READING UTOPIA IN CHRONICLES

STEVEN SCHWEITZER

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For Jill—
lifelong companion on this wonderful journey together

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CONTENTS

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Acknowledgments

This book represents a revised and abridged version of my doctoral dissertation, which was completed at the University of Notre Dame in March of 2005 under the same title. The present volume is much shorter than its earlier counterpart, by about 250 pages. Those pages not included here largely contain the following: history of scholarship on a variety of issues, and surveys of comparative literature from the ancient Near East and Hellenistic worlds along with surveys of background material from the Hebrew Bible and literature of the Second Temple period for each of the main three chapters. In addition, some sections of the dissertation have been condensed along with some minor rearrangement of the material.

This analysis of utopianism in the book of Chronicles has benefited from the support and input of many individuals, especially those comprising my dissertation committee: James VanderKam, Hindy Najman, Gene Ulrich, and Greg Sterling. Their consistent affirmations and constructive criticisms of my work are deeply appreciated. In addition, the members of the Chronicles–Ezra–Nehemiah Section of the Society of Biblical Literature—especially Ehud Ben Zvi, Gary Knoppers, Christine Mitchell, and John Wright—have been a source of encouragement to me, as a younger scholar, allowing me to participate actively in the Section over the last five years.

My family has been a source of strength, motivation, and joy during this time of my life. My three children, Luke, Anna, and Benjamin, bring me such happiness and satisfaction that cannot be expressed. My wife Jill, to whom this book is dedicated, has truly been my unwavering inspiration and my best friend, and I owe her a debt of gratitude that she can never know.

ABBREVIATIONS

The style and abbreviations found in *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (ed. Patrick H. Alexander, John F. Kutsko, James D. Ernest, Shirley A. Decker-Lucke, and David L. Petersen; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999), are used with the following additions not contained therein:

BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
Diod. Sic.	Diodorus Siculus
Extrap	*Extrapolation*
Hist. conscr.	*Quomodo Historia Conscribenda sit*, Lucian
JHebScr	*Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*
MnemSup	Supplements to Mnemosyne
PEGLMBS	*Proceedings, Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies*
SFS	*Science Fiction Studies*
UtopSt	*Utopian Studies*

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. *The Current State of Chronicles Scholarship*

Once at the center of Hebrew Bible (HB) studies in the work of Wilhelm de Wette, and progressively moved to the margins where it was entrenched by Julius Wellhausen,[1] the book of Chronicles has enjoyed a resurgence in scholarly interest in recent decades. However, no consensus has emerged from these numerous studies on even the most basic of issues: the authorship, date, genre, and purpose of the work have been at the center of much debate. For example: Is the work from the Persian or Hellenistic or even Maccabean period? Is it history or historiography or midrash or something else? Is it originally the work of priests or Levites, and was it redacted by the other group and to what extent? What is its relationship to its sources—especially the Pentateuch, Samuel–Kings, and the Ezra and Nehemiah materials? How many redactions has it undergone and which sections belong to each? And what are its main theological interests?

Rather than focus on one of these issues, which has been the trend of a majority of recent publications, this examination employs a literary approach in an attempt to address the coherence of Chronicles as a whole. Three major concerns of the Chronicler[2] commonly discussed by

1. On this process and the shifting importance of Chronicles in the nineteenth century, see M. Patrick Graham, *The Utilization of 1 and 2 Chronicles in the Reconstruction of Israelite History in the Nineteenth Century* (SBLDS 116; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990); and John W. Wright, "From Center to Periphery: 1 Chronicles 23–27 and the Interpretation of Chronicles in the Nineteenth Century," in *Priests, Prophets and Scribes: Essays on the Formation and Heritage of Second Temple Judaism in Honour of Joseph Blenkinsopp* (ed. E. Ulrich, J. W. Wright, R. P. Carroll, and P. R. Davies; JSOTSup 149; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 20–42.

2. In referring to the "Chronicler," I intend the single author of Chronicles, following the general arguments presented by Sara Japhet, "The Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemiah Investigated Anew," *VT* 18 (1968):

scholars (genealogy, politics, and the temple cult) will be examined through the lens of utopian literary theory. While such a literary analysis has been undertaken successfully for explaining several features of the narratives concerning Solomon, Rehoboam, and Abijah in Chronicles,[3] an analysis of the utopian dimensions of Chronicles as a whole has not yet been attempted.[4] The results of previous work in utopian literary theory suggest that Chronicles scholarship may benefit from an analysis using this particular methodological lens.

1.1.1. *Authorship of Chronicles*

Chronicles and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah have long been associated by the theological traditions of Christianity and Judaism and by scholars.[5] Common authorship (or final editing) of these works had been the dominant position until the publication of Sara Japhet's article in 1968 and its adaptation and expansion by H. G. M. Williamson in 1977. Japhet's linguistic study has been challenged and revised,[6] but the

332–72; and H. G. M. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 5–70; idem, "The Composition of Ezra i–vi," *JTS* 34 (1983): 1–30.

3. Roland T. Boer, *Novel Histories: The Fiction of Biblical Criticism* (Playing the Texts 2; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 104–68; idem, "Decentered and Utopian Politics: 3 Reigns 11–14 and 2 Chronicles 10–13," in *Jameson and Jeroboam* (SBL SemeiaSt; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 195–285, from which pp. 243–85 have been subsequently revised and published as "Utopian Politics in 2 Chronicles 10–13," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (ed. M. P. Graham and S. L. McKenzie; JSOTSup 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 360–94.

4. Boer calls his own work an "interpretative prototype" ("Utopian Politics," 360). Although the recent work by John Jarick claims to be a reading of Chronicles as fantasy literature which creates the imaginary world of a "perfect society," the book does not develop either of these points nor does it supply any theoretical model for reading fantasy literature (*1 Chronicles* [Readings; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002)]; see the passing references to these concepts on pp. 6, 128.

5. Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemiah are ascribed to Ezra the scribe in *b. B. Bat.* 15a, with the completion of the work attributed to Nehemiah; see the brief comments on this Talmudic text by David Talshir, "The References to Ezra and the Books of Chronicles in *b. Baba Bathra* 15a," *VT* 38 (1988): 358–60. The Christian tradition has followed a similar view to the Jewish tradition regarding both the authorship and meager importance of Chronicles, despite the hyperbolic statement by Jerome: "The book of Chronicles, the epitome of the old dispensation, is of such quality and importance that if anyone wishes to claim knowledge of the Scriptures apart from it, he should laugh at himself" (*Epist.* 53.8).

6. Mark A. Throntveit, "Linguistic Analysis and the Question of Authorship in Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah," *VT* 32 (1982): 201–16; David Talshir, "A

separation of Chronicles from Ezra–Nehemiah as distinct units with different aims and arising in different historical contexts has been accepted by the vast majority of scholars. When scholars have concluded that "the Chronicler" is not the individual responsible for the composition of Ezra–Nehemiah, they have provided numerous suggestions regarding his identification with a particular social, political, or religious group. Of course, these suggestions have been made with recourse to the content and emphases of Chronicles: priests, Levites, scribes, Zadokites, high priests, and Levitical singers to name a few. Currently, there seems to be no agreement among scholars on a possible identification of "the Chronicler."

1.1.2. *Date of Chronicles*

In many ways, the lack of consensus regarding authorship is tied to and paralleled by the various dates suggested for Chronicles, especially when multi-layered redactional histories of the text are postulated.[7] Dates ranging from the sixth century B.C.E. to the Maccabean period have been suggested, although the late Persian or early Hellenistic period has by far the most supporters.[8]

Reinvestigation of the Linguistic Relationship between Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemiah," *VT* 38 (1988): 165–93; Robert Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose* (HSM 12; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1976), esp. 1–84; and Sara Japhet, "The Relationship Between Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemiah," in *Congress Volume Leuven 1989* (ed. J. A. Emerton; VTSup 43; Leiden: Brill, 1991), 298–313.

7. Two redactional schemes have found wide acceptance: those offered by David N. Freedman, "The Chronicler's Purpose," *CBQ* 23 (1961): 432–42; and Frank M. Cross "A Reconstruction of the Judean Restoration," *JBL* 94 (1975): 4–18; repr., *Int* 29 (1975): 187–203. Besides the suggestions of Freedman and Cross, scholars have also posited a pro-priestly redaction which cuts across Chronicles but is particularly evident in 1 Chr 15–16 and the supposed large insertion of 1 Chr 23–27; see the concise articulation of this view by Piet B. Dirksen, "The Development of the Text of I Chronicles 15:1–24," *Hen* 17 (1995): 267–77. The secondary nature of the genealogies in 1 Chr 1–9 has been asserted as well. A wide range of dates for these additions has been suggested, but not without each of these positions being refuted with a fair degree of success. See H. G. M. Williamson, "Eschatology in Chronicles," *TynBul* 28 (1977): 115–54 (121–22); and Gary N. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 12; New York: Doubleday, 2004), 72–100; idem, *I Chronicles 10–29: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 12A; New York: Doubleday, 2004), 654–59, 788–98.

8. Freedman and Cross have associated the original edition of Chronicles with the events surrounding the temple restoration under Zerubbabel. Although a minority

A few items do seem certain. First, the Chronicler's sources included the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, several of the Prophets, some of the Psalms, and the large block of material in Samuel–Kings, though not in any literary edition known today.[9] Second, some form of the Pentateuch containing stipulations from the sources commonly designated as "P" and "D" must have been in existence at the time of the book's composition but not necessarily in a *fixed written* form. Third, the absolute *terminus post quem* would be 515 B.C.E. based on 1 Chr 29:7, which

opinion, it still finds some supporters, including Mark A. Throntveit, *When Kings Speak: Royal Speech and Royal Prayer in Chronicles* (SBLDS 93; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 107; William M. Schniedewind, *The Word of God in Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple Period* (JSOTSup 197; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 249; and Steven S. Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles* (IBC; Louisville, Ky.: John Knox, 2001), 8–12.

Maccabean dating has been largely restricted to the "redactional additions" to the text and to the genealogical material in particular (especially in the material unique to the LXX). See Peter R. Ackroyd, "Criteria for Maccabean Dating of Old Testament Literature," *VT* 3 (1953): 113–32, esp. 126–27 on 1 Chr 24:7–18, with the comment that such a suggestion is "not unreasonable…[but] not conclusive" (p. 127); cf. the recent arguments in favor of the Maccabean period by Ernst M. Dörrfuss, *Mose in den Chronikbüchern: Garant theokratischer Zukunftserwartung* (BZAW 219; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 282–83; and the three-layered redactional model offered by Georg Steins, *Die Chronik als kanonisches Abschlussphänomen: Studien zur Entstehung und Theologie von 1/2 Chronik* (BBB 93; Weinheim: Beltz Athenäum Verlag, 1995), 419–39, 491–99; idem, "Zur Datierung der Chronik: Ein neuer methodischer Ansatz," *ZAW* 109 (1997): 84–92. However, this dating has been almost universally rejected, as nothing in the text *requires* the specific context of the Maccabean period for an explanation.

The detailed section on the date of Chronicles by Sara Japhet concludes with the following: "I would place it at the end of the Persian or, more probably, the beginning of the Hellenistic period, at the end of the fourth century BCE" (*I & II Chronicles: A Commentary* [OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 1993], 23–28, here 27–28). Compare the lengthy discussion of date, authorship, and compositional history of Chronicles by Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 72–117 (101–17); Jonathan E. Dyck, "Dating Chronicles and the Purpose of Chronicles," *Did* 8, no. 2 (1997): 16–29; and Isaac Kalimi, "The Date of the Book of Chronicles," in *God's Word for Our World*. Vol. 1, *Biblical Studies in Honor of Simon John DeVries* (ed. J. H. Ellens, D. L. Ellens, R. P. Knierim, and I. Kalimi; JSOTSup 388; London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 347–71.

9. The critical analysis of Steven L. McKenzie is particularly helpful even if all of its conclusions are not accepted (*The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History* [HSM 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1984]). On the concept of "literary editions" of texts, see Eugene C. Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* (Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 17–120.

uses the term "darics" (אדרכנים), Persian coinage known to be first minted at this time.[10] Fourth, the absolute *terminus ad quem* of ca. 158 B.C.E. can be determined from the citations of Chronicles found in Eupolemus' writings.[11] Fifth, there are no *explicit* Hellenistic or Maccabean references in Chronicles, although several allusions have been suggested.[12]

In light of these points, it seems best to locate the date of Chronicles, without serious additions to the text, to some point either in the late Persian or early Hellenistic period. Apart from the genealogy of Jeconiah in 1 Chr 3:17–24, which is "riddled with textual and interpretative difficulties,"[13] neither the genealogical material nor the narrative that follows *requires* a date which extends into the third century B.C.E., while the evidence for locating it in the transitional fourth century B.C.E. is more compelling.[14]

1.1.3. *Genre of Chronicles*

Chronicles contains a wide variety of genres: lists, linear and segmented genealogies, speeches, prophetic oracles, a letter, legislation regarding

10. Following the comments of Williamson, "Eschatology in Chronicles," 123–26; see also the arguments for Persian loan-words and against Greek loan-words in Chronicles, which have won wide acceptance among scholars, as articulated by William F. Albright, "The Date and Personality of the Chronicler," *JBL* 40 (1921): 104–24 (113–15).

11. Eupolemus, cited from Alexander Polyhistor, in Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 9.30.5–8, 9.34.1–4.

12. A recent argument for a Hellenistic date has been the occurrence of military terms and organizations used in Chronicles, typified by the phrase חשבנות מחשבת חושב (2 Chr 26:15), which has been taken to refer to some sort of catapult used in defense of the city. Scholars have found parallels with Hellenistic sources and not Persian ones. See the evidence and highly influential arguments of Peter Welten, *Geschichte und Geschichtsdarstellung in den Chronikbüchern* (WMANT 42; Neukirchen–Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973), 9–175 (111–14). However, Kai Peltonen rightly notes the difficulty of expressing any certainty surrounding this complex issue of dating ("A Jigsaw Without a Model? The Date of Chronicles," in *Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period* [ed. L. L. Grabbe; JSOTSup 317; European Seminar in Historical Methodology 3; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001], 225–71 [239]).

13. See the discussion of this complex text by Kenneth E. Pomykala, "1–2 Chronicles," in *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition in Early Judaism: Its History and Significance for Messianism* (SBLEJL 7; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 69–111 (83–88, here 83). Pomykala concludes that a date between ca. 435 and ca. 348 B.C.E. is most likely (p. 88). An even more restricted date of ca. 382–376 based on this text is argued by Kalimi, "Date of Chronicles," 366, 371.

14. See Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 23–28; and Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 116.

cultic organization and practice, source citations, poetry, and narrative. While these micro-genres are readily identifiable, scholars have offered a seemingly excessive number of labels for the macro-genre in an attempt to determine how the micro-genres function together in the larger work known as Chronicles.[15] While some type of historiography is the most common label, the importance of the wide variety of other viable options should not be overlooked. The authors of these less-accepted positions are all attempting to address the Chronicler's reworking of his sources and the clear theological overtones in the material unique to Chronicles. While some of these positions have merit, none of them fully represents the content and form of Chronicles. Each attempts to identify Chronicles by one all-encompassing category; yet Chronicles resists such a narrow definition.[16] However, to label Chronicles *sui generis* would be simply to avoid the problem instead of attempting a holistic reading of the work.

Defining genre is a complicated pursuit. Literary theorists have attempted to refine the understanding of how to determine what genre is and what separates one genre from another.[17] While many biblical scholars have attempted to use the findings by literary theorists, this examination will follow the recent tempered evaluations and suggestions

15. Rodney K. Duke notes that determining the genre of Chronicles has been perceived by scholars as "the first step towards understanding the [Chronicler's] purposes. The step of genre analysis, however, is fraught with problems" ("A Rhetorical Approach to Appreciating the Books of Chronicles," in Graham and McKenzie, ed., *The Chronicler as Author*, 100–35 [111]). The variety of generic descriptions is reflected by both the difficulty of the task and the anticipated result of correct genre identification. For a detailed list of proposed genres and the scholars who advocate them, see my dissertation, "Reading Utopia in Chronicles" (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 2005), 10–13.

16. A point echoed most recently by Steven L. McKenzie, *1–2 Chronicles* (AOTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 33.

17. See the insightful comments by Tzvetan Todorov, "The Origin of Genres," in *Genres in Discourse* (trans. C. Porter; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 13–26. Noting the difficulty in separating genres, Todorov states: "Where do genres come from? Quite simply from other genres. A new genre is always the transformation of an earlier one, or of several: by inversion, by displacement, by combination" (p. 15). Also, Todorov notes that genres may be present in one culture while absent in another, and that this is entirely consistent with the ideological milieu(s) of the society and of the writer (pp. 18–19). Todorov's view is employed in addressing the issue of genre in antiquity by Daniel L. Selden, "Genre of Genre," in *The Search for the Ancient Novel* (ed. J. Tatum; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 39–64 (39–45). Selden notes that genre analysis was first developed in Hellenistic political philosophy (p. 39) and that most "complex prose fiction" regarded itself as having an "eclectic nature" (p. 43).

by Alan Kirk.[18] His analysis allows for the mixing of genres to be a possible authorial communication strategy rather than a sign of redaction or of ineptness on the part of the author. He also recognizes that literary structure and genre are interrelated and cannot be easily separated in any literary analysis. Kirk notes that complex texts tend to employ a "large number of diverse small genres" which are organized into a holistic "framework genre"[19] or even a "mixed genre" functioning as the "framework genre."[20] Finally, he correctly notes that historical reality and social conditions may be revealed in genre. That is, the text does not exist apart from a historical context in which it was produced.

While these points do not delimit the genre of Chronicles, they do provide a starting point for discussing Chronicles as literature that presents a coherent message to its readers. There is also an explicit rejection of the idea that the Chronicler's purpose "may have been complex and perhaps not altogether clear even to him."[21] Rather, Kirk's analysis of genre allows for an analysis of a text, in this case Chronicles, which attempts to locate a "framework genre" with attention to the following interrelated concepts: the authorial communication strategy, the response of the reader, the historical and social context of the work's composition, and the important notion that inconsistencies do not indicate redactional layers *de facto*. All of these contribute to a holistic reading of a text, and (as will be obvious in the discussion below) are consistent with the principles of utopian literary theory.

1.1.4. *Three Major Themes in Chronicles*

Having briefly outlined the current scholarly assessment of the authorship, date, and genre of Chronicles, we now turn to a brief survey of the state of the question regarding the three major themes in Chronicles which are to be addressed by this reading of Chronicles: genealogies, politics, and temple cult.

1.1.4.1. *Genealogies*.

The genealogical material in 1 Chr 1–9 has not been the focus of scholarship on Chronicles; however, a growing number

18. Alan Kirk, "Compositional Analysis of Q: History and Theory," in *The Composition of the Sayings Source: Genre, Synchrony, and Wisdom Redaction in Q* (NovTSup 91; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 1–86 (64–86). While written to aid in illuminating the genre of Q, it is, in my opinion, one of the best overall discussions of the complexities of genre that I have come across.

19. Kirk, "Compositional Analysis," 77.

20. Ibid., 78.

21. Contra Simon J. DeVries, "Moses and David as Cult Founders in Chronicles," *JBL* 107 (1988): 619–39 (637).

of recent analyses have indicated a new interest in this often neglected material. As the text now stands, these chapters form an "introduction" to the narratives that follow.[22] The dominant position had been that this long "preface" was a secondary (or tertiary) addition to the original composition that began with the reign of David. However, many scholars are now questioning this view and have noted the literary function of the genealogies as necessary and thematically consistent with Chronicles and specifically with those sections that had been deemed "original" by source criticism.

The genealogies provide a means of group definition.[23] For the Chronicler, these lists draw the boundaries between Israel and the nations and between groups within "Israel" itself. The origin of the lists is debated. Some clearly summarize the narrative and genealogies of the Pentateuch (especially from P) and the Former Prophets; others reproduce previous lists (1 Chr 5:27–41 [6:1–15 Eng.]; 9:2–16); many may be historical records from the preexilic period that have been preserved; some are most likely the creation of the Chronicler. Together these genealogies organize Israel; they not only identify who belongs to "all Israel," but

22. Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (trans. A. Barber; BEATAJ 9; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1989), 278–79.

23. Walter E. Aufrecht, "Genealogy and History in Ancient Israel," in *Ascribe to the Lord: Biblical and Other Studies in Memory of Peter C. Craigie* (ed. L. Eslinger and G. Taylor; JSOTSup 67; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 205–35; Mark G. Brett, "Interpreting Ethnicity: Method, Hermeneutics, Ethics," in *Ethnicity and the Bible* (ed. M. G. Brett; BIS 19; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 3–22; Jonathan E. Dyck, *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler* (BIS 33; Leiden: Brill, 1998), esp. 77–125, 127–64, 203–12, 213–28; and Marshall D. Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies: With Special Reference to the Setting of the Genealogies of Jesus* (SNTSMS 8; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 3–82.

The most important work for biblical scholars on genealogies is the exceptional analysis by Robert R. Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World* (Yale Near Eastern Research 7; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977). However, he interestingly dismisses the importance of the genealogies in 1 Chr 1–9 for his study because he claims this section does not contain names that link the genealogies to the narrative that follows. Thus, he concludes that 1 Chr 1–9 "can provide little new information on the relation of genealogy to narrative" (p. 137). This is simply not correct. Several names *are* repeated between the genealogies and the narratives (particularly the Davidic kings, high priests, priests, and Levites), the genealogy of Saul leads directly into the narrative of his death in 1 Chr 10, and the genealogies contain numerous references and allusions to the narratives of the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets on which they draw for information. Wilson's desire to restrict his analysis to Genesis has resulted in a skewed view of the genealogical material in 1 Chr 1–9.

how this expansive group is interrelated.[24] While the Other is a concern of these lists, the internal structure of Israel is more significant than an exact account of those excluded from this group.

This structure of Israel, of course, is different from all the depictions preserved in the Pentateuch, Former Prophets, Ezekiel's vision of restoration (chs. 40–48), and the accounts of Ezra and Nehemiah. The Chronicler is *not* returning to an ideal depiction of Israel in the remote past, but has constructed a new version of "Israel" that is unique among the preserved traditions. Its portrayal of society may reflect the concerns of the Chronicler in his historical situation, whether in history or fantasy. This genealogical system has been termed—rather dismissively—as "ideal," but no systematic assessment of its "utopian" qualities has been undertaken.

1.1.4.2. *Politics*. The genealogical material is connected to the issue of politics via geography. Israel is both a people and a land. The genealogical material contains settlement information and reflects geographic boundaries. However, politics is not restricted to settlement lists. One major political concern in Chronicles scholarship has been the portrayal of the Northern Kingdom in the book. Scholars have advocated opposing positions on this complex issue: the North is the enemy, is barely mentioned, is illegitimate, but at the same time has true worshippers of God, has loyal Levites and priests, and is a significant part of the identity of "all Israel."[25] Much of the negative view of the North has been linked to

24. Japhet, *Ideology*, 267–308; Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*; and Gary N. Knoppers, "Greek Historiography and the Chronicler's History: A Reexamination," *JBL* 122 (2003): 627–50.

25. The traditional view of the North as a negative one is summarized by Jacob M. Myers, *I Chronicles* (AB 12; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), xxxii–xxxiv. The attitude towards the North is reassessed by Japhet who concludes with a more positive judgment (*Ideology*, 308–24). Both positions still find adherents. See also Roddy L. Braun, "A Reconsideration of the Chronicler's Attitude Toward the North," *JBL* 96 (1977): 59–62; Gerhard von Rad, *Das Geschichtsbild des chronistischen Werkes* (BWANT 54; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1930), esp. 25–37; and the relationship between the North and Judah as presented by Gary N. Knoppers, "'Battling Against Yahweh': Israel's War Against Judah in 2 Chr 13:2–20," *RB* 100 (1993): 511–32; idem, "Reform and Regression: The Chronicler's Treatment of Jehoshaphat," *Bib* 72 (1991): 500–24 (500–501, 523–24); idem, "Rehoboam in Chronicles: Villain or Victim?" *JBL* 109 (1990): 423–40; idem, "A Reunited Kingdom in Chronicles?," *PEGLMBS* 9 (1989): 74–88; and idem, "'YHWH is Not with Israel': Alliances as a Topos in Chronicles," *CBQ* 58 (1996): 601–26 (622–26). The term "all Israel" certainly serves a unifying purpose in Chronicles as noted by Japhet, *Ideology*, 267–351; and Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*.

the supposed anti-Samaritan attitude of Chronicles (especially when viewed together with Ezra–Nehemiah). Despite recent advocates of this hostility,[26] Chronicles seems much less interested in condemning the North (or its referent in Samaria) than it does in explicitly noting the faithful followers of God who migrate south at the key points in the narratives which depict religious reforms. This openness to the North contrasts with the exclusive claims found in Ezra–Nehemiah, which is concerned about defining the "holy seed" of Israel (Ezra 9:2) against the Other, particularly in terms of intermarriage.

While the book of Kings provides an account of both kingdoms of the Divided Monarchy, the narrative of Chronicles focuses on the Davidic line. This central concern has been, again, the subject of much debate: did the Chronicler desire the restoration of the Davidic monarchy in his own time or does he advance the idea that the monarchy has fulfilled its purpose (restoring the cult) and is superfluous now that the Persian Empire is the chosen instrument of God in history?[27] There is no doubt that the Davidic monarch has a cultic significance in Chronicles,[28] but there is also no indication that Chronicles advocates or even awaits its

26. Most notably, Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*. Vol. 2, *From the Exile to the Maccabees* (trans. John Bowden; 2 vols.; OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 2:544–56 (544–46).

27. See the wide range of opinions advocated by Martin Noth, *The Chronicler's History* (trans. H. G. M. Williamson; JSOTSup 50; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 105; McKenzie, *1–2 Chronicles*, 372; William Riley, *King and Cultus in Chronicles: Worship and the Reinterpretation of History* (JSOTSup 160; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), esp. 203; Thomas Willi, *Die Chronik als Auslegung: Untersuchungen zur literarischen Gestaltung der historischen Überlieferung Israels* (FRLANT 106; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972), 206–7; Peter R. Ackroyd, *The Chronicler in His Age* (JSOTSup 101; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 108–9, 203, 225; Rudolf Mosis, *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes* (Freiburger theologische Studien 92; Freiburg: Herder, 1973), 211–13; Donald F. Murray, "Dynasty, People, and the Future: The Message of Chronicles," *JSOT* 58 (1993): 71–92 (75–79); Ehud Ben Zvi, "When the Foreign Monarch Speaks," in Graham and McKenzie, eds., *The Chronicler as Author*, 209–28; and idem, "The Book of Chronicles: Another Look," *SR* 31 (2002): 261–81 (273–74, 278 n. 15). See also the extremely helpful survey of this issue and the conclusions by Pomykala, *Davidic Dynasty Tradition*, 69–111.

28. DeVries, "Moses and David as Cult Founders in Chronicles"; Riley, *King and Cultus in Chronicles*; Thomas P. Wahl, "Chronicles: The Rewriting of History," *TBT* 26 (1988): 197–202 (198); and Glen E. Schaefer, "The Significance of Seeking God in the Purpose of the Chronicler" (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1972), 96. David himself is termed "the prototypical high priest" by Kenneth G. Hoglund, "The Priest of Praise: The Chronicler's David," *RevExp* 99 (2002): 185–91 (189).

restoration. The temple, built under the Persian Empire, is the essential element for societal stability in Chronicles. Indeed, as noted by Braun, the main message of Chronicles is "Rally Round the Temple" and not "Restore the Ruler."[29]

In the context of the Second Temple period, this position of Chronicles contrasts with many other texts which openly desire the restoration of the Davidic monarchy or the overthrow of the foreign government, especially those stemming from the Maccabean period.[30] While the "idealized" portrayal of the Davidic–Solomonic period in Chronicles (which lacks many of the foibles of these two kings) has been long noted,[31] understanding the portrayal of the Davidic monarchy as a whole in utopian terms has not been so explicitly clarified. How is the presentation of the Davidic monarchy utopian if the Chronicler does not maintain its continued significance in his present or future? Answering this question requires that the definition of "utopian" be clarified to a greater degree than terming it "ideal" and not necessarily "eschatological" and that the issue be investigated systematically throughout Chronicles rather than by focusing only on David–Solomon or the negative portrayal of some of the later kings as has been done typically by scholars.

1.1.4.3. *Temple Cult.* Chronicles is a work deeply concerned with the temple cult, typified by the priestly and Levitical organizations and duties.[32] While sacrifice itself receives minor attention, the major festivals

29. Roddy L. Braun, "The Message of Chronicles: Rally Round the Temple," *CTM* 42 (1971): 502–14.

30. Chronicles agrees with the positive opinion of Cyrus presented in Second Isaiah (44:24–45:13), and the Persian Empire in Ezra–Nehemiah; cf. Roddy L. Braun, "Cyrus in Second and Third Isaiah, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah," in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein* (ed. M. P. Graham, S. L. McKenzie, and G. N. Knoppers; JSOTSup 371; London: T&T Clark International, 2003), 146–64; Lisbeth S. Fried, "Cyrus the Messiah? The Historical Background to Isaiah 45:1," *HTR* 95 (2002): 373–93 (374), on the replacement of the Davidides by the Achaemenid kings in Second Isaiah; and John Goldingay, "The Chronicler as a Theologian," *BTB* 5 (1975): 99–126 (114–15). There is no hint of open revolt against the foreign ruler in these texts, despite the complaint that Israel is currently enslaved to another nation because of their sins in Neh 9:32–37.

31. Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* (New York: Meridian Books, 1957; 1st German ed. 1878), 171–82.

32. John C. Endres, "Joyful Worship in Second Temple Judaism," in *Passion, Vitality, and Foment: The Dynamics of Second Temple Judaism* (ed. L. M. Luker; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2001), 55–88; idem, "Theology of Worship in Chronicles," in Graham, McKenzie, and Knoppers, eds., *The Chronicler as Theologian*, 165–88; M. Patrick Graham, "Setting the Heart to Seek God: Worship in 2 Chronicles

are part of the religious reforms of several of the righteous kings.[33] With this focus on the temple and its operation, Chronicles becomes a cultic history rather than a royal one. All sources of authority employed in Chronicles are utilized to affirm the temple and its priority in the post-exilic community as a result of its importance during the preexilic period. Scholars have often *assumed* that many practices of the Second Temple period have been retrojected into the past, especially the functions of the Levites.[34] The unique and highlighted duties of the Levites in Chronicles stand in contrast to the limited descriptions of priestly duties and

30.1–31.1," in *Worship and the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honour of John T. Willis* (ed. M. P. Graham, R. R. Marrs, and S. L. McKenzie; JSOTSup 284; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 124–41; John W. Kleinig, *The Lord's Song: The Basis, Function and Significance of Choral Music in Chronicles* (JSOTSup 156; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993); von Rad, *Geschichtsbild*, 80–119; Schaefer, "Significance of Seeking God," 121–23; H. G. M. Williamson, "The Origins of the Twenty-four Priestly Courses: A Study of 1 Chronicles xxiii–xxvii," in *Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament* (ed. J. A. Emerton; VTSup 30; Leiden: Brill, 1979), 251–68; idem, "The Temple in Chronicles," in *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel* (ed. W. Horbury; JSNTSup 48; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 15–31; and John W. Wright, "Guarding the Gates: 1 Chronicles 26:1–19 and the Roles of the Gatekeepers in Chronicles," *JSOT* 48 (1990): 69–81.

33. While Jehoshaphat undertakes judicial reforms (2 Chr 17:7–9; 19:4–11), Hezekiah and Josiah both celebrate the Passover in grandeur (2 Chr 30; 35:1–19); see David Janzen, *The Social Meanings of Sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible: A Study of Four Writings* (BZAW 344; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), 209–42; Gary N. Knoppers, "History and Historiography: The Royal Reforms," in *The Chronicler as Historian* (ed. M. P. Graham, K. G. Hoglund, and S. L. McKenzie; JSOTSup 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 178–203; Terry L. Eves, "The Role of Passover in the Book of Chronicles: A Study of 2 Chronicles 30 and 35" (Ph.D. diss., Annenberg Research Institute [formerly Dropsie College], 1992); and Robert R. Wilson, "Israel's Judicial System in the Preexilic Period," *JQR* 74 (1983): 229–48 (243–48).

34. Gary N. Knoppers, "Hierodules, Priests, or Janitors? The Levites in Chronicles and the History of the Israelite Priesthood," *JBL* 118 (1999): 49–72; Goldingay, "Chronicler as a Theologian," 110; Antje Labahn, "Antitheocratic Tendencies in Chronicles," in *Yahwism After the Exile: Perspective on Israelite Religion in the Persian Era* (ed. R. Albertz and B. Becking; Studies in Theology and Religion 5; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2003), 115–35; and McKenzie, *1–2 Chronicles*, 53–54, 198. See, however, the pointed criticism of this common tendency to view such portrayals as retrojections of present practice by D. F. Payne ("The Purpose and Methods of the Chronicler," *Faith and Thought* 93 [1963]: 64–73 [71–72]), and the cautions against such claims based on the recognition that "we are methodologically unable to demarcate this material, even though we suspect that it is present" by Eves ("Role of Passover," 187).

virtually non-existent duties of the high priest in the narrative.[35] Several scholars have recently argued for Zadokite authorship of Chronicles, though this seems unlikely.[36] Rather, the immense concern over the Levites may indicate the Chronicler was at least supportive of this group in the Second Temple period if not a Levite himself.[37]

Indeed, Chronicles depicts the multi-talented and dependable Levites as one of the keys in establishing the proper functioning of the temple cult. This portrayal of the cult and the Levites in particular, while being the subject of several analyses, has not been addressed from the perspective of utopian literary theory. In the Chronicler's utopia, it is the temple cult and the Levites that stand at the center of its construction.

1.1.5. *The Present Situation and a New Approach to Chronicles*

Two conclusions can be drawn from the previous section: (1) though most frequently analyzed separately, the three themes of genealogies, politics, and temple cult are important in a systematic discussion of Chronicles, and (2) none of them has been analyzed using utopian literary theory. Given earlier comments about the lack of consensus in Chronicles scholarship in recent years, this analysis aims to read these three major themes—which have been recognized as functioning in important ways in Chronicles by the vast number of scholars—in the light of an underlying coherent ideological matrix, that is, utopianism.

35. Chronicles contains a genealogy of the preexilic leading priests but does not describe their ceremonial duties. See the bibliographic history of scholarship in my dissertation ("Reading Utopia in Chronicles," 27–28), the further discussion of this issue in my article, "The High Priest in Chronicles: An Anomaly in a Detailed Description of the Temple Cult," *Bib* 84 (2003): 388–402, and the summary in Section 4.1.4.

36. William R. Millar, *Priesthood in Ancient Israel* (Understanding Biblical Themes; St. Louis: Chalice, 2001), 33–64; Paolo Sacchi, *The History of the Second Temple Period* (JSOTSup 285; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 182–86; and Gabriele Boccaccini, *Roots of Rabbinic Judaism: An Intellectual History, From Ezekiel to Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), esp. 49–72, 73–82, 89; see also the earlier arguments for this view by Theophile James Meek, "Aaronites and Zadokites," *AJSL* 45 (1929): 149–66 (160–66). See my discussion of this issue in Section 4.1.5.

37. The "Levite Hypothesis" is not new, but was suggested as early as 1823 by C. P. W. Gramberg and has found a large number of adherents over the past 180 years. The further suggestion that the Chronicler was a Levitical singer or chorister has its merits, but rests on less solid ground. See the summary of previous scholarship by Labahn, "Antitheocratic Tendencies," esp. 115–16 n. 2.

1.2. *A New Methodology: Utopian Literary Theory*[38]

This reading of Chronicles will analyze the book through the lens of utopian literary theory. The formative work of Roland Boer, who has suggested that Chronicles may be read as utopian literature and has analyzed sections of the book accordingly, provides the initial point of departure for this project.[39]

1.2.1. *Definition of Utopianism*

However, before entering into a detailed discussion of utopian literary theory, it is first necessary to define utopianism and to dispel a few misconceptions about its characteristics.

"Utopianism" is the representative label for three manifestations: (1) as the *literary genre* of utopia; (2) as an *ideology* through which the world is viewed; and (3) as a *sociological* movement that writes utopias.[40] Thus, just as biblical scholars now restrict the designation of "apocalypse" to a literary genre, but are willing to discuss the "apocalyptic" content of a text composed in the milieu of "apocalypticism" by a community or individual, so a similar distinction must be made when the terms "utopia," "utopian," and "utopianism" are employed.[41] This precision allows for the reading of "utopian" content in a work that would not typically be classified as a "utopia" proper by generic considerations.

"Utopia" is, of course, the name of the fictional remote island created by Thomas More in his famous work of the same name.[42] The word, like

38. See also my discussion of this methodological approach and its application to a prophetic text in my essays, "Utopia and Utopian Literary Theory: Some Preliminary Observations," and "Visions of the Future as Critique of the Present: Utopian and Dystopian Images of the Future in Second Zechariah," in *Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature* (ed. E. Ben Zvi; Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 92; Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 2006), 13–26, 249–67.

39. Boer, *Novel Histories*; idem, "Utopian Politics."

40. See, e.g., two of the many highly influential works by Lyman Tower Sargent, "The Three Faces of Utopianism," *Minnesota Review* 7, no. 3 (1967): 222–30; idem, "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," *UtopSt* 5, no. 1 (1994): 1–37.

41. As mentioned, biblical scholars will recognize that these same classifications have been employed by Paul D. Hanson to address the nature of "apocalyptic": literary genre, worldview, and social movement lying behind the production of such literature ("Apocalypticism," *IDB* Supplement, 28–34). While having other difficulties, Hanson's distinctions have aided in the further exploration and, at times, complete reversal of previous thinking and associations of the term. A parallel phenomenon can be found in the critical literature on utopianism.

42. See my *Excursus on St. Thomas More's* Utopia, below, for a more detailed discussion of this work.

many names in his text, is Greek in origin and was, most likely, used because of its meaning.[43] However, the literal meaning of "Utopia" is not obvious. It is first "no-place" (*ou topia*), but also the "good-place" (*eutopia*), especially as More himself presents its society. This ambiguity has provided the basis for subsequent studies of utopias.[44] The imagined place is both idealized and does not exist in reality. Thus, "utopian" has come to mean "fanciful," "fantastic," "impossible," and "unrealizable." Yet, it can also mean "visionary," "ideal," "better-than-the-present," and "an alternative reality." The tension between these understandings of the adjective is essential to interpreting utopian literature and should not be readily dismissed in favor of one or the other connotations. Thus, its spatial existence is constantly a point of tension in a utopian text. Utopia exists in space, if only in the ideological space of the text.

In terms of its temporal location, however, it is clear that utopia is not necessarily a future place. That utopia does not have to be a future place, but can exist in the present (just as More's island of Utopia does)

43. See, for example, the comments by Eugene D. Hill, "The Place of the Future: Louis Marin and his *Utopiques*," *SFS* 9 (1982): 167–79 (173–74).

44. Fredric Jameson, "Introduction/Prospectus: To Reconsider the Relationship of Marxism to Utopian Thought," *Minnesota Review* 6 (1976): 53–58; idem, "Of Islands and Trenches: Neutralization and the Production of Utopian Discourse," in *the Ideologies of Theory: Essays 1971–1986.* Vol. 2, *The Syntax of History* (2 vols.; Theory and History of Literature 49; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 75–101; repr. from *diacritics* 7, no. 2 (1977): 2–21; idem, "Progress Versus Utopia; or, Can We Imagine the Future?," *SFS* 9 (1982): 147–58; idem, "World-Reduction in Le Guin: The Emergence of Utopian Narrative," *SFS* 2 (1975): 221–30; Louis Marin, *Utopics: Spatial Play* (trans. Robert A. Vollrath; Contemporary Studies in Philosophy and the Human Sciences; Atlantic Heights, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1984); idem, "The Frontiers of Utopia," in *Utopias and the Millennium* (ed. Krishan Kumar and Stephen Bann; Critical Views; London: Reaktion Books, 1993), 7–16; Darko Suvin, "The Alternate Islands: A Chapter in the History of SF, with a Bibliography on the SF of Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance," *SFS* 10 (1983): 239–48; idem, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979); idem, "On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre," in *Science Fiction: A Collection of Critical Essays* (ed. Mark Rose; Twentieth Century Views; Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice–Hall, 1976), 57–71; idem, "The River-Side Trees, or SF & Utopia," *Minnesota Review* 2–3 (1974): 108–15; idem, "Theses on Dystopia 2001," in *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination* (ed. Raffaello Baccolini and Tom Moylan; New York: Routledge, 2003), 187–201; cf. Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *diacritics* 16 (1986): 22–27. For additional sources on utopian literary theory, please see my dissertation, "Reading Utopia in Chronicles," 31–35.

eliminates an automatic equivalence between eschatology and utopia. Something or some place can be utopian without being eschatological.[45]

Following the central feature of More's work, the essential characteristic of utopian literature is not its temporal placement, but rather the depiction of the society which it aims to portray. In fact, the organization and qualities of the society depicted are the one commonality between all works considered to be utopian in nature.[46] Whatever else utopian literature may be, it must describe a "good" (or better) society than that of the author's present.[47]

1.2.2. *The Methodology of Utopian Literary Theory*

This point about utopian literature reflecting such a good/better society is made by Darko Suvin's paradigmatic definition of utopia as

> a literary genre or verbal construction whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence of a particular quasi-human community where sociopolitical institutions, norms and individual relationships are organized on a more perfect principle than in the author's community, this construction being based on estrangement arising out of an alternative historical hypothesis.[48]

Suvin's definition reflects three central concerns of recent literary criticism on utopia: (1) comparison between the present society and the "more perfect" literary presentation; (2) the principle of estrangement or

45. Often passed over without much thought is the fact that More's island of Utopia existed contemporaneously with medieval England and that the lands of Euhemerus and Iambulus were also contemporary societies with ancient Greece. Temporal distance is more typically invoked in *Urzeit* and *Endzeit* myths, such as the Garden of Eden and the New Jerusalem or in Plato's myth of the then 9,000–year-old Atlantis civilization (in *Crit.* 108e–115d and *Tim.* 23d–25d). In utopian literature and in its related genre of science fiction, temporal displacement can be past or future depending on the individual work; and while spatial displacement towards the Other is very common, it can also be articulated as the Other coming near.

46. Suvin notes that utopias come in a variety of models and proposals, but *all* of them are *organized*; there are no disorganized utopias (*Metamorphoses*, 50).

47. This is partially demonstrated by the fact that a dystopia, the "bad" society and inverse of utopia, has the portrayal of an inherently "worse" society than the present situation as its common theme. See the comments by M. Keith Booker, *The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature: Fiction as Social Criticism* (Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy 58; Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), 18–20; W. Edward Brown, "Some Hellenistic Utopias," *Classical Weekly* 48 (1955): 57–62 (62); Tom Moylan, *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia* (Cultural Studies Series; Boulder: Westview, 2000); and Dingbo Wu, "Understanding Utopian Literature," *Extrap* 34 (1993): 230–44 (233, 242–43).

48. Suvin, "River-Side Trees," 110.

defamiliarization as an interpretative key; and (3) provision of a different series of events leading to the present situation or to the future as depicted explicitly or implicitly by the text. These three tenets derive both from the content and form of utopias and reflect the position of utopian theory within literary criticism.

As a recognized methodology in literary criticism, utopian literary theory is related to a number of contemporary literary theories, especially deconstructionism, sharing many of the same presuppositions regarding the means by which a text generates meaning. Of particular importance are the ideas of "neutralization" and "defamiliarization" or *ostranenie*. In this view, utopian literature invites readers

> to reconsider their notions of the normal and the familiar…[so that] one can safely assume that contemporary readers are particularly aware of the tensions and ambiguities observable in utopian visions. This emphasis on the provisional nature of all utopian systems encourages readers to employ their own utopian imagination.[49]

In this light, the organizational structure of the utopia becomes a means of social critique, whether deriving ultimately from the reader or from the text, which constructs an alternative world that calls the present order into question at every turn.

Indeed, in More's *Utopia*—the central, but not the only, text employed in definitions of the literary genre of utopia—the island of Utopia exists as an alternative reality filled with critiques of More's present social situation.[50] This point has been made in numerous studies on More's work and has brought about a re-evaluation of the character of utopian literature in general. Largely under the influence of Marxism, utopias have traditionally been viewed negatively as literary works of oppression that restrict the "revolutionary" spirit as the powerful elite impose a system on the masses. Given the highly detailed organizational structures, especially hierarchical social pyramids, common to utopias, such a reaction is not surprising. However, the interrelationship between the

49. Frank Dietz, "Utopian Re-visions of German History: Carl Amery's *An den Feuern der Leyermark* and Stefan Heym's *Schwarzenberg*," *Extrap* 31 (1990): 24–35 (33).

50. The relationship between alternative reality and historical present is well-articulated by Northrop Frye: "The utopian writer looks at the ritual habits of his own society and tries to see what society would be like if these ritual habits were made more consistent and more inclusive" ("Varieties of Literary Utopias," in *Utopias and Utopian Thought* [ed. F. E. Manuel; Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1966], 25–49; repr. in *The Stubborn Structure: Essays on Criticism and Society* [Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970], 109–34 [124]).

utopian text and the reality against which it defines its values has provided a means of assessing the "utopian ideology" of the text. This phrase, "utopian ideology," is an oxymoron in Marxism, which distinguishes between the two concepts as opposites.[51] Since, in the traditional Marxist system, ideology leads to revolution, while utopia is viewed as a vehicle for maintaining the *status quo*, Marxism has traditionally rejected utopia and favored ideology. However, the typical Marxist definitions of utopia and ideology are inadequate to account for the true nature of utopia: it is an ideology, and one which can be revolutionary in that it provides a strong social critique. Utopia is not opposed to ideology, but is an ideological position itself that can be identified in a text, a counter-ideology designed to question the present historical situation.

The importance of social critique in utopian literature is emphasized in recent critical theory as a means of reading such works *not as blueprints* for ideal societies, but rather as *revolutionary texts* designed to challenge the *status quo* and question the way things presently are being done.[52] Thus, utopias depict the world "as it should be" *not* "why it is the way it is." In other words, *utopias are not works of legitimation* (providing a grounding for the present reality), *but works of innovation* (suggesting a reality that *could* be, if its parameters were accepted). This reassessment of utopian literature produces a significant by-product: the utopian construct does not necessarily reflect the historical situation of the author, that is, the author does not legitimize his present, but criticizes it by depicting the literary reality in terms *not* to be found in the author's society. This makes historical reconstruction derived primarily from a utopian text extremely difficult. The utopian text does not reflect historical reality, but future possibility. For example, attempting to find the structures of society from More's *Utopia* in his contemporary England would produce a distorted view of England during this time period.[53]

51. This opposition is part of the heritage of Marx and Engels; cf. Lyman Tower Sargent, "Authority and Utopia: Utopianism in Political Thought," *Polity* 14 (1982): 565–84.

52. Dietz, "Utopian Re-visions of German History," 33; Hill, "Place of the Future"; Ursula K. Le Guin, "'A War Without End,'" in *The Wave in the Mind: Talks and Essays on the Writer, the Reader, and the Imagination* (Boston: Shambhala, 2004), 211–20 (216–20); Tom Moylan, *Demand the Impossible: Science Fiction and the Utopian Imagination* (New York: Methuen, 1986), 3–7, 36–40; and Wu, "Understanding Utopian Literature," 234–35.

53. This point is repeatedly made, with examples, by Sarah R. Jones, "Thomas More's 'Utopia' and Medieval London," in *Pragmatic Utopias: Ideals and Communities, 1200–1630* (ed. R. Horrox and S. R. Jones; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 117–35.

However, to take More's portrayal as the opposite or another view of constructing society, the *problems* of his contemporary English society (at least in More's own view) would become accessible to the reader.

It may be objected that this line of reasoning applies only to post-Marxist interpretations of utopian literature, or at least only to utopias since More's inauguration of the genre in 1516 C.E. Roland Boer, in defending his "reading as" method, has rightly observed that "the arrival of a new genre—More's *Utopia* is my example—is not without its cultural precursors. More importantly, the opening of one's eyes to the various contours of the radically new also opens one's eyes to examples and generic forms that provide a foretaste of what is to come."[54]

As noted previously in the discussion of genre, new genres arise from previously existing genres; this condition allows for the possibility that such cultural precursors to modern forms may be present in antiquity. As has been argued and reaffirmed by critical scholarship, utopian literature is an appropriate generic designation for writings in antiquity, of which there are numerous examples—particularly from the Hellenistic world.[55] Such generic comparisons, with both ancient and modern literature, have greatly aided in the endeavor to situate utopian literature among other generic forms. Within the field of genre studies, utopian literature has been associated with science fiction[56] and the historical novel.[57] While

54. *Novel Histories*, 122. More's *Utopia* is a mixed genre; see Marina Leslie, *Renaissance Utopias and the Problem of History* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 1–5; and Jane Donawerth, "Genre Blending and the Critical Dystopia," in Baccolini and Moylan, eds., *Dark Horizons*, 29–46 (29).

55. Many classicists and literary critics have labeled the societies of Plato (*Republic*), Iambulus (in Diod. Sic. 2.55.1–60.3), and Euhemerus (in Diod. Sic. 5.41.1–46.7) "utopian" and honored the journey to the moon in Lucian's *A True Story* as the first science fiction story (Graham Anderson, "Lucian's *Verae Historiae*," in *The Novel in the Ancient World* [ed. G. Schmeling; MnemSup 159; Leiden: Brill, 1996], 555–61 [556]; S. C. Fredericks, "Lucian's *True History* as SF," *SFS* 3 [1976]: 49–60; Aristoula Georgiadou and David H. J. Larmour, *Lucian's Science Fiction Novel,* True Histories*: Interpretation and Commentary* [MnemSup 179; Leiden: Brill, 1998], esp. 45–48). Fredericks also argues that Lucian's work contains the earliest depiction of a dystopia designed as a contrast to its picture of the utopian Elysium ("Lucian's *True History* as SF," 56). See also the assessments by John Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World* (Aspects of Greek and Roman Life; Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975); and James S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration, and Fiction* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).

56. This relationship is complex and borne out by the major analyses in both the areas of utopian studies and science fiction. The two genres are related to one another; literary critics view utopia as a sub-genre of science fiction or vice versa.

these forms belong properly to modern literature, there is ample evidence to locate their "cultural precursors" in antiquity and in significant numbers as well. If the objections sometimes noted to the use of this generic designation for ancient literature have been answered at least to some degree, then the wealth of recent critical analyses of utopian literature, science fiction, and the novel becomes available to aid in reading ancient literature such as Chronicles.[58]

Roland Boer has followed this line of argument in constructing his methodology by drawing on the highly influential works on utopian literature by Louis Marin and on the related genre of science fiction by Darko Suvin, in addition to the obvious influence of Fredric Jameson's insights into these matters.[59] Boer provides the following helpful summary list of "literary features" common to utopian literature:

> neutralization, continual reference to contemporary events, contradiction between narrative and description of the utopian place, contradiction between the description itself and any efforts at graphic representation, and a dialectic of disjunction and connection between the constructed utopia and outside world, in particular the society from which the writer originates.[60]

For example, Suvin advocates the former position ("River-Side Trees," 114) and Sargent the second ("Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," 11).

57. The genre of novel is problematic, but its usefulness for discussions of genre in the ancient world has been affirmed by scholars in literature and in classics. See, among others, the essays contained in *The Novel in the Ancient World* (ed. G. Schmeling; MnemSup 159; Leiden: Brill, 1996), and esp. Niklas Holzberg, "The Genre: Novels Proper and the Fringe," and "Utopias and Fantastic Travel: Euhemerus, Iambulus," 11–28, and 621–28. Holzberg affirms the traditional understanding of utopianism present in Plato's *Republic*, Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, and in the existence of at least two works commonly recognized as ancient utopias, the fragments from Euhemerus and Iambulus. If such a connection between novel and utopia is allowed, the usefulness of utopian literary theory for analyzing a work of uncertain genre like Chronicles may be enhanced significantly.

58. Even if this argument for contemporary generic relatives for Chronicles as a work of utopian literature should be rejected, the contention of Mario Liverani that one may benefit greatly from a cross-temporal, cross-spatial, or cross-generic comparative analysis of ancient documents in illuminating a text's meaning would still be applicable to this present endeavor at reading utopianism in Chronicles; see his enlightened remarks on the usefulness of this type of broad literary criticism ("Memorandum on the Approach to Historiographic Texts," *Or* 42 [1973]: 178–94 [181–82]).

59. Boer, *Novel Histories*, 15.

60. Ibid., 138.

One of his central principles is that the appearance of a closed system in utopian literature is really an illusion.[61] The utopian system resists closure and remains open to inconsistencies and change. Boer thus intentionally looks for inconsistencies, impossibilities, and perceived "surprises" throughout the text focusing on two main issues: "world reduction" with its accompanying "large numbers" in spatial description, and the "inclusive/exclusive" society with its boundary definitions.[62] He concludes that these common utopian concepts manifest themselves in Chronicles as part of the Chronicler's overall arguments about the nature of "Israel" and its relationship to the land. So, for example, by leaving a geographical opening in Rehoboam's defenses in 2 Chr 10–13 (immediately following the division of the kingdom), the Chronicler provides a means for the Northerners to join Judah at the temple.[63] Boer next suggests that such openness indicates that "Israel" is incomplete without the North; that is, the Chronicler awaited the day of full reconciliation between North and South under the auspices of the one temple cult located at Jerusalem.

