redaction of the Deuteronomistic History. This work has been mostly written during the monarchic period (probably, in Josianic times) and was completed in the exilic era, ca. 550 B.C.E. For detailed references, see Kalimi, “The Land / Mount Moriah,” *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy*, 23-24, note 40.

⁵⁶ On this dictum see recently the stimulating article of B. Dooley, “Veritas filia Temporis: Experience and Belief in Early Modern Culture,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 60 (1999), 487-504.

⁵⁷ On this issue, see in detail, Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 194-214 esp. 194-95.

⁵⁸ Thus, for instance, he harmonizes 2 Samuel 5 with Deuteronomy 7 concerning idol burning (see below).

should be read alongside them for a “right” and “appropriate” understanding of them!

Furthermore, the Chronicler rewrote some texts in chiasmic order in relationship to their original appearance in earlier writings (mostly Samuel-Kings).⁵⁹ Concerning some simple cases, for example, two-member structures,⁶⁰ one can claim that maybe it is natural for a writer who is rewriting a text and, unintentionally, would produce chiasm in some percentage of the cases.⁶¹ However, there are many multi-parted, sophisticated structures of chiasmus between the parallel texts that must be considered as intentional on the Chronicler’s part.⁶² Thus, one can reasonably suppose that the Chronicler would have to presume that at least a certain portion of his intellectual audience would be reading his book in comparison to Samuel and Kings!

The presence of two various histories within a community, even if they occasionally contradict each other, presumably was not a real issue for that society. Indeed, this phenomenon is not unique to Chronicles and Samuel-Kings. It is known also from the books of the Torah; for example, the two different stories of creation, in the same book, side by side (Genesis 1-2); the contradictory stories about wandering in the wilderness, which are related in Exodus and Numbers, on the one hand, and in Deuteronomy, on the other hand.⁶³

2.6 CHRONICLES AND EZRA-NEHEMIAH

Indeed, the Chronicler lived some time after Ezra and Nehemiah, and his book is a distinct composition, separate from Ezra-Nehemiah.⁶⁴ There are several essential differences between these writings, as I detailed in the volume.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, at the same time the Chronicler uses Ezra-

⁵⁹ See Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 232-74.

⁶⁰ Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 234-46.

⁶¹ There are many examples of this feature in the Hebrew Bible; see Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 232-34.

⁶² Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 246-68, examples nos. 12.38-12.92.

⁶³ Compare, for instance, Numbers 13-14 and Deut 1,22-25. There are also a number of contradictory theological motifs that exist side-by-side in the same corpus, in the same book, and even in the same chapter. See Kalimi, *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy*, 141 and the examples in note 17.

⁶⁴ For this term, see Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 8, note 28. Of course, by this term I am not referring to the final form of this writing.

⁶⁵ Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 54-56.

Nehemiah as a source (i.e., 1 Chr 9,2-17 // Neh 11,3-19; 2 Chr 6,40 and Neh 1,6; 2 Chr 2,9 and Ezra 3,7; 2 Chr 36,22-23 // Ezra 1,1-3a).⁶⁶ Why shouldn't he? In fact, an author can agree with another writer on a number of issues on the one hand, and still keep his distinct opinion, world view, even dispute with him on different issues, on the other hand.

2.7 THE CHRONICLER'S AGE AND CONTEXT

The Chronicles represents the principle of 'each generation with its own historiography' and its own historian. But what is the generation of the Chronicler? In which period and on which exact days of that period did he compose? Once again, clear evidence concerning the date of composition and authorship is lacking in Chronicles itself or in other biblical or non-biblical sources.

