



Proceedings

The 9th Literary Studies Conference

Literature and Interdisciplinarity

20-21 October 2021
Universitas Sanata Dharma



Published by
Fakultas Sastra
Universitas Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta
2021

PROCEEDINGS The 9th LITERARY STUDIES CONFERENCE

“Literature and Interdisciplinarity”

Universitas Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta 20-21 October 2021

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THE 9TH LITERARY STUDIES CONFERENCE 2021
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Fakultas Sastra

Universitas Sanata Dharma

Jl. Affandi, Mrican Yogyakarta

55022.

Telp. (0274) 513301, 515253 Ext.1324

Editor

Dalan Mehuli Perangin-Angin

First publishing

260 pages; 210 × 297 mm.

ISBN: 978-623-7601-17-3

ISBN 978-623-7601-17-3 (PDF)



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CONTENTS

Title Page.....	1
Copyright Page	2
Greetings From The Chair	3
Welcome Notes From The Rector	4
Contents.....	5
 Literature Learning With A Nusantara Feminist Perspective To Raise Gender Justice Awareness In Universities <i>Wiyatmi, Else Liliani, Esti Swatika Sari</i>	9
 American Dreaming: A Postcolonial Reading Of America Is Not The Heart <i>Jamelle Frances A. Realin</i>	14
 Anita Desai's Fasting, Feasting: The Different Presentations Of Contagion <i>Stasya Yovela</i>	21
 Behavior Restrictions In Customs In Pasundan <i>Juanda</i>	25
 Anime Scenes Soundtrack: Semiotic And Perceptual Cues For Film Comprehension <i>Tiara Depitasari, Thafhan Muwaffaq</i>	29
 Freedom And Power As Contructed In Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451 <i>Shara Rose Virgini B. Olaya-Dionaldo</i>	38
 Improving Thinking And Soft Skills Of Learners By Integrating Literature Programs Into Language Classes <i>Bernadhetta Roselita Anggorosari</i>	46

Representation Of Cultural Contracts In Kidd’s The Secret Life Of Bees <i>Miyata Diva</i>	56
Focalization-Narrator Effect On Perceived Likability And Villainy In Kepnes’s “You: A Novel” <i>Andy Jefferson Sabur, Retno Purwani Sari</i>	60
Multiple Forms Of Oppresion On Women In Muna Masyari’s Damar Kambang And Khaled Hosseini’s A Thousand Splendid Suns <i>Tri Pramesti, Adeline Grace Marianne Litaay, Milenia Fransisca C., Berry Kamayan</i>	65
Revealing Orientalism And Occientalism In Avatar: Na’vi Conquest Through Its Discourses <i>Hermawan Adi Prasetya</i>	71
Ethos In The Courtroom Poems Of Simeon Dumdum, Jr <i>Christine Veloso Lao</i>	77
How And Why Men And Women Speak Differently: A Case Study From Indonesian Speakers In Mataram, Palangkaraya, And Temanggung <i>Natasya Faskadhini, Elfrisa Rismonita, Helena Faustina Trisunjata</i>	82
Text As A Tool For Maintaining Political And Religious Power In 1-2 Chronicles <i>Nikolas Kristiyanto</i>	90
Woman’s Movements Through Social Media: Feminist Activism On Instagram <i>Indah Fajaria</i>	102
The Resistance Towards American Anarchy:	

TEXT AS A TOOL FOR MAINTAINING POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS POWER IN 1-2 CHRONICLES

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Abstract

This research tries to analyze the story of Ancient Israelite Dynasties in the Old Testament. We will try to compare some stories about Kings of Israel in 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, and 1-2 Chronicles. We will use historiography as a method. Through this approach some questions can arise: (1) What are the similarities between Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles versions? (2) What are the differences between them? (3) Did the Chronicler intentionally change some passages? (4) What are the intentions of the Chronicler to change some stories? (5) Are there some political and religious agendas behind Chronicles texts? From these questions, this article tries to find (a) the function of the text of 1-2 Chronicles in Ancient Israel and (b) its relationship with political and religious power. Meanwhile, many scholars try to analyze the implication theologies of 1-2 Chronicles. In this paper, 1-2 Chronicles will be examined as a text in the context of political and religious situations in its own era. Moreover, this article tries to explain three periods of Israelite Dynasties, i.e. Davidic Era, Solomon Era, and Divided Monarchy based on “Chronicler Eyes”. Therefore, this article also tries to find (a) the uniqueness of each era and (b) their political and religious situation behind the text. All of these will bring us to the conclusion that “Text can be used as a tool to maintain political and religious power and it all already happened thousands of years ago”.

