

Exploring the Utopian Space of Chronicles: Some Spatial Anomalies

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Introduction

At the start of this paper several points should be made for clarity. As the title indicates, this analysis will be an exploration of the book of Chronicles using spatial theory. Such a probing is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather suggestive of future research and is an attempt to hone some ideas that I have been contemplating for some time now. Second, the title declares that the book of Chronicles contains or consists of “Utopian Space.” Such a statement is not entirely self-evident and will be defended (if somewhat briefly) below. Third, the subtitle suggests the course of this investigation: we will be looking for inconsistencies in the presentation of space in Chronicles and speculating on their significance.

Utopianism in Chronicles

Before turning to a description of the spatial theory to be employed in this analysis of Chronicles, we should probably begin with the suggestion that Chronicles can be understood as being utopian in character.¹ This proposal, as far as I am aware, originated with Roland Boer’s book, *Jameson and Jeroboam*.² In his third chapter, “Decentered and Utopian Politics: 3 Reigns 11-14 and 2 Chronicles 10-13,” Boer assesses the Jeroboam narrative in Chronicles from the perspective of utopian literature. He notes that this idea first occurred to him in reading Fredric Jameson’s work on Ursula Le Guin’s science fiction novels.³ Boer has subsequently pursued and expanded this

notion in his book, *Novel Histories*.⁴ His reading of *Chronicles* as utopian literature is highly innovative and, I believe, convincing.⁵ I will briefly recount his method and conclusions here.

In constructing his methodology, Boer has followed the highly influential works on utopian literature by Louis Marin and on the related genre of science fiction by Darko Suvin.⁶ Suvin defines utopia as

a literary genre or verbal construction whose necessary and sufficient condition 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*.⁷

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 defamiliarization as an interpretative key, and (3) provision of a different series of events leading to the present 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 fact that utopian theory is related, at least in its present form, to deconstructionist and postmodern literary methodologies.

Boer utilizes each of these three tenets as a means of structuring his own reading of *Chronicles* as if it were utopian literature. He concludes that *Chronicles* provides another narrative history largely based on the related ideas of "neutralization" and "plurality" (from Jameson)⁸ in an effort to construct an alternative world that calls the present order into question at every turn.⁹

The importance of social critique in utopian literature is emphasized by both Marin and Suvin 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. 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 in More’s *Utopia* in his contemporary England would produce a distorted view of England during this time period.¹⁰ 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.

Boer depends on the Russian formalist category of *ostranenie* in analyzing the utopian dimensions of Chronicles.¹¹ He intentionally looks for inconsistencies, impossibilities, and perceived “surprises” throughout the text focusing on two main issues: “world reduction” with its accompanying “large numbers,” and the “inclusive/exclusive” society with its boundary definitions.¹² 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 Chronicles 10-

13 (immediately following the division of the kingdom), the Chronicler provides a means for the Northerners to join Judah at the temple.¹³ Boer next suggests that such an 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.¹⁴

Boer’s use of geography as an indicator of utopianism returns us to Marin’s spatial analysis of Thomas 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.¹⁵ Utopia is dialogue with spatial representation in a literary arena, which is in constant process and adaptation.¹⁶ 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,”¹⁷ especially the dominant ideology which it seeks to displace by its own displacement 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.¹⁸ Suvin’s main point here is to explain the relationship between science fiction and utopian literature, especially in its modern manifestations. Concerning Hellenistic utopian literature, this same conclusion has been recently advocated by Klaus

Geus, who addresses the importance of locating utopia on the map of the ancient Greek world.¹⁹ 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," i.e., 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 and often-considered "boring" texts.²⁰

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 hierarchy. Suvin notes that utopias come in a variety of models and proposals, but *all* of them are *organized*.²¹ Chad Walsh, in his famous work, concurs that *planning* is the "keyword" of all utopias from Plato to the present.²² That is, 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 utopian theorists. 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.²³

Before leaving utopia and moving on to spatial theory, a very brief point about utopia and science fiction should be made. As stated above, utopia and science fiction are generically related, though which one is the macro-genre is disputed. Either way, a large number of critical observations about science fiction are directly applicable to utopian literature, as noted not only by Boer, but also by literary critics working in one of these two areas or in both. While science fiction tends to utilize time displacement as a narrative device more often than utopia does,²⁴ sci-fi also employs a significant amount of space transformation or spatial displacement in its plot structure. Starships move across the universe, through space, either with the Earth (or some other world) as origin or destination. This “final frontier” is not an empty container, but is filled with entities, objects, and phenomena of various types. Space is vast, as are the possibilities.

Science fiction thus makes extensive use of “spatial anomalies” to create a means of variation, plot development, the unexpected to occur, and for problems to arise and to be resolved. These anomalies exist in a closed system (the literary world of sci-fi) which allow the system to be broken, challenged, critiqued, and to move the narrative forward. Spatial anomalies attract attention because they do not fit the system; they seem to speak to an explorer’s sense of reality and how new phenomena may challenge it. However, in order to assess such “spatial anomalies” a system of organizing space must first be in place. It is to this theory of space that we now turn.

Spatial Theory

A relative newcomer to the methodological inventory, both for literary critics and for biblical scholars, spatial theory has been warmly received and its parameters continue

to be refined. My own understanding of this theory has been greatly aided by the paper from Claudia Camp on Space in Sirach given at the CBA meeting last year.²⁵ Her helpful summarizes of other previous work in the field allowed me to enter the somewhat daunting task of reading the theorists' own explications with more confidence than I would have had otherwise. Drawing from Camp's example, I will now briefly recount some of the more significant aspects of spatial theory especially as articulated by two of its major architects, Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja;²⁶ in addition, what these two individuals have to say about the place of "utopia" in their construction of spatiality will be explicitly addressed (which previous summaries or critiques that I have consulted have not included).