Indeed, though the book of Chronicles mainly deals with the history of the Davidic dynasty and the First Temple, there is no doubt that it was composed in the Second Temple period. There is, however, enormous diversity concerning the question: when exactly Chronicles' composition should be situated. On this point, one admits that the number of proposals for the dating of Chronicles is almost as large as the number of scholars themselves. There are several hundreds of years of difference between some proposals. Admitting this complicated situation, which almost makes it impossible to do any serious historical research on the book that will be acceptable at least to a vast number of scholars, the volume reviewed here strives to find a reasonable resolution to the problematic dating of Chronicles. On the one hand, it claims that the book of Chronicles neither contains Greek words, nor does it reflect any feature of Classical or Hellenistic thought or a specific influence of literary, cultural, or historical events. There is also no indication of anachronisms from the Hellenistic period in Chronicles. On the other hand, Chronicles does have some Persian words and names; it mentions events from the Persian period (i.e., 2 Chr 36,22-23); some genealogical lists extend into the Persian era (such as, 1 Chr 3,1-24); and it has also some anachronisms from the Persian time (for instance, in 1 Chr 29,7). Accordingly, it is reasonable to presume that the book was composed sometime in the Persian epoch (539 - 332 B.C.E.).

The dating of Chronicles depends to a high degree on a scholar's approach to other basic problems of the book, that is, the question concerning the presumed common authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-

⁶⁶ See Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 62-63, 129-130; idem, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 90-92, 143-144.

Nehemiah and the extent of the original text of Chronicles itself. This study argues that in all appearances 1 Chr 1,1 - 2 Chr 36,23 represents a more or less coherent literary-historiographic unit that is so distinct from Ezra-Nehemiah that a common authorship seems implausible. Now, the only indication for a *terminus a quo* is to be found in the Masoretic Text of 1 Chr 3,19-24.⁶⁷ The six generations after Zerubbabel, which are listed there, lead to the year 400 B.C.E., if 20 years per generation are assumed or to the years 382-376 with one generation lasting for 23-24 years, that is, about the first quarter of the fourth century B.C.E. If the Anani mentioned in the Elephantine papyri (407 B.C.E.) is identical to the one in 1 Chr 3,24, this also results in a *terminus a quo* very close to that time. Since 1 Chr 3,19-24 represents later data than the Chronicler's citation of Ezra 1 in 2 Chr 36,22-23 and his usage of the verses from Nehemiah 11 in 1 Chr 9, it is needless to refer to these texts as a *terminus a quo*.

At the present time, considering lack of knowledge and in view of the scarcity of external evidence, it seems improbable to reach a more precise and reasonable resolution to the dating of the book of Chronicles.

Now, Gary N. Knoppers asserts that the Chronicler's work "does manifest some signs of contacts (direct or indirect) with historiographic traditions attested to in the ancient Aegean world..."⁶⁸ He argues that "some extra-biblical analogies to the Chronicler's use of segmented genealogies are found... in the west." Knoppers dates the book, like some other scholars in the past and present, "near the end of the Persian period or the beginning of the Hellenistic period."⁶⁹

⁶⁷ My preference of MT 1 Chr 3 (i.e., six generations) over the number given in the LXX (i.e., eleven generations) is, indeed, explicated: "Apparently, the translator(s) of the ancient Greek (as well as of the Syrian and Latin) version tried to clarify their difficult Hebrew *Vorlage* of the list, and to apply it to their own time as close as possible.⁶⁷ The corruptness of the Masoretic Text has not been proven, though; rather, it seems to be the case that the original version in fact encompassed six generations after Zerubbabel;" see Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 57.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to relate the LXX version of the genealogy of the house of David in 1 Chr 3,24, which mentions Akkub, one of the seven sons of Eljoenai, with the Aramaic grave-inscription of "Akabia son of Eljoenai" from the ancient cemetery of El Ibrahimia (Alexandria, beginning of the third century B.C.E.), since too many "ifs" are involved, and any conclusion would be very speculative (see *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 57, note 93).

⁶⁸ See Knoppers, "Greek Historiography and the Chronicler's History," 647.

