



Of Fine Wine, Incense and Spices: The Unstable Masculine Hegemony of the Books of Chronicles

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Is the double book of Chronicles in the Bible a solidly masculine zone, dominated by a seamless hegemony? This article suggests not. Making use of the theories of Louis Althusser, Antonio Gramsci and Antonio Negri on unstable hegemonies and constitutive resistance, the article looks for signs of trouble in the dominant hegemony of the text. It does so by exploring the utopian/dystopian ripples around a very phallic temple, the overdone camp of the mighty warriors, and the concern with crucial matters of cultic performance, such as utensils, cooking and interior design. In this respect, the study may be seen as another step not only in studies of masculinity, but in opening further new directions taken in the study of Chronicles in recent years.

The two books of Chronicles are forbidding territory for all but the hardest of readers. As a world full of men, priests, kings, battles, and a vengeful God, only a small band of biblical scholars dare to make Chronicles their home.¹ Rarely if ever does a feminist, gay, lesbian, postcolonial, poststructuralist or even a Marxist critic dare to enter this forbidding text that begins with nine grueling chapters of genealogies. Fortunately, that closed world has begun to open up in the last few years, with utopian studies by Schweitzer (2007a), who builds on my earlier work (Boer 1997, 1999), and the feminist study by Kelso (2007). This refreshing opening also enables the study and critique of masculinity in Chronicles, not despite but because it is a work devoted to the world of men.

In what follows, I begin with some theoretical concerns, drawn from Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser and Antonio Negri, which deal with the unstable nature of hegemonies, the internal conflicts of ideologies and the constitutive power of resistance. From there I introduce two features of Chronicles: its nature as a literary utopia (for whom?) and its central motif of the rigid phallic temple. Yet this phallic world is not as firm as it seems, for the stories in Chronicles continually soften one's initial impression: the overt machismo is a little too camp to be taken seriously; David and Solomon turn out to be expert interior designers; and the crucial sign of one's faithfulness to God is through the correct observance of the temple cult²—in terms of cutlery, cooking, spices, oils, incense, fine wine, and singing. What sort of masculinity is this? Let us see.

Masculinity, Hegemony and Ideology

It has become a standard if somewhat banal point that masculinity is by no means an eternal, static, and singular quality inherent to men, but that it is constructed, performed, multiple, fluid and subject to historical change (see, for example, Connell, 2005; Hooper, 2001, pp. 17–76). Masculinities may be constructed discursively, socially or economically, they may be constituted through performance, they may be fluid and constantly shifting, the multiplicity of masculinities is a feature of any historical period, and masculinities change over time, are created, die and are recreated again and again. Apart from the obligatory theoretical touchstones of Foucault, Butler, Haraway, and a host of lesser lights, another who makes a regular appearance in studies of gender and masculinity is Antonio Gramsci. Or rather, a bowdlerized version of Gramsci's theory of hegemony that owes much to Edward Said's misreading usually turns up. According to this perception of hegemony, it designates the dominant position, the one of the ruling class or race or gender (e.g. Connell, 2005, pp. 77–78; Hooper, 2001, p. 40). It is reinforced by force (police, both secret and not so secret, law courts and army) and persuasion (propaganda in the media, education and argument).

There is some limited truth in this perception. However, a careful reading of the many treatments of hegemony in Gramsci's notebooks (1971; 1992; 1996; 2007) reveals that such an interpretation is superficial (see especially Boer, 2007, pp. 215–74; Fontana, 1993). Instead, Gramsci's purpose in developing the theory of hegemony (a reworking of the Marxist theory of ideology) was to find a way to overthrow those in power, to explore how a new, liberating, hegemony might develop. A corollary to this purpose is the argument that the ruling hegemony is inherently uncertain and shaky. So also with the Bible: despite the effort in the Bible to present a series of overlapping ruling and dominating perspectives, all the way from social organization to sexuality, not to mention religion, they are very shaky indeed. Or to put it even more forcefully, the very act of asserting dominance is inherently unstable. Subversion lurks in every murky doorway and under every bed. In fact, hegemony is continually undermined from within and without. A major reason that the dominant hegemony is unstable is that it must constantly deal with insurrection—in politics, social movements, ideas, personal beliefs and so on. After all, the reason Antonio Gramsci, the communist, developed the notion of hegemony was to find a way to overcome the dominance of the fascist state under Mussolini and capitalism more generally.