Boer's use of geography as an indicator of utopianism is dependent on Marin's spatial analysis of More's *Utopia*. Marin contends that "Utopia" is not "no-place" in the sense of being non-existent, but rather "the 'other' of any place" which does exist.[64] Utopia is dialogue with spatial representation in a literary arena, which is in constant process and

61. Jameson notes the importance of contradictions and the impossibility of spatial and narrative closure common to most utopias despite the appearance of a detailed systematic order in the utopian society ("Progress Versus Utopia," 155).

62. Drawing from Jameson ("World-Reduction"), Boer notes that "World reduction is a feature of Utopian writing" ("Utopian Politics," 375); in addition, the utopia must not be a completely closed society (a common misconception of utopias), since outsiders must enter, learn, and return to the larger world in order to bring its wonders to light. This second point is true of More's *Utopia* as well as the ancient voyage of Iambulus and the utopian society that Homer describes in *Od.* 6.261–67. In the first two cases, the utopians receive the outsider and explicitly participate in trade relations with other nations. While "most utopians expel their visitors as evil-doers," this is only after a warm reception and much interaction occurs over a period of months or years (cf. David Winston, "Iambulus' *Islands of the Sun* and Hellenistic Literary Utopias," *SFS* 3 [1976]: 219–27 [223]).

63. Boer, "Utopian Politics," 374–81. Drawing on Marin's comments (see below), he notes that the inclusion of Philistine Gath in the list of Judean cities in 2 Chr 11:6–10 neutralizes the perception of a drastically reduced Judah. Thus, this "quirk" enters the system and disrupts the spatial representation, causing the reader to rethink the reality of the system, namely, a small Judah contemporary with the Chronicler (*Novel Histories*, 145).

64. Marin, "Frontiers," 11.

adaptation.[65] Marin especially notes that utopias tend to resist easy representation on a map or straightforward depiction of its detailed societal structures. For Marin, such failure is a true victory over the powers that would attempt to contain and control the ideas of the utopia. By presenting ideals that avoid simple implementation, utopia is held out as the goal to be continually striven after but never completely reached. Thus, power is indefinitely critiqued and never fully accepted as sufficient or satisfactory in its present form(s) and structure(s). Thus, Marin concludes that "Utopia is an ideological critique of ideology,"[66] especially the dominant ideology which it seeks to displace by its own reconstitution of structures and projection of reality.

In contrast to Marin, Suvin emphasizes that utopia is always located on a map, even if removed from the author's/reader's society by a great distance or temporal displacement.[67] Klaus Geus has come to a similar conclusion regarding Hellenistic utopian literature. His analysis stresses the importance of locating utopia on the map of the ancient Greek world.[68] Geus' conclusions demonstrate that the spatiality of utopia plays a significant role in its depiction and in its relationship to the cultural ideals of the day. The notion that "utopia" has "space" draws more on its etymology as "good place" rather than its other connotation of "no place," that is, without space. While utopias have long been marginalized as "pie-in-the-sky" unrealistic portrayals of society without reference to the "real world," more recent literary theorists have openly rejected the negative associations of the word "utopia" and have argued for a more sympathetic reading of these lengthy texts often considered boring.[69]

Yet the location of utopia in relationship to the "outside world" is not the extent of spatial concerns in the description of utopia. Utopia's relationship to the outside world is accompanied by an even more intense fixation on its internal structure, organization, planning, system, and

65. Marin, *Utopics*, 8, 113–16.

66. Ibid., 195.

67. Suvin, *Metamorphoses*, 42.

68. Klaus Geus, "Utopie und Geographie: Zum Weltbild der Griechen in frühhellenistichers Zeit," *Orbis Terrarum* 6 (2000): 55–90; cf. Andrew C. Sneddon, "Worlds Within Worlds: Perceptions of Space, Place and Landscape in Ancient Greece," *JACiv* 17 (2002): 59–75; and Dag Øistein Endsjø, "Placing the Unplaceable: The Making of Apollonius' Argonautic Geography," *GRBS* 38 (1997): 373–85.

69. On the rejection of this negative view of utopia and its results in reading utopias, see Christopher Grey and Christiana Garsten, "Organized and Disorganized Utopias: An Essay on Presumption," in *Utopia and Organization* (ed. M. Parker; Sociological Review Monographs; Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 9–23; and Moylan, *Demand the Impossible*, 197.

hierarchy. As already mentioned, Suvin notes that utopias come in a variety of models and proposals, but *all* of them are *organized*.[70] Chad Walsh, in his famous work, concurs that *planning* is the "keyword" of all utopias from Plato to the present.[71] In other words, utopias exist because they are intentional, following rules and patterns, and work themselves out in a literary reality.

However, it should be also noted that no longer is the common wisdom that "change is the enemy of utopia" held to be true by many utopian theorists.[72] Innovation is not excluded within the confines of the utopian system, and utopia does not exist apart from history. Time and space still continue to impact the happenings of the utopian society. Utopia exists in a specific place and, at least, has a historical beginning if not a history of its own since the time of origin.

Excursus: St. Thomas More's Utopia[73]

A discussion of utopian literature and utopian literary theory would seem somehow incomplete without discussing the text that has provided the name for both the genre and the ideology itself. However, this text is not from the ancient world; it is, of course, the composition by St. Thomas More from 1516 entitled "The Best State of a Commonwealth, the Discourse of the Extraordinary Character, Raphael Hythlodaeus, as Reported by the Renowned Figure, Thomas More, Citizen and Sheriff of the Famous City of Great Britain, London," which describes in two books this political community located on the island with the suggestive name "Utopia" (meaning "no-place" and/or "good-place"). This excursus will provide some comments on the basic content of the work and those points that are significant for the reading of utopianism in Chronicles.

70. Suvin, *Metamorphoses*, 50.

71. Chad Walsh, *From Utopia to Nightmare* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), 57.

72. However, in reference to Chronicles, Japhet explicitly claims that "The primary principle underlying the book's world-view is acceptance of the existing world: no change to the world is anticipated in Chronicles… Continuity, not change, characterizes the Chronistic way of thinking on every subject…[so that] the ways of the present are legitimized anew" (*Ideology*, 501–2, 516). While she is correct that the Chronicler stresses continuity with the past, the basis for her statement is actually based on her *assumption* that the depiction of the ordered cult and society of Chronicles reflects the present reality of the Chronicler's period. If the depictions instead were the aspirations which the Chronicler desired to see implemented, then change would be at the very center of his purpose; such a shift in thinking is necessary in approaching Chronicles from the perspective of utopian literary theory.

73. All citations are taken from Thomas More, *The Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More*. Vol. 4, *Utopia* (ed. E. Surtz and J. H. Hexter; 15 vols.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

More's work clearly draws on the utopian traditions of the Greek world, especially Plato, and is influenced by the Christian tradition and Augustine's *De civitate Dei* in particular.[74] The basic plot framework of the entire work is as follows: the character More and his companion Peter Giles have an extended conversation with a traveler named Raphael Hythlodaeus (whose name translates as "purveyor of nonsense"),[75] who has returned from a journey to the new world originally in the company of Amerigo Vespucci but who then set out with other adventurers. This individual relates an account of his time among the inhabitants of the island of Utopia who live in many respects a superior life than those in Europe (and in England and France in particular). Before this description (which is really the subject of Book II), however, Raphael addresses other societies such as the Polylerites among the Persians and debates the various objections of More and Giles to his political philosophy and his criticism of English society. In this dialogue, Raphael pointedly remarks, "What if I told them the kind of things which Plato creates in his republic or which the Utopians actually put in practice in theirs?" This is a key point in the work for two reasons: first, it establishes the *reality* of the Utopian society in contrast to the hypothetical nature of Plato's *Republic*; and second, as such a reality it challenges directly the reality of More's present-day England, which can no longer simply defer such criticism as coming only from an abstract and hypothetical society; that is, the alternative reality of the Utopian society is not "nowhere," but exists in the present somewhere just as the Hellenistic utopias aside from the *Republic* often did. Still in Book I, Raphael notes the benefits in the practice of commonality of goods versus the dangers of private property, which will be a recurring theme in Book II. Raphael then emphatically invites his listeners to hear his eyewitness account of the five years he spent in the incredible Utopia (he left only to make known its wonders) in terms reminiscent of the ancient historian's claims to authority and trustworthiness.[76]

In the final paragraphs of Book I, Raphael begins to relate the history of the island before the trio decides to eat, and then return to hear the remainder of the tale continued in Book II. Raphael relates the shape of the island (a circle, but actually

74. On the relationship of More and Augustine, see Joyce Oramel Hertzler, *The History of Utopian Thought* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1965; repr. from New York: Macmillian, 1923), 84–94, 127–46 (129); and W. Warren Wagar, "The Millennium as Utopia," *UtopSt* 11, no. 2 (2000): 214–18 (216–17).

75. This pun on Raphael's name is only one of the many employed by More; such a practice is also common in the Hellenistic material; see, e.g., Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World*, 105.

76. Compare the statement by Raphael (*Utopia*, p. 107 lines 17–23) with those made by ancient historians: Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.1–5, 2.99; Thucydides 1.1.1–2, 1.20.1, 1.21.1–2, 1.22.1–4; Polybius 1.1.1–5.1, 1.12.5–14.9, 4.1.1–2.4, 12.4c–28a.10; Lucian, *Hist. conscr.* 4b–5a, 7b–10, 13b–14a, 16–17, 20, 22–24a, 27, 30a, 31–32, 34, 37–63; Diod. Sic. 1.1.1–4.7, 1.6.1–3, 4.1.1–6, 5.1.1–4, 20.1.1–2.2; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 1.1.1–2.4, 1.5.1–4, 1.6.1–2, 1.8.1–4; idem, *Thuc.* 2–3, 5–9, 10.1, 11–12, 13.1, 16, 19–20, 22–24, 35, 50–52; idem, *Pomp.* 3–6; Sallust, *Bell. Cat.* 1.1–4, 4.1–4; idem, *Bell. Jug.* 1.1–4, 4.1–5, 4.9, 5.1–3, 17.1–7, Josephus, *Ant.* Preface 1.1–26, 14.1–3, 16.183–187, 20.154–157, 259–268; idem, *J.W.* Preface 1.1–30, 7.454–455; idem, *C. Ap.* 1.1–59; 2 Macc 2:19–32; Luke 1:1–4; Acts 1:1–2.

more of an oval), with its harbors and terrain. Raphael reports that the island was formerly named Abraxa and was connected to the mainland before the eponymous Utopus conquered the land at least some 1,760 years in the past[77] and ordered the digging of the great trench to separate it as an island. The island now has fifty-four city-states identical in language, culture, and laws, and are laid out in a similar fashion and distance from each other as the topography will allow. Besides this "less than perfect" positioning, there is also a capital city at the center of the island. The utopian (but not perfect) geography again is brought up in discussing the cities themselves and the river Anydrus ("no-water") which runs asymmetrically across the island.

This discussion of utopian geography is followed by an extended explanation of: the political system, work duties, leisure, education, the pursuit of the arts and science, the repudiation of gold and wealth and fine attire, social relations which function as if the inhabitants were all a single family, avoidance of pride and greed, a certain degree of asceticism and patience in their actions, the allowance of visitation to the world outside the island, the lack of morally corrupt institutions such as brothels and alehouses, the inhabitants' inconsistent attitude toward war, their love of philosophy, their affirmation of Greek literature and language, their more humane institution of slavery, marriage practices, their allowance of suicide, the rarity of divorce (allowed only for adultery or "intolerable offensiveness of disposition"), the need for relatively few laws given their education and their equal distaste for lawyers, their avoidance of treaties, their relations with neighboring peoples, and their diverse religious beliefs.

When Raphael has finished his account, the character More offers his own reflections on what he has just heard, noting that: (1) much of it is absurd especially in light of common practice in England; (2) he would like to discuss these matters further if possible; and (3) he cannot agree with all of the description, but "readily admits that there are very many features in the Utopian commonwealth which it is easier for me to wish for in our countries than to have any hope of seeing realized." With this final comment, *Utopia* concludes.

One of the main interpretative questions brought to this text has been how to judge More's own position and advocacy of these ideas. Is "Raphael" More or is the character "More" More? Do his concluding paragraphs indicate that this account contains many ideas with some of greater and some of lesser value? However these difficult questions are answered, More clearly constructed a society in tension with his present, especially the England of 1516; he also doubts that any of the "improvements" which he has offered in this alternate society would become actual practice in his historical reality. Nevertheless, *Utopia* exists as an alternative reality that offers a critique of the present social and political organizations and practices, and More has had his say. His desire to continue the dialogue with Raphael about these matters stands, in many respects, as an invitation to further discussion to whoever

77. See this number of years in *Utopia*, p. 121 lines 26–34; see also the claim of Romans and Egyptians being shipwrecked there some 1,200 years ago on p. 109 lines 1–11. This shipwreck allows for many of the similarities between Utopian culture and European, including its language, to be possible and somewhat more credible.

will engage More in the details of his text and the society described therein. More's utopian *Utopia* is a call to question the *status quo*, to re-evaluate commonly held beliefs, and to probe the possibility of what England would look like if even some aspects of the society of Utopia were implemented in place of current practices and beliefs. Thus, More's *Utopia* is not chiefly about the past or even present, but it is most concerned with the future.

1.2.3. *Utopianism and Its Literary Form in the Ancient World*

As an ideology, utopianism is present in the ancient world, especially in Hellenistic literature. The following texts have been discussed in light of their utopian content or as depictions of classical utopias: Hesiod's Golden Age (in *Theogony* and *Op.* 109–180, 822–824); Homer's societies of Phaeakia (in *Od.* Bks. 6–8), and the Ethiopians (in *Il.* 1.423; 23.205; *Od.* 1.22; cf. the Lotus-eaters in *Od.* 9.83–104); Herodotus' description of the Ethiopians (in *Hist.* 3.22–23); Plato's *Republic*, *Laws* (esp. 3.702a–b), and his description of Atlantis (in *Crit.* 108e–115d and *Tim.* 23d–25d); Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and *Anabasis*; the land of Meropis in Theopompus (in Strabo, *Geogr.* 7.3.6); the travel narratives of Euhemerus (in Diod. Sic. 5.41.1–46.7) and Iambulus (in Diod. Sic. 2.55.1–60.3); Hecataeus of Abdera's *On the Hyperboreans* (in Diod. Sic. 2.47.1–6); Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*; and Lucian's *Verae Historiae*.

Several texts or descriptions from the biblical corpus and works related to it have also been labeled "utopian": the Garden of Eden (Gen 2); the eschatological visions of the prophets (esp. in Amos, Hosea, Micah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Second Isaiah, Third Isaiah, Second Zechariah); the book of Deuteronomy; the Priestly Source of the Pentateuch; the "Jerusalem-theology" of the HB; the temple society of Ezek 40–48; the Christian community of Acts 2–4; the *Letter of Aristeas*; the *Temple Scroll* (11Q19–20), *War Scroll* (1QM), and the New Jerusalem texts (2Q4, 4Q554, 4Q555, 5Q15, 11Q18) from Qumran; the description of the Therapeutai (in Philo, *De vita contemplativa*) and the Essenes in Philo (*Prob.* 75–91; *Hypoth.* 11.1–11.18 in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 8.6.1–7; 8.11.1–8) and in Josephus (*Ant.* 13.171–173; 18.18–22; *J.W.* 2.119–161); the description of the New Jerusalem in Rev 21:1–22:5; and Augustine's *De civitate Dei*.[78] While the biblical and related material listed has been

78. See my dissertation ("Reading Utopia in Chronicles," 56–57) for the relevant secondary literature that label these texts under the rubric "utopian." With the exception of Boer's analyses, Chronicles has not been treated significantly from the perspective of utopianism. However, it is addressed with *only some* detail as one of the many "utopian proposals for what the priesthood ideally should become, proposals never fully realized in actual history" by Richard D. Nelson, "Restoration

termed utopian, this is mostly due to the dual misconception that utopian is interchangeable with eschatological and that none of these texts is practical in their implementation. However, as argued above, neither of these characteristics is essential for a work being classified as "utopian."

In a much more sophisticated analysis, John Collins has also recently argued for the authentic presence of various forms of utopianism in what he terms the "Biblical Tradition."[79] In this essay, he draws on the classical tradition in recognizing that different kinds of utopias exist, but that all are "visions of an idealized or transcendent time and place."[80] He thus distinguishes four types of utopias in the "corpus of biblical and early Jewish writings":

> The first, which envisions a transformed land of Israel, may be termed agricultural. The second, which focuses on an ideal Jerusalem, has an urban character. The third is the model of an ideal community, such as we find in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the writings of Philo. The fourth, which appears at the beginning of Genesis and again in apocalyptic visions at the end of the biblical period, is properly utopian in the sense that the place it imagines is out of this world.[81]

and Utopian Vision," in *Raising Up a Faithful Priest: Community and Priesthood in Biblical Theology* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 111–40 (111); see also pp. 130–38. Chronicles is labeled a "utopian history, history not as it really was, but should have been [similar to the prophetic messianic ages and the legal codes]" by Wahl, "Chronicles," 197. Yet, Wahl provides no further discussion of this insight and no theoretical basis for his brief assertion. In addition, it is clear from his statement that he understands "utopian" to mean "historically unrealized," as do the majority of scholars who employ this term. Finally, Donald F. Murray terms the Davidic–Solomonic era in Chronicles as a "utopian past" which is to be "recreated" by the Chronicler's audience ("Retribution and Revival: Theological Theory, Religious Praxis, and the Future in Chronicles," *JSOT* 88 [2000]: 77–99 [88–89, 96]); cf. Ackroyd, *Chronicler in His Age*, 220. Murray does not address Chronicles as a whole, but only the "ideal" period of David and Solomon; cf. the similar remarks about replication of the ideal era of Solomon in the Chronicler's future by Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 122, 232–34; the period of David as an ideal picture of the future theocracy according to Tae-Soo Im, *Das Davidbild in den Chronikbüchern: David als Idealbild des theokratischen Messianismus für den Chronisten* (Europäische Hochschulschriften 23, 263; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1985); and the Davidic–Solomonic era as a "classical age" and "golden age" according to Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10–29*, 741, 798.

79. John J. Collins, "Models of Utopia in the Biblical Tradition," in *"A Wise and Discerning Mind": Essays in Honor of Burke O. Long* (ed. S. M. Olyan and R. C. Culley; BJS 325; Providence, R.I.: Brown University Press, 2000), 51–67.

80. Ibid., 52.

81. Ibid.

However, Collins' final statement that this category of *Urzeit* and *Endzeit* myths is "properly utopian" because such myths lack a "this-worldly" location is simply incorrect. This notion of "utopian" is not to be found in More's presentation or in the classical utopian literature, as discussed above. All of them, including the biblical material, locate the utopian society somewhere on this planet.[82] Collins' use of the phrase "properly utopian" is also difficult to accept given this conclusion to his otherwise erudite analysis: "Much of the abiding power of the Bible surely lies in the fact that its vision of utopia is so concretely embodied in a specific land."[83] Thus, Collins himself notes the immense importance of spatiality and physical location in "biblical" utopian literature.

1.2.4. *Utopianism in Chronicles*

In addition to the previous argumentation for the appropriateness of analyzing Chronicles as if it were utopian literature, Collins inadvertently provides one more point. His final remark noted above could be used to demonstrate that Chronicles should have been included in his own analysis of utopian literature in the biblical tradition.[84] The vision of an "idealized or transcendent time and place" is surely appropriate to a description of Chronicles, which portrays such a society during the past "in a specific land"—Israel. While Collins focuses on depictions of future ideal societies (Ezek 40–48, the visions for the "messianic" future in Isaiah)[85] and terms the *Temple Scroll* utopian because "it is incongruous with the state of reality in which it occurs,"[86] he fails to consider that the Hellenistic traditions locate utopian societies in past, contemporary, and future proximity to their own time.

The utopian character of the *Temple Scroll* for Collins is worth further brief consideration. The reason provided—the depiction does not match historical reality—is, of course, one of the central principles in utopian literary theory outlined above. While scholars debate the nature of the temple in *Temple Scroll* (is it *a* future temple or *the* eschatological

82. Note that the Garden of Eden of Gen 2:8–3:24 and the New Jerusalem of Rev 21:1–22:5 both exist on, or at least are connected to, the earth in a physical/spatial relationship. The classical literature is even more clear about this point.

83. Collins, "Models of Utopia," 67.

84. Also of interest is the remark by Frye that "Most utopias are conceived of as elite societies in which a small group is entrusted with essential responsibilities, and this élite is usually some analogy of a priesthood" ("Varieties of Literary Utopias,"119). This description definitely fits the utopian depiction of Israel in Chronicles.

85. Collins, "Models of Utopia," 54–58.

86. Ibid., 63.

temple?), they are unanimous that it is not simply a depiction of actual temple practice during the Second Temple period. The elaborate rituals and legislation of the Pentateuch's Priestly source, especially its provision of the Jubilee regulations, has also been termed "utopian" due to the perceived impracticability in implementing its details. This pattern by biblical scholars—Collins is only one representative—of labeling works as "utopian" which do not contain historical realities is important to note.

While the historicity of Chronicles is much debated, especially for the preexilic period, it is commonly assumed to contain information useful for the reconstruction of Second Temple period history and cultic practice. In this view, as such a source of "historical data" Chronicles cannot be utopian *de facto*, for its structures were (apparently) implemented at some point. However, this is an assumption common in scholarship without actual evidence. That the stipulations of Chronicles may be reflected in later documents does not mean that they were historical reality for the Chronicler.[87] Rather, if Chronicles is utopian in character, then its cultic practices and systems may reflect *desired* (but not necessarily implemented) changes and, therefore, not historical realities. Thus, the Chronicler may have been constructing an "ideal" or *desired* system which would possibly be implemented in the future; that is, the Chronicler may not be legitimizing current practice but rather offering an alternative system that would change the present structure. It is equally

87. Many examples could be offered, but undoubtedly the most obvious one is the "priestly courses" mentioned several times in Chronicles and as "twenty-four" in number in 1 Chr 24:1–19. This "rotation system" and that there were "twenty-four" of them are reflected by Josephus (*C. Ap.* 2.102–109; *Ant.* 7.363–367); apparently in Luke 1:5, 8–9, 23; and explicitly in the Mishnah (*Sukkah* 5:6–8; *Ta'an.* 4:1–2; cf. *Bik.* 3:12; *Ta'an.* 2:6–7; *Yebam.* 11:7; *B. Qam.* 9:12; *Tem.* 3:4; *Tamid* 5:1; *Parah* 3:11). Similar evidence has been adduced from the "priestly rosters" and calendrical documents from Qumran (4Q320–330), which list the names and sequence of what appear to be priestly courses in temple service. This is often taken as evidence that Chronicles was recording Second Temple practice, which continued from his day down to the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E.; for example, this is the explicit position of Gary N. Knoppers, "'The City Yhwh Has Chosen': The Chronicler's Promotion of Jerusalem in Light of Recent Archaeology," in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology: The First Temple Period* (ed. A. G. Vaughn and A. E. Killebrew; SBLSymS 18; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 307–26 (310), and even citing the above passages from Josephus and Luke. However, that these three texts later record practice in line with Chronicles does not actually affirm the historicity of Chronicles' description. It *could be* that Chronicles suggests a system which was later implemented or that the Qumran community, Josephus, Luke, and the Mishnah use this idealized picture of priestly service in Chronicles to their own advantage, drawing on literary tradition rather than actual practice (e.g. *Ant.* 7.363–67 is essentially a rewriting of 1 Chr 23–24).

plausible that its descriptions of society are not projections of Second Temple practice back into the preexilic period for the sake of legitimation, but are actually more in line with the desired stipulations of Ezekiel's Temple and the Priestly Source.

Thus, rather than sift through Chronicles for what it may say about the Second Temple period, utopian literary theory would suggest that its depiction of society is in tension with historical reality. From this perspective, Chronicles provides an excellent source for looking once more at the *problems* and *ideological struggles* of the late Persian or early Hellenistic period, rather than at a text produced by those elite who are advocating a continuation of the *status quo*.[88]

It is therefore suggested that the utopianism of Chronicles has a great deal in common with Ezekiel's restored temple, the New Heavens and New Earth, the New Jerusalem, and the future anticipated by the Qumran community. However, while these other texts present their utopian ideology as future idealized visions, Chronicles presents its utopian future as an idealized portrayal set in Israel's historical past. Rather than a literary device designed to encourage legitimation of the present, this anchors the desired changes solidly in the hallowed past. Chronicles, if not supplying rationale for "why it is this way," points to the alternative reality constructed in this version of Israel's past as "how it should be."

88. This notion of discontent with the present situation and an implicit dissatisfaction with the *status quo* in Chronicles is noted by several scholars: Ackroyd, *Chronicler in His Age*, 205; Piet B. Dirksen, "The Future in the Book of Chronicles," in *New Heaven and New Earth: Prophecy and the Millennium. Essays in Honour of Anthony Gelston* (ed. P. J. Harland and C. T. R. Hayward; VTSup 77; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 37–51 (50); Duke, "Rhetorical Approach," 123; Sara Japhet, "Exile and Restoration in the Book of Chronicles," in *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation and Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times* (ed. B. Becking and M. C. A. Korpel; OtSt 42; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 33–44 (43–44); Ralph W. Klein, "Prophets and Prophecy in the Books of Chronicles," *TBT* 36 (1998): 227–32 (231–32); Gary N. Knoppers, "Jehoshaphat's Judiciary and the Scroll of YHWH's Torah," *JBL* 113 (1994): 59–80 (80); Antje Labahn and Ehud Ben Zvi, "Observations on Women in the Genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1–9," *Bib* 84 (2003): 457–78 (459 n. 7, 473); Murray, "Dynasty, People, and the Future," 90 n. 43, 91–92; idem, "Retribution and Revival," 88 n. 27, 97 n. 45.

The similar relationship between the perceived need for restoration based on an idealized past and the creation of a utopian or imagined future is noted in Jewish apocalyptic literature and some of the sectarian Dead Sea Scrolls; see David E. Aune with Eric Stewart, "From the Idealized Past to the Imaginary Future: Eschatological Restoration in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature," in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives* (ed. J. M. Scott; JSJSup 72; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 147–77 (147).

Chapter 2

A Genealogical Utopia

2.1. *The Genealogies: Brief Comments on Purposes and Forms*

The opening nine chapters of Chronicles contain an extensive amount of genealogical material, in various forms and interspersed with narrative comments. This material and its part in the formation of the ideological construct of identity in Chronicles will be assessed in this chapter using the principles of utopian literary theory outlined in the previous chapter. Comparative data from the ancient Near East and the Hellenistic world both contribute to the assessment of the genealogies in Chronicles. However, rather than focus on this comparative evidence,[1] this introductory section will make some brief remarks on the purposes and forms of the genealogies in Chronicles in order to demonstrate their function within the book as a whole.

2.1.1. *Purposes of Genealogies*

As has been demonstrated with numerous examples by Gary Knoppers, the comparative data from the Hellenistic world, more so than those from the ancient Near East, provides illuminating evidence for understanding both the purposes and forms of the genealogical material in Chronicles.[2]

1. For an assessment of these comparative data in relation to Chronicles, see my dissertation, "Reading Utopia in Chronicles," 65–74.

2. Gary N. Knoppers, "The Davidic Genealogy: Some Contextual Considerations from the Ancient Mediterranean World," *Transeu* 22 (2001): 35–50; idem, "Greek Historiography"; cf. idem, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 253–59. See also, the earlier comparisons between the genealogies of Genesis and the Hellenistic material by John Van Seters, "The Primeval Histories of Greece and Israel Compared," *ZAW* 100 (1988): 1–22. Both scholars draw heavily on the analysis by Martin L. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women: Its Nature, Structure, and Origins* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985). Many of the positions held by West have been strengthened by additional arguments and evidence in Rosalind Thomas, "Genealogy and Family Tradition: The Intrusion of Writing," in *Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens* (Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture 18; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

Indeed, Chronicles shares many of the same concerns as the Hellenistic genealogies and demonstrates the importance of genealogies in that time period. Drawing on the reasoned conclusions by Knoppers, the genealogies in the Hellenistic world and in Chronicles do indeed appear to be remarkably similar.

It may not be entirely surprising that genealogies from approximately the same historical era should exhibit similar functions and purposes. Further, that genealogies in general, from a variety of historical contexts, share similar features and serve similar ends when they are articulated has been well-established in previous scholarship. The similarities between Chronicles and the Hellenistic material both confirm and are confirmed by the leading scholarly studies on genealogies. However, these studies are not specifically focused on the Hellenistic data nor have the material in Chronicles as their main thrust. Two of these analyses have been notably influential on subsequent critical discussion of genealogies: the seminal work by Johnson and the exhaustive study by Wilson.[3]

Johnson's main concern is to provide a context for understanding the genealogies of Jesus in the Gospels of Matthew (1:1–17) and Luke (3:23–38). This context is constructed by an analysis of the genealogical material in the HB, particularly the Pentateuchal sources and the material in Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemiah. In his assessment of the material in Chronicles, Johnson divides the data into three categories: the "core material," "geographical data," and "other notes."[4] This third category largely consists of the narrative elements not formally genealogical or geographic in nature. Johnson concludes that the core material derives mainly from the Pentateuchal sources and is used to construct "a picture of the complete kingdom of God" under the label of "all Israel."[5] To this biological construct is added the geographical material which thus associates the people with their "promised" land in an intimate interrelationship, so that "people and land are essentially one."[6] Regarding the third category, Johnson rejects the common view that the narrative elements in

1989), 155–95. She emphasizes the importance of genealogies for prestige and status (pp. 156, 177), the reflection of current socio-political relations in genealogical relations (pp. 175–76), the role of eponymous ancestors (p. 176), the lack of concern in Hellenistic genealogy for tracing lines of descent down to the present (pp. 181–82, 195), and the complex relationship which the literary forms have with their oral sources (pp. 184–95).

3. Johnson, *Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies*; and Wilson, *Genealogy and History*.

4. Ibid., 55–68.

5. Ibid., 56–57.

6. Ibid., 57–60 (57).

the genealogies are interpolations with recourse to comparative data: Safaitic inscriptions from the region around Damascus which date from some point during the first centuries B.C.E. and C.E. Johnson's evidence is useful for him since he intends to address the New Testament genealogies, but is not the best comparative data for Chronicles; he even admits that the late inscriptions do not fully account for the variety of narrative notations found in Chronicles. Instead, Johnson emphasizes the military and tribal nature of many of the notations, and concludes that the Chronicler's "faithfulness to the details of his sources where he had no theological reason to change them, a procedure seen in his treatment of the biblical texts available to him, is sufficient to explain his inclusion of the military and historical notes."[7] However, the Hellenistic data suggest another more direct possibility than positing a consistent use of sources on part of the Chronicler: simply put, genealogies often included narrative comments, as the Hellenistic data show.

In summarizing his analysis of the genealogies in Chronicles, Johnson first acknowledges the role of genealogies in defining Israel's identity against the other peoples who are related to Israel and yet excluded from the distinctive community known as "all Israel" before he concentrates on the purpose of these lists: the presentation of a "theocracy *par excellence*" which focuses on the lines of Judah and Levi—the ancestors of David and the priests—that is, the monarchy and the temple which it instituted. Although Johnson notes the important role of legitimacy for individuals in the preservation and construction of genealogies (particularly for the priesthood), he demurs from the commonly held belief that this is the most important (if not the only) function of the genealogical material. Rather than providing legitimacy for the Chronicler's "contemporary officiants," he suggests that it is the grounding of the temple worship as a Davidic institution, a claim to continuity with the past, which takes precedence in the lengthy enumeration of the people of Israel.[8] Thus, Johnson's study touches on the most common understandings of the purposes of genealogies: legitimacy of the present, affirming claims to continuity with the past, distinguishing between different groups by drawing ethnic boundaries, and defining the internal organizational relationships of a single group.

Wilson's study of the genealogies in the HB echoes these four purposes for genealogies, although approaching the issue from a very different perspective than Johnson. While Johnson discusses the literary functions of genealogies with only the rare example of the Saifitic

7. Ibid., 61–68 (68).
8. Ibid., 74–82 (79).

inscriptions for comparative data, Wilson focuses on the anthropological study of the oral nature of genealogies in pre-literate and literate tribal societies and on the comparative ancient Near East "genealogical" data. After constructing a model from this extensive analysis in order to approach the genealogies of the HB, Wilson employs it in addressing the genealogies of Genesis.[9]

In this model, Wilson has laid out terminology, drawn from anthropologists working in this area, which now dominates the study of genealogies by biblical scholars.[10] According to Wilson, genealogies may take either the form of a list or the form of a narrative; they may be either linear or segmented in terms of relational descent;[11] within these two structures they exhibit three main formal characteristics: breadth through segmentation, depth through linearity, and fluidity—contraction or expansion in either breadth or depth over time;[12] they function in one (or more) of three spheres: domestic, politico-jural, and religious;[13] the function of the genealogy in nearly any given context is dependent on the form (and not only content) which the genealogy takes;[14] that it is typical for genealogies to extend three to five generations but extremely rare to extend beyond ten or twelve generations, with the only exception being the material in 1 Chr 2–9;[15] that legitimacy of present positions or conditions is a primary concern of the genealogy;[16] and that there is overwhelming evidence for two phenomena: the relative fixation of the beginning and end of the genealogy, and the related feature of telescoping—the loss of the middle section(s) of the genealogy so that several generations may be missing in a condensed list noting only the most memorable or most significant ancestors.[17]

In summary, some of the significant purposes of genealogies are: (1) group definition, both internally through organizational hierarchy and

9. Compare the application of Wilson's insights and additional analysis of the ancient Near East material to Chronicles by William L. Osborne, "The Genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1–9" (Ph.D. diss., Dropsie University, 1979), 97–98, 128–46.

10. Nearly every subsequent treatment of the genealogies in Chronicles, whether article, monograph, or commentary, cites Wilson's work and uses his categories and terminology in discussing these lists.

11. Wilson, *Genealogy and History*, 9; cf. Osborne, "Genealogies," 105–8.

12. Wilson, *Genealogy and History*, 19–37; cf. Osborne, "Genealogies," 107–21.

13. Wilson, *Genealogy and History*, 38–45; and Osborne, "Genealogies," 97.

14. Wilson, *Genealogy and History*, 46–55.

15. Ibid., 197.

16. Wilson, *Genealogy and History*, 37–45; cf. Osborne, "Genealogies," 69–74, 261–68.

17. Wilson, *Genealogy and History*, 32–35; cf. Osborne, "Genealogies," 117–20.

associations and externally through lines of demarcation; (2) preservation of history; (3) explanation of current social, political, or religious structures, often with the intention of maintaining the *status quo*; and (4) assertion of claims to continuity with the past or to the authoritative interpretation of that past, which may either support or challenge the *status quo*.[18] All four of these functions of genealogies can be and have been easily identified in the content, form, and structure of the material in 1 Chr 1–9.

2.1.2. *Forms of Genealogies: The Function of 1 Chronicles 1–9 as a Literary Preface*

Turning to the forms of the genealogical material in Chronicles, one of the first issues to require attention is the relationship between these genealogies in 1 Chr 1–9 and the narrative which follows in 1 Chr 10–2 Chr 36.[19] Several questions arise: Should these chapters be considered secondary (or even tertiary) in nature, added by a subsequent or multiple redactor(s)? Are the genealogies linked with the narrative, whether original to Chronicles or as additions, whether in terms of content, scope, ideology, theology, or *Tendenz*? Do the genealogies function as an "introduction" to the narrative, or are they disconnected and evidence of antiquarianism on the part of whoever is responsible for their present location?[20]

18. This seeming inconsistency over whether genealogies are designed to support or contend with existing power structures is not unique to genealogies; historiographic texts also exhibit the possibility of functioning either to "foster or to overthrow particular perspectives or ideologies" according to Marc Z. Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 137. Thus, what one individual/group may perceive as supporting the *status quo* may be interpreted by another individual/group, typically of a different social location, as a call for change. In the case of Chronicles, scholars have *assumed* that the work is one of legitimacy rather than critique; the methodology of utopian literary theory begins with the latter as its premise instead of the former.

19. Chronicles has been traditionally divided into these two macro-sections based on the genre division between the genealogies and the narrative that follows. Almost all commentaries on Chronicles follow this division in their outlines and structures. However, see the comments by John W. Wright that such a distinction is essentially "not helpful" in either a structural sense or in terms of content ("The Fabula of the Book of Chronicles," in Graham and McKenzie, eds., *The Chronicler as Author*, 136–55 [153–54]).

20. On antiquarianism, see, among others, Roddy L. Braun, *1 Chronicles* (WBC 14; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1986), 54–55; Richard J. Coggins, *The First and Second Books of the Chronicles* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 26; and Edward Lewis Curtis and Albert Alonzo Madsen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Chronicles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1910), 81.

The view taken here is that those arguments presented for an intimate connection, and indeed, a *unified and original* association between the genealogies and the narratives seem to be built on better evidence from comparative literary examples and the text of Chronicles itself. Thus, it seems best to accept the genealogical material as a whole as original to Chronicles and in concert with its overall aims, while holding out the possibility of *minor* later additions. In this section, such a relationship on the level of literary function will be addressed and a piece of datum not previously considered in this discussion will be examined. Hopefully, subsequent research will follow that may clarify and refine the significance of this possible comparative concept.

In Chronicles' scholarship, as in any area of biblical studies, a number of preliminary issues about the text are typically addressed: date, authorship, genre, purpose, major themes, and unity of the work. The issue of a text's unity can be assessed in a variety of ways: single authorship; multiple authorship from a school of similarly minded individuals; single authorship with additions made to correct or adjust the text by another individual or group not so similarly minded; an original text (by either a single or multiple authors) to which a number of additions have been inserted by any number of related or unrelated hands, to name only a few of the options. The more inconsistent or repetitious a single composition tends to be (i.e. possessing contradictory and duplicate material), the more redactional layers may be posited to explain this situation. This phenomenon can be found throughout HB studies, especially in Pentateuchal criticism, in the treatment of various prophetic books, and in studies of the composition known as the Deuteronomistic History (with an ever-expanding number of postulated redactional schemes offered to explain its growth and the present form of the text). Of course, Chronicles also has not escaped from the scholarly penchant for locating the supposed *Urtext* and stratifying its layers of growth, even to the point of joining the Deuteronomistic History in its impending "death by redaction."[21]

While nearly all scholars will allow for the possibility of at least minor additions to the basic text of Chronicles, there has been a long history of postulating major additions or sweeping redactional strata throughout the text. Although most scholars would distance themselves from the statement of Martin Noth that Chronicles exhibits "rank textual

21. The humorous, and yet somber, phrase used by John Van Seters, "The Deuteronomistic History: Can It Avoid Death by Redaction?," in *The Future of the Deuteronomistic History* (ed. T. Römer; BETL 147; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000), 213–22.

growth,"[22] a large number affirm that the genealogies of 1 Chr 1–9 are an addition to the core text of Chronicles which does not share the same concerns of the narrative material. The separation is thus made both in terms of genre and content.

Scholars who have affirmed the unity of the Chronicles, and that 1 Chr 1–9 in particular should not be quickly dismissed as an addition, have focused on the issue of content and thematic consistency between the narrative and the genealogical material. In this growing trend, a variety of related terms have been used to express the relationship between these two generic divisions: prologue, introduction, preface, *Vorhalle*. Thus, the genealogical material is understood to "prepare the reader for the narrative which follows" or to "set forth the themes to be developed in the subsequent section" or "provide the historical background for the main story about to be related" or some such function which defers priority of place to the narrative.

The case made for the unity of the genealogies and the narrative in terms of purpose, scope, and theme is very convincing. In addition to providing the history before Saul and the rise of David in brief outline as a summary of the past, the major themes of Chronicles are found in these lists and accompanying narrative asides: the monarchy, cult, the identity of "Israel" both internally and externally, retribution and blessing,[23] "seeking YHWH,"[24] and employing terms consistent with the idealism in the presentation of the narrative. Two further points of connection that have been observed are worth particular mention. First, DeVries has noted that "the genealogical introduction needs the narrative, for it has no

22. Noth, *Chronicler's History*, 36.

23. On the doctrine of retribution in Chronicles, see Raymond B. Dillard, "Reward and Punishment in Chronicles: The Theology of Immediate Retribution," *WTJ* 46 (1984): 164–72; and Sylvain Romerowski, "La théologie de la retribution dans les Chroniques," *Hok* 35 (1987): 1–34; cf. the critiques of a simplistic view of this doctrine by Ehud Ben Zvi, "A Sense of Proportion: An Aspect of the Theology of the Chronicler," *SJOT* 9 (1995): 37–51; Brian E. Kelly, "'Retribution' Revisited: Covenant, Grace and Restoration," in Graham, McKenzie, and Knoppers, eds., *The Chronicler as Theologian*, 206–27; and Sara Japhet, "Theodicy in Ezra–Nehemiah and Chronicles," in *Theodicy in the World of the Bible* (ed. A. Laato and J. C. de Moor; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 429–69 (445–68).

24. On this theme in Chronicles, see Christopher T. Begg, "'Seeking Yahweh' and the Purpose of Chronicles," *LS* 9 (1982): 128–41; Graham, "Setting the Heart to Seek God"; and Schaefer, "Significance of Seeking God." Its appearance in the genealogies is evident in the "narrative" elements, especially in the remarks about Jabez's prayer in 1 Chr 4:9–10; see the further comments on this text below in Section 2.2.3.

meaning in itself."[25] Although this is not quite an accurate statement, the genealogies would serve a different function if they existed apart from the narrative as a separate composition. As they exist as a part of Chronicles, the genealogies *do* introduce the narrative and must be read in connection with it. Second, Wright has argued that in a structural sense the genealogies

> *are* the book. Formally, what is usually called the "narrative" of the book of Chronicles (1 Chron. 10–2 Chron. 36) is actually the slower paced repetition of what has already been narrated in 1 Chron. 1.1–9.34 itself. While details emerge in its retelling, 1 Chron. 1.1–9.34 narrates the fundamental structure of the book. Thus, to distinguish between the genealogies and the "narrative" is not helpful.[26]

Wright's narratological reading presents the genealogies not only as being intimately connected with the narrative, but as being the book in microcosm. This obviously not only enhances the importance of the genealogies, but forces a reassessment of the function of the genealogies as a lengthy introduction dissimilar in form but not overall content to the narrative which follows.

The clarification of this reassessment may proceed with attention to some considerations from Hellenistic historiography. Part of the difficulty in determining the purpose of the biblical histories (whether discussing the so-called "Primary History," DtrH, Chronicles, or Ezra–Nehemiah) is that "no biblical historical book contains a statement of purpose, like that found in Herodotus or Thucydides."[27] This difference is particularly important for those scholars who have argued that the best source of comparison for Chronicles is the Hellenistic historiographic tradition. If Chronicles follows or fits this tradition, *why does it lack the most basic distinctive characteristic of that tradition*—a statement of purpose typically expressed in a preface?

25. Simon J. DeVries, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (FOTL 11; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 14. Thus, for example, while the genealogies do contribute much to the concern over the identity of Israel, even this concept awaits further development in the narrative.

26. Wright, "Fabula," 154.

27. Brettler, *Creation of History*, 135; cf. Ben Zvi, "Book of Chronicles," 269–70, 277 n. 11. The claims for authority typically made by these authors, nearly always in a preface and always with the explicit intent to supersede previously written histories, stand in marked contrast to all examples of historiography in the HB (but see 2 Macc 2:19–32). See the discussion of this phenomenon in the Hellenistic historiographies by John Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), esp. 1–7, 62, 117.

Nearly all extant historical works following in the Hellenistic tradition contain a preface which outlines the scope and theme of the work: the time period to be surveyed, the major themes to be addressed, the main protagonist(s) involved, the chief conflict to be resolved, and so forth.[28] Yet, Hellenistic historiography does provide a different approach to the issue of a preface which has gone largely unnoticed and may help to elucidate the type of *functional preface* which is found in Chronicles. The example comes from the discussion of common historiographic practice and its abuses in antiquity as articulated by Lucian in his *How to Write History*, which was composed ca. 162–165 C.E.

Although composed centuries after Chronicles, Lucian's work provides evidence of the type of historiographic writing being undertaken in the Hellenistic world.[29] Lucian discusses the appropriate forms and strategies to be used by historians in their construction of a historiographic text. As such a didactic work, it both criticizes and lauds earlier works. Among the many interesting comments which Lucian makes about the proper way to write history, the ones of concern for possibly understanding the genealogical material in Chronicles are his musings about the function and form of a preface (τό προοίμιον).

For Lucian, the preface should be: not "frigid" (ὑπέρψυχρος) or in poor style (*Hist. conscr.* 16); in the same language, dialect, or style as the main body (16); not overly long or at least not in disproportion to the length of the main body (23, 55); should make only two points—not three like the rhetors (53); and should transition smoothly to the narrative which follows (55). All of these comments by Lucian refer to the content and form of what can be termed "introductory separable prefaces" that stand apart from the main body of the narrative. Lucian, however, discusses another type of preface—the virtual preface (ὡς δυνάμει τινὰ προοίμια; 23, 52).[30] In these two instances, Lucian notes that sometimes

28. See Chapter 1 n. 76 for many ancient examples of this.

29. While Lucian's work is obviously not contemporary with Chronicles, it contains views of historiographic methodology which go back to the Hellenistic period (he cites Herodotus and Thucydides in *Hist. conscr.* 54 and Xenophon in 23); Lucian expresses these opinions pedagogically rather than in practice (as do, e.g., Herodotus, Xenophon, and Thucydides).

30. In his discussion of the standard Hellenistic forms, Gregory Sterling cites these two passages from Lucian as evidence that Hellenistic historiography *required* a preface and that this form thus distinguishes Hellenistic works from the historiography of the HB (*Historiography and Self-Definition: Josephos, Luke–Acts and Apologetic Historiography* [NovTSup 64; Leiden: Brill, 1992], 369, 369 n. 268). However, these passages rather provide evidence that a preface is the *standard and expected* form at the beginning of a historiographic work but that a historian is *not*

authors do not follow the common practice of these "introductory separable prefaces" and rather *seem* to lack an introduction in terms of form.[31] However, in reality, so Lucian contends, the beginning of these works still "clarify what [the historian] is going to say" (52). Thus, Lucian indicates that the *beginning of a text may function as a preface even if it fails to take the proper form* which is typically employed by Hellenistic historians. The genealogies in Chronicles serve this type of function for the narrative though they lack the form of the standard Hellenistic historiographic preface.[32] If this noted similarity stands as a reasonable explanation of what *could be* the case with the genealogies in Chronicles, the view expressed by Wright would be confirmed and, more importantly, the *form* of the genealogies can no longer be cited as a reason for their failure to function as a preface for Chronicles.

2.2. *The Genealogical Identity of "Israel" in Chronicles: Genealogy as Utopia*

Taken together, the insights of the previous section clearly demonstrate that one of the major purposes of the genealogical material in Chronicles is to provide the identity of the entity known as "Israel." In this section, the construction of this identity by the Chronicler will be explored. However, two additional preliminary issues which directly impact the interpretation of this genealogical data (besides the relationship of the genealogies to the narrative discussed above) must be considered before pursuing this notion of identity and its formulation as a utopian construct in Chronicles.

First, the issue of the historical reliability of the genealogical material, and the related issue of the historicity of Chronicles as a whole, have been the subject of much debate in determining how the information in

absolutely required to include one, at least according to the possible exception noted explicitly by Lucian.

31. This is the understanding of the distinction by the Loeb edition: Lucian, *How to Write History* (trans. K. Kilburn; 8 vols.; LCL; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), 6:1–73 (35 n. 3); cf. the emphasis on content by Gert Avenarius, "προοίμιον," in *Lukians Schrift zur Geschichtsschreibung* (Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain Kg., 1956), 113–18 (114); and the explicit discussion of this feature in Xenophon's *Anabasis* as well as Lucian's opinion on the matter in Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 237 n. 107, 273.

32. Unfortunately, Lucian is the only individual to refer to this literary phenomenon. He does cite the beginning of Xenophon's *Anabasis* as an example, but mentions "other old writers" without providing names or examples of how their works began as and did function as "virtual prefaces" (*Hist. conscr.* 23).

Chronicles should and/or can be used for historical reconstruction of the histories of Israel and Israelite religion, and for which historical periods; that is, if Chronicles is historically reliable (and for many scholars that is a big "if" to be established first), then does it present historical information for the preexilic, exilic, postexilic, or all three, periods of Israelite history? Again, the opinion on this issue is extremely diverse, with many scholars holding nuanced views of the relevance of Chronicles for historical data. If it be accepted that Chronicles contains *at least some* accurate historical information about the Second Temple period—a view which most scholars would allow—and that it contains *in some form* accurate historical information concerning the preexilic period about which it purports to speak, then the issue becomes one of sorting out "the wheat from the chaff"[33] and by what criteria this process should be undertaken. Needless to say, no consensus among scholars can be reached on this necessary principle of demarcation. Thus, determining which information in Chronicles is historical and which existed only in the Chronicler's imagination shows no sign of being accomplished in the near future.

That being said, it is ironic that the vast majority of scholars will assert rather confidently that a particular description of preexilic practice or detail must reflect postexilic concerns or conditions either without providing any evidence to support the claim or by noting that there is no other evidence of the practice in preexilic texts, excluding the description in postexilic Chronicles, so that the practice must be postexilic in origin. Such circular reasoning has plagued the study of Chronicles since Wellhausen first argued that Chronicles cannot be trusted for historical information since it follows the postexilic Priestly source temporally.[34] This impasse cannot be overcome without a new methodological approach to the question.

33. Compare the use of this metaphor, the difficulty associated with this process, and the arbitrary decisions often made by scholars, as articulated by Roddy L. Braun, "1 Chronicles 1–9 and the Reconstruction of the History of Israel: Thoughts on the Use of Genealogical Data in Chronicles in the Reconstruction of the History of Israel," in Graham, Hoglund, and McKenzie, eds., *The Chronicler as Historian*, 92–105 (102–3, 105).

34. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 189–90, 222–27; cf. the axiomatic assertion that the "author of Chronicles has carried back to the period of David regulations about the temple worship and the personnel there which clearly reflect a much later time" without any evidence being marshaled to defend such a claim as made by Adam C. Welch, *Post-Exilic Judaism: The Baird Lecture for 1934* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1935), 12–13.

Second, the Chronicler's methodology in employing source material, if there were actual sources and not merely pure fabrications, has been a topic of particular interest among scholars. This has been especially the case for the narrative sections that Chronicles shares with Samuel–Kings. It is here, so the logic holds, that the Chronicler's *Tendenz* can be identified. However, such redaction criticism is flawed on a number of levels[35] and by no means implies that all of those items in the non-synoptic sections (the Chronicler's so-called *Sondergut*) which correspond to the Chronicler's *Tendenz* are to be classified as the invention of the Chronicler without any possibility of deriving from a non-extant and non-canonical source, whether oral or written in nature. As many of the details of the genealogies of 1 Chr 2–9 are largely unparalleled in the biblical corpus, this has resulted in great skepticism about the Chronicler's preservation of ancient information here in particular, although the tide may be changing in some respects. At this point, redaction criticism will not help in determining how the Chronicler has utilized his sources, and the historical veracity of much of the genealogical data cannot, and probably never will, be confirmed.[36]

35. See the early warning against this redactional strategy by W. Emery Barnes, "The Midrashic Element in Chronicles," *The Expositor* 5th ser. 4 (1896): 426–39 (437); idem, "The Religious Standpoint of the Chronicler," *AJSL* 13 (1896–97): 14–20 (19–20); contrast the affirmation of this reading strategy by Werner E. Lemke, "The Synoptic Problem in the Chronicler's History," *HTR* 58 (1965): 349–63 (363 n. 44).

36. However, many scholars will disagree with this portrayal of the quest for sources as difficult at best and hopelessly irresolvable at worst; cf., for example, the "prime importance" placed on this enterprise by Kai Peltonen, "Function, Explanation and Literary Phenomena: Aspects of Source Criticism as Theory and Method in the History of Chronicles Research," in Graham and McKenzie, ed., *The Chronicler as Author*, 18–69 (66); and its "essential" role in understanding Chronicles by Nadav Na'aman, "Sources and Redaction in the Chronicler's Genealogies of Asher and Ephraim," *JSOT* 49 (1991): 99–111 (100).

Two types of data should be mentioned here. First, while most scholars have accepted, at least to some degree, that the Chronicler's *Vorlage* was closer to that found in the Samuel manuscripts from Qumran than to the MT of Samuel, so that every change is not automatically to be ascribed to the Chronicler's *Tendenz*, it is the unfortunate case that only one fragment of Chronicles was found at Qumran (4Q118), thus preventing a thorough textual critical re-evaluation of Chronicles; see Julio Trebolle Barrera, "Édition préliminaire de 4QChroniques," *RevQ* 15 (1992): 523–39; and Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 52–55. Second, it is difficult to hypothesize about the Chronicler's use of sources when the only substantial source available for comparison is Samuel–Kings; did the Chronicler use the same methodology for all of his sources or were different sources treated in different ways? That the latter is most likely the case can be deduced from the methods employed for the hymnic

Excursus: Prophecy, Speeches, and Authority in Chronicles

The use and implied citation of sources by the Chronicler, and his references to other available ancient records, constitute significant methods by which the message of the book is communicated to its audience. Scholars have also seen that the treatment of prophecy and the numerous speeches reported throughout the narrative perform this same function.[37] This excursus will address briefly the utopian nature of prophecy and speeches in Chronicles. In addition, these two devices are among the multiple "authority-conferring strategies" employed by the Chronicler.[38] The ability of the Chronicler to convince his audience that the utopia presented in the text is indeed a *better alternative reality* rests heavily on the authoritative status of Chronicles itself. Thus, some comment on the issue of authority in Chronicles is also required.

