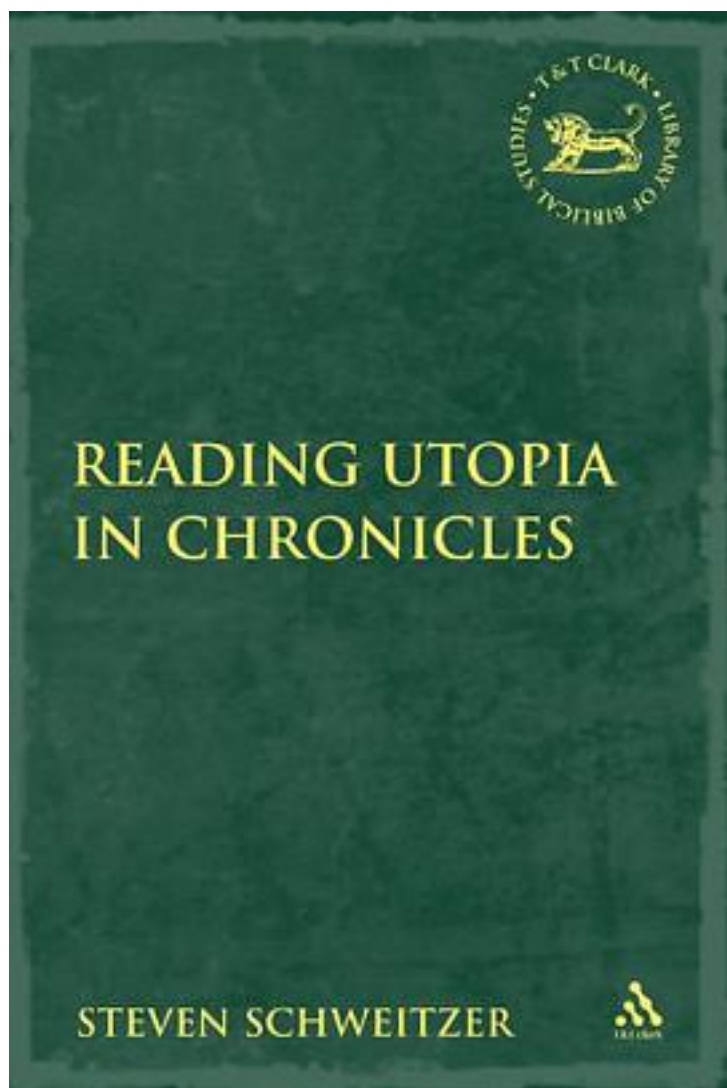


Reading Utopia in Chronicles



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This examination employs a literary approach in an attempt to address the coherence of Chronicles as a whole. The book of "Chronicles" is examined using the methodology of utopian literary theory. From this innovative perspective, "Chronicles" is interpreted as a utopian work that critiques present society and its status quo by presenting a 'better alternative reality'. The author's analysis contends that Chronicles does not reflect the historical situation of a particular time during the Second Temple period in its portrayal of the past, but rather conveys hope for a different future. While some scholars have also affirmed that Chronicles is concerned with the future, the majority of scholars believe that the content of Chronicles largely reflects the present situation of the author and in doing so reinforces or legitimizes the status quo. Also, this assessment argues that utopianism is an underlying ideological matrix that contributes to the coherence of the book of Chronicles as a whole. Three commonly addressed concerns of the Chronicler (genealogy, politics, and the temple cult) are understood from this methodological perspective as vehicles for conveying the Chronicler's vision for a utopian future. Thus, the scope of this analysis is broader than many recent studies on Chronicles that have focused on isolated themes, individuals, or discrete sections in the book. Many of the conclusions challenge the dominant scholarly views about Chronicles and the assumptions that lie behind them. Over the last 30 years this pioneering series has established an unrivaled reputation for cutting-edge international scholarship in Biblical Studies and has attracted leading authors and editors in the field. The series takes many original and creative approaches to its subjects, including innovative work from historical and theological perspectives, social-scientific and literary theory, and more recent developments in cultural studies and reception history.

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目录:

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