Keywords: *chronicles; politics; power; text*

A. Introduction

The story of Ancient Israelite Dynasties in the Old Testament is very interesting to be investigated as a text itself. At least, there are six books in the Old Testament which narrate the history of Ancient Israelite Dynasties: (1) 1 Kings; (2) 2 Kings; (3) 1 Samuel; (4) 2 Samuel; (5) 1 Chronicles; and (6) 2 Chronicles. In these six books, we can categorize the era of Israelite Dynasties becomes three big sections: *First*, Davidic Era; *Second*, Solomon Era; and *Third*, Divided Monarchy.

The date of composition of these six books can be a material to be discussed for a long discourse. Many scholars, until today, do not agree one to another on the date of composition of these books. In this article, we just want to follow one hypothesis for each book, in order to put easily the context behind the book of 1-2 Chronicles between the other books (1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings). The early version of 1-2 Samuel were composed in the 8th Century B.C.E., in the time of King Hezekiah, and work was substantially complete by about 550 B.C.E. (6th Century B.C.E.) (Auld, 2003). Then, the composition of 1-2 Kings is to be assigned to the period between 562 and 536 B.C.E. (6th Century B.C.E.) (Lange, Schaff, Bahr, Harwood, & Sumner, 2008). Finally, 1-2 Chronicles, in general, it may be said that the early version was composed about 515 B.C.E and its final form was completed about 350-300 B.C.E. (Braun, 2002; Klein & Krüger, 2006).

Based on the hypothesis of the date of composition of these six books, 1-2 Chronicles are the latest books between them. It seems that the author of 1-2 Chronicles (*Chroniclers* – it is possible more than an author) already knew about 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings in that era (6th-4th Century B.C.E.). It is proved by John C. Endres and his colleagues in *Chronicles and Its Synoptic Parallels: Samuel, Kings, and Related Biblical Texts* (1998) who stated that in the Hebrew Bible, there are 1323 pericopes (Greek: *literally*, “something cut around”; a discrete, self-contained unit of biblical text). At least, 25 percent of them have some kind of clear synoptic parallelism. The majority of the parallelism can be found in the Former Prophets or Deuteronomistic History (417 pericopes). From these 417 pericopes contain approximately 41 percent of all synoptic parallels within the Hebrew Bible. Most of them occur in 1-2 Chronicles (Endres, Millar, & Burns, 1998).

This article tries to analyze the story of Ancient Israelite Dynasties in the Old Testament. We will try to compare some stories about Kings of Israel in 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, and 1-2 Chronicles. However, we will focus on the historiography of the Ancient Israelite Dynasties in the point of view of 1-2 Chronicles.

B. Methodology

We will use historiography as a method (Vann, 2020) to analyze the motif of Chronicler to write the Ancient Israelite Dynasties in 1-2 Chronicles. Through this approach some questions can arise: (1) What are the similarities between Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles versions? (2) What are the differences between them? (3) Did the Chronicler intentionally change some passages? (4) What are the intentions of the Chronicler to change some stories? (5) Are there some political and religious agendas behind Chronicles texts? From these questions, this article tries to find (a) the function of the text of 1-2 Chronicles in Ancient Israel and (b) its relationship with political and religious power.

Meanwhile, many scholars try to analyze the implication theologies of 1-2 Chronicles. In this paper, 1-2 Chronicles will be examined as a text in the context of political and religious situations in its own era. Moreover, this article tries to explain three periods of Israelite Dynasties, i.e. Davidic Era, Solomon Era, and Divided Monarchy based on "Chronicler Eyes".

C. Result and Discussion

1. Davidic Era

a. The Ark of God

Before "David goes to bring the Ark" (1 Chronicles 13:5-14 // 2 Sam 6:1-11), in 1 Chronicles 13:1-4, we can find a story "David proposes to Bring the Ark to Jerusalem":

¹ And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader. ² And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren everywhere, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us: ³ And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul. ⁴ And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