The unique roles of prophecy and prophets in Chronicles indicate a transition in the understanding of these phenomena during the Second Temple period. Schniedewind lists several observations about the prophets in Chronicles: (1) when Kings is unclear about why certain events happened, prophets may be invoked to provide the answer in Chronicles; (2) they most typically function as interpreters of past and present events, rather than predictors of the future; and (3) perhaps most importantly, prophets have become historians, the writers of the historical sources mentioned in Chronicles.[39] If prophets have now become writers, this suggests a perceived

compositions included in 1 Chr 16:7–36 and the apparent source-texts of several Psalms in opposition to those used in conversation with Samuel–Kings. Thus, given the probability that the Chronicler used different sources, or even the same source, in a variety of ways, any general statements about the Chronicler's methodology in using sources are open to serious debate and ultimately inconclusive.

37. See, e.g., Simon J. DeVries, "The Forms of Prophetic Address in Chronicles," *HAR* 10 (1986): 15–36; Rex Mason, *Preaching the Tradition: Homily and Hermeneutics after the Exile. Based on the "Addresses" in Chronicles, the "Speeches" in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah and the Post-Exilic Prophetic Books* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. 13–144, 257–62; Otto Plöger, "Reden und Gebete im deuteronomistischen und chronistischen Geschichtswerk," in *Aus der Spätzeit des Alten Testaments* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 50–66 (54–66); repr. from *Festschrift für Günther Dehn zum 75. Geburtstag* (Neukirchen–Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1957), 35–49; Throntveit, *When Kings Speak*; and Claus Westermann, "Excursus: Prophetic Speeches in the Books of Chronicles," in *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* (trans. H. C. White; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), 163–68. On speeches revealing the author's purpose and themes in Hellenistic historiographic works, see Charles W. Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 142–68.

38. The phrase and concept is taken from Hindy Najman, "Interpretation as Primordial Writing: Jubilees and Its Authority Conferring Strategies," *JSJ* 30 (1999): 379–410 (381).

39. William M. Schniedewind, "The Chronicler as an Interpreter of Scripture," in Graham and McKenzie, eds., *The Chronicler as Author*, 158–80; idem, *Word of God*.

relationship between scribalism and prophecy during this period. Thus, scribal activity may be considered prophetic in nature. By association, this link established between scribalism, prophets, and historical writing functions as a means of asserting the authority of the Chronicler's own composition—an account of the past most likely written by a scribe who would claim the same prophetic inspiration for his own work as he assigned to the "prophetic" scribes of the past. This association between prophecy and scribalism has been extended in scholarship recently to a direct relationship between apocalypticism and scribalism in antiquity.

However, Chronicles is not an apocalyptic text; nevertheless, it does exhibit scribal features, especially those associated with the wisdom tradition.[40] While Chronicles certainly exhibits characteristics of a text produced by scribes, not many scholars would argue that it is a prophetic text, at least on the basis of form. However, the lack or scarcity of prophetic oracles does not determine the "prophetic" nature of any given text. Chronicles itself claims that historical writings as well as oracular material were composed by prophets in the past.[41]

As part of the Chronicler's utopian construct, prophecy functions to connect the past with the present by the interpretation of events, whether in the form of historical narrative or oracular material or in a genealogy. Prophecy and prophets function in a very specific way in Chronicles: they are one of the means for promoting innovation in the tradition while at the same time affirming continuity with it. These dual, and seemingly contradictory, functions convey the essence of the Chronicler's vision for a utopian future without expressing it in the form of predictive prophecy. Instead, the past and present are recorded and interpreted by prophets for the benefit of the community centered around Jerusalem—whether in the preexilic period as in the narrative or in the postexilic period during the time of the Chronicler.

The prophecies and speeches related by prophets share similar concerns with the speeches by non-prophetic figures, especially by kings. These "royal speeches" mirror the content of the prophetic words. Thus, these speeches demonstrate how two sources of authority—the prophet and the monarch—are employed as mouthpieces for the Chronicler's message. And yet the Chronicler's concern for authoritative entities is not restricted to prophetic and royal speeches.

40. See, e.g., Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Sage, the Scribe, and Scribalism in the Chronicler's Work," in *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. J. G. Gammie and L. G. Perdue; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 307–15; idem, "Wisdom in the Chronicler's Work," in *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie* (ed. L. G. Perdue, B. B. Scott, and W. J. Wiseman; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 19–30; Christine Schams, "1 and 2 Chronicles," in *Jewish Scribes in the Second-Temple Period* (JSOTSup 291; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 60–71; and Labahn, "Antitheocratic Tendencies," 123–35.

41. See, e.g., 1 Chr 29:29–30; 2 Chr 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 20:34; 21:12–15; 24:27(?); 26:22; 32:32; 33:18(?); 33:19(?); 35:25. The division between history and prophecy on the basis of form is to be rejected. Compare the labels the "Former Prophets" assigned to the historical narrative of the Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings and the "Latter Prophets" used to refer collectively to the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Book of the Twelve. The so-called "historical psalms" are another example of the blurring of formal genre distinctions, in this case, between history and poetry (or liturgy).

Indeed, the issue of authority in Chronicles should not be underestimated. Repeated references to sources of authority for praxis are vital to the Chronicler's presentation of the proper functioning of the cult and for society in general.[42] The Chronicler invokes the following as possessing some level of authority for determining proper action: *Moses* (1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]; 15:15; 22:13; 2 Chr 1:3; 5:10; 8:13; 24:6, 9; 33:8; 35:6), *David* (1 Chr 6:16 [v. 31 Eng.]; 9:22; 15:2–14, 16; 16:2, 7; 18:14; 21:26; 22:1, 2; 23:1–6, 27; 24:3; 25:1; 28:11; 2 Chr 3:1; 6:4–11; 7:6, 17; 8:14; 11:17; 23:18; 28:1; 29:2, 25–30; 34:2; 35:4; 35:15), *Solomon* (1 Chr 28:5, 11; 29:25; 2 Chr 3:1; 7:1; 8:14; 9:2; 30:26; 35:3, 4), *Aaron* (1 Chr 24:19), *"all Israel"* (1 Chr 11:1–3; 15:28; 2 Chr 30:23; 31:1), *the book of the kings* (1 Chr 9:1),[43] *the Mosaic Torah* (2 Chr 23:18; 25:4; 30:16; 34:14; 35:12); *the Law of God* (1 Chr 16:40; 2 Chr 35:26), *the Word of God* (1 Chr 11:10; 12:23; 17:3; 22:8; 2 Chr 10:15; 11:2–4; 12:7; 18:18; 30:12; 34:21), *the prophets*,[44] *the messengers sent by God* (2 Chr 36:15–16), *the Levites* (1 Chr 9:2, 26, 31, 33–34; 15:2–15, 16–17; 16:4; 24:6; 26:20; 2 Chr 7:6; 8:15; 13:10; 17:7–9; 19:8; 20:14, 19; 23:6; 24:5, 11; 29:5, 12–17, 25–26, 30, 34; 30:13–22, 27; 31:2–4, 12, 14; 34:9, 12–13; 35:3, 8–15, 18), and several (if not nearly all) of the Judean kings. The Chronicler is obsessed with grounding his composition in recognized authorities that can support his interpretation of the past, present, and future.

In his own authoritative composition, the Chronicler has retrojected his utopian vision into the past in order to actualize it in his present and into the future. This utopian vision does not replicate the past or continue the *status quo* of the present. In these appeals to authority, the Chronicler critiques the present and offers his understanding of a *better alternative reality* anchored in the words and *inherent* authority of these personages and concepts. It is significant that the Chronicler does not offer an apology for their authoritative status. Recognition of their prestige or esteem by his audience does not seem to have been a concern for the Chronicler, who does not defend his selection of supporting authorities. In fact, the Chronicler has not created new sources of authority,[45] but draws on those already prominent in the tradition.

42. Note that the concern of these authoritative citations clearly involves action, practice, or ritual observance. These sources of authority are not typically employed to provide a basis for a particular belief or article of faith independent of its practical manifestation in the reality of the community. The Chronicler is *not* engaging in abstract philosophy, theology, or ideology. Rather, the implications of particular theological and ideological positions for the construction of reality are of primary importance for the Chronicler.

43. Compare the other citations of non-prophetic historical records in 2 Chr 16:11; 20:34; 24:27(?); 25:26; 27:7; 28:26; 33:18(?); 33:19(?); 35:26–27; 36:8.

44. *Samuel*: 1 Chr 9:22; 11:3; 29:29; 2 Chr 35:18. *Gad and Nathan*: 1 Chr 29:29; 2 Chr 29:25. *Gad only*: 1 Chr 21:18. *Jeremiah*: 2 Chr 35:25; 36:12, 21–23. *Isaiah*: 2 Chr 26:22; 32:20, 32. *Huldah*: 2 Chr 34:22–28. *Prophets, not specific*: 1 Chr 29:29; 2 Chr 9:29; 12:5, 15; 13:22; 15:8; 18:21–22; 20:37; 21:12; 24:19; 25:15–16; 28:9; 29:25; 36:16.

45. This is true despite the "creation" or presentation of specific prophets known only in Chronicles. That is, the Chronicler may "invent" particular individuals, but their authority is based on their identity and function as prophets just as with those personages known from other sources who are also prophets.

While the Chronicler may not have invented the terminology for these authorities, he may have created their content. In other words, the Chronicler chose categories from his own day that were already invested with authority and supplied the content to allow for these sources to support his own presentation of Israel's past. In the creation of the content of these sources, the Chronicler anticipates a trend in later Jewish literature to appeal to sources of authority for supporting particular practices.[46] With these various strategies for conferring authority, the Chronicler attempts to solidify the status of his own composition.

It is true that the Chronicler wrote a new text instead of editing an existing document, but this does not help to clarify the authoritative status of the source material in the perspective of the Chronicler. The relationship of Chronicles to both the Torah and to Samuel–Kings (in whatever textual forms the Chronicler may have encountered them) cannot be reduced to the simple dichotomy of a new work designed either to "supplant" or "supplement" other texts, using the terminology often employed in scholarship. Chronicles cannot dismiss Samuel–Kings but neither does it require Samuel–Kings to be read synoptically to elucidate meaning.[47] The Chronicler constructs a different history, a *better alternative reality*, that sometimes affirms and often contradicts both the Pentateuch and Samuel–Kings as well as the society of his own time. The same tension between continuity and innovation that is characteristic of prophecy, speeches, and authority in Chronicles is manifested in the Chronicler's vision of the future, which is presented as a utopian history. The probability of acceptance of this utopian vision by the Chronicler's audience is bolstered by the repeated and variegated claims to authority made throughout the work, including source citations, references to other ancient records, prophecies, and royal speeches, among others. Thus, as with many of the Chronicler's prominent ideological motifs, these issues are not the primary concern of his composition. Rather, just as with other important concepts, these concerns also contribute to the effectiveness of the utopian ideology that dominates the Chronicler's history.

2.2.1. *Constructing a Lineage: Examples of the Chronicler's Utopian Use of Sources*

Rather than offer another assessment of the preservation of historical information in Chronicles or discuss the types of sources from which the Chronicler most likely drew to construct the genealogies—both projects

46. Compare, as only one example among many, the appeal to the Heavenly Tablets and other sources of authority in *Jubilees*. See, for example, Najman, "Interpretation as Primordial Writing," and the similar remarks made concerning Chronicles by Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 133.

47. As such, Chronicles is an independent narrative and not a commentary; see Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 133–34; and Duke, "Rhetorical Approach," 109. Nevertheless, certain information contained in Chronicles makes sense only if the traditions reflected in Samuel–Kings are assumed to be known by the Chronicler's audience; for example, the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite in 2 Chr 10:15, among many such examples.

being already done with lesser and greater success[48]—utopian literary theory will be employed to address a different issue: the picture of reality constructed by these lineages, and the critique of present reality accomplished by such a construction. Thus, as discussed above, while genealogies *may* be used as a means of legitimation, this analysis proceeds from the second interpretive option, namely that lineages *may* be constructed to challenge the current *status quo* by presenting a radically different picture of the world *as if it were reality*. Thus, implicitly for the readers, the historical situation at the time of the Chronicler should be adjusted to conform to the reality expressed by the *genealogical utopia* as articulated in Chronicles. This section, 2.2.1, begins by laying out some of the issues addressed by previous scholars and prepares the context for the further development of these points and the use of utopian literary theory in detail in Sections 2.2.2–4.

It should be noted that most scholars have made two assumptions from which they proceed: (1) that the Chronicler has constructed the genealogical material as propaganda for the state of affairs in his own time; and (2) that any information which seems to work against this view (e.g. preserving seemingly preexilic data without adaptation and describing Northern tribes long since lost) is included out of a sense of "thoroughness," "conservatism," or "antiquarianism" on his part and does not reflect authentically his own views, but merely demonstrates the Chronicler's respect for his sources, which he maintains unaltered in these cases.[49]

Three examples of how the assumptions mentioned in the previous paragraph have been used in textual interpretation will suffice to illustrate the point: (1) the missing genealogies of Dan and Zebulun (cf. the first of two Benjaminite genealogies in 1 Chr 7:6–12); (2) the short genealogy of Naphtali in 1 Chr 7:13; and (3) the assimilation of individuals and families to the lines of Judah and Levi (1 Chr 2:3–4:23; 5:27–6:66 [6:1–81 Eng.], respectively).

48. The type of sources typically listed as being available to and used by the Chronicler for his genealogies include: military census or muster lists, temple archives, oral or written tribal genealogies, resettlement lists (esp. of the type found in Ezra 2//Neh 7), the Torah (esp. the genealogies of Genesis), Joshua (the list of Levitical cities in ch. 21), and Samuel–Kings (which contains some relevant genealogical information).

49. This paradoxical view of the Chronicler's methodology in utilizing his sources—he is simultaneously a pietistic copyist *and* a manipulator of the tradition for his own purposes—is reflected throughout scholarship; see the description of the Chronicler's dual method in these same terms by W. Emery Barnes, "The David of the Book of Samuel and the David of the Book of Chronicles," *The Expositor* 7th ser. 31 (1909): 49–59 (55).

In the first example, although they are listed as "sons of Israel" in 1 Chr 2:1–2, Dan and Zebulun have no subsequent genealogies in the texts of both the MT and LXX. This has been explained in one of three ways: (1) as textual corruption (reading Benjamin for Zebulun in 1 Chr 7:6 and corrupting an originally short Danite genealogy ["sons of Dan: Hushim" based on Gen 46:23] at the end of 1 Chr 7:12); (2) as a consistent polemic against the idolatrous tribe of Dan in line with an absolute rejection of idolatry throughout Chronicles; or (3) as an indication that the Chronicler lacked any source material for these two tribes and maintained the silence of his sources in this instance.

The second example, the single generation of Naphtali's four sons without further segmentation or linear development, in the opinion of most scholars, either reflects a muster list or was the only information to which the Chronicler had access and he therefore limited his comments on the tribe to only that which his sources would allow. That the Chronicler should be *so careful* not to expand on or adapt the material concerning this Northern tribe (and Dan and the Southern tribe of Benjamin for that matter) obviously stands in marked contrast to his methodology in relating the descendants of Judah and Levi.

These final two tribes have been the recipients of a great deal of expansion and assimilation of individuals and groups to their genealogical heritage. Thus, for example, Samuel becomes a Levite in 1 Chr 6:7–23 (vv. 22–38 Eng.) despite the fact that on a plain reading 1 Sam 1:1 provides him with an Ephraimite heritage; the singers Heman, Ethan, and Asaph gain Levitical pedigrees in 1 Chr 6:16–33 (vv. 31–48 Eng.) while all other references outside of Chronicles to these individuals are vague or silent on their tribal affiliation; and Kenites become Judahites in 1 Chr 2:50b–55 without any extant source to support such a connection. In these examples, the Chronicler has either been charged with attempting (1) to legitimize Second Temple practice, (2) to clarify that individuals in the source material who act like Levites in reality were of Levitical heritage, or (3) to assimilate non-Israelites into the tribe of Judah as a means of inclusion for these individuals or groups who had *already* become a vital part of the Second Temple period community and who would otherwise be excluded on the basis of genealogical purity. In these cases, in which other texts disagree with the Chronicler's presentation or are silent on the issue of genealogical heritage, rarely does one find a scholar contending that the Chronicler reflects accurate sources otherwise lost. Rather, since these changes are in line with the perceived *Tendenz* of the Chronicler in other passages, the conclusion that the Chronicler has adjusted his sources or simply fabricated these lineages is quickly drawn. The circular logic, selectivity, and inconsistency by scholars in

assessing the Chronicler's use of sources according to this method are readily apparent.

These inconsistencies should also be compared with the first mention of all twelve tribes in Chronicles. The order of the tribes in the introductory list of 1 Chr 2:1–2 duplicates no other sequential list,[50] although it seems to derive from a similar account in Gen 35:23–26 that is organized by mother: Leah's sons, Rachel's sons, Bilhah's sons, and Zilpah's sons. However, the inclusion of Dan, son of Bilhah, between Zebulun and Joseph (between Leah and Rachel) is not consistent with the order presented in the apparent source text. This has, of course, led to the conclusion that Dan was originally missing (consistent with the Dan-polemic theory) and that a redactor has inserted Dan incorrectly at this point in the text for some now unknown reason. As Williamson has demonstrated that the Dan-polemic theory cannot withstand scrutiny, it becomes unnecessary to postulate that this order is the result of a less-than-competent redactor.[51] Rather than resort to this extremely popular means of explaining perceived textual difficulties,[52] another look at the text reveals an interesting observation: it may be significant that Dan stands just after Zebulun in the present text of 1 Chr 2:1–2. These are the two tribes missing genealogies in the following chapters. They also stand at the center of the list, flanked by the other five children of Leah and the two sons of Rachel, the remaining one son of Bilhah, and the two sons of

50. Knoppers notes that this list follows neither J nor P (*I Chronicles 1–9*, 284–85). See the other lists of the tribes in the HB (though strangely lacking the information from Chronicles), the New Testament, and selected literature from the Second Temple period as presented and briefly assessed by David E. Aune, *Revelation 17–22* (WBC 52C; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 464–65. Aune discusses these tribal lists in the context of Rev 7:4–8, which also presents a distinct order.

51. H. G. M. Williamson, "A Note on I Chronicles vii.12," *VT* 23 (1973): 375–79; idem, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 47–48. That this placement is the result of a "copyist's error" is a common view; see, e.g., Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 10–12; Curtis and Madsen, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 80; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 65; Myers, *I Chronicles*, 12; and Noth, *Chronicler's History*, 151 n. 23.

52. As in Pentateuchal criticism, the author must be consistent in method and detail, while a "sloppy" redactor may be invoked to explain inconsistencies—a convenient but improbable position to maintain about the abilities of authors and redactors; see, e.g., John Van Seters, "The Redactor in Biblical Studies: A Nineteenth Century Anachronism," *JNSL* 29, no. 1 (2003): 1–19; idem, "An Ironic Circle: Wellhausen and the Rise of Redaction Criticism," *ZAW* 115 (2003): 487–500; and Roger N. Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study* (JSOTSup 53; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), esp. 19, 30, 55, 74, 221–35, 242; cf. the assertion that it is "well known that total self-consistency is rarely achieved by any writer" by Ackroyd, *Chronicler in His Age*, 261.

Zilpah (for a total of five). Is this a coincidence? Perhaps this irregular order and the failure to include the two tribes of Dan and Zebulun should not too quickly be attributed to multiple and compounded scribal errors.

Utopian literary theory would suggest that such an inconsistency is not a mistake. Rather, inconsistencies provide an opportunity to reconsider the reality presented in the text. The historical reality of the postexilic period *may* have been that Zebulun and Dan did not return or had ceased to exist (either of which cannot be known or proven at this time), but that may not account for the failure to record genealogies for these two tribes. Indeed, when noting those who returned to settle in Jerusalem, the Chronicler states that people from only four tribes did so: Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh (1 Chr 9:3), and the Chronicler then relates information about only those from Judah and Benjamin. The apparent source text of Neh 11:3–22 mentions Judah and Benjamin and the subsequent information found in Chronicles, but fails to mention Ephraim and Manasseh. Is this an indication of the Chronicler adjusting the text to his theological presuppositions or of the Nehemiah text being adjusted to conform to its exclusive ideology? No clear answer can be given.

The question that should be asked instead is: Why list only these tribes? What about Issachar, Naphtali, Asher, or even Simeon, not to mention the two-and-a-half tribes (Reuben, Gad, western Manasseh) who were exiled by Assyria never to return (a notice mentioned only in Chronicles; see 1 Chr 5:1–26)? Did *no one* from these remaining tribes return with those from the four mentioned tribes? Is this merely a reflection of the Chronicler's "all Israel" ideology?[53] Is it only antiquarianism or conservatism toward the tradition which prompted the inclusion of the genealogies of these other tribes who are thus not part of the postexilic Israelite community? What is their value in terms of legitimacy or of maintaining the *status quo* (the two most common explanations for the

53. It has been supposed that Ephraim and Manasseh stand in as representatives of the Northern tribes (e.g. Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 138, 144; and Japhet, *Ideology*, 300); however, this use is not consistent in Chronicles, so that at least on one occasion Zebulun is mentioned, while Ephraim is not listed, among the tribes responding to the call to worship at Jerusalem under Hezekiah, although it is clear that Ephraim received the same call (2 Chr 30:10–11). In this passage, Ephraim and Manasseh are *not* a circumlocution for "the faithful in the North." Indeed, Zebulun and Dan also respond positively to David's rise to power (1 Chr 12:34–41 [vv. 33–40 Eng.]). Each time that either Zebulun or Dan is specifically mentioned in Chronicles, the context is either neutral or positive in nature, but never negative. The same, however, cannot be said of the groups for which the Chronicler is supposedly concerned to provide an aura of legitimacy: Judahites, Levites, priests, and the Davidic monarchy. If the Chronicler wished to criticize the tribes of Zebulun and/or Dan, this is *not* accomplished clearly in either the narrative or in the genealogical material.

Judah and Levi material in 1 Chr 1–9)? The mentioning of Ephraim and Manasseh does not serve either of these functions. In fact, Williamson correctly notes that the purpose of the genealogies is not legitimacy at all, but "to paint a portrait of the people of God in its ideal extent."[54] However, such an ideal will not be found in textual or oral sources or in the historical situation of the Chronicler's own day; rather, the presentation of Israel in the genealogies is accomplished by means of depicting a utopia.

In Chronicles, "Israel" is a larger entity than the tribes who returned during the Persian period. Israel also includes those tribes who did not return, from *either* of the exiles (Babylonian *and Assyrian*), and those tribes (Zebulun and Dan) who had an existence in Israel's past and may again one day become known to their relatives who resettled in the land of Israel.[55] There is nothing in the genealogies which would indicate that these tribes would or could not some day return.[56] If anything, the

54. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 39; cf. the similar terminology of "ideal Israel" used repeatedly by DeVries, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 18–28, 94.

55. See the similar comments on the importance of the diaspora in the understanding of the Chronicler by Thomas Willi, "Late Persian Judaism and Its Conception of an Integral Israel According to Chronicles: Some Observations on Form and Function of the Genealogy of Judah in 1 Chronicles 2.3–4.23," in *Second Temple Studies*. Vol. 2, *Temple Community in the Persian Period* (ed. T. C. Eskenazi and K. H. Richards; JSOTSup 175; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 146–62 (161–62); and the comments that Chronicles is theologically speaking "written while Israel is still 'in exile', whether among the nations of the world or even in its own land" according to William Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*. Vol. 1, *1 Chronicles 1–2 Chronicles 9: Israel's Place Among the Nations* (JSOTSup 253; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 1:10–11.

Scholars have more recently come to recognize that many Jewish groups during the Second Temple period believed that they were living in exile well after the return in the Persian period and even while living in the land of Israel; see, for example, the comments to this effect by James C. VanderKam, "Exile in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature," in *Exile: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Conceptions* (ed. J. M. Scott; JSJSup 56; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 89–109 (89 and 109). Although VanderKam focuses on apocalyptic literature, this notion of continued exile is not restricted to these texts alone.

56. The notice about the Transjordanian tribes being in exile "to this day" should not be taken to imply the judgment that they will remain so forever in this condition (1 Chr 5:23–26). Rather, this statement indicates that for the Chronicler, whether in composing the phrase or by preserving it from his source, these tribes still exist though in a state of exile (see Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 392, 469–73, 487); contra Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 142. See also 2 Chr 30:6–9, which explicitly holds out the restoration of the Northern tribes as a viable option, and the discussion of this text in Section 3.1.7.

conclusion of the book (2 Chr 36:22–23) serves as an open call for them to return home.[57] However, while in exile outside the land, these tribes do not cease to be part of "all Israel." What this indicates is that *Israelite identity is not tied to geographic location* in Chronicles; all those in the land are not necessarily Israelites and there are Israelites who live outside the land.[58] It may further suggest that the community *should be* open to those who may *claim* a connection with the "Israel" depicted in these chapters of genealogies. The lack of genealogies for Zebulun and Dan and the short genealogy of Naphtali thus would become *not* a means of exclusion from the genealogical tree,[59] but rather excellent points for further growth and incorporation into the entity known as Israel.[60] And it is this entity of "Israel," not whether the Chronicler has preserved historical information or how he adapted his source material, which is the central concern of the nine chapters of genealogical and geographical information. For the *readers* of Chronicles, this *utopian* Israel *is* Israel; it is the Chronicler's ideal that existed in the past as a real entity—at least within Chronicles' portrayal of that reality—and not any identifiable historical context.[61]

57. Compare the comments of Sara Japhet regarding the function of this verse as an indication that a future restoration was still expected by the Chronicler to occur ("Periodization: Between History and Ideology. The Neo-Babylonian Period in Biblical Historiography," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* [ed. O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003], 75–89 [84]). She further contends that because of this conception, "the book of Chronicles is more future oriented than any other piece of biblical historiography. The past has laid the foundation for the future, but this is still to come" (ibid.).

58. Contra Japhet, *Ideology*, 333, 351; idem, *I & II Chronicles*, 74; and Myers, *I Chronicles*, xxxvi.

59. So Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 39. Contra Karin Friis Plum who asserts that exclusion is the purpose of all of the genealogical material in Chronicles ("Genealogy as Theology," *SJOT* 1 [1989]: 66–92 [86]).

60. While Chronicles claims Judah or Levi as the tribe of ancestral heritage for the majority of the community in the land during the postexilic period, for many individuals or groups, the lesser developed tribes would provide a better (i.e. easier) means of entrance to the community genealogically. None of the genealogies, except the Davidic (1 Chr 3:1–24) and the list of resettlement (1 Chr 9:2–34), continue into the postexilic period; all the other material stops well short temporally, thus precluding legitimacy as the obvious purpose for this material (Knoppers, "Davidic Genealogy," 36).

61. Compare the observation that for the Chronicler's geography "the ideal was in the past the real" by Matthias Augustin, "The Role of Simeon in the Book of Chronicles and in Jewish Writings of the Hellenistic–Roman Period," in *Proceedings of the Tenth World Congress of Jewish Studies (1990): Division A: The Bible and Its World* (ed. D. Assaf; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1990), 137–44 (141).

2.2.2. *The "Twelve Tribes" of Utopian Israel: Identifying "Israel"*
From these previous examples and discussion it is evident that the identity of "Israel" requires further exploration. As regards the lengthy genealogical material, a more detailed and comprehensive analysis must be attempted; however, a systematic treatment of every comment and each verse in these nine chapters of Chronicles is not the procedure undertaken in this project. Rather, some preliminary discussion of the issue of identity, especially as it has been applied to Chronicles, will be followed by a treatment of this concept from the perspective of utopian literary theory with examples from the genealogical material in 1 Chr 1–9.

The concept of "identity" refers to the attempts by a group at self-definition, typically through the construction of "boundary-markers" (i.e. practices and beliefs that differentiate themselves from others). These boundary-markers may take the form of confessional statements of internal commonality regarding belief systems, adherence to a religious code or a particular worldview, or they may be expressed in the practical and external means of clothing, food, dress, culture, etc. If these boundary-markers not only separate individuals or groups on the basis of practice and/or beliefs but also on the basis of ethnic continuities, then cultural differences become tied to genealogical relationship in the attempt at group self-definition. It is at this final point, ethnic identity, that much of the research into identity, and specifically in determining the identity associated with the term "Israel" in the Second Temple period, has been undertaken. It is clear from even a cursory reading of the genealogies of 1 Chr 1–9 that they are engaged in this type of definition of identity: one expressed in terms of ethnicity and biological relationship.

However, the primary function of 1 Chr 2–9 (ch. 1 is concerned with identity of a different sort; see below in Section 2.2.4) is not to explain how this entity of "Israel" is distinct from others in terms of boundary-markers. These chapters neither list those who are excluded nor do they describe the practices and beliefs that separate "Israel" from the Other. Rather, they are concerned primarily with the internal organization of this "Israel" by expressing interrelationships between those who are, *or should be*, considered to be a part of this "Israel."

It has been assumed, as noted previously, that the inclusion of elements into these lists of non-Israelites (those who should be labeled as "Other" and possibly excluded) was undertaken to provide a means of legitimizing the standing of these groups at the time of the Chronicler; thus, because of the significant role in which some individuals or groups were functioning *already in the historical reality* of the Second Temple community despite their ethnic identity, these groups were "baptized" or

"transplanted" into the genealogical system in order to provide them with the appropriate genealogical credentials to maintain the *status quo* and to continue in their roles which required a specific ethnic identity on the part of those functioning in them.[62] Thus, the issue of identity has often been reduced by scholars to one of legitimacy.

However, utopian literary theory reads this evidence in a dramatically different way with different conclusions about the functions and purposes of the genealogies of the "sons of Israel." Utopian literary theory begins with the notions of "defamiliarization" and critique of the present reality. Rather than beginning with the assumption that historical reality is reflected in the text, the foundational principle in utopian literary theory is that the critique of present reality through the depiction of an alternate reality is the main objective of the representation of the society being portrayed in the text. Thus, the text does not provide an argument for the legitimacy of current social relationships, but contends in direct contrast that the present society is deficient and should instead be reformed in light of this *better alternative reality*.

Thus, drawing on a previously mentioned example, the inclusion of Kenites into the line of Judah (1 Chr 2:50b–55) is not a result of the Kenites having risen to places of prominence in the Second Temple community and the subsequent need to affirm unequivocally their status as authentic Israelites.[63] Rather, utopian literary theory would suggest that the historical importance of Kenites at the time of the Chronicler is irrelevant to their inclusion in the genealogical lists of the "sons of Israel." Their significance lies instead in their association as "friends" or allies of "Israel," or at least as positive examples in Israel's past to be emulated regardless of ethnic descent, as they are depicted in various other texts, which were most likely available and certainly at least their traditions known to the Chronicler.[64] The Kenites become a cipher for those in the land, regardless of true descent, who are part of "Israel" in terms of action or example. Numerous scholars have noted that one of the Chronicler's common methods in using sources is that he does not need to reference in an extended way or make an explicit statement when glossing a familiar point from his source material, but seemingly assumes that the audience will be aware of the larger tradition behind the brief mention. Thus, when the Chronicler notes "These are the Kenites,

62. On the use of these two terms, see Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 36; and Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 153, respectively.

63. Contra Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 46–47.

64. See the references to the Kenites in Judg 1:16; chs. 4–5; 1 Sam 15:6; 30:29; and to the associated group of Rechabites in 2 Kgs 10:15–27; Jer 35.

who came from Hammath, father of the house of Rechab" (v. 55), the positive portrayal of the Kenites and especially that of the Rechabites in other literature is immediately recalled.[65]

If this is the case, then inclusion of foreigners among the "sons of Israel" by the Chronicler is similar to the point made by the conclusion to the book of Ruth (4:17b–22), which provides David with a Moabite genealogy via this exemplary *woman* of foreign (and especially ostracized) descent. In Ruth, the great king of Israel acquires a Moabite heritage.[66] Ruth, with its concluding genealogy, thus reads as a comment on the position of foreigners in society; that is, it apparently ends by posing the question: "Even the greatest king of Israel was of foreign descent, so what is the problem with foreigners and with intermarriage with them?"

In Israel's past, so Chronicles contends, foreigners have either aided or been examples for "Israel" and they will continue to be so in the present and in the future.[67] Chronicles seems to suggest in the genealogies that if such foreigners will not be accepted by those claiming to be "Israel,"

65. However, it should be noted that the meaning of this verse is complicated and there is the possibility that Rechabites are not even intended here; see the articulation of this view by C. H. Knights, "Kenites = Rechabites? 1 Chronicles ii 55 Reconsidered," *VT* 43 (1993): 10–18; idem, "The Text of 1 Chronicles iv 12: A Reappraisal," *VT* 37 (1987): 375–77. Nevertheless, given the relatively few occurrence of "Rechab" in the HB, it is difficult not to see one of them in this case as well.

66. In 1 Chr 2:11–15, David's genealogy is provided as the son of Jesse, son of Obed, son of Boaz, but no mention is made of foreign elements introduced into this line of descent. In Ruth 4:17b–22, the only other occurrence of this genealogical information (Jesse's father and grandfather are not provided in any other HB texts), Boaz's wife is, of course, now a Moabite (a point of her ethnicity itself being made repeatedly throughout this brief book), and thus David is the third-generation descendant of this union. On the basis of Deut 23:3–5, cited as the "proof text" in the famous passage of Neh 13:1–3, *David* himself should have been excluded from the "assembly of God."

67. Compare the overtly positive portrayals of Pharaoh Neco of Egypt (2 Chr 35:20–22) and the Persian king Cyrus (2 Chr 36:22–23). See also the explicit statement by the Chronicler indicating that the entire line of Judah is the result of Judah's interactions with a Canaanite woman or incestuous relationship with his daughter-in-law (1 Chr 2:3–4). This information could easily have been left out of the genealogical information about Judah, and its inclusion emphasizes a particular point: the entire postexilic community, which traces its heritage back to Judah, is of mixed ethnic descent or the result of a prohibited union; cf. the similar conclusion regarding the genealogical heterogeneity of Judah drawn by Gary N. Knoppers, "'Great Among His Brothers,' But Who is He? Heterogeneity in the Composition of Judah," n.p. [cited 29 December 2003] *JHebScr* 3 (2000–2001). Online: http://www.jhsonline.org.; see also the discussion of foreigners in the genealogies by Labahn and Ben Zvi, "Observations on Women," esp. 462–66, 478.

then the correct response is simply to redefine "Israel" to include these individuals. This may seem to be similar to the position of legitimacy rejected above, but important distinctions must be noted: the conclusion just suggested does not require any particular historical situation to account for the inclusion of this particular group into "Israel" nor does it assume that the purpose is to legitimate the current status of these individuals in the community. Instead, this view contends that the argument is being waged on the level of ideology, and rather than affirming the *status quo*, this description is a criticism of it. "Israel" is not a "closed" entity; it is a fluid term capable of constant redefinition. In this case, such redefinition is accomplished through genealogies, and not necessarily only in retrospective attempts to justify the present. Any group may be assimilated into the entity of "Israel" regardless of historical genealogical descent; as such, this definition of "Israel" is a utopian construct, an ideological move independent of "real" circumstances that is designed to present an alternative reality to be considered as *the* reality.

From this understanding of the inclusion of foreign elements as not necessarily being motivated by an overwhelming penchant for legitimation, the depiction of the "sons of Israel" as a whole in these genealogies can be analyzed. As noted in the previous section, scholars have tended to mine these chapters for whatever bits of historical information may be imbedded in the genealogies. They assume that a historical reality is reflected in the text, even if only as a move for legitimacy in the postexilic community without any preexilic validity. Utopian literary theory abandons the perceived need to link the portrayal of these lists with one historical era or another, and instead it mines the data for those points which transcend the historical reality to construct another alternative reality for "Israel." In this light, the people of "Israel" is not limited to the "twelve tribes," nor is it restricted to those returning from exile, nor is it even those in the land of Israel, nor did it exist in an ideal form at any one point in time.

First, the "twelve tribes" of Israel do not exist as such in the genealogies of Chronicles. Rather, genealogies of the following tribes appear in 1 Chr 2–8: Judah, Simeon, Reuben, Gad, half-Manasseh, Levi, Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, half-Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher, Benjamin. If Dan and Zebulun were not originally provided with genealogies, the list of the descendants of the "twelve tribes" is extremely irregular, so that counting them becomes a complex effort.[68] Should Benjamin be counted

68. Compare, for example, the ten tribes of Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 29, with the fourteen of Japhet, *Ideology*, 280. See also the unique listing of tribes in 1 Chr 27:16–24 that is missing Gad and Asher and seems to regard "Aaron" as a tribe distinct from Levi.

as two distinct tribes? Do the two "half-Manasseh" units count as one or two tribes? What should be done about names and lineages noted without tribal affiliations but imbedded in these genealogies—do they count as part of the tribe or not, and if so why are they not better integrated into the genealogies? Japhet's contention that the traditional number twelve gives way to the "inclusion of every element" for the Chronicler's presentation is on the right track, but does not go far enough.[69]

"Israel" in Chronicles is not simply "the twelve" *plus* those attached to them. Genealogically, the "twelve tribes" did not exist, but "Israel," in the Chronicler's notion of "all Israel", did exist in the past and continues to exist in the Chronicler's present. Its membership was ever changing in the past and will continue to be in a state of flux in the future. The terms "Israel" and "all Israel" resist fixed definitions in Chronicles. The terms relate to genealogical, social, political, and religious groups. While this "all Israel" is enrolled by genealogies (1 Chr 9:1), it becomes clear that the genealogical definition is less significant than the religious one as the narrative unfolds. As many scholars have noted, "Israel" is: the community of YHWH centered around the Temple, and open to those from the "Israel" of Judah, the "Israel" of the Northern tribes who worship YHWH, and (though far less recognized) the "Israel" of those not genealogically Israelite but also part of this community. The centrality of this religious definition of the identity of "Israel" does not displace the genealogical entity of "Israel" but shifts the importance away from the claim to genealogical heritage towards the requirement of religious fidelity to YHWH and the Temple.

Second, "Israel" is not only those who returned from exile. Although many other biblical texts seem to indicate that it was only those who returned from exile which may constitute the true people of "Israel"—whether genealogically or religiously—Chronicles denies this limited view.[70] Rather, Chronicles should be viewed as one of the many texts which hold out hope for a future restoration of the Northern tribes to the land of Israel from their exile.[71] It was through religious "unfaithfulness" that the Transjordanian tribes (1 Chr 5:25–26), the Northern Kingdom (2 Chr 30:6–9), Judah (1 Chr 9:1; 2 Chr 36:14–16), and even king Manasseh (2 Chr 33:1–13) were exiled;[72] it was through the "spirit of YHWH" moving in Cyrus that Judah was restored (2 Chr 36:22–23), and

69. Japhet, *Ideology*, 308.

70. See, e.g., Jer 24:1–10; Ezra 4:1–4; Neh 2:19–20; cf. Zech 11:14.

71. See, e.g., Isa 11:11–16; Ezek 37:15–23; and Zech 10:6–12.

72. Note here the contrast between the reason given for exile in Chronicles (religious unfaithfulness) and the one emphasized in Ezra–Nehemiah: intermarriage (Ezra 9:1–7, 12; Neh 9:1–2, 26–31; cf. Neh 13:23–27).

by repentance and humility that both Manasseh returned from his exile to regain his throne (2 Chr 33:10–20) and that the remnant of the Northern Kingdom participated effectively in Hezekiah's Passover (2 Chr 30:10–22). How will the Transjordanian tribes and remaining Northern tribes still in exile be restored in the future? Chronicles does not specify the means (YHWH's intervention or their repentance, or both), though it does not reject the genealogical claims of these tribes as "Israel" as it retains them in the genealogies of 1 Chr 1–9; the book also most likely holds out for those in exile (whether from Babylon or Assyria) the call of Cyrus to return as part of YHWH's "people"—whether in this case genealogical or religious—to the Temple in Jerusalem (2 Chr 36:22–23).

Third, "Israel" is not synonymous with those residing in the land. Despite Japhet's claim to the contrary, "Israel" does not continually occupy its land and does not subsume within it the foreignness of non-Israelites so that all those living in the land are *de facto* part of "Israel."[73] Although not emphasizing the Exodus and Conquest traditions, Chronicles does not completely suppress them either. Japhet notes this exception,[74] but she does not seriously consider the statements in Chronicles which indicate that non-Israelites—in this case in the biological sense—resided in the land, or at least in parts of it, before the Israelites did and that these groups continued to exist alongside "Israel" throughout its history.[75] In addition, Chronicles on two occasions notes that "Israel" itself is but a "stranger and alien" in the land, having no permanent attachment to it (1 Chr 16:19; 29:15). While there certainly is an intimate connection between the people and its land in Chronicles, the recognition of foreigners residing within it and the tenuous nature of the existence of

73. Japhet, *Ideology*, 351, 363–86; idem, "Conquest and Settlement in Chronicles," *JBL* 98 (1979): 205–18 (213–18).

74. Japhet, *Ideology*, 374–86. See, however, the comment against this view by Brett that "Genealogy is, in fact, opposed to autochthony, and the Bible makes no claim to Israel's autochthony" ("Interpreting Ethnicity," 17); cf. Graham, "Setting the Heart to Seek God," 136; Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 260 n. 29; idem, "Shem, Ham and Japheth: The Universal and the Particular in the Genealogy of Nations," in Graham, McKenzie, and Knoppers, eds., *The Chronicler as Theologian*, 13–31 (28–29); and Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 66 n. 1; idem, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 81.

75. See the remarks regarding the "former inhabitants there [who] belonged to Ham" (1 Chr 4:40) and "the men of Gath who were born in the land" (1 Chr 7:21). The label "who were born in the land" is interestingly never applied to biological Israelites in Chronicles, but only here to the originally non-biologically Israelite inhabitants. In addition, there is a recognition of *gerim* (גרים) residing in the land who are not biologically Israelite (contra Japhet, *Ideology*, 334–51) throughout all of Israel's history.

"Israel" itself within the land are worth special notice here. The *land* of "Israel" is not determinative for the *people* of "Israel."[76] When the people are exiled to Babylon, leaving the land *completely* desolate according to Chronicles (2 Chr 36:20–23), this does not change the people's status as being authentically "Israel." This "empty land" theology demonstrates that the connection between YHWH and "Israel" in Chronicles is not about physical location or space. "Israel" transcends space; it is not tied to the land, and it is not restricted to any particular dimensions of the land.

Fourth, "Israel" as an ideal did not exist at any one particular time. As noted above, the presentation of the dimensions of the land is not restricted to one spatial description. This is partially due to the fact that in Chronicles "Israel" is presented in atemporal terms. The "Israel" of the genealogies stands outside of time. The genealogies do not continue down to the same time period and even reflect cross-sections of different historical periods (e.g. 1 Chr 4:31; 7:2, 13). Thus, no one period can be consulted to provide the answers to the questions: Who is "Israel," and what should it look like? The entity changes throughout the genealogies and throughout the narrative, while always remaining as "Israel." Thus, there can be no "return" to a "Golden Age" by simply replicating the depiction of "Israel" which these chapters contain.[77] The book does not say that "Israel" can be restored again if only the conditions which existed in the past at its moment of perfection could be replicated somehow; rather, "Israel" *is* and will continue to exist despite historical circumstances. Its identity is not in jeopardy of being lost; even the exile and the destruction of the temple cannot eradicate it.[78] The question

76. Contra Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 46, 74; cf. the nuanced view of Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 486–87.

77. Even the Davidic–Solomonic era does not qualify; contra Murray, "Retribution and Revival," 96; and Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10–29*, 741, 798. The genealogies do not reflect the conditions of this time period despite the fact that several lines end at this time and despite the apparent culmination of all this material at the time of Saul. The genealogies contain data explicitly noted as coming during the periods of later kings (1 Chr 5:17) and even down to the exile and beyond (1 Chr 3:16–24; 5:41 [6:15 Eng]); contra Osborne, "Genealogies," 72; and Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 64.

78. The desolation of the land and removal of *all* of its inhabitants does not destroy "Israel" (2 Chr 36:17–21); in addition, while the cultic objects are preserved, the temple itself is destroyed and the cult is defunct (vv. 18–19). Thus, "Israel" does not cease to exist when its temple does or when it is removed from its land. In many respects, this view of the Chronicler on the continued existence of "Israel" without temple and without land is paralleled by several texts written after the destruction of the Second Temple (e.g. *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*) and by rabbinic literature in particular (cf. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 137).

which Chronicles asks is not "*Will* Israel continue to exist?," but "*How* will Israel continue to exist?," or "What will be its 'quality of life'?" However, there can be consistency or lines of continuity between the past, present, and future. The utopian "Israel" of the genealogies is not a model to be instituted as a system in the present, but a pattern from which to assess the present. This can only be accomplished in terms of the seemingly contradictory notions of continuity and of openness to continued historical change in the future. Thus, larger principles, such as the inclusion of foreigners within "Israel" and the centrality of Judah and Levi within the social organization, stand out in the midst of genealogical and geographical details.[79]

2.2.3. *Judah and Levi in Privileged Positions*

Scholars almost unanimously agree that the structure and content of the genealogical material in 1 Chr 1–9 are designed to elevate the status of Judah and Levi and to place them at the center of attention. In 1 Chr 1, the consistent strategy is to note the subsidiary line(s) of descent first—the ones not discussed further in the following sequence.[80] Once Chronicles reaches the "sons of Israel" in 2:1–2, this structural device operates only within the tribal lines of descent though not in the movement from one tribe to the next. Japhet contends that by restoring Dan and Zebulun in their proper locations in chs. 2–8, the structure of the tribes is roughly geographical: beginning in the south with Judah and Simeon, moving to the Tranjordanian tribes of Reuben, Gad, half-Manasseh, continuing to the north with Issachar, (Benjamin), [Zebulun], (Dan), Naphtali, and then turning south back to the center with half-Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher,[81] Benjamin, and finally culminating at Jerusalem (1 Chr 9:1). Japhet also notes that Levi, having no land (but having numerous cities), is situated

79. Compare the point made by DeVries that these genealogies depict Israel so that it "*may yet be what it is*" (*1 and 2 Chronicles*, 20, 94); however, the postexilic community cannot replicate these conditions in their present, but they can *employ the principles* advocated by the genealogical presentation of who they are and how they comprise "Israel."

80. Osborne, "Genealogies," 164 n. 3, following the comments of Peter R. Ackroyd, *I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah* (TBC; London: SCM Press, 1973), 31; cf. Japhet on this pattern in ch. 1 and on the shift to geography in chs. 2–8 (*I & II Chronicles*, 8–9).

81. Japhet does note the peculiar geographical placement of Asher between the "Joseph" tribes and Benjamin, and offers another explanation for the sequence here besides geography, the diminishing size of military numbers (*I & II Chronicles*, 9, 169); Osborne simply states that geography governs the first four tribes while the "rest have no discernible order" ("Genealogies," 320).

at the center of the list as the sixth tribe between half-Manasseh and Issachar.[82] This positioning of Judah as the first tribe and Levi at the center of the list is paralleled by the length of treatment for all the tribes with Judah as the longest followed by Levi. Benjamin comes in third in terms of length, is the final tribe discussed in order in ch. 8, and is again invoked before mentioning the Benjaminite Saul in ch. 9 as the transition to the "narrative proper." Thus, it is concluded, the three tribes which "actually" constitute the postexilic community receive the most treatment and are positioned at the proper points of emphasis in the list: as the first, center, and final tribes.

Whether the return from Babylonian exile involved members of only these three tribes or not, it is difficult to see how these genealogies could possibly function as means of inclusion and exclusion on the basis of the information which they contain. That is, it has been repeatedly asserted that the genealogies serve to legitimize the situation of the Chronicler's time, to provide a means by which to allow some individuals to serve as priests or Levites to the exclusion of others, for example. However, this can hardly be the case since only two lists, the Davidic line and that of the leading priest, actually extend to the postexilic period (and even the line of the leading priest does not extend beyond the return in Chronicles; only the list in Neh 12:10–11 does so). The rest of the lines of descent for all of the tribes in chs. 2–8 stop well short of the exile, including that of Benjamin. It is only in the additional resettlement list of 1 Chr 9:1–34 (apparently lifted and adapted from Neh 11:3–22) which extends other parts of the lines of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi into this era, and then only briefly without detailed or precise genealogical trees connecting these individuals and families back into the past. So, for example, the repeated references to *other unnamed* sons and relatives (בניו and אחיהם) and the mention of only the "heads of families according to their ancestral houses" (v. 9) in this list leave an ambiguous aura about how this postexilic information would be employed as a device for legitimacy.[83] Rather than restricting access or incorporation into the lineages

82. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 9–10; cf. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 39, 46–47.

83. In light of this limited information about the postexilic period in these genealogies, it is worth noting that Japhet argues that the list in 1 Chr 9:1–34 originally presented the Chronicler's view of the inhabitants of Jerusalem at the time of David; although a resettlement list in Neh 11:3–22, it was reshaped here as a *preexilic* portrait of Jerusalem (*I & II Chronicles*, 206–8). If this view of Japhet is followed, then the amount of postexilic data in Chronicles is *reduced further*, leaving only the Davidic and leading priestly lines to extend into the exilic and postexilic periods.

of the postexilic community, this postexilic list provides an opportunity (a "loophole") for the individuals or groups to attach themselves to these tribes as descendants of these unnamed returnees, in a similar way to that suggested above for the tribes with limited information.

The primacy of Judah and Levi in these genealogies seems correct; however, the argument from structure based on the hypothetical geographical sequence of the tribes is not without its problems and lack of textual support; the argument from length of coverage at least has some grounding in the text itself. With this qualification to the commonly accepted view of the structure of the genealogies, an examination of the content of 1 Chr 1–9 indicating an important role for these two tribes is required.

To begin, Judah is explicitly said to have become "great among his brothers" and a "ruler (נגיד) came from him" (1 Chr 5:1–2). This statement, of course, does not actually occur in the Judahite genealogies of chs. 2–4. When Judah's genealogy is the first to be listed following the naming of Israel's twelve sons in 2:1–2, no reason for beginning with Judah rather than Reuben (or Joseph or Levi, for that matter) is provided. Indeed, this explanatory statement occurs after the genealogy of Simeon (4:24–43) and immediately before Reuben's (5:3–10) *without* expressly stating that this is the reason that Judah was listed first. The statement regarding Judah's prominence is actually a side-comment in the larger discussion of why Reuben is not listed first, as one might expect. The major concern is to explain that Reuben was not listed first due to his infidelity, as drawn from Gen 35:22; 49:3–4, and that the sons of Joseph are the authentic recipient of the birthright in his place—an association not stated in Gen 48:1–22, but made explicit in Chronicles.

This concern to elevate the (Northern) Joseph tribes has attracted much scholarly attention, especially given the larger debate over a supposed "anti-Samaritan" or "anti-Northern" polemic in Chronicles. While this is understandable, two points should be brought to the fore. First, if the loss of birthright is the reason for Reuben's demotion from the head of the list, then the converse *should* be expected to be the case, though it is not: Joseph, as the true holder of the birthright, should be listed first. Further, there is nothing apart from these statements in 1 Chr 5:1–2 to indicate any special importance for the Joseph tribes in the remainder of 1 Chr 1–9. Second, Judah's attainment of greatness is not a result of hostility toward or manipulation of his brothers. Reuben's own sin causes his loss and Joseph does not yield the birthright to Judah. The reason for Judah's ascendancy to prominence is not explicitly stated, though the fact that one of his descendants was a "ruler" is at least part of his enduring claim

to fame.[84] This ambiguity over the precise reason for listing Judah first is all the more striking given the discussion regarding Reuben and Joseph. Is this refusal to attribute the birthright (and its accompanying power) to Judah a limitation on Judah which the Chronicler seeks to maintain? That is, the ascription of the birthright to Joseph (which is first attested in Chronicles) poses a serious problem for those advocating the priority of Judah over Israel for all time because of the Davidic monarchy's previous authority. The Chronicler acknowledges other forms of power by recourse to the birthright *which he emphatically associates with Joseph*. This could be seen in terms of a utopian critique of claims from Judahites for power or increased power during the Chronicler's own time. Thus, according to the Chronicler, the descendants of Judah do not have a *de facto* claim to positions of authority based on genealogical descent from either David or the eponymous ancestor himself. The Chronicler, at least based on 1 Chr 5:1–2, would allow a means for the descendants of Joseph to contest such a view.

The focus of the Judahite genealogies is, of course, the Davidic line in ch. 3.[85] However, even this simple statement requires qualification: while the many sons of David are listed and alluded to vaguely in the segmented genealogy of vv. 1–9, it is only the descendants of Solomon who are recorded in a linear fashion in vv. 10–24. Following the pattern of the practice adduced in the other lineages, it should thus be concluded that the primary line is the *Solomonic* line rather than the larger Davidic line. While many scholars have pointed to this passage as evidence for at least "Davidism" in Chronicles (if not eschatological or messianic expectation), perhaps a better understanding of the *structure and content* would be to label this *centrality of Solomon* as part of the larger phenomenon of "Solomonism" in Chronicles. That being the case, the focus of the Judahite lineage is the Solomonic line. Whichever association is accepted, it is clear from the two previous examples that the monarchy plays a vital role in the importance of the tribe of Judah.

Another indication of the significance of Judah is the "Prayer of Jabez" recorded in 1 Chr 4:9–10. This prayer to God couched in a brief

84. There is no explicit causality in the verse; that is, Judah's prominence is not explicitly stated to be a result of this ruler nor is Judah's prominence the reason that the ruler comes from his line. The verse states the "facts of history" without drawing the implicit connections as one might expect; contra Willi, "Late Persian Judaism," 155.