Space is a construct, not a given, at least as it is organized, encountered, and assigned meaning.²⁷ Thus, space is a social product, being the result of human interaction with the surrounding world and with other beings. Soja (drawing on the seminal work of Lefebvre) divides such spatial constructs into three categories: Firstspace, Secondspace, and Thirdspace.²⁸ Lefebvre termed his three groupings: Spatial Practice, Representations of Space, and Representational Spaces (or his variant terms: perceived-conceived-lived).²⁹ For both Soja and Lefebvre the first concept represents the direct interaction of human beings and space, especially in terms of physicality.³⁰ The second is the arena of imposed codes, signs, maps, and ordering of space, especially in terms of ideology.³¹ The third term applies to the lived reality when the concrete spaces of the first and the ideological systems of the second are put into practice.³²

Camp details the importance and attraction of Thirdspace for biblical scholars.³³ While Secondspace can be a stronghold of power for the elite imposing an ideological

matrix on representations of space and reality, Thirdspace has the potential, especially as presented by Soja, of recombining the first two perceptions of space and thus producing an opportunity for “struggle, liberation, emancipation.”³⁴ However, lest we rush ahead to the freedom of Thirdspace, ready to ignore the seemingly obvious descriptions of Firstspace or the oppressive nature of Secondspace’s ordering of reality, Lefebvre warns us that his triad “loses all force if it is treated as an abstract ‘model’” and all three groupings “should be interconnected.”³⁵ Camp also notes the difficulty of separating Secondspace and Thirdspace and the tendency for each theorist to gravitate towards one of the groupings instead of utilizing all three (both of which I have also found to be the case). She rejects the strict division of Secondspace as power and Thirdspace as resistance; “the oppressors also have lived spaces” and “life just goes on” for those in the margins of Thirdspace, which “is most often the spatially unrealizable work of intellectuals, while the heterotopias of resistance that make life livable for the oppressed usually do little in the way of actual social transformation.”³⁶

Camp’s critique of Thirdspace is well-founded. She concludes her introduction with the stated concern to assess the “power-mongering and maintaining potential of Thirdspace” in her analysis of Sirach. For Ben Sira, space is enlisted by the powers of Secondspace to portray Thirdspace in terms reinforcing the oppressive center without any hope of liberation for the margins. Her analysis of Sirach thus focuses on “Thirdspace as power” and moves forward on the seemingly continuous line connecting Secondspace and Thirdspace in the text.³⁷

In approaching Chronicles, I wish to take a somewhat different approach than Camp. While it would be easy to relegate Chronicles to the same pile of ideologically

oppressive texts as Sirach,³⁸ Boer's reading of Chronicles as utopian literature (see above) and the following comments on utopias in the works of Lefebvre and Soja provide a means of moving from Thirdspace to Secondspace, from power to liberation (using Camp's criticism of Thirdspace while rereading Secondspace at the same time). We now turn our attention to locating utopia in this system of spatiality.

Lefebvre specifically calls his own book a project which "straddles the breach between science and utopia, reality and ideality, conceived and lived" and draws an explicit parallel between his attempt to indicate "a different society, a different mode of production, where social practice would be governed by different conceptual determinations" and those of the "great utopians," (especially of the Marxist variety).³⁹ That Lefebvre would term his own book, which classifies a spatial system in order to critique it, as being of a utopian nature plays an important role in assessing the comments about utopian space throughout his text.

Lefebvre only incidentally mentions utopia in his analysis, but the concept and its associations are found repeatedly and provide important points to consider in adjusting our spatial theory. First, Lefebvre notes the "grid on the basis of 'topias'" to which places can be assigned. One of these is, of course, utopia, which he further defines as "places of what has no place, or no longer has a place—the absolute, the divine, or the possible."⁴⁰ With such a definition, when Lefebvre uses "absolute space" or "divine space" or "possible space" he is also speaking of utopian space, and such space for Lefebvre is utilized by authoritative powers, especially religious or political, to establish space and restrict access to it.⁴¹ Thus, Lefebvre continues, utopian space is truly Other-space, located in such physical places as temples, tombs, palaces, memorials. Lefebvre is

clearly following his second category of Representations of Space, with its imposed order, signs, codes, and conceived-nature. However, I doubt that Lefebvre would characterize his own book as such a repressive Representation of Space. While he may prefer to locate his own analysis in the liberation of Representational Spaces (Soja's Thirdspace), his explicit comments clearly locate it as a utopian text, as an ideological work, but chiefly as a counter-ideology to the dominant one. Thus, we have returned to the major tenets of utopian theory as discussed in the opening section of this paper.

Utopian literature is an ideological critique of ideology. Lefebvre's spatial system does not completely account for the ability of a writing in Secondspace to work against other writings in Secondspace. In other words, is Lefebvre correct that his Representations of Space (Soja's Secondspace) is only about ideological oppression by the "priestly castes and political power"⁴² without also possibly being about criticism of the same ideology?

As ideology, utopia is naturally located by Soja in Secondspace. While recognizing with Lefebvre that Secondspace is the "dominating" space of power, he expands Lefebvre's limited view of this category. It is also space for "the purely creative imagination of some artists and poets."⁴³ However, as with Lefebvre, Soja continues to promote Thirdspace as "the chosen spaces for struggle, liberation, emancipation."⁴⁴ Secondspace recedes into the ethereal background, being "entirely ideational, made up of projections into the empirical world from conceived or imagined geographies ... [where] the imagined geography tends to become the 'real' geography, with the image or representation coming to define and order the reality."⁴⁵ Soja, finally, also does not account for the ability of Secondspace to resist power, to offer a different geography than the one commonly accepted by the "powers" of Secondspace, and to attempt to define a

new reality by a different projection of a different space that reorders space against the *status quo*. Utopianism, from utopian theory, rejects the claims of “hegemonic powers” who would maintain the current space and its accompanying social system. Utopian space is “Other-space” working for spatial change, and thus for the social change required to bring its new order into the lived world of Thirdspace. Just as Thirdspace is not always about liberation (Camp’s view of power in Thirdspace), so Secondspace is not entirely about ideological oppression. Secondspace can also be the realm of “struggle, liberation, emancipation” especially when it takes the shape of utopian literature, writing designed to cause a “disconnect” between the world of the text and the world of the reader. Utopian space critiques the *status quo* and its Representations of Space thereby forcing new systems to be developed along new ideological tenets in the place of the old complexes. Utopian space creates a space of resistance, a space in which a new society can be formed.

When this definition of utopian space is brought to spatial theory, the theory shifts once again (if Camp’s critique is regarded as the first adjustment). Secondspace is the realm of utopia, and utopia is the realm of revolution. In utopian literature, space is employed to critique the spatial, and thus societal, structure of the present. Utopian space becomes a means of presenting new options for the future. However, it must be remembered, utopia can be located on a map, but with inconsistencies or with details that defy depiction. And it is at these spatial anomalies where the conflict between reality and utopia is especially evident.⁴⁶ In exploring the spatial anomalies of a utopian text, we journey into Secondspace with the hope of encountering “strange new worlds” as a result.

The Utopian Space of Chronicles

Chronicles is dated by the overwhelming majority of scholars to either the end of the Persian or early Hellenistic period, most often sometime during the fourth century B.C.E.⁴⁷ While some find a Maccabean date possible, especially for a final redaction,⁴⁸ Chronicles has most commonly been read against a Persian or Hellenistic context. I agree with dating the work to some point during the transitional fourth century.