This narrative is only found in 1 Chronicles. There is no a parallel text in 1-2 Kings and 1-2 Samuel which narrates this story. It means that the Chronicler wants to underline David as a person who proposes to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. In 2 Samuel 6:1-11, we can find a narration "David goes to Bring the Ark". It has a parallel to 1 Chronicle 13:1-14. But, in this part (1 Chronicle 13:1-4), the author wants to make an introduction to the story of "David goes to Bring the Ark" by adding 4 verses which narrates where David made a consultation to every leader in Israel. It seems that the author has an agenda to propose David as an initiator to bring Ark to Jerusalem and this action is supported by all leader of Israel. It means that David is also convoking of his elite troops (*David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader* [1 Chr 13:1]. The phrase "*the captains of thousands and hundreds*" refers to military leaders (cf. Num 31:14,54; 1 Sam 22:7; 2 Sam 18:1; 2 Kgs 11:4,9,10,15) rather than to judicial officials (cf. Exod 18:21,25; Deut 1:15) (Knoppers, 2004). Therefore, David has his legitimation from every leader of Israel. It means that the people of Israel are behind him. This narrative has a background of David's victory of Jerusalem in 1 Chr 11:4-9:

⁴ Then David and all Israel went to Jerusalem (that is, Jebus); and the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, were there. ⁵ And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, "You shall not enter here." Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion (that is, the city of David). ⁶ Now David had said, "Whoever strikes down a Jebusite first shall be chief and commander." And Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, so he became chief. ⁷ Then David dwelt in the stronghold; therefore, it was called the city of David. ⁸ And he built the city all around, from the Millo even to the surrounding area; and Joab repaired the rest of the city. ⁹ And David became greater and greater, for the LORD of hosts was with him.

The temporal narrative ended in 11:9 and resumed again in 13:1 (Knoppers, 2004). The Ark of God was in the hand of Philistines. It was in the house of Abinadab at Kiriath-Jearim for twenty years (cf. 1 Sam 6:2). Kiriath-Jearim (city of forests) is about eight miles west of Jerusalem. Nowadays, Kiriath-Jearim is Tell el-Azhar (Myers, 1965a). In other words, having seized the Jerusalem, David consults with Israel's leader to bring the Ark of God into the newly won capital, Jerusalem (Knoppers, 2004).

The Ark is a part of the identity of Israel. It is so important for them. God himself said to Moses, "You shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give you (Ex. 25:16)." More than that, the ark is also a meeting point between God and His people:

"And there I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel." (Exod. 25:22)

Therefore, when Chronicler describes David as an initiator to bring the Ark to Jerusalem, it means that the Chronicler tries to put David as a central for the religious life of Israelites. On the other hand, the author wants to say that without David, the Ark would not be in Jerusalem.

The narrative "The Ark brought to Jerusalem" in 2 Sam 6:12-19a can also be found in 1 Chronicle 15:25-16:3. But, in 1 Chronicle, we can find an introduction and a conclusion which are constructed by the author to frame the narration of 1 Chr 15:25-16:1-3.

Introduction (1 Chr 15:1-24):

¹ Now David built houses for himself in the city of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched a tent for it. ² Then David said, "No one is to carry the ark of God but the Levites; for the LORD chose them to carry the ark of God, and to minister to Him forever." ³ And David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place, which he had prepared for it. ⁴ And David gathered together the sons of Aaron, and the Levites: ⁵ of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, and 120 of his relatives; ⁶ of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, and 220 of his relatives; ⁷ of the sons of Gershon, Joel the chief, and 130 of his relatives; ⁸ of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, and 200 of his relatives; ⁹ of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, and 80 of his relatives; ¹⁰ of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, and 112 of his relatives. **¹¹ Then David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab, ¹² and said to them, "You are the heads of the fathers' households of the Levites; consecrate yourselves both you and your relatives, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it. ¹³ "Because you did not carry it at the first, the LORD our God made an outburst on us, for we did not seek Him according to the ordinance."** ¹⁴ So the priests and the Levites consecrated themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁵ And the sons of the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders, with the poles thereon as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD. ¹⁶ Then David spoke to the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their relatives the singers, with instruments of music, harps, lyres, loud-sounding cymbals, to raise sounds of joy. ¹⁷ So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel, and from his relatives, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and from the sons of Merari their relatives, Ethan the son of Kushaiah, ¹⁸ and with them their relatives of the second rank, Zechariah, Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the gatekeepers. ¹⁹ So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were appointed to sound aloud cymbals of bronze; ²⁰ and Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with harps tuned to alamoth; ²¹ and Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah, to lead with lyres tuned to the sheminith. ²² And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was in charge of the singing; he gave instruction in singing because he was skillful. ²³ And Berechiah and Elkanah were gatekeepers for the ark. ²⁴ And Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, blew the trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-edom and Jehiah also were gatekeepers for the ark.

Conclusion (1 Chronicle 16:4-6)

⁴ And he [David] appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the LORD, even to celebrate and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel: ⁵ Asaph the chief, and second to him Zechariah, then Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-edom, and Jeiel, with musical instruments, harps, lyres; also Asaph played loud-sounding cymbals, ⁶ and Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests blew trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.