To this account of Gramsci's theory I would like to add two brief points that are relevant for the analysis of Chronicles that follows. The first comes from Louis Althusser's argument concerning what he calls 'Ideological State Apparatuses'—a term that adds some economic and social depth to what are usually called institutions (Althusser, 1971, pp. 121–73). For Althusser, Ideological State Apparatuses include education, religion, family, politics, the legal system, and culture. But the important point for my analysis is that while these apparatuses are zones where the ruling ideas seek to be inculcated, they are also *sites of ideological struggle*.³ And these struggles take place *within* the apparatuses. Although the ruling class attempts to dominate and control the Ideological State Apparatuses, their hold is unstable and contested—a point Althusser owes to Gramsci's notion of hegemony. Ideological struggles take place in precisely these institutions. Thus, in our own day

we can witness in the debates over media representation (is it biased or balanced?), education (public versus private, and the drive to render universities subject to the vagaries of the market), religious institutions (orthodoxy versus social justice), culture (funding for the arts), the continued attacks on trade unions as part of a neo-liberal agenda, and so on.

The second point comes from Antonio Negri, whose work is simply absent from studies of masculinity. One of Negri's major arguments, coming out of the workerism (*operaismo*) of Italy in the 1960s and 1970s, is that a dominant power is not a given against which one resists.⁴ Rather, resistance itself is constitutive, and power must constantly adapt and reshape itself in response to such resistance. For Negri this creative resistance is embodied in the trade union movements, in the global anti-capitalist protests, in anti-colonialism, and in the green and feminist movements. I would suggest it also applies very well to studies of masculinity, for what are assumed to be dominant masculinities do not occupy centre stage, givens against which resistance must struggle. No, those dominant forms must constantly change and respond to what resists them.

Obviously, Negri's position is a step beyond those of Gramsci and Althusser, but let us see how all of them apply to my reading of masculinity in the biblical book of Chronicles. In this text we find a wholesale construction of an exclusively male world of priests, but it is an unstable hegemony, one that must constantly be reasserted in the face of a constant resistance. In this ideal world religion, politics and gender are the dominant Ideological State Apparatuses, woven together through the temple in a way that suggests their separation is artificial. However, the instability of that artificial world is due to its own inconsistencies and conflicts, to internal ideological struggle, rather than any external threat. In fact, that resistance will turn out to be the constitutive feature of Chronicles, a resistance to which the dominant masculine ideology must try to assert itself. So let us see how all this works in my reading of Chronicles.⁵

Utopia and Phallic Temples

I begin my reading of Chronicles with two positions, one concerning utopia and the other dealing with the centrality of the temple. To begin with, Chronicles may be read as a utopia, an effort to represent an ideal world that resists the world as it is (see Boer, 1997, pp. 136–68; Boer, 1999; Schweitzer, 2007a). I should point out that such a reading is a radical break in itself with the bulk of Chronicles' scholarship, which obsesses over matters of historical reliability, textual production and transmission, manuscript variations and theology.⁶ It is a text that creates a different memory of the past in order to construct the picture of a different present and hoped for future. It challenges, erases, and rewrites the established patterns, providing an appeal to alternative collective memories—embodied particularly in the genealogies—for the hope of the future. More correctly, Chronicles may be read as uchronian fiction. It tells a different story of the past in order to open up the possibility of a different and better present and future—the basic definition of uchronian literature. Chronicles presents a picture of an ideal or utopian Israel in opposition to the strongly dystopian lines of the story in the Deuteronomistic History, especially Samuel and Kings. By contrast with the Deuteronomist History, which presents an increasingly apostate people and leadership, or as Schweitzer puts

it (2007a), a fatalistic determinism, Chronicles has a much more positive picture of both people and kingship.⁷ In presenting an ideal past, with the (dis)obedience or disobedience of king and people acting as a trigger for immediate divine favor or disfavor, with the priests as the actual rulers, Chronicles also generates a hope for a future in which such an ideal state will be realized.