Chronicles also has a complex relationship with the Israelite literary and theological traditions which preceded or were contemporary with it. In many ways Chronicles is the first “rewritten Bible,”⁴⁹ although such a label may suggest too much about the authority and fixed-form of the Chronicler’s sources at that time. That Chronicles utilizes a variety of sources to construct a new history of Israel, some of which are present in our biblical canon, is almost certainly correct.⁵⁰ However, the precise relationship of Chronicles to those sources is a matter of dispute. Does Chronicles intend to replace or supplement Samuel-Kings, or even the larger units of the Torah and the Prophets? Why should a new history be necessary, especially one which often contradicts the “official” earlier version?

While no definitive answers are attainable, the suggestion by Isaac Kalimi that Chronicles reflects the principle of “each generation with its own historiography” provides a reasonable possibility.⁵¹ A new history for a new people at a new time in a new place. With these brief comments, we now turn to look at the utopian space of Chronicles.

In addressing the issue of space in Chronicles quite a number of different concerns could be investigated. I wish to focus on the following issues which all have

inconsistent presentations in the text: (1) burial notices, (2) foreign space and the land of Israel, and (3) the temple and its state of holiness.

Burial Notices

One of Lefebvre's examples of "priestly" control of the spatial matrix of a society is in establishing proper location and differentiation via burial practice.⁵² 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.⁵³

Chronicles exhibits considerable interest in such burial notices throughout the narrative. While taking its cue from Samuel-Kings, Chronicles provides more detailed and variant forms of such notices than its source material. It has been suggested that burial notices carry an evaluative quality in Chronicles. Thus, for example, according to the Chronicler's retributive theology, the righteous kings are blessed even in death and the wicked are denied the full benefit of their royal position.⁵⁴ However, such is not consistently the case. The kings can be organized into three groups: (1) Those buried with their ancestors in the "city of David" without qualification: Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Jehoshaphat, Amaziah, Jotham, Josiah (2 Chr 9:31; 14:1; 21:1; 25:28; 27:9; 35:24). (2) Those receiving some type of additional statement about where they were buried: Asa (16:14; with ancestors in own tomb); Jehoram (22:9; with no one's regret and not in tombs of kings); Ahaziah (22:9; buried without further specific location, but honored since a grandson of Jehoshaphat); Joash (24:25; not in tombs of kings); Uzziah

(26:23; near ancestors in burial field belonging to kings); Ahaz (28:27; in city [but *not* “of David,”) in Jerusalem, but not in tombs of kings of Israel); Hezekiah (32:33; on the ascent to the tombs of the descendants of David). (3) Other remarks: Manasseh is ambiguously buried “in his house” (33:20); Amon is condemned as evil, but receives no burial notice (33:21-25); the final four kings—Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah—are all exiled with neither death nor burial notices (2 Chronicles 36); finally, the chief priest Jehoiada is buried in the city of David among the kings (24:16).

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 place of both good and bad kings in the second group (especially including Hezekiah here instead of with Solomon and Josiah), the ambiguity surrounding Manasseh, and Amon’s missing notice all work against a simple pattern of “good king = good burial” in Chronicles.

Spatially, these burial notices locate kings in relationship to David and to the Davidic line. 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 location to the Davidic tombs? While speculative, an affirmative answer would help to make sense of the utopian space of tombs 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 are proof enough of this—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.

Before turning to the next topic, a brief word about the significance of Jehoiada's inclusion in the tombs of the kings seems warranted. This information about Jehoiada, of course, 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 claims of power, particularly high-priestly ones, based on burial practices. If 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? Without going into all the details in refuting such a position,⁵⁵ suffice it to say here, that Jehoiada is not explicitly a Zadokite, is not a “high” priest (this title from 2 Kings 12 is changed to “chief priest” in Chronicles), and he is the *only* priest to have such an honor. Again, no pattern is established indicating that all priests, all high priests, or all Zadokites receive such a distinguished burial. Thus, Jehoiada's “royal burial” is not an indication of Zadokite supremacy in the Second Temple period.

Indeed, such details may also serve against those claiming (whether individuals contemporary with the Chronicler or modern scholars) that such burial notices 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

and then “neutralizing” it with the inconsistent burial notices of the Davidic kings. Such burial places existed, or were at least claimed to exist, in the Second Temple period. The Firstspace of these sites had a definite function in Thirdspace; I would also suggest that they have been infused with a new understanding by Chronicles from Secondspace—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.

Foreign Space and the Land of Israel

The relationship between foreign nations and Israel in Chronicles is not one of simple condemnation or whole-hearted acceptance. The Philistines and other surrounding nations are often at war with Israel, Israel is invaded by foreign armies, and the final result of Israel’s unfaithfulness is exile to Assyria (1 Chr 5:25-26) and to Babylon (2 Chr 36:11-21). However, beside these obviously negative encounters there are other statements: God “stirs up the spirit” of the kings of Assyria (1 Chr 5:26), sends Judah into Babylonian exile (1 Chr 6:15; 2 Chr 36:17), speaks (prophetically!) through Pharaoh Neco (2 Chr 35:20-22), and finally “stirs up” the spirit of Cyrus to begin the return from exile and restoration of the Temple (2 Chr 36:22-23). In Chronicles, the God of Israel clearly controls history and influences world events.⁵⁶ These claims, of course, are not unique to the Chronicler, but are expressed elsewhere—especially in the Book of Isaiah.⁵⁷ By repeatedly noting God’s involvement, the Chronicler is able to infuse disaster with hope for the future since there is no chaos but only the plan of God for his

people (just as in Isaiah). Even the disaster of exile to Assyria and to Babylon are muted in Chronicles. The Assyrian deportation only affected the Transjordanian tribes in the explicit comments by the Chronicler (1 Chr 5:25-26) and the theological interpretation of exile to Babylon as a sabbath-rest for the land in fulfillment of prophecy (2 Chr 36:20-23) shifts attention away from the destruction to the future of the people in the land after a limited, rather than extended, period of time. Thus, following the lead of Isaiah, Chronicles overcomes spatial displacement and openly accepts the political power of foreign nations as being appointed by God. Foreign space is not “Other” space to be feared, but “Other” space used by God for the benefit of Israel and its land. With such a perspective on history, it is difficult to conceive of the Chronicler as an advocate of political revolution against foreign governments, whether Persian or Hellenistic.