The story about "The Ark Brought to Jerusalem" can be found in 1 Chr 15: 25-16:3 and 2 Samuel 6:12-19. However, only in 1 Chronicles, we can find an introduction and a conclusion to that story. In both part, David was described as a King who gave a legitimation for the Priests and the Levites **(1)** to bring the Ark of God and **(2)** to be ministers before the Ark.

b. David and Bathsheba

In 2 Samuel 11:1-27, there is a narration about "David and Bathsheba":

¹ Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem. ² Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. ³ So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" ⁴ **And David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house. ⁵ And the woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, "I am pregnant."**

⁶ Then David sent to Joab, saying, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David. ⁷ When Uriah came to him, David asked concerning the welfare of Joab and the people and the state of the war. ⁸ Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." And Uriah went out of the king's house, and a present from the king was sent out after him. ⁹ But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. ¹⁰ Now when they told David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" ¹¹ And Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing." ¹² Then David said to Uriah, "Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will let you go." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. ¹³ Now David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with his lord's servants, but he did not go down to his house.

¹⁴ **Now it came about in the morning that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. ¹⁵ And he had written in the letter, saying, "Place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle and withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die."**

¹⁶ So it was as Joab kept watch on the city, that he put Uriah at the place where he knew there were valiant men. ¹⁷ And the men of the city went out and fought against Joab, and some of the people among David's servants fell; and Uriah the Hittite also died. ¹⁸ Then Joab sent and reported to David all the events of the war. ¹⁹ And he charged the messenger, saying, "When you have finished telling all the events of the war to the king, ²⁰ and if it happens that the king's wrath rises and he says to you, 'Why did you go so near to the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?' ²¹ 'Who struck down Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?' then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'"

²² So the messenger departed and came and reported to David all that Joab had sent him to tell. ²³ And the messenger said to David, "The men prevailed against us and came out against us in the field, but we pressed them as far as the entrance of the gate. ²⁴ "Moreover, the archers shot at your servants from the wall; so some of the king's servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead."

²⁵ Then David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab, 'Do not let this thing displease you,

for the sword devours one as well as another; make your battle against the city stronger and overthrow it'; and so encourage him."

²⁶ Now when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.

²⁷ When the time of mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house and she became his wife; then she bore him a son. But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the LORD.

Table 1: This long story in 2 Samuel 11:1-27 is reused by the Chronicler just in a verse (1 Chr 20:1)

2 Sam 11:1; 12:26	1 Chr 20:1
<i>11:1 Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem.</i>	<i>1a Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that Joab led out the army and ravaged the land of the sons of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem.</i>
<i>12:26 Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the sons of Ammon, and captured the royal city.</i>	<i>1b And Joab struck Rabbah and overthrew it.</i>

From the fact above, there are 51 verses – from 2 Sam 11:2 up to 12:25 – which cannot be found in 1 Chr 20. Totally, fifty-three verses in 2 Sam 11-12:26 are reconstructed by the Chronicler to be a single verse in 1 Chronicles 20:1. In this case, there are many narrations which are deleted by the author to reconstruct the story of "David Captures Rabbah". There are 2 important story which cannot be found: **First**, "The Sin of David" (2 Sam 11:2-27); and **Second**, "Nathan Reproves David" (2 Sam 12:1-25). It means the author of 1 Chronicles wants to avoid all the negative things of David. The Chronicler tries to describe David as a "Perfect-Ideal-King" for Israel.

c. Amnon and Tamar

In 2 Sam 13:1-22, we can find a story about Amnon and Tamar. Tamar was raped by Amnon, her half-brother:

¹ Now it was after this that Absalom the son of David had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar, and Amnon the son of David loved her. ² And Amnon was so frustrated because of his sister Tamar that he made himself ill, for she was a virgin, and it seemed hard to Amnon to do anything to her. ³ But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother; and Jonadab was a very shrewd man. ⁴ And he said to him, "O son of the king, why are you so depressed morning after morning? Will you not tell me?" Then Amnon said to him, "I am in love with Tamar, the sister of my brother Absalom." ⁵ Jonadab then said to him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill; when your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Please let my sister Tamar come and give me some food to eat, and let her prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it and eat from her hand.'" ⁶ So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill; when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let my sister Tamar come and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand."

⁷ Then David sent to the house for Tamar, saying, "Go now to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him." ⁸ So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, and he was lying down. And she took dough, kneaded it, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes. ⁹ And she took the pan and dished them out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, "Have everyone go out from me." So everyone went out from him.

¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand." So Tamar took the cakes which she had made and brought them into the bedroom to her brother Amnon. ¹¹ When she brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." ¹² But she answered him, "No, my brother, do not violate me, for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do this disgraceful thing! ¹³ As for me, where could I get rid of my reproach? And as for you, you will be like one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you."

¹⁴ However, he would not listen to her; since he was stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her. ¹⁵ Then Amnon hated her with a very great hatred; for the hatred with which

he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, "Get up, go away!" ¹⁶ But she said to him, "No, because this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you have done to me!" Yet he would not listen to her.

¹⁷ Then he called his young man who attended him and said, "Now throw this woman out of my presence, and lock the door behind her." ¹⁸ Now she had on a long-sleeved garment; for in this manner the virgin daughters of the king dressed themselves in robes. Then his attendant took her out and locked the door behind her.

¹⁹ And Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore her long-sleeved garment which was on her; and she put her hand on her head and went away, crying aloud as she went. ²⁰ Then Absalom her brother said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? But now keep silent, my sister, he is your brother; do not take this matter to heart." So, Tamar remained and was desolate in her brother Absalom's house.

²¹ Now when King David heard of all these matters, he was very angry. ²² But Absalom did not speak to Amnon either good or bad; for Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar.

This narration cannot be found in 1-2 Chronicles. Furthermore, 1-2 Chronicles does not also recount **(1)** "Absalom's Revenge and Flight" (2 Sam 13:23-39); **(2)** Joab's Scheme for Absalom's Return" (2 Sam 14:1-33); **(3)** "Absalom's Rebellion" (2 Sam 15:1-16:23); **(4)** "Ahithopel's Advice Undermined by Hushai" (2 Sam 17:1-23); and **(5)** "The Death of Absalom: (2 Sam 18:1-19:9b). All of these are disgraceful stories of David's Family. In 1-2 Chronicles, we cannot find all of these narrations. The Chronicler seems to reconstruct a new narration about David's Family Stories. All of shameful histories of David try to be cleaned by the Chronicler. Therefore, David's dynasty looks perfect and ideal in 1-2 Chronicles.

2. Solomon Era

a. Fire from the Lord Consumes the Sacrifices

In 2 Chr 7:1-3, we can find a story which narrates about "Fire from the Lord consumes the sacrifices":

¹Now when Solomon had finished praying, **fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house.** ² And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house. ³ And all the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the LORD upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the LORD, saying, "Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting."

In 1 Kings 8:54, we just find a parallel from 2 Chr 7:1a: "*It came about that when Solomon had finished praying this entire prayer and supplication to the Lord.*" Furthermore, the Chronicler adds 2 Chr 7:1b-3 to describe the good response from the Lord to Solomon's prayer by narrating "Fire from the Lord Consumes the Sacrifices". This is a symbol from God to accept the sacrifice of His people. Therefore, in this case, the Chronicler wants to represent King Solomon as a wise, holy, and faithful man.

b. Solomon's Wise Judgment

The interesting fact of Solomon can be found also in 1 Kings 3:16-28. In that part, we can find a story about two women who came to King Solomon to ask his wise judgment for their case:

¹⁶ **Then two women who were prostitutes came to the king and stood before him.** ¹⁷ And the one woman said, "Oh, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth to a child while she was in the house. ¹⁸ "And it happened on the third day after I gave birth, that this woman also gave birth to a child, and we were together. There was no stranger with us in the house, only the two of us in the house. ¹⁹ "And this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on it. ²⁰ "So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while your maidservant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead son in my bosom. ²¹ "And when I rose in the morning to nurse my son, behold, he was dead; but when I looked at him carefully in the morning, behold, he was not my son, whom I had borne." ²² Then the other woman said, "No! For the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son." But the first woman said, "No! For the dead one is your son, and the living one is my son." Thus, they spoke before the king. ²³ Then the king said, "The one says, 'This is my son who is living, and your son is the

dead one'; and the other says, 'No! For your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.'" ²⁴ And the king said, "Get me a sword." So, they brought a sword before the king. ²⁵ And the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other." ²⁶ Then the woman whose child was the living one spoke to the king, for she was deeply stirred over her son and said, "Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him." But the other said, "He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him!" ²⁷ Then the king answered and said, "Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him. She is his mother." ²⁸ When all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had handed down, they feared the king; for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

This story describes the King Solomon as a wise judge. Nevertheless, this good episode cannot be found in 1-2 Chronicles. Usually, all good narration of Kings of Israel is always narrated by the Chronicler, however, it is not narrated. Then, we can ask a question, "Why is the Chronicler not interested in this good narration?"