But now we need to ask a further question: for whom is this utopia? Chronicles is a document that expresses the ideas and hope of a distinct class, or rather sub-class. And that sub-class is none other than the Levites. Particularly in the sections that describe an ideal organization of the temple and its worship, the Levites, who are usually relegated to a second-class status, are granted a much greater role than in other pieces from the Hebrew Bible. Not only do they have a role in the cult, but they are entrusted with matters of defense as well. Although they are a sub-class within the ruling class, they are disenfranchised on two counts: Levites were usually placed in secondary roles to the priests; the ruling class itself was a class without much power, since Judah (or Yehud) was a province of the Persian Empire when Chronicles was penned. Without a king, with a Persian appointed governor, the clerics and scribes had to find another avenue to express their wishes. So they redirected their efforts towards the only other area they knew best: religious observance. Yet this Levitical utopia is clearly one for men. Women are few and far between in this text, especially when its central concern is the temple and its worship—an exclusively male zone.⁸ It may be utopia for them, but it is a dystopia for women, and indeed anyone who is not a Levite—especially the different lineages of regular priests and Zadokite priests as well as high priest.⁹ In short, this utopia is one that belongs to the interwoven Ideological Apparatuses of religion, politics and gender in which the religious dominates.

Further, at the centre of the masculine utopia of Chronicles is the temple, a distinctly phallic temple. The narrative itself leads us to the building and organization of the temple. David passes on the task to Solomon without a hitch (in contrast to Samuel and Kings where David is not permitted to build the temple) and then we come across no less than six chapters (2 Chronicles 2–7) devoted to the construction and organization of the temple. Even in the lead-up to these chapters, David plays a massive role in preparing for the temple. But this is a literary and ideological temple, never built.¹⁰ I would suggest that the temple is a figure for the books of Chronicles as a whole, an image that represents the phallic economy of this ideal world.

I do not make this assertion without textual ground, for in 2 Chronicles 3.3–4 the following measurements appear:

These are Solomon's foundations for building the house of God: the length, in cubits of the old standard, was sixty cubits and the width twenty cubits. The vestibule (*ha'ulam*) that was in front of the length, across the breadth of the house, was twenty cubits, and *the height one hundred and twenty.* (emphasis added)

Compare this text with the other description in 1 Kings 6:2–3:

The house that King Solomon built for Yahweh was sixty cubits long, twenty wide and thirty cubits high. The vestibule in front of the temple of the house

was twenty cubits long, across the width of the house. Ten cubits was its width in front of the house.

Note the difference: in the Kings text no height is given for the vestibule at all; it is 10 by 20 cubits on the ground plan. By contrast, in Chronicles height is included: the vestibule is 20 cubits across and *120 high*. Given that the main section of the temple is only 60 cubits long, that makes the vestibule twice as high as the length of the whole temple! It is a massive phallic tower, a high-rise temple for Solomon, like some angular cock raised to the heavens with its balls on the ground. Commentators on Chronicles are keen to cut down this phallus: the unanimous agreement is that 2 Chronicles 3.4a is—of course!—corrupt. It could not possibly mean a massive tower of 120 cubits. However, I suggest that this text is a telltale sign of the text's masculine economy, for it is the image *par excellence* of the overwhelming if desperate effort to assert a male-only world.¹¹ The text of both books of Chronicles leads to this climax, this high point, this massive effort to assert a distinct hegemony.