With such a portrayal of the great empires, it is not surprising to find a certain degree of openness to foreigners in Chronicles. Indeed, Chronicles makes no secret of intermarriage between Israelites and individuals from other nations, but mentions it without open criticism, even with reference to David and Solomon (e.g., 1 Chr 2:3; 3:1-2; 7:14-19; 2 Chr 8:11; see more on Solomon below).⁵⁸ This is in direct contrast to the restrictions against intermarriage with the seven nations in Deuteronomy (7:1-6) and the exclusivity of Ezra-Nehemiah, with its concern over the “holy seed” of Israel and the purity of its lineage (Ezra 9:2). In Chronicles, Israel’s space is not contaminated by the presence of foreigners in it.⁵⁹

This brings us to a brief discussion of the land of Israel as Israel’s “space.” The intimate relationship between land and people in Chronicles, with special reference to the sabbath-rest at the book’s conclusion, has been much discussed in scholarship. However,

such treatments have failed to address sufficiently a particular spatial anomaly: the presence of other nations in the land. While many scholars have noted the nearly complete absence of the Exodus in Chronicles and thus Israel's apparent long-standing claim to the land, few take seriously the implications of what is said about these foreigners in Israel's space.

First, never is anything said to the effect that "this is Israel's land, always has been and will be." Such a land theology is absent from Chronicles. According to Chronicles, Israel is exiled and removed from the now desolate land, which rested during the seventy-year absence (2 Chr 36:20-21). Whatever the historical reality, the ideological nature of this claim is significant. The people were in another space during this period.⁶⁰ Second, on several occasions the Chronicler notes the presence of other nations which lived in the land prior to or contemporaneously with the Israelites (1 Chr 4:40 adds the statement that the "former inhabitants there belonged to Ham"; 1 Chr 7:21 mentions the "native-born" people of Gath [a statement never applied to Israelites]; 2 Chr 1:17-18 and 8:7-9 note that Solomon counted the "aliens living in the land" and conscripted them for his building projects including the temple).⁶¹ Thus, despite the failure to mention Abraham's migration, the sojourn in Egypt, or the Exodus in explicit terms, the reality of other nations living in the land of Israel and that fact that they were there first are not omitted by the Chronicler in his portrayal of Israel's history. Whatever the nature of Israel's claim to the land in the Second Temple period, Chronicles does not invoke the idea that they had always possessed it. Rather, these spatial anomalies, foreigners living in their midst, have been the case for all of Israel's history in the land, including most likely the Chronicler's own day.

The relationship of Israel and the land is thus not permanent or exclusive. Foreigners lived here, do live here, and will most certainly continue to live here. But what about Israel's presence in the land? We have already noted above that according to Chronicles the exile removed the people completely from the land. In an unparalleled prayer by David at the conclusion of his reign (found only in Chronicles), the ideal king makes a strange declaration: "For we are aliens and transients before you [God], as were all our ancestors; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope" (1 Chr 29:15). In a sweeping statement comparable to Qohelet, Chronicles renders all claims about land and privileged access to it moot. The shortness of life neutralizes the space of the land and creates a utopian space beyond the control of any individual or group.⁶² The land exists independent of the people, and the people are only temporary journeymen ("residents" is even too permanent a term) through it.

Returning now to Solomon's associations with foreigners, while many commentators have noted the Chronicler's avoidance of Solomon's many foreign wives and his resulting downfall (as portrayed in 1 Kgs 11:1-8) as an indication of his idealization of this king, most fail to note that the only explicit mention of a wife (and then explicitly a wife rather than a concubine) for Solomon is Pharaoh's daughter, clearly intermarriage with an Egyptian (2 Chr 8:11). Thus, the Chronicler does not omit Solomon's intermarriage practice, simply his excessiveness. Also, the Chronicler makes no indication that this action in any way diminishes Solomon's status. On the contrary, Solomon is presented as taking what is apparently an appropriate action: he relocates his foreign wife to another house and supplies the reason for it, which is lacking in Kings, "for the places to which the ark of the LORD has come are holy" (2 Chr 8:11). The

removal of the apparently unholy foreign woman⁶³ from a location which has been changed by the presence of God as manifest in the ark establishes a hierarchy of space. Some individuals are allowed to be with the ark, to be where it has been, and some individuals cannot be in either of these spaces. We shall return to this issue again in more detail in the following section on the Temple and its Holiness. For now, we should observe that a foreign woman is excluded from where the ark has been. In Chronicles, foreigners can pray toward the temple (2 Chr 8:41-43 // 1 Kgs 8:41-43), but there is no evidence that they can enter into it. Thus, space for foreigners in Israel is created via marriage, but such individuals are apparently excluded from the holy spaces.

While this may not necessarily be the spatial utopia that we would construct, for the Chronicler—writing after the time or literary production of Ezra-Nehemiah—such a positive portrayal of foreign empires and foreign marriages, with only the proviso that they not enter the temple (and then only in passing without any explicit proscription), creates a utopian space for these foreigners within the society of the Second Temple period. Indeed, such a space may have been quite “utopian” for its time and place.⁶⁴

The Temple and its State of Holiness

“One of the few points about which all commentators on Chronicles are agreed is that the temple was of central significance to its author.”⁶⁵ This comment by Williamson is certainly true, and the temple is certainly at the heart of Chronicles. The temple functions as the place of reform, of connection with God, and of societal structure. Chronicles presents the “good” kings of Israel as deeply concerned about the temple and its cult, its organization and proper operation. Even the conclusion of the book calls for

those in exile to “go up” to build the house of God in Jerusalem (2 Chr 36:23).

Throughout Chronicles, cultic matters are always the chief concern of restoration.

David explicitly calls the temple a “holy house” (1 Chr 29:3) and as such a space it is a place set apart from the rest of “ordinary space.” Its vessels (1 Chr 9:29; 22:19; 2 Chr 5:5) and offerings (2 Chr 30:17; 31:14; 35:13) are holy as well as its attendants.

Specifically, only priests and Levites are allowed to enter into it, for they are holy (2 Chr 23:6; 31:18; 35:3). However, even between priests and Levites a distinction is made.

Only priests may enter into the inner part of the temple while the Levites are excluded (1 Chr 24:19; 2 Chr 29:16). The duties performed in these areas can thus only be

undertaken by individuals allowed to be present. Priests and Levites have distinct duties in Chronicles, while Levites are on occasion seen to act as priests but not vice versa.⁶⁶

The organization of the priestly courses and Levitical divisions also reflects the need for controlling access to the temple and its cult, if only on a logistical level. These groupings take on special significance in the reforming actions of the various kings who repeatedly reestablish the courses and divisions on the basis of their institution by David and their use in the temple by Solomon. Having “the right person in the right place at the right time” is important for the proper operation of the temple cult. Thus far, Lefebvre’s description of temples as places of power and control, and thus of imposed order on the margins of Thirdspace, fits extremely well with this depiction of the temple and its cult in Chronicles.