A clue word that we can find from the text is "prostitute". Even though, the all story describes the wise of Solomon, however, the word "prostitute" becomes an obstacle to reuse this story to 1-2 Chronicles. The Chronicler tries to avoid all the story – even a word – that can bring all negative senses of Kings of Israel. In that sense, the Chronicler works as a "purifying-editor".

c. *Solomon's Apostasy and Adversaries*

In 1-2 Chronicles, the author refuses the narration of 1 Kings 11:1-40:

¹Now **King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women**, ² from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, "You shall not associate with them, neither shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods." Solomon held fast to these in love. ³ And **he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away**. ⁴ For it came about when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. ⁵ For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites. ⁶ And Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as David his father had done. ⁷ Then **Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon**. ⁸ Thus also **he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods**. ⁹ Now the LORD was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, ¹⁰ and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not observe what the LORD had commanded. [...] ⁴⁰ **Solomon sought therefore to put Jeroboam to death**; but Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt to Shishak king of Egypt, and he was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

From this passage (1 Kings 11:1-40), there are many wicked things that relate to King Solomon. For that reason, the Chronicler seems to avoid all these things on his work because it can form the bad image of King Solomon. Solomon must be an ideal King for Israelites. Therefore, this omission becomes a part of Chronicler's agenda to maintain an ideal image of Solomon.

3. *Divided Monarchy (1-2 Kings, 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Chronicles)*

a. *Jeroboam I Leads Israel into Sin*

In 1 Kings 12:25-33, we can find a story about Jeroboam I who leads Israel into Sin. The interesting fact, there is no one scene of this story can be found in 1-2 Chronicles. This is the story of Jeroboam I (1 Kings 12:25-33):

²⁵Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel. ²⁶ And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom will return to the house of David. ²⁷ "If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will return to their lord, even to Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me and return

to Rehoboam king of Judah." ²⁸ So the king consulted, and made two golden calves, and he said to them, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt." ²⁹ And **he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.** ³⁰ Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. ³¹ And he made houses on high places, and made priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi. ³² And Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; thus, **he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves which he had made. And he stationed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made.** ³³ Then he went up to the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised in his own heart; and he instituted a feast for the sons of Israel, and went up to the altar to burn incense.

In this case, it is not about to purify the name of Jeroboam I. Chronicler is not interested to reuse the story of Jeroboam I. He flees to Egypt during the Solomon Era. He tries to form conspiracies to be a king of the ten northern tribes. Nevertheless, this agenda is discovered. He returns from Egypt after the death of Solomon. He is well known for his revolt against Rehoboam (the successor of Solomon) that put an end to the United Monarchy (Oded & Sperling, 2007).

Furthermore, it does not mean that Jeroboam I cannot be found in Chronicles. At least, in 2 Chronicles 9:29; 10:1-19, Jeroboam I occurs in the story. In this context, chronicler just wants to explain why Jeroboam I in Egypt and why he returns from Egypt (Myers, 1965b). In this case, Jeroboam seems not to be an important person for Chronicler. The Chronicler's view that only those elements of Israel that remain loyal to the Davidic line are the true Israel (Myers, 1965b).

b. The Prosperity of Rehoboam

In this case, we will find a story about The Prosperity of Rehoboam. It is only found in 2 Chronicles 11:5-23:

⁵**Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and built cities for defense in Judah.** ⁶ **Thus he built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa,** ⁷ **Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam,** ⁸ **Gath, Mareshah, Ziph,** ⁹ **Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah,** ¹⁰ **Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron, which are fortified cities in Judah and in Benjamin.** ¹¹ **He also strengthened the fortresses and put officers in them and stores of food, oil and wine.** ¹² **And he put shields and spears in every city and strengthened them greatly.** So, he held Judah and Benjamin.

¹³ **Moreover, the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel stood with him from all their districts.** ¹⁴ **For the Levites left their pasture lands and their property and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had excluded them from serving as priests to the LORD.** ¹⁵ **And he set up priests of his own for the high places, for the satyrs, and for the calves which he had made.** ¹⁶ And those from all the tribes of Israel who set their hearts on seeking the LORD God of Israel, followed them to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD God of their fathers. ¹⁷ And they strengthened the kingdom of Judah and supported Rehoboam the son of Solomon for three years, for they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.