With this image of the priapic temple at the centre of Chronicles a number of other texts begin to make sense. Let me deal with one example, which necessitates a dip into Hebrew terminology, namely, the genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1–9 and their formulae.¹² The dominant formula for the genealogies makes use of *holidh*, translated variously as 'was the father of' or, in a still classic translation, 'begat'. So we get 'A *holidh* B, C, D....' As in 'Abraham begat Isaac' (1 Chronicles 1:34). Semantically, there is nothing exceptional about the formula, partly because we are so used to the statement that such-and-such 'begat' a child, or became the father of a child. The problem with all of this is that at a basic level the *holidh* formula leaves the mother entirely out of the process. Where the mother's name does appear, we find *yaledhah*, 'she bore', the form of the verb (Qal) in which the mother is the direct subject, the son the object and the father the indirect object. And so we get, 'X bore Y for A' (see 1 Chronicles 2:19, 21 and so on), or just 'X bore Y' (see 1 Chronicles 2:17; 7:14). However, with *holidh* we have a different form of the verb (Hiphil), which means strictly, 'A caused to bear B'—for instance, 'Abraham caused to bear Isaac'. The question then becomes: whom did he cause to bear? The mother is the obvious answer, but the formula itself effaces her presence, attributing the verb for giving birth to the man. Thus, what we have in the genealogies is an endless list of men producing men, with the occasional exception, such as Keturah, Abraham's 'concubine' in 1 Chronicles 1:32, or Tamar in 1 Chronicles 2:4, or Ephrathah in 1 Chronicles 2:24, or Caleb's concubines in 2 Chronicles 2:46-49.¹³

Let us estrange¹⁴ the genealogies for a moment, asking what it means for men to 'beget' men without women. The image that keeps coming back to me is of the whole human tradition from Adam onwards with men giving birth to men. How did Abraham manage his pregnancy? Did he worry about how he was going to give birth? How did he deal with the hormonal changes? Did he produce the child all on his own, coming in his own mouth perhaps? The genealogies become a huge story from the beginning of time of pregnant men, waddling about, belly-buttons popped out, waiting for the birth of yet another son from their own bodies. In the very effort of Chronicles to restrict the ideal world to men, they have to become pregnant, carrying a child and giving birth if the line was going to continue. The masculine

hegemony of Chronicles has already started to come unstuck, if indeed there was any uniformity in the first place.

Machismo

This phallic world is not as rigid as it might be, the temple less than solid and somewhat flaccid, the apparent masculinity showing signs that it is not quite what it at first seemed to be. A series of texts indicate that this masculinity is queerer than we might expect. Indeed, a distinct campiness pervades the books of Chronicles.¹⁵ On top of the auto-generation of the genealogies, three other items of this increasingly strange masculinity emerge from Chronicles: excessive if somewhat comical machismo; an extraordinary concern with interior design; and an intense emphasis on those crucial cultic items such as utensils, incense, spices and freshly baked bread.

Testosterone seems to be overabundant in the ‘mighty men’ (*hagibborim*) of David, who flex their muscles all the way through Chronicles, wielding swords and massive spears as though they were prosthetic penises (see 1 Chronicles 11:10–47). They slaughter hundreds of enemies at a blow (Jashobeam and Abishai), dispense with gigantic enemies bare-handed (Benaiah and the Egyptian), and leap into snow-filled pits to wrestle lions (Benaiah again)—enough to shame even those mad dog Viking berserkers. Yet the mightiest act of all is not some feat that would outdo even these astounding achievements; instead it is nothing less than King David’s glass of water. Out in the field of battle, David looks wistfully out over the troops, licks his lips and croaks, ‘O that some one would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate’ (1 Chronicles 11:17). A heartrending wish, is it not, a small thing to ask these great men? But there is one small problem: that well with its sweet, fresh water, lies a good distance away, behind Philistine lines. Dumbly obedient to their king and his wish for a drink, Jashobeam, Eleazer and third unnamed man, crash through enemy lines, draw out the water from the well as masses of Philistines run towards them, faces contorted in anger and swords at the ready, and carefully carry the mug of water back to David—presumably without spilling a drop.