The physical location of the temple itself (its Firstspace) is of particular importance for Chronicles. Out of nowhere, Chronicles equates the physical location of David’s temple site with Mount Moriah, without any explanation as to the significance of

this specific locale (2 Chr 3:1). Of course, the only other reference to Moriah (or, to the land of Moriah, on a mountain) in the Hebrew Bible is the Akedah of Genesis 22, the location of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac.⁶⁷ As the Chronicler skips over the "Patriarchal Age" by the summary genealogies, this spatial association drawn from the Torah is highly suggestive. Whether the Chronicler creates this spatial assimilation or is giving written expression to a traditional view,⁶⁸ the emphasis falls clearly on the selection of this particular Firstspace by God for sacrifice. Often viewed as a means of legitimation for the temple site based on God's provision of a sacrifice in place of Isaac,⁶⁹ such a view is not sufficient to explain the relationship of these two spaces. There is no additional evidence that the site of the Akedah was revered prior to its reference in Chronicles or that the sacrifice provided by God was viewed as the institution of an Abrahamic cult (i.e., not an issue of establishing a direct lineage back to Abrahamic sacrifice).⁷⁰ Rather, the decision for this particular site by David (1 Chr 22:1), returns to reader to David's fear of the angel immediately preceding this selection (1 Chr 21:28-30), to Abraham's fear of God (Gen 22:12), and also to David's fear of God in response to the death of Uzzah caused by touching the ark (1 Chr 13:9-13)—the holy object to be the centerpiece of the holy temple (2 Chr 8:11). Such fear and awe is fitting for the holy temple and its contents (Firstspace) as they represent the "Other"-space of God (Secondspace).

Also, as noted previously, Solomon relocates his Egyptian wife outside the city of David because "the places to which the ark of the LORD has come are holy" (2 Chr 8:11). In this case, the ark leaves "residual holiness" in its wake en route to the temple. The holiness of the ark has changed these spaces, but for what period of time is uncertain although "forever" seems logical. Such a claim would seem to fit well with the earlier

comments about the exclusive holiness of the temple and the restrictions on who may enter it. In addition, the contrast between the proud Uzziah's entrance into the temple to offer incense—explicitly noted as only a priestly duty (2 Chr 26:16-21)—with his son Jotham's righteousness to “not invade the temple of the LORD” (2 Chr 27:2) would seem to support such a reading of the absolute holiness of the temple and the precautions necessary so that the rituals be performed following correct procedures.

So far, Chronicles appears to serve as a text reinforcing the perspective of the elite who control the spatial matrix (an excellent example of Secondspace in the sense of an oppressive elitist ideology). However, even here in the description of the holy temple do spatial anomalies arise which shatter any simplistic understanding of the efficacy of the cult and its location as it is presented in Chronicles. Chronicles uses spatial anomalies to contest the claims made by those in control of the temple, and to bring about a criticism even of this holy space.

In Boer's analysis of utopian space and the temple, he focuses on the inflated and disproportional dimensions of the temple and its vestibule (2 Chr 3:3-4). I will not repeat his observations here, but merely agree with his conclusion that the inability to represent this image on a spatial map is an indication of utopian literature.⁷¹ Yet, this is not the only anomalous representation of the temple space. More important than the dimensions of the temple are two instances which challenge the absolute holiness of the temple space and its cult.

Our first example: as many scholars have noted, when the boy Joash is hidden in temple for six years special notice is made that the one responsible is Jehoshabeath, daughter of King Jehoram and the wife of the priest Jehoiada, who also resides with him

(2 Chr 22:11-12). The source text of 2 Kings 11:1-3 mentions only the Davidic side of Jehoshabeath's identity; that she is the wife of the leading priest is the Chronicler's own detail. Thus, many scholars have speculated that this information was necessary to explain the presence of a woman in the temple. This reasoning is then compared with the additional comment in the following verses that only priests and Levites may enter the temple, for they are holy (2 Chr 23:6). Thus, according to these scholars, the Chronicler has preserved the holiness of the temple space by making this woman into the "high priest's" wife.

However, such a view has significant problems. First, in this line of reasoning, Jehoiada, the Chronicler's "ideal high priest,"⁷² (whose title is actually changed to "chief priest" by the Chronicler) would be in violation of the strict marriage laws for "high priests" ("the priest exalted above his brothers") in Lev 21:10-15. These "holiest" of priests are required to marry a virgin of their own kin, which is not required of other priests. As Jehoiada, according only to Chronicles, has married the daughter of the Davidic king, he stands in direct violation of this stipulation.⁷³ Given the few explicit commands in the Torah about "high priests," it would seem unlikely that the Chronicler would so blatantly contradict this command (if it did exist at the time of his composition, which is certainly a logical assumption).⁷⁴ Second, scholars arguing that Chronicles protects the sanctity of the temple then fail to discuss the fact that such an interpretative move does not affect the status of the boy Joash, a male but also a Davidide, who lives in the temple. If Uzziah the Davidide is prevented entrance, and his son Jotham is praised for his restraint, then what about this non-priestly and non-Levitical toddler in the holy space, not to mention his nurse for whom no "justification" is given in the text? This

incident is clearly a case of the holy space being occupied by people who should not be there; indeed, even the Chronicler's supposed "solution" to this problem from his source renders his leading priest as disobedient to Torah stipulations. Turning to utopian theory, a suggestion: the holiness of the temple and its personnel are critiqued by placing others in this space and using their presence to undermine the "all-or-nothing" approach to the holiness of sacred space. While the Chronicler will not have a "free-for-all" in the temple (so 2 Chr 23:6), there is a greater good, a utopia, toward which to strive. The restoration of legitimate government and the restoration of proper worship (even at the cost of violating holy space or making its leading personnel blameworthy) supercede perceptions about the restrictions of holy space.

Our second example: the reforms of the temple and celebration of Pesach under Hezekiah (2 Chr 29-30) are another prime source of spatial anomalies. First, Hezekiah orders the priests to offer the people's sacrifices, but a problem soon arises—there are not enough priests to accomplish the task (2 Chr 29:31-36). The solution: Levites, who were "more upright in heart" will act as priests until enough priests are able to be sanctified. So much for "right people in the right place"! And yet, Chronicles concludes this event by stating: "Thus the service of the house of the LORD was restored." What about the holy space of the temple? Has its holiness not been violated by these Levites not in their proper space? Evidently not. But the spatial anomalies during the celebration of Pesach are even more astonishing.