85. H. G. M. Williamson's argument for a chiastic structure has been widely accepted ("Sources and Redaction in the Chronicler's Genealogy of Judah," *JBL* 98 [1979]: 351–59 [358–59]).

narrative which is *entirely unconnected* to the genealogy of Judah in which it is found deserves special comment on two points. First, it is the first example of a prayer or speech in Chronicles, a form which is used repeatedly throughout the narrative of 1 Chr 10–2 Chr 36 to express some of the primary theological and philosophical concerns of the Chronicler, especially the "doctrine of retribution" and the call to "seek God." As the first occurrence of this form, it is of particular significance. Second, the prayer and narrative speak directly to the relationship of Israel and its land. Jabez prays for additional land and is granted it by God. In a recent article, R. Christopher Heard argues persuasively that this text functions as an example to the Chronicler's contemporaries about the proper acquisition of land in peace without violent or military means.[86] As part of this conclusion, Heard notes that Jabez's reception of land in peace stands in marked contrast to the violence employed by the Simeonites and Reubenites in their successful conquest of land in the following two genealogies (1 Chr 4:24–5:10) and that a similar point is made in the narrative concerning Jehoshaphat's non-battle in 2 Chr 30. Such a portrayal of this individual as exemplar in contrast even to David, the man of war with blood on his hands (1 Chr 22:7–9), reflects a utopian critique of military and violent conquest.[87] Jabez is successful without military effort. Perhaps, as Heard suggests, this is the message to the Chronicler's audience. If this is accepted, the inclusion of this exemplary individual into the lineage of Judah, even if and especially as he is rather poorly integrated into it,[88] serves to highlight further the tribe of Judah.

Finally, as noted previously, Judah's significance among the tribes is indicated by the numerous individuals or groups who are assimilated to or associated with it via the genealogies.[89] There is no comparison with

86. R. Christopher Heard, "Echoes of Genesis in 1 Chronicles 4:9–10: An Intertextual and Contextual Reading of Jabez's Prayer," n.p. [cited 29 December 2003] *JHebScr* 4 (2002–2003). Online: http://www.jhsonline.org. He also notes that this is the first association of prayer and land acquisition in Chronicles, two important themes which are brought together for the first time here.

87. The Chronicler does depict victory in battle as being from God, and righteous kings as victorious in fighting their battles. However, the portrayals of Jabez and Jehoshaphat undercut a clear equation between being righteous and being victorious in battle.

88. The failure to provide Jabez with even a minimal Judahite lineage is all the more striking given the Chronicler's repeated integration of foreign elements into the line of Judah by a variety of methods.

89. Knoppers ("'Great Among His Brothers,'" n.p.) notes the following: Calebites, Jerahmeelites, Qenizzites, Canaanites, Qenites, Ishmaelites, Arameans, Egyptians, Moabites, Midianites, Horites, Seirites, and Edomites .

the other tribes of Israel—Judah is by far the tribe most involved in these types of relationships, and without a single hint that this is not acceptable or to be avoided in the future. Thus, Knoppers contends that Chronicles presents "a Judah that is very much connected with its neighbors. The descendants of the patriarch, who 'became great among his brothers,' do not appear as an unadulterated, homogeneous, and internally fixed entity."[90] While not explicitly commending the Judahites for this practice, there can be little doubt that the Chronicler portrays these extensive genealogies (i.e. many descendants) as one of the blessings on Judah. This portrayal would fit the theology of retribution throughout Chronicles (cf. 1 Chr 3:27, which explicitly contrasts the Judahites and the Simeonites in this regard). Utopian literary theory suggests that those foreign elements *should be* considered authentically Israelite; they are included among the genealogies but have no other known genealogical connection to Israel in extant sources. Rather than providing legitimacy for the current situation, these incorporations suggest an alternative reality in which these elements *should be* welcomed within the entity known as "Israel." Such a portrayal reflects one position in the larger debate regarding proper interactions with foreigners in the Second Temple period; if so, this type of overt inclusion of foreigners could be seen as a utopian critique of those holding a more restricted view of who constitutes "Israel."

Turning now to the tribe of Levi, the case for its "privileged position" rests on a structural argument of its "central" placement among the tribes, its overall length, the inclusion of the so-called "high-priestly" genealogy of 5:27–41 (6:1–15 Eng.), and the importance of the tribe in the narrative which follows. That is, there are *even fewer* explicit statements about the importance of Levi in the genealogies than could be adduced or inferred for the tribe of Judah. The larger concern for the temple and its cult in Chronicles brings the significance of the individuals mentioned in the Levitical genealogy into clearer focus.

It should be noted, however, that the information about Levi consists of far more than a genealogy; the genealogy proper consists of the names in 5:27–6:15 (6:1–30 Eng.), the partial repetition in 1 Chr 6:35–38 (vv. 50–53 Eng.), and the genealogies provided for the three chief Levitical singers Heman, Asaph, and Ethan in vv. 3–17 (vv. 18–32 Eng.). The remaining section (vv. 39–66 [vv. 54–81 Eng.]) is a description of the towns and pasturelands assigned to the tribe, the so-called Levitical cities, intimately connected with the similar distribution list in Josh 21:4–40, though in a complicated and debated manner.

90. Ibid.

The scholarly assessment of this material concerning Levi is fairly consistent. The "high-priestly" genealogy is typically regarded as a construct, meant to authorize the Zadokite control of the office by giving the eponymous ancestor an Aaronite and Levitical heritage, with few or no claims to historical reliability; the singers, without explicit Levitical heritage apart from Chronicles, have been the focus of several elaborate analyses which attempt to isolate the development of their Levitical heritage in the history of Israelite religion; and the geography of the Levitical cities has been consulted for what it may reveal about the borders and scope of the Israelite settlement of the land of Canaan—although it is dated variously to periods during the pre-monarchy, united monarchy, and divided monarchy, or as an imagined geography without a corresponding historical reality.

Thus, in this scholarly assessment, the Levitical material reveals the true concerns of Chronicles: the authority and primacy of the temple cult and its personnel, and the organization of the larger Levitical order. However, it should be pointed out again that just as the Davidic (or rather Solomonic) lineage is the only Judahite line to continue into the postexilic period, so too the "high-priestly" line is the only Levitical one even to reach the exile. The remaining Levitical lines do not extend anywhere near this time. In addition, the singers' lineages are not continued down from Heman, Asaph, and Ethan. It is difficult to imagine that these lineages were used to exclude individuals from these offices or to guarantee that only those biologically qualified to serve did so.[91] These lists distinguish and organize *within* the Levitical line,[92] but they do not serve as a means of adjudicating Levitical claims by precisely delineating these lines of descent through the exilic and postexilic periods (with the possible exception of 1 Chr 9:10–12). That is, from this material, it would be impossible during the time of the Chronicler to contradict or confirm the claims made by individuals to be a member of one of these lines. In addition, the "Zadokite claim" to the high priesthood may be reflected in the two genealogies, but no similar claims are made for the rest of the Zadokites in this text. It is clear that Chronicles considers all the descendants of Aaron (and not just Zadok) to be priests, while it does *implicitly* limit the high priesthood to the sons of Zadok through

91. Contra Antti Laato, "The Levitical Genealogies in 1 Chronicles 5–6 and the Formation of Levitical Ideology in Post-Exilic Judah," *JSOT* 62 (1994): 77–99 (98).

92. As do the lists of priestly courses and Levitical divisions in 1 Chr 23–27, which also do not provide subsequent genealogical information for these branches of the highly complex family tree.

Jehozadak. Thus, even for the priests, such a genealogy is not restrictive nor is it "pro-Zadokite" in orientation as part of the Chronicler's *Tendenz*.

As concerns the Levitical cities, it is difficult to imagine that this list reflects the historical situation of the Chronicler's day, given what is known about the settlement of Yehud during the late Persian and early Hellenistic period. Despite the various suggestions for a historical context during the preexilic period, the evidence is not clear and none of the suggestions has superior explanatory power over the others. While acknowledging that the list *may possibly* reflect conditions and borders which are otherwise unattested in both the extant literary and archaeological data, the description of the cities does exist in space, in literary space, at some point in Israel's past (as the text itself presents the temporal location of these settlements in the past, although not with a precise moment stated). Are these cities which the Levites are expected to have in the future? Should they attempt to replicate the geographic "reality" presented by this list? If the answer to these questions is "yes," then should not the same response be given to the geographical notations included for the other tribes in the genealogies? Should not Judah, Simeon, Reuben, Gad, Ephraim, and Benjamin attempt to regain their territory as depicted in their genealogies? If those tribes who returned from exile were the only recipients of the geographical markers, then such an explanation would more likely suggest that Chronicles advocates a return to some ideal borders (from the Golden Age of David and Solomon, for example). However, this is not the case.

First, only five tribes are listed as returning (in 1 Chr 9:3–34): Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Levi. Of course, Manasseh has no specific geographical associations other than dwelling in the region "from Bashan to Baal-hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon" (1 Chr 5:23). In addition, in 1 Chr 4:41 Simeon's information comes from the time of Hezekiah (not David or Solomon); the tribes of Gad and Reuben are still in an Assyrian exile along with Manasseh in 1 Chr 5:25–26, and their genealogical information dates to the time of Jotham (v. 17). Thus, no one time is depicted by the geographical data in the genealogies, and the assumption that such a list functions as a call to replicate its contents does not fit the evidence contained in Chronicles itself. Finally, as all twelve tribes do not provide land for the Levites—Dan is missing—the use of the term "ideal" or an association with the inclusive "all Israel" ideology is difficult to maintain. This is one step further removed from the notion that the Chronicler advocates a literal replication of the list. So, what of the Levitical cities?

The Levitical cities are one of the examples of space used for utopian concerns, or simply *utopian space*, in Chronicles.[93] The presentation is better than the actual reality of the Second Temple period, but not idealized. It exists in a real space, defies depiction graphically, stands outside of one timeframe, and cannot be aligned with historical reality—all common features of utopian space. Rather than attempting to reconstruct the history of Israel from this list of cities, utopian literary theory suggests that the present reality is called into question by what is presented and the reader is challenged to consider the possibility of an alternative reality. In this alternative reality, the Levites—all of them, from all three major clans—were provided with towns and lands from the tribes who were able to do so. Is this included to demonstrate that in the past the Levites were *all* given towns and pasturelands without excluding some groups within the lineage? Perhaps this is indeed part of the Chronicler's *Tendenz* to emphasize the cult, but in this case it is specifically to present the Levitical case for inclusion in land distribution and as recipients of the care of the community during the Chronicler's own day. It is extremely doubtful that the Chronicler included this information to give authority to the *current* Levitical situation and it is also doubtful that he advocated that the Levites should be given *these particular* locations. Rather, in concert with his method elsewhere, it seems that the *principles* being demonstrated by the account should be enacted in his present situation. There is no hint that such actions were commanded or instituted by law, by the Torah, or by God.[94] This further minimizes the claims of the Levites to reinstate such a policy; they are dependent on the goodwill of the people. In this utopia, the powers-that-be cannot exercise control over every aspect of the community, but they must work alongside the members of the community with each group fulfilling their obligations to the other, especially as concerns the cult.

93. On the notion of "utopian space," that is, space that is truly Other, and thus is susceptible to ideological redefinitions, see Fredric Jameson, "Is Space Political?," in *Anyplace* (ed. C. C. Davidson; New York: Anyone Corp., 1995), 192–205 (196–97); and David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (California Studies in Critical Human Geography 7; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), esp. 133–96. See the further development of the idea of utopian space in my Excursus on Burial Notices as Utopian Space in Chronicles in Chapter 3 (pp. 119–25).

94. While many instances of ritual practice, cultic concern, and Levitical responsibility in Chronicles are performed "as it is written" or "as Moses commanded," the distribution of land to the Levites in Chronicles is merely recorded as an event lacking *any* invoked authority. Contrast the claims made for Levitical rights, especially for the tithe and land, in Num 35:1–8; Deut 12:11–12; 14:22–29; 18:1–8; Josh 21:13; Mal 2:4–9; 3:8–12; Neh 10:29–40 (vv. 28–39 Eng.); 12:47; 13:10–12.

Thus, these Levitical cities serve a decidedly utopian function within Chronicles: they represent the desired social and economic arrangement between *all* of the Levitical groups and the rest of the community, which arrangements *apparently did not* exist at the time of the Chronicler.

2.2.4. *"Israel" Among the Nations: Universalism and Particularism in Chronicles*

Having discussed the internal organization of utopian Israel, this analysis now turns to the issue with which Chronicles itself begins, Israel's place among the nations of the world. Whereas 1 Chr 2–9 is primarily concerned with the "sons of Israel," ch. 1 traces the lineage of humanity from Adam down to Jacob (almost always called "Israel" in Chronicles)[95] and attempts to situate the people of Israel in their proper location and relationship to the outside world. This opening genealogy functions in several ways. (1) it summarizes in a concise form the material in Genesis prior to the appearance of Israel, ignoring most of the narrative which surrounds the genealogical data embedded in the stories, providing a quick review of the mythical/ancient past;[96] (2) it acknowledges that the descendants of Israel are part of the larger human family, related biologically and ethnically to all elements of humanity on some level; (3) it shows special interest in those neighboring nations which played a significant role in Israel's past (and some scholars would assert in the Chronicler's present or recent past) and who were some of their closest relatives according to the Genesis accounts; and (4) the map of the world is not updated to conform to new social realities: the description of the mythic/ancient past as found in Genesis (especially in the genealogies of P and the Table of Nations) is not adjusted to conform to the new historical present of the Chronicler's day—that is, while the information recorded here is selective, it is drawn without much alteration from the material in Genesis.

This consistency between Genesis and Chronicles may be somewhat surprising when compared to the Hellenistic material concerning the mythic/ancient past that was continually adapted to the present world situation; that is, this type of genealogy serves as a means of explaining

95. "Jacob" is found only in 1 Chr 16:13, 17 as the poetic parallel to "Israel." This uniform use of Israel to the near exclusion of Jacob has been noted frequently as a structural device which separates the Israelites from non-Israelites; see, e.g., Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 62; Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 62.

96. This is the purpose of the chapter according to Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 56. She also notes that Chronicles follows "the content, order and structure" of Genesis in relating this information (p. 53).

current national and socio-political relationships.[97] For example, one may have expected a greater emphasis on the Persians or the Greeks or other surrounding nations. Some scholars have suggested that the inclusion of the descendants of Seir and the Edomite kings may reflect the continuing significance of these groups (or the people now living in their territory) for the Chronicler's own time. While such a direct relationship is possible, the stereotypical use of these particular nations in Chronicles would seem to indicate that they function as ciphers for whoever is opposed to Israel rather than any particular group actually residing to the southeast of Yehud at the time of the Chronicler. It is the significance of these two groups in Israel's past (note their additional appearances in 1 Chr 4:42; 18:11–13; 2 Chr 8:17; 20:2, 10, 22–23; 21:8–10; 25:11–20; 28:17; almost all in some type of conflict or military context) that sufficiently explains their inclusion here.

From this opening chapter detailing the larger human family, the Chronicler proceeds to discuss the lineage of Israel exclusively in chs. 2–9. As noted previously, within ch. 1 the order of presentation follows a clear pattern: the subsidiary lines are listed first followed by the line of greater significance. Thus, Japheth and Ham precede Shem, Ishmael precedes Isaac, and Esau precedes Israel. The genealogical tree is progressively narrowed until the main object of attention comes into focus: the sons of Israel (1 Chr 2:1–2). This literary device and the emphasis on the figure of Jacob as the first Israelite in Chronicles (as opposed to Abraham or Isaac) have been noted by scholars repeatedly. What has not been much discussed by scholars is the failure of the Chronicler to comment explicitly upon the reason for this apparent selection of Israel as a chosen entity, especially given his inclusion of narrative comments concerning individuals within the opening genealogy and in the genealogies of the tribes which follow.[98] Is the *special status* of Israel assumed,

97. Another explanation for their similarity could be their derivation from the same or nearly the same time period, and thus a reflection of the same historical situation. If P, however, predates Chronicles by a century or two (dating P closer to the exile and Chronicles closer to the Hellenistic period), then their historical contexts would be very different. Further, the origin of the Table of Nations in Gen 10 is not clear; it could derive from P, while many hold that it is from J or an independent source which predates P. Whatever the true chronological sequence of these texts, the failure of the Chronicler to alter significantly his source material in this case (as he does regularly with other source information) is worthy of further consideration.

98. This silence about Israel's "election" is all the more remarkable given the repeated references to and reasons for the chosenness of David and Solomon and the city of Jerusalem in Chronicles (1 Chr 28:4–6, 10; 2 Chr 6:5–6, 34, 38; 7:12–18; 12:13; 33:7).

accepted, and in need of no argumentation by the Chronicler? Or, is the unique position of Israel accepted without hesitation while the issue is the *composition and scope* of the entity represented by the name "Israel"; that is, "Israel" *is* chosen, but just *who* is "Israel"?

The distinction between the two questions rests on the distinction of audience or intended readership and their historical situation. Chronicles is not propaganda literature to outside communities (i.e. the Samaritans or the Persians) to argue for the claims of the Yehudites and convince the Other of the correctness of that position. Chronicles is definitely "insider" literature, assuming particular concepts to be true that other groups would have difficulty accepting. Chronicles is concerned with the issues important to the internal affairs of the Israelite/Yehudite community. While books such as Ezra–Nehemiah and Deuteronomy appear to have the characteristics of "crisis literature" written during a period of struggle for identity and definition against the Other, Chronicles reflects the views of a community not as concerned with establishing external borders and boundaries, but with the proper relationships *within* a community not currently struggling for its own survival amid a hostile environment.[99] Put another way, Chronicles is not so much concerned with threats from without as it is in addressing various issues of contention and dispute that have developed within the entity known as "Israel."

Though primarily concerned with internal relationships, through the opening genealogies in ch. 1 and in chs. 2–9 the Chronicler does participate in a debate which is found throughout the corpus of Second Temple literature about the proper parameters for relationships with other nations and about the possibility of non-Israelites being included as part of the community of the "true Israel."[100] This "internal/external" dichotomy, of course, cannot be so easily separated, as the demarcation of the qualifying characteristics for one of the two categories of concern naturally influences the extent of the other category. It is in this light that the Chronicler's concern over the identity of "Israel" touches upon the issues of "inclusion/universalism" and "exclusion/particularism" as so labeled by a long history of scholarship on this complex and controversial motif.

Discussions of this issue in Chronicles often begin by addressing the presentation of similar concerns in Ezra–Nehemiah. This has been a direct result of the once commonly held belief in the unity of a Chronistic History, consisting of Chronicles–Ezra–Nehemiah as an edited

99. Japhet states that "Chronicles does not represent 'religion under stress'. It is an expression of a religion that came to terms with the past, formed a solid theological basis for its existence, and was looking forward, to the future" ("Exile and Restoration," 44).

100. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 26.

collocation in its final form.[101] From this position, the similarities in perspective on the issues of foreigners and especially intermarriage between the two units of Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemiah were emphasized while the differences were typically attributed to the preservation of source material or downplayed by previous scholars. As the consensus about the unity of these works gave way, one of the main thematic issues raised was the distinctive treatment of these themes in the two books.

Recent scholarship on the topic of foreigners and especially the inhabitants of the North in Chronicles have rightly pointed out the more tolerant and even accepting position towards these individuals ostracized in Ezra–Nehemiah. This is demonstrated in a number of ways: first, the numerous notes about intermarriage in the genealogical material and especially in the Judahite line without a hint of condemnation; second, the repeated invitations made to the Northern tribes to participate in the religious festivals made by the reforming kings of the South that some Northerners accepted; third, the presentation of "all Israel" as extending beyond the narrowly defined unit of the returnees or of those in Yehud in particular. However, to say that Chronicles welcomes foreigners without placing any demands upon them or as a polar opposite position to that of Ezra–Nehemiah would be just as incorrect as understanding it to reflect the same restrictions as Ezra–Nehemiah on this particular issue.

While business or personal interaction and even intermarriage are not prohibited, the religious loyalty of both foreigners and Israelites from the Northern tribes is expected to be shown toward the temple cult in Jerusalem. Indeed, a proper attitude on the part of all participants toward the temple and its cult provides the source of unity for these diverse individuals. This concern is made most pointedly in the account of Hezekiah's Passover, in which those from the Northern tribes who are ritually unclean but had "set their hearts to seek God" are allowed to participate in the festival "even though not in accordance with the sanctuary's rules of cleanness," and though the Pesach was eaten "otherwise than as prescribed" (2 Chr 30:17–20). Hezekiah not only allows this improper ritual to occur, but prays to "the good LORD" for a pardon of the people, and God "healed" them in response to this apparently unorthodox petition not concerned with the proper functioning of the cultic ritual.[102]

101. On the term "collocation," see DeVries, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 7–8; cf. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 57.

102. It may be of special significance that this is the only time in the entire HB that the God of Israel is termed "the good LORD" (יהוה הטוב), although the "LORD is good" (יהוה טוב or יהוה כי טוב) occurs several times (e.g. Jer 33:11; Nah 1:7; numerous times in Psalms; 1 Chr 16:34 [citing Ps 106:1]; and 2 Chr 7:3).

In addition to this primacy of religious loyalty as a requirement, Chronicles depicts conflict, especially of a military nature, with some of the inhabitants of the land who were not ethnically Israelite and with some of the nations surrounding Israel. Thus, while the Conquest traditions are downplayed in the Chronicler's version of Israelite history, it is incorrect to claim that Israel always occupied the land or did not have to engage in military struggle to gain at least some of it for themselves. In this light, the tribes of Simeon (1 Chr 4:39–43), Reuben (1 Chr 5:10, 18–22), Gad and half-Manasseh (1 Chr 5:18–22), and Benjamin (1 Chr 8:13) attack the people in the land and acquire their territory or towns. In addition, while attempting to raid cattle, Ephraim is attacked by the "people of Gath, who were born in the land" and many of the tribe are killed (1 Chr 7:20–21).

Moving from the issue of geography to genealogy, Chronicles has recently been viewed as a "compromise" response in comparison with the contrasting perspective of Ezra–Nehemiah, which certainly has genealogical purity as one of its primary concerns. This view assumes a particular historical reconstruction of the restored community in Yehud: a political struggle between groups or parties vying for supremacy and power which has been played out by claims to ethnic continuity with the "Israel" of preexilic times. Thus, in this view, the refusal to confer priestly status on those who could not provide proof of their *genealogical connection* to the "legitimate" priestly family as recorded in Ezra 2:62// Neh 7:64 is extended as a principle governing the recognition of those who were authentically a part of "Israel" (not just the priesthood) at the time.[103] Thus, in the wake of this method of constructing identity, Chronicles is viewed as providing such a genealogical connection for individuals or groups who would otherwise have been excluded from "Israel" on the basis of their non-Israelite ethnicity. The method of Chronicles, then, is cast as a response to the concerns of Ezra–Nehemiah: providing a genealogy (even if imaginary in nature) to maintain the *status quo* of the community's organization versus the expulsion or rejection of these individuals as the solution to a perceived problem with the *status quo* (i.e. Chronicles attempts to create harmony by legitimizing the present, while Ezra–Nehemiah brings disunity by establishing a means of excluding those who should not be in the community but nonetheless currently are). In this reconstruction, scholars have further tended to describe the

103. Compare also the removal of *all* those of foreign descent on the basis of the limited exclusions found in Deut 23:3–5 as recorded in Neh 13:1–3. It is worth noting that this passage makes no mention of the method used to determine who was and was not included in this group now excluded from "Israel."

view of Ezra–Nehemiah as "exclusive/particular" and that of Chronicles in contrast as "inclusive/universal."

However, this dichotomy simply does not account for the evidence. Chronicles presents a complex picture of the relations between Israel and the nations that cannot be labeled so easily. As stated above, the war and other conflicts with foreigners, the openness to the Northerners who accept the religious program at Jerusalem, and the frequent reference to intermarriage without criticism are not easily encapsulated within the traditional dichotomies imposed on these ancient texts. Chronicles has much to say about this issue, but this information cannot be placed neatly into two distinct categories. Chronicles as a whole does not fit within one or the other. Rather, the view of foreigners in Chronicles is mixed in nature. They are neither welcomed without reservation nor rejected flatly; they can be part of "Israel" genealogically, but it is ultimately religious fidelity that indicates identity. The same holds true for all the individuals named within the genealogies. Thus, those who are genealogically "Israelites" but participate in "unfaithfulness" and/or "transgression" will find a very different end than those who are righteous, whatever their ethnicity.[104] It seems that Chronicles does not disregard genealogical heritage, but rather uses it to demonstrate the superiority of religious fidelity for the purpose of identity formation.

While such a reading of Chronicles may seem to support the aforementioned typical reconstruction of Chronicles as a compromise intended to maintain the *status quo*, it rather may point to a criticism of the *status quo* and an attempt to refocus the community on a different area of concern. Utopian literary theory recognizes that such a varied response towards foreigners in Chronicles may function as part of such a critique and not as a sign of multiple redactional layers or an attempt to validate the present policy. Instead, the depiction of "Israel" and the nations in Chronicles can be read as one that critiques the present policy by presenting a *better alternative reality* for consideration. Perhaps Chronicles is arguing that the relationship between "Israel" and the nations is one of great complexity (which it is in historical reality), and that no clear policy can be instituted to cover the variety of concerns that will arise. However, some *principles* for this relationship according to Chronicles can be adduced: (1) intermarriage is not condemned; (2) war against

104. Note the following examples: Achar (1 Chr 2:7), the tribes exiled by Assyria (1 Chr 5:23–26), the Southern Kingdom of Judah (1 Chr 9: 2), Saul (1 Chr 8:29–40; 9:35–10:14), David's mighty men (1 Chr 11:26–47), Huram-abi (2 Chr 1:13), the kings of the Davidic dynasty mentioned throughout 2 Chronicles who act in both ways, and the leading priests and the people (2 Chr 36:14).

foreigners is not condemned (however, victory is not guaranteed in every instance, so the people should not be hasty to engage in conflict and should rather depend on God's intervention to occur); and (3) religious fidelity, seeking God with the proper attitude, supporting the temple and its cult, and the proper internal relations of the community are of primary concern—much more important for the continued existence of the community than the establishment of borders and boundaries to distinguish between "us and them." Thus, Chronicles advocates neither "inclusive/universal" nor "exclusive/particularistic" positions, as typically understood. Chronicles does comment on foreigners in a variety of contexts; and the understanding that most fully accounts for this complex portrayal can be described best as being utopian in nature.

Chapter 3

A Political Utopia

3.1. *The Davidic Monarchy in Chronicles*

An analysis of the Davidic monarchy in Chronicles must be limited in some way, given its complex nature and the numerous matters which *could* be discussed. This section will focus on the utopian characteristics of the portrayal of the monarchy in Chronicles. While Chronicles is to be read as a narrative in its own right without the necessity of a detailed synoptic comparison of Samuel–Kings, many of its utopian elements are expressed most clearly in the differences between the two texts. Thus, reference will be made to divergences in the accounts that illuminate the utopianism of Chronicles. Also, in an effort to cover the *entire* monarchy and not only the "ideal" Davidic–Solomonic era or the presentation of the popular "reforming kings"—something not typically done in studies on Chronicles—this section will include discussions of *each* monarch and how each contributes to the utopian ideology of Chronicles.[1]

3.1.1. *Saul, David, and Solomon (1 Chronicles 10–2 Chronicles 9)*

The repeated genealogy of Saul in 1 Chr 9:35–44 forms the transition from the genealogies of 1 Chr 1–9 to the narrative that extends from 1 Chr 10 to the end of 2 Chr 36. Included with slightly different details in the line of Benjamin in 1 Chr 8:29–40, this information about Saul appears again following the list of returnees from the exile (in 1 Chr 9:3–34) which notes particularly those connected with the temple cult: the priests, Levites, gatekeepers, and singers. It has been suggested that this placement may indicate that the family of Saul should also be reckoned among the temple functionaries, in this case as part of the *Nethinim* or the "Servants of Solomon," but such a relationship is not explicitly

1. Many of the cultic issues associated with the monarchy will be deferred to the discussion in Section 4.1 although some brief comments will be provided throughout this section.

mentioned in the text.[2] It may also suggest that the family of Saul had returned from exile to dwell in the land.[3] While this second possibility may account for the presence of the lineage in 1 Chr 8, the duplication in ch. 9 requires another explanation.

Given the Chronicler's emphasis on the importance of the Davidic monarchy in Israel's past, it certainly would have been possible for the Chronicler to begin the narrative of the monarchy directly with David and avoid, or at least downplay, the significance of Saul or the reality that he was Israel's first king.[4] However, by beginning with Saul's defeat at the hands of the Philistines, there are at least two significant points which can be made. First, the demise of Saul can be an explicit example of those who are unfaithful to YHWH and suffer the consequences at the hand of God. While the Chronicler has followed the narrative in 1 Sam 31 rather closely with only a few changes to the story, the comments in 1 Chr 10:13–14 which follow this account are apparently the Chronicler's own understanding of the significance of the preceding story.[5] In these verses, the Chronicler explains that Saul dies as a result of unfaithfulness (מעל) to the command of YHWH and, in addition, sought guidance (דרש) from the medium instead of YHWH.[6]

2. Contra Aaron Demsky, "The Genealogy of Gibeon (1 Chronicles 9.35–44): Biblical and Epigraphic Considerations," *BASOR* 202 (1971): 16–23 (20). See the treatment of these groups by Joel Weinberg, *The Citizen–Temple Community* (trans. D. L. Smith-Christopher; JSOTSup 151; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 75–91, and the literature cited there.

3. This is only one possible reason. Information about various tribes and families who evidently did not return from exile is included in these genealogies as well.

4. See the discussion of possible reasons for the narrative beginning with Saul's death by Saul Zalewski, "The Purpose of the Story of the Death of Saul in 1 Chronicles x," *VT* 39 (1989): 449–67 (449–52); and the excellent analysis by Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 17–43.

5. The use of the root "unfaithful" (מעל) is the strongest evidence for this being the Chronicler's own composition, as it is a repeated theme throughout Chronicles and appears often at points in the Chronicler's *Sondergut* as the commentary to the events recorded (see, e.g., 1 Chr 2:7; 5:25; 9:1; 10:13; 2 Chr 12:2; 26:16, 18; 28:19, 22; 29:6, 19; 30:7; 33:19, 36:14). Note that there is no mention of unfaithfulness during the reigns of David and Solomon. According to 1 Chr 9:1, the exile of Judah is itself a result of their מעל. Thus, unfaithfulness is depicted negatively for both the individual and the community.

6. The first charge may be derived from Saul's disobedience of Samuel in 1 Sam 15, but the specific wrongdoing is not made clear by the Chronicler in contrast to the explicit statements in 1 Sam 28:18–19. The second charge contradicts 1 Sam 28:3–7, which states that Saul consults the medium only after he had inquired of YHWH but that YHWH had failed to respond to him.

Second, the Davidic monarchy exists entirely as an action of YHWH who "turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse." Will the Davidic dynasty practice the ways of Saul and his unfaithfulness or will it choose to be faithful? The assessment of the Davidic dynasty by the Chronicler on this issue will vary greatly from king to king. In addition, the reigns for some of the kings can be divided into periods of faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Thus, this episode about Saul introduces one of the main criteria by which the evaluation of subsequent monarchs can be made. The dynasty itself ceases to exist with Zedekiah (2 Chr 36:11–13). This king is described as being evil and rebellious against Jeremiah and Nebuchadnezzar; he also refused to turn to YHWH. The leading priests and people during his reign were "exceedingly unfaithful" (למעול מעל), and the result was exile (2 Chr 36:14–21; cf. 1 Chr 9:1).

While the Davidic dynasty lasts much longer than the Saulide kingship, it is the *people* who are released from exile;[7] indeed, the call at the conclusion of Chronicles is for the temple to be rebuilt and not for the re-establishment of the Davidic or any other monarchy. In other words, the Davidic dynasty is conditional and temporary in Chronicles.[8] Just as YHWH made David king *in place of* Saul, so too the Davidic dynasty can be replaced at the will of YHWH in response to continued unfaithfulness (מעל). While not an explicit criticism of the Davidic dynasty, the remarks in 1 Chr 10:14 regarding the nature of David's selection as a *replacement* for Saul provides a subtle critique of the claims for the necessity of the Davidic dynasty in the Second Temple period; after all, David was not Israel's first or only king.[9] Although the primary function of Saul's death is to set the stage for David's kingship as an anti-type, the Chronicler's version also suggests a subtle critique of the monarchy itself.

7. Note the failure to mention explicitly the fate of Zedekiah and that there is nothing similar to the "muted hope" for the dynasty in a story reminiscent of Jehoiachin's release from prison in 2 Kgs 25:27–30 at the conclusion of Chronicles.

8. See the discussion of the tension between the conditional and unconditional nature of the Davidic covenant in Chronicles by Gary N. Knoppers, "David's Relation to Moses: The Contexts, Content and Conditions of the Davidic Promises," in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar* (ed. J. Day; JSOTSup 270; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 91–118.

9. It is significant that Chronicles affirms that the "kingdom" (המלוכה) existed under Saul. For YHWH to turn it over to David, as stated in 1 Chr 10:14 (cf. 1 Chr 12:23), it must have had a prior existence, presumably with Saul as the caretaker; see also the explicit recognition of Saul as king in 1 Chr 11:2. This idea of "turning over" the kingdom seems to speak against emphasizing the *uniqueness* of David's kingship, *special* selection, or status as the *original* monarch in Chronicles.

The remaining chapters of 1 Chronicles (chs. 11–29) are concerned with the reign of David. While the vast majority of scholars have viewed the Chronicler's presentation of David as "pristine" or "whitewashed" or "ideal," these terms fail to capture the true nature of David's depiction in Chronicles. It is rather a utopian view of this monarch—a better alternative picture without being perfect. It is certainly true that the David in Chronicles is not the same as the David of Samuel–Kings. The accounts which portray David in overtly negative terms in 2 Samuel and 1 Kings are not repeated in Chronicles: the adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah the Hittite (2 Sam 11:1–12:25), the internal family intrigues among his children and Absalom's subsequent revolt (2 Sam 13–19), Sheba's revolt (2 Sam 20:1–22), and his depiction as an ailing old man who cannot keep warm (1 Kgs 1:1–4). However, Chronicles does not remove all of David's flaws (1 Chr 13:7–13; 15:11–15; 22:8; 28:3), nor is he sinless (1 Chr 21:1–22:1),[10] nor does he rule "all Israel" without elements of internal dissent (1 Chr 12:30 [v. 29 Eng.]; 15:29). These particular notices disallow an understanding of David as an ideal ruler during an ideal time.

David's reign should not be seen as a legitimation of the monarchy by the Chronicler. Instead, in Chronicles it is David who reorients the monarchy towards its chief purpose: the worship of YHWH and his temple, which stand at the center of concern in the Chronicler's account of Israel's history and not the monarchy itself. Saul's failure to seek YHWH is corrected by David's concern for the cultic worship of YHWH and in his preparation for the construction of the temple by Solomon. The true monarch provides for the cult. However, even in this task, David does not establish practices that cannot be adapted or changed by subsequent monarchs. Thus, for example, his juridical reforms are not re-enacted by Jehoshaphat in the same manner (cf. 1 Chr 26:29–32; 2 Chr 19:4–11), his reforms of the Levitical and priestly orders are not merely reinstituted in exactly the same form by the reforming kings, and new methods of collecting funds are developed at later times (2 Chr 24:4–14).

Chronicles does not use David as a means of legitimizing current cultic practices by retrojecting them into the time of David or of the other kings. If this were the intent of Chronicles, then one should expect to find greater continuity between the depictions of cultic practice throughout Chronicles. The depiction of the cult in Chronicles should not too

10. Gary Knoppers correctly states that David does sin in this account as he confesses himself in 1 Chr 21:17 ("Images of David in Early Judaism: David as Repentant Sinner in Chronicles," *Bib* 76 [1995]: 449–70 [here 453]). He is also correct to note that David may thus serve as a repentant sinner in the Chronicler's theological agenda (pp. 469–70).

quickly be assumed to reflect the Chronicler's supposed desire to reinforce the *status quo*. While the inconsistencies in the description of cultic practice have been attributed traditionally to redactional strata, there is another possibility. The Chronicler was not attempting to legitimize current practice, but was suggesting innovative ways for the cult to be organized or to perform in the future. The Chronicler recognized that the cult was not a static entity. Its organization and practices must be adapted over time. However, there must also be continuity between the past, the present, and the future. Thus, the reforming kings "restore" cultic practice in line with that established by David or Solomon, but with new features given a new situation. In presenting the cult in this manner, the Chronicler emphasizes that the cult can always be reformed and restored, even when it has fallen into a period of inactivity during the exile. It also does not have to mirror the practices of the time of David, but it must stand in continuity with them.

Along with Solomon (see below), David is presented as a utopian ruler. His kingship is established by God in accordance with prophecy (1 Chr 10:14–11:9). His army is likened to "an army of God" (12:23 [v. 22 Eng.]) which is comprised of all the tribes of Israel (12:24–41 [vv. 23–40 Eng.]), including ambidextrous Benjaminites of Saul's kindred (12:1–2) and chiefs of Issachar "who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel should do" (12:33 [v. 32 Eng.]). Thus, David is pictured as the leader of a unified people that even included relatives of his predecessor and as surrounding himself with individuals who can provide wise counsel. He is attentive to the cult of God as represented by the ark—in explicit contrast to Saul's failure to do so (1 Chr 13:3). His military exploits are successful against the surrounding nations and his fame spreads among the nations (1 Chr 14:8–17; 18:1–13; 19:1–20:8; cf. 1 Chr 29:30). He also "administered justice and equity to all his people" (1 Chr 18:14//2 Sam 8:15), a stereotypical desire for all kings to perform on behalf of their subjects in the ancient Near East.[11] He established a judicial system in matters of both cult and state (1 Chr 26:29–32) and a

11. In the HB, only three named kings are explicitly associated with doing justice and righteousness: David (2 Sam 8:15//1 Chr 18:14); Solomon (1 Kgs 10:9//2 Chr 9:8); and Josiah (Jer 22:11, 15–17); cf. also Pss 45:4, 6; 72:1–4, 12–14; 89:14; 97:1–2; Jer 22:1–3. However, in Samuel–Kings, the idolatrous end of Solomon (1 Kgs 11) seems to mitigate against such expectations and thus leaves David as the only monarch actually to implement such practices *throughout* his reign. In Chronicles, Solomon's failure is absent, thus preserving both David and Solomon as utopian rulers who enacted these ideals in the *better alternative reality* presented as Israel's past. In addition, there is envisioned explicitly a future king who will replicate these ideals; see, e.g., Isa 9:1–6 (vv. 2–7 Eng.); 11:1–9; 16:4b-5; 32:1; Jer 23:5; 33:15.

rotation of service for military and civil officials (1 Chr 27:1–34).[12] He engaged in some building projects (especially in fortifications of Jerusalem in 1 Chr 11:8) and assembled the materials and structured the cultic organization for the construction of the temple. He was generous in his own personal donation to the funds for the temple construction, which engendered an overwhelmingly magnanimous response on the part of his leadership to give freely of their own wealth (1 Chr 29:2–9).[13] Finally, the transition of power from David to Solomon is performed smoothly without dissension and to the benefit of all (1 Chr 29:23–25).[14]

The transfer of leadership from David to Solomon is clearly patterned on the "installation" of Joshua as successor to Moses in Josh 1.[15] Solomon will complete the work begun by David (especially the temple) and will exemplify the ruler who "seeks God" without unfaithfulness. Some scholars have argued that Solomon should be viewed as secondary in status to David in Chronicles, while others have argued more convincingly that the reigns of David and Solomon are presented as a unified period which considers Solomon to be equal—if not superior—to David.[16] Indeed, whereas David is not without his faults, Solomon is presented as the nearly perfect ruler who exceeds the success of his father, and is presented in categories that are not only utopian but also ideal. Solomon is first and foremost "chosen" (בחר) by God, just as his father David was. It is significant that in Samuel–Kings only David receives such laudatory claims, while in Chronicles the term is applied to both David and Solomon—but to no one else. Thus, Chronicles makes a clear point in these additional comments regarding the status of Solomon. Further, while David was a "man of war" (1 Chr 22:7–8; 28:3), Solomon is a "man of peace" (1 Chr 22:9). In Chronicles, peace is one of the many blessings

12. This administrative system established by David is apparently maintained by Solomon in Chronicles. Contrast the account of Solomon's famous reorganization of the land into twelve districts in 1 Kgs 4:7–19.

13. Ralph W. Klein contends that this action by David is to "serve as a model for the post-exilic community of the Chronicler's day" ("The Last Words of David," *CurTM* 31 [2004]: 15–23 [20, 22, 23]); cf. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10–29*, 625, 965. This is certainly a possibility; however, even this reading should be understood from a utopian perspective: the action presented is *desired* and not a reflection of historical events already performed by the community of the Second Temple period.

14. These statements by the Chronicler, of course, stand in contrast to the pressure on David to select Solomon as successor and the series of struggles which Solomon had to overcome in his consolidation of power in 1 Kgs 1:5–2:46.

15. See, e.g., Dennis J. McCarthy, "An Installation Genre?," *JBL* 90 (1971): 31–44 (32–37); and H. G. M. Williamson, "The Accession of Solomon in the Books of Chronicles," *VT* 26 (1976): 351–61 (351–56).

16. On the second position, see Williamson, "Accession of Solomon," 356–59.

of the righteous; while victory in war is also a blessing from God, not fighting in the first place is perceived as the superior of the two.[17]

In Chronicles, Solomon began his reign with attention to the cult—he and the leadership of the people sacrificed at the tabernacle of Moses in Gibeon (2 Chr 1:1–6).[18] Following his cultic inquiry, Solomon receives wisdom from God to rule the people (2 Chr 1:7–13). At this point in the narrative, the Chronicler transposes the final paragraph from 1 Kgs 10:26–29, which immediately precedes the recounting of Solomon's unfaithfulness and ultimate decline in 1 Kgs 11. All such indications of this negative aspect of Solomon's life are absent from Chronicles, and the transposition of this concluding text from 1 Kings may indicate that the Chronicler wished his readers to see all of Solomon's reign as prosperous and that it was not divided into two distinct periods as in 1 Kings.

Solomon then turns his attention immediately to preparations for the construction of the temple (2 Chr 1:18–5:1 [2:1–5:1 Eng.]). In this section, small differences (variant and additional information) between the

17. See Heard, "Echoes of Genesis." The only exception to this depiction of Solomon is 2 Chr 8:3, which states that Solomon captured (חזק) Hamath-zobah. While many have seen this as problematic for the depiction of Solomon as the ideal ruler of peace, it serves a vital function in the utopian geography of the Chronicler: Solomon's empire was not exactly the same dimensions as David's—Solomon's was larger. This small detail thus serves to enhance the statement regarding the utopian extent of Solomon's kingdom in 2 Chr 10:26 (see further below).

18. The contrast between Kings and Chronicles concerning the beginning of Solomon's reign could not be clearer. In addition to the intrigues of 1 Kgs 1:5–2:46, Solomon marries Pharaoh's daughter in a political alliance (3:1), and only then goes to Gibeon to sacrifice, apparently by himself (3:3–15). In Chronicles, the first action of Solomon is to assemble the leadership to go with him to sacrifice at the tabernacle at Gibeon (the specific notice about the tabernacle being unique to Chronicles). After both Solomon and the assembly inquired (דרש) at the bronze altar (both details not in 1 Kings), God appeared to Solomon at night (without specifying "in a dream," in contrast to 1 Kgs 3:5).

The assimilation of the tabernacle tradition and the explicit notice about seeking God serve utopian functions in this narrative to bolster Solomon's status. The direct communication between God and Solomon is unparalleled by any other monarch. Solomon is the only monarch not to require the agency of a prophet to hear God's word—even his father David requires a prophet (1 Chr 17:1–15); see the further comments on this final point by John W. Wright, "Beyond Transcendence and Immanence: The Characterization of the Presence and Activity of God in the Book of Chronicles," in Graham, McKenzie, and Knoppers, eds., *The Chronicler as Theologian*, 240–67 (248–49), and the claim that Solomon himself is presented as a "super-prophet" by Christine K. Mitchell, "The Ideal Ruler as Intertext in 1–2 Chronicles and the *Cyropaedia*" (Ph.D. diss., Carleton University, 2002), 222–23.

accounts in 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles reveal a utopian concern on the part of the Chronicler. Connections are made between previous Israelite cultic traditions and Solomon's temple apart from any historical reality or explicit statements in the source material. These clarifications, contradictions, and innovations serve to enhance the status of Solomon's temple and by extension the Second Temple. However, even in this, these utopian critiques do not necessarily reinforce the *status quo*; rather, they may be indications of the Chronicler's challenge to the prevailing understanding of the traditions and authoritative texts. While many (but not all) of these differences have been noted and discussed previously, their function as utopian elements in the text has gone largely unnoticed.

First, in 1 Kgs 5:1–4, Solomon notes in his message to King Hiram of Tyre that David could not build the temple because of his continual wars, but that God had given him, his son, rest. In 2 Chr 2:2 (v. 3 Eng.), Solomon merely reminds Huram of his previous provision of cedar for David's own house. Thus, as Japhet notes, the apologetic nature of the text in Kings is not found in Chronicles.[19] In the latter text, Solomon merely cites precedent without attempting to justify his actions to the foreign ruler. This may indicate the Chronicler's understanding of what accountability the Israelites of his own time should have toward the surrounding foreign authorities—a very different approach than the one taken in the appeals and letters in Ezra–Nehemiah, for example.

Second, this is followed by statements regarding the cultic activities to take place in the new temple in 2 Chr 2:3 (v. 4 Eng.)—details which are lacking in Kings. Japhet also notes that this list of cultic activities happens to coincide with the order of their appearance in the Pentateuchal legislation and that it is the only text to provide such a summary of the regular cultic observances.[20] This concern for the cultic tradition(s) and its implementation is one of the Chronicler's main motifs; these details affirm the Pentateuchal traditions while serving as a model of what normal activities should be occurring at the temple, whether they were being practiced or not.

Third, two explicit statements regarding YHWH are found only in Chronicles and not in Kings: (1) the superiority of YHWH over all other gods (such a statement may have been offensive to the non-Israelite king, but the Chronicler has no difficulty in expressing this theological point); and (2) YHWH created the heaven and the earth, according to Huram. While Israelites contended that this was true, and even did so to

19. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 539.
20. Ibid., 539–40.

non-Israelites (e.g. Jon 1:9), it is rare that a non-Israelite made such a statement about the God of Israel.[21]

Fourth, the identity of the Tyrian who fashioned the temple vessels, cultic objects, and curtains is different in 1 Kgs 7:13–14 and 2 Chr 2:12–13 (vv. 13–14 Eng.). In Kings, this Hiram has a Tyrian father and a Naphtalite mother, but in Chronicles this Huram-abi has a Tyrian father and a Danite mother. The changes of name and tribal affiliation are significant. First, it has been suggested that both the addition of "-abi" and the Danite heritage may have been to echo the name and tribe of one of the two craftsmen of the tabernacle in the Pentateuch, Oholiab (Exod 35:34; 38:23).[22] The concern for the Chronicler to establish continuity between the tabernacle tradition and the temple has already been noted in 2 Chr 1:2–6, which also explicitly names the other craftsman, Bezalel.[23] That the Chronicler's utopian reading of this tradition was successful in bringing his understanding of the relationship between the tabernacle and temple to the fore is reflected in a rabbinic tradition that follows his lead in drawing such lines of continuity.[24]

Fifth, in direct contradiction of 1 Kgs 5:13–18, and 11:28, the Chronicler is insistent that Solomon did not use forced labor from the people of Israel. Instead, Solomon had subjected the resident aliens to the task of building projects with the Israelites involved acting as their overseers (2 Chr 2:16–17 [vv. 17–18 Eng.]; 8:7–10//1 Kgs 9:20–22). The Chronicler appears to have no qualms with such a methodology. He simply changes or ignores his sources whenever they do not fit his ideology of what constitutes a utopian ruler.[25] Thus, for the Chronicler, Israelites should not be enslaved in the present either.

21. Compare the confession of Naaman in 2 Kgs 5:15–19.

22. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 544–46; and Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 125–63.

23. Compare the Chronicler's inclusion of Bezalel in the genealogy of Judah in 1 Chr 2:18–20.

24. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 541; and Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 124; both citing Pseudo-Rashi.

25. In Kings, the issue appears to be whether Solomon used forced Israelite labor to construct the temple or if they were involved in his other building projects, whereas Chronicles denies any such practice at all. In addition, the policy of Solomon is already anticipated in David's similar use of resident aliens as recorded only in 1 Chr 22:2. The Chronicler's methodology parallels one means by which Xenophon depicts Cyrus as the utopian ruler in his *Cyropaedia*; see, among others, Robert Drews, *The Greek Accounts of Eastern History* (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Hellenic Studies, 1973), 120; Bodil Due, *The Cyropaedia: Xenophon's Aims and Methods* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1989), esp. 207–41; Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World*, 56–60; and Mitchell, "Ideal Ruler as Intertext."

Sixth, in 1 Chr 3:1 the Chronicler provides the earliest attestation of an explicit connection between the temple site and the location of the *Akedah*, the binding of Isaac from Gen 22.[26] The site which David had selected is further described here, and only here in the HB, as "Mount Moriah," which certainly refers back to the "land of Moriah…on one of the mountains" (Gen 22:2). While expressly emphasizing the Abrahamic tradition, the Exodus tradition that is of primary importance in the chronology of 1 Kgs 6:1 is entirely absent in the Chronicler's version.[27] This utopian geography may either reflect the writing down of an understanding or is the innovation of the Chronicler—it is impossible to determine which is the case. For the Chronicler, this is the *reality* of the relationship of these spaces and provides another level of continuity for the history of Israel's cult.

Seventh, the dimensions of the temple and its vestibule are one of the examples of utopian space in Chronicles.[28] It is significant that no text in the HB provides a clear or consistent statement of the size of the temple, whether the First or Second.[29] While textual corruption is commonly postulated for the numbers and terms, Boer has argued that the description of a disproportionate structure is an example of utopian space that defies graphic representation, especially as revealed in the Chronicler's account.[30] The gigantic dimensions of the temple complex clearly present it as the dominating structure in Jerusalem—towering over everything else. If the Solomonic temple in Chronicles represents the utopian quality of the Second Temple—what the temple should be—this type of depiction may suggest a subtle critique of the present temple similar to the complaints voiced in Haggai and Ezra 1–6 about the inferiority of the Second Temple to the First (Hag 2:3–9; Ezra 3:10–13). However, Chronicles articulates this without any overt criticism of the present situation, only in portraying the past temple using utopian dimensions.

Eighth, while the remainder of narrative relating the actual construction of the temple and its contents is largely identical to the text in

26. See Isaac Kalimi, "The Land of Moriah, Mount Moriah, and the Site of Solomon's Temple in Biblical Historiography," *HTR* 83 (1990): 345–62; and Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 550–52.

27. The Chronicler does indeed downplay the Exodus motif, but he does not eliminate it completely (1 Chr 17:21; 2 Chr 5:10; 6:5; 7:22; 20:10–11).

28. On the term "utopian space," see Chapter 2 n. 93.

29. Only Ezek 40–48 attempts such a description of a desired future temple that is understood not to be the current Second Temple. There are disagreements between 1 Kgs 6:2–3 and 2 Chr 3:3–4, and the text of Ezra 6:3 seems to describe a cube, although most scholars consider this final passage corrupt.

30. Boer, *Novel Histories*, 146; cf. the commentaries on this passage.

1 Kgs 6–8, several points are worth noting in 2 Chr 3:8–7:22. In both texts, Solomon must offer sacrifices on an altar other than the bronze altar made by Bezalel due to the large number of animals. Kings fails to note the origin of this altar (1 Kgs 8:64). Chronicles, however, provides an explanatory note and clarifies its recent construction (2 Chr 4:1; 7:7). The concern for cultic detail is also reflected in the unparalleled description of the liturgical singers and music which immediately precedes the filling of the temple with the glory of YHWH (2 Chr 5:11–13).

In contrast to this concern for detail, the ambiguity in Chronicles concerning the length of time required for the building of the temple stands in marked contrast to the explicit statements in 1 Kings.[31] Although both texts agree that Solomon took twenty years to build both the temple and his palace (1 Kgs 9:10//2 Chr 8:1), the respective amounts of seven and thirteen years appear only in 1 Kgs 6:37–7:1. While both texts also agree that Solomon began to build the temple in the second month of his fourth year and dedicated the temple in the seventh month (1 Kgs 6:1; 8:2; 2 Chr 3:2; 4:3), Chronicles does not provide a year for this completion, perhaps implying that the work took approximately five months. However, it is also possible that the ambiguity in Chronicles is meant to imply that the dedication took place closer to the end of the twenty-year construction period rather than after only the first seven. In Chronicles, it is only after the twenty years that Solomon clearly turns his attention away from constructing the temple and his palace to other aspects of his kingdom, which is not strictly the case in 1 Kings (esp. 3:16–4:34). Thus, Solomon's reign does divide into two periods in Chronicles, but appears positive in nature: the construction of the temple and blessings on the righteous ruler.[32] However, by obscuring the amount of time required to build the temple, Chronicles may be suggesting that the temple required a great deal more attention and time from Solomon than was recorded in 1 Kings. Whatever the nature of this temporal adjustment (compression or expansion), such a feature is common in utopian literature—time is often manipulated to account for the plausibility of the depiction of certain details within the utopian society.[33] Such a utopian manipulation

31. Of all the major commentaries, only DeVries notes that Chronicles fails to supply this temporal information (*1 and 2 Chronicles*, 249). He suggests, in agreement with my view, that this may have been to highlight the importance of the temple as the "the one most important project" of these twenty years.