⁶⁹ See G. N. Knoppers, "Greek Historiography and the Chronicler's History: A Reexamination," *JBL* 122 (2003), 627-50 esp. 650 and note 103. In an earlier essay,

Without criticizing the meaning of “some signs” and “some... analogies” (what do these mean? Is it enough to date a book such as Chronicles on the basis of “some signs” and “some... analogies”?), one should not explain them, necessarily, as a result of a genetic relationship (this is revealed from his work and arguments, rather than being mistaken by me) between Chronicles and the Hellenic writings. Though I am not of the opinion that in the late Persian and early Hellenistic times the southern Levant was “a period of great cultural isolation,”⁷⁰ as Knoppers ascribes to me, these kinds of literary features could easily be developed independently within various cultural regions with no *direct or indirect* influence upon each other. Unfortunately, Knoppers neglects to refer to this essential part of my argumentation. He writes: “I view late Persian and early Hellenistic times as a period of great flux, an era of significant trade, and the occasion of interaction among a variety of cultures.” However, still it is very hard, if not impossible, to see how the Chronicler, whose work does not reflect any sign of the Greek language nor any anachronism from Greek and/or Hellenistic culture, could have read any Greek writings or to have met with any Greek scholars (with whom and where exactly?) who knew Hebrew and/or Aramaic and thus how he could have been influenced by them. After all, this sort of intellectual and academic influence is far beyond the western material influence (such as numismatics, pottery, weights, etc. which could be moved easily by any trader, visitor and so forth) even before Alexander’s conquest of the Land of Israel. Indeed, the segmented and linear genealogies are found in Chronicles as well as in other biblical writings (especially in the Pentateuch, in the J and P codices)⁷¹ which were available to the Chronicler. Knoppers adduces an instance from Greek writings for the form: genealogical lists (1 Chr 1-9) which serve as a prelude

he notes that the time in which the Chronicler composed his book was “in the late Persian and early Hellenistic periods” (italics mine, I.K.). See idem, “Intermarriage, Social Complexity, and Ethnic Diversity in the Genealogy of Judah,” *JBL* 120 (2001), 15-30 esp. 27, note 61.

⁷⁰ See especially Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 50.

⁷¹ See for example, A. Malamat, “King Lists of the Old Babylonian Period and Biblical Genealogies,” *JAOS* 88 (1968), 168-173; idem, *Israel in Biblical Times: Historical Essays* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute & Israel Exploration Society, 1983), 24-45 (Hebrew); idem, “Tribal Societies: Biblical Genealogies and African Lineage Systems,” *History of Biblical Israel: Major Problems and Minor Issues* (CHANE, 7; Leiden / Boston / Köln: E.J. Brill, 2001), 41-53. For more bibliography on this issue see I. Kalimi, *The Books of Chronicles: A Classified Bibliography* (SBB, 1; Jerusalem: Simor, 1990), 117-20, items no. 1000-1035.

to the narrative (1 Chr 10 - 2 Chr 36).⁷² This form appears, however, already in the Torah, which the Chronicler knew perfectly. For example, the flood story (Gen 6-8) has a prelude with a long list of genealogies from Adam to Noah (Gen 5,1-32); stories of the Patriarchs (Gen 12-50) are preceded by genealogies of mankind from Noah to Abraham (Gen 10-11). All in all, it is reasonable to assume that the Chronicler used and sometimes even developed the literary models he found in the well known earlier Hebrew writings, rather than to presume that he was influenced by foreign Greek writings.

2.8 THE CHRONICLER'S *VORLAGE*(N)

2.8.1 General Approach

In any comparative study of the parallel texts between the book of Chronicles and the books of Samuel-Kings, the Chronicler's *Vorlage*(n) becomes an essential issue. In fact, this problematic issue is discussed in detail in my other studies.⁷³ I am fully aware of the issue in this volume as well, and refer to it in the context of the various textual witnesses of Chronicles, Samuel, Kings as well as other scriptures whenever there is a real need to do so, case by case.⁷⁴ Nonetheless, as I state in the *Prologue* of the volume, it is worthwhile to highlight:

once again, that the Qumranic as well as LXX and other ancient text-witnesses could represent sometimes an original version, but also – no less – an interpretation, textual and thematic harmonization, revision, correction, and even corruption of the original text. Thus, one must evaluate the issue very carefully and not give an automatic preference to those witnesses over the Masoretic Text. Furthermore, recently Emanuel Tov emphasized that “since the language and spelling of Torah and the Prophetic books actually did not pass the process of updating, as revealed by comparing the parallel texts between Samuel-Kings and Chronicles, it may show that the exact MT form of these books already existed at the time the book of Chronicles was composed.”⁷⁵

⁷² See Knoppers, “Greek Historiography and the Chronicler’s History,” 643.