Hezekiah celebrates Pesach in the second month (not in its "proper time" of the first month) because of the insufficient number of sanctified priests (2 Chr 30:2-3). Just as before, the individuals designated to stand in the holy space cannot be there, so now

the sacred time must be adjusted (here, space trumps time). This problem of “unholiness” also extends to the people from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun who came to the celebration but did not sanctify themselves. However, even these individuals ate the pesach “otherwise than as prescribed” (2 Chr 30:18). The response: not condemnation for violation of ritual law or additional sacrifice to atone for this sin; instead, Hezekiah prays for God to pardon those “who set their hearts to seek God ... even though not in accordance with the sanctuary’s rules of cleanness [!]” (2 Chr 30:19). And God’s response: no fire, brimstone, or booming voice rebuking the people; instead God “healed the people” (30:20). The narrative then continues with a comparison to the glorious days of Solomon and ultimately notes that blessings for the people by the priests and Levites “came to [God’s] holy dwelling in heaven” (2 Chr 30:26-27). Thus, all of these apparent violations of the sacred space of the temple stand in marked contrast to the quality of the people’s worship. By such spatial anomalies, the Chronicler creates utopian space in this text for variation in ritual practice, for the priority given to the heart “seeking God,” and even for the unclean to participate fully in the festival despite the written proscriptions. This understanding of these spatial anomalies radically challenges the common view that the Chronicler’s chief concern was for proper ritual and proper respect of the holiness of the temple.

Combined with the earlier comments on Joash, Chronicles demonstrates a masterful critique of claims concerning the temple’s Secondspace and Thirdspace. The temple is still holy in Chronicles, but its significance and accessibility have been drastically altered by spatial anomalies in the narrative. By employing the apparently standard view of the temple’s holiness and critiquing it through these spatial anomalies,

Chronicles exists as a text (thus, Secondspace) which forces a reconsideration of the temple's own Secondspace.

Conclusion

If these examples of spatial anomalies in Chronicles and the related issue of its reformulation of “utopian space” are accepted, the Book of Chronicles may no longer be read as a treatise designed to radically and thoroughly legitimize the present situation of the Second Temple period; rather, this method suggests that a more subtle (and often open) critique of the power structures present at the time of the Chronicler may be seen in the descriptions of institutions and organizational schemes. Chronicles is thus not a lengthy explanation of “why this is the way it is.” Rather than providing a past for the present, Chronicles provides a new past for a different future. Such a rejection of the *status quo* and the formation of social critique occurs—at least in part—after an exploration of the utopian space in Chronicles and an attempt to understand the significance of the anomalies found there.

Endnotes

¹ The term “utopian” has suffered a similar fate as the problematic adjective “apocalyptic.” Often misunderstood and ill-defined, the term has been clarified using the following three-fold distinction: (1) as the *literary genre* of utopia; (2) as an *ideology* through which the world is viewed; (3) as a *sociological* movement that writes utopias. See the highly-influential works by Lyman Tower Sargent, “Utopia: The Problem of Definition,” *Extrapolation* 16 (1975): 137-48; “The Three Faces of Utopianism,” *Minnesota Review* 7, no. 3 (1967): 222-30; “The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited,” *Utopian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1994): 1-37. 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 problems, 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.

² Roland Boer, *Jameson and Jeroboam* (SBL Semeia Studies; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996).

³ *Jameson and Jeroboam*, 272 n. 54. The section of this chapter on Chronicles has been subsequently revised and published as “Utopian Politics in 2 Chronicles 10-13,” in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (JSOTSup 263; ed. M. P. Graham and S. L. McKenzie; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 360-94.

⁴ Roland Boer, *Novel Histories: The Fiction of Biblical Criticism* (Playing the Texts 2; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997).

⁵ My dissertation, “Reading Utopia in Chronicles,” currently in process, attempts to explore the utopian dimension of Chronicles by building on Boer’s insights, incorporating additional utopian theory, and taking these methods further and more systematically than has been done previously. It consists of four main chapters, each examining one aspect of the utopia constructed in Chronicles: a genealogical utopia, a political utopia, a prophetic utopia, and a cultic utopia.

⁶ Boer, *Novel Histories*, 15. The two genres are related to one another; literary critics view utopia as a sub-genre of science fiction or vice versa; e.g., Darko Suvin advocates the

former position (“The River-Side Trees, or SF & Utopia,” *Minnesota Review* n.s. 2-3 [1974]: 108-15, esp. 114) and Lyman Tower Sargent the second (“The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited,” 11).

See especially the following: Louis Marin, *Utopics: Spatial Play* (trans. R. A. Vollrath; Contemporary Studies in Philosophy and the Human Sciences; Atlantic Heights, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1984); Louis Marin, “The Frontiers of Utopia,” in *Utopias and the Millennium* (Critical Views; ed. K. Kumar and S. Bann; London: Reaktion Books, 1993), 7-16; Darko Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979); Darko Suvin, “On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre,” in *Science Fiction: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Twentieth Century Views; ed. M. Rose; Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 57-71; Darko Suvin, “The River-Side Trees.”

⁷ “The River-Side Trees,” 110.

⁸ Of particular importance is Fredric Jameson, “Of Islands and Trenches: Neutralization and the Production of Utopian Discourse,” in *the Ideologies of Theory: Essays 1971-1986. Volume 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.

⁹ Defending his “reading as” method, Boer rightly observes “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” (*Novel Histories*, 122). Indeed, many classicists and literary critics have labeled the societies of Plato (*Republic*), Iambulus (in Diodorus Siculus, 2.55.1-60.3), and Euhemerus (in Diodorus Siculus, 5.41.1-46.7) “utopian” and honored the flight to the moon in Lucian’s *True History* as the first science fiction story. See, e.g., John Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World* (Aspects of Greek and Roman Life; Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975); David Winston, “Iambulus’ *Islands of the Sun* and Hellenistic Literary Utopias,” *Science Fiction Studies* 3 (1976): 219-27; James S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration, and Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); Niklas Holzberg, “Utopias and Fantastic Travel: Euhemerus, Iambulus,” in *The Novel in the Ancient World* (Mnemosyne 159; ed. G. Schmeling; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 621-28.

¹⁰ This point is repeatedly made, with examples, by Sarah Rees 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.

¹¹ Boer, *Novel Histories*, 109.

¹² 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. In both cases, the utopians warmly receive the outsider and explicitly participate in trade relations with other nations.

¹³ 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, i.e., a small Judah contemporary with the Chronicler (*Novel Histories*, 145).

¹⁴ Boer also suggests that the description of Jerusalem and its environs may reflect the “crucial role in the context of the imperial ancient world” played by the *polis*, and that the ideal of the *polis* may stand behind this depiction (“Utopian Politics,” 375, 387-89). Further research into the nature of the *polis* is necessary on my own part before completely agreeing with Boer’s contention, although it certainly remains feasible.

¹⁵ Marin, “Frontiers,” 11; Suvin agrees with this understanding, though in slightly different terms (*Metamorphoses*, 54).

¹⁶ Marin, *Utopics*, 8, 113-16.