32. This stands in contrast to the division in 1 Kings into periods of righteousness and idolatry.

33. See the discussions of utopian time in my essay "Utopia and Utopian Literary Theory," 15; and in my dissertation, "Reading Utopia in Chronicles," 47–48.

of time in Chronicles can be seen in the failure to provide a specific timeline for Solomon's activities.

Solomon's reign following the temple construction is portrayed in completely utopian terms in 2 Chr 8:1–9:31. There is no hint of idolatry or of failure to seek YHWH. In addition, the possible negative implications of the giving of twenty cities by Solomon to King Hiram (1 Kgs 9:11–14) is presented in Chronicles as the reverse: it was Huram who gave the cities to Solomon (2 Chr 8:2). The cryptic remark about the dwelling place of Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kgs 9:24) is clarified in Chronicles in a way which deflects any possibility of cultic corruption (8:11). In 1 Kgs 9:25, there is a brief notice that Solomon celebrated three annual cultic observances which states that Solomon also offered incense to YHWH. In 2 Chr 8:12–15, the notice is much more detailed. According the commandment of Moses (כמצות משה), Solomon offers daily sacrifices, celebrates the sabbaths and the new moons, and the three observances are specified as the festivals of Unleavened Bread, Weeks, and Booths.[34] According to the ordinance of David (כמשפט דויד), he appointed the priests, Levites, and gatekeepers to their duties. Thus, Solomon stands in continuity with both the Mosaic Torah and the Davidic cultic organization. The temple personnel function in complete harmony with the Solomonic program. Also, the reference to the offering of incense by Solomon in 1 Kings is absent in Chronicles, which further highlights its significant inclusion in the Chronicler's narrative of Uzziah (2 Chr 26:16–21).

The narrative then recounts his trading policies, the visit by the Queen of Sheba, and the extravagant wealth and wisdom of Solomon (2 Chr 8:17–9:28). In this passage, the relationship between Solomon and Huram is again discussed. Japhet notes correctly that the numerous small differences with the text of Kings have the effect of suppressing Huram's independence and emphasizing his provision for the superior Israelite monarch. She concludes that this demonstrates the Chronicler's lack of concern for "actual circumstances" and his ideological agenda.[35] However, the Chronicler's ideological agenda produces a different historical reality in his narrative—a utopian one, a *better alternative reality*—that provides a different understanding of Solomon.

34. Japhet notes that the language of this verse combines both Priestly and Deuteronomistic terminology and that it probably reflects "the actual circumstances of the Second Temple" (*I & II Chronicles*, 627–28). However, this could also be a utopian presentation of the cult operating as it should.

35. Ibid., 630.

This utopian picture of Solomon's kingdom receives further enhancement by the dimensions of the kingdom in 2 Chr 9:26. These dimensions—from the Euphrates to the border of Egypt—recall the promise of land made to Abram by God at the conclusion of the first covenant ceremony in Gen 15:18.[36] The same language is used in 1 Kgs 5:1, 4 (4:21, 24 Eng.) to describe the borders of Solomon's kingdom. Thus, both Kings and Chronicles agree that Solomon's kingdom is the high-point of Israelite geographic expansion, and possibly should be seen as, at least, a partial fulfillment of that promise. However, the placement of the two notices is significant. In Kings, the notice comes early in Solomon's reign and prior to the temple construction. In Chronicles, the identical information is found at the conclusion of Solomon's reign after his construction of the temple and before his death. Thus, its placement in Chronicles may further highlight the connection with the Abrahamic promise of Gen 15:18. As one of the many blessings of Solomon *as a result of his faithfulness to the cult*, he presides over the kingdom of Israel in its utopian dimensions—never to be approached before or rivaled again.[37]

3.1.2. *Rehoboam and Abijah (2 Chronicles 10–13)*

Both Kings and Chronicles treat the reigns of Rehoboam and Abijah as a related unit. However, they portray these rulers very differently and with important implications for the larger concerns of both books.[38] Like 1 Kgs 12, the united kingdom under David and Solomon is divided following the death of Solomon in Chronicles. Solomon's son, Rehoboam, assumes the throne but quickly finds himself in the midst of an internal crisis that results in the secession of all the tribes except Judah and Benjamin. While the Chronicler's version of the actual division is very similar to that in Kings, some notable differences both highlight the key concerns of the Chronicler and help to paint an ambiguous picture of Rehoboam that is best understood as a utopian critique of this monarch, the Davidic monarchy, and the Northern Kingdom.

36. These dimensions are also found in Exod 23:31; Deut 1:7–8; 11:24; Josh 1:4.

37. Solomon is correctly declared to be the single "highpoint in Israelite history" and one incomparable king by Knoppers (*1 Chronicles 10–29*, 957).

38. Knoppers states that the "Chronicler diverges more radically from Kings in his coverage of the early monarchy than anywhere else in his history" ("'Battling against Yahweh,'" 531). While difficult to judge the degree of difference objectively, his essential point is nonetheless correct. Williamson also notes the "crucial importance" of the Abijah narrative for the Chronicler's understanding of the divided monarchy and for the principles that it advocates (*1 and 2 Chronicles*, 250).

First, the background (1 Kgs 11:11–13, 26–40) concerning the conflict of Jeroboam ben Nebat with Solomon and his flight to Egypt mentioned in 2 Chr 10:2 is lacking in Chronicles. However, the Chronicler provides information which alludes to this material (or tradition) in his account, both in parallel sections and in his *Sondergut*: (1) the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite is mentioned as a document containing descriptions of the acts of Solomon (2 Chr 9:29) (this is the same prophet who symbolically gives ten pieces of his garment to Jeroboam and declares that he will be king in 1 Kgs 11:29–39); and (2) the narrative describing the exchange between Rehoboam and Jeroboam which leads to the rebellion is virtually identical, including references to forced labor, Solomon's "heavy-hand" on the Israelites, Ahijah's prophecy, and YHWH's direct involvement in Rehoboam's decision. Lacking in Chronicles, however, is the conclusion in 1 Kgs 12:20 that notes the coronation of Jeroboam by "all Israel." While Jeroboam and other Northern monarchs are called "king" in Chronicles,[39] there is no report of their installation as monarch contra 1–2 Kings. Is this a subtle critique of the validity of the Northern Kingdom's political system, made more explicit in other ways in Chronicles?[40]

Second, the issue over the political authority of the Northern Kingdom is complex. Chronicles clearly affirms that the division of the kingdom was YHWH's doing (2 Chr 10:15; 11:3–4). However, there is some tension between these statements and the speech of Abijah to Jeroboam and all Israel in 2 Chr 13:5–7. This text seems to excuse Rehoboam's actions on the basis of his youth and "weakness of heart" (רך לבב). Rehoboam is presented as the victim of Jeroboam and his "worthless scoundrels" (אנשים רקים בני בליעל). This text also proclaims that the kingdom of "Israel"—and not only Judah—belongs to "David and his sons" on the basis of God's covenant with them. This has been interpreted to indicate that the political authority of the Northern Kingdom is rejected in Chronicles despite the notice that its creation was a result of God's actions. Knoppers suggests that this directly relates to the situation of the Chronicler's own time: how the northern neighbors—Samaria in particular—should be viewed.[41] While they are authentically Israelites, they have no right to separate political authority, since the true *Israelite* political authority resides in the Davidic house. Knoppers further suggests that this reveals the Chronicler's desire to re-establish the

39. For example, 1 Chr 5:17; 2 Chr 13:1; 16:1, 3; 18:3; 20:35; 22:5; 25:17, 23, 25; 28:2.

40. See, e.g., Knoppers, "'Battling against Yahweh,'"; idem, "Rehoboam in Chronicles."

41. Knoppers, "'Battling against Yahweh,'" 531.

Davidic–Solomonic state,[42] but this is not a necessary conclusion. Instead, as with the presentation of the previous three monarchs, the political significance of the kingship resides in its concern for the cult. Thus, for the Chronicler, the Davidic covenant is not primarily political in its nature; the Davidic monarchy's primary concern is with the cult, and the cult has been re-established without necessitating the re-establishment of the political dynasty.

This understanding of the political significance of the monarchy is reinforced by the Chronicler's unparalleled description of the influx of priests and Levites to Jerusalem from the North (2 Chr 11:13–15). The exclusion of these proper individuals as cultic functionaries by Jeroboam and his appointment of a different priesthood worshipping satyrs and calves is explicitly contrasted with the valid cult of Jerusalem (2 Chr 13:8–12). In addition, Israelites from the North who had "set their hearts to seek YHWH God of Israel" migrated south to strengthen Rehoboam's kingdom through their cultic faithfulness to the "way of David and Solomon" (2 Chr 11:16–17). This will be the first of several migrations of faithful Northerners to Jerusalem to participate in cultic worship.[43] Such passages may indeed serve as precedents for the inclusion of faithful Northerners in the worship of the temple cult during the Chronicler's own time. While numerous scholars have recognized this, it should be emphasized that none of these accounts is explicitly paralleled in Kings. All of them are unique to Chronicles. These texts collectively serve a utopian function in Chronicles—they present a different *reality* of the past than the one in Kings. In Chronicles, from the beginning of the divided monarchy all faithful Israelites are welcomed, if not invited, to participate in the cult, and the community is better for it. Regardless of historicity, these accounts *are* reality for the Chronicler—a *better alternative reality* that has direct implications for the policies of the present and future. Thus, despite Knoppers' desire to focus on the political point made in 2 Chr 13:5–6, the emphasis in vv. 8–12 is clearly on the invalidity of the Northern cult and their failure to worship YHWH, and is consistent with the host of similar comments noted previously. It is the cultic failure of the North which also renders it politically invalid—just as such "unfaithfulness" will ultimately result in the end of the Davidic monarchy and in the exile.

Third, while Kings depicts Rehoboam's reign as evil without any period of faithfulness to YHWH (1 Kgs 14:21–31), Chronicles has a more complex portrayal of Rehoboam. Following his obedience to the word of

42. Ibid., 532.
43. 2 Chr 11:13–17; 15:9–15; 30:5–11, 18–20; 35:18.

YHWH through Shemaiah not to attack Jeroboam, Rehoboam undertakes the building of his defensive cities (2 Chr 11:5–12). This successful enterprise is followed by the notice of the incorporation of priests, Levites, and faithful Northerners mentioned above. Next, Rehoboam is reported to have eighteen wives, sixty concubines, twenty-eight sons, and sixty daughters (v. 21). Rehoboam also indicates his successor and insightfully provides for his other sons apparently to appease them and discourage revolt against the chosen heir (vv. 22–23). Up to this point, Rehoboam is presented in terms that would suggest his faithfulness as demonstrated by the blessings which he has received: ability to engage in building projects, further security from his newly enlarged population, and many descendants.

However, these conditions of blessing are presented explicitly as the source of his subsequent unfaithfulness (מעל) in 12:1–2. The implicit connection between Rehoboam's cultic infidelity in 1 Kgs 14:21–24 and the plundering invasion of Shishak in vv. 25–28 are explicit in the Chronicler's version (12:1–11). However, the Chronicler notes the humility and repentance of Rehoboam and his officers. This, an important point made repeatedly in Chronicles, results in deliverance by God. In this case, the deliverance is only partial: they are still plundered and still subjected to "serving the kingdoms of other lands," though not destroyed completely, and the enigmatic statement that "conditions were good in Judah" closes this passage (vv. 6–12). Thus, it would seem that the Chronicler has presented Rehoboam's reign as consisting of three periods: faithfulness with blessing, unfaithfulness with punishment, and repentance that tempers the judgment. Whereas other kings continue to respond in repentance by making reforms of the cult,[44] no actions are attributed to Rehoboam. This omission may be the source for the final criticism of Rehoboam as ultimately evil and failing to seek YHWH (12:14). Finally, he dies naturally and receives a royal burial (12:16).[45]

44. The reigns of the kings in Chronicles are structured in several ways. The pattern of faithfulness, sin, repentance, reform applies only to David. Rehoboam and Hezekiah move from faithfulness, to sin, and repentance but without reform. Jehoshaphat proceeds from faithfulness, to sin, reform, and sin. Manasseh's reign alone moves from unfaithfulness, to repentance, and finally to reform. Kings who begin in faithfulness and then sin without repentance include: Asa, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, and Josiah. Kings who are completely faithful: Solomon, Abijah, and Jotham. Kings completely unfaithful: Jehoram, Ahaziah, (Athaliah), Ahaz, Amon, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Only Jehoahaz receives no such explicit evaluation of his reign.

45. See the Excursus on Burial Notices as Utopian Space at the conclusion of this section (p. 119–25) for a further discussion of the significance of this for evaluating Rehoboam and the monarchy as a whole.

The ambiguous presentation of Rehoboam, the first monarch of the divided kingdom, functions in a utopian manner. Both the positive and negative characteristics of his reign will be repeated by subsequent rulers. However, his reign demonstrates not only the necessity of repentance on the part of the unfaithful, but further emphasizes the requirement of reformation—and specifically cultic reformation—for those who will truly seek YHWH.[46] The invasion by Shishak also explicitly provides the nation with a taste of subjugation—a foretaste of the exile and a state of affairs reflecting the Chronicler's own time. However, in none of these instances does God allow the complete destruction of his people, but continues to act on their behalf.

Finally, the notice that conditions were good in Judah despite the depravation at the hands of Shishak is a utopian description *par excellence*. In this reduced and impoverished state, the Chronicler nevertheless asserts the true condition of the people. As suggested above, this may provide the Chronicler with the necessary context for explaining the faithful reign of Abijah. In a thoroughly different portrayal of his reign from Kings,[47] Chronicles presents an Abijah who is confident in YHWH's support, claims cultic continuity with the past and authority for the present and future, defeats his enemy when attacked by an army twice as large as his own, has numerous wives and offspring, and provides the security for his faithful son to enjoy ten years of rest (2 Chr 13:1–23

46. Although Hezekiah shares the same sequence as Rehoboam, he is in the end evaluated positively by the Chronicler. His earlier reforms may have been of such magnitude as to affect this assessment. However, what this further demonstrates is the inability to classify clearly individual kings according to a rigid system of evaluation, as Kings does in formulaic language. The Chronicler's anthropology is much more sophisticated: actions alone—even cultic reforms—do not account for one's fidelity, but intentions are also important, and humans can be inconsistent in their orientation towards good and evil; cf. the similar remarks about the Chronicler's anthropology as related to Asa by Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 741. This type of subtlety on a variety of topics in Chronicles that resist simple classification has been advocated by Ben Zvi ("Book of Chronicles," 267; and "Sense of Proportion").

47. Even the monarch's name is different: Abijam in 1 Kgs 15:1–8. It is certainly possible that the Chronicler preserves an alternative historical account of Abijah, as is advocated by several scholars; see David G. Deboys, "History and Theology in the Chronicler's Portrait of Abijah," *Bib* 71 (1990): 48–62 (61); Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 688; Gwilym H. Jones, "From Abijam to Abijah," *ZAW* 106 (1994): 420–34 (434); and Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 250. However, Knoppers' correct contention that the concerns in Abijah's reign coincide rather nicely with the Chronicler's own time is highly suggestive of a constructed account regardless of its historicity or theological adjustment of a historical source ("'Battling Against Yahweh,'" 531–32).

[13:1–14:1 Eng.]). Knoppers notes the similarity in the Chronicler's own time and early period of the divided monarchy under Rehoboam and Abijah as related in Chronicles.[48] This may be the case; indeed, if the Chronicler suggests that "conditions were/are good in Judah" in the present situation of foreign subjugation in late Persian Yehud, he may be using this narrative to support a policy of non-revolt against foreign powers. That is not to exclude the repeated assertion that the community may or should defend itself when attacked. However, neither does Chronicles seem to advocate initiating military campaigns to rid itself of foreign oppressors. What is clearly being asserted in this context, however, is not complacency and the simple affirmation of the *status quo*. Rather, the "good" conditions of the present are used by Abijah to create a better future on the basis of his confidence in YHWH and the efficacy of the Jerusalem cult. This thoroughly positive assessment of Abijah by the Chronicler—only Solomon and Jotham receive the same evaluation—can do nothing but present his three-year reign as an exemplar of a utopian ruler to be emulated.

3.1.3. *Asa and Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 14–20)*

The reigns of Asa and Jehoshaphat continue the emphasis on many of the themes already prominent in the accounts of previous monarchs. The length and content of both of the accounts of their reigns stand in marked contrast to their abbreviated parallel texts in 1 Kings (15:9–24; 22:1–50). In addition to numerous clarifications, Chronicles explicitly contradicts the version of Kings at several points.

One of the most obvious tensions is the chronological data in Asa's reign, especially the notices of peace until Asa's thirty-fifth year and the beginning of war with Baasha of Israel in the following year (2 Chr 15:19–16:1). Many attempts have been made to defend and to deny the historicity of these data and to harmonize them with Kings. However, as noted previously, the manipulation of time is a typical utopian methodology and functions within the Chronicler's narrative to present an alternative reality of the past. It is explicitly stated in 1 Kgs 15:16 that Asa was at war throughout the reign of Baasha—in the chronology of Kings this would thus mean from Asa's third year to his twenty-seventh based on 1 Kgs 15:33. However, the peaceful nature of his kingdom for the first thirty-five years of his forty-one year reign is noted quite emphatically in Chronicles (2 Chr 14:4–5 [vv. 5–6 Eng.]; 15:19).[49] With

48. Knoppers, "'Battling against Yahweh,'" 531–32.

49. The lone exception is the attack by Zerah the Cushite in 14:8–14 (vv. 9–15 Eng.), which results in the further enhancement of Asa's wealth. Compare also the contrast made to previous times of peril in 2 Chr 15:5–6.

this chronological displacement, Asa's prosperity is seen as a direct result of his cultic reforms and determination to seek YHWH (2 Chr 13:23–14:4 [14:1–5 Eng.]; 15:1–19).

The text of Kings notes Asa's cultic reforms in similar terms to Chronicles, but immediately proceeds to note his *continual* war and the appeal to Aram for assistance. Kings then quickly closes its account of Asa by noting his foot disease during his "old age" (1 Kgs 15:23) without any direct causation drawn between his alliance and his disease. However, Chronicles explicitly condemns the alliance with Aram by the speech of Hanani the seer and promises only war in Asa's future for his failure to rely on YHWH for his defense (2 Chr 16:1–9). Asa responds by imprisoning the seer and inflicting unspecified cruelties on the people (v. 10). Chronicles also provides the thirty-ninth year as the advent of his foot disease; Asa is again criticized for not seeking YHWH for help (v. 12). Finally, his elaborate burial concludes the Chronicler's account (v. 14).

Thus, in these differences, Asa is presented as a righteous king who experiences a loss of fidelity in his final years, ending his reign without repentance or reform. The faithfulness of Asa resulting in his overwhelming victory over the ridiculously large Cushite army is directly contrasted with his unfaithfulness in seeking the military assistance of foreigners. The call for dependence on YHWH for military protection has already been emphasized in the previous reign of Abijah (2 Chr 13) and will be prominent again in the subsequent reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20). The contrast developed between the response of these three rulers to similar threats—that climaxes in the extended narrative of Jehoshaphat's deliverance through liturgical song—advances utopian critiques of military strength and reliance on foreign powers in Chronicles.[50] Is it too much to speculate that the Chronicler is presenting an argument against a common view in his own time: the necessity of military buildup, possible incursions against surrounding areas, and forging alliances?[51] The

50. This is in explicit contrast to Kings, which notes that all three rulers experienced war while none experienced such deliverance by God—and not even on a far lesser scale—as portrayed in Chronicles.

51. Compare the similar perspective toward these same topics, especially alliances, in the book of Isaiah (2:6; 7:1–8:22; 28:14–18; 30:1–18; 31:1–9). Chronicles also agrees with the view of Isaiah on the following: the election of Cyrus (44:24–45:13), the criticism of cultic ritual that lacks a humanitarian component (1:10–17; 56:1–2; 58:1–7, 13–14; 66:3–4), the democratization of the Davidic covenant (55:3–5), the inclusion of foreigners in the worshiping community (2:2–4; 11:10; 14:1–2; 18:7; 19:18–25; 23:17–18; 25:6–10a; 42:1–12; 49:6; 51:5; 55:5; 56:3, 6–8; 60:3, 5–14; 66:12, 18–19, 22–23), the anticipated return of Israelites still in exile (4:2–6; 10:20–23; 11:11–16; 14:1–2; 19:24–25; 27:12–13; 35:8–10; 43:5–7; 45:13; 49:6; 60:9; 66:20–21).

Chronicler advocates another position: YHWH defends and prospers those who seek him, especially through the cult and its worship. He supports this contention by constructing an alternative reality in Israel's past that most likely relates to and critiques his present situation.

While the differences between the Asa in Kings and in Chronicles are significant and rather straightforward, the two accounts of Jehoshaphat are radically different with important implications for the Chronicler's utopian portrayal of the monarchy. Although 2 Chr 18 is virtually identical to 1 Kgs 22:1–35a, the remainder of the Chronicler's version of Jehoshaphat's reign is either completely independent of or explicitly contradicts the abbreviated account in Kings.

The Chronicler begins his account with the statement that Jehoshaphat strengthened himself over/against Israel (ויתחזק על ישראל) in 2 Chr 17:1. Japhet argues that this should be understood just as the same phrase is taken in 2 Chr 1:1 in reference to Solomon: "to establish himself over/to consolidate his rule," without the connotation of "against someone/something." She further notes that such an interpretation is consistent with the Chronicler's view of the last years of Asa's life as a "time of unrest."[52] In addition, YHWH is with Jehoshaphat as he seeks him and walks in the "earlier ways of his father" (2 Chr 17:4).[53] Thus, the Chronicler continues his narrative of Jehoshaphat on the basis of his unique portrayal of the reign of Asa. The similarities and contrasts between the two rulers are thus further heightened.

Jehoshaphat is the first monarch in Chronicles to deal explicitly with Baalism and to be described in contrast to the Northern Kingdom (vv. 3–4). These details, unique to Chronicles, stand in juxtaposition to the actions of Jehoshaphat that directly result in his condemned military expedition with Ahab of Israel recorded in 2 Chr 18:1–2. In these verses, again unique to Chronicles, Jehoshaphat's great wealth, marriage alliance with Ahab, and participation in a cultic sacrifice performed by Ahab are briefly recounted. At this questionable event, Ahab convinces or induces (סות) Jehoshaphat to join him in going to Ramoth-Gilead. Subtle differences in their recorded dialogue are significant here. In 1 Kgs 22:3–4a, Ahab asks him to go to battle; in 2 Chr 18:2b–3a, Ahab's request lacks an explicit mention of war. The final part of Jehoshaphat's reply in 1 Kgs 22:4b states that "my horses are your horses"—which clearly implies battle—while the Chronicler's version has Jehoshaphat introduce the explicit mention of war into the text (2 Chr 18:3b). Thus, in contrast to

52. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 745. Both of these details are not found in Kings.

53. Following the common emendation to delete "David" from the text supported by the LXX; see Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 746.

previous rulers in Chronicles, Jehoshaphat initiates battle—something Chronicles rejects as an inappropriate policy. These verses also stand in contrast to the description of Jehoshaphat's military strength and peaceful kingdom as a result of his cultic policies in 2 Chr 17:10–19. In vv. 10–11, Jehoshaphat is not attacked by the surrounding nations, but instead receives tribute from the Philistines and Arabs without any fighting whatsoever. This utopian portrayal of foreign relations is followed by a description of his building projects and large military with adept commanders (vv. 12–19). While Jehoshaphat has gained his security by one method (seeking YHWH and cultic reform) he now attempts to increase this by another (alliance and battle). The Chronicler emphatically favors the former and thoroughly condemns the latter.

Jehoshaphat's early success was a result of his cultic faithfulness. He seeks only YHWH and not the Baals (17:3), removes the high places and Asherim (v. 6), and institutes the teaching of the book of the Torah of YHWH (ספר תורת יהוה) throughout the cities of Judah to the people by an itinerant group of five officials, nine Levites, and two priests (vv. 7–9). This innovation in cultic practice has been repeatedly interpreted as an anachronism of postexilic practice.[54] Regardless of its historicity or reflection of actual postexilic practice (an assumption with only the evidence of Ezra 7:25 for support), it functions as an indication of the utopian nature of Jehoshaphat's cultic endeavors. Whether performed in reality (in either preexilic or postexilic times) or not, the Chronicler presents this practice as *reality*. Should this not be a possible way to act in the present? Rather than attempting to legitimate current practice by an anachronism, the Chronicler may be suggesting a change in current cultic practice based on the model of Jehoshaphat.

Following his escape from battle, Jehoshaphat is confronted by Jehu son of Hanani the seer (2 Chr 19:1–2). Jehu condemns Jehoshaphat actions, but encourages him by citing his earlier cultic fidelity (v. 3). Jehoshaphat responds, in contrast to his father Asa, with the institution of further reforms—in this case, innovations to the judicial system that involves cultic personnel (vv. 4–11). Again, this system instituted by Jehoshaphat has been treated as an anachronism of postexilic practice. As with the previous example, this is not necessarily the case; the Chronicler could be advancing an innovation couched as reality in utopian terms. First, the institution of the judicial system follows only after the statement that Jehoshaphat caused the people throughout the entire land under his control to return to YHWH (v. 4). Thus, the ability of any political system to operate properly is dependent on the status of the people's

54. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 749.

faithfulness to YHWH. Second, in Jerusalem "certain Levites and priests and heads of families" were given final authority to decide disputed cases (v. 8). This court is headed by the chief priest (כהן הראש) and the governor/prince (הנגיד) of the house of Judah—not explicitly a Davidide—who have distinct spheres of responsibility: the matters of YHWH and the matters of the king, respectively. There is no evidence that such a political structure existed during the postexilic period. The assumption that actual practice is reflected here is just that—an assumption. As with all of Jehoshaphat's innovations involving the cult, this presentation could just as likely have been a suggested innovation for the Chronicler's own time. That is, the Chronicler uses these depictions of a *better alternative reality* as utopian critique of the current systems—political and cultic—in his own day.

The emphasis on the utopian function of the cult and seeking YHWH climaxes in the account of the miraculous deliverance in ch. 20. The invading army of Moabites, Ammonites, and some Meunites approaches Judah for battle (vv. 1–2). Jehoshaphat proclaims the only instance of a fast in Chronicles, and all Judah responds by seeking YHWH with him (vv. 3–4).[55] Jehoshaphat's prayer, which reminds God of his past interventions, gift of land, and promise to respond when called upon from the temple (vv. 5–11), concludes with the dramatic expression "humble helplessness" in waiting for God to act (v. 12).[56] The spirit-inspired Levite, Jahaziel of the Asaphite line, proclaims encouragement to the king and people, stating that God will fight on their behalf the next day (vv. 13–17). The response is worship, including the praise offered by Levitical singers (vv. 18–19). The next day, Jehoshaphat commands the people to believe in God and his prophets.[57] As he begins to follow Jahaziel's prophetic instruction to head out to the site of their victory, Jehoshaphat consults with the people (vv. 20–21a). As no specific instructions had been given for the procedure, this interchange may have been to determine the appropriate arrangement. Jehoshaphat then appoints the Levitical choir to sing praise to God in front of the army (vv. 21b–22a). As they begin to sing, YHWH "set an ambush" (נתן מארבים) and caused the enemy armies to destroy themselves without the Israelites needing to

55. In 2 Kgs 18:6, Hezekiah proclaims a fast, but Chronicles does not record this.

56. The phrase is Japhet's (*I & II Chronicles*, 792).

57. The text echoes the famous conditional statement made to Ahaz in Isa 7:9. However, the emphasis here is on the certainty of their success (the deletion of the conditional language); see Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 797. The further command to believe God's prophets reveals the Chronicler's positive attitude to prophecy as being authoritative and worthy of the same fidelity shown to YHWH in the cult.

fight (vv. 22–24; cf. vv. 15–17). After plundering their enemy, the Israelites joyfully returned to Jerusalem to praise God with music in the temple (vv. 25–28). The final result is the quiet and rest which results in Jehoshaphat's kingdom as word of YHWH's victory spreads among the surrounding peoples (vv. 29–30).

In this passage, the Chronicler emphasizes several key concepts that are by now quite familiar: faithfulness to cult, seeking YHWH, dependence on God instead of military power, the appropriate response to authentic prophecy, the people's involvement in decision making,[58] and the resulting peace which comes from obedience. The account is thoroughly utopian in its advocacy of the proper response to military threat. The Chronicler is presenting a *better alternative reality* in numerous points made by this elaborate depiction of events: (1) the efficacy of the cult extends beyond the sacrificial system to its ritual liturgy; (2) Levites, particularly singers, may be the recipients of authentic prophecy, even if impromptu; (3) society will have rest and peace only when it completely trusts in God for its protection and not on human military power; (4) the political leadership does not always have the correct solution or the right to implement policy without consultation of the larger community; and (5) despite their temporary exile and whatever additional threats may come, Israel's claim to the land is based on the promise of God and will not be denied. While scholars have assumed that many of these points are made to reinforce the *status quo*, they could be challenges to the current socio-political order or to common beliefs during the Chronicler's time. The utopian quality of the portrayals of society throughout Chronicles would seem to fit better with an implicit critique of the present than with an affirmation of a present that looks little, if anything, like the society depicted in Chronicles. The traditional labeling of these portrayals as "ideal" or "paradigmatic" does not capture the full force of their utopian function when read as the depiction of *reality*, at least as such a reality is presented by the Chronicler.

However, from this crescendo of utopianism, the Chronicler moves into a different portrayal of Israel's past, a dystopian one set in contrast to the previous utopian constructions. Beginning in faithfulness, then to unfaithfulness, then repentance with reform, and further faithfulness rewarded by deliverance and blessing, Jehoshaphat's reign concludes with criticism of his return to unfaithfulness. While clearly similar to the parallel account in 1 Kgs 22:41–50, the account differs in its assessment

58. For the democratizing tendency in Chronicles, see the comments by Ben Zvi, "Book of Chronicles," 271–74; Japhet, *Ideology*, 416–28; Boer, *Novel Histories*, 159; and Im, *Davidbild in den Chronikbüchern*, 52–58.

of Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:31–37). First, the statement that he followed the ways of Asa his father (v. 32) emphasizes all the appropriate actions which Jehoshaphat had undertaken—the Chronicler does not wish this point to be missed. Second, the notice that the high places had not been removed (v. 33) is the first negative assessment of Jehoshaphat in this passage. This qualification to his level of obedience, of course, conflicts with the explicit statement that Jehoshaphat did indeed remove them at the beginning of his reign in 2 Chr 17:6. Rather than viewing this textual tension as a tendency by the Chronicler to preserve sources verbatim without attempting to harmonize inconsistencies,[59] it is more likely that the Chronicler suggests, in line with his source, that there were indeed high places at the end of Jehoshaphat's reign. However, for the Chronicler this would imply that they had been rebuilt during his reign—though not necessarily by the king himself since the following line indirectly implicates the people's involvement.

This negative assessment of Jehoshaphat is continued in the Chronicler's unique ordering of the information in vv. 35–37. In the version of 1 Kgs 22:48–49, the order of events is clear: Jehoshaphat builds ships, they are wrecked, then Ahaziah of Israel offers a partnership, which Jehoshaphat declines. The point in Kings is equally clear: Jehoshaphat had learned from his mistake in working with the Northern Kingdom from the Ahab incident. However, the events in Chronicles have a different order: Jehoshaphat acts "wickedly" in partnering with Ahaziah in building ships for an expedition, a prophet predicts the destruction of the ships due to the alliance with Ahaziah, and the ships are wrecked. The point is clear in Chronicles: Jehoshaphat did not learn his lesson about alliances, but repeats his mistake of the past. Thus, Chronicles portrays the end of Jehoshaphat's reign negatively. This dystopian portrayal of the monarchs will continue with the Chronicler's presentation of the next three rulers, ultimately resulting in the temporary period when the ruler was not a Davidide.

3.1.4. *Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah (2 Chronicles 21–22)*

The negative assessment of Jehoshaphat's final years leads into the description of the succession of Jehoram as king (2 Chr 21:1–7). The unique information concerning Jehoshaphat's distribution of gifts and cities to his sons but the kingdom to Jehoram parallels the explicitly prudent policy of Rehoboam who appointed Abijah as his successor (2 Chr 11:23). However, in contrast to Rehoboam, Jehoshaphat selects

59. Contra Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 800–1.

his successor based on primogeniture.[60] This decision to follow the common practice of primogeniture proved to be a poor one. Once Jehoram secured his position as king, he murdered all his brothers and some leading officials—eliminating all competition. In agreement with 2 Kgs 8:16–18, the Chronicler notes that Jehoram married the daughter of Ahab and imitated the evil practices, presumably cultic, of the Northern kings. The added information in Chronicles about Jehoshaphat's practice of a marriage alliance and cooperation with Israel is stressed by the actions of his son. However, both Kings and Chronicles note that God did not destroy Jehoram because of the covenant made with David (2 Kgs 8:19//2 Chr 21:7). This proclamation ends up being seriously challenged in the narrative that immediately follows regarding Athaliah (in both Kings and Chronicles).

The revolt of Edom and Libnah from Judah at the time of Jehoram is noted in both 2 Kgs 8:20–22 and 2 Chr 21:8–10a. The Chronicler's account also includes the explanation: he had forsaken YHWH (v. 10b). With his cultic unfaithfulness in erecting high places, Jehoram receives special condemnation in the form of a letter sent from Elijah the prophet (vv. 11–15). Much attention has been given to two aspects of this account: (1) the difficulty of this action being taken by Elijah during Jehoram's lifetime on the basis of the chronology in Kings; and (2) this singular use of a prophetic writing as a method of proclamation in Chronicles. In Elijah's letter, YHWH contrasts Jehoram's ways with those of Asa and Jehoshaphat and charges Jehoram with cultic impropriety and the murder of his brothers. Thus, even though both Asa and Jehoshaphat end their reigns with periods of unfaithfulness, the reign of Jehoram is thoroughly unfaithful; the positive aspects of their reigns stand out in comparison. YHWH further predicts a plague on his household and a terrible disease that will befall him personally. In fulfilling the first part, YHWH incites against Jehoram the Philistines and Arabs. It is no coincidence that these are the two groups who spontaneously brought tribute to Jehoshaphat during his early period of faithfulness in 2 Chr 17:11. The invading army captures his entire house except for his son Jehoahaz/Ahaziah (vv. 16–17). Jehoram is then struck with a disease that causes

60. Note that Abijah is the firstborn of Rehoboam's second wife (2 Chr 11:20). While not stating why Rehoboam chose Abijah, it was not on the basis of primogeniture. The practice of primogeniture seems to be critiqued by the Chronicler who rejects its automatic and blind implementation; see Gary N. Knoppers, "The Preferential Status of the Eldest Son Revoked?," in *Rethinking the Foundations: Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible. Essays in Honour of John Van Seters* (ed. S. L. McKenzie and T. Römer; BZAW 294; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 115–26. This is a utopian critique of the practice in Chronicles.

him a painful death after two years. He dies unmourned and "with no one's regret" (vv. 18–20).

This abysmal picture of the monarch, much more negative than the portrayal in Kings, is a major departure in the depiction of the monarchy in Chronicles. Up to this point, the Chronicler notes the unfaithfulness of the kings and criticizes it, but does not express his disgust as pointedly as with Jehoram. He serves a dystopian function: this is the *worse alternative reality*. If this is the model, destruction is assured. For the Chronicler, the dystopian elements include: (1) the misuse of primogeniture; (2) invalid cultic worship, particularly on the high places; (3) marriage alliances that result in unfaithfulness; (4) exclusively negative judgment by the prophet without hope or a call to repentance;[61] and (5) the threat to the dynasty caused by all of this.[62] While the view taken here is that the Chronicler does not advocate the restoration of the dynasty, this additional dystopian feature may possibly be the Chronicler's attempt to show the futility of attempting to re-establish it in the midst of threats from the other dystopian practices. If indeed the Chronicler were composing this narrative to expose some of the negative repercussions of his present society, such elaboration on these particular points would also serve to enhance the overall schemes of the Chronicler's utopian ideology in formulating the *better alternative reality* for his present and future.

In reporting the one-year reign of Ahaziah, son of Jehoram, Chronicles closely parallels the account of this monarch from 2 Kgs 8:26–29 in 2 Chr 22:1–6, which emphasizes his association with the house of Ahab and their corrupt practices. In contrast, Chronicles summarizes rather succinctly the narrative recorded in 2 Kgs 9:1–28 in 2 Chr 22:7–9. One significant difference in the Chronicler's abbreviated account is the location of Ahaziah when he is caught and murdered by Jehu son of Nimshi. In 2 Kgs 9, Ahaziah is in Jezreel (v. 17), shot while fleeing, and dies at Megiddo (v. 27). Chronicles locates Ahaziah entirely in Samaria (2 Chr 22:7–9a), the capital of the North, and of particular significance during the Chronicler's own time. In addition, he receives a burial because of his descent from Jehoshaphat according to v. 9b, although the location is

61. This is unique in Chronicles. All other prophetic judgments in Chronicles provide some other form of hope or a call to repentance. The Chronicler may be expressing his view that, while rare, such a completely negative prophecy is possible, and should be avoided by his audience; cf. his negative assessment of the end of the kingdom in 2 Chr 36:15–16, which clearly serves as a commentary for the readers.

62. Japhet notes that while Athaliah attempts the eradication of the dynasty in 2 Chr 22:10 (//2 Kgs 11:1), Chronicles alone assigns "dynastic endangerment" to Jehoram on two different occasions (*I & II Chronicles*, 807); cf. Simon J. DeVries, "The Schema of Dynastic Endangerment in Chronicles," *PEGLMBS* 7 (1987): 59–77.

not specified.[63] Three key dystopian features of Jehoram's reign are repeated in Ahaziah's: (1) invalid cultic worship, particularly on the high places; (2) alliances that result in unfaithfulness; and (3) the resulting dynastic endangerment. By following the practice of forming an alliance with the North and their cultic practices, Ahaziah again endangers the dynasty as he is murdered and his mother assumes the throne.

Athaliah, granddaughter of Omri, attempts to replicate the elimination of competition for the throne undertaken by the Chronicler's Jehoram (2 Chr 22:10; cf. 21:4). Ahaziah's son Joash is saved by his sister Jehoshabeath from death at the hands of Athaliah. For six years, Athaliah rules as queen over the land, temporarily interrupting the reign of the Davidic dynasty, which has gone into hiding for its very survival.[64] While Chronicles closely parallels 2 Kgs 11 in narrating the events surrounding Athaliah, Jehoiada's revolt, and the appointment of Joash as king, minor details reveal special concerns on the part of the Chronicler. However, even in the midst of this dystopian picture, a utopian presentation of the cult is maintained. To summarize the utopian elements of this cultic presentation briefly: the cult is still operative, with the proper functionaries, and with the proper regard for its status as a holy space. However, in the Chronicler's narrative it is the failure of Jehoiada to perform one of his duties which allows for the opportunity to carry out the planned revolt: he does not dismiss the Levitical divisions (2 Chr 23:8). This is a utopian critique of the ritual practices themselves: while the ritual practice and even written "ordinances" are to be followed, there are occasions which may warrant ignoring the procedure in favor of a greater good.[65]

3.1.5. *Joash, Amaziah, and Uzziah (2 Chronicles 23–26)*

The previous three monarchs (Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah) are presented with entirely negative reigns. The following three monarchs (Joash,

63. Japhet contends that Samaria is more likely than Jerusalem, which would deny Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah proper burials (*I & II Chronicles*, 823–24). While this may be correct, her comment about the concern of the Chronicler for proper burials is overstated; see my Excursus on Burial Notices as Utopian Space below.

64. Although she is not called a queen in either Kings or Chronicles, both texts describe her as "reigning" over the land (מלכת על הארץ). Thus, while both texts denounce her actions, her status as the ruling monarch is nonetheless affirmed; it is not her identity as a woman that is problematic for either text, but her association with the Northern Kingdom and its cultic practices.

65. Compare the cultic violations by Hezekiah in 2 Chr 30:2, 17–20, and their apparent approval by God.

Amaziah, and Uzziah) are presented with reigns that begin in faithfulness and end in unfaithfulness without repentance. While Kings clearly portrayal the first triad negatively, its presentation of the second triad is more ambiguous. In Kings, each of the three receive the positive evaluation of doing what was "right in the sight of YHWH" (2 Kgs 12:2; 14:3; 15:3), but qualifications are made to this claim—particularly evident in the violent deaths of Joash and Amaziah and the disease sent by YHWH on Ahaziah (Uzziah)—that imply failure on their part in some aspect of their rule. Further, while Kings details the restoration of Joash to the throne, the rest of his reign and those of his two successors are only briefly recounted in comparison to the coverage of the Northern Kingdom during this same period (2 Kgs 11:4–15:31). While including the information found in Kings, Chronicles contains significantly longer accounts for each of these three monarchs. This additional information serves to clarify their reigns, providing details to passing remarks in Kings, and to emphasize the utopian presentation of the monarchy in Chronicles.[66]

Joash, hidden as an infant in the temple for six years, receives his kingship from Jehoiada the priest in a *coup d'état*. In his coronation ceremony, Joash is crowned, given the treaty (העדות), proclaimed as king, and anointed by the priest and his sons (2 Chr 23:11).[67] Jehoiada clearly sees his actions as consistent with the promises made to David by YHWH (v. 3). After the murder of Athaliah, Jehoiada made a covenant between himself, the people, and the king. The people destroy the foreign cult of Baal. While these points are found in Kings, the notice that Jehoiada restored the Levitical service with its liturgical music according to David's order (על ידי דויד) and the written Torah of Moses is unique to Chronicles (v. 18).

However, it seems that Chronicles does *not* suggest that these actions taken by the leading priest are paradigmatic for his own time. Rather, the exceptional conditions of the coup and Joash's age, seven years (2 Chr 24:1), provide the explanation for Jehoiada's increased political and cultic authority. As the narrative continues, Jehoiada is depicted as returning to the power structure reflected throughout Chronicles in which the king has ultimate authority over the cult. Thus, the Chronicler does not use

66. These three monarchs are further connected by an emphasis on the condition of the heart, and especially the danger of pride; see 2 Chr 24:4; 25:19; 26:16, and cf. the remark about pride as "a basic cause of sin" in Chronicles by McKenzie, *1–2 Chronicles*, 57.

67. These same actions are reflected in 2 Kgs 11:12, but with a significant difference: all the verbs in Chronicles are plural while the first two are singular in Kings—the crowning and giving of the treaty done only by Jehoiada. This is one more instance of the democratizing tendency in Chronicles.

this incident to augment the authority of Jehoiada (and thus the Second Temple priesthood or, more specifically, the high priesthood) in either the cultic or political spheres. Nor does the depiction of Jehoiada reflect the Second Temple role of the high priesthood.[68] Instead, the authority of the Davidic king over the cult is affirmed in this narrative and throughout Chronicles. While partially an argument from silence, it is clear that the role of the king and his officials in cultic matters are increased in the Chronicler's version while lasting changes in the authority of the (high) priesthood are not emphasized.[69]

In fact, the textual evidence points in the opposite direction. While the (high) priesthood has assumed political authority in the past (as stated in 2 Kgs 11 and repeated in Chronicles), such a condition was only temporary and did not continue beyond this highly exceptional case. Indeed, it rather establishes "royal responsibility for the restoration of the Temple."[70] In the political utopia of the Chronicler, this point is highly significant. The political authority is responsible for the financial maintenance of the cult.[71] Thus, this narrative functions as a utopian critique of both the political and cultic administration of the Chronicler's own day. Each has its proper sphere, role, and responsibility; they should not be confused, and traditions about the past cannot be invoked as precedent for increased authority on the part of either group.

Although the section of the narrative concerning Joash discussed thus far (2 Chr 22:10–24:14) differs from the version in Kings mainly in small (but important) details, the remainder of the Chronicler's account of Joash (2 Chr 24:15–27) diverges significantly from the parallel in 2 Kgs 12:17–21. The royal burial given to the priest Jehoiada contrasts with the previous Davidic monarchs denied their expected burial privileges and with Joash himself who is denied burial with the kings—

68. Contra Ackroyd, *I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah*, 159–60; Coggins, *First and Second Books of the Chronicles*, 240–41; and Raymond B. Dillard, *2 Chronicles* (WBC 15; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1987), here 192.

69. Note the authority of the king over cultic matters in 2 Chr 24:4–6, 8, 11–12, 14. While the statements in vv. 4–6 essentially agree with 2 Kgs 12:4–16, the king's increased role in vv. 8, 12, 14, and the subordination of the Levites to the king's officials in v. 11 are unique to Chronicles.

70. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 842.

71. See also the enormous supply of sacrifices provided by Hezekiah and his officials (2 Chr 30:24) and by Josiah and his officials (2 Chr 35:7–8), in comparison with the smaller amounts contributed by the priestly and Levitical leadership (2 Chr 35:8–9). The role of the Persian kings in providing for the construction of the Second Temple may be reflected in this particular emphasis in Chronicles (cf. 2 Chr 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–4, 6–11; 6:3–4, 8–12, 22; 7:12–24; 8:36; Neh 2:7–8).

contradicting 2 Kgs 12:21. Second Kings 12:17–21 suggests, though not in explicit terms, a change in Joash's concern for the temple cult and his lack of faith in trusting YHWH for deliverance from foreign military attacks. In contrast, Chronicles explicitly describes the cultic unfaithfulness of the political leaders and Joash following the death of Jehoiada including even the rejection of prophetic warnings (2 Chr 24:17–19, 24). In addition, the reason for the murder of Joash by his servants is not provided in 2 Kgs 12:19–21. However, 2 Chr 24:25–27 declares that he had been wounded in the attack of Aram, was murdered by foreigners because of his own murder of Jehoiada's son, and had many oracles made against him (רב המשא על יו). Thus, the implicitly negative end of his reign in Kings is explicitly and poignantly expressed in Chronicles.

The earlier utopian portrayal of this monarch has become a dystopian picture of a ruler who abandons the cult of YHWH for other gods, rejects prophecy, even murders, fails to seek YHWH, and finally dies violently and without proper honor in his burial. Only Jehoram receives more explicitly critical remarks than Joash at the conclusion of his life (2 Chr 21:18–20). The notation of a cultic impropriety as the key event leading to the demise of Joash is also found in the Chronicler's account of Amaziah (2 Chr 25:14–16) and Uzziah (2 Chr 26:16–21).

Amaziah's reign begins with a sense of hope for reversal of Joash's failure, but it soon fades away. In contrast to Joash's murder of Zedekiah, the son of the priest Jehoiada who had done him and the nation so much good, Amaziah does not execute judgment on the children of those who murdered his father in accordance with the legislation of Deut 24:16, which is cited in both 2 Kgs 14:6 and 2 Chr 25:4 as Mosaic Torah. The king has been obedient to the Torah, but even this worthy action is critiqued by the Chronicler.

While 2 Kgs 14:3 notes that Amaziah did "what was right in the sight of YHWH, but not like his ancestor David," the clarifying phrase in 2 Chr 25:2 does not mention David but instead states "only not with a whole heart" (רק לא בלבב שלם). The condition of one's heart is very important for the Chronicler. The contrast between the depictions of Amaziah and Hezekiah in Chronicles is particularly noteworthy in this regard. In 2 Chr 25, Amaziah obeys the written Torah in one instance, but subsequently pursues questionable and unacceptable practices: he enlists a mercenary force from the North, worships the Edomite gods whom he had defeated, challenges the North out of pride, is defeated by the North and loses the temple vessels, and is murdered by conspiracy. In 2 Chr 30, on the other hand, Hezekiah celebrates Passover at the wrong time (vv. 2–4), allows Northerners to eat the Pesach "otherwise than as prescribed" (בלא ככתוב; v. 18) and disregards the "cleanness of the sanctuary" (לא בטהרת הקדש;

v. 19). Nevertheless, his concern is for those who have "set their hearts to seek" YHWH (כל לבבו הכין לדרוש), and God hears Hezekiah's prayer. Their good intentions without the proper observance of ritual, and even when written authoritative texts are contradicted (vv. 19–20), are accepted by God. Although the Mosaic Torah is not explicitly mentioned in connection with Hezekiah, the contrast in the obedience to written regulations and the conditions of the heart between these two rulers nonetheless remains. Chronicles does not diminish the importance of observing written ordinances, even of the Mosaic Torah itself, but it does place a priority on the condition of the heart in seeking YHWH. Thus, the Mosaic Torah should be obeyed, but there also may be times when circumstances dictate a "greater good" to be achieved in not following the written commandments. This critique of "Torah piety" without an authentic internal desire to seek YHWH serves a utopian function in Chronicles. The *better alternative reality* of the Chronicler requires both obedience to Torah and seeking YHWH, but elevates the latter over the former.

Nevertheless, in Chronicles Amaziah is not only obedient to the Mosaic Torah. He also obeys the prophetic oracle given by an anonymous "man of God." In gathering an army to fight—itself a questionable policy in the Chronicler's view—Amaziah hires mercenary soldiers from the North. Yet, these Ephraimites are to be sent home and Amaziah must trust in God to be victorious in battle. Amaziah is obedient and is successful in battle against the Edomites (cf. the brief statement in 2 Kgs 14:7). However, even in this victory, his actions are subtlety critiqued. The results of his temporary employment of these individuals now angry with Judah (2 Chr 25:10) are the plunder of several Judean cities and the death of many of their inhabitants (v. 13). The dystopian quality of Amaziah's policies culminates in his worship of the gods reverenced by the now defeated Edomites (v. 14). Amaziah is warned by a prophet, but this time he refuses to listen (vv. 15–16). In addition to his cultic misconduct (v. 20), the Chronicler emphasizes that the "boastfulness of his heart" (ונשא לבך להכביד; v. 19) drives Amaziah to engage in battle against Israel. He is defeated and captured (vv. 21–23a). Part of Jerusalem's wall is broken and the treasuries of the palace and temple and its vessels are plundered (vv. 23b-24). The dystopian portrayal of Amaziah thus climaxes in actions reminiscent of the exile of Judah (cf. 2 Chr 36:18–19).

The emphasis on the condition of the heart is continued in the reign of Uzziah (2 Chr 26:1–23). Uzziah begins in faithfulness, seeking God, and even being "instructed in the fear of God." Uzziah experiences great military success and building projects recounted in details reminiscent of

his righteous predecessors—David, Solomon, Abijah, and Jehoshaphat. However, the end of his reign is reminiscent of his two immediate predecessors who failed to continue in their faithfulness. Like Amaziah, Uzziah's heart grew proud (גבה לבו; v. 16). This pride, the result of his success, leads him to an action of unfaithfulness (מעל): attempting to offer incense—a priestly duty (vv. 16–18). This passage (2 Chr 26:16–21) clearly advocates the exclusion of political leadership from specific cultic duties. While many have taken this as a reflection of the situation in the Chronicler's own time, it is also possible that this is the Chronicler's utopian portrayal of the relationship between the political and cultic spheres.[72] The text in Kings lacks a reason for Uzziah's disease, but Chronicles contains a very clear explanation: the violation of cultic protocol by a proud ruler.[73] The emphasis on the condition of Uzziah's heart is further highlighted by the notation of when he was struck by YHWH with his disease. The Chronicler twice states that it is only after he became angry that Uzziah is afflicted (זעף; v. 19).[74] While his attempt to enter the temple is evidence enough (2 Chr 27:2), his anger reveals the true nature of his heart, and his anger is the cause of his punishment.

3.1.6. *Jotham and Ahaz (2 Chronicles 27–28)*

In contrast to the periodization of the reigns of previous monarchs into times of faithfulness and unfaithfulness, Jotham and Ahaz are depicted as having reigns entirely positive and negative, respectively. In this regard, Jotham is particularly noteworthy. Solomon is the only ruler to escape criticism completely in Chronicles. Although Jotham himself is not criticized, the comment that "the people still followed corrupt practices" (v. 2) denies him an ideal reign—but not a utopian one. As the dystopian images of the monarchy have been recounted over the past several chapters, this brief account of a period of respite, of a *better* reality, demonstrates one of the key theological points of the Chronicler: each generation or individual can make decisions and is not bound to repeat the mistakes of the past. Jotham alone is said to have "ordered his ways before YHWH" (הכין דרכיו לפני יהוה; v. 6), and this laudatory action results in his becoming strong, achieving military success, and building projects. However, in contrast to his father, Jotham does not become

72. See, for example, the administrative judicial systems of David (1 Chr 26:29–32) and Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 19:4–11).

73. Contrast the acceptance of cultic violations by a ruler "whose heart is in the right place," namely, Hezekiah (2 Chr 30).

74. This verb appears four times in Chronicles, in reference to the excessive action of the North in killing Judahites (2 Chr 28:5–9), the response of Asa to Hanani's prophecy (2 Chr 16:7–10), and twice in reference to Uzziah (2 Chr 26:19).

proud as a result. His reign is utopian—a *better alternative reality* than both the preceding accounts and, most likely, the Chronicler's own time. Although extremely similar to the account in 2 Kgs 15:32–38, the Chronicler's version emphasizes the utopian quality of Jotham's reign. While the Kings' version ends with the ominous note that it was during Jotham's time that YHWH began to send Aram and Israel to invade Judah, nothing of this is reflected in Chronicles. The thoroughly positive picture of Jotham in Chronicles is not necessarily a result of his lack of additional sources for this monarch,[75] but the utopia under Jotham is precisely that—the depiction of a *better alternative reality* which critiques not only the Chronicler's present but also the fatalistic inevitability of the book of Kings. Yet, this utopia under Jotham is short-lived, as his son Ahaz institutes what is the clearest picture of a dystopia in Chronicles.