Given that these men are David’s bodyguard, one would expect them to be well organized, just like the temple and its furnishings (see below). Sadly, it is not so, for they can hardly count at all, let alone get themselves into any sense of order. Do these three brave souls who fetch David a drink belong to the two, the three or the thirty? An extraordinary and bewildering passage from 1 Chronicles 11 leaves everyone confused. Is Jashobeam at the head of the thirty (1 Chronicles 11:11) or of the three (2 Samuel 23:8)? For his part, Eleazer believes he is just behind Jashobeam among the ‘three mighty men’ (1 Chronicles 11:12). But then another mighty man, Abishai, feels that he is chief of the three, except that he ‘had no name among the three’ (1 Chronicles 11:20). What is going on here? Perhaps the next verse will help us: ‘Among the two was he more renowned than the three, and he became their leader, but unto the three he did not come’ (1 Chronicles 11:21). If we are confused, then spare a thought for poor Abishai. To add to the confusion, Benaiah turns out to ‘have a name among the three mighty men’ (1 Chronicles 11:24). Then again, perhaps he didn’t; he certainly was better known than the thirty, but he wasn’t actually part of the three (1 Chronicles 11:25). One can only assume that David

feared for his own life at the hands of these dolts who mill about in numerical confusion, especially when Benaiah was appointed over David's bodyguard (1 Chronicles 11:25). Reading this passage, I can't help thinking of the oxymoron 'military intelligence'.

However, the real answer to organization for battle lies elsewhere—in the temple choir. Later, towards the end of the second book of Chronicles we meet King Jehoshaphat, face to face with the marauding army of the Ammonites, Moabites and men of Mount Seir. Unfazed, Jehoshaphat asks God what he should do (2 Chronicles 20:1—17). The answer: sing! Forget complex maneuvers like ambushes, pincers or disciplined advances under cover of the archers. No, faced with the enemy, Jehoshaphat 'appointed those who were to sing to Yahweh and praise him in holy array' (2 Chronicles 20: 21). They were to beat back the enemy with the refrain, 'Give thanks to Yahweh, for his steadfast love endures forever' (2 Chronicles 20: 21). The result: God takes control of the battle and enemy ends up slaughtering itself through 'friendly fire'. Battle as a musical: all that is left for the victors is gather the spoil and head for home, still singing (2 Chronicles 20: 24-8).

Masculine hegemony? If so, it is not what we would expect. In fact, I would suggest that here a resistant masculinity is emerging that makes mockery of the phallic rigidity of the temple. What appears in this battle account is perhaps the central theme of Chronicles, namely correct observance of the cult. Follow the minute rules for organizing the temple and for worship and God's blessings will smile on you. If not, then a curse soon follows.¹⁶ Incense mixed incorrectly, a golden basin out of place, a false note sung—these unforgivable sins among many others would bring God's immediate wrath, usually in terms of marauding foreigners, strange diseases, loss of those valuable sons the men labored so valiantly to produce, and gruesome early deaths.

Cult Matters: The Finer Things of Life

All this campy machismo is in the end a sideshow for Chronicles (which is a shame in many respects). After all, the temple is the main concern of these two books of the Bible, which brings us to the matters of interior design, organization, crockery and other masculine matters of cultic correctness. Here at least, the men can organize themselves.

And what an organization it is! It begins with David, who is no hack when it comes to interior design, and then that organizational skill passes (genetically?) on to Solomon. David leaves Solomon a detailed shopping list for an exclusive home furnishings store (see 1 Chronicles 28:15-18 and 29:3): gold and silver lamp-stands, tables and bowls, forks and basins and cups of pure gold, a golden altar of incense, precious stones throughout the temple, and even the *pièce de résistance*, a golden chariot for those cherubim on the ark of the covenant. Anything David can do, Solomon can do better: he ensures that every corner of the temple is adorned with gold, decorates the tops of each pillar with necklaces of pomegranate and gold, and above all pays special attention to the curtain concealing the most sacred place, the Holy of Holies. That, stipulates Solomon, must be woven 'of blue and purple and crimson fabrics and fine linen' (2 Chronicles 3:14), and it must be embroidered with cherubim. The list is endless, as is Solomon's delight with these vital matters of state: forks, tongs, snuffers, fire-pans, lamp-stands, pots, shovels, finely wrought and

carved wash basins, not to forget the all-important flowers (see 2 Chronicles 4: 1-22). Solomon, it seems, had a soft spot for the finer things in life.