⁷³ See for instance, Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 11-16.

⁷⁴ See for example, Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 13, 16, 75, 90, 91, 100, 101, 103, 108, 110, 112, 116, 127.

⁷⁵ See Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 16.

2.8.2 *Specific Textual Issues*

Concerning the specific textual issues mentioned by Knoppers, I would like to respond:

(1) It is hard to admit that the difficult text of 2 Sam 5,6b β and 8b, concerning the capture of Jerusalem, is “a later addition.” What was the purpose of such late expansions? The texts in Samuel 5 are *lectio difficilior*, therefore, they are much earlier than the clear text of Chronicles. McCarter’s supposition,⁷⁶ for example, that the texts in 2 Sam 5,6b β and 8b are late expansions is not convincing, since it is based on several unproven hypotheses. Moreover, these “late expansions” cause more problems than they solve. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that this version of 2 Samuel was already available to the Chronicler and that he attempted to make the early difficult texts less complex and more meaningful to his audience.⁷⁷

(2) Concerning some scholars’ arguments that “the Chronicler’s *Vorlage* for the final chapters of Kings was shorter than MT Kings and did not contain certain features, such as the names of the Judahite queen mothers,” I would like to emphasize, once more, as follows. In the case under discussion, Jehoiachin’s story in Chronicles comparable to that in Kings, we are not talking about a word – such as a name of queen mother – or even a phrase that may or may not appear in the Chronicler’s *Vorlage*. Instead, we are talking about *10 verses* (i.e., *159 words*) in 2 Kgs 24,8-17 comparable to the parallel text in Chronicles that contains only *2 verses* (*34 words*, 2 Chr 36,9-10). Though the Chronicler abridged the accounts of the two previous kings, Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim, and of Jehoiachin’s successor, Zedekiah, he shortened the account of Jehoiachin drastically—by 79%, which can be compared to reductions of 53% for Jehoahaz, 55% for Jehoiakim and 55% for Zedekiah. The Chronicler omitted what we find in the book of Kings about the siege of Jerusalem and its despoiling and depopulation — specifically, about the removal of the treasures of the

⁷⁶ P.K. McCarter, Jr., *II Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary* (AB 9; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 137-38.

⁷⁷ It is worthy to mention that in Lev 21,17-23 the blind and lame were included among those who were not allowed to worship in the House of God. There is nothing, however, concerning their visiting the House of God. Therefore, Targum Jonathan on Samuel wrote “the sinner and the guilty” instead of “the blind and lame” of the Hebrew text. Nevertheless, the Chronicler’s omission, as well as the Targumist’s changes, represent an effort to improve the image of David. Compare Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 101, note 22.

palace and of the Temple (verse 13) and the surrender of Jehoiachin and his household, his ministers and all of the military elite, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths (verse 14a),⁷⁸ of the queen mother (cf. Jer 13,18; 22,24), the king's wives, his officials, and the nobles of the land (verses 14b-16).⁷⁹

3. COMMENTS ON SOME PARTICULAR ISSUES

3.1 PUNS ON ROOTS AND PLAYS ON SOUNDS IN CHRONICLES

I distinguish between "puns on roots" and "plays on sounds:" sections II and III of chapter three deal with "plays of Hebrew roots,"⁸⁰ while section IV of it deals with sound plays in the explanations of names.⁸¹ This distinction is also expressed verbally at the end of section I: "Some of the puns are based on the plays of Hebrew word's *roots*, while others – mostly in the midrashic names – are based on *sound* plays."⁸² Furthermore, it is clearly stated that the chapter centers mostly on cases of 'paronomasia' / 'pun' in Chronicles, rather than on the related literary devices such as 'alliterations,' 'assonances.'⁸³

3.2 THE PORTRAIT OF JOAB IN CHRONICLES

Generally speaking, the portrait of Joab reflected from Chronicles is more positive than the one emerging from Samuel and Kings. It seems that the cause for this reflection mainly stems from the fact that several large texts appearing in the earlier books (that of portraying Joab as vengeful, anxious and ambitious), are altogether omitted in Chronicles. The Chronicler omits