¹⁷ Marin, *Utopics*, 195.

¹⁸ Suvin, *Metamorphoses*, 42.

¹⁹ Klaus Geus, “Utopie und Geographie: Zum Weltbild der Griechen in frühhellenistischer Zeit,” *Orbis Terrarum* 6 (2000): 55-90. See also the insightful comments on space in the Hellenistic world by Andrew C. Sneddon, “Worlds within Worlds: Perceptions of Space, Place and Landscape in Ancient Greece,” *Journal of Ancient Civilizations* 17 (2002): 59-75.

²⁰ 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* (Sociological Review Monographs; ed. M. Parker; Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 9-23.

²¹ Suvin, *Metamorphoses*, 50.

²² Chad Walsh, *From Utopia to Nightmare* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), 57.

²³ The misconception that utopias cannot change their structures or develop has produced two side-effects: (1) inconsistencies in utopias have been interpreted as deficiencies on the part of the author, and (2) the label “utopia” has been restricted to very few works, almost all of an “eschatological” nature, especially when used for those in the biblical tradition—so that the Garden of Eden, the Priestly legislation, Ezekiel 40-48, the New Jerusalem (and related presentations of the eternal *unchanging* future), and the society of the *Temple Scroll*, have been interpreted as being “utopian,” and (especially when used by biblical scholars) thus unattainable, fanciful, unrealistic, and escapist. The fact that the society of Ezekiel 40-48 and the laws of P were almost certainly never implemented contributes to their being understood as “utopian.”

On these and other texts standing in the biblical utopian tradition, see the following: John J. Collins, “Models of Utopia in the Biblical Tradition,” in “*A Wise and Discerning Mind*”: *Essays in Honor of Burke O. Long* (BJS 325; ed. S. M. Olyan and R. C. Culley; Providence, R.I.: Brown University, 2000), 51-67; Menahem Haran, “The Character of the Priestly Source: Utopian and Exclusive Features,” in *Proceedings of the Eighth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1983), 131-38; Joyce Oramel Hertzler, *The History of Utopian Thought* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1965; repr. from New York: Macmillan, 1923); E. Luz, “Utopia and Return: On the Structure of Utopian Thinking and Its Relation to Jewish-Christian Thinking,” *JR* 73 (1993): 357-77; Doron Mendels, “Hellenistic Utopia and the Essenes,” in *Identity, Religion and Historiography: Studies in Hellenistic History* (JSPSup 24; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 420-39; repr. from *HTR* 72 (1979): 207-22; Unyong Sim, *Das himmlische Jerusalem in Apk 21,1-22,5 im Kontext biblisch-jüdischer Tradition und antiken Städtebaus* (Bochumer Altertumwissenschaftliches Colloquium 25; Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1996); Moshe Weinfeld, “Zion and Jerusalem as Religious and Political Capital: Ideology and Utopia,” in *The Poet and the Historian: Essays in Literary and Historical Biblical Criticism*

(HSS 26; ed. R. E. Friedman; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983), 75-115. The Book of Chronicles is not discussed in any of these analyses.

Regarding the portrayal of society in Chronicles, what if its descriptions are not projections of Second Temple practice back into the pre-exilic period for the sake of legitimation, but are actually more in line with the desired stipulations of Ezekiel's Temple and P? In my research I have found that scholars often assume that the Chronicler provides us with a source for such reconstruction without appropriately considering the pitfalls involved in such an assumption. If Chronicles is utopian in character, then its cultic practices may reflect desired (but not necessarily implemented) changes and, therefore, not historical realities. Accepting this position would then have far-reaching implications in writing a history of the Second Temple Period, especially a history of the Jerusalem temple cult.

²⁴ Often passed over without much thought is the fact that More's 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. Thus, the form of displacement, spatial or temporal, is not unique to either science fiction or utopia. Temporal displacement can be past, contemporary, 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.

²⁵ Claudia V. Camp, "Storied Space, or, Ben Sira 'Tells' a Temple" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Catholic Biblical Association, Cleveland, Ohio, 6 August 2002); now published in *'Imagining' Biblical Worlds: Studies in Spatial, Social and Historical Construction in Honor of James W. Flanagan* (JSOTSup 359; ed. D. M. Gunn and P. M. McNutt; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002). Unfortunately, I have not had access to the published version, so references are to the version made available from the conference.

²⁶ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (trans. D. Nicholson-Smith; Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989); Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imaginary Places* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996).

²⁷ Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, 79-80.

²⁸ Soja, *Thirdspace*, 10.

²⁹ Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33, 40.

³⁰ Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33; Soja, *Thirdspace*, 66.

³¹ Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33; Soja, *Thirdspace*, 67.

³² Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33; Soja, *Thirdspace*, 10, 67.

³³ Camp, “Storied Space,” 2-4.

³⁴ Soja, *Thirdspace*, 68.

³⁵ Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 40. James Flanagan, largely responsible for the recent interest in spatial theory among biblical scholars, agrees with this methodological caution (“Space,” in *Handbook of Postmodern Biblical Interpretation* [ed. A. K. M. Adam; St. Louis: Chalice, 2000], 239-44, here 242).

³⁶ Camp, “Storied Space,” 4.

³⁷ Camp, “Storied Space,” 3-4.

³⁸ Camp notes, for example, the difficulty which Sirach presents for feminist hermeneutics. The same criticism can be applied to Chronicles, which is not as openly misogynistic as Sirach, but is neither liberating; however, one “positive” portrayal of women in Chronicles is the lack of open criticism of the “foreign woman.” The Chronicler does not polemicize against intermarriage, and foreign women are not “personified evil” as is the case in several Wisdom texts and in Ezra-Nehemiah.

³⁹ Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 60, 419, 422-23.

⁴⁰ Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 163-64.

⁴¹ Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 236-40.

⁴² Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 237.

⁴³ Soja, *Thirdspace*, 67, 79. Although Soja notes that Lefebvre includes artists in this second category, Lefebvre never seems to make much of this idea in his analysis.

⁴⁴ Soja, *Thirdspace*, 68.

⁴⁵ Soja, *Thirdspace*, 79.

⁴⁶ As utopian theory draws so heavily on deconstructionist methods, this is not surprising. Such readings focus on “gaps,” “seams,” “inconsistencies,” and other points of conflict in a text.

⁴⁷ See the summary by Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary* [OTL; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993], 27-28; see also the helpful comments by Kai Peltonen, “A Jigsaw without a Model? The Date of Chronicles,” in *Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period* (JSOTSup 317; ESHM 3; ed. L. L. Grabbe; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 225-71; cf. the reasoning of Peter Welten, *Geschichte und Geschichtsdarstellung in den Chronikbüchern* (WMANT 42; Neukirchen Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973), 98-114; and F. Bianchi and G. Rossoni, “L’armée d’Ozias (2 Ch 26, 11-15) entre fiction et réalité: Une esquisse philologique et historique,” *Transeu* 13 (1997): 21-37.