Whereas Manasseh is the epitome of evil in Kings, Ahaz serves the similar (though not exact) role in Chronicles. Like his predecessors Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah, the reign of Ahaz is thoroughly negative, and is mostly concerned with cultic misconduct. However, Ahaz's actions exceed everything that has come before. Chronicles depicts Ahaz as the first king to practice child sacrifice (2 Chr 28:1–4). Because of his cultic practices—implicit in Kings but explicit in Chronicles—Ahaz is attacked by Aram and Israel. While 2 Kgs 16:5 clearly states that Ahaz could not be conquered, Chronicles presents Judah being devastated at the hands of these nations (2 Chr 28:5–8). Whatever the historical reality behind these texts, the prophetic oracle of Oded provides the key to understanding the Chronicler's version of events (vv. 9–15). This prophet addresses the army of the Northern Kingdom, telling them to send the Judahite captives back. His words are reinforced by certain Ephraimites. After a remarkable exhibition of compassion and humanitarianism, the captives are returned to the city of Jericho (v. 15). While Japhet rightly emphasizes the significance of claims to "the brotherhood of Judah and Israel" and the text's function as a "model of moral integrity,"[76] there is more to consider.

The people of the North are obedient to the prophet and take appropriate, even unrequired, action in response. Ahaz, however, will continue his cultic misconduct and bring further disaster upon Judah (vv. 19, 23, 25). His appeal for assistance against the Edomites and Philistines results in his subjugation to Assyria instead of deliverance for Judah despite plundering the royal and temple treasuries (vv. 16–21). His excessive

75. Contra Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 890–91.
76. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 900.

unfaithfulness (מעול מעל; v. 19) finally culminates in the worst unfaithfulness yet recorded in Chronicles (ויוסף למעול; v. 22): Ahaz worships the Assyrian gods and finally, according to Chronicles, shuts the doors of the temple (vv. 23–24). Thus, the temple cult of YHWH ceases under Ahaz until its restoration under Hezekiah (2 Chr 29:7). The dystopian reality under Ahaz is emphatically rejected by the Chronicler. However, if the community mistakenly follows this example, it too will be "subdued" (בנע; v. 19).[77] Nevertheless, Ahaz does not doom Judah to destruction or exile. Reform, and utopia, are still possible—in the past, present, and future.

3.1.7. *Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah (2 Chronicles 29–35)*
The Chronicler's concern for the cult is clearly evident in the amount of space dedicated to this institution in the reigns of these four kings. In addition, the utopian ideology of the Chronicler is perhaps best understood in the context of these four rulers. It is in their reigns that many of the theological themes culminate, that the distinction between ideal and utopian is readily apparent, that hope for the future is held out repeatedly to those still in exile, and that the proper relationship between the community and the foreign empire is articulated. These issues will again be restated at the book's conclusion (2 Chr 36:15–23), but their appearance in these chapters further emphasizes their importance in the Chronicler's utopian ideology and overall argument throughout the book.

Hezekiah converts the dystopia under Ahaz into a utopia by instituting numerous reforms.[78] At the very beginning of his reign (in his first month as ruler) according to 2 Chr 29:3, Hezekiah opens the temple again and begins the process of sanctification for the temple and the restoration of its cult (vv. 4–36). Several key points are made in this section: the death and captivity of the Israelites is a direct result of their cultic misconduct (v. 9); a covenant will be made between the people and YHWH (v. 10); the various types of offerings are performed at the king's command (vv. 20–24); the Levitical music and priestly trumpeters are re-established according to the prophetic Davidic organization (vv. 25–30); and the temple cult is restored (v. 35). Hezekiah's heart for God (v. 10) is

77. Compare the language about serving other nations in 2 Chr 12:8; and the discussion in Section 3.2.

78. Most of the actions taken by Hezekiah in chs. 30–31 lack parallels in Kings. The Sennacherib invasion and Babylonian envoys are the key events of Hezekiah's reign in Kings while the version presented in Chronicles gives priority to the earlier unparalleled cultic reforms. This analysis will focus on the Chronicler's version and the utopia which it presents without continual reference to the divergent account in Kings.

matched by the people's "willing heart" (נדיב לב; v. 31) and the Levites' dedication to being "upright in heart" (ישרי לבב; v. 34). While the priests are criticized (v. 34; 2 Chr 30:3), Hezekiah and the assembly (קהל) together decide to celebrate the Passover with an invitation extended to the North to join them (2 Chr 30:2–4).

In this written invitation, those Israelites not exiled by Assyria, but who remained in the land, are encouraged to return to YHWH, who is "gracious and merciful" and who will bring the Assyrian captives back to the land in response to their actions (vv. 6–9). This brief passage is highly significant for the utopian ideology of Chronicles. First, it recognizes that not all Northerners were exiled (*contra* 2 Kgs 17:6, 18–24). Second, this remnant in the North is still regarded as authentically a part of Israel. Third, the possibility of a return of the Assyrian exiles is held out as a certainty if they repent and return to YHWH. Of course, the final point is also applicable to those exiled by Babylon who continue to reside outside the land of Israel. If the community in Yehud repents, will God restore these tribes also? The implication of v. 9 is an emphatic "Yes!"

The responses by the Northerners and the Judahites also serve utopian functions. First, in response to Hezekiah's letter, only a few Northerners come to Jerusalem in repentance while most reject his invitation with laughter and mockery (vv. 10–11). This response *cannot* be labeled "ideal," but "utopian" does seem appropriate. If the Chronicler's purpose was to describe an "ideal" past on which to base present and future action, then the number of individuals responding with repentance may be expected to be larger than the meager few who do so. Second, the people of Judah are supportive of these atypical events because God had given them "one heart" to be obedient to their leadership and the command of God (לב אחד; v. 12). These two responses have direct implications for the Chronicler's own day. The Northerners are still invited (or should be) and they are to be received openly and without dissent in whatever number they should choose to do so.

In addition, the depiction of Hezekiah as a Second David-Solomon ruling over a unified Israel including resident aliens (גרים) is explicitly emphasized at the conclusion of the Passover celebration (2 Chr 30:25–27). Hezekiah, the first king of Judah to reign after the deportation of the North to Assyria, has the opportunity to re-unite all of the people of Israel in the worship of YHWH. This unique role of Hezekiah is formulated in a variety of ways. First, although he exercises religious authority over some parts of Ephraim and Manasseh (2 Chr 31:1), Hezekiah does not attempt military expansion into the former Northern Kingdom. It is not the concern of the Chronicler to depict righteous kings as restoring, or

attempting to restore, the geographic boundaries of the Davidic–Solomonic empire. Instead, the restoration of the cult is the primary concern for Hezekiah, including the destruction by the people of all cultic sites other than the Jerusalem temple (31:1). Further, in the reign of Hezekiah, the security of Israel is entirely dependent on God and his faithfulness to deliver the people (2 Chr 32:8). Hezekiah prepares and builds defenses for the people, but he does not attack his enemy and he does not depend on military strategy to gain victory. In his defensive posture, he is delivered from the impending threat only after he and the prophet Isaiah had prayed to God (2 Chr 32:20). As a result, he receives "rest on every side" and an influx of gifts in line with the Solomonic precedent (2 Chr 32:22–23).[79]

Second, he models his reformation of the cult on the Davidic–Solomonic organization. However, even in this, he does not simply replicate the earlier regulations. Rather, Hezekiah orders store-chambers to be built to hold the collected tithes for the clergy (2 Chr 31:2–11).[80] Then, along with Azariah, the chief officer of the house of God, he appoints Levites to oversee their collection, storage, and distribution (vv. 12–15). While this passage has some parallels to David's appointment of the priests with the assistance of both Zadok and Ahimelech (1 Chr 24:3), the differences between the accounts are striking. It is clear that Azariah is a leading cultic official, but may not be *the* "leading priest," so that the parallel to the two priests at the time of David is inexact. Also, the appointments are for priestly divisions at the time of David and for Levites overseeing the storage locations at the time of Hezekiah.

Third, the Chronicler's evaluation of his reign is expressed as the zenith of monarchic faithfulness in the post-Solomonic era. In the initial summary of his reign, Hezekiah is "good, right, and faithful" before YHWH, his reforms were also in accordance with the Torah and the commandment, and he sought God with all of his heart, all of which thus led to his prosperity (2 Chr 31:20–21). However, following this equation of righteousness and blessing, the Chronicler explicitly juxtaposes the

79. Accepting the common emendation suggested for this phrase based on the LXX version; see Curtis and Madsen, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 490; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 991–92; and Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 385. Ingeborg Gabriel rejects this emendation (*Friede über Israel: Eine Untersuchung zur Friedenstheologie in Chronik I 10–II 36* [ÖBS 10; Klosterneuburg: Verlag Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1990], 152–55), which results in a different understanding of Hezekiah's reign.

80. While storage facilities are mentioned during the reigns of David and Solomon (1 Chr 26:15–17, 20–28; 2 Chr 5:1), the ones at the time of Hezekiah are apparently new constructions and separate from the temple treasuries.

arrival of Sennacherib and his army (2 Chr 32:1). This presents a tension in the Chronicler's theory of "immediate retribution," at least as it is commonly understood by scholars. Faithfulness has led to an immediate threat, not prosperity. Yet, Hezekiah's faithfulness delivers him and the people from this desperate situation (2 Chr 32:7–8, 20–23). Thus, rather than destroying the Chronicler's ideology, it serves to advance his belief that *continued* faithfulness is the key and that such difficulties are not signs of God's abandonment, but opportunities for demonstration of faith. This sentiment is echoed in the following passage that notes Hezekiah's sickness, his prayer, and his healing. In contrast to his previous response, Hezekiah's heart was proud (גבה לבו; v. 25) and wrath is the result. Yet, Hezekiah and Jerusalem repent, and the wrath of YHWH ceases. Hezekiah's pride thus prevents him from escaping criticism altogether, as does Solomon. He thus serves as a model for repentance and thus continued blessing, as does David. Thus, just as with David, Hezekiah's reign is not ideal, but it is most certainly utopian. In the final summary of his reign (2 Chr 32:27–31), Hezekiah's prosperity and the incident of the Babylonian envoys are recorded. In contrast to 2 Kgs 20:12–19, Hezekiah's actions are not criticized. Rather, God uses this to test Hezekiah and "know all that was in his heart" (v. 31). Hezekiah evidently passes this test without qualification.[81] The depiction of Hezekiah in Chronicles is thoroughly utopian.

However, the utopia under Hezekiah is short-lived. Manasseh reverses his father's religious policies and institutes a dystopia similar to that under Ahaz (2 Chr 33:1–9). Many of the details in the opening section of Manasseh's reign are in verbatim agreement with the parallel text in 2 Kgs 21:1–9. Yet, while his reign is thoroughly negative in Kings, the Chronicler presents a radically different series of events. After being warned, Manasseh is taken captive to Babylon by the king of Assyria under the agency of YHWH (2 Chr 33:10–11). Manasseh subsequently repents in his distress[82] and is restored to Jerusalem and his kingdom (vv. 12–13). Following this, he engages in defensive military building projects and religious reforms in Jerusalem and the temple (vv. 14–16). Yet the actions by Manasseh are a pale comparison to the vast scope of the religious reforms of Hezekiah. Thus, utopia is only partially initiated, and remains unrealized, under Manasseh.

81. See Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 995–96; and Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 387–88.

82. The description of Manasseh's state as one of distress (הצר) which leads to repentance stands in contrast to the distress (הצר) which results in Ahaz's extreme dystopia (2 Chr 28:22–27).

Many scholars have suggested that Manasseh is a model of repentance for the exilic/postexilic community and that his lengthy reign of fifty-five years in 2 Kgs 21:1 is the textual reason for the necessity of his repentance in Chronicles. However, while both of these contentions are possible, the Chronicler's utopian ideology better explains the unique presentation of Manasseh in Chronicles. Regardless of the historicity of this narrative, Manasseh demonstrates the efficacy of repentance in his restoration to the land and to his kingdom (מלכותו; 2 Chr 33:12–13). The Chronicler's present was no different: if the Davidic monarchy wished to be restored again to its place, its leader(s) must repent and await God's hand in restoring the throne. It is worth noting that Manasseh does not revolt against the foreign power of Assyria to regain his kingdom; the impetus for his restoration to the throne comes solely from God in response to Manasseh's change of heart. While this point could be used to argue that the Chronicler advocated the restoration of the Davidic monarchy, it instead places the responsibility on the leadership to repent and on God to do the restoring—if that is God's intention. Thus, the Chronicler certainly does not use the example of Manasseh to illustrate the violent overthrow of the foreign power in an attempt to restore the Davidic monarchy—even if there has been the necessary prerequisite of repentance. Also, the restoration community may have seen much of their present situation in the description of Manasseh, especially in the limitation of reforms to the immediate sphere of influence in the defensive strategy throughout the cities of Judah and to the cult only within Jerusalem. Thus, Manasseh may have served as a utopian depiction of appropriate steps to *begin* the process of reform, if the depictions of David, Solomon, and Hezekiah seemed unattainable for the present. However, the Chronicler clearly conveys to his audience that Manasseh's utopia is not the final destination, even if it is technically a *better alternative reality* than the Chronicler's present.

While Amon's reign is merely an extension of Manasseh's evil practices in Kings (2 Kgs 21:19–26), his reign serves a different function in Chronicles (2 Chr 33:21–25). In Chronicles, Manasseh ends his reign with a period of partial reform and Amon returns to Manasseh's earlier dystopian practices, thereby setting the stage for the following reforms of Josiah. Thus, the vague description of the dystopia under Amon stands out in the context of three reforming kings in Chronicles—Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah. The Chronicler makes the explicit point that Amon does not humble himself before God (2 Chr 33:23) while noting the other three have indeed done so (2 Chr 32:26; 33:12; 34:26–27). Thus, Amon's brief reign is a dystopian example of the failure to repent. He "incurred more and more guilt" (הרבה אשמה; 2 Chr 33:23) in this

two-year period and condemned himself to murder by a political coup. Through repentance, Hezekiah experiences the removal of wrath (2 Chr 32:26), Manasseh is restored to the land and his throne (2 Chr 33:12–13), and Josiah avoids seeing the coming destruction (2 Chr 34:28). While these other rulers serve as utopian models for the Chronicler's audience, Amon's rejection of their humility in repentance is the point of his brief dystopian reign in Chronicles.

With Josiah, the Chronicler presents the final attempt at utopia under the Davidic monarchy in his work. Josiah is not the exemplary hero in Chronicles that he is in Kings, but his reign is utopian nonetheless. The reign of Josiah exhibits several utopian features: chronology and geography, cultic organization and reformation, obedience and disobedience to the prophetic word, humility and repentance, the accountability of each generation/individual for their actions, and relationship to foreign powers. The chronology of Chronicles for Josiah's reign provides a different understanding of Josiah's reforms and a different geography to be associated with them. Whereas 2 Kgs 22:3 implies that Josiah began his reforms in the eighteenth year with repair to the temple, 2 Chr 34:3 states that Josiah began to seek God in his eighth year and started reforms in his twelfth year. These reforms took place throughout Jerusalem, Judah, Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and Naphtali and purged the land of its idolatrous religious objects (vv. 3–7). Second Kings 23:15–20 places Josiah's reforms in the North *after* his discovery of the Book of the Torah and the covenant renewal, but the Chronicler's version locates these reforms in the North *prior to* the discovery of the Book of the Torah and the covenant renewal. The different order of events in Chronicles allows for the Northerners to contribute financially to the temple repair project, affirming their solidarity with the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem (2 Chr 34:8–9).[83] The geography of Josiah's reforms in Chronicles includes parts of the Northern Kingdom and is reminiscent of the appeal to the North and the actions taken by the people at the time of Hezekiah (2 Chr 30:1, 10–11; 31:1). However, the geography is not identical: different tribes are mentioned in each instance.

83. It is also significant that in the remainder of Josiah's reign the distinction between Judah and Israel seems virtually to disappear as the people again seem to be brought together under Josiah's leadership as a unity. Although Hezekiah is the first to rule over a reunited Israel, the reforms of Manasseh seem to apply only to Judah. Thus, the people are reunited under Josiah for a second time. This type of pattern is suggestive again for the Chronicler's present: the people of Israel have been separated and reunited *more than once* in the past, and their current separation should not be viewed as a permanent condition without hope of change in a utopian future.

This is consistent with the Chronicler's use of geography as a utopian device elsewhere in the work. No one area is designated nor is one particular point in time. The borders of Israel and the regions that are under a particular king's influence are constantly shifting and changing with the events of history. The Chronicler's present may have been no different. By using different geographical markers, the Chronicler argues that the political leadership should extend its reforms to an area in which it is possible to implement them effectively, regardless of its extent. It is also worth repeating that none of the three reforming kings (Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah) takes military action to gain more surrounding territory with the intention to impose their religious reforms in that area subsequently. Thus, the spread of religious reform is advocated, although it must be done without political, military expansion.[84]

Josiah's cultic reforms may also be compared to the Chronicler's account of Hezekiah's reforms. While they are similar in scope, they are different in detail and in their implementation. Just as Hezekiah, Josiah reinstitutes the Levitical and priestly divisions, celebrates Passover, renews a covenant with people, and destroys the idolatrous religious objects.

Unlike Hezekiah, Josiah has the opportunity to respond to prophetic warnings (2 Chr 34:22–33; 35:21–22). Also, Hezekiah is threatened by a foreign invasion and must *defend* Jerusalem, but Josiah *attacks* Pharaoh Neco, who has no interest in attacking Jerusalem (2 Chr 35:20–22). While the vast majority of scholars have seen the explanation for Josiah's death in Chronicles as a "last ditch effort" of theodicy to salvage his theory of retribution, its function in Chronicles is expressly utopian and is consistent with other ideological points advocated by the Chronicler. First, this is consistent with the repeated assertion in Chronicles that a defensive military strategy is acceptable while offensive excursions should be avoided and may have disastrous, or at least ambiguous, outcomes.

Second, until the very end of his reign Josiah had been faithful to YHWH—approaching the illustrious level of obedience and utopian description of the likes of David, Solomon, Hezekiah, and Jotham. During this period the prophetess Huldah promises him a peaceful death as reward for his repentant heart and humility (2 Chr 34:26–28). However, this hardly seems to fit the description of his death in battle at

84. Contrast the actions of the Maccabees and the Hasmonean dynasty in this regard, especially in the forced circumcision of Israelites by Mattathias, the conquered Idumeans by Hyrcanus I, and the conquered Itureans by Aristobulus I (1 Macc 2:46; Josephus, *Ant.* 13.257–258, 318–319, respectively).

the hands of Neco. Despite the prophecy—or maybe because of it—Josiah prepares to engage Neco in battle and is warned not to continue with his plan. Yet, he is disobedient to the "words of Neco from the mouth of God" (דברי נכו מפי אלהים; 2 Chr 35:22). Thus, in this commentary on Josiah's death, the Chronicler explicitly acknowledges the authenticity of Neco's "prophetic" words.[85] Perhaps Josiah had assumed that he would be protected from harm on the basis of the earlier prophetic word by Huldah. As Josiah unfortunately learned, the promise of protection by God is not a "blank check" to engage in inappropriate actions. Similarly, the people of Israel have a covenant with God, a promise from YHWH to preserve them, but in the Chronicler's view this does not allow them to act irresponsibly.

Third, just as the invasion of Sennacherib occurs after Hezekiah's faithfulness (2 Chr 32:1), so Neco's passage through the land occurs after Josiah has established the temple (2 Chr 35:20).[86] However, rather than violate the Chronicler's theory of retribution, these events reinforce the notion of *continued* faithfulness that is required on the part of the individual. Circumstances may seem to be inconsistent with blessings on the righteous, but the final outcomes demonstrate the results of faithfulness and disobedience: Hezekiah depends on God and is delivered; Josiah takes inappropriate action himself, even fails to heed the prophetic warning, and is killed as a result. Thus, the circumstances of Josiah's demise present a dystopian view of this otherwise entirely utopian ruler in Chronicles. While Josiah's cultic reforms and obedience to Torah are lauded by the Chronicler (2 Chr 34:31; 35:4–6, 12–13, 18), his failure to respond to contemporary prophetic warning—even from an extremely atypical source—brings about his own death and the beginning of the downward spiral that ends in the cessation of the monarchy, the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem, and the exile to Babylon.

85. Compare Jeremiah's prophecies as being "from the mouth of YHWH" (מפי יהוה; 2 Chr 36:12).

86. It has been suggested that this claim about the establishment of the temple under Josiah indicates the completion of the monarchy's usefulness, since its primary function to care for the temple has been accomplished (Riley, *King and Cultus*, 138–40, 149, 155–56, 179–80). Therefore, the monarch is no longer necessary for the restoration or operation of temple worship. However, this reading fails to account for the similar comments in Hezekiah's reign and the continuation of the temple cult until its pollution at the time of Zedekiah prior to its destruction. Thus, the argument for a "culmination" under Josiah would have better support if the cult immediately ceased or remained in this correct form until it was destroyed. Better evidence for the unnecessary nature of the monarchy in Chronicles should be sought elsewhere.

With respect to the Chronicler's own time, the message is clear: Torah obedience and appropriate cultic observance is very important and even central to the life of the community, but the leadership also cannot ignore contemporary prophecy without suffering for their disobedience. In the Chronicler's ideology, there are many ways to bring about a dystopia, but only one means of establishing utopia: *continued* faithfulness both to the written and oral traditions of the past and to the prophets of the present (whether by Levites or even foreign leaders) who provide direction in the midst of changing historical circumstances.[87]

3.1.8. *The Final Four: Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah (2 Chronicles 36)*

The untimely death of Josiah brings the Chronicler to the final four kings of Judah before the Babylonian Exile. The abrupt and abbreviated descriptions of their reigns stand out in contrast to the longer narratives that are presented for most of the monarchs in comparison with Kings.[88] With the death of Josiah, the Chronicler seems to "rush to the end" of his work. However, even in the brief accounts of these monarchs, his utopian ideology is present, although mostly in the negative form of a dystopia.

Jehoahaz, the people's appointed ruler after his father's death, is the only king to receive no judgment of faithfulness or unfaithfulness by the Chronicler. Although many scholars have assumed that his exile to Egypt is enough proof of his failure or that his death notice has been eliminated as the result of a scribal error,[89] these explanations should not be accepted too hastily. Also, the brevity of the final four reigns cannot be used to explain its absence here, since negative evaluations do appear in the subsequent three accounts. Rather, the removal of Jehoahaz from the throne should be seen as a continuing effect of Josiah's death. Although the Chronicler is at pains to hold each generation accountable for its own actions, here Jehoahaz seems to suffer from his father's mistake given the historical circumstances of the time. Neco may not have trusted this apparently non-firstborn son of a contentious king who had been appointed by the people.[90] Also, the fact that he was appointed by the people is not inherently a negative statement as other kings not

87. Note also the appearance of both oral and written communication (a herald and an edict) in declaring an end to exile and hope for restoration in 2 Chr 36:22.

88. Japhet, *I &II Chronicles*, 1062–63; and Christopher T. Begg, "The Fate of Judah's Four Last Kings in the Book of Chronicles," *OLP* 18 (1987): 79–85 (79–80).

89. Japhet, *I &II Chronicles*, 1063.

90. See the comments supporting this interpretation by Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 1062–65.

thoroughly evil are also installed in this manner (e.g. David in 1 Chr 11:3; Joash in 2 Chr 23:11; Uzziah in 2 Chr 26:1; and Josiah in 2 Chr 33:25; cf. Ahaziah in 2 Chr 22:1). Yet, Jehoahaz seems a victim of his circumstances in Chronicles. Mistakes of the past can and do have continuing effects into the present and future; each generation is responsible for itself, but it also inherits circumstances that may be somewhat, but not totally, beyond its control.[91]

The next two rulers, Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, are summarily dismissed by noting their evil ways, the plundering of the temple vessels, and their exiles to Babylon (2 Chr 36:5–10). The final king, Zedekiah, brings the dystopia to its nadir by his refusal to listen to the prophetic word. He does evil, refuses to humble himself before the prophet Jeremiah, rebels against Nebuchadnezzar even in violation of an oath to God, stiffens his neck, and hardens his heart (2 Chr 36:12–13). However, he is not alone in this misconduct: "all leading priests" (כל שרי הכהנים) and the people were "exceedingly unfaithful" (הרבו למעול מעל), polluted the temple (v. 14), and rejected the messengers and prophets sent by YHWH out of compassion (vv. 15–16).[92] Finally, the city and temple are destroyed and those surviving the onslaught are exiled as servants to Babylon (vv. 17–20). This servitude lasts until the rise of Persia, which begins a new era for the people of YHWH (vv. 20–23). The complete disappearance of Zedekiah at the end of the narrative, along with the similar silence on Jehoiachin's release from prison (2 Kgs 25:27–30), is hardly suggestive of an overt hope for the restoration of the Davidic dynasty at the conclusion of the book. Rather, all of the reigning monarchs after Josiah are explicitly exiled or simply forgotten without any further information about their condition or death.[93] Hope for the future is not attached to the Davidic dynasty, but to the opportunity for an end to exile, the return of the people to the land, and the building of the

91. The people bear some responsibility in this since they are the ones who select Jehoahaz as king.

92. While these two verses could be taken as a summary for the entire history of Israel or at least of an extended period at the end of the nation's existence (Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 300–301), the actions taken in the verses are clearly performed by the same subjects of v. 14—those at the time of Zedekiah and the destruction itself. Thus, while Kings blames Manasseh and the people at the time of Zedekiah for the exile (2 Kgs 23:26–27; 24:3–4, 18), Chronicles is quite clear that the exile was the result of those at the time of Zedekiah regardless of the downward spiral evident in the period immediately preceding his reign.

93. On the basis of the account in 2 Kgs 25:5–7 it is *assumed* that Zedekiah is also among those exiled in 2 Chr 36:20; however, the Chronicler's text is silent about his ultimate fate (contra Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 243).

temple.[94] Thus, the dystopia under Zedekiah is replaced by the possibility of utopia under the Persian monarchs if the people act accordingly.[95]

Excursus: Burial Notices as Utopian Space in Chronicles[96]

The Chronicler's burial notices for the monarchs are treated collectively in this excursus. There has been no systematic treatment of the Chronicler's burial notices published to date. In previous studies, all discussions of these data occur in the context of other topics or as passing remarks.[97] This excursus presents an analysis of

94. Contra the claims that the fates of the Davidic dynasty and the temple are paralleled in the final chapter of Chronicles (Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 412; and Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 297). Both come to an end, but the temple alone is the subject of restoration at the book's conclusion in 2 Chr 36:22–23.

95. Note the contrast between the rejection of Jeremiah's words by Zedekiah and the fulfillment of his prophecy by Cyrus. This detail highlights the disparity between the two options for response by the readers. The Chronicler's position is clear: Foreign rulers supporting YHWH and his people are to be preferred to a Davidic monarch who leads the people into destruction; cf. Ben Zvi, "When the Foreign Monarch Speaks," 227; and Murray, "Dynasty, People, and the Future," 75–79.

96. On the term "utopian space," see Chapter 2 n. 93. This analysis draws on insights from spatial theory, derived from formative work by two theorists—Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (trans. D. Nicholson-Smith; Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); and Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989)—and by three biblical scholars: Jon L. Berquist, "Critical Spatiality and the Construction of the Ancient World," in *"Imagining" Biblical Worlds: Studies in Spatial, Social and Historical Construction in Honor of James W. Flanagan* (ed. D. M. Gunn and P. M. McNutt; JSOTSup 359; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 14–29; Claudia V. Camp, "Storied Space, or, Ben Sira 'Tells' a Temple," in Gunn and McNutt, eds., *"Imagining" Biblical Worlds*, 64–80; and James W. Flanagan, "Space," in *Handbook of Postmodern Biblical Interpretation* (ed. A. K. M. Adam; St. Louis, Miss.: Chalice, 2000), 239–44. See the detailed discussion of spatial theory and its terminology in my essay, "Exploring the Utopian Space of Chronicles: Some Spatial Anomalies," in *Constructions of Space in the Past, Present, and Future* (ed. C. V. Camp and J. L. Berquist; LHBOTS; London: T&T Clark International, forthcoming).

97. In addition to the commentaries at the relevant isolated verses, see the following: Norbert Dennerlein, "Jerusalem in the Book of Chronicles," in *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies. Division A: The Bible and Its World* (ed. R. Margolin; Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1999), 141–47 (146–47); David A. Glatt-Gilad, "Regnal Formulae as a Historiographic Device in the Book of Chronicles," *RB* 108 (2001): 184–209 (203–5); Baruch Halpern, "Sacred History and Ideology: Chronicles' Thematic Structure—Indications of an Earlier Source," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature: Composition and Redaction of the Biblical Text* (ed. R. E. Friedman; University of California Publications: Near Eastern Studies 22; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of

the data *in their entirety* from the perspective of utopian literary theory. In this method, the depiction of space as a utopian construct will be assessed and applied to the Chronicler's burial notices.

Chronicles exhibits considerable interest in such burial notices throughout the narrative. While Samuel–Kings mentions many royal burials, Chronicles provides more detailed and variant forms of such notices than the often stereotypical language of the parallel text. Since much of this information is regarded as part of the Chronicler's *Sondergut*, scholars have suggested that these burial notices carry an evaluative quality in accordance with the Chronicler's *Tendenz*. Thus, for example, according to the Chronicler's supposed retributive theology, the righteous kings are blessed even in death and the unrighteous ones are denied the full benefit of their royal position. However, the evidence demonstrates that such is not consistently the case.[98] The relevant data are collected in the table appearing below (pp. 122–23).

California Press, 1981), 35–54 (49); Im, *Davidbild in den Chronikbüchern*, 107–10; Brian E. Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles* (JSOTSup 211; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), *passim*; Ralph W. Klein, "The Ironic End of Joash in Chronicles," in *For a Later Generation: The Transformation of Tradition in Israel, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity. Festschrift for George W. E. Nickelsburg* (ed. R. A. Argall, B. A. Bow, and R. A. Werline; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2000), 116–27" (126); E. J. Smit, "Death and Burial Formulas in Kings and Chronicles Relating to the Kings of Judah," in *Biblical Essays: Proceedings of the Ninth Meeting of Die Oud-Testamentiese Werkgemeenskap in Suid-Afrika* (Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 1966), 173–77; and Tomotoshi Sugimoto, "The Chronicler's Techniques in Quoting Samuel–Kings," *AJBI* 6 (1990): 30–70 (54); idem, "Chronicles as Historiography: An Investigation in Scripture's Use of Scripture" (Ph.D. diss., University of Sheffield, 1989), 70–72.

98. Contra Sugimoto who notes the qualifying remarks for *some*, though not all, of the "evil" kings as being negative, but proceeds to interpret the qualifiers for Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah as being positive ("Chronicler's Techniques," 54). Dennerlein states that "burial in the graves of kings honours those who have deserved well of the Lord and the cult" ("Jerusalem in the Book of Chronicles," 147). McKenzie also has recently asserted that the burial notices function as "expressions of favor or disfavor" in Chronicles (*1–2 Chronicles*, 356–57).

The idea of using the burial notices as indicators of the Chronicler's depiction of the moral character of the kings has recently been asserted by Kelly (*Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles*). Kelly notes this *Tendenz* in passing (pp. 37, 106), claims Asa and Hezekiah are enhanced in burial with "special honours" (pp. 97, 105), notes exclusion from the tombs is a negative comment for Jehoram, Joash, and Ahaz (pp. 100, 105), and declares that Jehoiada's "singular honour" does *not* indicate the Chronicler's sympathy for high-priestly supremacy over the king (p. 203). As with Sugimoto, Kelly ignores the evidence for "evil" kings receiving "good" burials and also fails to discuss the silence over Amon. While I agree with his basic conclusion about Jehoiada (see below), I obviously disagree with his reading of the other burial notices. Compare the claim by Halpern that "Jehoiada is a royal figure for Chronicles. His 130-year life span is plain testimony to his righteousness; his burial among kings is proof" ("Sacred History and Ideology," 49 n. 28).

The monarchs can be classified into three groups: (1) those buried with their ancestors in the "city of David" without qualification (Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Jehoshaphat, Amaziah, Jotham, and Josiah);[99] (2) those receiving some type of additional statement about where they were buried (Asa, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joash, Uzziah, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, and the chief priest Jehoiada); (3) those lacking burial notices (David [cf. 1 Kgs 2:10]; Amon, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah).

Two brief observations: first, the burial notices are almost consistently the final information given about a king before moving on to his successor (thus, the "last word" on a given king); second, the details of the burial notices do not conform to any pattern of "good" or "evil" kings. The appearance of both good and bad kings in the second group (especially including Hezekiah here instead of with Solomon and Josiah in the first group), the ambiguity surrounding Manasseh's unique burial, and the missing notices for David and Amon all work against a simple pattern of "good king = good burial" in Chronicles. Thus, the Chronicler does not use this information to reinforce the evaluative judgment on a specific monarch. In fact, if anything, the Chronicler's burial notices complicate the assessment of a monarch's reign.[100] The Chronicler *does not* have a simplistic understanding of the monarchy conveyed through a dichotomy of righteousness and unrighteousness. Instead, the individual monarchs reflect the nature of reality from the Chronicler's perspective: life and people are highly complex, and they cannot be reduced to simplistic categorization.

In his spatial theory, Lefebvre notes that one of the examples of "priestly" control of the spatial matrix of a society is the establishment of proper location and differentiation via burial practice.[101] Even in death, the leadership of a community may be distinguished from the rest of society. And even within the burials of the leadership, a value judgment on these individuals may be indicated by the elaborateness or physical location of one's grave in comparison with another.[102] Thus, the ruling class or individuals may reinforce its position of power by appealing to burial practices of the community as evidence of their authority, honor, and mandate to rule.

Although the use of burial notices for hegemonic purposes in Chronicles has been asserted, the evidence taken holistically indicates otherwise. Indeed, the burial notices in Chronicles are utopian spaces which critique claims to power that are based on the location of an individual or familial ancestry.

99. Although the Chronicler has additional material regarding the laments made for Josiah and their continued use in the tradition, the details of the burial notice itself are identical to those for the other kings listed in this group.

100. This similar complexity can be seen in the Chronicler's periodization of the reigns of the monarchs. See n. 44, above, for the schematic patterns laid out for the monarchs.

101. Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 240.

102. A hierarchical view of burial practice persists even to the present day, with elaborate mausoleums for the "important" individuals or families and "mass graves" for the insignificant (as horrible as such an actuality is).

The Death and Burial Notices of the Monarchs in Chronicles

Reference	*Monarch*	*Death and Burial Language*	*Same Details as Samuel–Kings?*	*Verdict on Monarch (+/–)*
1 Chr 10:5, 12	Saul	suicide; under the oak of Jabesh	Yes	–
1 Chr 29:26–30	David	old, rich, honored; burial not mentioned	No	+
2 Chr 9:31	Solomon	slept with his ancestors; in the city of his father David	Yes	+
2 Chr 12:16	Rehoboam	slept with his ancestors; in the city of David	Yes	+ then –
2 Chr 13:23 (14:1 Eng.)	Abijah	slept with his ancestors; in the city of David	Yes	+
2 Chr 16:12–14	Asa	diseased, slept with his ancestors; in the tomb that he had hewn out for himself in the city of David, with elaborate funeral pyre	No	+ then –
2 Chr 21:1	Jehoshaphat	slept with his ancestors; in the city of David with his ancestors	Yes	+ and –
2 Chr 21:18–20	Jehoram	in agony to no one's regret; no pyre, in city of David but not in the tombs of the kings	No	–
2 Chr 22:9	Ahaziah	murdered; buried as Jehoshaphat's grandson, without specific location	No	–
2 Chr 23:15, 21	Athaliah	murdered; burial not mentioned	Yes	–
2 Chr 24:25	Joash	murdered; in city of David, but not in tombs of the kings	No	+ then –
2 Chr 25:27–28	Amaziah	murdered; with his ancestors in city of David	Yes	+ then –

2 Chr 26:23	Uzziah	slept with his ancestors; near his ancestors in burial field belonging to kings, due to disease	No	+ then –
2 Chr 27:9	Jotham	slept with ancestors; in city of David	Yes	+
2 Chr 28:27	Ahaz	slept with ancestors; in the city, in Jerusalem, not in the tombs of kings of Israel	No	–
2 Chr 32:33	Hezekiah	slept with ancestors; on ascent to tombs of descendants of David, honored by people	No	+
2 Chr 33:20	Manasseh	slept with ancestors; in his house	No	– then +
2 Chr 33:24–25	Amon	murdered; burial not mentioned	No	–
2 Chr 35:23–25	Josiah	killed in battle; in tombs of his ancestors, mourned by people	No	+
2 Chr 36:3–4	Jehoahaz	exiled to Egypt; death not mentioned	No	not explicit
2 Chr 36:6	Jehoiakim	exiled in fetters to Babylon; death not mentioned	No	–
2 Chr 36:10	Jehoiachin	exiled to Babylon; death not mentioned	Yes	–
2 Chr 36:12–20	Zedekiah	not explicit	No	–
2 Chr 24:15–16	Jehoiada	old, full of days; in city of David among the kings	No	+

Spatially, burial notices in Chronicles locate monarchs (and one leading priest) in relationship to David and to the Davidic line. As stated above, the Chronicler does not use this space as a means to reinforce patterns or to comment on the quality of the kings. Good kings do not always receive the best burials and evil kings may receive burials not befitting their moral (and thus, for the Chronicler, theological) character. Could this "non-pattern" be an attack on those who claim superiority by pointing to their family's superior burial plots or their physical proximity to the Davidic tombs in particular? While speculative, an affirmative answer would help to make sense of the utopian space of burial notices in the Chronicler's narrative. Chronicles rejects any sort of inherent power or theological correctness on the basis of where one's ancestors are buried. Such a conclusion has significant implications for considering power struggles or class conflict in Jerusalem during the Persian and early Hellenistic periods. While ancestry is obviously important in Chronicles—the extensive genealogies in 1 Chr 1–9 are proof enough of this[103]—the hierarchy of authority in the Second Temple period is not reflected by burial practices from the First Temple period, at least according to its presentation in Chronicles.

In addition, Jehoiada's inclusion in the tombs of the kings is especially provocative as part of the Chronicler's construction of utopian space. This information about Jehoiada is unique to Chronicles and is also the *only* reference to *any* priest being buried among royalty. One *could* conclude from this that Chronicles creates the possibility of priestly or high-priestly claims of power based on burial practices. If (high) priests can be buried among Davidic royalty, then does this not indicate a transfer of power from the Davidic line to the "Zadokite" high-priestly office? As part of the refutation of such a position, it should be noted that in Chronicles Jehoiada is not explicitly a Zadokite, he is not a *high* priest, and he is the *only* priest to have such an honor.[104] Again, no pattern is established in Chronicles indicating that all priests, all high priests, or all Zadokites receive such a distinguished burial. Jehoiada's burial notice is *clearly* an anomaly and further contributes to the creation of a "non-pattern" in Chronicles. Thus, Jehoiada's "royal burial" should not be interpreted as an indication of Zadokite supremacy in the Second Temple period.

Indeed, such details may also serve as a critique of those claiming (whether individuals contemporary with the Chronicler or modern scholars) that such burial practices indicate righteousness before God, and therefore the location of true authority in the community. Chronicles may even turn such priestly claims on their head by creating Jehoiada's burial in the narrative and then "neutralizing" it with the inconsistent burial notices of the Davidic kings. Such burial places existed, or at least were claimed to exist, in the reality of the Second Temple period.[105] The Chronicler redefines their (non)-significance.

To use the terminology of spatial theory, the Firstspace (actual physical space and its immediate social associations) of these sites had a definite function in Thirdspace

103. However, even the Chronicler's genealogies are utopian in nature by providing a critique of the *status quo* rather than simply reinforcing those in positions of power.

104. See my article, "High Priest in Chronicles," for further discussion on these points.

105. The "graves of David" (קברי דויד) are mentioned as present realities in the Second Temple period in Neh 3:16.

(practices lived out in real space); this analysis suggests that these burial spaces have been infused with a new understanding by the Chronicler from Secondspace (imposed ideology on space)—they are utopian spaces, no longer spaces of power and control, but spaces emptied of whatever associations may have been attached to them. In Chronicles, burial space in the Second Temple period is now a space of contention, and not political or religious oppression. These burial notices thus reinforce the utopian ideology of Chronicles by constructing a *better alternative reality* in which burial space and practice do *not* indicate social status in the community.

3.2. *A Utopian Future in Chronicles: Conclusions about the Political Dimension*

This section concludes the analysis of the Chronicler's political utopia. Three main issues will be discussed: the view of the role of the monarchy in the future, the importance of the exile, and the possibility of producing a utopia while under the rule of a foreign power. As will be seen, the Chronicler's positions on these issues are presented with a certain amount of ambiguity, but a great deal of possibility.

3.2.1. *Restoration or Reapplication? A Synthetic Reading of the Monarchy in Chronicles*

Since the concept of an alternative reality is a key component of utopian literature, it is a possibility that the Chronicler advocates a restoration of the Davidic dynasty in contrast to its absence in his present. Such a position finds support from those scholars who adopt an eschatological, messianic, or royalist understanding of Chronicles. However, there is another possible utopian reading of the Davidic dynasty in Chronicles. The utopian future in Chronicles is a cultic society that does not *require* any specific political system or a Davidide in particular to bring it into existence. The key word in the previous sentence is "require." The brief assessment in this section contends that a better understanding of the Chronicler's utopian ideology for the future is to allow that the Davidic dynasty *may* be part of the future of Israel, but that its restoration is *not necessary* for achieving utopia as it is constructed in Chronicles.

As explained in Chapter 1, one of the common misconceptions about utopian literature is that it portrays an unchanging society based on a blueprint of exact details which are necessary for its existence. However, this understanding of utopia has been rejected. Rather, utopias sketch out a *better alternative reality* that may adapt as historical circumstances change. Thus, historical reconstruction of a society based on utopian literature is problematic, but the enumeration of debated issues and societal conflicts at the time of a utopia's composition is a better understanding

of the nature of this genre. It is within such a framework that the Davidic monarchy in Chronicles can be assessed more coherently.

First, it is clear that the chief purpose of the dynasty is responsibility for the cult. The Chronicler's version of the "dynastic promise" emphasizes that Solomon is chosen as David's successor for the explicit purpose of building the temple (1 Chr 17:10b–15; cf. 1 Chr 22:9–10; 28:2–7; 2 Chr 7:17–18). Thus, all of his descendants who properly administer and support the temple are portrayed in utopian terms even to the point of subtly critiquing righteous kings who fail to institute additional reforms after periods of sin and repentance. In addition, at the conclusion of the work, the focus is clearly on the temple and cult while the monarchy simply disappears from the scene (2 Chr 36:14–23). Finally, in this passage, the people are to return to restore the temple under the auspices of the Persian kings. The monarchy, or even a Davidic descendant, is absent (cf. 2 Kgs 25:27–29).

Second, the foreign rulers and the Persian kings in particular are presented as fulfilling the duties of the Davidic dynasty in attending to the cult. Neco speaks the words of God (2 Chr 35:21–22), and Cyrus acts to fulfill them (36:22–23). Specifically, Cyrus is used by God to restore his people to the land and to rebuild the temple. The repeated concerns for the restoration of the tribes in exile and for the maintenance of the temple in Chronicles have been noted previously. There is no such explicit concern for the restoration of the dynasty in Chronicles.

This is *not* to say that the Chronicler disallows the *possibility* of a future restoration of the monarchy. The "covenant of salt" made with David (2 Chr 13:5) suggests a possible future for the dynasty, as does the recording of the Solomonic genealogy well into the postexilic period (1 Chr 3:10–24). However, these texts hold out the *possibility* of restoration and not its *necessity*. The Chronicler is somewhat vague about this issue: he does not explicitly advocate the restoration of the dynasty and neither does he explicitly doom the dynasty to oblivion. He is clear that military revolt against the foreign power or the forcible appointment of a Davidic king in the present is not the proper course of action. Just as Chronicles holds out the possibility that the remaining tribes will be restored *if God so acts in history*, the Chronicler preserves the *option* for a restoration of the dynasty by God's agency.[106] Yet, the Chronicler does

106. Compare Gabriel, *Friede über Israel*, 4–5. Braun notes the ambiguity of this presentation in Chronicles, but concludes that it is possible that the Chronicler simply "did not know" the outcome of the Davidic hope ("Cyrus in Second and Third Isaiah, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah," 163–64). My view differs from Braun in affirming that the Chronicler is aware of numerous options for restoration

not depend on it for the future existence of the community. Instead, he reinforces the necessity of the temple cult and *continued* faithfulness to YHWH on the part of *all* those in the land.

Third, the Chronicler provides a subtle argument that at its heart Israel is a theocracy in the true sense of the word whether it has a Davidic monarch, a Persian overlord, or any other political system in place. God rules the people. The Chronicler directly associates the throne of the king with the throne of God (1 Chr 28:5; 29:23; 2 Chr 9:8; 13:8). Thus, even though a human—and specifically a Davidide—is the visible monarch, it is YHWH who is the true ruler. The kingship of YHWH is not affected by the identity of whoever is currently ruling over the people; thus, the unrighteous kings, the usurper and non-Davidide Athaliah, and the Persian kings do not negate this reality. In addition, David himself affirms that kingship belongs to YHWH (1 Chr 16:31; 29:10–12), and the belief is repeated by Jehoshaphat at a critical point in Judah's existence (2 Chr 20:6).

Finally, and most significantly, the Davidic dynasty has demonstrated its own futility in attempts to establish a utopia. The apparent utopia at the time of Solomon dissipates. Dystopia is formed all too easily and can only be forged into a temporary utopia that has no permanence. The monarchy cannot sustain a utopian society. The temple cult alone provides the means for establishing utopia.[107] Unfaithfulness (מעל) has been the problem, but faithfulness (חסד, אמת, אמן) is the means by which the Chronicler's *better alternative reality* can be achieved.

3.2.2. *The Exile and Its Implications for Utopia in Chronicles*

The two exiles imposed on the people of Israel (the Assyrian deportation of 722/721 B.C.E. and the Babylonian exile of 587/586 B.C.E.) are catastrophic events in both the genealogies and narrative of Chronicles. "Unfaithfulness" (מעל) has produced these dystopias for the people. However, this is not the end of history. Indeed, although the Northern Kingdom was still perceived to be in a state of exile, Chronicles suggests the possibility of a future return for these tribes (2 Chr 30:6–9). In the same regard, the Babylonian exile was not the end for the Southern Kingdom of Judah, but it was only a temporary period of rest which "wiped the slate clean" to provide a new opportunity to rebuild a society that is not hindered by the failures of the past. Thus, in Chronicles, the land is empty during the exile (2 Chr 36:21), which disrupts the spatial-temporal lines of continuity with the past.

(of people, temple, and land) and any of these could be utilized *by God* in re-establishing the Davidic dynasty if that was part of the divine plan.

107. See the evidence provided to support this claim in Chapter 4.

The period of exile witnesses the cessation of the monarchy, the temple cult, the people's dwelling in the land, and, at least by implication, the prophetic word. Cyrus' decree indicates that the temple will be rebuilt, the people will return to the land, and the prophetic voice and its fulfillment are active once again. However, the only monarch mentioned is the Persian Cyrus, who speaks with a message from God and acts in obedience to it.[108] The dystopian political organization of the past remains in the past. The future utopia in Chronicles will not necessarily be realized through the re-establishment of the dynasty.

The exile serves as the spatial–temporal line of demarcation in Chronicles.[109] The future cannot be the same as the past, nor is it a simple continuation of it. Much of the past is irrevocably lost (e.g. the temple vessels, the ark, and the borders of the Israelite nation) without any possibility of restoring these *original* conditions or items. Instead, adaptation, historical change, is the avenue to be pursued in the construction of a *better alternative reality* to the past and present. The Chronicler's rejection of a single ideal time or condition in the past opens up numerous possibilities for the future. This is particularly evident in the details of cultic reforms. None is identical. Variation and adaptation are the keys to success. So also with the political dimension: none of the judicial systems in Chronicles is identical, nor is the spatial extent of Israel's land consistent, nor does the Davidic monarchy seem to have a particular function in the restoration society. The past *should not be replicated*, but its positive and negative lessons should be learned for living in the present and future. There is no blueprint for a future political utopia in Chronicles. Rather, Chronicles presents a *better alternative reality* that has a political dimension, but which focuses on the cult rather than political organization.[110]

108. Wright correctly notes that this assertion of direct divine communication by Cyrus is a "Solomonic claim" by the foreign ruler, but proceeds to state that "No assessment is made of the validity of this claim, however" ("Beyond Transcendence and Immanence," 258). Yet, coupled with the Chronicler's previous attribution of direct divine communication to Pharaoh Neco, the Chronicler's assessment seems to affirm the claim by Cyrus and indeed heightens the prestige of Cyrus by recourse to a Solomonic parallel.

109. This is a common device in Hellenistic utopian literature and in More's *Utopia* for establishing a key point in the historical development of a utopian community. See the remarks about the exile's relegation to an "interruption" in Chronicles by Knoppers (*I Chronicles 1–9*, 514; idem, *I Chronicles 10–29*, 889).

110. This makes Chronicles very different from Hellenistic utopian literature, which almost never discusses a utopia with cultic concerns as a key component of its political program. The exception to this is the political utopia with priests as the final authority in Euhemerus (in Diod. Sic. 5.42.5, 45.3b–5, 46.2–3).

3.3.3. *Utopia Under the (Persian) Empire?*

The subjugation of Israel under a foreign power without an independent political system raises serious questions concerning the Chronicler's advocacy of such prospects for the future. Whether the foreign power from the fourth century B.C.E. in question is Persia or Greece is relevant to the discussion, but the answer does not alter the main points that follow.[111] Is political independence a necessity for utopia, or can utopia exist under an empire?

If the Chronicler, as seems to be the case, fails to advocate the overthrow of or revolt against the imperial regime, then the implementation of a *better alternative reality* by the removal of the foreign power can only come through God's action. The Chronicler may allow for such to happen, but this is not the primary message which he wishes to convey. The readers of Chronicles gain no insight into the process by which such events would occur. Instead, the Chronicler does provide evidence that the current power is to be accepted and dealt with for the benefit of the community, since its members are the instruments of God at this time. God's control of history is a central concern in Chronicles. If this present empire (whether Persian or Greek) should be overthrown by another, then that must be the will of God or a result of his involvement in human affairs. However, the community is not to seek the overthrow of the foreign power because it is the will of God for them at this time.

God provided the means of attaining a utopia, a lasting utopia, by the actions of Cyrus and the Persian Empire.[112] The community's obligation is to respond accordingly and take advantage of the situation in which they find themselves. Two passages are significant in this respect:

111. The issue of whether the late Persian period or early Hellenistic era is more probable will not be addressed here; cf. Section 1.1.2 on the date of Chronicles. The subject in this section is restricted to the issue of Israel's subjugation to a foreign power as an ideological problem for a utopian construction of reality.

112. This assumes a Persian date for Chronicles, but is still valid for a Hellenistic date. The process begun under the Persians could continue under these new leaders. The point of departure for a new future in Chronicles is the exile and the promised restoration, not the subsequent shift in world powers. Compare the remark that "the effective political power of the day is not a matter of concern to the Chronicler" by Richard J. Coggins, "Theology and Hermeneutics in the Books of Chronicles," in *In Search of True Wisdom: Essays in Old Testament Interpretation in Honour of Ronald E. Clements* (ed. E. Ball; JSOTSup 300; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 263–78 (266). One is tempted to agree with Dyck that if the Chronicler had been among those in the procession to greet Alexander the Great as recorded in Josephus (*Ant.* 11.326–339), the Chronicler would have been at the front leading the way for the arrival of this next instrument of God (*Theocratic Ideology*, 3).

Shishak's invasion at the time of Rehoboam (2 Chr 12:7–12) and a section of Solomon's prayer at the temple dedication (2 Chr 6:36–40).

In the first, God allows Jerusalem to become temporarily subject to Egypt to instruct the Israelites in "the difference between serving [God] and serving the kingdoms of other lands" (2 Chr 12:8). This verse could be read as a reflection by the Chronicler on the state of subjection to Persia (or Greece) in his own day. Such a reading would echo the perception of slavery to Persia expressed as a complaint in Neh 9:36–37. However, the Chronicler is quick to conclude the section on Shishak's invasion with the comment that "conditions were good in Judah" (2 Chr 12:12). The conditions in this state of affairs were thus better and more desirable than those under most of the subsequent Davidic monarchs.

In the second, Solomon concludes his prayer with a brief petition for God to forgive the people once they have repented in their state of punishment: an exile from the land (2 Chr 6:36–40). What Solomon does not say about the state of exile in this prayer is significant. If the Davidic–Solomonic era is an "ideal" state to which Israel should hope to return by replication, as many scholars have believed, then this would be an appropriate location for comments regarding the future restoration of the people from exile, of the temple complex, and of the restoration of the Davidic dynasty. However, all that the text relates is that God should forgive them without specifying how that forgiveness would take practical form. Chronicles also lacks the line in 1 Kgs 8:50b-51 that God should cause their "captors" (שביהם) to grant the people compassion. Perhaps the Chronicler wishes to avoid the possible labeling of the Persians (or Greeks) as "captors" who are holding the community as prisoners. Perhaps this is one additional way in which the Chronicler presents the foreign kings as the legitimate political authority in his utopian construction of reality. In the Chronicler's opinion, the Persians (or Greeks) should not be compared to the Egyptians who held Israel in the "furnace of iron" (כור הברזל), as they are negatively described in 1 Kgs 8:50b–51. Instead, the foreign empire is the divine agent through whom God is working to establish a *better alternative reality* for the community if they too will join in this process.