⁷⁸ In verse 14, the number of those deported from Jerusalem is ten thousand, although verses 15-16 give eight thousand (seven thousand warriors and one thousand craftsmen and smiths). On this and on the number 3,023 which is preserved in Jer 52,28, see A. Malamat, "The Last Years of the Kingdom of Judah," in L. G. Perdue, L. E. Toombs, and G. L. Johnson (eds.), *Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Memory of D. Glenn Rose* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1987), 287-314 esp. 293. A slightly different version of the paper was published in his collection: *History of Biblical Israel: Major Problems and Minor Issues*, 299-321 esp. 309-11. Cf. Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 312.

⁷⁹ See in detail, Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 115-118 and notes 6 and 12.

⁸⁰ See in detail, Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 69-77.

⁸¹ See Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 77-81.

⁸² See Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 69.

⁸³ Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 68.

the story concerning the kingdom of Ish-Bosheth/Baal, son of Saul (2 Sam 2-4). This story includes the cruel murder of Abner, the commander of the army of Ish-Bosheth, by Joab and Abishai as revenge for the death of their brother, Asahel, in the course of the war between the houses of Saul and David (2 Sam 3,22-30). He omits the entire story of David and Bath-sheba (2 Sam 11-12), which includes sending Bathsheba's husband, Uriah the Hittite, to his death by Joab (though per David's request; 2 Sam 11,15-24). The Chronicler omits the story of Absalom's rebellion that includes the killing of Absalom by Joab, despite David's clear request: "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, with Absalom" (2 Sam 18,5.10-15). Joab killed his rival, Amasa, the Israelite commander (2 Sam 19,14; 20,9-10b). The Chronicler excludes the story of the opposition of Adonijah (and Joab who supported him) to Solomon, as well as the description of the wicked Joab in David's will (1 Kgs 1-2). These omissions have not been done purposely in order to portray Joab positively, rather for some other reasons that lie beyond the scope of this paper. Moreover, along with the omissions of Joab's negative points, the Chronicler failed to include some of his glorious military actions that protected and fortified the Davidic kingdom (this including the putting down of Sheba ben Bichri's rebellion; 2 Sam 20,1-22).

In fact, what we do find in Chronicles are the following: (1) Joab was one of the three sons of Zeruiah, David's sister, that is, he was a part of the royal family (1 Chr 2,16; compare 2 Sam 3,39; 17,25). (2) He was commander-in-chief of David (1 Chr 18,15; 27,34 // 2 Sam 8,16; 20,23), and as such contributed booty to the building of the Temple, as did Samuel, Saul, and Abner who fought against Israel's enemies (1 Chr 26,28). (3) Joab acted heroically in the course of the capture of Jerusalem (1 Chr 11,6), a description that does not appear in the parallel text of 2 Sam 5,7-8. Probably, the Chronicler intends here to fill in the incomplete sentence in Samuel and to explain how Joab became the commander-in-chief of David's army, an explanation that does not appear in any other source.⁸⁴ (4) Joab restores / rebuilds "the rest of the city" (= Jerusalem; 1 Chr 11,8b—an "addition"). Since there is nothing "chronistic" here, it may be that it reflects a different *Vorlage*. (5) 1 Chr 18,12 ascribes the defeat of the Edomites to Abishai, Joab's brother, while Ps 60,1 credits it to Joab.⁸⁵ (6) Joab's decisive war against the Ammonites (1 Chr 19,8-20,1), which the

⁸⁴ Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 95-108 esp. 100-7.

⁸⁵ 2 Sam 8,13-14 credit it to David (read: "Edom" with the LXX and the Peshitta). See also 1 Kgs 11,15-16 – a text that the Chronicler omits together with the entire chapter.

Chronicler copied almost verbatim from 2 Sam 10,7-11,1. (7) Joab carried out David's ill-fated census of the people, though it was disputed with the king (1 Chr 21,18 // 2 Sam 24,19), and according to the Chronicler at some point Joab decided not to count Levi and Benjamin (1 Chr 21,6—an "addition").