⁴⁸ Kurt Galling, *Bücher der Chronik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1954), 10-11; G. Steins, “Zur Datierung der Chronik: Ein neuer methodischer Ansatz,” *ZAW* 109 (1997): 84-92.

⁴⁹ Steven S. Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles* (Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox, 2001), 7.

⁵⁰ See the summary by Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 5-6.

⁵¹ Isaac Kalimi, “Was the Chronicler a Historian?,” in *The Chronicler as Historian* (JSOTSup 238; ed. M. P. Graham, K. G. Hoglund, and S. L. McKenzie; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 73-89, here 88.

⁵² Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 240.

⁵³ Such 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).

⁵⁴ *Contra* Tomotoshi 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 [although his burial notice itself does not have any] as being positive (“The Chronicler’s Techniques in Quoting Samuel-Kings,” *Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute* 6 [1990]: 30-70, here 54). His comments follow a long history of interpretation including Gerhard von Rad and Robert North. The idea of using the burial notices as indicators of the Chronicler’s depiction of the moral character of the kings has been recently asserted by Brian E. Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles* (JSOTSup 211; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996).

Kelly notes this *Tendenz* in passing (37, 106), claims Asa and Hezekiah are enhanced in burial with “special honours” (97, 105), notes exclusion from the tombs is a negative comment for Jehoram, Joash, and Ahaz (100, 105), and declares that Jehoiada’s “singular honour” does not indicate the Chronicler’s sympathy for high-priestly supremacy over the king (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.

⁵⁵ See the more detailed discussion of this and related issues in my article, “The High Priest in Chronicles: An Anomaly in a Detailed Description of the Temple Cult,” *Biblica*, forthcoming.

⁵⁶ This idea may also be indicated in the conclusion to David’s reign, which states that all of his acts were written in the prophetic records as well as “events that befell him and Israel and all the kingdoms of the earth” (1 Chr 29:29-30). This summary information about David is especially noteworthy, since there is no parallel in Samuel-Kings. The Chronicler has supplied the notice for David (undoubtedly constructed on the pattern of the other notices), but adds the final phrase only here in relation to David’s reign. The larger world and Israel’s relation to it are thus especially emphasized at the end of the reign of its greatest king.

⁵⁷ See, e.g., Isa 7:20; 10:5-19; 19:1-25; 44:24-45:13.

⁵⁸ See also Gary N. Knoppers, “Intermarriage, Social Complexity, and Ethnic Diversity in the Genealogy of Judah,” *JBL* 120 (2001): 15-30; and Gary N. Knoppers, “The Davidic Genealogy: Some Contextual Considerations from the Ancient Mediterranean World,” *Transeu* 22 (2001): 35-50.

⁵⁹ While 2 Kings 17 and Ezra-Nehemiah do not reflect very positively on the northern tribes, often treating them as if they were foreigners, Northerners are not viewed as second-class or outside the “true” people of Israel in Chronicles. The northern tribes are still a vital part of Israel, so much so that Israel is incomplete without them. Boer has pursued this point in some detail (“Utopian Politics”). In addition to Boer’s observations, the Chronicler makes this clear in other ways, including: (1) having northerners and especially Levites journey south during times of reform and renewal (2 Chr 11:13-17; 15:9-15; 30:1-12, 25; 31:1; 34:6-7; 35:17-18), (2) having only the Transjordanian tribes exiled by Assyria (1 Chr 5:25-26), thus leaving the northern kingdom relatively intact until Judah itself is exiled, and (3) adding to the source text of Neh

11:3-22 that “Ephraim and Manasseh” joined some of Judah and Benjamin in returning from exile to live in Jerusalem (1 Chr 9:3).

⁶⁰ This is not to ignore the claim against those remaining in the land by the *golah* who returned to the land (as in Jeremiah 24), but was such the point of it in Chronicles (especially since associations with the “Samaritan schism” in Chronicles have more frequently been rejected by scholars for some time now)? I would suggest that this statement is directed against the people who were so corrupt that they had to be removed so that the land could be restored (2 Chr 36:14-16; cf. the land’s “vomiting you out” in Lev 18:24-30; 20:22). This is hardly praise for those taken into captivity, and who were thus ancestors of those who would return to rebuild the temple following the rise of Persia (2 Chr 36:14-23).

⁶¹ Note also that in 2 Chr 2:13 Solomon employs Hiram (or Hiram-abi), whose mother was a Danite and whose father was Tyrian, to fashion the temple vessels and most of its component parts.

⁶² The identification of the people as “aliens and tenants” also occurs in the Jubilee legislation of Lev 25:23-24 (the context of which chapter stands behind the sabbath-rest idea in 2 Chr 36:21), which names God as owner of the land, restricts the ability of Israelites to sell it, and requires them to redeem it.

⁶³ Or, is it simply her status as woman without concern for ethnicity? The text is not specific as to why she is unfit to be where the ark has been. Also, the issue is clearly about the residual holiness left by the ark, which is no longer in the house of David but in the temple. This action should be contrasted with the statements concerning Jehoiada’s wife (2 Chr 22:10-12) in the following section on this paper.

⁶⁴ Contrast this view in Chronicles with the “utopian society” of Ezekiel 40-48 which explicitly excludes all foreigners from participation in the temple cult in the sanctuary (44:5-9) and with the apparently laudatory claim in Nehemiah’s Memoir that he cleansed the people from “everything foreign” (Neh 13:30).

⁶⁵ H. G. M. Williamson, “The Temple in Chronicles,” in *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel* (JSNTSup 48; ed. W. Horbury; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1991), 15-31, here 15.

⁶⁶ See Gary N. Knoppers, “Hierodules, Priests, or Janitors?: The Levites in Chronicles and the History of the Israelite Priesthood,” *JBL* 118 (1999): 49-72.

⁶⁷ Japhet notes that this allusion is “unmistakable” and that the association of the two sites appears for the first known time in Chronicles (*I & II Chronicles*, 551).

⁶⁸ Japhet notes both of these possibilities (*I & II Chronicles*, 552).

⁶⁹ Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 552.

⁷⁰ Japhet assumes such is the case without providing any additional evidence (*I & II Chronicles*, 552).

⁷¹ Boer, *Novel Histories*, 146.

⁷² So H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (NCBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 314.

⁷³ I have not found a discussion of this Torah legislation in any of the scholarly material I have consulted in my attempt to understand what could possibly be going on in this passage.

⁷⁴ See the further comments on this issue in my article, “The High Priest in Chronicles.”