If this position of tolerance by the Chronicler for foreign powers in his political utopia is accepted, then Chronicles has no direct political parallel in the utopian literature from antiquity. That the Hellenistic utopias should be independent city-states is not surprising given the Greek's loathing of kings and propensity toward local autonomy.[113] The vast

113. See the comments by Erich S. Gruen, "Introduction," in *Images and Ideologies: Self-definition in the Hellenistic World* (ed. A. Bulloch, E. S. Gruen,

majority of texts in the HB, New Testament, and Second Temple period reflect the belief that either a Davidic descendant or God himself will rule over the chosen community. The lone exception is the local Christian communities of the New Testament and of the book of Acts in particular.[114] These utopian communities accept—or are instructed to accept—many, though not all, of the social parameters imposed on them, working within the overall limits of the socio-politico-economic system of the Roman Empire. These communities do not attempt social upheaval or political revolt. The Chronicler has a parallel interest: identifying what *must* change and what *cannot* change given the present historical situation. The Chronicler fails to see the wisdom of political revolt, so that course of action is discouraged. However, the future of the community *can* be built on the cult, since this institution has the backing of the political power of his day, and provides the source of stability and identity for the community.

A. A. Long, and A. Stewart; Hellenistic Culture and Society 12; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 3–6 (4–5).

114. See the detailed discussions of these various primary texts in my dissertation, "Reading Utopia in Chronicles," 159–81.

Chapter 4

A Cultic Utopia

4.1. *A Utopian Temple: The Priesthood, Sacrifice, and High Priesthood in Chronicles*

"One of the few points about which all commentators on Chronicles are agreed is that the temple was of central significance to its author."[1] This claim by Williamson is a correct assessment of a rare consensus among scholars working on Chronicles. However, this consensus begins to dissolve almost immediately as scholars attempt to clarify further the identity of the author and the precise nature of his interest in the operation of the temple cult.

In addition, the date of Chronicles and its perceived relationship to social reality also impact the interpretation of the arguments advanced by the Chronicler in support of the temple. Thus, for example, if Chronicles (or at least its earliest stratum) is dated to the period of the temple construction in the early Persian period, then the book is seen as a piece of propaganda literature designed to encourage support for the proposed or recently completed building project. However, if Chronicles is dated to a much later point in either the Persian or Hellenistic periods, then the conflict with the Samaritans and their rival temple often is postulated as the appropriate context in which to understand the claims made about the temple and its cult. In both of these cases, the depiction of the temple cult is understood as a defense of the present cultic organization, its validity, and claims to authority.

In this common view, the portrayal of the cult during the First Temple period in Chronicles frequently is *assumed* to reflect Second Temple practice and the discrepancies in the details throughout the book indicate multiple redactional layers from new historical contexts that attempt to anchor these innovations, which have already been implemented, in the hallowed past. This assumption has been supported by and built on numerous analyses of the development of the priesthood and temple cult

1. Williamson, "Temple in Chronicles," 15.

in the HB and Second Temple literature. These studies have tended to relegate the practices of the detailed cultic system of Chronicles to the postexilic period. Thus, while the historical value of Chronicles for the reconstruction of the temple cult during the First Temple period has been largely rejected (with a few exceptions), its value for reconstructing a history of the temple cult in the Second Temple period has been largely embraced in scholarship.[2] As noted previously, the criteria by which such a determination of assigning specific practices and details to one of these two periods are ambiguous at best. However, there is another interpretative option: the description of the temple cult in Chronicles does not reflect *any* historical reality—neither preexilic nor postexilic—but instead is a utopian construction by the Chronicler revealing his vision for a *better alternative reality* to be enjoyed in the future if it will be accepted by the community of his own time. Thus, from the perspective of utopian literary theory, Chronicles does not reflect historical reality, but instead critiques it and suggests in its place a different society that may yet exist.

The utopian portrayal of the temple cult in Chronicles will be the subject of this chapter. This discussion of the utopian temple cult in Chronicles begins with its presentation of the priesthood, high priesthood, and the sacrificial system. The personnel who serve as priests and leading priests are clearly distinguished in their identity and duties from the other groups of cultic officials: the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, and other temple servants.[3] Scholars have assumed that the details of these activities provided in Chronicles—and especially in the *Sondergut*—either reflect Second Temple practice or, to a lesser extent, reflect traditions from the First Temple period. Further, conflicting reports or variety in details in Chronicles is assumed to indicate either redactional strata or the incorporation of sources that were not edited, that is, it is the work of a sloppy redactor or a pietistic copyist. In the following analysis, these interpretations are challenged and another understanding is presented that affirms the coherence of the Chronicler's depiction of the temple cult when viewed from the perspective of utopian literary theory.

4.1.1. *The Identity of the Priests*

In Chronicles, the identity of the priests is not uniformly established. Almost all priests are provided with an ancestry. Others, especially some of those identified as leading priests, are not. However, in all of the

2. Wellhausen's influence in this regard should not be underestimated (*Prolegomena*, 171–227).

3. This point has been argued convincingly in detail by Knoppers, "Hierodules, Priests, or Janitors?"

instances that explicitly provide priests with some ancestry or identification, they are always of Aaronide descent within the larger Levitical genealogy. This relationship is one of the means of distinguishing between the two groups: all priests are Levites, but not all Levites are priests.[4]

Yet, there is a further distinction among the priests within the lineage of Aaron. The entire priesthood is traced back to Aaron's two surviving sons, Eleazar and Ithamar (1 Chr 23:13–14; 24:1–19).[5] All of the descendants of Ithamar serve as priests as indicated by their organization into eight courses for service (1 Chr 24:1–19). The descendants of Eleazar are further divided into two groups: those descended from Eleazar's son Phinehas and those claiming any other association with Eleazar. The first group descended from Phinehas constitutes the line of leading priests while the second group operates within the wider context of the priesthood just as their cousins of Ithamarite descent do. That is, except for those descended from Phinehas who serve as leading priests, descent from Eleazar or Ithamar does not affect the types of duties assigned to each group or their status as priests.[6]

The distinction already present in P between the Levites and the descendants of Aaron who serve as priests is thus continued in Chronicles. Although Chronicles does use the characteristically Deuteronomic phrase "levitical priests" on one occasion (2 Chr 23:18),[7] Chronicles does *not* affirm the proposition that all priests are Levites and all Levites are priests as advocated by the Deuteronomic literature. The position held in Ezek 40–48 that only the Zadokites may serve as authentic priests (40:45–46; 43:19; 44:5–31; 48:11) is also *not* supported by the presentation of the priesthood in Chronicles. The Chronicler emphasizes that *all* priests are descended from Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron. Thus, in Chronicles, those claiming descent from Zadok are only one of several groups with claims to serve as priests.

4. Compare the summary by Aelred Cody, *A History of Old Testament Priesthood* (AnBib 35; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969), 167.

5. The distinction between Aaronide priests and other Levites is further emphasized by the explicit location of Moses' sons among the Levites and not the priests in 1 Chr 23:13–14.

6. Ithamar and Eleazar have distinct duties for the care of the tabernacle in the Pentateuch. In Chronicles, no such separation of duties between the two groups is evident.

7. Many scholars have held that the MT contains a scribal error, either originally reading "priests and Levites" or "the divisions of the priests and Levites" as attested by the ancient versions (see Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 835–36). If this is correct, the distinction between D and Chronicles is made even more evident.

While Chronicles affirms the claims of the Aaronides to the priesthood, it should be noted that Chronicles lacks genealogies for the priests descended from Eleazar and Ithamar. This is in contrast to the extensive Levitical genealogies and the genealogies of the leading priests. The members of the priesthood are divided into twenty-four divisions based on their ancestral houses, but lineages that connect these houses to Aaron's sons are not included. This suggests that Chronicles was not meant to establish, without subsequent adjustments, the parameters for the personnel who operate as priests within the temple cult. For example, in the settlement list of 1 Chr 9:3–34,[8] priests are mentioned among those who returned to the land, but only five individuals are specifically named. In contrast, their *unnamed* "kindred, heads of their ancestral houses" who serve as priests, number 1,760 (v. 13).

Just as with the genealogies of 1 Chr 1–9 discussed in Chapter 2, the open-ended nature of these priestly divisions does not provide clear criteria by which to adjudicate claims of descent from the priestly lines.[9] Thus, while the information about the identity of the priests in Chronicles has been traditionally understood as an affirmation of the *status quo*, the Chronicler's identification of the priests is better understood as part of his utopian construct. Instead of reflecting an existing historical situation, the Chronicler may be advocating a means of organization that was implemented *as a result* of his composition. Japhet notes that ten of the twenty-four names in the list of courses are also the leaders of ancestral houses in Neh 12:12–21. She suggests a development from the list in Nehemiah to the stabilized form recorded in Chronicles.[10] Thus, for Japhet, the Chronicler represents the end of this process rather than being one of the contributors to the ongoing process of reorganization in the operation of the temple cult. As she notes, this structural process cannot be reconstructed because of a "lack of evidence and documentation."[11] Thus, the scholarly *assumption* is that Chronicles reflects a point of consensus attained prior to or at the time of its composition since, according

8. This list is related in some way to the similar list in Neh 11:3–24. The latter list also includes a large but different number of unnamed priests without providing genealogies for them. This is another example of the Chronicler taking his cue from his sources in developing his own utopian text.

9. In Ezra 2:59–63//Neh 7:61–65, individuals who could not prove their genealogical descent from priestly lines were excluded from the priesthood. There is no hint of a concern for maintaining or preserving detailed *priestly* genealogies in Chronicles; cf. the remarks in 2 Chr 31:18.

10. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 423–29.

11. Ibid., 429.

to a wide variety of texts that postdate Chronicles, the priesthood is organized in a very similar manner.

Is it not possible, even probable, that Chronicles articulates a viable option which was actualized after its *initial conception* by the Chronicler as a novel approach to some historical situation? The belief among scholars that the Chronicler was a legitimist and not an innovator has not allowed this consideration to be taken seriously. However, utopian literary theory offers another possible reading: the Chronicler's structure critiques the present and suggests a *better alternative reality* in its place. A variety of possible scenarios that would prompt the construction of such a systematic organizational model are conceivable: the temple cult was disorganized or inefficient, priests were in conflict with each other over the right to perform their duties, one group had attempted to control the process to the exclusion of others (the Zadokites and the Aaronides, or the descendants of Eleazar and the Ithamarites),[12] or a reformation of the priesthood on a smaller scale seemed a necessary counterpart if the Chronicler's Levitical reforms that were being presented as past reality were to be accepted and implemented by his contemporaries. Many additional scenarios could certainly be offered.

4.1.2. *The Duties of the Priests*

Chronicles identifies those serving as authentic priests with those claiming descent from Aaron. The manner of their service as priests is communicated in an equally clear way, although the precise procedures involved in the performance of their ritual duties are often vague.

In Chronicles, service in the temple is the primary concern of the duties assigned to the priests. The first reference to a priest in Chronicles is the brief chronological note about the service of Azariah in the temple of Solomon (1 Chr 5:36 [6:10 Eng.]).[13] In the second instance, Aaron and

12. Ithamar is clearly affirmed as a priest and a son of Aaron in the Pentateuch (Exod 6:23; 28:1; Lev 10:12–20; Num 3:2–4; 26:60). In these instances he is always mentioned with his brother Eleazar. However, he is mentioned alone in Exod 38:21; Num 4:28, 33; 7:8. Here, Ithamar serves as the overseer of the Levites. In Ezra 8:2, among those who return with Ezra from Babylon is a descendent of an Ithamar—apparently this same one—who is mentioned in parallel with Phinehas and David. Thus, in source material that was likely available to the Chronicler, Ithamar has descendants who returned to the land and he himself was associated with the proper roles of the Levites in the cult. Perhaps this situation explains the Chronicler's affinity for including Ithamar and his descendants equally among the priests (1 Chr 5:29 [6:3 Eng.]; 24:1–19), as a legendary champion of the Levites' involvement in the cult.

13. Almost all scholars agree that this note is misplaced chronologically and should instead be associated with the Azariah mentioned in 5:35 (6:9 Eng.); see Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 150.

his sons make offerings on the two altars for the atonement of Israel in accordance with Moses' commands, although without any details being provided (1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]). In the third instance, priests who are "qualified for the work of the service of the house of God" are among those who returned to the land following the exile (1 Chr 9:2, 10–13). Thus, the service of the priests in the temple is associated in the opening genealogical material with two of the authoritative figures of Israel's past, Solomon and Moses, and is worth special notice in establishing continuity for the present with the past.

These three texts establish the sphere of the priests' responsibilities, but without providing specific details about their duties. The first ritual action that is explicitly cited as a priestly duty, apart from serving at the altars in a vague sense, is the preparation of the mixed spices for use in the temple (1 Chr 9:30). This clarification appears in the context of Levitical duties for the operation the temple cult. Japhet correctly notes that the duties assigned to the Levites here are ascribed to Moses in the Pentateuch without explicitly designating who will be responsible for the *preparation* of these various items in the future after Moses' death, although Eleazar the son of Aaron is ultimately responsible for their *care* (Num 4:16).[14] But, why should only the mixing of spices be singled out from all of the other responsibilities? The mixing of spices may refer to either one (or both) of the only two items to use spices: the anointing oil and the incense for use *only* in the cultic rituals (Exod 30:22–33, 34–38). Of all the items made for the Tabernacle in the Pentateuch, these are also the only two to be explicitly forbidden outside of the cult. These stipulations also contain the only two times that being "cut off" (נכרת) from the people is the prescribed punishment for improperly preparing any of the cultic items mentioned in Exodus. Thus, the seriousness associated with the use of spices may be responsible for assigning the task to the priests instead of to the Levites. While Chronicles may reflect Second Temple practice or simply replicate a source in this material,[15] it is also possible that the Chronicler is suggesting an innovation in cultic practice motivated by a careful reading of the cultic legislation in Exodus that takes its warnings to heart.

The priests often appear as those serving at the altar or making sacrifices in Chronicles (e.g. 1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]; 16:39–40; 2 Chr 5:14; 8:14; 13:10–11; 23:18; 26:18; 29:20–24, 34–35; 31:2–3; 35:10–14),

14. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 218.

15. The second option seems to be Japhet's position, although she is not explicit about the reason for singling out only this particular task (*I & II Chronicles*, 202–5, 218).

although very few details are provided as to how these duties were carried out. This meager information includes: priests dash the blood of the Pesach (2 Chr 30:15–16; 35:11); priests skin the burnt offerings (29:34–35);[16] and priests alone have access to the innermost parts of the temple, and are therefore responsible for its cleansing (2 Chr 5:7; 29:16).

In contrast to this depiction of duties that are exclusive to the priests, on several occasions it is either unclear who are the ones performing these sacrificial duties or the Davidic king is explicitly the one making the sacrifices (1 Chr 16:1–6; 21:26–30; 2 Chr 1:6; 7:4–5, 7; 15:9–15; 24:14). Also, it is difficult to accept the conclusion that Chronicles *champions* the right of the priests to perform the sacrifices exclusively given the number of ambiguous or contradictory references to other individuals functioning as priests.

However, the priests are not restricted to sacrificial responsibilities in Chronicles. First, the priests are associated with the playing of trumpets during rituals and cultic celebrations (1 Chr 13:2, 8; 15:24, 28; 16:6, 39–42;[17] 2 Chr 5:11–14; 7:6; 13:12, 14; 15:14; 20:28; 23:12–13;[18] 29:26–28). The association of priests with trumpets at such times is found in the Torah, the book of Joshua, and in Ezra–Nehemiah (Exod 19:13, 16, 19; 20:18;[19] Lev 23:23–25; 25:9; Num 10:1–10; 29:1–6; 31:6; Josh 6:1–21; Ezra 3:10; Neh 4:12, 14 [vv. 18, 20 Eng.];[20] 12:35, 41).[21] Thus, this

16. In contrast, note that the skinning of the Pesach is performed by the Levites (2 Chr 35:11), and that the Levites may substitute for the priests in skinning the burnt offerings when there are not enough priests available to perform this duty (2 Chr 29:34–35).

17. In 1 Chr 16:39–42, David leaves Zadok and the priests at the tabernacle at Gibeon with attending Levites to perform the cultic offerings. In v. 42, the two named Levitical leaders are said to have the trumpets and cymbals for music. While this could suggest that the Levitical leaders played the trumpets, the presence of priests at the same location may imply that it is the priests who actually play them, which would be consistent with the other references to trumpets in Chronicles.

18. The revolt against Athaliah is the only instance in Chronicles where someone other than the priests is explicitly blowing trumpets. In this passage, the people of the land perform this duty. The parallel text of 2 Kgs 11:13–14 contains this same reading. That this exceptional event occurs during the time of Jehoiada only adds to the numerous unique practices associated with his tenure as leading priest.

19. The references to a trumpet sounding at Mount Sinai do not specify who is blowing them. This ambiguity may account for the proleptic presence of priests who are mentioned twice in this context before the commands to establish the priesthood occur in the subsequent chapters of Exodus.

20. However, the identity of the trumpeter at Nehemiah's side is not made explicit.

21. Note also the use of trumpets by non-priests, Ehud and Gideon, in Judg 3:26–27; 6:34; 7:8, 16–23. The Chronicler only briefly acknowledges the period

uniform presentation of the priestly trumpeters may not necessarily reflect Second Temple practice, but may be the Chronicler's attempt to be consistent, at least in his understanding, with the Pentateuchal stipulations and other textual precedents.

Second, the priests function as teachers or liturgists. Two priests accompany the five officials and nine Levites teaching Torah at the command of Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 17:7–9). Priests praise YHWH and bless the people at cultic celebrations (1 Chr 23:13; 2 Chr 30:21, 27). However, while this duty is more commonly associated with the Levites and the Davidic kings, the people themselves and foreign monarchs also perform this activity (1 Chr 16:2, 4, 7, 9, 36; 23:5; 25:3; 29:10, 13, 20; 2 Chr 2:11 [v. 12 Eng.]; 5:13; 6:4; 7:6; 8:14; 9:8; 20:19, 21, 22, 26; 29:30; 30:21, 27; 31:2, 8).[22] Finally, the spirit of God fills Zechariah the son of the priest Jehoiada in order to bring a warning to the Davidic king Joash (2 Chr 24:20–22).

The duties of the priests in Chronicles are not the focus of the Chronicler's cultic system. As with the genealogies of these priests, the Chronicler provides little information about their functions and duties. What information is contained in Chronicles is largely consistent with the presentation of the Aaronide priesthood in the Torah, and with the stipulations of P in particular. The priests are responsible for offering the sacrifices and for blowing the trumpets. They also appear as teachers and liturgists, though infrequently so. The depiction of the priesthood in Chronicles is thus utopian *not* because it expands the duties of the priests. On the contrary, the cultic utopia of Chronicles is based on the *limitation* of the priesthood to those areas that are assigned or most directly associated with it in the cultic legislation of the Torah. The priests have an *important but restricted* sphere of influence in Chronicles. Priests do not oversee Levites and they do not perform duties reserved for the Levites. In contrast, in special circumstances the Levites may temporarily function as if they were priests. Thus, in the Chronicler's *better alternative reality* the priests are *properly* organized and operating within their *appropriate* sphere of influence without encroaching on the duties and roles of the Levites that are advocated throughout the book.

of the judges (1 Chr 17:9–10) without affirming any of the practices associated with it.

22. The scope of individuals performing this "duty" mitigates against these terms having technical meanings or only being associated with specific ritual actions. The notion of "blessing" or "praising" cannot be regarded as a strictly ritual formula or procedure in Chronicles, despite its repeated description as a duty of the Levites.

4.1.3. *The Sacrificial System*

Chronicles contains information about the sacrificial system and festival celebrations associated with the operation of the temple cult. First, the sacrificial system in Chronicles includes references to offerings and rituals that are found in other literature, especially in the Pentateuchal texts assigned to the Priestly writer. The depictions contain both similarities and differences to other portrayals. For example, Chronicles continues, although to a much lesser extent, the emphasis in P on making atonement for the guilt (מעל) of the people via sacrifice performed by the cultic personnel.[23] However, in contrast to P, no distinction is made in Chronicles between intentional and unintentional sins. Chronicles presents all sin that incurs guilt (מעל) as the result of conscious and intentional actions and flagrant disobedience. In this regard, Chronicles does not refer to offerings that are designed to atone for unintentional sins.

The Chronicler does mention several regular ritual observances known from P: the daily burnt offerings in the morning and evening,[24] the offerings of incense on the altar of incense, sacrifices for the new moons, and provisions for the weekly Sabbaths (1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]; 9:29; 16:37–40; 23:31; 28:18; 2 Chr 1:6; 2:3 [v. 4 Eng.]; 4:6; 8:12–13; 9:3–4; 13:11; 24:14; 26:16, 19; 29:7, 18; 31:2–3). A few specific components of the cult associated with the Sabbath that are not found in P: the rows of bread are prepared on a weekly basis (1 Chr 9:32) and the divisions of priests and Levites evidently normally rotate on the Sabbath (2 Chr 23:4, 8).

Second, the Chronicler's cultic system includes references to several, but not all, of the festivals known from the Pentateuch, from the material typically assigned to both P and D. Chronicles explicitly mentions the celebration of the "appointed festivals" (מועדים; 1 Chr 23:31; 2 Chr 2:3 [v. 4 Eng.]; 31:3). This term is used in P to describe the following cultic events: the Sabbath, the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread, the Festival of First Fruits and Festival of Weeks, the Festival of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Festival of Booths or Sukkoth, and possibly

23. See, for example, the references to atonement in 1 Chr 6:34 (v. 49 Eng.); 2 Chr 29:24; and the emphasis on מעל in 1 Chr 2:7; 5:25; 9:1; 10:13; 2 Chr 12:2; 26:16, 18; 28:19, 22; 29:6, 19; 30:7; 33:19; 36:14.

24. Burnt offerings, not done as part of the daily routine, are also mentioned in the context of important cultic events (1 Chr 16:1–2; 21:23–30; 29:21–22; 2 Chr 7:1, 7; 29:23–24, 27–28, 31–36; 30:15; 35:12, 14, 16). Other non-daily offerings are mentioned as well: offerings of well-being (1 Chr 16:1–2, 21:26; 2 Chr 7:7; 29:35; 30:22; 31:2; 33:16), grain offerings (1 Chr 21:23; 23:29; 2 Chr 7:7), offerings of thanksgiving (2 Chr 29:31; 30:22; 33:16), drink offerings or libations (1 Chr 21:29; 2 Chr 29:35), and a "sin offering" (2 Chr 29:21–24).

also the daily burnt offerings and the sacrifices at the new moon (Lev 23:2, 4, 37, 44; Num 10:10; 15:3; 29:39).[25]

It may appear that the Chronicler's three references to these celebrations are entirely consistent with P. However, this is not the case. The Chronicler does explicitly mention several of these cultic celebrations from P: daily burnt offerings, new moons, and the Sabbath, the Festival of Passover (2 Chr 30:1–27; 35:1–19), the Festival of Unleavened Bread (2 Chr 8:13), the Festival of Weeks (2 Chr 8:13), and the Festival of Sukkoth (2 Chr 8:13). The significance of 2 Chr 8:13 should not be overlooked in this regard. In this verse, Solomon celebrates the "three annual festivals" (ולמועדות שלש פעמים בשנה) of Unleavened Bread (חג המצות), Weeks (חג השבעות), and Booths (חג הסכות). Although the P text of Exod 23:14–17 intends the same three festivals and utilizes this same chronological phrase, the names given by P in this instance are not the same as in 2 Chr 8:13. Rather the festivals are named as "Unleavened Bread" (חג המצות), "Harvest, of the First Fruits of your Labor" (חג הקציר בכורי מעשיך), and "Ingathering" (חג האסף). However, the D text of Deut 16:16 contains both the distinctive phrasing for three annual celebrations and the same names for these festivals as appear in 2 Chr 8:13. Thus, in describing the only required annual festivals, Chronicles is more consistent with the language of D than of P. But this is not all. Solomon is the only king to celebrate all three of these festivals in Chronicles (2 Chr 5:3; 8:13).[26] While Hezekiah and Josiah both celebrate the festival of Unleavened Bread (2 Chr 30:13, 21; 35:17), only Solomon observes the Festivals of Weeks and Sukkoth. Thus, despite the lofty accolades bestowed on the Passovers performed by Hezekiah and Josiah (2 Chr 30:26; 35:18), neither ruler explicitly celebrates the other festivals and thus fail to compare yet once again to the utopian Solomon. Therefore, it should not be assumed too quickly that the term "appointed festivals" in Chronicles has the same scope as it does in P.

Third, Chronicles presents the cultic observances in details that are consistent with the depictions neither in P nor with other portrayals by

25. In other texts, this term is used without specifying its scope of coverage (Isa 1:14; 33:20; Ezek 36:38; 44:24; 45:17; 46:9; Hos 2:13 [v. 11 Eng.]; 9:5; 12:10 [v. 9 Eng.]; Neh 10:34 [v. 33 Eng.]). However, the contexts of the other rituals mentioned in these latter texts suggest that these passages are consistent, if not to be equated, with the range of cultic events outlined by P. The texts assigned to D do not use this particular term.

26. The parallel text of 1 Kgs 9:25 states that Solomon sacrificed three times a year but does not include any further clarification of when these events took place. This silence highlights the concern for specifying the three festivals and the use of terminology from D instead of P in Chronicles.

the Chronicler of the same events. The number of sacrificial animals, the types of offerings presented, and the order of the ritual actions often vary in these texts. Scholars have noted this point, with particular attention to the Passover of Hezekiah (2 Chr 30:1–27) and the Passover of Josiah (2 Chr 35:1–19). In the former text, several significant deviations from "official" practice are noted: (1) the observance of the festival in the second month instead of the prescribed first month due to the lack of sanctified priests; (2) the slaughter of the Pesach by the Levites on behalf of the people—who should have slaughtered their own animals; (3) the eating of the Pesach by those who were unclean in violation of the written stipulations; and (4) the extension of the festival for an additional seven days. In the latter text, different discrepancies are apparent: (1) the Levites seem to be instructed to place the ark in the temple when this has already occurred; (2) the officials provide the Pesach for the people—who should have provided their own animals; and (3) the Levites "boil with fire" (ויבשלו באש) the Pesach in accordance with the ordinance—but a practice that instead contradicts two texts from the Torah (Exod 12:8–9; Deut 16:7) by a supposed harmonization of the language found in each. Typical of much of the scholarship on these texts, Japhet concludes that the difficulties in the Hezekiah account may be the result of an authentic tradition regarding a Passover celebration at the time of Hezekiah and that those in the Josiah narrative are explained as either textual corruptions or as a result of the Chronicler's desire for legitimization of current temple practice.[27]

However, utopian literary theory suggests that instead of reflecting a past or present reality, these narratives convey a *better alternative reality* that critiques the present. In the Chronicler's cultic utopia, the cult is affirmed without criticism; indeed, it is in *constant* need of reform. Established on the authority of Aaron (1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]; 24:19) and of Moses, the organizational and procedural changes attributed to David in Chronicles dramatically alter the portrayal of the cult. David does not merely replicate what Moses had previously instituted or legislated. Instead, the cult under David is filled with innovations that are presented as being consistent with the traditions already associated with the cult despite the obvious, and often explicit, knowledge that the cult has undergone multiple changes during the time of David. In the newly constructed temple—itself an innovation presented as a continuation of the Mosaic tabernacle (1 Chr 16:37–42; 21:29; 2 Chr 1:3–5; 5:10)—Solomon implements the plans for the temple service which he had received from his father David (1 Chr 28:11–19; 2 Chr 8:14–15). Thus,

27. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 935–36, 1041, 1044–55.

Solomon stands in continuity with his father in establishing a cult that is both consistent and in tension with its predecessors. An emphasis on the continued reform of the cult to bring it into line with the Davidic–Solomonic model continues with the descriptions of the subsequent reforms by other Davidic kings. However, in none of these instances is the Davidic–Solomonic temple cult replicated without additional changes or differences also being noted.

First, the influx of Levites and priests from the Northern Kingdom at the time of Rehoboam (2 Chr 11:13–17; 13:9–20) changes the allocation of land mentioned in the genealogical section (1 Chr 6:39–66 [vv. 54–81 Eng.]) as well as impacting the divisions of the priests and Levites (1 Chr 23:1–24:19; 28:21). Also, the migration of additional Northerners to Judah at key points in the history of the Southern Kingdom provides a context for covenant renewal and cultic reforms, which are accomplished in diverse manners and practices (2 Chr 15:8–19; 30:1–27).

Second, the judicial roles of the Levites and priests are only infrequently mentioned in Chronicles (1 Chr 26:29–32; 2 Chr 17:7–9; 19:4–11). Even in these texts, the details concerning their administrative organization and scope of duties are not consistent. Thus, Jehoshaphat's reform imitates David's original model, but not as a reinstitution without adaptation to a new historical circumstance.

Third, not only does the temple cult become repeatedly corrupt, but it ceases to function under Ahaz and must be reinstituted completely by Hezekiah (2 Chr 28:24; 29:3–11). This interruption of service parallels the extended period during the exile when the "land kept its Sabbath" and no cultic rituals were performed (2 Chr 36:19–21). In his reinstitution of the cult, Hezekiah imitates but does not replicate the proper conditions under the previous kings. Historical circumstance again is the major factor: (1) the small number of sanctified priests causes Levites to serve in their place (2 Chr 29:34), (2) the observance at an irregular time because of a lack of sanctified priests and the people's failure even to be there (2 Chr 30:2–4), and (3) the inability of the people to cleanse themselves causes both the Levites to slaughter the Pesach in their place and the people to eat while ceremonially unclean (2 Chr 30:15–20). However, in none of these cases does God reject the sacrifice on account of the improper procedures. In a similar vein, although Josiah attempts to observe the Passover according to the written instructions of David and Solomon and the Mosaic Torah, inconsistencies nonetheless exist. Despite this, according to Chronicles, Josiah's Passover far exceeds all previous ones, including Hezekiah's and even Solomon's.

While the superiority of Josiah over Hezekiah in terms of attention to cultic detail has been advocated as the source of this praise, the context of the reign of both kings suggests that Chronicles presents a more nuanced position. While Japhet emphasizes correctly the *ad hoc* nature of Hezekiah's celebration,[28] it is precisely this feature that makes it remarkable rather than deficient. The irregularities of Hezekiah's cultic reforms and observations do not prevent the explicit affirmation made regarding the *intention* of the worshippers, which are confirmed by God's actions. No such language is present in the account of Josiah. In addition, the narrative accounts that follow in each of these cases further illustrate the differences between Hezekiah and Josiah. The religious piety of both individuals are extolled (2 Chr 31:20–21; 35:16–20). However, Hezekiah is delivered from the Assyrian invasion by Sennacherib (2 Chr 32:1–23) and Josiah is killed by the Egyptian Pharaoh Neco (2 Chr 35:20–25). Thus, Josiah's cultic concern does not prevent his demise. Chronicles does not suggest that creating a "permanent institution" with all of its procedures and personnel in the proper structure is the key to God's blessing or to the survival of Israel.[29]

Fourth, Chronicles simply cannot be used to answer with any systematic detail such cultic questions as: "What are the correct procedures for celebrating Passover?," "What happens at the Festival of Sukkoth?," or "What is the order of the daily routine in the temple cult?" Many more unanswerable inquiries could be added. Chronicles is neither a manual for cultic performance nor a retrojection of the present into the past for the sake of legitimization. Rather, the diverse presentation of the functioning temple cult in Chronicles conveys a utopian ideology: the cult must be able to undergo change while still maintaining continuity with the past in order for it to be efficacious for the present and future. The Chronicler does not advocate simply implementing the cultic organization established by David and Solomon or the legislation by Moses. Rather, as historical change occurs and new situations challenge the Second Temple community, it must adapt while maneuvering the complex issue of how to maintain continuity and encourage practical innovations at the same time. Thus, for the Chronicler, the temple cult is in constant need of re-evaluation and improvement. When the cult ceases to adapt, it is susceptible to becoming irrelevant and ineffective. The *better alternative reality* for the Chronicler is a temple cult that neither becomes stagnant nor blindly reinforces a *status quo* that cannot accept new methods or procedures in the light of new circumstances. The Chronicler's utopian

28. Ibid., 1045.
29. The phrase is Japhet's (ibid., 1045).

temple cult is thus a *loosely organized* one, and not the product of a systematician striving to have a rigid program imposed on the community for all time.[30]

4.1.4. *The Zadokites and the High Priest in Chronicles*[31]

The previous section has argued that the priesthood is not a primary concern for the Chronicler. This lack of interest in details about the priests (as opposed to the Levites) is also reflected by the Chronicler's scant treatment of the office of leading priest and the group of priests who would claim descent from Zadok. The Chronicler's view of the leading priest is part of his utopian construction of the temple cult, one which critiques the leading priest and the Zadokites rather than supporting any claims to power and prestige that they *may have been* putting forth in the Second Temple period (e.g. the type of contentions found in Ezek 40–48).

The two leading priests (Zadok and Hilkiah) mentioned in both the genealogy and the narrative do not do very much and have a rather limited role in civic and cultic administration.[32] They act either within their roles as presented by the Chronicler's source or within the cultic sphere as a supervisor of priests.[33] The Chronicler has not overtly enhanced the presentation of the genealogically Zadokite high priests in the narrative.

The three chief priests (the Azariah under Uzziah, the Azariah under Hezekiah, and the ambiguous Amariah under Jehoshaphat that is *possibly* Amariah II in 1 Chr 5:37 [6:11 Eng.]) who are not mentioned in the Zadokite genealogy of 1 Chr 5:27–41 (6:1–15 Eng.) are presented with more authority and an increased role in cultic matters. Several details from these narratives could *possibly* be retrojections of high-priestly responsibilities from the Second Temple period: (1) acting as spokesperson to the civic official on behalf of the cult; (2) being responsible for

30. The point that the Chronicler was *not* something of a "rigid legalist" has been recently asserted by Endres, "Theology of Worship in Chronicles," 185–86; Graham, "Setting the Heart to Seek God," 138; and McKenzie, *1–2 Chronicles*, 55.

31. In the interest of space, this section presents the conclusions drawn from my article "High Priest in Chronicles," with a few additional comments. See the argumentation for my positions there.

32. Zadok is anointed, but acts as the supervisor of only priestly, and not Levitical, duties. Hilkiah has more responsibility: charge of the funds for temple repair, provision of sacrificial portions for the priests under him (though not alone), and some sort of unspecified leadership role in the delegation sent by the king.

33. Zadok and Hilkiah are not responsible for the Levites in addition to the priests. The chief priests who are not explicitly Zadokites, however, are responsible for the Levites as well as the priests.

the actions of all the temple functionaries including the Levites; (3) serving as the leading cultic official who may at times appear to have royal prestige; and (4) overseeing the dismissal of the Levitical gatekeepers on the Sabbath. Even if these items are accepted as retrojections of Second Temple practice, they do not overtly enhance the power and authority of the leading priest into civic matters. It does, however, seem rather surprising that for all of the Chronicler's concern over cultic matters, he is also consistently *not* concerned with delineating the precise nature of the office of high priest. He seems to have *no interest* in what the high priest does ceremonially. The duties of the high priest are only addressed where they impinge on Levitical responsibilities.

One priest who looks more like the expected presentation of a *high priest* during the Persian period, Jehoiada, is presented as an exception under extreme circumstances. Perhaps the depiction of this *chief priest* served as a model of how the government and the cult should function when Davidic kingship was not a viable option. Here the title "chief priest" comes into focus. In Chronicles, the office of "high priest" in the Second Temple period is a continuation of a preexilic position termed "chief priest" *which was not held continually by Zadokites*. It seems that if the Chronicler's audience wished to see a Second Temple high priest, they were directed to this *non-Zadokite chief* priest as the closest model.

The relationship between the genealogical, political, and cultic utopian matrices in Chronicles is addressed in the depiction of the leading priest. It has been suggested that the Chronicler did not hope for a restoration of the Davidic dynasty. Rather, the Persian kings have taken over this role. If this is correct, the judicial structure represented by the Davidic king Jehoshaphat with a chief priest over cultic matters and a non-Davidide governor over civic matters (2 Chr 19:5–11) may be a parallel to the Chronicler's actual historical situation: a Persian king with a high priest over the cult and an appointed governor over civil affairs.[34] Further, this leading priest need not be a Zadokite, on the basis that in Israel's past some of its leading priests were not explicitly of Zadokite descent. In addition to the non-Zadokite Jehoiada, this Amariah of ambiguous lineage, serves as a model for the role of Second Temple high priests by delineating the scope of their duties, but without a clear presentation of their ceremonial role in the operation of the cult. In Chronicles, the leading priest is the chief cultic official, the final authority in cultic matters, but *only* in cultic matters. Chronicles does not provide evidence for an

34. A similar suggestion is made by Deborah W. Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs: The Role and Development of the High Priesthood in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 208.

independent high priest or even of one involved in the administration of civil affairs.

The leading priest in Chronicles serves a utopian function in the temple cult. The Chronicler's *better alternative reality* includes a leading cultic official, in this case a priest who *may or may not* be of Zadokite descent, whose precise duties are only vaguely described and often in limited or restrictive terms. The cultic utopia of Chronicles acknowledges the existence of the Aaronide priesthood and of a leading priest without overly enhancing their prestige, power, or indispensability in the operation of the cult.[35] Instead, the non-Zadokite leading priests provide a contrast to those explicitly of Zadokite descent. Utopian literary theory suggests that the portrayal of the leading priest critiques a situation in which the high priesthood either had already consolidated its power and control over the temple cult or, more likely, was attempting to do so. Thus, Chronicles does not eliminate the office of leading priest but does restrict it, and simultaneously provides a basis for both Zadokite and non-Zadokite claims to hold a cultic position that is *not necessarily* hereditary.

4.1.5. *Looking in the Wrong Place: Neither a Zadokite Nor Priestly Utopia*

According to some recent authors, Zadokitism is equated with concern for the temple cult and all of the texts from the Second Temple period which exhibit a concern for the temple cult are viewed as deriving from the same broadly defined movement. Differences in details or positions among the texts reflect the continued development and refinement of the original Zadokite ideology, of which Chronicles is one example.[36] However, this logic cannot be sustained. *Interest in the cult does not require a Zadokite origin for the ancient authors of such works*. The Zadokites are only one group among many who would have had an investment in the temple cult in the Second Temple period. There are at least two other groups of significant size and influence during the Second Temple period that are concerned with the cult and are not equated with the Zadokites:

35. If all that scholars possessed in terms of textual evidence from this segment of the Second Temple period was the limited information in Chronicles, the high priesthood would *not* be reconstructed as having played an important role in the life of the community.

36. Contra Boccaccini, *Roots of Rabbinic Judaism*, 49–72; and Millar, *Priesthood in Ancient Israel*, 33–62. In 1929, Meek had already asserted that "In the person of the Chronicler the Zadokites had a champion of the first order" ("Aaronites and Zadokites," 165). Knoppers quickly dismisses the suggestion that Chronicles reflects the dominance of the Zadokites in this period (*I Chronicles 1–9*, 406, 414).

the Levites and the Aaronides. While Ezek 40–48 explicitly advocates what could be termed a "Zadokite" ideology, the content of such texts as Chronicles, the Priestly source, and Ezra–Nehemiah do not. The distinction which this material makes between Levitical, priestly, and Zadokite concerns disallows a simple reduction of all cultic concerns stemming from a dominant Zadokitism that continues to be nuanced over time.

In Chronicles, the Zadokites are included among the descendants of Levi and Aaron in the genealogies. Thus, the Zadokites have a claim to cultic service as members of the Levitical line and to specific roles restricted to priests as descendants of Aaron. However, any *exclusive* claim which they may have had to the office of leading priest is not supported by the presentation of Chronicles. The office of leading priest is often, but not always, occupied by a Zadokite in the Chronicler's narrative. On a practical level, one that is rarely addressed in scholarship on this issue, it is impossible for *all* the descendants of Zadok to serve as the *single* leading priest at once. What do the vast majority of Zadokites actually do then as members of the temple cult? They are apparently priests, but *are indistinguishable* from their fellow Aaronides in their duties. While this may be the logical conclusion, it is worth emphasizing that Chronicles is *silent* on the issue of Zadokites serving as priests. The division of cultic personnel in Chronicles is between priests and Levites; Zadokites are *not* to be found as a separate group with special rights or privileges in Chronicles.

While some may argue that this silence demonstrates that the Zadokites had been successful in solidifying their status as the authentic priests, Chronicles follows the stipulations in P that explicitly present the priesthood as open to the larger groups who claim to be descended from both of Aaron's sons, Eleazar and Ithamar—that is, all priests are not Zadokites. Thus, the Zadokites remain only a small fraction of those who would be eligible for priestly service on the basis of genealogy. In addition, one of their own *may* have been the leading priest, but this was not *necessarily* the case throughout the First and Second Temple periods, nor is it the case as reflected specifically in Chronicles. While this is an argument from what is *not* the case, it would have been an easy task, if the Chronicler (or a later editor) was so inclined, to supply all of the leading priests in the narrative with Zadokite pedigrees and confirm any exclusive claim which the Zadokites may have been making to the office of leading priest. For example, all that would be needed is simply to include "of the house of Zadok" (a phrase which does appear in 2 Chr 31:10) or a similar phrase. Also, the near absence of the leading priest at cultic ceremonies or periods of reform and covenant renewal hardly

seems an effective means of enhancing the prestige or power of this office or of those individuals serving in it.

4.2. *Locating the "Good Place": The Levites and the Production of Utopia*

The cultic utopia portrayed in Chronicles is neither a priestly nor a Zadokite utopia. It is also not a dystopia for either group—that is, a "worse alternative reality" for these individuals or for a society that follows their leadership is not depicted in Chronicles. While the priests are explicitly criticized in Chronicles, their role in the proper operation of the cult is also affirmed. However, it is their counterparts, the Levites, who serve as the primary group that provides the means for the community to attain the utopian future existence in the *better alternative reality* advocated by the Chronicler.

4.2.1. *The Identity of the Levites*

In Chronicles, all those who would claim to belong to the group known as "Levites" seem to be genealogically descended from the eponymous ancestor Levi via one of his three sons: Gershom,[37] Kohath, and Merari (1 Chr 5:27 [6:1 Eng.]; 6:1 [6:16 Eng.]; 23:6).[38] The descendants of Gershom and Merari are briefly included (1 Chr 6:2, 4–6 [vv. 17, 19–21 Eng.]), but the focus in the initial genealogies of 1 Chr 5:27–6:15 (6:1–30 Eng.) is on the line of Kohath.[39]

The Kohathites include all of the Aaronide priests and the leading priests descended from Eleazar in particular. The Zadokites also receive their Aaronide and Levitical pedigree in this passage. Further, the prophetic figure of Samuel is attached to the Kohathite genealogy of 1 Chr 6:7–15 (vv. 22–30 Eng.) in contrast to his apparent Ephraimite ancestry in 1 Sam 1:1.[40] It is through this Samuel that one of the leading Levitical

37. The name is also spelled "Gershon" both in Chronicles and elsewhere in the HB. Japhet concludes that the Chronicler prefers the final *mem* and that appearance of the final *nun* in Chronicles is the result of a copyist familiar with the Pentateuchal tradition (*I & II Chronicles*, 149).

38. This is in agreement with the claims of P (see Exod 6:16–19; Num 26:57–58).

39. Compare the high value placed on the Kohathites as distinct from the other two Levitical groups in Num 4:18–20.

40. Samuel is called a seer in 1 Chr 9:22; 26:28; 29:29; he is called a prophet in 2 Chr 35:18. According to 1 Chr 11:3, he received a word of YHWH which was fulfilled in David's anointing. Japhet expresses the common view of the Chronicler's motivation: Samuel performs duties believed to be restricted to Levites in the

singers, Heman, is associated with the Kohathites in 1 Chr 6:18–23 (vv. 33–38 Eng.).

The Kohathites also include the Korahites, who serve as the vast majority of the gatekeepers for the Tabernacle and later for the temple along with some of the Merarites (1 Chr 6:7 [v. 22 Eng.]; 9:17–27; 26:1–19).[41] Gatekeepers are presented without any additional genealogical information as a group distinct from the Levites in both Ezra (2:42, 70; 7:7; 10:24) and Nehemiah (7:1, 3, 45, 73; 10:29, 40 [vv. 28, 39 Eng.]; 11:19; 12:25, 45, 47). Their Levitical descent is made explicit only in Chronicles. In addition to Heman the Kohathite, his two relatives, Asaph the Gershomite and Ethan the Merarite,[42] are *explicitly* of Levitical descent in Chronicles (1 Chr 6:24–32 [vv. 39–47 Eng.]), as are their descendants, naturally, who also serve as singers and musicians (1 Chr 25:1–31).[43] The Levitical pedigree of the Asaphite singers is stated in Nehemiah (11:15–18, 22; 12:35) and once in Ezra (3:10), but not in other HB texts. The other two groups of singers are explicitly Levitical only in Chronicles.

Chronicler's source material ("ministering to YHWH" in 1 Sam 3:1). Thus, Japhet concludes, the Chronicler answers "some contemporary need" to clarify that if Samuel did these Levitical tasks, then he must have been a Levite (*I & II Chronicles*, 153–54, 155–56).

41. In 1 Chr 26:1–19, four of the twenty-four divisions of the gatekeepers are associated with Hosah the Merarite (vv. 10–11, 19). See the discussion of the duties of these gatekeepers in Section 4.2.2 below.

42. The complicated relationship, whether historical or literary in nature, between Ethan and Jeduthun—who also appears as the third leader of these singers in Chronicles—will not be addressed here; see the remarks by Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 323–24, 442–43. While the "replacement" of Jeduthun by Ethan may be attributed to a scribal error or to historical developments, the appearance of four names for three groups of singers *may* be part of the utopian construction of the cult—even the names can be changed, but the overall system remains intact. Adaptability is a central concern for the utopian portrayal of the cult.

43. Heman and Ethan appear as Levites only in Chronicles. Heman is one of the sages associated with an Ethan the Ezrahite in 1 Kgs 4:31 and is thus apparently to be equated with the Heman the Ezrahite in Ps 88:1 (title Eng.). Ethan the Ezrahite is mentioned only in Ps 89:1 (title Eng.) and the reference in Kings. Nothing is known about the tribal affiliation of these Ezrahites—a designation not found in Chronicles or elsewhere. Jeduthun also only appears as a Levite in Chronicles. This name is associated rather obliquely with the Levites in MT Neh 11:17–19, which may be the source of the elaboration in Chronicles; cf. the related text of 1 Chr 9:14–16. The final two phrases in LXX Neh 11:17 (2 Esd 21:17) that would include the reference to Jeduthun are not present in the Greek text. Jeduthun also appears in Pss 39:1; 62:1; 77:1 (titles Eng.). Additionally, the first two psalms are associated with David and the last with Asaph.

The repeated references to the divisions of the priests, Levites, singers and musicians, and gatekeepers throughout Chronicles would suggest that this system was of significant concern for the Chronicler. Certain priests, Levites, singers and musicians, and gatekeepers are assigned specific tasks prior to the "official" appointment of the divisions under David's authority in 1 Chr 23–26. These allocations are based on various authorities: Moses (1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]; 15:15; 21:29), Samuel (1 Chr 9:22), and of course David (1 Chr 6:16 [v. 31 Eng.]; 9:22; 15:1–24; 16:4–7, 37–42). In addition, although he does not create them, the leading priest Phinehas is associated with the performance of specific Levitical duties (1 Chr 9:20). In the details of the "official" appointments, only in the priestly divisions are arrangements made on the authority of anyone else besides David alone: the priestly divisions themselves are organized by David in consultation with the two leading priests Zadok and Abiathar (1 Chr 24:3), and the procedure for entering the house of God is based on the authority of Aaron (1 Chr 24:19). These alone among all of the innovations in these chapters are not attributed directly to the decision of David. Thus, all of the decisions involving the various groups associated with the Levites are not presented as being under the authority of the priests or of the leading priest in particular.

The ultimate authority for these divisions, however, is related by David in his instructions to Solomon. David mentions the divisions of the priests and Levites twice in his remarks (1 Chr 28:13, 21) and claims that his entire plan for the temple that Solomon is to construct—apparently including these very important divisions—has been written down "at the direction of YHWH" who had made all of this clear to David (1 Chr 28:11–19). Not only do the written plans have David's authority, but also they are inspired in some way by God. The term for "plan" (תבנית) used in vv. 11 and 19 also appears in the description of God's revelation of the plans for the tabernacle to Moses (Exod 25:9). Besides other explicit connections between the Solomonic temple and the Mosaic tabernacle, this claim firmly anchors David's cultic *innovations* with a great deal of authority.

However, the significance of these divisions does not end with David nor with their implementation in the new temple under Solomon (2 Chr 8:14). The reigns of Rehoboam and Abijah are strengthened and validated by the presence of the priests and Levites performing their duties (2 Chr 11:13–17; 13:9–12). Yet, the duties assigned to these divisions do not remain constant. Under Jehoshaphat, changes are made to the administrative system which involves the appointment of Levites to serve as judges (2 Chr 19:8–11). This would seem to interfere with whatever

cultic duties they may have been expected to perform on the basis of David's organizational scheme. In addition, after three periods of neglect of the temple, the divisions are re-established as part of the cultic reforms. First, Jehoiada reinstates the divisions according to David's program (2 Chr 23:18–19). Here the leading priest attempts to establish continuity with the past instead of implementing innovations in the cultic procedures. Second, after initial reforms, Hezekiah appoints the priestly and Levitical divisions, and they were enrolled in official records (2 Chr 31:2, 17–19). Third, at the celebration of Passover, Josiah employs the priestly and Levitical divisions in accordance with the written stipulations made centuries earlier by David and Solomon (2 Chr 35:2, 4–5, 10). In all of these various descriptions, Chronicles presents a basic plan established by David that is the source for multiple reincarnations but that could not be replicated precisely due to the different historical circumstances in which subsequent generations found themselves. However, all of these structures claim continuity with the Davidic model despite blatant innovations or adjustments. Thus, the organization of the temple cult in Chronicles is not consistent with a *static picture* at one point or multiple points in time.[44] Renewal and change are inherent to the survival and efficacy of the cult, even in the rotational duty system for its personnel. As in other utopian literature, change is not excluded but is a necessary part for the continued existence of the utopia over time. The utopia that will not adapt will fail. The depiction of the divisions that can be adjusted as necessary is one significant component of the Chronicler's cultic utopia.

Scholarship has long affirmed that these different depictions of the identity of the Levites, and especially of the singers and gatekeepers, reflect historical developments that culminate in the time of the Chronicler (or a post-Chronistic redactor in some analyses) who attempted to anchor the *status quo* in the authority of the past. That is, Chronicles retrojects the present practice or situation into the narrative past as an attempt to demonstrate continuity between the present and a supposed past. However, there is no evidence that the structures or supposed changes that are reflected in posited redactional layers of the text were ever a historical reality.[45]

44. That is, positing the existence of redactional layers does not account adequately for the differences in detail among the presentations of cultic practice and organization.

45. Japhet states that it is "difficult to say how much of these reflect actual developments…and how much are an expression of theoretical systematization" (*I & II Chronicles*, 459). This difficulty is due to a lack of clear evidence apart from the

4.2.2. *The Duties of the Levites*

The Levites are associated with a variety of responsibilities, duties, and privileges in the HB. Deuteronomy presents the Levites as priests, as the guardians and teachers of Torah, and as some of the judges in difficult matters (Deut 17:8–13).[46] In P, the Levites serve as assistants to the priests in the role of caretakers for the cultic objects in the Tabernacle (e.g. Num 1:50–53; 8:19, 26; 18:1–7, 21–23, 31) and as its gatekeepers or guards (e.g. Num 1:53). However, in Leviticus, P does not specify what distinct role the Levites have that differentiates them from the Aaronides in the detailed descriptions of the offerings in that book.[47] In addition, they are to receive a portion of the tithes as their compensation after distributing the appropriate amount to the priests (e.g. Num 18:21–32). Also, P assigns to the Levites several cities that are scattered throughout the other tribes, including the six cities of refuge (Lev 25:32–34; Num 35:1–34).[48] Finally, the Levites are associated repeatedly with the ark of covenant, and especially for its transportation, in a variety of texts.[49]

These duties associated with the Levites in texts other than Chronicles are almost entirely cultic in nature.[50] The particular functions of teacher and judge may imply that at least some Levites engaged in scribal activity, but the terminology of "writing" associated with scribalism is

depictions in Chronicles. This reservation and the lack of supporting evidence nevertheless do not prevent her from asserting that "there can be no doubt that actual conditions of the Second Temple period are reflected in these data" (ibid., 458). Compare the more tempered comments by Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10–29*, 620–21, 658.

46. This Deuteronom(ist)ic view is reflected in Mal 2:4–9, which further states that these teaching priests who are connected with Levi serve as messengers of YHWH for the people.

47. However, Num 18:3–7 clearly prohibits the Levites from service at the altar and the area "behind the curtain" that is the sole responsibility of the Aaronide priests.

48. Deuteronomy, in contrast, does not acknowledge distinct "Levitical cities" nor does it assign the cities of refuge to the Levites (18:1–8; 19:1–13; cf. Exod 21:12–13). The book of Joshua, however, reflects the view of P in assigning cities throughout the land, including the cities of refuge, to the Levites (14:3–4; 20:1–21:42).