Yet, if all these in Chronicles – particularly 1 Chr 11,6. 8b; 21,6; 26,28 - have something to do with Joab's descendants mentioned in Ezra 2,6 // Neh 7,11 and Ezra 8,9; 1 Esdr 8,35 -- to cite R. W. Klein: "the Chronicler may have equated them and therefore felt he needed to enhance the status of Joab" -- it is hard to say with certainty, however, it is possible. Nevertheless, if one accepts this assumption, then he must explain 1 Chr 18,12, which mentions "Abishai son of Zeruiah," as opposed to Ps 60,1 which mentions "Joab."⁸⁶

3.3 THE CHRONICLER'S TREATMENT OF JERUSALEM

(1) A careful reading of my discussion of the Chronicler's treatment of Jerusalem does not leave any space for G.N. Knoppers' inquiry. Again, I wrote as follows:⁸⁷

Contrary to all the exilic and post-exilic prophetic and post-biblical literature mentioned above, *Jerusalem* [and not: "*Jerusalem and its temple*" as Knoppers mistakenly ascribes to me (italics mine; I.K.)] is represented in Chronicles *essentially* in realistic terms.... Indeed, the Chronicler represents Jerusalem as the chosen city of God and the capital of the "kingdom of the Lord," the site of His throne and sanctuary. However, his pragmatic treatment of the city follows the practice as in most of the rest of the Hebrew Bible. The Chronicler describes the city basically as a monarchic capital. The post-exilic temple-city of his days (ca. 400 - 375 B.C.E.), the poor and provincial Jerusalem of the Persian province, *Yebud Medinta* (Neh 11,1; 1 Chr 9,2-18 // Neh 11,3-19), and the poorly built Temple of Zerubbabel⁸⁸ did not motivate him to illustrate Jerusalem and its Temple in eschatological terms or allude to the

⁸⁶ Does the change in Chronicles reflect another tradition? Or, does it reflect a different *Vorlage*? The Sages in Genesis Rabbah 74,13 solved the problem in a harmonistic way, by ascribing the texts to two different wars against Edom; see also Rabbi David Altschuler commentary on 1 Chr 18,12 who followed them, and compare Rabbi David Kimchi, who takes a different approach.

⁸⁷ See Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 133-135. In order to shorten, I omitted some of the footnotes that accompany the original text in the volume.

⁸⁸ On this issue, see in detail Kalimi, "The land / Mount Moriah," *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy*, 27-29.

utopian visions of the exilic and postexilic prophets. Moreover, by way of contrast to Ezekiel, who described the heavenly plans of the future Temple and Jerusalem (Ezek 40-42; 43,10-27), the Chronicler spoke in detail about the heavenly *planned* structure of the Solomonic Temple only (1 Chr 28,11-19, no parallel).

Such a paragraph is not found in Chronicles regarding Jerusalem itself. Moreover, no visionary description of Jerusalem as can be found later in the apocalyptic writings occur here. The huge gap between the city of his own period and that of the monarchic period did not cause him to idealize and glorify Jerusalem (of the First Temple period), nor to refer to it in a symbolic-mystic fashion. The Chronicler might have glorified some kings such as David, Solomon, Abiam / Abijah, Hezekiah, and Josiah (1 Chr 11-29; 2 Chr 1-9; 13; 29-32; 34-35), but never their royal city. Throughout his work the Chronicler treats Jerusalem in realistic, earthly, geographic terms, rather than as some heavenly ideal.⁸⁹

The geographical reality of Jerusalem in the Chronicler's time could be depicted, more or less, from the description of Nehemiah 2,11-18; 3; 4,1 and from some archaeological excavations.⁹⁰ Usually, the Chronicler does not describe the pre-exilic city and Temple in terms of the city and Temple of his own day. In other words, when giving a 'physical' *description* of Jerusalem or the Temple (as it was), the Chronicler *essentially* follows the biblical sources that were available to him without making anachronistic emendations.⁹¹

In my view, one definitely could not say that Jerusalem as portrayed by the Chronicler "projects into the past what other writers project into the future." One could not say so even about the *essential* description of the Temple – that is only a part of the city - in Chronicles. Thus, for example, what is unrealistic in the description of 2 Chr 3,1-5,1 (// 1 Kgs 6,1-7,51), or of 2 Chr 24,1-14 (// 2 Kgs 12,1-17)?