¹⁸ Then Rehoboam took as a wife Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David and of Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse, ¹⁹ and she bore him sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham. ²⁰ And after her he took Maacah the daughter of Absalom, and she bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. ²¹ And Rehoboam loved Maacah the daughter of Absalom more than all his other wives and concubines. For he had taken eighteen wives and sixty concubines and fathered twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. ²² And Rehoboam appointed Abijah the son of Maacah as head and leader among his brothers, for he intended to make him king. ²³ And he acted wisely and distributed some of his sons through all the territories of Judah and Benjamin to all the fortified cities, and he gave them food in abundance. And he sought many wives for them.

This pericope shows us the grandeur of Rehoboam. *First*, based on the first section (2 Chr 11:5-12), we can find that the system of fortifications belongs to the period of Rehoboam (Beyer, 1931). It is also proved by the archeological excavations at Azekah, Mareshah, Lachish, Beth-Zur, and elsewhere that have discovered fortifications which may date from the period of Rehoboam (Bliss & Macalister, 1902; Myers, 1965b; Sellars, 1933; Tufnell, 1953).

Second, the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel stood with Rehoboam from all their districts (2 Chr 11:3). The Chronicler is not interested in the report of 1 Kings 12:31-32; 13:33 which narrate about Jeroboam who appoints priests from the whole people who are not Levites. Everything that Jeroboam did is sinful in the sight of the Chronicler. For the Chronicler, the migration of priests and Levites becoming a part of Rehoboam's side is more interesting (Myers, 1965b). For that reason, this story can be found in 2 Chr 11:13-17. It means that the religious power is supporting the Rehoboam's authority in the sight of the Chronicler.

Third, in 2 Chr 11:18-23, we can find a strategic plan of Rehoboam which places his sons in the center movement to maintain his position for all the territories of Judah and Benjamin and to guard against disloyalty, like his Father Solomon did (cf. 1 Kings 4:1-20) (Myers, 1965b).

c. Asa's Reform

In 2 Chronicles 15:1-15, there is a story of Asa's Reform:

¹ Now the Spirit of God came on Azariah the son of Oded, ² and he went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: the LORD is with you when you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you. ³ "And for many days Israel was without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law. ⁴ "But in their distress they turned to the LORD God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He let them find Him. ⁵ "And in those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in, for many disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands. ⁶ "And nation was crushed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every kind of distress. ⁷ "But you, be strong and do not lose courage, for there is reward for your work."

⁸ **Now when Asa heard these words and the prophecy which Azariah the son of Oded the prophet spoke, he took courage and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim. He then restored the altar of the LORD which was in front of the porch of the LORD. ⁹ And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin and those from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who resided with them, for many defected to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him. ¹⁰ So they assembled at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign. ¹¹ And they sacrificed to the LORD that day 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep from the spoil they had brought. ¹² And they entered into the covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and soul; ¹³ and whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, man or woman. ¹⁴ Moreover, they made an oath to the LORD with a loud voice, with shouting, with trumpets, and with horns. ¹⁵ And all Judah rejoiced concerning the oath, for they had sworn with their whole heart and had sought Him earnestly, and He let them find Him. So, the LORD gave them rest on every side.**

This pericope has two big section: *First*, The Sermon of the Prophet Azariah (2 Chr 15:1-7); and *Second*, The Reformation of King Asa (2 Chr 15:8-15).

First, The Sermon of the Prophet Azariah has three main points: (1) *The Declaration of the Lord* who promises to King Asa that He will be with the King and his people so long as they are with Him (v.2); (2) *The Illustration from History*, especially from Judges that narrates about "The Nation without God and all its consequences". We can find it in 2 Chr 15:3-6; and (3) *The Exhortation and Promise* can be found in third part (v.7) where God wants to courage King Asa and his people to be strong and there will be a reward for their work (Myers, 1965b).

Second, The Reformation of King Asa (2 Chr 15:8-15) is a religious reformation. "If a nation wants to be better than before, they have to do a religious reformation and the rest will follow", it is a faith of King Asa to reform Israel to be better than before. Therefore, at least there are 7 actions that he does:

- a. He removes all the idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin
- b. He restores the altar of the Lord
- c. He gathers all people in the land of Judah and Benjamin to assemble at Jerusalem
- d. They sacrifice to the Lord 700 oxen and 7000 sheep
- e. They enter into the covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers
- f. They made an oath to the Lord with a loud voice, with shouting, with trumpets, and with horns
- g. Whoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death

D. Conclusion

At least, there are three strategic manners of Chronicler to bring his agenda to their readers: **First**, **adding** some passages in the history of Israelite Dynasties which can be found in 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings to 1-2 Chronicles; **Second**, making **omissions** for some passages in 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings which are “not proper” in the sight of Chronicler; **Third**, creating a “**framing stories**” (adding an introduction and a conclusion in some passages) in the story which is narrated by 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings to make a new nuance of the story that has been already known.