How did one care for such an elaborate interior? The forward thinking David has it in hand, for he appoints no less than 38,000 Levites in the thirty-plus age group (1 Chronicles 23:3). Even they were not enough, so David drops the age barrier to twenty (1 Chronicles 23:24). What were they to do? Lead the odd worship service? Pray? Meditate? No, they were to clean, cook the breads and wafers and baked offerings, mix the various oils and ... sing at every opportunity (1 Chronicles 23:28-31). To accompany them others were to strum lyres and harps and ring cymbals. So involved were these tasks that they were rostered on a monthly basis; even the mighty men we met above came in on the act (see 1 Chronicles 25-27).

Perhaps the best summary of these vital tasks appears towards the beginning of the first book of Chronicles:

Some of them had charge of the utensils of service, for they were required to count them when they were brought in and taken out. Others of them were appointed over the furniture, and over all the holy utensils, also over the fine flour, the wine, the oil, the incense, and the spices. Others, of the sons of the priests, prepared the mixing of the spices, and Mattithiah, one of the Levites, the first-born of Shallum the Korahite, was in charge of making the flat cakes. Also some of their kinsmen of the Kohathites had charge of the showbread, to prepare it every sabbath (1 Chronicles 9:20-32).

What do real men do in Chronicles? They concern themselves with crockery and cutlery, furniture, fine flour, wine, oil, incense, spices, flat cakes and showbread. Everywhere we find the singers; released from any other service, they were rostered on to sing day and night (1 Chronicles 9: 33). Picture the scene: the men in the temple, finely dressed and perfumed, mix the spices, cook the flat cakes, arrange the furniture, ensure that the holy crockery and cutlery are correctly ordered; as they go about their tasks, they are surrounded by groups of singers and choristers who launch into song 24/7. A musical? An early version of piped music? Masculine?

In case we might think that these foppish dandies were engaged in peripheral matters, like some high church Anglicans, then we need to think again. Cultic correctness is, for Chronicles at least, a matter of life or death—in short, God's favor or disfavor. Perhaps the best example of its importance appears in some words uttered by king Abijah, soon after the breakup of the united kingdom after Solomon's reign. After the breakup of the two kingdoms—faithful Judah and rebel Israel—face each other. Abijah begins by pointing out the cultic errors of the wayward Israelites, and then he says:

But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him. We have priests ministering to the Lord who are sons of Aaron, and Levites for their service. They offer to the Lord every morning and every evening burnt offerings and incense of sweet spices, set out the showbread on the table of pure gold, and care for the golden lamp-stand that its lamps may burn every evening; for we keep the charge of the Lord our God, but you have forsaken him. Behold, God is with us at our head, and his priests with their battle trumpets to sound the call to battle against you. (2 Chronicles 13:10-12a)

Are the signs of faithfulness an upright heart, a prayerful and moral life, justice for the poor, a humble walking with your God? Or does it require the offering of sweet spices at the right times, setting out the showbread on the gold table and making sure that the golden lamp stand keeps burning? No and yes would be Abijah's answer to these questions, berating the Israelites as he did so for their failure to live up to these standards. Yet even here there is ambivalence. Abijah's confidence may well be covering a deeper uncertainty. Standing there in his carefully washed linen robe with its jiggling tassels and tinkling bells, his beard trimmed and carefully oiled, Abijah has yet to realize that even his preferred approach does not live up to what Yahweh wants, for in 2 Chronicles 30 his successor, Hezekiah, would lead all the people to become aware of how inadequate their cultic observance had been. Yahweh was obviously a difficult god to please.

Conclusion

Chronicles consistently undermines the masculine hegemony it so desperately seeks to establish; it is a very unstable hegemony, an Ideological State Apparatus that is deeply conflicted within itself. It is a text full of queers doing their thing, whether in the genealogies of men begetting men, in the comic machismo of the 'mighty men', in the interior design of the temple, or in the attention to the finest detail of temple organization and decoration. Or, given that it is an utopian representation that was never realized, is it a very different masculinity, an alternative hegemony from what we might have expected, a resistant masculinity that must be thwarted by more conventional phallic models?