⁸⁹ Occasionally the Chronicler omitted from his source some harsh words regarding Jerusalem, since he considered them, apparently, as a curse against the city. Thus, for instance, compare 2 Chr 34,27 with 2 Kgs 22,19; and see Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 284, note 27.

⁹⁰ See for example, B. Mazar, "Jerusalem in the Biblical Period," in Y. Yadin (ed.), *Jerusalem Revealed: Archaeology in the Holy City 1968-1974* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press and Israel Exploration Society, 1976), 1-8.

⁹¹ That is, excluding the preparation to the Temple's building as in 1 Chr 28,11-19 (see the citation in my book at the top of p. 134, and note 33 there), and of course in the parallels in 1 Chr 22,2-5.14-16; 29,19 (all additions).

Concerning the preparation of David for the building of the Temple and its heavenly plan (1 Chr 22,2-5.14-16; 28,11-19; 29,1-9), I already noted the purpose of the Chronicler to pattern the First Temple after that of the Tabernacle of Moses,⁹² in order to show the continuity of the same sort of holiness in the tabernacle, in the Solomonic Temple and his own time's (Second) Temple.⁹³ Moreover, in order to show the piety of David, the Chronicler exaggerated his preparations, of course in some way unrealistically, as I noted before.

(2) Concerning the notes of R. Hubbard about the text in 1 Chr 11:6, which relates the capture of Jerusalem,⁹⁴ I would like to stress:

(a) For the Chronicler, David reigns over 'all Israel' from the first moment of his coronation, which follows Saul's death on the mountains of Gilboa!⁹⁵

(b) Even in the book of Samuel, the capture of Jerusalem happened *after* the reunification with the northern Israelite tribes! It is hard to imagine that in between there were separate armies: one the Judahite - under control of Joab, and the other - the Israelite - under control of someone else (since Abner son of Ner was killed already). Thus, it is indeed impossible to suppose that there were *two* armies under *two* commanders-in-chief in the same kingdom!

3.4 "JERUSALEM" VERSUS "CITY OF DAVID"

The reviewer of this issue unfortunately, represents my arguments fragmentarily and inaccurately. Thus, I present here, once again, my complete claims exactly as they were detailed in chapter six of the volume, and leave the final conclusion to the readers. I wrote:

In spite of the admiration and great sympathy for King David, as is revealed in his writing, the Chronicler *does not make systematic usage* of the new name, 'City of David'. He does not change the texts of the Former Prophets and write 'City of David' instead of 'Jerusalem'. He does not even write something similar to "at Jerusalem, in the city of David" as appears in later historiography, for instance, in 1 Macc 2,31. Though the

⁹² Exod 25,9.40; 26,30; 27,8; and see also Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 134, note 36.

⁹³ See in detail, Kalimi, "The land / Mount Moriah," *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy*, 25-31.

⁹⁴ See Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 98-107.

⁹⁵ See in detail, Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 18-22.

Chronicler actually follows in this case what he finds in the books of Samuel and Kings, the evidence is quite surprising *since occasionally he writes equivalent or synonymous names in place of some geographical sites which appear in those books*.⁹⁶ Moreover, contrarily, he alters the text of Kings twice and writes other names instead of the name 'City of David'.⁹⁷

In what follows, I will give two examples:

(1) Second Kings 14,20 "City of David" is changed by the Chronicler to "the City of Judah" (2 Chr 25,28). There is no evidence whatsoever for a scribal error in Chronicles, as R. W. Klein in his review and some other scholars assert.⁹⁸ Indeed, the name appears in the Chaldean Chronicles, which tell about Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon that "in the seventh year ... the king of Akkad collected up his armies and advanced into the land of Hatti and encamped at the *al Ia-a-hu-du* (that is, City of Judah = Jerusalem)."⁹⁹