Table 2: Analysis of the Text of Israelite Dynasties in 1-2 Chronicles

No.	Theme	1-2 Samuel / 1-2 Kings	1-2 Chronicles	Strategic of Chronicler	Purpose
A					
Davidic Era					
1	The Ark of God	(2 Sam 6:12-19a)	1 Chr 13:1-4 1 Chr 15:1-24; (1 Chr 15:25-16:3) 1 Chr 16:4-6	Addition Framing (Introduction & Conclusion)	Legitimizing the religious power of Priests and Levites by the political power of King David.
2	David and Bathsheba	2 Sam 11:1-27 (2 Samuel 11:1-27)	- (1 Chr 20:1)	Omission (Summarize)	The Chronicler wants to avoid all the negative things about David. The Chronicler tries to describe David as a “Perfect-Ideal-King” for Israel.
3	Amnon and Tamar	2 Sam 13:1-22	-	Omission	The Chronicler seems to reconstruct a new narration about David’s Family Stories. All of shameful histories of David try to be cleaned by the Chronicler. Therefore, David’s dynasty looks perfect and ideal in 1-2 Chronicles.
B					
Solomon Era					
1	Fire from the Lord Consumes the Sacrifices	-	2 Chr 7:1-3	Addition	The Chronicler wants to represent King Solomon as a wise, holy, and faithful man.
2	Solomon’s Wise Judgement	1 Kgs 3:16-28	-	Omission	The Chronicler tries to avoid a negative sense of a word “prostitute” in the story – even the whole story is good. The Chronicler avoids all

					negative senses of Kings of Israel. In that sense, the Chronicler works as a “purifying-editor”.
3	Solomon’s Apostasy and Adversaries	1 Kgs 11:1-40	-	Omission	This omission becomes a part of Chronicler’s agenda to maintain an ideal image of King Solomon.
C	<i>Divided Monarchy</i>				
1	Jeroboam I Leads Israel into Sin	1 Kgs 12:25-33	-	Omission	It is not about to purify the name of Jeroboam I. Chronicler is not interested to reuse the story of Jeroboam I because he is a traitor of the nation.
2	The Prosperity of Rehoboam	-	2 Chr 11:5-23	Addition	The Chronicler wants to show us the grandeur of Rehoboam.
3	Asa’s Reform	-	2 Chr 15:1-15	Addition	The Chronicler tries to show his readers that King Asa is listening the word of God through the Prophet Azariah and does what God’s will.

From this table, we try to compare some stories about Kings of Israel in 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, and 1-2 Chronicles. We use historiography as a method. Through this approach some conclusions can arise: **(1)** There are some similarities between Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles versions; **(2)** At the same time, there are some differences between them; **(3)** The Chronicler intentionally changes some passages on his text **(4)** with intentions to change some nuances of the story; and **(5)** there are some political and religious agendas behind Chronicles texts: **First**, the Chronicler tries to make an ideal-perfect-image of Kings of Israel, especially those who is in the line of King David and King Solomon; **Second**, Israel after the exile is a confused nation seeking identity. The Chronicler gives them direction by telling them to find identity in their relationship with God (Geyser-Fouché & Chukwuka, 2021); **Third**, the Chronicler, intentionally, wants to bold and underline the important role of Priests and Levites. It is acceptable because some scholars argue that the author of 1-2 Chronicles comes from the group of Priests of Levites (McKenzie, 2004) and they want to legitimize their religious power through the text which narrates that their legitimation comes from the King himself (political power); **Fourth**, the religious and political power for the Chronicler are two important powers for Israel Dynasties. For that reason, the Chronicler seems to model God’s theocratic rule over the earth in Israel history (Brueggemann, 1997; Merrill, 1991); **Fifth**, all of these bring us to the conclusion that “Text can be used as a tool to maintain political and religious power and it all already happened thousands of years ago”. All of these can be found in 1-2 Chronicles.

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delivering a paper entitled

Text as a Tool for Maintaining Political and Religious Power in 1-2 Chronicles

at the 9th Literary Studies Conference

“Literature and Interdisciplinarity”

held by the English Letters Department, Faculty of Letters
and the Graduate Program in English Language Studies, Universitas Sanata Dharma Yogyakarta, Indonesia
in cooperation with Ateneo de Manila University, the Philippines, on 20-21 October 2021.

Yogyakarta, 21 October 2021




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