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Notes

¹ Needless to say, the reading offered here differs from anything the reader will find in the standard commentaries on Chronicles. See, for example, Curtis (1910), Ackroyd (1973), Japhet (1993), McKenzie (2004), and Knoppers (2004a; 2004b). Even Jarick's mildly different commentary (2007a; 2007b) does not come close.

² I am actually falling in line here with the standard scholarly position on Chronicles and the cult, but see Schweitzer 2007b, who argues that a text like 2 Chronicles 30, with its repentance and unworthiness for keeping the cult the way they have, the people seek forgiveness.

³ 'Ideology' Althusser famously defines as the representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence, thereby revolutionizing Marxist approaches to ideology (it is not simply false consciousness). It is not the *imaginary relationship* itself that is ideology—for instance, an illusion such as belief in justice, or God, or the honesty of one's rulers. It is not, in other words, a deliberate concealment of the truth by a conspiracy of priests and the powerful. Rather, ideology is the way this imaginary relation is *represented*. It operates at a second remove from reality.

⁴ This position runs through Negri's works (Negri, 1991a, 1991b, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2008b; Negri & Casarino, 2008; Negri & DeFourmantele, 2004; Negri & Scelsi, 2008), but has made its largest impact through *Empire* (Hardt & Negri, 2000; Negri, 2008a) and *Multitude* (Hardt & Negri, 2004). See also Boer (in press).

⁵ In contrast to ancient Greece and Rome, there is still relatively little on this subject in biblical studies. See especially the work of Stephen Moore (1996; 2003), David Clines (1995) and Howard Eilberg-Schwartz (1993), who make far greater use of deconstructive strategies which soon run up to their limits.

⁶ See the references in note 1.

⁷ In traditional historical critical scholarship such a perspective has been described as eschatology or messianism (Braun, 1979, 59–61; Williamson, 1977, p. 135; 1982, pp. 24–6).

⁸ The desperate effort by Knoppers (2001) and Labahn and Ben Zvi (2003) to salvage some role for women in Chronicles only reinforces this point.

⁹ So Kelso 2007, but see the argument by Schweitzer (2003 and 2007b) that this disenfranchising of priests, Zadokites and the high priest has an implicit democratizing tendency, since it breaks the stranglehold on power by the traditional priesthood as well as moving the focus away from the monarchy.

¹⁰ A standard point in Chronicles' scholarship; see the references in note 1.

¹¹ For a comparable assessment of the role of the temple in Ben Sira, see Camp (2002). See, however, Kelso's study (2007), where she argues that the temple also contains within itself a womb, appropriating the productive capacity of women into a male-only world.

¹² On what follows, see especially Kelso (2007), whom I follow quite closely here.

¹³ In fact, when the mother's name does appear in the formula, the syntax breaks down. It seems as though that masculine world cannot handle the presence of women even in the structure of its sentences. For example, in 1 Chr 2:18 there is the strange sentence: 'Caleb the son of Hezron begat (*holidh*) Azubah, his wife, and Jerioth'. Or is that 'Caleb the son of Hezron begat by means of (*'et*) his wife, Azubah and with Jerioth'? It is unclear here whether the *'et* is a marker of the direct object—in which case Caleb begets his wives—or the preposition 'with'.

¹⁴ The estrangement effect, or *Verfremdungseffekt*, owes itself famously to both Bertolt Brecht and the Russian Formalists (*Ostrenanie*).

¹⁵ On camp, see Sontag (1994, pp. 275–92), Robertson (1996), LaValley (1995), Meyer (1994), Michasiw (1994), Babuscio (1977), Cleto (1999) and Tinkom (2002).

¹⁶ This is the well-known 'immediate divine retribution', first identified by Julius Wellhausen (1994 [1885], pp. 203–10). To spell it out: the divine response to obedience or disobedience is immediate blessing or punishment, particularly by the

kings and often exhibited in terms of cultic correctness (see, for example, 2 Chronicles 29–31). The inevitable punishment that follows disobedience may be averted by repentance after a warning. However, this immediate retribution may not be as smooth or as immediate as many have assumed. See especially Dillard (1984).

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