49. Num 3:31; 4:5, 15 (Kohathites); Deut 10:8; 31:9, 25 (Levites); Josh 3:3–6, 8, 13–17; 4:9–11, 16–18; 6:6, 12; 8:33 (levitical priests); 1 Sam 6:15 (Levites); 14:3, 18 (Ahijah the priest descended from Eli); 2 Sam 15:24–29 (Levites and priests); 1 Kgs 8:1–11 (priests).

50. The only exception may be their role as judges in disputed cases, which are not necessarily restricted to issues of cultic concern.

not found in these passages in Deuteronomy. The Levites are explicitly responsible for *reading* the Torah publicly at the celebration of the Festival of Sukkoth every seven years (Deut 31:9–11), for *interpreting* the Torah in disputed cases (Deut 17:11), and for *being present* when the king writes the Torah (or has it written for him)[51] and when he reads it "all the days of his life" (17:18–20)—presumably to give the king guidance and to ensure that this royal requirement is indeed performed. Thus, the Levites in Deuteronomy are clearly literate (i.e. they are able to read), but their aptitude and service as writers or scribes is not emphasized even though it may be implied. Each of the duties and privileges of the Levites listed above are also found in Chronicles, but typically with elaborations of the details. In addition, other roles or functions of the Levites not found in any other text are attributed to the Levites in Chronicles.

The depiction of the Levites as assistants to the Aaronide priests with distinct duties from their kindred in the operation of the cult is emphasized in Chronicles. The Levites were appointed for the service of the tabernacle but the Aaronides are the ones making the offerings according to the commands of Moses (1 Chr 6:33–34 [vv. 48–49 Eng.]). This distinction between priestly and Levitical roles in the sacrificial procedure is repeated in 1 Chr 23:13–14, 28–32; 2 Chr 8:14; 13:10; 29:12–16, 21–24; 30:16; 35:11. However, just as clearly, Chronicles advances the position that Levites may serve temporarily as priests under extreme circumstances.

First, because of the failure of the priests to sanctify themselves for their duties, the Levites act as priests until enough Aaronide priests are available at the time of Hezekiah (2 Chr 29:34). Second, in a legal innovation under Hezekiah, the Levites slaughter the Pesach in place of those who were unclean (2 Chr 30:17–20). Third, under Josiah, the Levites are allowed to prepare the Passover offerings for their fellow Levites and priests who are otherwise occupied with their own cultic obligations (2 Chr 35:11–15). In these instances, it is worth emphasizing that Levites may act as priests or may substitute for the unclean, but *no one* ever substitutes for the Levites—their unique duties are not performed by others in any circumstance. This suggests the indispensability of the Levites among the cultic personnel. Instead of appearing as a secondary class of temple servants subservient to the Aaronide priests,

51. The MT and LXX agree that the king is the one doing the writing despite the tradition of translating the verb causatively as reflected in the NRSV and the NJPS; cf. Richard D. Nelson, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 211.

these Levites demonstrate their essential role in the effectiveness of the cult for the community. According to the presentation in Chronicles, if the Levites had been unable to act outside of their "normal" obligations, then these events that brought about cultic renewal and restoration in the community would not have been possible. However, instead of viewing these anomalies as indications that the Chronicler preserved an underlying source or tradition for which he had to apologize, or that the Chronicler was reflecting the current role of the Levites in Second Temple practice, these three examples are best understood as models for the *better alternative reality* that could be attained by the community if they would allow for the possibility of the Levites acting beyond their commonly accepted duties when the situation should dictate.

The responsibility of the Levites to care for and carry the ark of the covenant receives a unique clarification in Chronicles. The Chronicler continues the tradition which associates the Levites with the ark (1 Chr 6:16 [v. 31 Eng.]; 15:11–15, 26–27; 16:4–6, 37–38; 2 Chr 5:2–4; 35:3), but alone addresses the practical issue of what the Levites do once the ark has been placed in Solomon's temple and no longer requires semi-regular transportation.[52] The parallel texts of 2 Sam 6:1–11 and 1 Chr 13:1–14 state that at the time of David the ark was transported on a cart drawn by oxen, but neither passage indicates that this method was improper nor provides any reason that Uzzah should have died for his seemingly pious action. Yet, the Chronicler connects both of these in the claim that the improper method was indeed the reason (1 Chr 15:12–13). Thus, the Levites now performed their duty and carried the ark by its poles into the city of David (vv. 14–15, 25–29). However, once the ark has been brought to Jerusalem the Levites no longer need to serve in this way (1 Chr 23:26). Instead, they are to assist the Aaronide priests with the offerings and to care for the maintenance of the cultic apparatus (1 Chr 16:37–38; 23:28–32). The Levites carry the ark one final time into the newly built Solomonic temple bringing it as far as they are able. The priests, who alone could enter the "most holy place," finish the task in accordance with their unique access to this part of the sanctuary (2 Chr 5:2–10). David states and Solomon affirms, with a certain emphasis, that the mobile ark has come to its final resting place (1 Chr 28:2; 2 Chr 6:11, 41; 8:11).

The ark is not mentioned again in Chronicles until the problematic text of 2 Chr 35:3, in which Josiah commands the Levites to place the ark in the Solomonic temple, to carry it no longer, but to serve YHWH and the

52. Japhet correctly notes that the ark's immobility is presented as "the basis for all the changes in the roles of the Levites" (*I & II Chronicles*, 1048).

people in the celebration of Passover. Minor orthographic changes to the MT have been suggested that would adjust Josiah's imperative into a perfect verb and alleviate this difficulty.[53] If accepted, this statement becomes a notice about the ark's current state of rest that allows the Levites to perform their duties in accordance with the innovations presented in the Davidic–Solomonic model. In a time without the ark—a reasonable assumption as no mention of its use in the temple cult during the Second Temple period is attested in any contemporary literature[54]—the reminder that the Levites have been assigned a vast array of responsibilities in place of their traditional role as "carriers and keepers" of the ark serves a utopian function in the depiction of the cult. In the final reform movement described in the narrative, the Chronicler emphasizes that the expanded roles of the Levites in the cult are essential to its operation. While this portrayal has been understood as a reflection of Second Temple practice, the irregular actions of the Levites in preparing the Passover on behalf of the priests, singers, and gatekeepers are not presented as the *typical* procedures to be followed at the festival. Instead, the narrative affirms the potential *adaptability* of the cultic system that depends on the Levites serving in their innovative roles rather than attempting to restrict these individuals to older models that no longer serve a useful function in the present cultic program (i.e. the Mosaic model which emphasizes that the *primary* function of the Levites is to "set up and take down" the mobile sanctuary). In this regard, the Chronicler's model stands both in continuity and tension with that of P—building on it but critiquing it at the same time.

This relationship with the stipulations of P is evident also in the presentation of the role of the Levites as caretakers of the cultic apparatus. Each of the three clans of the Levites is assigned specific responsibilities in the proper erection, packing, and transportation of the tabernacle and its various cultic objects according to Num 3:21–37 (cf. Num 10:17, 21). This text also asserts that Eleazar was the supervisor of the entire process performed by these Levites (v. 32). Further, the exclusion of any "outsider" (זר) from the tabernacle is associated with the Aaronide priests who encamp on the tabernacle's east side where the entrance is found. Although the term "gatekeeper" (שוער) or a similar one is not found here, this type of duty appears to be associated only with the Aaronide priests in the Torah when the concept does appear. Additional details regarding the Levitical duties are contained in Num 4:1–33, which also

53. So Japhet, in agreement with the LXX (*I & II Chronicles*, 1048).

54. See *b. Yoma* 21b, 54b; and Christopher T. Begg, "The Ark in Chronicles," in Graham, McKenzie, and Knoppers, eds., *The Chronicler as Theologian*, 133–45.

affirm Eleazar's position as overseer of the entire tabernacle and some of its sacrificial elements (v. 16) and further place the two clans of Gershon and Merari under the charge of Eleazar's brother Ithamar (vv. 28, 33). These passages in Numbers mention that the Levites are responsible for the utensils and for the carrying of the furniture, but the primary focus of both texts is on distribution of labor for the component parts of the frame of the tabernacle's outer fence.

In Chronicles, the duties of the Levites in the maintenance of the cultic apparatus are listed (1 Chr 9:28–32; 23:26–29): assisting the Aaronide priests; performing the service of the house of God; cleansing the cultic area; assisting with various elements including the rows of bread for each Sabbath, the flour for the grain offering, the unleavened bread, the baked offering, the offering mixed with oil, all measurements, the oil and spices, the furniture, and counting the utensils before and after each use. Most of these responsibilities are not found in or derived from the two passages in Numbers. Except for carrying the mobile ark, the roles of the Levites in the necessary duties of transporting the tabernacle are not found in Chronicles.

In a major difference from Numbers, the description of the Levitical duties by the Chronicler does not distinguish between the unique responsibilities of the three clans. The Kohathites are singled out at some points (e.g. 1 Chr 9:32), but the Gershonites and Merarites do not have separate duties. Instead, the caretakers of the cult in Chronicles are nearly uniformly addressed as "Levites" without further differentiation into clans. In another point of contrast, Phinehas the son of Eleazar is stated to have been in charge of the Levites performing these duties (1 Chr 9:20)—a point never made explicit in the Torah.

In addition, while in the Mosaic Torah it is the priests who seem to have been what could be termed "gatekeepers," the service of gatekeepers is explicitly assigned to certain Levites and associated with the authority of David (and of Samuel) in 1 Chr 9:22 and 26:1–19. In Chronicles, the Korahites of the Kohathite clan and a few of the Merarites are assigned to the weekly divisions of the gatekeepers that parallel the other divisions of the cultic personnel (1 Chr 9:17–27; 26:1–19). These gatekeepers serve as guardians of the cultic area and have the specific duties of night watch and of "opening" (מפתח) it for use each morning (1 Chr 9:19, 26–27). Although gatekeepers are mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah, they do not appear explicitly as Levites and their duties are not described. Chronicles, however, provides them with a Levitical heritage and mentions them in the performance of the duties with some frequency (1 Chr 9:17–32; 15:18, 23–24; 16:38; 23:4; 26:1–19; 2 Chr 8:14; 23:4–11, 19; 34:12–13; 35:15).

One of the duties of the gatekeepers that has received particular attention in scholarship is their service as a military (or paramilitary) force. Although only explicitly noted in connection with Jehoiada's revolt in 2 Chr 23, two other possible associations of these Levites as a military force are found in Chronicles: (1) the Korahites (of whom many are gatekeepers) join David's army at Ziklag (1 Chr 12:6), and (2) the enumeration of David's military includes some 4,600 Levites, without specifying from which clans (1 Chr 12:27 [v. 26 Eng.]). Much has been made of the differences between the account of Jehoiada's revolt as it is presented in 2 Kgs 11 and 2 Chr 23. One of these is the identity of the guards. The individuals who are guarding both the temple and the other parts of the city in 2 Kgs 11:4–8 are not explicitly Levites and at least some of them are called Carites, who are possibly foreigners. However, in 2 Chr 23:4–11, these individuals are clearly Levites.

Typical of much scholarship on this issue, Wright concludes that this depiction of the Levites as a military force serving as guards *possibly* presents "an imaginative reflection of a small part of the social reality of Jerusalem in the late Persian period."[55] That is, the Chronicler is depicting, at least to some degree, the conditions of his own time in this narrative: Levites serve as gatekeepers in the temple and have a military role as "social deterrents and enforcers of order and political stability within the city and province."[56] While scholarship has tended to focus on the "reality" part of Wright's conclusion, utopian literary theory would emphasize the "imaginative" side. As one of many such examples, the portrayal of the Levites as a military force appears in detail only in an *extreme situation under unusual circumstances*. Given the appearance of this exceptional motif in other key points in the narrative, utopian literary theory suggests that Chronicles is once again presenting the case for adaptability and change within the temple cult and its structure when the situation would dictate that such a course of action is necessary. Thus, in contrast to Wright's position, the social reality of the Second Temple period should not be reconstructed from this text. Instead, a *different* future, a *better alternative reality*, is the basis for the depiction in this narrative. That is not to exclude the *possibility* that Levites were already functioning as gatekeepers—or perhaps better, that the gatekeepers had claimed to be Levites—in the operation of the Second Temple. However, it is only in Chronicles that such an *innovation* in the temple cult appears. This may suggest that the status or identity of the gatekeepers was an issue at the time of the Chronicler, but it does not logically follow that

55. Wright, "Guarding the Gates," 79.
56. Ibid., 74.

the creation of a legitimate line of continuity with the past for the present reality is the *only* option to explain this novel contention.[57]

The service of the Levitical gatekeepers as guards and as a military force should be kept distinct from the depiction of Levitical singers and musicians as key components in one military victory in Chronicles.[58] The victory of Jehoshaphat over the coalition coming against Judah contains the unique positioning of the singers in front of the army (2 Chr 20:21). An explicit connection is made in the text between their praise and singing and the defeat of the enemy through YHWH's intervention (v. 22). Upon returning to Jerusalem, celebration at the temple is undertaken with rejoicing using musical instruments (vv. 27–28). Although similar accounts of God's miraculous deliverance are found in other texts, the role of the Levites in this instance is unparalleled. Other victories include the blowing of trumpets by priests or shouting by the people (e.g. Josh 6:16–20; Judg 7:19–22;[59] 2 Chr 13:12–15), but Levitical singing and music are not found elsewhere. The exceptional nature of this description within Chronicles further emphasizes the utopian construct being presented in various means throughout the book. While Jerusalem's armies have to fight their own battles, they are assisted by God, and on one rare occasion they do not even fight to gain the victory —singing and praise in music, along with their belief and faith, are enough. This incident does not establish a pattern of Levitical singers leading the Yehudite army to victory in battle, but suggests possibilities for the future should a similar situation present itself.[60] In the Chronicler's *better alternative reality*, the Levites provide a means of victory even when no other hope can be offered. It is worth repeating, however, that the Levites in this text are not some paramilitary group, but the "choir" who do not need to engage in armed conflict to be victorious.

The association of the Levites as singers or musicians in the temple cult is not unique to Chronicles. As noted previously, the Asaphites who are singers are associated with the Levites in Nehemiah. However, the

57. Compare Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10–29*, 620–21, 658.

58. The Levitical singers are also associated with the military in the statement that the officers of the army assisted David in the establishment of the divisions for the singers and musicians (1 Chr 25:1).

59. Gideon's army of three hundred who blew trumpets is not limited explicitly to priests or to Levites. This is one of the few times that trumpets are blown in battle by non-priests.

60. David L. Petersen claims that the description of the Levitical singers in this text is a "retrojection" of how the present practice would have been performed in the past (*Late Israelite Prophecy: Studies in Deutero-Prophetic Literature and in Chronicles* [SBLMS 23; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977], 77).

prominence given to this understanding of the Levites in Chronicles has encouraged a number of scholars to suggest that the Chronicler was not only a Levite, but a Levitical singer in particular. This identification may or may not be correct, but the Chronicler's intense concern over the Levitical singers and musicians in his work certainly cannot be doubted.

The first appearance of the Levites in Chronicles is their association as singers in the tabernacle by David's authority and in Solomon's temple (1 Chr 6:16–17 [vv. 31–32 Eng.]). This introductory statement is followed by genealogies for the three eponymous leaders of the singers: Heman the Kohathite, Asaph the Gershomite, and Ethan the Merarite (vv. 18–32 [vv. 33–47 Eng.]). These three individuals along with the rest of their kindred singers next appear in 1 Chr 15:16–28 at the successful transfer of the ark to Jerusalem. In this passage, the Levites sing, they play musical instruments including the three most commonly associated with these musicians—harps, lyres, and cymbals—and they wear fine linen. Horns and trumpets are also mentioned.

For this event, the leaders of the Levites appoint singers from their kindred, including one Levite who served as the director since he "understood" the music (מבין; v. 22). The priests have no control over these singers as it is David who appoints the divisions of the Levitical singers and musicians (1 Chr 16:4–7, 42; 23:5; 25:1–31). The direct accountability of the three eponymous Levitical singers (in this case, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun) to the king—thereby by-passing the priests or leading priest—is emphasized in the repetition of this point in 1 Chr 25:2, 6. The Levitical singers are uniquely presented as being trained for their occupation with some of them being "teachers" and some "students" (v. 8). None of the other Levitical or priestly groups are associated with this type of instructional system—including those who teach the Torah. After the establishment of their divisions by David, the singers appear in Chronicles at significant cultic events: the temple dedication by Solomon (2 Chr 5:12–13; 7:6; 8:14), the victory over the enemy through praise under Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:19–28), the rededication of the temple under Hezekiah (2 Chr 29:25–30), the celebration of Passover under Hezekiah (2 Chr 30:21), and the celebration of Passover under Josiah (2 Chr 35:15).

The inclusion of the Levitical singers during these cultic events is not unexpected in Chronicles. The most intriguing association with these singers that is made in Chronicles—at least for numerous scholars—is the claim that their singing and playing of musical instruments in the cult was prophetic in nature (1 Chr 25:1, 2, 3). In these verses, it is not grammatically clear whether the prophetic activity applies to the singers

in general or only to the three leaders, although the latter seems more likely in context. The three eponymous ancestors are called "seers" (Heman in 1 Chr 25:5; Asaph in 2 Chr 29:30; and Jeduthun in 2 Chr 35:15).[61] In addition, in 2 Chr 20:14–17, one of the Asaphite Levites named Jahaziel—he is also apparently a singer, though this identification is not made explicit in the text—has the spirit of YHWH come on him to pronounce a word of encouragement and instruction from God, although it is not called a prophecy. In the other three instances in which the spirit "comes on" (היה על) or "clothes" (לבש) individuals, one is a priest and the other two are not stated to be Levites.[62] Of these four, only Azariah's utterance is explicitly called a prophecy (2 Chr 15:8).

The final reference to the Levitical singers functioning as prophets that scholars have emphasized is the apparent replacement of "the Levites" in 2 Chr 34:30 for "the prophets" in the parallel text of 2 Kgs 23:2.[63] However, there are at least two arguments to be made against the view that the Chronicler simply equates the two groups. First, the association of Levites with prophets in this verse is made only on a synoptic reading of the passage in Kings. It is questionable whether the Chronicler intends his audience to have the text of Kings available to consult in order to notice this "change" or its implied significance. Second, this would be the only instance in Chronicles in which the Levites as a whole and not the singers or their leaders alone are associated with prophecy.[64] Thus, it is an overstatement to assert that the Chronicler correlates the Levitical singers, or worse the Levites as a whole, of his own time with the prophets of the past.[65]

61. The MT of 2 Chr 35:15 has the singular "seer" (חוזה), but the plural (הזים) is attested in other ancient versions (LXX, Vulgate, Syriac, and the Targum). If the plural is accepted, then all three would be termed "seers" instead of just Jeduthun. In either case, Heman, Asaph, and Jeduthun are all described as seers in Chronicles.

62. Zechariah is clothed in 2 Chr 24:20; Amasai, chief of the Thirty, is clothed in 1 Chr 12:19 (v. 18 Eng.); and Azariah ben Oded has the spirit come on him in 2 Chr 15:1.

63. Curtis and Madsen, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 511–12; Jacob M. Myers, *II Chronicles* (AB 13; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), 208; von Rad, *Geschichtsbild*, 114; Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 85; cf. Kleinig, *Lord's Song*, 156; and Harry V. Van Rooy, "Prophet and Society in the Persian Period According to Chronicles," in Eskenazi and Richards, eds., *Second Temple Studies*, 2:163–79 (170, 176–77).

64. Both of these conclusions are defended in more detail by Schniedewind, *Word of God*, 184–87.

65. This is a common view among scholars; see, e.g., DeVries, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 408, 411; and Mason, *Preaching the Tradition*, 81.

The wide variety of individuals who are associated with the terms "prophet" or "seer" or related language in Chronicles further supports the conclusion that the Chronicler does not attempt to restrict prophetic activity to the Levites or Levitical singers.[66] Most scholars would not dispute this point. However, many scholars proceed to argue that what does appear in Chronicles is a distinction between "classical" prophecy and his contemporary situation that is a result of the "decline" or "cessation" of prophecy. Thus, in Chronicles, the "classical" prophets become the authors of histories and are relegated to the past. Prophecy, in this view, continues in the compositions of the Levitical singers and musicians and may be redefined as the exegesis of prophetic texts, including the histories written under prophetic inspiration (such as Samuel–Kings) by a new generation of prophetic messengers who are also Levites, and of whom the Chronicler himself was most likely a member.[67] However, the evidence in Chronicles cannot support any of these claims.

The Chronicler's depiction of Levitical singers as prophets is not designed to restrict prophetic activity of his time to the Levites. Prophetic activity includes Levites, Levitical singers, and non-Levites in Chronicles. Also, the writing of records and prophetic books is not restricted to Levites in Chronicles. No distinction can be drawn in Chronicles

66. *Prophet and prophecy*: Nathan (1 Chr 17:1; 29:29; 2 Chr 9:29; 29:25); Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun (1 Chr 25:1, 2, 3; possibly their descendants); Ahijah (2 Chr 9:29); Shemaiah (2 Chr 12:5, 15); Iddo (2 Chr 13:22); Azariah (2 Chr 15:8); prophets of God (2 Chr 20:20; 24:19; 29:25; 36:16); Eliezer (2 Chr 20:37); Elijah (2 Chr 21:12); an unnamed prophet (2 Chr 25:15–16); Isaiah (2 Chr 26:22; 32:20, 32); Oded (2 Chr 28:9); Huldah (2 Chr 34:22); Samuel (2 Chr 35:18); Jeremiah (2 Chr 36:12). *Seer*: Samuel (1 Chr 9:22; 26:28; 29:29); Gad (1 Chr 21:9; 29:29; 2 Chr 29:25); Heman (1 Chr 25:5); Iddo (2 Chr 9:29; 12:15); Hanani (2 Chr 16:7, 10; 19:2[?]); Jehu ben Hanani (2 Chr 19:2[?]; 20:34); Asaph (2 Chr 29:30); seers of God (2 Chr 33:18, 19 [or "Hozai"]); Jeduthun (2 Chr 35:15; or all three leaders).

Note that several individuals are termed both a prophet and a seer: Samuel, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and Iddo. Thus, the terms do not distinguish between Levitical and non-Levitical prophetic activities. Also, many of these individuals are associated with the writing of records or prophetic texts: Samuel and Gad (1 Chr 29:29); Nathan (1 Chr 29:29; 2 Chr 9:29); Ahijah (2 Chr 9:29); Iddo (2 Chr 9:29; 12:15; 13:22); Shemaiah (2 Chr 12:15); Jehu ben Hanani (2 Chr 19:2[?]; 20:34); Elijah (a letter in 2 Chr 21:12); Isaiah (2 Chr 26:22; 32:32); and seers or "Hozai" (2 Chr 33:19). Yet, with the exception of Samuel, none of these individuals is a Levitical singer or even a Levite according to Chronicles.

67. No one has argued for this position more extensively than Schniedewind; see "Chronicler as an Interpreter of Scripture"; and *Word of God*. His reading of 2 Chr 36:15–16, which uses the terms messengers and prophets, is vital to his interpretation of the Chronicler as one of these messengers serving to exegete prophetic texts.

between "classical" prophets and the "prophets" of the Second Temple period, namely, some Levites, in their descriptions in Chronicles. There is no pattern on which to base such claims. Scholars have read the statements about the Levitical singers serving a prophetic function in the cult *as if* this reflected the practice of the Second Temple period.[68]

Utopian literary theory highlights the inconsistencies found in identifying those who may serve as prophets in Chronicles. These inconsistencies do not suggest that Levites "replaced" classical prophets nor do they suggest that prophecy was a phenomenon relegated to the past. Many of the prophetic utterances in Chronicles appear as part of the Chronicler's *Sondergut*. It is also in these same speeches that the message of the Chronicler to his contemporary audience is most readily apparent. However, the majority of these prophetic messengers are not Levites and are never Levitical singers. This methodology does not seem overly effective if the Chronicler intended to convey an association between the prophets of the past and the Levites of the present.

Instead, the Chronicler suggests an innovation in the *perception* of the music of the Levitical singers and musicians. The prophetic voice may *also* be found in their compositions. This understanding of the Levitical singers as prophets is not dependent on the disappearance of the rest of the prophets. As part of the Chronicler's cultic utopia, these Levitical singers provide *a*, but not *the*, place for the prophetic voice to be found *regardless* of other historical circumstances. Chronicles has often been interpreted as one reflection of a hierocratic view that disdained the prophetic and attempted to marginalize it by replacing the prophets with Levitical singers who could be controlled as part of the temple cult.[69] However, the singers neither replace nor restrict; they *expand* the possible arenas in which to find prophets and prophetic activity. A utopian reading of these singers in Chronicles does not suggest any malice on the part of the Chronicler; instead, the singers enhance the cult by providing praise to God that shares in the same prophetic spirit associated with the prophets of Israel's past. For those who may have contended that prophecy did or should cease,[70] the Chronicler articulates a *better alternative*

68. See, e.g., Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 77; and Van Rooy, "Prophet and Society," 176–77.

69. See this view as represented by Otto Plöger, *Theocracy and Eschatology* (trans. S. Rudman; Richmond, Virg.: John Knox, 1968); Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology* (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979); and Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 6–8, 98–100.

70. For example, the cessation of prophecy is *desired* in Zech 13:2–6, a text definitely originating at some point during the Second Temple period.

reality that includes prophecy and advocates that the Levitical singers have a role to play in its implementation in the present and in the future.

But apart from this concern over prophecy, the Levitical singers serve another utopian function in the cult: the praise of YHWH is included as a regular part of the cultic celebrations, something not prescribed in the Torah. The Chronicler does not have to argue strenuously for the existence of singers in the cult, but their service as a *vital* part of the cult's operation does seem to be an issue. This is another innovation in the temple cult presented by Chronicles. While scholars have tended to *assume* that this reflects Second Temple practice, the evidence suggests instead that the Chronicler may be attempting to *expand* the roles commonly associated with these singers and to affirm their participation in the rituals that were already being observed in the cult. Thus, the depictions of the Levitical singers should not be used to reconstruct the cultic liturgy of the Second Temple period. The Chronicler offers a different liturgy with different officiants instead of the depictions in other cultic texts such as P and Ezek 40–48, which contain nothing specific regarding singing and praise in the operation of the cult. The Chronicler's cultic utopia is again shown to have unique features that differentiate it from other cultic programs, including other utopian models.

The various cultic responsibilities of the Levites in Chronicles are not the full extent of their duties. They serve within the cult and within the larger societal structure. Some of these other functions involve or are related to the cult, but have also been termed "secular" or "administrative" in nature by a number of scholars. However, attempting to distinguish between the cultic sphere and "non-cultic" arena of the Levites in regard to the following set of duties is neither beneficial nor does it accurately account for the depiction of the Levitical duties in Chronicles. As much as scholars would like to see the Levites expanding their influence beyond the cult, the textual evidence does not support this conclusion.[71] These remaining duties include service as: overseers of the treasuries, scribes, judges, and teachers of the Torah.

First, the treasuries of the cult are placed under the authority of the Levites by David (1 Chr 9:26; 26:20–28). These treasuries included the

71. The argument that Chronicles reflects a Levitical "grab for power" outside of the cultic sphere and into new areas of secular administration has been articulated by various scholars. It has been recently asserted again by Labahn, "Antitheocratic Tendencies," esp. 121–23, 130–35. Contrast, for example, the cautious view taken by Schams regarding the scribal activity of the Levites in particular and the inability to distinguish adequately between the cultic and secular spheres ("1 and 2 Chronicles," 71).

donations of gifts for the operation of the cult and of the booty confiscated in battle that had been dedicated to God. The cultic treasuries are also mentioned in 1 Chr 28:11–12; 29:3; 2 Chr 5:1; 8:15; 12:9; 16:2; 28:21 (implied); 36:18. The Levitical care of them is affirmed explicitly only in 1 Chr 29:8. While not mentioning treasuries, the Levites as well as the priests are associated with the money and gifts brought into the temple as donations for its repair (2 Chr 24:5–14; 31:4–14; 34:8–14). In the construction and operation of storehouses by Hezekiah for the portions to be distributed to the Levites and priests, two Levites are placed in charge (2 Chr 31:12). However, cultic treasuries are not the only type of treasuries mentioned in Chronicles. Royal treasuries are clearly distinguished from the cultic ones in 1 Chr 27:25; 2 Chr 12:9; 16:2; 25:24; 28:21 (implied); 32:27–28; 36:18. Of these texts, only the reference to royal treasuries established by David in 1 Chr 27:25 lacks a parallel or similar statement in Kings.[72] None of the references to royal treasuries in Chronicles makes any mention of Levitical responsibility for their care.[73] Thus, the Levites are explicitly responsible for the cultic treasuries, while the identity of the individuals who are in charge of the royal treasuries is never made explicit. In the Second Temple period there may have been no "royal" treasuries in Yehud.[74] Two texts in Nehemiah assert the existence of cultic treasuries or storehouses in Jerusalem at two separate points in time during this period (Neh 7:70; 13:13). In the latter, Nehemiah appoints one priest, one scribe, and one Levite with two assistants over these facilities used for the distribution of portions to the temple personnel.

Also, in Chronicles, the priests or leading priest is connected with the money brought into the treasuries (see the roles of Jehoiada, Azariah, and Hilkiah in the three passages cited above), but the overseeing of the treasuries and storehouses themselves is assigned to the Levites independently of the priesthood in Chronicles. Is this a reflection of Second Temple practice, or an innovation in the administration of the cultic finances advocated by the Chronicler? Any cultic duty that is not sacrificial in nature—a priestly responsibility, if it were—would easily be

72. The parallel texts are, respectively: 1 Kgs 14:26; 15:18; 2 Kgs 14:14; 16:8 (explicit, not implied); 20:13 (different context, but existence made clear); 24:13.

73. The list of David's stewards does not suggest any of these individuals were Levites.

74. This is an important point. The Levites are not depicted as being in charge of the "secular" treasuries in the past. *If* the Chronicler wished to expand their influence, this would be one means of doing so. Their past duties in non-cultic arenas that no longer exist could easily be extrapolated to other non-cultic duties that do exist in the present, which they could oversee by implication.

associated with the types of duties that the Levites perform in the routine maintenance of the cult and provision for its personnel in a variety of texts in Chronicles. Thus, without additional evidence to support the claims of the Levites *alone* to have this duty, this Levitical responsibility for overseeing the cultic treasuries as expressed in Chronicles should be interpreted as a utopian element similar to those previously discussed.

Second, the responsibility for these treasuries may suggest that the Levites had some writing ability or, at the very least, that they were able to count and apportion significant quantities of various items to the appropriate recipients. Thus, it is not surprising to find Levites associated with scribal activities or stated to be scribes in Chronicles. However, the number of instances in which such a connection is made is relatively small. In fact, only two individual Levites are said to have written anything or to have been a scribe. The first is a certain Shemaiah, a Levite and a scribe, who records the list of priestly divisions (1 Chr 29:6), but the identity of the one or ones who recorded the other lists of the various Levitical divisions is not mentioned. The second individual is Samuel, the prophet/seer who records the events of David's reign, although his Levitical pedigree is known only from a previous passage (1 Chr 29:29 and 6:13, 18–23 [vv. 28, 33–38 Eng.], respectively). In addition, a group of Levites served as scribes at the time of Josiah without specifying what types of things they recorded or wrote (2 Chr 34:13). Thus, *some* Levites served as scribes, but the precise nature of their responsibilities or the subject matter which they dealt with is unclear in Chronicles.

Other *possible* associations between scribal activities and Levites have been suggested: their service as judges (1 Chr 26:29–32; 2 Chr 19:8–11); their service as teachers of the Torah (2 Chr 17:7–9; 35:3; cf. the "teaching priest" of 2 Chr 15:3); the implementation of the "teacher" and "pupil" instructional model of the Levitical singers and musicians (1 Chr 25:8);[75] and the enrollments of the Levites and priests in genealogies (2 Chr 31:12–19). However, none of these texts explicitly claims that the Levites were scribes nor mentions them writing anything. In fact, none of the references in Chronicles to genealogies states who were the ones recording such information as the written genealogical records.[76] This silence is also true for the few references to enrollments in genealogies in

75. It is unnecessary to postulate scribalism in the structured instruction of music and singing. One only needs to think of the significant number of musicians who "play by ear" or sing in choirs without ever learning how to read one note of music.

76. Each reference to genealogical records in Chronicles is silent about who wrote them down (1 Chr 5:1, 17; 7:5, 7, 9, 40; 9:1, 22; 23:11, 24; 2 Chr 31:15–19). Only for the recording of the priestly divisions is someone named, who is a Levite and a scribe, as noted above (1 Chr 24:6).

other books in the HB (Neh 7:5, 64; Ezek 13:9)—with the notable exception of Numbers. In this P text, the various genealogical enrollments are performed by several combinations of people: Moses alone (Num 3:16, 42; 4:49), Moses and Aaron (1:3, 19; 3:39; 4:37, 41, 45; 26:64), Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the people (1:44; 4:34, 46), and Moses and Eleazar (26:63). Thus, in Numbers, the task is neither assigned to nor restricted to the Levites, but involves the leading priest and civil leaders.

Chronicles acknowledges that a single Levite may be a scribe or that a group of Levitical scribes may exist, but it *does not* make an effort to associate all scribal activities with the Levites. Instead, Chronicles includes references to scribes who do not have Levitical heritages: the scribes associated with the tribe of Judah (1 Chr 2:55), and the uncle of David who served as a counselor and a scribe (1 Chr 27:32). In the presentation of Chronicles, the scant amount of information about the scribal activities of the Levites and the obvious affirmation that not all scribes are Levites requires the conclusion that the Chronicler was not attempting to use scribalism to separate the Levites from the priests and to consolidate *political power* for these now independent Levites.[77]

As with the previous Levitical duties, their status as scribes should be viewed as part of the Chronicler's utopian motif. Not all scribes are Levites, but Levites *may* be scribes. Perhaps the Chronicler *is* making the case that Levites should be scribes *too*. That is, these few examples depict Levites as scribes within the cultic system and even as the composers of court records (i.e. Samuel). However, there is no effort to present large groups of scribes who diligently record, copy, or compose documents of any particular types of subject matter. Rather, the Chronicler affirms that Levites may be and even *should be* among those working as scribes. Nothing can be concluded from these depictions about whether Chronicles reflects a present condition in which Levites served as scribes, to what extent they did, or in what types of matters they performed their service. The entire depiction of Levites as scribes in Chronicles could reflect a *better alternative reality* constructed by the Chronicler in which Levites *do* serve as scribes regardless of their present employment in such capacity. Perhaps it is the novelty of this suggestion by the Chronicler (Levites *could* be scribes) that accounts for

77. Contra Labahn, "Antitheocratic Tendencies," esp. 123–35. Also, the recording of the priestly divisions by the Levite-scribe occurs in the presence of the two leading priests and other priests—among the large number of people stated to be there (1 Chr 24:6). This hardly seems to suggest the independence of this Levite-scribe from the priests. Schams correctly concludes that the evidence in Chronicles suggests that the Levites were neither the only scribes in the Chronicler's time nor were all scribes Levites ("1 and 2 Chronicles," 69).

the *rarity* of its appearance in Chronicles in comparison to other cultic innovations that are mentioned with greater frequency.

Third, Levites are among those who serve as judges in Chronicles. Levites are appointed as judges by David in 1 Chr 26:29–32 and by Jehoshaphat in 2 Chr 19:8–11. In David's system, Izharite Levites are appointed as judges for "outside work" (1 Chr 26:29).[78] David also appoints two groups of Hebronites as judges over different geographic regions of his kingdom. Those related to Hashabiah are placed in charge of the Cisjordan and those related to Jerijah are over the Transjordan. Both groups are responsible for two distinct categories of issues: the work of YHWH and the service of the king (v. 30), also expressed as the matters of God and the matters of the king (v. 32). The identification of these Hebronites as Levites is not explicit in this text in Chronicles, but other textual evidence from Chronicles and the Torah would suggest that they should be considered so.[79] The name Jerijah is also highly suggestive, but not conclusive, that these individuals were Levites.[80] If these two groups of Hebronites are Levites, as seems most likely, then this text places Levites of the Kohathite clan in positions as judges over the entire Davidic kingdom in both cultic and civil affairs.[81]

In Jehoshaphat's system, judges are appointed throughout the cities of Judah (2 Chr 19:5). The identity of these judges is not specified,

78. This odd phrase also appears in Neh 11:6. In both cases, the meaning is unclear. Work not directly related to the temple or outside its precincts has been suggested; see the NJPS translation.

79. Hebron is most famously associated with the tribe of Judah in one of two contexts: (1) the city conquered by Caleb, and thus its location within Judah (Josh 14:13–14; 15:13; 20:7; 21:11; Judg 1:10, 20; 1 Chr 2:42–43; 6:40 [v. 55 Eng.]); and (2) its function as David's first capital city (2 Sam 2:1–4, 11; 3:2–5; 5:1–5, 13; 1 Kgs 2:11; 1 Chr 3:4; 11:1–3; 29:29).

Hebron is also one of the sons of Kohath the Levite who had descendants serving in the cult (Exod 6:18; Num 3:19, 27; 26:58; 1 Chr 6:1, 3 [vv. 2, 18 Eng.]; 23:12, 19; 24:23[?]; 26:23). The descendents of a prominent Levite named Hebron, who may or may not be this same individual, are listed among those Levites and priests who assisted in the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem (1 Chr 15:4–10). The city of Hebron as a Levitical city is explicitly associated with the Kohathites in 1 Chr 6:39–41 (vv. 54–56 Eng.).

80. The name Jerijah (יריה) is found only in 1 Chr 26:31. However, a Jerijahu (יריהו) is mentioned in 1 Chr 23:19; 24:23. In all three passages—the only appearances of this name—the individual is associated with the Hebronites. These Hebronites are clearly Levites in the final two references. Japhet asserts without qualification that both groups of Hebronites should be understood as Levites (*I & II Chronicles*, 454).

81. Note that David appoints some 6000 Levites of unspecified descent to the vague positions of officers and judges according to 1 Chr 23:4.

however.[82] The relationship between this group of judges and the group of judges who are appointed over disputed cases and are located in Jerusalem is much debated. The identity of the second "higher court" should not be associated with the judicial administration in the rest of the land as there is no evidence to suggest that judges formed a homogeneous group at any point in Israel's history. While the identity of the first group must remain unknown, the second group consists of an unspecified number of Levites, priests, and leaders of the families of Israel (2 Chr 19:8). Thus, both cultic and civil authorities are involved. Further details about this arrangement include the division of subject matter for such cases into the matters of YHWH and the matters of the king, each with an individual supervisor. Over the cultic affairs is the leading priest and over the royal (possibly civil) affairs is the governor of Judah. The Levites serve both groups as some form of assistants (2 Chr 19:11). Several points are worth emphasizing: (1) the distinction between these two spheres seems only to apply at the level of the central court in Jerusalem and not to the lower courts; (2) the parameters of what type of issues fall into each category is not distinguished; (3) the Levites are not in charge of either the lower courts or the central court for disputed cases; and (4) the ancestry of the governor is not clearly connected to any specific tribe or family in Israel.

The position of the Levites in each of these versions of the Israelite judicial system is significant. In David's system, the Levites are completely in charge; in Jehoshaphat's system, they are under the authority of the leading priest and governor and comprise only part of a cultic and civil court. The inconsistency is best explained as part of the utopian portrayal of the Levites. Either structure would be better than the present—whatever it may have been! The Chronicler offers two possible means of running a functional judicial system, either of which could be implemented, although the one under Jehoshaphat could possibly have been more directly applicable to the Chronicler's own time. Note that even the number of judges is not defined, which would allow for a great deal of flexibility in adapting the system over time. The Chronicler is not reflecting the situation of his present, but offering a *better alternative reality* in its place. This reality, whichever program is followed, includes Levites, but not necessarily to the exclusion of others, and their precise position within the hierarchy can be negotiated.

82. Note that Solomon assembled judges whose ancestry is unknown in 2 Chr 1:2. Their identification with the Levitical judges appointed by David in 1 Chr 23:4 or 26:29–32 may be assumed, but this would only be an assumption based on the book's narrative progression. The same would be true of the unidentified judges appointed by Jehoshaphat throughout the cities of Judah (2 Chr 19:5).

Fourth, Levites are among those who teach the Torah in Chronicles. Three texts are relevant to this Levitical duty: 2 Chr 15:3; 17:7–9; 35:3. In the first text, the people were "without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law" at some point in their past. As a result, Israel was in distress. Eventually, the people did repent and they were delivered by God from their enemies (2 Chr 15:3–6). Such a time is most readily associated with the premonarchic period of the judges. It has been suggested that all three of these elements come together for the first time during the reign of David.[83] If this is correct, it may suggest that the organization of the personnel into divisions allowed for some to function as teachers of the Torah. However, nothing in the chapters describing those divisions indicates that the personnel engaged in such actions. The only possible exception might be the establishment of the Levitical judges (1 Chr 26:29–32), but there is no hint that these Levites (who are not priests) provided the people with instruction in Torah. Thus, the precise nature of this claim in Chronicles must remain nebulous, although its association of the teaching of the Torah with the priests is explicit.

The first clear reference to instruction in Torah being undertaken appears during the reign of Jehoshaphat prior to his judicial reforms (2 Chr 17:7–9). In this brief passage, Jehoshaphat sends five officials, nine Levites, and two priests throughout the cities of Judah with the book of the Torah of YHWH to teach the people. Implicitly as a result, Jehoshaphat prospers and lives in peace (2 Chr 17:10–13). This combination of cultic personnel and civil leaders parallels the composition of the central court in Jehoshaphat's judicial reform (2 Chr 19:8). Finally, the Levites alone are stated to be teachers for all Israel in 2 Chr 35:3. The subject of their instruction is not stated; it may be limited to the Torah or may be more extensive so as to include judicial rulings such as those of the central court as well.[84]

These texts affirm that the Levites serve as teachers. However, they are not alone in this regard, and the scope of their subject matter seems to include the book of the Torah but may be more extensive. Thus, Chronicles does not advocate that the instruction of the people in Torah is the restricted purview of the Levites. Instead, consistent with the traditions of the priest serving as a teacher,[85] the Levites *also* share in this respon-

83. Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 169.

84. However, this should not been taken to mean that Chronicles distinguishes between this written Torah and some form of Oral Torah, or traditions of interpretation, that is developing around it. Also, the contents of the "book of the Torah of YHWH" cannot be determined.

85. See, e.g., priests in Lev 10:10–11; 2 Kgs 17:27–28; Ezek 44:23–24; Mal 2:4–9; levitical priests in Deut 24:8; and Levi in Deut 33:8–10.

sibility, especially since the priests are primarily sacrificial officiants—a point made repeatedly throughout Chronicles. As part of this utopian depiction of the cult, the Levites serve among those who teach the people Torah. No details are provided as to how, where, when, or with what types of materials this is accomplished. Such practical concerns should remain flexible. The return to a condition "without a teaching priest"—*perhaps* a utopian critique of the contemporary priests who are not fulfilling their responsibility in this regard—however, is not an option for the Chronicler's present or future. The Chronicler's *better alternative reality* requires the instruction of the people in Torah, regardless of the source of such vital spiritual training.

A final comment on one aspect of spirituality that is associated with the Levites in Chronicles concludes this description of the Levitical duties. As noted previously, "seeking God" is one of the primary expressions of spirituality in Chronicles. Much of this "seeking" takes place within the cult, either through sacrifices or through the music and singing of the Levites. However, it also occurs through the vehicle of prayer.[86] This method of "seeking God" may take place either within or outside of the cult.

Nine examples of prayer in non-cultic settings are found in Chronicles. The first mention of any positive religious act,[87] cultic or otherwise, in Chronicles is the prayer for divine assistance and protection offered by Jabez (1 Chr 4:9–10). Second, the Gadites pray while battling their enemies (1 Chr 5:19–22). Third, David inquires of God before successfully engaging the Philistines in battle (1 Chr 14:9–12). Fourth, in David's prayer to God following the declaration by Nathan that God will build a house for David, he calls on the deity to act in accordance with his promise (1 Chr 17:16–27). Fifth, as the angel is preparing to strike the inhabitants of Jerusalem, David pleads with God to end the plague against the people (1 Chr 21:16–17). Sixth, Asa cries out to YHWH for deliverance from the attacking Ethiopians (2 Chr 14:10 [v. 9 Eng.]). Seventh, Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet pray for deliverance in response to the threats made by Sennacherib (2 Chr 32:20). Eighth, Hezekiah prays to God when he had become extremely sick (2 Chr 32:24). Ninth, Manasseh prays in humility to God while in his exile (2 Chr 33:12–13).

86. Prayer is being defined simply as any address directed *to* God, but not speaking *about* God.

87. Although not specific, Er's wickedness in the sight of YHWH and the transgression by Achar (i.e. Achan in Josh 7:1–26) are the only two references to anything spiritual or religious that precedes the prayer offered by the mysterious Jabez in 1 Chr 4:9–10.

Six examples of prayer offered in cultic settings are found in Chronicles. First, the psalm of praise associated with the Asaphite singers concludes with an appeal for God's intervention (1 Chr 16:35). Second, at the consecration of the gifts donated for the temple at the end of his life, David prays to God to assist the people in their spiritual direction and to enable Solomon to be obedient and successful (1 Chr 29:18–19). Third, the tabernacle in Gibeon at the beginning of his reign, Solomon requests wisdom from God to rule (2 Chr 1:3–10). Fourth, at the dedication of the temple, Solomon offers a lengthy prayer that emphasizes the promises made to David, the forgiveness of the people's sins, the eventual return of the people from captivity, and the temple as a locus for prayer for both Israelites and foreigners (2 Chr 6:12–42). Fifth, during a period of fasting in the temple, Jehoshaphat prays to God for deliverance from the coalition of forces coming to attack Judah (2 Chr 20:5–12). Sixth, during the celebration of Passover, Hezekiah prays that God will pardon those who were seeking God and yet ate the Pesach improperly (2 Chr 30:18–20).

These data demonstrate that according to Chronicles prayer is appropriate in both cultic and non-cultic contexts. This is consistent with the depiction of prayer in the HB, but this understanding of prayer in Chronicles is significant in that the Chronicler does not restrict prayer to the cultic sphere. Also, while the king is repeatedly presented as the individual offering the prayer, others do so as well: Jabez, the Gadites, the Asaphite singers, the prophet Isaiah, and the Israelites and foreigners have the opportunity to do so. In addition, Chronicles does not explicitly present the priests, the leading priest, or other Levites as offering prayers to God either as individuals or in public liturgies. Even if all the references to Levitical singers and singing throughout Chronicles were included because scholars *believe* that their service in the cultic liturgy would have *presumably* included prayer, this would only add to the number of references to the singers and not suggest anything about the involvement of other cultic personnel in such possible prayers.

Just as all of the kings who "seek God" serve as models for the Israelites to do the same, so the repeated depictions of the kings praying suggest that this is a practice to be imitated as well. The notion that prayer may be performed by anyone is reinforced by depicting those who are not kings or personnel in the temple cult doing so. In this regard, prayer serves a utopian function in Chronicles. It may be done as part of the cultic celebration or in response to an immediate need without necessitating the presence of the one praying in the temple itself for the prayer to be effective. The effectiveness of prayer offered apart from the cult is a point made repeatedly in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of

the temple (2 Chr 6:12–41).[88] Also, cultic personnel are neither required to lead it nor to regulate it. Significantly, all of the prayers offered in Chronicles are answered by God with results that are viewed positively by the one praying. In Chronicles, circumstances *always* change as a result of prayer. In addition to offering a *better alternative reality* in the form of cultic innovations, the Chronicler suggests that prayer is a means to change the present—a truly utopian activity.

4.3. *A Utopian Future in Chronicles: Conclusions about the Cultic Dimension*

First, the Chronicler's interest in and even preference for the Levites in his work has been observed and asserted by numerous scholars. However, this elevation of the Levites has been viewed most typically as a reflection of their status during the Chronicler's own time. In this view, the Chronicler writes to provide this group with a legitimate claim for the duties that they are *currently* performing in the cult and in the larger community. Some scholars have noted that it is difficult to determine which descriptions of the Levites are reflections of the present and which ones are part of the Chronicler's vision for the future. However, this insight almost always occurs in passing remarks—often in footnotes—that serve as a type of disclaimer before the scholars proceed to connect these portrayals with some situation or development in the cult or larger society during the Second Temple period. Utopian literary theory interprets these data as part of the Chronicler's vision for a different future and emphasizes the *probability* that these innovations serve as critiques of the present and of the *status quo*.

Second, the Levites, more than any other group in Chronicles, are the focus of the Chronicler's utopianism. Other groups, such as the priests and the kings, are depicted in utopian terms, but they serve only to support the primary concern that Chronicles manifests for the utopian portrayal of the Levites. These temple personnel are not restricted to the roles of "second class" assistants to the more significant priests. Their responsibilities are not limited to the less glamorous, mundane, or demeaning tasks that are necessary for the practical operation of the temple cult. However, the Levites are neither made completely independent of the priesthood in their cultic and "secular" duties, nor are they presented as replacing the priests, nor are they even presented as the highest authority in cultic affairs. The Levites are presented as engaging in a variety of activities in the cult that are not found or only hinted at in

88. The parallel text of 1 Kgs 8:26–53 also makes this same point repeatedly.

other texts. In these instances, Chronicles asserts the *indispensability* of the Levites for the successful operation of the cult. And yet, not all of these innovations in their duties are assigned strictly to the Levites alone. Many of these tasks and vocations are shared by other members of the community, both priests and Israelites not serving as cultic personnel. Thus, Chronicles does not attempt to claim *exclusive* rights for the Levites in all of these cases. Rather, Chronicles argues that the Levites *should be* a part, even a significant part, of the operation of the cult and aspects of the larger administration of the community that are being performed by others in the present.

Thus, the Levites are the focus of the Chronicler's utopian vision for the community. The monarchy is an institution of the past that has served its purpose. The priests are necessary for the operation of the cult but have limited areas of service, and they have a history of failure in their duties and piety. The Levites, in contrast, are dependable, versatile, and will continue to exist as a vibrant group in the community's future. Their incorporation into new areas of responsibility within the cult enhances the ability of the community to "seek God" and to be taught "the good way" in which to live (2 Chr 6:27). The conditions of the present *will* be improved as the Levites are allowed to serve in a wide variety and number of functions, according to the Chronicler's argument.

Third, Chronicles does not construct a detailed blueprint for the precise nature of these roles and their impact on the operation of the cult. Much of the information still remains vague or even contradictory. Sometimes two or three different descriptions of possible scenarios are presented. Instead of assuming that this is the result of multiple redactional layers or evidence of historical development within the text, a utopian reading emphasizes the *adaptability* of the system over time to new circumstances.[89] The Chronicler is providing options, not a rigid system to be implemented once and for all. These various structures indicate that organizational structures *may and do* change over time. Innovation and continuity are not mutually exclusive.

Fourth, the cultic utopia of Chronicles is *not* a perfect system that operates smoothly and remains the same indefinitely. The cultic utopia of Chronicles is a *better alternative reality* that operates in continuity with the cultic regulations found in the tradition while adapting them to new situations. The procedures of the cultic celebrations may also vary in their order or details without jeopardizing their efficacy. The cultic utopia incorporates additional individuals as personnel and assigns them

89. Compare the assertion by Ackroyd that "the Chronicler is hesitant about the precise nature of the future" (*Chronicler in His Age*, 309).

a variety of meaningful tasks. It also affirms the inclusion of foreigners and the unclean in the festivals, if their hearts are "seeking God" (see, e.g., 2 Chr 30:1–20). In all of these cases, it is the Levites who ensure through their actions and interpretations that the innovations are still performed so as to maintain continuity with the traditions. The cultic utopia of Chronicles is not ethereal or an escapist fantasy, but this *better alternative reality* may come into existence in the future, if the parameters that are outlined in Chronicles are accepted and initially implemented. If this should happen, the realization of the Chronicler's utopian hope for the future will largely be the result of the actions undertaken by the Levites and the validation of their new roles by the community.

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INDEXES

INDEX OF REFERENCES

Index of Authors

"Schweitzer's book is a rare blend of a stunning new proposal for Chronicles and a highly astute engagement with critical theory. Here we find as good an engagement with utopian critical theory as can be found. The detailed new proposal for reading Chronicles as an experimental Utopia effectively breaks those books open for a whole new range of innovative work."

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In order to address the coherence of Chronicles as a whole, Steven Schweitzer employs the literary approach of utopian literary theory to examine three major concerns of Chronicles: genealogy, politics, and the temple cult. Considering Chronicles as utopian in character, Schweitzer posits that its cultic practices and systems may reflect desired changes, not historical realities. The Chronicler, then, may have been constructing a desired system, which would possibly be implemented in the future. Utopian literary theory suggests that this ideal depiction of society is in tension with historical reality. From this viewpoint, Chronicles provides an excellent source for looking once more at the problems and ideological struggles of the late Persian or early Hellenistic period, rather than at a text produced by those elite who are advocating a continuation of the status quo.

It is therefore suggested that the utopianism of Chronicles has a great deal in common with Ezekiel's restored temple, the New Heavens and New Earth, the New Jerusalem, and the future anticipated by the Qumran community. However, while these other texts present their utopian ideology as future idealized visions, Chronicles presents its utopian future as an idealized portrayal set in Israel's historical past and points to an alternative reality constructed as "how it should be." This volume provides a provocative alternative to the role Chronicles plays in the history and future of ancient Israel.

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