(2) In 2 Kgs 16,20 we read that Ahaz king of Judah was buried in the "City of David." The Chronicler, however, changes the text and writes the ancient and common name "Jerusalem" instead of the name "City of David" (2 Chr 28,27).¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, at least twice the Chronicler preferred to omit the name "City of David" that appeared in his *Vorlage*: 2 Sam 6,12b // 1 Chr 15,25; 1 Kgs 2, 10-12 // 1 Chr 29,26-28. Concerning the first example, Klein suggests a different explanation for the omission of "City of David" in 1 Chr 15,25. Without evaluating the quality of his suggestion, it still does not erase the validity of my explanation. Concerning the last example, Klein claims, "but he incorporates nothing at all from the verse in question (1 Kgs 2:10)." However, the Chronicler uses the paragraph concerning David, verse 10, which includes the words "City of David," as an integral part of it. Though he definitely could use 1 Kgs 2,10 as he uses the rest of the paragraph (verses 11-12), in fact he chose to omit it. Why did he choose to omit that verse?

Indeed, the name 'City of David' occurs in Chronicles altogether 19 times. However, almost all of them are transferred mechanically from the

⁹⁶ For this feature in the Chronicler's writing, see Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 99-107.

⁹⁷ Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 109.

⁹⁸ See the scholars listed in Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 110, note 3.

⁹⁹ On this issue, see in detail Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 100-101.

¹⁰⁰ See Kalimi, *Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 101. For the full discussion, see idem, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 110.

earlier biblical sources. The **19 times** “City of David” is mentioned in Chronicles is, nevertheless, incomparable to the number of times “Jerusalem” is used in the book, **151 times** (that is, almost a ratio of 1:8,4).¹⁰¹

3.5 JEHOIACHIN’S RELEASE FROM PRISON

Unlike the Deuteronomistic historian, the Chronicler states that the destruction and exile are not the end of history, but rather are necessary steps to achieve purification of the land in order to create a new and hopeful beginning. It seems that 2 Kgs 25,27-30 has been appended later on to the book of Kings, most probably according to Jer 52,31-34. However, even if one considers 2 Kgs 25,27-30 as a part of the original Deuteronomistic composition, it still does not hint at the Israelites’ future, as already stated by Martin Noth: “Under these circumstances the Deuteronomist cannot mean the improvement in the deported Jehoiachin’s personal fortunes (2 Kgs 25.27-30) to herald a new age.”¹⁰² The improved conditions of prisoner Jehoiachin is not compatible with Cyrus’ decree concerning the restoration, the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its Temple.¹⁰³

3.6 CYRUS’ DECREE

At the time of the Chronicler, Yehud and Jerusalem probably needed *immediate* (rather than far into the future) immigrants (however, much more than pilgrims / visitors / tourists) in order to be repopulated and empowered. Calling for immigration is an attempt to awake the patriotic and religious feelings of the Jewish people in the *gola* for the real needs of Yehud and encourage them to act accordingly,¹⁰⁴ though their ancestors did not act appropriately in Cyrus’ time, scores of decades ago.

4. CONCLUDING WORDS

Following the Temple Torah reading for the Day of Atonement (from Leviticus 16), the high priest stated:

¹⁰¹ See in detail, Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 111. For the statistical data concerning the name ‘Jerusalem’ in Chronicles, see 137-39.

¹⁰² *The Deuteronomistic History* (2nd ed.; JSOTSup 15; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 143.

¹⁰³ See in detail, Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 154, note 42.

¹⁰⁴ Compare Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 153, note 40.

“יותר ממה שקריתי לפניכם כתוב כאן” “There is written here much more than I read for you.” To paraphrase the words of the high priest, there is much to study from this captivating composition named “Chronicles.”

Ironically, the Chronicler who is much disputed as a historian becomes the leading theme in recent scholarship. Nevertheless, it is my hope that the book of Chronicles will take its appropriate and fully deserved place in modern biblical studies. In other words, it will move more and more from periphery to the center of the 21st century’s biblical scholarship, and become a corner stone in the research of ancient Israelite history and historiography.¹⁰⁵ It is hoped, that this volume along with other studies will advance the book to its desired destination.

¹⁰⁵ Compare Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, 159-160, esp. 160.